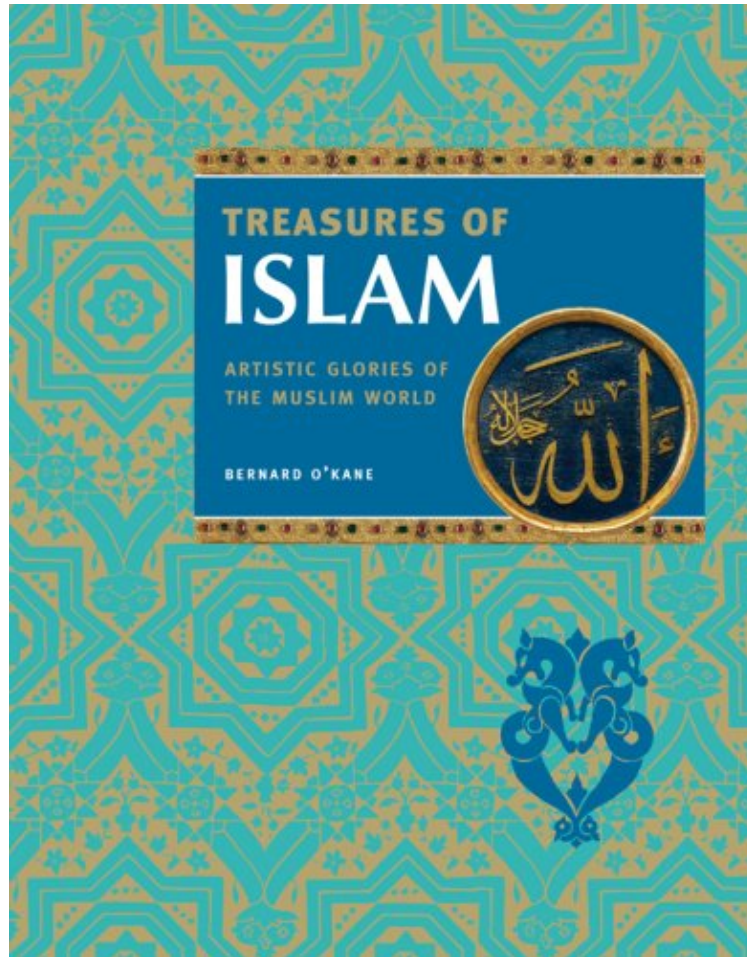


Treasures of Islam: Artistic Glories of the Muslim World

Bernard O'Kane

*audiobook / *ebooks / Download PDF / ePub / DOC*



[Download](#)

[Read Online](#)

#2197313 in Books Duncan Baird 2007-10-01 1999-01-01 Original language: English PDF # 1 .97 x 9.54 x 12.19l, 3.40 #File Name: 1844834832224 pages | File size: 64.Mb

Bernard O'Kane : Treasures of Islam: Artistic Glories of the Muslim World before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Treasures of Islam: Artistic Glories of the Muslim World:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Pattern Art is ignored, which snuffs out the religious spirit of Islamic art By Qalb-e-Saleem This is a good book, as it offers a rare glimpse into the splendor of the Islamic world, which is largely misunderstood as a primitive and barbaric monolithic culture. Art is the rendering of a visual narrative of history. When one views European art, we have the western narrative explaining it to us, and in the absence of intellectual input from those of other civilizations, the understanding of that art is based entirely on the western understanding. This seems to be an acceptable situation, but unfortunately the issue with western intellectual imperialism is that it tends to clothe all civilizations with its own narrative, which is unfair not only to the civilizations in question but also to art itself. Islamic art is complex. To understand Islamic art one has to be versed with Islamic theology, geo-political history and the regional legacies of art. Quite obviously, very few people can achieve sufficient knowledge of all three to pen a book as this one. Mr. Kane is one such individual and I applaud his interest and effort

