

# The Guarded Tablet

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THE BASIC SYMBOLS used in Islamic art derive from the concept of creation, which proceeds from God and encompasses all that exists. Muslims, like Jews, regard the universe as having been created by God through the power of the letters of the alphabet. Words, therefore, or rather the letters (and by extension sound and number) from which they are formed, are regarded as the basic substructure of the universe and consequently form much of the subject matter of Islamic art. The Koran as given to the Prophet in the Arabic language is described as part of the infinite word of God taken from a tablet guarded or preserved, *al-lauh al-mahfūz*, in heaven.<sup>1</sup>

For these reasons Islamic art does not generally use an iconography in the accepted Western sense of the term. Indeed, only a relatively small proportion of Islamic works of art bear figural representations, while the majority are covered with vegetal and geometric designs and with words. The words especially must be regarded as a major force in the iconography and should be analyzed and treated in the way that we in the West analyze pictorial imagery. We must keep in mind always that these words and the letters from which they are formed are an aspect of the very structure of reality. It should also be remembered that only an approximation of this very different worldview can be glimpsed through translation.

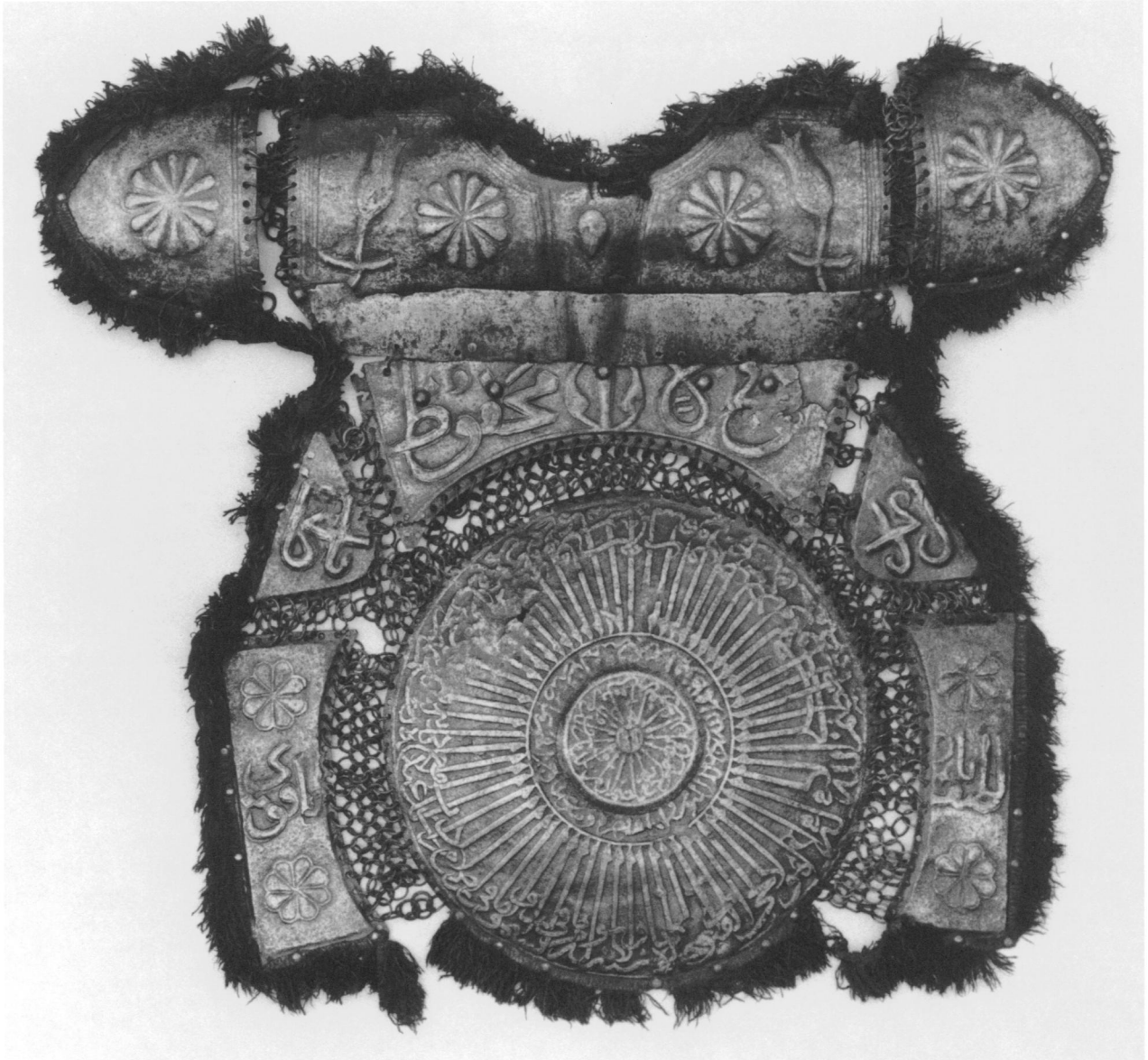
Perhaps because of the centrality of the concept of the Holy War, *jihād*, one of the largest corpora of inscriptions is found on Islamic arms and armor. Indeed, most pieces of Islamic arms and armor bear inscriptions, and a large proportion of these are koranic. One such piece is an Ottoman breastplate with a pectoral disk, which dates to between 1557 and 1600, now in The Metropolitan Museum of Art (Figure 1). This pectoral is important because the Arabic inscriptions with which it is covered include much that is essential to an understanding of Islam,

