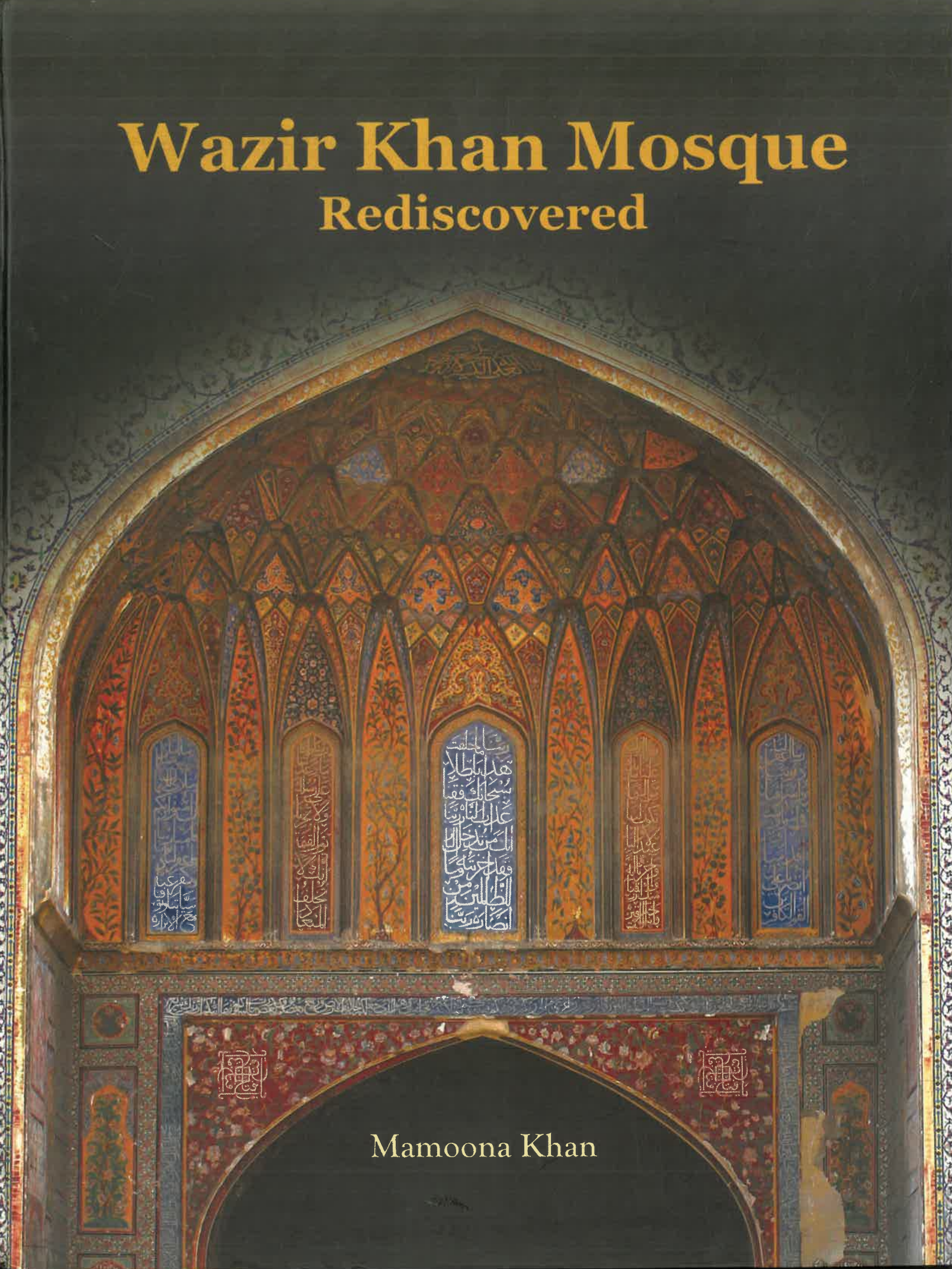
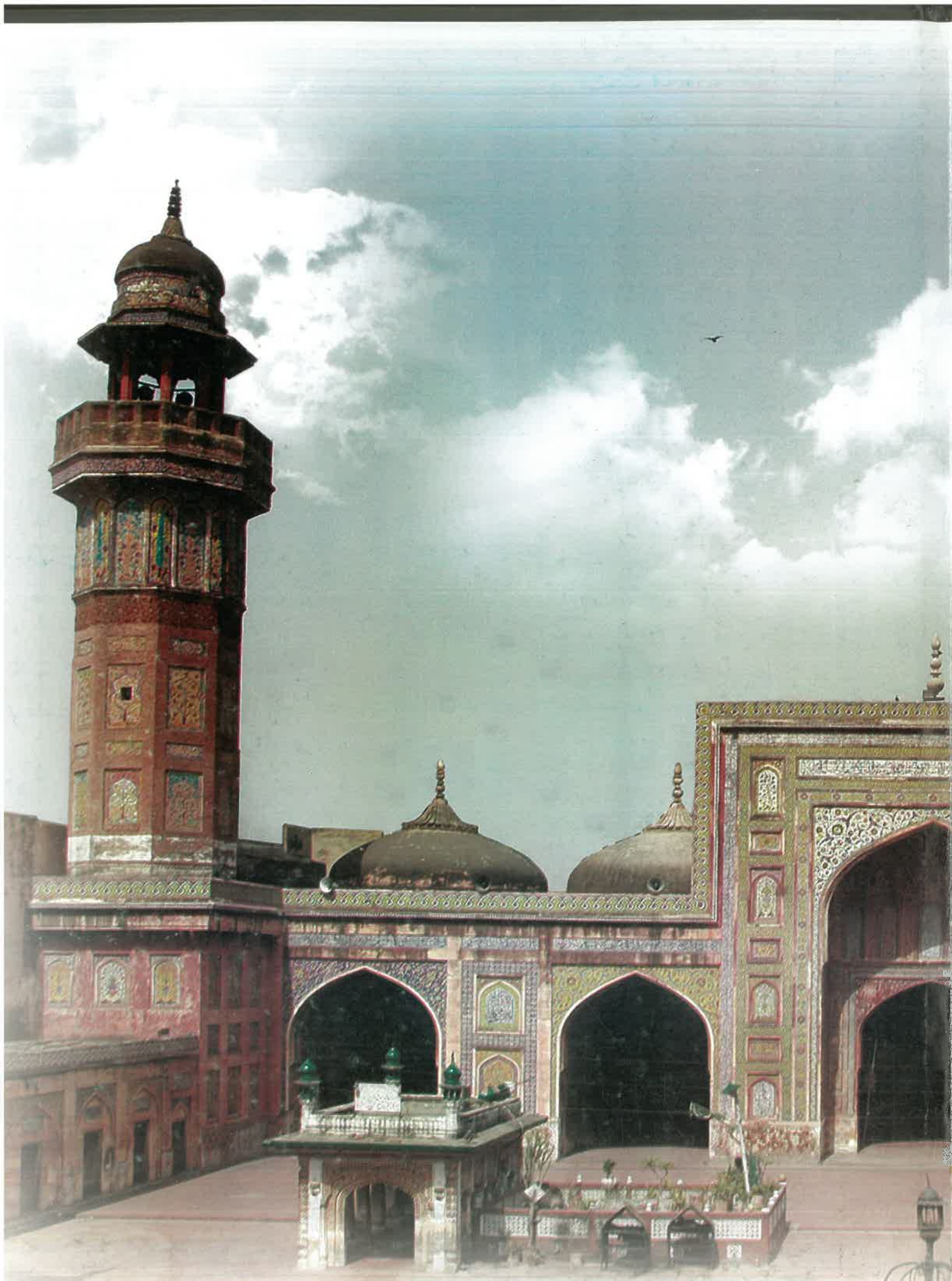
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Rediscovered



Mamoona Khan



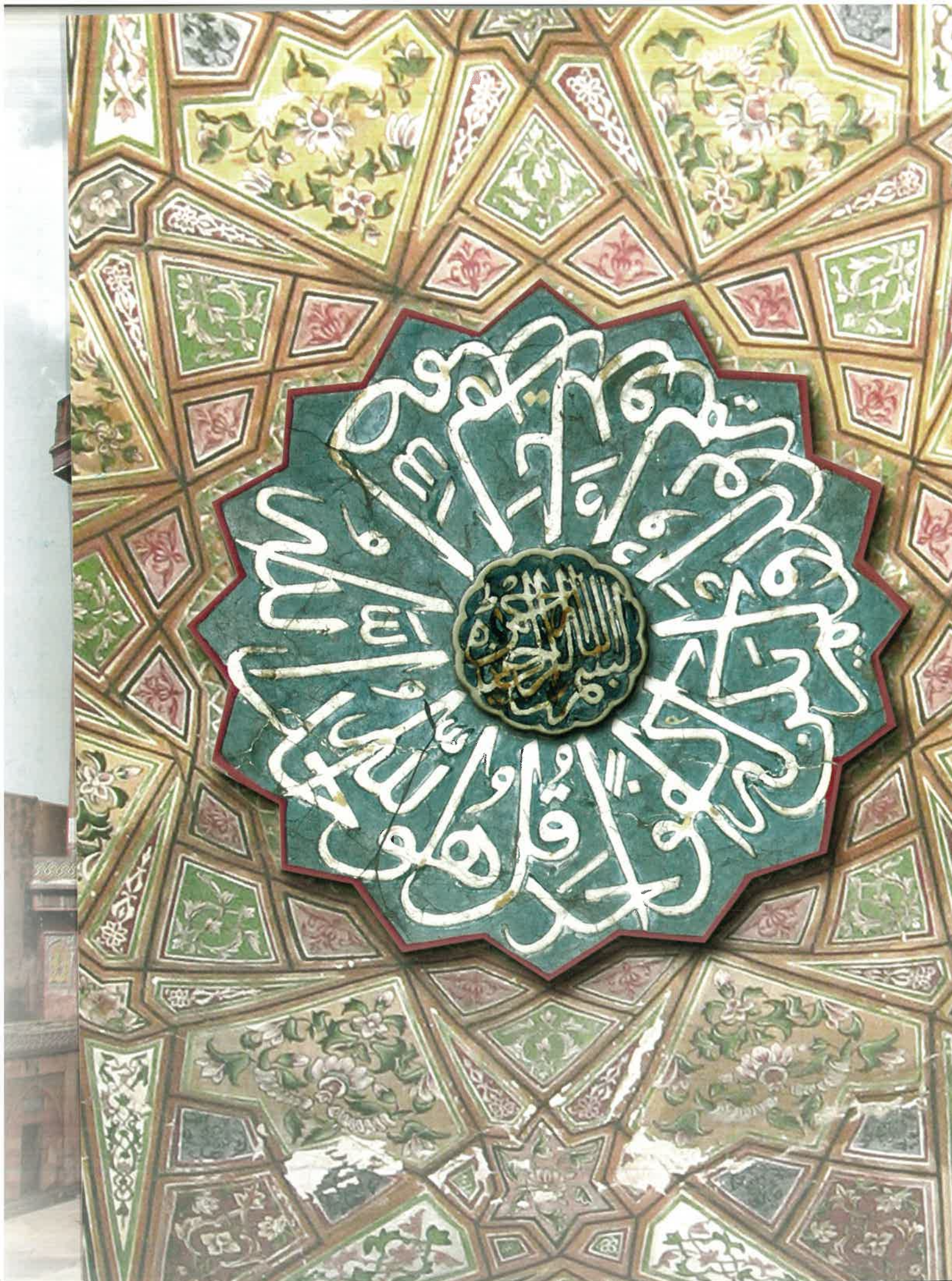


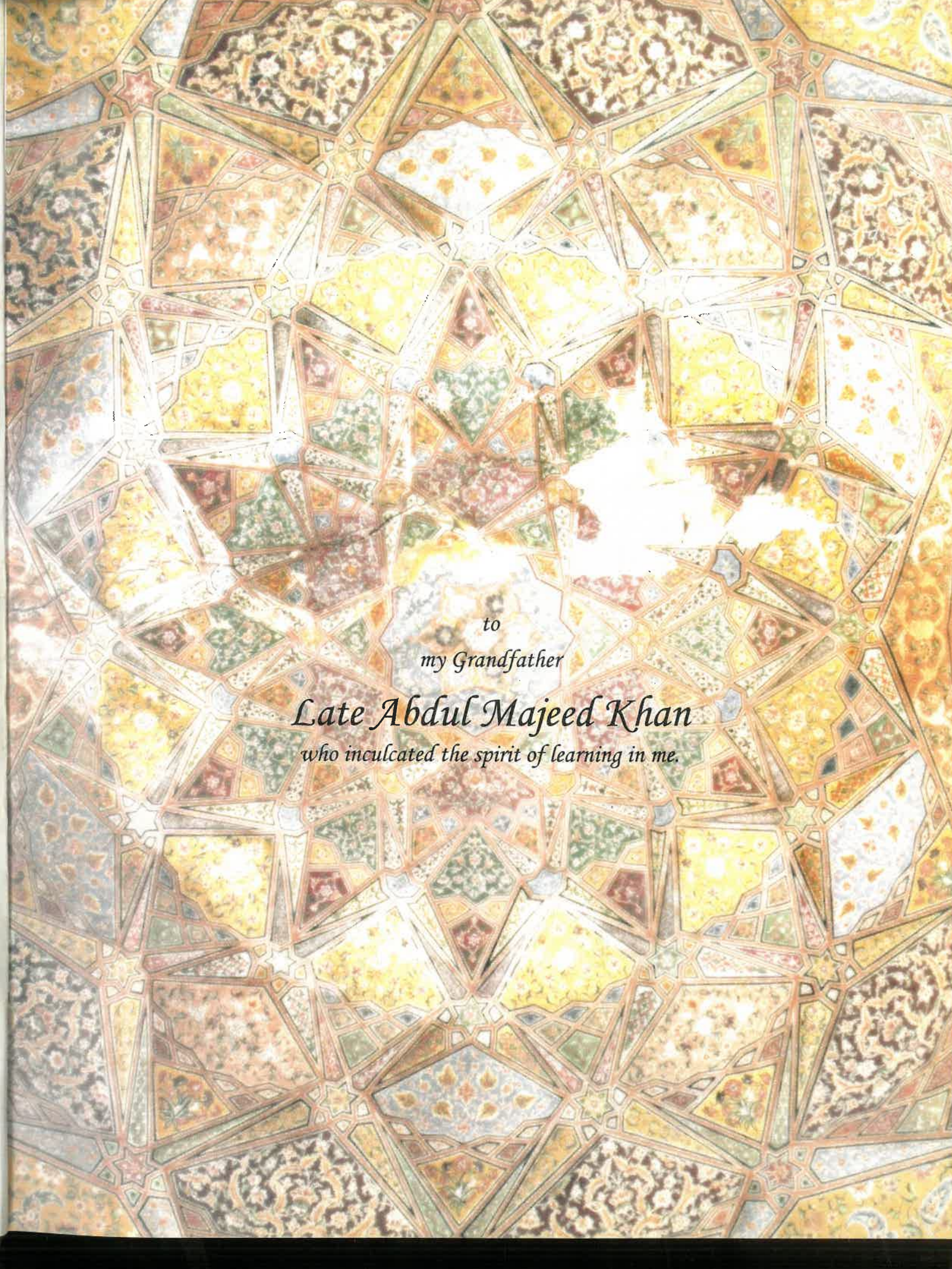
Wazir Khan Mosque
Rediscovered

Mamoona Khan

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22000

Pakistan Writers Co-operative Society
Lahore-Pakistan


بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
قل هو الله



to

my Grandfather

Late Abdul Majeed Khan

who inculcated the spirit of learning in me.

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Contents

	Foreword Dr. Shaukat Mahmood	I
	Acknowledgements	III
	Preface	V
	Transliteration	IX
Chapter 1	**Wazīr Khān**	1
	Transliteration of the deed of bequest	4
Chapter 2	**Mosque History**	7
	Plan and Elevation	14
	Main Gate	15
	Vestibule Complex	15
	Courtyard	16
	Sanctuary	16
	Cenotaph in the Courtyard	17
	Minarets	17
Chapter 3	**Decorative Motifs in the Wazīr Khān Mosque**	19
	Eastern Gate of the Mosque	24
	The Vestibule	35
	Turrets	43
	Courtyard of the Mosque	45
	Brick Designs on Floor	45
	Minarets	49
	Façade of the Sanctuary	54
	Central Arch of the Façade of Sanctuary	55
	Ḥujrās Flanking Courtyard	61
	The Eastern Façade	64
	Sanctuary of the Mosque	66
	Far-northern *Iwān* of the Sanctuary	67
	Northern *Iwān* of the Sanctuary	69
	Main Chamber of Sanctuary of the Mosque	71



	Inscriptions in the Vestibule	199
	Calligraphy in Persian	201
Chapter 5	**Marvel of Star Shape in the Wazīr Khān Mosque**	209
	Perforated Simple Stars	213
	Simple Star Shapes	216
	Intricate Star Shapes	226
Chapter 6	**Minbar of the Mosque**	259
Chapter 7	**Supply of Water to the Mosque**	267
Chapter 8	**Material and Techniques of Ornamentation used in the Wazīr Khān Mosque**	271
Chapter 9	**Tomb of Sayyid Muḥammad Isḥāq Kāzirūn**	275
Chapter 10	**Epilogue**	289
	List of Plates	305
	Plates	307
	Glossary	321
	Bibliography	323
	List of figures	325
	Index	335

Far-northern *Miḥrāb* of the Sanctuary 74
Far-northern Smaller Niche 76
Ceiling of the Sanctuary 77
Transverse Arches 80
Northern *Iwān* of the Sanctuary 83
Northern *Miḥrāb* of the Sanctuary 86
Ceiling of Northern bay of the Sanctuary 88
The Second Transverse Arch from North 91
Central *Iwān* of the Sanctuary 93
The Central bay and Main *Miḥrāb* of the Sanctuary 95
Northern Gate 101

Chapter 4 **Inscriptions in the Wazīr Khān Mosque** 107
History 109
Styles of Calligraphy 110

Arabic Calligraphy 114
Eastern Gate 114
Northern Gate 115
Façade of the Sanctuary 116
Inscriptions on the Façade of the Sanctuary 116
Central Façade of the Sanctuary 124
Inner Arch of the Central Facade 128
Central *Iwān* of the Sanctuary 140
Central *Miḥrāb* of the Sanctuary 145
Far-northern *Iwān* of the Sanctuary 154
Far-northern Bay of the Sanctuary 155
Miḥrāb of the Far-northern Sanctuary 156
Ceiling of the Far-northern Bay of the Sanctuary 164
Northern *Iwān* of the Sanctuary 170
Miḥrāb of the Far-northern Bay of the Sanctuary 170
Ceiling of the Northern Bay of the Sanctuary 176
Southern Bays of the Sanctuary 181
Southern *Miḥrāb* of the Sanctuary 182
Ceiling of the Far-southern Bay of the Sanctuary 185
Ceiling of the Southern Bay of the Sanctuary 190
Transverse Arches 194
Inscriptions on the Soffit of the First Transverse Arch from North 195
Inscriptions on the Soffit of the Second Transverse Arch from North 196
Inscriptions on the Soffit of the Second Transverse Arch from South 197
Inscriptions on the Soffit of the First Transverse Arch from South 198

Foreword

There can be few lovers of old monuments who do not feel a special attachment and admiration for the mosque which a physician of Mughal emperors built in Lahore to pay homage to his revered saint Muḥammad Ishaq Gāzirūni. The physician, 'Ilm al-Dīn Ansāri better known as Wazīr Khān and his mosque, the Wazīr Khān Mosque, is now a household name for the denizens of not only Lahore but whole of the subcontinent.

In fact, the diversity and quality of its inscriptions and decorative motifs makes it something more than a mere place of worship. This mosque is an album, a repertoire of inscriptions, floral motifs, geometric designs and arabesques in their finest form. Wherever one looks, one senses that there is a fruit of one, rather several artistic brains that its founder managed to gather. Not surprisingly, the originality that lies behind various artistic forms is not at one place, rather every nook and corner has the designs which inspire a true connoisseur instantly, and then he is lost in the magical labyrinth or lines that constitute, comprise and emerge out of various stellated shapes. The stellular half dome of the iwan is a magic in itself and its intricacies cannot be observed with naked eye. Beside various intriguing shapes there is a rich variety of material which has been used to fashion the beauty of the mosque.

In every period geometry has played a very consequential role. In classical Greece, Thales, Pythagoras, Plato, Euclid, and Archimedes made great advances in this field. The Golden Mean Rectangle and the Golden Mean Triangle are the products of this great age. While in the East Ibn-i Haitham, Al-Birūni, 'Umar Khayyām and Sharīf al-Dīn Tūsi excelled in this science. This mosque at many places has the application of Golden Ratio and even the simile of Bohr model of atom. Interestingly the great names of mathematicians and geometricians who adorned this mosque are not known. Only at a couple of places the names of calligraphers are noticeable. These great artists were above this kind of publicity. In art any claim for publicity is always absurd because art is not about quantitative issues; it belongs to a purely qualitative sphere where each artist measures himself against the criteria of beauty that he has himself invented, and that would never have existed without him. A great work of art only satisfies those needs that it has inspired in the beholder.

In its arts, especially those associated with architecture, Islam has originated world's greatest artistic traditions. Whereas Mosque of Wazīr Khān is over four hundred years old it contains several fine examples of Arabic ambigrams (*Khatt-e-Ma'kus*). In the West ambigrams were only introduced in 1970 by John Langdon and Scott Kim. There is one isolated example of a western ambigram by Peter Newell which dates back to 1893.



Acknowledgements

No research work can result from the individual efforts of a single person, there always are some sources that help to materialise intangible inspirations. To say thanks to these sources is a moral obligation. In the case of this book my first and foremost gratitude is undoubtedly due to my teacher Prof. Dr. Shaukat Mahmood, whose inspiration and supervision brought this work into reality. He has been a moving spirit behind this endeavour. He put me on the task of recording inscriptions adorning the mosque that have never been recorded fully by any, prior to this work. Wherever I had a problem he was there to solve it. I do not find suitable words to express my gratitude to him. He was kind enough to go through the entire manuscript and suggest amendments where necessary. He also helped in photography adorning this book. I also owe my thanks to the coordinator Ph.D programme, Dr. Shahida Manzoor, whose candid criticism fired my imagination to find new angles for this research.

I must add a word of praise for Ms. Nadia Shabbir Rao and Ms. Sarwat Jamila, of Sheikh Zaid Islamic Centre, University of the Punjab, Lahore, for tracing various *aḥādīth* from authentic sources, translating them into Urdu and putting of punctuation marks on the Arabic text. I owe my sincere gratitude to both. I am also thankful to Prof. Dr. Suhail Hassan of International Islamic University, who also helped in tracing some of the *aḥādīth*. I say thanks to the people of High Energy Physics, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Ms. Bushra Kanwal and Ms. Samina Yasmin for their kind guidance in the field of Physics. I owe my gratitude to the computer teacher, Sociology Department, University of the Punjab for his technical help.

I owe my thanks to my father, Muhammad Ahmad Khan, who helped me wherever I needed and solved many different problems related to composing of the book. I am also thankful to my friends: Rukhsana Saeed, Shahina Bisharat and Nahid Qureshi who helped at various places in this job. My thanks are also due to my nephews and niece Muhammad Jibran Khan, Muhammad Hayyan Khan and Nashia Khan for being supportive at various places.

Though numerous articles, monographs and books have been written on this great edifice none has covered its every aspect in such a detail. This book is complete Masjid Wazīr Khān in words and pictures. Positively nothing has been left out except some inscriptions in the zone of transition of the main dome. This area was inaccessible due to the iron grille fixed there to ward of the pigeons. With Mamoona I made uncountable trips to this mosque in sweltering heat as well as in shivering cold. Mamoona, one of my most brilliant and scholarly students has upheld the high traditions of scholarship. She tirelessly and very committedly worked to complete this treatise. I also feel greatly indebted to my dear friend Muḥammad Jāved, Secretary General, Pākistān Writers Co-operative Society and Director/Curator of Co-opera Art Gallery, for his generous offer to publish this book. No strings were attached. By publishing this book Jāved sāḥib has served the cause of literature, cause of Islamic architecture and arts and above all he has pleased his faith and Allah and I have full confidence that Allah will bless the writer and the publishers of this book, Pakistan Writers Co-operative Society, Lahore being headed by Lt. General ® Khālid Latīf Mughal as its President, for their noble effort.

May Allah bless us all.

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January 7, 2011

Preface

Wazīr Khān Mosque, a great Muslim edifice is the epitome of the Mughal sense of ornamentation. It is generally ascribed that Mughal art resulted from the creative blending of Persian and Indian traditions. So in the ornamentations of the mosque, the decorative trends of the Muslim Persia are innovatively amalgamated with the traditions of native India. But the dominating element in this field remains Persian because Muslim ornamentations are light and airy whereas, Indian, are massive and heavy. Thus delicacy of the Persian motifs has overpowered the heaviness of Indian designs. This mosque was erected in the period of Shāhjahān which is the apogee of the Mughal architecture. It, therefore, represents the splendid aspect of the Muslim ornamental designs.

Since its erection, it has been visited and appreciated by all who have but a keen eye to appreciate beauty. Various art historians, local as well as foreign, have time to time expressed their views, showing high esteem for its ornamental scheme but commented generally, on the decorative motifs responsible for its comeliness. It was earnestly desired then, to make a repertoire of all the motifs used, to bedeck the mosque, that have been rapidly engulfed by the ravages of time and climate.

The word motif here deals not only with designs or shapes that adorn the structure but it also includes inscriptions that enhance its ornamental appeal. In the desire to document all the motifs used in its decorative scheme many new dimensions of Muslim ornamentations are explored that are helpful to expand the peripheries of the Muslim sense of ornamentation. Actually, it does not limit itself to the usual frame of decorating things but keen observation deciphered the role of science as the guiding principle of the Muslim adornment. Geometry in this respect is the part and parcel of each design. But the subject science, here, does not stand for geometry only; other disciplines of science have also played their role in the formation of ornamental designs of the Muslim edifices. Wazīr Khān Mosque is a humble specimen of the antithesis.

Muslim architectonic decorations have been appreciated by all but unfortunately no one has bothered to realize the genius of the Muslim artists, who were well equipped with the knowledge of science. Medieval ages once labelled as dark ages, were dark only for the western quarters of the globe but it was a period when the light of knowledge was brilliantly illuminating the Muslim world. Historians do confess that all scientific knowledge of the Classical Greece approached the western world through Muslims. They accept that Muslims excelled in the domains of mathematics and the discovery of algebra is also attributed to these mathematicians. But no one realized till the last quarter of the 20th century the contribution of the Muslim artists who appear to have full acquaintance with the scientific innovations besides geometry. Many patterns that embellish the Muslim edifices are related to the scientific discoveries made by Muslims, a proof of the pithy statement that



preserve it from the damage caused by birds that are but permanent visitors of the mosque. A lot of effort was made to get support from the required sources. Ministry of Archaeology was also consulted but all in vain. Still those parts which were even vaguely visible were photographed and inscriptions in this section, which were faint enough, are recorded in the particular chapter. But those which were impossible to discern and no clue could be traced from them are not included in this list. Ceiling of that part of the mosque is also concealed under the grille. All possible measures were taken to have this section photographed because it was the most elegantly and lavishly ornamented section of the mosque, but results were not fruitful. Therefore, it is the only portion, inscriptions and decorative motifs of which are not recorded fully.

Although, this book is related to the ornamental designs that bedeck the Wazīr Khān Mosque, it is intended then to keep its contents within the confines of the pretty details of its filigree. But in the course of this work many new dimensions of the Muslim sense of ornamentation were explored. It then led to the study of disparate disciplines, such as, science along with religion. Mathematics, geometry, physics, chemistry, Qur'ān, and *āḥādīth*, were consulted and it was deciphered that the Muslim ornamentations require a wide range of expertise. The multifarious knowledge is joined together by inter-relating the crux of each subject. This unique probing is not limited to the Mosque Wazīr Khān only but in this search, findings of some foreign scholars have also been encountered, in which many new paths leading to the Muslim ornamental designs had been explored. Those having equitable nature have confessed it broadly that the Muslim ornamental designs, stand witness to the geometric skill of their creators. These are not mere decorative renderings but a clear proof of how ahead were Muslims in the field of mathematics, and science from their counterparts in the West.

Furthermore, history of the mosque, its patron, and of the saint, whose tomb solemnly occupies a corner of courtyard of the mosque, is also looked for. In this process many historical facts were searched out to gain clarity, which apparently does not seem to have any concern with this field of study. For instance, an astonishing query that irked mind was related to the demand made by Sikhs, who demolished Delhi Gate, to slaughter the cow-butchers of Lahore or to give them in their possession, during the rule of Aḥmad Shāh Abdāli. It is stated that Kābli Mal the fearful governor, who was not willing to do so, eventually, had to amputate the noses and ears of some of the butchers, after seeing the massacre of Sikhs, and forced them to get away from the city. It was shocking information that excited a question about why Sikhs, so brutally demanded for the cow-butchers. The answer was searched out from various sources and at last the problem was solved by Shafqat Tanveer Mirza, a noted journalist and an authority on *Punjābīāt*, during an interview. He contributes a regular column on the subject in *Dawn,* the daily. It is a known fact that Sikhs had twelve *mithl* or groups, who were either the *Jāts* or non *Jāts*. They do not slaughter cow in public but they do eat beef irrespective of being *Jāts* or non *Jāts*. Since these were the days of anarchy and the Sikh murderers thought it fit to demand handing over of butchers from Aḥmad Shāh Abdāli's appointed governor of Lahore, simply to appease the Hindus with whom they wanted to curry favour as compared to the Muslims.

Another question was about the role of the well of Dīna Nāth, when the southern street outside the mosque had a *riht,* for the supply of water to the edifice. It was unravelled

art is a window into history, a primary source of knowledge of the past.

Muslim artefacts are a solid proof of the erudition of Muslim scientists, born in the western medieval ages: a period of Renaissance of the Muslim world. Many Writers, mostly from the west have written treatises on Islamic ornamental designs, paying no heed to the innovative renderings of its motifs. Many among these are formulas of their scientific discoveries, preserved in the guise of ornamentations. Wazīr Khān Mosque is also a witness of a few scientific facts. For instance, the amazing discovery of atom that is of great concern in the modern era has some clues recorded in the mosque. Neil Bohr a Danish scientist made a magnificent discovery in 1913 of providing the world with atomic model. Many modern innovations related to atom are based on this model. A design exactly similar to the Bohr's atomic model adorns the Wazīr Khān Mosque. Apart from atomic model certain other scientific facts are explored in this book. Calligraphic formations, which are part of decorations of the mosque, are also based on geometric renderings besides other ornamental renditions.

Moreover the mosque is replete with calligraphic bands and panels which are sometimes hard to be read or to comprehend because of the decorative calligraphic styles and the changes that have occurred with the passage of time in the styles of writing. For instance, the Arabic letter *sīn* is now devoid of any diacritical mark, whereas, *shīn,* the letter next to it has three diacritical marks on it. But in the previous eras *sīn* also retained three diacritical marks below it. So those unaware about this fact have a lot of difficulty to read this calligraphic text. A lot of effort is made in this context, involving many people of the required fields to make an exact record of inscriptions whether Arabic or Persian. The Qur'ānic *āyāt* were searched through *Mu'ajjam*[1] al- Qur'ān and added with translation. All the English translation of the Qur'ānic *āyāt* are taken from exegesis of the Holy Qur'ān made by 'Allama 'Abdullah Yūsaf 'Alī, while *aḥādīth* were first translated into Urdu by scholars of Islamic studies and then into English. Similar procedure was adopted while recording the sayings of mystics. All the translation of Persian inscriptions adorning the mosque, are taken from the Ph.D dissertation of my teacher, Prof. Dr. Shaukat Mahmood with his kind consent. The authenticity of the adages of the mystics was also searched out from their biographical notes. Thus a variety of motifs ornamenting the mosque are not dealt in this research in generalized way but to explore the under-currents of reality a full record of all sorts of adornments are made. It was desired earnestly, by Dr. M. Abdullah Chughtai, in his book: *The Wazīr Khān Mosque*, written in 1975, that someone should take the endeavour to make a complete record of its inscriptions. He wished for an aesthete, who could document the calligraphy on this mosque, while bestowing full reverence to its Muslim ornamental entity. This book therefore, is a humble effort to accomplish his desire. Therefore, the most arduous efforts, in the process of compiling the book were allocated to the recording of inscriptions adorning this mosque.

In order to make a complete repertoire of the ornamentations of the mosque, each nook and corner of it, was repeatedly photographed, without ignoring any section. But unfortunately the upper part of the central bay of the sanctuary was impossible to be recorded. It was difficult to be snapped because of being sealed under a fixed grille, to

1. *Mu'ajjam* is a book used as a source to search the exact location of any of the *āyah* from the Holy Qur'ān.

TRANSLITERATION

Arabic Letter	Transliteration
ا	a
ء	ʾ
ب	b
ت	t
ث	th
ج	j
ح	h
خ	kh
د	ḍ
ذ	dh
ر	r
ز	z
س	s
ش	sh
ص	ṣ
ض	ḍ
ط	ṭ
ظ	ẓ
ع	ʿ
غ	gh
ف	f
ق	q
ك	k
ل	l
م	m
ن	n
و	w
ه	h
ة	t
ي ے	y
ـ	ʾ

Short Vowels

ـَ	a
ـُ	u
ـِ	i

Long Vowels

اَ	ā
وَ	ū
يَ	i

Diphthongs

وُ ـَ	aw
يُ ـَ	ay
يَّ ـِ	iyy
وّ ـُ	uww

Persian / Urdu Letters

پ	p
ٹ	ṭʹ
چ	ch
ڈ	ḍʹ
ڑ	rʹ
ژ	zh
گ	g

by reading the deed of bequest Wazīr Khān wrote about his property, in which he also mentioned two wells, worked with Persian wheels for the supply of water to the mosque. The place of the second well was not obvious, so the well of Dīna Nāth was also brought into consideration, but after consulting history, specially the date of its erection, it was ruled out. There were numerous other mind boggling questions which were looked for, like a needle in a haystack.

After going through this whole process of research it has been realised that Wazīr Khān was a man of high calibre who, when took a project, was conscious about the very nature of it. He thoroughly envisaged all its measures and materialised its best possible picture. This mosque bespeaks the genius of its patron. It is provided with every possible commodity to furnish the pious with a tranquil place, where they can bow in peace before the Almighty. It now stands in a busy bazaar, where all sorts of terrific are running, with a hustle and bustle of people. But the inside of the mosque is so placid that it is almost in contrast to the blaring bazaar. The *ḥujrās*, flanking it from three sides as well as the other structures provide it with a shield against noise. The use of double dome is another device that avoids echo, to have best audibility of the religious sermon. These are a few facts related to the perfect structure of a religious edifice, contemplated by its patron, Wazīr Khān.

In recording multifarious details of this mosque many non-English words were also encountered. The standardised method of transliteration is followed then, so that perfect pronunciation of words, alien to English could also be made. A page related to the transliterated method is attached herewith in the beginning of the book.

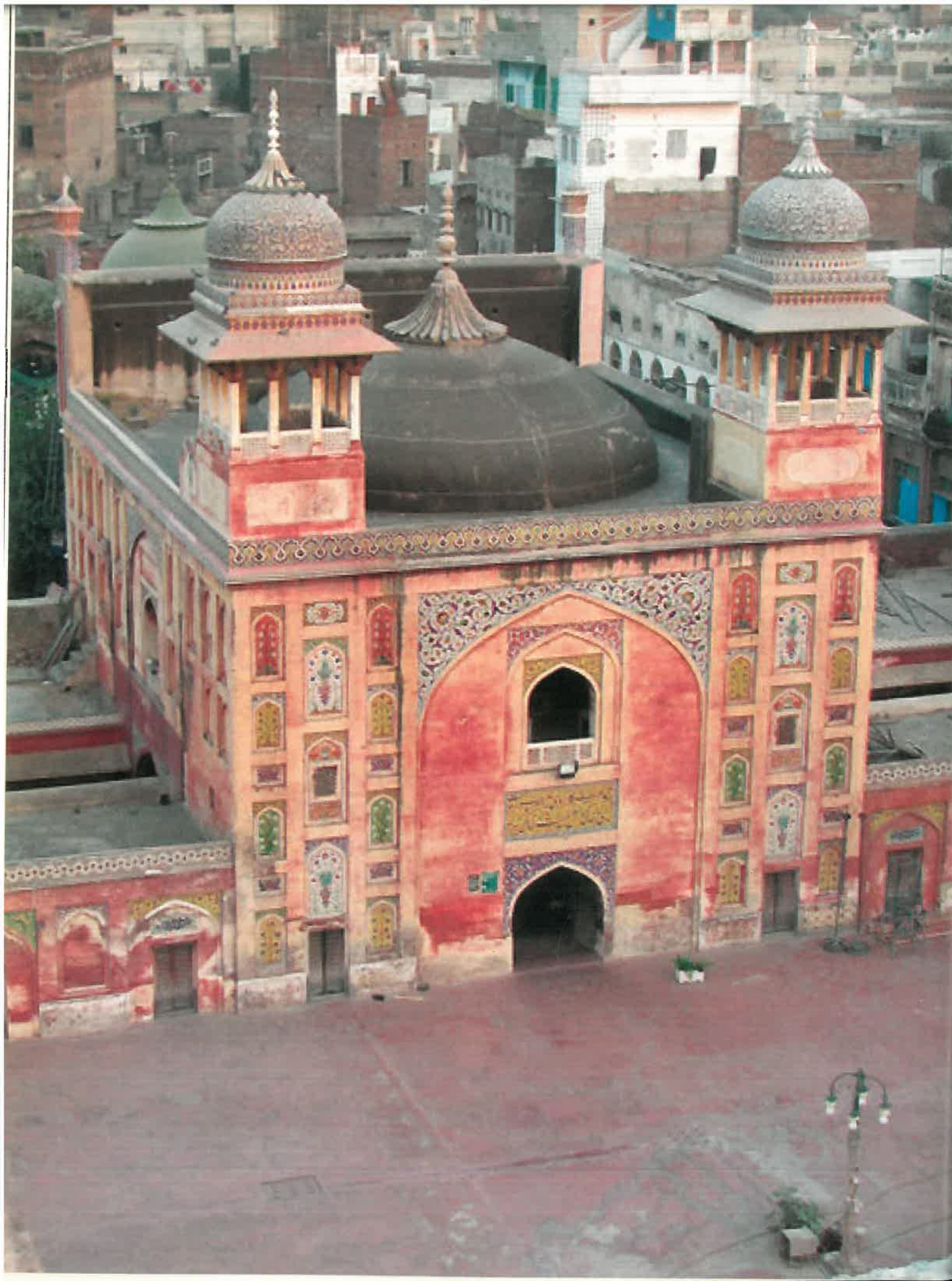
All the pictures included in this book were photographed in the year 2008 and plans of various sections of the mosque, included in this book were taken from the Ph.D. dissertation of my teacher Prof. Dr. Shaukat Mahmood.

Wazīr Khān

The Mosque Wazīr Khān was erected under the patronage of the governor of Lahore, Shaykh 'Ilm al- Dīn ibn-Shaykh 'Abd al-Laṭīf ibn-Shaykh Ḥassan, who bears the cognomen Wazīr Khān, a title bestowed to him by Shāhjahān. He was basically a physician, who came in the services of the prince Khurram later Shāhjahān. The earliest part of his life is inconspicuous but it is known that he was a Pathān by race, a resident of *Chinīoṫ* in the *Jhang* district in Punjab[1]. 'Abd al-Ḥamīd one of his contemporary historians gives the earliest account of his life in his book *Pādshāhnāmāh.* He states that 'Ilm al- Dīn was a student of Arabic and philosophy, and then learnt *Ṭib* from Ḥakīm D'āvi[2], getting proficient in medicine. Ḥakīm D'āvi was one of the twenty nine physicians of the court of Akbar and was also the teacher of Shāhjahān[3]. It brought a meteoric change in his life, taking him from oblivion to a celebrity.

After acquiring knowledge from the *ḥakīm* he practiced in *Chinīoṫ* but moved to Lahore, when he found it unrewarding in his home town. He settled in Lahore for a while and then moved to Delhi and from Delhi to Akbarābād (Āgra), where his luck proved him a proficient physician by bringing him in closer quarter to the royal family. Various accounts are given by different people about the first person of the Mughal family he cured that elevated his status. Kanhiyya Lāl quotes in his book that he cured the mother of Prince Khurram, later Shāhjahān who was sick for many years[4] while another source attributes it to one of the favourite concubines of Khurram[5]. It is said that he was enormously awarded then and from that day he became known in the royal circles and valued especially by the Prince Khurram.

There is yet another account that proved his proficiency as an intelligent physician. It is associated with Nūrjahān who once became unwell due to a cyst under her foot. The treatment suggested by the royal physicians was to make a cut on the cyst to remove the toxic substance, which was not accepted by Nūrjahān because of being a very painful treatment. Wazīr Khān too considered it the only cure but adopted an intelligent trick to heal the sore. Bran was spread after his suggestion in the courtyard and the queen was asked to pass through it bare footed. Tracing the exact area of the cyst, he then smartly fixed a tiny lancet in the bran at the required area and the queen was again asked to cross it barefooted, placing her feet exactly at the previous foot marks. Lancet pricked the sour and thus it was easily healed. This astute plan pleased Nūrjahān as well as Jahāngīr that brought respect for the *ḥakīm.* He was at once raised to the position of officer of the hospitals and rest of the prize was awarded to him when the queen recovered fully. Recovery of the queen was celebrated in Lahore where the *ḥakīm* received high accolades. The queen presented him with all her jewellery, she was wearing on that occasion and the slave girls, who were one hundred and eleven in number, following the queen, presented to him whatever jewellery they were wearing. M. Latif quotes from *Pādshāhnāma* that the *ḥakīm* received presents



Shikoh died and Dāra himself became ill due to fever. When the imperial physicians failed to cure his ailment, Wazīr Khān the then viceroy of Lahore was called in to the court camp on 4th of Shawwāl, 1043 A.H. that is April 3rd, 1634 A.D. it is said that he successfully treated the prince who got well[12]. It is also ascribed that Shāhjahān then reached Lahore, being interested in the building work; he took notice of the repair and reconstruction of the royal palaces, entrusting all repair work to the Viceroy Wazīr Khān[13]. It seems believable because this account gives strength to Wazīr Khān's governorship of Lahore in 1634, the date inscribed on the mosque. Because if mosque was constructed under the auspices of 'Alī Mardān Khān it would have been named after him.

Ihsan H. Nadeem also gives a somewhat similar account of Wazīr Khān's governorship. He describes that prince Khurram who had an appreciative eye for 'Ilm al-Dīn, when ascended the throne in 1628, raised the *ḥakīm* to the command of 7000 and bestowed him with the title of Wazīr Khān. Then he was further promoted to the position of the Governor of the Punjab. He served in this post from 1632 to 1639[14]. It seems more plausible because the entire events in this way are knitted together factually.

It is further added that in the end of the twelfth year of Shāhjahān's reign, he visited Lahore while coming from Kabul. During this stay he received complaints about Wazīr Khān. On 8th Jumāda 1, 1049 A.D., he was reported that Wazīr Khān was misusing his powers as governor and not putting well with the general masses. As a result he was immediately transferred to Akbarābād (Āgra) and Mu'tamid Khān was appointed the viceroy of this region[15]. So Wazīr Khān served as the governor or viceroy of Lahore for seven years but when he was transferred to Āgra, he held this post for barely ten months where he died of colic in the year 1050-51 / 1640-41.

Wazīr Khān was a generous builder and numerous buildings are to his credit, including mosques, gardens, *hammāms* (baths), caravansarais, bazaars and *ḥawailīan* (stately homes) or palaces. A town was also established by him near Gujrānwālā called Wazīrābād after his name. He erected many buildings in his home town *Chinīoṫ* such as ponds, wells, caravansarais, hospitals and bazaars. He also provided his native city, where he yearned to go, with a fortified wall. But most of the building work was done in Lahore. Although, his buildings are not huge in their sizes, but in ornamentation and the use of *Kāshīkāri*, these are monuments of great esteem. He built a residential *ḥawaili,* inside *Shāh 'Ālmi* Gate, Lahore, remembered by historians as *Pari Maḥal* (fairy palace)[16]. It is stated that he bedecked his palace with such splendour that no other *Amīr* (reverential personage) in the sub-continent had ever done[17].

Wazīr Khān's reverence for the mosque as well as his altruistic nature led him to dedicate most of his property for the expenses of the mosque, in the later times to come. It is said that a few months before his death when one day he was entering Āgra, while crossing *Hāthipol* his horse stumbled and fell down, Wazīr Khān was injured and his condition became serious. It is stated that he wrote his will at that time describing all the moveable and immovable property, and sent it to the Emperor. A copy of his deed of bequest which is an almost four centuries old document taken from the book of Syad Muḥammad Laṭīf[18], is attached herewith, vide *Plate: 5.* He tried to manage all the expenses of the mosque even after his death, defining about the maintenance, cleanliness, and remunerations of those

of twenty lakh rupees on that day and was ranked among most respected physician of the royal family[6].

But the most respectable position was acquired by him when Shāhjahān ascended the throne because Wazīr Khān remained in friendly terms with him even when he was a prince. He made him familiar with the temperaments of his father the emperor Jahāngīr and other members of the royal family. He was an altruist, never demanded anything from Shāhjaḥān, and on the contrary spent his own money if required by the prince. It is said that he spent up to ten or twelve lakh rupees as the necessary expenses of the prince when he was in dispute with his father. So when prince Khurram was at Junair Wazīr Khān was promoted to the rank of Diwān. At that time among the friends of the prince no one except Māhābat Khān was better ranked than Wazīr Khān[7]. The list of his promotions does not end here, afterwards he was promoted as *Amīr* (commander) of 5000 personnel and 5000 cavalry and then he was made *ṣūbidār* of Punjab[8]. It is recorded in history that in the last days of Jahāngīr, conspiracies of Nūrjahān created a rift between Shāhjahān and his father, who imprisoned him, while Wazīr Khān was appointed his physician. 'Aṣif Khān , the brother of Nūrjahān and father-in-law of Shāhjahān, persuaded Wazīr Khān to rescue him from the imprisonment and move to Dakkan. The plan was implemented but they were on their way to reach Dakkan when the news of Jahāngīr's death arrived, who was on his way to Kashmir. So on the coronation of Shāhjahān the *ḥakīm* was entitled: Nawwāb Wazīr Khān and was later declared the governor of Lahore. He rapidly acquired respectable positions, while in the service of the king. Because of his proficiency as a physician, intelligence, skill and honesty in settling disputes, and tactful understanding of the mood of his master, gave him the highest place of estimation[9]. First appointed as the superintendent of his camp-court, then superintendent of the royal kitchen (*Mīr-i Sāmān*), gradually promoted to the rank of commander and then in 1030/1620 appointed the *ṣūbidār* (Governor) of Lahore[10]. He chose the site for the erection of the Mosque Wazīr Khān, which was central, to that time Lahore and its foundations were laid in 1634/1045.

There are some controversial accounts related to the date Wazīr Khān acquired governorship of Lahore and erection of the Mosque Wazīr Khān. Syad Muḥammad Laṭīf writes in his book *Lahore, its History, Architectural remains and Antiquities* that 'Alī Mardān Khān was appointed viceroy of Lahore and Kashmir in 1631 by Shāhjaḥān. He also states that Wazīr Khān was appointed *ṣūbidār* of Āgra, when the Emperor returned to Lahore after his second visit to Kashmir, which was in 1632[11]. He further added that in 1634 Wazīr Khān died in Āgra, because of colic.

These events do not tally with the date of construction and attribution of the mosque to Wazīr Khān. The date written on the main gate is 1045 A.H. that is 1634 A.D. it is also the year of Wazīr Khān's death ascribed by Syad Muḥammad Laṭīf. Moreover, the Viceroy of that region at that time, according to this source was 'Alī Mardān Khān instead of Wazīr Khān, which is another controversial issue. It seems quite unbelievable that under the rule of another person a monument is attributed to someone else.

M. Bāqir gives a somewhat different account about the dates and position of Wazīr Khān. According to him, by 1043/1634 which was the 7th year of Shāhjahān's imperial position, he decided to come to Lahore. On his way to Lahore the eldest daughter of Dāra

Further, it is laid down that twenty shops outside the eastern gateway, together with their upper storeys, shall be for the exclusive use of the book-binders and book sellers of the books of Islam, free of the rent in perpetuity.

Further, it is covenanted that there shall be two teachers for the said mosque for the purpose of giving instructions in theology.

The following are the provisions regarding the remuneration of the establishment attached to the endowment. The *imam* and preacher to receive from one rupee to ten rupees per diem; the public crier to prayers four annas a day; each teacher one rupee.

Any one of the descendants of the testator in charge of the legacy aforesaid, shall receive each month one-sixth of the income of the endowed property ; and any one of his near relations who may be in charge shall receive a ninth share of the same and the share shall decrease according to the remoteness of consanguinity.

And whatever shall remain after defraying the expanses of building, the servants of the mosque and other necessary expenses, shall be spent in maintaining guests, providing for the carrier of fire-wood (for baths), and the chamberlain and other rightful persons attached to the mosque.

And in appointing the servants of the mosque, the Law of the Hanfi sect shall be taken as a guide.

And the rules above detailed have been framed by the testator himself. Any one, who attempts to make a change in them after he has once heard them, shall be deemed a transgressor. This legacy has a binding force; and whatever I have herein written is attested as binding by the Qazi of the time, who has put his sacred seal on it in confirmation of the same.

Written on the first date of the Holy Ramazan, in 1051 (1641 A.D,) of the sacred Hijri era.

The deed is a well thought out document, a record of the ingenuity of Wazīr Khān in pursuing goals. It is also a specimen of how much he valued this religious structure. Each expense of the mosque is given due consideration, keeping in mind even the trivial matters. Thus the rapid advancement in his career is attributed to nothing else than his astute nature.

who would serve this religious edifice in future. Translation of this deed, taken in verbatim from the same book is as follows:

Translation of the deed of bequest.

(tr.) Praise be to God who enabled His servants to honor religious edifices and benedictions and salutations to Mohamed, His Prophet, who persuaded people to spend money on charitable objects, and to his descendants and companions, the mine of virtues and the source of good, so long as there is duration to earth and skies.

Be it known that this is a writing to declare that I, the humble slave of the threshold of God, *Hakīm* Ilm-ud-Dīn, *alias* Wazīr Khān, son of Sheikh Abdul Latif, son of Sheikh Hisām-ud-dīn, Ansāri, have, while in full possession of my health and senses, and the enjoyment of my property, and al the privileges pertaining thereto, out of property exclusively owned and best earned by me, dedicated to pious uses the Chief Mosque, situated in Lahore city, with all its lawful accessories and appendages;

And that in order to give permanency to this sacred Institution, I have endowed for its expenses all the shops situated on both sides of the road, together with the upper storeys, habitable quarters, the large *serae*, bath, two wells worked with Persian wheels, and several miscellaneous plots of ground, each of these properties just mentioned having known boundaries and manifest marks.

The legacy is valid, binding, certain, and imperative; it is not subject to sale, mortgage or dower; it is un-inheritable, and is under no circumstance or cause to become the property of anyone until the day when God shall assume heritage of all lands, for He is the best of the inheritors; and this is my final endowment to poor Mussalmans.

And the conditions in regard to the legacy before mentioned are these:- The control and charge of the endowments, the dismissal and appointment of the servants of the mosque, &c., the disbursement and the apportionment of expenses, the increase therein and investments and divestments relating thereto, the location and ejectment of the tenants of the shop, will permanently for life in the hands of the testator himself. After him the power shall rest with one of his lineal descendants, and Mohamed Sai'd Khan, after whom it shall rest with Mirza Mohamed Anwar; after him with the ablest of his male descendents and the descendants of that descendent, progeny after progeny, and generation after generation, so long as their offspring shall last. Should none be left of his male descendants, then the power shall rest with his nearest of kin, in the order already mentioned.

Further, it is provided that there shall be one imam (prelate) and preacher to the mosque, thoroughly skilled in the art of reading, and familiar with the rules of prayer, and one public crier to prayers who must be fully conversant with the death ceremonies.

Mosque History

Among the architectural monuments of Lahore the Wazīr Khān Mosque has a very significant position. It is one of the best specimens of Mughal architecture that retains unified features of Indo-Persian architecture. In its dimensions, durability and the magnificence of its adornment, architects place it very high. It is a unique monument that reflects the spirit and talent not only of the Mughal builders but also of the artisans, who while remaining anonymous, contributed their skill in "tile making, design or wall painting to make the mosque not only a spiritual but also an aesthetic experience.[1]"It is located inside *Chauk* Wazīr Khān, which was a central place to that time Lahore because it was attached to various parts of the city through perpendicular passages, leading to its east, west, north and south. Another reason for choosing this site for such a splendid mosque was the tomb of Sayyid Muḥammad Isḥāq Kāzīrūn who died almost two and a half centuries before the erection of the mosque. This place had been a school of religious learning, because these were the living quarters of the saint who used to impart spiritual knowledge to the seekers from this very place. So Wazīr Khān, when took the initiative of erecting a magnificent mosque he selected this place, in reverence to the saint. The cause of erection of such a gorgeous edifice is related to a promise Wazīr Khān made with Allah during the period when he was a physician just in his primes and was conferred the gigantic task of curing Nūrjahān. He committed to build a mosque from whatever he would receive as reward if the beloved queen of Jahāngīr got well[2]. His intelligent plan and treatment cured her and the rewards bestowed to him were enormous and beyond his expectations. So it resulted into such a magnificent structure that

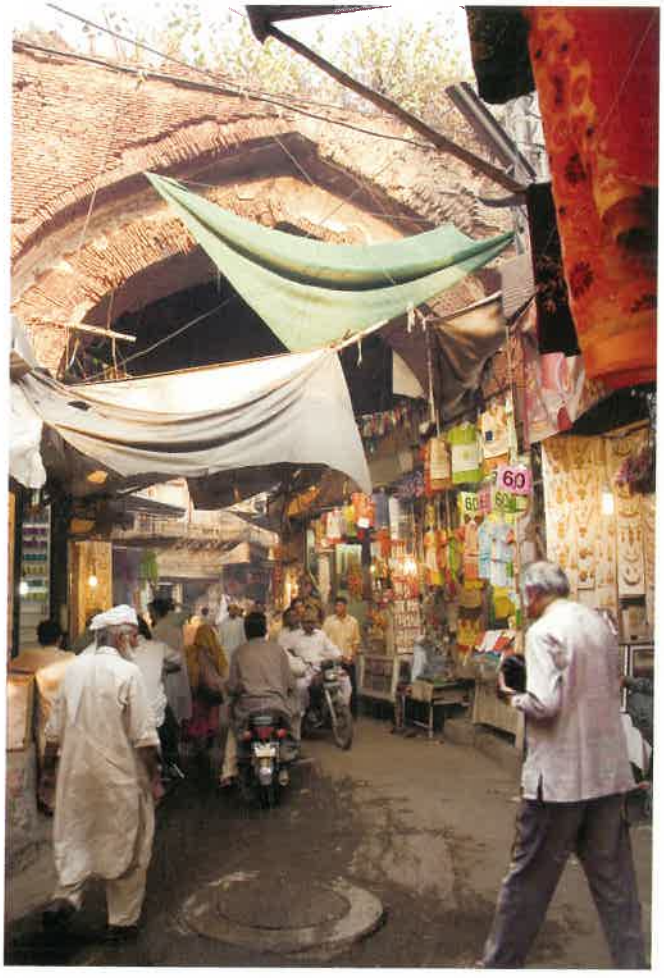
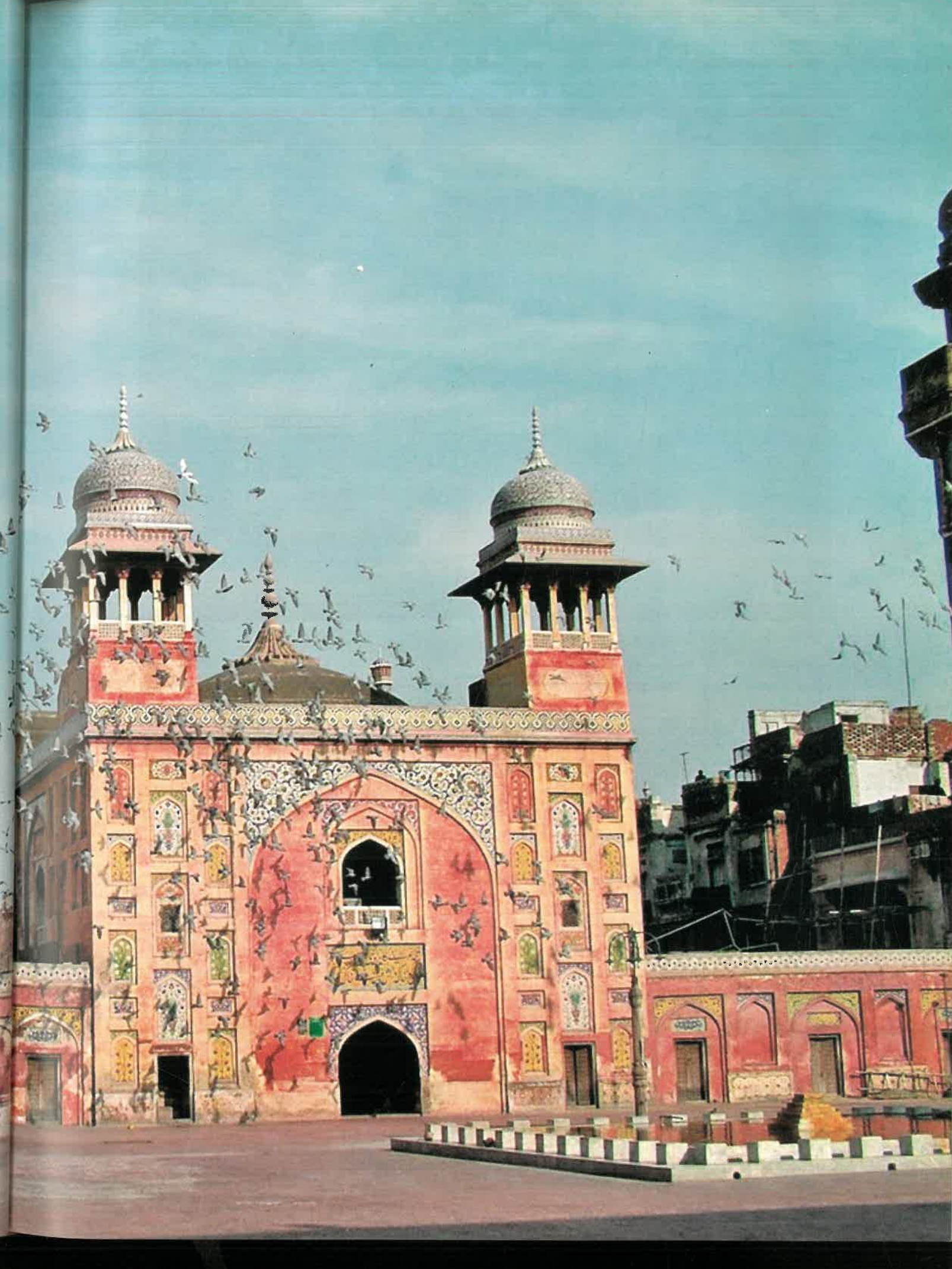


Fig.1: Present state of Chiṫṫa Darwāza.

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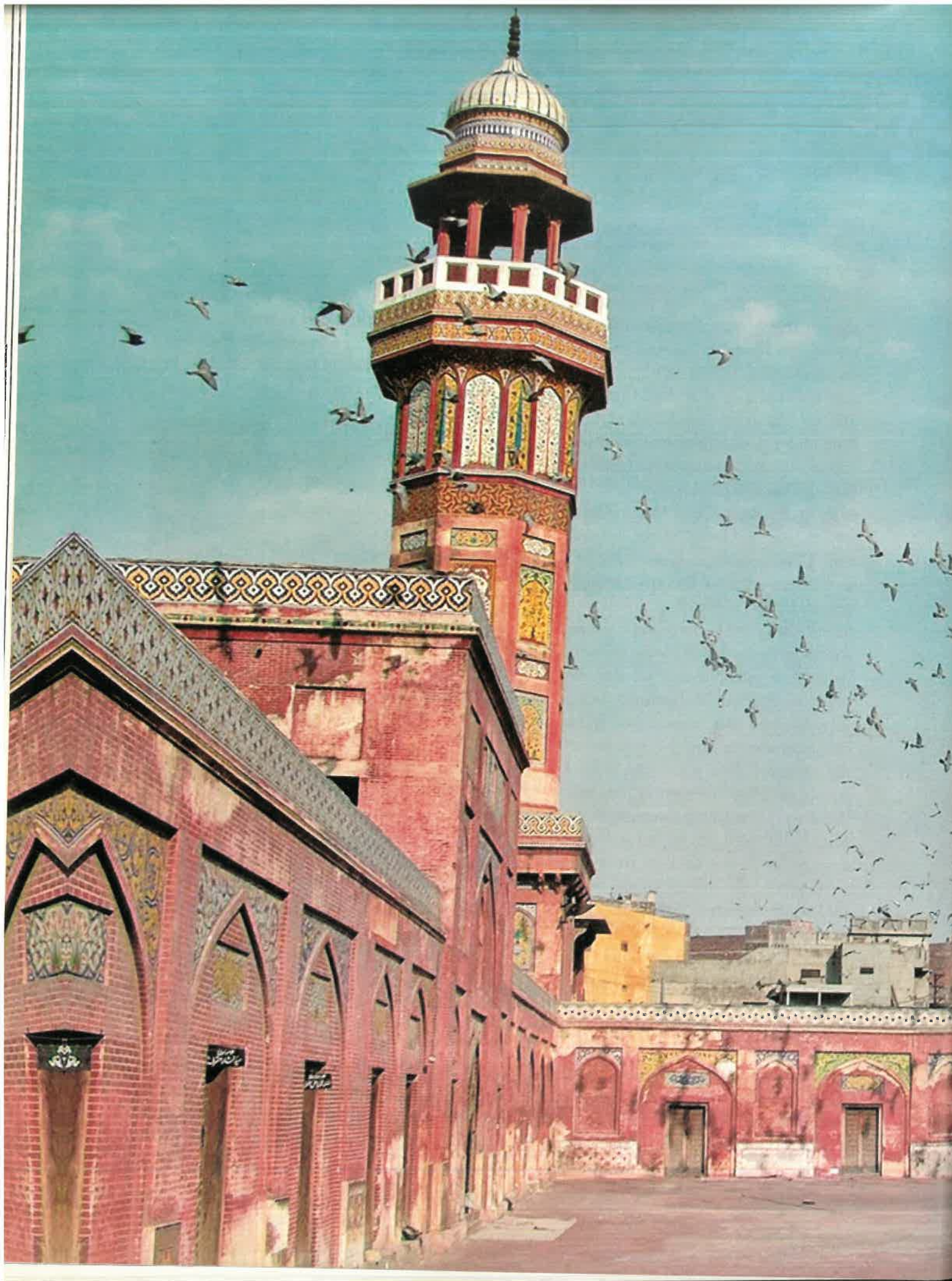




Fig.3: Remains of the embellishment inside the Chiṫṫa Darwāza.

Delhi gate was also perpendicular to the *Chiṫṫa Darwāza*. The unplanned and accidental encroachments in the bazaar leading to the Delhi *Darwāza* make undulating line instead of a straight one, which must be the later additions. The *Chauk* or square, which was called *Jilaū khāna* by Mughals, was connected through perpendicular passages to various parts of the city because it was the centre of that time Lahore. It is stated that *Jilaū khāna* had four gates: eastern, western, southern and northern, connected to various parts of Lahore, through straight perpendicular passages. But only eastern one, called *Chiṫṫa Darwāza* still survives though fallen into partial ruins. It is usually considered that this gate was called *Chiṫṫa Darwāza* because it was without decoration of any sort but there are remains of motifs on its hemispherical roof that are now at the verge of extinction. It means that this gate was plain from its outer quarters but retained decorative designs on its inner parts, *figs. 2-4*.

It was connected through a perpendicular passage to the Delhi Gate by passing through an old mosque: *Masjid-i Qaṣṣābān*. The passage was flanked by splendid buildings: houses, shops, including *Ḥammāms*[i] and inns, erected by Wazīr Khān[6]. It is evident from the deed of bequest that Wazīr Khān made, of his property, in which he reserved all income coming from the shops and buildings on both sides of the passage, leading from the mosque to the Delhi Gate, for the future usage of the mosque. This square must be a spacious place to

i Baths



Fig.2: Domed ceiling of Chiṫṫa Darwāza.

stands with grace, even after elapsing about four centuries.

It is within the ancient square known as *Chauk* Wazīr Khān that once had gates on its four sides. The eastern one was famous as *Chiṫṫa Darwāza, fig.1,* because it was plain, devoid of embellishments. *Chauk* Wazīr Khān was inside the famous Delhi Gate: the main entrance for people coming from Delhi. Presently the gate does not stand at its original place. It is a historical fact that it was destroyed by Sikhs before the rule of Ranjīt Singh, while fighting against the *Qaṣṣābān* (the butchers), who lived inside the gate[3]. It was during the Afghan rule of Aḥmad Shāh Abdāli, when Khawāja 'Ubaid Khān, who was governing Lahore, died while fighting against Charŕat Singh Sakar Chakiyah, a Sikh commander near Chenāb. Kābli Mal who was working as assistant *ṣūbidār* took over the governorship of Lahore. Sikhs then besieged the city, demanding that all the butchers present in Lahore should either be handed over to them or massacred. Seeing reluctance of Kābli Mal, they broke open the Delhi *Darwāza* and entered Lahore[4]. It was later erected by the British during their rule on the sub-continent, but it was not laid at its original place.

It is another historical fact that unlike its present position the gate was perpendicular to *Chiṫṫa Darwāza.* Because the Mughals loved symmetry of highest order in all walks of life, and monuments of their times could not sacrifice symmetry at any cost. J. Berton Page, in his report on the Wazīr Khān Mosque, also gives a similar view that "this large congregational mosque gave the city topography mostly a perpendicular layout"[5]. So

During Sikh rule the mosque and its surroundings were misused greatly. Apart from unnecessary encroachments it was used for various purposes other than religious. A blasphemous incident of Ranjīt Singh is cited in this context. It is said that the power frenzied Ranjīt Singh once brought a famous bawd Morān to the terrace of portal of the mosque[8], without realising the piety of the religious structure and tomb of the saint. As a result he and Morān, both promptly became sick in the evening. He was then made to realise about the sanctity of tomb of the saint along with the mosque and his heinous act. The very next day he reached the tomb and paid Rs.500, with regrets to compensate for the blasphemy he had committed[9]. It is further stated that in the Sikh period, a fair was held, weekly, in the mosque on every thursday, where prostitutes used to gather on the terrace of the portal and danced, while thousands of people gathered there to enjoy. Moreover, annual *'Urs* (death anniversary) of the saint was celebrated with a lot of hustle and bustle in the mosque and *Majlis-i Samā'* (devotional songs and music) used to be an important feature of the *'Urs*. People of different communities, like Hindus and Sikhs along Muslims enthusiastically attended these celebrations[10]. Furthermore, it is also quoted that steps of the eastern door which is the main entrance of the mosque, were fully occupied in the Sikh period by horse-shoe makers who used to sit there the whole day, busy in the craft of their trade[11]. Sikhs, during their rule had desecrated mosques as ammunition dumps but due to the above mentioned incident of Ranjīt Singh, this mosque remained safe and physically it was not devastated by Sikhs again.

Looking back at the remote past, the mosque had been a place of knowledge and learning under the Mughals, where learned men of great calibre from different parts of the Muslim world, used to gather and hold scholarly discussions. It is proved by a text written on a wall of the northern outer *iwān* that opens in the bazaar, attributed to Mirza Mīrak. He was a renowned Persian poet, who visited India in those days. It is noted that this was written nine years after the erection of the mosque that is in almost 1643. The date quoted by Mirza Mīrak on the wall is 1054 Hijra. Unfortunately the text being obscure is not possible to be comprehended fully. The only lines intelligible ascribe the Eternity of Allah and signatures of the poet. Still it is a solid proof that the mosque was not meant for the congregational prayers only, it functioned like an Islamic institute where scholars of the Muslim world used to gather to ennoble their cognizance. Chandar Bhān Brahman in his book *Chahār Chaman* referred such a scholarly milieu, when, he quotes, that on Fridays eminent scholars of great calibre, from various walks of life, including poets and writers from Iran, Tūrān, Khurāsān and Hindustān used to gather there for the exchange of views through discussions or participated in contests of poetry[12]. It is ascribed in *Tuhfāt al-Karam*, written in 1304 that Mirza Mīrak, whose name was written on one of the walls of the above mentioned *iwān*, was an eloquent poet but another intellectual of that time Persia was also Mīrak. So whether he, be a poet or a highbrow, he must be a learned man, who visited the intellectual sessions held in the mosque. It is also ascribed in the *Chahār Chaman* that during these sessions a variety of books were available in the mosque including Arabic, Persian, books on History, *Mathnavīs*[ii], religious books, rare books on calligraphy etc. along inks and other tools, used for the writing of books. All these could be purchased as well[13] from the shops inside the

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ii A long poem that deals with a single subject, each two hemistich of it rhym together but all are not built on a single rythm.



Fig.4: Close up of Chiṫṫa Darwāza.

accommodate larger crowds on special occasions, apart from the present encroachments.

An English tourist Mr. Murray sketched a diagram and plan of this place in 1891, *Plates: 1-1.1,* describing that he could see a minaret of the mosque clearly from the Delhi gate which is but impossible today. The mosque being a *Jāmi'ā-i Islāmia*: a place of learning for the Muslims remained a hub of religious activities, which must not be liked by the later rulers and people of the other communities. Because every traveller when entered Lahore from Delhi Gate reached that square and had to encounter the magnificence of the Muslim edifice: the Wazīr Khān Mosque. Thus, unplanned structures were erected during Sikh rule, to destroy the splendour of the square leading to the mosque. The tomb of Sayyid Ṣūf, for instance, and the famous well of *Dīna Nāth* were provided with domed structures in 1850, inaugural plates of the English deputy Commissioner Major McGregar are present on both the buildings. Furthermore, it is said that the northern quarters of the square were in possession of the relatives of Ranjīt Singh for their residences, while south-eastern side was occupied by *Dīna Nāth*, who erected several houses in this square. Thus the focal point of the *chauk* was intentionally disturbed[7] because the grave of Sayyid Ṣūf was present already before the erection of the mosque but its tomb structure was added very late. It was only to disturb the view of mosque. So the *ckauk* must be like a splendid Mughal edifice, surrounded from four sides by gates, and spacious enough to lodge huge congregations.

Main Gate

Passing through the magnificent doorway, a monument in itself is the main gate, which is at the eastern side of mosque. It is now elevated on a flight of six steps but originally it must have more steps. Because the shops, on either side of it, are now half sunk into the ground, which is a proof of the lower ground level at the time of construction of the mosque. Moreover, the tomb of saint is also nine steps down from the present level of the courtyard. The main gate is projected two feet outward from its surrounding walls and framed on both sides by attenuated minarets of two feet diameters each, topped by small cupolas. The platform which is 6.47m wide is approached by six steps that are 4m broad and placed in the centre, leaving 1.23m (4ft) on either side. At the centre of the back wall is a large pointed arch that reaches till the upper most band of *Kalima-yi Ṭayyiba*. A smaller arch, recessed 2.76m from the larger one has a height of 4.61m, surmounted by a conch, formed by the outer larger arch. On both sides of the smaller arch, there is a space of 4m.[20], which is adorned with panels and motifs. This arch leads to a huge rectangular portal complex.

Vestibule Complex

The entrance gate opens up into the vestibule which is unique of its kind among the portals of Muslim buildings. It is double storied, octagonal in shape from inside but square over all, measuring 9.45m across and covered by a huge dome. The vestibule has four entrance arches on its east, west, north and south, each 5m wide. Eastern one is the entrance gate, western arch leads to the courtyard, while northern and southern have corridors extending till its farther ends, measuring 39.93m[21] with a breadth of 5.20m. Vide plan of the corridors on *plate: 3.* These are flanked by shops on their eastern and western sides, fronted with covered corridors that are 50cm. raised from the passage and approached by three steps. The western sides contain four shops and the eastern five, all double roomed but the eastern shops are twice as large as the western ones. There are brick paved passages like the floor of other parts of the mosque. The northern corridor leads down to the street of the busy bazaar through a small flight of six steps, while the southern one leads to an impasse due to the construction of residential quarters in the street outside[22]. It might not be there when the mosque was erected. The shops on both sides of the corridors were permanently reserved for book-binders and up till Sikh rule this was the only market place for selling and binding of books[23]. It was desired by Wazīr Khān that shops outside the mosque and in the corridors of the vestibule should be let without rent for the writers of Islamic books.

The diagonal sides of the vestibule open up into four double rooms, while its western side leads to the mosque courtyard through two steps. The upper storey is also similar in plan, except the passages of ground floor, attached to the outer sides of the arched openings. There are balconies above the arches of the vestibule that open up into the northern and southern corridors of the shops, bearing perforated screens in their lower portions. From inner side of the vestibule, upper storey is surrounded by smaller and larger balconies. The smaller ones are placed on the diagonal sides and the broader are on the arched openings. The vestibule is flanked from north-western and south-western sides by square turrets, clearly discernible from the courtyard of the mosque.

mosque. It is quoted that the Friday bazaar continued till noon and after that people used to prepare for the Jum'a prayer. So the mosque was provided with every facility to gather intellectuals to work on the pursuits of learning. Thus, basic purpose of the *ḥujrās* too, was to accommodate students of Islamic sciences as well as travellers[14].

In this bazaar besides the other tools of the trade of writing, *vaslīs*[iii] could also be purchased. Up till the Sikh era, famous calligraphers, painters, book-sellers, book-binders it. were available from the shops of the vestibule. Painters and calligraphers used to earn their living through copying manuscripts including their illuminations. This activity continued till the end of the Sikh era. Moreover it is also recorded in history that in the period of Ranjīt Singh a learned teacher named Mirza Akram Baig used to reside in the porch of the mosque. Children of the nobles and rich people of Lahore, all Hindus and Muslims used to visit him to learn Persian[15].

Shops in the corridors of the vestibule, which were reserved by Wazīr Khān for the book dealers including binders of books, remained popular till Sikh era. It is recorded by Kanhiyya Lāl that it was a busy bazaar of book binders, the only merchandise in Lahore for the binding and selling of books in the Sikh rule. But then the merchandise spread through out the city including Kashmīri bazaar. This is how the Mosque Wazīr Khān remained a hub of the activities of learning, something envisaged by its patron. It was further desired by him that shops outside the mosque and in the corridors of the vestibule should let without rent for the writers of Islamic books.

It brings to mind an atmosphere of intellectual festivity in the mosque which was built, not for the customary religious services only but a broader perspective stirred the imagination of its builder that is intellectual upbringing of the masses. Thus the complex was planed accordingly: *Ḥujras* for the accommodation of the scholars and intellectuals and to supply material, shops were planned besides places for offering prayers

It is quoted by Nūr Aḥmad Chishti, in his book titled *Tiḥqīqāt-i Chishti*[16](1865) that during British Raj *ḥujrās* of the mosque were occupied by painters as well. It is also recorded about *'Abd al- Raḥmān Chughtā'i*, the eminent artist of Pakistan that he was apprenticed to his uncle Baba *Mirān Bukhsh Naqqāsh*, who had a *ḥujrā* in the Wazīr Khān Mosque[17].It was called *ḥujra-i Naqqāshān.* So, different parts of the mosque were used for various functions at different times.

Thus, after the demise of the Mughal empire, such devastating turns were brought to the great mosque by the ravages of time and eventually, it lost the purpose for which it was erected. But still it bespeaks the legend of its splendid past. Centuries have elapsed and it still attracts local as well as foreign visitors, who get fascinated by the crispness of its adornments.

Plan and Elevation

The plan of the mosque is rectangular measuring 86.16m x 49.24m. All the sections of the edifice are contained within this enclosure, except the central *miḥrāb* of the *Qibla* wall which is projected out from the back of wall[18]. All is explained through a plan[19], produced here vide *plate: 2.*

iii Hand made thick paper, used in miniature painting.

smaller cells, one on each side. Exactly similar plan is repeated in the upper storey of these smaller cells. Plan of the sanctuary produced here, vide *plate: 4.*

Cenotaph in the Courtyard

The tomb of Sayyid Muḥammad Isḥāq of Kāzīrūn is present in the south-western side of the courtyard. Plan of the tomb is very simple. It consists of a symbolic grave above the floor of the courtyard, facing north-south and a rectangular veranda or *bārādari*, adjacent to it. The actual grave is exactly underneath the cenotaph, which is enclosed by a small wall with perforated screens, forming parapets of the low walled enclosure. The veranda is placed east-west, southern to the grave. It has five arched openings on its northern and southern sides and one comparatively broader on both sides at its east and west. The north-eastern side of the veranda has a flight of steps leading down to the subterranean chamber that retains the actual grave of the saint. The grave is larger from the usual and placed in the centre of the chamber, leaving little room around. A marble grave-stone, heading the north of the grave records the name and date of demise of the saint.

Minarets

The most distinguishing feature of the mosque is the four minarets majestically standing at the four corner of the courtyard. They have octagonal shafts with the square bases. Each base measures 5.29m a side with a height of 8.20m. It equals the height of *ḥujrās* and the facades of smaller arches of the sanctuary. Each minaret, from its octagonal shaft to the top of the pinnacle is 39m high. These are highly ornamented with decorative panels but bear no trace of any other balcony except the one around its pavilion.

From the square base which is quite massive, there emerges an octagonal shaft, divided into vertical and horizontal panels, turns into a thin cornice, supporting the necking of the structure. It is topped by an upper pavilion, which is crowned by a small cupola with three sphered finial and sloping eaves supported by smaller columns. The pavilion, which is also octagonal, measures a diameter of 3.14m and surrounded by eight columns, with fluted shafts, carved out bases and capitals. Small brackets support the eaves which create the impact of arched openings in these pavilions; otherwise beams below eaves are supported by columns but bracket in the corners give the impact of arches.

All the minarets are alike in every respect despite a few exceptions. The bases, for example, of south-east and south-western minaret are adorned only on the sides facing courtyard whereas, the north-eastern and north-western are embellished from all sides: the side visible from the courtyard and the other seen from the bazaar adjoining it.

Courtyard

Courtyard of the mosque measures 39.60m by little less than 51m, divided into two levels. An area of 39.60m from the entrance, on east west axis forms a square. It is 15cm lower than the raised part. The lower part has an ablution tank, the dimensions of which are 10.57m x 10.72m. The courtyard is flanked from three sides that are north, south and east by small rooms called *ḥujrās*. These are thirty two in number: thirteen each on its northern and southern wings and six on its eastern side that is three on either side of the entrance of the main portal. All the *ḥujrās* are rectangular in shape but differ in sizes except their breadth, which is 1.20m each. Longitude dimension of the smallest cell is 2.74m., whereas, medium measures 3.65m.and the largest are 4.75m.[24]. But on the west ends in both sides has a double room *ḥujra*. A usual similarity is discernible in the arrangement of *ḥujrās* . On the northern and southern wings, *ḥujrās* are identical in plan and dimensions except a minor variation in the northern *ḥujrās* that bear a window each, on their northern walls that opens up into the bazaar. Moreover, while counting from east, the central parts after five *ḥujrās* in both sides have northern and southern facades, double in height from their adjacent compartment. .Both the facades have staircases inside, leading up to the floor of the ceiling. The arched entrances of these facades measure 8.90m each, that opens up into compartments, one on each side, on both ends of which are smaller cells, retaining flights of steps for the upper floor. In the northern façade the stairs of the two cells open in a rectangular room that leads to the roof of the mosque. But in the southern, the small cell in the east is connected to the street in the southern side of the mosque, whereas, the other cell that is western one, keeps the usual flight of steps leading to the roof. But the northern façade once had an opening into the bazaar which has been closed permanently. Furthermore, the lower most parts of the walls of *ḥujrās* and on the eastern and western façades once had a dado of 75.3cm high, only the remains of which are discernible now.

Sanctuary

Western side of the courtyard comprises a rectangular chamber which is the prayer chamber or sanctuary of the mosque. It is 39.60m wide that equals the breadth of the courtyard, and 14m deep with five compartments demarcated by transverse arches that are four in number. The five chambers of the sanctuary are surmounted by five, squat domes and the five arches facing courtyard, form the façade of the sanctuary. The central arch, labelled arch A, is larger than the two on its either sides. The larger one, which is central also, is 13.70m high and 6.40m broad, while the smaller arches, names B, C, D and E, have the height of 6.10m and their breadths measure 1.50m each. Similarly the central dome is larger than the rest. Its height is 17.60m including its finial[25] with a diameter of 7.90m[26] and the side ones are14.30m high[27] and their diameters measure 5.75m[28], all double shelled[29]. All the five chambers of the sanctuary are exactly alike except the central one which is larger and more elaborate in is adornments than the other four. Each compartment has *iwān* inside its entrance arch and a double alcove or *miḥrāb*: a larger one with a smaller inside, on the western wall of the sanctuary. The far-northern and far-southern walls of the sanctuary are like blind arches, retaining an arched opening at their lower levels, one on each side, which is 83cm. broad. These arches lead to the double storied compartments, one on either side, measuring 2.56m by 2.32m and connected on their eastern and western sides with

Decorative Motifs in the Wazīr Khān Mosque

Among all the plastic arts, architecture in the Islamic world acquired greater significance because of being in concord with the religious interdictions. Association of this form of art with the sacred edifice, mosque exalted to it religious sanctity. In the Holy Qur'ān, the mosque refers to a place where one prostrates before Allah the Almighty. The word *Masjid* for such a structure is used in Iran, *Jamī* or *Jama'* in Arab countries, the word *Cami* in Turkey and its English version is mosque. To have a particular place for congregational prayers was approved by the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh), whose residence was the first mosque which became a model for all the later structures. Its simplicity was gradually added with sophisticated embellishments evolving novel art forms that retained the sobriquet "Islamic". The development of these art forms made the Muslim edifices as unique monuments of the world. Wazīr Khān Mosque in Lahore being one of them, erected during the period of Shāhjahān. This book thus focuses on the adornments of the Wazīr Khān Mosque by making an inventory of the decorations including motifs and inscriptions, through an on site study. Besides all, it will also be checked whether golden ratio is implemented on any of the decorative motifs of this religious edifice.

Although there is no such concept as sacred or profane in Islamic art yet the association of architecture with mosque and other sacred edifices, promulgates religious veneration for it and its decorative forms. The decorative configurations were shaped by the confines of the religion and usually labelled as similar through out the Muslim World. But this uniformity has diversity in it, though bearing an apparent similarity of concept. These architectural ornamentations were evolved from nature but bear no trace of similitude. A transformation of nature took place, usually referred to faith but shaped by the creative intellect and imagination of the Muslim artists. Besides a particular structure to prostrate before Allah, the whole earth for a Muslim is like a mosque where he can say his prayers. So his contemplation of God in the open, amidst flowers and foliage is perhaps the cause of creating arabesques and other ornamental forms.

Arabesques are the interlacing, intricate and fanciful designs based on curvilinear forms derived from nature. It seems as an endless stylisation of natural vegetation in which flowers and foliage play the important role. Nature is transformed in the type of art work into un-natural patterns through repetition, stylisation and symmetry. But the curvilinear shapes in it, induces life to the abstractions of nature. The whole process is aimed at omitting similitude of the living organisms. Segments of the objects of nature are re-organised spiritually and aesthetically into continuous designs, retaining rhythm of highest order. K.K. Aziz links philosophy of arabesques with eternity, defining it poetically, he says:

> It goes steadily, relentlessly onward, leaf after leaf on a seemingly endless vine, room after room of a palace or madrasah [*sic*] (school) complex, line

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world[6]. Many a source attributes the origin of arabesques to Greece. They are of the view that arabesques have their prototypes in the acanthus, vine leaf and cornucopia of the antiquity[7]. Whichever link people associate, these designs are so original that they have no equal precedence. Muslim edifices are magnificently adorned with arabesques and geometric patterns along calligraphic panels that is also a part of its decorative scheme.

The most venerable art form in the Muslim world is calligraphy that fulfils a two-fold function: a form of ornamentation promoting physical aesthetic as well as inculcating beauty of the spiritual order. Calligraphy was actually developed for the preservation of the Holy Qur'ān in its original form. Although Arabs had a primitive script which they did not develop much, considering it a hindrance in their eloquence. They possessed extraordinary memory, and distrusted "writing as a medium which imprisoned the free spirit of their poetry". But with the advent of Islam, such forms of writing were evolved that could emulate the "nobility of content" of the Holy Scripture[8]. Therefore, the above discussed three art forms: arabesques, geometric designs and calligraphy were not confined to the illumination of books only, rather served the function of architectural decorations as well. Buildings of the Muslim world including Mughal edifices of the ṣub-continent, too, possess similar adornments and a celebrated example in this context is the Wazīr Khān Mosque.

The un-surpassing splendour of the Muslim architecture in India is attributed to the Central Asian Muslim dynasty, the Mughals, who were the aesthetic titans. Each member of the family was imbued with artistic spirit reflected in the splendour of art forms he patronised. Bābur, the founder of that dynasty inherited the artistic instinct from his Timurid ancestors and bequeathed that spirit to his successors. In the field of architecture eminent contribution was made by the Mughal emperors Akbar and Shāhjahān during their reigns. Shāhjahān is labelled as engineer king because monuments of exquisite beauty and magnificence are to his credit and Wazīr Khān Mosque was also erected in his period.

Before going into details of ornamentations of the Wazīr Khān Mosque, it would be better to have a retrospective of the Islamic ornamental designs that also shaped the adornments of the Mughal edifice. Decorative motifs of the Islamic world while constituting the precise and strict structural rules never lost the crispness of spontaneity, a reflection of the creative genius of its innovators. Viewing the designs in the broader analytical frame, these can be categorised into two main groups: polygonal, resulted from the precise geometric knowledge, while vegetal and floral motifs on the other hand emerged from the inspiration of nature. It is interesting to note that all the complicated designs have their seminal roots in these two basic shapes[9]. Although numerous influences played their part in the formative phase of this branch of Muslim art.

Various civilisations that came under the subjugation of the Muslim rule, affected its arts, but the seeds of their roots were so accommodating that their originality was never lost. Generally two main sources, eastern and western are ascribed as the repositories of its seminal roots: the influence of pre-Islamic Persia from the east and of the Byzantium from the west. From the eastern sources lyrical floral and vegetal designs were acquired, whereas from the west, influence of geometric patterns is ascribed. But these are not the only sources that shaped its character, the peripheries of the Muslim empire expanded vastly in the period of the four Caliphs. So each area with its individual cultural heritage left a distinct mark of

> after line of a poem. One gets the impression that even if the artist's or the architect's or poet's inspiration fails, the vine portrayal, the building, the poem could ideally continue for ever. By making only part of the pattern visible, by cutting his arabesque before its completion, the artist further emphasizes this impression of the infinity of the Divine realm. He thus provides to the perceptive viewer a microcosmic institution of the macrocosm found and fully known only in the Transcendent[1].

Arabesques do not confine the viewer to one focal point; rather at the completion of one design, generates another, making intertwining patterns. These infinite designs have no apparent beginning or end. The continuity is certainly related by scholars to the unending attributes of Allah.

The term arabesque is derived from the word Arab because it is based on the "particular Arab attitude"[2]. It was used, for long in literature to define particularly the Islamic ornamental designs. But it included at the earliest, in its wider interpretation, all types of designs of the Muslim World such as geometric, vegetal, calligraphic and even figural. But then A. Riegl clearly defined its whereabouts that it is typically related to the "denaturalised vegetal ornaments consisting of shoots of split or bifurcated leaves on inorganic tendrils". The leaves might bear any shape: pointed, curled or round etc. but it is never represented individually, always attached to its stalk. Stalks too, retain a variety of shapes: curve, undulating, hiding under leaves or moving spirally, but never represented alone. Leaves and their stems are intimately related in arabesques, which is the cause of their interlacing character[3].

Tracing the history of arabesques it becomes evident that this form of ornamentation had not attained its true character till the Umayyad period. It is a later development of the 9th century that took place under the Abbasids and fully formed in the 11th century in Spain under Saljuqs, Fatmids and Moors. Then its potentialities were utilised to the utmost, in a variety of ways through out the Muslim World. Further dimensions, in the form of art were added by the Persians, Turks and Indian artists. So much variety was added in, that it is hardly possible to categorise arabesques in chronological order or according to the dynastic styles[4].

The elementary rules that regulate the formation of arabesques lay in the harmonious alternation of movement, where nothing is absurd, and an interest in the filling of whole surfaces, not partially adding in ornaments. The true character of arabesques is only then visible. Rhythm of arabesques is also agile, placid and tranquil. Although it is an agglomeration of twists and turns of leaves, stalks and tendrils but their beauty lies in their nimble appearance not in the vigorous dynamism. But it does not suggest the word static for this type of ornamentation rather it is tamed dynamism not the wild vigour[5]. These are so tranquil that their rendition behind the calligraphic text does not disturb its general impact. Geometric patterns too, bear similarity of rhythms as angular forms are their integral part, but this to be borne in mind that there is no angularity in arabesques.

Islamic art is replete throughout with examples of geometric designs of great variety. These were assumed to be inherited from the classical Greek art but sophisticatedly developed to such intricacies that it acquired the status of a major art form in the Muslim

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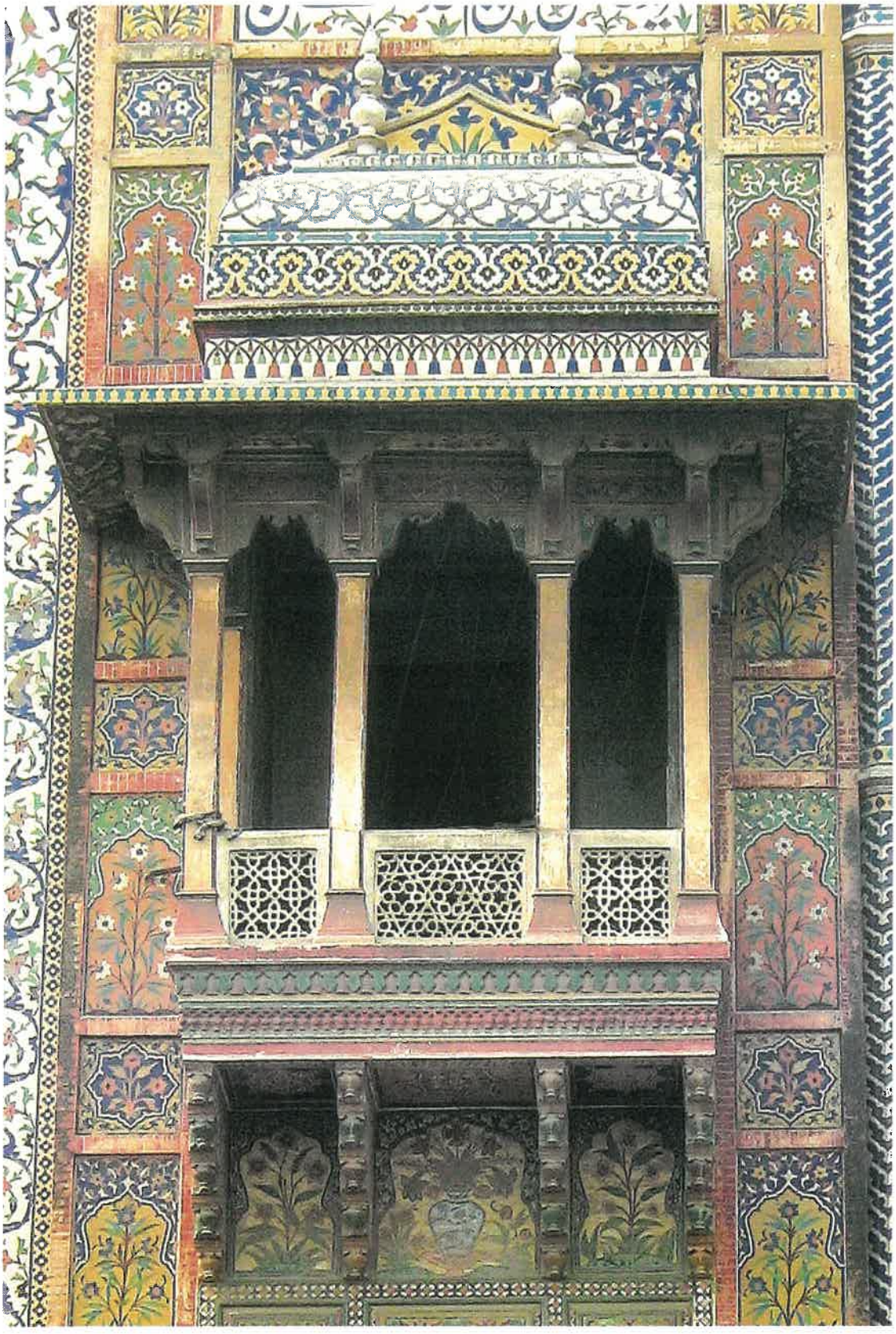


Fig. 5: Oriel window on the front of the main gate.

its characteristic features. But the foundations from where it emerged were so strong that it assimilated all without depriving itself from its mark of distinction. Because it was based not on the outer physical reality of nature rather emerged from within. The outer world which is the physical world around us is not the only source that invigorated creativity. It served only a step to it. The true source was in the subterranean regions within the artist himself that fostered under the aegis of religion.

Geometry, the epitome of the Muslim designs is restricted to certain steadfast and precise rules, but never acted as a hindrance in the formation of designs. On the contrary it facilitated greater freedom of artistic expression. The whole process is so thought out and organized that the key of one design provides basis for another. These designs carry elaborate details that are quite complex and intricate but minutest deviation of rhythm is avoided. Tendrils and stems of vegetation provide the structural basis on which the whole design is built.

These designs are neither ordinary nor simple but appear to be sophisticatedly intricate, which is but a perceptual deception. Because the study of grids of these designs makes comprehension of each, simple and easy, a little variation in the grid provides numerous other possibilities for completely new designs. The structural elements of these designs can be categorised into three basic geometric shapes: square, circle and oval. Square for instance, shapes the polygonal forms, most commonly based on the multiples of fours. Circle, when divided gives triangles or three-fold symmetry. It can also provide multiples of five, six or seven. Star shapes can also be configured through it. Oval, on the other hand is the constitutional unit of floral or plant designs. The structural bases are thus provided by spiral or sinusoid lines[10].

Tracery or the interlacing designs, the culmination of which is arabesques, are also based on the oval, although geometric designs too have interlacing patterns. But the most appropriate term for it, is spiral instead of oval. The underlying structure of arabesques is the spiral, through which designs are spread on the area that is to be adorned. Thus, the constitutional unit of arabesques lies in geometry which is not obvious at a glance because of their poetic and lyrical appearance. The structural lines are thus provided by the delicate and stylised stems and tendrils that take the form of spirals or undulating curves. Spiral in itself is a geometric shape and regular spiral requires perfect geometric calculations. That is why minutest variations in the structural lines can bring considerable range of possibilities in the arabesques. But this is possible only after comprehension of crux of the matter. It proves that the innovators had rich stock of creative imagination. Hence, the world of Islamic ornamental designs though, does not look simple but appears modest if comprehended thoroughly. Geometric designs are generally attributed to the west and floral and vegetal to the Sassanid Persia but the pulsating pulchritude is resulted from the versatile imagination of the Muslim artists. Wazīr Khān Mosque is an exemplary of its kind in the ornaments of Mughal edifices. It is an embodiment of all the ornamental motifs ascribed to the Muslim structures. To make an inventory of these motifs its various sections will be discussed one by one in this chapter.

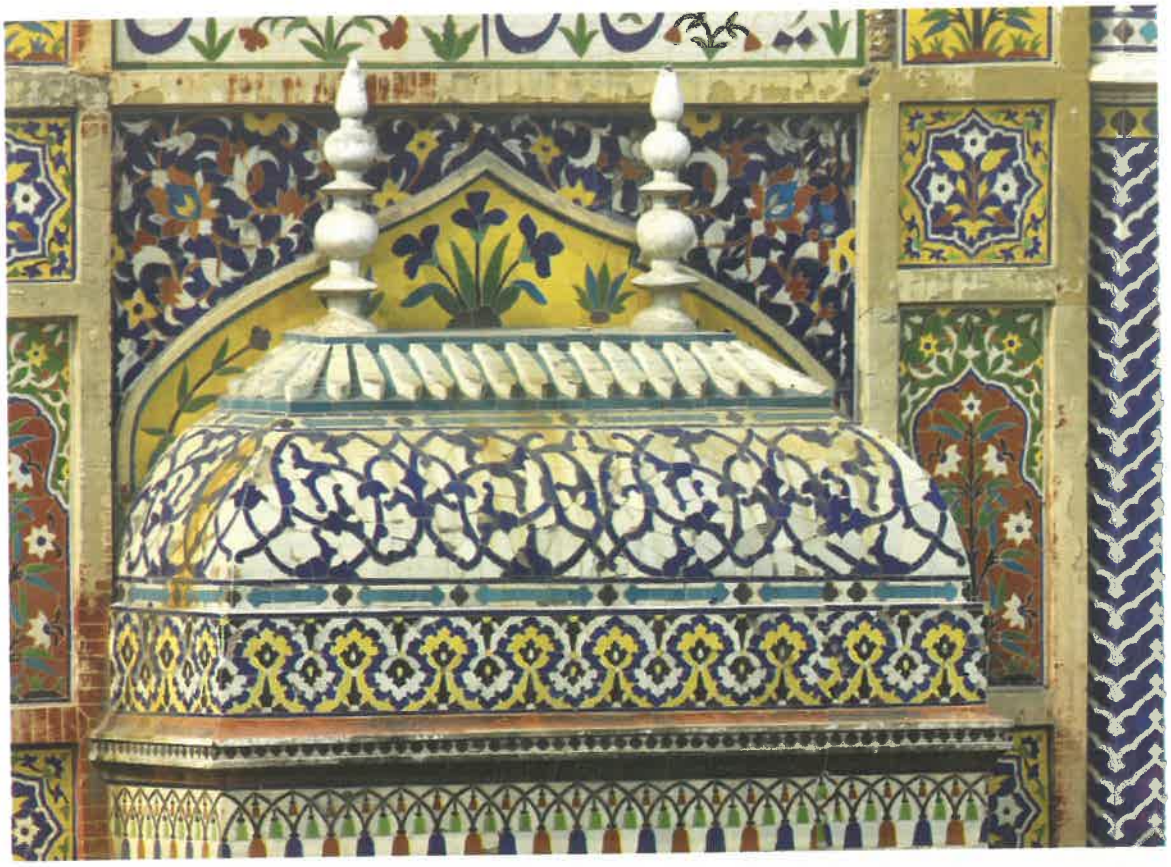


Fig. 7: Motifs on the vaulted roof of the balcony.

The spandrels are ornamented with multi-coloured interlacing designs different from the vaulted roof of the oriel window, *fig.7*.

The elegant turrets, attached to the façade, seem to hold the structure intact. These are delicate piers marked into five storeys by projecting cornices, topped by a half blossomed lotus flower, surmounted by a tiny cupola and a finial, *figs.8-9*. The turrets are fully decked with chevron pattern in blue and white, while two bands of geometric designs are placed above and below each of its cornices. The lower one which bears quadrifoil and *miḥrābi* design has the general colour scheme of blue and white, while the upper is added with yellow. Each petal of the lotus blossom, below cupola is marked with chevron design in yellow and blue while its cupola which is also ribbed, has blue and white colours. Only alternative to the chevron pattern, decorating turrets is the small horizontal bands at the top and bottom of each of its cornices.

Surmounting the façade below parapet, framed by rectangular and square blocks adorns the famous *ḥadīth* that the best recitation is *Kalima-yi Ṭayyiba*: There is no god but Allah and Muḥammad (pbuh) is His messenger. It is in *Nast'ālīq, fig.10*. The bold letters of *Kalima* in blue against white gives reverential impact to the structure. Blue related to sky and infinity and white reminds *nūr*, the only earthly thing related to Allah. Calligraphy being part of the decorative scheme of ornamentations of the mosque is represented here with the first confession of faith. It adorns the top most part of the main entrance to the

Eastern Gate of the Mosque

Main entrance of the mosque is through a magnificent doorway in the east. It stands as exemplary in its class for the grace and embellishments it contains. It looks majestic and elegant. Size of the structure gives it reverential appearance, essential in the Mughal religious edifices, and the beauty and delicacy of its ornaments add grandeur to majesty.