in this field, which is neglected by others. That said, I feel the book did not capture the true spirit of Islamic art, as it should have been presented. Mr Kane had the unique opportunity to present a local understanding of Islamic art while maintaining the prism of western incisiveness viz a viz the historical narrative. But it did not come across as such. Perhaps the publisher flexed his muscle and steered the book in a narrative more palatable to the western reader, but then if cultural flavors are suppressed for the audience, then the joyful merit of exploration is lost. That is what happens with this book. Muhammad (pbuh) culminated the Abrahamic tradition, by teaching the world the Qur'an. Earlier works such as the Torah and Injil (gospels) were lost and their followers had strayed from pure monotheism and the idea of accountability of the day of Judgment. Abraham (pbuh) was calling out to his followers to submit to the one true God. He changed home from Iraq to Palestine, and settled his nephew Lot in Jordan, and his son Ishmael in Mecca, so as to spread the religion far and wide. He was not preaching to his Hebrew tribe alone. But among his followers the Jews claimed privileged exclusivity in race and religion, claiming to be the chosen ones- a belief rooted in false pride. Christians similarly began to deify a prophetic descendant of Abraham, who they claim to have died and paid for everyone's sins. Both groups strayed from Abrahamic monotheism and its central tenet of accountability of all men before God. Islam is hence resolute on pure monotheism, and the idea of all men being equals before Allah gaining merit only through righteous actions, and being accountable for their worldly life on Judgment Day. All major world scriptures strictly forbid graven images, be it Judaism, Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism or Islam. Iconography is oxygen for idolatry and hence it is a grave sin in Islam. This may be difficult to understand let alone to appreciate, but pagan traditions and festivals of Graeco-Rome were kept alive and wedded to Christianity mainly through iconography. If there were no Michelangelo paintings in the Vatican, the Christian world could not have a "white" Jesus and all other trappings of Christianity. The white man's burden, and colonialism through genocide were the outcomes of these trappings. Images of ancient Egypt breathe oxygen into the Jewish tradition by retelling the tale of the exodus of Moses, creating the psyche of victimhood through the theme of persistent persecution ("I am hated because I am different/special"). Buddha worship is also owed to the millions of idols of Buddha in the region- a practice Buddha himself forbade. Islam came to liberate from all these ideologues, as the religion rooted in the verb s-l-m or submission. Surrender to Allah, as equals before God, irrespective of color, language or social status - competing only for righteousness, and being ever-conscious of hellfire, which follows Judgment Day for sinners. Islamic masjids (mosques) with Quranic inscriptions thus celebrate the glory of the ever-living Allah alone, above mortal rulers and conquerers. This book with its inundation of form art - aimed at drawing parallels to western art - subverts the message of Islam, which only allows pattern art. The scientific glory of the world of Islam which invented Chemistry on the eve of the eighth century and created the Arabic numerals and algebra a century later, enabled artistic sophistication wedded to science. Muslim tiling techniques in the 1200's embraced quasi-crystalline, a method of non-repetitive tiling patterns. This technique was discovered by the west as a scientific breakthrough in the twentieth century (Roger Penrose of Oxford University). There is one or two fleeting mentions of Muslim Science in the book, and this avoidance leads to a failure in explaining Islamic art. On another note, as someone with a Mughal heritage, I believe that this richest civilization of its day was not given due coverage. The Taj Mahal alone was revered, but Mughal poetry, painting, jewelry and fabrics, which remain unsurpassed even today, were ignored. 24 of 24 people found the following review helpful. An Excellent Introductory Survey By Barbara Evans TREASURES OF ISLAM: ARTISTIC GLORIES OF THE MUSLIM WORLD is indeed "a wealth of glorious" photographs: Of the 166, most of which I've not seen elsewhere, 75 are at least a full page each. While there is no Search-Inside feature to allow you to sample them, another book in the series, Treasures of the Andes, does have one. And what you can see there is equal to what awaits you in this book, albeit there are no photographs of landscapes in "T. of Islam." Likewise comparable is the well-written, non-academic prose of the texts. Had this book been available when I was just beginning to study the subject, I would have bought it without hesitation, for I've not found another book that provides such an easy-to-digest, "excellent introduction" to the artistry the religion inspired over the centuries. And what Publishers Weekly describes as the book's "cursory history of Islam's empires and dynasties" is perfect for the neophyte, who is unlikely to want to drown in historical detail. As for those who have read in-depth histories-- I, for one, so appreciated the excellent summary that this book gave me of all I've read that I've finally succumbed to temptation and bought my own copy. To better help you determine if this is a book you wish to purchase, I have detailed the Table of Contents in the first "comment" on this review. But lest it is less than obvious, be aware that while all Islamic arts are covered, the glories of the architecture are featured, as can be evidenced by the fact that almost half the book's photographs are devoted to them. (There are 22 one-to-two-page shots of entire structures, 16 full-page ones of architectural details, and 43 of structures and details that are often a half-page in size.) NOTE: If you are especially interested in Islamic architecture, I'd highly recommend Splendors of Islam: Architecture, Decoration and Design and The Mosque: History, Architectural Development Regional Diversity. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By DLTS - HCC Excellent.

Discover the grandeur of Islam in a vivid portrait of some of the greatest and most creative civilizations ever to have existed a wide range of peoples and cultures all united spiritually by their adherence to Islam and its holy book. This

important survey which features outstanding production values, an oversized volume, a foil-trimmed cover, and special five-color printing celebrates the remarkable diversity of Muslim art, from beautiful textiles and peerless ceramics to awe-inspiring architecture and exquisite metalwork. With superb photography throughout, this guide marries the religion's artistic legacy with its rich history, travelling from the royal mosque at Isfahan to the beauty of Quranic illumination.

From Publishers Weekly In this sumptuous volume, O'Kane combines an overview of Islamic art and architecture with a cursory history of Islam's empires and dynasties. Beginning with a brief discussion of the earliest mosque from the seventh century, and showing how Islamic architects created a distinctive artistic tradition, O'Kane (*The Iconography of Islamic Art*) follows architectural and artistic ideas to the 19th century. Major monuments, such as the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, the Great Mosque of Damascus, the Sultan Hasan mosque in Cairo, the Alhambra in Moorish Spain and the Taj Mahal, are highlighted, as are many works of art, including colorful mosaics, lace-like wood and stone carvings and exquisite manuscript paintings. O'Kane stresses the significance of religious and secular symbolism, and points out the craftsmanship that makes this art a feast for the eye. He does a credible job of surveying a vast panorama of art and culture, but it's difficult to compress so much complex material into one volume. The wealth of glorious full-color illustrations make this beautifully designed book an excellent introduction to the art of Islam. (Oct. 24) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.