because no other object in the Museum's collection of Islamic arms and armor bears a mention of the *al-lauh al-mahfūz*, and because in formal terms the pectoral seems to continue solar imagery that can be traced back to about fourteen hundred years before the birth of Christ.

Pectoral and dorsal disks, suspended by straps in the center of the chest and at the back, seem to have been first used in Iran during the fourteenth century B.C., from which period is preserved an Elamite example (Figure 2), decorated with rams surrounding a radiating sunburst. From Iran the style spread to Assyria, where it appears in relief sculpture from the Palace of Sargon (721–705 B.C.), and to the steppes of Central Asia as is witnessed by a Scythian example of about the fourth century B.C., which has a disk incorporated into a lamella breastplate (Figure 3).<sup>2</sup>

The style also traveled to Italy and Central Europe. Two sixth-century B.C. examples from these regions are decorated, respectively, with a sunburst design and with concentric rings.<sup>3</sup> In the Sasanian period pectoral disks were often depicted on silver-gilt plates, such as a fourth-century plate that shows an unidentified king slaying lions;<sup>4</sup> they also appear in the royal hunting and investiture scenes at Taq-i-Bustan (Figure 4). The latter include a pectoral disk decorated with what is probably a sunburst motif of exactly the same type as the Elamite example. Pectoral disks continued to be used in Central Asia, and a sixth-century example from Panjikent shows a rider in the boar-drawn chariot of Veshparkarn wearing a disk of this type decorated with small circles and triangles.<sup>5</sup>

In the Islamic period, depictions of pectoral and dorsal disks occur with great frequency in miniature painting, especially in Iranian paintings from the fourteenth century onward.<sup>6</sup> Later Islamic armors with large central disks of the type under discussion



1. Cuirass with pectoral disk, Turkish, Ottoman period, 1557–1600. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bequest of George C. Stone, 1936, 36.25.345

are essentially a variation of these early forms. However, later examples differ from the earlier ones in that the pectoral and dorsal disks are usually larger and are incorporated into an armored shirt or body armor. The earliest surviving examples from the Islamic period are an armor with a small disk incorporated into a plate and mail armor, which can be dated

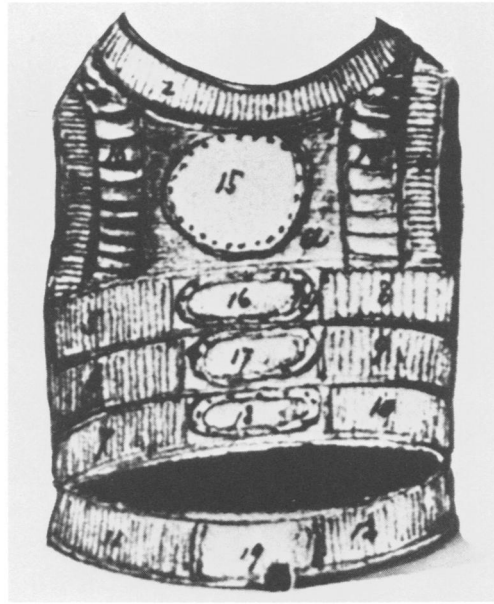
to the fifteenth century, and an armor with both pectoral and dorsal disks, which cannot be later than the early fifteenth century (Askeri Museum, Istanbul, nos. 4326/2 and 21301; for the latter see Figure 5). Two other examples of the early sixteenth century with larger disks, one Safavid and the other Syrian, are in the Topkapi Sarayi Museum, Istanbul, and the Stibbert Museum, Florence (no. 3514).<sup>7</sup>

It is tempting to suggest that these disks originally had a solar significance. Some of the early examples are certainly decorated with solar motifs identical to