Most of the Mughal structures are provided with such magnificent entrances. But it is not only the size that gives these structures a gorgeous look rather the paramount role is played by diverse elements that are used in their adornments. The main gate of the Wazīr Khān Mosque is fully draped with glazed tiles of variegated designs and splendid inscriptions in Arabic and Persian. It is further emphasised by turrets framing both sides of the façade and the two oriel windows, *fig.5*: provided with balconies carried on richly carved brackets[11], all part of its decorative scheme. The elegant balconies with the rectangular pillars have lacy pierced screen parapets. Four pillars at the front retain three screens



Fig. 6: Perforated screens of the oriel windows on the main gate.

in-between, the central screen broader than the side ones. It has star shaped perforations, while the side ones have quadrifoil design placed diagonally, *fig.6*. The perforated screens and pillars rest on a massive band, lower parts of which are divided by carved out designs. There is lob shaped immediately below the upper most projected band, then a plain band slightly recessed from the middle and then another with diagonal wavy lines, followed by yet another band which is plain. All rests on strong brackets.

Both the balconies are surmounted by *chhajjās* and vaulted roofs, topped by two finials each. The vaulted roof has six tiered horizontal bands of varied designs, each retaining a different pattern; the lowest one has the design of hanging tassels. Above it is a thin band of slightly projected cornice which is three tiered and further above is the typical design painted on the parapets, all around the mosque, shaped by merlons: a row of upright merlons intersected by an inverse in between the two straights. Then is a very thin band consisting of the typical quadrifoil and *miḥrābi* on the vaulted area. It is also the most frequently painted motif on various parts of the mosque. It is topped by a broader band of interlacing design, surmounted by another with repeated lob shaped pattern having a dot inside. It is toped by two prominently strong, three storied finials. These are placed against spandrels of a false arch, surrounded by a rectangular frame of brick imitation.

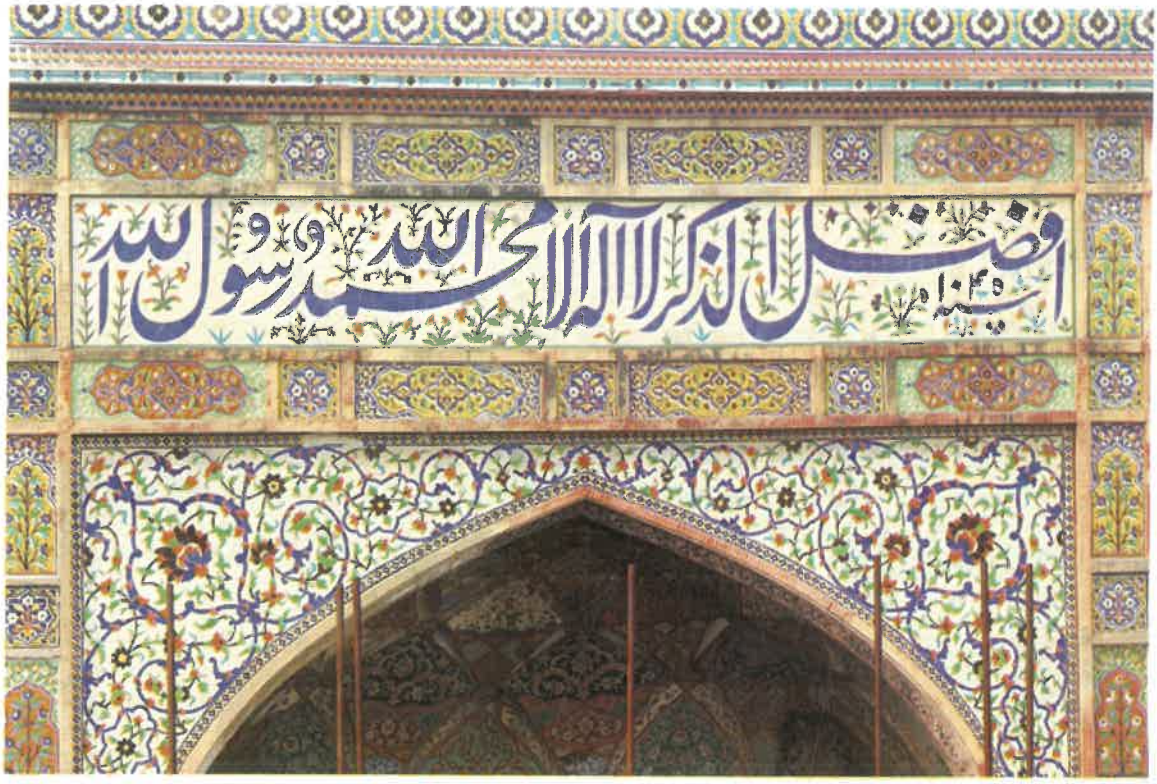


Fig. 10: Kalima-yi Ṭayyiba adorning the main gate of the mosque.



Fig. 11: Horizontal bands enframing various sections of the entrance gate.



Fig. 13: Parapet of the main gate with merlon design.

horizontal panels, embellished either with inscriptions or decorative designs, all in glazed tiles. Although these panels vary in sizes but the left and right sides of the central arch are identical in every respect except inscriptions that are different on either side. But the general impact is exactly similar, perhaps to retain symmetry.

Thus the entrance façade is fully decked with motifs, not even a single inch is left blank. It is divided up into vertical and horizontal bands that have square and rectangular panels, little bit recessed from the main surface and marked by frames of *tāzakāri.* These panels have multi-coloured floral and geometric patterns and they seem to provide frames to the calligraphic bands. Two similar horizontal bands, one above and another below the



Fig. 8: Turret on the main gate of the mosque.

mosque. Background of *Kalima* is not simple, it is also provided with delicate vegetal motifs that are subdued in colours. Whereas the bold letters of *Kalima* and its lapis blue colour makes it the most conspicuous of all. The whole façade is divided up into vertical and



Fig. 9: Close up of a turret.



Fig. 14: Arabesques on the spandrels of the arch of main gate.



Fig. 15: Tripartite band below cornice of Inner arch of the main gate.

a similar background. These panels unlike the above horizontal ones are a little bit recessed from the surface and have vase motifs, each inside a painted arch. The spandrels of which are decked with interlacing designs. The square panels contain floral and plant motifs.

Spandrels of the inner arch of the main gate which is smaller from the outer one are filled with arabesques in light blue, ochre, pink and green against the magenta red background, *fig.17*. The projected area of the cornice above has a pattern of small quadrifoils in green and red against white background. Band below the projected area has intricate floral design with flowers in pink, white and yellow, and green leaves on red ground, *fig.18*. Side walls of the area, below the cornice bear a similar decorative scheme of the frontal wall.



Fig. 16: Background pattern on Inner arch of the main gate.



Fig. 17: Spandrels of the recessed arch.



Fig. 18: Design on cornice of the recessed arch.



Fig. 12.

Kalīma and two on either side of the main arch, enframing the oriel windows, as well as the calligraphic panels, *fig.11*. Similar vertical bands enframe calligraphic panels and oriel windows from vertical sides. They appear similar but their rectangular panels retain floral bushes instead of the geometric designs of horizontal panels, *fig. 12*. Area above the windows has two horizontal panels on either side, bearing inscriptions in Persian. There are comparatively larger vertical panels of inscriptions in Persian, below the balconies; one on either side of the arch. The parapet above is beautifully decked with intertwined merlon design. One row straight and the other upside down fixed inside. This design adorns almost all the parapets of the mosque. Mostly the merlon parapets have similar colour scheme but at some places different colour combinations are used, *fig.13*, but all the parapets are decked with merlon design. Below the merlon band of this parapet is a plain band in brick red and another equally thin but decorated with quadrifoil and *miḥrābi* patterns.

Spandrels of the main arch have intricate arabesques of exquisite beauty in lapis blue, light green, colour of the baked clay and pink accented with brown, against white background. Spandrels are retained within delicately thin borders of repeated geometric design of quadrifoil motif in blue against yellow, around the arc of the arch and parallel to the rectangle around it, *fig.14*.

The entrance is approached by a small flight of six steps, leading to a comparatively smaller arch, which is a few feet backward from the main arch, forming a recess that opens up into the vestibule. For a convenient study we can divide this part into two sections: Area below the cornice and area above it. The former has a horizontal band central to the area just below the cornice, divided into three sections, *fig.15*. The central one surmounting the spandrels of the arch and side ones, placed above the panels adorning either side of the vertical section of the arch. This band contains vase motifs in brick red and ochre colours, alternated by multicoloured floral designs, with white dominating, all against green background. This band and panels are placed against a repeated geometric pattern in ochre, red, and green with accents of white. It consists of eight pointed star, red in colour centred with pink alternated by quadrifoil in green and white, against ochre background, *fig.16*. The square and rectangular panels on the vertical sides of the arch contain



Figs. 20: Inner frames of the recessed panels.



Fig. 21: Dado on the side walls of the recessed arch of the main gate.



Fig. 22: Dado on the front walls of the recessed arch of the main gate.

beautiful patterns of decorative borders. Designs of these borders have great variety. From quadrifoils to geometric and even interlacing floral design are added in the decorative scheme, *fig.20*. Some of the vases on these panels remind shapes of the vases of Greek pottery.

The lower most area of the recess has a dado of geometric designs rendered in outlines that are black against brick red dado of the front wall has intricate star pattern while the side ones have conjoint octagons that turn it into quite a complex pattern. It is centred on an octafoil flower, white in colour concentric to the black circle with a white dot inside, *fig.21*.

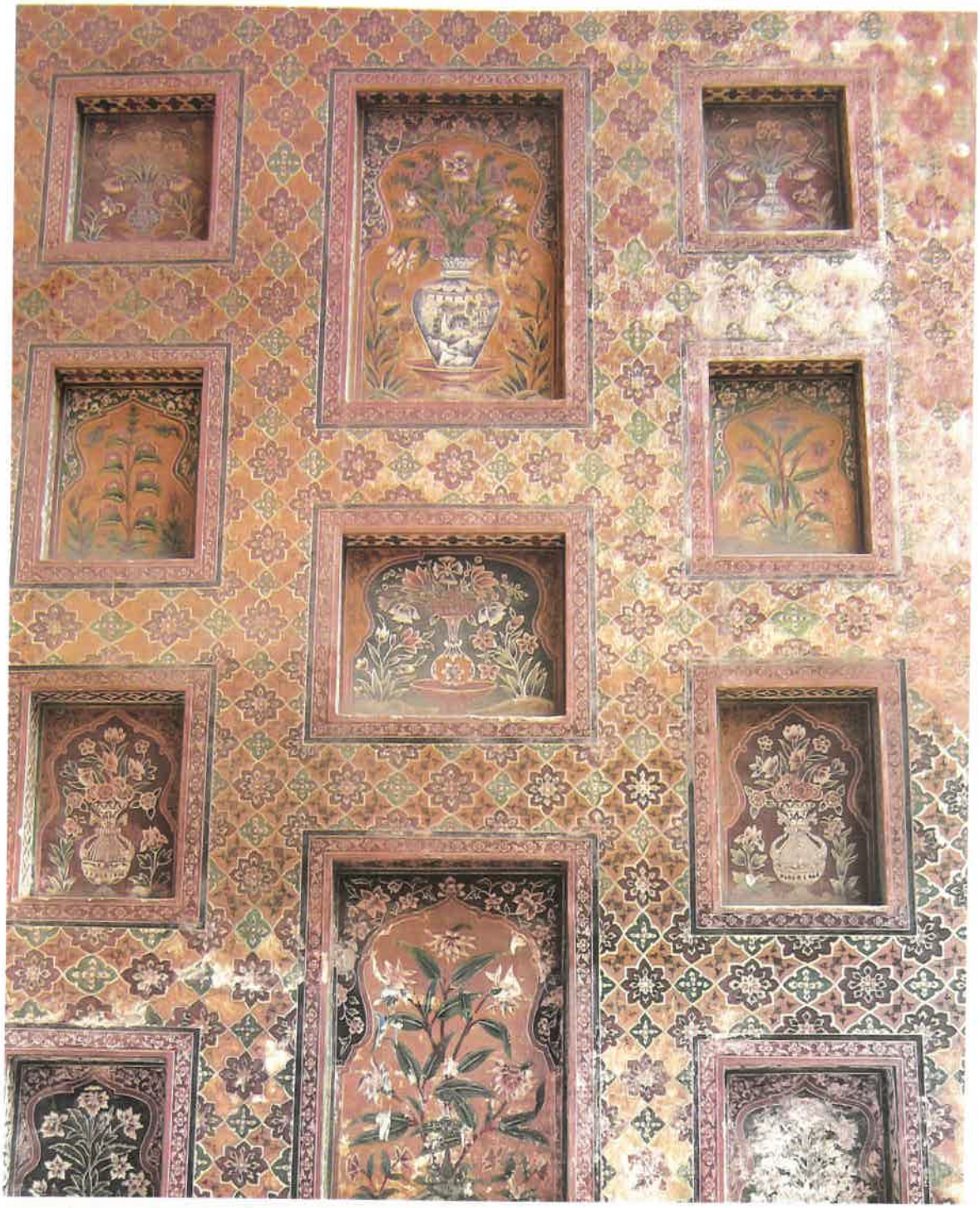


Fig. 19: Panels on the side wall of the recessed arch.

Starting from the horizontal band with vase and floral motif, the wall is further divided into recessed vertical rectangular and square panels, filled with similar motifs of vases with flowers. A few are decked with stylised floral plants only, *fig.19*. These panels are provided with monochrome frames, while the inner sides of the projections around the panels have



Fig. 25: Motifs on the soffits of the side arched openings.

side openings have red and green motifs against ochre ground. A blind arch on both sides of these openings bear floral tree motif. Side walls of the recess have also three blind arches decked with tree motifs in varying colours. These arched openings are similarly decorated with beautiful borders even on their soffits. The two soffits of the side ones are alike in decorative designs, *fig.25*, while the central one is altogether different. The former have multi-coloured diamond shapes, filled with floral motifs and the later has maroon background on which diamond shapes are drawn with white undulating lines and filled in with pink, white and blue flowers, *fig.26*. Dados on the soffits, which can be viewed from the upper storey, have coloured panels that are devoid of any motif except the delicately elegant borders framing these panels. The two arched openings, one on either side from the centre have their dado panels in green, surrounded by two thin bands of brick red colour, the central part of which keeps an intricately beautiful border in white against black, *fig.27*. While the soffits of the central arch have plain ochre coloured dado, with a border of flowers and leaves in white against green that is enclosed from both sides by brown strips, *fig. 28*. It is now, in a quite dilapidated condition. Inner sides of these arches, too, have decorative designs.



Fig. 26: Soffit of the central arched opening.



Fig. 27: Dado on the soffits of side arches.

Moreover, the conch, above the arched openings has stalactite formations, each section of which has arabesques of exquisite elegance, *fig.23*. Each stalactite is provided with a different design and separate combination of

The octagons and conjoint octagons are centred on it. The side walls of the area retain star pattern. It has a ten pointed star concentric to a small white flower inlayed inside. It is then surrounded by another ten pointed star, encircled by pentagons and then by five pointed small stars placed at each point of the bigger star. The panels of dado are further enframed by the typical design of *miḥrābi* and quadrifoil in white against black colours, *fig.22*. It is most frequently painted border design on various parts of the mosque, used in a variety of ways.

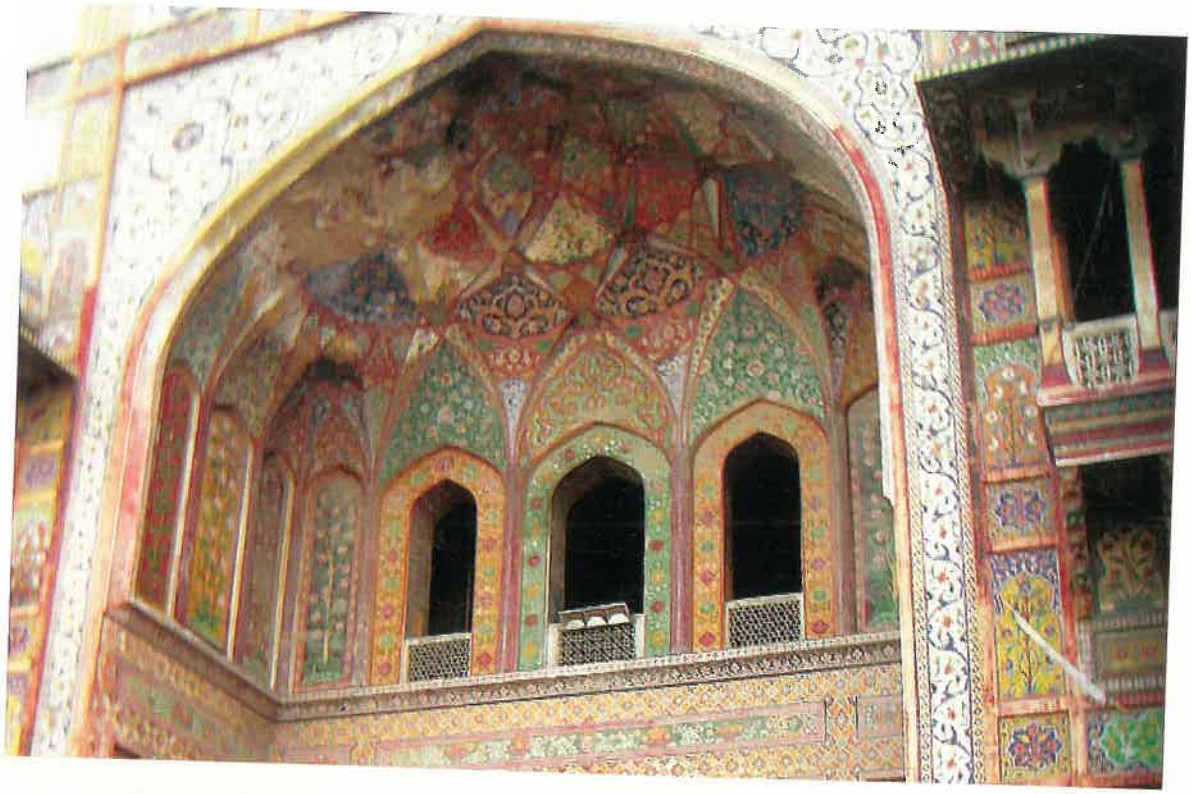


Fig. 23: Conch of the main gate.

The part above cornice is equally fascinating. It has three arched windows, their lower parts are filled with perforated stone screens and topped by half domed ceiling, carved into stalactites, *fig.23*, all bedecked with decorative motifs. Stone screens are similar to those on the oriel windows of the outer façade; only their placement has been changed. Now the screen bearing star shaped design is on the side windows, and the four petalled, placed in the centre on oriel windows, are here reversed for the outer arched openings, to retain symmetry and avoid monotony. Among the arched openings the central one is broader but all the three are surrounded by floral frames.



Fig. 24: Arched openings in the conch.

Frame of the central opening has larger flowers in red, yellow and smaller ones in white, all placed against green background *fig.24*. The

The Vestibule

Vestibule of the mosque is behind the recessed arch of the main gate. By passing through the eastern gate and crossing the smaller arch which is at the back wall of the recess, one enters the vestibule, which is unique of its kind, so far as sacred structures are concerned. In the history of religious edifices of the Muslim world, this type of vestibule has no precedence[12]. It is octagonal in plan, have corridors in its north and the south from the centre, *fig.31*, flanked by shops. The shops have covered corridors at their front, approached by three steps attached to the each entrance. There are four larger arched entrances on either

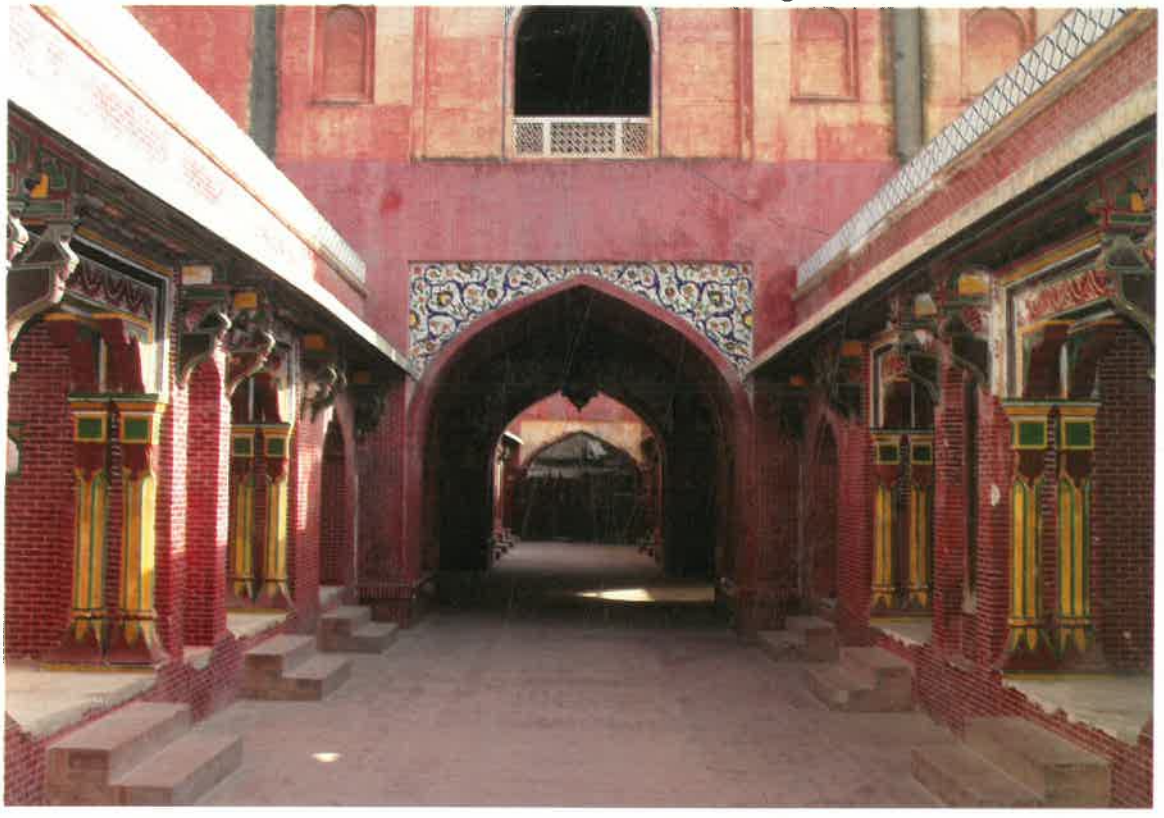


Fig. 31: Diminutive bazaar on the north and south flanks of vestibule.

side with an attenuated one in the centre. The first and last are multi-foil or cusped arches, while the two central ones create just impression of arch shapes because of the brackets placed on the pair of columns attached to its side walls. Architrave rests on these brackets that create an arch like impression, otherwise these have flat roofs. The central arch which is equal in height but lesser in breadth, keeps the shape of a shoulder arch.

Columns, brackets and the fronton of the corridors bear colourful decorations. There are flatly coloured plain bands or strips, squares, rectangles and a horizontal painted frame on the fronton of the architraves of entrances to these covered corridors. The design on this band looks like the frilled palmetts of a curtain, *fig.34*. A continuous sloping *chhajja* or eave projects above, is supported by beautifully carved brackets, *fig.32*, called bird's beak



Fig. 28: Dado band of the central arched opening.



Fig. 30: Sūriya motif on the spandrels of outer walls of the mosque.

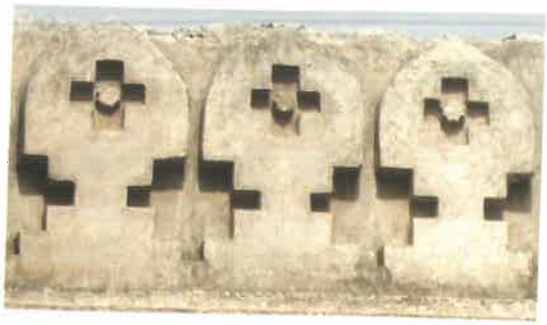


Fig.29: Parapet of the outer walls of the mosque.

colours but all equally beautiful. Colours too, are balanced and fascinating. These embellishments are so magnificent that one cannot remain without appreciating the imagination of the artist who did such a marvellous job.

There are shops within arched openings on either side of the main gate, half sunk in the ground because of the raised level of the surrounding streets with the passage of time. The spandrels of these arches have a carved out *sūriya* motif. This part of the mosque carries engraved designs rather, coloured adornments like the other sections. Maintaining symmetry, the upper story is also decorated with blind arches having a window and a small rectangular recess in the centre of each. Parapets of these walls have carved merlons, upper part of each merlon has a recessed cross or chequer board deign with a projected star in its centre, *fig.29.* The negative spaces between the merlons have also chequer board design. Furthermore, cornice above the shops demarcating the second storey, has carved out lob shaped design that create a beautiful pattern of light and shade on the wall, *fig.30.* These walls are though devoid of coloured embellishments but their recesses and projections form interesting patterns through light and shade.



Fig. 35: Alcoves with ogee arch in walls of the verandas of shops.



Fig. 36: A segment of door carving.



Fig. 37: Parapet of the corridors of vestibule.

help of carved out borders and each square has another smaller square within, concentric to a carved rosette inside, *fig.36*. Moreover, the parapets of these shops are adorned with merlon design in *Kāshīkāri*. Almost all parapets of the mosque are bedecked with this design but here it is used with a little difference. We only find the grid of this design, which is drawn with blue outline on white background *fig.37*. It is not added with further intricacies.

The farther ends of both the corridors have pointed arches, the upper sections of which have balconies with three arched openings. These arches are also shaped through brackets; otherwise they bear flat roofs based on architraves. These are covered with sloping eaves the undersides of which have painted designs and the lower sections have perforated screens. The pillars, brackets, *chhajjas* and plain application of colours are exactly like



Fig. 38: Upper stories of the far-ends of the corridors of vestibule.

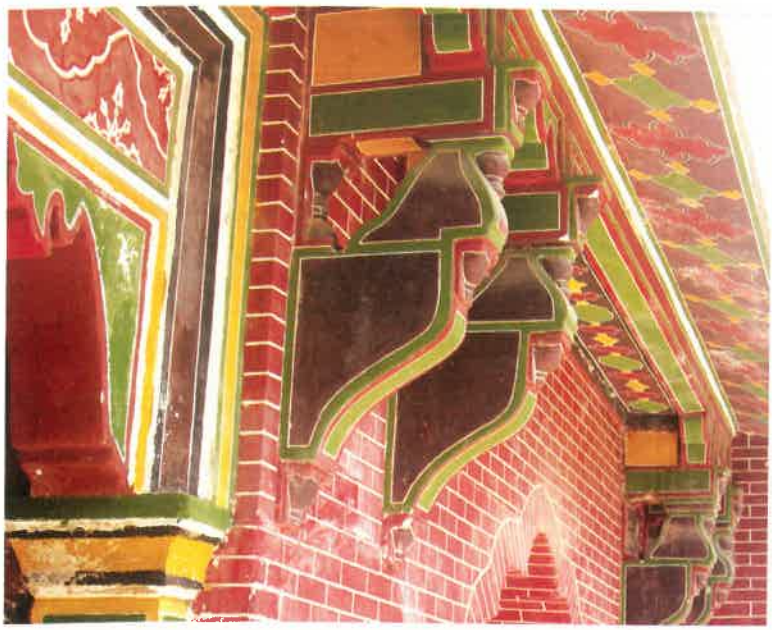


Fig. 32: Under side of chhajja and brackets bedecked with flat coloured ornaments.



Fig. 34: Palmette-like band on the architrave.



Fig. 33: Double columns of the ante-chambers.

brackets, exactly like those surmounting columns on side walls of the covered corridors, *fig.33*. These are multi-coloured, in red, yellow and green. The *chhajja* and the upper parts of entrances below the *chhajja* are painted in bright colours. There are flatly coloured panels, strips, quadrifoils joined at their corners with small palmettoes, and some irregular shapes like cloud formations on the under side of eaves and their adjacent walls. The colours used are very bright. It goes well with *tāzakāki*, the brick imitation on walls. But not akin to the other parts of the mosque that are bright but not so loud in tones. Because the use of soft colours of other sections reflect more of Persian impact, while this part reminds of Hindu art of the region.

The shops flanking the corridors, though appear simple are not devoid of embellishments. There are alcoves on either side of each shop, perhaps to keep oil lamps because electricity was not invented yet. But now the alcoves appear as part of the decorative scheme of this section. The rectangular alcove is shaped into a pointed Ogee arch, spandrels of which are plain; only, the arch and its rectangle are bordered with plain green strips, *fig.35*. Moreover, doors of these shops are also decked with carvings. But these are not original doors because wood being perishable must have decayed with the passage of time and these would have added later. Each leaf of the door is divided into four squares with the

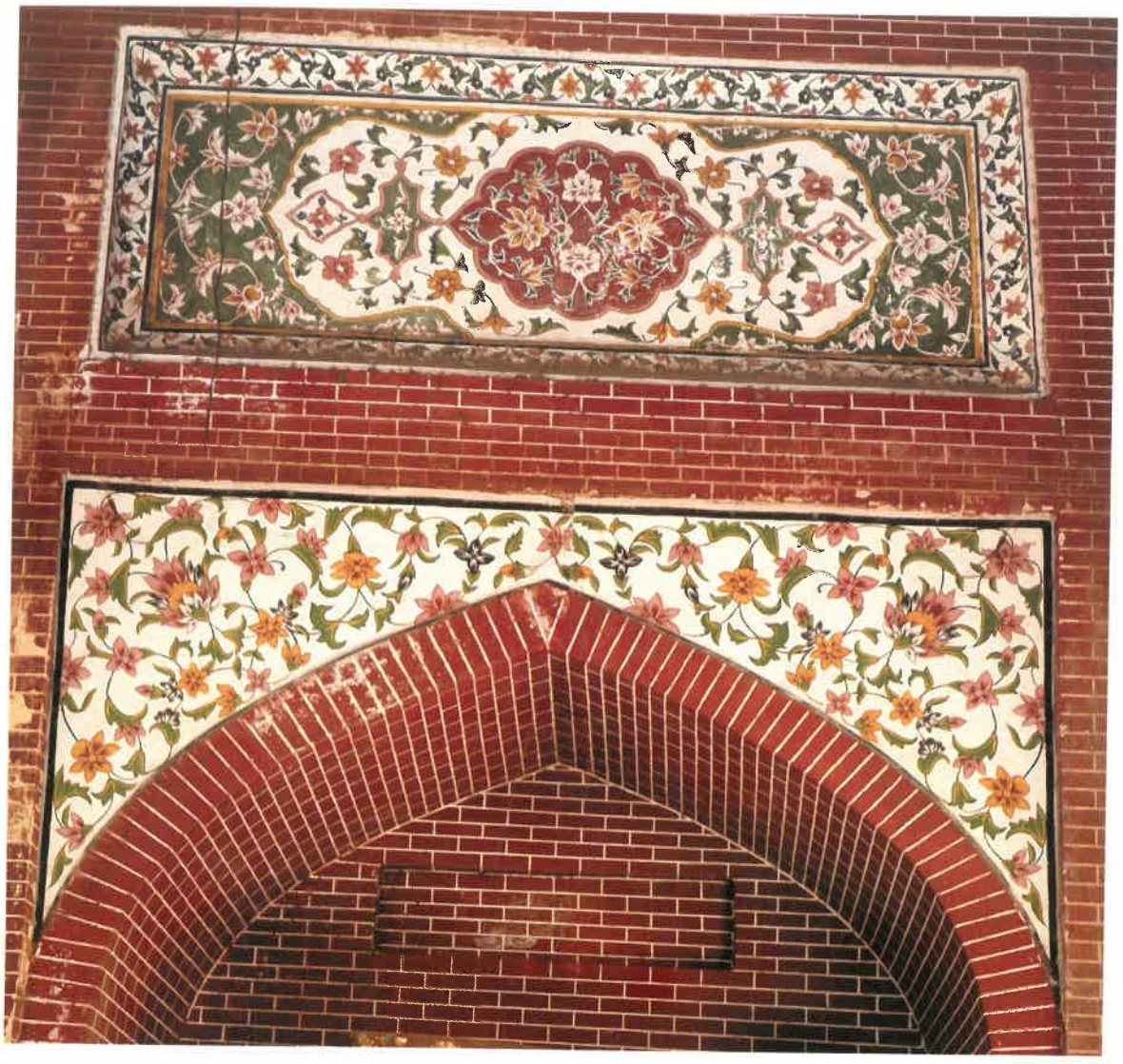


Fig. 40: Ornamentations on the smaller arches of the vestibule.

arabesques. The large arches are alike in the adornments of arabesques and the smaller ones, though, bearing a different design also, have exactly similar arabesque renditions. A rectangle surmounts each smaller arch, intricately decorated with floral ornamentation. It consists of a *miḥrābi* design centred on a sea-shell motif, all surrounded by a border of leaves and stars. Spandrels of the *miḥrābi* and its inner parts are filled in with arabesques. All the four small arches are surmounted by exactly similar rectangles: not only in design but also in the use of colours. The sea-shells, in the inner most areas are red in all,



Fig. 41: Band surmounting inside of the vestibule from all around.



Fig. 39: Central part of dome of the vestibule, forming lotus flower through chevron pattern.

the decoration on the corridors of the shops. But the undersides of *chhajjas* have intricate designs as compared to those adorning the porches *fig. 38*. Viewing this corridor from the farther end, the back wall of the vestibule is visible. The lower part of this wall has an arched entrance to the vestibule. Spandrels of this arch have arabesques. Exactly above this arch, similar in size is a blind arch, spandrels of which have also similar arabesques. It has a smaller arched opening, fixed in with perforated screens at its lower section and its spandrels too have arabesques. This arched opening is surmounted by a rectangular recess above. Both sides of the blind arch have smaller rectangles carrying smaller blind arches within but all plain. The wall is topped by a parapet bearing typically painted intricate merlon design and below the parapet is a thin cornice bedecked with quadrifoil and *miḥrābi* design. Thus, no part of the mosque, whether central or subsidiary, is left blank.

The octagonal space of the vestibule is surmounted by a huge and high dome. The brick imitation inside the dome forms chevron pattern that takes the shape of a twenty four petalled lotus flower at the apex, *fig.39*. The vestibule is double storied defined by double arches. The lower portion has four large arches at its east, west, north and south. Eastern arch is attached to the main gate, while western leads on, to the courtyard of the mosque and northern and southern open up into corridors of shops. The diagonal sides of the octagon have smaller arches. Spandrels of each arch whether larger or smaller, have

while *miḥrābi* have white background, its spandrels are green and the outer borders have also white backgrounds, *fig.40*. While each part has multi-coloured interlacing designs on it. Each smaller arch of the octagon has a shop inside its porch, bearing alcoves and carved out doors similar to the shops in the northern and southern corridors. Lower storey of the vestibule is surmounted by a broad decorative band, placed below its cornice. It is adorned with octagonal stars alternated by *miḥrābi* motifs, background of the band as well as both the motifs; star and *miḥrābi* are added in with arabesques. This band is further enframed from above and below by thin strips, composed of small quadrifoils, *fig. 41*. Under side of the cornice has an intertwined design of stylised leaves and flowers in multi-colours, *fig.42*.



Fig. 44: Detail of panels on the balconies.

Area above cornice has balconies at each side; larger balconies are at the cardinal points while smaller placed at the diagonal ends, *fig.43*. Back walls of the larger balconies are divided up into panels bearing decorations, different from the rest. There are fruit dishes, fruit bowls, vases with flowers placed in similar dishes, attenuated large necked pitchers, cypress trees and stylised as well as natural plants with flowers, *fig.44*. Spandrels of each arch have circular medallions containing geometric designs inside, and their circumferences are attached all around with small leaves that also look like tiny flames licking the circle, *fig.45*. Dados of the smaller



Fig. 45: Medallion in spandrels



Fig. 42: Decorative band below cornice.

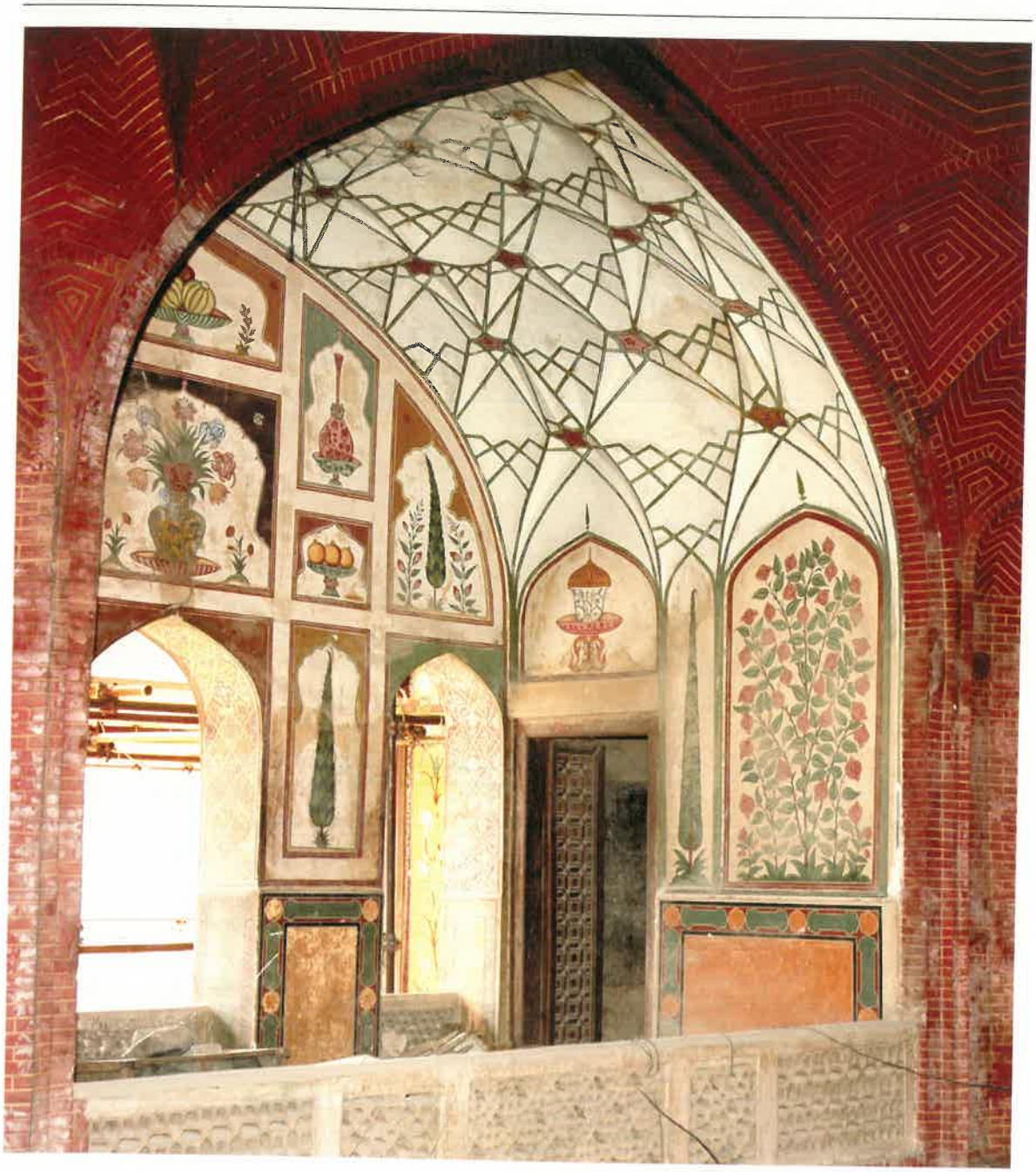


Fig. 43: Larger balcony of the vestibule.

Turrets

The vestibule has two elegant turrets, surmounting its north-western and south-western corners, *fig.47*. These are also adorned in the fashion of rest of the mosque ornamentation. Each turret is square in plan, and composed of a podium, decorated with square panels from all four sides. It is then surmounted by rectangular columns that are



Fig. 47: Turrets with dome of the vestibule.

twelve in number: four visible from each side, which support sloping eaves that project outward. Lower parts of the spaces between the columns are filled in by perforated screens, typical in design to the screens of other parts of the mosque. Capitals of the columns bear coloured embellishments exactly similar to their counter parts on the corridors of the shops on the north and south of the vestibule. Brackets attached to the columns support eaves that create the impression of arches, are also exactly alike.

Drum of the cupola consists of two horizontal bands with a thin projecting cornice in between. The lower band is adorned with octagonal stars and the upper one bears the typical merlon design that bedecks the parapets of mosque, whereas, the cornice has a continuous band of quadrifoils alternated by *miḥrābi*. Then the recessed necking of the cupola has a band of multi-coloured hanging tassels, present on the oriel windows of the main gate. The cupola of the turrets are fully covered by curvilinear design in blue against white, while the lower most part of the dome has a thin band of quadrifoil and *miḥrābi, fig.48*. It is then

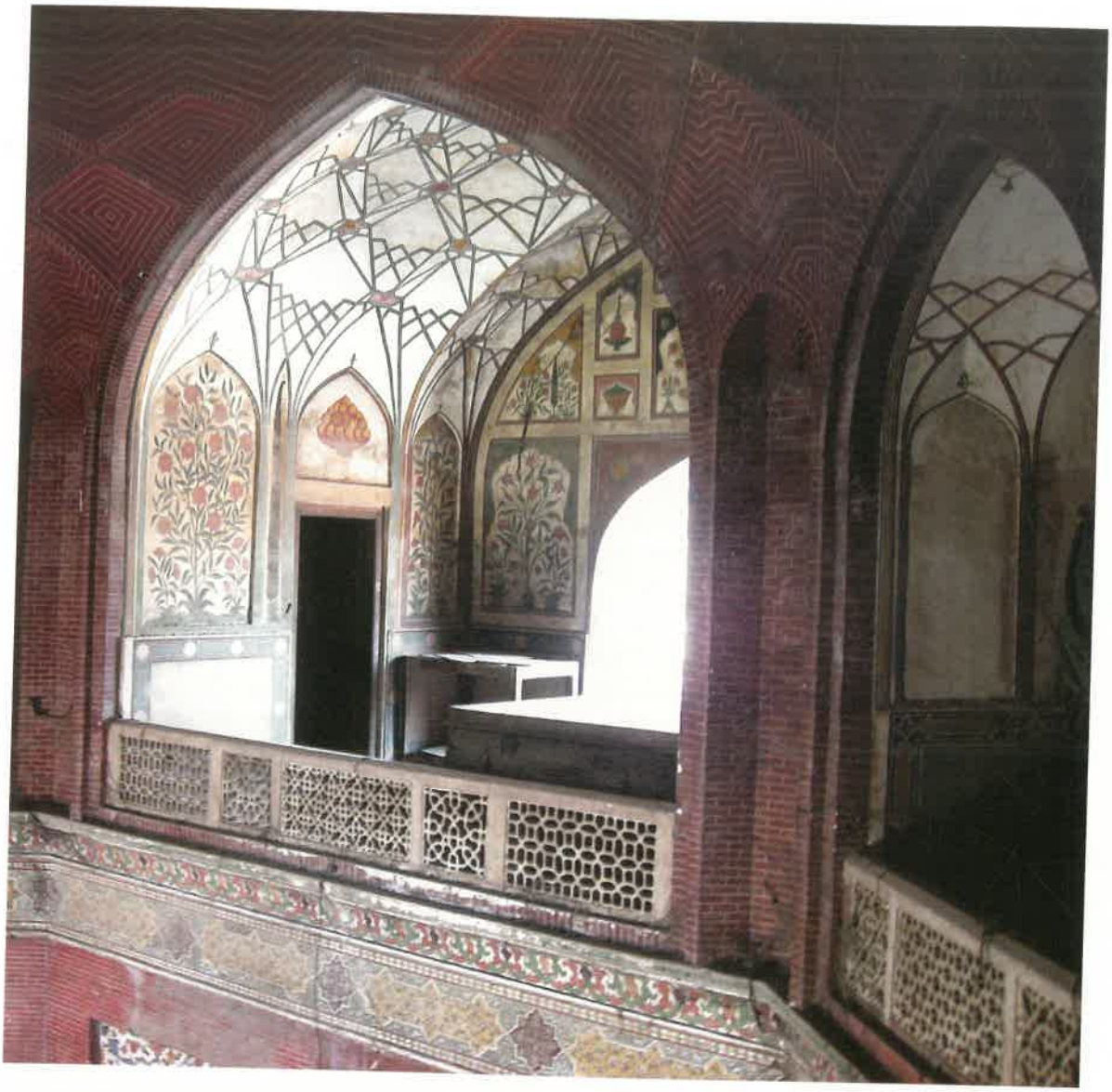


Fig. 46: View of balconies of the vestibule.

as well as larger balconies have plain panels, enframed by borders composed of quadrifoils and *miḥrābi* but vary in colours. At some places panel is ochre and border is green and ochre, against red, while at other places, panel is green and border is ochre and red against black. Lower part of each balcony is provided with perforated screens, *fig.46*.

Smaller balconies are simply divided into panels which are marked only with out lines but retaining no motif like the larger balconies. The domed ceilings of all the balconies bear grids of the stalactite formations, elaborate representations of which can be viewed on the conches of niches of the prayer chamber, central arch of its façade and the main gate. These demarcations seem to provide grids, introductory to the elaborate stalactites of other sections. An amazing design bedecks the apex of each balcony. It is composed of three intersecting ovals, which resembles the model of atom discovered by Bohr, a 20th century scientist.



Fig. 49: Finial of the cupola of turrets.



Fig. 50: Finial of the dome of vestibule.

Courtyard of the Mosque

Western side of the portal leads to the courtyard, through an arch, approached by two steps. The courtyard is a rectangle with a water tank for ablution almost in the centre and the tomb of Sayyid Muḥammad Isḥāq Kāzīrūn on its south-west. The *ṣaḥn* is surrounded on three sides by *ḥujrās*. The western side is occupied by a sanctuary with an impressive façade, the focal point of the courtyard. Another fascinating feature, adorning courtyard is the minarets, standing majestically on its four corners. No part of the surrounding walls of the courtyard is left without ornaments.

Brick Designs on Floor

The floor of the mosque including courtyard, is artistically paved with bricks, forming a variety of geometric patterns that go well with the general decorative scheme of the mosque Bricks are so placed that they define designs. Sometimes these are marked with thin bands of black stone for the enhancement of various designs. Different sections of the floor are provided even with borders formed by the placing of bricks only. Bricks are laid on



Fig. 51: Floor design.

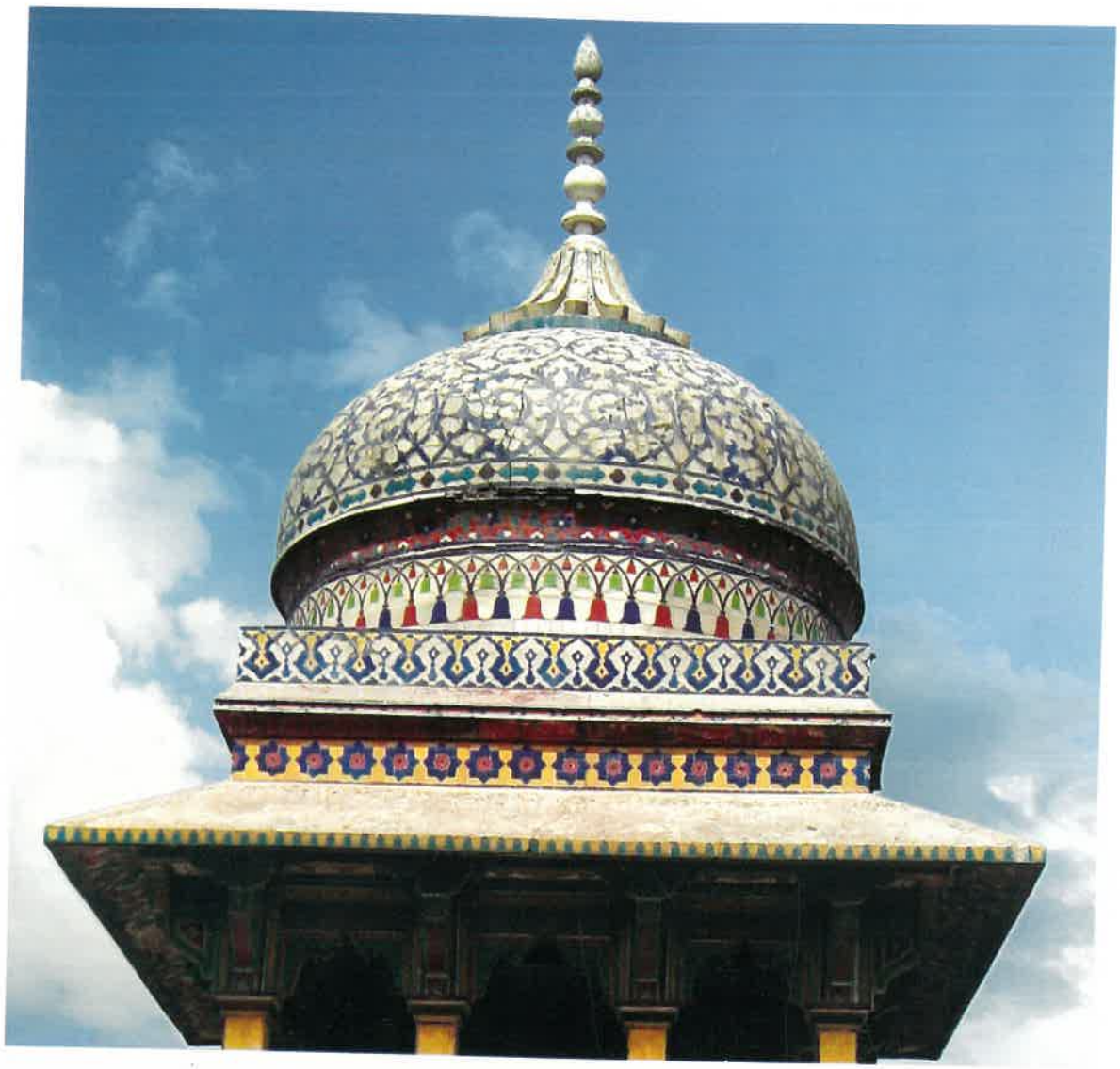


Fig. 48: Cupola of the turret.

topped by a typical finial that adorns all the domes and cupolas of the mosque. It comprises an inverted petalled lotus flower, surmounted by double sphere, alternated by small circular discs with a top most bud like formation, *fig.49*. All finials of other domes are similarly composed, except the number of petals of the inverse flower that increase in number for the larger domes and decrease for the smaller cupolas, *fig.50*.

Interior of the turrets do have floral and geometric motifs. Squinches formed by the placing of hemi-spherical roof on the square base are beautifully decorated. Each of the eight squinches has three painted arches bearing a floral tree in the central arch with a cypress on the side ones. The arched panel between every two squinches bears a vase motif filled with red flowers and vegetal designs all around. The hemispherical roofs have geometric ornamentations, the one we see in the upper balconies of the vestibule. It forms the grid of stalactites, centered on an eight pointed star, concentric to a motif similar to the atomic model presented by Bohr.



Fig. 58: Floor design.



Fig. 59: Floor design.

commitment on the part of its builders, who must be keenly absorbed in the composing and execution of each and every section of the mosque. A few floor designs can be viewed from *figs.51-61*. The intricacies of adornments of other sections of the mosque are equally implemented on bedecking the floors.



Fig. 60: Floor design.

Although no colour is employed except the brick red and at places, a few thin bands of black marble are considered enough to highlight patterns because the creative imagination of its artists is at work. Thus, it is not the tool that matters in the creative pursuits but the artistic mind that creates objects of beauty. Moreover, it further enhances mastery of the Muslim artists in the geometric configurations. There are squares, triangles, diagonals, intersecting diagonals in different ways, see *figs.58-59*. Both the designs are based on diagonals but produce different patterns. Furthermore, there are single stars and stars within stars, defined by laying of bricks and further marked by the strips of black stone. Thus, a variety of designs have been produced on the floors of various parts of the mosque.



Fig. 61: Floor design.



Fig. 52: Floor design.



Fig. 53: Floor design.

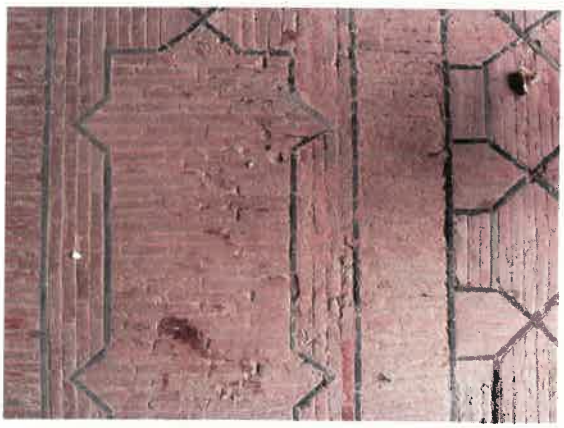


Fig. 54: Floor design.



Fig. 55: Floor design.

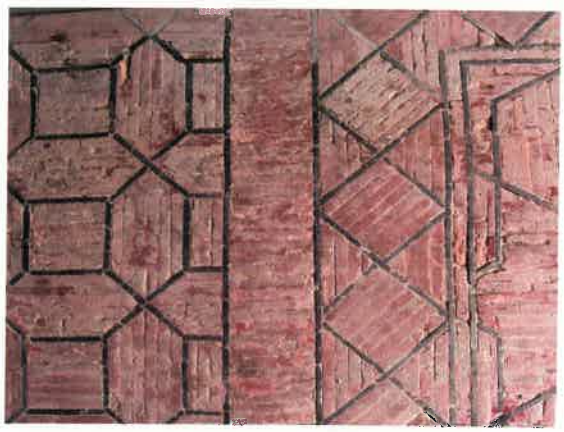


Fig. 56: Floor design.



Fig. 57: Floor design.

edge, meaning thickness of bricks make the upper surface of floor and thus define designs. Because thinner sides of bricks are convenient to handle while making designs. At a casual glance, one is not fascinated by the variety of designs that floors keep but detailed observation exposes that each part of it bears a different design. Even courtyard is divided into various sections and each has a dissimilar pattern from the other, only with the placing of bricks. At places it gives the effect of carpets surrounded by borders. It discloses the height of

Minarets

Minarets are beautifully attached to the four corners of the courtyard as they are fully decked with ornaments, *fig.62*. They have octagonal shafts, each placed on a square base which is 5.29m broad from one side and 8.20m high that equals the height of *ḥujrās* and smaller arches of the façade of sanctuary. Height of the minarets including the pinnacle is 29m. The octagonal shafts are surmounted by balconies, topped by cupolas. There are no intermediary balconies as we generally see in Mughal minarets. All four minarets are alike in construction and ornamentation.

The square base is divided up into four sections. The lower most has a dado of 1.20m high forming a repeated geometric design, exactly like the pedestals of the façade of sanctuary. Rest of the base, has three rows of nine recessed panels. The central horizontal row has three almost square panels, have "conventional patterns with radially balanced floral designs". The upper and lower rows have vertical rectangular panels with pointed arches inside[13] that are recessed a little bit. The upper most row has vase motifs and among the three; the central one is different in shape and colour from the side ones which are identical in every respect. The central panel has yellow and brown vase against white ground and the side ones have blue and white vases, each, against yellow background. In the lower row the pointed arches retain tree motifs, here also the central panel, is different from the side ones that are exactly alike. The central tree motif is depicted over yellow ground and its both sides have identical trees placed against white. The spandrels of the pointed arches have arabesque designs. Base of the minaret is surmounted by a gallery, supported by brackets. The area in between every two brackets also retains horizontal panels of traditional designs. Above is a thin cornice bedecked with continuous quadrifoils and topped by a parapet that bears through out, the undulating merlon design, *fig.63*.

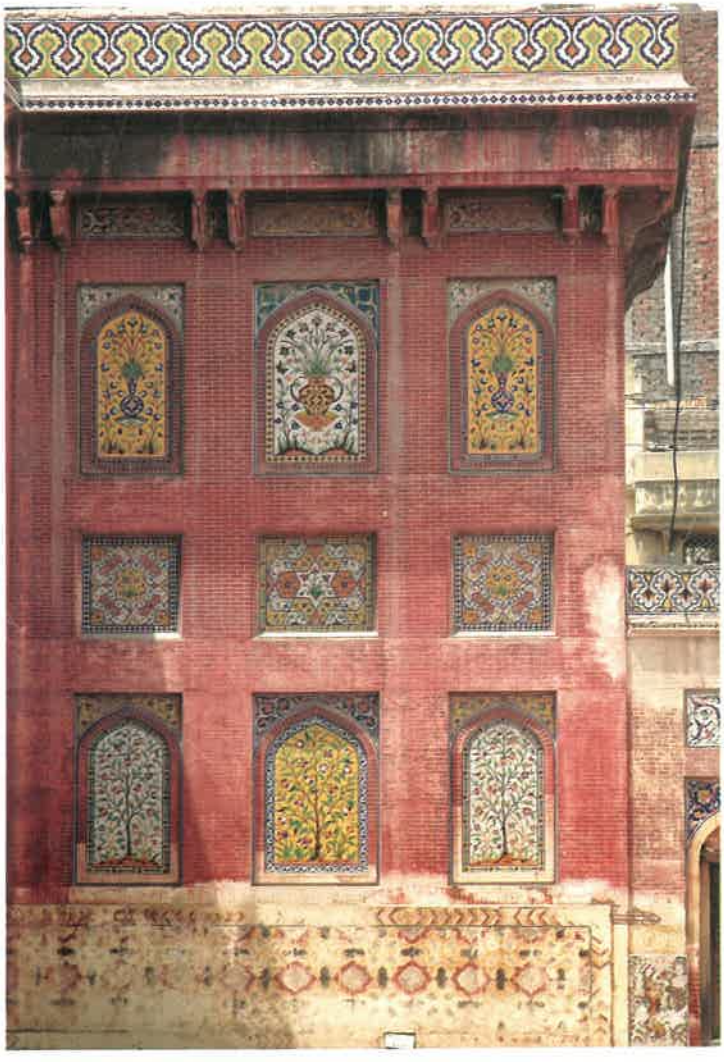


Fig. 63: Square base of the minaret.



Fig. 62: North-western minaret of the mosque.

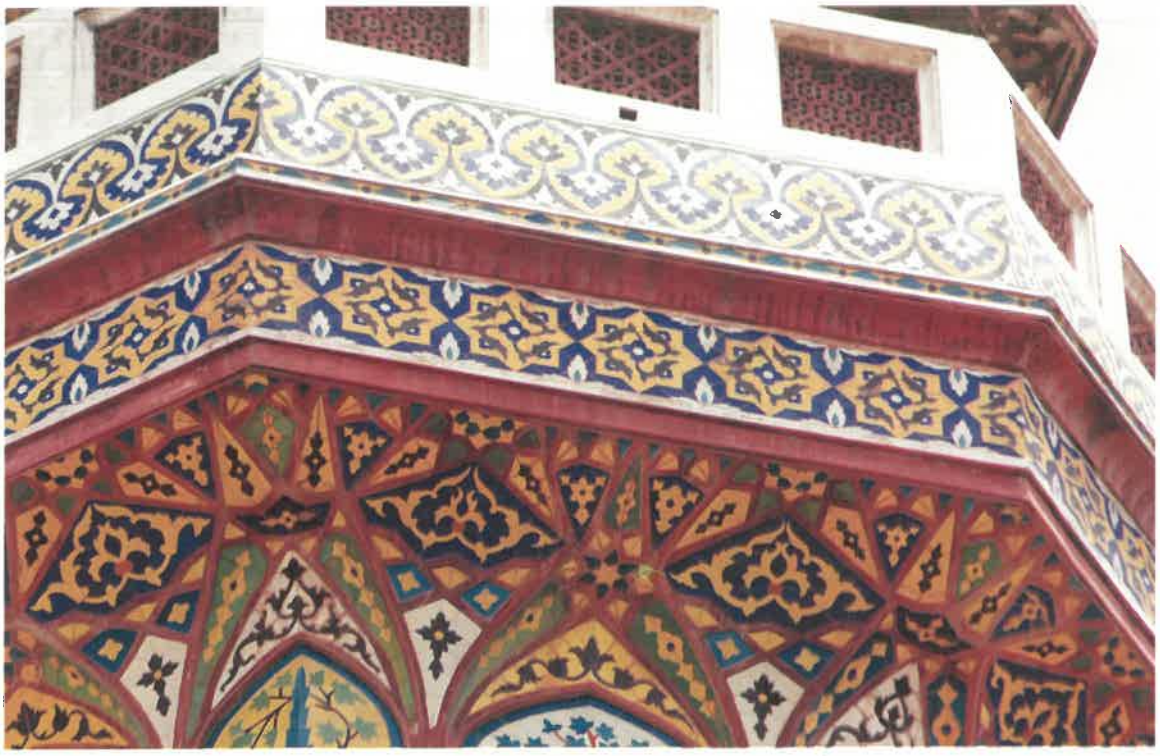


Fig. 66: Decorative bands below the pavilion.

the gallery above. The base is also provided with ornamental bands of traditional motifs, the lower most is dominated by eight pointed star, above is a thin band of quadrifoil and *miḥrābi* and immediately below the balcony is the typical merlon design of the parapets, *fig.66*. Above this is the pavilion: lower portion of it, is surrounded by grilles, *figs.67-68* placed alternately and flanked by small columns, supporting the arched openings. But these are not arches proper, rather based on architraves and brackets, like those present in the corridors of the vestibule that when conjoint give the impression of an arch. It is surmounted by a slopping *chhajja* or eaves. All embellished with decorative motifs.

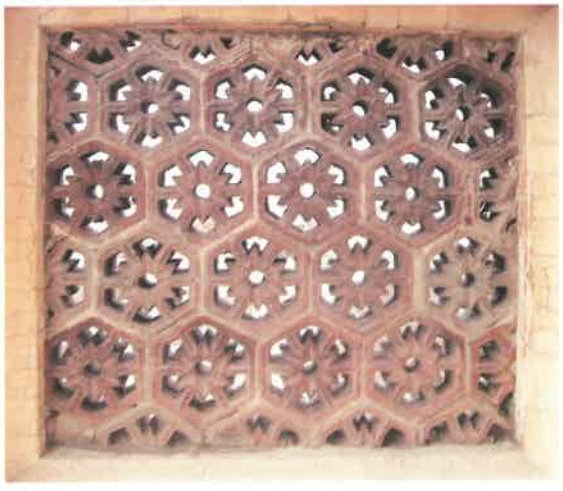


Fig. 67: Grille of the pavilion of the minaret.



Fig. 68: Grille of the pavilion of the minaret.

The octagonal shafts of the minarets are elegantly adorned, by dividing each into various sections of recessed panels. The octagonal part begins with a plain band that formerly had a dado, now disappeared with the ravages of time. Each side of the area above has two horizontal and two vertical recessed panels placed alternately. These also have traditional geometric patterns and floral tree motifs, very much similar to the panels of the base except the recessed arches of the vertical panels, replaced here by painted cusped ones *fig.64*. Rest of the arrangement is exactly alike. Above these panels a horizontal band of geometric designs is running all around the minaret, topped by three narrow torus bands. Above these and below the pavilion lies the most beautiful part forming the neck of the minaret, *fig.65*. It is adorned with

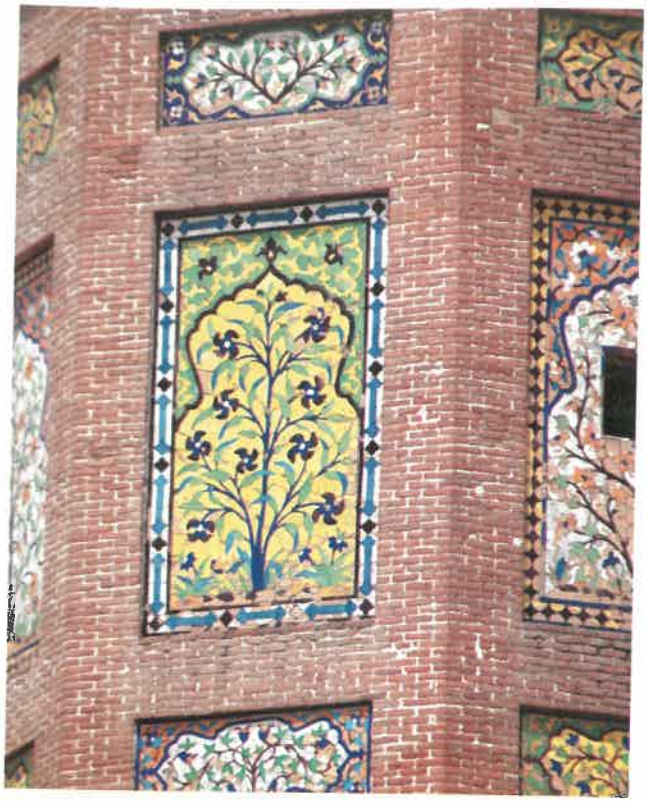


Fig. 64: Decorative panels on the shaft.

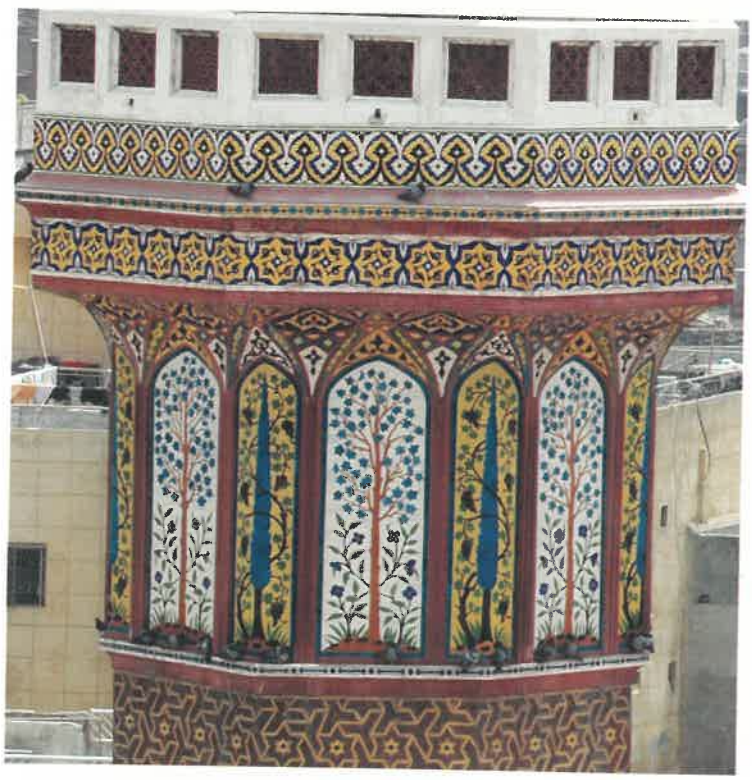


Fig. 65: Neck of the minaret.

vertical arched panels, total sixteen in number. These are so arranged that each side of the octagon carries one panel, which is little broader and flanked by another which is half panel on its either side, that is comparatively attenuated. Thus the narrow panel is half on this side and half on the other, meaning, placed on the edge of each side. Each broader panel carries the traditionally balanced plant motif and those placed on the edges have elegant and brilliant Cypress trees, one on each. From the pointed sections of the arches there springs up beautifully ornamented stalactites, also called *gulābkāri*[14] or pendent work, supporting the base of

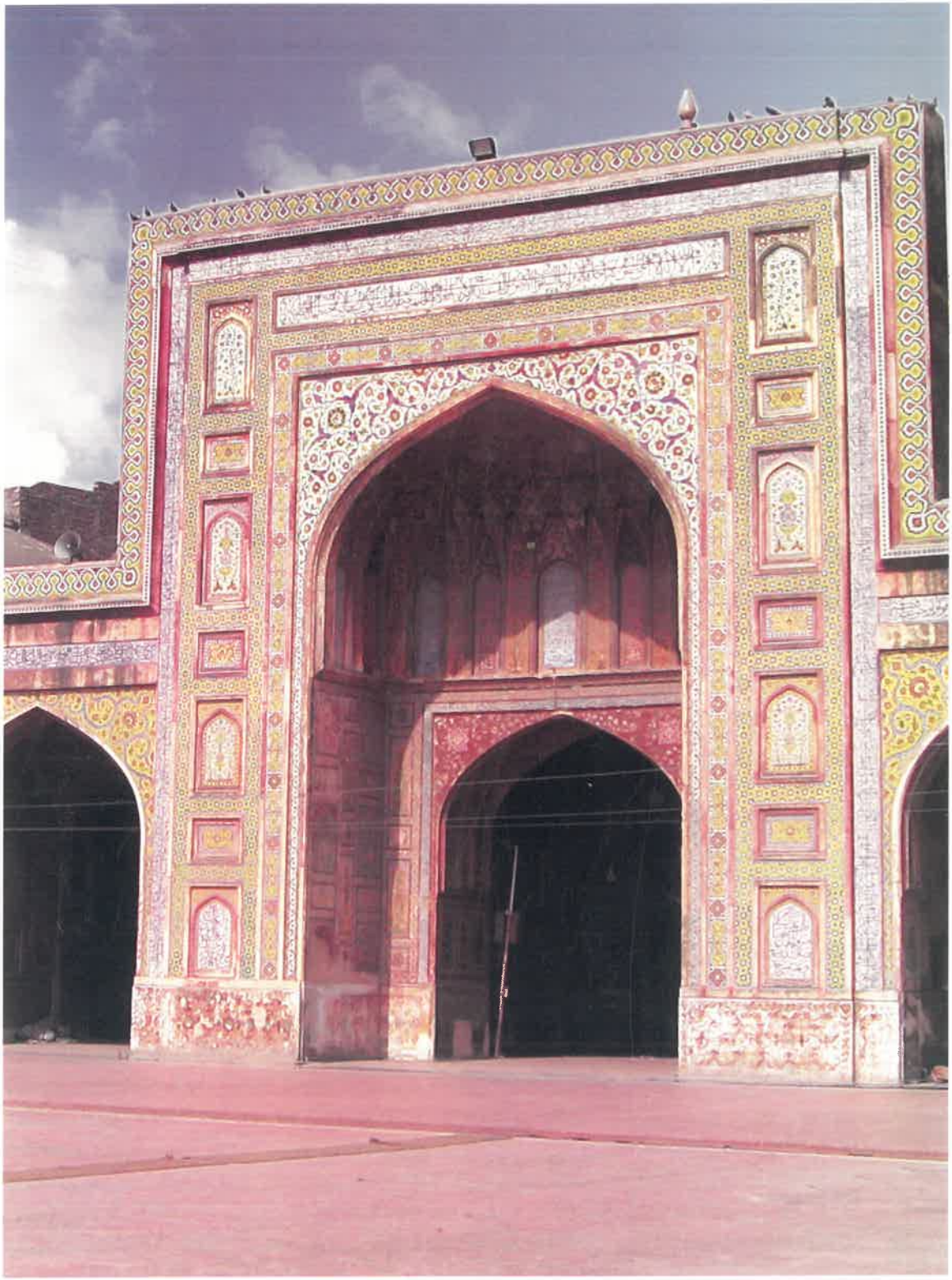


Fig. 70: Central arch of façade of the sanctuary

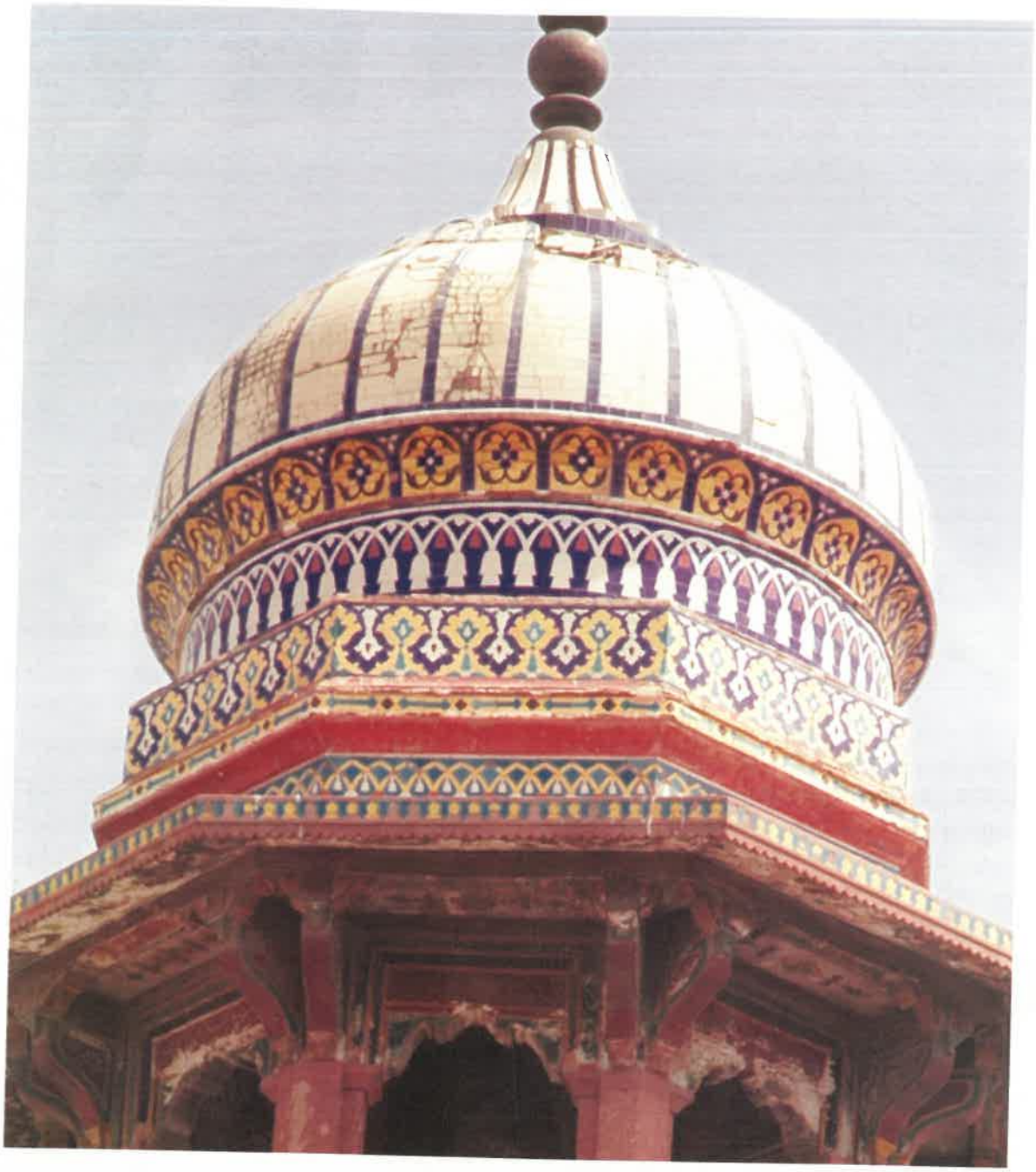


Fig. 69: Cupola of the minaret.

Above is an octagonal stilt, decorated with a continuous band of merlon pattern in blue, white and yellow. The octagon is topped by another stilt which is recessed, circular and then curved outward. The circular part and the curved both adorned with bands of exquisite beauty. The circular one bears geometric design of hanging tassels in white and pink against lapis blue and the curved area in blue, white, brown and dominating yellow, bears a design of star and flower formation. It is crowned by a dome, adorned with ribs in blue and white and topped by an inverted lotus finial, *fig.69*.

Central Arch of the Façade of Sanctuary



Fig. 73: Horizontal panel on the central arch.

Central arch is the most elegant part of the whole facade, divided into panels, bands of motifs and calligraphy, *fig.71*. In general arrangement it is very much similar to the outer façade of the main gate, except a few dissimilarities. The whole façade is crowned by a parapet decked with merlon design, which resembles the shape of palmate, the one we have already discussed above. The central arch is enframed on three sides by a calligraphic band, containing *āyāt* from the Holy Qur'ān. It consists of *Sūrah*: *xlviii, (al-Fatḥ.)* The whole *Sūrah* is written on this band. Another horizontal band of inscription, placed above the spandrel of the arch but below the horizontal crossing of *Sūrah al-Fatḥ*, contains *āyah* of *Sūrah ii*, (*al-Baqarah*), 255, generally known as *āyat al-Kursi*. Inscriptions on



Fig. 74: Close up of the band with quadrifoil and miḥrābi motifs.

the bands are in lapis blue against white. The calligraphic band framing the central façade is balanced by another, forming a rectangle around the spandrels of the arch, *fig.72*. It is not calligraphic rather contains ornamental motifs composed of quadrifoil and *miḥrābi* design. Quadrifoil is a stylised four petalled flower and *miḥrābi*, a formation seems to be created by stretching the quadrifoil from its centre in opposite directions, *fig.73*.

Vertical sides of the central arch have alternate horizontal and vertical panels filled with motifs almost similar to the adornments on the base of the minarets. Consecrated floral and geometric ornamentations on horizontal panels, *fig.74* and the vertical ones have traditional vase or stylised floral tree motifs composed within recessed arches, *fig.75*. But the lower most panels

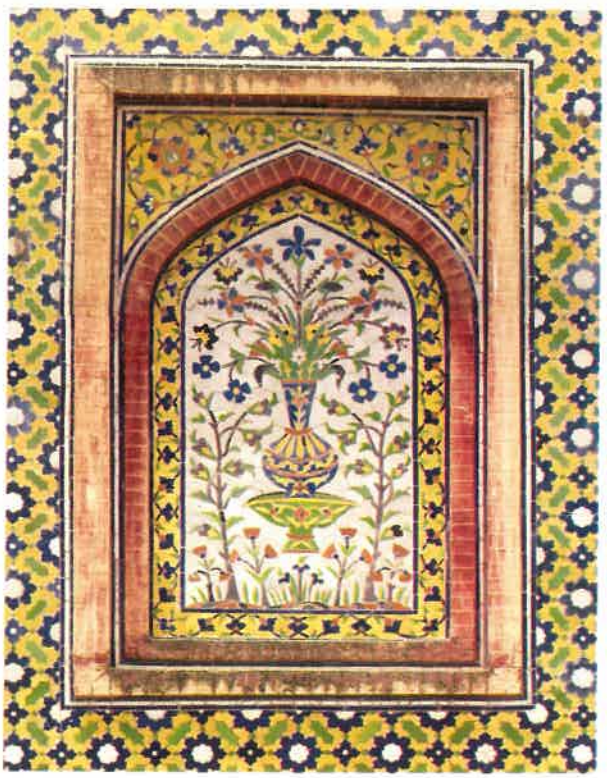


Fig. 75: Vertical panel on the side of the central arch.

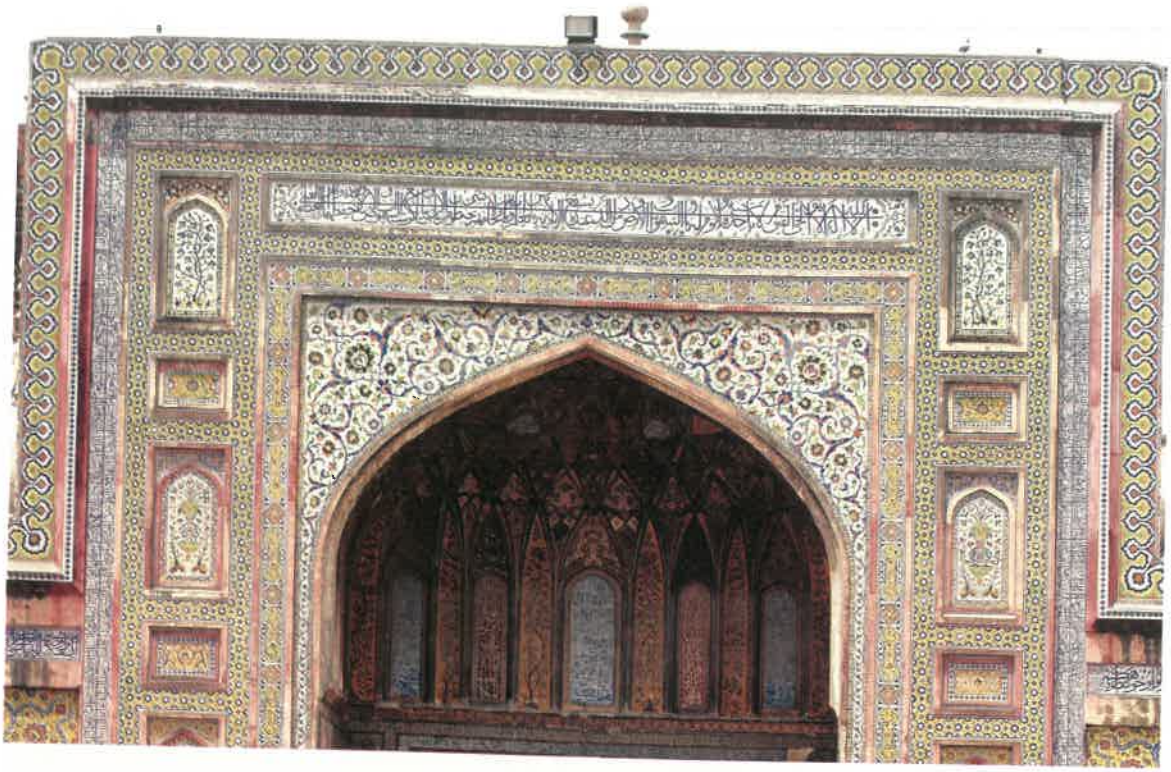


Fig. 71: Upper part of the central arch of the sanctuary.



Fig. 72: Decorative band enframing the central arch of the sanctuary.

Facade of the Sanctuary

Entering from the main gate, on the eastern side of the mosque, stepping into the courtyard one is at once fascinated by the façade of the sanctuary, flanking western quarters of the courtyard. Sanctuary is 14m deep and as wide as the breadth of the courtyard and so is its façade. Each visible portion of this section is provided with embellishments, mostly with glazed tiles, in *kāshīkāri*. It is apportioned into five sections, each having an arched opening. For convenient comprehension, these are marked as A, B, C, D and E, vide *plate. 4*. The central one is larger than the two on its each side. The central arch, labelled A, has a span of 6.40m and height till its apex is 13.70m, *fig.70*, and till top 14.50m. The side arches have a span of 4.50m, height up till apex is 6.10m and till end is 8.20m. The central arch bears marvellous adornments and arches flanking its north and south are identical to each other in every respect: decorative designs as well as combination of colours. The far northern that is arch B, is similar to the far southern that is arch E, and the *vice-versa.*



Fig. 83: Inner arch of the central façade.

fig.83. It is also enframed by a calligraphic band in the manner of the outer arch. But this time not with *Sūrah xlviii, (al-Fatḥ),* rather, from the northern vertical to the top horizontal panel, it bears *āyāt* from the *Sūrah vi, (al-An'ām)* and continuing the same band to the south vertical side, it is adorned with *Sūrah xxiii, (al-Mu'minūn)*. The spandrels have usual interspersed arabesques in pink and green on red ground, *fig.84*. Vertical sides of the arch have customary division of alternate square and rectangular ornamental panels, *fig.86*. These are placed



Fig. 84: Spandrel of the inner arch.

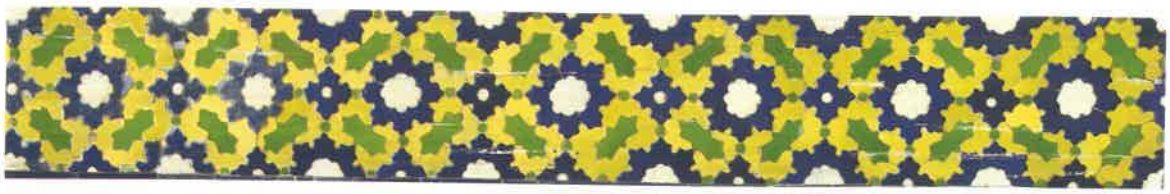


Fig. 76: A pattern that frames panels on the central arch.



Fig. 77.



Fig. 78: Floral frame of a panel containing inscriptions.



Fig. 79: Floral frame of a decorative panel.



Fig. 80: Floral frame of a panel containing inscriptions.



Fig. 81: Spandrels of Panels with arabesques.



Fig. 82: Spandrels of panels with arabesques.

on both sides of the arch are quoted with inscriptions instead of motifs. Moreover, each panel is surrounded by a repeated pattern of eight sided flower within a flower. This design serves as a background for all the panels of the façade of sanctuary but in various combinations of colours. For the panels of the central façade it is in yellow, blue and white, *fig.76,* and for the side panels it contains white, blue and shades of brown, *fig.77.* All the bands and panels are provided with an additional frame of small bricks of *tāzakāri* that is brick imitation. All the vertical and horizontal panels carry additional frames, mostly floral in design, *figs.78-80* and the vertical ones are kept within painted arches the spandrels of which have minute arabesques, *figs.81-82.*

The central arch of the façade leads to the smaller arch which is a bit recessed and surmounted by a conch, similar in general appearance to the main gate of the mosque,



Fig. 87: Cornice of the recessed central arch.

and decorative motifs. These pointed arches are surmounted by stalactites of exquisite beauty, embellishing the domed ceiling with elegance. Another interesting feature of the adornments is the use of calligraphy, crowning the apex in semi-circular form, around a half lotus flower, *fig.88*. Each compartment of the stalactite is provided with floral ornaments that have variety of forms and colours. Thus the area forming the inner smaller arch of the central façade is decorated with deep colours that are comparatively warmer but give depth to the already recessed area and the outer surface of the façade has brighter tonality, dominated by white and lapis blue with accents of light green, brown pinks and yellow. Comparing the spandrels of the larger arch with the smaller one, it is apparent that the outer larger arch has light and brilliant combination of colours and the inner has deeper tonality, although both have arabesques renditions. So it projects the outer part and keeps the recessed area at its place, enhancing the most beautiful part of the courtyard through contrasts. Thus the central façade stands majestically, flanked on both sides by embellished arches, two on each side but smaller in comparison to the central one. These too are adorned with the usual arabesques, decorative and calligraphic panels and bands, provided with a variety of frames.



Fig. 88: Calligraphy adorning apex of the central arch.



Fig. 85.

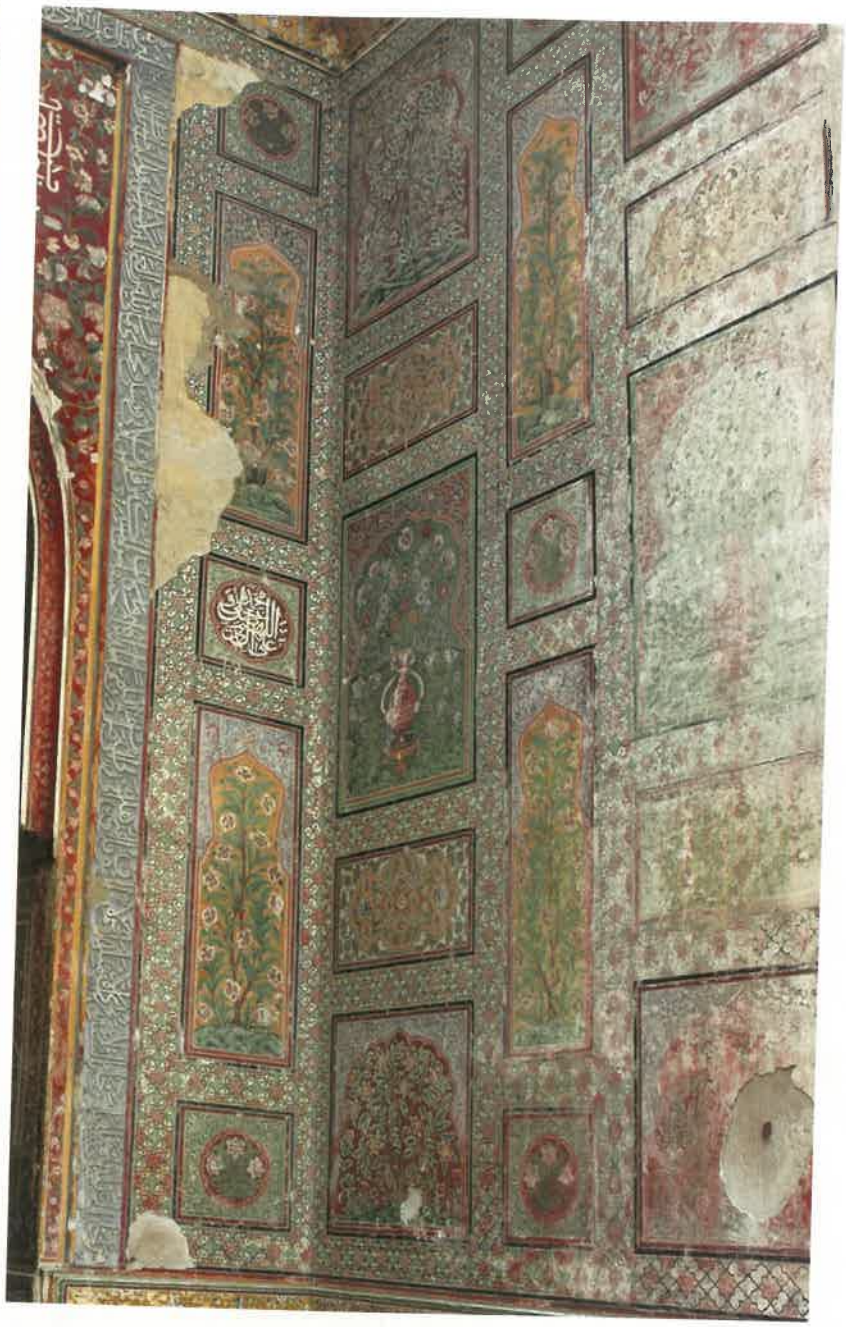


Fig. 86: Division of walls flanking the recessed arch.

against repeated geometric design in pink green and white, which provides frames for all the panels, *fig.85*. Cornice and the inside curved area below, have ornamental bands. The projected part has geometric shapes in white on red, resembling the modern computerised designs and curved area of the cornice has multi-coloured design, *fig.87,* with dominating ochre that creates continuity with the upper vertical panels, having tree motif.

The area above cornice is divided into eleven vertical panels on front in the shape of pointed arches, adorned with calligraphy and tree motifs, successively, *fig.89*. The side walls of this section, too, retain similar arch shaped panels bedecked with calligraphic



Fig. 92: Northern side of the courtyard.

between two smaller arches of the façade have vertical rectangular panels: two on each, retaining holy inscriptions, comprising *aḥādīth*. These panels are also recessed like that of the central façade and kept within outer frames of pointed arches, made up of *tazākāri*, the spandrels of which also bear arabesque designs.

The panels have a painted outer frame, composed of the usual repeated pattern of eight sided flower within a flower in white, blue and shades of brown, spreading all around the panels. Thus, it creates unity in diversity. Each panel of inscriptions bears an additional painted frame. Further, horizontal bands of inscriptions surmount each arch and the area between arches. Therefore, the most elegant part flanking courtyard is the facade of sanctuary but outer walls of the *ḥujrās* are also decked with motifs.

Ḥujrās Flanking Courtyard

All the entrance doors of *ḥujrās* are placed within blind arches, the spandrels of which have arabesques of great variety. Inside the spandrels and crowning door way of each *ḥujra* is a rectangular horizontal panel decked with floral plant motif, placed within a formation of two reclining cusped arches. The composing of all these panels is generally similar except the plant motifs on the panels, arabesques on the spandrels and specially their colour combinations. Designs of the spandrels and the panels inside have contrasting but balanced colour combinations. If spandrels of an *ḥujra* are white, the rectangular panel



Fig. 93: Spandrels of blind arches enframing the entrance doors of ḥujrās.



Fig. 94: Spandrels of blind arches enframing the entrance doors of ḥujrās.



Fig. 89: Calligraphy adorning apex of the central arch.

Spandrels of the side arches also contain intertwining arabesques, different in pattern from the central arch. But these arches retain an interesting similarity: the far northern arch that is arch B is identical in ornamentation to the far southern or arch E, and the northern or C is similar to the southern that is arch D. Spandrels of the arch B, have interlacing pattern in yellow and white against blue background, *fig.90* and exactly similar design with same combination of colours exists on the arch E. Arch C, has blue and brown design on yellow background, *fig.91,* and exactly similar design and colours exists on the arch D. The walls



Fig. 90: Spandrels of the far-northern and far-southern arches labelled as arches: B, and E, of the sanctuary.



Fig. 91: Spandrels of the northern and southern arches, labelled as arches: C, and D, of the sanctuary.



Fig. 97: Parapets on north and south of the courtyard.



Fig. 98: Vases alternated by perforated screens on the northern and southern facades.

There are facades in the centre of the northern and southern lines of *ḥujrās,* twice as high as their sides, *fig.96:* having doorways with staircases, leading to the upper floor. The northern and the southern facades of the courtyard are almost identical, which is usual and customary to the other sections of this mosque. For ornamentation, these are divided up, both ways: horizontally and vertically into three sections. The upper most row below the parapet has vase motifs; the central part has two panels containing vases alternated by perforated stone screens that are three in number, *fig.98.* Both the vases are identical that is brown and yellow against white background. On both sides of this section, comparatively larger panels exist, each containing blue vase on yellow ground, having multicoloured flowers and plants, *fig.99.* Below this are rectangular vertical panels, one on either side, decked with tree motif inside a recessed pointed arch. After that comes the customary decoration of entrances of the *ḥujrās*. The central part below, the panels, containing vases and screens have blind arches above the main door, spandrels of which retain arabesques with dominating blue. Smaller spandrels below the larger ones, surmounting the entrance gate, leading to the staircase of northern and southern facades, are in dominating white colour. In northern façade, below the apex of the blind arch, between the two spandrels, is a small arched ventilator, surmounted by the tiny ornamented spandrels *fig.92*, the lower panel of which retains a vase motif. Whereas, in the southern façade instead of the tiny arched ventilator, a square ornamental panel is fixed with a vase motif, placed inside an arched representation. The spandrels of that arch do have arabesques, *fig.96*. The northern and southern façades are identical like the adornments of the *ḥujrās*, except the only variation. Ornamentation on either side of the facades of both the *ḥujrās* that is to their left and right are exactly alike. This is how Mughals retained symmetry in their edifices.



Fig. 99: Identical right and left sides of the southern façade.



Fig. 95: Spandrels of blind arch enframing entrance doors of ḥujrās.

below it will be yellow and green but if arabesques on spandrels are blue, the rectangle below will have white and yellow design. If the spandrels are yellow, the rectangle will have white and blue combination or *vice- versa, figs.92-95*. Meaning contrasting combinations are joined together to create beauty. The motif adoring parapet above *ḥujrās* is akin to the one crowning walls of the façade of sanctuary, which seems dissimilar at a glance. But a closer view reveals that the motif used is exactly same in both the parapets, *fig.97* but here it is just outlined not completely filled with colours like the parapet of the façade of sanctuary.

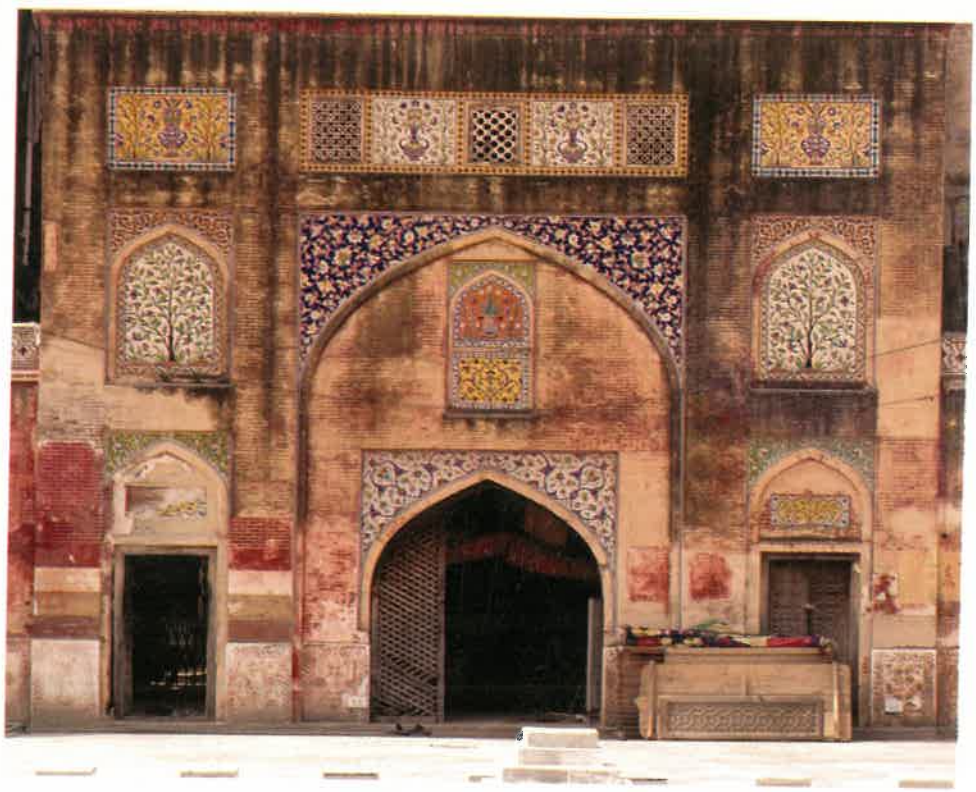


Fig. 96: Façade of the southern ḥujrās.

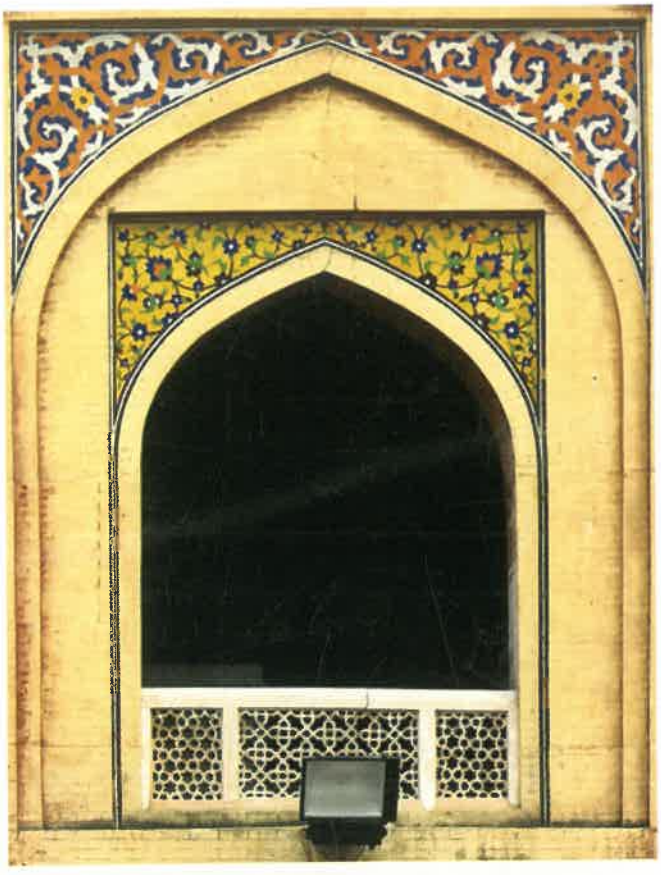


Fig. 101: Jharoka of the eastern façade.

before general masses, who gathered around their palaces on special occasions, *fig.101*. A rectangular horizontal panel of calligraphy is placed below the window. It surmounts the arched opening, through which one enters into the courtyard. Spandrels of this arch are also decked with arabesques in the most conspicuous blue. Both sides that is the left and right from centre of the façade are divided equally. Each into three vertical lines of horizontal and vertical panels slightly recessed from the surface. These panels retain within decorative arches, vases with flower arrangements and floral trees. *jharoka* in this section is another exception. The central panel, instead of carrying a vase retains a rectangular opening toped by a blind arch, spandrels of which have motifs, *fig.102*. Decorative scheme in the central part is enhanced by the simple plain space, either to give rest to the eye or as a pictorial device, to enhance beauty of the structure.

within another blind arch within an arched opening, thus keeping three within one. Spandrels of all the three are decked with arabesques in a variety of colours. The larger one has dominating white along blue, green, pink and brown, below, is the prominent lapis blue and the inner most crowning the arched window opening, has dominant yellow. The arched window here is like the *jharoka*, used by Mughal emperors to appear

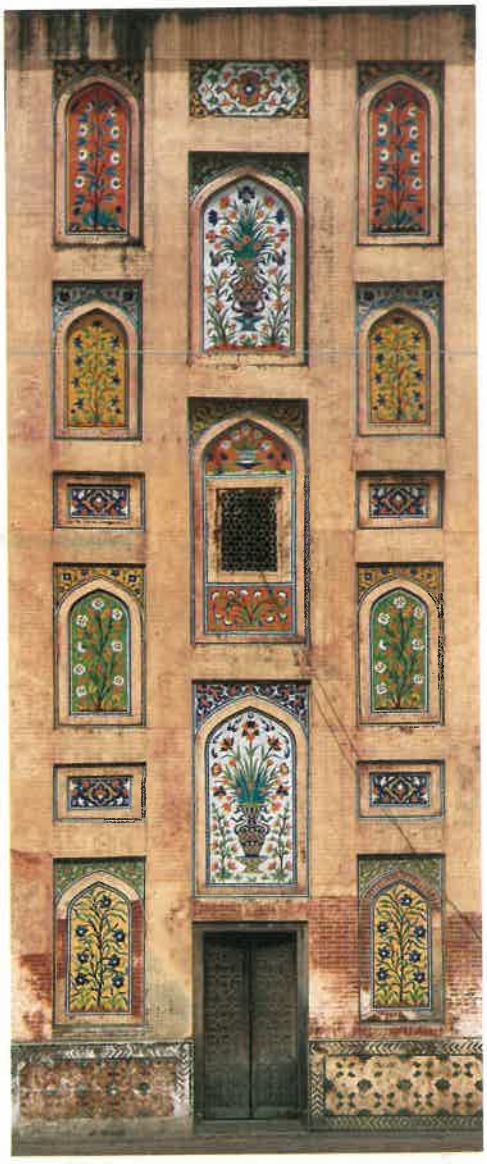


Fig. 102: Panels decorating north and south of the eastern façade.

