

Action sheet A

How do you store your Quran?

WHEN AND HOW DO YOU READ THE QURAN AND HOW DO YOU STORE IT?

Discuss your views and note down all opinions.

Choose a person in the group as your opposite, exchange information about your opinions and the surroundings depicted on the images.

Write down what is important to you, likewise your questions and ambiguities on this topic.



Action sheet B

Can appreciation be expressed by design?



1. CONTEMPLATE THE DIFFERENT IMAGES OF THE QURAN BOX CALMLY AND CAREFULLY!

2. WHAT CATCHES YOUR EYE; WHICH DETAIL DO YOU FIND THE MOST INTERESTING? WHAT CAN YOU RECOGNISE AND NAME?



3. WHAT TECHNIQUES WERE USED FOR THE OUTER DESIGN AND HOW IS THE INSIDE OF THE BOX DESIGNED?

4. CAN YOU DERIVE IDEAS AS TO HOW AND BY WHOM IT WAS USED?



5. NOTE DOWN YOUR FINDINGS! AFTERWARDS LOOK FOR REFERENCES IN THE INFORMATION SHEET; READ THEM OUT TO ONE ANOTHER AND EXCHANGE YOUR VIEWS!

Info sheet

Quran Box

Object **Quran Box**
Inventory no. I. 886
Period 1320–1330 AD

Place Cairo, Egypt
Material Wood, brass with silver and gold
Size 27cm high, 42.5 cm long und wide

DETAILS ABOUT THE OBJECT

The box was intended for storage of the Holy Book. Inside there are 30 compartments so that probably a Quran divided into 30 sections was stored here. The box itself is made of wood. Brass plates, which were then decorated with gold and silver, were attached to the wood. The technique whereby the metals were inlaid into the brass plates is called damascening: small holes are stamped in and the metal which should be on the surface is hammered into these. It is signed by two artists and the object greatly resembles other works donated by the Mamluk Sultan al-Nasir Muhammad ibn Qalawun in Egypt. Altogether this is a really magnificent object for storing the Holy Book.

THE DIFFERENT DESIGNS OF THE QURAN

The Quran was designed in varying ways in different communities. It was often divided into different sections. The most well-known division was called dschuz' (in German: part, piece, segment, also volume) and was a division into 30 parts; in the Persian language this division is called si-para. Here the division of the Quran corresponded to the days of a month. In North Africa the division into 60 parts was often used (Arabic: hizb, in German: group or volume). Both of these are functional divisions which arrange the Quran text for recitation. There are, however, also examples of other divisions.

These sections were often only made obvious by the illumination, that is the ornamental design. This could be shown, for example by a medallion in the margin. In many cases indeed separate books were bound which together made up the whole Quran. We must assume such a case for the Quran box here since there are 30 compartments inside.



Info sheet

Quran Box – Calligraphy



WHAT DOES THE CALLIGRAPHY MEAN?

Three different types of writing, with which verses from the Quran are written, are to be found on the box. The Throne Verse (2:255) runs the largest around the whole box. This is written in the Thuluth style of writing. In the Mamluk Period this was the preferred writing style for official inscriptions – the curved lines upward were long and wide wherein a Mamluk object can be quickly recognised.

Before Thuluth was used for these official inscriptions, the Kufi style of writing was used here. This angular style can also be seen on the box, namely on the bevels of the lid. (26:192-199).

Finally, the Naskhi style of writing was also used: this is easy to read and is therefore suitable for smaller inscriptions. This style is to be found on the lid of the box, can unfortunately no longer be clearly recognised due to the condition. This verse from the Quran strengthens the faithful in their beliefs (6:115).

Two artists have signed the clasp: Muhammad ibn Sunqur al-Baghdadi, probably the calligrapher, and Hadschdsch Yusuf ibn al-Ghawabi, who probably carried out the metalwork.

Action sheet C

How do you deal with the Quran and how is this visible?

1. ONCE AGAIN SUM UP THE MOST IMPORTANT POINTS FOR YOU WHICH CHARACTERISE HOW YOU USE THE QURAN:

Where does it mostly lie or stand?
Who should see it: only you or others, too (e.g. guests)? Etc...

2. WHICH STORAGE FORM IS THE MOST SUITABLE FOR THAT WHICH YOU NAMED UNDER 1? E.G. BAG, SHELF, BOX, CLOTH, SAFE, DISPLAY CABINET ETC.

3. WHICH SIGNS, PATTERNS OR ORNAMENTS DO YOU LIKE BEST AT THE MOMENT?

Can you imagine using some of these to design your Quran storage box?

If so, then take this as your starting point and inspiration.

4. PAINT, DRAW, GLUE... YOUR DESIGN!

Action sheet B



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