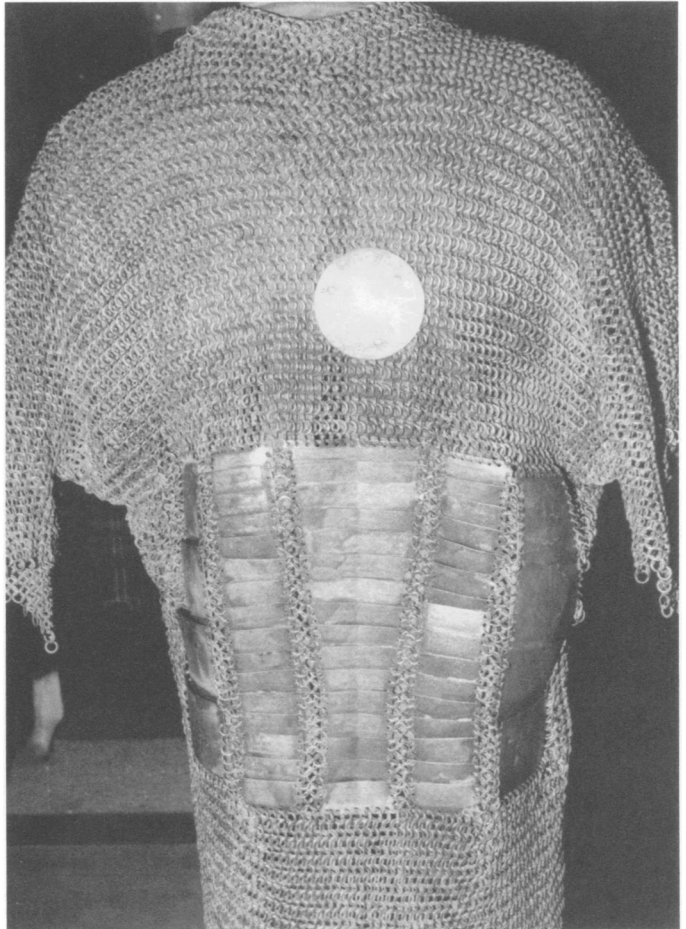
2. Elamite disk, Iranian, 14th century B.C. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1962, 62.115

4. Warrior with pectoral disk, Iranian, Taq-i-Bustan, A.D. 6th century (from Fukai and Horiuchi, *Taq-i-Bustan*, pl. LXVII)



3. Scythian cuirass, Russian, Pasterkaja, 4th century B.C. (from Gamber, *Waffe*, fig. 324)

5. Coat of mail with pectoral disk, Iranian, A.D. 15th century, Istanbul, Askeri Museum, no. 21301 (photo: Askeri Museum)



those on some of the later Islamic armors. The Elamite disk, the disk on the armor illustrated in Figure 5, and a sixteenth-century Ottoman example in the Askeri Museum in Istanbul (no. 16468) have exactly the same radiating solar motif that also occurs on the outer plates of the Museum's armor. A disk with a spiraling sunburst is depicted in a miniature painting in an Iranian *Shahnama* of 1648.<sup>8</sup> Solar worship would not have been possible in an Islamic context, but it is very possible that an ancient solar motif could have been transformed into one evoking the power of God, especially God in the sense of Lord of the Heavens, who created "the sun and moon to revolve to a computation" (Koran 55:5).<sup>9</sup>

In order to understand this piece properly it is necessary to examine the inscriptions with which it is covered.

#### INSCRIPTIONS:

##### A. Inner circle

قل هو الله أحد الله الصمد لم يلد ولم يولد ولم يكن له كفواً أحد

Say: "He is God, the one the most unique, God the immanently indispensable. He has begotten no one, and is begotten of none. There is no one comparable to Him" [Koran 112].

##### B. Around circle

فوقهم الله شر ذلك اليوم ولقهم نضرة وسروراً وجزيهم بما صبروا  
جنة وحريراً

So God will protect them from the evil of that day, and grant them happiness and joy, and reward them for their perseverance Paradise and silken robes [Koran 76:11–12].

##### C. Outer circle

الله لا اله الا هو الحي القيوم لا تاخذه سنة ولا نوم له ما في السموت وما في الارض من ذا الذي يشفع عنده الا باذنه يعلم ما بين ايديهم وما خلفهم ولا يحيطون بشيء من علمه الا بما شاء  
وسع كرسيه السموت والارض

God: There is no god but He, the living, the eternal, self-subsisting, ever sustaining. Neither does somnolence affect Him nor sleep. To Him belongs all that is in the heavens and earth; and who can intercede with Him except by His leave? Known to Him is all that is present before men and what is hidden (in time past and time future) and not even a little of His knowledge can they grasp except what He will. His seat extends over heavens and the earth and He tires not protecting them: He alone is all high and supreme [Koran 2:255].