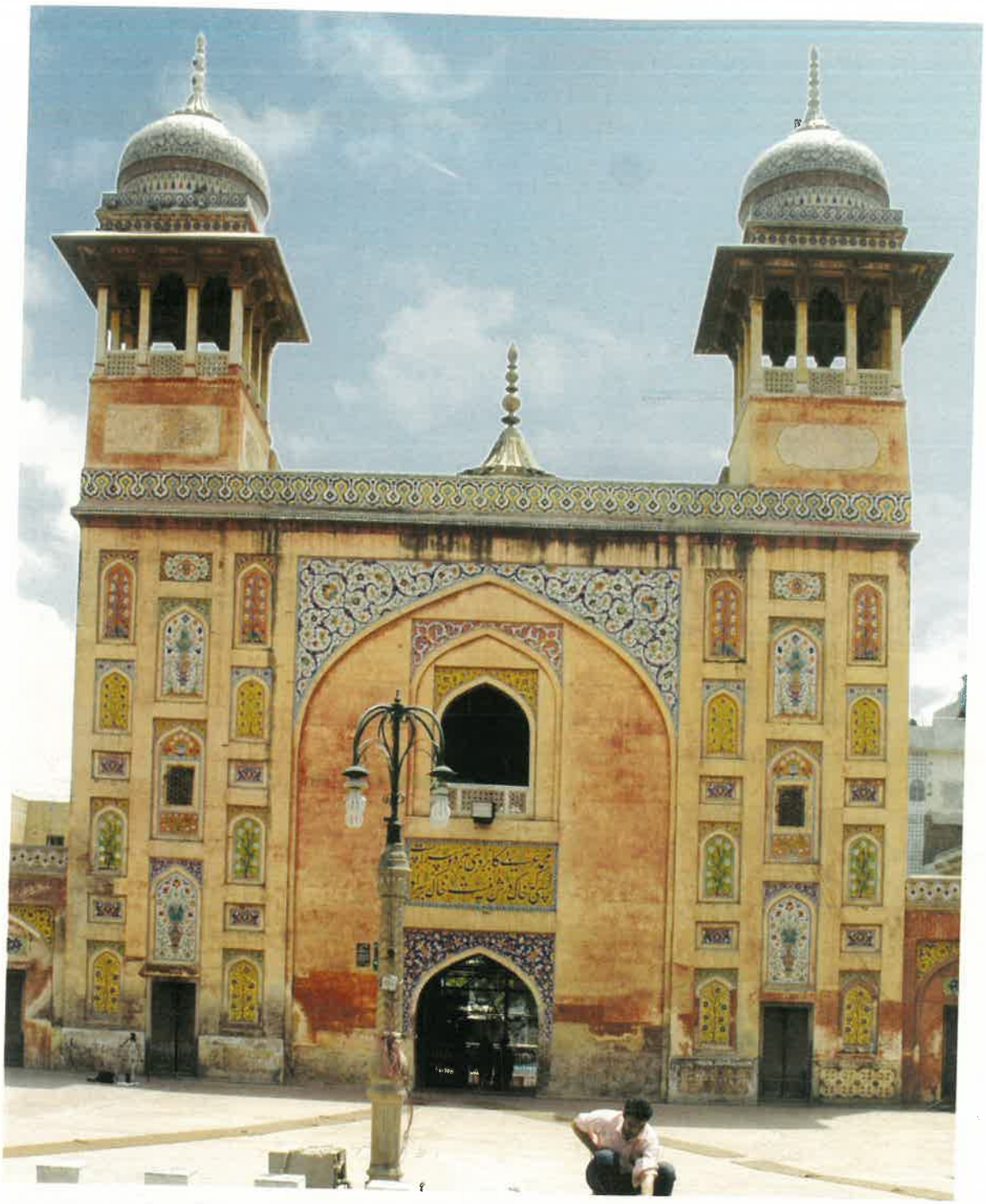


Fig. 100: Eastern Façade of the main portal, facing courtyard.

The Eastern Facade

The façade of the main portal, facing the courtyard stands elegantly opposite to the western one. It is embellished with usual vertical and horizontal panels retaining motifs, *fig.100*. The central part carries a bit unusual appearance because it keeps a blind arch

Far-northern *Iwān* of the Sanctuary

The sanctuary is entered through five archways, all equally fascinating. Each entrance is broad enough to accommodate elegant ornamentations. It has a domed ceiling, two blind arches each, on its northern and southern walls, all filled with painted decorations. These are divided into panels of variegated dimensions through a band composed of eight pointed stars, *fig.109*. The panels created thus contain vase motifs, tree motifs, carpet like formation and concentric geometric designs kept within stylised two fold cusped arches, placed vertically as well as horizontally, *figs.106-108*. The spandrels of which are adorned with arabesques of great beauty. Colours used are contrasting that is light against dark and dark against light. If background is light coloured, it is provided with darker vegetation and *vice-versa*



Fig. 106: Floral tree on a panel of iwān B.



Fig. 107: Carpet motif on the iwān B.

The domed ceiling above is made up of extremely intricate formation of stalactites that make a complex pattern of stars, composed of wedges and other geometric shapes. The central part of the ceiling has a six pointed star in light pink, surrounded by another that is twelve pointed, further surrounded by diamond and wedge shapes of various sizes that amazingly turn into six and then twelve pointed stars. Thus, the outer most circular arrangement of stalactites forms a twelve pointed star, each corner of which is culminated at a small six pointed star. The stalactites descend on the squinches, forming a continuous pattern. These are concentric to six pointed stars on the ceiling and five pointed on the soffits of the arches. Each compartment of the stalactite is filled either with delicate floral or geometric design but all organic, *figs. 110-111*.



Fig. 103: Northern wall of iwān B of the sanctuary.

Sanctuary of the Mosque

Sanctuary of the mosque is a vast area which is intrizcately decorated with a wide range of motifs and inscriptions. Not a single centimetre of this part is left without embellishments, *fig.103-105*.

The entrance arches of the sanctuary, its *miḥrābs*, niches, intersecting arches and domed ceilings have far superior ornamentations. But like its outer façade, the far northern bay of the sanctuary that is bay B, is similar in every respect to the far southern or bay E, as we call it, and northern or bay C, to the southern or bay D. While central part of the sanctuary is the most elegantly decorated portion and it is a fine display of aesthetic taste of the Mughals. Generally the motifs decorating various sections of the sanctuary are vases, filled with flowers, floral trees, a variety of geometric designs and above all inscriptions. Though calligraphy is an essential part of the decorative scheme of the mosque but it will be discussed in detail in the chapter on inscriptions.



Fig. 104: Band framing panels.



Fig. 105: Vase adorning apex of the blind arch of northern wall of iwān B.



Fig. 112: Double borders at the rim of soffits of iwān B.

The soffits of both the arches of the *iwān* have a double band on both sides of their arcs: one broader and the other smaller. The broad band has interlacing intricate floral design of great elegance. It consists of multi-coloured floral vine on red ground. The inner band, which is comparatively thin, retains geometric patterns that are similar to the modern computerised designs, black and white in colours, *fig.112*. The apex of the arch retains a stretched star called *miḥrābi* design, carrying inscriptions. Immediately below the stalactites there are panels: the upper ones have traditional tree motifs painted inside pointed recessed arches and the lower have vase motifs inside cusped arches. The painted lower most parts of the arch have a dado of geometric patterns.



Fig. 113: Vase on the soffit of the iwān B.

Northern *Iwān* of the Sanctuary

The second entrance of the sanctuary from north that is also labelled *iwān* C appears to be similar in general arrangement of adornments to the *iwān* B. The soffits of arches of both the *iwāns*, have exactly similar double band borders, stalactite ornamentations, and the surmounting calligraphic panel at their apices, all alike in representation. But the inscription and the forms, bearing calligraphy are dissimilar. The inscription in *iwān* C is retained within a shape that resembles a sea shell, instead of the *miḥrābi* of the *iwān B*. The northern and southern walls that retain the form of blind arches are similar in all these sections: in their



Fig. 108: Geometric design on the iwān B.



Fig.109: Band of eight pointed stars framing panels.



Fig. 110: Stalactites on the domed ceiling of the iwān B.



Fig. 111: Stalactites on the ceiling of the iwān B.



Fig. 116: Panel with geometric designs in the iwān C.



Fig. 117: Natural representation of a tree with Chinese clouds in iwān C of the sanctuary.



Fig. 118: Tree motif on the soffit of the iwān C.



Fig.119: Panel on the soffit above dado in iwān C.

Main Chamber of Sanctuary of the Mosque

Sanctuary of the mosque is a wonderful display of the skill of Muslim artists in adorning sacred edifices, *fig.120.* It is divided up into five compartments through four transverse arches, labelled a, b, c and d, successively from north, and surmounted by five low domes, having five double *miḥrābs* on its western wall, all fully equipped with beautifully painted ornamentations. Starting from the far-northern section, it is perceived that the northern wall of the sanctuary is quite akin to the northern wall of the *iwān* B.

This wall has arched formation surrounded by a double ornamental band, the upper one composed of

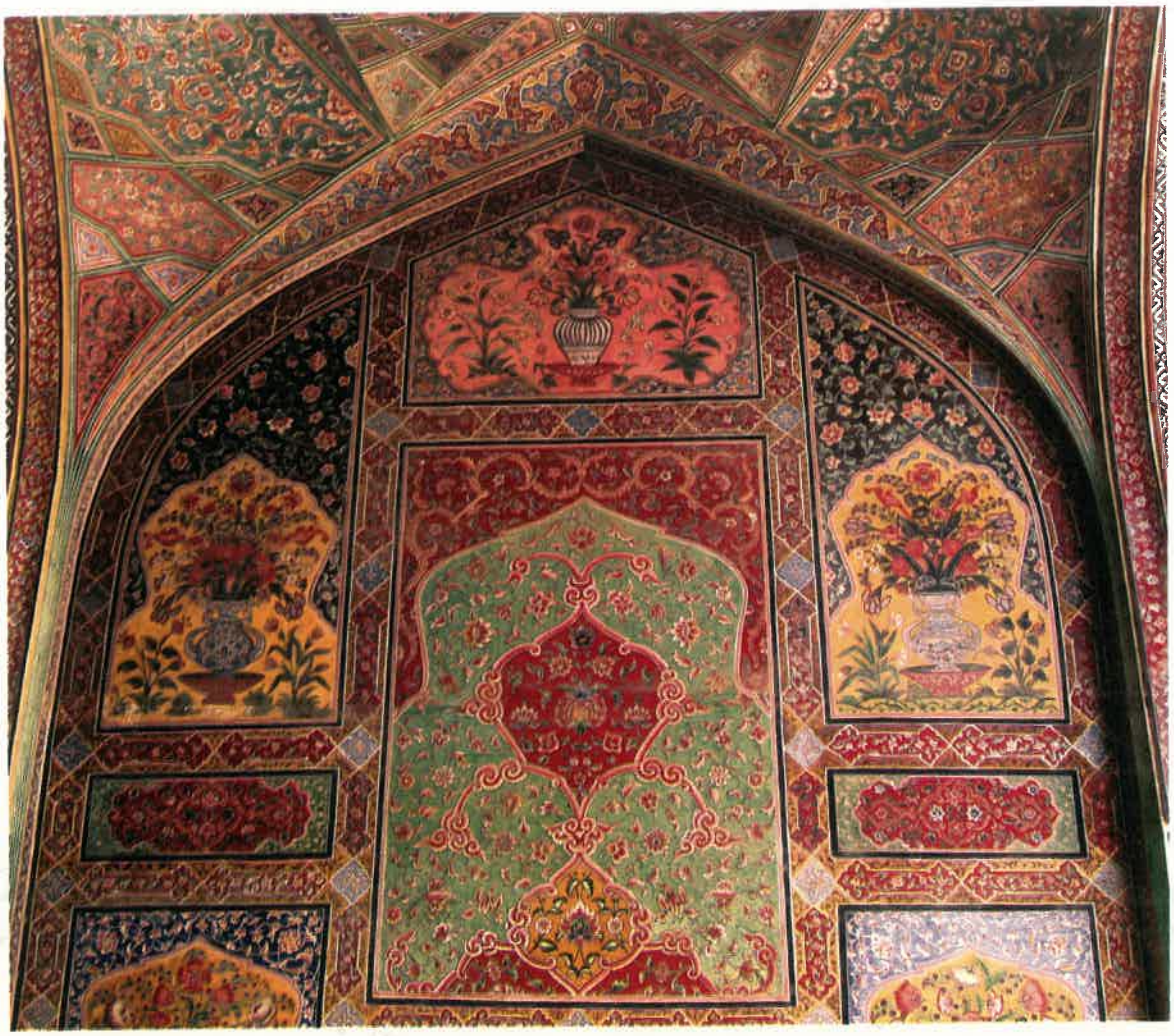


Fig. 114: Iwān C of the sanctuary.

division into vertical and horizontal panels but the bands that divide those into different sections are dissimilar in both the arches. In *iwān* C, it is formed by a repeated pattern of two *miḥrābi* and one quadrifoil, *fig.115,* dividing the wall as well as providing frames to the panels. Moreover, the arabesques, floral designs, plant motifs and vase motifs, are also not identical but their placing is exactly the same, *figs.113-119.* Another interesting similarity



Fig. 115: Quadrifoil and miḥrābi design that enframe all the panels of iwān C.

retained by all the arches is the identical arrangement of their northern and southern walls. In the arch B, northern wall is exactly alike, in arrangement, motifs and colour scheme to the southern wall and this internal similarity exists in all the other arches, including the central one which is though unique of its kind.



Fig. 121: Double border of the far-northern sanctuary.



Fig. 123: Panel on the far northern wall of the sanctuary.

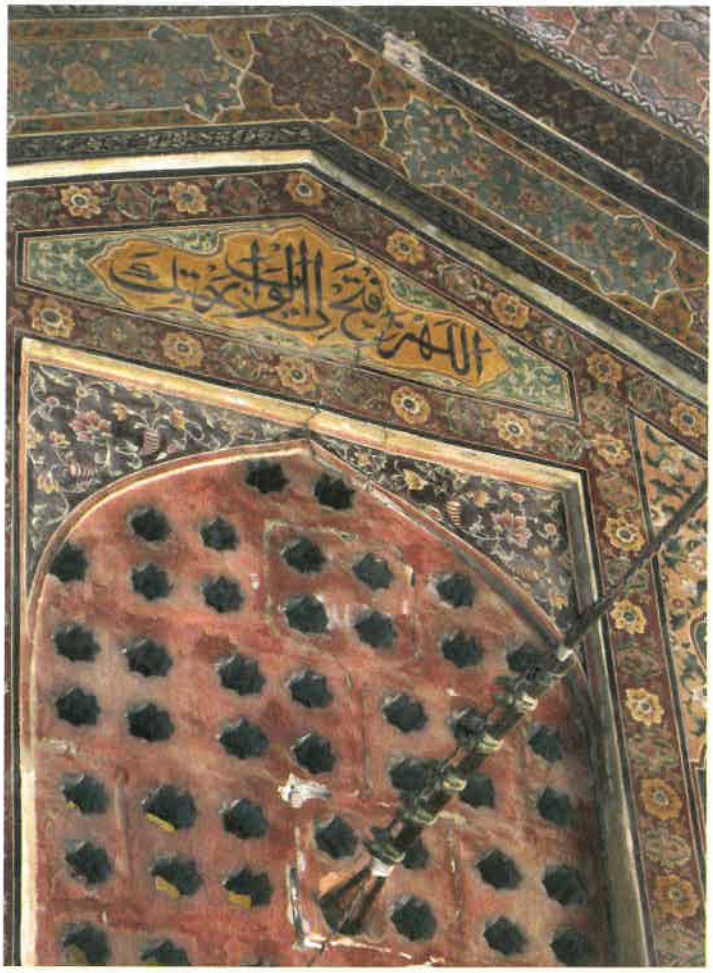


Fig. 122: Far-northern wall of the sanctuary.

eight pointed star alternated by another which is six pointed and compressed. The second band, which is a little bit recessed from the outer one, has almost similar eight pointed stars alternated by the traditional *miḥrābi* design, *fig.121.* Major sections of the wall are devised by this band into panels, retaining either vase motif or tree motif, *fig.123.* Vases depicted, have a variety of shapes and colours and so are trees represented in these panels. These are placed within painted cusped arches, the spandrels of which have usual arabesque ornamentations.

Despite all these similarities, a five sided panel exactly below the apex of the arch retains an Arabic inscription in black and below it is a panel making perforated screen of eight pointed stars, inside a pointed blind arch, *fig.122.*

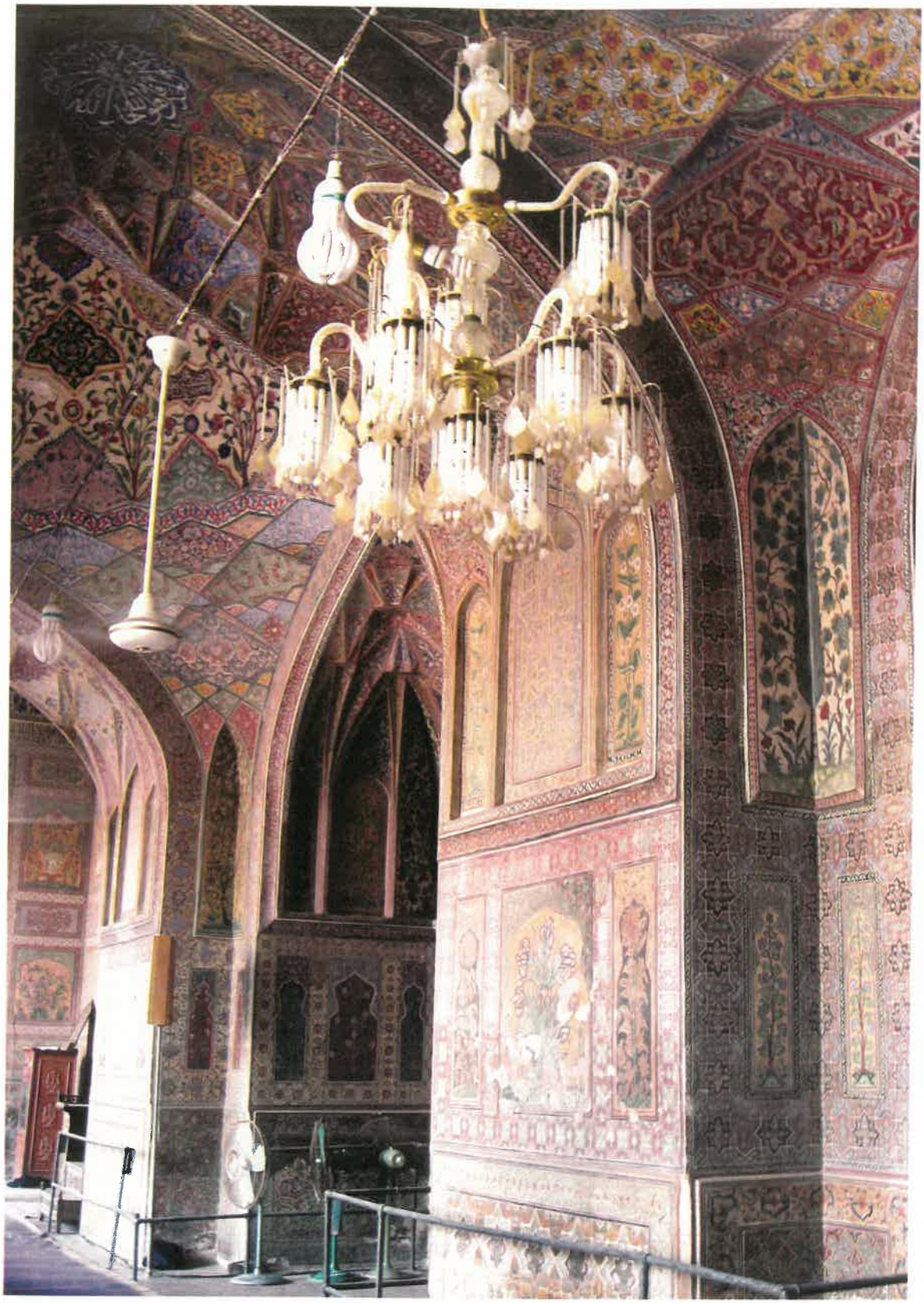


Fig. 120: Sanctuary of the mosque.

the cornice and the enframed dado. Similar is the arrangement of the smaller niche. The top most part of *miḥrāb* has rectangular vertical calligraphic panels almost similar to the central arch (arch A) of the facade. The apex too, retains a semi-circular stucco band decked with inscriptions, reminding the believers *"there is no god but Allah: the proprietor, the lasting"*. The stalactites emerging from the panels of inscriptions below are concentric to this circular inscription of the apex. There are wedge-shaped, diamond-shaped, octagonal, and decagonal shaped stalactites, carrying within, floral ornaments and geometric designs of tasteful richness, surmounting the calligraphic panels below, *fig.124*. Among the five calligraphic panels the central one is broader adorning the words in Arabic, *"Allah is Sufficient"*. The squinches on both sides have floral plant motifs, *fig.125*. The side walls have two panels on each side, containing tree motifs. Each calligraphic panel is provided with a frame of floral vines, composed of leaves and flowers of great variety. These are curled and entangled, forming interlacing designs. On the central panel, which is comparatively larger, a broader band is employed, containing multi-coloured flowers and green leaves on red background, *fig.127*. Panels next to the central one carry little bit thin frames of multi-coloured floral vine on green ground, *fig.126*. The outer most, panels of inscriptions carry frames of single stylised leaf arranged in zigzag order around the panels. Moreover, bands below and above the cornice are similar to the double band used around the arcs of the arches of



Fig. 125: Tree in the squinch of the miḥrāb.



Fig. 126: Border of panels around the central one.



Fig. 127: Border of central panel in the miḥrāb.



Fig. 128: Double border of cornice in the miḥrāb.

The permeable stars seem to have been taken from the painted bands because these are also eight pointed. Panels below this perforated screen retain another double frame, composed of flowers. Exactly identical embellishments are repeated on the far southern wall of the sanctuary, a typical Mughal trait of composing artefacts.

Far-northern *Miḥrāb* of the Sanctuary

The western wall of the sanctuary has five *miḥrābs*, one in each section, denoted again by G, H, I, J and K. these are double: one larger and another smaller within. This one is labelled as *miḥrāb* G, for being linked with first bay from the north and the rest are marked successively as H, I, J, and K. These are all similar in the general arrangement of their adornments, except inscriptions but the central *miḥrāb* has elaborate ornamentations that are novel in comparison to the rest. Starting from the *miḥrāb* G, it is observed that a smaller *niche* is recessed within a larger arch, which seems to be a minor replica of the central arch (arch A), of entrance façade of the sanctuary. The dissimilarity lies in the smaller arch which is here in the form of a closed niche that was an arched opening otherwise. This area is divided up into three sections: the half domed area above the cornice, part below

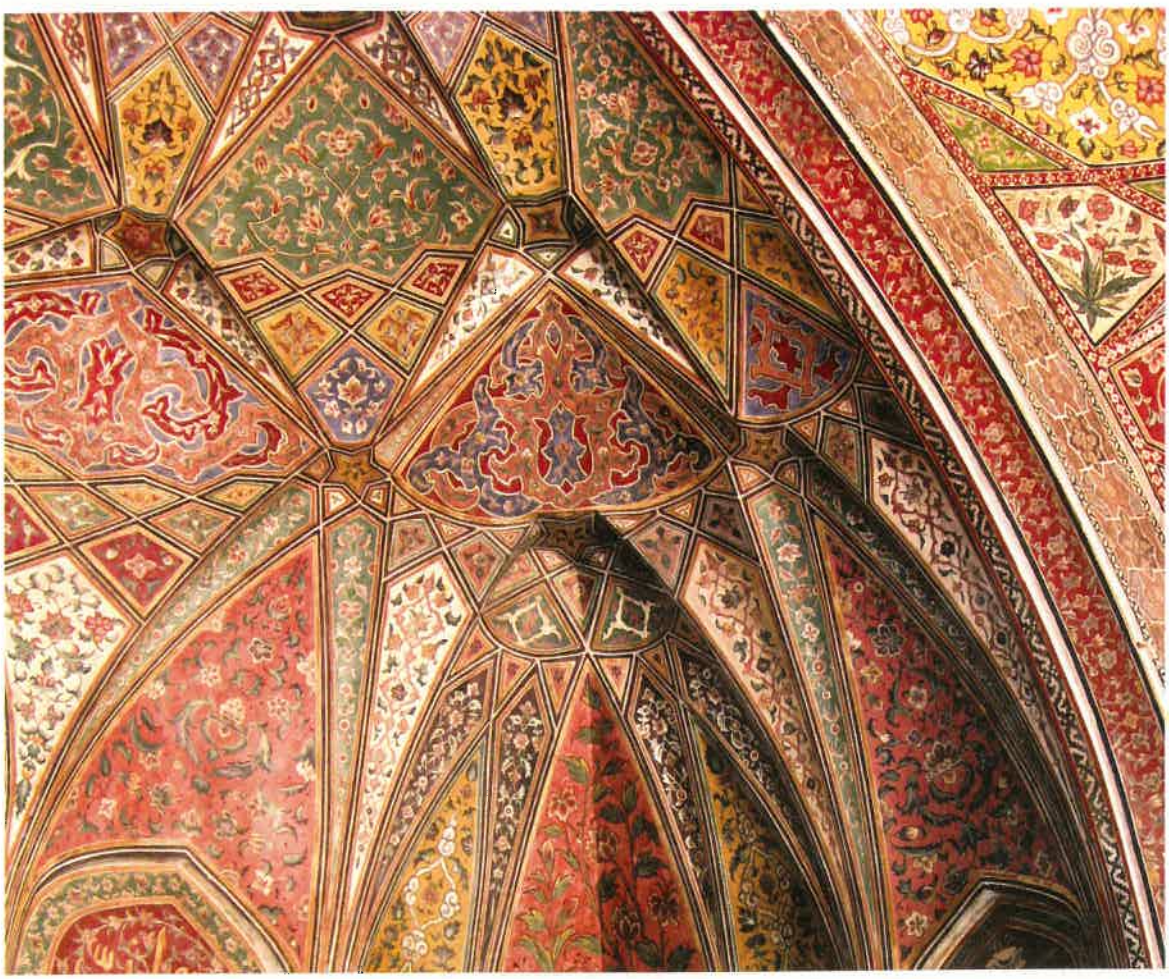


Fig. 124: Stalactites in the miḥrāb G.



Fig. 132: Border framing niche of miḥrāb G.



Fig. 133: Border framing panels in miḥrāb G.

sides of the *miḥrāb* G containing tree motif inside the cusped arches, *fig.132*. A continuous pattern of quadrifoils in yellow, surrounded diagonally from four sides by compressed stars in green, intersected at each corner by eight petalled flowers that are red in colour, *fig.133*. This pattern is used as background around all the panels.

Ceiling of the Sanctuary

The most interesting parts of the sanctuary are its domed ceilings, each section of which is adorned with novel forms of ornamentation. The far northern ceiling is decorated with an intricate stylised *sūriya* motif, *fig.134*. The sixteen pointed star in the centre denotes the sun disc, *fig.135* and its rays resembling stylised petals placed in two rows around the

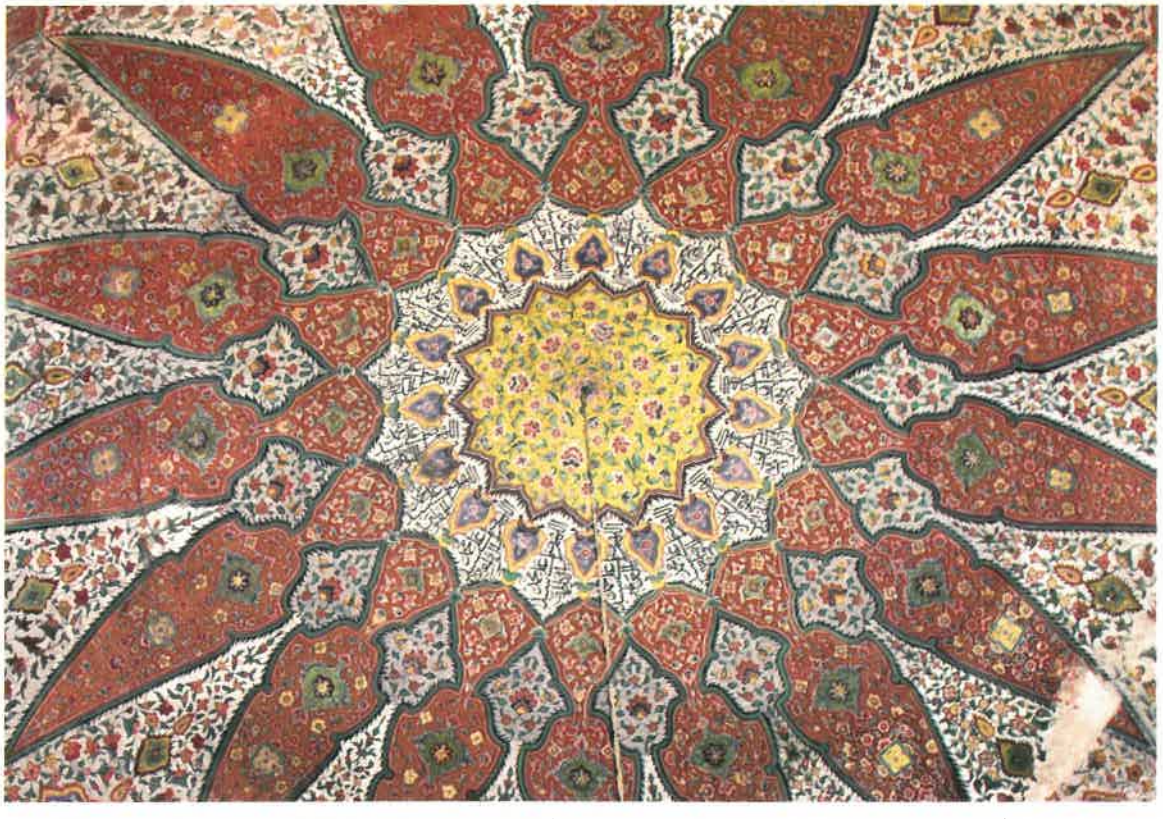


Fig. 134: Sūriya motif on the ceiling of the first bay from north.



Fig. 129: Frame of the outer most panels.

iwān of that part of the sanctuary, *figs.128-129.*

Far-northern smaller Niche

The central part below the cornice has an arched niche, which is almost a miniature replica of the upper part. The top most area of this niche is also half domed, adorned with stalactites. But this time these are not surmounted on calligraphic panels rather placed on vase and floral plant motifs retained on panels, *fig.130.* The lower most part of it once had a dado composed of quadrifoil and compressed star that have been vanished by the time.

Moreover, this section is pentagonal, devised into five sides. Below the cornice and framing the conch of the lower niche is the most interesting ornament, it is a band in stucco, bearing the names of Allah among the ninety nine, starting from the lower northern side of the niche with the word *Bismillah*. These are arranged in

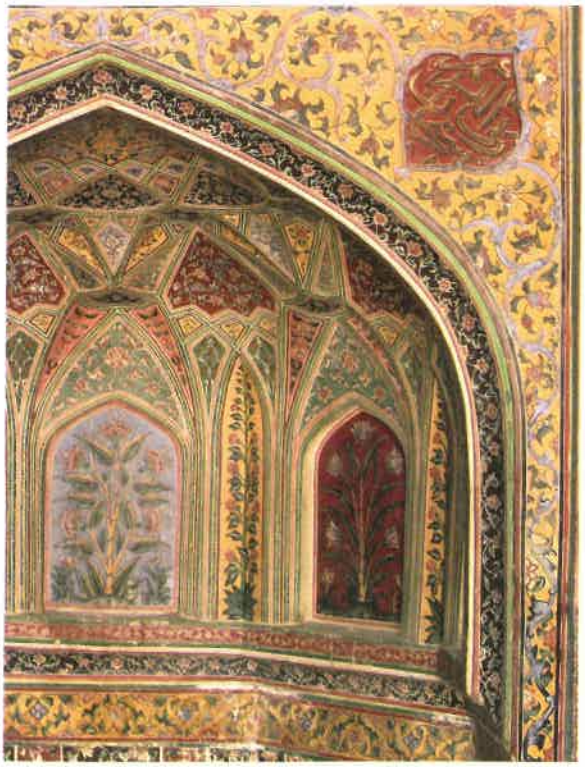


Fig. 130: Parts of the niche of the miḥrāb G.



Fig. 131: Panels below cornice of the larger miḥrāb G.

continuous merlon shapes in sky blue and white, intersected by inverted merlons in red, decked with intricate designing, which gives the look of a palmate bordering the rim of a tent. The spandrels of the arch, inside this band has arabesques which are a usual feature of the mosque, but this time it also contains pendent like forms on the upper corners of the spandrels, placed diagonally and adorned with a small palm leaf at its upper corner and a small trefoil at its lower edge that adds elegance to its beautiful shape. Framing the arc of the niche is a delicate band of small flowers in pink green and yellow against black background that gives finished effect to the adornments of the arch, *fig.131.* There are panels on both



Fig. 137: Arabesques on petals and adjacent areas.



Fig: 138: Arabesques in between rays of sūriya motif.

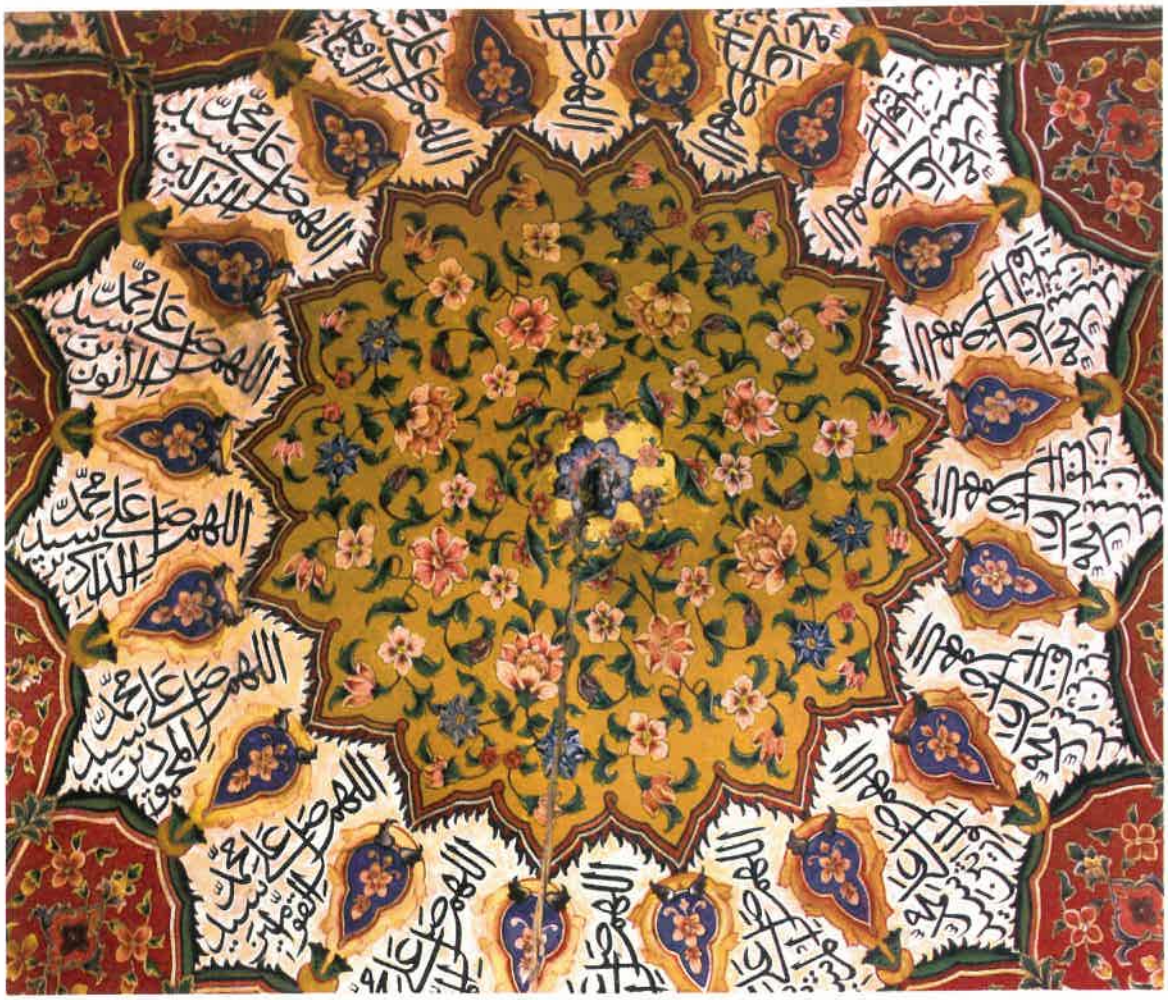


Fig. 135: Sixteen pointed star, central part of the sūriya motif.



Fig. 136: A shape connecting rays of sūriya motif.

star. The inner circle of the smaller stylised rays that are white in colour carries *darūd* on the prophet Muḥammad (pbuh) by addressing him with different names that are his attributes. In between the rays are elegant pendent shapes, *fig.136,* that join the sun disc with outer most red rays surrounded it. The red rays are larger in size and ornamented with floral designs, repeated in all the petals alike, *fig.137.*

The central star is not devoid of embellishments, it too retains gorgeous arabesques in it. Spaces between the larger petals are not blank; these are elegantly adorned with floral and vegetal motifs in pinks, yellow and greens on white ground, *fig.138.* Around this petalled formation of sun rays, there is another motif, commonly known as *miḥrābi,* surrounding the *sūriya* motif and adorned with *darūd.* Then another row of pendant like motifs, ornamented with flora on green ground making a closed circle around it, gradually emerges into stalactites, *fig.140.* The squinches below stalactites have vertical panels

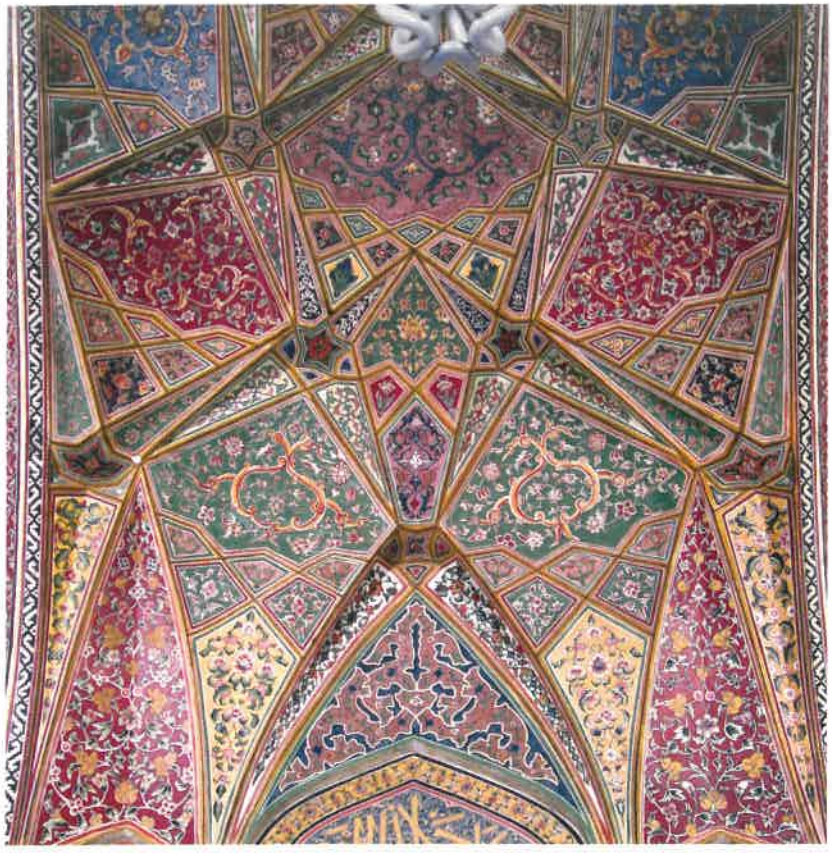


Fig. 142: Stalactites crowning panels on the eastern and western walls of the transverse arch: 1.



Fig. 143: Decorative panel on both sides of panel bearing inscriptions.

of stalactite formations, turning into another eight pointed star. Each section of the stalactites bears ornamental floral and vegetal motifs in elegant combination of colours, *fig.141*. Moreover, both the arcs of the arch are marked by a double decorative band, which is exactly similar to the one adorning the rim of the entrance arch of *iwān* B of the sanctuary, *fig.128*.

The stalactite formations, emerging from the apex, surmount panels on the eastern and the western walls of the arch, containing three panels on either side. The central one is larger among the three and ornamented with inscriptions, *fig.142*

The western wall of each transverse arch contains Qur'ānic *āyāt* and the eastern wall has exactly similar arrangement but the calligraphic panel, here, retains *ḥadīth* instead of the Qur'ānic *āyah*. The calligraphic panel is surrounded on both sides by smaller and thinner panels, containing floral trees, one on either side, *fig.143*. All are placed within pointed arches, having additional frames, broader for the central panel, *fig.145*, and narrower for the side ones, *fig.144*. The central frame consists of multi-coloured floral vine placed on ochre ground and the side ones are composed of quadrifoil in black against white. Moreover, the double band adorning the rim of the arc is further carried below these panels giving it an additional frame. The lower part of this wall, above dado is further divided into



Fig.139: The Cypresses in squinches.



Fig.140: Border encircling the ceiling.



Fig.141: Motifs within stalactites.

each carrying a cypress tree, *fig.139*, entangled by a grape vine with bunches of grapes, hanging on both sides; all kept within painted pointed arches. These are placed on squinches formed in the sanctuary by transverse arches. Apart from the cypress trees some of the squinches retain floral trees that are quite naturalistically rendered. Thus tree is the general motif that adorns squinches of the sanctuary.

Transverse Arches

The region between two domed parts of the sanctuary, are divided by transverse arches. These are total four in the sanctuary, marked as 1, 2, 3, and 4, dividing it into five sections. These are almost alike in style and adornments. The apices of the soffits of all these arches are ornamented with *Sūrah: cxii (al-Ikhlāṣ),* placed in a sixteen sided star, centred by undulating circle containing *Bismillah*. Both the inscriptions are moulded in relief form, painted on sky blue with white. It is further surrounded by stalactites of varying shapes and sizes, transforming into an eight pointed star, which is further added with other rows

eight pointed green star, making a quadrifoil formation between the two rows which is yellow in colour, *fig.148*. Speciality of these stars is in their knotted points. Each point seems to be composed of a systematic knot, creating a unique look. The star and quadrifoil formations are further decorated with intricate floral ornamentations. It is surrounded by a broader band of interlacing design of delicate flowers and leaves in red pink and white on a green ground, *fig.149*. The delicacy of this frame is in contrast to the heavy geometric forms inside. But the artists have tried to shed this heaviness by adorning the geometric section with elegant floral motifs that seem quite natural at certain places. The opposite walls of the transverse arches are exactly like except the inscriptions decorating the upper central panel. The eastern wall of each transverse arch retains an *ḥadīth* and the western carries Qur'ānic verses; rest of the decoration is exactly similar.



Fig. 148: Dado of the far-northern transverse arch.



Fig. 149: Border of dado of the far-northern transverse arch.

Northern *Iwān* of the Sanctuary

The general arrangement of the décor of entrance arch of the sanctuary, second from the north, labelled arch C, is almost analogous to the first one that is arch B. Starting from the soffit of the arch, it is discernible that panels, bands and stalactites, all appear almost alike, *fig.150*. The double band, for example, adorning the rim of the *iwān* C is very much

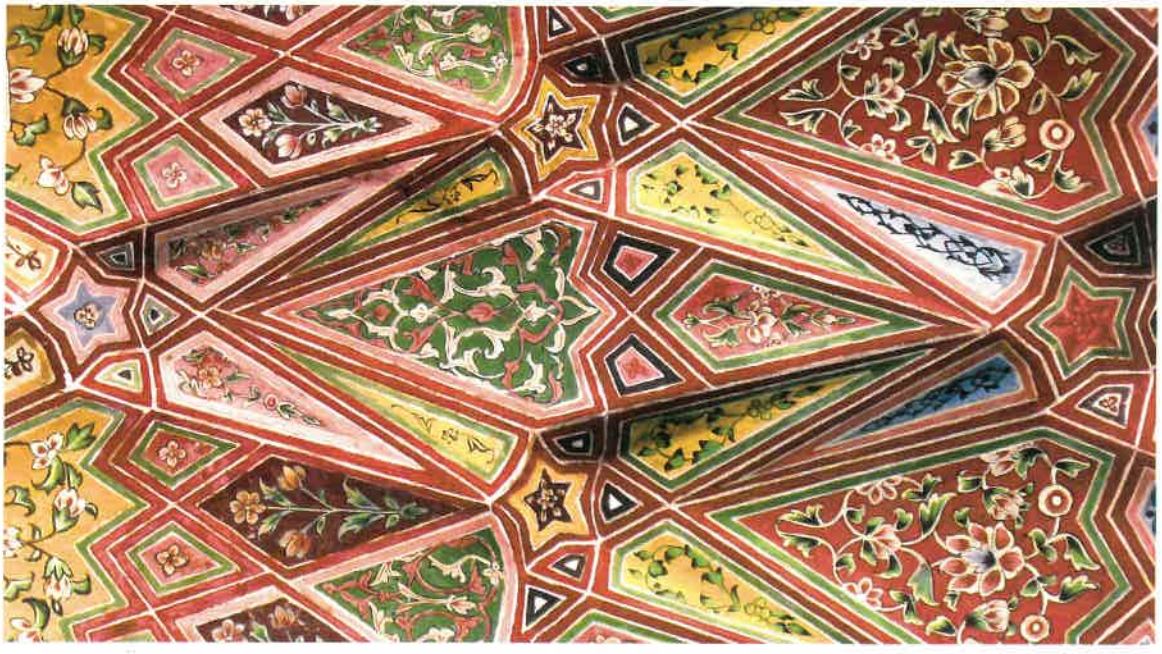


Fig. 150: Soffit of the arch of iwān C.



Fig. 144: Frame of panels with trees in the transverse arch: 1.



Fig. 145: Frame of the calligraphic panels in the transverse arch: 1.

three panels: the central broader, *fig.146,* than the side ones, decked with floral plants. The panels on sides of the central one, have identical tree motifs, all contained within painted cusped arches, the spandrels of which have usual adornments of arabesques, *fig.147.* An over all running pattern on that portion of the wall, provides a frame to all the panels. It is composed of smaller and larger quadrifoils and half flowers in green, red and white, half of which seems to have concealed beneath the panels or the wall above.

A dado composed of two rows of eight pointed stars, red in colour within another

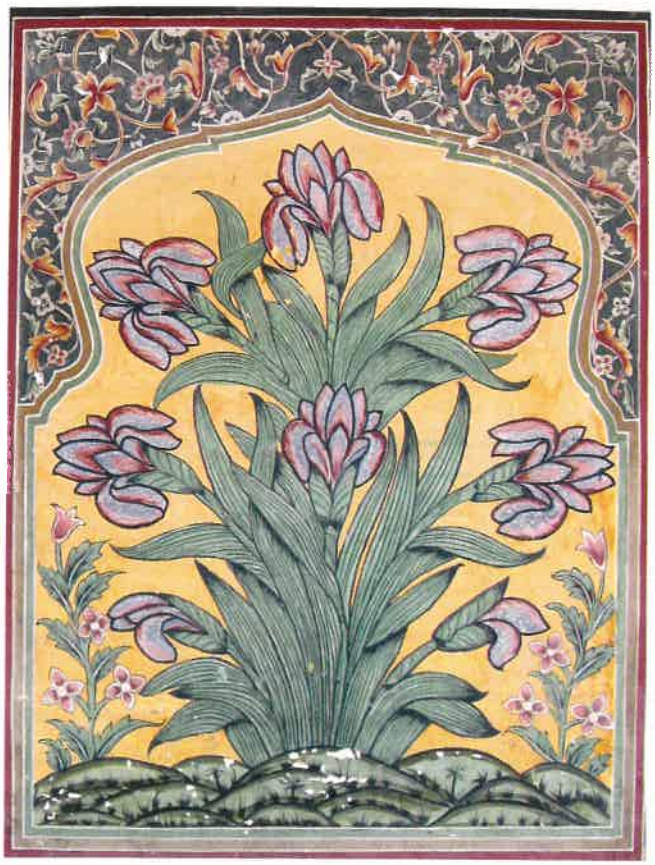


Fig. 146: Panel with floral plant above dado in the transverse arch: 1.



Fig. 147: Smaller panel above dado.



Fig. 156: Tree on the soffit of arch in iwān C.



Fig: 154 Vase with flowers in iwān C.



Fig. 155: Geometric design in iwān C.

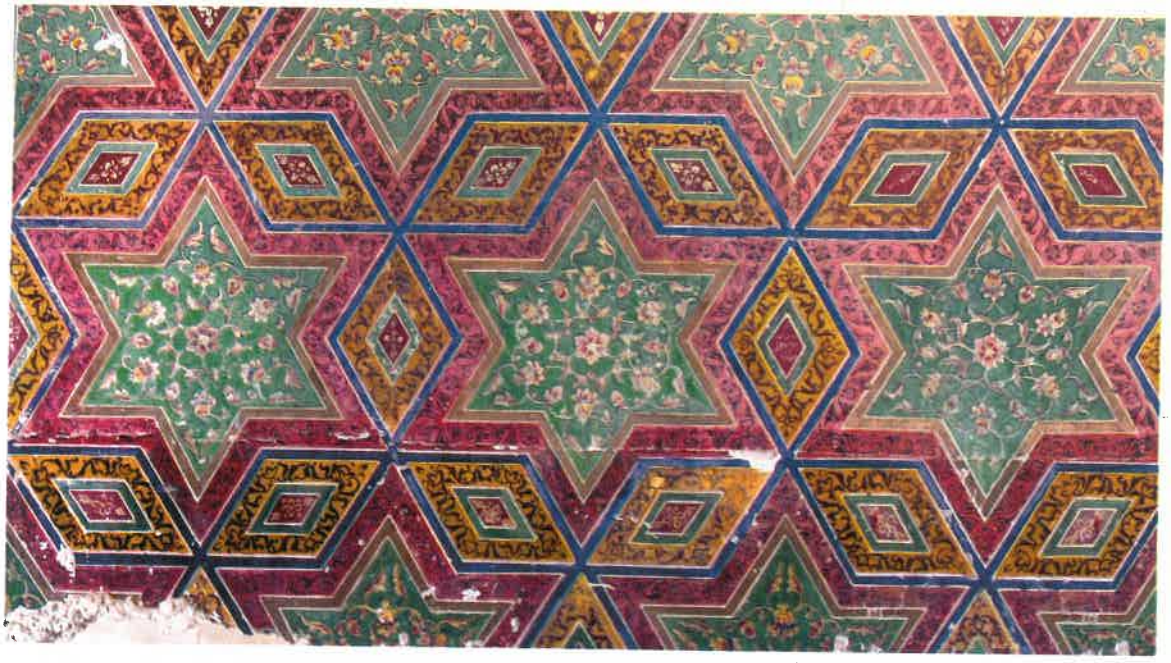


Fig. 157: Dado in iwān C.



Fig. 158: Bands framing dado in iwān C.



Fig. 151: Border framing panels in the iwān C.

similar to that of *iwān* B. The same thin band of geometric shapes, in black and white, like the modern computerised designs is attached with somewhat broader band of interlacing floral vine scroll. It is similar in colours, to that of *iwān* B, *fig.128*, but with a little variation of the pattern inside. Apex of the soffit has a form of eighteen sided sea-shell, containing Qur'ānic inscription. Although it is different from the *miḥrābi,* placed on the apex of the arch B, rest of the ornamental scheme is exactly like the arch B, despite, the few little changes. The ornamental band segmenting northern and southern walls of the arch is different in design from that of the arch B. It consists of quadrifoil combined with *miḥrābi,* in bright red against ochre colours, *fig.151*. The vertical and horizontal compartments contain all the



Fig. 152: vase with flowers.

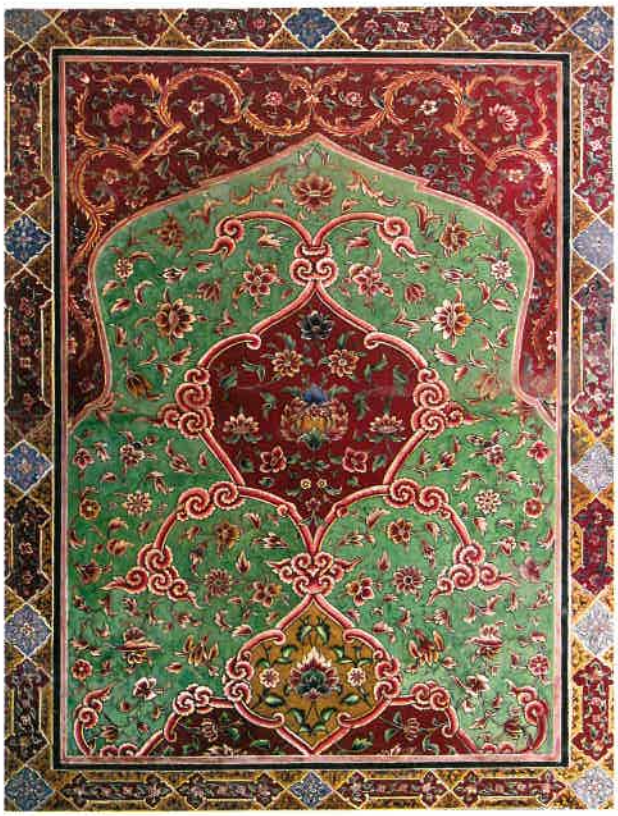


Fig. 153: Carpet like panel in iwān C.

motifs used in the arch B that is floral vases, ornamental designs, and tree motifs, *figs.152-156,* but their apparent shapes and colours are different. Vases too have multifarious shapes and attractive colours. The dado adorning this section is little bit different from the first arch, though both designs are based on star formation. Here it consists of six pointed stars



Fig. 161: Stalactites surmounting central calligraphic panels.

the *miḥrāb G*. It is also surmounted by stalactites of exquisite beauty, *figs.159-161*. The lower, smaller niche is analogous to the niche G: the band enframing it, is also decorated with the names of Allah that are thirteen in number. The recessed area of the niche H, and its ornamentations, all are similar to the niche G, in general scheme including the inscriptions on pendent shapes, placed in the corners of spandrels, of the arch. Walls on both sides of the larger *miḥrāb* contain panels having plants bearing flowers. These are placed against red and green backgrounds, the broader panels have red background and the thinner ones have green, both placed alternately. To create symmetry, spandrels of the red panels are made grey on the other hand; grey panels retain red spandrels, *figs.162-163*. But the most gracefully refined embellishments are of ceiling



Figs. 162- 163: Panels on the side wall of miḥrāb H.



Figs. 159, 160: Stalactites surmounting calligraphic panels.

surrounded by six diamond shapes, making a continuous geometric pattern, *fig.157.* Star is filled with floral motifs in pink against green ground. The diamond shapes surrounding the stars have diamonds confined within diamonds. It is surrounded from four sides by a black band containing intricate interlacing floral designs in pink, blue and white, *fig.158.*

Northern *Miḥrāb* of the Sanctuary

The formation and ornamentations of this *miḥrāb* also titled *miḥrāb H*, has numerous elements that are exactly identical to the adornments of *miḥrāb G*, meaning the *miḥrāb* on far-northern part of the sanctuary. It also consists of double arch: a larger and a smaller, within. Compartmentalisation of which is precisely like the *miḥrāb G*. Conch of the arch has similar vertical calligraphic panels but the inscriptions on these panels are different. The central panel for example retains the names of *Allah* and *Muḥammad*. Moreover, the apex has a similar semi-circular shape retaining calligraphy but with words, different from



Fig. 167: Compressed star with darūd in it.

intricate, multi-coloured arabesques, provided with frayed outer contours in the tones of dark pink, *fig.169*. The sea-shell like motif are eight in number on this ceiling, each alternated by a pendent shape, little bit larger than those placed in the inner circular arrangement. These are white in colour with multi-coloured floral motifs, outlined with pink and carry the usual frayed contours in blue, *fig.170*. It is added around with pendent like and compressed star shapes placed successively in maroon and the ragged outer lines are in pink, *fig.167*. The compressed star is again adorned with *darūd* and the palmette is ornamented with concentric design containing floral motifs. All the above mentioned shapes are floating on white background of the domed ceiling, further embellished with arabesques of



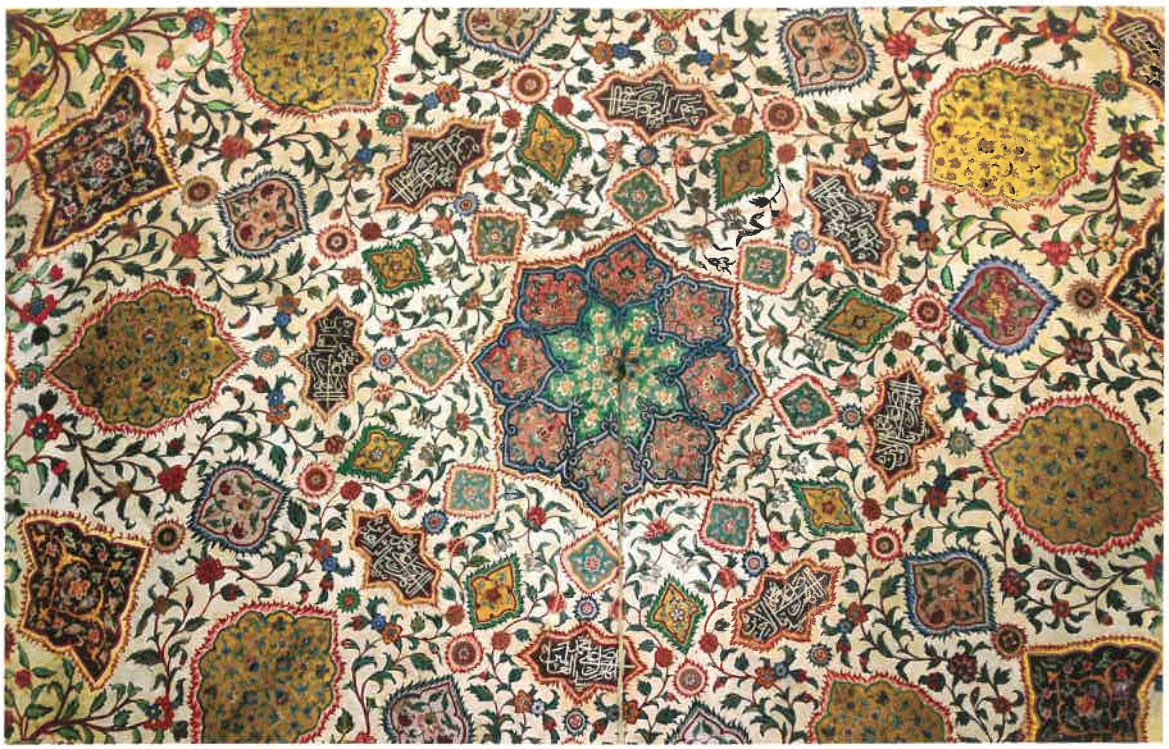
Fig. 166: Diamond shape on the ceiling.



Fig. 168: Pendent shape on the ceiling.



Fig. 169: Sea-shell design on the ceiling of the sanctuary.



Figs. 164: Ceiling of the northern sanctuary.

of that part of the sanctuary.

Ceiling of Northern Bay of the Sanctuary

The domed ceiling, second from north, is composed in circular arrangement, of a variety of shapes, fixed within arabesques, *fig.164.* It is concentric to an eight petalled flower in green and pink outlined with blue colour, encircled by another eight petalled flower, which is pink, and also outlined blue, *fig.165.* It is surrounded by stylised diamond shapes that are green and pink and are eight in number, *fig.166,* then surrounded by compressed stars containing *darūd*, that are also eight, it is written in white on maroon background, *fig.167.* This shape is alternated by pendent like motif in ochre with tattered green contours centred on a five petalled flower, which is red and green in colours, *fig.168.* It further carries another circular arrangement of a shape resembling a sea-shell, with dominating yellow colour, filled with



Fig. 165: Central flower on the ceiling.



Fig. 173: Apex of the second transverse arch.

The Second Transverse Arch from North

The transverse arch, second from the northern quarters of the sanctuary is exactly like the far-northern intersection. The soffit is covered with stalactites that are concentric to the apex containing a sixteen sided star, adorned with *Sūrah: cxii (al-Ikhlāṣ)* set around *Bismillah*, which is placed within an undulating circle. The calligraphic letters are in white colour, moulded in stucco on a blue ground. It is identical to the first transverse arch from north, except, the sixteen sided star of the apex that does not form sixteen corners, rather one from the sixteen, takes a round shape instead of the angular one, perhaps by mistake, *fig.173*. Rest of the scheme of embellishments appears exactly similar. But a closer view deciphers



Fig.174: Zigzag lines of the star.



Fig. 175: Star and stalactites on the northern transverse arch.



Fig. 170: White pendent motifs.

magnificent elegance, *fig.171.* Nothing seems static here and it reminds one, of the circular motion of mystics, who move in their passion to attain a union with the transcendental. The arabesques shed weight of the intricate embellishments and provide it with a light and airy atmosphere. It is then held together by continuation of palmette motifs making a zigzag band around the ornamentations, *fig.172.* The zigzag plays a two fold function: it adds mobility to it as well as gives stability to the feeling of movement. Then it gradually turns into stalactites, coming down to the squinches of the arches.



Fig. 171: Arabesques on the ceiling.



Fig. 172: Zigzag band providing frame to the ornamental motifs on the ceiling.



Fig. 180: Panels above dado of the northern transverse arch.



Fig. 179: Tree motif on both sides of the calligraphic panel of the northern transverse arch.

colours. It was red, green and yellow in the previous but here it has turned into pink, green and red. Whereas, the division of space and the general arrangement of forms and shapes give this arch an analogous look with its counter part in the far-north.

Central *Iwān* of the Sanctuary

The exquisitely elegant part of the sanctuary is the central area, with its arched entrance, *miḥrāb* and niche of the western wall and the domed ceiling. It is a manifestation of manual dexterity of the Mughal artists, and aesthetics of its patron. Although the entrance arch is bedecked with ornaments analogous to the other arches discussed above but it is more intricate in design and more refined in taste. The apex of the central *iwān,* marked as *iwān* A, is adorned with star formations. But the central part has a circular line moulding, made up of twenty five curves, painted in red. It is ornamented with *Kalima-yi Ṭayyiba*: the confession of the Muslim faith, in white colour against black. It is surrounded by an eighteen pointed star with another calligraphic moulding, containing the names of the four caliphs that are repeated four times around the circle. It is surrounded further by stalactites of a variety of shapes and sizes, amazingly placed around small stars, located at



Fig. 182: Border on outer calligraphic panels.



Fig. 176: Stalactites in the northern transverse arch.



Fig. 177: Stalactites in the northern transverse arch.

minute dissimilarities, for instance, the star at apex is different in colour from the first transverse arch from north, *fig.174.* It is in ochre and green instead of red and green colours of the first arch. Moreover, the arabesques in the stalactites and their colour combinations too vary, *figs.175-178.* Trees with flowers placed on either side of the calligraphic panel are also different, *fig.179.* Panels above dado, carry trees and plants different from the previous one, *fig.180.* A pattern surrounding these panels, serving as their border has a design almost similar to the first transverse arch that is far-northern but it varies in its combination of

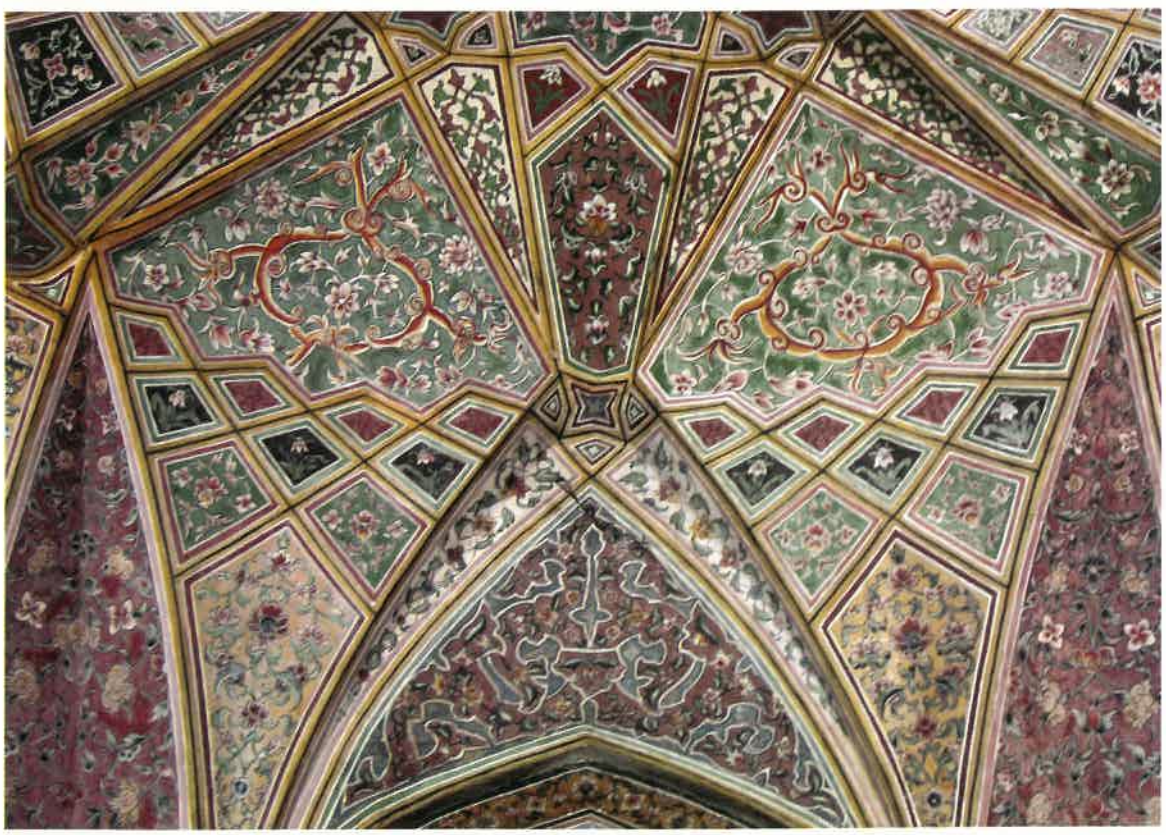


Fig.178: Stalactites in the northern transverse arch.



Figs.184-185: Floral Designs behind the text on calligraphic panels in central iwān.

figs.184-185. It goes well with the borders that have contrasting colours. If background of a panel is dark it is provided with a light coloured border and if background of a panel is light it is bedecked with dark coloured border.

The Central Bay and the main *Miḥrāb* of the Sanctuary

Apart from the usual decorative motifs of vases, trees, and plants as well as geometric designs, there are many unusual features in this section that makes it unique from all the rest, *fig. 186*. The central bay of the sanctuary has a continuous band of Qur'ānic inscriptions, surmounting the walls from all four sides. These are in relief form in black colour on beige



Fig. 186: Ceiling of the central miḥrāb.

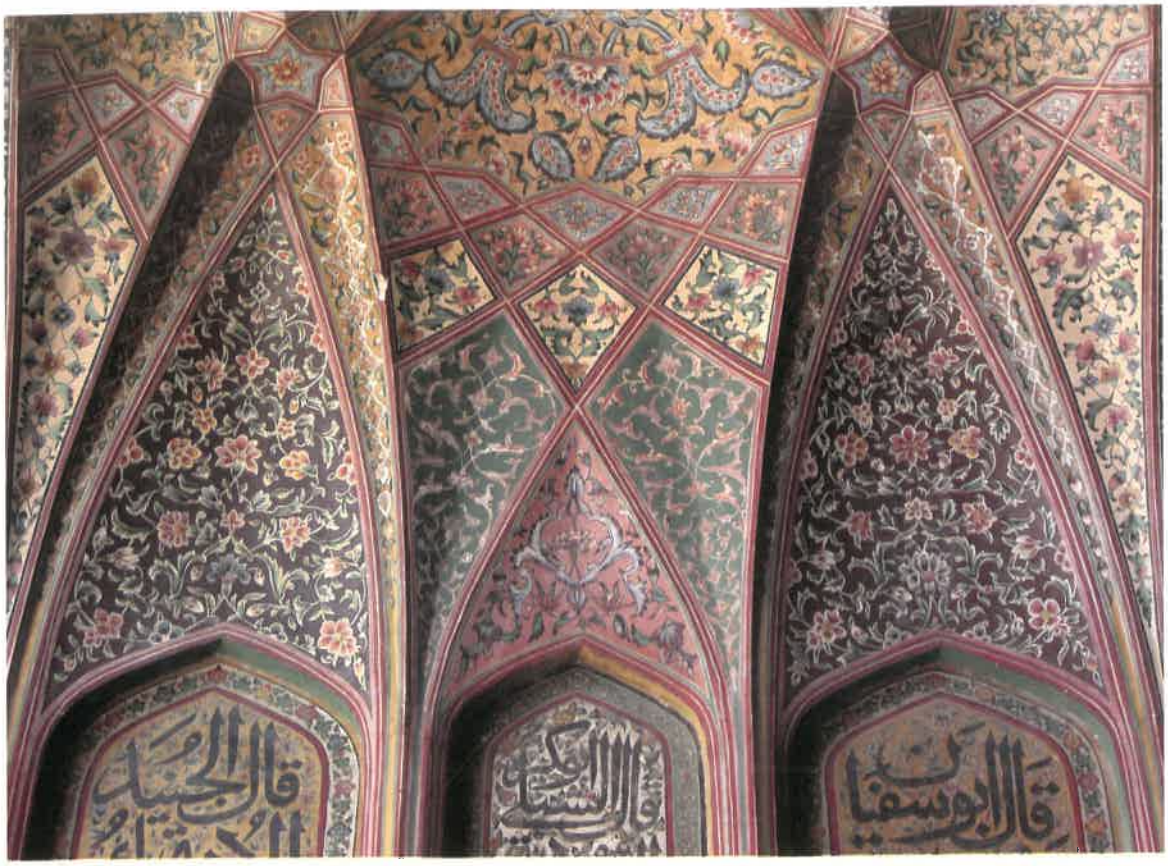


Fig. 181: Stalactites above calligraphic panels in the central iwān.

short intervals, *fig.181.* But on broader scale, all the stalactite formations are consecrated to a single point that is the star at the apex. Each section of the stalactite is adorned with floral motifs, as is usual in the other arches. But the difference lies, not in the ornamental scheme, rather in the quality of work represented here. The designs are more delicate and refined with the use of rich colours that adds elegance to beauty.

Stalactites in the northern and southern walls of the arch are surmounting calligraphic panels retaining sayings of saints and mystics. While in all the other arches, this part contain blind arched formations, decorated with vase and tree motifs. Three panels are placed on the northern wall and three on the southern. Both carry similar inscriptions. These are recessed panels placed within pointed arches. Each one is provided with a delicate border, the central one is different from the side ones that are exactly alike. On the side panels, it consists of multi-coloured floral ornaments, placed on white ground, *fig.182*, and the central panel retains multicoloured flowers on green ground, *fig.183*. The calligraphic panels, through out the sanctuary, retain delicate motifs behind text, and so is in the panels of the central *iwān,*



Fig. 183: Border on the central calligraphic panel.



Fig. 191: Stalactites on the central miḥrāb of the sanctuary.

combing. The upper part of it is three dimensional and the lower is amazingly adorned with the flat painting of compartments like honeycombs. These are multi-coloured, tiny, painted squares, having small arch shapes, bedecked with tiny floral designs and their small spandrels too, bear minute designs. Extremely beautiful patterns adorn stalactites, rich in colours and intricate in designs, *fig.191.* There are accents of chrome yellow, specially in small stars placed in between stalactite formations, that adds to the brilliant effects of this area. A similar chrome yellow formation which is a mixture of star and flower shape, four, five and even six cornered stars surmounts the honeycombs, *fig.192.* Moreover, the small calligraphic panels are crowned with really elegant elongated arched formations, red in colour and filled with delicate arabesques, surrounded

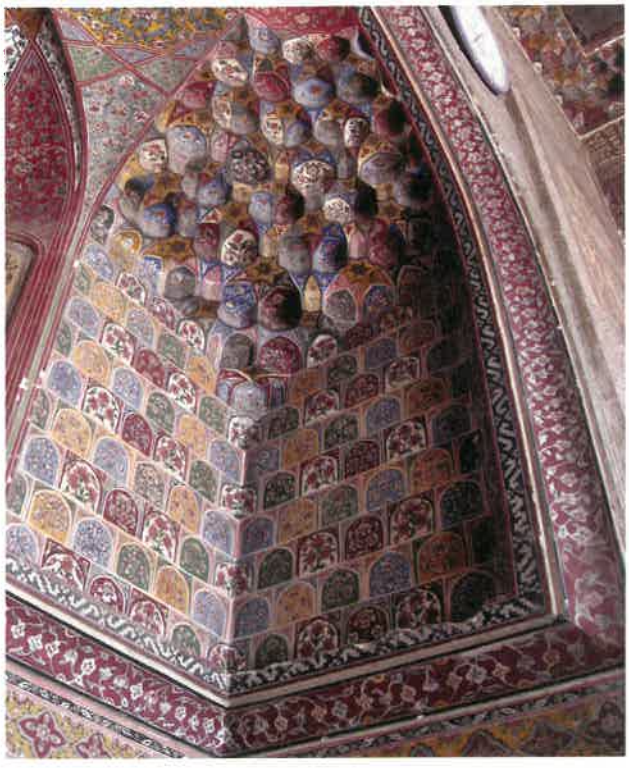


Fig. 192: Honey-combing in the corners of the central miḥrāb.

ground. It is topped by a broader band of unusual geometric shapes decked with rich tones of red, green, blue and white. This type of motif is not discernible in any other part of the mosque. It consists of small arch shapes with concentric floral motifs, stars, intersecting half circles, full circles etc, *fig.187.*



Fig. 187: Geometric formation above the calligraphic band in the central part of the sanctuary.

The central *miḥrāb* that is in the western wall of the sanctuary is broader than its other counterparts. The apex is marked by a half star, very small in size, round in shape and indicated by tiny rays, nine in number that are denoted by very small lines, *fig.188.* It is further surrounded by another half star, with four visible points, encircled by another with eighteen points, half of which are rendered here, concentric to it and crown the calligraphic panels beneath It contains calligraphy in circular form. All the stalactites below are concentric to it and crown the calligraphic panels beneath. The central one is broad enough and two more panels, one on each side, are comparatively narrow



Fig. 188: Apex of the central miḥrāb.

and also smaller in size. These are provided with beautiful frames, broader and multi-coloured for the central panel, *fig.189* and tiny bands for the side ones in black and white, *fig.190.* Unlike the other arches this arch has a double recess, and the side walls of the inner most recess also retain a panel of inscriptions on each side, equal in size to the frontal smaller panels. The most beautiful and unique of its kind is the squinch of outer recess of the arch, marked by honey-



Fig. 189: Border framing central calligraphic panel in the miḥrāb.



Fig. 190: Border framing calligraphic panels other than the central, in the miḥrāb.

by dainty wedge shapes in white that further enhance the elegant effect.

The lower part of this *miḥrāb* with a niche in the centre is also little bit different from the other niches of the sanctuary which are all alike. From inside, the niche is not much different but it is surrounded by a band of Qur'ānic verses, instead of the names of Allah adorning the other four. Its spandrels carry two circles of undulating contours, placed in each corner, retaining inscriptions and surrounded by arabesques that create luminous brilliant effect because of the prominent chrome yellow, *fig.193*. Conch of the niche retains arch shaped panels with floral plant and tree motifs, *figs.194-195*. On both sides of the niche, there are rectangular calligraphic panels carrying *darūd*, placed in painted cusped arches and surrounded from four sides by frames, composed of ornamental quadrifoils, *fig.196*.



Fig. 194: Panel inside central smaller miḥrāb.



Fig. 195: Panel inside central smaller miḥrāb.

Below this is a dado, made up of eight pointed star surrounded by a quadrifoil and small geometric shapes that forms a diagonally placed rectangle, all filled with floral motifs, *fig.197*. It is further surrounded by beautiful border of delicate plant and leaf motif, *fig.198*. The decorative scheme of spandrels of the larger arch is very similar to that of the niche. It has also circular medallions on both sides of the spandrels, ornamented with *Sūrah: cxii (al-Ikẖlāṣ)* and a small *miḥrābi* carrying Bismillah.

Surrounding the central arch from its vertical sides, there are horizontal and vertical bands, placed successively, carrying vase and plant motifs on its vertical panels and concentric stylised designs on the horizontal ones. The border enframing the panels are also dissimilar from the rest of the boarders of the sanctuary. It consists of quadrifoils with four compressed stars, making a diamond shaped arrangement. Although the motifs of quadrifoil and compressed star exist at many places but its arrangement here is different from the rest. Thus the central part of the sanctuary is the focal point of all the adornments of the mosque: the central façade, the central inner arch, and the central *miḥrāb*, have tastefully rich examples of embellishments.

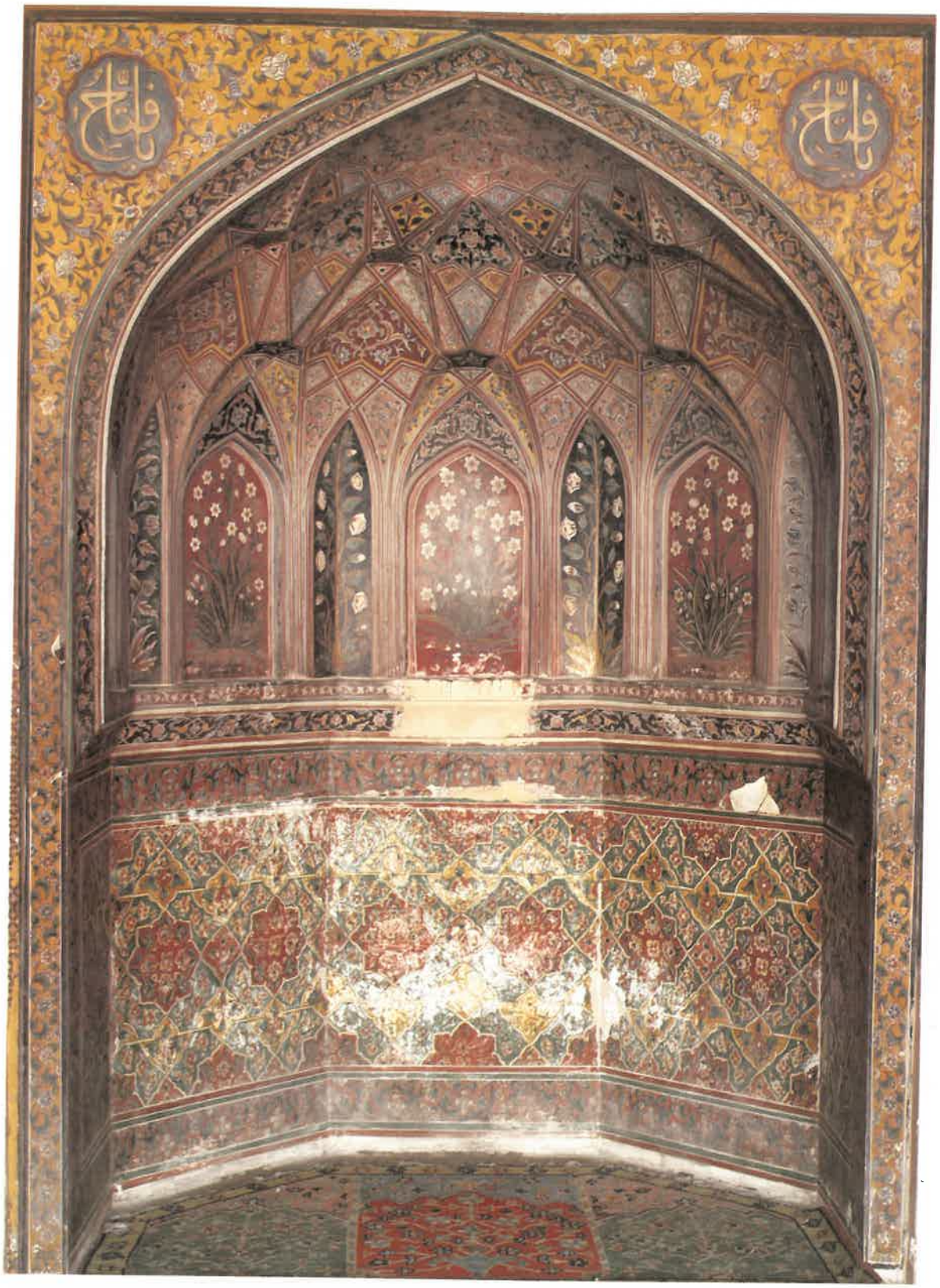


Fig.193: Central niche of the sanctuary.



Fig. 198: Upper frame of the dado of central smaller miḥrāb.

respect to the far northern. There are numerous other analogies in these ornamentations. Each *iwān* of the sanctuary has exactly identical decorative scheme on its northern and southern walls and the borders framing every small niche, with the names of Allah are exactly alike except the central niche. Furthermore, the walls of *ḥujrās* surrounding the courtyard of the mosque bear analogous traits. For instance each part of the northern wall is similar in every respect to its counterpart on the south and this likeness is maintained even in the right and left of each façade of the *ḥujrās*. This was in the aesthetics of the Mughals to create symmetry in their pieces of art. Each part was balanced with another, called by them as *jawāb,* meaning duplicate or reflection. Thus the trait of *jawāb* is utilized to the utmost in the ornamentation of this structure as well.

Northern Gate

In general appearance this gate is very similar to the eastern one but comparatively lacks majesty and grandeur, the hallmark of eastern gate. It also consists of a larger arch, upper part of which has a conch and the lower provided with a smaller entrance arch.



Fig. 199: Northern Gate.



Fig. 196: Frame around panels containing darūd.

Rest of the two transverse arches are identical in their general scheme of ornamentation, except the panels containing inscriptions, which differs in each part. But there is one disparity in the second and the third transverse and on the sides that open up in the central bay. It contains medallions with *Sūrah*: *cxii (al-Ikhlāṣ)* and *Bismillah* in *miḥrābi* design on the spandrels of both the arches. Rest of the embellishments are exactly similar. These are exactly similar in their adornments to the others. Furthermore, in the fourth transverse from north, we find nothing different it is identical to the first one in every respect.

Beauty of every Mughal artefact counts on symmetry, be that a painting, an edifice or ornamentation of any structure. It prefers balance of highest order. The word asymmetrical does no seem to exist in the vocabulary of a Mughal artist. This is discernible in the adornment of the mosque as well. The embellishments of the far northern part of the sanctuary in this respect, is exactly similar to the far-southern and northern to the southern one. Same is the case of the facades, inner arches, niches and the domed ceilings. There is no dissimilarity, except a few exceptions. For instance the southern *miḥrāb* of the sanctuary is analogous to the *miḥrāb* of the northern quarters, except the inscriptions on panels crowning it. Rest of the arrangements are exactly similar. Moreover, the panels with cypress trees and grape vines, flanking one on either side of the panels bearing inscriptions, have grapes in red colour in the southern quarters that are green at other places. But the far southern part is identical in every



Fig. 197: Dado of central smaller miḥrāb.



Fig. 202: Spandrels of the inner arch in the Northern Gate.



Fig. 203: Parapet of the Northern Gate.

Spandrels of the inner arch are simple, and devoid of the typical arabesques that usually adorn almost all the other arches of the mosque. But it retains on both sides, two circular medallions with carved out *sūriya* motif, almost similar to the one placed on the spandrels of shops on both sides of the eastern gate, *fig.202.* Rest of the decorations are typical like the parapet, bedecked with merlon design, but it has lost beauty of colours because most of the tiles have broken down and only blue colour remains there. Below this is a thin strip of quadrifoil and *miḥrābi* design, *fig.203*.

Framing the gate from two sides are the turrets, decorated with multi-coloured chevron pattern, *fig.204*. This gate must also had the gorgeous look, a typical trait of the Mughal structures but the ravages of time has taken away its monumental appearance, though a few remains narrates the legend of its lost past.

The northern outer wall of the sanctuary that opens up in the busy bazaar also retains some of the surviving symbols of its beauty, *fig.205*. It is divided up into arched openings, spandrels of which are decorated with designs in *kāshīkāri, fig. 206.* There are vertical, horizontal, square and rectangular panels, decked with vase or tree motifs and the usual parapet with merlon design. But it is also in dilapidated state, only a few remains are enough to visualise its previous magnificence.

Thus innumerable motifs and designs decorate this mosque with a variety of techniques but none clashes with the bounds defined by the religion. All anthropomorphic and zoomorphic elements are altogether avoided. Although Hindu artists were also serving at the Mughal atelier but they were never allowed to trespass the demarcations of the religion Islam. Muslim art is actually based on the ideal of infinitude and the voyage to set

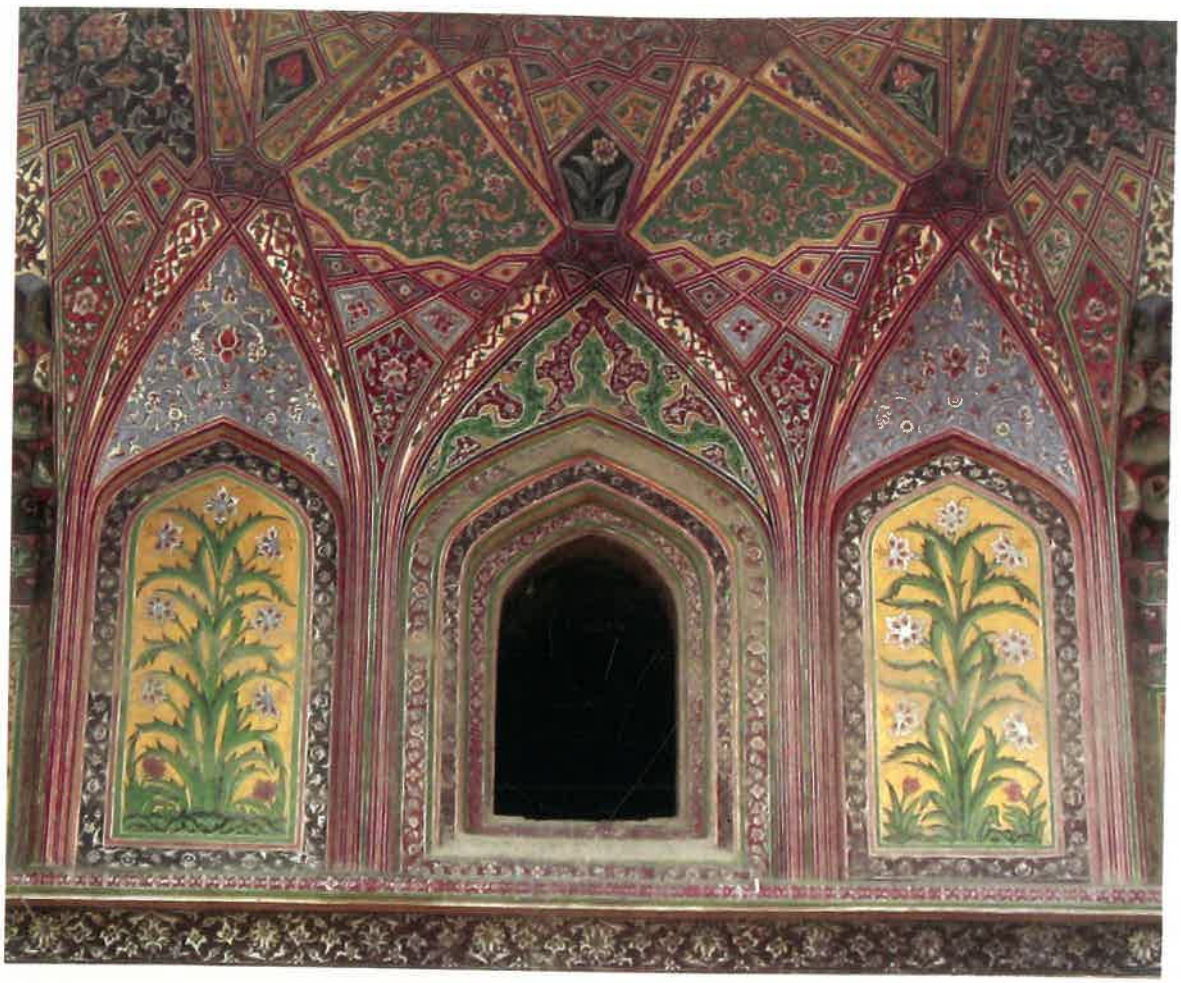


Fig. 200: Lower part of the conch of Northern Gate.

It is surrounded on both sides by vertical and horizontal panels: vertical retaining tree motif or decorative designs, while horizontal ones are bedecked with vases, *fig.199*. All the panels are fixed within a frame of quadrifoils and compressed stars. It is identical to the ornamental design of the façade of sanctuary with exactly similar combination of colours. But it is decrepit with age, as most of the pieces of *kāshīkāri* have been lost leaving a few remains, only as an identification mark of its original embellishments. Spandrels of the arch have arabesques in dominating blue.

Inner part of the arch that has a conch on its upper section is decked with stalactites and the lower part above cornice has three arched panels. The central arch has an open window, while the side ones have blind arched formations retaining floral trees, *fig.200*. Lower part of the gate that is area below cornice has an entrance arch. A calligraphic band surmounts it. Above calligraphy and below the cornice is a beautiful band of interlacing vegetal motifs in white on black background that adds delicacy to beauty, in this structure, *fig.201*.



Fig. 201: Decorative band between cornice and calligraphic band.



Fig. 205: Northern wall of the sanctuary from outside the mosque.

Hindu cult this motif is known as *sūriya* related to their sun god. Star the frequently used shape in the decorations of the mosque is related to the Celestial. Arabesques on the other hand symbolises constant spring that awaits the pious in heaven. Despite of all these intricacies the element of rhythm and balance is the fundamental principle on which this whole structure is adorned. It is the cosmic order of the creations of Allah. Thus the artist has attained unity in multiplicity.



Fig. 206: Arched opening in the northern outer wall of the sanctuary.



Fig. 204: Shaft of turret of the Northern Gate.

it free from the finite to the infinite was intellectual and philosophical one. All directed to attain perfection but a novel perfection, perceived through the eye of mind and heart. It does not limit itself to the physical, not even an abstraction of the physical but directed to attain the primordial truth, leading to perfection that is *kamāl*.

Perfection in the Muslim art is based on explicitness, the essential characteristic of the Holy Qur'ān. It is neither similar to the perfection of the Greek antiquity nor to the formlessness of the modern western art but based on building form in its totality. So it follows the path of cosmological order where mathematics and geometry plays their role to attain rhythm. In the arabesques, geometric designs and calligraph art, the totality of highly rhythmic order is brought into being that venerates the sacred mosque structure of Wazīr Khān.

The amazing stalactite formations retaining geometric configurations, provided with elegant arabesques, are an archetype of the devotional zeal of the Muslim artists to decorate the abode of Allah. The ornamental motifs along calligraphy, which are the sacred art forms emanated from the illumination of books, specially the Holy Qur'ān. Esoteric meanings are attached to these forms. For instance the palmette motif adorning the mosque is related by Martin Lings to the revelation of the Holy Qur'ān. Its downward movement denotes the descending of the words of Allah from heavens to earth. Its outward spread is related to the reverberation of the recitation of the Holy Qur'ān. It is the "virtual starting point of a limitless vibration, a wave that ultimately breaks the shores of eternity."[15] The motif of the rayed sun is also related to the Holy Qur'ān that refers itself to light. In the

Inscriptions in the Wazīr Khān Mosque

Calligraphy, an art form attributed particularly to the Muslims, because the history of the world art has no similar precedence, except a few examples from Gothic and Roman eras. The etymology of this word is Greek: *Calli* is the Greek *Kallo* meaning beautiful and *Graphein* means writing. Thus calligraphy stands for the elegant and beautiful writing. A very common definition delineates it as an art that "gives form to signs in an expressive, harmonious and skillful manner". Because letters basically, are abstract symbols, bearing many nomenclatures, the combinations of which correspond meaning, and thus used as symbols of communication. These were evolved by man for the necessity to transfer information, ideas and expressions to his fellow beings. This system has been used by almost all the communities and civilisations. But none utilised it the way Muslims did. Though, the origin of writing can be traced back from the times immemorial. Evidences of Chinese script are from the 3rd century B.C. and traces of the ancient Persian script are from about 500-600 B C., which was invented to provide monumental inscriptions to the Achaemenid kings. It is composed of horizontal, vertical and diagonal nail shaped letters labelled *Khaṭṭ-i mīkhi* or "the script of nails". It is also called cuneiforms, *plate: 12*. But these were all writings, without acquiring ornamental status.

Man among all the creatures on earth is endowed alone with the power to express ideas and convey feelings in a substantial form, so eulogised, on the basis, as the best of all creatures. A unique ability retained by none others on earth and it is the *raison de'tre* to evolve writing which then became a paramount source of knowledge of every sort. Through this power one gets familiar with ones ancient past, otherwise memory, the other source of previous knowledge has certain limitations that can never acquaint us with the antediluvian times. This nifty gift has been used by man only but not venerated by any except Muslims. Though it had been utilised to permeate and preserve doctrines of religious sort but to clad it with ornamental jacket is done alone by Muslims. This chapter focuses on the inscriptions decorating the Mughal edifice, the Wazīr Khān Mosque by providing a brief origin in the beginning, of the various scripts evolved under Muslims and then documenting each and every inscription that adorns the edifice. It includes Arabic as well as Persian scripts. The Arabic text consists of *āyāt* from the Holy Qur'ān, *aḥādīth*, adages of saints and mystics and a variety of *darūds* for the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh), besides the names of Allah, Muḥammad (pbuh), four caliphs including the name of Ḥaḍrat Imām Ḥussain, the younger son of the last caliph Ḥaḍrat 'Alī. It is not only a documentation of the text inscribed but also encompasses English translations and above all veracity of *aḥādīth* is checked from the authentically researched books on this subject.

Thus calligraphy or ornamental script is a contribution entirely of the Muslims. Although there are a few exceptions relating to the pre-Islamic Arabs who wrote characters

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form was reserved for the last scripture revealed to the chosen one. As the final revelations of Allah the Almighty are complete in every respect, providing a complete code of life so was the recording and preserving of the ultimate revealed truth.

Islam assigns sanctity to the act of reading, writing and to pen. The first revelations to the Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh) were a decree from Allah to read. *Sūrah xcvi* (*al-'Alaq*),

> (tr.) *Proclaim! (Or read) in the name of thy Lord and Cherisher, who created. Created man, out of a (mere) clot of congealed blood: proclaim! And thy Lord is Most Bountiful. He, who taught (the use of) the pen. Taught man that, which he knew not.*

This approval is perhaps the main source that opened up new avenues for the ornamentation of words and phrases. Religious reverence was added when a devotee adorned the words of Allah. The holiness of pen and writing is ascribed by the Holy Prophet (pbuh), when he says that ink of a scholar's pen is sacred than the blood of a martyr. The status of a martyr is highly elevated by Allah and the Prophet (pbuh) and the one who retains the eruditions of a scholar, sanctity is attributed even to the ink of his pen with which he makes proclamations. It appears as a major cause of the ornamental character of writing.

Preserving and transmitting the words of Allah was considered the foremost obligation of a Muslim. To develop this art form, was taken as gratitude and a pious act. Because "good writing makes the truth stand out" is proclaimed by the Prophet (pbuh)[3]. So beauty of writing was first implemented on Arabic which is the language of the Holy Scripture and calligraphy was restricted at the earliest for the Holy Qur'ān but later crowned architectural ornamentations and gradually became inevitable for every religious edifice to retain it in its decorative scheme.

History

The earliest preservation of the Holy Qur'ān, as described above was by memory. A group of the followers of the Prophet who were called *ḥuffāẓ* (singular = *ḥāfiẓ*) were exclusively devoted to learn by heart the *āyāt* revealed to the Prophet and they did this job vigilantly. But in the period of the caliph 'Umar a *sine qua non* for recording of the Holy Scripture in writing was felt because a large number of *ḥuffāẓ* had been martyred in various combats. This is the seminal cause of evolution of the new art form named calligraphy. The earliest writings were simple without vowel marks, called dots (*nuqāṭ*) and *a'rāb* in Arabic, gradually added with decorative ornamentations. So this art form truly contains the sacred in it because it is a medium to document religious decrees in its purest form that resulted in the truthful promulgation of the religion Islam.

History records that the art of painting and sculpture were used as vehicles by the West to promote Christianity because of being the effective means to convey a message even to the illiterates and seeing is believing too. On the other hand in Islamic circles, where figurative art bears certain religious interdictions, the creative brains took a novel turn and adorned the words of Allah to transfigure letters into elegant art forms. These letters performed the function of clergy men, who bespoke to the believers the righteous path, conveying the code of conduct to them. Thus letters are personified here which have seldom been equalled and even surpassed in their effectiveness, the figurative representations of

of Arabic beautifully. It is said that the father of the Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh) Ḥaḍrat ʻAbdullah and his uncle Ḥaḍrat Abū Ṭālib were gifted with the skill of elegant writing and people used to visit them to have their documents written beautifully. But definite standards and styles of calligraphy were a later invention. Greeks, Romans, Buddhists and Hindus etc. used this source for the promulgation of their religions but no religious or secular edifice of theirs, made it a part of its decorative scheme. Ashoka in his period inscribed doctrines of Buddha on pillars to spread Buddhism but these writings contained no element of beauty these were crude representations. Egyptian hieroglyphs though, had their letters in pictorial form and Roman manuscripts too, were written quite well but the ocular elegance attached to the letters and words remained a speciality only, of the Muslim artists. It raises a probing question about how this ornamental art form came about when the earliest Muslims lived simple and unsophisticated lives, or the pre-Islamic Arabs too, had not promoted writing much because of the pride in their exceptional memory.

The ancient Arabs loved the poetic nature of their language but being proud of their memory considered writing a hindrance in the memory display. It is quoted that when they composed poetry, instead of noting it down in writing they used to prepare two younger members of their families to memorise their poetic works[1]. Recording them in writing was taken negatively. Numerous adages and stories are narrated in this context. One of these relates to a king who had a slave boy and a slave girl in his court, both retaining extraordinary memory. It is said that the boy had the exceptional ability to reproduce exactly any thing he had listened only once and the girl reacted similarly after listening twice. The king enjoyed this merit of his slaves. Once he publicised in his domain a heavy prize for the poet, who would compose an original poem. The prize was said to be according to the weight of the base on which the poem would be inscribed. Many poets tried their luck but were proved by the slaves, to have brought staled works instead of the original ones. The story goes so that as soon as the poet finished recitation of his poem, the boy who was gifted with memorising after listening only once, would start reproducing it word by word, and after him the slave girl, who had the capacity to reproduce after listening twice. As a result the poetic work was labelled as common place and trait. But an intelligent poet, who had anticipated the clever trick, composed meaningless verses that were difficult to understand and so to recall, made the slave boy and girl unable to reproduce it in the way they were accustomed to do. Thus the slave boy and girl, both were competed and the poet received heavy reward because the poem was carved on stone. There is a different version of this story as well. It is said that the astute poet after reciting a few verses, asked the slave boy and girl to recall the rest if they had any prior knowledge of the poem. In this way he responded the clever trick of the king and won the prize he deserved. This is how Arabs valued memory.

The earliest recordings of the Holy Qur'ān were also through memory. But it was not a perfect tool for preserving a Holy Scripture with exactitude. So the practice was not continued for long because of the fallibility of human memory, and the most infallible tool was thought to be writing. Thus a new era dawned on the horizon of the world art when the seeds of calligraphy were sown and under affectionate tendering of various Muslim dynasties it bore fruit and resulted in a novel art form, which had laid dormant for millennia since man gave expression to his innate capabilities for creation. Amazingly the community of the unlettered Prophet was "destined to excel in the art of lettering"[2]. Perhaps this art

and dynamic in appearance. The Eastern one has marked diagonals and triangular shapes instead of the thick verticals that is why it is labeled as bent *Kūfic*. But it does not limit itself to a singular shape rather have a wide variety. One type of it is based on un-joined letters but spaced not so widely as in the rectangular type. Another variation has compactly joined letters[7]. The cursive *Kūfic* is considered to have paved the way for *Naskhi* and it too, initiated numerous variations of the cursive script.

Thulth is also one of the cursive types which keep free hand strokes along the stately verticality of the *Kūfic* script[8]. In the 13th century Persia another style became much in vogue, based on the drooping configurations of letters called *Ta'līq*. Furthermore, by the end of the 14th century Mīr 'Ali a calligrapher from Tabrīz introduced a style of lettering that was an amalgamation of *Ta'līq* and the normal *Naskhi* called *Nasta'līq*. A style practised most widely in a good few illustrated manuscripts. It also became a style of writing of the languages originated from the amalgamation of Arabic and Persian, specially the Urdu language. Modern era has unfolded many variations of these basic styles, for instance, the calli-painting, in which painting is composed of coloured calligraphy or calligraphic shapes. The modern western artists, too, have evolved calligraphic shapes in their paintings without corresponding meaning to these symbolic forms.

A few scholars have associated metaphysical connotations with calligraphy for the elevated task of recording of the Holy Qur'ān, since it has made the communication of Allah with mankind possible through a tangible form. Martin Lings links ineligibility of *Kūfic* script with spiritual meaning. According to him letters in this type are sometimes placed separately, creating space in between that corresponds to deeper meanings of *āyāt* of the Holy Qur'ān. Because he is of the belief that "the contents of the Holy Qur'ān are too tremendous to be lightly and easily unfolded", it requires intellectual indulgence, not a surface study. Thus, non-eligibility of the *Kūfic* script at a precarious glance is symbolic to this attribute of the Holy Scripture[9].

Martin Lings further links the horizontal and vertical nature of *Kūfic* with two main attributes of Divinity that is majesty and beauty: *al-Qābiḍ* (Occupant and Possessor) and *al-Bāsiṭ* (Vast, Extensive and Candid), two attributes of Allah related to expansion and contraction. *Al-Qābiḍ* is majesty that contracts and *al-Bāsiṭ* is beauty that expands. This duality resides in every aspect of the universe. This relationship persists in the creator and his creations. It can be further explained through an *ḥadīth* that Allah says, "*I was a hidden treasure, I wished to be known, so I created the world*". It is the relationship of contraction and expansion, the vertical and horizontal of the *Kūfic* script. Verticality contracts to a point in the higher world that is towards majesty and horizontality to the expansion of beauty on earth. It is also symbolic to the revelations (expansion) of the Holy Qur'ān. It came from the single source and expanded on earth. So the characteristics of contraction and expansion or concealing and revealing are best reflected in the *Kūfic* script. Physical connotation of the ineligibility of this style lies in the fact that the earliest recording of the Holy Qur'ān was by memorization. So script of the Holy Scripture, when written first, was not added with vowel marks, for it was not necessity of the time, because it was already in the memory of the *huffāẓ*. So the cryptic nature of the *Kūfic* style did not bother any one. Problem started when *ḥuffāẓ* expired and clarity of script was then indispensable. So, after *Kūfic,* cursive script was originated.

the West. In other words the function of pictorial art was performed by letters and words which is also a proof that the Muslim community was literate. Furthermore, when mosques, the abode of Allah were decorated with this art form, reverence of the devotee opened up new avenues for the shaping of these letters. Thus the human receptivity and productivity resulted in calligraphic forms, which were not confined to a single shape of decorating letters but many new dimensions were evolved that could do justice with the respect a devotee had for the Holy Scripture. The novel shapes of letters were called styles of calligraphy.

Styles of Calligraphy

To provide reverential appearance to the words of Allah numerous shapes of letters were tried out by the Muslim calligraphers, all reflective of their time and concord to the requirements of the period. The art form developed into various categorical styles that were originated from the basic two: *Kūfi (Kūfic)* and *Naskhi* or the later might be called cursive in the broader frame of meaning. Prior to that, it is widely agreed that the Arabic script originated from Nabataean script, which itself emerged from the Aramic writing. The first full versions of the Holy Qur'an were written down in 650s in the style titled *Jadhm,* which itself reflects Nabataean influence. This *Khaṭṭ* is considered responsible for the development of the famous *Kūfic* style. *Kūfic* is angular or rectilinear in character whereas, *Naskhi* is derived from the spontaneous movement of hand. *Kūfic* is generally considered to have derived its name from *Kūfa* in Iraq in the ancient Mesopotamia from where it is thought to have emerged in the later half of the 2nd century after Hijra. But this style of writing was present even before the city of *Kūfa* was established in 638 A.D. It is said that before the advent of Islam four scripts existed in Arabia: *al-Hirī* emerged from Hira, *al-Anbari* from Anbar, *al-Makki* and *al-Madani* from Makkah and Madīna. *Kūfic* is thought to have emerged from the ancient *Hirī*. The title *Kūfic* was used for the first time by Ibn-Nadīm in his al-Fihrist, attributing its origin to the *al-Hirī* script. But *Kūfa* remained a centre of the art of calligraphy[4].

This script is not easy to comprehend because of its rectilinear character. Its letters are so calculated that it seems to have synthesized with geometry and was difficult to read. But *Naskhi* is called "the most human of the scripts"[5] for the clarity it bears in its representation. It is cursive geometric writing, corresponding to the natural gesture of the hand because it is amiable with the movement of hand, devoid of the structural complexities. But the geometric character of *Kūfic* provides monumental appearance to it. Its earliest use was for the preservation of text of the Holy Qur'ān but then proved to be best for the architectonic ornamentations[6].Because its geometric nature has the capacity to adjust with the angularity of architecture. Besides being closer to drawing it is not static, rather retains mobility within its elongated horizontal strokes. But the earliest *Kūfic* was not very comprehensible.

Two variants of *Kūfic* were evolved in the 3rd century Hijra, square or rectilinear *Kūfic* that is present day *Kūfic,* named eastern *Kūfic*. It flourished in the North Africa. It is also called *al-Kūfī al-Fārisi* or *Baghdādi Kūfic*. The other type named western *Kūfic,* is curvilinear as compared to the angular character of the eastern. Both, distinct in appearance from the original one, which is labelled as square or rectangular *Kūfic,* to retain separate names, but all the three keep certain similarities to prove that these have stemmed from a single cord. Both the latter styles are subjected to more ornamentation, for being lighter

script has thick and stout appearance and more decorative than *Thulth*. Its strokes bear the "grace of running snake or look like ripples of stream"[15]. It is best expressed on the walls of mosques because of its slow moving and balanced nature.

Muḥaqqaq, another variant of the cursive, literally means "strongly expressed (words) or tightly woven (cloth)"[16]. It unites the two extreme trends of calligraphy: the severe angularity with the smooth flow of curves. Both the trends are used on their extreme pitch, without destroying unity of the individual styles. We feel in its curves, the strength of tidal waves mingled with the extreme verticality of a minaret. For example *alif*, *lām* and other vertical letters, rise upward majestically and horizontal ones have many varied curves and sweeps, creating monumental impact[17]. It was best used for the larger formats of the Holy Qur'ān and also for the epigraphy of the Holy Book.

Another script, which is a smaller version of *Muḥaqqaq*, when it takes the size of *Naskhi,* it is called *Rayḥāni.* It is named after basil the aromatic plant, famous for its fragrance. Its characters are elongated, with *alif* having eleven points and *jīm*, the only letter that continues below the line. Letters begin with thick strokes and gradually turn thin till the end[18]. *Ta'līq* is another important *Khaṭṭ* that resulted from the blending of *Tawqi'*, *Riqa'* and *Naskhi,* based on diagonal shapes, with combined use of thicker and thinner lines in each word. The top and bottom of each letter have oblique cuts. It does not retain the sharp cuts of *Naskhi,* mostly have flat sweeps never retains straight shapes, whereas, some of the curved letters, at their ends turn into sudden right angles. It is not restricted to rigid rules. Strokes have wide variety from very thin to broad and thick, their ends too vary rest of the shape of the letter. It is well said about this script that it glides over the breaks with a winged grace[19].

The mingling of *Naskhi* with *Ta'līq,* brought a style that was most appreciated and frequently used, called *Nasta'līq.* Alif in it has mostly three points or sometimes four as well but the top and bottom in it are cut obliquely as in *Ta'līq.* Curves are dominatingly smooth, either round like crescent or oval like an egg. Strokes are long either straight or pointed like a blunt sword or slightly curved like a scimitar. Its strokes have no abrupt turns like *Ta'līq*. It has easy flow, moves quickly but firmly. K. K. Aziz appreciates this style while quoting Pop and Ackerman from *Calligraphy: An outline History*, "*Nasta'līq* is polished, elegant, easy and casual, the expression of highly civilised, sophisticated people. It remains the artistic culmination of the Islamic calligraphy[20]"

Another type of calligraphy which is original of its kind is *Ṭughra.* It has also cryptic nature in which first letter of each word is clear and formulates the base of other letters to emerge vertically, mostly, in an abrupt manner. The horizontal and vertical strokes are gathered at the bottom that might be of many layers. It was most widely used in Turkey for official monograms. The title *Ṭughra* is also used for a pictorial sort of writing in which a phrase is so composed that it takes the shape of an animal or bird, such as lion, horse, elephant or parrot.

There is unending list of other calligraphic styles like *Ghubār*, *Bihār*, *Shafi'*, *Maghribi*, etc. *Ghubār* means dust; it is thin like a hair and not readable from the naked eye. At a glance it gives the look of dust spreading on paper. *Bihār* is derived from *Naskhi*, composed differently: either starting from thin strokes turns to thick or the *vice versa*. *Shafi'*

The angularity of *Kūfic* was replaced by cursive, formulated by Ibn Muqla in the 4th/10th century, based on strict proportions of letters. Each letter was proportionate in size to the length of the letter *alif.* The hard proportional rules of it, then, led to another script which was also cursive but user friendly. Avoiding angularity of the *Kūfic* and strict proportions of the cursive, *Naskhi* is written with ease and natural flow of hand that causes smoother and speedier movement. Its curvious nature retains flexibility in the arrangement of its shapes. It is also easy to comprehend because of the clarity it bears. With the passage of time, *Kūfic* had gained a purely decorative aspect while *Naskhi* was introduced as the only form of writing that does not retaining decorative motives[10]. Another quality apart from the spontaneous flow of hand in *Naskhi* is that it made the normal size of the Holy Qur'ān possible that was easy to carry[11].

Martin Lings ascribes cryptic nature of the *Kūfic* script to a saying of Allah that the Holy Qur'ān is still to be unfolded, it is not fully expounded but its archetype is preserved in heaven on (*al-lawḥ al-maḥfūẓ*) the guarded tablet. But the clarity of *Naskhi* is related to another symbolism of the Holy Scripture that is called *mūbīn* in Arabic: the clear and luminous. The clarity of *Naskhi* in this respect is identical to the clarity of the Holy Qur'ān that Allah has made it easy, according to the capacity of human comprehension[12]. This script played a pragmatic role in the spreading and interpreting of the Holy Qur'ān.

There are further variations of cursive script called monumental cursive of the east that has three more variations, such as *Thulth*, *Muḥaqqaq* and *Rayḥāni* all contemporary to *Naskhi.* Ibn al-Bawwāb is considered by many as the master of these styles, which were invented by Ibn-Muqlah, furnished with beauty by Ibn al-Bawwāb and developed to its summit by Yaqūt. The six styles of calligraphy, introduced by Ibn-Muqlah, called *Khaṭṭ al-Sitta,* includes *Thulth, Naskhi, Muḥaqqaq, Rayḥāni, Riq'a* and *Tawqi'*[13]. He introduced *Naskhi* in 413/1022. *Thulth* is considered as decorative *Naskhi.* Proportions of *alif* in this type, is 9, 11 or 12 points and its top is always provided with a downward stroke of 3 points. The word *Thulth* stands in Arabic for three and here curves and strokes are three times larger than those in *Naskhi.* The wavy formation, avoided in *Naskhi* is fully utilised here. "Strokes borrow the shape of a dagger. Curves in this script bend like waves in water," meaning that it is a combination of diagonals and wavy lines. Strict proportions are avoided here. It provided greater freedom to the calligrapher, who could elongate verticals, expand horizontals and increase rhythms by increasing margins or spaces between lines[14]. It was not restricted to the rigid bounds.

Thulth has many variations that bear different labels, such as *Thuluthayn*, *Tawqi'* and *Riq'a*. In *Thuluthayn* difference is only of scale of proportions, that is instead of one third its scale of proportions is two third or half scroll. In *Tawqi'*, letters are more compressed and made round. It has another curious characteristic of joining letters; like *alif*, *dāl*, *dhāl*, *lām waw,* etc. are sometimes joined to the letters following them, forming chain like appearance or last letter of the word was joined with the first letter of the next. In Iran this type of script was kept for the last pages of the manuscript. *Riq'a* is the smaller version of *Tawqi',* follows exactly the same rules except the size which is comparatively smaller. Word *Riq'a* is perhaps derived from the Arabic *ruq'a*, which is a brief letter. In the Ottoman Empire this script was used by the master calligrapher to sign diplomas of students who had successfully completed the course of *Thulth* and *Naskhi*. So in Turkey it was called *Khaṭṭ-i i'jāzah*. This

اَفْضَلُ الذِّكْرِ لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَّسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ

(tr.) *The best incantation is (the Kalima- yi Ṭayyibah) there is no god but Allah and Muḥammad (pbuh) is the Messenger of Allah.*

It magnificently adorns the summit of the gate below the parapet, covering the span of spandrels of the arch below, *fig.207*. This *ḥadīth* is traced from Ibn-i Mājah[23] but with little variation because only first half of the *Kalima* is mentioned there.

While the text mentioned by Ibn-i Mājah is in the following words:

اَفْضَلُ الذِّكْرِ لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ (ابن ماجہ)

The calligraphic style used here is *Nasta'līq* and letters are so bold that can be comprehended from quite a distance. It is in lapis blue, a favourite colour of the Mughals which they desired to use in their miniature paintings, in addition to the decorations of edifices. It is placed against white that gives it a magnificent look and white spaces are filled with vegetal motifs of naturalistic order. The whole is surrounded by vertical and horizontal panels that are square and rectangular adorned with concentric geometric designs. It seems to adore the *ḥadīth* which is also the first principle of the confession of faith that is belief in Allah and His Prophet. Exactly below the first word is the date of completion of the mosque in Hijra that is 1045, which is written in Persian numerals. The rest of calligraphic panels, at this place, are in Persian which would be discussed later.

Northern Gate

In the general appearance this gate resembles the eastern one in many respects but in the lavishness of adornments it is lesser than the previous. So far its inscriptions



Fig.208: Ḥadīth inscribed on the Northern Gate.

are concerned; it bears only a thin horizontal band, below the cornice of the conch, which surmounts the entrance arch and contains two *aḥādīth* in the form of a continuous inscription,

قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ مَنْ بَنَى لِلّٰهِ مَسْجِدًا بَنَى اللّٰهُ لَهٗ بَيْتًا فِى الْجَنَّةِ

in *Naskhi* style, *fig. 208-209*. The first *ḥadīth*, quotes:

is derived from *Nasta'liq* and represented with half curves. These are elongated horizontally to such an extent that they look oblique rather curved strokes. *Maghribi* is the script that spread from Spain to North-Africa. It was a synthesis of *Kūfic* and *Naskhi*. It has oblique strokes and its circles are wider. It is powerful and generous because of retaining angular as well as curvilinear lines[21].

The art of calligraphy has certain rules on which proportions of each style are determined. The unit of measurement here is the dot, used as diacritical mark beneath the second Arabic alphabet *bā*. The largest vertical length in this unit is of the first letter *alif* and the largest horizontal width is of half circle, diameter of which is based on the length of *alif* [22]. The measure of points defines the proportions of various calligraphic styles. These proportions were determined by Ibn Muqla in the first half of the 10th century. He devised these rules in systemic form and codified generalized standards of proportions for calligraphy, which are mathematical in certain respect and categorised various styles of calligraphy. Thus calligraphy besides being an art form is also a science that can be tested empirically.

This art form is used as a decorative motif as well as a source to promulgate religious doctrines. Wazīr Khān Mosque, one of the monuments of the Mughals, is an epitome of the Muslim architectonic decorations. It is replete with adornments: motifs as well as inscriptions. The later category includes Arabic and some of the Persian inscriptions. Among the Arabic category Qur'ānic *āyāt* as well as *aḥādīth* are beautifully inscribed on a variety of panels, in various calligraphic styles. The major among them are *Naskhi and Thulth*.

Arabic Calligraphic Scripts

The mosque from the entrance to the end is satiated with inscriptions mostly, in Arabic that are coloured beautifully and the most dominating is the blue of *Lapis lazuli*. It looks majestic when used against white, which is generally employed on glazed tiles of *Kāshīkāri*. Mostly, these are flat representations but some of these have low relief projections, while a few inscriptions are rendered in stucco.

Eastern Gate

Starting from the Eastern gate which is the main entrance of the mosque, the inscriptions begin with the famous *ḥadīth*:



Fig.207: Ḥadīth based on Kalima-yi Ṭayyiba inscribed on the summit of the Eastern Gate.

أَفْضَلُ الذِّكْرِ لَآ إِلٰهَ إِلَّا اللّٰهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَّسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ

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Fig.207: Ḥadīth based on Kalima-yi Ṭayyiba inscribed on the summit of the Eastern Gate.

of the portions do adorn Qur'ānic *āyāt* and *aḥādīth*. Spandrels of each arch below the parapet are surmounted by a horizontal band of calligraphy with *āyāt* from the Holy Qur'ān and the areas between every two arches also have similar bands. There are six horizontal bands on the whole façade of the sanctuary, calligraphed in *Naskhi*. The band above far-northern arch contains *āyah* from *Sūrah ii (al-Baqarah),* 125, *fig. 210*:



Fig.210: Band of the Qur'ānic ayāh above arch B.

(tr.) *Remember we made the house a place of assembly for men and a place of safety and take ye the station of Ibrāhīm and Ismā'īl, that they should sanctify my house for those who compass it around or use it as a retreat, or bow or prostrate themselves (therein in prayer).*

A smaller band on the area between far-northern and northern arches of the sanctuary, contain *āyah* from *Sūrah ii (al-Baqarah),* 127, *fig.211*. It is as the follows:



Fig.211: Band of the Qur'ānic ayāh on the area between arch B and arch C.

(tr.) *And remember Ibrāhīm and Ismā'īl raised the foundations of the house (with this prayer): Our Lord! Accept (this service) from us: for thou art the all hearing the all knowing.*

The inscription on the band above northern arch is also from the *Sūrah ii (al-Baqarah),* first half of the verse 144, *fig.212*:



Fig.212: Band of the Qur'ānic āyah above arch C.

(tr.) *We see the turning of thy face (for guidance) to the heavens: now shall we turn thee to a Qibla that shall please thee. Turn then thy face in the direction of the Sacred Mosque, wherever ye are, turn thy face in that direction.*

At the end of the *āyah* this prayer is written in smaller font, *fig.213*:

(tr.) *O Lord! Forgive those who view these āyāt and those who have inscribed them.*



Fig.213: Du'a at the end of the āyah.

(tr.) *The prophet Muḥammad (pbuh) declared about a person who constructed a mosque that Allah would construct a home for him in the heavens.*

It is further added with another *ḥadīth*, forming an uninterrupted band of calligraphy, which is inscribed in the following words:



Fig.209: Second inscription on the Northern Gate.

قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ اَلتَّوْفِيْقُ شَيْءٌ عَزِيْزٌ لَا يُعْطٰى اِلَّا بِعَبْدٍ عَزِيْزٍ

(tr.) *The Prophet (pbuh) proclaimed that capacity (to do good) is something very precious. It is not bestowed (by Allah) to all except the one who is precious (dear) to Allah (or loved by Him).*

The veracity of both the *aḥādīth* is checked, the former is found authentic while there is no trace of the later, because the former is traced from three sources. It is inscribed in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri*[24], *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Muslim*[25] and *Mishkāt al-Maṣābīḥ*[26]. But there is a little variation in the texts of the three, although all bear almost similar meaning. Text inscribed in the mosque as well as in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Muslim* keeps similar wording: In *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Muslim* it is as follows:

قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ مَنْ بَنٰى لِلّٰهِ مَسْجِدًا بَنَى اللّٰهُ لَهٗ بَيْتًا فِي الْجَنَّةِ (صحیح مسلم)

Whereas, in *Mishkāt al-Maṣābīḥ*, it is inscribed in the following words:

مَنْ بَنٰى لِلّٰهِ مَسْجِدًا بَنَى اللّٰهُ لَهٗ بَيْتًا فِي الْجَنَّةِ (مشکوٰۃ المصابیح)

Façade of the Sanctuary

Entering the mosque from eastern gate, passing through the vestibule, one is fascinated by the decorative scheme of interior of the mosque. It is not less than adornments of the main gate. This section has five compartments in the form of arches; the central one is larger than the flanking two on its either side. All bearing inscriptions along with other decorations but the central arch is the most splendid of all, in every respect.

Inscriptions on the Façade of Sanctuary

Apart from the central façade which contains a larger number of inscriptions, rests



Fig.217: Name of the calligrapher, who adorned the mosque.

The end of this *āyah* bears a name of Ḥāji Yūsūf Kashmīri, along with the year 1044 in Persian numerals. It is inscribed "may Allah forgive Ḥāji Yūsūf Kashmīri", *fig.217*, who must be the calligrapher of these inscriptions because his name is retained on the panel of the Qur'ānic *āyāt*. Otherwise one may consider him as an artist who would have adorned the mosque with motifs. Moreover, another source to prove this fact is the letters of the Mūjadid Alif Thani that he wrote to the Ḥāji Yūsūf. He is addressed there, as a *Mu'adhdhin* and the esoteric meanings of various verses of *adhān* are deciphered to him by his mentor. It provides a good reason to assume that he was a mystic, who belonged to the Naqshbandi Sūfi order. But we are not sure whether he also served as *Mu'adhdhin* in the Wazīr Khān Mosque because the above mentioned letters were written prior to the erection of the mosque[27]. But his association with the mosque is approved because of his name, written at the band of the Qur'ānic inscription. Moreover all these *āyāt* are inscribed in *Naskhi* style of writing.

All the *āyāt* chosen for the façade of sanctuary are related to *Qibla*, the first mosque and abode of Allah erected on earth that regulates direction of prayers of a Muslim. The *āyāt* define sanctity of *Ḥajj*, the fourth pillar of Islam, major part of which is performed in the mosque of *Ka'ba* at Makkah. The blessedness of this place is further enhanced by the fact that it was erected by the great patriarch *Ḥaḍrat Ibrāhīm* and his son *Ḥaḍrat Ismā'īl*, who were so humble that they repeatedly requested Allah to accept their services, while erecting His house. These *āyāt* also familiarise us with the fact that the direction of prostration was changed by Allah from the *Bait al-Maqdas* to *Ka'ba* at the desire of the Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh), which became an identity of the Muslims. The sacredness of *Ka'ba* is also for its being the first house of worship for men and other creatures which denotes that it was re-erected by *Ḥaḍrat Ibrāhīm* and *Ḥaḍrat Ismā'īl*. The benedictions of which are for those, who enter into it for *Ḥajj* and other '*ibādāt* (prayers) while those who deny, shall be deprived of the blessings of Allah. Thus, the faith in visiting mosques for the purpose of prayers should be as strong as the belief in Allah. This is how the *āyāt* define importance of praying in mosques. The calligrapher or his mentor seems to have full command on religious knowledge. He chose the subject of mosque for adorning the most conspicuous place of this edifice. He defined the origin of the first mosque on earth, its association with Islam and the sanctity assigned to it by Allah, through *āyāt* of the Holy Qur'ān, in a precise manner.

Below the horizontal bands surmounting the area between two arches, there are two vertical panels on each part, adorned with calligraphy, containing *aḥādīth*. But the upper panels on the walls between the northern and southern arches are decorated identically with *Kalima-yi Ṭayyiba* and names of Allah, Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh) and the four caliphs:

Two *āyāt* surmount the southern arch from *Sūrah ii (al-Baqarah), 96-97, fig.214:*



Fig.214: Two āyāt surmounting the arch D.

(tr.) *The first house (of worship) appointed for men was that at Bakkah (an old name of Makkah), full of blessings and of guidance for all kinds of beings. In it are signs manifest; (for example), the station of Ibrāhīm; whoever enters it attains security; pilgrimage there too is a duty men owe to Allah. Those, who can afford the journey; but if any deny faith, Allah stands not in need of any of His creatures.*

Area between the two southern arches that has a smaller band carries the *āyah* from *Sūrah ix (al-Tauba),* 18, *fig.215*:



Fig.215: Qur'ānic band on the area between arch D and arch E.

(tr.) *The mosque of Allah shall be visited and maintained by such, as believe in Allah and the last day. Establish regular prayers and practice regular charity, and fear none (at all) except Allah. It is they who are expected to be on true guidance.*

The *āyāt* inscribed on the band of far-southern arch are from the same *Sūrah ix (al-Tauba),* 108-109, *fig.216*:



Fig.216: Āyah surmounting the arch E.

(tr.) *Never stand thou forth therein. There is a mosque whose foundation was laid from the first day on piety; it is more worthy of thy standing forth (for prayer) therein. In it are men who love to be purified; and Allah loves those who make themselves pure. Which then is best? Or he that layeth his foundations on undermined sand cliff, ready to crumble to pieces with him, into fire or hell. Allah guideth not people that do wrong.*

The end of this *āyah* bears a name of Ḥāji Yūsūf Kashmīri, along with the year 1044 in Persian numerals. It is inscribed "may Allah forgive Ḥāji Yūsūf Kashmīri", *fig.217*, who must be the calligrapher of these inscriptions because his name is retained on the panel of the Qur'ānic *āyāt*. Otherwise one may consider him as an artist who would have adorned the mosque with motifs. Moreover, another source to prove this fact is the letters of the Mūjadid Alif Thani that he wrote to the Ḥāji Yūsūf. He is addressed there, as a *Mu'adhdhin* and the esoteric meanings of various verses of *adhān* are deciphered to him by his mentor. It provides a good reason to assume that he was a mystic, who belonged to the Naqshbandi Sūfi order. But we are not sure whether he also served as *Mu'adhdhin* in the Wazīr Khān Mosque because the above mentioned letters were written prior to the erection of the mosque[27]. But his association with the mosque is approved because of his name, written at the band of the Qur'ānic inscription. Moreover all these *āyāt* are inscribed in *Naskhi* style of writing.



Fig.217: Name of the calligrapher, who adorned the mosque.

All the *āyāt* chosen for the façade of sanctuary are related to *Qibla,* the first mosque and abode of Allah erected on earth that regulates direction of prayers of a Muslim. The *āyāt* define sanctity of *Ḥajj*, the fourth pillar of Islam, major part of which is performed in the mosque of *Ka'ba* at Makkah. The blessedness of this place is further enhanced by the fact that it was erected by the great patriarch *Ḥaḍrat Ibrāhīm* and his son *Ḥaḍrat Ismā'īl*, who were so humble that they repeatedly requested Allah to accept their services, while erecting His house. These *āyāt* also familiarise us with the fact that the direction of prostration was changed by Allah from the *Bait al-Maqdas* to *Ka'ba* at the desire of the Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh), which became an identity of the Muslims. The sacredness of *Ka'ba* is also for its being the first house of worship for men and other creatures which denotes that it was re-erected by *Ḥaḍrat Ibrāhīm* and *Ḥaḍrat Ismā'īl.* The benedictions of which are for those, who enter into it for *Ḥajj* and other '*ibādāt* (prayers) while those who deny, shall be deprived of the blessings of Allah. Thus, the faith in visiting mosques for the purpose of prayers should be as strong as the belief in Allah. This is how the *āyāt* define importance of praying in mosques. The calligrapher or his mentor seems to have full command on religious knowledge. He chose the subject of mosque for adorning the most conspicuous place of this edifice. He defined the origin of the first mosque on earth, its association with Islam and the sanctity assigned to it by Allah, through *āyāt* of the Holy Qur'ān, in a precise manner.

Below the horizontal bands surmounting the area between two arches, there are two vertical panels on each part, adorned with calligraphy, containing *aḥādīth*. But the upper panels on the walls between the northern and southern arches are decorated identically with *Kalima-yi Ṭayyiba* and names of Allah, Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh) and the four caliphs:

Two *āyāt* surmount the southern arch from *Sūrah ii (al-Baqarah), 96-97, fig.214:*



Fig.214: Two āyāt surmounting the arch D.

(tr.) *The first house (of worship) appointed for men was that at Bakkah (an old name of Makkah), full of blessings and of guidance for all kinds of beings. In it are signs manifest; (for example), the station of Ibrāhīm; whoever enters it attains security; pilgrimage there too is a duty men owe to Allah. Those, who can afford the journey; but if any deny faith, Allah stands not in need of any of His creatures.*

Area between the two southern arches that has a smaller band carries the *āyah* from *Sūrah ix (al-Tauba),* 18, *fig.215*:



Fig.215: Qur'ānic band on the area between arch D and arch E.

(tr.) *The mosque of Allah shall be visited and maintained by such, as believe in Allah and the last day. Establish regular prayers and practice regular charity, and fear none (at all) except Allah. It is they who are expected to be on true guidance.*

The *āyāt* inscribed on the band of far-southern arch are from the same *Sūrah ix (al-Tauba),* 108-109, *fig.216*:



Fig.216: Āyah surmounting the arch E.

(tr.) *Never stand thou forth therein. There is a mosque whose foundation was laid from the first day on piety; it is more worthy of thy standing forth (for prayer) therein. In it are men who love to be purified; and Allah loves those who make themselves pure. Which then is best? Or he that layeth his foundations on undermined sand cliff, ready to crumble to pieces with him, into fire or hell. Allah guideth not people that do wrong.*

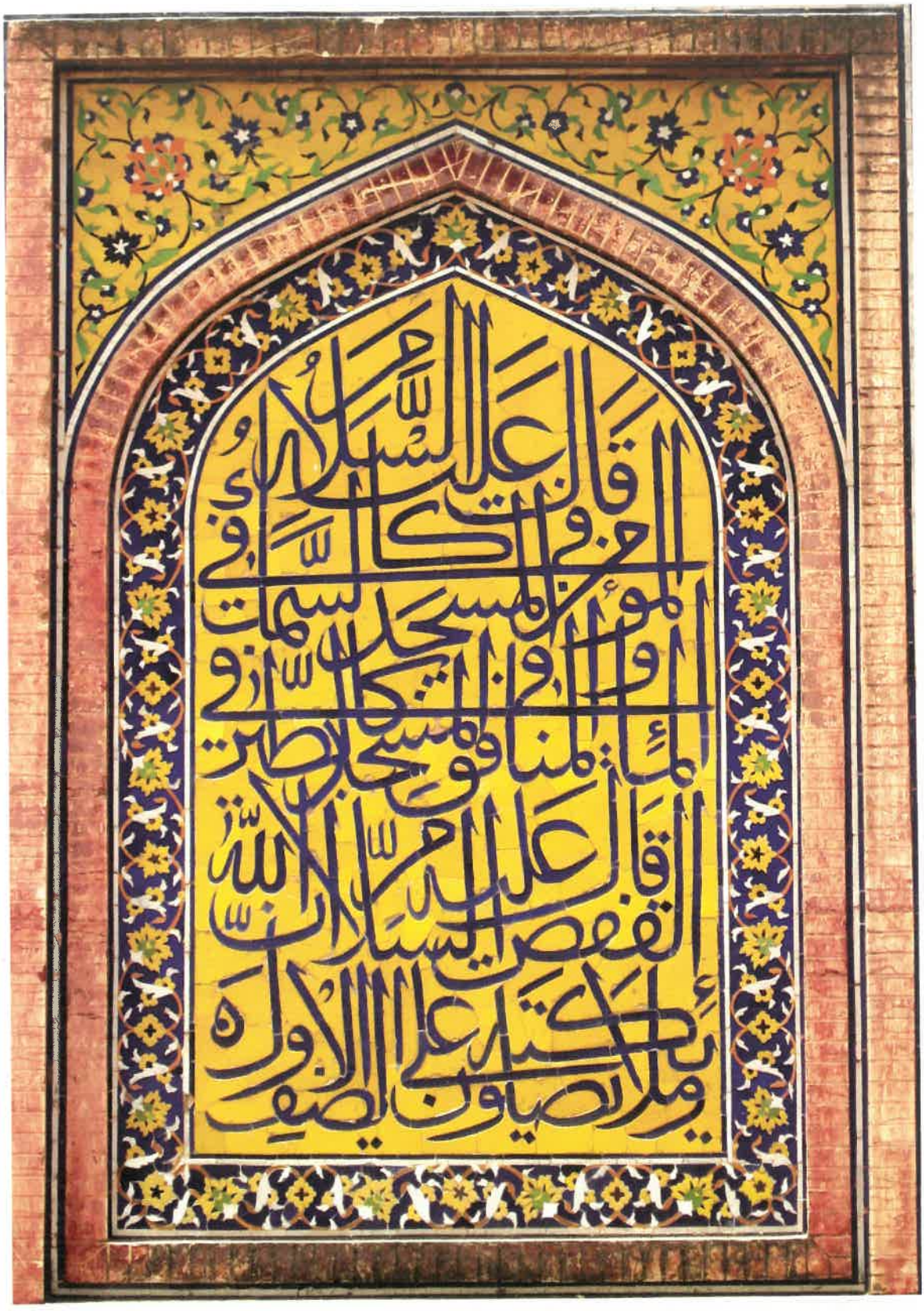


Fig.219: Lower panel on the northern side of sanctuary.



Fig.218: Upper panel on the northern and southern sides of the façade of sanctuary.

Ḥaḍrat Abu Bakar, Ḥaḍrat Umar, Ḥaḍrat Uthmān, Ḥaḍrat Alī, Ḥaḍrat Ḥasan and Ḥaḍrat Ḥussain. It is in stylized *Thulth*, where *A'in*, the first alphabet of the names of three later caliphs is used only once and the rest of the letters of their names are so joined with the single *A'in* that their names are rightly comprehensible, *fig.218*. It is written in lapis blue on white background, looks so beautiful that it bespeaks the artistic talent of its creator.



Fig.220: Ḥadīth inscribed on the lower panel in the southern side of the facade of sanctuary.

Beneath the panels mentioned above, there is another vertical panel on each side containing *aḥādīth*. On the northern panel, two *aḥādīth* are inscribed in *Thulth, fig.219*.

The first one is inscribed in the following words:

قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ اَلْمُؤْمِنُ فِي الْمَسْجِدِ كَالسَّمَكِ فِي الْمَآءِ
وَالْمُنَافِقُ فِي الْمَسْجِدِ كَالطَّيْرِ فِي الْقَفَصِ (کشف الخفاء)

(tr.) *The Prophet (pbuh) declared that a Mu'min, (a devoted Muslim) in a mosque is (delighted) like fish in water and a hypocrite, sitting in the mosque is like a bird in a cage.*

It means a person with true faith feels pleasure in the place of worship and the one, who pretends to virtue, is disconsolate in the house of Allah, like a bird in a cage. The *ḥadīth* is traced and found in *Kashf al-Khifā*[28] *(but the author does not accpet it as a "Ḥadīth")*. This text inscribed on both the places is exactly similar.

This panel is further added with another saying of the Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh),

قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ اِنَّ اللهَ وَمَلَآئِكَتَهٗ يُصَلُّوْنَ عَلَى الصَّفِ الْاَوَّلُ (کنز العمال)

(tr.) *He proclaimed that Allah and his angels offer darūd (blessings) on the devotees who observe their prayers, while standing in first row (meaning those who make haste to arrive in a mosque after hearing adhān).*

References of this *ḥadīth* are located from three sources: two *aḥādīth* from *Musnad-i Aḥmad*[29], and one from *Kanz al-'Ummāl*[30]. The *ḥadīth* phrased in the mosque as well as in *Kanz al-'Ummāl* and one of the *Musnad-i Aḥmad* are in similar words whereas the second reference of *Musnad-i Aḥmad*[31] bears a little variation of words, though similar in content. The text inscribed in the mosque and in *Kanz al-'Ummāl* contains similar words, while the variation in *Musnad-i Aḥmad* is as follows:

اِنَّ اللهَ عَزَّوَجَلَّ وَمَلَآئِكَتَهٗ يُصَلُّوْنَ عَلَى الصَّفِّ الْاَوَّلِ (مسند احمد)

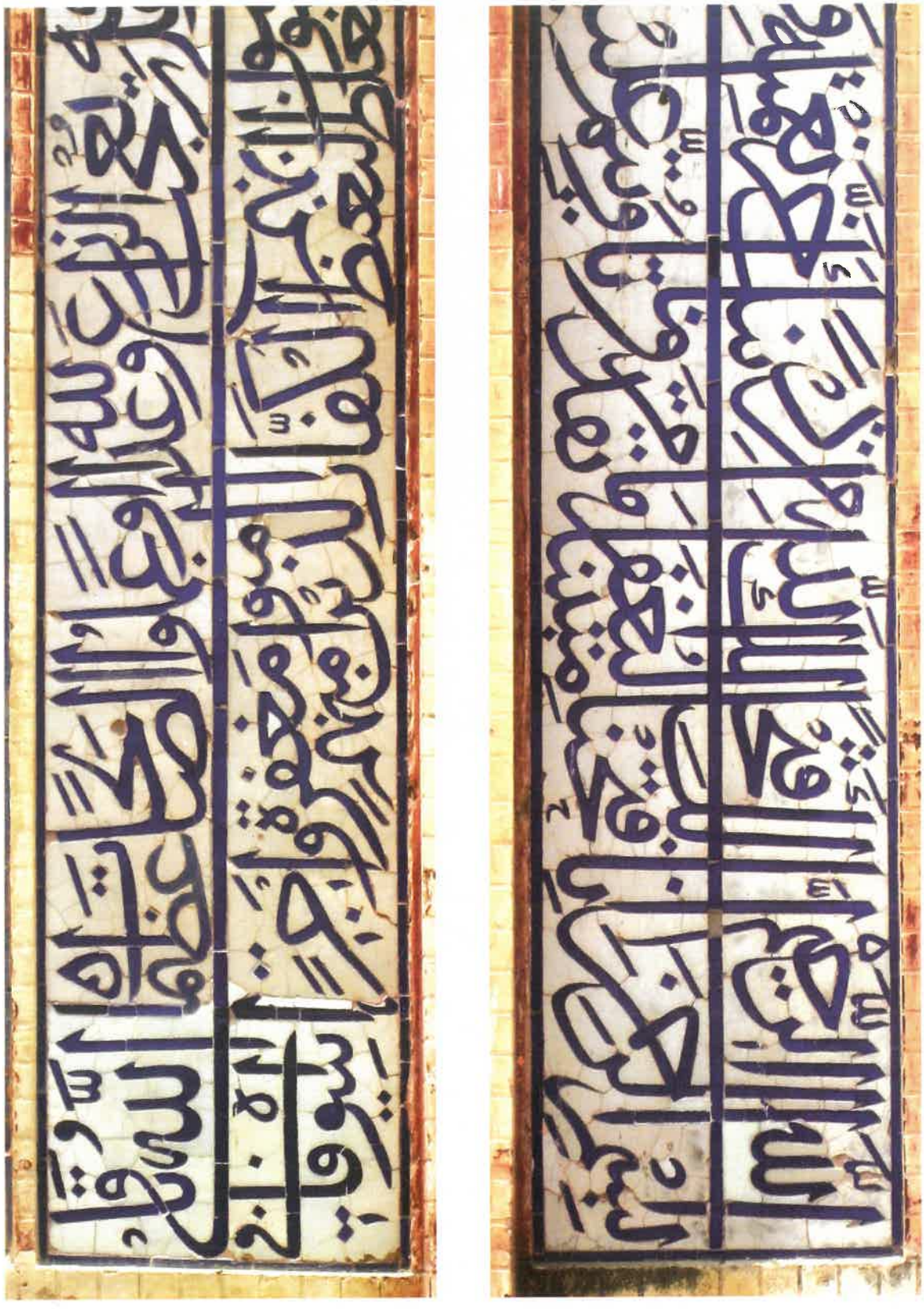
Another reference from *Musnad-i Aḥmad* is in the following words:

اِنَّ اللهَ وَمَلَآئِكَتَهٗ يُصَلُّوْنَ عَلَى الصَّفِّ الْاَوَّلِ (مسند احمد)

The lower panel on the area between southern arches is inscribed with two more *aḥādīth* related to *adhān, fig. 220*. It begins with the following content:

قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ مَنْ اَدْرَكَهُ الْاَذَانُ فِي الْمَسْجِدِ ثُمَّ خَرَجَ لِحَاجَةٍ وَهُوَ لَا يُرِيْدُ الرَّجْعَةَ فَهُوَ مُنَافِقٌ

(tr.) *The Prophet (pbuh) proclaimed about a person who heard adhān while he was in the mosque and went away with some other purpose*



Figs.221, 222: Sūrah al-Fatḥ surrounding the central facade of the sanctuary.

and without the intent to come back (for prayer) he will be a hypocrite.

This *ḥadīth* is traced from the book of *aḥādīth* attributed to Ibn-i Mājah[32], which is as follows:

قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ مَنْ اَدْرَكَهُ الْاَذَانُ فِي الْمَسْجِدِ ثُمَّ خَرَجَ لِحَاجَةٍ وَهُوَ لَا يُرِيْدُ الرَّجْعَةَ فَهُوَ مُنَافِقٌ (ابن ماجہ)

The second one inscribed on the same panel, is in the following words:

قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ مَنْ سَمِعَ النِّدَآءَ فَلَمْ يُجِبْهُ فَلَا صَلٰوةَ لَهٗ اِلَّا مِنْ عُذْرٍ - صَدَقَ رَسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ

(tr.) *The Prophet (pbuh) proclaimed that a person who evade responding adhān (did not come to the mosque) without a proper excuse, his prayer will not be accepted by Allah. There is no doubt that the Prophet (pbuh) of Allah proclaimed the truth.*

This *ḥadīth* is quoted by Ibn-i Mājah[33]. But with little variation of words, although content of the both is similar. The words quoted by Ibn-i Mājah are as follows:

مَنْ سَمِعَ النِّدَآءَ فَلَمْ يَاْتِهٖ فَلَا صَلٰوةَ لَهٗ اِلَّا مِنْ عُذْرٍ (ابن ماجہ)

All these *aḥādīth* are related to the sanctity of *adhān* and saying of prayer after hearing *adhān* (call for the faithful to prayer).

Central Façade of the Sanctuary

This section among the whole façade retains maximum inscriptions mostly taken from the *āyāt* of the Holy Qur'ān, including a few *aḥādīth*. Below the parapet and under a thin projected band of small diamond shapes is another band, comparatively broader, surrounding the central arch from three sides. It is inscribed with *Sūrah al-Fatḥ, figs. 221-223*, in lapis blue against white and the style of writing is *Thulth*. A centrally placed horizontal band below *Sūrah al-Fatḥ*, expanding the spandrels of the arch, retains *Āyah al-Kursi*, *Sūrah*, *ii* (*al-Baqarah*), 255 in comparatively larger format because its band is broader too, *fig.224*. It is also in perfect *Thulth*. At the end of the *āyah*, in the lower left corner of the band is written in smaller format "*katbah* Muḥammad Sharīf": name of the scribe, who did such a splendid calligraphy, *fig.225*. The script is again in *lapis* blue against white.

The vertical area in between the band of *Sūrah al-Fatḥ* and the central arch is further divided into horizontal and vertical panels, placed alternatively. There are four vertical panels and three horizontal ones, on each side. Among the four vertical panels, the lower most on either side above dado is adorned with calligraphy quoting *aḥādīth*, rest of the panels have decorative motifs. On the northern panel is inscribed an *ḥadīth* that stresses importance of the saying of prayer in a mosque instead of performing it alone at some other



Fig.226: Northern panel on the central arch.



Figs. 223: Sūrah al-Fatḥ surrounding the central arch.



Fig.224: Āyah al-Kursī surmounting the central arch.

place, *fig. 226*. It quotes that the Prophet (pbuh) says:

قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ صَلٰوةُ الْجَمَاعَةِ تَفْضُلُ صَلٰوةَ الْفَذِّ بِسَبْعٍ وَّعِشْرِيْنَ دَرَجَةً



Fig.225: Name of the scribe Muḥammad Sharīf at the end of Āyah al-Kursi.

(tr.) *Congregational prayer is better than praying alone and it is twenty seven times more rewarding than the individual prayer.*

This *ḥadīth* is also quoted by Ibn-i Mājah[34] but it also contains difference of a few words although meanings of both are similar. The *ḥadīth* attributed to Ibn-i Mājah has the following words:

صَلَاةُ الرَّجُلِ فِيْ جَمَاعَةٍ تَفْضُلُ عَلٰى صَلٰوةِ الرَّجُلِ وَحْدَهٗ بِسَبْعٍ وَّعِشْرِيْنَ دَرَجَةً (ابن ماجہ)

It is also quoted in *Kashaf al-Khifa*[35] in the following text:

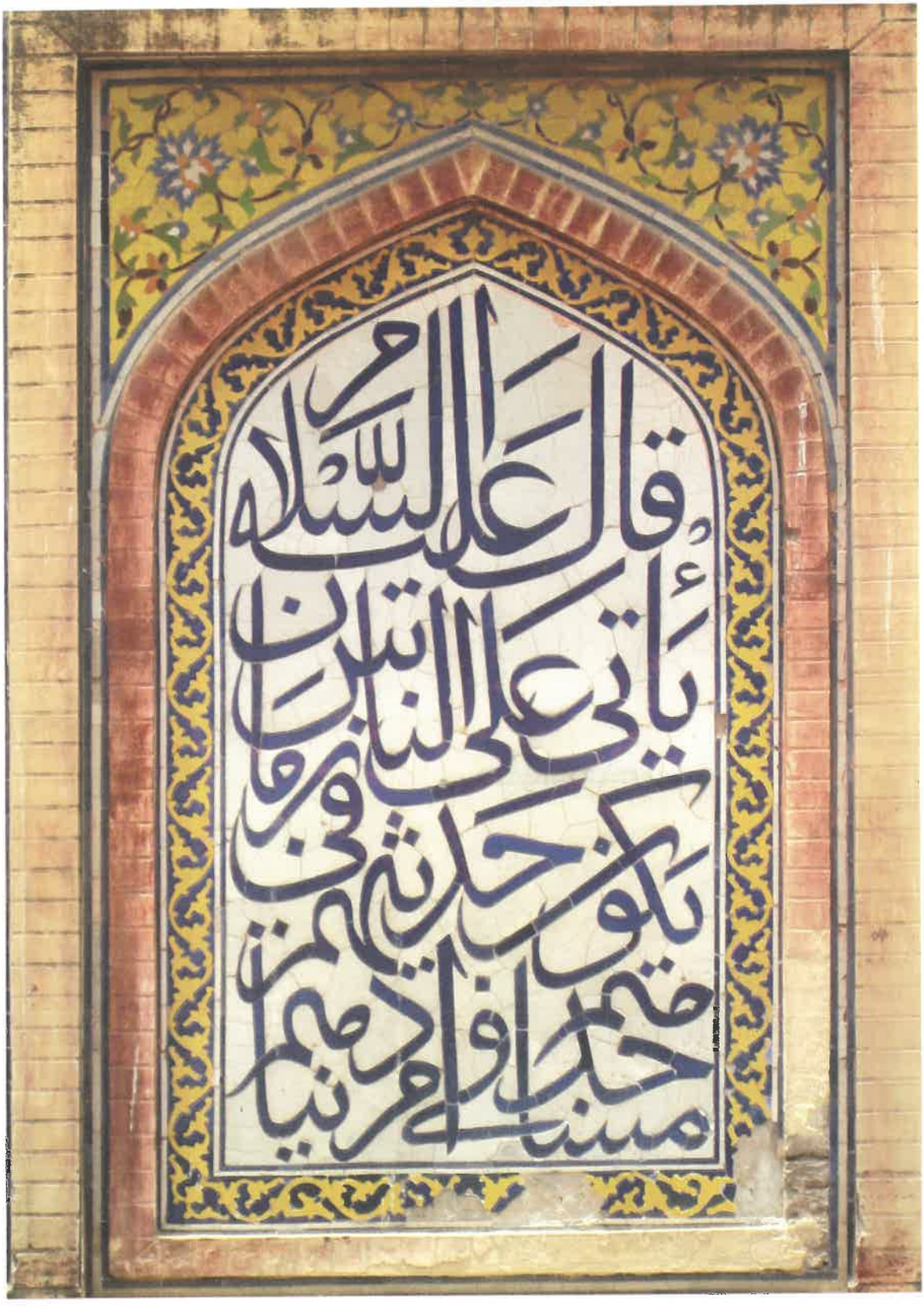


Fig.227: Southern panel on the central arch.

قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ صَلٰوةُ الْجَمَاعَةِ اَفْضَلُ مِنْ صَلٰوةِ الْفَذِّ بِسَبْعٍ وَّعِشْرِيْنَ دَرَجَةً (کشف الخفاء)

Whereas the panel on the southern part of the façade is ornamented with the following *ḥadīth*, *fig.227*:

قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ يَاْتِيْ عَلَى النَّاسِ زَمَانٌ يَكُوْنُ حَدِيْثُهُمْ فِيْ مَسَاجِدِهِمْ فِيْ اَمْرِ دُنْيَاهُمْ

(tr.) *Declared the Prophet (pbuh), that a time would come, when people would be discussing their worldly affairs (at the time of prayer) while sitting in the mosques.*

It is derived from *Mishkāt al-Maṣābīḥ*[36] but with variation of words, it is phrased in following text:

قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ يَاْتِيْ عَلَى النَّاسِ زَمَانٌ يَكُوْنُ حَدِيْثُهُمْ فِيْ مَسَاجِدِهِمْ فِيْ اَمْرِ دُنْيَاهُمْ
فَلَا تُجَالِسُوْهُمْ فَلَيْسَ لِلّٰهِ فِيْهِمْ حَاجَةٌ (مشکوٰۃ المصابیح)

Inscriptions on both the panels are in bright blue of *Lapis lazuli* against white. Panels are arched shape and enframed thrice. The inner most frame which is a flat band of decorative design in blue and yellow, surrounded by another arched shape but this time in relief form, consisting of a thin band of bricks, while the outer most is rectangular, also of projected band of bricks that forms spandrels between the two outer frames which are decorated with arabesques. The colours of frames make the inscriptions of *aḥādīth* luminous. Because blue and white are contrasting and when surrounded by dull tonality becomes more prominent. This is how the artist has glorified sayings of the Prophet (pbuh).

Inner Arch of the Central Façade

The recessed area of the central arch is also adorned with inscriptions; these consist of *āyāt* from the Holy Qur'ān. The upper part, that is half-domed area have five panels at the front wall with central panel broader than the rest. The side walls of the recess too, bear four calligraphic panels, two on either side. Each calligraphic panel is alternated by a decorative panel. One interesting fact about these inscriptions is that selection of *āyāt* for each part had been planed methodically. If numerous *āyāt* are gathered from various *Sūrahs* and collected at one place, their subject is usually similar. For example the upper part of the recessed area of the central arch has nine panels bearing inscriptions. Almost all dealing with some request made to Allah mostly for the grant of righteous path and forgiveness for sins, to escape the penalty of hell that awaits the infidels. All these panels are calligraphed in *Thulth*.

The central panel of the half-domed area, which is sky blue in colour and broader from the rest, has two *āyāt* from *Sūrah iii* (*Āl-i 'Imrān*), second half of the *āyah* 191 and 192 complete, *fig.228*:

(tr.) *Our Lord! Not for naught hast Thou created (all) this! Glory to Thee!*

thy messengers and save us from shame on the Day of Judgment; for thou never breakest thy promise.

A similar subject is chosen for the far southern panel from the Holy Qur'ān. Here also it is reminded to God that we have accepted the message of your messenger, so keep us among those who are believers, *fig.232*. *Āyah* from *Sūrah iii* (*Āl-i 'Imrān*), 193:

(tr.) *Our Lord! We have heard the call of one calling (us) to faith, believe ye in the Lord; and we have believed. Our Lord! Forgive us our iniquities and take to thyself our souls in the company of the righteous.*

The side walls of the recess retain two panels on each side bearing inscriptions, all



Fig.229: Northern panel next from the central, in the conch of arch A.



Fig.230: Second panel from the central in north, on the conch of arch A.



Fig.231: Southern panel next to the central, in the conch of arch A



Fig.232: Second last panel from south, in the conch of arch A.



Fig.228: Āyāt on the central panel in the conch of the arch A.

Give us salvation from the penalty of the fire. Our Lord! Any whom thou dost admit to the fire truly thou coverest with shame, and never will wrong doers find any help.

Letters are in white on sky blue background, which gives a very soft impact that suits the humble request made by the believers to Allah the all powerful.

Next panel, *fig.229*, northern from the central has reddish brown background with inscriptions in white contain *āyah* from *Sūrah* (*al- Mā'idah*), 114:

(tr.) *O Allah our Lord! Send us from heaven a table set (with viands) that there may be for us, for the first and the last of us, a solemn festival and a sign from thee; and provide for our sustenance, for thou art the best sustainer (of our needs).*

If in the above *āyāt*, request for forgiveness is not made, prostration before His powers is confessed. The far northern panel, *fig.230*, that also has sky blue background, with letters in white, contains *āyah* from *Sūrah iii* (*Āl-i 'Imrān*), 147. Here again forgiveness is desired from the Creator.

(tr.) *Our Lord! Forgive us our sins and anything we may have done that transgresses our duty: establish our feet firmly and help us against those that resist faith.*

The other panel which is southern, next to the central one, *fig.231*, is again reddish brown containing *āyah* from *Sūrah iii* (*Āl-i 'Imrān*), 194. Here believers remind God of his promise for the grant of His bounties and forgiveness:

(tr.) *Our Lord! Grant us what thou didst promise us through*



Fig.237: Inscription on the apex of the conch of arch A.

The panels on the southern side have *āyāt* taken from *Sūrah al- A'rāf* discussing the subjects of confession of sins and hope for forgiveness, the two subjects already retained in the *āyāt* selected above, along the trust in Allah. The inner panel is taken from *Sūrah vii (al- A'rāf), 23, fig. 235:*

(tr.) *They said our Lord! We have wronged our own souls; if thou forgive us not and bestow not upon us thy mercy, we shall certainly be lost.*

The outer panel on south, *fig.236*, quotes *Sūrah vii (al- A'rāf),* 8:

(tr.) *Our Lord can reach out to the utmost recesses of things by His knowledge. In Allah is our trust. Our Lord! Decide thou between us and our people in truth for thou art the best to decide.*

The most elegant part of this section is apex of the conch, containing text related to *darūd* on the Prophet and praise for the greatness of Allah. It is retained within three concentric half circles: the inner most has a half lotus flower with seven petals, surrounded by seven cusped half circle. It is enwrapped by another half circle of thirteen cusps, retaining *darūd* for the Prophet:

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلَيْهِ

(tr.) *Allah's blessings and peace be upon Him.*

It is further surrounded by a twenty eight pointed star, half of which is visible; it retains inscriptions related to the confession of faith and the supremacy of Allah, *fig.237*:

contain similar subject, taken from the Holy Qur'ān in which the believers confess their faith and ask for forgiveness. The inner panel of the northern side glorifies the *āyah* from *Sūrah iii* (*Āl-i 'Imrān*), 16, *fig.233*. It quotes:

(tr.) *Our Lord! We have indeed believed: forgive us, then, our sins, and save us from the agony of the fire.*

And the outer panel quotes the *āyah* from the same *Sūrah* that is *Sūrah iii (Āl-i 'Imrān*), 53, *fig.234*:

(tr.) *Our Lord! We believe in what thou hast revealed, and we follow the messenger; then write us down among those who bear witness.*



Fig.233: Inner panel on northern wall of the conch of arch A.



Fig.234: Outer panel on northern wall of the conch of arch A.



Fig.235: Inner panel on southern wall of the conch of arch A.



Fig.236: Outer panel on the southern wall of the conch of arch A.

That is either a calligrapher or an artist who did such marvelous adornments of the stalactites. If we consider him an artist then he must be a geometrician as well because such a harmonic division of geometric shapes was not possible, otherwise. Next semi-circle consists of nine stars, three among them, placed in the centre have four points whereas rest of the six: three on either side have five points each, all carrying name of the first Caliph Abū Bakr. So the name of the first caliph is written nine times in this area, *fig.244-245*. Then in the fourth row that consists of ten stars, two among the ten, placed in the centre, are smaller and have four points and rest of the eight: four on the either side are larger and have five points. These stars are adorned with the name of the second Caliph 'Umar, *fig.246-247*. Name of the third Caliph Ḥaḍrat 'Uthmān is not represented in the smaller stars of the next row, rather it is represented only on two stars, one on either side of the conch, placed little bit off from the circle that contains smaller stars with the name of 'Umar. It is on





Figs.242-243: Name of Aḥmad Abū al-Qāsim on the stars.





Figs.244-245: Name of the Caliph Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakar on the stars.



Fig. 246: Name of the Caliph Ḥaḍrat 'Umar on stars.

لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ الْعَلِيُّ الْكَبِيْرُ لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ الْكَرِيْمُ الْخَبِيْرُ

(tr.) *There is no god but Allah, the most Supreme and the most High.*
There is no god but Allah, the most Generous, the All Knowing.

It is in beautiful *Thulth* represented in relief form with white letters on light blue background.

The half domed area below the apex has minute calligraphic renderings on the smaller stars placed in between stalactites. These stars contain names of Allah, Muḥammad and the four caliphs. All alike in representation except Ḥaḍrat 'Uthmān, rendition of his name is unusual. The stars bearing names are placed in five, half-circular arrangements, concentric to the apex that is inscribed with the adulations of Allah and Muḥammad (pbuh),





Figs.238-239: Name of Allah adorning stars on the conch of arch A.

contained within a fourteen pointed half star. Surrounding it are diamond shapes, then wedge shapes and around it is the first row of five pointed stars, each placed at the joining edges of two wedge shapes. Each of the stars that are seven in number in the uppermost row is inscribed with *Yā-Allah*, (O my Lord), *fig.238-239*. Thus *Yā-Allah* is written here, seven times. The next row consists of six stars: four smaller in the centre and two bigger at the edges. The smaller stars contain the name of the Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh), *fig.240-241*, and the two bigger stars, at both ends, bear another name: Aḥmad Abū al-Qāsim, *fig.242-243*.





Figs.240-241: Name of Muḥammad (pbuh) adorning stars on the conch of arch A.



Fig.253: Band on the inner arch of the central façade, adorned with āyāt.

Ḥaḍrat Uthmān, Ḥaḍrat Alī and Ḥaḍrat Imām Ḥussain within stars. It is not visible with a naked eye, only a closer view enables one to perceive these tiny inscriptions. Otherwise one entangles in the beauty of stalactites that are exquisite of all in that part.

Inner arch of the recess has a rectangular frame of calligraphic band surrounding it from three sides, inscribed with *āyāt* from the Holy Qur'ān, in *Thulth* style, *fig.253*. Starting from the lower northern side, *āyāt* of *Sūrah vi (al-An'ām),* 160-165, carried on the vertical band and continued till the end of the horizontal one, *fig.254-255*. From here, the band continues its downward journey, containing *āyāt* of *Sūrah xxiii (al- Mu'minūn),* 114-117, till its end. The *āyāt* of *Sūrah al-An'ām* are related to the just reward resulted from the deeds of man, complete prostration before the Will of Allah and firm belief that all bounties come from the One who is all powerful. It is written in the *āyāt:* 160-165 of *Sūrah al-An'ām*

(tr.) *He that doeth good shall have ten times as much to his credit: he that doeth evil shall only be recompensed according to his evil: no wrong shall be done unto (any of) them. Say: verily my Lord hath guided me to a way that is straight. A religion of right, the path (tried) by Ibrahīm the true in faith and he (certainly) joined not gods with Allah. Say my prayers and my service for sacrifice, my life and my death are all for Allah, the cherisher of the world. No partner hath He: this am I commanded and I am the first of those who bow to His will. Say*



Fig. 247: Name of the Caliph Ḥaḍrat 'Umar on a star.





Figs.248-249: Name of the Caliph Ḥaḍrat 'Uthmān on stars.



Fig.250: Name of the Caliph Ḥaḍrat 'Ali on stars.





Figs.251-252: Name of Ḥaḍrat Imām Ḥussain on a star.

comparatively larger stars that are seven pointed on which his name is repeated seven times around a seven petalled flower, *fig.248-249*. The most amazing formation is of petals that are delineated through *A 'in*: first Arabic alphabet of the name of the caliph. Moving clockwise it is rotated in different angles to make a flower. It is identical on both the stars. The lower most circle has fifteen stars, all five pointed, carrying name of the last caliph Ḥaḍrat Imām Ḥussain, Ḥaḍrat Alī, *fig.250*, except the central star which contains the name of his son Ḥaḍrat Imām Ḥussain, *fig.251-252*. So in this row the name of Ḥaḍrat Alī is inscribed fourteen times and that of Ḥaḍrat Imām Ḥussain only on one star. His name also surmounts the central calligraphic panel below. It is placed at the apex of the arch shaped panel which is larger and broader from the rest. Thus, this area has an interesting calligraphic formation of the great names of Allah, Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh), Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakr, Ḥaḍrat Umar,



Fig.257: Inscriptions on the spandrels of the central inner arch.



Fig.258: Darūd inscribed on the sides of the central inner arch.

The reality: there is no god but He, the Lord of the throne of honour. If anyone invokes, besides Allah any other god, he had no authority therefore: and His reckoning will be only with his Lord and verily the unbelievers will fail to win thought.

The spandrels of this arch, bedecked with usual arabesques ornamentation, are further adorned with another name of Allah: *Yā-Fattāhu, O: Opener* (of bounties for mankind). It is written in stylised *Naskhi*, inscribed four times in the format of a square by rotating it in four different angles. It makes a beautiful formation of a square by placing the first two letters of this word, *Yā* in four angles that form the peripheries of a square, in which rest of the letters of the word are so placed that the last letter of this word, *ḥā,* forms outlines of the other squares in the centre. The inner square is further divided into a chequer design of four smaller squares; each retaining in it is a *shadd,* the punctuation mark of Arabic text. This attribute of Allah is inscribed very symmetrically in the four adjoining angles and decked with its diacritical and punctuation marks. It adorns both sides of the spandrels of the arch, *fig.257.*

The vertical sides of this arch, outside the calligraphic band are further divided into square and rectangular panels, which are decorated with floral plant motifs. But the square panels, second from above, on both sides have calligraphic inscriptions, containing *darūd* on the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh). It is in *Naskhi* verging on *Thulth* because *alifs* are elongated here, *fig. 258.*

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلٰٓى اٰلِ مُحَمَّدٍ

(tr.) *O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) on Muḥammad (pbuh) and his family.*

It is inscribed in white colour on red background and placed within a cusped circle, retaining eight cusps; each cusp is further divided into three smaller cusps.



Fig.255: Band on the inner arch of the central façade, adorned with āyāt from Sūrah al-An'ām.



Fig. 254: Band on the inner arch of the central façade, adorned with āyāt from Sūrah al-An'ām.

shall I seek for (my) cherisher other than Allah, when He is the Cherisher of all things (that exists)? Every soul draws the meed of its acts on none but itself: no bearer of burdens can bear the burden of another. Your goal in the end is towards Allah: He will tell you the truth of things where in ye disputed. It is He who hath made you (His) agents, inheritors of the earth: He hath raised you in ranks, some above the others: that He may try you in the gifts He hath given you: for thy Lord is quick in punishment: yet He is indeed Oft-forgiving, most Merciful

The calligraphic band is further continued with *āyāt* from *Sūrah xxiii (al- Mu'minūn)* in which it is stressed that knowledge of man is limited and Allah is the knower of everything, *fig. 256.*

(tr.) *He will say ye stayed not but a little, if ye had only known! Did ye then, think that We had created you in jest, and that ye would not be brought back to Us (for account). Therefore exalted be Allah, the King.*



Fig.256: Band on the inner arch of the central facade adorned with āyāt from Sūrah al-Mu'minūn.

Abū Sufiyān was a mystic and a great religious teacher of his time. He was proficient in the Divine law and *Sunna.* His disciples used to call him *Amīr al-Mu'minīn* (chief of the faithful). Numerous religious scholar of that time were indebted to his teachings. His title *al- Thawri* is related to an incident, when once, while entering a mosque he stepped his left foot inside first. It is quoted that a voice came from above, saying "O *Thawri,* this is disobedience". It is said that he fainted after hearing that and when got up he regretted greatly that he had been deprived of recognition as a human. *Thawri* in Arabic stands for a bull. From that day on, he was called Abū Sufiyān al- Thawri[37]. Saying of the saint, quoted in the mosque is actually the essence of his teachings. It is related in *Tadhkirāt al-A'uliya'* that someone asked from him the meaning of faith, he answered that faith means something that comes from the depth of ones heart. He further added that highest rung of faith comes when one surrenders with contentment before each calamity or woe, thinking that it is the will of Allah[38]. A similar statement is quoted in the Mosque Wazīr Khān that piety means to prostrate before the will of Allah, how hard it might be.

The central panel in this area is ascribed to a saying of Abū Bakr Dulāf al-Shibli, *fig.260*:

قَالَ اَبُوْبَكْرٍ اَلشِّبْلِيْ اَلْعُبُوْدِيَّةُ لَا اِخْتِيَارَ فِيْهِ اَلْعُبُوْدِيَّةُ تَرْكُ الْمَشِيَّةِ الْمَقَالُ مَنُوْطٌ بِالْعَلَكْ

(tr.) *Abū Bakr Shibli stated that piety or devotion is not subservient to personal likings; rather devotion connotes the abandoning of all habits or desires of self. The truth of this saying lies in the capacity a devotee has for such a resistance.*

Abū Bakr Dulāf al-Shibli (247/861-334/946) was a mystic of Baghdād, who acquired knowledge from the contemporary mystics and saints of his time, the most prominent among them, was Imām Mālik. Being the disciple of the *Imām* many *āhādīth* are also attributed to him. It is said that after getting proficient in *ahādīth* and *fiqh,* till the age of thirty, he searched for the mystic path to reach God. For this he consulted various saints. But no one, he found able enough to reply to his quarries about the latent world. So he searched for his own path.

He was considered the *Shaykh* of Sūfis and *imām* of those, skillful in their quest for the esoteric meaning of religion. He was born in Sammārā or Baghdād but his family belonged to a village of Khurasān, called *Shibla* from where he received the cognomen Shibli. He was a great friend of Jūnaid Baghdādi.

His guidance or those who wanted to become his disciples was based on complete devotion to Allah. It is said that if any one wanted to become his disciple he would ask him to depart for *Ḥajj* without provisions and conveyance, or to enter a desert completely relying on God. If someone qualified this exam he was welcomed to enter his circle[39].

The *ḥadīth* quoted in the Wazīr Khān Mosque has a similar connotation. The path of truthful devotion and submission to Allah lies in the blind faith on His powers. But this is a supreme path which all are not liable to adopt. There are a selected few, who had the capacity to resist against the worldly temptations. Abū Bakr Shibli was such a devotee that he once said if Allah sends him in hell, he would be more pleased to accept it. Considering

Central *Iwān* of the Sanctuary

Passing through the arch, one steps inside the *iwān*. The upper parts of the northern and southern walls of this section have calligraphic panels. There are three on each side containing quotes of saints and mystics. Here the southern and northern walls bear exactly similar sayings attributed to the mystics of the 8th, 9th, and 10th centuries. These are Abū 'Abd-Allah Sufiyān al- Thawri, Abū Bakr Ḍulāf al-Shibli and Jūnaid Baghdādi. The three sayings on the panels, inscribed in stylised *Thulth*, are related to a single subject that is *al-'Abūdiyat*, meaning the devotion to Allah or piety. It is actually complete submission to the Lord that a true Muslim yearns for. The panel which is first from the side of prayer chamber is related to Abū Sufiyān al- Thawri (715-778), *fig.259*. It is quoted:

قَالَ اَبُو سُفْيَانَ اَلْعُبُوْدِيَّةُ اَنْ يُسَلِّمَ اِلَيْهِ كُلَّكَ وَتَحْمِلَ عَلَيْهِ كُلَّكَ

(tr.) *Proclaimed Abū Sufiān that piety actually means that a devotee should submit to Allah completely and to strictly obey the regulations ordained by Him. It is an essential requirement of the path.*

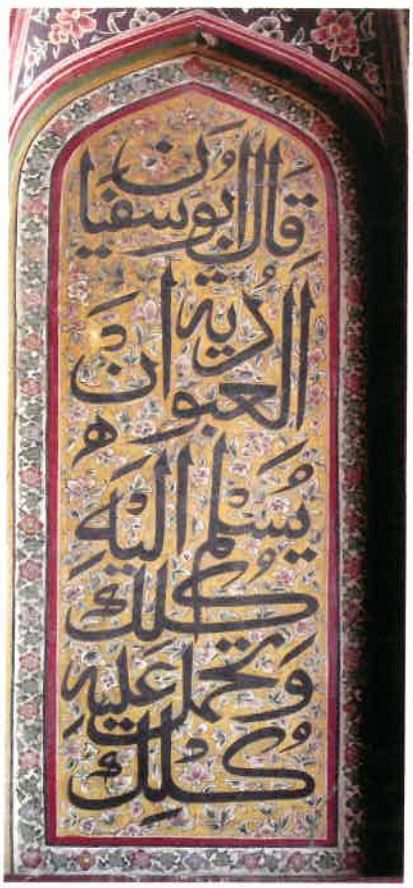


Fig.259: Saying of Abū Sufiān al-Thawri on the side walls of the central iwān.



Fig.260: Saying of Abu Bakr Dulāf al-Shibli on the side walls of the central iwān.



Fig.261: Saying of Jūnaid Baghdādi on the side walls of the central iwān.



Fig.262: Inscription on the apex of the central iwān.

is beautifully decked with names of the four caliphs. These are inscribed four times around the circle in *Thūlth*. Both the inscriptions though white in colour and moulded into relief form, are placed on coloured backgrounds. *Kalima* is retained within black surroundings with red cusps of the circle, while names of the caliphs are placed in sky blue. The black background of *Kalima- yi Ṭayyibah,* seems to be symbolic of *Ḥajr al-Aswad*, the black stone of Ka'ba and the names of caliphs seem to circumambulate around it, *fig.262.*



Fig.263: Calligraphic band surmounting northern wall of central bay of the sanctuary.

Entering through the *iwān* one reaches into the central bay of the sanctuary which is most exquisite of all; so far its adornments are concerned. The decorative motifs are the most splendid in this area and same are its inscriptions. It is replete with beautiful calligraphic panels and bands. A top most band below the domed ceiling surrounds the bay

that heaven was a place he himself wished for and hell, the destiny, Allah had chosen for him[40]. This is the height of submission.

The third panel, which is third from the side of the prayer chamber and first from the side of *iwān* retains a saying by Jūnaid Baghdādi, (d.298/910) who was a contemporary of Abū Bakr al-Shibli and Manṣūr Ḥallāj. The death knell of Manṣūr was finally signed by him, although he himself belonged to the same school of thought. He was a great supporter of the sober school of Sufism and his theosophical doctrine influenced greatly in changing the course of orthodox mysticism in Islam[41]. He was considered a fountain of knowledge and many titles were bestowed to him such as: *Sayyid al-Ṭaifā*, *Lisān al-Qaw'm*, *Ṭā'ūs al-'ulama'*, and *Sulṭān al- Mūḥaqqaqīn*. But he was also called by his opponents as an infidel of highest order[42]. Although his devotion to Allah was such that at the age of thirty he revised all his prayers realising that those performed earlier might have lacked true absorption. For rest of the thirty years of his life, if any worldly thought floated in his mind during prayer, he would revise the whole prayer again. But if a notion of the life hereafter came during prayer he used to make the *sajdah sahw:* at the end of prayer he would prostrate before Allah again, twice to overcome the forgetfulness he had made[43]. Because saying a prayer, according to him, is a complete submission to Allah, any idea in this course is infidelity. The saying on the panel of the mosque quotes a similar notion, *fig.261:*

قَالَ الْجُنَيْدُ اَلْعُبُوْدِيَّةُ تَرْكُ الْاِشْتِغَالِ وَالْاِشْتِغَالُ بِالشُّغْلِ الَّذِیْ بِالشَّرْعِ اَلْفَرْعِ

(tr.) *Jūnaid asserted that piety or devotion (to Allah) stand for deserting all the activities, which means to disdain everything that takes you away from the Divine Commandments.*

This saying of the saint is further elaborated, in the book: *Tadhkirāt al-A'uliya',* in the chapter on Jūnaid Baghdādi He has stressed that devotion to Allah means to abominate the worldly enjoyments that are a hindrance in the divine percepts and penury is the height of piety, reserved by Allah for His favourites only, who are but a selected few[44]. This also stands for a complete submission to the predetermined course of Allah.

The three sayings inscribed in this section are attributed to three different saints but essence of their messages is analogous. This element is not reserved for the central *iwān* only rather it is a common feature of all the inscriptions selected for various sections of the mosque and calligrapher must be credited for that. So, the job of the scribe in this respect is marvelous, who did not only provide the mosque with calligraphic beauty, but in the selection of sayings he also made a marvelous attempt. Each area whether adorned with Qur'ānic inscriptions, *aḥādīth* or sayings of the mystics and saints, centres on certain selective subjects. *Āyāt*, whether taken from different *sūrahs* bear similar meaning and same is the case of *aḥādīth* or quotes of saints. All the three mystics mentioned above are not even contemporary to one another but their sayings selected for this area, promulgate almost similar message which is an important characteristic of inscriptions adorning this mosque.

The apex of the central *iwān* is ornamented with calligraphy within a cusped circle and a central star. In the cusped circle that has twenty five cusps, *Kalima-yi Ṭayyibah* is represented in-*Khaṭṭ-i Naskhi* verging on *Thūlth*, surrounded by an eighteen pointed star that

them, who have not already joined them: and He is Exalted in Might, Wise. Such is the bounty of Allah which He bestows on whom He will: and Allah is the Lord of the highest bounty. The similitude of those who were charged with the (obligations of the) Mosaic Law, but who subsequently failed in those (obligations), is that of a donkey which carries huge tomes (but understands them not). Evil is the similitude of people who falsify the signs of Allah. And Allah guides not people who do wrong! Say the death from which ye flee will truly overtake you: then will ye be sent back to the knower of things secret and open: and He will tell you (the truth of) the things that ye did! O ye who believe! When the call is proclaimed to prayer on Friday (the day of assembly) hasten earnestly to remembrance of Allah and leave off business (and terrific): that is bet for you. If ye but knew. And when the prayer is finished, then may ye disperse through the land, and seek of the bounty of Allah often (and without stint): that ye may prosper. But when they see more bargain or some amusement, they disperse headlong to it and leave thee standing. Say; (the blessings) from the presence of Allah is better than any amusement or bargain! And Allah is the Best to provide (for all needs).

This calligraphic band contains *āyāt* from two different *Sūrahs* of the Holy Qur'ān but their contents are quite similar. These are generally related to confessing the most exalted status of Allah by repeatedly describing His attributes, stressing His omnipotence. This actually preaches the submission of the people of faith before the commandments of Allah. Furthermore, *Sūrah al-Jum'ah* has some additional content relating to the Friday prayer that is congregational prayer. It is ordained by Allah that all business and recreations should be stopped for a while, only at the time of prayer. The esoteric meaning of this subject is also linked with the submission of the faithful to the decrees of Allah. These inscriptions adorn the focal point of the mosque that is its central part, so the subject chosen is directly linked with the function of the religious edifice. It further carries text, quoting sayings of the Prophet (pbuh), along the Qur'ānic script.

Central Miḥrāb of the Sanctuary

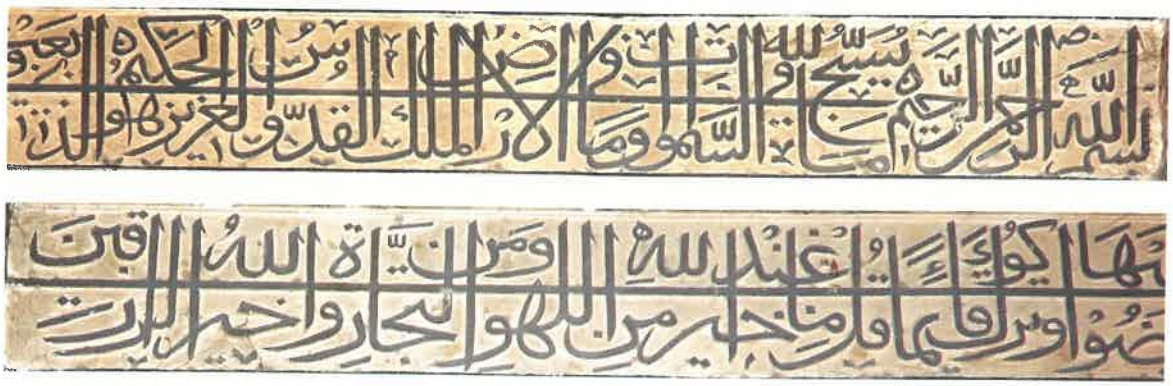
Miḥrāb at the back wall that is western wall is also embellished with calligraphic text from the Holy Qur'ān and *aḥādīth*. The conch of *miḥrāb,* above its cornice has five panels: the central one larger and broader from the rest and the other four: two on its either sides are attenuated. The larger panel is adorned with *āyāt* of the Holy Qur'ān but the thinner panels retain *aḥadīth*. *Āyāt* are from *Sūrah xxxix* (*al-Zumr*), 53-55. These *āyāt* are aimed at bringing optimism for the infidels, who are directed to seek forgiveness before the arrival of the dooms day, *fig.267*. It is inscribed in *Thūlth* with uniform pen:

(tr.) *Say O my servants who had transgressed against their souls! Despair not of the mercy of Allah: for Allah forgives all sins, for He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. Turn ye to your Lord (in repentance) and bow to His (will), before the penalty comes on you: after that ye shall not be helped. And follow the best of (the courses) revealed to you*



Fig. 264: Calligraphic band surmounting northern wall of central bay of the sanctuary.

of the sanctuary from all four sides. The band on northern wall of that part of the sanctuary contains three *āyāt* of *Sūrah Lix* (*al-Ḥashr*), 22-24. In these *āyāt,* Allah is exalted and praised highly by remembering His lofty attributes, *figs. 263-264*. It quotes:



Figs.265-266: Calligraphic bands surmounting walls of central bay of the sanctuary.

(tr.) *Allah is He, than whom is no other god- who knows (all things) both secret and open; He, Most Gracious, Most Merciful. Allah is He, than whom there is no other god- the sovereign, the Holy One; the source of peace (and perfection). The Guardian of faith, the Preserver of safety, the Exalted in might, the Irresistible, the Supreme: glory to Allah! (High is He) above the partners they attribute to Him. He is Allah, the Creator, the Evolver, and the Bestower of forms (or colours). To Him belong the most beautiful names: whatever is in the heavens and on the earth, doth declare His praise and glory; and He is the exalted in Might, the Wise.*

The top most bands on the rest of the three walls of that part, contains complete *Sūrah lxii* (*al-Jum'ah*), 1-11, starting with the *Bismillah*. It is also inscribed in *Thūlth* with black on light yellow background, *fig.265-266*. It quotes:

(tr.) *In the name of Allah, the most Gracious, the most Merciful. Whatever is in the heaven and on the earth, doth declare the Praise and Glory of Allah-the Sovereign, the Holy one, the Exalted in might, the Wise. It is He who has sent amongst the unlettered a messenger from among themselves, to rehearse to them His signs, to sanctify them, and to instruct them in scripture and wisdom, although they had been, before in manifest error. As well as (to confer all these benefits upon) others of*

The inner left panel (south) from the central quotes an *ḥadīth*, inscribed in *Naskhi*, *fig.268:*

قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ مَنْ شَهِدَ اَنْ لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ حَرَّمَ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ النَّارَ

(tr.) *The Prophet (pbuh) certifies about a person, who stands witness that there is no one except Allah who can be worshiped, the fire of hell will be forbidden him.*

Tracing this *ḥadīth* from *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri*[45] and *Jamī'āh al-Tirmadhi*[46] it has become clear that the two *aḥādīth* quoted in these books bear meaning, almost similar to the one calligraphed in the mosque. But selection of words vary a little, although meaning resulted, are similar. *Ṣaḥīḥ al- Būkhāri* retains the following words:

لَنْ يُّوَافِيَ عَبْدٌ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يَقُوْلُ لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ يَبْتَغِيْ بِهَا وَجْهَ اللّٰهِ اِلَّا حَرَّمَ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ النَّارَ (صحیح بخاری)

In *Jamī'a al-Tirmadhi*, it is written in these words:

مَنْ شَهِدَ اَنْ لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ وَاَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ حَرَّمَ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ النَّارِ (جامع ترمذی)



Fig.268: Ḥadīth inscribed on the inner left panel in the conch of central miḥrāb.



Fig.269: The outer left panel from south in the conch of central miḥrāb.



Fig.270: The inner right panel from south in the conch of the central miḥrāb.



Fig.271: The outer panel from north in the conch of central arch.

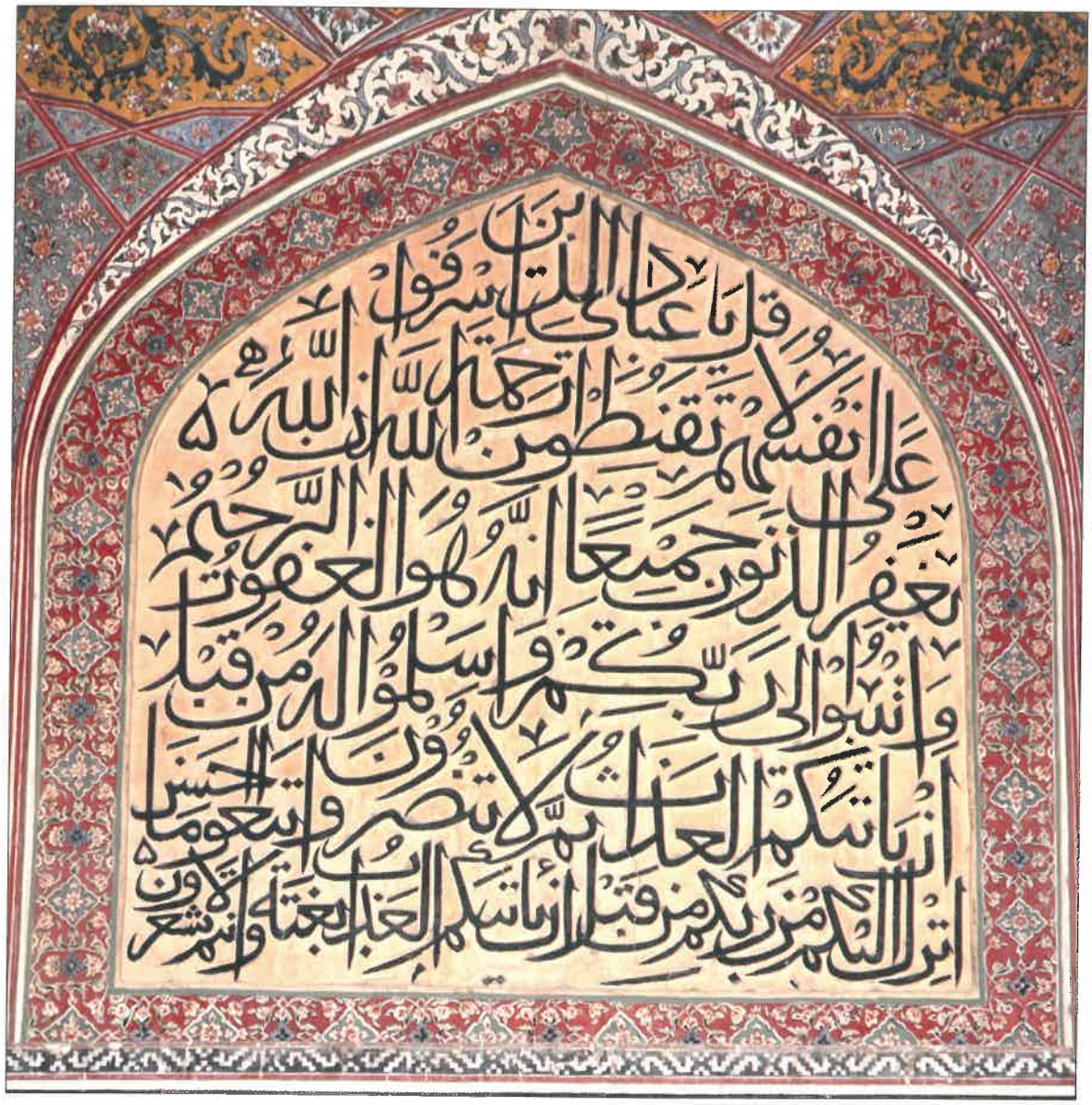


Fig.267: Central panel on the conch of the central miḥrāb, inscribed with āyāt from Sūrah al-Zumr.

from your Lord, before the penalty comes on you- of a sudden, while ye perceive not.

The *āyāt* are a glitter of hope for those, indulge in misdeeds, to seek forgiveness from the One who is All Powerful. Those who repent on their sins should trust Allah, who is forgiving and merciful. *Aḥādīth* chosen for this section, further enhance optimism that is the content of the text inscribed on smaller panels on both sides of the central one. Here the significance of *Kalima-yi Ṭayyiba* is accentuated, recitation of which is said to be the path of salvation. It is repeatedly stressed in all the four panels that *Kalima-yi Ṭayyiba* is the most blissful to attain forgiveness and reach heavens. Thus in the broader panel hope for forgiveness is inscribed and in the attenuated ones path for salvation is defined.

in this book as well as in the mosque are exactly alike but without attributing it to Imām Ṭibrāni. It is inscribed in the following words:

قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ مَنْ قَالَ لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ مُخْلِصًا دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ (مجمع الزوائد)

Central part of the façade which is actually focal point of the mosque is the most magnificent of all. Central *miḥrāb* of the sanctuary carries numerous other inscriptions, which are retained in a variety of shapes. For instance, in the corners of the spandrels of this arch, there are two cusped medallions, one on either side that has sixteen cusps each. *Sūrah cxii (al-Ikẖlāṣ)* is inscribed in circular shape in these cusped circles, *fig.272*. This *Sūrah* makes us comprehend God in the simplest way that He is the One and Eternal and the only being to whom, worship is due. It is inscribed:



Fig.272: Sūrah al- Ikhlāṣ inscribed in the shape of medallion in the spandrels of the central miḥrāb.

The outer left (south) panel bears a similar inscription, quoting another *ḥadīth*, *fig.269*. It is inscribed in *Naskhi*:

قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ لَيْسَ عَلٰى اَهْلِ لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ وَحْشَةٌ عِنْدَ الْمَوْتِ وَلَا عِنْدَ الْقَبْرِ

(tr.) *The Prophet (pbuh) proclaimed if someone reads with the depth of ones heart "there is no god but Allah", he will be saved from the distress of death and grave.*

Another *ḥadīth* represented on the third attenuated panel, which is inner right (north) from the centre, also mentions the significance of *Kalima-yi Ṭayyiba.* But in al-Baihāqi and al-Ṭabrāni, the last word is مَنْشَرِهِمْ in stead of مَنْزِلِ. It is also in *Naskhi* style, *fig.270*:

قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ لَيْسَ عَلٰى اَهْلِ لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ وَحْشَةٌ فِيْ قُبُوْرِهِمْ وَلَا مَنْزِلِ

(tr.) *The Prophet (pbuh) declared about a person, who confesses whole heartedly that there is no one to be adored except Allah; he will be protected from the dreads of grave and desolation of home.*

The above mentioned both sayings, here attributed to the Prophet (pbuh), their authenticity is doubtful because these have been searched from *Ṣaḥāh al-Sittah*[i], thoroughly checked from *Aṭrāf al- ḥadīth* by Sayyid Zaghlol and from *al-Mū'jam al-Mufahris li-Alfaẓ al- ḥadīth* by A.J.Wensinck but neither exact nor similar content is present in these books.

The fourth panel which is far right (north) from the centre further stresses the same subject. It is also related to the Prophet (pbuh), who proclaimed, *fig.271*:

قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ مَنْ قَالَ لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ مُخْلِصًا دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ (رواہ الطبرانی والنسائی)

(tr.) *If someone declares veraciously that there is no god but Allah, his abode will be in heaven.*

It is traced from three sources: two from *al-Mū'jam al-A'ust* and another from *Majma' al-Zwa'id*. One of the *ḥadīth* in *Mū'jam al-A'uṣṭ*[47] bears exactly similar words : that are inscribed in the mosque. But in the *al-Mū'jam' al-Zwa'id,* another *ḥadīth*[48] is quoted which is attributed to Abī Hūrairah instead of al-Ṭabrāni. Although, the basic content of both the *aḥādīth* is similar but selection of words is different. While the one attributed to Abī Hūrairah is inscribed in the following words:

قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ مَنْ قَالَ لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ مُوْقِنًا دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ

Thus the narrators of that *ḥadīth* are different but the message conveyed by both is one and the similar. Third source of this *ḥadīth* is from *Majma' al-Zwa'id*, words written

---

i *Ṣaḥāḥ al-Sittah is a compilation of six authentic books on aḥādīth, which include: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri, Ṣaḥīḥ al-Muslim, Jamī'ah al Tirmadhi, Sunan-i Abī Da'ūd, Sunan-i al-Nasā'i and Sunan-i Ibn-i Mājah.*

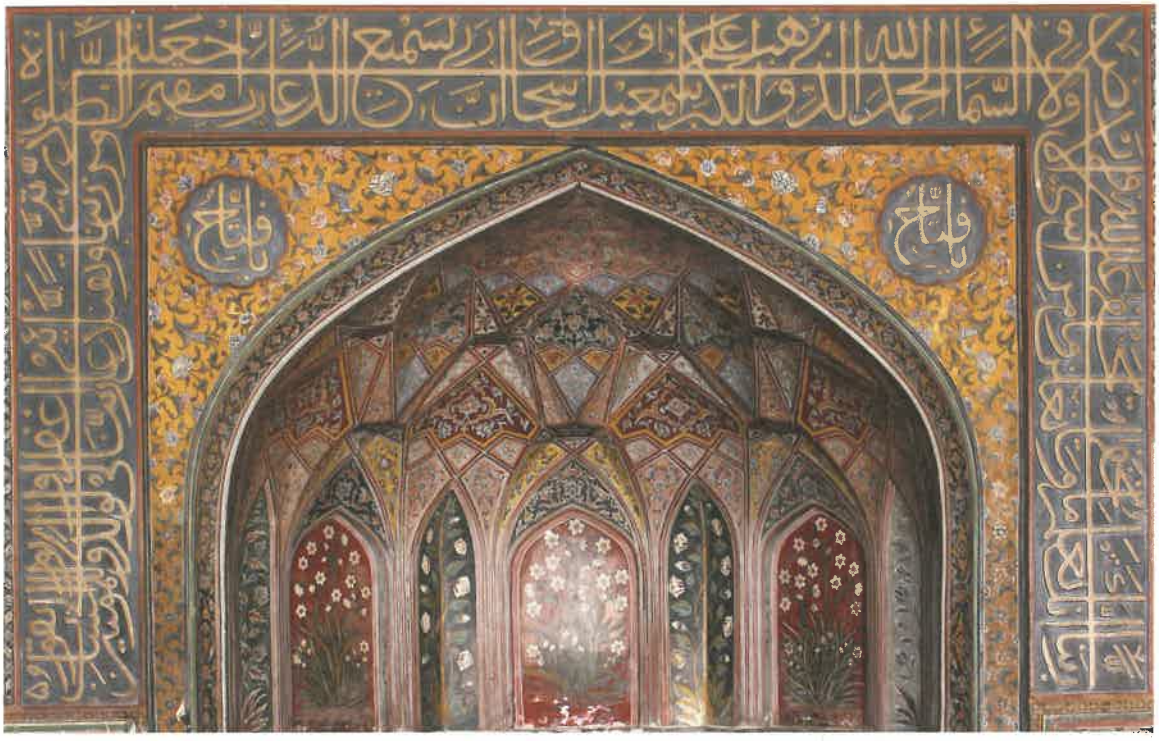


Fig.274: Band of Qūr'ānic āyāt around the central smaller niche.

Lord! Make me one who establishes regular prayer, and also (raise such) among my offspring. O our Lord! And accept thou my prayers. O our Lord! Cover us with thy forgiveness- me, my parents and (all) believers, on the day that the reckoning will be established.

In these Allah is praised then thanked and also begged for His bounties and in the end asked for forgiveness, a complete prayer by the great patriarch Ḥaḍrat Ibrāhīm. This is also in *Thūlth*, with white letters in relief form on a light blue background.

The spandrels of the lower niche contain in both corners a twelve cusped circle, inscribed with the words: *Yā Fattāhu*, addressing Allah by calling him the *One who opens up (the paths of success), fig.275.* The colour scheme of letters is exactly like the band of *āyāt* around the niche that is white on light blue ground and slightly projected in relief form. It is in *Thulth* style.

The walls around the niche also have vertical panels, one on each side. *Darūd* on the



Fig.275: Pendants on the spandrels of the lower central niche.



Fig.273: Bismillah in miḥrābi design at the spandrels of the central miḥrāb.

(tr.) *Say He is Allah, the One and Only: Allah the Eternal, Absolute; He begetteth not, nor is He begotten; and there is none like unto Him.*

It is in stylised Thūlth in decorative form, so arranged that the verticals of the letters are extended till the opposite of each in such a way that each vertical joins in the centre to its opposite in the farther end. Thus, the stretching of straight lines of the vertical letters, form four double lines that cross the circle around its centre. The nucleus of this circle has an eight petalled flower that is blue in colour. It is surrounded by an eight pointed star, red in colour, formed by the extended vertical lines of the letters. This star is surrounded by another but comparatively bigger which is also eight cornered and amazingly resulted from the extended lines of the vertical letters. The rest of the letters are arranged near the outline of the cusps. It is a marvelous arrangement retained on both sides of the spandrels in similar manner. Moreover on both sides of the spandrels near the apex of the arch there are *miḥrābi* patterns, one on each side, containing *Bismillah* in Thūlth, *fig.273.* Both the inscriptions are in light yellow against a background of red. The area below cornice of the central arch, further carries calligraphic adornments.

The smaller niche in the central *miḥrāb* is surrounded from three sides by a band of calligraphic script, *fig.274.* It contains *āyāt* from *Sūrah xiv (Ibrāhīm),* 38-41:

(tr.) *O our Lord! Truly thou dost know what we conceal and what we reveal: for nothing whatever is hidden from Allah, whether on earth or in heaven. Praise be to Allah. Who hath granted unto me in old age Ismā'īl and Isḥāq: for truly my Lord is He, the hearer of prayer! O my*

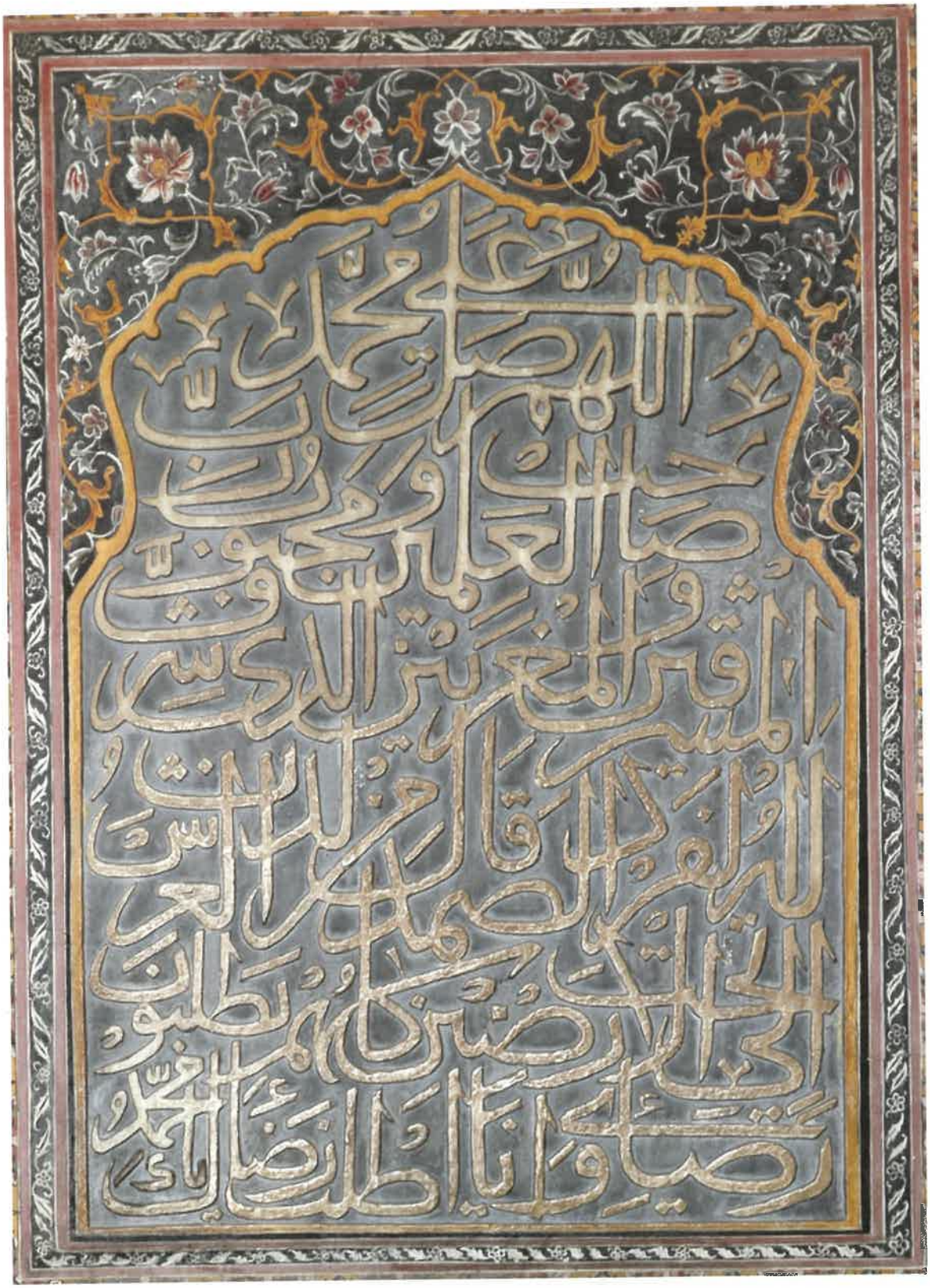


Fig.277: Darūd inscribed on the wall, southern to the central niche.