#### D. Side plates

يا لطيف يا ماجد يا كافي يا قوي في لوح محفوظ

O most one, o glorious one, o sufficient one, o strong one (four of the ninety-nine names of God).

Preserved on the guarded tablet [Koran 85:22].

The major series of inscriptions is carved onto the pectoral disk and in formal terms can be associated with the circular fields that were often used by Islamic artists. Roundels inscribed with koranic verses were a specialty of Ottoman calligraphers. Large roundels of this type adorn the Hagia Sophia in Istanbul, and other fine examples can be seen on ceramic tiles of the sixteenth century. These designs were composed by the best calligraphers, such as Ahmed Qaraḥisārī (1469–1566), whose inscribed roundels in the *çeli* script adorn the Süleymaniye Mosque of about 1557.<sup>10</sup> In fact the inscription (Koran 112) used by Qaraḥisārī for the roundels surrounding the mihrāb in the Süleymaniye Mosque is the same one used in the inner circle of the Museum's armor. It is very likely that the armorer based his design on that of Qaraḥisārī.

The use of *Sūra* (chapter) 112 to flank the mihrāb in the Süleymaniye Mosque is indicative of its importance. This *sūra* is called *Al-Ikhlāṣ*, which can be translated as either the "verse of pure faith" or the "verse of purity." The Sufis regarded it as especially important for the *dhikr*, or invocation of God, because according to Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh (died 1309) each of its words possessed its "own quality, an allusive value, a profound significance, of the astonishing benefits, of secrets, wisdom, science and majestic and exceptional knowledge." Ibn 'Aṭā' went on to analyze each of its words, explaining how it flows "from the divine commandment, affirms His being and the name of His divine function, unity and transcendence and signifies that He has no rapport with any other than Himself nor has He created any other." The latter, since it is given in terms of positive and negative, alludes to a unity beyond human understanding. The chapter is also important because it contains not only the great names of God (i.e., Allāh and Hu) but also the second name of God, Aḥad ("the One"), which is bounded on either side by the word *Allāh*, thereby amplifying and repeating the divine unity.<sup>11</sup>

The second inscription is from Koran 76:11–12. Its use supports the view that these disks retain in a

veiled form, their original significance long forgotten, the solar associations probably attached to them in pre-Islamic times, for the very next verse (Koran 76:13) reads, “where they will recline on couches feeling neither heat of sun nor intense cold.” This inscription is clearly talismanic and praises God as Lord of the heavens, of sun and moon, who will protect His servants on the Day of Judgment. That large numbers of the surviving pectoral armors are engraved, incised, or embossed with lines radiating from their centers also suggests the validity of this hypothesis.

The third inscription is from Koran 2:255. This is the *Āyat al-kursī*, or “Throne” *sūra*. This verse occurs frequently on arms and armor, especially on helmets. According to a ḥadīth, as reported by Anās Ibn Mālik and recorded by Abu ‘Isā al-Tirmidhī (died ca. 892), the Prophet said that the lord of all the verses in the Koran was the *Āyat al-kursī*. Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh gave four reasons for this: first, it has no equal in the way it mentions the infinite essence of God, especially as it gives five of the divine names and uses the pronoun *hā* (him) eleven times. He described every other verse in the Koran as a tributary of this verse, just as all things are tributaries of the divine essence. Second, the pronoun *hā* is the synthesis of all the principal realities of the name of the divine essence, and whoever invokes the name *hā* will be covered with light and will understand the divine mysteries. Third, it is called the “Throne” *sūra* because the throne of God extends from heaven to earth, just as all things temporal proceed from God, and just as all of creation exists within a hierarchy with God as sovereign at the summit. Fourth, when the Prophet called this verse the lord of all the other verses, he expressed its hierarchical perfection and its summation of the most noble qualities. It is analogous to the relationship of the Prophet to other men, which is expressed in a ḥadīth that calls the Prophet the lord of the children of Adam because of his perfect humility, patience, and thankfulness.<sup>12</sup>

The word *Aḥād*, which occurs in the central inscription, is one of the ninety-nine names of God. Another four are embossed on the side plates. The importance of these names is explained in Koran 59:23–24:

He is God; there is no God but He, the King, the Holy, the Preserver, Protector, Guardian, the Strong, the Pow-

erful, Omnipotent. Far too exalted is God for what they associate with Him. He is God, the Creator, the Maker, the Fashioner. His are all the beautiful names. Whatever is in heaven and earth sings His praises. He is all-mighty and all-wise.

The concept that the names or attributes of God are crucial for understanding the true nature of reality is found in both Jewish Cabala and Islamic mysticism, where it is said that God created the universe through the power of his names. These names are found not only in the verse quoted above but throughout the Koran as revealed to the Prophet; indeed, the entire Koran can be regarded as one of the names of God. The number of the names varies according to different philosophers and mystics, but generally it is put at ninety-nine. The mystics regarded knowledge of the names of God as capable of giving power to men. This is expressed in a ḥadīth of the Prophet: “To God belong 99 names, a hundred less one; for He, the Odd Number, likes one by one; whosoever knows the 99 names will enter paradise.”<sup>13</sup> As the names were regarded as being invested with such power, it is easy to see why they were used on weapons as talismans that might protect the warrior from physical harm in this world.

The names of God are often compared to a ladder by which the believer can ascend to knowledge of the Divine. This, incidentally, is why ladder patterns on Islamic sword blades were so highly prized and why these patterns were called “Muḥammad’s ladder.” The ladder represents the means of ascent to knowledge of the Divinity as in Jacob’s ladder: “And he dreamed and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it” (Genesis 28:12). This idea appears in Koran 70:2–4: “No power can hinder Allāh from punishing them. He is the Lord of the steps, to whom the angels and the soul take a day to ascend, whose length (to you) is fifty thousand years” and in Koran 32:5: “He regulates all affairs from high to low, then they rise to perfection step by step in a (heavenly) day whose measure is a thousand years by your reckoning.”

The koranic word *ma’arīj* is often translated as ladder but literally means steps in the sense of a progression toward perfection. This ascent is generally regarded as the highest of mystical experiences, and Muḥammad, like Jacob, made such a journey, which

is called the *mīrāj*. The traditions differ as to when this occurred, but it is sometimes said to have been on the twenty-seventh night of the seventh month in the year 620. The Prophet lay asleep and was visited by Gabriel, who first purified him with water from the paradisiacal river Zamzam. Then Gabriel mounted Muḥammad upon a winged creature called *burāq*, and they flew to Jerusalem, which became the gateway to an ascent through the seven heavens, where Muḥammad met all the previous prophets and finally experienced the Divine Essence. The journey also included a visit to hell, where the Prophet witnessed the tortures inflicted on sinners and unbelievers. The *mīrāj* inspired many commentaries, the most famous being that of Ibn Sina (Avicenna), who noted that the Prophet saw the greatest name of God, *La ilāha illā Allāh* ("There is no God but God"), written in words of fire around the head of the archangel. The journey is frequently depicted in miniature painting.<sup>14</sup> Following this journey Koran 17:1 was revealed: "Glory to Him who took his votary to a wide and distant land from the Sacred Mosque at Mecca (to the remote temple in Jerusalem), that we may show him some of Our signs." The Sufis developed an elaborate mysticism around the concept and linked the idea of the ascent to the Divine with the beautiful names. Ibn al-ʿArabī (1165–1240), for instance, describes the steps leading up to a *mimbar* (pulpit) as "the ladder of the Most Beautiful Names, to climb this ladder is to be invested with the qualities of the Names."<sup>15</sup>

To understand the meaning of the one-line verse on the top plate, it is necessary to read it in conjunction with the preceding line, Koran 85:21. Both lines together translate as: "This is indeed the glorious Qur'an, preserved on the guarded tablet." This verse refers to the idea that the Koran as revealed to the Prophet was taken from an archetypal book conserved in the heavens. It underlines the idea that creation proceeds from the power of the Word and that—since this power is infinite—only knowledge of a portion of it can be revealed to mankind. God's omniscience and omnipotence in relation to the tablet is also mentioned in Koran 6:59: "Not a leaf falls without His knowledge, nor a grain in the darkest (recess) of the earth, nor any thing green or seared that is not recorded in the open book."