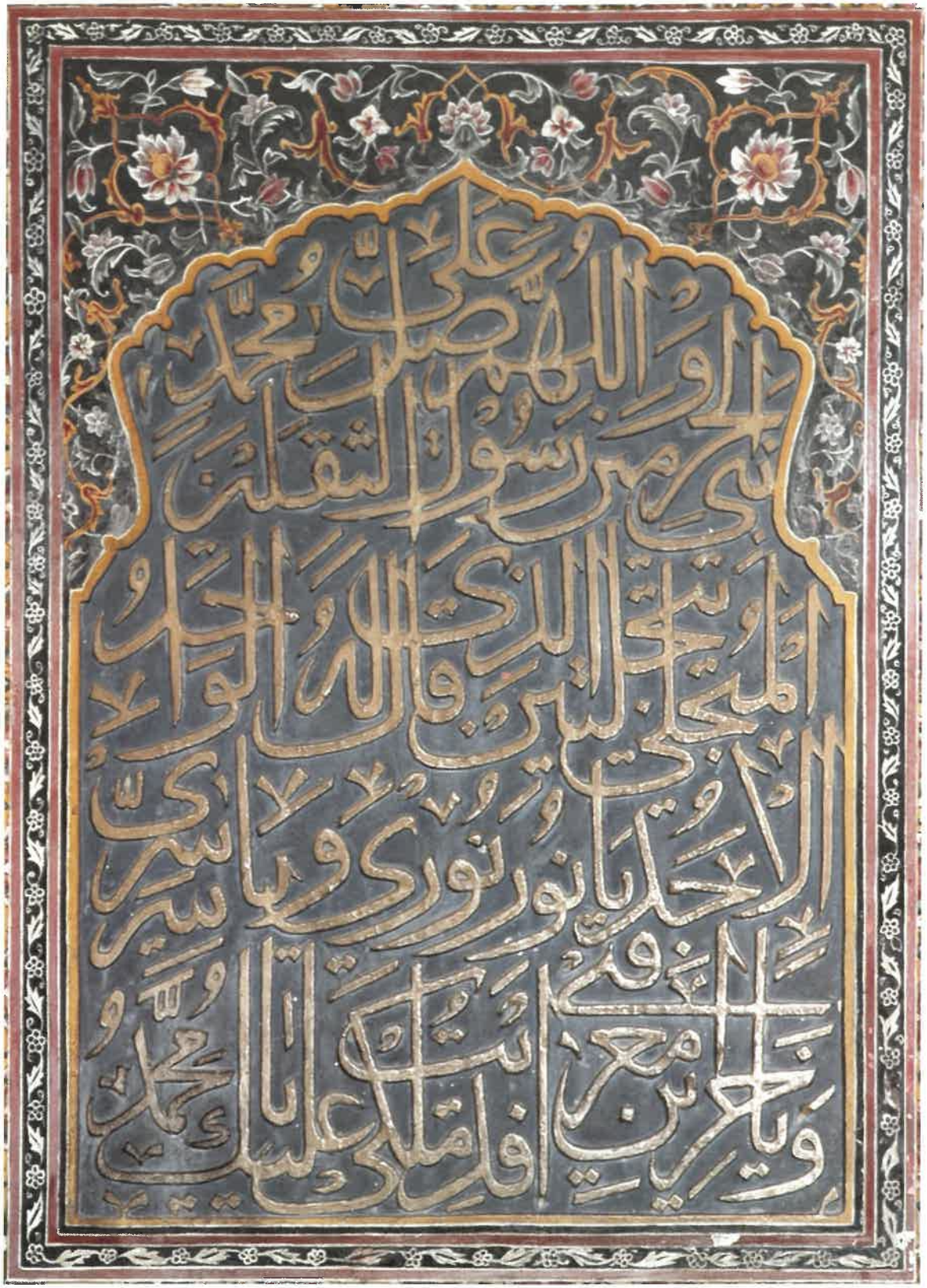


Fig.276: Darūd inscribed on the wall, northern to the central niche.



Fig.278: Qūr'ānic ayāh from sūrah al-Raḥmān at the apex of iwān B.

Rest of the *iwān,* bears no trace of any other script. But various parts of this section of the sanctuary: the northern wall, *miḥrāb* in the west, etc. do have panels and bands of calligraphic inscriptions.

Far-northern Bay of the Sanctuary

Starting from the northern wall of the sanctuary we see that below the apex of the arch, surmounting the vertical panel with perforated stars, there is a five sided horizontal



Fig.279: Ḥadīth inscribed on the northern and southern walls of the sanctuary.

Prophet Muḥammad is nscribed on these panels, both in *Khaṭṭ-i Naskhi*. On the northern side of the niche *darūd* calligraphed is as follows, *fig.276*:

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ نَبِيِّ الْحَرَمَيْنِ وَ رَسُوْلِ الثَّقَلَيْنِ اَلْمُتَجَلّٰى بِتَجَلِّيَيْنِ الَّذِىْ قَالَ لَهُ
الْوَاحِدُ الْاَحَدُ يَا نُوْرُ نُوْرِىْ وَيَا سِرُّ سِرِّىْ وَيَا خَزَآئِنَ مَعْرِفَتِىْ اَفْدَيْتُ مُلْكِىْ عَلَيْكَ يَا مُحَمَّدُ

(tr.) *O Lord! Offer your blessings on the Prophet of Ḥermain (Prophet of Makkah and Madīna) who is the messenger for both men and jins and he is praised for these two attributes. He is proclaimed by the One and the Only (Allah), "as a segment of My Brilliance, a trusty of My Mysteries, and a treasure of My Enlightenment. I have devoted My kingdom to you (I have sacrificed my kingdom on you) O Muḥammad (pbuh)".*

On the southern wall, a similar panel retains another *darūd* for the Prophet (pbuh) in the following words, *fig.277*:

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ صَاحِبِ الْعَالَمِيْنَ وَمَحْبُوْبِ رَبِّ الْمَشْرِقَيْنِ وَ رَبِّ الْمَغْرِبَيْنِ الَّذِىْ شَرَّفَ لَهُ
الْفَرْدُ الصَّمَدُ مِنْ لَّدُنِ الْعَرْشِ اِلٰى تَحْتِ الْاَرْضِيْنَ كُلُّهُمْ يَطْلُبُوْنَ رِضَآئِىْ وَاَنَا اَطْلُبُ رِضَاكَ يَا مُحَمَّدُ۔

(tr.) *O Lord! Offer your blessings on Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the chief of the heavens and the earth. He is the beloved of all, residing in the east and the west. No one among us is properly aware of the status He retains. Allah, who is Eternal, Absolute and the Master of both: the heavens and the earths, proclaims that every single object of the universe yearns for His consent and He says O Muḥammad (pbuh), I want to have your consent.*

The transverse arches flanking the northern and southern sides of central bay of the sanctuary are decorated on the corners of their spandrels with *Sūrah cxii (al-Ikhlāṣ),* one on either side, represented in the circular format exactly similar to the spandrels of the central niche. In between this *Sūrah, Bismillah* on *miḥrābi* motif is also placed in the manner of the central niche. Thus the circular design of *Sūrah al-Ikhlāṣ* and *miḥrābi* of *Bismillah* are repeated eight times each in this part of the sanctuary.

Far-northern *Iwān* of the Sanctuary

Iwāns of the five arches as well as five bays of the sanctuary do have various inscriptions. Starting from the *iwān* B, that is far-northern *iwān,* we find that soffits of the two arches on the eastern and western sides of it have identical *miḥrābi* designs at their apices retaining similar inscriptions on both, *fig.278*. It inscribes an *āyah* from the Holy Qur'ān: *Sūrah lvcxii (al-Raḥmān),* 26:

(tr.) *Every one that is there in will pass away.*

It is inscribed in *Khaṭṭ-i Ma'kūs* but it is not the perfect *Khaṭṭ-i Ma'kūs.* It stresses the oneness of Allah who is the Mightiest of all and He is the only One who is everlasting.



Fig.281: Inner northern panel in miḥrāb G.

panel, *fig. 279*, on which is written in *Naskhi* script. This *ḥadīth* is attributed to Abū Dā'ūd[49]: It is defined in the following words, both in the mosque as well as by Abū Dā'ūd quoted in *Majma' al-Zwa'id*:

اَللّٰهُمَّ افْتَحْ لِيْ اَبْوَابَ رَحْمَتِكَ (مجمع الزوائد)

(tr.) *O Lord! Open the doors of your bounties on us.*

Rest of the bay B is devoid of script of any kind except the western *miḥrāb*, smaller niche and the ceiling.

Miḥrāb of the Far-northern Sanctuary

It is *miḥrāb* G of the sanctuary that retains panels and band of inscriptions. It is

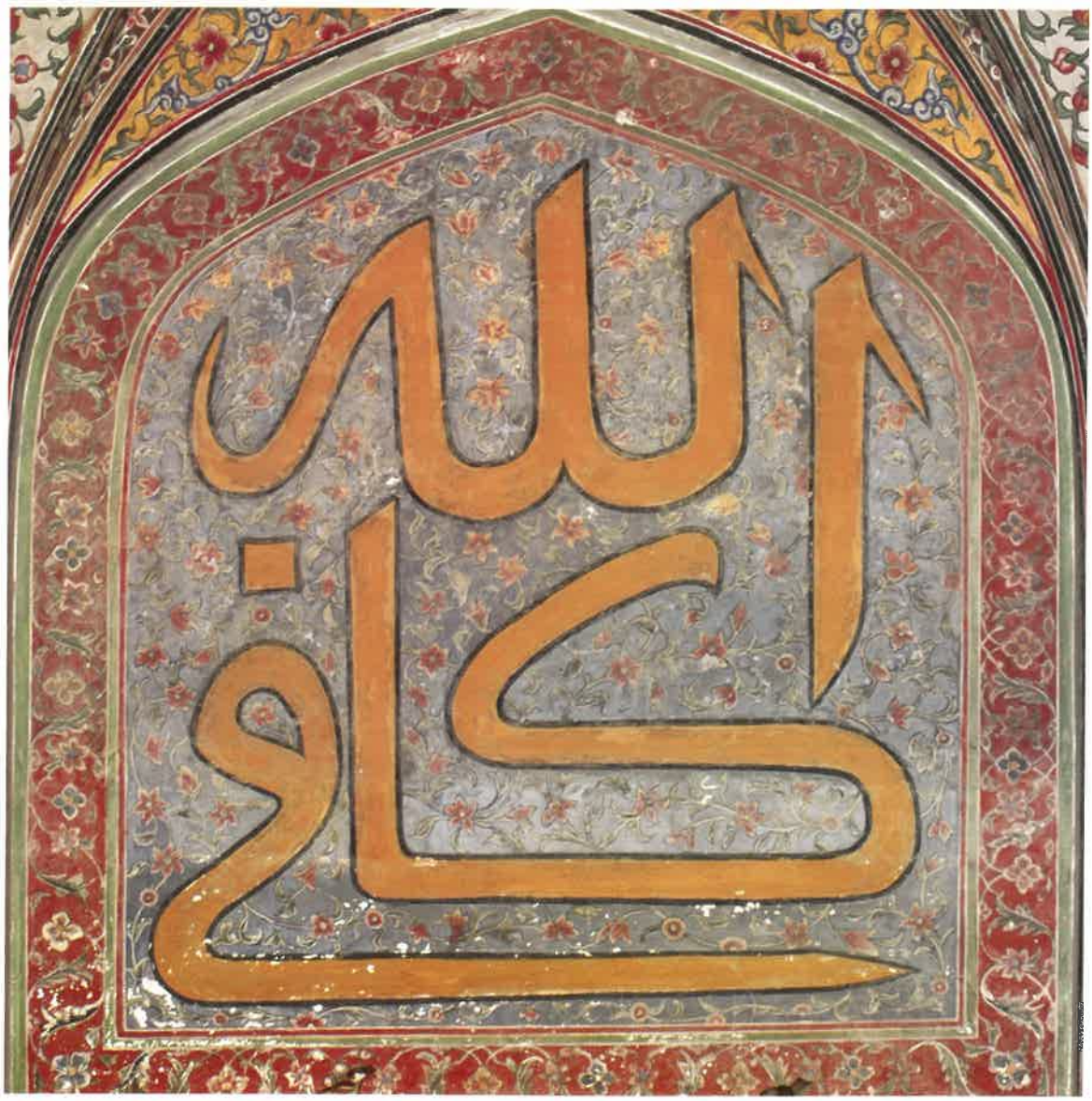


Fig.280: Central panel in the miḥrāb G.

divided into two sections with the help of a cornice, has panels and a band of inscriptions. The upper part, which is a half domed area, has five arch shaped panels with the central one, larger and broader than the rest. It is inscribed with the words: *Allah is sufficient* (adequate and enough for His creatures). *Fig.280.* It is in yellow ochre, outlined with black on light blue ground, which is patterned with floral arabesques. The panels very next to its right and left are comparatively smaller from its length and breath but broader than those placed in the farther ends. Prayers are inscribed on all these panels. The panel on north from the central one is red in colour with yellow inscription on it, *fig.281. Ḥadīth* inscribed in *Thulth*. The original text of this panel in the mosque is as follows:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّیْ اَعُوْذُبِكَ مِنْ غَلَبَةِ الدَّیْنِ وَقَهْرِ الرِّجَالِ

(tr.) *O Lord! Protect me from the burdens of debt and anger of people.*

The *ḥadīth* quoted above is searched out in various authorised books of *aḥādīth* but its complete text is available nowhere. In *Sunan-i al-Nasā'i*[50] first half of it is written in similar words but the later half is different[51]. It is inscribed in the following words:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّیْ اَعُوْذُبِكَ مِنْ غَلَبَةِ الدَّیْنِ وَغَلَبَةِ الْعَدُوِّ وَشَمَاتَةِ الْاَعْدَآءِ (سنن النسائی)

The panel on south from the centre, *fig.282*, which is also having red background with yellow calligraphy, *Thulth* in style, retains the following inscription:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّیْ اَعُوْذُبِكَ مِنْ عَذَابِ الْقَبْرِ وَفِتْنَةِ الدَّجَّالِ

(tr.) *O Lord! Protect me from the torments of grave and treachery of Dajjāl.*

Sunan-i al-Nīsa'i retains a similar *ḥadīth* but with a little difference of words, though almost similar in meaning[52]. Another *ḥadīth* with very ordinary variation of a single word is written in the same book[53]. Yet another is located from *Ṣaḥīḥ al- Bukhāri*[54] with a different arrangement of words, though the content is exactly similar. The two *aḥādīth* in *Sunan-i al-Nasā'i* are as follows:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّیْ اَعُوْذُبِكَ مِنْ فِتْنَةِ الْقَبْرِ وَفِتْنَةِ الدَّجَّالِ (سنن النسائی)

اِنَّ النَّبِیَّ كَانَ یَسْتَعِیْذُ بِاللّٰهِ مِنْ عَذَابِ الْقَبْرِ وَمِنْ فِتْنَةِ الدَّجَّالِ (سنن النسائی)

In *Ṣaḥīḥ al- Bukhāri,* it is quoted in the following words:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّیْ اَعُوْذُبِكَ مِنْ فِتْنَةِ الدُّنْیَا یَعْنِی فِتْنَةَ الدَّجَّالِ وَاَعُوْذُبِكَ مِنْ عَذَابِ الْقَبْرِ (صحیح بخاری)

Panels on far-north and the far-south from the centre are quite attenuated, green in



Fig.282: Inner southern panel in miḥrāb G.



Fig.283: Outer northern panel of miḥrāb G.



Fig.284: Outer southern panel of miḥrāb G.

colour but also bear inscriptions. The one on the far-north, represented in Thulth, *fig.283*, is adorned with a *ḥadīth*, the first 1/3rd of which is also written on the far-northern and far-southern walls of the sanctuary. It is quoted in the genuine books on *aḥādīth* but the later 2/3rd is found from nowhere. For example the text inscribed in the mosque is in the following words:

اَللّٰهُمَّ افْتَحْ لِيْ اَبْوَابَ رَحْمَتِكَ وَسَهِّلْ لَنَا اَبْوَابَ رِزْقِكَ يَا دَيَّانُ

(tr.) *O my Lord! Open the doors of your bounties on us and make the sources of our livelihood convenient for us. You are the Greatest of the Benedictors.*

While *Majma' al-Zawā'id* quotes only these words:

اَللّٰهُمَّ افْتَحْ لِيْ اَبْوَابَ رَحْمَتِكَ (مجمع الزوائد)

The far-southern panel, *fig. 284,* is also calligraphed in Thulth in the following words:

اَللّٰهُمَّ رَبَّ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَّمَلِيْكَهٗ وَاِلٰهَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ اَعُوْذُبِكَ مِنْ عَذَابِ النَّارِ

(tr.) *O Cherisher of all: of angels and of the whole universe, I seek your protection against the torments of hell.*

It is searched and found in *Musnad-i Aḥmad*[55] but with a little variation of words. The text present in *Musnad-i Aḥmad* is as follows:

اَللّٰهُمَّ رَبَّ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَّمَلِكَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَّاِلٰهَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَّلَكَ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ اَعُوْذُبِكَ مِنَ النَّارِ (مسند احمد)

Apex of the conch, *fig.285*, is in the shape of seven pointed half star on which is inscribed in stucco:

لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ الْمَلِكُ الْقَآئِمُ

tr.) *There is no one to be worshiped except Allah, the owner (of every thing) and lasting (firm).*

It is beautifully modelled in Thūlth. A very symmetrical arrangement in which the word *Lā* is so designed that it cuts the verticals of all letters in such a rhythmic way that all seems to be framing the word Allah, which is placed at the summit. Thus the name of the Lord is venerated both ways, through words as well as through pictorial design.

Lower portion of the arch has a smaller niche in the centre which is enframed by a calligraphic band in stucco, above dado containing seventeen names of Allah. It starts with *Bismillah* and then a continuous band in white letters on light blue background, modelled with a continuous line, which does not break till the last letter. It is so inscribed that the

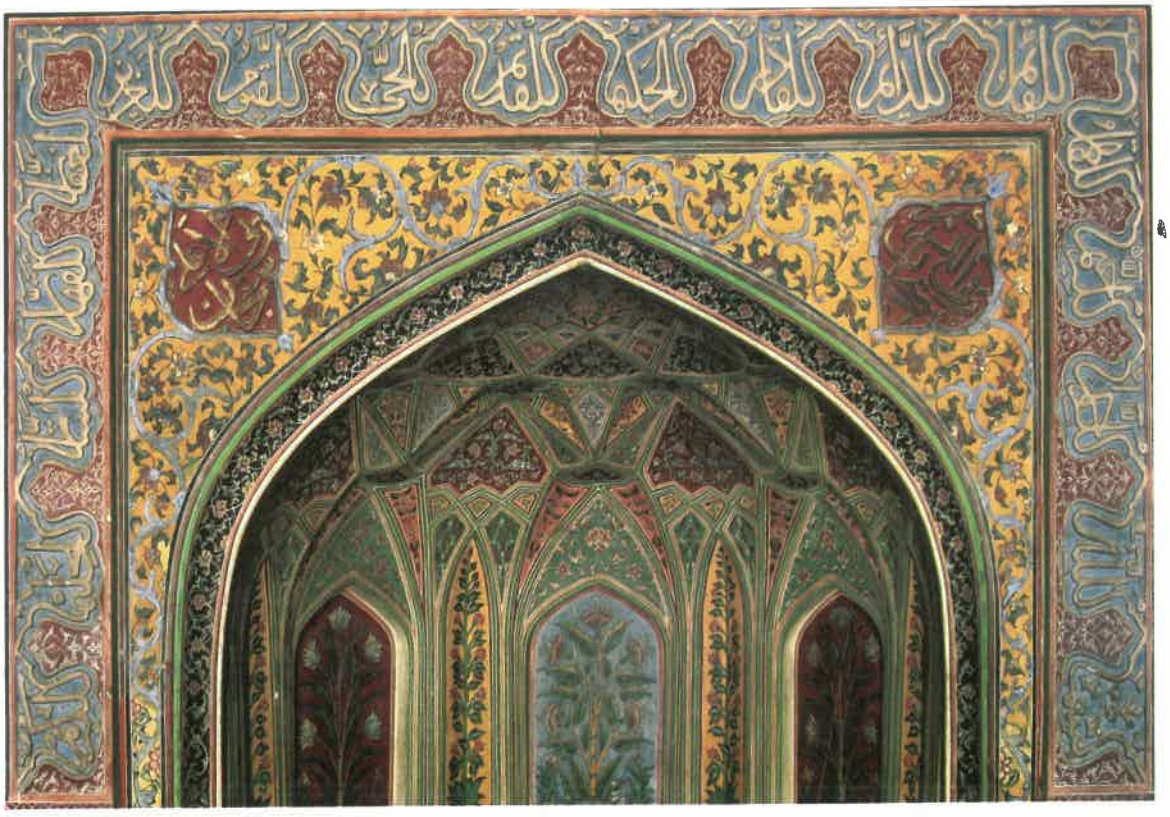


Fig.286: Band containing seventeen names of Allah surrounding the smaller niche of miḥrāb G.

This script is *Naskhi,* verging on *Thulth*, meaning it is neither purely *Naskhi* nor *Thulth*, rather an amalgamation of both. Rests of the parts of this section have beautiful ornamentations of a variety of motifs.



Fig.287: Pendent shapes on the spandrels of smaller niches of arch G.



Fig.285: Inscription on the apex of miḥrāb G.

spaces between two letters form a palmette pattern, *fig.286*. This style of calligraphy is called *Khaṭṭ-i Silsilah*. The seventeen names begin with the words:

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ- اَلْقَاهِرُ- اَلْقَائِمُ- اَلدَّآئِمُ- اَلْقَادِرُ- اَلْحَكِيْمُ-
اَلْقَدِيْمُ، اَلْحَيُّ، اَلْقَيُّوْمُ، اَلْعَزِيْزُ، اَلْغَفَّارُ، اَلْقَهَّارُ، اَلسَّتَّارُ، اَلْحَلِيْمُ، اَلْكَرِيْمُ-

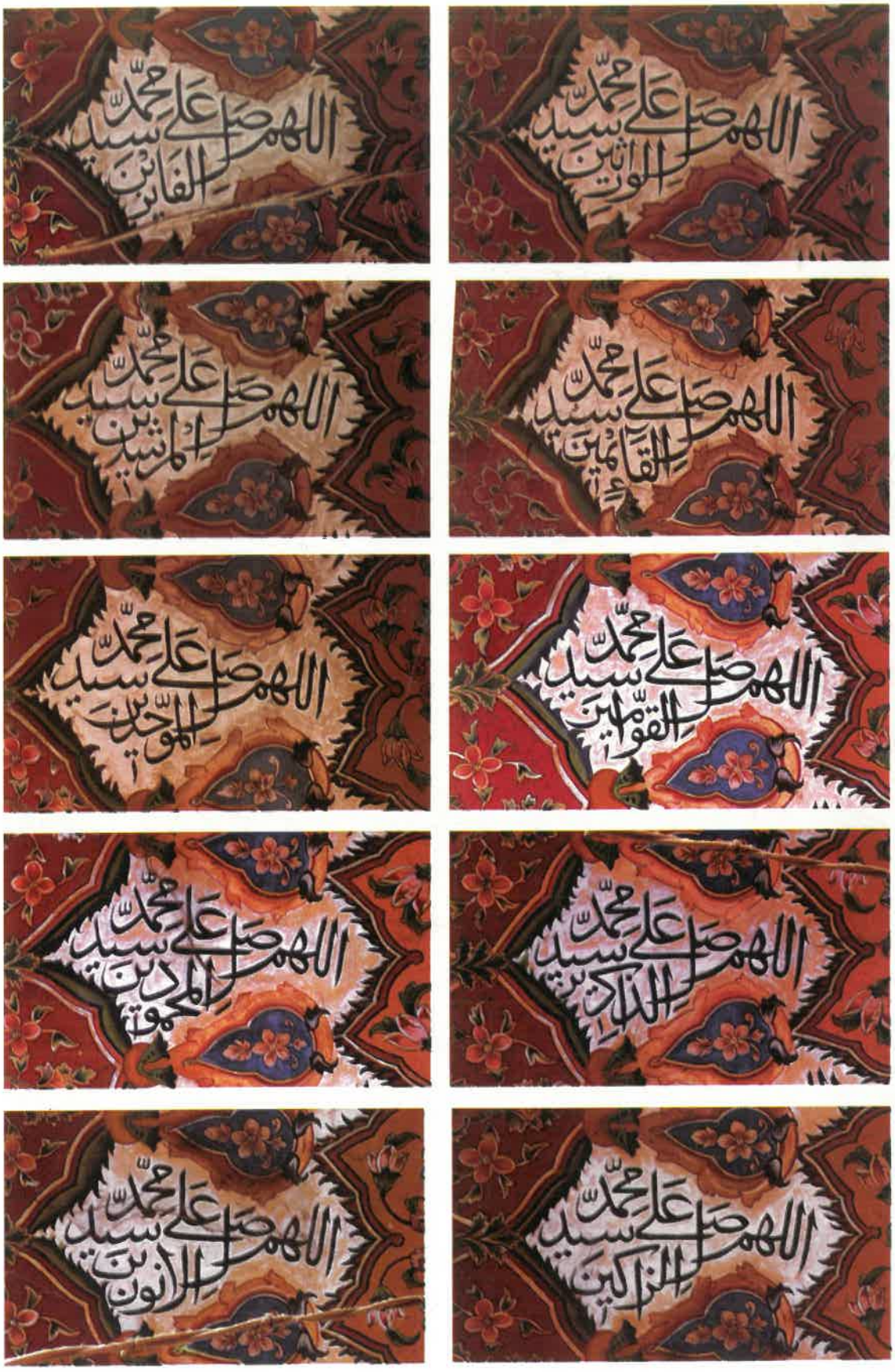
(tr.) *In the name of Allah, the most Beneficent, Merciful, Wrathful, Firm, Everlasting, Omnipotent, Philosopher, Present from eternity, Living (alive), Permanent, Strong and Powerful, Forgiving, the One who punishes, Concealer of vices, Tolerant (Mild) and Merciful.*

The attributes of Allah indicated here through His names reveal His benedictions in magnanimous way than His punishments. This is how a Muslim perceives Allah. Moreover, the spandrels of this niche have pendent shapes, one on each corner. It is red in colour but outlined in blue and inscribed with calligraphy, *fig.287*. It extols Allah's attributes. On the northern side it is inscribed:

(tr.) *Glorified is the Lord, who is Gracious.* سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ الْكَرِيْمِ

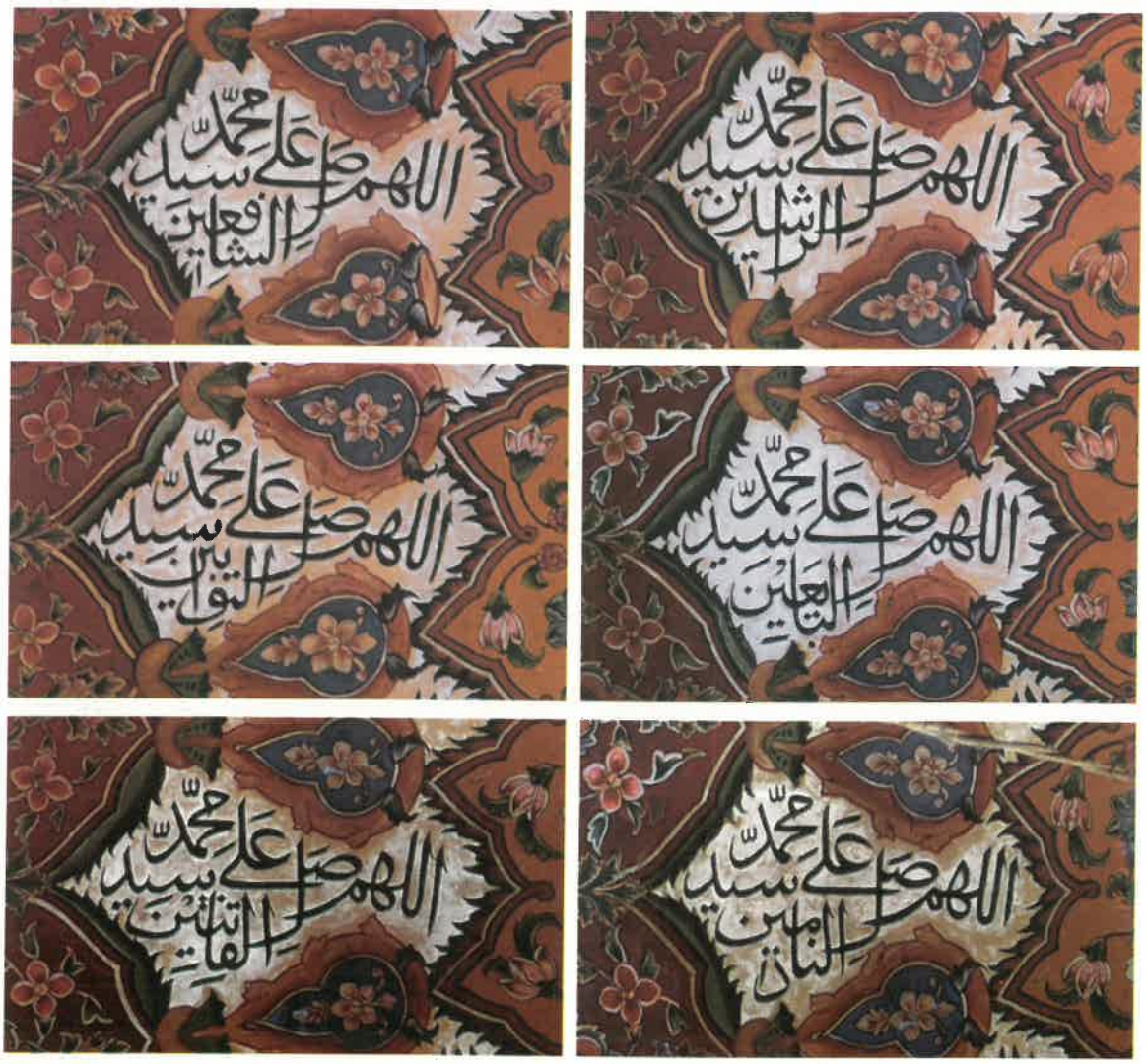
While on the southern, it bears the following script:

(tr.) *Glorified is the Lord, who is Supreme.* سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ الْاَعْلٰى


اللهم صل على محمد سيد الأولين
اللهم صل على محمد سيد الفائزين
اللهم صل على محمد سيد القائمين
اللهم صل على محمد سيد المرشدين
اللهم صل على محمد سيد القوامين
اللهم صل على محمد سيد الموحدين
اللهم صل على محمد سيد الذاكرين
اللهم صل على محمد سيد المحمودين
اللهم صل على محمد سيد المزاكين
اللهم صل على محمد سيد الأنورين

Ceiling of the Far-northern Bay of the Sanctuary

The most beautiful section of this area is the ceiling, magnificently adorned with *sūriya* motif. It is further enhanced by two rows of inscriptions. The inner row is placed around the sixteen sided star. Each compartment of which looks very much like the nib of a pen, so sixteen nibs or sixteen petals of a flower, arranged in a circle around the star, are inscribed with *darūd* for the Holy Prophet (pbuh), addressing him with sixteen different names, in black colour on white background, *figs 288-304.*



اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ الْفَآئِزِيْنَ

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ الْوَارِثِيْنَ

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ الْمُرْشِدِيْنَ

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ الْقَآئِمِيْنَ

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ الْمُوَحِّدِيْنَ

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ الْقَوَّامِيْنَ

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ الْمَحْمُوْدِيْنَ

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ الذَّاكِرِيْنَ

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ الْاَنْوَرِيْنَ

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ الزَّاكِيْنَ

(tr.) *O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the Chief of the recommenders.*

O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the Chief of the virtuous.

O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the Chief of those who seek forgiveness.

O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the Chief of the followers of the faith (Tāba'īn are those, who did not meet the Prophet but met his companions).

O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the Chief of the obedients.

O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the Chief of the repentants.

O my Lord! Propel darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the Chief of the victorious.

O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the Chief of the successors (of earth).



Figs.288-304: Darūd with its variations in the inner circle of sūriya motif on the far-northern ceiling.

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ الشَّافِعِيْنَ

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ الرَّاشِدِيْنَ

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ التَّوَّابِيْنَ

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ التَّابِعِيْنَ

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ الْقَانِتِيْنَ

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ النَّادِمِيْنَ

darūd for the Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh). These are sixteen in number and placed in between the end of red rays of the *sūriya* motif. In each of it, the Prophet is addressed with a different sobriquet that is his attribute. But unfortunately most of the writings on the *miḥrābi* patterns have become unintelligible due to their damaged state, only a few could be read, *figs.305-312*. Those comprehensible are as follows:

صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ نَبِيِّ الْهَاشِمِىْ

صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ نَبِيِّ الْقُرَيْشِىْ

صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ نَبِيِّ الرَّشِيْدِ

صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ نَبِيِّ الْمَحَّارِيْنَ

صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ نَبِيِّ الْوَارِثِيْنَ

صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ نَبِيِّ الْقَيِّمْ

صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ نَبِيِّ الْعَرَبِىْ

صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ نَبِيِّ الْعَزِيْزِ

(tr.) *Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is called the Prophet, al-Hāshmi.*

Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is called the Prophet al-Quraishi.

Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the most intelligent and wise Prophet.

Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the Prophet of his disciples.

Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the Prophet of the inheritors (of ḥikma: wisdom).

Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who remained determined in all adversities.

Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is called the Prophet al-'Arabi (the Prophet of Arabia).

Offer darūd (blessings) upon the Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh), who is dear and precious (to us, all).

O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the Chief of the spiritual guides.

O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the Chief of those, who are firm for the righteous path.

O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the Chief of the ones, who cherish for the oneness of Allah.

O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the Chief of those, who are firm.

O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the Chief of the most appreciated ones.

O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the Chief of the commemorators of Allah.

O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the Chief of the enlightened ones.

O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the Chief of those who are disciplined (restrained to their animal instinct, to seek purity).

The outer most circle of the ceiling is composed of *miḥrābi* design, also containing



Figs.305-312: Darūd on the outer circle of sūriya motif on the far-northern ceiling.

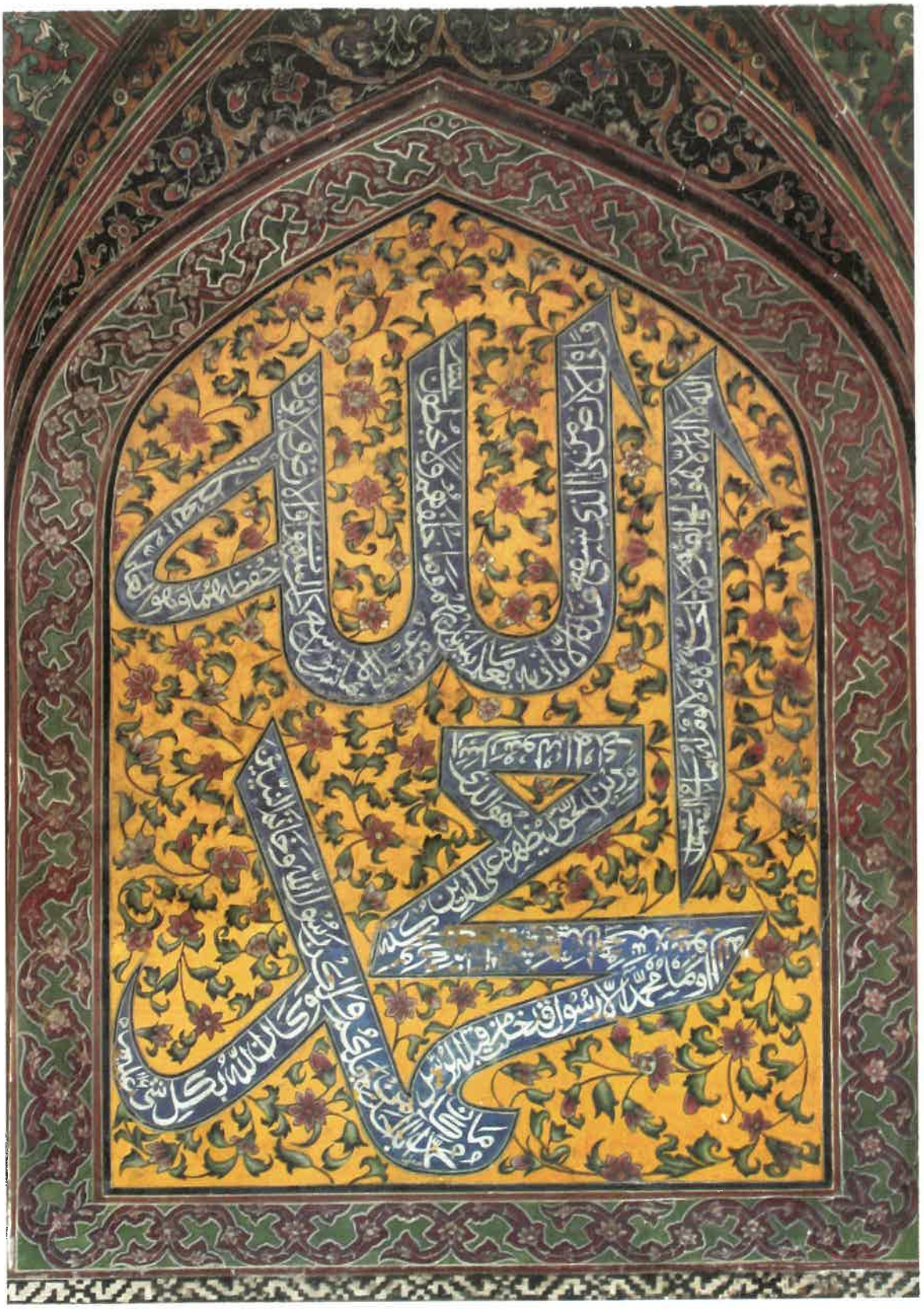


Fig.314: Central panel of the miḥrāb C adorned with the names of Allah and Muḥammad (pbuh).



Fig.313: Inscription on the apex of the iwān C.

Thus benedictions are prayed for the Prophet (pbuh) by calling him with a variety of names that happens to be his characteristics. Actually the devotee, who selected these *darūds,* expressed his reverence in an expressive way.

Northern *Iwān* of the Sanctuary

The arches enframing the *iwān* C, from east and west contain a shape like sea-shell at the apices of their soffits, *fig.313*, keeping *ayāh* from the Holy Qur'ān: *Sūrah xvii (al-Bani Isrā'īl),* 84:

(tr.) *Say that every one works according to his individual way.*

It is calligraphed in *Khaṭṭ-i Ma'kūs* or mirror reflection but it is not the true reflection, rather a variant of it. Rests of the parts of *iwān* are replete with decorative motifs but devoid of inscriptions of any sort. But sanctuary of this part has calligraphic panels in its western niches.

Miḥrāb of the Northern Bay of Sanctuary

Miḥrāb H, is quite similar in the general scheme of its embellishments to the *miḥrāb* G, but different in the selection of inscriptions. The division of upper part of the *miḥrāb* is also similar to the previous one. The area above cornice, which is the lower part of conch, has five vertical panels containing inscriptions, similar in the manner of *miḥrāb* G. The central panel is as usual, larger than the side ones. It contains the name of Allah and Muḥammad in larger format, *figs.314*. These are amazingly inscribed further with *āyāt* of the Holy Qur'ān. The word Allah is filled with *āyah al- Kursi* that is *Sūrāh ii (al-Baqarah),*

Qur'ān: two from the *Sūrah ii (al-Baqarah),* 28 and first half of the 29th *āyah*. It is further continued with *Sūrah iii (Āl-i 'Imrān*), 144.

(tr.) *It is He who has sent His messenger with guidance and the religion of truth, to proclaim it over all religions: and enough is Allah for a witness. Muḥammad (pbuh) is the messenger of Allah. Muḥammad (pbuh) is no more than a messenger: many were the messengers that passed away before Him.*

A thought out and interesting selection of *āyāt* for both the names: Allah and Muḥammad (pbuh). The major attributes of Allah are selected for the adornment of His name through which He is exalted. Moreover, name of Allah, is further venerated by defining status of the Prophet that he is only the messenger of Allah. Supreme power lies only with Allah, Who is Eternal and Muḥammad (pbuh) is a temporal being. Here the words Allah and Muḥammad are calligraphed in *Naskhi*, while the tiny inscription inside the Great Names is in dust script, called *Khaṭṭ-i Ghūbār* in Persian. This panel is surrounded by two more on its either side.

On the southern panel next to the central one and another next to it, on both sides, Allah the almighty is extolled by stressing His attributes, *fig.315*. The panel with light blue background that is very next to the central one is calligraphed in *Thulth,* with these words:

بِسْمِ اللهِ رَبِّ السَّمَآءِ سُبْحَانَ ذِى الْمُلْكِ وَالْمَلَكُوْتِ سُبْحَانَ ذِى الْعِزَّةِ وَالْعَظَمَةِ
وَالْقُدْرَةِ وَالْجَلَالِ وَالْجَمَالِ وَالْكَمَالِ وَالْكِبْرِيَآءِ وَالْجَبَرُوْتِ

(tr.) *In the name of Allah, the Cherisher of the heavens, Lord of everything (in the heavens and on earth) and all domains. Exalted is Allah, Reverential, Tremendous, Powerful, Majestic, Beautiful, Accomplished, Grand and Omnipotent.*

Two almost similar *aḥādīth* are traced from *Kanz al-'Ummāl*. Contents of both are almost similar but all the attributes of Allah the Almighty, inscribed on the panel are not mentioned in any of the two. There are a few which are mentioned in one *ḥadīth*[56] while the others are inscribed in the second *ḥadīth*[57]. But not any of the genuine books on *aḥādīth* quotes it completely. The two *aḥādīth* in *Kanz al-'Ummāl* are as follows:

اِذَاسَجَدَ: سُبْحَانَ ذِى الْمُلْكِ وَالْمَلَكُوْتِ وَالْجَبَرُوْتِ وَالْكِبْرِيَآءِ وَالْعَظَمَةِ (كنز العمال)
سُبْحَانَ ذِى الْمُلْكِ وَالْمَلَكُوْتِ سُبْحَانَ ذِى الْعِزَّةِ وَالْجَبَرُوْتِ سُبْحَانَ الْحَيِّ الَّذِىْ لَا يَمُوْتُ (كنز العمال)

The outer southern panel, which has red background and yellow lettering, inscribed in *Thulth, fig.316*, carries this script:

سُبْحَانَ الَّذِىْ رَافِعُ السَّمٰوٰتِ بِغَيْرِ عَمَدٍ سُبْحَانَ اللهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ وَلَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللهُ وَاللهُ اَكْبَرُ
وَلَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ اِلَّا بِاللهِ الْعَلِىِّ الْعَظِيْمِ

(tr.) *Glory is to Allah, who elevated the sky without any support, exalted*



Fig.315: Ḥadīth on the inner southern panel of the miḥrāb C.



Fig.316: Ḥadīth in the outer southern panel of the miḥrāb C.

255, the majestic status of Allah is glorified in this *āyah.*

(tr.) *Allah! There is no god but He- the living, the Self Subsisting, Eternal. No slumber can seize Him, nor sleep. His are all things in heavens and on earth. Who is there can intercede in His presence, except as He permitteth? He knoweth what (appearath to His creatures as) before or after or behind them. Nor shall they compass aught of His knowledge except as He willeth. His throne doth extend over the heavens and the earth, and He feeleth no fatigue in guarding and preserving them for He is the most High, the Supreme.*

The word Muḥammad (pbuh) contains three *āyāt* from different parts of the holy

سُبْحَانَكَ مَا عَبَدْنَاكَ حَقَّ عِبَادَتِكَ سُبْحَانَكَ مَا عَرَفْنَاكَ حَقَّ مَعْرِفَتِكَ
سُبْحَانَكَ مَا ذَكَرْنَاكَ حَقَّ ذِكْرِكَ

(tr.) *Sacred is Allah, we worship (pay reverence to Him) but not in the way He deserves to be worshiped. Sacred is Allah, we have not recognised Him the way He really deserves (according to His status) to be recognised. Sacred is Allah but we have not recollected Him in the way He has to be recollected.*

On the northern panel (next from the central), *fig.318*, it is inscribed in Thulth, in the following words:

سُبْحَانَكَ مَا شَكَرْنَاكَ حَقَّ شُكْرِكَ سُبْحَانَ اللهِ الْأَزَلِيِّ الْأَبَدِيِّ ـ سُبْحَانَ اللهِ الْفَرْدِ الصَّمَدِ

(tr.) *Sacred is Allah, we cannot pay gratitude (for His Blessings) to the extent He deserves. Sacred is Allah, He was always and He will be there, always. Sacred is Allah, He is the only One and He is eternally Sovereign.*

Both the above mentioned inscriptions are searched from the books of *aḥādīth* but none is inscribed there. The content that they bear seems to be the sayings of mystics who in their passion to become closer to Allah revere Him by recalling His attributes and compare them with the deficiencies of their own.



Fig.319: Praise for Allah inscribed on the apex of miḥrāb C.

is Allah and praise be to Him, Who is the only one to be worshiped, the Greatest of all. There is no power except Him, who can surround (protect everything) with His might, for He is the most High, the Supreme.

This *ḥadīth* is thoroughly searched out from various authentic sources but only the central part is inscribed in *Ṣaḥīḥ al- Muslim*[58]. It is not completely quoted by any. In *Ṣaḥīḥ al- Muslim,* it is as follows:

سُبْحَانَ اللهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ وَلَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللهُ وَاللهُ اَكْبَرُ (صحیح مسلم)

Northern panels too are venerated in the praise of Allah, *fig.317.* It is written in *Thulth* on the far-northern panel:

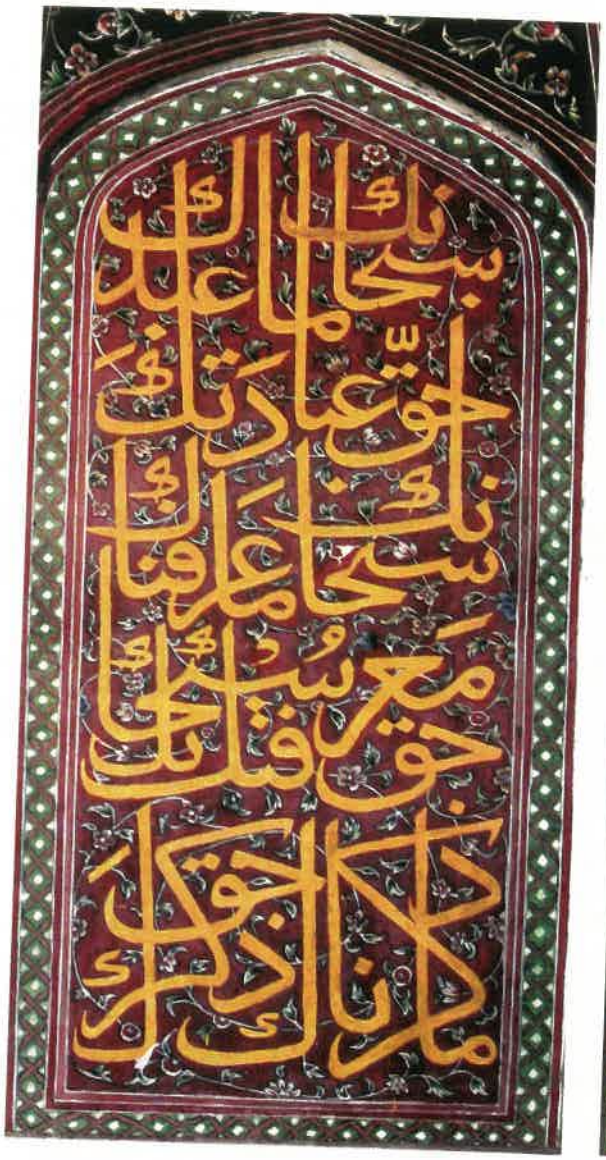


Fig.317: Inscription in the outer northern panel of miḥrāb C.

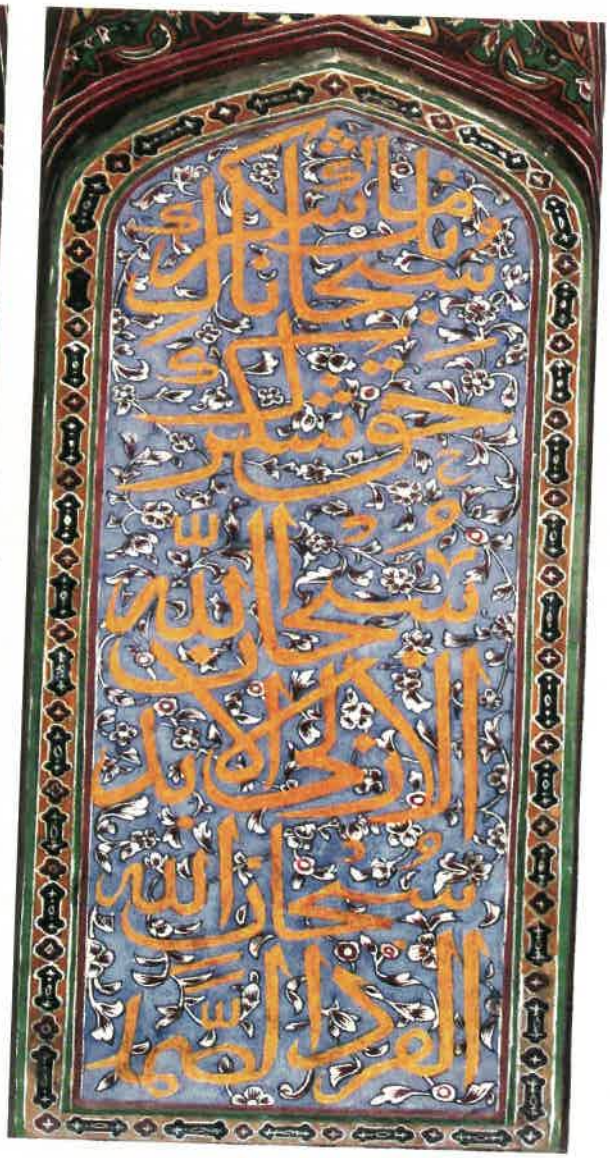


Fig.318: Inscription in the inner northern panel of miḥrāb C.



Figs.320-327: Darūds upon the Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh) in the inner circle of ceiling of the northern sanctuary.

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ الزَّاهِدِيْنَ

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ الْعَابِدِيْنَ

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ الْحَامِدِيْنَ

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ الرَّاكِعِيْنَ

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ السَّاجِدِيْنَ

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِنَا فِى الْاَوَّلِيْنَ

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِنَا فِى الْاٰخِرِيْنَ

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ الْعَالَمِيْنَ

The apex of this niche has a half star with seven points, carrying beautiful inscription in *Thulth, fig.319*:

لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ الْمَلِكُ الدَّآئِمُ

(tr.) *There is no god but Allah, the Sovereign, the Lasting (Eternal).*

It is carved out in stucco and identical in design to another, adorning the apex of the far-northern niche. The difference lies only in the words: *Dā'im* and *Qā'im.* Otherwise the arrangement of letters is exactly alike. We find the same word *Lā,* which starts from the central lower corner and cuts the tops, of all vertical letters that seem to enframe the word Allah. All the motifs surrounding this area and the compartments of these motifs seem to be pointing the name of Allah and motifs specially, appear to have prostrated in reverence before His name. Niche of this *miḥrāb* is a prototype of the niche of *miḥrāb* G, except a little variation in the use of colours and motifs.

Ceiling of the Northern Bay of the Sanctuary

Ceiling of this section gives the appearance of a carpet or a combination of small rugs concentric to an eight petalled flower, placed at the apex of the domed area. It reminds the ceilings of the legendary tents of the Timurids, ancestors of the Mughals. Calligraphic inscriptions are also part of the embellishments of this ceiling. *Darūd* for the Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh) is inscribed on a shape that resembles a compressed star, placed around the central flower in two circles. Each circle contains eight stars. Thus on sixteen compressed stars; *darūd* is inscribed for the Prophet by addressing him with sixteen different names that are actually the qualities attributed to him by Allah. For example he is called *Zāhid, 'Ābid, Ḥāmid* etc, *figs.320-327.* In the inner circle the star shapes are adorned with the following inscriptions:





Figs.328-336: Darūds upon the Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh) in the outer circle of the ceiling of the northern bay of the sanctuary.

(tr.) *O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the Chief of the pious.*

O Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the Chief of the devotees.

O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the Chief of those who praise (Allah).

O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the Chief of the genuflectors, (who bow in rukū' only before Allah).

O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the Chief of those who prostrate before Allah.

O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon our lord Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the Chief of all the Prophets, who were his predecessors.

O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon our lord Muḥammad (pbuh), who will also be the Chief in the life hereafter.

O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the Chief of the whole universe (of heavens and earth).





Fig.337: Ḥadīth inscribed in the inner right panel of the miḥrāb K.



Fig.338: Ḥadīth calligraphed in the outer right panel of the miḥrāb K.

Southern Bays of the Sanctuary

The southern compartments of the sanctuary are exactly identical in every respect to the northern sections, including their decorations. For instance, far-southern or *iwān* and bay E are perfectly identical to their far-northern parts that is *iwān* and bay B, and southern, that is bay D, is very much like the northern, that is bay C, except a little dissimilarity in the selection of script for the panels of the *miḥrābs*. It is the only disparity otherwise each and every part of the southern sanctuaries are a prototype of their counter parts in the north. Specially far-northern and far-southern retain even exactly similar inscriptions besides other adornments.

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ الشَّاكِرِيْنَ

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ النَّبِيِّيْنَ

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ الصَّادِقِيْنَ

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ الْمُشْفِقِيْنَ

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ الطَّاهِرِيْنَ

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ الْمُرْسَلِيْنَ

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ الشَّافِعِيْنَ

The second circle of the compressed stars containing *darūd* defines a few other attributes of the Prophet (pbuh), *figs.328-336,* such as:

(tr.) *O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the Chief of those who pay gratitude to Allah.*

O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the Chief of the Prophets.

O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the Chief of the veracious.

O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the chief of the believers (of Allah).

O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the chief of the altruists.

O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the chief of the pious and pure.

O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the chief of the Prophets (Messengers).

O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the chief of the recommenders.

All the above mentioned *darūds* are inscribed in *Thulth* but the pen used, is not bold.



Fig.339: Ḥadīth adorning the inner left panel of the miḥrāb K.



Fig.340: Ḥadīth represented on the outer left panel of the miḥrāb K.

Kanz al-'Ummāl, there is an addition of last few words. It bears the following text:

إِذَا قَالَ الْعَبْدُ اَسْتَغْفِرُ اللهَ الَّذِیْ لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ الْحَیُّ الْقَیُّوْمُ وَ اَتُوْبُ اِلَیْهِ غُفِرَ لَهٗ
وَاِنْ كَانَ مُوَلِّیًا مِّنَ الزَّحْفِ (کنز العمال)

While *Sunan-i Abī Dā'ūd* retains this script:

مَنْ قَالَ اَسْتَغْفِرُ اللهَ الَّذِیْ لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ الْحَیُّ الْقَیُّوْمُ وَ اَتُوْبُ اِلَیْهِ غُفِرَ لَهٗ وَاِنْ كَانَ فَرَّ مِنَ الزَّحْفِ (سنن ابی داؤد)

The inner left panel from centre, *fig.339*, has another *ḥadīth* that defines the path to heaven:

Southern *Miḥrāb* of the Sanctuary

General arrangement of the *miḥrāb* J of the sanctuary is analogous with its counterpart in the north that is *miḥrāb* H. For instance, the central panel of its upper part is a replica of a similar panel in the *miḥrāb* H. It bears the names of Allah and Muḥammad (pbuh) in identical way to the *miḥrāb* H, filled in with the similar *ayāt* that we have discussed above relating the *miḥrāb*, H, *figs. 314*. But inscriptions on all the other panels of this section are different. It is the only dissimilarity from the northern quarters that lies in this section. Taking into account the inscriptions of this part we see that the inner right panel (north) from the centre contains the *ḥadīth, fig.337:*

قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ اَلَا اَدُلُّكَ عَلٰى بَابٍ مِنْ اَبْوَابِ الْجَنَّةِ يَا مَعَاذُ قَالَ وَمَا هُوَ قَالَ لَاحَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ اِلَّا بِاللّٰهِ

(tr.) *The Prophet (pbuh) addressed M'ādh asking him whether he should tell him about one of the doors leading to heaven. M'ādh enthusiastically inquired about it. The prophet (pbuh) proclaimed "read excessively Lā ḥaulā walā quwwatā illa Bi-Allah (there is no authority than Allah, Who is the Mightiest).*

This *ḥadīth* is checked and more than one references are located but with a little variation of text, although meanings of all the three do not vary much. One reference is located from *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri*[59], where, the narrator of the *ḥadīth* is different, the name of 'Abd-Allah instead of M'ādh is quoted here. It is as follows:

قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ يَا عَبْدَ اللّٰهِ اَلَا اَدُلُّكَ عَلٰى كَلِمَةٍ مِنْ كَنْزِ الْجَنَّةِ قُلْتُ بَلٰى قَالَ لَاحَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ اِلَّا بِاللّٰهِ (صحیح بخاری)

Moreover, the second reference is from *Musnad-i Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal*[60]. It bears the following text:

قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ اَلَا اَدُلُّكَ عَلٰى بَابٍ مِّنْ اَبْوَابِ الْجَنَّةِ قُلْتُ بَلٰى قَالَ لَاحَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ اِلَّا بِاللّٰهِ (مسند احمد)

Yet another similar *ḥadīth* is located from *Jāmi'āh al-Tirmadhi*[61] which is quoted in the following text:

قَالَ اَلَا اَدُلُّكَ عَلٰى بَابٍ مِّنْ اَبْوَابِ الْجَنَّةِ قُلْتُ بَلٰى قَالَ لَاحَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ اِلَّا بِاللّٰهِ (جامع ترمذی)

Although, all the above mentioned *aḥādīth* vary a little in their text but the basic content behind the words is exactly similar.

The outer right panel (far-northern) is inscribed with the following *ḥadīth, fig.338*:

قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ مَنْ قَالَ اَسْتَغْفِرُ اللّٰهَ الَّذِيْ لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّوْمُ وَاَتُوْبُ اِلَيْهِ غُفِرَ لَهٗ

(tr.) *The Prophet (pbuh) proclaimed, if a person seeks forgiveness from Allah by saying that there is no one to be worshiped except Him, who gives life and maintains it (or gives sustenance to it) and I have to return to Him, he will be pardoned for his sins.*

It is located from two sources from *Kanz al-'Ummāl*[62] and *Sunan-i Abī Da'ūd*[63] but with little variation of words, although all the three give similar meaning. Moreover, in the

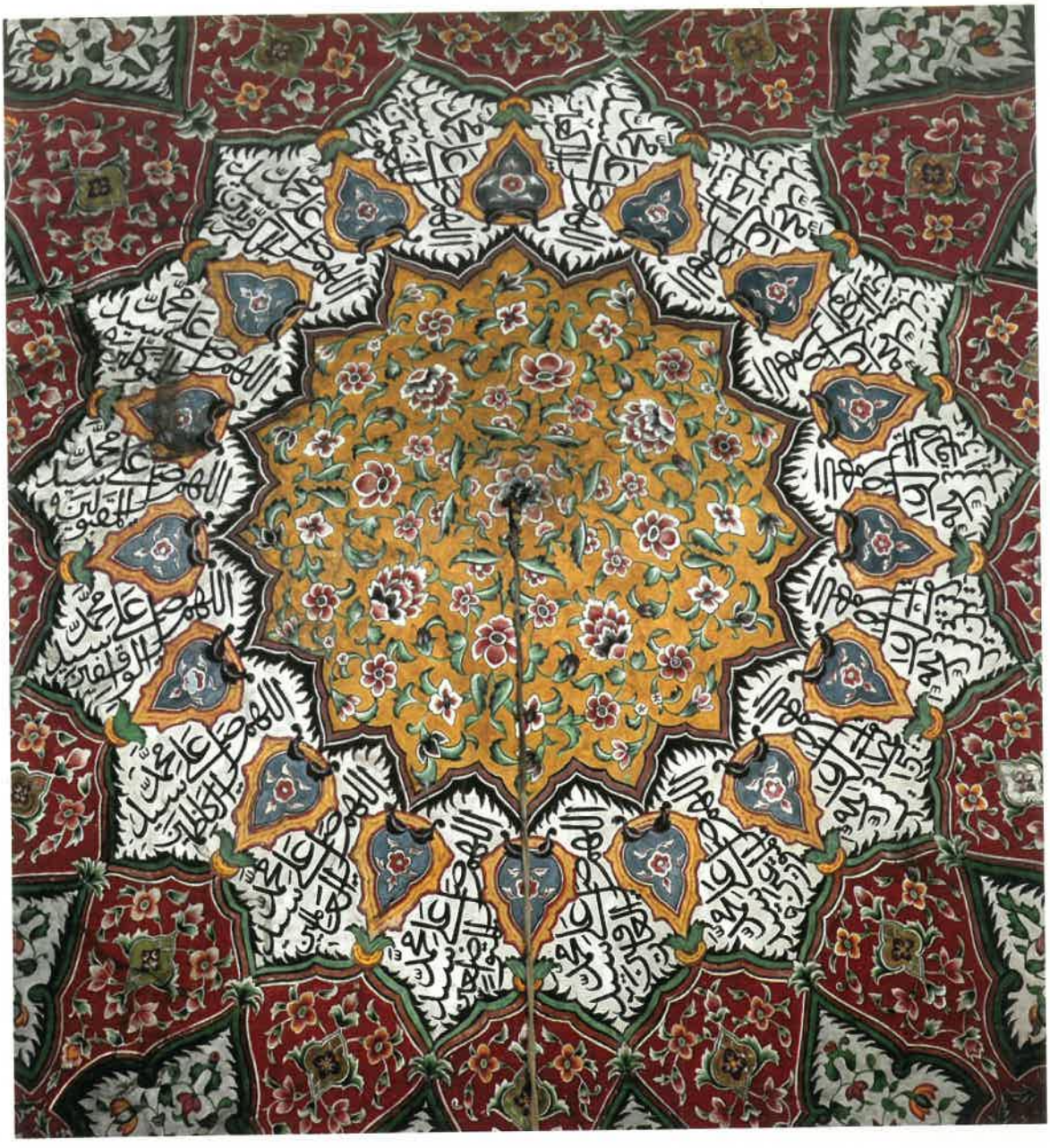


Fig.341: Darūds inscribed in the central circle of the far-southern bay of the ceiling.

Ceiling of Far-southern Bay of the Sanctuary

Apparently this ceiling is a replica of its counterpart in the north but the inscriptions adorning this section vary to a greater extent. Although the shapes that keep the calligraphic text are duplicate of the previous ones. Because it consists of *sūriya* motif, decked with the blessings offered to the Prophet (pbuh). His attributes inscribed here are quite similar to those represented in the far-northern ceiling but not exactly alike in the central circle. Some of the additional characteristics of the Holy Prophet are inscribed here, *fig.341*. The calligraphic style used here is also *Naskhi* verging on *Thulth*. These *darūd*s are as follows:

إِنَّ رَسُولَ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ أَلَا أَدُلُّكَ عَلَى كَلِمَةٍ مِّنْ تَحْتِ الْعَرْشِ مِنْ كَنْزِ الْجَنَّةِ فَقَالَ
لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللهِ

(tr.) *The Prophet (pbuh) of Allah once asked people, should I not guide you to an uttering, right from beneath Divine Throne and a piece from the treasure of paradise? Then he told them to recite "Lā ḥaulā walā quwwatā illa Bi-Allah" (there is neither might nor power except with Allah)*

It is present in *Mishkāt al-Maṣābīḥ*[64] and *Musnad-i Aḥmad*[65]. In the former it is present in almost similar words whereas in the later it is quoted with little variation of words. In *Mishkāt al-Maṣābīḥ* it is inscribed as follows:

قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ أَلَا أَدُلُّكَ عَلَى كَلِمَةٍ مِّنْ تَحْتِ الْعَرْشِ مِنْ كَنْزِ الْجَنَّةِ لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللهِ (مشکوۃ المصابیح)

While in *Musnad-i Aḥmad* it is quoted in the following words:

أَفَلَا أَدُلُّكَ عَلَى كَلِمَةٍ مِنْ كَنْزِ الْجَنَّةِ مِنْ تَحْتِ الْعَرْشِ لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللهِ
يَقُولُ أَسْلَمَ عَبْدِي وَاسْتَسْلَمَ (مسند احمد)

The outer left panel of this section of the *miḥrāb* is inscribed with this saying of the Holy Prophet, *fig.340:*

قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ ثَلَاثُ دَعَوَاتٍ لَا شَكَّ إِجَابَتُهُنَّ دَعْوَةُ الْمَظْلُومِ وَدَعْوَةُ الْمُسَافِرِ
وَدَعْوَةُ الْوَالِدِ عَلَى وَلَدِهِ۔

(tr.) *The Prophet (pbuh) said that Allah does not reject the prayers of three people: the oppressed, the passenger and the father, who prays for his kinsfolk.*

The content of the *ḥadīth* mentioned above is about seeking of forgiveness from Allah. It defines means for getting prayers sanctioned and forgiveness granted by the Supreme Authority. Tracing the authenticity of the *ḥadīth* mentioned above, it can be located from two sources: *Jāmī'āh al-Tirmadhi*[66] and *Ibn-i Mājah*[67]. In *Jāmī'āh al-Tirmadhi* it bears the following text:

ثَلَاثُ دَعَوَاتٍ مُسْتَجَابَاتٌ لَا شَكَّ فِيهِنَّ دَعْوَةُ الْمَظْلُومِ وَدَعْوَةُ الْمُسَافِرِ وَدَعْوَةُ الْوَالِدِ عَلَى وَلَدِهِ (جامع الترمذی)

While *Ibn-i Mājah* has defined it in the following words:

قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ ثَلَاثُ دَعَوَاتٍ يُسْتَجَابُ لَهُنَّ لَا شَكَّ فِيهِنَّ دَعْوَةُ الْمَظْلُومِ وَدَعْوَةُ الْمُسَافِرِ
وَدَعْوَةُ الْوَالِدِ لِوَلَدِهِ (ابن ماجہ)

the truthful and sincere.
O my Lord! Offer darūd upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the chief of those, who humbly approach Allah.
O my Lord! Offer darūd upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the chief of those, who prostrate (before Allah).
O my Lord! Offer darūd upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the chief of those, who bow in rakū'(before Allah)
O my Lord! Offer darūd upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the chief of the grieved and the mournful.
O my Lord! Offer darūd upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the chief of the angels.
O my Lord! Offer darūd upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the chief of those, who have surrendered before the will of God.
O my Lord! Offer darūd upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the chief of those, popular and a chosen few.
O my Lord! Offer darūd upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the chief of those, who are conversant and sensible.
O my Lord! Offer darūd upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the chief of those, who exercise restraints.
O my Lord! Offer darūd upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the chief of the two worlds: corporeal and spiritual (world of men and angels).
O my Lord! Offer darūd upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the chief of the modest and caring.



اَللّٰھُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰی مُحَمَّدٍ سَیِّدِ الْعَارِفِیْنَ

اَللّٰھُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰی مُحَمَّدٍ سَیِّدِ الْمُتَوَرِّعِیْنَ

اَللّٰھُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰی مُحَمَّدٍ سَیِّدِ الْمُکَمَّلِیْنَ

اَللّٰھُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰی مُحَمَّدٍ سَیِّدِ الْمُرْشِدِیْنَ

اَللّٰھُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰی مُحَمَّدٍ سَیِّدِ الصَّادِقِیْنَ

اَللّٰھُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰی مُحَمَّدٍ سَیِّدِ الْوَاصِلِیْنَ

اَللّٰھُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰی مُحَمَّدٍ سَیِّدِ السَّاجِدِیْنَ

اَللّٰھُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰی مُحَمَّدٍ سَیِّدِ الرَّاکِعِیْنَ

اَللّٰھُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰی مُحَمَّدٍ سَیِّدِ الْمَغْمُوْمِیْنَ

اَللّٰھُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰی مُحَمَّدٍ سَیِّدِ الْمَکْرُوْبِیْنَ

اَللّٰھُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰی مُحَمَّدٍ سَیِّدِ الْمُتَوَکِّلِیْنَ

اَللّٰھُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰی مُحَمَّدٍ سَیِّدِ الْمَقْبُوْلِیْنَ

اَللّٰھُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰی مُحَمَّدٍ سَیِّدِ الْوَاقِفِیْنَ

اَللّٰھُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰی مُحَمَّدٍ سَیِّدِ الْکَاظِمِیْنَ

اَللّٰھُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰی مُحَمَّدٍ سَیِّدِ الْعَالَمِیْنَ

اَللّٰھُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰی مُحَمَّدٍ سَیِّدِ الْمُتَوَاضِعِیْنَ

(tr.) *O my Lord! Offer darūd upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the chief of the devotees and ascetics.*
O my Lord! Offer darūd upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the chief of those, who feel awe (for their lord).
O my Lord! Offer darūd upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the chief of those, who are perfect and accomplished.
O my Lord! Offer darūd upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the chief of the spiritual guides.
O my Lord! Offer darūd upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the chief of

صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ مَنْ لَهُ الدَّرَجَاتُ الْعُلٰى

صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ وَمَنْ صَلّٰى عَلَيْهِ وَذُرِّيَّتِهٖ

صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ وَمَنْ صَلّٰى عَلَيْهِ

صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ وَمَنْ صَلّٰى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهٖ

صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ مِنْ آيَاتِ رَبِّهِ الْكُبْرٰى

(tr.) *Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who keeps all the beautiful names.*
Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who went on the sojourn, beyond the heights of rainbow.
Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), for whom is the magnificent paradise.
Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), for whom is the magnificent paradise.
Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who, because of his veracity, was bestowed by the Lord with (Sūrah) wa al-Ḍuḥā, as one of His Signs[ii].
Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), and also on those who send counted darūds upon him.
Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is bestowed with great rewards and auspiciousness from Allah.
Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), on his spouses and also upon those who offer him darūd.
Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), on his companions and also upon those who offer him darūd.
Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), and upon those who are near to his heart, including the ones who offer him with darūd.
Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is bestowed with great rewards and auspiciousness from Allah.
Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), upon his progeny and also on those who offer him darūd.

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ii *Wā al-Ḍuḥā: The sūrah is taken as a symbol that Allah is pleased with his Prophet (pbuh). The incident inscribed in this context is that after the revelation of the sūrah al-'Alaq, waḥī (revelation) was seized for forty days that dismayed the Prophet (pbuh) enormously. He feared that something has enraged the Lord and the revelation of the sūrah Wā al-Ḍuḥā was a pleasant approval that Allah still loves His messenger. This darūd reminds the whole incident.*



Figs.342-356: Darūds inscribed in the outer circle of the far-southern ceiling.

Inscriptions on the outer circle are quite different from the far-northern ceiling of the sanctuary but all represented in the typical *miḥrābi* design and in *Naskhi* script, *figs.342-356.* These are mostly in dilapidated state and a few are hard to read. Those apprehensible are as follows:

صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ مَنْ لَهُ الْاَسْمَآءُ الْحُسْنٰى

صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ مَنْ لَهُ قَابَ قَوْسَيْنِ اَوْ اَدْنٰى

صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ مَنْ لَهُ الْفِرْدَوْسُ الْاَعْلٰى

صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ مَنْ لَهُ الْفِرْدَوْسُ الْاَعْلٰى

صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ مِنْ آيَاتِ رَبِّهِ وَالضُّحٰى

صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ بِعَدَدِ مَنْ صَلّٰى عَلَيْهِ

صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ مَنْ لَهُ الدَّرَجَاتُ الْعُلٰى

صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ وَصَلِّ عَلٰى مَنْ صَلّٰى عَلَيْهِ وَاَزْوَاجِهٖ

صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ وَمَنْ صَلّٰى عَلَيْهِ وَاَصْحَابِهٖ

صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ وَمَنْ صَلّٰى عَلَيْهِ وَاَحِبَّآئِهٖ



Figs.358-365: Darūds in the inner circle of the southern ceiling.

Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), upon whose standing no one can approach.
Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), his progeny including the followers of the faith and upon all those whois one of the greatest signs of his Sustainer.
Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is one of the greatest signs of his sustainer.

Fig.357 is unintelligible because of its damaged state.



Fig.357: Darūd, which is unintelligible due to its damaged state.

Ceiling of the Southern Bay of the Sanctuary

Southern parts of the sanctuary are similar in every respect to the northern, including ceiling of this part, which contains almost similar *darūds*. But the only difference lies in the titles with which the Prophet (pbuh) is addressed. There is an inner as well as an outer circle. Both delineate *darūds* within *miḥrābi* design, eight in the inner circle, *figs.358-365,* and eight in the outer, *figs,366-373*, all represented in *Thulth*. *Darūd* written in *fig.366* is placed twice in this ceiling. The inner circle retains the following *darūds*



Figs.366-373: Darūds in the outer circle of the southern ceiling of the sanctuary.

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ الْمُتَّقِيْنَ

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ الْقَبِيْلَةِ

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ الْمُقَدَّسِيْنَ

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ الْحَرَمَيْنِ

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ الْمُتَّقِيْنَ

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ الْمُقَرَّبِيْنَ

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ الْمُنَازِرِيْنَ

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ الْمُمْتَازِيْنَ

iii *In the Holy Qur'ān, there is no mention of north or south, so two easts and to wests are used there.*

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ الْكَوْنَيْنِ

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ الْفَرِيْقَيْنِ

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ الْقِبْلَتَيْنِ

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ الْمَشْرِقَيْنِ

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ الْمَغْرِبَيْنِ

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ الْحَرَمَيْنِ

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ الثَّقَلَيْنِ

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ سَيِّدِ الْخَافِقَيْنِ

(tr.) *O my Lord! Offer darūd upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who, is the leader of the two worlds: Physical and spiritual (also indicates the worlds of men and jinns).*

O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who, is the leader of the two groups: (mahājarīn and anṣār).

O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who, is the leader of the two Qiblās: Ka'ba and Masjid al- Aqsā.

O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who, is the leader of the two easts.

O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who, is the leader of the two wests[iii].

O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who, is the leader of the two sacred houses: (Makkah and Madina).

O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the leader of both the worlds: the world of mankind and the world of genies.

O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is lord of both east and west of the heavens.

In the outer circle it is as follows:

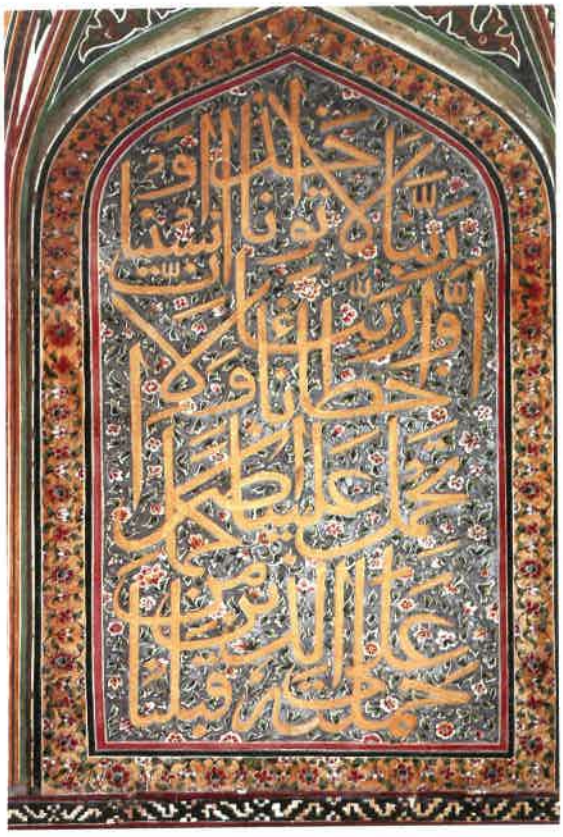


Fig.375: Āyāt on a panel of western soffit of the first transverse arch.



Fig.376: Saying of Dhū al-Nūn al-Miṣri on the eastern soffit of the first transverse arch.

well as similar in size.

Inscriptions on the Soffit of the First Transverse Arch from north

The western wall of the first transverse from north carries inscription from the Holy Qur'ān: *Sūrah ii* (*al- Baqarah*), middle of the *āyāh* 286, *fig.375*. It is inscribed in *Thulth*:

(tr.) *It (every soul) gets every good it earns, and it suffers every ill that it earns. (Pray) O Lord! Condemn us not if we forget or fall into error: our Lord! Lay not on us a burden like that which thou didst lay on those before us.*

Eastern wall of the same arch, as described above bears a saying of the saint Dhū al-Nūn al-Miṣri on a vertical panel exactly like the one on the western wall that is adorned with Qur'ānic *āyāh, fig.376.* It is in *Naskhi* script amalgamated with a few strokes of *Muḥaqqaq*.

قَالَ ذُو النُّوْنِ الْمِصْرِيُّ اَلْعُبُوْدِيَّةُ تَرْكُ التَّدْبِيْرِ شُهُوْدُ التَّقْدِيْرِ اَلْعُبُوْدِيَّةُ شُهُوْدُ الرُّبُوْبِيَّةِ

(tr.) *It is stated by Dhū al-Nūn al-Miṣri that submission to Allah is basically refraining from making strategies. It is the acceptance of predetermined destiny (written on al Lauḥ al- Maḥfūẓ). Submission in essence is the perception of God.*

(tr.) *O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the leader of the God fearing and the abstemious.*
O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the leader of his tribe (Quraish).
O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the leader of those who are sacred to Allah.
O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the leader of the two sacred houses: (Makkah and Madina).
O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the leader of the God fearing and the abstemious.
O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the leader of the ones loved by Allah.
O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the leader of the admonishers.
O my Lord! Offer darūd (blessings) upon Muḥammad (pbuh), who is the leader of the eminent and distinguished people.



Fig.374: Sūrah al-Ikhlāṣ on the apices of all transverse arches.

Transverse Arches

The sanctuary has four transverse arches that divide it into five sections. These are fully ornamented with decorative motifs and inscriptions like the other parts of the sanctuary. The apices of all the four arches have exactly similar adornments: motifs and calligraphic inscriptions. All the four transverse arches retain on their apices *Sūrah cxii (al-Ikhlāṣ),* with *Bismillah* in the centre, *fig. 374. Sūrah al-Ikhlāṣ* has a circular arrangement, contained within a sixteen sided star, while in its centre is a cusped circle with fourteen cusps, carrying *Bismillah. Sūrah al-Ikhlāṣ* and *Bismillah* are made of stucco. The inscriptions are in white colour on blue background, represented in *Thulth*. This *Sūrah* in similar arrangement adorns the apices of all the transverse arches. It is identical in its colours, technique and placing. These arches further carry calligraphic inscriptions on their eastern and western walls but this time not identical, though their arrangements and representations are exactly alike in manner. But differ in the selection of scripts. Another similarity resides in the fact that each western wall of the transverse has a vertical panel containing Qur'ānic *āyāt* and all the eastern walls of these arches have *aḥādīth* inscribed on the panels that are also vertical as

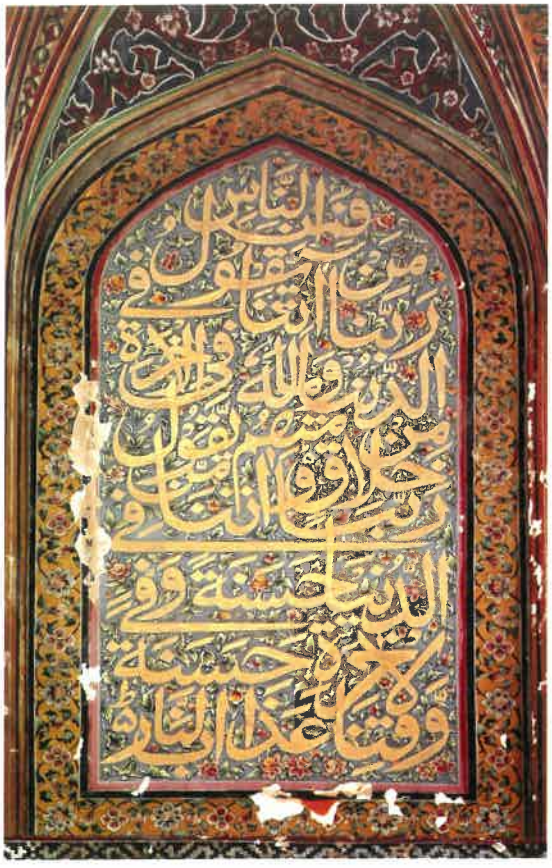


Fig.379: Āyāt on the western wall of the third transverse arch.



Fig.380: An adage inscribed on the eastern wall of the third transverse arch.

Inscriptions on the Soffit of the Second Transverse Arch from south

The panel on the western soffit of this arch contains two *āyāt* from the Holy Qur'ān: *Sūrah ii* (*al-Baqarah*), second half of the *āyah* 200 and complete 201, *fig.379*, inscribed in *Naskhi*.

(tr.) *There are men who say, our Lord give us (the bounties) in the world! But they will have no portion in the hereafter. And there are men who say: our Lord give us good in this world and good in the hereafter and defend us from the torment of fire.*

In this section the two complete *āyāt* are not inscribed, only those parts are chosen that are related to the two types of people. Those coveted for the gains of this world only and others, the wise ones, who want to have their share in the bounties of this world along with the blessings of Allah in the next world. People the second category are also afraid of the torments of hell, so they also ask for forgiveness from the hazards of fire that awaits disbelievers.

On the eastern soffit of this arch a saying is quoted which is not attributed to any one because no reference is attached to it. It might be the saying of a mystic, quotation of a saint or a generally accepted notion, common among those faithful to religion. It is

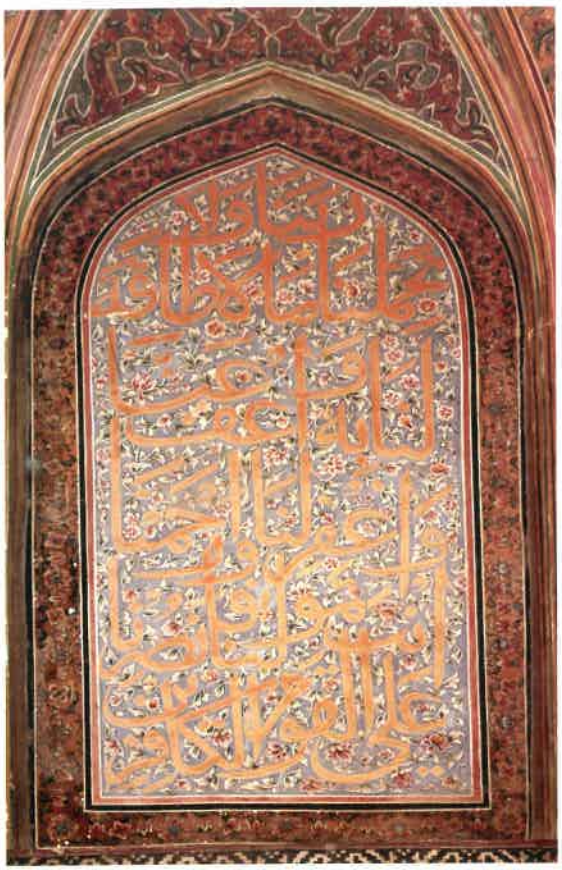


Fig.377: Āyāt on the western soffit of the second transverse arch.



Fig.378: Saying of Junaid Baghdādi on the eastern soffit of the second transverse arch.

Inscriptions on the Soffit of the Second Transverse Arch from north

The western soffit of this arch too has a Qur'ānic inscription in Thulth, from *Sūrah ii* (*al- Baqarah*), 286, *fig.377.*

(tr.) *Our Lord! Lay not on us a burden greater than we have strength to bear. Blot out our sins, and grant us forgiveness. Have mercy on us, thou art our protector; help us against those who stand against faith.*

A similar panel that exists on the eastern wall of the soffit of transverse arch that bears an *saying*, attributed to al- Jūnaid Baghdādi and calligraphed in *Naskhi, fig.378.*

قَالَ الْجُنَيْدُ الْبَغْدَادِيُّ اَلْعَبْدُ عَبْدٌ مَا لَمْ يَطْلُبْ لِنَفْسِهِ خَادِمًا فَإِذَا طَلَبَ فَقَدْ سَقَطَ عَنْهُ حَدُّ الْعُبُوْدِيَّةِ

(tr.) *Jūnaid Baghdādi states that a true devotee never asks for assistance for his self. But if he does so, he will no more be placed to the status of a true devotee.*

قَالَ اَبُوْعَلِیْ دَقَّاقْ اَلْعِبَادَةُ لِمَنْ لَهٗ عِلْمُ الْيَقِيْنِ وَالْعُبُوْدِيَّةُ لِمَنْ لَهٗ عَيْنُ الْيَقِيْنِ وَالْعُبُوْدَةُ لِمَنْ لَهٗ حَقُّ الْيَقِيْنِ

(tr.) *Abū 'Alī al-Daqqāq says that prayer which is performed with true faith is the most glorified and best prostration is based on the truthful belief in Allah. True devotion can be achieved only by the one who perceives Him with a believing eye. He can only be called a true devotee.*

Abū 'Alī al-Daqqāq al-Nīshapūri (d.412/1021) was an Arabized Persian who was a mystic and great Asḥārī scholar as well as a teacher. He was the foremost Ṣūfi Shaykh of his time. He was proficient at *Fiqh*, *Taṣawwuf* and all the theological sciences. In his teachings he usually stressed on *dhikr:* the remembrance of Allah, because he considered it a key to achieve success. Once, one of his companions asked him whether *dhikr,* remembrance of Allah, is more important or *fikr*, meditation. He approved *dhikr,* considering it an attribute of truth.

Inscriptions in the Vestibule

There is only one area in the vestibule that bears calligraphic adornments. It is in the upper chamber on the northern side that retains *Kalima-yi Ṭayyiba* in the combination of *Naskhi* and *Thulth*. It is placed in painted cusped arch, which is further bedecked with a beautifully painted peacock in typical Mughal style, *fig.383.*



Fig.383: Kalima-yi Ṭayyiba in the upper storey of the Vestibule.

Almost all the inscriptions adorning the Wazīr Khān Mosque are listed here except the text ornamenting the central ceiling of the sanctuary, which was impossible to read because of the protective grilles, fixed there. There are vertical arch shaped panels containing inscriptions, below the domed area, which are further surrounded by bands of calligraphy. A few words of these bands can be comprehended but not the full text. But after a lot more effort, the text inscribed on three of the panels is apprehended, which is actually the segmentation of a single *ḥadīth*, *figs. 384-386.* On one of the panels it is inscribed:

لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ وَحْدَهٗ لَا شَرِيْكَ لَهٗ، لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ وَهُوَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ (صحیح مسلم)

On the second panel, the text is as follows:



Fig.381: Āyāt on the western soffit of the fourth transverse arch.



Fig.382: Saying of Abū 'Alī Daqqāq on the eastern soffit of the fourth transverse arch.

inscribed in Thulth, *fig.380*, in the following text:

خَيْرُ الْعِبَادِ اَنْ تَكُوْنَ عَبْدَهٗ فِيْ كُلِّ حَالٍ كَمَآ اَنَّهٗ رَبُّكَ فِيْ كُلِّ حَالٍ

(tr.) *Excellent among men is a person who always remains His servant just like Allah who continueously distinguishes Himself as His servant's Lord.*

Inscriptions on the Soffit of the First Transverse Arch from south

Qur'ānic inscriptions on this section are taken from the *Sūrah iii (Āl-i 'Imrān)*, 8-9, *fig.381,* inscribed in *Naskhi*.

(tr.) *Our Lord! (they say) let not our hearts deviate now after thou has guided us, but grant us mercy from thine own presence; for thou art the granter of bounties without measure. Our Lord thou art He that will gather mankind together against a day about which there is no doubt, for Allah never fails in His promise.*

Saying quoted on the eastern wall of this arch is ascribed to Abū 'Alī al-Daqqāq, *fig.382,* inscribed in Thulth:

No one can obstruct us from acquiring anything that you bestow and no one can donate anything that you obnigate. No proprietor (how big he may be) can bestow us with benefits, better than yours.

Rests of the parts of this section are also replete with motifs and inscription like the other ceilings of the sanctuary but these were impossible to read and so to represent.

Calligraphy in Persian

Besides numerous Qur'ānic and non Qur'ānic inscription in Arabic, there are a few Persian calligraphic specimens adorning this mosque[iv]. Most of them are on the Eastern Gate but a single exception is on the outer side of the western fronton of the main portal flanking the courtyard of the mosque. It is placed at the eastern wall of the courtyard. There are six panels containing Persian inscriptions on the eastern gate. It consists of two vertical and four horizontal panels. The two verticals which are placed at the bottom above dado of the outer larger arch, one on either side. Among the four horizontals which are placed above the oriel windows, but this time two on either side. The horizontal panels are smaller in size as compared to the vertical ones. Another interesting fact about the Persian text on the panels is their chronographic value. There are a few couplets that compute the date of erection of the mosque through chronography. It is concealed within text of the two panels. The panel, immediately above the southern window, bears this couplet, *fig.387*:



Fig.387: Persian inscription immediately above the southern oriel window of the Main Gate.

تاریخ این بنائے چون پرسیدم از خرد
گفتا بگو کہ بانی مسجد وزیرخان

(tr.) *When I asked wisdom the date of its completion, (It) answered "say the founder of this mosque is Wazīr Khān".*

In the second hemistich of the couplet, the words "*bānī masjid wazīr khān*",

iv *Persian text, in the manner of Arabic of aḥādīth is not included in this section because it is easily comprehensible in the pictures retaining that script.*







Figs.384-386: Ḥadīth inscribed in three segments on panels below the dome of central bay of the sanctuary.

اَللّٰهُمَّ لَا مَانِعَ لِمَآ اَعْطَيْتَ وَلَا مُعْطِيَ لِمَا مَنَعْتَ (بیہقی)

While on the third panel, it is calligraphed in the following words:

وَلَا رَآدَّ لِمَاقَضَيْتَ وَلَا يَنْفَعُ ذَا الْجَدِّ مِنْكَ الْجَدُّ (بیہقی)

Whereas, the actual *ḥadīth* is derived from two sources: *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Muslim*[68] *and Sunan al-Nasā'i*[69], noted by both in the following words:

لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ وَحْدَهٗ لَا شَرِيْكَ لَهٗ۔ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ وَهُوَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ اَللّٰهُمَّ لَا مَانِعَ لِمَآ اَعْطَيْتَ وَلَا مُعْطِيَ لِمَا مَنَعْتَ وَلَا يَنْفَعُ ذَا الْجَدِّ مِنْكَ الْجَدُّ

(tr.) *There is no one to be worshiped except Allah, He is the One and the Only. Sovereignty and Praise be to Allah, who is Omnipotent. O Lord!*

Above the northern window, two more panels are placed that are similar in size and placing, of the southern panels. One immediately above the window carries this text, *fig.389*:

بانی بیت اللہ ثانی فدوی باخلاص
مرید خاص الخاص قدیم الخدمت وزیر خان

(tr.) *The founder of this house of God is the humblest of old and faithful servants, Wazīr Khān.*

The other panel, placed above the upper one is adorned with this text, *fig.390*:



Fig.390: Persian inscription at the top of the northern side of the Main Gate.

در عهد ابوالمظفر صاحب قران ثانی
شاه جهان بادشاه غازی اتمام یافت

(tr.) *Constructed during the reign of the valliant king, the lord of the fortunate conjunction, Shāhjahān.*

Among the two vertical panels that are comparatively larger and placed below the windows, the northern one is inscribed with this text, *fig.391*:

(tr.) *He, the most complete, This house, like the sanctuary of the heaven, is the source of bounty. It has like the ḥarem of Ka'ba, for its object the benefit of mankind, May its gate ever remain open to the congregation with prosperity, until the day of resurrection.*

The southern vertical panel bears the following inscription, *fig.392*:

(tr.) *He, O virtuous man! The cultivator will reap on resurrection day, whatever it sowed in the world. In your dealings, then, leave a good foundation in the world, for all have to pave their way to heaven through this gateway, at last.*

according to the *Abjad* calculation, gives us the date of construction of the mosque that is 1044[70] (A.H). Another panel which is also horizontal and placed exactly above the panel described bears this text, *fig.388*:



Fig.388: Persian inscription at the top of the southern side of the Main Gate.

سال تاریخ بنای مسجد عالی مقام
ازخرد جستم بگفتا سجده گاه اهل فضل

(tr.) *When I asked wisdom the date of this magnifieent mosque (it answered, "This is the place of worship of the pious".*

Here the words "*sajda gāh ihl-i faḍal*", the last three words of the second hemistich compute the date of construction of the mosque that is 1044 (A.H). It is also recorded in numerals at the top most panel of the gate with *Kalima-yi Ṭayyibah*, at the end of which is inscribed the date: 1045 (A.H), very close to the Abjad computation[71].



Fig.389: Persian inscription at the top of the northern oriel window of the Main Gate.

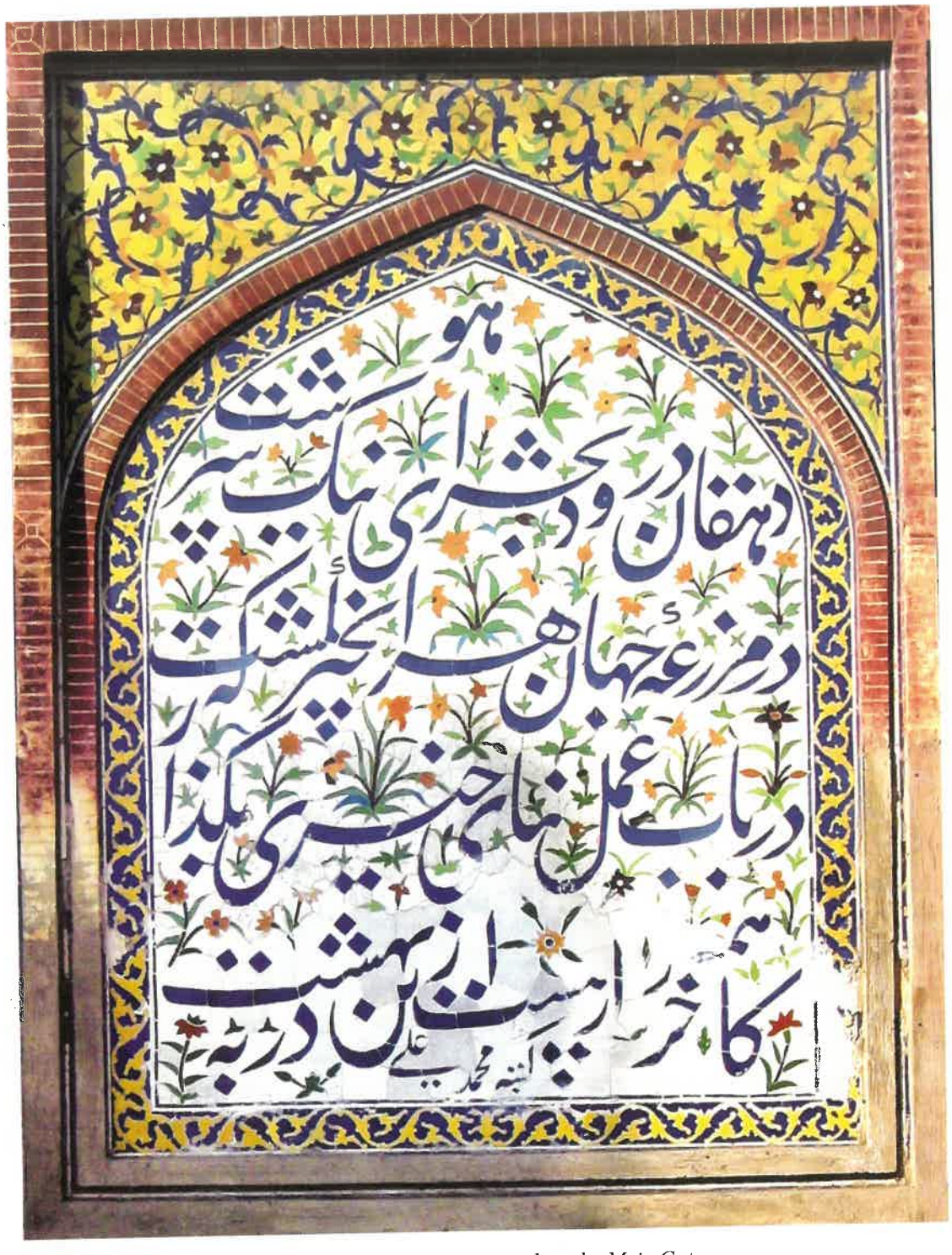


Fig.392: Southern lower panel on the Main Gate.

هُو

دهقان درود بخشر ای نیک سرشت　　در مزرعه جهاں هر آنچیز که کشت

در باب عمل بنائے خیری بگذار　　کاخر همه را ریست ازین در به بهشت



Fig.391: Northern lower panel on the Main Gate.

هوالجامع

ایں خانہ کہ ہست چون فلک مظہر فیض دارد چو حریمِ کعبہ سر در سرِ فیض
بر چہرہ اہل قبلہ این در بمراد تا حشر کشادہ باد ہمچون در فیض

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31. *Musnad-i Aḥmad. Ḥadīṯẖ* No: 269/4.
32. Ibn-i Mājah. *Abwāb al-Aḍẖān wa al- Sunnatu Fīha, Bāb* No: v: *Iḍẖā Aḍẖdẖānā wa antā Fī al-Masjidi. Falā Takẖruj.*
33. Ibn-i Mājah. *Abwāb al- Masājid wa al-Jamā'āt, Bāb* No: iv*: al-Taghlīz Fī al-Takẖallaf.*
34. Ibn-i Mājah. *Abwāb al- Masājid wa al-Jamā'āt, Bāb* No: xvi :*Faḍal al-Ṣalāt fī Jamā'tin.*
35. *Kashaf al-Khifa Lil'ajlūnī. ḥadīṯẖ* No: 1615/2.
36. Miṯẖkāt al-Maṣābīḥ al-Kẖaṭīb al-Tabrīzī, Kitāb al-Ṣalāt al-Bāb: v, ḥadīṯẖ: 743.
37. Aṭtar, Shaikẖ Farīd al-Dīn. *Tadẖkīrat al-A'ulīya'*. p. 143. Lahore: Azeem and Sons.
38. Aṭtar 147.
39. Aṭtar 379.
40. Aṭtar 239.
41. G:\shibli\Hadrat.Junaid Baghdadi.htm.
42. Aṭtar 235.
43. Aṭtar 238.
44. Aṭtar 247.
45. *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukẖārī. Kitāb al-Riqāq, Bāb al-'aml alladẖī Yabtaghī Baihī Wajh Allah T'ālā.*
46. *Jamī'a al-Tirmadẖi. Abwāb al-Imān , Bāb*:xvii.
47. *Al-Mū'jam al-A'usṭ. al-Ṭabrāni., Hadīṯẖ* No: 1235.
48. *Al-Mū'jam al-A'usṭ. Hadīṯẖ*, No: 778.