Because he is infinite his creation is continuous and so is his revelation to humanity. Because the to-

talities of God is viewed as essentially unknowable to man, this revelation contains only portions of the truth, which is verbalized in keeping with the Semitic idea that all of creation proceeds from God through the power of the Word. It is in this sense that Muslims see the prophetic role. Each of the prophets, beginning with Adam and continuing through Abraham, Moses, and Jesus to Muḥammad, was able to reveal, by the grace of God, a part of the truth. Each was given a portion of the knowledge contained on the "guarded tablet." *Al-lauh al-mahfūz* is given here as "the guarded tablet," but it is also translated as "the well-preserved tablet," "safely preserved," or "the preserved tablet,"<sup>16</sup> which God is said to have "written" before the creation and which contains the "reality of all things."<sup>17</sup> The idea of a continuing revelation sustains the concept of the *ahl al-kitāb*, or "people of the Book," and is why Muḥammad regarded Jews, Christians, and Muslims as members of one family, in contrast to the polytheists and unbelievers. It is at the core of the Sufis' view that all paths lead to God expressed by Ibn al-ʿArabī, who wrote that the Torah of light had four faces—the Koran, the Psalms, the Pentateuch, and the Gospel—and that:

My heart has become capable of every form; it is a pasture for gazelles and a convent for Christian monks,

And a temple for idols [ed., the Divine realities] and the pilgrim's ka'ba and the tables of the Tora and the book of the Koran.<sup>18</sup>

The verses on the "guarded tablet" tap the very essence of the Koran. The word *koran* means a recitation or discourse, and the entire book can be regarded as a single recitation of a revelation from God that men should also recite (*Sūra* 75:18) and not forget (*Sūra* 87:6). That part of the guarded tablet revealed in Arabic to Muḥammad is the Koran. The Koran is in turn divided into *sūras*, each of which seems to indicate a specific revelation, and then into *āyat*, or verses, that are its individual, miraculous parts.<sup>19</sup>

The germ of the idea of a "guarded tablet" can be seen in the Torah as revealed to Moses, which in later Islamic times was said to have been inscribed on tablets of emerald brought from Paradise. According to this version, when Moses died the tablets were sealed



in a mountain and only uncovered for Muḥammad, who was able to understand the Hebrew text with Gabriel's aid and then with Ali's help to compose a book containing "all science or knowledge past and future."<sup>20</sup>

The idea that the Prophet, in conjunction with Ali, composed a book containing "all science or knowledge" is directly linked to the claim that an esoteric knowledge had been passed from Ali through the line of Shia imams to the sixth imam, Ja'far al-Ṣādiq (ca. 699–765). This secret knowledge is directly related to the story of the emerald tablet, which is also inspired by the koranic idea of the tablet preserved in heaven. The earliest reference to the emerald tablet seems to be of the eighth century. At that time Jabir ibn Ḥayyān, who claimed Ja'far al-Ṣādiq as his source, wrote a treatise in which he described an emerald tablet inscribed with the "ultimate secrets of nature."<sup>21</sup> According to Jabir this esoteric knowledge originated with Hermes Trismegistus and was then passed on by Balinus (Apollonius of Tyana). It has been suggested by Kraus that the real origin of this might lie in Mesopotamian folklore, where reference can be found to an inscribed emerald called the "eye of the dragon."<sup>22</sup> This Arab source for the emerald tablet of Hermes Trismegistus has had a profound influence on Western thought and literature. For instance, it is the origin of the concept of the Grail in *Parzival* by Wolfram von Eschenbach, who following Sufi and cabalistic speculations on the tablet described the Grail as a stone on which names are inscribed.<sup>23</sup>

Armors of the pectoral-disk type are called in Persian *char aina* (four mirrors)<sup>24</sup> because they are often composed of shiny mirrorlike plates and because such armors were probably made after the inspiration of mystical Sufi writings that abound in mirror symbolism. This symbolism occurs for example in the work of the founder of the Mevleri order, Jalāl-uddīn Rūmī (1207–73), who often compared the mirror to the heart or to the visible world itself as a place that reflects the divine: "The world is a mirror, an imaging of Love's perfection."<sup>25</sup>

The Mevleri were very influential in the Ottoman period and the sheikh of the order generally performed the girding of a new sultan.<sup>26</sup> The Mevleri grand sheikh Emir Adil composed a verse in which he likened the heart to a mirror that was able to receive impressions from the preserved tablet:

Yonder heart by tracery of earth unscored,  
Cometh keeper of the mysteries to be;  
Mirror-holder to the tablet the preserved,  
Double grows it of the script from doubt that free.<sup>27</sup>

During the reign of Mehmet II, Aḥmad Pasha, the foremost court poet and tutor of the sultan, composed a poem in which he compared the marble in the conqueror's new palace (built in 1460–61) to the preserved tablet:

Thy marble white a mirror is that showeth things  
unseen, for lo, it pictures either world day-like in  
clarity.<sup>28</sup>

The Ottomans certainly made a connection between the pure heart/mirror and the preserved tablet, and if they also thought of armors with pectoral disks as a type of *char aina*, then it seems most likely that the armorer who inscribed the verse on the preserved tablet on the Metropolitan Museum's armor was making a pun on the relationship of armor (as mirror), heart, and the preserved tablet.