Another text in Persian, inscribed on the outer wall of the main portal facing the courtyard bears the following text, *fig.393*:

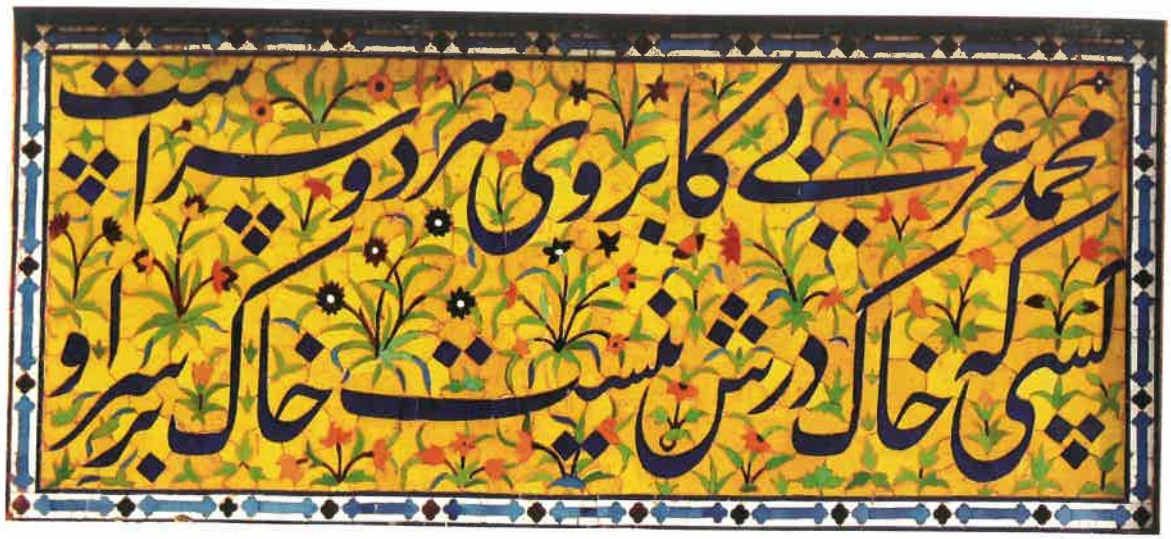


Fig.393: Persian inscription on the wall of the main portal, facing courtyard of the Mosque.

محمد عربے کابروی ہر دوسرا ست
کسی کہ خاک درش نیست خاک برسراو

(tr.) *Muḥammad of Arabia is the honour of both the worlds; He, who is not the dust of his threshold, let dust be on his head.*

Thus, the major role in the adornment of the Wazīr Khān Mosque is played by inscriptions, pleasing to the eye and nourishing for the soul. Whether Arabic or Persian, all are directly linked with the sacred edifice. The most valuable aspect lies not only in the elegance with which the text is handled but also the way religious doctrines are simply conveyed to all who encounter it. Furthermore, it is a proof of the capabilities of those, who were involved in the sacred pursuits. It also mirrors the religious zeal of artists and artisans who contributed their skills to ornament the mosque. Furthermore, the calligraphic representations are a specimen of the geometric erudition of the Muslim artists because this art form is purely based on highly sophisticated geometric principles.

Marvel of Star shape in the Wazīr Khān Mosque

Muslim art retains aniconic character, apices of which are the decorative designs used specially to adorn the Muslim edifices. A solution, Muslim artists sorted out to satisfy their instinct for beauty without coming at clash with the religious interdictions. Wazīr Khān Mosque, which is a marvel of the Mughal architectonic decorations, is replete with a variety of decorative shapes: organic as well as geometric, from arabesques to *miḥrābi* designs, quadrifoils, pendent like shapes and the most dominating of all is the star shape. This form is used to adorn the mosque in a variety of ways; from the simple star to the complicated ones that invigorate human imagination to link esoteric connotations with it. Because stars adorn the arc of sky, and their scintillation is adulated by every human, indiscriminate of age. Its association with sky; the seventh sphere of which is the abode of Allah, signifies its reverential status. By making an inventory of this shape in the Wazīr Khān mosque, significance of Muslim ornamental designs will also be traced out. These are not mere designs configured at random, just to decorate spaces. It is rather a delineation of the multifarious capabilities of Muslim artists, who were also geometricians besides being artists.

Designs produced by these artists incarnate harmony that delve deep in the mathematical order. Algebra was introduced by Muslims to the mathematical world and each artistic creation of theirs comes under the aegis of this subject. So are the decorative patterns of the Muslim edifices. Mathematical computations and aesthetics are generally considered as two poles apart but joined together here, to produce elements of greater harmony and thus beauty. The mystery of these patterns lies in pure geometry, the intrinsic aspect of which is the *Golden Section* introduced by Pythagoras but mutely interpreted in the decorative patterns of the Islamic world. Mughal artists in this respect did not lag behind either. A specimen of their genius is the patterns that deck Wazīr Khān Mosque, most enigmatic of which is the star shape. It is configured at some places on the amazing measures of the golden ratio perceived centuries ago by Pythagoras and where *Golden Section* is not directly implemented, geometry is fundamental to create symmetry.

In the mosque we find simple star shape used in a variety of ways. The perforated parapets of balconies are ornamented with this design. It composes borders of various sections and is also a component of the dadoes. Furthermore, its complicated representations are a specimen of perfect geometry. Geometric computation does not only shape the physical features of a star, it also plays its role to probe the underlying currents that selected this decorative form for the ornamentation of Muslim architecture. Besides the non-objective path adopted by the Muslim artists, objects of nature remained for them, throughout, the main source of inspiration which were then modulated to retain aniconism. So all the intricacies attached to these decorations have some esoteric significance.

49. Al-Haithami. *Majma' al-Zawa'id, Kītāb al-Ṣalāt, Bāb:81: Mā Yaqūlu Īdhā Dakhal al- Masjida wa Īdhā Kharajā Minhū.*
50. *Sunan-i al- Nasāī. Kitāb al-Istī'āzatu, Bāb: al- Istī'āzatu min Ghalabtī al-Dain.*
51. *Sunan-i al-Nasāī. Kītāb al-Ist'āzātu, Bāb: al-Ist'āzātu Min Ghalabatī al-Dain.*
52. *Sunan-i al- Nasāī. Kītāb al-Ist'āzātu, Bāb: al-Ist'āzātu Min Fitnah al-Dajjāl.*
53. *Sunan-i al- Nasāī. Kītāb al-Ist'āzātu, Bāb:al-Ist'āzātu Min Fitnah al-qabr.*
54. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Būkhāri. Kītāb al-Da'wāt. Bāb: 37: al-Ta'ūz Min 'azāb al- Qabr.*
55. *Musnad-i Aḥmad. Ḥadīth* No: 117/2.
56. *Kanz al-'Ummāl. Hadīth* No: 22656, 106/8.
57. *Kanz al-'Ummāl. Hadīth* No: 2059, 240/1.
58. *Ṣaḥīḥ al- Muslim. Bāb: al-Zikr wa-Dū'ā. Bāb: Faḍl al-Tahlīl wa-Tasbīḥ wa-al-Dū'ā*
59. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Būkhāri, Kitāb al-Dā'wāt, Bāb Lā Ḥaulā Wā Lā Quwwātā Illā Bi-Allah.*
60. *Musnad-i Aḥmad Bin Ḥanbal, Bāb:* 5, *ḥadīth* No: 242.
61. *Jāmi'āh al-Tirmazi. Kitāb al-Da'wāt. Bāb: Fi al-Faḍl Lā ḥaulā walā quwwatā illa Bi-Allah. ḥadīth* No:3581, 2020.
62. *Kanz al-'Ummāl. Hadīth* No: 2093, 243/1.
63. *Sunan-i Abī Da'ūd. Kitāb al-Witr, Bāb: Fi al-Astaghfār. ḥadīth* No:1517, 1335.
64. Mishkāt al-Masābīḥ al- Khatīb al- Tabrīzi, al Bāb: iii, Bāb: Thawāb al-Tasbīḥ wa al-Taḥmīd wa al-Tahlīl wa al-Takbīr, ḥadīth No: 2213.
65. *Musnad-i Aḥmad bin Ḥambal. Al-Juz al-thamin. Ḥadīth*: 7953, 85.
66. *Jāmī'āh al-Tirmadhī, Abwāb al-Bir wa Ṣilah Bāb Mājā' fī D'awatu al-Wālīdain.*
67. Ibn-i Mājah, *Abwāb: Al-Du'ā', Bāb: Da'wat ul-Wālīdī wa-Dā'wat ul-Maẓlūm, ḥadīth No: 3862.*
68. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Muslim, Kītāb al-Masājid wa-Mawaḍi' al-Ṣalāt, Bāb: Isteḥbāb al-dhikr ba'd al-Ṣalāt wa-Biyān Ṣaftah: 137.*
69. *Sunan al-Nasāi' Kītāb al-sahw Bāb: Nu'ākhir min al-qul 'inda anqaḍā' al-ṣalāt: 85.*
70. Mahmood, Shaukat. *Islamic Architecture in Pakistan to 1707.* Diss. U of Edinburgh, 1981, 539.
71. Mahmood 540.



Fig. 394: Stele of Naram Sin.

Sin, the grandson of Sargon, who was the ruler of Akkad. Sargon and his successors were the first Mesopotamian rulers (2340-2180 B.C.), who called themselves kings. Two stars surmount the stele that symbolise Naram Sin's good fortune because he is represented victorious here, *fig.394*. This denotes that ancient people too, associated hidden meaning with the constellation of stars that their motion determines destiny of man. So stars had been a focal point of human perception because of their link with human fate. It would have aroused a desire to have closer kinship with this heavenly body. So this unearthly being was brought to the terrestrial sphere by the Muslims. Muslims when began to adorn their edifices, preferred objects of nature over animate beings. Considering, celestial as superior to the terrestrial, archetype of which was perceived in the shape of star and its shimmer, links it with *Nūr*, the light of Allah. Thus, implicit meanings were automatically integrated with this motif. Umayyads, the first Muslim dynasty, who is credited for magnificent buildings, also used star motif for the decoration of their buildings. For instance, in *Khirbāt al-Mafjār*, an 8th century Umayyad palace, the rose window opposite the gateway has a design resembling star in a circle[3], which is six pointed, *fig.395*. Star pattern is also present in various artefacts of the Abbasid period. An obvious example of the Mongol era is the Tomb of Uljaitū (1315-1325) at Sultanīyah, *fig.396*. The eight sided vaulted gallery is decorated with a big star, concentric to a smaller star encircling the word Allah. Numerous smaller stars are also part of the decorative scheme of the ceiling. Under Timurids the star shape adorned architecture in



Fig.395: Six pointed star in the palace Khirbāt al-Mafjār.

Every creation, in reality is the inner reflection of its creator. Allah too, bespeaks to mankind through His creations and one of the masterpieces of His creations is man, himself, who is also a microcosm of the *Absolute Truth*. The creations of His vicegerent on earth are a trivial counterfeit of the Supreme Creations. Order in the cosmos for instance, is archetype of the symmetry in iconic forms of the Muslim ornaments. Though there are numerous shapes and designs that are sometimes extremely intricate but the underlying code of conduct of all is the law of geometry. It is also the principle of cosmos. The traffic running, for instance in the upper sphere of the cosmos is far greater than the one we perceive on earth and a minor disorder in this motion can cause inconceivable destruction. But rhythm and order is the hallmark of Allah's creations. The cosmological order, in fact is based on pure geometry and a minor reflection of it is in the geometric designs of the Muslim art. But it generates a question that how Muslims, while avoiding similitude adopted the symmetry of nature? Discipline and order in reality is the life inducing force, which is also promulgated by the Holy Qur'ān. So the Muslim artists by keeping this spirit in mind created their artworks. But this does not mean that Muslims were the first to give laws of geometry to the world.

In the ancient civilisations of Egypt and Mesopotamia, where geometry was not much developed, though played simple and many-fold functions. It was used to measure lands, to construct buildings and also utilised in the astrological computations. It is recorded that the Egyptians excelled in astrology. An incident of the angel 'Izrā'īl is quoted in this respect. Once the angel, in order to check their perfection in this field visited an ordinary shepherd and asked him about the place of station of the angel himself. The shepherd, at random, drew some lines on the ground with his stick and answered quickly that he was neither on the sky nor at any other part of the earth. It was either "you or me. I know that I am not an angel, so, that must be you". Such unerring was their knowledge of astrology. But Greeks refined this skill to pure geometry. The name of Euclid in this context is very famous; he wrote a treatise on the subject in around 300 B.C. in his mathematical school. But all dispersed with the passage of time and then reinvented by Muslims in the 8th century under the Abbasid rule when some of the Greek books on geometry[1] came in their possession. Geometry was then developed to such an extent that it became part and parcel of the Muslim world which was provided with symbolic, cosmological and philosophical connotations. This was especially implemented on architecture and its adornments. In the plan, elevation and decoration, strict adherence to the rules of geometric was followed. It brought harmony, rhythm and discipline in all the spheres of Islamic art. Accomplishment of which can be viewed in the interlacing designs ornamenting edifices. Star patterns in the Wazīr Khān Mosque are also a specimen of the geometric erudition of its people. Space is so perfectly divided in the decorations through geometric formulas that even negative areas carry symmetrical floral ornaments[2]. But this does not mean that star shaped decorations were limited to the Muslim world only.

This celestial element had been in use since ancient times, retaining a variety of connotations which remained in conformity with the social strata of that time. In the orient, from the pre-Islamic epochs to the modern era we perceive a variety of star shaped ornamentations. One of the earliest examples is from Mesopotamia on the Stele of Narum Sin which dates back to 2300-2200 B.C. The Stele depicts victory of Narum

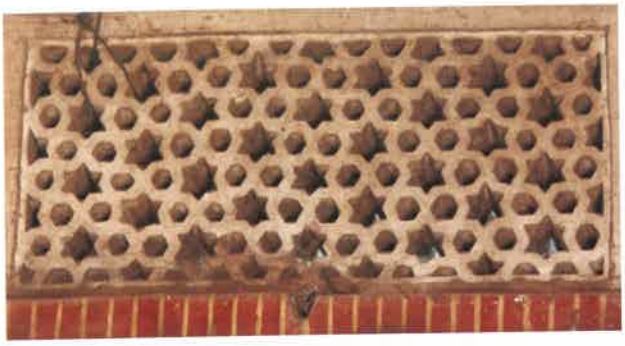


Fig.400: Perforated star on the balconies of the inner arch of main gate, Wazīr Khān Mosque

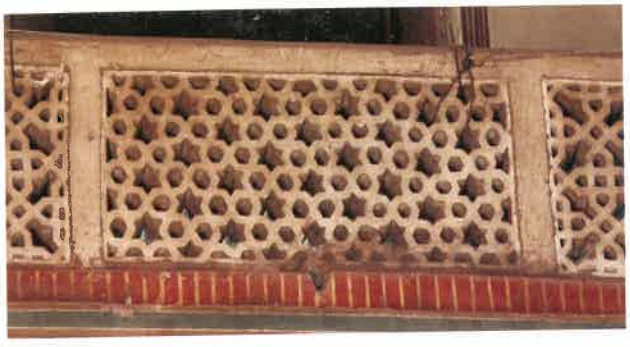


Fig.402: Star on the balconies of the main portal, Wazīr Khān Mosque.



Fig.401: Star within a chequer on the parapet, Wazīr Khān Mosque.

discussion.

Perforated Simple Stars

The perforated screens used as parapets of various sections have star patterns besides quadrifoil piercing, along the other geometric shapes. Starting from the main gate of the mosque, the two most conspicuous oriel windows on either side have three screens each. The central one among the three has star shaped perforation and the side ones bear quadrifoil design, *fig.399*. Furthermore, upper part of the inner arch of this gate that is area below the conch and above cornice has three balconies carrying screens. The two, side ones, have star patterns in their perforations, *fig.400*. Another type of star motif adorns the parapet of the walls on both sides of the gate. It contains merlon shapes, the central parts of each has a recessed chequer board design, centred in an octagonal star. It is not perforated, like the above mentioned screens but the negative areas around it are recessed, so that the positive part forms a star, *fig.401*. It just enhances the chequer shape, not much obvious from a distance. Only a closer view reveals the shape.



Fig.403: Fence of balcony at the farther end of the diminutive bazaar, flanking vestibule, Wazīr Khān Mosque.

The vestibule of the mosque, which is octagonal in plan, has a huge domed ceiling. It has broad arched openings on its four sides, leading to the passages, on its north and



Fig.396: Star shape, Tomb of Uljaitu, Sultāniyah.

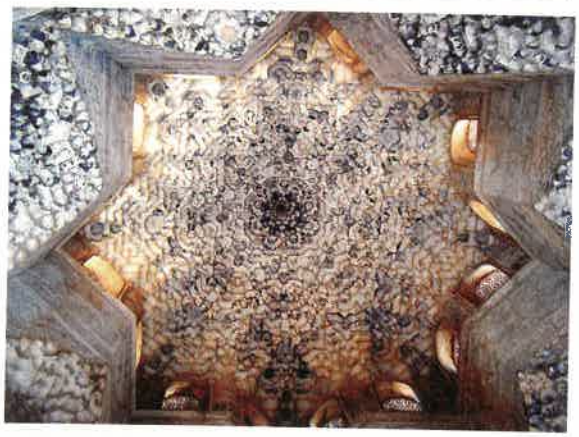


Fig.397: Octagonal star surmounting the court of lions, Alhamra, Spain.

many different ways. A trivial example of it is in the *Shāh-i Zindān* necropolis near Samarqand[4]. But the marvel of this shape can be viewed in the Court of Lions at Alhamra, *fig.397-398.* Dome on the southern side of the court is based on the star motif. The zone



Fig. 398: Closer view of the star formed by muqarnas, Alhamra, Spain.

of transition from four sides to the round is carried out by an eight pointed star which is made up of *muqarnas*. It is such a wonderful representation that creates an impact of transit from the earth to heavens, not only a transition from four to eight sides. The melodramatic light reflected through the eight windows that surmount each side of the star, sheds weight of the structure and gives it a feeling of unearthliness. These were a few examples of the past, now we trace the above mentioned shape from the Wazīr Khān Mosque.

An overview of the mosque reflects that each section of it retains the star shape in its decorative scheme, which is used in many different ways. We perceive simple stars, enframing borders of panels carrying motifs or inscriptions and even represented in the perforated screens. It also includes intricate patterns composed of the shape under

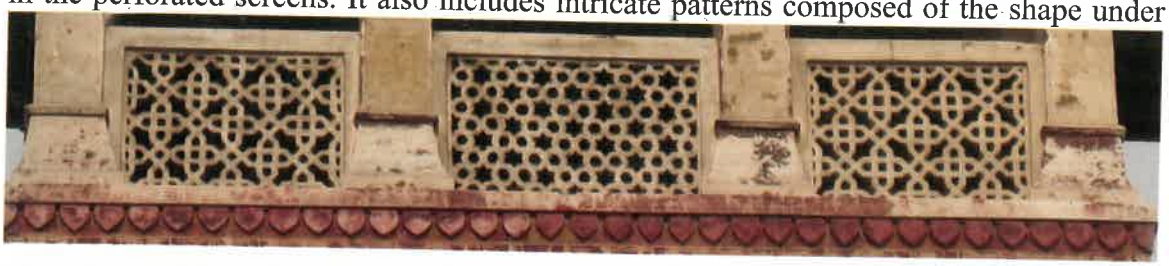


Fig.399: Star perforation on the central screen of the oriel window, Wazīr Khān Mosque.

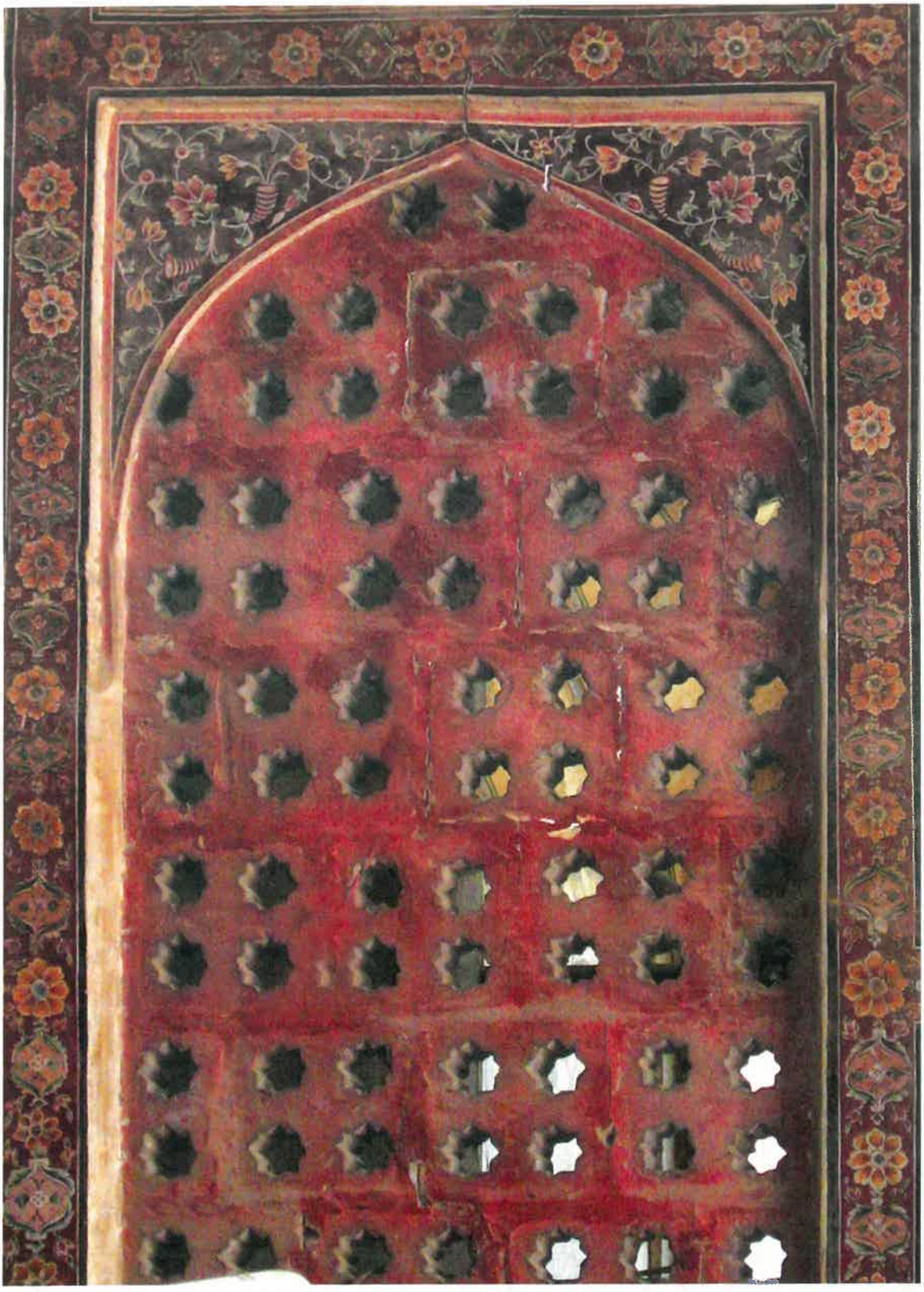


Fig.406: Octagonal perforated stars on the northern and southern walls of the sanctuary, Wazīr Khān Mosque.



Fig.404: Fence of the pavilion of minaret with star perforation, Wazīr Khān Mosque.

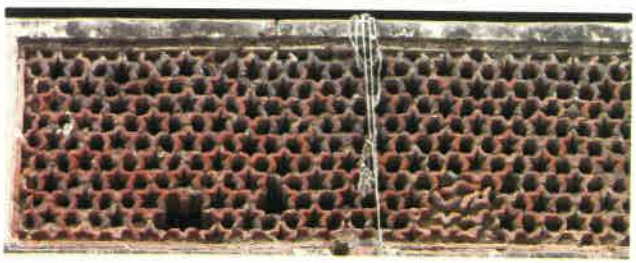


Fig.405: Star perforation on the parapet of jharoka window on the northern outer wall of the Mosque.

south, while on eastern side is the main gate and at west is entrance to the courtyard. Rest of the four sides in between the arched openings have smaller arches with wooden doorways inside. There are eight balconies carrying perforated screens above each archway. The balconies above smaller arches have their central screens with star patterned perforations, exactly similar to those adorning the outer balconies and windows, *fig.402*. Moreover, the northern and southern facades of the vestibule visible from the passages flanked by shops on both sides have an arched opening surmounting the archway. It too has pierced screens. Among three, the two side ones have star perforations. The farther ends of these passages opposite the façades have similar arched openings retaining pierced screens. But this time reverse of the previous ones. Now the central screen has star motifs and on their either side is the quadrifoil piercing, *fig.403*. These are not white in colour rather reddish brown, the colour of baked clay. Rest of the screens are white in colour. Similar screens are used on the pavilions of the two turrets on the north and south western corners of the roof of vestibule, flanking courtyard of the mosque. All the star patterned perforated screens are congruent in design, with six pointed stars that are similar, even in sizes. But the artist has avoided monotony by bringing changes in their placing. Sometimes central screen is made up of star perforation, while it is placed at sides in the other sections.

Pavilions of the four minarets also retain perforated screens containing star patterns but not analogous to those studied before. Now, the negative areas around the stars are perforated while in other screens, pierced parts formed stars. Only the central parts of these stars have round holes. These also have six points but retained within a hexagon which dominated the star shape. Moreover, these are larger as compared to the stars in other screens, *fig.404*.

Indent outer walls of the sanctuary that open up into the bazaar do have ornamental patterns, including the perforated window screens. The northern outer wall of this area has *jharoka* arched openings on its upper section with star shaped perforated screens, *fig.405*. These have survived only on two arches, the central arch that most probably had a screen now retains a plain wall and the surviving two are quite dilapidated. Moreover, these are brick red instead of the white ones. All these screens have six pointed stars.

Another similar patterned piercing but comparatively larger in size is found at the extreme northern and southern walls of the sanctuary, serves the function of ventilators.



Fig.409: Mihrābi or the outstretched star on the Main Gate.

the panels, *fig.408*. The difference lies only in the colours of flowers. These are brown in the lower portion of the gate and the upper part has white flowers, closer view of which deciphers that these too retain the shape of stars. But appear like flowers when placed on a stem with leaves. The horizontal panels that bear *miḥrābi* designs also have their flowers in the shape of stars and the most amazing fact is that *miḥrābi* design itself is an outstretched star, *fig.409*.

The underside of oriel windows also retains decorative stars that are octagonal in shape and ornamented with floral patterns. One of the patterns too has an interesting formation of leaves that surround the central flower within the star, forming another octagonal star inside, *fig.410*. These are some of the fascinating formations of star shape in the Wazīr Khān Mosque.



Fig.410: Star shape below the oriel windows.



Fig.407: Star shape on the back wall of the sanctuary from outside.

But these are octagonal stars not hexagonal like those on the pierced screens and their sizes too are larger enough, *fig.406*. Some other parts of the mosque do retain star perforations but not usual in their design. These can be viewed at the back wall of the sanctuary: the western one from outside the bazaar. An interesting design on the ventilators is retained by this wall only. It is in the shape of a square slightly recessed from the wall. A tiny star which is not porous is carved out in the centre of the square. Four rectangular perforations, concentric to the tiny star, divide it into further four squares, making a cross in the centre. Each small square thus formed, retains an eight sided perforated star in it, *fig.407*.

The perforated stars do not only ameliorate beauty on the solid screens rather the impact of light coming through these perforations further enhances its aesthetics. Light, by passing through the perforations creates a mysterious impact: the impression of sky on earth. The day light penetrating inside and artificial light coming out, at night, through the perforations create star patterns, inside and outside the mosque. A pattern, man is used to perceiving from his infancy, as a far away sphere, the approach of which is not within his bounds. So by creating a replica of the outer screen of that sphere he has tried to create a heaven on earth, thus brought down the celestial element in closer communion with the terrestrial.



Fig. 408: Panel with star on the Main Gate.

Simple Star Shapes

There are numerous shapes of the star pattern in this mosque, present in painted form as well as on glazed tiles of *kāshīkāri*. There are four, five, six, eight and twelve pointed stars. At some places forming borders of panels and at others serving as their backgrounds, even used to ornament panels and also adorn parts of floor. At the entrance gate, the three above mentioned functions are performed by this pattern. There are vertical and square panels on both sides of the oriel windows and also around the panels carrying inscriptions. The square panels, all over the gate are decorated with star motif, blue in colour with a floral plant inside each, which is identical in all



Fig.415: Border below cornice, inside the vestibule, composed of octagonal and twelve pointed out-stretched stars.

ochre colour, all filled with floral designs. Dome of the vestibule is another exception that has a lotus flower at its apex, delineated through *tāzakāri,* and retains uncountable star formations concentric to the lotus apex. It has twenty four points through out, moving from the apex to downwards, making star within star within another, thus covering the whole dome. Though dimensions of stars increase as they move from apex to downwards but they remain twenty four pointed throughout, without breaking symmetry and order.

The northern gate in its ornamentations keeps star motifs. The lower panels, one on either side of the gate has decorative motif based on eight pointed star. It is three tiered, the outer one, which is the largest, is outlined with projected terracotta. It has a smaller star inside, in turquoise blue, while the inner most, the smallest of all is yellow in colour. All are kept within an octagon. It forms a repeated pattern in the panel, based on this shape, *fig.416.*

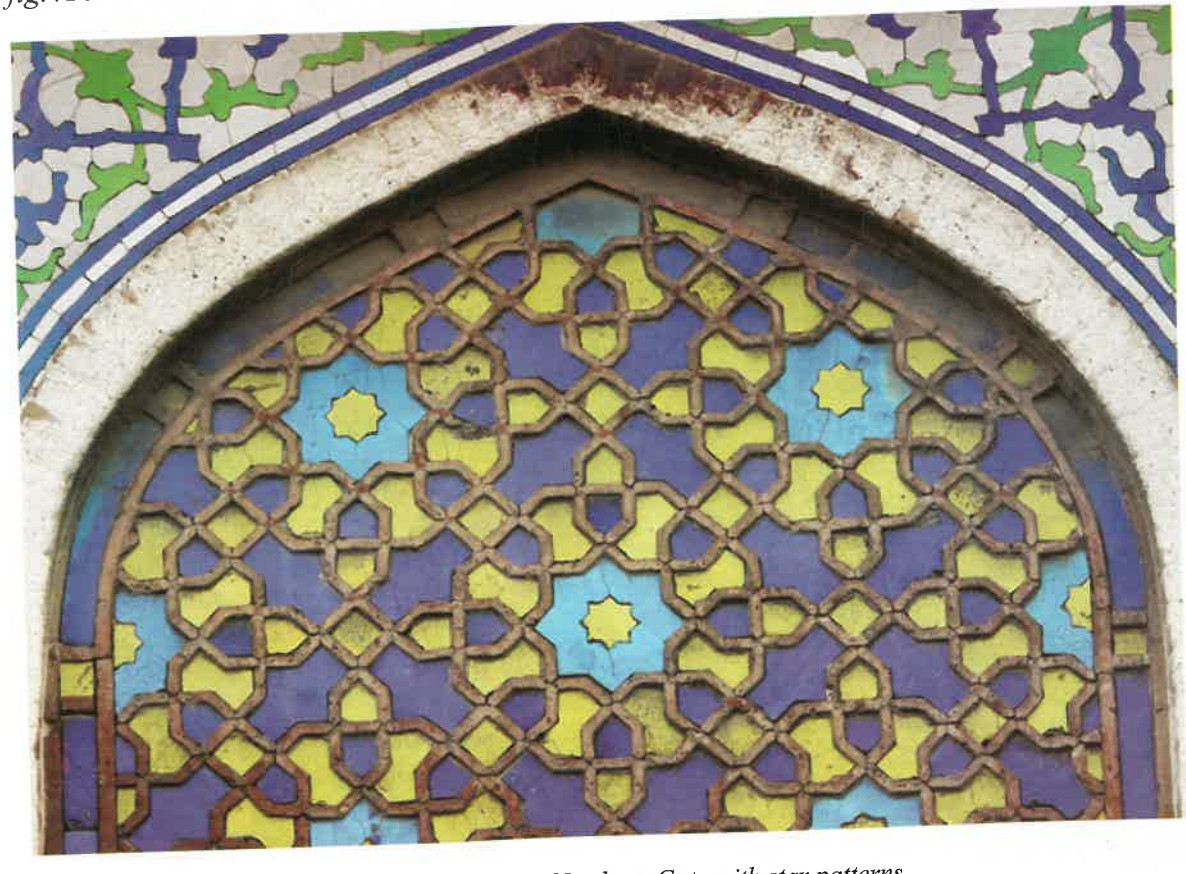


Fig.416: Panel on the Northern Gate with star patterns.



Fig.411: Star pattern on the inner arch of the Main Gate.

Inner arch of the entrance gate has a repeated pattern that serves as a background for the panels below cornice, *fig.411*. Dominating element of this pattern is the octagonal star that is repeated in red colour. It serves as a frame or background for all the panels whether decorative or bearing inscriptions. Moreover, borders enframing the arched balconies above cornice are also composed of multi-hued eight pointed stars, *figs.412-413*.

Soffits of the inner arch are adorned with *tāzakāri* that is brick imitation. It also retains in its design eight sided stars within stars. It is based on an intricate geometric division of space, the dominating elements of which are octagonal stars, *fig.414*. The vestibule itself has various specimens of this shape: the perforated screens that bear stars have already been discussed. The pierced star shaped screens of the balconies are all alike throughout the mosque. The vestibule is further surmounted below the cornice of the first floor, with a band that moves all around the octagonal portal. It consists of eight pointed stars alternated by out-stretched stars that have twelve points, which are also labelled as *miḥrābi, fig.415*. A band composed of octagonal stars red in colour, each succeeded by a *miḥrābi* that has



Fig.412.



Fi g.413.

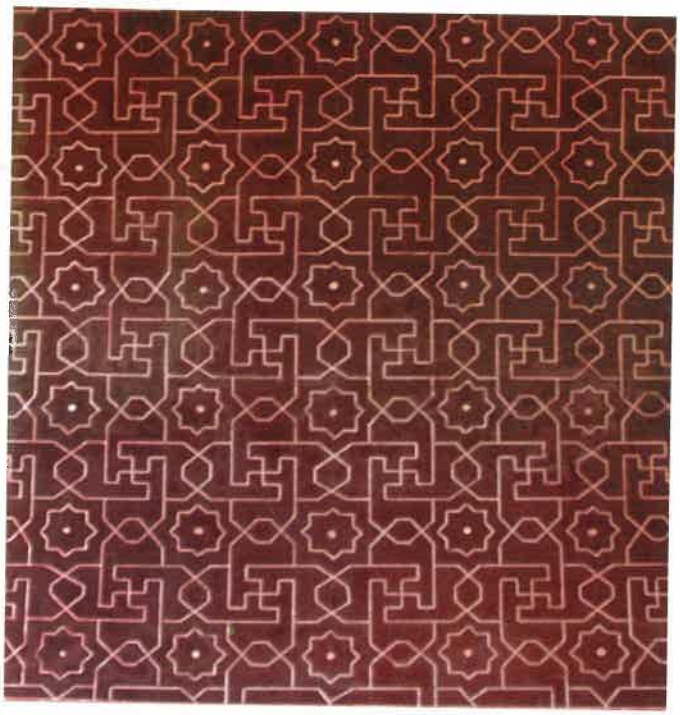


Fig.414: Star formation by tāzākāri through brick imitation on the soffits of the inner arch of the Main Gate.



Fig.418: Star border for the panels of the Northern Gate.



Fig.419: Star border around the panels of the iwāns B and C.



Fig.420: Outer frame of blind arch of the northern and southern walls of the sanctuary.

complicated ones. Walls of the far northern and far-southern *iwāns* are divided up by a thin band based on star motif. It is composed of a repeated octagonal star. Each segment of which have three concentric stars that is star within star, within a third star. The outer most is outlined blue with intricate designing inside, while the middle one has flat yellow colour and the inner most is plain blue, which has the shape of star cum flower, *fig.419*.

The northern wall of the sanctuary which is arch shaped carries star patterned double borders. One framing the arch from outside is composed of octagonal star alternated by a six sided compressed star. This pattern is repeated throughout the exterior border of the blind arch, extending to the surrounding walls as well, *fig. 420*. Another border band, that frames the arch from inside as well as encloses the panels on the blind arch, consists of eight pointed stars alternated by *miḥrābi* design. *Miḥrābi*, itself is a ten pointed star which is stretched horizontally from its centre, *figs.421-422*. Another border encloses panels below the cornice of *miḥrāb* G. It consists of compressed stars surrounding diagonally a four petalled flower from four sides, *fig.423*. The design of compressed star with quadrifoil or octagonal shape adorns various sections of the sanctuary. A similar repeated pattern with eight sided central star surrounded by simplified compressed stars forms the dado of



Fig.417: Star shaped flowers of a tree Northern Gate.

The panels above it are decked with tree motif, the flowers of which retain the shape of stars, *fig.417*. Furthermore, a border framing the central arch of the gate as well as panels on both sides of the arch is composed of blue coloured octagonal stars, each surrounded by four compressed stars that are light green in colour and placed diagonally around the blue star, *fig.418*. This pattern is repeated through out on the larger arch of the gate. A similar pattern also adorns the façade of sanctuary.

Sanctuary of the mosque is also ornamented with the star shapes, both simple and

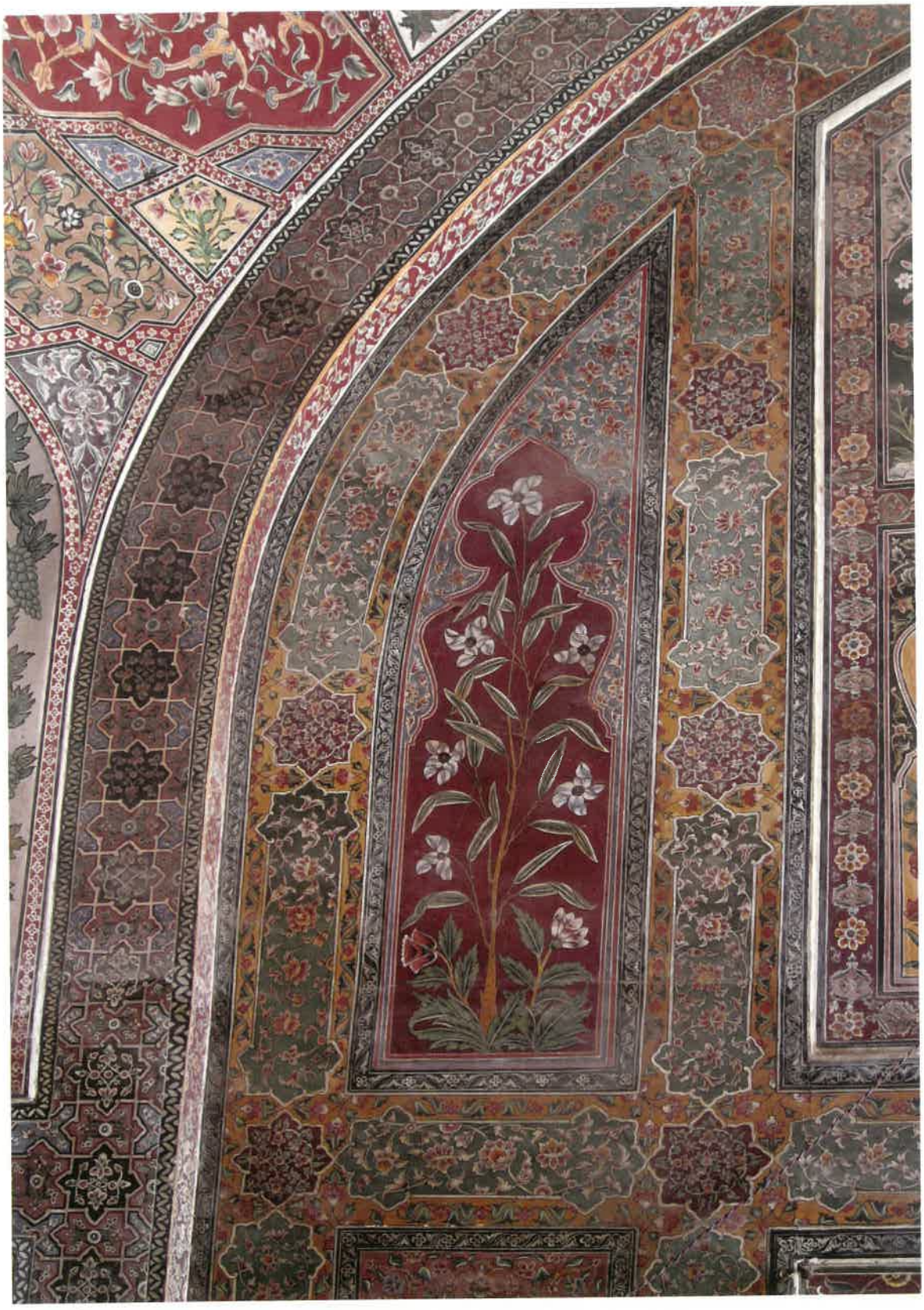


Fig.422: Double border on the far-northern and far-southern walls of the sanctuary.



Fig.421: Border based on compressed stars and octafoil.



Fig.423: Border based on compressed stars and quadrifoils.



Fig.424: Dado of the central smaller niche.

the central smaller niche. The expertise of the Muslim artists in giving new dimensions to patterns is expressed in another border, *fig.424*. It is based on the shapes similar to those used in *fig.423*. But a minor change has formulated a completely new design. It is also an agglomeration of octagonal stars, quadrifoils and compressed stars but here octagonal star is larger than quadrifoil, a reverse of the above mentioned design, changing completely the character of it. A comparison of the two *figs.423* and *424* is enough to disclose the secret of the mastery of its creators.

Another compressed star pattern adorns the northern and southern domed ceilings of the sanctuary, *figs.425-426*. It looks like small pieces of rugs embedded on a larger carpet. The speciality of it is that it carries *darūd* for the Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh). Although both have analogous shape and both carry *darūd* for the Prophet (pbuh) but can be very colse differentiated by their colours. The northern compressed star has blue base, marked with brownish contours and on the far-northern ceiling it has maroon base. Compressed star is also used at certain other places containing *Bismillah* especially in the central part of the sanctuary. Spandrels of the central *miḥrāb* carries on their either side a compressed star adorned with *Bismillah*. Similar shape with *Bismillah* bedecks spandrels of the side arches of this section: transverse arches as well as arch of the *iwān*, facing sanctuary.



Fig.427: Three tiered star on brick floor of the sanctuary.



Fig.428: Star pattern on the brick floor.

Star motif seems the most favourite decorative shape of the artists who ornamented this mosque. The whole edifice is surfeited with this design, even floors retain it. Various sections of the floor are decked with a variety of star shapes. Stars are here configured through the laying of bricks, at places, marked by black outlines, *fig.428*. Bricks are so masterly laid on the floor that the pattern of star within a star is formed, *fig.427*. At places just half star is visible while there are complete four, six or eight pointed star formations at other parts of the mosque floors. Corners of some of the borders do keep half stars, *fig.429*. Sanctuary too has star patterns in its brick floors. A repeated pattern of six pointed star, outlined in black, is beautifully rendered here. The floor of the central *iwān* has an eight pointed three tiered star motif, *fig.427*. Furthermore, the top most step of main gate of the mosque has an octagonal shape, concentric to a four pointed star, a design novel of its kind which is repeated no where in the mosque and four pointed star is also very rare in the whole mosque, *fig.430*. A few examples of it can be viewed on the conch of central arch of the façade of sanctuary.



Fig.429: Brick floor with quarter of a star at its corners.



Fig.430: Four pointed star on the upper most step of the Eastern Gate of the mosque.



Fig.425: Compressed star on the northern and southern ceilings.



Fig.426: Compressed star on the far-northern and far-southern ceilings.



Fig.433: The inner most stars on the iwān B.



Fig.434: The inner twelve pointed blue star on the iwān B.



Fig.435: Six pointed star formation surrounding the twelve pointed on the iwān B.

shapes, wedge shapes, octagons, triangles and five to twelve pointed stars, etc. Various parts of the sanctuary bear the sort of ornamentations.

The four *iwāns,* two on either side of the centre have the intricate formation of star shapes on their domed ceilings, *fig.431*. A compact design covers the whole ceiling. It is centred on a flower that has twelve petals around its nucleus surrounded by further three layers of petals and then enclosed by a cusped circle, *fig.432*. It looks like a lotus flower placed mutely within an amazing formation of delicate stems and leaves that twist and turn into the shape of a star, on each point of which is a small flower. The six flowers of two different categories are then placed within another six pointed stylised star that has light pink colour, *fig.433*. It is called stylised because of its shape, which also gives the glimpse of a flower. A larger star formation that has twelve points then encircles it, which is blue in colour and decked with elegant arabesques, *fig.434*. All this is retained within another star formation that has six points but shaped through combining of small segments of geometric shapes, lozenges, darts, kite shapes, etc. but so symmetrically dividing the space



Fig.436: The outer most twelve pointed star on the iwān B



Fig.431: Intricate star on the ceiling of iwān B.



Fig.432.

Intricate Star shapes

Apart from the simple star motifs used to ornament the Wazīr Khān Mosque, there are certain intricate designs that eventually configure star patterns. These are not based on simple stars rather composed of many complexly interrelated components, the over all manifestation of which is the star shape. It usually begins from centre or apex with a small star and by passing through many intricate forms that transfigure one after the other into star formations, ends in a star itself but this time a tiny one. The components that constitute this design are all based on geometry such as diamond



Fig.440: Wedge shapes of stalactites, forming rays of smaller stars.



Fig.441: Scintillation of stars in the shape of stalactites.

Other components include geometric formation of palm leaf, 1/4th part of the eight pointed star, *fig.438*, six edged small stars,*fig.439,* the attenuated wedge shapes placed in reverse angles, looks like sharp shimmering rays of smaller stars, *figs.440*. All shapes filled in by natural vegetation or arabesques. These divisions when viewed as a whole submerge into a bigger star that fully covers the domed ceiling, *fig.431*. These basic geometric shapes, the symmetrical product of which is a design of splendid elegance, reminds the famous saying of Cezanne that all the objects of nature can be devised through three geometric shapes: cube, cone and sphere. Cezanne realised it in the 20th century and Muslim artists explored it many a century earlier and without making any similar declarations demonstrated it in their artefacts. So the ceiling under discussion if viewed from closer angles split up into various angular shapes. But eventually it takes the circular format of stars adorning the dome.



Fig.442: Star at the apex of the far-northern ceiling of the sanctuary.



Fig.443: Sixteen pointed star on the far-northern ceiling of the sanctuary.



Fig.437: Smaller star at each point of the larger one on the iwān B.

that it forms a regular hexagonal star, *fig.435*. It is enclosed thereby with another formation of twelve pointed star, formulated through the similar segments of geometric formations. Being larger than the inner stars it contains a rich variety of geometric shapes of varying sizes. It is composed of intricate division of stalactites. But at no point, order and balance is ignored, *fig.436*. Thus, each tier of this intricate formation, is based on a regular star that has many smaller segments but extremely symmetrical. Each point of the outer most star is then crowned with a smaller star that has six points, *fig.437*. It is not finished there but its stalactites extend downwards till the intersection of the neighbouring arches. This is the most fascinating design that manifests adroitness not of art only but of mathematics and geometry of the artists who adorned it. Because delineation of such intricacies on a domed ceiling with so much perfection demands the calibre of a qualified geometrician and this qualification present in the Muslim artists, is approved by the decorative designs of this structure.

The star patterns on these areas are extremely complicated but retain amazing equilibrium. It consists of a variety of wedge shapes, diamonds of numerous sizes and shapes: larger diamond, sub-divided by smaller ones but without de-shaping their forms.



Fig.438.



Fig.439.



Fig.445: Stars in sūriya motif.



Fig.446: Hexagonal star on the edges of the red rays of the sūriya motif.



Fig.447: Compressed star on far-northern ceiling.

This intricate star shape is different from the one decorating the *iwān* of this part of the sanctuary. The ceiling of far-southern sanctuary is also adorned with *sūriya* motif which is identical in general appearance to the far-northern ceiling. But there are



Fig.444: Novel star formation on the far northern ceiling.

Sanctuary of the mosque contains five domed ceilings that are elegantly decorated with variegated shapes. The northern ones are alike in decoration to the two southern ceilings. The enigma of star shape is again used in the far northern and far-southern domed ceilings of the sanctuary but this time retaining another novel shape. It is also centred on an eight pointed star cum flower which has blue colour, *fig.442*. It is encircled by another that has sixteen points and then another star, also having sixteen points. The former sixteen pointed star has yellow ochre base with multi-coloured arabesques, *fig.443* and the later exceptionally different from all the previous ones. White coloured rays of the star carry *darūd* for the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) describing his sixteen variegated attributes, one on each ray, *fig.444*.

The outer most circle of the star consists of larger rays that are red coloured and filled in by multi-coloured arabesques, *fig.445*. Another amazing placement of a star is within the red rays that are extremely stylised but each carries a hexagonal star near its end point, *fig.446*. It further carries compressed stars that are also sixteen in number and each placed within two red rays, bearing *darūd* for the Prophet (pbuh), *fig.447*. This ceiling when viewed as a whole delineates a complete *sūriya* motif with sun, in the centre and huge rays surrounding it.



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Fig.456: Star band surmounting the necking of minarets.

compressed stars that are eight in number and exactly like the *fig.426* but alternated by diamond shapes again. Then the third circle has stylised leaf and diamond shapes, each eight in number and another circle of compressed stars and palm leaves placed alternately. All the compressed stars are ornamented with *darūd* for the Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh).



Figs.454-455: Yellow and white compressed stars around the blue.

An interesting feature of star shapes on this ceiling is that each form is linked with its immediate above and below with the help of a star that retains a queer shape. It is smaller in size, circular in shape and its shimmer is indicated by small strokes of brush, *figs.450*. Most of these tiny stars have an inner circle composed of undulating lines and in the nucleus of each is a flower, either four, five or six petalled. It connects each form adorning the ceiling with its immediate above and below, knitting the separate parts into a united whole.

Another intricate pattern of stars can be viewed on the façade of sanctuary. All the panels of the façade are retained within a sophisticated design of star shapes. But it astonishingly produces a different impact on the central façade, *fig.451* and a dissimilar on the side arches, although diversity lies only in the colour schemes. Most noteworthy star in both the sections is blue but on the central facade it is surrounded by yellow compressed stars, the broader view of which forms octagonal star and on the side arches these stars are white, *fig.452*. A similar design, bearing the combination of central façade is retained on northern gate of the mosque but it has lost crispness because of being severely damaged, *fig.453*. Another almost similar design, with a little variation, ornaments the spandrels of the *jharoka* windows of the sanctuary flanking the bazaar in the north. It is concentric to an eight cusped circle resembling a flower which is yellow in colour, with a brown dot inside and surrounded by blue shapes resembling quadrifoil, *fig.454*. In the central arch of the façade of sanctuary it is white, while on the side ones it is yellow, whereas in both the places it keeps an additional brown dot inside. It is surrounded by the above mentioned



Fig.448: Inner most star at apices of the bays of northern and southern ceilings of the sanctuary.



Fig.449: Star within star at the apices of the bays of the northern and southern ceilings of the sanctuary.



Fig.450: Novel star shape on the northern and southern ceilings of the sanctuary.

little variations in the combination of colours, designs of arabesques and selection of design internal to these shapes. But it is not discernible at a glance, for example the central star, on which the whole design is concentric to, is blue in the far-northern part of the sanctuary but it is pink in the far-southern, arabesques too, have variations of design and colours.

Another intricate delineation of star shape is on northern ceiling of the sanctuary. It gives the impression of a galaxy with innumerable stars floating around the central point. Although it is not in the form of a continuous pattern, the one we have seen on the ceilings of *iwāns* but the domed ceiling is replete with many different shapes that either simply define a star or look like a transformed version of the star shape. For instance it represents through out, the eight fold symmetry. Apex of the dome is adorned with an eight pointed star in green colour, *fig.448,* surrounded immediately by another which has also eight points but this time pink in colour, *fig.449.* Both the stars are marked by convoluted double outlines which are in the shades of blue.



Figs.451, 452, 453.

Rests of the shapes independently float around this double star. It is encircled by eight diamond shapes and further surrounded by another circle of

blue star. The two consecutive yellow wings of this type of star in the central arch of the façade of sanctuary and white on the side ones are stapled with a compressed star, *fig.454*, which is green in the former part and brown in the later, *fig455*. Moreover the central arch retains diagonal symmetry in which yellow and green compressed stars are diagonally placed around the blue and horizontal-vertical symmetry on the side arches. It is a proof of the creative imagination of the Muslim artists.



Fig.459: Star, crowning panels on the necking of the minarets.

Star shape is not lacking on the minarets of the mosque. Numerous parts of theirs do retain this motif in the decorative scheme. Apart from the perforated grilles of pavilions of the minarets, a simple but sophisticated rendering of this motif is quite arresting on the projected area above necking and below cornice. It consists of a band of stars in contrasting colours, *fig.456*. These are in rich yellow ochre surrounded by lapis blue to make it conspicuous from quite a distance, because it is nearer to the top most area. Below this section is the recessed necking with vertical arch shaped panels containing cypress and Maple trees; one on each and placed alternately.

An interesting feature is the use of stars even on the trees. Maple leaves already resemble a star but the use of grape vines that spirally encircle Cypresses with star shaped leaves is really interesting, *fig.457-458*. A six pointed star further crowns the apex of each arch, *fig.459*. This is also three tiered, beautifully represented in contrasting colours.

The most sophisticated rendering and extremely geometric in nature is the carved out band surmounting shafts of the minarets, *fig.460*. This band is dominated by perfect six pointed stars made up of projected outlines, the inside of which have a smaller star, shaped out by similar projected outline and then further added in its inner most centre with a tiny blue star. This geometric shape is continued, so that half stars are visible near the top and bottom of the band. The area between the bigger stars and the half stars is filled in with another angular shape resembling "Y" the second last letter of the English



Figs.460: A novel star band, crowning shafts of the minaret.



Fig.457: Maple leaves, forming tiny stars.



Fig.458. Leaves of grape vine in the shape of stars.



Fig.463: Stars in motion, an impression created by the use of "Y" like geometric shape around the star formations.

The northern, far-northern and their counterparts in the south have complicated designs of eight pointed stars alternated by the compressed ones. Although dissimilar in appearance but the key motifs used, to devise borders are compressed and full stars.

Dadoes of various sections are also based on a variety of star patterns, for instance, *iwān* B, of the sanctuary has an intricate border of star shape. It has six pointed stars and the

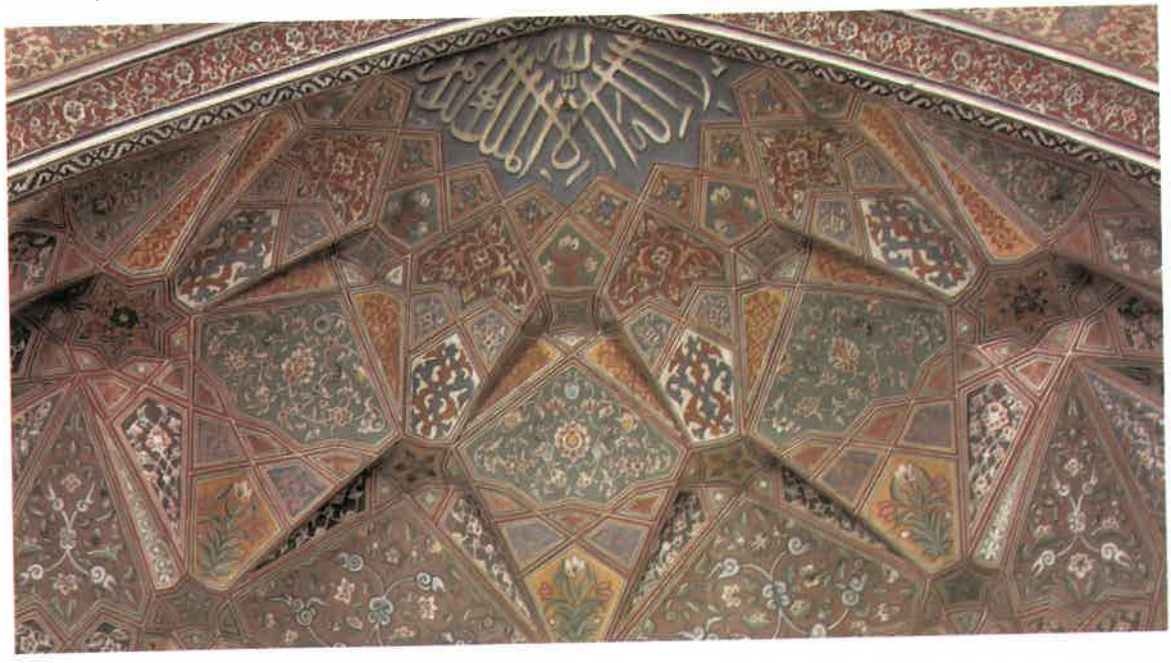
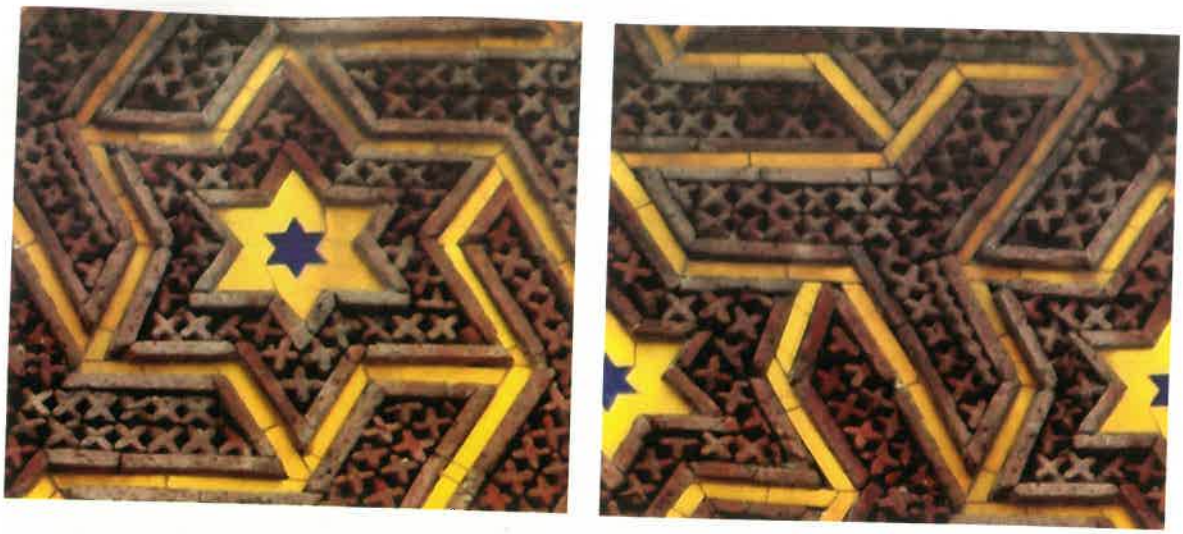


Fig.464: Half star and full star formations on the conches of miḥrābs.



Figs.461-462: Tiny stars inside the larger stars and in other geometric shapes.

alphabets, placed in different angles. But the most unusual feature of this band is the use of an extremely minute form that fills in the spaces of this band. Areas between bigger and medium stars and all the "Y" shapes as well as half stars are inserted with tiny stars that are obvious only from a closer view, *figs.461-462*. This insertion is also very organised and calculated. Although in other places of the mosque, star shapes are filled in with arabesques but here a different format is used.

An almost similar design exists in the northern outer walls of the sanctuary that open up in the bazaar. Spandrels of the *jharoka* window in the upper section have stars combined with "Y" shapes. Placing of the two shapes is so marvellous that it creates the impression of stars in circular motion, which looks very amazing, *fig.463*. It seems to be a portrayal of galaxy, where each star is depicted with its orbital motion.

The exceptionally remarkable geometric rendering of the shape under discussion is in the niches of sanctuary. The divisions of half domed ceilings into stalactites with regular intervals of small star formations and their apices crowned with half stars are not ordinary representations. These are if joined with another similar half dome would create a complete star formation, the one we can view on the domed ceilings of *iwāns*. Another interesting formulation of the geometry is that the dimensions of stars at the apices determine the layout of the rest of the domed ceilings. For instance, if the half star at the apex has six points, the domed ceiling would eventually formulate into twelve or six pointed star formation. On the contrary if the apex has eight pointed star, rest of the structure would retain the eight fold symmetry and the *vice versa*. Because symmetry defined by pure geometry is the hallmark of these ornamentations. Taking under consideration northern niche of the sanctuary we see that half star with eight visible points crowns it and rest of the stalactite formulations comply similar order, *fig.464*.

Another interesting feature is the smaller niches inside the larger ones. These are almost a replica of the general design of larger niches. The same half domed upper parts, adorned with stalactites and star formations ending at vertical panels. Furthermore the outer frames of the larger niches have borders composed of intricate patterns based on star shapes.

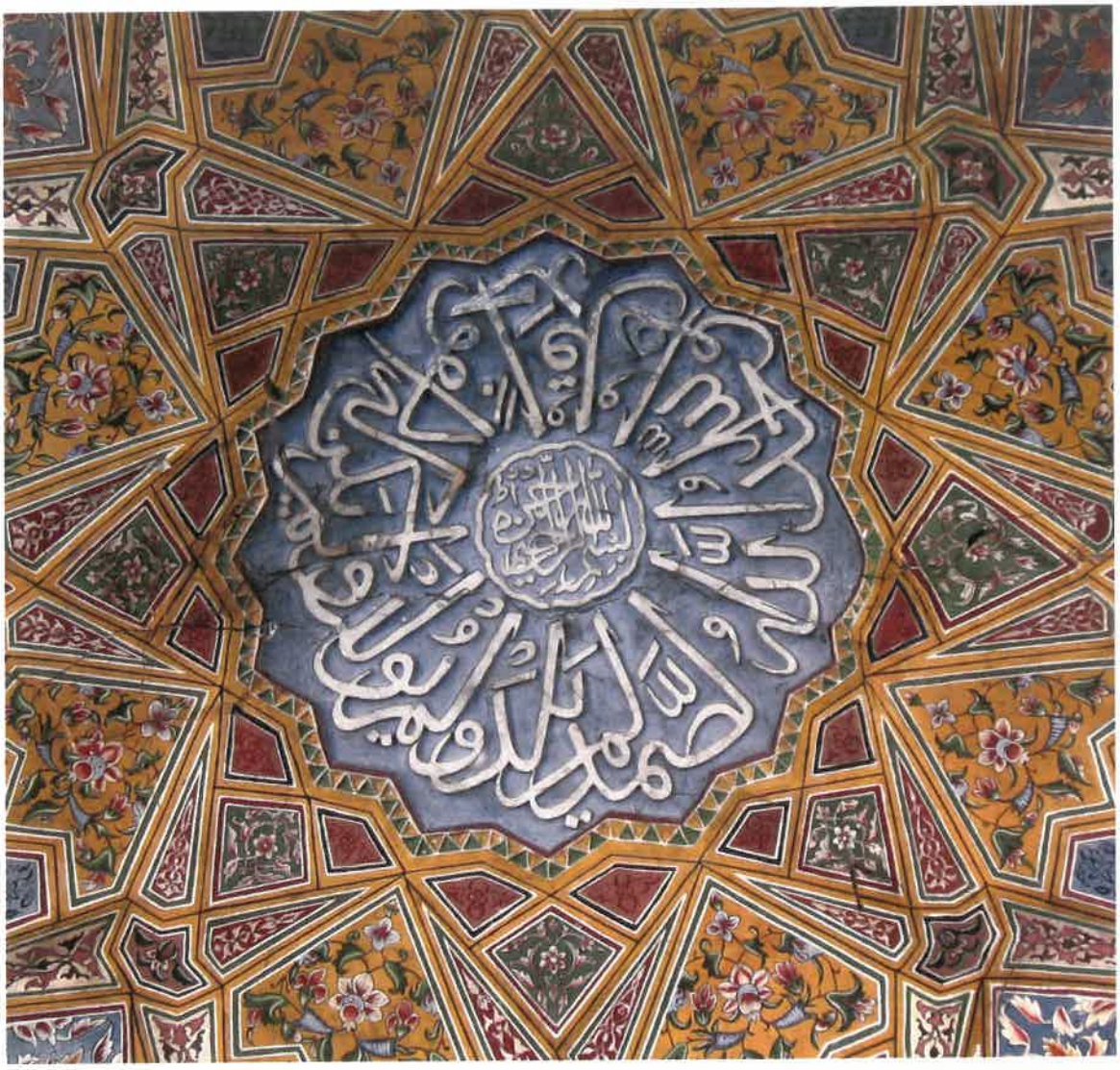


Fig.467: Eight pointed star on the apices of transverse arches.

Each edge of the eight points then ends up either on six pointed small star or a three pointed half star, placed alternately, *figs: 467-469*. It is surrounded by another larger star with eight points. The two on the south and the other two points on its north touch the edges of the soffit. But rest of the four points, two on its east and two on the west; end up at five pointed small stars that are also a segment of the stalactites. In the northern and southern directions stalactites symmetrically continue downwards till the beginning of panels below, the central one of which is calligraphic in all transverse arches. Apex of the panel which is arch shaped has a small four pointed star that is also the meeting point of the two wedge shapes of stalactites, *fig.470*. The stalactites are continued with the sort of symmetry that if the soffit was broader enough it would have turned into another star of larger dimensions.

The marvellous star formations are not limited to the mentioned areas only rather a keen eye can decipher numerous other truths of its mysteries. The central part of the sanctuary with its façade, and *iwān* has more sophisticated formations of stars. At places



Fig.465: Star shape on the dado of iwan a.



Fig.466: Star shape on the dado of iwān b.

geometric shapes surrounding it are also hexagonal, *fig.465*. Dadoes of rests of the *iwāns* keep almost similar designs, their basic key lies in the star motif, *fig.466*.

Intricacies of the star pattern are used to ornament few other areas of the sanctuary that is the soffits of transverse arches. Adornments of these arches retain an eight-fold symmetry. Apex of each has a cusped circle carrying *Bismillah,* around it is sixteen pointed star ornamented with *sūrah al-Ikhlāṣ, fig.467*. The sixteen points then generate stalactite formations of varying sizes and shapes that configure a bigger star that has eight points.



Fig.471: Half star at the apex adulating Allah and Muḥammad (pbuh).

these are so novel that have no precedence. The central façade although have similar half domed ceiling with stalactite formations but their intricacy is not matched anywhere in the mosque. Moreover, the smaller stars it retains within stalactites are also unique in their character. The vertex of the half dome has half of the twenty eight pointed star adulating Allah and the Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh) in its inscriptions, *fig.471*. It is surrounded by diamond shapes, wedge shapes and small stars that are inscribed with the names of Allah, Muḥammad (pbuh), Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakr, Ḥaḍrat Umar, Ḥaḍrat Uthmān, Ḥaḍrat Ali and Ḥaḍrat Imām Ḥussain. Besides inscriptions these stars are of varying dimensions, not similar in size as is represented in various other sections but symmetry of highest order is still maintained. Tiny stars crowning the apices of calligraphic panels with their long wedges of stalactites resemble meteorites moving from sky to earthward, *fig.470*.

Maintaining of equilibrium in multifarious shapes, the hallmark of these designs that requires greater proficiency, with which Muslim artists were fully equipped. The novel art forms in the image of architectonic decorations are specimens of their diverse abilities. Besides having an agglomeration of such diverse shapes, the placing of each form is highly symmetrical. It is not a random arrangement but sophisticated balance is acquired through mathematical perfection. Actually every creation or innovation has some elementary roots to begin with that serve as its nucleus. Rest of the progress is concentric to this very centre. In the intricate star formation, Mughal artists followed the order of nature, the



Fig.468: Star formations at the edges of stalactites.



Fig.469: Half-star formation at the edge of stalactites

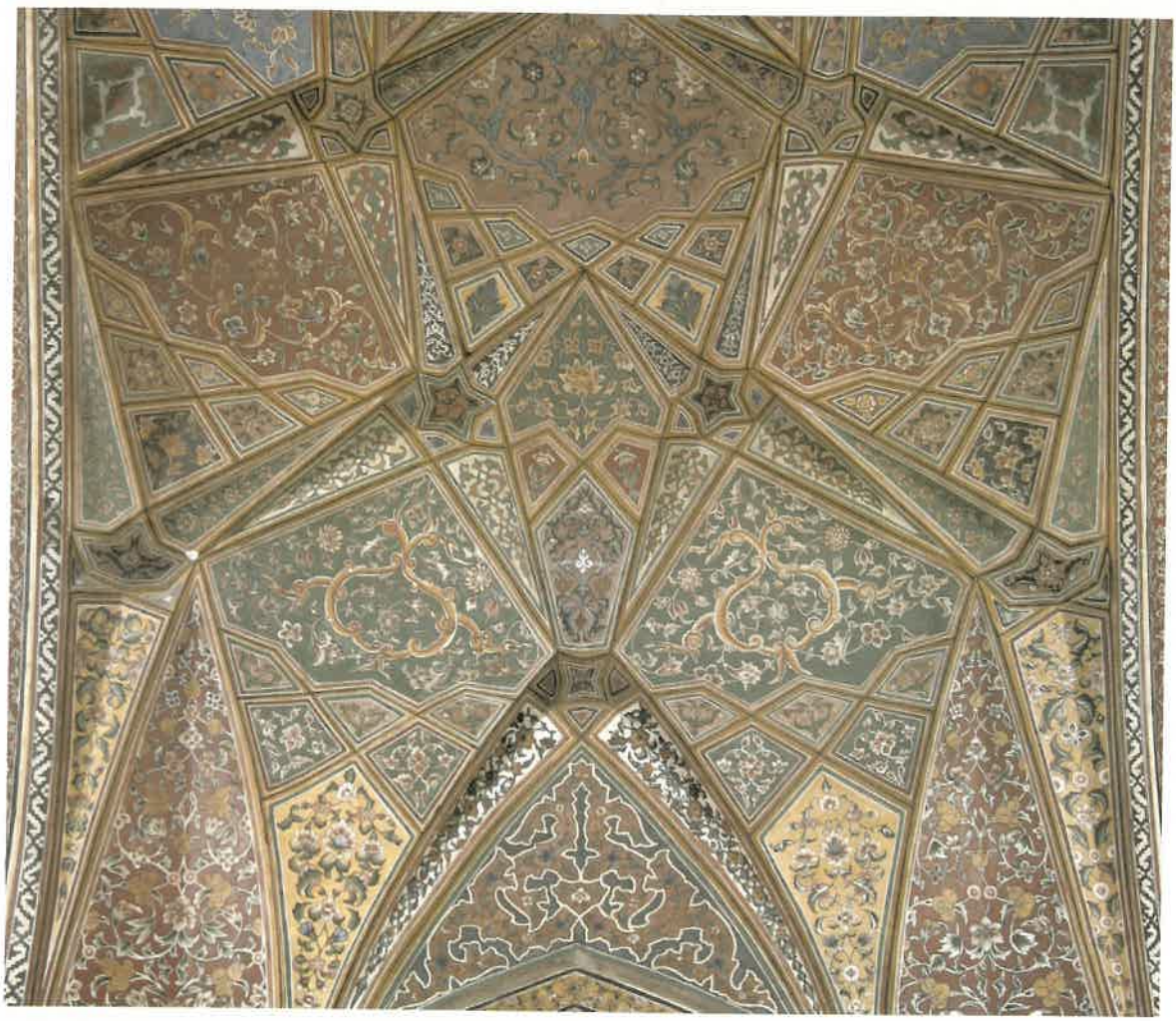


Fig.470: Beauty of small stars between stalactites.



AC: CB = CB: AB

It can be defined in this way as well that what is smaller to the larger is larger to the whole. In mathematical computation it is defined as follows:

$$X^2 = X + 1$$

Or A: B = B: A+B

It is the most harmonic proportion so bears the nomenclature of Golden Proportions. Numerically it is based on proportions related to, 1: 1.618. According to the scientists it is present in every object of nature. It is considered a "fundamental building block in nature" because animals, plants and men along other creatures retain their dimensional proportions on this ratio.

It is a sensational discovery that the harmonic fundamentals of the universe are hidden in the number: 1.618. It is also called *Phi*, which is derived from the Fibonacci sequence of numbers. But it is to be born in mind that description of the Golden Proportion would not be considered complete, if the Fibonacci sequence is ignored. It is based on a harmonic chain of numbers that when computed with their adjacent ones result in Golden Ratios. Fibonacci sequence was introduced by Leonardo Pisano, nicknamed Fibonacci, a 13th century Italian mathematician, born about 1175. He wrote a tremendous treatise on Arithmetic, titled *Liber Abaci* (the book about an abacus), in 1202. Since then it is placed among the best books on arithmetic. Fibonacci was such an astute scholar that it is recorded in history that the King Frederick II, when visited Pisa, in 1225, in order to judge the abilities of Leonardo held an open competition on arithmetic, where Leonardo proved his abilities. It is said that he was the only one to answer each question put forth by any one[5].

But the period of Leonardo Fibonacci is known in the west as middle ages when progress in every creative field was halted due to the abeyance of objective observation. But this epoch celebrated the climax of Muslim culture. In the 11th and 12th centuries Muslims were the most learned people of the world who acquired Greek knowledge and even excelled it through experimentation. Leonardo Fibonacci at that time was an exception in the western world. Moris Cantor a well known historian of Mathematics, called him "*as the brilliant meteor flashed past on the dark background of the West-European Middle Ages*"[6].

According to the Fibonacci sequence, each number is the sum total of its two previous ones. It is as follows:

0, 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, 34, 55, 89, 144, ...

This sequence is valued not only as a progression, the sum of adjacent terms of which provides next term. But it is appreciated also for the fact that the number Phi is also derived from this sequence. It is an astonishing discovery that the quotients of all adjacent numbers have the peculiarity to approach *Phi*[7]. A few of them will have an approximation of Phi, while others exactly meet 1.618. For instance if we divide 3 with 2 from the Fibonacci sequence: $\frac{3}{2} = 1.5$

It is resulted in an approximation of Phi. Same is the case of 5 / 3 = 1.6…, but it is closer

physical aspect of which is mathematical, particularly derived from geometry, especially Pythagorean geometry. Because beauty of the intricate stars lies in their segments that are actually geometric shapes which perform a two fold function. Each segment retains individuality and at the same time merges itself to become a muted part of the larger whole that is the intricate star. The domed areas of the mosque, for instance, have triangles, hexagons, pentagons, wedge and diamond shapes, etc. but make a variety of stars. Similar is the functioning of cosmos. It is composed of miscellaneous planets, stars, men, animals and things beyond human perception and all are mobile in one way or the other. But their formation and mobility is based on certain law of cosmos accredited for its equilibrium. It was explored indirectly millenniums ago by the great philosopher Pythagoras, whose wisdom places him among the five seers. It was named Golden Ratio or Divine Proportions, considered by geometricians as the building block of all creations of nature.

So the composing of intricate star decorations in the Wazīr Khān Mosque that are based on diverse shapes and sizes also required a specific law to create harmony and balance: the criterion of all beauty. Because these are not muddled formations rather all ornamental patterns of the Muslim world are properly thought out creations. But these were not listed in the category of creative arts, just considered as the works of craftsmen. On the contrary modern discoveries proved their real worth. When a few scholars investigating liberally, explored the new venues of research, to comprehend the underlying structures of beautiful designs of the Muslim world.

The name of Keith Critchlow in this respect is the first one who explicated Islamic designs on the lines that had never been explored by any, prior to him. He made the world realise that Islamic art and Islamic science are not two separate domains and these patterns are not mere ornamentations rather manifest mathematical erudition of the Muslim artists. One among these is the implication of the Golden Proportions on the designs. Before going into the depth of this statement it is necessary to have an understanding of the Golden Ratio.

It is actually a criterion of beauty, evolved by Pythagoras which was based on mathematical order. Golden Ratio is basically a mathematical concept, the relationship of which is a sure criterion of harmony and thus beauty. Both of which have always remained an essential part of art and aesthetics. So Golden Ratio, Golden Means or Golden Section, whatever name we employ, is a measure of beauty, the main criterion of which is harmony. It is an indispensable tool to measure beauty of every sort, not reserved for any singular aspect of it. Although Pythagoras is credited for this nifty gift but history proves that Babylonians and Egyptians prior to Greeks had proficiently used it in their artefacts, Egyptian pyramids are an example of it. But we are not sure whether they were proficient in this computation or being closer to nature it was just their instinctive expression of harmony and beauty. But an awareness, of this ratio, whether conscious or sub-conscious, is reflective of the acumen of those people for the intrinsic side of things. What actually Golden Ratio is?

The simplest way to define Golden Proportions is through a line. Take a line AB and divide it into two segments at point C, in such a way that the ratio of smaller segment: AC, with the larger one: CB, should be the same as the ratio of larger part: CB with the whole: AB. Euclid called it the extreme and means ratio.



Fig: 472- 473: Golden spiral of the shell of Nautilus.

clockwise, while another, but outer set, where spirals are comparatively larger, and moves anti-clockwise, *figs.474*. It is discovered by scientists that each spiral is linked with its neighbour, following the golden progression. Here, it forms two sets of Fibonacci sequence[13]. Moreover, the number of spirals retained in the head of a sunflower, correspond to the age of the flower. The older the flower the ratio of bigger numbers of the Fibonacci progression it retains, for example, 13:21, 21:34, 34:55[14], etc. Fibonacci series is also observed in the

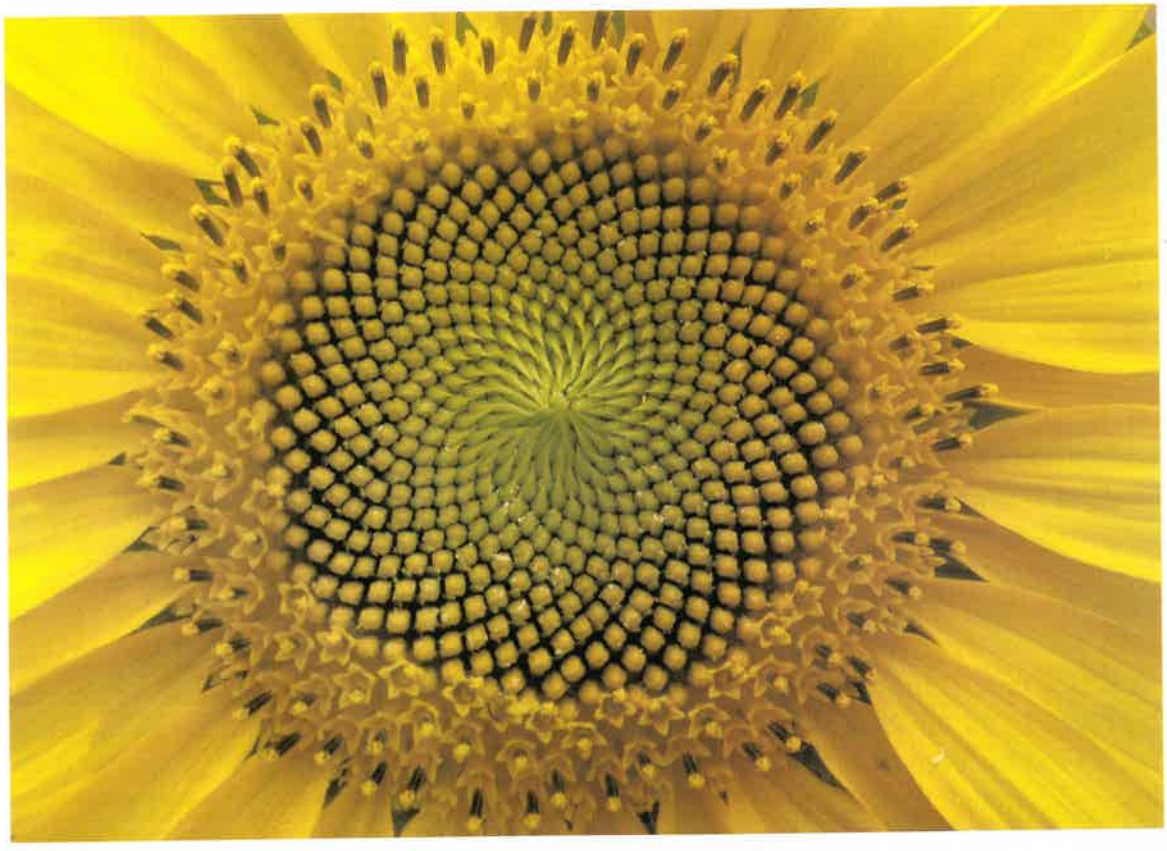


Fig.474: Golden spirals in the Sun flower.

and 8 / 5 = 1.6 and 21 / 13 = 1.615 but 144 / 89 = 1.618 gives almost exact *Phi*.

Further amazing facts about *Phi* can be attained by making a reverse of it. If the devisor is used as dividend the quotient will follow the same rhythm but this time of 0.618, for example:

2 / 3 = 0.6..., 3 / 5 = 0. 6, 5 / 8 = 0.62..., 8 / 13 = 0.6.., 13 / 21 = 0.619, 89 / 144 = 0.618...Thus harmony and rhythm are the distinguishing characters of the Fibonacci sequence. It is not simple balance but sophisticated balance that retains multi-dimensional equilibrium that no other number has the capacity to possess. Another astounding relation of this number that stresses further, the characteristic of beauty in harmony can be seen in a progression acquired by multiplying each term with 1.618 or dividing it with 0.618. The progression thus formed is as follows:

Multiplication by 1.618	**Division by 0.618**
1 x 1.618 = 1.618	1 / 0.618 = 1.618
1.618 x 1.618 = 2.618	1.618 / 0.618 = 2.618
2.618 x 1.618 = 4.236	2.618 / 0.618 = 4.236
4.236 x 1.618 = 6.854	4.236 / 0.618 = 6.854
6.854 x 1.618 = 11.09	6.854 / 0.618 = 11.09

It again gives amazingly symmetrical results. It is based on the simple mathematical key related to this number, 1 / 0.618 = 1.618[8]. It can also be written: $\frac{\sqrt{5}+1}{2}$

These are a few astonishing facts related to this number. It gives a good cause to assert that Phi is considered as the most beautiful number which is very important in art[9], because of being an integral part of nature that it is present in all its creations. It has the capacity to define intrinsic harmony, compatible in the objects of nature, despite the variety and individuality they possess. Ubiquity of Phi in nature is immutable. This is the very reason that ancient people associated it with divinity and early scientists called this ratio as Divine Proportions[10].

Nature is satiated with examples of objects that retain Golden Proportion. Let us observe a few before coming back to the Wazīr Khān Mosque. The beehive for instance with its beautiful hexagonal cells, is an abode of male and female honey bees and female bees always out number the male. But the ratio between male and female bees is always, 1: 1.618[11]. So this number must have some Divine linkage. Furthermore, the spiral shell of nautilus does have this symmetry, *fig.472-473*. It is an astonishing fact that the chambered nautilus in its shell grows at a constant rate without changing shape and similar is the growth of its shell, which follows exactly the Fibonacci sequence and the diameter of each spiral of the shell when computed with its adjacent, gives 1:1.618[12]. The most amazing fact in this example is that the growth of nautilus is also exactly according to this sequence.

Another but worth seeing example is of the seed head of a sun flower. Its seeds grow in two opposite spirals. From its centre, emerges a set of shorter spirals, moving

Moreover, the phenomenon of the rotation of planets is associated with their speed which, according to the modern discovery, is caused by the magnetic field of resonance between the adjacent planets. This resonance, according to him, resembles the rhythmic combination of tones in music[17]. It proves what Pythagoras said centuries earlier:

> *There is geometry in the humming of the strings ... and there is music in the spacing of the spheres.*

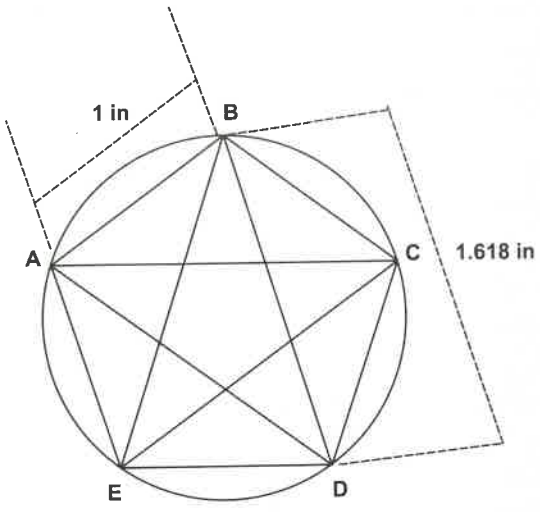


Fig.475: Golden Proportions in the five pointed star.

Pythagoras and his companions loved music. They were mathematicians as well as musicians. Pythagoras believed that musical notes could be translated into mathematical equations. But according to the legend he was not satisfied with the music of his time. An interesting story is quoted about how the great philosopher discovered musical notes. It is said that once he was passing by a blacksmith's workshop. The man was busy in his work of beating the metal. Hearing the sound of rhythmic beat produced by hitting on the anvil, his philosophic mind assumed at once that there must be a scientific law behind the harmonic and elegant sound. He observed the tools and discovered that ratio between the sizes of anvils was the cause of such an elegant rhythm. Because one anvil was half the size of the other and another was 2/3 of it and so on. So the musical harmony discovered by Pythagoras was also based on the Fibonacci sequence that is 1: 1.618. It is also written as, $\frac{\sqrt{5}+1}{2}$ and computation of it will result in 1.618. So, Golden Ratio is the key to open the secrets of the harmonic fundamentals of the universe. Pythagoras is accredited for this discovery although initial problems in this field must have been solved by Egyptians and Babylonians. It is said that Pythagoras visited both the places; he stayed for twenty two years in Egypt and twelve years in Babylonia and after coming back he established the Pythagorean School. It is most probable that he must have acquainted himself with the very roots of the Golden Ratio from the eastern centres. History repeats itself and in the splendid years of the Muslim Empire when Abbasids were busy to quench their thirst of knowledge through Greek erudition, it again entered Mesopotamia, from where it had once begun.

So, Muslim art based its fundamentals on philosophic roots. Each creation of theirs was orderly, thought out and retained some philosophy behind it. In the decorative designs of Wazīr Khān Mosque we realise that each star ornament of the edifice is mathematically composed according to the area it is intended for. In addition it is sometimes exactly copied in a few spots if considered necessary, although the intricacies at a glance seem hard to replicate. Because in the composing of various complex shapes that play their role in the formation of a design, perceptual symmetry along with mathematical balance is the rule of the law. A minute deviation of it would have destabilised equilibrium which is the hall mark of these designs. Taking the ceiling of *iwāns* of the sanctuary one is astounded by the variety of geometric shapes that delineate six and twelve pointed stars on the domed areas.

phylotaxis[i] but the sequence of different numbers on different plants is observed. One thing that is common is the rotating angle of the spiral on which leaves are placed. The most common angle is 137.5 degrees, which allows maximum sun light to reach each set of leaves. The importance of the angle 137.5 lies in the fact that Fibonacci relations exist in the angle and the perimeter of a circle. The angle 137.5 and the perimeter of a circle form exact proportions of the Golden Ratio[15].

Pine cone, another example of natural spiral that retains Fibonacci sequence, it contains double spiral like the seed head of sunflower. When the double sets of its spirals were counted it resulted in the Fibonacci numbers. In the branching system of plants this relationship is followed. The offshoots of a plant grow exactly in Fibonacci sequence. Each plant emerges with a single branch that turns into two, then three, then five, then eight, then thirteen, etc. and the growth continues in this sequence. Nature has numerous examples where shapes of its forms have linkage with the Fibonacci sequence or in other words Golden Ratio.

Man, best of the creations of nature is also subjected to the Golden proportion. Several parts of human body are in golden ratio to their adjacent ones. For instance, the distance of the total length of human body from head to floor is in Golden Ratio to the distance from his navel to the floor. Further, measurement of the distance from shoulder to the tip of fingers and from elbow to the finger tips will also result in the ratio: 1: 1.618. Another part bears the similar proportion. Lengths from hip to floor and from knee to floor also result in Phi. A distinct number of parts of human body retain the harmonic sequence of Fibonacci. Another interesting example is the spiral on the head of a baby, which is also the Golden Spiral. Leonardo de Vinci's Vitruvian man itself is an acclamation to the divine proportions. He has employed Golden Ratio with its geometric equivalents on the figure of man. It is a drawing of a male whose outstretched arms and legs form a pentacle and regular pentacle defines Golden Ratio. Even in the drawings of human face he has discovered the golden geometric proportions. Leonardo's research on human body is beyond question because it is a common secret that he used to dissect corpses to study the divine mysteries.

The story of the samples of Golden Proportions in nature is unending; our surroundings are replete with specimens that carry harmonic ratios named Divine proportions. But we can limit it here by studying a research related to the harmonic rotation of planets of the solar system, because its mystery has always stirred human imagination. K. P. Butusov, a Russian astronomer, in his book titled The Golden Section in the Solar System mentions a research related to the resonance theory of the solar system. According to him the Divine Ratio persists in the regularity of the placing and rotation of planets around the sun. He calculated time of the planet's cycles around the sun. While comparing the ratio of time in this cycle, of the adjacent planets, he realised that they also follow the Golden Progression that is Fibonacci sequence. The most important point in this respect is that the ratio of their time cycle around the sun equals either ratio 1.618 or the square of it that is 2.618[16].

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i Phylotaxis is the study of ordered position of leaves on the stem.

arch of the eastern gate. Dado on the front wall of inner arch of the gate bears the five-fold symmetry, *fig.477*. There is a ten pointed star in the middle of the panel, surrounded by another which also has ten points, further encircled by wedge shaped pentagons. Surrounding it are small sized pentacles, four above and four below the central star because the design is laid on a rectangle if it were a circular place, the smaller pentacles would have surrounded it from all around. Although the design is based on geometric segmentations, including triangles, wedge shapes and pentacles, agglomeration of which forms stars within stars. But despite the geometric segmentations it retains symmetry of highest order, due to the reliance on Golden Proportions. Although, the star pattern on this area is neither three dimensional nor multicoloured as we see on ceilings of the *iwāns* of prayer chamber. But it is outlined with black on brick red. It seems to be a grid of the painted designs inside and it's placing at the entrance, gives it an introductory character of the elaborately painted designs inside the mosque. The esoteric connotation here defines the seminal roots of beauty in nature that is Golden Ratio and the fundamentals of the most intricate designs adorning the mosque are defined in the grid at its entrance.



Fig.477: A specimen of five-fold symmetry on the dado of the Entrance Gate.

The intricate star patterns that are formed by a variety of geometric shapes also have smaller stars, placed at the edge points of each star formation on the ceilings of *iwāns*. In the far-northern and far-southern *iwāns* exactly identical designs are represented. On their northern and southern counterparts, almost similar designs are depicted but with little variations, not much obvious at a glance. Adornments of the ceilings of all four *iwāns* retain the six-fold symmetry, but smaller stars placed at the points of the arms of the larger ones differ. In the far off *iwāns* they have six points but in the inner two they retain five points. It proves thus that symmetry is lost nowhere because of the geometric proportions of the Golden Ratio. There are three circles of smaller stars, placed at the edges of the larger ones but all have five points whereas the larger stars have six and twelve points, formed through segments of stalactites, and composed with such perfection that each makes a harmonious whole. The smaller stars are also intimate part of the larger ones.

The most thought provoking rendition is the harmony with which star formations are segmented into smaller shapes called stalactites. Although the star-forms are devised by agglomerations of many different shapes but retain equilibrium of highest order. It is only because the divisions are either of Golden Triangles or Golden Rectangles through Golden Means. Taking a Golden Rectangle for instance, but the procedure of its formation must be comprehended first. Every geometric formation begins with a point, extension of

Different sizes of a variety of geometric shapes are used here but harmony of the star is not destabilised. It again reminds the divisions of geometric shapes through Golden Ratio.

Among the star shapes a regular five pointed star known as pentacle carries the precise Golden Proportions. The ratio between an arm and the edge length of a regular pentacle retains Golden Symmetry that is the symmetry of 1:1.618. In simple words we can say if five points of a star of equal dimensions are marked with the letters, ABCDE, as ascribed in the diagram, *fig.475*, with the length of line AB = 1 inch, the length of BD in relation will always be 1.618 inch or $\sqrt{5}+1/2$. This means a five pointed star is a true symbol of Golden Ratio. This is perhaps the very reason that it has been in use from the ancient times. This symbol has been considered as divine, retaining magical power by many cultures. But whatever interpretations they had linked, its most essential feature is the Golden Ratio. Because the line segments of a regular pentacle automatically divide it into Phi which is the Divine ratio: a symbol of perfect beauty. This means if ancient people were not aware of the mathematical computation of Golden Ratio, it was in their perception or we can say that it was in their instinct. The reverential status of this shape can also be viewed on ontological terms.

An amazing astronomical fact is related to the planet Venus. Astronomers have been observing from the times immemorial that the planet Venus in its movement of eight years makes through its path a pentacle on the sky[18]. It has surprised people from the very beginning and many ancient civilisations took Venus as their goddess. Amazingly she was considered the goddess of love and beauty perhaps because of the harmony retained within Golden ratio which has always been a criterion of beauty. But Muslims realising beauty in harmony which is a distinguishing characteristic of their artworks, used it abundantly for decorative purposes especially to adorn the religious edifices.

The area under discussion is the small domed ceilings of *iwāns* of the sanctuary with the intricate star patterns. Four among the five *iwāns* are identical in the general layout of their decoration, having six and twelve pointed stars on their domed ceilings, with complex geometric segmentations. The stars represented here are not all pentacles but mostly have six and twelve points. Implementing Golden Ratio on a six pointed regular star, it has been discovered that a five pointed star is a perfect symbol of Golden proportions[19] whereas six pointed is an approximation of it. Because it gives ratio 1: 1.7...., instead of 1: 1.6...., which is very close to the Golden Ratio, *fig.476*. But a few other sections of the mosque have five-fold symmetry of star patterns. One among these is on the inner

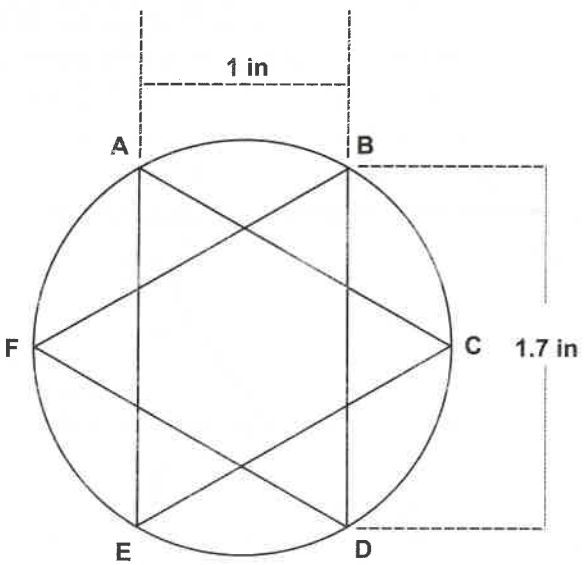


Fig.476: Approximation of Golden Ratio in six pointed star.

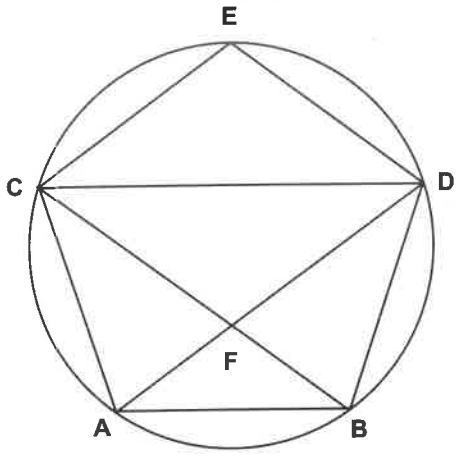


Fig.481: Golden cup

Rectangle ABCD, draw a square ADLM in it, the remaining rectangle BCLM will also be in the Golden Ratio. Drawing another square from the rectangle BCLM will provide another smaller rectangle CLNO. CLNO will also be a rectangle with Golden Proportions; division of it into another square, the remaining rectangle LNPQ will again result in another further smaller Golden Rectangle. If the procedure is continued, it will give infinite squares and Golden Rectangles of diminishing proportions[22]. The division will be as proportionate and thus as harmonious as the equilibrium retained by the objects of nature. The fragmentations of an intricate star design into stalactites in the Wazīr Khān Mosque do retain this balance. Numerous diamond shapes of varying sizes seem to follow this formula because there is so much variety in their sizes that maintaining of the geometric rhythm is not an easy job. But it is so balanced that the equilibrium of star shape is not disturbed at any place. Apart from rectangular divisions some other segments of intricate stars seem to have emerged from triangles. So the division of a Golden Triangle through Golden Means must also be understood.

A regular pentagon is a marvellous shape of geometry that has the capacity to create some astonishing shapes that are widely used in the architectonic decorations and so in the Wazīr Khān Mosque. An interesting division of a pentagon thus, will result into the formation of a Golden cup which consists of two triangles that vary in size but carry the proportions of Golden Ratio, *fig.481*. Take for instance a pentagon ABDEC draw two diagonals AD and BC that cross each other at point F. The triangles thus formed ABF and CDF will shape the Golden cup and both when measured will result into Golden Ratio[23].

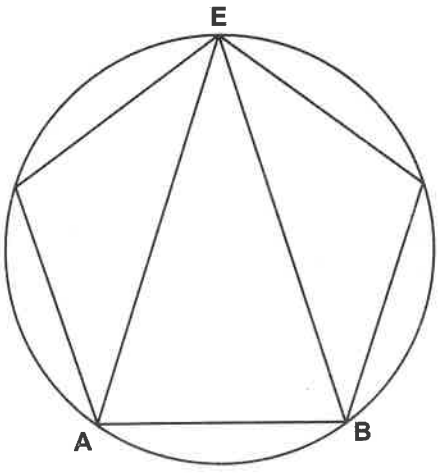


Fig.482: Golden Triangle.

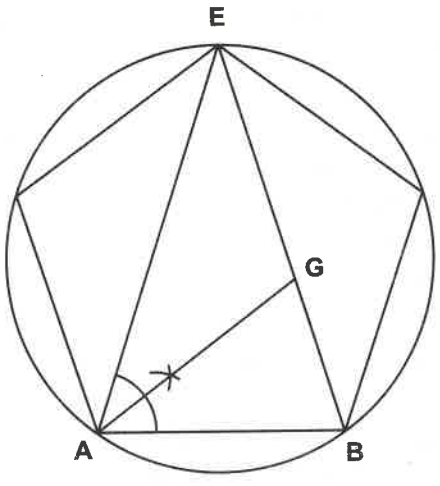


Fig.483: Division of the Golden Triangle into smaller Golden Tiangles.

which takes the shape of a line. So take a line AB, draw a perpendicular from A to F, which is half the length of AB. Join F with B, *fig.478*. Then placing compass at point F, open it of the length AF, draw an arc from F to the line FB, cutting it at point G. Then placing the compass at point B open it of the length BG, draw another arc from G to C. join the lines from B to C and C to D and from D to A. It will result into a perfect Golden rectangle ABCD[20] in which ratio of the sides AD to AB retains ratio 1:1.618 or 1: $\sqrt{5}$+1/2.

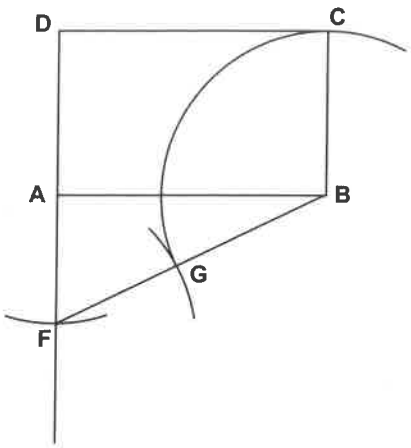


Fig.478: Method of drawing of Golden Rectangle from line AB.

Another easier way to draw a Golden rectangle is by taking two adjacent squares of equal dimensions, making a rectangle ABCD, *fig.479*. Draw an arc from D to E taking the diagonal BD

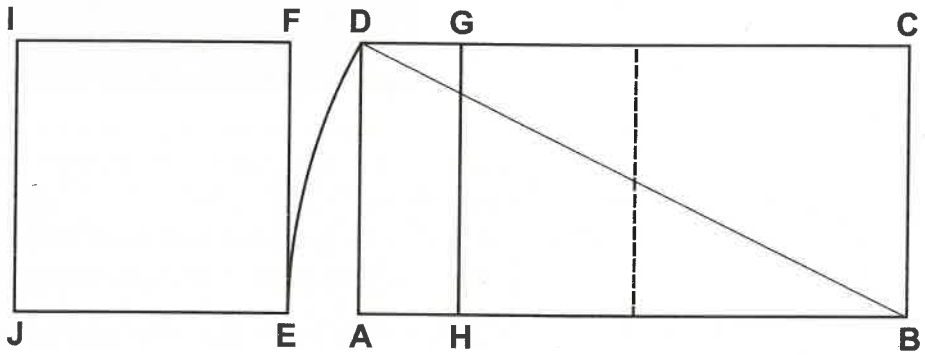


Fig.479: Method of drawing a Golden Rectangle.

as its radius. If BC equals to 1, BE will be equal to $\sqrt{5}$. Attach another square equal in dimensions to the previous ones, forming a rectangle BCIJ, resulting in $\sqrt{5}$+1. Then cut this rectangle into two equal halves, it will give $\sqrt{5}$+1/2. that is an exact equal of 1.618. Thus the ratio of rectangle BCGH is 1: 1.618[21], it will also be a Golden rectangle. Drawing of the harmonic segments from the Golden Rectangle, a little more concentration on geometry is required to understand the procedure, *fig.480*. Taking a Golden

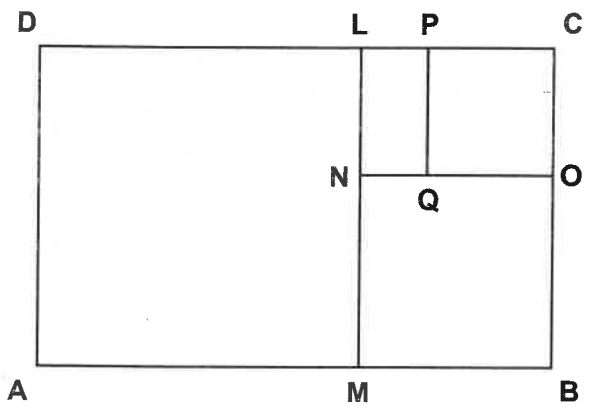


Fig.480: Diminutive Golden Rectangles.

> *Harmony is coordination of the parts and the whole, coalescence of different components of the object in the unified organic whole. In the harmony the internal orderliness and measure of the being get the external revelations*[25].

Harmony here stands not for simple balance but for complex equilibrium based on a continuous connected series of rhythms. It is not the naïve or ingenuous steadiness but true harmony is the balance maintained within heterogeneous bodies and their numbers. It is even, not the equilibrium attained through two objects: if one placed at left the other must be at right, rather an exploring of the sophisticated aspect of rhythm that is beauty. It can be practically perceived in the intricate star patterns of the mosque under discussion. There are four, five, six, seven, eight and twelve pointed stars devised by division of a variety of shapes. But the segmentation of the whole into parts gives a constant ratio, the relations of which are proportionate enough that they retain elegance. A valuable saying of Plato on almost similar notion of proportions is as follows:

> *Two parts or values cannot be satisfactorily connected among themselves without a third part; the most beautiful link is that, which gives the perfect unit together with two initial values. It is reached in the best way by proportion (analogy), in which among three numbers, planes or bodies, the mean one so concerns to the second one, as the first one to the mean one, and also the second one to the mean one as the mean one to the first one. This implies, that the mean one can exchange the first one and the second one, the first one and the second one can exchange the mean one and things together thus makes an indissoluble unit*[26].

It can be explained through the symbols A, B, and C. If the first one which comprises highest value is denoted by A, middle value defined by B and the lowest value among the three is ascribed by C, the equation thus forms will be as follows:

$$B: C = A: B, \text{ and } C: B = B: A$$

In this respect B can be placed at A, or B, and A, or C, can be placed at the position of B but these values cannot be other than the Fibonacci progression. This is the epitome of the harmony and rhythm that persists in the contrasting shapes used to format the star patterns in the Mosque Wazīr Khān. For instance taking the ceiling of the central *iwān* of the prayer chamber, that contains complicated star pattern. The general layout of the design seems similar to the other *iwāns*, at a glance but a closer look reveals that it is more intricate and more refined as compared to the ceilings of the other four *iwāns* retaining the star motif. The complexity with which this design is worked out brings to mind the hand of a jeweller. Each shape that plays its role to fashion the star is rendered with a jeweller's perfection. But in the actual sense of meaning an accomplished geometrician integrated the design by dividing the area into complex geometric shapes. The design begins with an eighteen pointed star concentric to a cusped circle, surrounded from all around by small diamond shapes. Then another row of diamond with two obliquely joint squares, shaped like the open pages of a book, next circle consists of larger diamond shapes and attenuated pointed

Another wonderful formation is of Golden Triangle constituted by taking one side of the regular pentagon as base of it. Join both sides of it at vertex of the pentagon, *fig.482*. In this way the two base angles of the triangle will be of 72 degrees each, with the vertex angle measuring 36 degrees. Thus it will be a triangle ABE having Golden Proportions. It can also be further divided into regular triangles of infinite order. Bisect the angle A of this triangle, it will cut BE at point G, the division of this line will retain the mean and extreme ratio. It will form another Golden Triangle ABG, *fig.483*. The bisection of the angle G

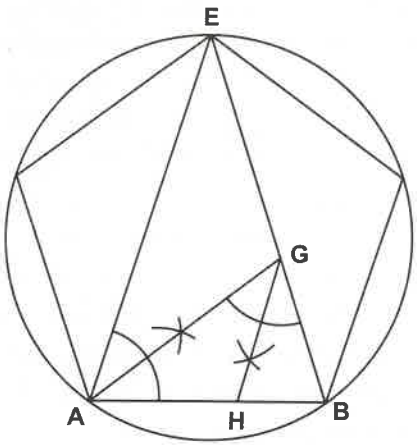


Fig.484: Division of the Golden Triangle into smaller Golden Triangles.

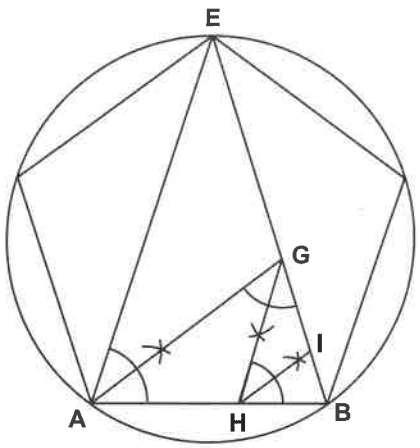


Fig.485: Division of the Golden Triangle into smaller Golden Triangles.

will repeat the same process. It will cut line AB at H and create a further triangle GHB, of Divine Proportions, *fig.484*. Bisection of angle H will create a further Golden Triangle HIB, *fig.485* and bisection of I will produce another diminutive but regular triangle[24]. Similarly an infinite voyage of Golden Triangles can be disclosed through this path.

The complex star patterns of the mosque are a cluster of motley shapes: larger and smaller diamonds, numerous wedge shapes, triangles, small stars of varying sizes, irregular shapes, diamond from one side and zig-zag from the other, pentagons, all divided into numerous other smaller forms. This complex agglomeration of structures knitted together in a relationship, not based on two plus two, symmetry but a higher order of harmony configured here, substratum of which is in the nature's symmetry. Harmony of the objects of nature is impeccable because it is based on the Divine laws. A fragment of which is decoded by man to represent truth which is beauty. So the perception of a Muslim artist is like the Sufi perception that has the capacity to comprehend crux of the matter not just outer appearance. So his concern was not limited to the similitude, he opted for the undercurrents of natures balance. He ruled out all other laws that had been criterions of beauty and perceived it in harmony that is not superficial but retains solid bases in mathematics and geometry. Because all functions of the cosmos follow this harmonic structure. Such an emphatic stress on harmony makes one inquisitive about what harmony stands for. In the Great Soviet Encyclopaedia, the concept of harmony is defined in the following words:



Fig.486: Novel star formation on the ceiling of the central bay of sanctuary.

parts is not sacrificed at any rate. So we have solid reason to assert that harmony of the band must have had golden proportion, the crux of which lies in the rhythmic relations of various shapes and their sizes. Various parts, different in their nature are arranged in such a perfect ratio that their union reverberate beauty because this relationship is derived from nature.

Another salient feature, yet to be discussed is the harmony with which geometry and vegetal motifs are combined in the star shape. Exquisite arabesques are conjoined with the geometric intricacies. Each shape whether a triangle, wedge, diamond or pentagon, combined into a star is minutely filled with vegetal designs that, while retaining individuality are a harmonic part of the whole. On the ceilings, their delicacy is beyond question. Moreover, the dadoes composed of stars do retain floral ornaments within stars as well as in their adjacent shapes. The arabesques, though derived from nature, are concentric to the geometric shapes they adorn. Each of the floral design is harmonised with the shape of the star that retains it. Even the four and five pointed stars on the band in the central part of the prayer chamber are bedecked with flowers and leaves, fashioned according to their shapes, *fig.487*. The esoteric basis of the union of terrestrial within celestial defines the fact that a single principle of harmony reverberates in each phenomenon of nature whether it be the objects of this world or from the world above. Both united here through the bounds of Divine ratio.



Fig.487: Four pointed star on the ceiling of the central bay of sanctuary.

A few other parts of the mosque are also decked with the intricate star patterns but comparatively unusual in its representation. It is on the upper balconies of the vestibule. Ceilings of these balconies that also have domical roofs, have similar star patterns that bedeck the ceilings of the *iwāns* of the prayer chamber. We find analogous division of space into diamond, wedge, irregular octagon *etc.* that have been studied in the sanctuary. But the major difference lies in the colouring, only the small stars at the edges

wedge shapes. When viewed as a whole it configures six diamond shapes forming arms of the star, each composed of diamonds of varying sizes, with four or six pointed small stars, one at its each corner. The design is further continued in similar fashion but the star is immediately surrounded by comparatively larger wedge shapes that have their outer edge, either round or formed by a regular zig-zag line that counters its neighbouring shapes. If the ceiling was broader enough it would have accommodated another six or twelve pointed star and so on.

The pattern under consideration appears beautiful because of the variety it bears of sizes and shapes but not one in the agglomeration out weighs the other. Each provides amiable space for the other because of the harmony of proportions discussed above by Plato. The sort of proportions engenders symmetry in the asymmetrical shapes. This is nature's symmetry, a cause of unity in diversity and the seminal root of captivating elegance. Actually "the chaos of the world has an underlying order"[27]. Aristotle promulgated an analogous conception when he says:

> *The nature aims to contrasts and from them, instead of from similar things, forms consonance .... As well, the art, apparently, acts in the same way by imitating to the nature. Namely the painting makes the pictures conforming the originals by mixing white, black, yellow and red paints. Music creates unified harmony by mixing different voices, high and low, lingering and short, in congregational singing. The grammar creates the whole art from the mixture of vowels and consonants.*

This is the criterion of beauty delineated as star design in the mosque. If it were a simple star filled in with attractive colours or beautiful vegetal motifs it would have failed to encompass the aura of elegance, its mark of distinction. It is the heterogeneous compartments, proportionate relations of which formed such pleasing examples of ornamentation in the mosque.

It will be unjust if the star design on a band in the central part of the prayer chamber is ignored. It is placed above the calligraphic band surmounting the chamber from all four sides. Although, it also configures stars in its composition but it is unique of its kind, demonstrating another dimension of genius of the artists who delineated it. It is based on circular shapes instead of diamond, wedge, pentagon it. of the previously discussed sections. It is a three dimensional band of *muqarnas*, where intersecting circles delineate various shapes including stars. There are five and four pointed stars but at places seem to have concealed their parts behind the overlapping of circular forms. The top most area of the band also gives a similar feeling. It creates the impact that only one point of the stars is visible and the rest concealed behind the upper edge of the band. Shapes of small arches are formed in this design through the overlapping of circles and stars are so placed above that they seem to surmount small arches. Another interesting feeling that a closer view of this section enhances is, that stars appear to be holding the circular shapes above, in their arms, *fig.486*.

Although the band is intricately intersected by geometric shapes and it is a novel division that has no precedence in the whole mosque but the harmony of smaller and larger

undercurrents of which are also related to the Golden Ratio does not seem away from the peripheries of their cognizance. They might have some affinity with powers of such a tiny unit.



Fig.489: Design resembling Bohr's atomic model.

Atom is a small bit of matter; it is the basic constituent of chemicals. A basic unit, from which a system is built and so, are the Golden Proportions. Esoteric significance of both has some kinship, because both are related to the fundamentals of their fields. The divine ratio is not an ordinary phenomenon and so is the atom. The perfection of stalactite formations that configure star shapes in this mosque is reflective of the erudition of the artists. It is the deciphering of the bases of harmony in the universe and an atom, the hardly divisible particle possesses all the basics of the matter it belongs. Both are powerful units. Geometry seems not alien in the vocabulary of the Muslim artists; they must have penetrated into its very depths. The awareness of Golden Ratio exposes cosmic significance of geometry and cognizance of atom, opens up the potentialities of the trivial particle of the universe. So the under currents of both are analogous. One certifies significance of the other.



Fig.490: Design resembling Bohr's atomic model.

It is concluded then that the Muslim concept of beauty is not an isolated phenomenon, segregated from the other domains of knowledge. It encompasses all fields of scholarship that are knitted into one unit. The phenomenon of Golden Ratio, *Phi* or 1:1.618 cannot be viewed only as a mathematical phenomenon or just a numeral; it retains a sort of cryptic nature that takes us beyond the phenomenal world. Its presence in all the creations of nature asserts its Divine significance. In all the mathematical numerals it is the only one with mysterious characteristics. It appears to be the crux of the Divine phenomenon of creation and so is atom: the smallest part of an element that can take part in chemical reactions[29] as well. Representation of the atomic model is also harmonised with the star shape through its geometric formation. Congruity of diverse elements brought a harmonious shape of the star that shines brilliantly in all the ornaments of the Wazīr Khān Mosque.

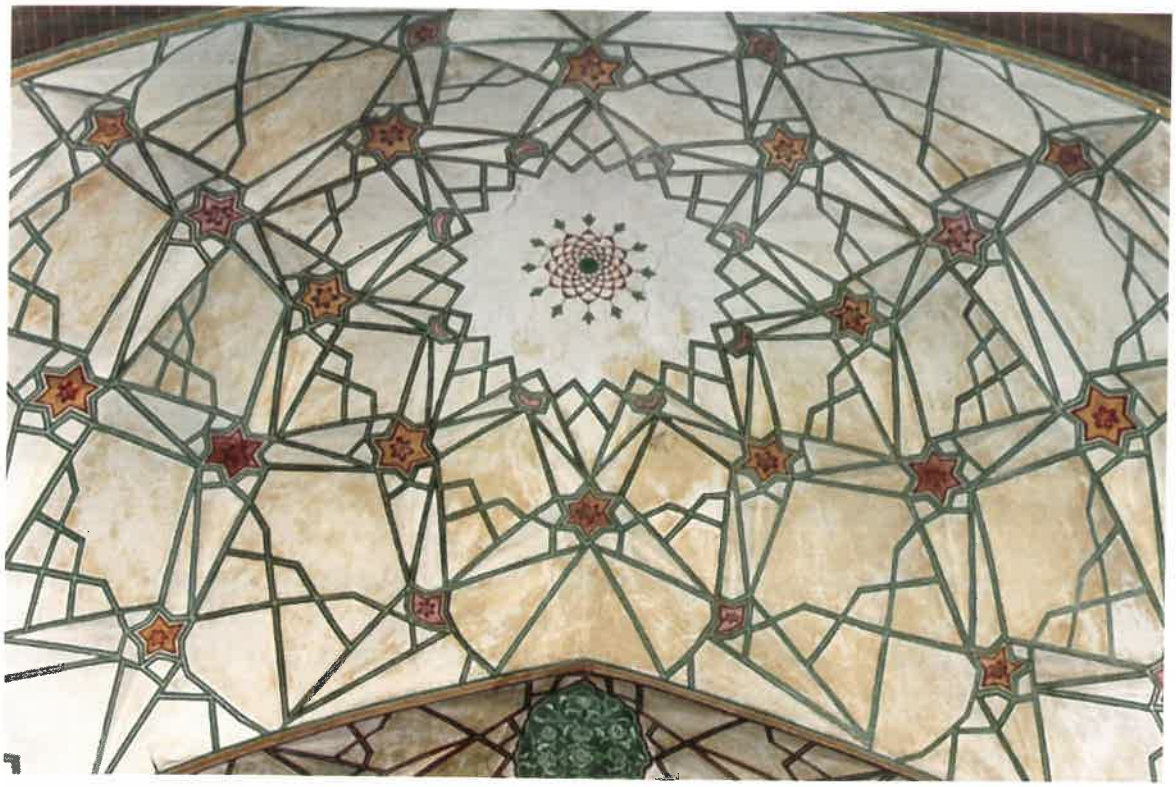


Fig.488: Design on the apices of balconies of the vestibule.

of the bigger ones, in the balconies of the vestibule are coloured, rest of the area is devoid of colouration. The design here seems to serve as a grid of the patterns that adorn the main sections of the mosque that is the prayer chamber. It can be taken as a preface of the adornments, a viewer encounters after entering the mosque. The grid when compared resembles the star pattern on ceiling of the central *iwān* of the sanctuary, *fig.488*.

Apart form the grid a most astounding pattern is placed at the apex of each balcony. It is related to the modern discoveries of atom, known as Bohr's atomic model, a scientist who implemented Quantum theory on atom which he gave in 1913[28] and explained it through a diagram which resembles greatly the pattern adorning the upper balconies of the vestibule, *figs.489-490*. This pattern, if one is not familiar with Bohr's model, looks either like a many petalled flower or an eight pointed star. But a perceptive eye can at once recognise Bohr's atomic model. Some probing queries stir the imagination when we realise that Bohr belonged to the 20th century and this mosque was erected in about 1643. Were Muslims of that time aware about the powers of a tiny particle, called atom? Or is it just a coincidence that an almost three and a half centuries old decorative design resembles the modern model?

Answer comes in affirmation when one realises that a thorough awareness of the nature's building block in the delineation of beauty persisted in the artists. Cognizance with the properties of atom might not be alien to them, because, there was a time, when Muslims excelled in sciences. West in this field is indebted to them because all modern knowledge was transmitted to them through the Muslim source. Recognition of the powers of atom, the

Minbar of the Mosque

Minbar or pulpit, from where a religious savant delivers sermon, before a congregational prayer, is an essential feature of the mosque architecture. Because its origin is traced back from the period of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh), who used high platform, to address the faithful. From then on it became an essential part of the mosque. The *minbar* present in the mosque Wazīr Khān is not the original one, not even a clue of the earliest pulpit survives. The present one was a gift of Lord Curzon, the Viceroy and Governor General of India, who bequeathed it in 1899, during his first visit to the mosque. The inaugural tablet is carved out on two horizontal panels in the left side of the *minbar*; one in English and the other in Urdu. The upper one is in English, *fig.491,* and the same



Fig.491: Carved out panel on the minbar, a record that it was presented by the Viceroy Lord Curzon.

script is repeated in the lower section in Urdu, *fig.492,* forming part of the decorative panels adorning the pulpit. The style of calligraphy, used for the Urdu scrip is *nasta'līq*. It is a fine specimen of carved walnut wood that is light and durable. More than a century has elapsed still it retains its original crispness.



Fig. 492: Same text in Urdu, a memorial of the present of the Lord Curzon.

The elegantly carved *minbar* is an exact match to the intricacies of decorative motifs of the mosque. It was designed and worked out at the Mayo School of Arts which was

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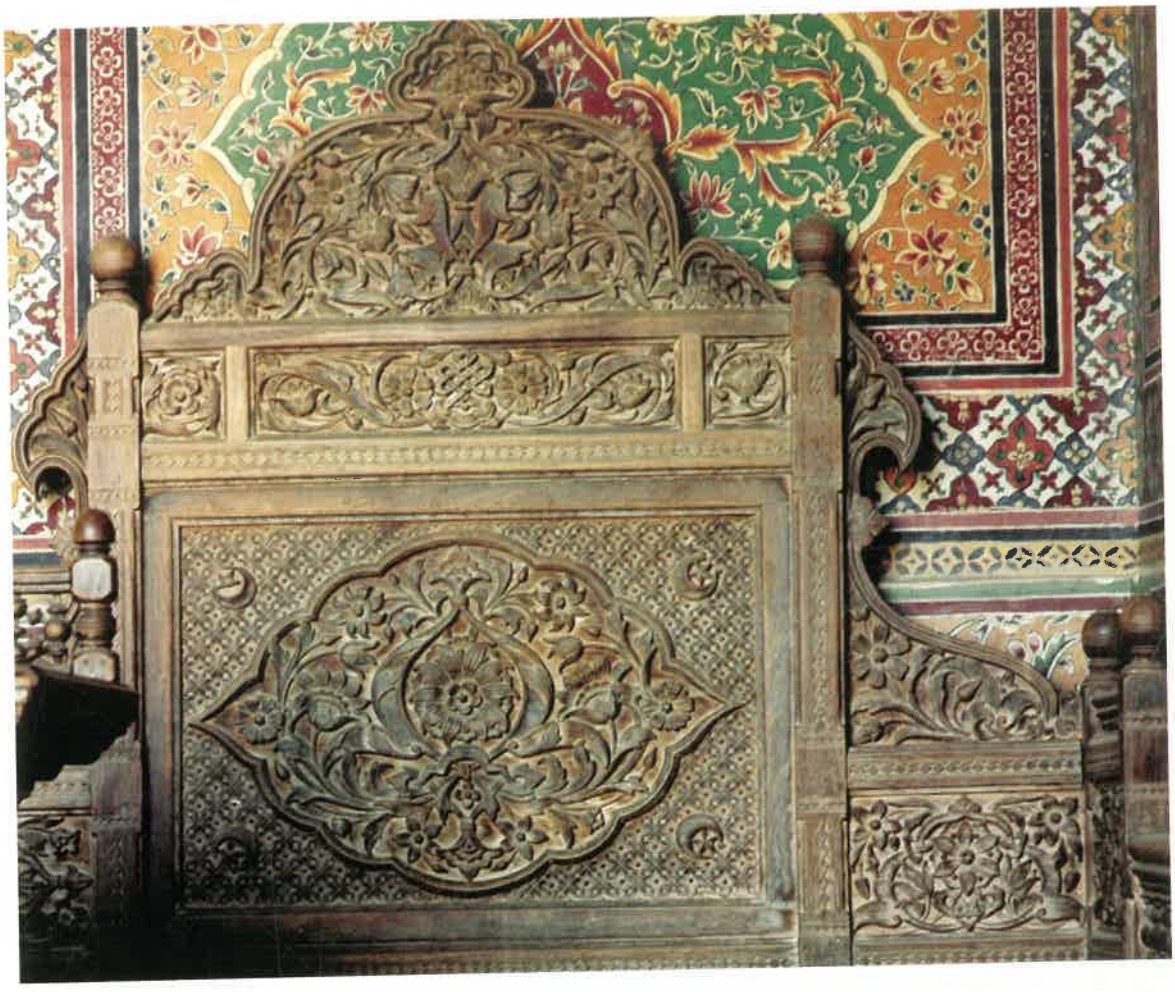


Fig.495: Rear view of the minbar.

sides as well, *fig.495*. It is easy to shape wooden frames into straight geometrical designs but hard to create curvilinear frames. But skill of the wood carver has given it the delicacy of flora. Vertical sides of each of the three steps, bear intricately carved designs. The lower most has a continuous band, composed of flowers, leaves and geometric shapes, *fig.496*. It is bordered from above and below, both composed of diamond shapes.



Fig.496: Carving on the first step of the minbar.



Fig.493: Stand of the minbar to keep a Holy Book on it.

renowned for its fine crafts. In the exhibition of Indian crafts at Wembley in 1924, the work of Mayo School was placed in an elevated position for the *pinjrā* work and wood carvings. The pulpit thus prepared is not only appreciated for its exquisite carving but also for the skill of carpentry. The proficiency with which the carpenter has perfectly fixed wooden parts is worth appreciating because it has been in use for more than a century but no interstice has yet emerged in its joints. It is still perfectly intact. It consists of three steps, each placed at a height of one foot. Thus, the *Khaṭīb* delivers sermon while sitting three feet higher than the audience, a moderate height, which maintains perfect contact between audience and the speaker. Each step is almost three feet wide that provides enough space for the speaker to sit comfortably. On its left, it is attached with a stand like formation to conveniently place the Holy Qur'ān or any other book used by a scholar during the sermon, *figs.493-494*. The stand is almost one foot broad and four feet high and is in line with the second step. It has a slightly broader top, almost of eighteen inches. It bears beautifully carved wooden grille on its two sides that is, on southern and western, again a convenient support for the book to be placed on it. The *minbar* is provided with an equally elegant back which is square in shape, divided by framed panels that retain elegantly carved designs. It is further crowned by an inverse half pendent that seems to emerge beautifully from the frame of its



Fig.494: Details of the stand to keep the Holy Book on a minbar.



Fig.500: Sea-shell motif on the left wall of the minbar.

parts of the sanctuary is carved on the back, as well as on the left side of the pulpit, *figs. 500-501*. The sea-shell designs on the ceilings of the sanctuary are filled with arabesques in variegated colours while similar foliated designs are carved out within these shells on the *minbar*. Borders enframing panels of the *minbar* are very similar to those that frame various walls of the mosque. For instance, a border composed of diamond shapes with a dot inside, *fig. 502,* Is used around panels of the minbar as well as preserved in painted form to frame the decorative panels ornamenting various walls of the mosque, *fig. 503*. There are a few other examples to prove the thesis: brackets that support the top of the stand, for the placing of the Holy Qur'ān are just like those supporting eaves of the pavilions of the minarets, turrets and the porches of the shops flanking the northern and southern corridors of the vestibule, *fig.504*. Quadrifoil design the most common in the adornments of the mosque



Fig.501: Sea-shell motif on the ceiling of northern and southern parts of sanctuary.



Fig.497: Carving on the second step.



Fig.498: Top most step of the minbar.



Fig.499: Vase motif on the minbar.

The interesting point in this part is that both the borders are composed of diamond shapes but in the lower one diamonds are carved out from inside while in the upper border, negative areas around the diamonds are carved out and projected part forms the design. Whereas, the lower border is reverse of it, with design recessed. The upper two steps are divided into three panels each, with squares alternated by a rectangular but all adorned with different designs, *figs.497-498*. But the upper borders of both are exactly similar.

The most interesting part of decorative motifs that bedeck the *minbar* is the similarity they retain with the adornments of the mosque. The motifs that we see in the form of painted decorations on the walls of the mosque are present on the *minbar* in the form of carved out designs. For instance, the vase motif that bedecks the mosque in many different ways can also be viewed on the vertical panel of the stand of the *minbar* for the holding of books used in sermons, *fig.499*. The floral vase is represented within a cusped arch as is usual in various parts of the mosque. Similarly a sea-shell like formation that adorns the ceilings of the northern and southern

inspiration of both the sources was Muslim ornamental designs or the students of Mayo School as ascribed by M. Latif used to visit the mosque frequently to make imitations of the design[1] to improve their skill.



Fig.506: Leg and brackets of the minbar.

No part of the *minbar* is left without embellishment. It bears panels, borders, grilles and even its legs are not left without carved ornaments. These are enclosed with pendent like motif with flower and leaves inside, *fig.506*. Furthermore, the vertical side of every frame that encloses a panel is crowned by a tiny dome like structure that is identical in all parts of the pulpit, *fig. 507*. This also seems to be an imitation of the domes and cupolas of the mosque because in every respect they resemble a cupola.

The top or seat of each step is not left without ornamentation. These are plane, devoid of carving to facilitate sitting but if carved out motifs are avoided, it is not left without adornments. It also bears borders centred on geometric designs, *fig.508*. The motifs here are worked out by an inlay of coloured wood. Abony-like wood is used to demarcate designs inside. It contains borders all around, composed of geometric shapes and surrounded from both sides by thin bands composed of lozenges. The central part has an eight pointed star concentric to an octagon which also bears a border of diamond shapes. Thus the pulpit is symmetrical with the ornamentations of the mosque. Although it became part of the



Fig.507: Miniature globe mouldings in wood.



Fig.508: Designs on the seat of the minbar.



Fig. 502: Border on the minbar.



Fig.503: Painted Border on various sections of the Mosque.



Fig.504: Miniature brackets on the minbar.

is also part of the motifs used, to adorn the *minbar*. Star shape that embellishes the mosque in many different ways, also adorns corners of the back of the pulpit. But here each star is surrounded by a crescent, *fig.505*, whereas, in the painted decorations of the mosque star motifs are frequent but without crescent. These similarities were either due to the fact that



Fig. 505:Ccrescent and star on the minbar.

Supply of Water to the Mosque

It is generally known that water was supplied to the mosque from a well that was in the southern street, adjacent to the mosque. But in a monthly magazine *Naqūsh* of February, 1962 it is recorded that there were two wells attached to the mosque to provide it with ample water. Ablution tank was filled from one of the wells with the help of electric motors. But it was not in the period of Wazīr Khān because electricity and electric motors are a later invention. We are familiar with the southern well which was a *riht* (Persian wheel) that had long been used to supply water to the mosque[1]. But there are no obvious clues of the other

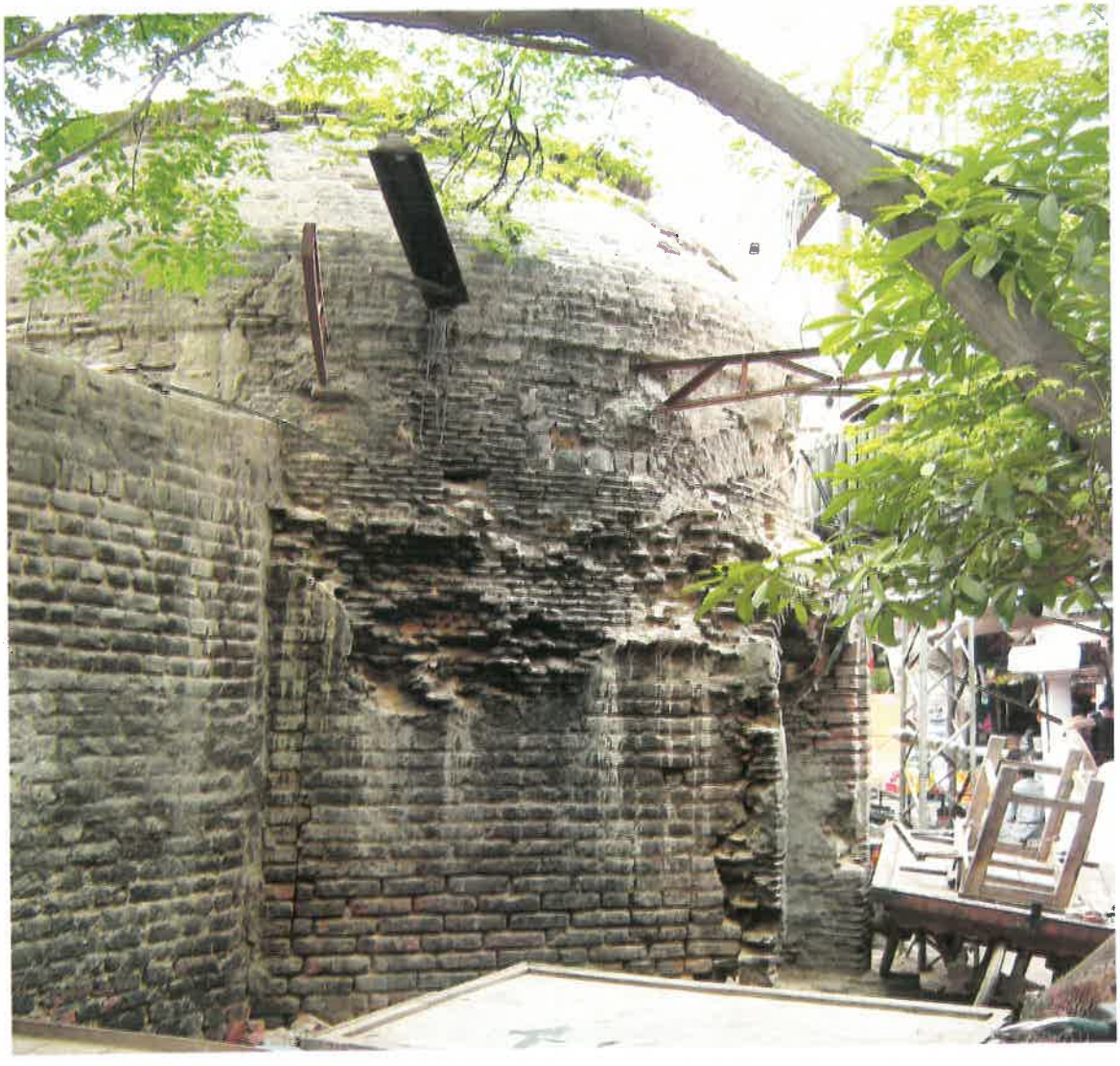


Fig. 510: Domed enclosure of the well of Dīna Nāth.



Fig.509: Minbar viewed from left.

mosque in April, 1899, almost two and a half century after the erection of mosque but it is akin to it in every respect. The majesty and grandeur of the adornments of mosque are reflected in this small structure, *fig.509*.

Refernces

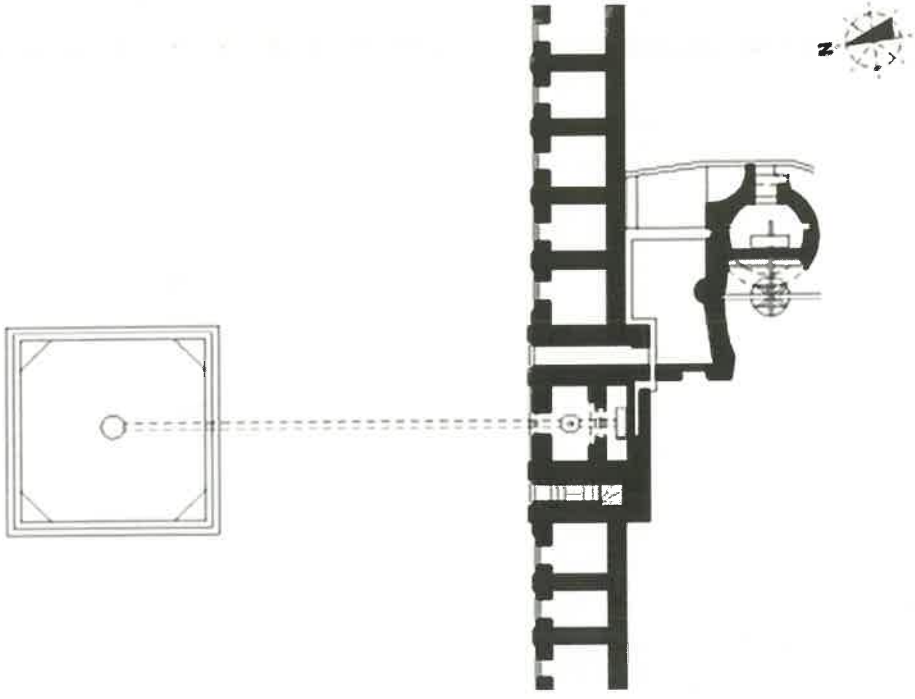
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Fig. 512: Water channel viewed from above

1903 that on the northern and southern facades of the courtyard, there are steps leading "to the roof and the arcading pavilions"[3]. The southern pavilion had a fountain. The channel, directly linked with *riht* supplied water to the fountain, placed on a scalloped basin in the southern pavilion. From there it was brought through another but underground channel to the ablution tank. Thus a proper and systematic arrangement was there for the supply of water to the mosque. It is defined in detail by Aḥmad Nabi Khān, through a plan, attached here, *fig.513.*

The function of fountain in this respect seems quite strange. Why didn't they



.513: The course of water supply through the southern well.



Fig.511: Water channel viewed from below.

well, although it is recorded in many sources that the other well became detached from the mosque by the formation of residential quarters around it. So it might be in the northern side of the mosque.

In the deed of bequest Wazīr Khān has also mentioned two wells, working with Persian wheels that according to him would supply water to the mosque, in future as well[2]. But he did not give any clue of their location. One *riht* is obviously the southern one and the other might be the well of Dīna Nāth, *fig.510.* The wells with Persian wheels remained for long, the two main sources of water to the mosque. But now wells and *riht* are things of bygone times. The invention of electricity and modern technology has changed the past techniques. So now ablution tank of the mosque is filled by electric motors.

The southern well after the detachment of the second was the only source for the supply of water to the mosque. A few remains of the systematic arrangement through which water reached from this well to the ablution tank still exist. In the street with the southern walls of the mosque, slightly off the centre from southern façade of the courtyard, there existed a well which once had an elevated Persian wheel. Water was extracted from the well and passed on to a channel, which was higher enough to hurl water with pressure, towards the tank. Remains of the channel still exist at the height of the ceiling of *ḥujrās*, *figs. 511-512.* It was not directly linked with the tank but through a fountain that occurred in the southern pavilion. It is ascribed by Andrews, in *the Journal of Indian Art and Industry,*

Material and Techniques of Ornamentation used in the Wazīr Khān Mosque

In architectural monuments of the Sub-continent Mughal edifices are specified for their lavish decorations. Mughals had used multifarious ornamental techniques to add beauty to their majestic structures. Shāhjaḥān's period is mostly characterised by the magnificent marble edifices but in the alluvial planes, where stone was not easy to be obtained, the builders relied on small bricks of tile like finish. Shāhjaḥān was obsessed with the smoothness of marble to such an extent that he demolished many sandstone structures of his ancestors, and replaced them by marble buildings. Marble structures were then inlayed with precious coloured stones, a technique called *pietra-dure*. But the buildings, where marble was not employed, glazed tiles of exquisite beauty substituted it.

Wazīr khān Mosque, which stands with majesty in the planes of Lahore, is of small brick masonry, generally used by the Mughal builders. It is added with occasional use of sandstone to break monotony or to give additional strength to the structure. On the stairs and surrounding platform of the main gate red sandstone is employed, whereas, brackets of various sections and some of the perforated screens are also made up of stone, while rest of the building is in small bricks, laid in "*Kankar*[i] lime, with a sprinkling of red sandstone"[1]. The brick walls are then quoted with plaster a thin layer of finely sifted lime *(chūnam)*, which is then tooled to marble like smoothness. It was further covered with Indian red colour, in the technique of true fresco. It was then picked out with white lines, parallel to the small bricks underneath[2] that creates the impact of evenly laid bricks, instead of the use of fresco. This technique is known as brick imitation or *tāzakāri*. It gives uniformity to the structure. But monotony of the walls is broken, through ornamental bands and panels, which are further provided with projected brick like frames, with the help of *tāzakāri*. It does not only create the impact of just brick structure rather different other designs are also formed through this technique. For instance, geometric design based on star shape on the soffits of the inner arch of the main gate and chevron pattern on the dome of the vestibule. Both if considered as true brick formations, startles the observer for the perfection with which bricks are laid to create such complex designs.

Shāhjaḥān's craze for marble is reflected even in the brick constructed buildings of his time. The brick masonry is then clad with coloured glazed tiles in *kāshīkāri*. A technique used by Muslims in the sub-continent, even before Mughals but in Lahore it became a popular mode of architectural ornamentation in the reign of Shāhjahān. Although, the earliest use of glazed tiles in Lahore was on the tomb of Shāh Mūsa, built in 1519 in the reign of Ibrāhīm Lodhi, which is a little earlier than the conquest of India by Babur[3].

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i concrete

provide a direct link of the upper channel with the underground one, instead of the intermediary fountain? The answer again is based on the scientific view point. It is a known fact that in order to purify water from germs it was crossed through air and here such a function was performed by the fountain. It added to the scenic beauty along with the process of purifying. No doubt, Wazīr Khān took every possible measure to construct an ideal mosque for the Muslim community of Lahore.



Fig. 514: Site where the well once existed

One probing query still remains about the second well that supplied water to the mosque. Was that the well of Dīna Nāth when he belonged to the Sikh era? So the location of the second well mention by Wazīr Khān himself in the deed of bequest is quite vague. He had described two wells functioned with Persian wheels but did not define their place of existence. The attribution of the well of Dīna Nāth in this case is ruled out because it is inscribed on the marble stone fixed on its southern wall, "This well was built by Rāja Dīna Nāth, Rāja of Kalānour, at his own expense, at the suggestion of Major George Macgregor, Deputy Commissioner of Lahore, in 1908". It is an obvious fact that Dīna Nāth did not belong to the period of Wazīr Khān. So where did the second well exist then, which Wazīr Khān had mentioned? Whatever the truth is, the second well, for sure, must be in the vicinity of the mosque.

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established to emulate the translucent Chinese porcelain. But its earliest recorded history is from Egypt, where in 4700 B.C. stone paste called "fritt" was used. It was prepared through ground quartz mixed with a small amount of white clay and ground glaze. It gave translucent effect when applied thinly. It was further developed into bas-relief formations and elaborately used in Mesopotamia. The most noted example in this context is the palace of Sargon at Khorasabād (722-705 BC) in Assyria and the Ishtar Gate of Babylon[9]. Iran acquired this technique from Mesopotamia another source attributes it, to China. But which ever influence it followed it remained the most renowned and unsurpassed centre from the 12th to 16th centuries.

Iran also introduced the over-glazing technique. According to which already glazed and fired earthenware was repainted and fired again. It was then developed into two types: the lustre ware and enamelled ware. The centre of Iranian lustre ware was *Kāshān* in central Iran, so *kāshīkāri* is a derivative of the word *Kāshān.* Iranian lustre painted pottery was monochromatic[10]. A large number of lustre wares have been unearthed from Ray: a place near Tehran, painted in yellow and brown[11]. The second type of glazed pottery was for luxury ceramics, enamelled in several colours, and called *minā'i*[12] that stands in Persian for enamel. This technique, though developed in Iran was brought to India by the Mughals. The faience tiles whether lustre or *minā'i* are marked for the brilliance of their colours: the brilliant blue, startling yellow with lustrous white and accents of various other colours discernible in the mosque Wazīr Khān, are the hallmark of this technique. The patterns here are composed of tiny fragments of cut tiles, forming exquisitely attractive decorations[13], and crisp till today.

Glazed or faience tiles were very commonly used in Punjab. It was simply earthenware tiles covered with enamel, decorated into patterns but *kāshīkāri* is the sophisticated use of faience mosaic. Thus faience or glazed tiles take two forms: tiles that are almost six inches square, each carries segment of a pattern, when joined creates an all over design. Whereas, in the other type, the pieces of coloured tiles work like tesseraes of mosaic, is the actual *kāshīkāri,* also labelled as mosaic tiles. The former was very common in Punjab and among the Mughal edifices some fragments of this type were present in the tomb of 'Āṣif Khān in Shāhdara, Lahore, whereas, the finest example of *kāshīkāri* is on the Wazīr Khān Mosque. Thus mosaic tiles were only practised in Persia and northern-India. In the other places of the sub-continent we do find faience mosaics.

In *kāshīkāri* tiles do not bear any of the relief mouldings. These are flat pieces on which colours and glazes are applied in the usual manner. But the material used in this type of tiles is not clay. It is like the porcelain of Chinese ware, composed of finely ground sand stone that is siliceous sand mixed with lime and other ingredients, held together with either gum or rice water, formed into coarse porcelain. It is then shaped into slabs of suitable thickness, which was then work out into required designs, whether foliated or geometric. These were then cut like jigsaw pieces and provided with colours and glazes. It was then baked separately. Background of the design too, follows the same procedure. The individual pieces were then embedded in the lime mortar[14], like the direct and indirect methods of mosaic decoration. The only difference is of the substance of tesserae, which were of stones in the mosaics and of baked tiled in *Kāshīkāri.*

But the earliest building of the Muslim world, adorned with glazed tiles is Villa Viciosa Mosque of Cordova in Spain dated back to 965 A.D. by Prisse and 1200 A.D by Fergusson, who believed that the mosque of Tabrez, built at the end of the thirteenth century bears the earliest examples of glazed tiles in Persia. Furthermore, the tomb of Muḥammad Khuda Bandah, built in Sultānīyah comes next in the list of glazed tile ornamentation[4].

The most frequent use of *kāshīkāri* on brick masonry in Lahore is based on two factors: geological and geographical. Being a region containing no stone depository, caused the erection of brick structures and being in closer proximity to the Persian Empire, responsible for the seeping in of its cultural influence. Persia had always been a source of inspiration for the Mughals. So this type of impact on the buildings was stronger than anything else. In the second half of the 17th century during the rule of Shāh 'Abbās, Safawid architecture was at the summit of its development[5]. Persian artists were frequent visitors of the Mughal court. So the brick buildings of that time Lahore, along with other parts of the Mughal Empire, do retain this influence and one of the best specimens of it, is the Wazīr Khān Mosque. The decorative scheme of this mosque with its unusual plan is worth appreciating.

Sundry techniques were employed to decorate the Wazīr Khān Mosque as par requirements of the structure. Besides *tāzakāri* and brick paved patterns of floors there are frescoes, glazed tiles in *kāshīkāri* and numerous inscriptions that are coloured but rendered in relief form, called stucco mouldings. Fresco being sensitive to moisture, light and extreme weathers was confined to the interiors only and glazed tiles ornamenting exteriors. While some of the calligraphic panels that are rendered in stucco, perhaps to quench the thirst of the artists for sculpting.

Fresco painting had its ancient precedence in the Sub-continent in Ajanta caves. This technique is simple but lasting, although water based. The painting, according to it is executed on a few centimetres thick mortar, placed evenly on the surface of the wall with an upper most layer of lime. The pigment is applied while the lime is wet, that causes a chemical reaction and makes colours fast. All the painted motifs of the sanctuary of the mosque are in fresco. Although this technique is not fully employed and it is not the true fresco rather a variant of it. The outer elegance of this structure rests on the use of glazed tiles, retaining capacity to withstand the climatic severities. More than four centuries have been elapsed still it keeps the original freshness. Ceramic tiles are a developed version of the earthenware, the naïve expression of the primitive man. Pottery, as is generally envisaged, is not confined to the clay utensils, rather it enwraps all the product of baked clay[6] Glazed tiles are also a derivative of the earthenware that helped to add colour to the sterile structures.

The words *Tegula* in Latin and *tuile* in French stand for tile and in Greece *keramic* denotes clay used on the potter's wheel. Thus the word "ceramic tile" is the cross-pollination of the French and the Greek[7]. It is an art form that developed in Egypt, Mesopotamia, Greece, China and Persia. But its presence in the sub-continent is attributed to the Muslim dynasties, specially to the Mughals[8]. The Mughal glazed tiles are based on the native Indian and Persian traditions. In Iran at the earliest tin glaze was used for this purpose, which was opaque and thick. Then in the year 1171 a transformation took place when new centres were

Tomb of Sayyid Muḥammad Isḥāq *Kāzīrūn*

Tomb of the saint is considered as the cause of erection of the mosque at this place. It is now in the south-western side of the mosque courtyard, *fig. 515*. Apparently it consists of a grave like structure, marked by grilled parapets in the south west of the courtyard and a colonnaded corridor with a small staircase leading downwards to the basement where the actual grave lies. The grave is quite large indicating the tall stature of the saint. So the upper grave is just a cenotaph, symbolising the actual inside because it is placed exactly above the actual one.

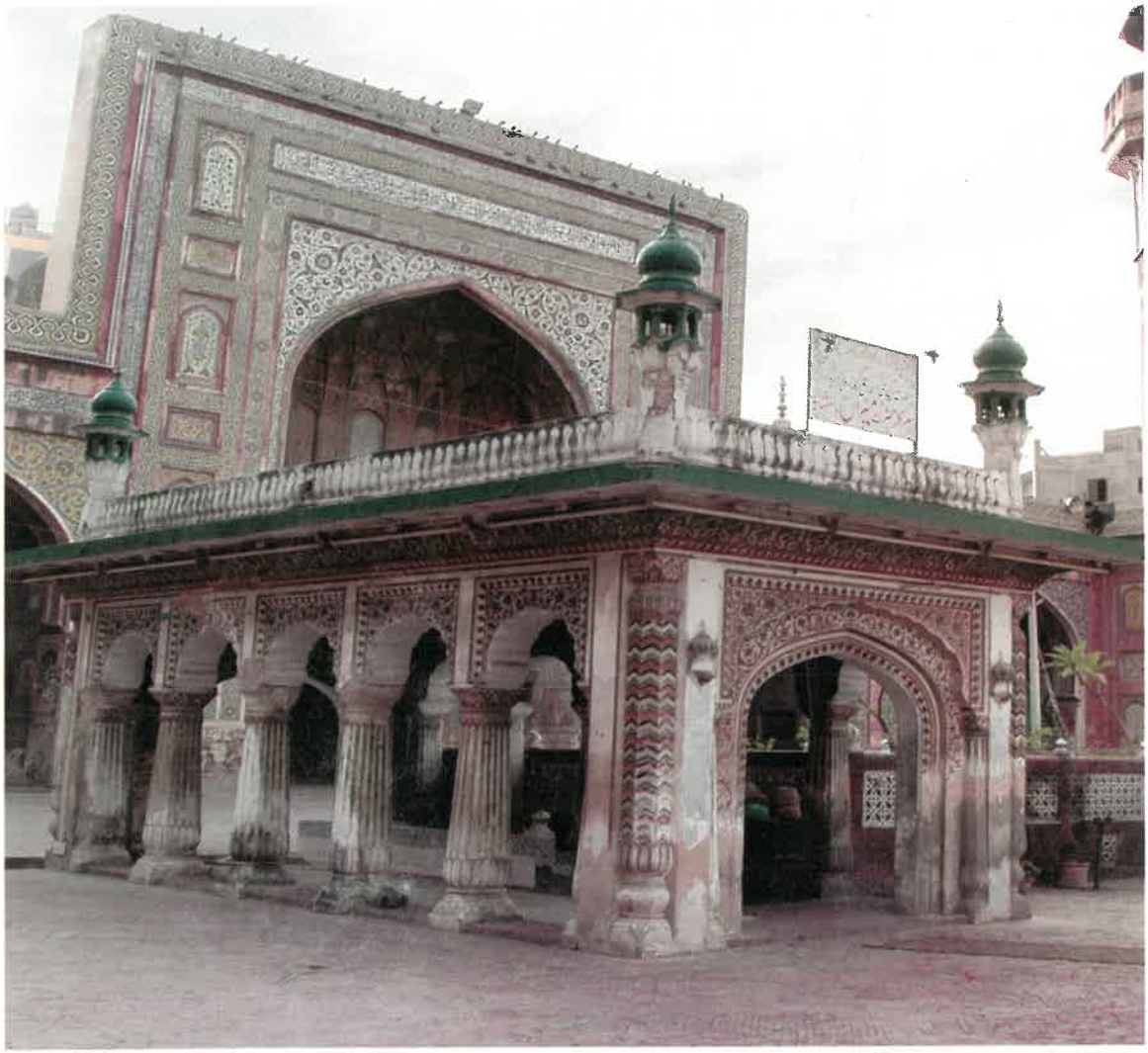


Fig. 515: Tomb of Sayyid Muḥammad Isḥāq of Kāzīrūn.

One thing is to be borne in mind that in the process of baking objects shrink or a little change occurs in their dimensions. So, in *Kāshīkāri*, the pieces of mortar designed according to the required shapes, sizes or colours, must undergo some changes in the process of baking. But the masters of this technique must be skilled enough that by anticipating this drawback, they would have taken measures to over come the problem

Fred. H. Andrews, in his report on the Wazīr Khān Mosque, quotes his experiments on this technique, which he and his friend Rā'i Bahādur Ganga Rām conducted separately. Ganga Rām exactly followed the procedure of the Persian artists by cutting various shapes into pieces before firing and Andrews used pieces of coloured pottery, which are already baked and glazed. Results of the latter were finer with neat and crisp edges, whereas, pieces were little bulged out and rounded in the former, where shapes were cut, coloured and glazed prior to baking[15]. But whichever procedure was adopted by the Mughal artists, edges of their tesserae were extremely fine. It is said that there was a sort of industry where a large number of artisans were expert in the craft of faience mosaic but gradually this art became extinct when the work no more remained in demand. In the twilight of this craft, there lived in Lahore an artist named Muḥammad Bakhsh, who was a master of *Kāshīkāri.* In 1876 he was 97 years old. All the secrets of the craft became extinct with his demise because he refrained from imparting his skill to any of his students[16].

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Fig. 517: One of the columns of Bārādari.



Fig. 518: Double base of the column.



Fig. 519: Neck of the column.



Fig.516: Bārādari Structure of the Tomb.

The tomb comprises colonnaded structure that has twelve columns surrounding it from north and south. Meaning that six columns supporting five arches on the longitudes of the rectangle that are at its northern and southern sides and two arched entrances on its east and west, thus making it a *bārādari,* a structure that has twelve doors, *fig. 516.* Shape of the columns is quite different, the shafts appear round from front and back but these are compressed when viewed from sides, *fig. 517.* Each consists of a double base: lower one is square and the upper bevelled, *fig.518.* Shaft has flutes and a necking, decorated with stylised lotus flower. Lower most part of the shaft also bears marks of petals of lotus flower, from which emerge flutes of the shaft. These flutes are carved, and painted in green colour. At the top end of each shaft there are drooping petals that are carved as well as painted in brown, yellow, green and white colours. Neck of each column is divided into three parts: the lower most is thinnest, angular and recessed, marked with six sides; the middle one is projected in the shape of a round band like structure and next comes a wedge-shaped slab, supporting a larger one, with painted leaves in similar brown and yellow and outlined in black, *fig.519.* There are attached columns on its east and west, four on either side. One



Fig. 522: Chevron design on the shafts of attached columns..

a beautiful alcove *fig. 525*. It is not as simple as those represented in the porches of the northern and southern corridors of the vestibule. Upper part of the alcove is a miniature imitation of dome with ribs and a carved out finial. While middle part is a recess to keep oil lamp or *dīya* and the lower most part is a smaller transverse dome. Leaf motif is the major element that bedecks alcoves of the tomb, there are painted leaves of various shapes as well as carved out below the finials.



Fig. 523: Three storied base of the attached column.

The double arches on the eastern and western sides are beautifully decorated with vegetal motifs. The



Fig. 524: Pointed and cusped arches on the eastern and western sides of the Tomb.



Fig. 520: Attached column on the corners of eastern and western arches.



Fig. 521: Column supporting eastern and western inner arches.

joined with each outer corner leading up to the projected eave of the roof, *fig. 520*, while the other, which is almost half of its length is attached to the outer arch, *fig. 521*. Because the eastern and western sides have double arched openings, the inner one is pointed while the outer is cusped. The four outer columns, one placed in each corner, have their shafts painted in chevron pattern, instead of the fluted ones of rest of the columns. It is in black, white, green, red and yellow colours, *fig. 522*. Each strip is different in colour from its next. Lower parts of the shafts have carved half blossomed lotus flowers, placed on their double bases, *fig. 523*. Shafts of these columns are attenuated unlike the other ones that are broader from their lower portions and have tapering heights. Necking of these columns is similar to the rest of the columns, placed in the north and south of the corridor. The shafts are topped by drooping leaves with recessed necking and surmounted by foliated capitals, painted with leaves, similar to the columns on north and south of the corridor. The smaller columns are also divided on similar lines except a few variations. Instead of the double, they contain single base and shafts too, are broader from bottom and narrower from the top while shafts of the outer columns with chevron pattern keep equal diameter through out. There are double arches in eastern and western sides of the corridor, enframed by the above mentioned two types of columns, *fig.524*.

There are pilasters in between these columns, that are plain and white in colour but upper part of each carries



Fig.528: Interior of bārādari of the Tomb.



Fig. 527: Band surmounting bārādari from all around.

of sun are also rendered here with wood making undulating wavy lines around the disc of mirror. It is enclosed within an octagon of a wooden band which is slightly broader and further encircled by an octagonal star, delineated again by wooden frame. It forms a regular star, impressively carved out into a pattern resembling small leaves or tiny flames surrounding



Fig.529: Ceiling of bārādari of the Tomb.



Fig.525: Alcove in pilasters.

pointed arch below the cusped, retains a thin band of small buds in red and green; while its spandrels have arabesques in red and green. It is surmounted by a cusped arch, the spandrels of which are also decked with arabesques, keeping similar colour scheme but different in design from the arch below. A band enframing the upper rectangle of this arch is an exact replica of the one placed at the rim of the arch below, *fig. 526*. A decorative band amid arches and ceiling move about the colonnaded corridor from in and outside composed of merlon shapes. Each of this shape retains a small vase surrounded from all sides by flowers, *fig. 527*.

Inside of the *bārādari* is replete with painted motifs but the keenly appreciative part of it is the ceiling. It is composed of octagons, pentagons, hexagons, diamond shapes, small squares and star shapes, all placed within octagons. All these shapes are also part of the decorative motifs of domed ceilings of the sanctuary but their rendition seems totally different because the ceiling here is flat not domed. A salient feature of these adornments lies in the fact that each shape whether small or large is provided with a thin wooden frame. It is a mark of distinction of this area which is not used in any other part of the mosque, *fig.528*.

The adornments of the ceiling are based on a large star covering the rectangle from its four sides. It is an out-stretched star taking the shape of *miḥrābi* because a regular star cannot fit in a rectangle. It is stretched to the farther ends of the ceiling, so that the whole decoration is contained within it, *fig. 529*. There are three more stars within the *miḥrābi*, alternated by octagons. The central which is more imposing has a prominent *sūriya* motif, centred on an eight petalled flower, carved in wood, placed around a mirror and concentric to an eight petalld wooden flower inside the mirror, *fig. 530*. It is another speciality of the ceiling that wherever *sūriya* motif is depicted, its central disc is of circular mirror. The rays



Fig. 526: Band framing the eastern and western arches.



Fig.532: Star border in wood framing the ceiling.

inside each star, carrying another smaller star within and another *sūriya* motif inside, *fig.531.*

The three stars within *miḥrābi* are alternated by octagons proportional to the small stars, keeping smaller stars inside and *sūriya* motif in the inner most. It seems as if the inside of the smaller stars are brought out. The octagons and star shapes are divided into geometric sub-sections. Although these divisions lack complexities of stalactites of the prayer chamber, these are simplified representations of stalactite formations but basically their sub-divisions are based on the similar approach that is of a geometrician. The whole ceiling, the central star, side ones, octagons surrounded by the large *miḥrābi* are contained within a frame surrounding the rectangle of the ceiling. It is also marked by eight pointed small stars, contained within irregular octagons. It is fixed with two thin bands decked with leave and flower motifs, delineated again by wood, *fig. 532.*

Arabesques adorn spandrels of all the inner and outer arches of *bārādari* but the eastern and western arches retain additional vertical and horizontal panels on their vertical and



Fig. 530: Sūriya motif, in the centre of the ceiling.

wood. *sūriya* motif also adorns the far-northern ceiling of the prayer chamber but here in the tomb ceiling it bears distinct features besides being *sūriya.* The central disc here is of mirror but it has lost luminosity with the passage of time but still bears faint reflections in it. Another star which is also large enough but smaller from the central one is placed in the eastern end of the ceiling and yet another on the western end. Thus there are three larger stars within the outstretched *miḥrābi.* They also bear wooden frames but these are thin to retain the significance of the central. Moreover, both are little bit different from the central. There is an octagon



Fig.531: Star formation in the eastern and western sides of the ceiling.

horizontal sides. The horizontal parts carry dishes with fruits, *fig. 533*, while vertical sides contain vases with flowers, *figs. 534-535* but all surrounded by arabesques. A band which is not in symmetry with rest of the ornamentations surmounts the walls of rectangular *bārādari* from inside. It consists of convolutes in blue on white ground, moving about the *bārādari* but only from inside, *fig. 536*. It is topped by another band that also surmounts the *bārādari* from all around.

There are small minaret on the top of each corner of the *bārādari* but different from those flanking the courtyard of the mosque. Each is a miniature replica, containing all the accessories of a minaret. It consists of a shaft, pavilion, eave, cupola and its finial. But it does not emerge from the ground but similar to the minarets of the Mongol era, it also emanates from the top of the ceiling of the tomb structure. The shaft, which has a smaller height is placed on a base and ends up on a half blossomed lotus flower, on which is placed the pavilion of the minaret. The pavilion consists of eight



Fig.534: Vase on vertical panel around eastern and western arches.



Fig.536: Three bands one on the ceiling and the other two above arches.



Fig. 533: Fruit dish and Arabesques on the eastern arch from inside.



Fig.535: Vase on xquare panel around eastern and western arches.



Fig. 538: Staircase leading to the subterranean grave chamber.



Fig. 539: Decorative band of tiles adorning the staircase.



Fig.540: Symbolic miniature dome, like knob at the side wall of the staircase.

recite Holy Qur'ān there. The stairs leading to the grave are in grey marble and walls of the staircase are of white glazed tiles, bordered with a band of decorative motifs in blue colour, *fig. 539*, whereas, the floor of the subterranean chamber is of black and white tiles forming a chequer pattern. Corner of the left parapet of staircase leading down to the grave is further adorned with a symbolic dome which is small enough, to retain its decorative value, *fig. 540*. But the embellishments in white tiles and marble are not original. These are part of recent renovation. This work is not akin to the rest of the adornments of the mosque or of the tomb structure itself. It gives the impact, more of a local touch of the modern era. The floor of *bārādari,* like the other parts of the mosque is in red bricks.

The saint was very popular during his life in Lahore and is still revered by the populace of this region. On the 13th and 14th of *Rajab*[i] every year, an *'urs*[ii] of the saint is celebrated enthusiastically, where people gather and recite the Holy Qur'ān, *Miḥfil-i Samā'* is a special feature of that occasion . Alms are also distributed among the poor on this occasion.

i 7th month of the Islamic calendar.

ii Death anniversary of saints, zealously celebrated by his disciples.



Fig. 537: Turret of the tomb.

arched openings and topped by an octagonal eave. At the top of it is the cupola which is in the shape of miniature dome, surmounted by a finial placed on an inverse flower, exactly like the larger domes of the mosque, *fig. 537.*

The colonnaded *bārādari* is thus surrounded from all around by arches, spandrels of which are bedecked with floral ornaments. But the dexterity with which other parts of the mosque are delicately and intricately worked out is lacking here. The tomb is adorned with fresco painting. We are not sure whether the decorations are original or painted later because of the quality of workmanship which is less refined as compared to the sanctuary of the mosque. But it bears similarity with some other sections. The floral ornamentations and fruits arranged in horizontal dishes can be viewed in the upper balconies of the vestibule of the mosque. But decorations on the ceiling, though quite different from the rest, seem to have older ornamentation, as compared to the adornments of the arches and columns. Because it is comparatively refined and its colours, too, narrates their age old story.

The actual grave which is underground is approached through a flight of steps present in the colonnaded *bārādari*. It consists of ten steps, leading down to the subterranean chamber, underneath the cenotaph in the courtyard above, *fig. 538*. The chamber is small enough that accommodates the grave only which is larger than usual, leaving a small space around. The grave is always covered with a green cloth and surrounded by a small wooden grille which is also green. People visit this place to offer *fātiḥa* and men's folk sit and

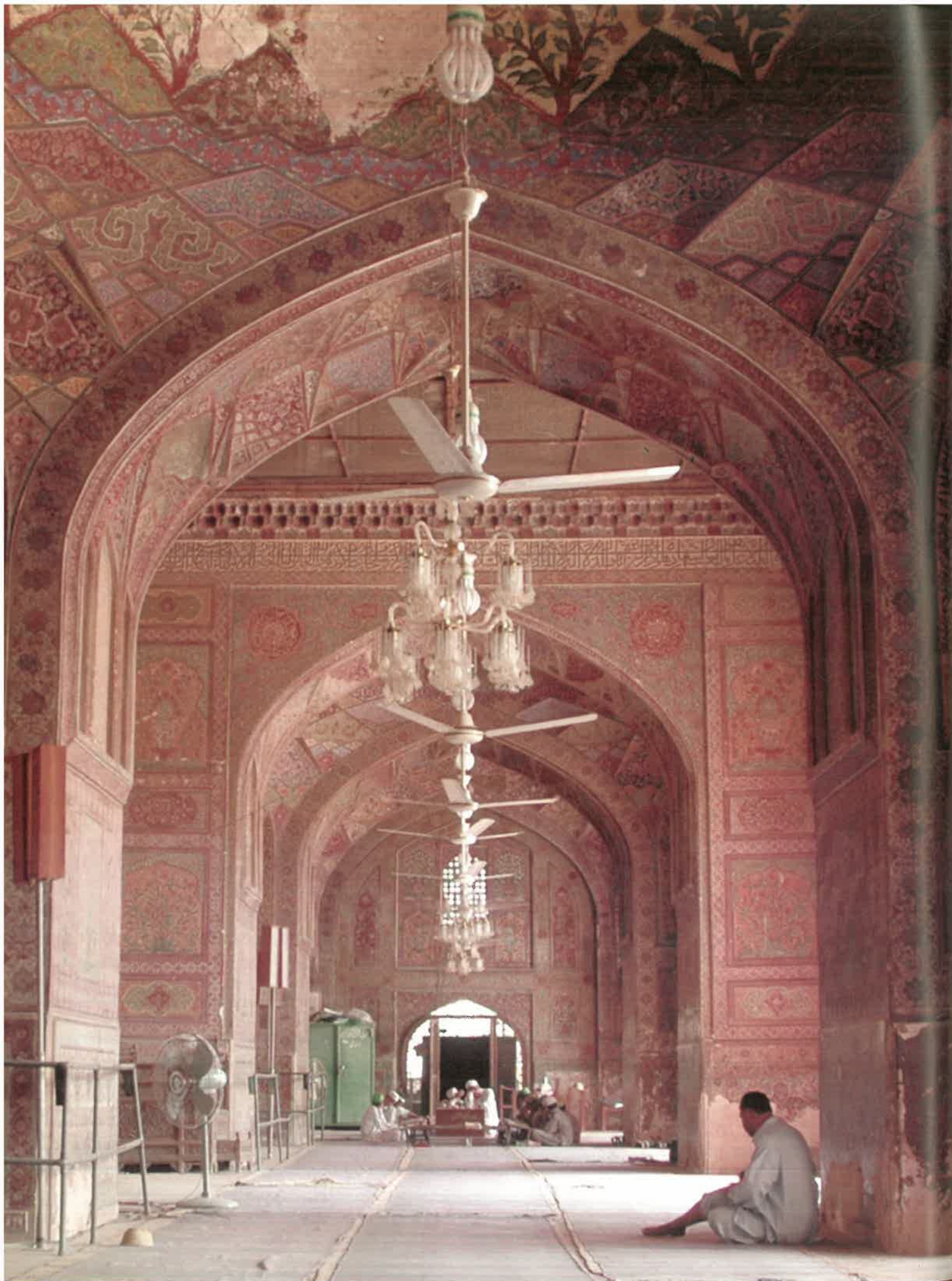
Epilogue

Wazīr Khān Mosque erected in an era which is labelled as the climax of Mughal architecture is a specimen of the genius and erudition of the Muslim artists. It is an epitome of Muslim architectonic decorations. Generally speaking, the architectural decorations of the Muslim world can be classified into three categories: geometric ornamentations, vegetal motifs and calligraphic designs. But the crux of the matter lies in the fact that all can be integrated under a single umbrella that is of geometry, a solid cause to assert that Muslim artists were proficient geometricians. The pre-eminence of these designs is caused by the perfect geometric renditions, whether the subject dealt in, is organic or inorganic.

Stalactite formations are sheer Muslim innovation emerging from the need of covering the square structures with domical roofs. The zone of transition was concealed with decorative forms that later produced stalactite formations, which provided marvelous ornamentations resulted from innovative imagination and geometric knowledge of par-excellence of its creators. The designs derived from nature that is floral ornamentations are not mere transformations of nature but re-inventions of these forms through geometry,

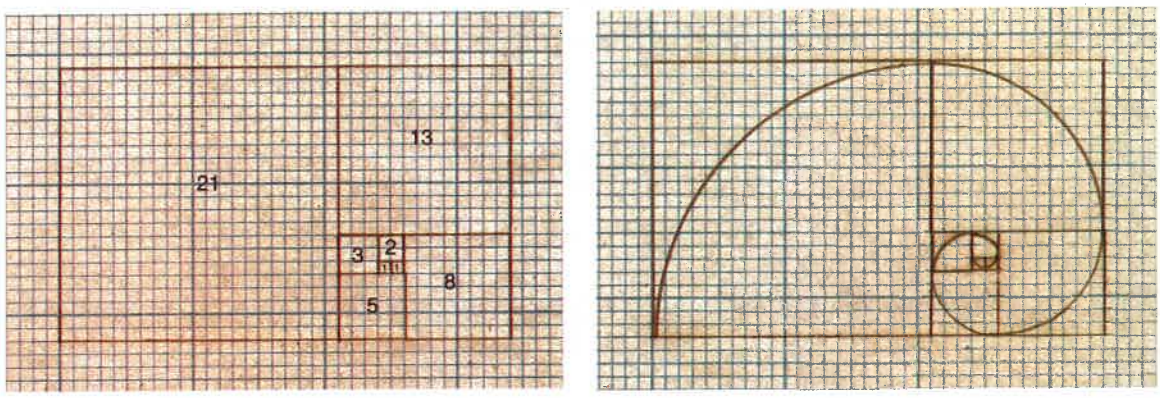


Fig.541: Identicaal arrangement of stalactites on both sides of the central line in the conch of central arch of the sanctuary.



used in the volutes of Ionic order. It is known as Golden Spiral. Golden Spiral of Golden Ratio is the intrinsic balance of nature, which is comprehended and implemented by the Muslim artists in their decorative schemes. It is based on the Fibonacci sequence of the ratio, 1:1:2:3:5:8:13:21.....etc. Just like the Golden Rectangle or Golden Triangle, Golden Spiral too follows similar rules: proportion of each winding course of a spiral is in Golden Ratio to its adjacent one. It can be defined well, through the following graphs, *figs.542-543*. It is the easiest way to understand formation of a Golden Spiral.

Distribution of arabesques follows the lines of a Golden Spiral, though it is not apprehended at a glance. Because the organisation of these designs is so marvelous that the underlying geometric structure is altogether concealed, through the lines of stems and



Figs.542-543: Formation of Golden Spiral through graphs.

tendrils. The cryptic use of Golden Spiral in arabesque formations, hide its geometric configuration: a cause that gives delicacy to natural forms, besides retaining closer affinity with mathematical computations. Although, calculated formations of mathematical structures eliminate spontaneity and daintiness which is the part and parcel of arabesques. But its inconspicuous use has eradicated this threat. Formations of arabesques are, therefore, based on the undercurrents on which the forms of nature grow. Thus Golden Ratio that is labelled as the building block of nature has been utilised fully in the shaping as well as distribution of arabesques on the required regions, besides other ornamental forms.

It is generally assumed that the Muslims artists have consciously avoided similitude or imitation of nature, due to the religious interdictions. It is taken in affirmation if the outer appearance of things is concerned. But if verisimilitude is related to the true nature of things then the statement can be negated on the basis that Muslim artists have always captured the true nature of things. In the rendition of arabesques they have explored the underlying principles of growth in nature, which follows the scheme of a Golden Spiral. The natural mode of plants is observed, analysed and then utilised in their artistic creations. A solid cause to assert that in the artistic renditions, intrinsic nature of things is explored by the Muslim artists, instead of relying just on the extrinsic that is subject to, only an aspect of reality.

Growth in all objects of nature follows the path of Golden Spiral. For instance, growing of leaves in a plant, follow this course because it provides them with maximum of sun light. Pine cones too expand on the same principle, shell of a nautilus follows the

albeit the debt of geometry is inconspicuous at a glance. Calligraphy which is decorative script, too, retains its seminal roots in geometry. Thus geometry is the part and parcel of the Muslim ornamentations. No design in this respect can be labelled as devoid of its indebtedness to mathematical formulation.

Distribution of these designs in any given space as well as their emergence is liable to geometric shapes, either square, rectangle, circle, triangle or spiral, not a single design crosses the peripheral regions of geometry. Wazīr Khān Mosque is ornamented with a variety of motifs but all emanate either from active or passive involvement of geometry. There is quadrifoil, *miḥrābi,* chevron, *sūriya* motif, pendantive, palmettes of varying dimensions, merlons, stars with four, five, six seven or eight-points, stars within stars or stars represented with rectilinear shapes, small or large flowers, stalactites filled in with vegetal or floral motifs and above all arabesques. Among the above list, not a single motif has emerged by evading geometric or mathematical rules.

The conches of the mosque, for instance, satiated with stalactites are an evidence of artist's expertise in this field. There are many different shapes, from diamonds to wedges, triangles and some of the organized irregular shapes, all bearing a variety of dimensions but arranged in such an orderly manner that no side of the conch out-weighs the other. Another interesting fact can be viewed, if we draw a line in the centre of a conch, we will be amazed to find that exactly identical formations of shapes exist on both sides of the axis. Even sizes of various shapes are alike on both ends, *fig.541.*

It appears to be a joint venture of a skilled mathematician, an adept geometrician and an accomplished artist. Or the artist employed was capable enough to have a command on all the domains of knowledge of beauty and aesthetics.

Taking into account the central arch of the façade of sanctuary, one is fascinated, not only by the proficiency of the three expertises, rather an adept calligrapher, also shares the splendour of adornments. Lower part of the conch have vertical panels containing Qur'ānic *āyāt*, alternated by tree motifs, ascending into stalactites above, that are exactly similar in shape and measure on the left and right from the centre of the conch. Minutest difference is avoided which was impossible without mathematical and geometric proficiency. Small stars within stalactites, though all are not regular but perfectly identical if we have to compare left and right sides of this section. These stars bear the names of Allah, Muḥammad (pbuh) and four caliphs, with unusual rendition of the name of the 3rd caliph Ḥaḍrat 'Uthmān, are identically similar on both sides. The representation of the name of the third caliph is again subjected to the geometric rules. *'Ain* the first Arabic alphabet of his name formulates a seven petalled flower by the rotation of the name, seven times, about its centre. It is also on four stars two on the either side of the conch. Here mathematical order and skill of geometry is imbued with artistic expression. Ingenuity of creativity in the Muslim artists is far-surpassed from others who had based their perfection on sterile imitations of nature. Muslim artists on the other hand used geometry to reshape nature into inventive forms. Even foliated designs that are naturalistic as well as stylised are indebted to geometry.

Broadly viewing arabesques, it is observed that in integrating the scheme of interlacing foliated designs, major role is played by the geometric shape of a spiral. This spiral is not based on the simple regular placing of helicoidal lines but it is the Greek Spiral

reality or super-realism.

The musical and rhythmic representation of arabesques manifests poetic beauty. Though derived from the rich floral and vegetal forms of nature that are converted into two dimensional, stylised representations but demonstrate vitality of highest order. There is a feeling of movement in the fragility of the petals, leaves, stems and tendrils. The transformation of these forms seems to have resulted from the observation of nature, so much so that one is stirred even by a feeling of fragrance in these stylised forms[4]. The convoluted leaves, twisted stems and coiled tendrils give movement of life and a sense of depth to these ornamental forms. All based on the underling structures of Geometric principles, minute variation of which brings considerable range of possibilities, which can be brought out only after comprehending the crux of the matter. It is an evidence to prove that the artists had a rich stock of creative imagination. The cosmos of the Islamic ornamental designs, though apparently not very simple, appears modest if comprehended thoroughly. This microcosm has numerous dimensions and there lies a whole world of these shapes, different from one another, waiting to be explored. Minute variations in the underlying structures can bring new potentialities of patterns, although their complexities are based on simple structural lines that follow mathematical and geometric principles.

The repertoire of these designs is not easy to complete. The most common among them are evolved from vine leaves, especially from grape vines, palm leaves, making palmettes, rosettes derived from roses, moreover, there are pine-cones, sometimes represented with bunches of grapes or the larger form of it is the cypress trees, shells are also part of the list, excluding flowers. There can be a separate list of flowers, some retaining identity while others stylised to the extent of design. The most common among those identified, include: Roses, Carnations, Peonies and Tulips. All composed on delicate lines that are sometimes symmetrical and sometimes asymmetrical or based on the balance of nature. It is also a scientific reality that the circles of petals of many layered flowers retain Golden Proportions. Thus the symmetry within asymmetry in nature is delineated by the Muslim artists comprehending the crux of each natural phenomenon.

It is a strong evidence to prove that the Muslim artists based their artistic creations on nature. If their concern was not with the capturing of resemblance they captured the true nature of things and portrayed reality beyond external appearances. But in the search for the intrinsic, link with the general appearance of things was not broken. There are, for instance, leaves, flowers, stems and tendrils in arabesque formations, if the species of a flower is not defined, it can still be labelled a flower and so is the case of leaves and stems. In the process of transformation to represent the true nature of things, identity of an object was not lost. It is unlike the modern western movements of art, where affinity with an object is broken to such an extent that its link with reality has become subservient to words. Art in this respect has become an isolated phenomenon, which is not to share the inner of an artist with the general masses but requires individual involvements on the parts, both, of the artists and observers. It is not the sharing of feelings or ideas. Whereas Muslim artists had transformed just, the appearance of objects to convey the crux of the matter, in which neither beauty nor link with truth is lost. Thus the transformation of things was not baseless even in the architectural adornments.

same scheme. Nature is replete with the sort of examples. It is stated that the Egyptians had discovered this ratio very earlier; it was followed by the Greeks, who evolved a concrete law on which spirals of volutes of ionic columns were based. Drawing of a Golden Spiral, which was invented by Greeks, results from a complicated geometric computation. It is defined by those who had fully analysed Greek architecture. Whelk Shell Goldman computed the geometry of golden spiral through the diagram, *Plate.13*.

It is evolved from a circle, which is divided into nine equal parts, the central part of which is taken as eye of the volute. It is then divided into four equal parts, the central point of which is labeled C, while the upper most edge is named A, and the lower most B. The two central parts are further divided into three equal parts each: drawing three squares from these points[1]. The outer most square is drawn by joining 1, 2, 3, and 4. Then from point C, which is the centre of the eye of volute, two diagonal lines are drawn C2, and C3, which would help to form the two inner squares. Thus, the inner square is defined through the joining of the points 5, 6, 7, and 8, with the help of straight lines and the inner most square is thus carried out by the joining of 9, 10, 11 and 12, at right angles. It then begins with the forming of spiral by taking radius from point 1, to the edge of the main circle at point D; an arc is drawn till E. The quadrant is further continued through radius 2E, till F, and further it is carried on till G from the radius 3F. Then from radius 4G, this arc is kept on till H, and from point 5, yet another radius 5H, continues this arc till point V The procedure of drawing quadrants is carried on by using the devised number points in sequence till the last number 12, which merges with eye at point R. The spiral, thus formed is based on changing its radius at every 90° of rotation that provides it with smooth curves[2]. It is named Golden Spiral or equilateral spiral, the other version of which is defined by the graphs in *figs.542-543*. Distribution of arabesques is based on this type of spiral[3], resulted from pure geometric computation.

Therefore, the ornamental designs of Islam assert the evidence that in the Muslim world knowledge of different subjects was not segregated to various qualifications. In other words the domain of art of the Muslims was not limited to a single phenomenon; rather the word "art" that stands for skill was taken for the proficient knowledge of any kind. So it kept within its boundaries knowledge of all sorts. Actually this word has been confined to the expression of decoration and beauty only, albeit the broader frame of perspective it retains within itself. The Muslim artists apprehended and utilised the core of it and enlarged its peripheries. Thus the domain of art was integrated with all sciences too. It is an undoubted and unchallenged fact that knowledge emanates from a single source, so it was realized that its acquisition must also not be confined within artificial limits. There are many sections in the Wazīr Khān Mosque, where an observer can fully appreciate the mastery of mathematics and geometry in the artistic creations. Yet there are other areas that bespeak the skill of a theologian. The variety of inscriptions selected for different parts of the mosque and their rendition are beyond appreciation. But the most treasured are those creations which though resulted from mathematical or geometric computation; do not keep any obvious mark of the rigid rules of both the subjects, although, formation of the Golden Spiral undergoes the strictly observed mathematical and geometric rules. It adorns the spandrels of arches of the mosque with musical rhythm. It happened only when the artist combined inner with the outer and transformed both into a new reality that can be credited without doubt as super-

concern is just Bohr's model. So an overview of the path that led to the above mentioned model would be enough.

It was in the 18th and 19th centuries that this subject became a serious concern of the scientists which led to a precise definition of this particle. It was defined then as "the smallest particle of matter that retains the chemical properties of an element". The word chemical is of most significance here because it led to the discoveries with which we are familiar in the modern era[6]. A major advancement was made in 1803 by Dalton who worked on the relative weights of ultimate particles of bodies: the atomic weights, molecular weights and combining or equivalent weights. Then in 1815 Prout postulated that all elements are made up of the atoms of hydrogen which was soon abandoned. But it led to a development in another direction and in 1860 it was defined that elements are arranged according to their atomic weights that led to the discovery of physical and chemical properties of atom[7]. Then from relative weights, sizes of atoms and their viscosity and density was explored. In 1865 Loschmidt deduced from the estimates of these sizes the Avogadro constant that is the number of molecules in the grand molecular weight. The determination of sizes and masses gave validity to the atomic theory of masses[8].

In the late 19th century the subject of vigorous study were the atomic spectra, the radiation emitted by atoms in the form of flames or gases, excited by electrical discharge. The radiation can be studied through spectroscope that exposes it through a set of discreet lines of varying wave lengths or colours. A sudden advancement in this field was made by a Swiss teacher Johann Balmer in 1885, who, discovered that "the lines in the visible and ultraviolet spectrum of hydrogen could be represented by the empirical formula"[9]. Many attempts were then made to construct an atomic model using Balmer's formula but all in vain. Then electron, a component of atom that retains negative charge was discovered by Sir William Crooks in 1879 by experimenting on low pressure gasses. But the name electron as the smallest electric charge in electrolysis was suggested by Johnstone Stoney in 1894[10]. Prior to that Proton, another component of atom was discovered in 1886 by Goldstein, in the process of passing electro-current in low pressure gasses. He realized in this experiment that some positive rays were also emitted which caused him to define another component of atom bearing positive charge which was called proton. J. J. Thomsom then appeared on the scene and successfully explained chemical reactions but the model that he prepared could not satisfy the frequencies of observed spectra[11]. He suggested the properties of corresponding particles of electron and proposed that "atoms are uniform spheres of positively charged matter in which electrons are embedded". His model is called Plum Pudding Model of atom because of its raisin studded delicacy. His hypothesis apparently looked reasonable but when tested after thirteen years it was also abandoned. Thomson's model was replaced by Rutherford and his students, J. W. Geiger and E. Marsden. The concept that positively charged matter is evenly distributed in atom was shattered when a gold foil was struck by the alpha particle. Most of the alpha particles passed through the gold foil, except a few which deflected. As a result Rutherford pictured an atom that is composed of a tiny nucleus "in which its positive charge and nearly all its mass is concentrated at the centre, with its electrons at some distance away". It delineates atom as having enough empty space to pass on alpha particles but its nucleus is thought to have enough electric field which caused deflection of particles that struck its range[12]. But he was unable to define the arrangement

Furthermore, Wazīr Khān Mosque retains some wonderful facts in its ornamentations about Muslim erudition in science apart from arts. In its decorative scheme, there are concrete proofs that Muslim scientists were far ahead in the field of science from their Western counterparts. It discloses that the most modern discoveries of the 20th century about atom might have begun in the period of cultural Renaissance of Islam, which happened under the Abbasid rule. But unfortunately before blowing its trumpet, splendour of the Muslim empire was usurped by the coveted enemies. History bears witness that Muslim scientists did not only work as mediators to transmit Greek knowledge to the West rather they also enriched it with new dimensions through experimentations. The astounding example, as discussed before is of Bohr's Atomic model, precise delineation of which is part of the decorative scheme of the mosque.

Niel Bohr, a Danish scientist gave this model in 1913, whereas Wazīr Khān Mosque is a centuries old monument. Although, the concept of atom was floated in the first decades of the 5th century B.C., by a Greek philosopher named Dimocritus. He put forward the notion that the fundamental building block of all matter was atom, a tiny particle that he considered indivisible. Prior to that discovery, the ancient Greek philosophers were of the view that all matter was made up of the four substances: earth, water, air and fire. On the other hand Chinese added two more elements in the above mentioned four substances that are gold and wood. Dimocritus considered atom as the indivisible particle of matter. The name atom was also derived from the Greek *atomos*, which means indivisible. This was the earliest recognition of atom; later discoveries negated its indivisibility and discovered that atom is composed of electrons, protons and neutrons that are invisible in an ordinary microscope. These are so small that a dot like full stop can be filled in by ten trillion (10,000,000,000,000) atoms. Gradually progressing from these basic conceptions, it eventually happened in 1913, when Niel Bohr gave atomic model. This is a general concept related to the discovery of atom but the most amazing fact is that mosque was built in the 17th century and an exact replica of this model exists on the apices of the arches of balconies of the vestibule of this mosque. Many probing questions strike the mind that need to be explained. The most usual must be that whether Muslims had discovered the properties of atom so early or its resemblance with Bohr's model is accidental.

The model is so perfectly drawn that assumption of accidental link can easily, be ruled out. On the apices of the smaller balconies, a perfect archetype of Bohr's model of hydrogen's atom that consists only of a single electron is drawn. While the larger balconies contain a complicated rendition of this model, which represents a matter that contains more than one electron. We will discuss this design by calling it Bohr's model, although it is far-earlier and it is most probable that Bohr might have encountered some clue of the ancient Muslim science. But before going into the detail of this model we must get familiar with atom and it structure.

The story of atom in the modern era is related to energy, radiation, as well as negative and positive utilities of this tiny particle. Although recognized by the Greeks in the 6th and 5th centuries B.C. but a gradual recognition of its properties began with Newton, when he discovered the refraction of white light that passed through a glass prism and exposed its rainbow spectrum. It became evident then that chemical elements and compounds emit three different types of spectra[5]. But there is no need to go into such intricacies when our

But after each excited state it is directed toward the nucleus[18]. It is said that Bohr at the earliest, was unable to define about how an electron makes transition from one stationary state to another or in simple language from one orbit to another. But later he postulated that "these must be sudden quantum jumps"[19].

It was also assumed that when atom is at rest, electrons and nucleus move around their centre of mass. But since nucleus is 1836 times as massive as an electron, so it is a good approximation to assert that nucleus is immobile and electrons move about it. The motion of electrons is very quick. It jumps upwards and downwards after absorbing and releasing energy respectively. Thus motion of electron is almost continuous which if visible will create fussiness.

These are the propositions of Bohr's model which were devised after passing the tedious path of empirical testing. But this is not the lasting discovery about atom or its properties, however it provided a basis for the future developments in this field that are beneficial as well as destructive for mankind. The most astonishing fact in this respect is the presence of this atomic model in the adornments of the Wazīr Khān Mosque which was erected in 1634, whereas Bohr made these discoveries almost three centuries after. The accuracy with which this model is delineated in the mosque becomes a good reason to assume that science in the Muslim world had made such tremendous discoveries so earlier. A period considered in the west as medieval or dark ages was the time of cultural and scientific Renaissance of the Muslim world. It is a historical fact that under the Abbasid rule (750-1258), mosques were not reserved to pay just lip service to religion but these were sources of knowledge of every sort. There were libraries attached to the mosques along with laboratories, to test all information empirically. All modern developments in the field of science are based on the past knowledge forwarded through Muslim sources, who did not only translate ancient books of knowledge but elaborations were made through further experimentations. But unfortunately these were not publicised in the way modern innovations are commended to people.



Fig.544: Decorative representation of the atomic model in the Wazīr Khān Mosque.

Thus the orbital motion of electrons is defined in the decorative motives adorning the apices of the balconies flanking the vestibule of the Wazīr Khān Mosque. There are three types of representations of this model, one among these is exactly, a replica of the model defined by Bohr, which he represented of the hydrogen atom with a nucleus and a single electron. Further elaboration of this model can be viewed on the other apexes of the larger balconies, because these are related to the orbital path of the atoms of

of electrons around the nucleus and stressed that electrons proceed in circular motion of a spiral. But the modern physicists objected that for spiral motion from one orbit to another it must decrease in energy constantly and eventually would fall into the nucleus which would be the decay of atomic structure. All these queries were modified and answered in Bohr's atomic model.

Bohr's atomic theory though replaced in modern times, brought forth some concepts which remained as essential features of many later theories. This structure besides its serious inadequacies, formulate a mental picture that many scientists had imagined of the atomic structure. Bohr implemented it on the simplest atom that is of hydrogen which consists only of a nucleus and a single electron. He compared the motion of electron with our planetary system, where an inversely attracting force exists, which is proportional to the square of the distance between the planets. It causes the planet, like earth to move in almost circular motion[13], about the sun. A similar orbital motion is defined by Bohr, of electron around its nucleus.

Bohr's theory of hydrogen spectrum is based on the assumption that electron does not remain in a static position, it moves around its nucleus but is held in a stable orbit between positive charge of the nucleus and negative of electron itself, through the coulomb attraction. According to the Coulomb's law objects retaining similar charges repel each other, whereas those having opposite charges have the quality to attract. The coulomb's force thus equals the centripetal force that maintains orbital motion[13].

It was also assumed that there is a ground state and an excited state of an atom. In the former, atom is isolated and it can remain in this state for prolonged periods, unless it is excited by collision or absorption of radiation[14]. Because heated solids emit radiation of various frequencies in which all wavelengths are present. Another proposition made by Bohr was that electrons exist only in certain special orbits around the nucleus which were called by Bohr as stationary orbits or stationary states[15]. But in the orbital motion of electrons energy is either absorbed or emitted in the form of photons. When it makes transition from the isolated state, it moves to the higher state of energy and thus absorbs energy or radiation. Whereas it releases radiation when it comes downwards in the orbits nearer to the nucleus and the radiation in this state is emitted in the form of photons. The whole process of absorption and discharge of energy of the electron can be simply explained through the experiment on the atom of sodium chloride.

Isolated sodium, atom at the lowest energy state or in the ground state of energy is like a marble that rests at the bottom of a bowl. To attain the higher excited state, it requires absorbing energy from any external source, either by colliding with other electrons in a sodium vapor lamp. The common salt or (sodium chloride) is thrown into an open flame to excite its atoms. A particular colour of light is emitted as the electrons transfer from the excited to the ground state of energy. According to the law of conservation of energy, the emitted energy is carried away by light[16]. The potential energy of an electron depends only on the distance of the electron from the nucleus[17].

Despite the excited state or potential energy of electrons, the original force always directs it towards nucleus. Because the energy used to excite a stationary electron in a stable orbit always remains negative but being powerful moves it away from the positive nucleus.

supplementing concepts of the original text. The major works utilised, besides the writings of Plato and Aristotle, were Hypocrites, Euclid, the earliest geometrician Galen, Ptolemy etc[20]. Scientists of high erudition were produced in this era in the Muslim world. The most significant feature is that Muslim community had physicians of high calibre, astronomers, chemists, physicists, geometricians, mathematicians, besides philosophers and above all these people served as political advisors to their rulers. This means political affairs too were intellectually handled. Moreover, major experiments were made in the field of Alchemy. As a result they excelled in natural sciences from their western counterparts. It is something very amazing that astronomers of that era could calculate the courses of stars, dimensions of earth, forecast weather, could predict the state of water supply. Ibn al-Haitham (965-1040), for instance was awarded the task of calculating the amount of water in the river Nile to make some planning for the development of agriculture. He was a physicist of par-excellence and in the field of optics, he calculated the distance of earth from stars just through the refraction of light. Al-Birūni measured the circumference of earth, defining its rotational status and gravity.

In the field of science Muslim princes did not lag behind either. Ulugh Baig (1394-1449), the grandson of Timur had an observatory to calculate the height of sun and with the help of other astronomers, he made a precise astronomical chart. In the domain of medicine they had made greatest contributions. It is stated that in the year 1000, the Muslim physicians had successfully operated cataracts[21].

The above stated discoveries are the rudiments, responsible to formulate the hypothesis that the ornamental design on apices of the balconies of vestibule of the Mosque Wazīr Khān is not merely decorative. Considering in mind the intellectual milieu of that time Islamic world, it must be a true delineation of the progression about the discovery of atom. Thus if Arabs are considered the precursors of the medical progress of Europe they are also forerunners of the atomic scientists of the modern era.

Another, mind-boggling research that supports this hypothesis was published in the world renowned journal *Science*, reported by Peter J. Lu and Paul J. Steinhardt, related to the geometric erudition of the Muslim artists. It is titled *Decagonal and Quasi-Crystalline Tilings in Medieval Islamic Architecture.* These scholars asserted that tile ornamentations of the Muslim buildings erected during the European medieval ages are not mere adornments rather they decipher complicated mathematical issues, which were discovered by the western mathematicians and physicists only in the 1970s and 1980s. It is related to the decagonal or five-fold symmetry, defined by Roger Penrose in 1973 and discovered in Muslim designs by Peter J. Lu of Harvard University and Paul J. Steinhardt of Princeton University[22] in February, 2007. They are of the view that *girih* patterns: geometric star and polygon or strap work, in the Muslim architecture are a specimen of the erudition of Muslim artists. Appreciating the architectonic designs of Muslim buildings they confessed that,

> by 1200 C.E. a conceptual breakthrough occurred in which *girih* patterns were reconceived as tessellations of a special set of equilateral polygons ("*girih* tiles") decorated with lines. These tiles enabled the creation of increasingly complex periodic *girih* patterns, and by the 15th century, the tessellation approach was combined with



Fig.545: Decorative representation of the atomic model in the Wazīr Khān Mosque.



Fig.546: The orbital paths of electrons in the atomic model, delineated in the Mosque Wazīr Khān.

a substance that contains more than one electron. It is further moulded into decorative representation of this model. But the fussiness linked with the brisk motion of electrons when excited, is perfectly delineated in these so called motifs, *figs.544-546.*

In the modern milieu one may ignore altogether, association of this design with the model that defines atom. However, if attention towards this link is directed, one may take it as a decorative element with accidental affinity with the atomic model. But it becomes an amazing discovery for those who are somehow acquainted with the splendid past of the Muslims, who excelled in mathematics, physics, alchemy *etc.* People mostly consider Greece as the main source of knowledge for the Muslim Renaissance. They are unaware of the fact that radicals of all the development were provided by one of the essential commandments of the Holy Qur'ān, where stress is laid on reason and pondering of the universe, a causal of expounding the mysteries of the cosmos. So there was no biasedness for the acquiring of knowledge from any source.

The love for learning and knowledge gave a boost to the Muslim sciences. It is stressed that Islamic science was at its prime during European medieval ages that is from 9th to 13th centuries. There were *Bayt al-Ḥikmah*[i] and *Dār al-'Ilm*[ii], under Abbasids, where books acquired from various sources, especially from Greece were systematically translated, and assimilated. In the places of knowledge and wisdom, Greek inheritance was not only translated but by keeping independent and intellectually original approach, many new dimensions were formulated by expanding and

i House of Wisdom
ii House of Knowledge

like differences[25]. Moreover, Peter J. Lu acknowledged advanced talent of Muslim artists by saying, *"At the very least, it shows us a culture that we often don't credit enough, was far more advanced than we ever thought before".*

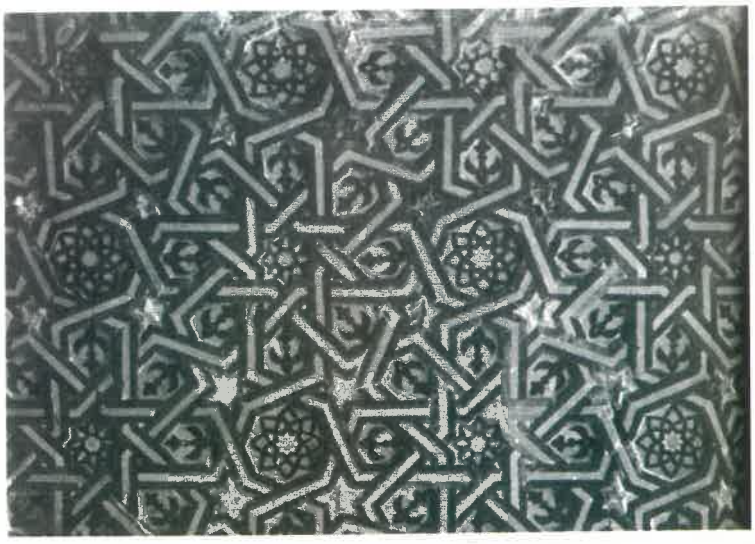


Fig.548 Design resembling Bohr' atomic model in Gök Medresse, Sivas, Turkey.

Keith Critchlow's point of view supports this concept fully, when he asserts that some of the intricate designs of Islamic Art resemble the underlying structures of various natural substances discovered by modern science[26]. A pattern, resembling Bohr's atomic model also adorns the Gök Medresse, Sivas, Turkey, *fig.548.* So, the presence of this model in the adornments of the Mosque Wazīr Khān is not an isolated phenomenon. There must be some other Muslim buildings ornamented with similar discoveries.

Scientists of the modern era have also confessed that Muslims of the European medieval ages were astute mathematicians, who could calculate the most complicated mathematical equations and they had already made the mechanical computers[27]. But they think that the Muslim scientists had not recorded their discoveries properly although the other side of the picture might be that their inventions and discoveries were devastated by the enemies who conquered these lands. These are but a few evidences to prove the authenticity of atomic model in the adornments of the Wazīr Khān Mosque.

It is evident then that all the domains of Muslim art had laid their foundations on the principles of nature and perfection is the epitome of all the creations of the universe. Because beauty for the Muslim artists is perfection and perfection beauty, so the undercurrents of perfection were explored in which science and arts were not two isolated phenomena. The way *Kamāl*[iii] and *Jamāl*[iv] are two major attributes of the One, Who is Supreme. Almost all ornamental designs of the Wazīr Khān Mosque specify the combination of both the characteristics. There are numerous examples that demonstrate the attainment of beauty through perfection. Even objects of two different spheres, such as organic and inorganic forms are united to attain beauty of highest order. Mathematics and geometrical computation of various segments, which of course are appreciated for their highest degree of excellence, are perfectly combined with vegetal and floral motifs. The stalactite formations, star shapes, and other designs like *sūriya* motif, quadrifoils, *miḥrābi*, etc. all contain within their contours leaves, flowers, stems and tendrils, either stylised or naturalistically represented. The organic forms though part of inorganic shapes do not

iii Perfection
iv Beauty

self-similar transformations to construct nearly perfect quasi-crystalline Penrose patterns, five centuries before their discovery in the West.

Decorative designs on Muslim architecture were generally considered to be the delineation of zig-zag lines through straight edge and compass and their visual appeal was ascribed to their rotational symmetries. But then it was realised in the 20th century that periodic patterns that are based on repetition of a single unit cell, have restricted sets of rotational symmetries. It provides two, three, four, or six-fold symmetries. Pentagonal or decagonal designs are hard to delineate through the rotational symmetries. However, frequently represented on Muslim buildings, and based on the rotation of single unit cells. It was labelled by the above mentioned two scholars that such designs are based on "crystallographically allowed symmetry"[23]. Simple pentagonal *girih* patterns can be worked out through straight edge and compass but the complicated ones incorporated by the rotation of single unit cells, on larger length scales are likely to result in several distortions but not discernible in the designs of Muslim architecture. A breakthrough, is said to have occurred in the 12th century in the mathematical sphere of the Muslim world that formulated new conceptions for complicated *girih* patterns, developed to further heights in the 15th century, all preconceived almost half a millennium from their discovery in the west. It apparently looked very simple but invigorated very complicated patterns, based on a set of five tiles with simple line designs that can be drawn easily with a straight edge and compass. It consists of a set of five adjoining polygons (a decagon, pentagon, diamond, bowtie, and hexagon). But when these tiles are joined by laying edge to edge, it forms a complicated network of patterns.

Taking into consideration various Muslim buildings like Darb-i Imām shrine, Iṣfahān, Iran (1453 A.D.), Timurid shrine of Khwāja 'Abdullah Anṣāri at Guzargāh in Herat, Afghanistan (1425 to 1429 A.D.), Mausoleum of Mama Hatun in Tercan, Turkey (1200 A.D.), Gunbad-i Kabūs in Marāgha, Iran (1197 A.D.), 1453, they analysed that the Islamic designers were proficient in all the conceptual elements essential to produce quasi-crystalline *girih* patterns.



Fig.547: Bohr's Atomic Model.

The most illustrious examples are of Darb-i Imām patterns in which asymptotic ratio of hexagon to bowtie is similar to the ratio of kite and dart shapes in the Penrose tiling. These shapes are repeated with a ratio which is irrational or called the Golden Ratio: $(\sqrt{5}+1)/2$[24]. However, scrutinising any irregularity in Darb-i Imām patterns, they found among 3700 examples only 11 mismatches, which were based on a minor, point

selection of script, religious scholars seem to have consulted[30] to add *Kamāl* with *Jamāl*. These were so thought out for each section that associates with each part, some esoteric meaning from within. For instance Kamil Khan Mumtaz has linked Qur'ānic āyāt and a painted panel with some historical facts related to the pilgrimage and the conquest of Makkah. *Sūrah al- Fatḥ*, inscribed around the central arch of the sanctuary and a panel that represents a tree with black strands stringing down is related to the incident when Muslims made an armistice at Ḥūdaibīyah with the infidels of Makkah, to perform *Ḥajj*, because it was revealed to the Prophet (pbuh) through a dream that he was entering Ka'ba with its keys in his hands and head shaven. But the treaty dismayed his companions because some of the clues of the pact were hard to digest, for being abasing for the Muslims and they became reluctant to shave their heads when demanded by the Prophet (pbuh), but obeyed at once, when he himself initiated the task. It is said that he then gathered the locks of his rich black hair from the ground and threw it over a mimosa tree, which is represented in the panel, *fig.117*. The panel when linked with the *sūrah* inscribed, and the historical incident, appears symbolic. Red background of it, too symbolizes the emotionality of the situation when the dismayed followers who had pledged allegiance were reluctant to obey the commandment of the Prophet of Allah. In *sūrah al- Fatḥ* too, the prophecy of the vanquishing of Makkah is inscribed and the name *al- Fatḥ* also denotes victory, so the whole arrangement is insightful[31]. Therefore, taking this proposition, it is obvious then that each design of the mosque whether calligraphic, geometric or floral, retains some undercurrents of reality.