The four sets of inscriptions on this armor contain many of the essential ideas of Islam: they stress the unity of God, his beautiful names, his omnipotence and mastery of sun, moon, and mankind, the rewards awaiting the believers. Finally, by use of the "sovereign of all the verses in the Koran" (the "Throne" *sūra*) in conjunction with Koran 85:22, stress is given to the eternal tablet of the heavens and its earthly counterpart the Koran. An armor inscribed with koranic verses does not just make a statement about belief. It must also be seen in the context of the jihād, which in certain circumstances may involve physically fighting an unbeliever.

The jihād is frequently mentioned in the Koran:  
Fight those in the way of God who fight you,  
but do not be aggressive:  
God does not like aggressors.  
And fight those (who fight you) wheresoever you find  
them,  
and expel them from the place  
they had turned you out from . . .  
But if they desist, God is forgiving and kind.

These ideas are explained and reinforced in a number of hadith in which the Prophet stressed the merit

to be earned by fighting in the jihād.<sup>29</sup> In such passages the believer is urged to fight in the cause of God, which is regarded primarily as struggle in the service of all that is good, for the light, against the forces of darkness. A warrior clad in armor covered with koranic inscriptions proclaims himself to be a *mujahaddīn* engaged in fighting in God's cause.

The *tamga* ( ١٧١ ) incised into the center of the Museum's pectoral armor is marked on many of the arms and armor from the Ottoman arsenals and is sometimes mistakenly called the mark of the St. Irene arsenal.<sup>30</sup> This is because most of the pieces of armor from the Ottoman arsenals that have entered Western collections were originally stored in the church of St. Irene in Istanbul. This church was turned into an armory by Mehmet II in 1453 and continued to be used as such until after the First

World War, when the contents were transferred to the military museum in Harbiye (Askeri Museum).

A number of objects bearing this mark are known to have come from other arsenals. These include a series of "turban" helmets now in the Hermitage, Leningrad, which were taken as booty from the arsenal of Erzurum in 1829,<sup>31</sup> and several Bohemian arrowheads and a cranequin, which were captured by the Ottomans in 1444 and must have been stored in the arsenal at Edirne, their capital.<sup>32</sup> It cannot be demonstrated with certainty that these *tamgas* were added at the time of their capture and not when the objects were transferred to Istanbul, but if they were, then the arrowheads and cranequin would provide the earliest examples of the mark, confirming von Lenz's view that the mark was used by the various Ottoman arsenals.<sup>33</sup>

## NOTES

1. A. J. Wensinck and C. E. Bosworth, "Lawh," in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, new ed. (Leiden, 1986) V, p. 698, for various translations of the term.

2. O. Gamber, *Waffe und Rüstung Eurasiens* (Braunschweig, 1978) figs. 192, 193, 269, 271, 324. The Elamite roundel is discussed by O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze and Iron: Ancient Near Eastern Artifacts in The Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York, 1988) fig. 16.

3. P. O. Harper, *The Royal Hunter: Art of the Sasanian Empire*, exh. cat., MMA (New York, 1978) no. 3; or on a series of 5th- to 6th-century plates, one depicting Hormizd II (303–309), as a lion slayer, another showing either Peroz (459–484) or Kavad I (488–531) hunting rams, or one representing Bahram V (Gur) (420–438) and Azada hunting gazelles, *ibid.*, nos. 6, 7, and 12.

4. S. Fukai and K. Horiuchi, *Taq-I-Bustan* (Tokyo, 1969) pls. XII, LXVI, and LXVII.

5. G. Azarpay, *Sogdian Painting: The Pictorial Epic in Oriental Art* (Berkeley/Los Angeles, 1981) fig. 14.

6. M. Gorelik, "Oriental armour of the Near and Middle East from the eighth to fifteenth centuries as shown in works of art," in R. Elgood, ed., *Islamic Arms and Armour* (London, 1979) figs. 171, 172, 173, 189, 192, 193, 194; H. Robinson, *Oriental Armour* (London, 1967) fig. 20, A, C, D; D. G. Alexander, "Two Aspects of Islamic Arms and Armor," in *MMJ* 18 (1984) fig. 9.

7. A. U. Pope, *A Survey of Persian Art* (Oxford/London, 1938–39) XII, pl. 1406; L. A. Mayer, *Saracenic Heraldry* (Oxford, 1933); and M. Herz Bey, "Armes et armures arabes," *Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale* 7 (1910) pl. VIII.