Thus we have strong grounds to assert that in the Muslim view of the world, religion, science and art were not three separate domains. Religion is the part and parcel of everything that demanded from its followers, truth and devotion in all walks of life, the field of art is not alien, in this respect. In the quest for perfection Muslim artists tried to grasp the true essence of things. In this pursuit there remained no discrimination between art, science, mathematics or geometry. Mathematics and geometry was utilised to the utmost to express their concepts of beauty which were based on delineation, not of one aspect of reality but related to the true essence of it.



Fig. 549-550: Floral designs serve as background of calligraphy.

overweigh, rather enhance ornamental beauty of the shapes. Floral and vegetal designs are integrated also with calligraphic script adorning the mosque. It serves every where as background of inscriptions, mutely united with the text, *figs.549-550*. Colours used in the organic forms, too, are not at clash with the script but subdued tonality is preferred in these sections to enhance the message inscribed in words.

Calligraphy, a major form of ornamentation in the Muslim world plays its role in the adornments of the Wazīr Khān mosque. A thorough perception of the inscriptions reveals that these are rendered in the spirit of a mystic. Selection of *āyāt*, *aḥādīth*, *darūds*, sayings of mystics or Persian inscriptions, all are perfectly befitting for various parts of the sacred edifice and their representation keeps religious awe. Though, artists in the Muslim world always remained anonymous but a few names inscribed in the mosque reveal that those who ornamented this mosque were not ordinary calligraphers but spiritually elevated people. For instance, the name of Muḥammad 'Alī, inscribed on one of the calligraphic panels, was actually a religious devotee and his name is mentioned by Dāra Shīkoh Qādri in his book *Sakīnat al-A'uli'ā*[28]. He was one of the closest disciples of Miān Mīr, a renowned *sūfi* saint of Lahore. Same is the case of Yūsaf Kashmīri, who pledged as the follower of Mujaddad Alif Thāni and had instigated the path of spirituality, so he himself was a mystic. Therefore, the aesthetic beauty of inscriptions retains spiritual in it. So best calligraphers served to adorn this mosque, Muḥammad Sharīf, Ḥussain and Aḥmad Abu al-Qāsim, are three more names inscribed in various parts of the mosque. The name of Mulla Ḥussain Gujrāti is listed in the *Iqbal nāma* Jahāngīr it by Mu'tamid Khān[29] but rest of the two are not found from anywhere. But those who have been traced out are not ordinary calligraphers but religious devotees, for whom performing of the duty was sacramental. So it was not taken by them just as profession, worked out for remuneration, rather with the spirit of a *sūfi* saint to beatify Allah whose abode was being adorned.

In the ornamentation of this mosque each step is taken with perfection, even in the

List of Plates

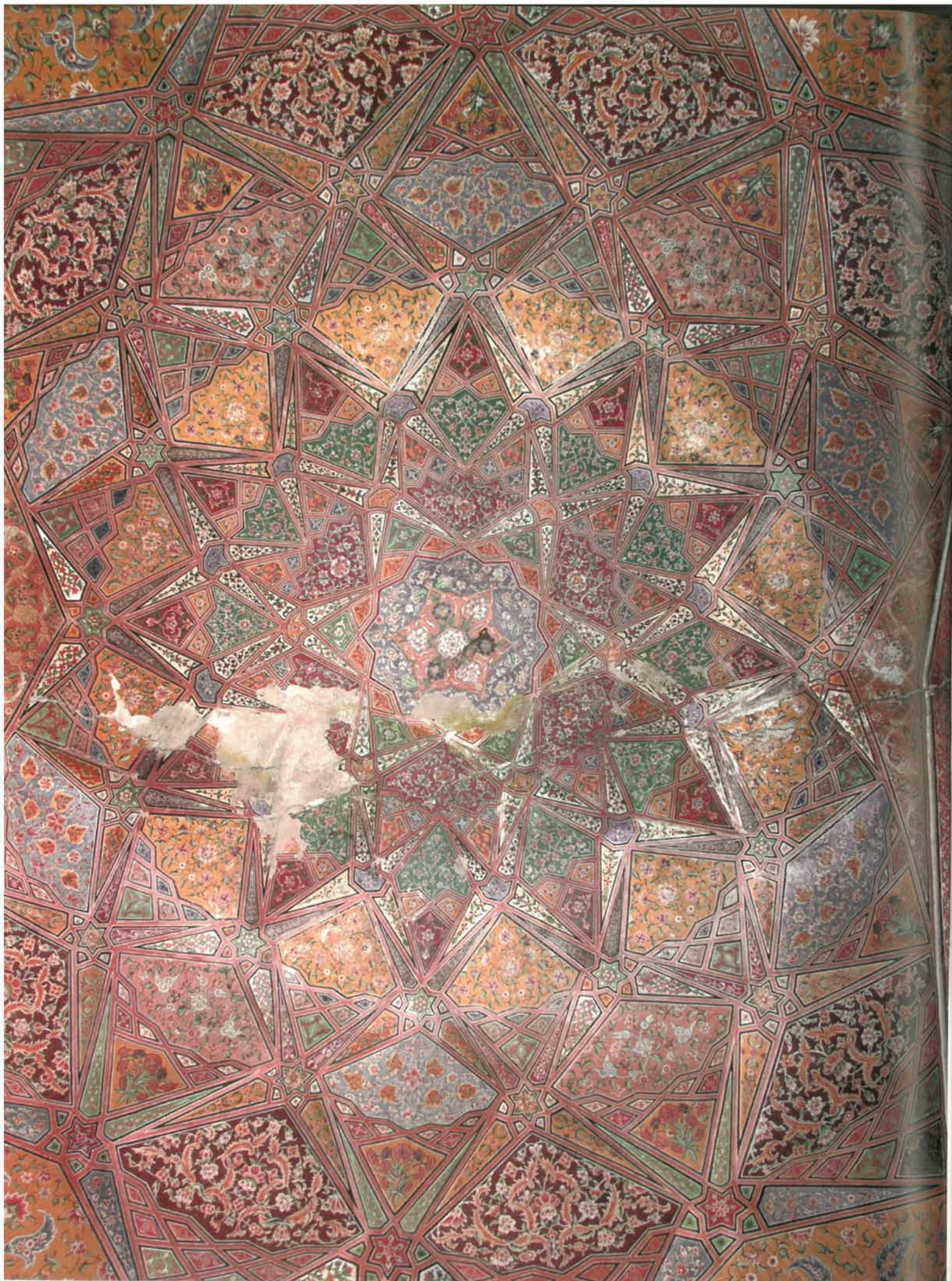
Plate. 1	Mr. Mauray's sketch of the minaret of Wazīr Khān Mosque from the Delhi Gate, 1891.
Plate.1.1	Mr. Mauray's sketch of the path leading from Delhi Gate to the Mosque Wazīr Khān.
Plate. 2	Plan of the Wazīr KhānMosque.
Plate. 3	Plan of corridor of the vestibule.
Plate. 4	Plan of sanctuary of the mosque.
Plate. 5	The deed of bequest of Wazīr khān.
Plate. 6	Entrance gate of the Wazīr khān Mosque.
Plate. 7	Central façade of the sanctuary.
Plate. 8	Façade of the sanctuary.
Plate. 9	Sanctuary of the mosque.
Plate. 10	Minaret of the mosque.
Plate. 11	Minbar of the mosque.
Plate. 12	Khaṭṭ-i Mīkhi.
Plate. 13	Golden Spiral - Eye of the volute.

References

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Plate.1: Mr. Mauray's sketch of the minaret of Wazīr Khān Mosque from the Delhi Gate, 1891.



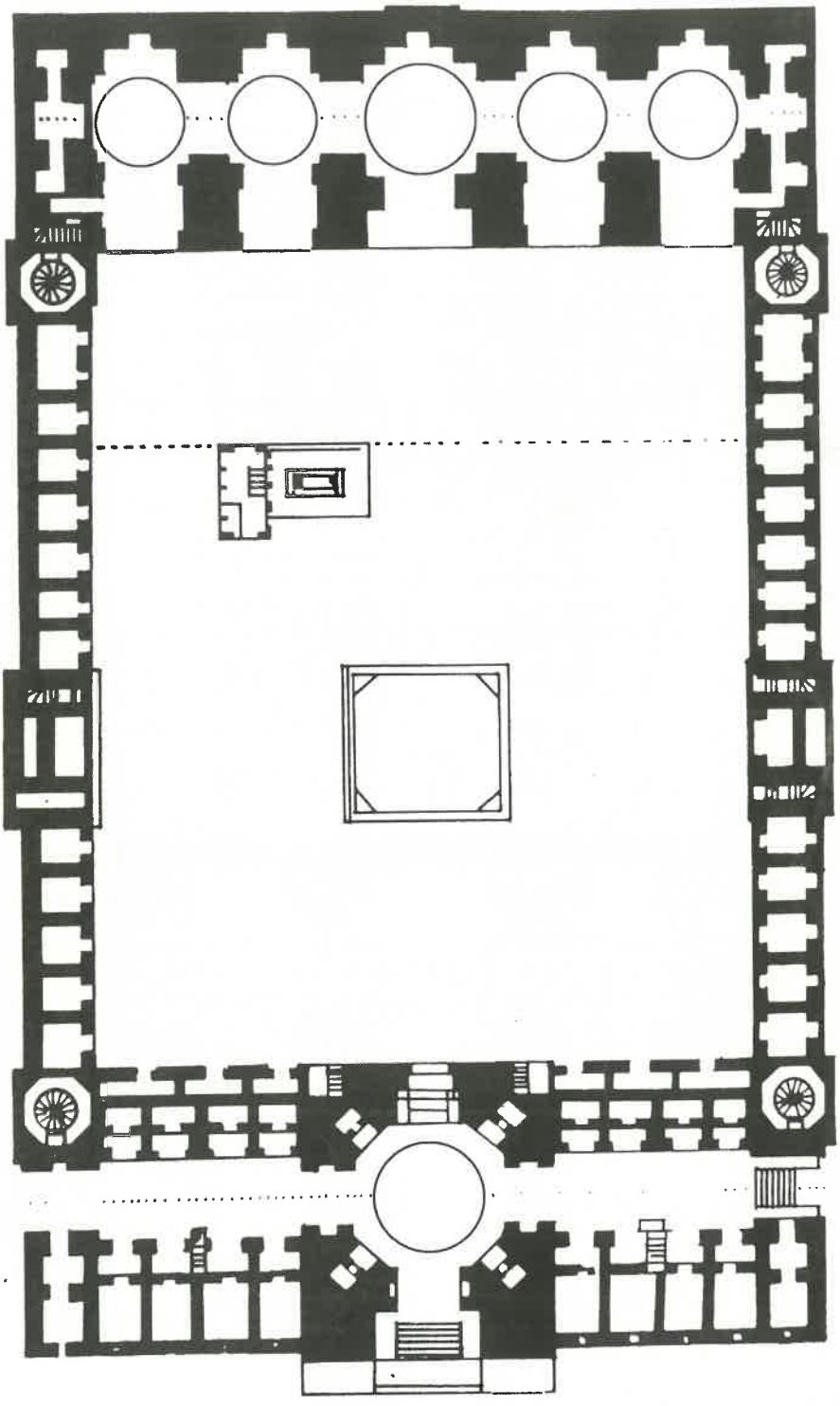


Plate.2: Plan of the Wazīr Khān Mosque.

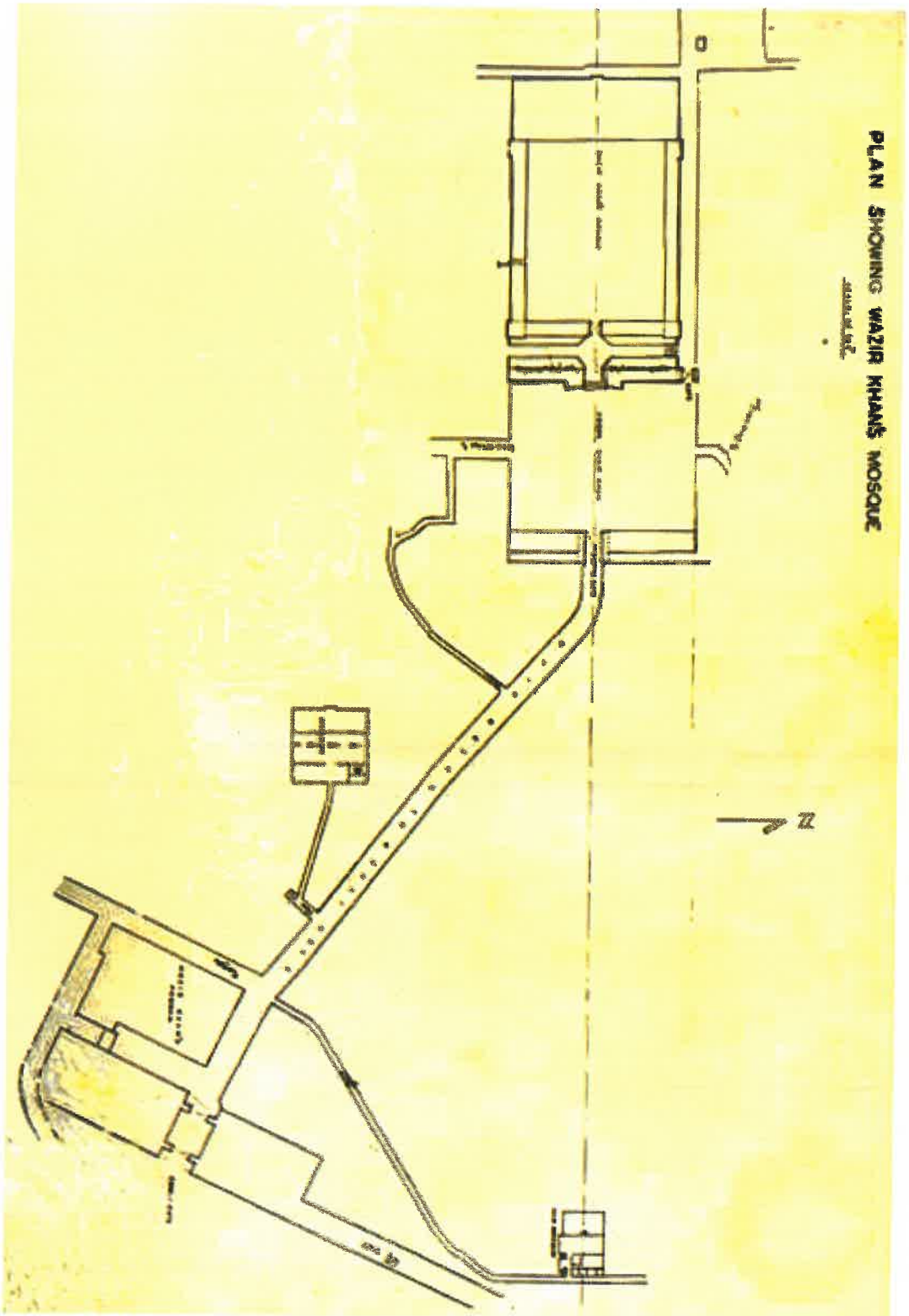


Plate.1.1: Mr. Mauray's sketch of the path leading from Delhi Gate to the Mosque Wazīr Khān.



هوالله

الحمد لله الذی وفق عباده الاعزاز الباقیات الصالحات والصلوٰة
والسلام علی رسوله محمد الذی رغبت البرایا فی انفاق الطیبات و
علی آله واصحابه معدن الخیرات ومناه الحسنات مادام الارض
والسموٰت اما بعد این ذکر سیت در بیان آنکه وقف کرد و تصدق
نمود نیاز مند درگاه صمدی مسمی حکیم علم الدین المخاطب به وزیر خان
بن شیخ عبد اللطیف بن شیخ حسام الدین انصاری از خالص املاک و طیب
مال خود در حال صحة وکمال العقل ونفاذ جمیع تصرفاته طائعا
اگی مسجد جامع بجمیع توابع ومرافق عشریه آن وبرای دوام این بقعه
شریفه وقف کرد بر مصالح مسجد مذکور خود تمام دکاکین دو رسته محاذی خانها
وکثرها واقع در کلان وحمام ودو چاه وچند قطعه زمین متفرقه که بر
این مکنه مذکور ومعلومة الحدود وظاهر علامات است واقع مذرون وارالسلطنت
لاهور وقف صحیحا لا نقابله تبدله لا یباع ولا یوهب ولا
یرهن ولا یمس ولا یورث ولا یملک بوجه من الوجوه وسبب
من الاسباب الی ان یرث الله الارض وهو خیر الوارثین وجعل
غلة الوقف علی الفقراء المسلمین وشرط کرد این واقف مذکور که
در حین تصرف اوقاف مذکوره در غل ونصب ائمه مسجد وغیره در تقسیم وتعیین
مصارف وارزیاد وانقاص اعضاء وحرمان الزمان نشود بر این کرده

دکاکین بدست خود واقف مذکور بالاستقلال مادام حیوته باشد وبعد از وی
ولد صلبی محمد سعید خان جداوبه میرزا محمد انور وبعد او باشد ذکور اولاد
اولا و اولاد او وبطنا بعد بطن ونسلا بعد نسل الی ماتوالدوا وتناسلوا وگر احدی از اولاد
نباشد به یکی از ذکور اقارب او کذلک شرط کرد نیز امام خطیب مسجد مذکور یک
کس باشد اقرء واعلم باحکام الصلوٰة ومؤذن عالم وقات ونیز شرط کرد که بیست قطعه دکاکین
دروازه شرقی وبالاخانها آنها محض برائے نشستن صحافان کتب باشد بلا
علی سبیل الدوام ونیز شرط کرد که در مسجد مذکور برائے تعلیم علوم دینیه مدرس باشد بسبیل
اهل خدمات از محصول عمارت اوقاف مذکوره انکه امام خطیب را یومیه یکروپیه تا دوروپیه
ومؤذن را چهار آنه یومیه هر یک مدرس را یکروپیه ودیگر از اولاد واقف متصرف وقف مذکور
باشد و هر ماه ششم حصه از محصول کرایه اوقاف گیرد و هر کسے از اقربا باشد نهم حصه گیرد و
وما بقیه از خرچ عمارت واهل خدمه ومصالح ضروریه دیگر کالمشروط والموقوف والوقف
یصرف علی المستحقین فی العهد وعند التعیین یصرف علی الخدمة کما هو
فی المذهب الحنفی کل ذلک وشرط الواقف من بدله بعد ما سمعه فانما
اثمه علی الذین یبدلونه فقد حکم بلزوم الوقف المذکور وشرط فیه
الناظر الاحکام الذی زین هذا الوثیقة

بخاتمه المبارک

تحریرا فی غرة رمضان المبارک الواقع فی سنة ١٠٥١

Plate.5: Facsimile of the Deed of Bequest of Wazīr Khān.

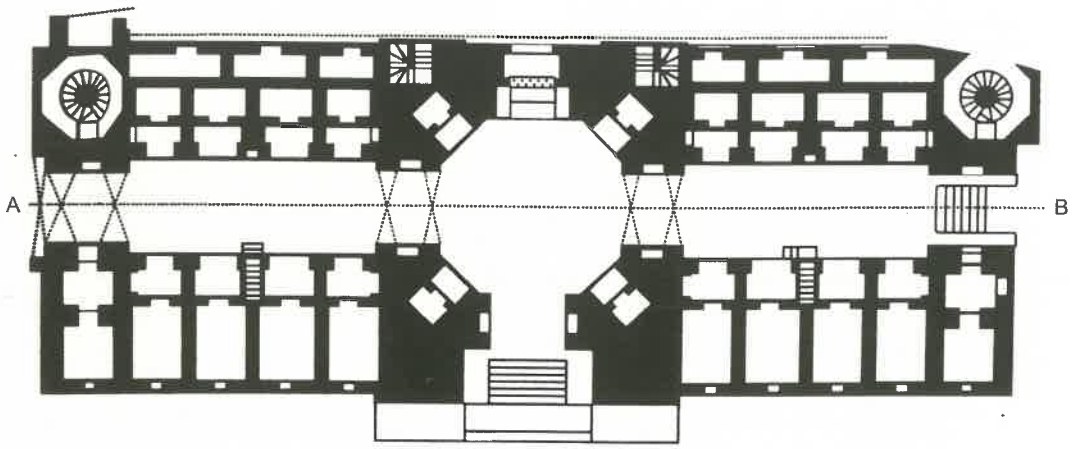


Plate.3: Plan of bazar of the vestibule.

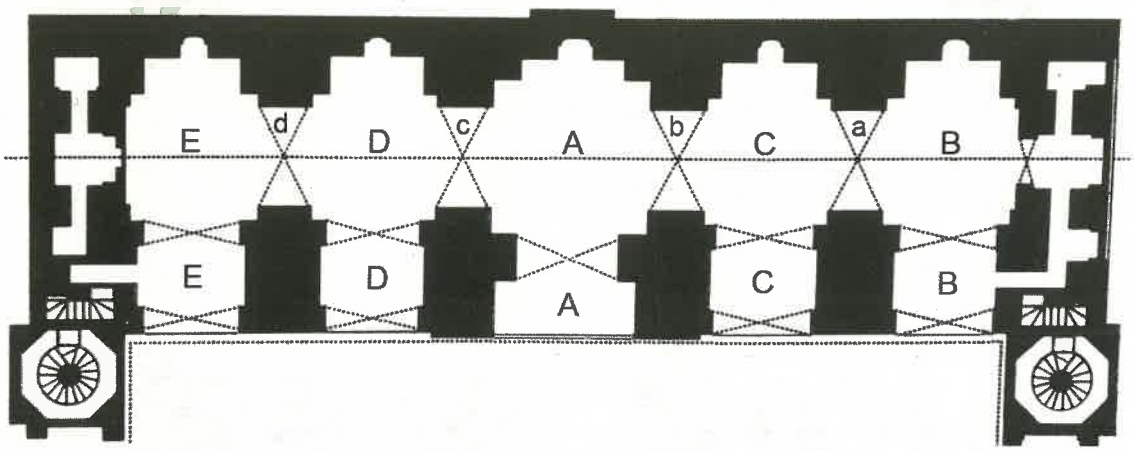


Plate.4: Plan of sanctuary of the Mosque.



Plate.7: Façade of the sanctuary.

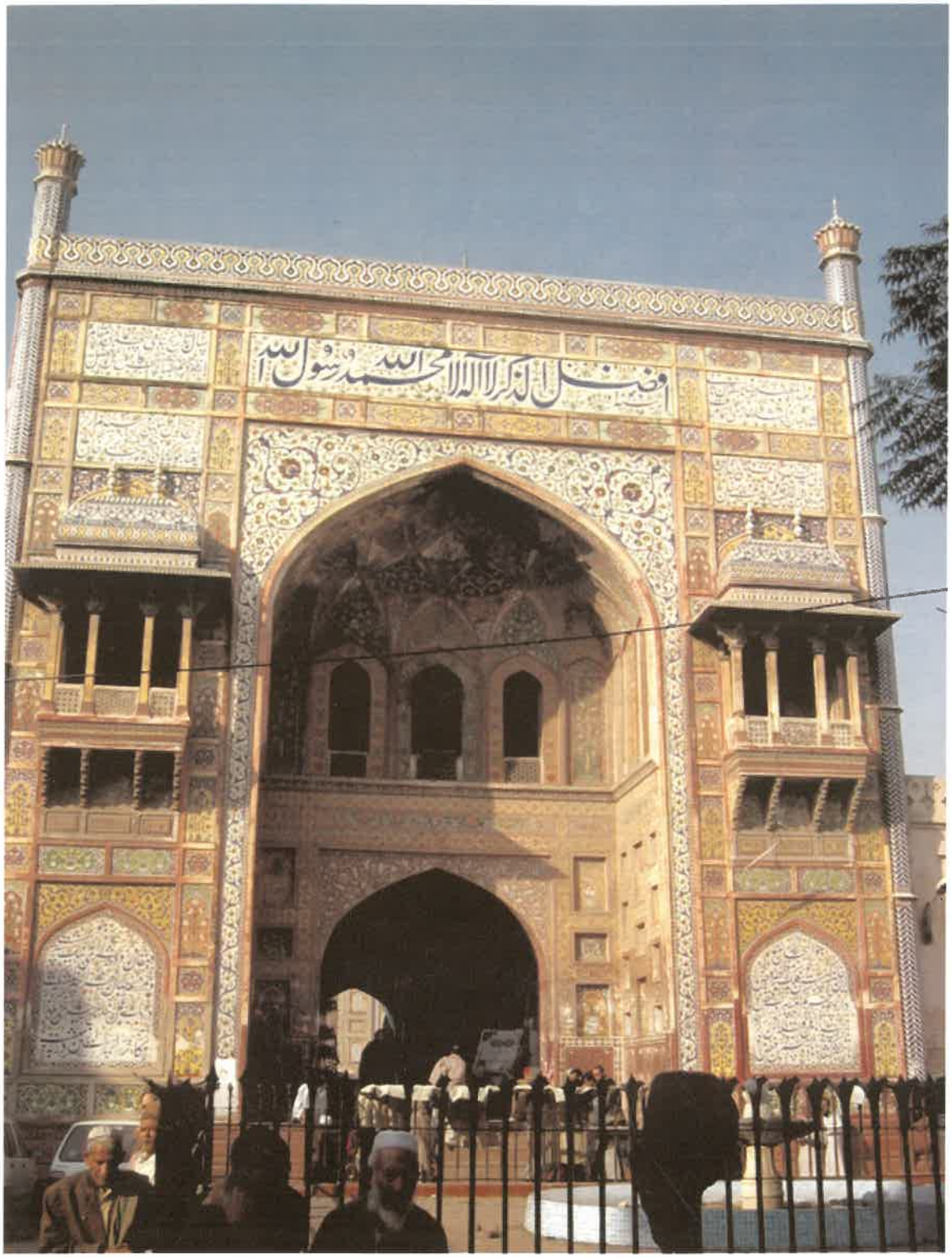


Plate.6: Main Portal of the Wazīr Khān Mosque.



Plate.9: Sanctuary of the Mosque.



Plate.8: Central arch of the façade of sanctuary.



Plate.11: Minbar of the Mosque.



Plate.10: South-eastern minaret of the Mosque.

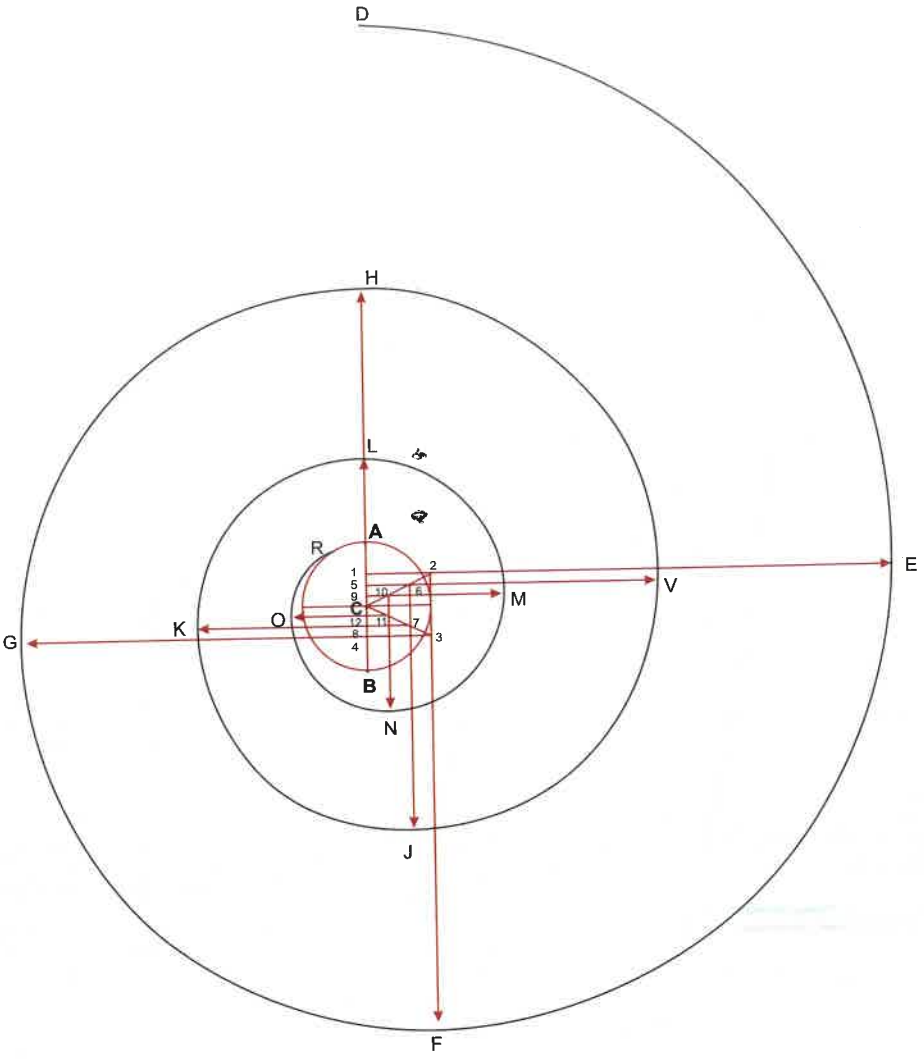
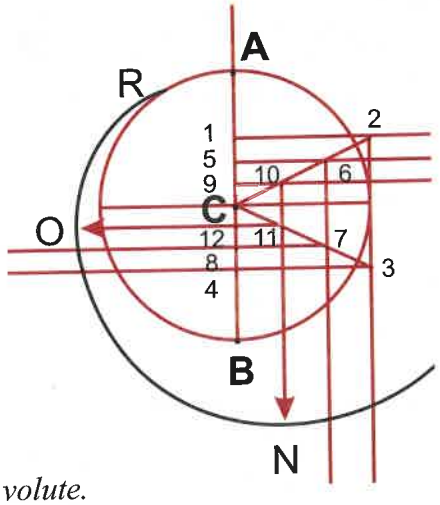


Plate.13: Golden Spiral.



Eye of the volute.

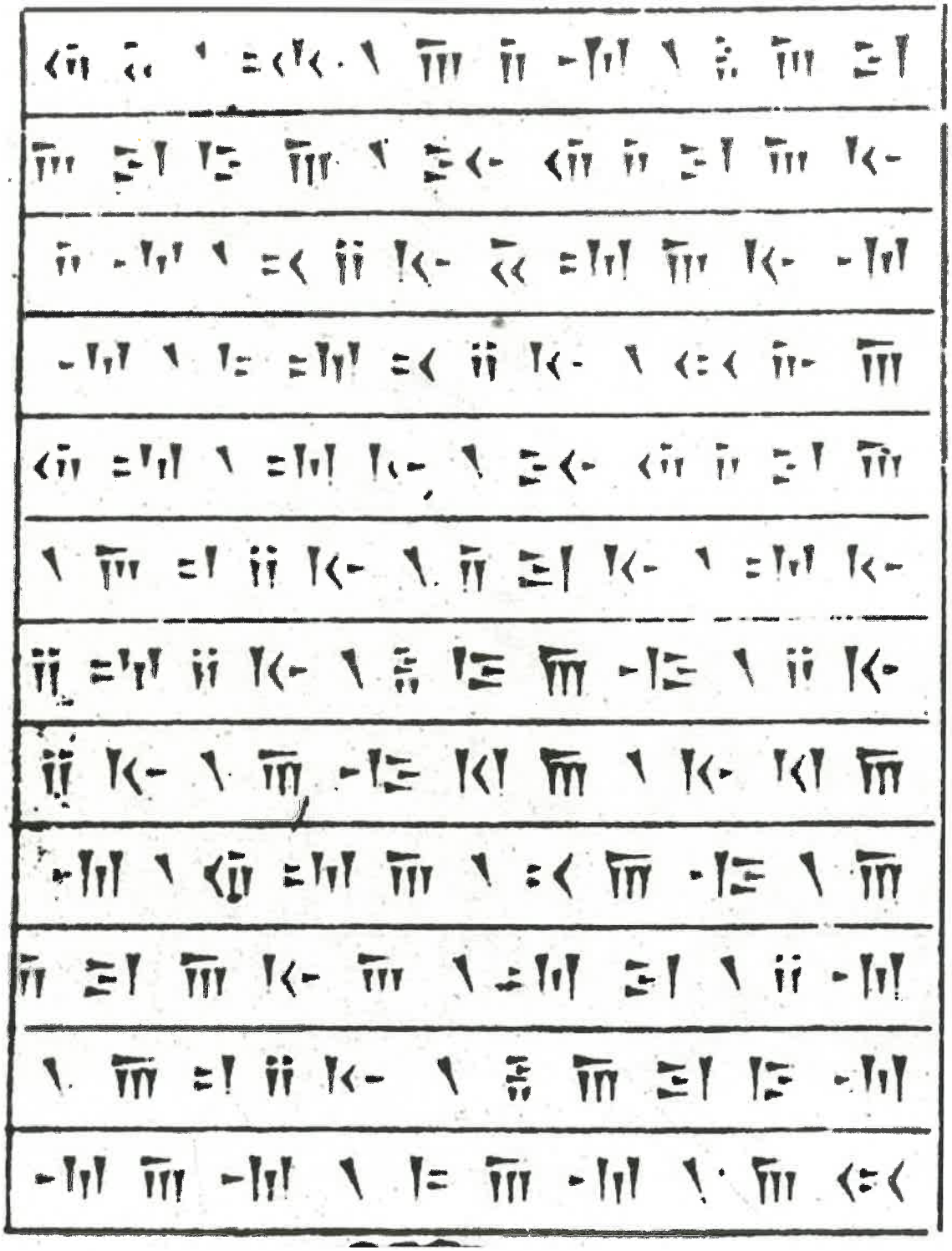
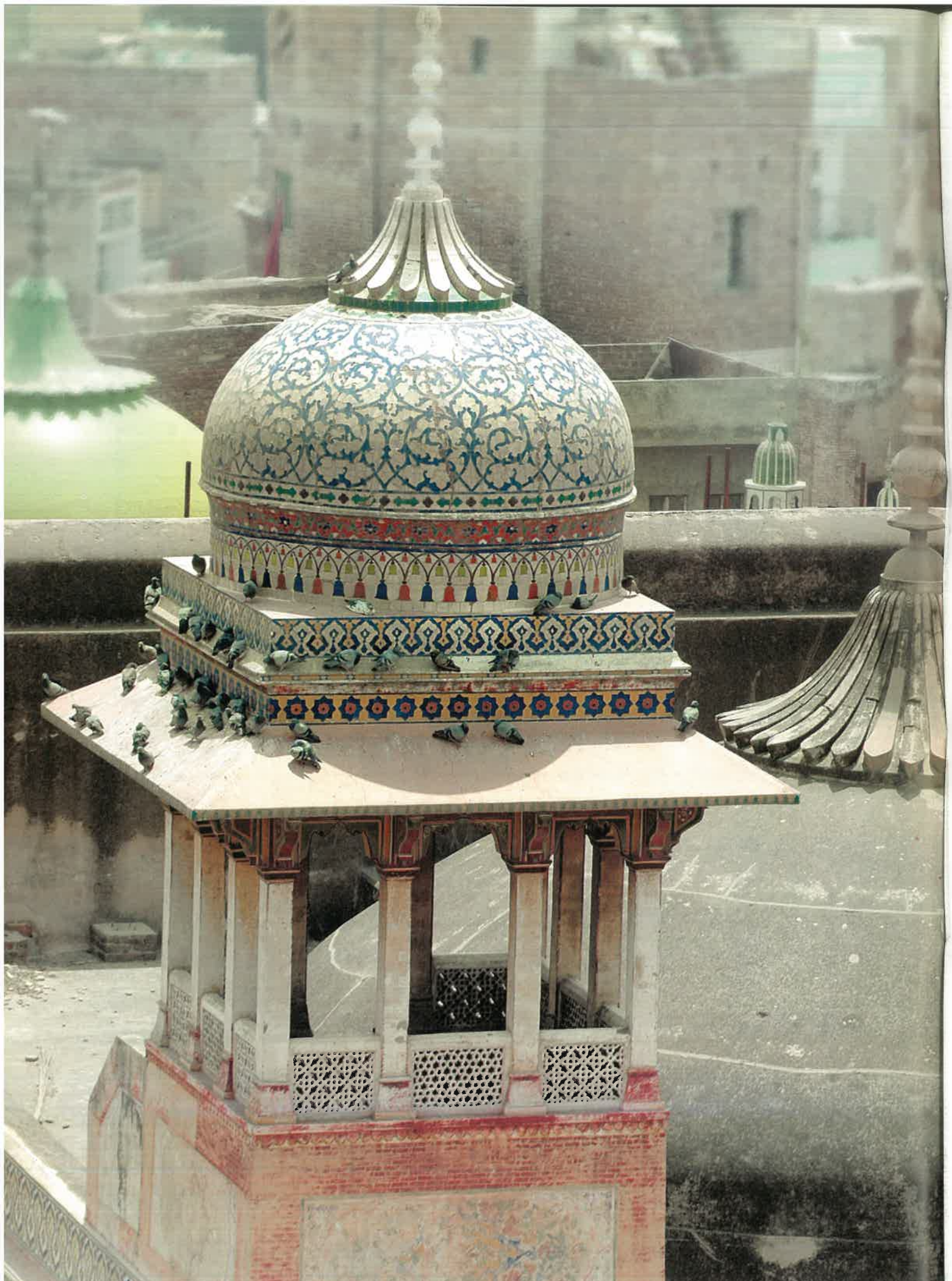


Plate.12: Khaṭṭ-i Mīkhi.

Glossary

Anṣār: Original dwellers of Madina.
Chajjā: Projected eaves.
Girrih patterns: Geometric star and polygon or strapwork.
Guilloche pattern: Guilloche pattern is an ornament formed of interlacing curved bands enclosing circles. It also means to decorate with intersecting curved lines.
Ḥadīth: Sayings of the Holy Prophet (pbuh).
Ḥāfiz: The one who learns the Holy Qur'ān by heart.
Hāshmī: A sub-division of the Quraish tribe.
Ḥuffāz: Plural of ḥāfiz.
Kāshīkārī: A technique of decoration on walls in which glazed tiles are embedded like tesseraes of mosaic.
Ḥujrās: small rooms.
Khaṭṭ: Style of calligraphy.
Mahājrīn: those who migrated from Makkah to Madina in the life of the Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh).
Miḥrāb: Arched recess in the western wall of a mosque for the accommodation of religious leader.
Miḥrābi: Design that looks like a star stretched from both ends.
Mithal: Groups of Sikhs.
Pinjra work: The geometric lattice work on wood crafts is locally known as Pinjra work.
Quadrifoil: A four petalled flower.
Quraish: One of the major tribes of Arabia.
Sūrīya: A design like the sun disc, surrounded by rays.
Tazakārī: Brick imitation.
Peroidic design: Celestial bodies (star shapes).



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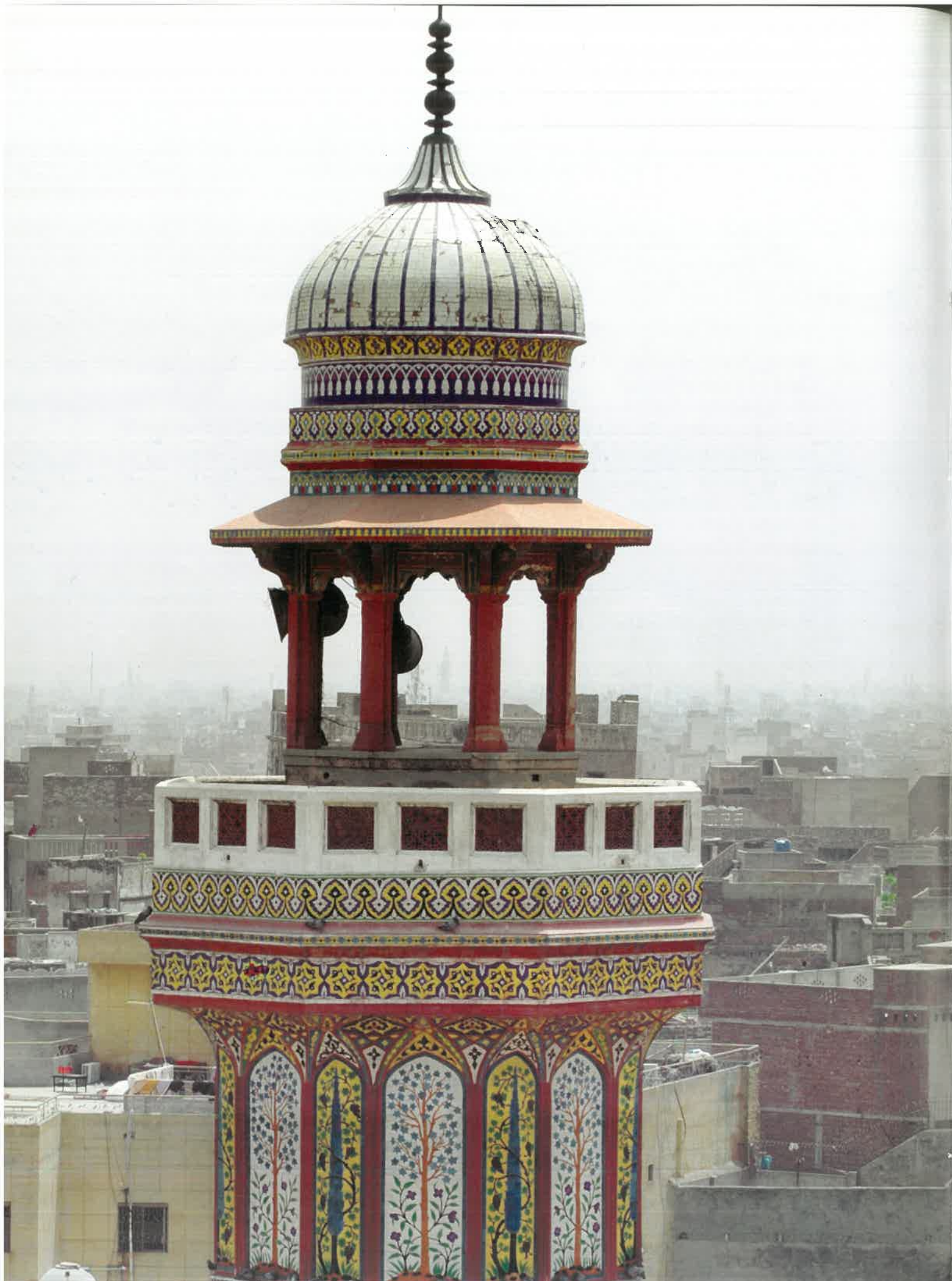
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List of Figures

Fig. 1	Present state of Chitta Darwāza.
Fig. 2	Domed ceiling of Chitta Darwāza.
Fig. 3	Remains of the embellishment inside the Chitta Darwāza.
Fig. 4	Close up of Chitta Darwāza.
Fig. 5	Oriel window on the front of the Main Gate.
Fig. 6	Perforated screen of the oriel windows on the Main Gate.
Fig. 7	Motifs on the vaulted roof of the balcony.
Fig. 8	Turrets on the main gate of the mosque.
Fig. 9	Close up of a turret.
Fig. 10	Kalima-yi Ṭayyiba adorning the main gate of the mosque.
Fig. 11	Horizontal bands enframing various sections of the entrance gate.
Fig. 12	Vertical bands enframing various sections of the entrance gate.
Fig. 13	Parapet of the main gate with merlon design.
Fig. 14	Arabesques on the spandrels of the arch of main gate.
Fig. 15	Tripartite band below cornice of Inner arch of the main gate.
Fig. 16	Background pattern on Inner arch of the main gate.
Fig. 17	Spandrels of recessed arch.
Fig. 18	Design on cornice of the recessed arch.
Fig. 19	Panels on the side wall of the recessed arch.
Fig. 20	Inner frames of recessed Panels.
Fig. 21	Dado on side walls of the recessed arch of main gate.
Fig. 22	Dado on the front walls of the recessed arch of main gate.
Fig. 23	Conch of the main gate.
Fig. 24	Arched openings of the conch.
Fig. 25	Motifs on the soffits of the side arched openings.
Fig. 26	Soffit of the central arched opening.
Fig. 27	Dado on the soffits of side arches.
Fig. 28	Dado band of the central arched opening.
Fig. 29	Parapet of the outer walls of the mosque.
Fig. 30	Sūriya motif on the Spandrel of outer walls of the mosque.
Fig. 31	Diminutive bazaar on the north and south flanks of vestibule.
Fig. 32	Under side of chajja and brackets bedecked with flat coloured ornaments.
Fig. 33	Double columns of ante-chamber.
Fig. 34	Palmette-like band on the architrave.
Fig. 35	Alcoves with ogee arch on walls of the varandas of shops.
Fig. 36	A segment of door carving.
Fig. 37	Parapet of the corridors of vestibule.
Fig. 38	Upper stories of the far-ends of the corridors of vestibule.
Fig. 39	Central part of dome of the vestibule, forming lotus flower through chevron pattern.
Fig. 40	Ornamentations on the smaller arches of the vestibule.
Fig. 41	Band surmounting inside of vestibule from all around.
Fig. 42	Decorative band below cornice.
Fig. 43	Larger balcony of the vestibule.
Fig. 44	Detail of panels on the balconies.
Fig. 45	Medallion in spandrels.
Fig. 46	View of balconies of the vestibule.
Fig. 47	Turrets with dome of the vestibule.
Fig. 48	Cupola of the turre.t
Fig. 49	Finial of the cupola.
Fig. 50	Finial of the dome of vestibule.
Figs. 51-60	Floor design.

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Fig. 114	Iwān C of the sanctuary.
Fig. 115	Quadrifoil and miḥrābi design that enframe all the panels of iwān C.
Fig. 116	Panel with geometric designs in the iwān C.
Fig. 117	Natural tree with Chinese clouds in iwān C of the sanctuary.
Fig. 118	Tree motif on the soffit of the iwān C.
Fig. 119	Panel on the soffit above dado in iwān C.
Fig. 120	Sanctuary of the mosque.
Fig. 121	Double border of the far-northern sanctuary.
Fig. 122	Far-northern wall of the sanctuary.
Fig. 123	Panel on the far northern wall of the sanctuary.
Fig. 124	Stalactites in the miḥrāb G.
Fig. 125	Tree in the squinch of the miḥrāb.
Fig. 126	Border of panels around the central one.
Fig. 127	Border of central panel in the miḥrāb.
Fig. 128	Double border of cornice in the miḥrāb.
Fig. 129	Frame of the outer most panels.
Fig. 130	Parts of the niche of t miḥrāb G.
Fig. 131	Panels below cornice of the larger miḥrāb G.
Fig. 132	Border framing niche of miḥrāb G.
Fig. 133	Border framing panels in miḥrāb G.
Fig. 134	Sūriya motif on the ceiling of the first bay from north.
Fig. 135	Sixteen pointed star, central part of the sūriya motif.
Fig. 136	A shape connecting rays of sūriya motif.
Fig. 137	Arabesques on petals and adjacent areas.
Fig: 138	Arabesques in between rays of sūriya motif.
Fig. 139	The Cypresses in squinches.
Fig. 140	Border encircling the ceiling.
Fig. 141	Motifs within stalactites.
Fig. 142	Stalactites crowning panels on the eastern and western walls of the transverse arch: 1.
Fig. 143	Decorative elements on both sides of panel bearing inscriptions.
Fig. 144	Frame of panels with trees in the transverse arch: 1.
Fig. 145	Frame of the calligraphic panels in the transverse arch: 1.
Fig. 146	Panel with floral plant above dado in thetransverse arch: 1.
Fig. 147	Smaller panel above dado.
Fig. 148	Dado of the far-northern transverse arch.
Fig. 149	Border of dado of the far-northern transverse arch.
Fig. 150	Soffit of the arch of iwān C.
Fig. 151	Border framing panels in the iwān C.
Fig. 152	Vase with flowers.
Fig. 153	Carpet like panel in iwān C.
Fig: 154	Vase with flowers in iwān C.
Fig. 155	Geometric design in iwān C.
Fig. 156	Tree on the soffit of arch in iwān C.
Fig. 157	Dado in iwān C.
Fig. 158	Bands framing dado in iwān C.
Figs. 159- 160	Stalactites surmounting calligraphic panels.
Fig. 161	Stalactites surmounting central calligraphic panels.
Figs. 162- 163	Panels on the side wall of miḥrāb H.
Fig. 164	Ceiling of the northern sanctuary.
Fig. 165	Central flower on the ceiling.
Fig. 166	Diamond shape on the ceiling.
Fig. 167	Compressed star with darūd in it.
Fig. 168	Pendent shape on the ceiling.
Fig. 169	Sea-shell design on the ceiling of the sanctuary.

Fig. 61 Floor of the entrance gate with four pointed star.
Fig. 62 North-western minaret of the mosque.
Fig. 63 Square base of the minaret
Fig. 64 Decorative panels on the shaft.
Fig. 65 Neck of the minaret.
Fig. 66 Decorative bands below the pavilion.
Fig. 67 Grille on the pavilion of the minaret.
Fig. 68 Grille on the pavilion of the minaret.
Fig. 69 Cupola of the minaret.
Fig. 70 Central arch of façade of the sanctuary.
Fig. 71 Upper part of the central arch of the sanctuary.
Fig. 72 Decorative band enframing the central arch of the sanctuary.
Fig. 73 Horizontal panel on the central arch.
Fig. 74 Close up of the band with quadrifoil and miḥrābi motifs.
Fig. 75 Vertical panel on the central arch.
Fig. 76 A pattern that frames panels on the central arch.
Fig. 77 Design on the façade of the sanctuary.
Fig. 78 Floral frame of a panel containing inscriptions.
Fig. 79 Floral frame of a decorative panel.
Fig. 80 Floral frame of a panel containing inscriptions.
Fig. 81 Spandrels of Panels with arabesques.
Fig. 82 Spandrels of panels with arabesques.
Fig. 83 Inner arch of the central façade.
Fig. 84 Spandrel of the Inner arch.
Fig. 85 Design on the side walls of the inner arch.
Fig. 86 Division of walls flanking the recessed arch.
Fig. 87 Cornice of the recessed central arch.
Fig. 88 Calligraphy adorning apex of the central arch.
Fig. 90 Spandrels of the far-northern and far-southern arches labelled as arches: B, and E, of the sanctuary.
Fig. 91 Spandrels of the northern and southern arches, labelled as arches: C, and D, of the sanctuary.
Fig. 92 Northern side of the courtyard.
Fig. 93 Spandrels of blind arches enframing the entrance doors of ḥujrās.
Fig. 94 Spandrels of blind arches enframing the entrance doors of ḥujrās.of ḥujrās.
Fig. 95 Spandrels of blind arch enframing entrance doors of ḥujrās.
Fig. 96 Façade of the southern ḥujrās.
Fig. 97 Parapets on north and south of the courtyard.
Fig. 98 Vases alternated by Perforated Screens on the northern and southern facades.
Fig. 99 Identical right and left sides of the southern façade.
Fig. 100 Eastern Façade of the main portal, facing courtyard.
Fig. 101 Jharoka of the eastern façade.
Fig. 102 Panels decorating north and south of the eastern façade.
Fig. 103 Northern wall of iwān B of the sanctuary.
Fig. 104 Band framing panels.
Fig. 105 Vase adorning apex of the blind arch of northern wall of iwān B.
Fig. 106 Floral tree on a panel of iwān B.
Fig. 107 Carpet motif on the iwān B.
Fig. 108 Geometric design on the iwān B.
Fig. 109 Band of eight pointed stars framing panels.
Fig. 110 Stalactites on the domed ceiling of the iwān B.
Fig. 111 Stalactites on the ceiling of the iwān B.
Fig. 112 Double borders at the rim of soffits of iwān B.
Fig. 113 Vase on the soffit of the iwān B.

Fig. 226	Northern panel on the central arch.
Fig. 227	Southern panel on the central arch.
Fig. 228	Āyāt on the central panel in the conch of the arch A.
Fig. 229	Northern panel next from the central, in the conch of the arch A.
Fig. 230	Second panel from the central in north, on the conch of arch A.
Fig. 231	Southern panel next to the central, in the conch of arch A.
Fig. 232	Second last panel from south, in the conch of arch A.
Fig. 233	Inner panel on northern wall of the conch of arch A.
Fig. 234	Outer panel on northern wall of the conch of arch A.
Fig. 235	Inner panel on southern wall of the conch of arch A.
Fig. 236	Outer panel on the southern wall of the conch of arch A.
Fig. 237	Inscription on the apex of the conch of arch A.
Figs. 238-239	Name of Allah adorning stars on the conch of arch A.
Figs. 240-241	Name of Muḥammad (pbuh) adorning stars on the conch of arch A.
Figs. 242-243	Name of Aḥmad Abū al-Qāsim on the stars.
Figs. 244-245	Name of the Caliph Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakar on the stars.
Fig. 246	Name of the Caliph Ḥaḍrat ʻUmar on stars.
Fig. 247	Name of the Caliph Ḥaḍrat ʻUmar on a star.
Figs. 248-249	Name of the Caliph Ḥaḍrat ʻUthmān on stars.
Fig. 250	Name of the Caliph Ḥaḍrat ʻAli on stars.
Figs. 251-252	Name of Ḥaḍrat Imām Ḥussain on a star.
Fig. 253	Band on the inner arch of the central façade, adorned with āyāt.
Fig. 254	Band on the inner arch of the central façade, adorned with āyāt from Sūrah al-Anʻām.
Fig. 255	Band on the inner arch of the central façade, adorned with āyāt from Sūrah al-Anʻām.
Fig. 256	Band on the inner arch of the central facade adorned with āyāt from Sūrah al-Mu'minūn.
Fig. 257	Inscriptions on the spandrels of the central inner arch.
Fig. 258	Darūd inscribed on the sides of the central inner arch.
Fig. 259	Saying of Abū Sufiān al-Thawri on the side walls of the central iwān.
Fig. 260	Saying of Abu Bakr Dulāf al-Shibli on the side walls of the central iwān.
Fig. 261	Saying of Jūnaid Baghdādi on the side walls of the central iwān.
Fig. 262	Inscription on the apex of the central iwān.
Fig. 263	Calligraphic band surmounting northern wall of central bay of the sanctuary.
Fig. 264	Calligraphic band surmounting northern wall of central bay of the sanctuary.
Figs. 265-266	Calligraphic band surmounting walls of central bay of the sanctuary.
Fig. 267	Central panel on the conch of the central miḥrāb, inscribed with āyāt from Sūrah al-Zumr.
Fig. 268	Ḥadīth inscribed on the inner left panel in the conch of central miḥrāb.
Fig. 269	The outer left panel from south in the conch of central miḥrāb.
Fig. 270	The inner right panel from south in the conch of the central miḥrāb.
Fig. 271	The outer panel from north in the conch of central arch.
Fig. 272	Sūrah al- Ikhlāṣ inscribed in the shape of medallion in the spandrels of the central miḥrāb.
Fig. 273	Bismillah in miḥrābi design at the spandrels of the central miḥrāb.
Fig. 274	Band of Qūr'ānic āyāt around the central smaller niche.
Fig. 275	Pendants on the spandrels of the lower central niche.
Fig. 276	Darūd inscribed on the wall, northern to the central niche.
Fig. 277	Darūd inscribed on the wall, southern to the central niche.
Fig. 278	Qūr'ānic ayāh from sūrah al-Raḥmān at the apex of iwān B.
Fig. 279	Ḥadīth inscribed on the northern and southern walls of the sanctuary.
Fig. 280	Central panel in the miḥrāb G.
Fig. 281	Inner northern panel in miḥrāb G.
Fig. 282	Inner southern panel of miḥrāb G.
Fig. 283	Outer northern panel of miḥrāb G.
Fig. 284	Outer southern panel of miḥrāb G.
Fig. 285	Inscription on the apex of miḥrāb G.
Fig. 286	Band containing thirteen names of Allah surrounding the smaller niche of miḥrāb G.

Fig. 170	White pendent motif.
Fig. 171	Arabesques on the ceiling.
Fig. 172	Zigzag band providing frame to the ornamental motifs on the ceiling.
Fig. 173	Apex of the second transverse arch.
Fig. 174	Zigzag lines of the star.
Fig. 175	Star and stalactites on the northern transverse arch.
Fig. 176	Stalactites in the northern transverse arch.
Fig. 177	Stalactites in the northern transverse arch.
Fig. 178	Stalactites in the northern transverse arch.
Fig. 179	Tree motif on both sides of the calligraphic panel of the northern transverse arch.
Fig. 180	Panels above dado of the northern transverse arch.
Fig. 181	Stalactites above calligraphic panels in the central iwān.
Fig. 182	Border on outer calligraphic panels.
Fig. 183	Border on the central calligraphic panel.
Figs.184-185	Floral Designs behind the text on calligraphic panels in central iwān.
Fig. 186	Ceiling of the central miḥrāb.
Fig. 187	Novel geometric formation above the calligraphic band in the central part of the sanctuary.
Fig. 188	Apex of the central miḥrāb.
Fig. 189	Border framing central calligraphic panel in the miḥrāb.
Fig. 190	Border framing calligraphic panels other than the central, in the miḥrāb.
Fig. 191	Stalactites on the central miḥrāb of the sanctuary.
Fig. 192	Honey combing in the corners of the central miḥrāb.
Fig. 193	Central niche of the sanctuary.
Fig. 194	Panel inside central smaller miḥrāb.
Fig. 195	Panel inside central smaller miḥrāb.
Fig. 196	Frame around panels containing darūd.
Fig. 197	Dado of central smaller miḥrāb.
Fig. 198	Upper frame of the dado of central smaller miḥrāb.
Fig. 199	Northern Gate.
Fig. 200	Lower part of the conch of Northern Gate.
Fig. 201	Decorative band between cornice and calligraphic band.
Fig. 202	Spandrels of the inner arch in the Northern Gate.
Fig. 203	Parapet of the Northern Gate.
Fig. 204	Shaft of turret of the Northern Gate.
Fig. 205	Northern wall of the sanctuary from outside the mosque.
Fig. 206	Arched opening in the northern outer wall of the sanctuary.
Fig. 207	Ḥadīth based on Kalima-yi Ṭayyiba inscribed on the summit of the Eastern Gate.
Fig. 208	Ḥadīth inscribed on the Northern Gate.
Fig. 209	Second inscription on the Northern Gate.
Fig. 210	Band of the Qur'ānic ayāh above arch B.
Fig. 211	Band of the Qur'ānic ayāh on the area between arch B and arch C.
Fig. 212	Band of the Qur'ānic āyah above arch C.
Fig. 213	Du'a at the end of the āyah
Fig. 214	Two āyāt surmounting the arch D.
Fig. 215	Qur'ānic band on the area between arch D and arch E.
Fig. 216	Āyah surmounting the arch E.
Fig. 217	Name of the calligrapher, who adorned the mosque.
Fig. 218	Upper panel on the northern and southern sides of the façade of sanctuary.
Fig. 219	Lower panel on the northern side of sanctuary.
Fig. 220	Ḥadīth inscribed on the lower panel in the southern side of the facade of sanctuary.
Figs. 221- 222	Sūrah al-Fatḥ surrounding the central facade of the sanctuary.
Figs. 223	Sūrah al-Fatḥ surrounding the central arch.
Fig. 224	Āyah al-Kursī surmounting the central arch.
Fig. 225	Name of the scribe Muḥammad Sharīf at the end of Āyah al-Kursi.

Fig. 404	Fence of the pavilion of minaret with star perforation, Wazīr Khān Mosque.
Fig. 405	Star perforation on the parapet of jharoka window on the northern outer wall of the Mosque.
Fig. 406	Octagonal perforated stars on the northern and southern walls of the sanctuary, Wazīr Khān Mosque.
Fig. 407	Star shape on the back wall of the sanctuary from outside.
Fig. 408	Panel with star on the Main Gate.
Fig. 409	Mihrābi or the outstretched star on the Main Gate.
Fig. 410	Star shape below the oriel windows.
Fig. 411	Star pattern on the inner arch of the Main Gate.
Figs. 412-413	Borders of arched balconies on the recessed arch of the Main Gate.
Fig. 414	Star formation by tazākāri through brick imitation on the soffits of the inner arch of the Main Gate.
Fig. 415	Border below cornice, inside the vestibule, composed of octagonal and twelve pointed out-stretched stars.
Fig. 418	Star border for the panels of the Northern Gate.
Fig. 417	Star shaped flowers of a tree, Northern Ggate.
Fig. 416	Panel on the Northern Gate with star patterns.
Fig. 419	Star border around the panels of the iwāns B and C.
Fig. 420	Outer frame of blind arch of the northern and southern walls of the sanctuary.
Fig. 421	Border based on compressed stars and quadrifoils.
Fig. 422	Double border on the far-northern and far-southern walls of the sanctuary.
Fig. 423	Border based on compressed stars and quadrifoils.
Fig. 424	Dado of the central smaller niche.
Fig. 425	Compressed star on the northern and southern ceilings.
Fig. 426	Compressed star on the far-northern and far-southern ceilings.
Fig. 427	Three tiered star on brick floor of the sanctuary.
Fig. 428	Star pattern on the brick floor.
Fig. 429	Brick floor with quarter of a star at its corners.
Fig. 430	Four pointed star on the upper most step of the eastern gate of the mosque.
Fig. 431	Intricate star on the ceiling of iwān B.
Fig. 432	Nucleus of the intricate star on the ceiling of iwān B.
Fig. 433	The inner most stars on the iwān B.
Fig. 434	The inner twelve pointed blue star on the iwān B.
Fig. 435	Six pointed star formation surrounding the twelve pointed on the iwān B.
Fig. 436	The outer most twelve pointed star on the iwān B.
Fig. 437	Smaller star at each point of the larger one on the iwān B.
Fig. 438	1/4th part of the eight pointed star in the intricate star shape.
Fig. 439	Six edged small star in the intricate star pattrn.
Fig. 440	Wedge shapes of stalactites, forming rays of smaller stars.
Fig. 441	Scintillation of stars in the shape of stalactites.
Fig. 442	Star at the apex of the far-northern ceiling of the sanctuary.
Fig. 443	Sixteen pointed star on the far-northern ceiling of the sanctuary.
Fig. 444	Novel star formation on the far-northern ceiling.
Fig. 445	Stars in sūriya motif.
Fig. 446	Hexagonal star on the edges of the rays of the sūriya motif.
Fig. 447	Compressed star on far-northern ceiling.
Fig. 448	Inner most star at apices of the bays of northern and southern ceilings of the sanctuary.
Fig. 449	Star within star at the apices of the bays of the northern and southern ceilings of the sanctuary.
Fig. 450	Novel star shape on the northern and southern ceilings of the sanctuary.
Figs. 451-453	Design based on star shape, used as background for the panels of the façade of sanctuary.
Figs. 454-455	Yellow and white compressed stars around the blue.
Fig. 456	Star band surmounting the necking of minarets.

Fig. 287 Pendent shapes on the spandrels of smaller niches of arch G.
Figs. 288-304 Darūd with its variations in the inner circle of sūriya motif on the far-northern ceiling.
Figs. 305-312 Darūd on the outer circle of sūriyā motif on the far-northern ceiling.
Fig. 313 Inscription on the apex of the iwān C.
Fig. 314 Central panel of the miḥrāb C adorned with the names of Allah and Muḥammad (pbuh).
Fig. 315 Ḥadīth on the inner southern panel of the miḥrāb C.
Fig. 316 Ḥadīth in the outer southern panel of the miḥrāb C.
Fig. 317 Inscription in the outer northern panel of miḥrāb C.
Fig. 318 Inscription in the inner northern panel of miḥrāb C.
Fig. 319 Praise for Allah inscribed on the apex of miḥrāb C.
Figs. 320-327 Darūds upon the Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh) in the inner circle of ceiling of the northern sanctuary.
Figs. 328-336 Darūds upon the Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh) in the outer circle of the ceiling of the northern bay of sanctuary.
Fig. 337 Ḥadīth inscribed in the inner right panel of the miḥrāb K.
Fig. 338 Ḥadīth calligraphed in the outer right panel of the miḥrāb K.
Fig. 339 Ḥadīth adorning the inner left panel of the miḥrāb K.
Fig. 340 Ḥadīth represented on the outer left panel of the miḥrāb K.
Fig. 340 Ḥadīth represented on the outer left panel of the miḥrāb K.
Fig. 341 Darūds inscribed in the central circle of the far-southern bay of the ceiling.
Figs. 342-356 Darūds inscribed in the outer circle of the far-southern ceiling.
Fig. 357 Darūd, which is unintelligible due to its damaged state.
Figs 358-365 Darūds in the inner circle of the southern ceiling.
Figs. 366-373 Darūds in the outer circle of the southern ceiling of the sanctuary.
Fig. 374 Sūrah al-Ikhlāṣ on the apices of all transverse arches.
Fig. 375 Āyāt on a panel of western soffit of the first transverse arch.
Fig. 376 Saying of Dhawāl Misri on the eastern soffit of the first transverse arch.
Fig. 377 Āyāt on the western soffit of the second transverse arch.
Fig. 378 Saying of Junaid Baghdādi on the eastern soffit of the second transverse arch.
Fig. 379 Āyāt on the western wall of the third transverse arch.
Fig. 380 An adage inscribed on the eastern wall of the third transverse arch.
Fig. 381 Āyāt on the western soffit of the fourth transverse arch.
Fig. 382 Saying of Abū 'Alī Dhaqqāq on the eastern soffit of the fourth transverse arch.
Fig. 383 Kalima-yi Ṭayyiba in the upper storey of the Vestibule.
Figs. 384-386 Ḥadīth inscribed in three segments on panels below the dome of central bay of the sanctuary.
Fig. 387 Persian inscription immediately above the southern oriel window of the main gate.
Fig. 388 Persian inscription at the top of the southern side of the Main Gate.
Fig. 389 Persian inscription at the top of the northern oriel window of the Main Gate.
Fig. 390 Persian inscription at the top of the northern side of the Main Gate.
Fig. 391 Northern lower panel on the Main Gate.
Fig. 392 Southern lower panel on the Main Gate.
Fig. 393 Persian inscription on the wall of the main portal, facing courtyard of the Mosque.
Fig. 394 Stele of Naram Sin.
Fig. 395 Six pointed star in the palace Khirbat al-Mafjār.
Fig. 396 Star shape, Tomb of Uljaitu, Sultanīyah.
Fig. 397 Octagonal star surmounting the court of lions, Alhamra, Spain.
Fig. 398 Closer view of the star formed by muqarnas, Alhamra, Spain.
Fig. 399 Star perforation on the central screen of the oriel window, Wazīr Khān Mosque.
Fig. 400 Perforated star on the balconies of the inner arch of main gate, Wazīr Khān Mosque.
Fig. 401 Star within a chequer on the parapet, Wazīr Khān Mosque.
Fig. 402 Star on the balconies of the main portal, Wazīr Khān Mosque.
Fig. 403 Fence of balcony at the farther end of the diminutive bazaar, flanking vestibule, Wazīr Khān Mosque.

Fig. 514	Site where the well once existed
Fig. 515	Tomb of Sayyid Muḥammad Isḥāq of Kāzīrūn.
Fig. 516	Bārādarī Structure of the Tomb.
Fig. 517	One of the columns of Bārādarī.
Fig. 518	Double base of the column.
Fig. 519	Neck of the column.
Fig. 520	Attached column on the corners of eastern and western arches.
Fig. 521	Column supporting eastern and western inner arches.
Fig. 522	Chevron design on the shafts of attached columns..
Fig. 523	Three storied base of the attached column.
Fig. 524	Pointed and cusped arches on the eastern and western sides of the Tomb.
Fig. 525	Alcove in pilasters.
Fig. 526	Band framing the eastern and western arches.
Fig. 527	Band surmounting bārādarī from all around.
Fig. 528	Interior of bārādari of the Tomb.
Fig. 529	Ceiling of bārādari of the Tomb.
Fig. 530	Sūriya motif, within an octagon in the centre of the Ceiling.
Fig. 531	Star formation in the eastern and western sides of the ceiling.
Fig. 532	Star border in wood framing the ceiling.
Fig. 533	Fruit dish and Arabesques on the eastern Arch from inside.
Fig. 534	Vase on vertical panels around eastern and western arches.
Fig. 535	Vase on vertical panels around eastern and western arches.
Fig. 536	Three bands one on the ceiling and the other two above arches.
Fig. 537	Turret of the tomb.
Fig. 539	Decorative band of tiles adorning the staircase.
Fig. 538	Staircase leading to the subterranean grave chamber.
Fig. 540	Symbolic miniature dome, like knob at the side wall of the staircase.
Fig. 541	Identicaal arrangement of stalactites on both sides of the central line in the conch of central arch of the sanctuary.
Figs. 542-543	Formation of Golden Spiral through graphs.
Fig. 544	Decorative representation of the atomic model in the Wazīr Khān Mosque.
Fig. 545	Decorative representation of the atomic model in the Wazīr Khān Mosque.
Fig. 546	The orbital paths of electrons in the atomic model, delineated in the Mosque Wazīr Khān.
Fig. 547	Bohr's Atomic Model.
Fig. 548	Design resembling Bohr' atomic model in Gök Medresse, Sivas, Turkey.
Fig. 549-550	Floral designs serve as background of calligraphy.

Fig. 457	Chinar leaves, forming tiny stars.
Fig. 458	Leaves of grape vine in the shape of stars.
Fig. 459	Star, crowning panels on the necking of the minarets.
Fig. 460	A novel star band, crowning shafts of the minarets.
Figs. 461-462	Tiny stars inside the larger stars and other geometric shapes.
Fig. 463	Stars in motion, an impression created by the use of "Y" like geometric shape around the star formations.
Fig. 464	Half star and full star formations on the conches of miḥrābs.
Fig. 465	Star shape on the dado of iwan a.
Fig. 466	Star shape on the dado of iwān b.
Fig. 467	Eight pointed star on the apices of transverse arches.
Fig. 468	Star formations at the edges of stalactites.
Fig. 469	Half-star formation at the edge of stalactites.
Fig. 470	Beauty of small stars between stalactites.
Fig. 471	Half star at the apex adulating Allah and Muḥammad.
Fig 472- 473	Golden spiral of the shell of Nautilus.
Fig. 474	Golden spirals in the Sun flower.
Fig. 475	Golden Proportions in the five pointed star.
Fig. 476	Approximation of Golden Ratio in six pointed star.
Fig. 477	A specimen of five-fold symmetry on the dado of the entrance gate.
Fig. 478	Method of drawing of Golden Rectangle from line AB.
Fig. 479	Method of drawing a Golden Rectangle.
Fig. 480	Diminutive Golden Rectangles.
Fig. 481	Golden Cup.
Fig. 482	Golden Triangle.
Figs. 483-485	Division of Golden Triangle into smaller Golden Tiangles.
Fig. 486	Novel star formation on the ceiling of the central bay of sanctuary.
Fig. 487	Four pointed star on the ceiling of the central bay of sanctuary.
Fig. 488	Design on the apices of balconies of the vestibule.
Fig. 489	Design resembling Bohr's atomic model.
Fig. 490	Design resembling Bohr's atomic model.
Fig. 491	Carved out panel on the minbar, a record that it was presented by the Viceroy Lord Curzon.
Fig. 492	Same text in Urdu, a memorial of the present of the Lord Curzon.
Fig. 493	Stand of the minbar to keep a Holy Book on it.
Fig. 494	Details of the stand to keep the Holy Book on a minbar.
Fig. 495	Rear view of the minbar.
Fig. 496	Carving on the first step of the minbar.
Fig. 497	Carving on the second step.
Fig. 498	Top most step of the minbar.
Fig. 499	Vase motif on the minbar.
Fig. 500	Sea-shell motif on the left wall of the minbar.
Fig. 501	Sea-shell motif on the ceiling of northern and southern parts of sanctuary.
Fig. 502	Border on the pulpit.
Fig. 503	Painted Border on various sections of the Mosque.
Fig. 504	Miniature brackets on the minbar.
Fig. 505	Ccrescent and star on the minbar.
Fig. 506	Leg and brackets of the minbar.
Fig. 507	Miniature globe mouldings in wood.
Fig. 508	Designs on the seat of the minbar.
Fig. 509	Minbar viewed from left.
Fig. 510	Domed enclosure of the well of Dīna Nāth.
Fig. 511	Water channel viewed from below.
Fig. 512	Water channel viewed from above.
Fig. 513	The course of water supply through the southern well.

Index

A

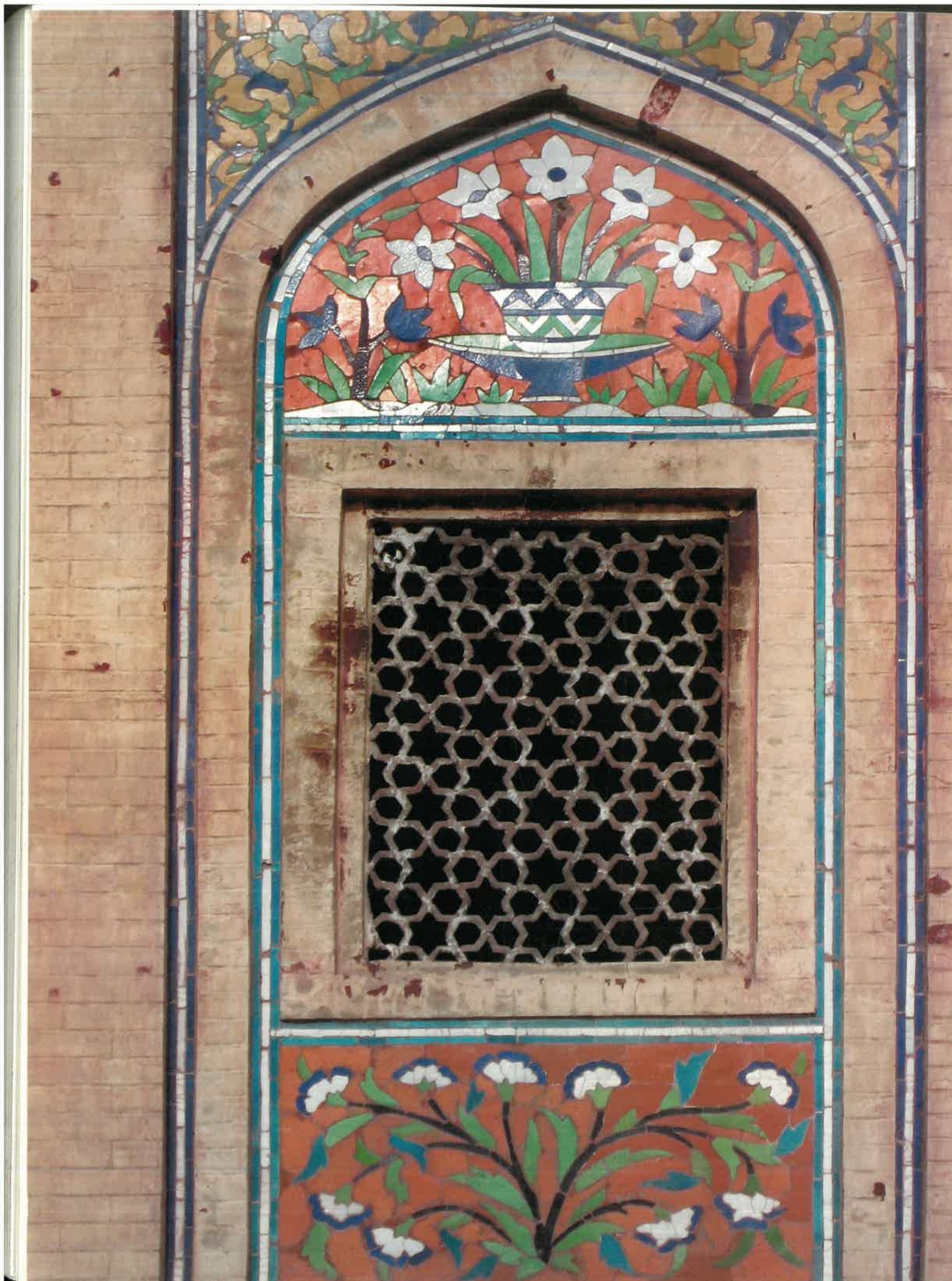
a'rāb, 109
Abbasid, 210, 211, 294, 297
Abbasids, 20, 247, 298
Abd al-Rahman Chughta'I, 14
Abjad calculation, 202
Abu Bakr Dulāf al-Shibli, 141
Abū Bakr Shibli, 141
Abū Dā'ūd, 156, 208
Abū Sufiyān al- Thawri, 140, 141
Abū'Abd-Allah Sufiyān al- Thawri, 140
Achaemenid, 107
adhān, 119, 122, 124
Afghanistan, 300
aḥādīth, III, 61, 107, 114, 115, 116, 117, 119, 122, 124, 128, 141, 142, 145, 147, 148, 159, 160, 173, 175, 182, 194
Aḥmad Abū al-Qāsim, 134, 135, 302
Aḥmad Shāh Abdāli, 10
Akbarābād, 1, 3
Akkad, 211
al-Anbari, 110
al-Birūni, I, 299
Alchemy, 298, 299
al-Hirī, 110
Alī Mardān Khān, 2, 3
al-Kūfī al-Fārisi, 110
al-Madani, 110
al-Makki, 110
Anbar, 110
angel 'Izrā'īl, 210
aniconic, 209
aniconism, 209
antiquity, 104
Arab, 19, 20
arabesques, I, 19, 20, 21, 22, 28, 29, 33, 38, 39, 41, 56, 57, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 65, 67, 70, 76, 78, 82, 88, 89, 90, 92, 97, 99, 102, 103, 104, 128, 139, 159, 209, 227, 229, 230, 232, 236, 255, 263, 280, 285, 290, 291, 292, 293
Arabs, 21, 107, 108, 299
Aramic writing, 110
Aristotle, 254, 299
Asḥārī scholar, 199
Ashoka, 108
Assyria, 273
Āṣif Khān, 2, 273
atom, 42, 256, 257, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299
atomic spectra, 295
atomic weights, 295
Avogadro constant, 295
āyah, 55, 81, 117, 118, 119, 124, 128, 130, 132, 154, 170, 172, 173, 197
Āyah al-Kursi, 124, 126, 170
āyāt, 55, 57, 81, 107, 109, 111, 114, 117, 118, 119, 124, 128, 130, 133, 137, 138, 144, 145, 146, 150, 151, 170, 172, 173, 194, 197, 290, 302, 303

B

Bābur, 21
Babylon9, 273
Babylonians, 242, 247
Baghdād, 141
Baghdādi Kūfic, 110
bārādari, 17, 276, 280, 281, 283, 285, 286, 287
Bayt al- Ḥikmahi, 298
Bihār, 113
Bohr, 42, 44, 256, 257, 294, 295, 296, 297, 300, 301
Bohr's atomic model, 256, 257, 296, 301
Buddha, 108
Buddhism, 108
Buddhists, 108

C

calligraphic panels, 21, 28, 59, 75, 76, 82, 86, 87, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 115, 128, 140, 143, 170, 241, 272, 302
calligraphy, VI, 13, 21, 55, 58, 59, 65, 66, 69, 86, 96, 102, 104, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 116, 117, 119, 124, 142, 159, 162, 199, 259, 302
cataracts, 299
celestial, 210, 211, 216, 255
Ceramic tiles, 272
Chahār Chaman, 13, 18
Chandar Bhān Brahman, 13
Charrat Singh Sakar Chakiyah, 10
chauk Wazīr Khān, 7, 10
chemists, 299
chequer design, 139
chevron pattern, 25, 38, 103, 271, 278
China, 272, 273
Chinese porcelain, 273
Chinīot, 1, 3
Chitta Darwāza, 7, 10, 11, 12
chronography, 201



Hāthipol, 3
Herat, 300
Hira, 110
Hirī, 110
Holy Qur'ān, VI, 19, 21, 55, 104, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 117, 119, 124, 128, 131, 132, 137, 145, 154, 170, 195, 197, 210, 260, 263, 287, 298
Honey-combing, 97
Ḥūdaibīyah, 303
ḥujrās, VIII, 14, 16, 17, 45, 61, 62, 63, 101, 268
Hypocrites, 299
Ḥaḍrat Alī, 107, 136, 241, 302
Ḥaḍrat Imām Ḥussain, 107, 136, 137, 241
Ḥaḍrat Ismā'īl, 119
ḥāfiz, 109
Ḥajr al-Aswad, 143
ḥuffāz, 109, 111
Ḥaḍrat'Abdullah, 108

I

Ibn al-Bawwāb, 112
Ibn al-Haitham, 299
Ibn-i Mājah, 115, 124, 126, 148, 184, 207, 208
Ibn-Muqlah, 112
Ibrāhīm Lodhi, 271
iconic forms, 210
Ilm al- Dīn, 1
Imām Mālik, 141
Imām Ṭibrāni, 149
inscriptions, 19, 24, 27, 28, 56, 61, 66, 69, 74, 75, 80, 81, 83, 86, 87, 94, 95, 96, 99, 100, 107, 114, 115, 116, 119, 124, 128, 130, 131, 133, 137, 139, 142, 143, 145, 149, 150, 154, 155, 156, 159, 160, 164, 170, 175, 176, 181, 182, 185, 194, 198, 199, 201, 206, 212, 216, 218, 241, 272, 292, 302
interlacing patterns, 22
Iqbal nāma Jahāngīr, 302
Iran, 13, 19, 112, 272, 273, 300
Ishtar Gate, 273
Iṣfahān, 300
iwān, 13, 16, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 76, 81, 83, 84, 85, 93, 94, 95, 101, 140, 142, 143, 154, 155, 170, 181, 221, 222, 225, 226, 227, 228, 231, 237, 238, 239, 253, 256

J

J. J. Thomsom, 295
J. W. Geiger, 295
Jadhm, 110
Jahāngīr, 1, 2, 7
Jāmi'āh al-Tirmadhi, 147, 182, 184
jharoka, 65, 214, 233, 236
Jilaū khāna, 11
Johann Balmer, 295
Johnstone Stoney, 295
Jūnaid Baghdādi, 140, 141, 142, 196

K

K. P. Butusov, 246
Ka'ba, 119, 143, 192, 303
Kābli Mal, 10
Kalānour, 270
Kallo, 107
Kāshān, 273
Kashf al-Khifā, 122
Kāshīkāri, 54, 102, 103, 216, 271, 272, 273
Kāshīkāri, 3, 37, 114, 273, 274
Keith Critchlow, 242, 301
Khaṭṭ-i Ma'kūs, 154, 170
Khaṭṭ-i Silsilah, 162
Khaṭṭ-i i'jāzah, 112
Khaṭṭ, 110
Khaṭṭ al-Sitta, 112
Khaṭṭ-i mīkhi, 107
Khaṭṭ-i Ghūbār, 173
Khaṭṭ-i Naskhi, 142, 154
Khawāja 'Ubaid Khān, 10
Khirbāt al-Mafjār, 211
Khorasabād, 273
Khurasān, 141
Khurram, 1, 2, 3
Khwāja 'Abdullah Anṣāri, 300
King Frederick II, 243
Kinz al-'Ummāl, 122, 207, 208
Kūfa, 110
Kūfic, 110, 111, 112, 114

L

Lapis lazuli, 114, 128
Leonardo de Vinci's, 246
Liber Abaci, 243
Lord Curzon, 259
Loschmidt, 295
lustre painted pottery, 273

M

Madina, 110, 154, 192, 194
Maghribi, 113, 114
Māhābat Khān, 2

compressed star, 76, 89, 99, 176, 221, 222, 235
Cordova, 272
cosmos, 210, 242, 252, 293, 298
Coulomb's law, 296
Court of Lions, 212
cusped arches, 35, 61, 67, 69, 77, 82, 99, 279

D

dado, 16, 31, 32, 33, 49, 50, 69, 71, 75, 76, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 92, 93, 99, 101, 124, 160, 201, 221, 238, 249
Dār al-'Ilmii, 298
Dāra Shīkoh, 3, 302
Darb-i Imām, 300
darūd, 78, 88, 89, 99, 100, 122, 124, 133, 139, 154, 164, 167, 168, 169, 176, 178, 180, 186, 187, 189, 190, 192, 194, 222, 230, 233
decorative motifs, 19, 32, 51, 59, 95, 124, 143, 170, 194, 259, 262, 280, 287
deed, 3, 4, 5, 11, 268, 270
Delhi Darwāza, 10, 11
Dhū al-Nūn al-Miṣri, 195
Dimocritus, 294
Dīna Nāth, 12, 267, 268, 270
Divine proportions, 246

E

E. Marsden, 295
Egypt, 210, 247, 272, 273
Egyptian hieroglyphs, 108
Egyptians, 210, 242, 247, 292
eight pointed star, 28, 44, 51, 73, 80, 81, 99, 133, 150, 212, 219, 225, 229, 230, 232, 236, 241, 253, 256, 265
eight-fold symmetry, 238
epigraphy, 113
Euclid, 210, 242, 299
European medieval ages, 298, 299, 301
extreme and means ratio, 242

F

faience tiles, 273
Fatmids, 20
Fibonacci, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 253, 291
Fiqh, 199
five pointed star, 247, 248
five-fold symmetry, 248, 249, 299
floral designs, 28, 70, 78, 86, 97, 219
floral motifs, I, 21, 33, 83, 86, 89, 94, 96, 99, 290, 301
floral ornaments, 59, 75, 94, 210, 255, 286
floral plants, 30, 82
floral vine scroll, 84
foliated designs, 263, 290
Fresco painting, 272, 286
fritt, 273

G

Galen, 299
Ganga Rām, 274
geometric designs, I, 20, 21, 22, 25, 28, 31, 41, 50, 66, 67, 71, 75, 95, 104, 115, 210, 265
geometric ornamentations, 44, 55, 289
Geometric patterns, 20, 21, 27, 45, 50, 69
geometricians, 209, 242, 289, 299
geometry, 22, 104, 110, 209, 210, 226, 228, 236, 242, 247, 250, 251, 252, 255, 257, 289, 290, 292, 303
girih, 299, 300
glazed tiles, 24, 27, 54, 114, 216, 271, 272, 273, 287
Gök Medresse, 301
Golden cup, 251
Golden Means, 242, 249, 251
Golden Proportions, 242, 243, 246, 247, 248, 249, 251, 252, 257, 258, 293
Golden Ratio, I, 19, 209, 242, 243, 246, 247, 248, 249, 251, 257, 291, 300
Golden rectangle, 250
Golden Section, 209, 242, 246
golden spiral, 245, 246, 291, 292
Golden Triangles, 249, 252
Goldstein, 295
Graphein, 107
Greece, 21, 272, 298
Greeks, 108, 210, 242, 292, 294
gulābkāri, 50
Gunbad-i Kabūs, 300
Guzargāh, 300

H

ḥadīth, 25, 81, 114, 115, 116, 122, 124, 126, 128, 141, 147, 148, 156, 159, 160, 173, 174, 182, 207, 208
Ḥaḍrat 'Uthmān, 134, 136, 241, 290
Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakr, 136, 241
Ḥaḍrat Alī, 120
Ḥaḍrat Ibrāhīm, 117, 118, 119, 137, 150, 151
Ḥaḍrat Ismā'īl, 117, 119, 150
Ḥaḍrat Umar, 109, 120, 135, 136, 241
Ḥaḍrat Abū Ṭālib, 108
Ḥāji Yūsūf Kashmīri, 119
Ḥajj, 119, 141, 303
Ḥakīm D'āvi, 1

Riq'a, 112
Roger Penrose, 299
Romans, 108
rose window, 211
Rutherford, 295

S

Safawid, 272
Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri, 116, 147, 159, 182, 207, 208
Ṣaḥīḥ al-Muslim, 116, 207, 208
sajdah sahw, 142
Saljuqs, 20
Samarqand, 212
Sargon, 211, 273
Sayyid Muḥammad Isḥāq Kāzīrūn, 45
Sayyid Ṣūf, 12
sea-shell motif, 39
Shafi', 113
Shāh 'Abbās, 272
Shāh Mūsa, 271
Shāhdara, 273
Shāh-i Zindān, 212
Shāhjaḥān, 2
shoulder arch, 35
Sir William Crooks, 295
Sivas, 301
six pointed star, 67, 225, 235, 236, 248
six-fold symmetry, 249
Spain, 20, 114, 212, 272
spandrels, 24, 25, 28, 29, 34, 36, 38, 39, 41, 49, 55, 56, 57, 59, 61, 62, 63, 65, 67, 73, 76, 82, 87, 97, 99, 100, 103, 115, 124, 128, 139, 149, 150, 151, 154, 162, 163, 222, 233, 280, 283, 286, 292
spiral, 22, 244, 245, 246, 290, 291, 292, 296
stalactite formations, 33, 42, 81, 94, 97, 104, 238, 241, 257, 283, 289, 301
star formations, 93, 219, 225, 226, 236, 237, 239, 240, 249
star motif, 211, 212, 213, 214, 216, 219, 221, 225, 226, 238, 253, 264
star shaped leaves, 235
Stele of Narum Sin, 210
stucco, 75, 76, 91, 114, 160, 176, 194, 272
Sultanīyah, 211, 212, 272
Sunan-i Abī Da'ūd, 208
Sunnan-i al-Nīsa'i, 148, 159
Sūrah, 55, 57, 80, 91, 99, 100, 109, 117, 118, 124, 125, 126, 130, 131, 133, 137, 138, 145, 146, 149, 154, 170, 173, 189, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 303
Sūrah al- A'rāf, 133
Sūrah al-Fatḥ, 55, 124, 125, 126, 303
Sūrah al-Ikhlās, 149, 154, 194, 238
Sūrah cxii (al-Ikhlāṣ), 80, 91, 99, 100, 149, 154, 194
Sūrah ii (al-Baqarah), 55, 117, 118, 124, 170, 173, 195, 196, 197
Sūrah iii (Āl-i 'Imrān), 128, 130, 131, 132, 173, 198
Sūrah ix (al-Tauba), 118
Sūrah Lix (al-Ḥashr), 144
Sūrah lvcxii (al-Raḥmān), 154
Sūrah lxii (al-Jum'ah), 144
Sūrah v (al- Mā'idah), 130
Sūrah vi, (al-An'ām), 57
Sūrah xcvi (al-'Alaq), 109
Sūrah xiv (Ibrāhīm), 150
Sūrah xlviii (al-Fatḥ), 57
Sūrah xlviii (al-Fatḥ.), 55
Sūrah xvii (al-Bani Isrā'īl), 170
Sūrah xxiii (al- Mu'minūn), 57, 137, 138
Sūrah xxxix (al-Zumr), 145
sūriya motif, 34, 77, 78, 79, 103, 164, 167, 168, 169, 185, 230, 231, 280, 282, 283, 290, 301
Ṣaḥāh al-Sittahi, 148
Ṣaḥāḥ al-Sittah, 148

T

Ta'līq, 111, 113
Taṣawwuf, 199
Tawqi, 112, 113
tāzakāri, 27, 56, 61, 218, 219, 271, 272
terracotta, 219
terrestrial, 211, 216, 255
three-fold symmetry, 22
Thulth, 111, 112, 113, 114, 120, 122, 124, 128, 134, 137, 139, 140, 142, 143, 144, 145, 150, 151, 159, 160, 163, 173, 174, 175, 176, 180, 185, 190, 194, 195, 196, 198, 199
Timur, 299
Timurid, 21, 300
transverse arch, 81, 82, 83, 91, 92, 93, 195, 196, 197, 198
tree motif, 33, 49, 50, 55, 58, 63, 67, 69, 71, 73, 75, 77, 82, 84, 93, 94, 99, 102, 103, 220, 290
Ṭughra, 113
Tuḥfāt al-Karam, 13
Turkey, 19, 112, 113, 300, 301
turrets, 15, 24, 25, 43, 44, 45, 103, 214, 263
twelve pointed stars, 67, 227, 247, 248, 253

U

Uljaitū, 211
Ulugh Baig, 299

Maḥfil-i Samā, 287
Majma' al-Zwa'id, 148
Makkah, 110, 118, 119, 154, 192, 194, 303
Manṣūr Ḥallāj, 142
Maple leaves, 234, 235
Maple trees, 235
Marāgha, 300
Masjid-i Qaṣṣābān., 11
Masnad-i Aḥmad, 160, 184
Mausoleum of Mama Hatun, 300
Mayo School, 259, 260, 265
merlon design, 27, 28, 37, 38, 43, 49, 51, 55, 103
merlons, 24, 34, 76, 290
Mesopotamia, 110, 210, 247, 272, 273
Miān Mīr, 302
miḥrābi, 24, 25, 28, 32, 38, 39, 41, 42, 43, 55, 69, 70, 73, 150, 209, 217, 290, 301
miḥrāb, 14, 74, 75, 77, 87, 156, 157, 158, 161, 162, 163, 172, 181, 182, 183
minā'i, 273
Mirān Bukhsh Naqqāsh, 14
Mirza Mīrak., 13
Mishkāt al-Maṣābīh, 116
Mongol, 211, 285
Moors, 20
Morān, 13
Moris Cantor, 243
Mu'ajjam al-A'ust, 148
Mū'jjam al-Mufahris al-Alfaẓ al- ḥadīth, 148
Mu'tamid Khān, 3, 302
Mu'adhdhin, 119
Mughals, 10, 11, 13, 21, 63, 66, 101, 114, 115, 176, 271, 272, 273
Muḥammad Bakhsh, 274
Muḥammad Khuda Bandah, 272
Muḥammad Sharīf, 124, 302
Mujaddad Alif Thāni, 302
Mulla Ḥussain Gujrāti, 302
muqarnas, 212, 254

N

Nabataean script, 110
Naram Sin, 211
Naskhi, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 117, 119, 139, 147, 148, 156, 163, 173, 185, 188, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199
Nast'ālīq, 25
Nautilus, 244, 291
Newton, 294
Niel Bohr, 294
Nile, 299
Nūrjahān, 1, 2, 7

O

Ogee arch, 36
oriel window, 25, 201, 202, 212
ornamental designs, V, VI, VII, 20, 21, 22, 84, 209, 265, 292, 293, 301
ornamental patterns, 214, 242

P

palmettes, 290, 293
Pari Maḥal, 3
Paul J. Steinhardt, 299
pendent shapes, 78, 87, 162
pentacle, 246, 248
perforated screens, 15, 17, 24, 38, 42, 43, 63, 213, 214, 218, 271
Persia, V, 13, 21, 22, 111, 272, 273
Persian wheel, 267, 268
Peter J. Lu, 299, 301
Phi, 243, 244, 246, 248, 257
photons, 296
phylotaxis, 246
physicists, 296, 299
pinjrā work, 260
Pisa, 243
plant motif, 50, 61
plant motifs, 29, 61, 70, 75, 76, 99, 139
Plato, 253, 254, 299
Proton, 295
Prout, 295
Ptolemy, 299
pyramids, 242
Pythagoras, 209, 242, 247
Pythagorean geometry, 242

Q

quadrifoil, 24, 25, 28, 32, 38, 43, 51, 55, 70, 76, 81, 83, 84, 99, 103, 213, 214, 221, 222, 233, 290
Quantum theory, 256

R

Ranjīt Singh, 10, 12, 13, 14
Rayḥāni, 112, 113
regular spiral, 22
Renaissance, 294, 297, 298
riht, 267, 268, 269



Umayyads, 211
Urs, 13

V

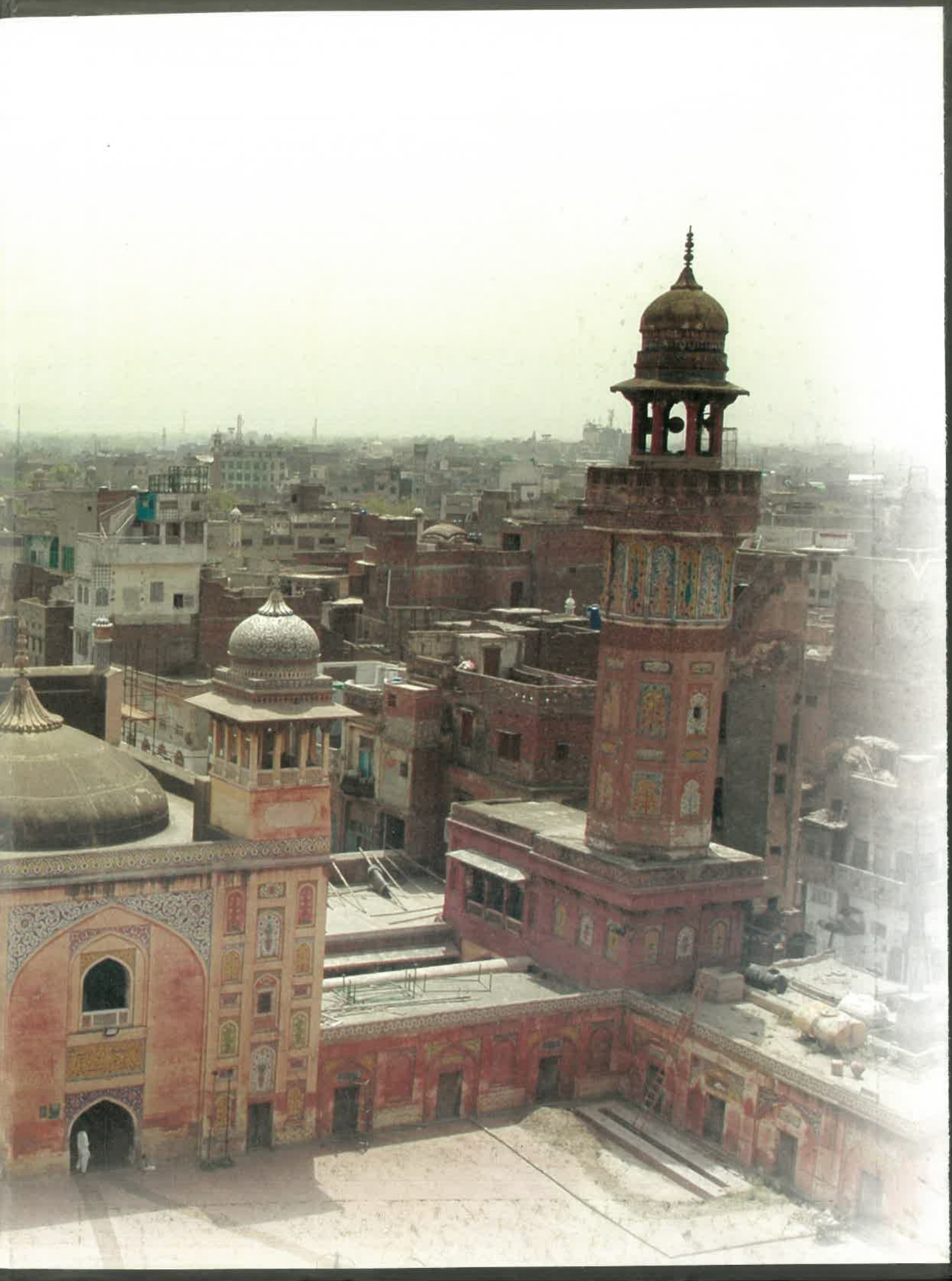
vase motif, 28, 29, 44, 49, 63, 67, 69, 70, 73, 262
vegetal designs, 21, 44, 255, 302
vegetal forms, 293
vegetal motifs, 26, 78, 81, 102, 115, 254, 255, 279, 289
Venus, 248
Villa Viciosa Mosque, 272
Vinsik, 148
Vitruvian man, 246

W

Wazīr Khān, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 19, 21, 22, 24, 104, 107, 114, 119, 141, 199, 201, 203, 206, 209, 210, 212, 213, 214, 215, 217, 226, 242, 244, 247, 251, 253, 257, 259, 267, 268, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 289, 290, 292, 294, 297, 298, 299, 301, 302
Whelk Shell Goldman, 292

Y

Yaqūt, 112
Yūsaf Kashmīri, 302







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