8. Robinson, *Oriental Armour*, fig. 20, D.

9. The translations of the Koran used throughout this article are from Ahmed Ali, *Al-Qur'an* (Princeton, 1988).

10. E. Akurgal, ed., *The Art and Architecture of Turkey* (New York, 1980) pl. 92.

11. Ibn 'Aṭa' Allāh, *Traité sur le nom Allah*, M. Glotton, trans. (Paris, 1981) pp. 171–172.

12. Ibn 'Aṭa' Allāh, *Traité*, pp. 149–152; also Cl. Huart and J. Sadan, "Kursi," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, V, p. 509.

13. L. Gardet, "Al-Ā'sma Al-Ḥusna," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, new ed. (Leiden, 1960) I, pp. 714–717.

14. M. Seguy, *The Miraculous Journey of Mahomet* (New York, 1977) for a 15th-century manuscript and a detailed analysis of the *mī'rāj*.

15. Muhyi'ddīn Ibn al-'Arabī, *Tarjumān al-Ashwāq*, R. Nicholson, trans. (London, 1978) p. 89.

16. A. Schimmel, *Calligraphy and Islamic Culture* (New York/London, 1984) p. 78; *The Koran*, N. J. Dawood, trans. (London, 1964) p. 48.

17. S. Nasr, *Ideals and Realities of Islam*, (London, 1985) p. 53.

18. Ibn al-'Arabī, *Tarjuman al-Ashwaq* (1978) pp. 51, 67–68.

19. F. Buhl, "Koran," in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam* (Leiden, 1927) II, pp. 1073–1076.

20. 'Allāma Muḥammad Bāqir al-Majlisi, *The Life and Religion of Muhammad II*, J. Merrick, trans. (Boston, 1982) p. 105.

21. M. Ullmann, "Al-Kīmiyā," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, V, p. 111.



22. P. Kraus, *Jabir ibn Hayyan* (Paris, 1986) p. 74.

23. The Sufi 'Abdu'r-Rahmān Jāmī (d. 1492) wrote that the names of his future disciples had been inscribed on the preserved tablet; see A. Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (Chapel Hill, 1986) pp. 101–102. Wolfram claimed as his source a Jewish scholar, Flegetanis, who had described the Grail as a heavenly stone on which names were inscribed. Wolfram, elaborating on this, says that the stone was an emerald. This writer is preparing an article on the subject.

24. G. Stone, *A Glossary of the Construction, Decoration and Use of Arms and Armor in all Countries and all Times* (New York, 1961) p. 175.

25. Jalāluddīn Rūmī, *The Ruins of the Heart*, E. Helminski, trans. (Putney, 1981) pp. 30–32; idem, *Open Secret*, J. Moyne, trans. (Putney, 1988) p. 56.

26. F. W. Hasluk, *Christianity and Islam under the Sultans*, M. Hasluk, ed. (Oxford, 1929) chap. 46.

27. E. J. W. Gibb, *A History of Ottoman Poetry* (London, 1901) I, p. 423.

28. Gibb, *Ottoman Poetry*, II, p. 58.

29. Koran 2:190, 191–192. There are many passages in the Koran that deal with fighting such as:

Enjoined on you is fighting,  
and this you abhor.  
You may dislike a thing  
Yet it may be good for you;

or a thing may haply please you  
but may be bad for you.

Only God has knowledge, and you do not know [Koran 2:216].

You will fight them till they surrender.  
If you obey, then He will give you a good reward . . .  
those who obey God and His apostle,  
Will be admitted by God to gardens with running streams  
. . . [Koran 48:16–17].

A number of ḥadīth regarding the jihād are given in B. Lewis, ed. and trans., *Islam from the Prophet Muhammad to the Capture of Constantinople* (New York, 1974) I, pp. 210–211:

Swords are the keys to Paradise.  
A day and night of fighting on the frontier is better than a  
month of fasting and prayer.  
He who fights so that the word of God may prevail is on the  
path of God.

30. S. V. Grancsay, *Arms and Armor* (New York, 1986) p. 170.

31. E. von Lenz, *Collection d'armes de l'Ermitage Impérial* (St. Petersburg, 1908) pl. vi.

32. D. G. Alexander, "European Swords in the Collections of Istanbul Part II," *Waffen- und Kostümkunde* (Munich, 1987) pp. 21–22.

33. E. von Lenz, "Arsenalzeichen oder Beschau," *Zeitschrift für historische Waffenkunde* 6 (Munich, 1912–14) pp. 299–302.