10.20378/irb-57628

Introduction

Text and Image Intertwined — Writing and its Perception

Lorenz Korn and Berenike Metzler

> *Kein Bild ohne Text — kein Text ohne Bild. Oder genauer gesagt: Kein Bild ohne Bild-Text-Differenz — kein Text ohne Text-Bild-Differenz. Mit jedem Wiedereintritt der Text-Bild-Unterscheidung steht diese gleichzeitig zur Disposition und wird — auf der Basis bestehender Konventionen — neu ausgehandelt [...].*[1]
>
> "No image without text — no text without image. More precisely: No image without image-text difference — no text without text-image difference. With each occurrence of the text-image distinction, it is discussed anew and is renegotiated on the basis of existing conventions [...]."

This passage is taken from the introduction of a volume published by Wilhelm Voßkamp and Brigitte Weingart, titled *Sichtbares und Sagbares*, (literally: "the visible and the speakable") which contains contributions on the various variants of text-image relations in European modern and contemporary art. It reflects developments in art history according to which the focus is no longer on the isolated image, but rather on its medial or semiotic context within a joint visual culture. Thus, under the auspices of "Bildwissenschaft" or "Visual Culture Studies," an expanded concept of the image (*erweiterter Bildbegriff*) has been shaped over the last few decades.[2] And while the statement above can be debated with regard to sculptures, paintings or photographs, it is certainly true for writing and calligraphy in a way that was perhaps not even intended by the authors. Complementary to the movement in art history, a tendency in the text-focused humanities and social sciences has made itself felt over the past twenty years (and more),

[1] Voßkamp, Wilhelm – Weingart, Brigitte: "Sichtbares und Sagbares. Text-Bild-Verhältnisse – Einleitung". In: *Sichtbares und Sagbares*. Eds. Wilhelm Voßkamp – Brigitte Weingart. Köln: Dumont, 2005, p. 9. Translation by the authors.

[2] Apart from opening new perspectives on the image, these new schools have criticized earlier approaches of art history for preferring "high art" to "popular art," for the dominating colonialist perspective on the arts of other cultures, for mystifying the (male) artist, and finally for continuing to think in categories of styles and periods while being impotent to react to the development of new media. Cf. von Falkenhausen, Susanne: *Jenseits des Spiegels. Das Sehen in Kunstgeschichte und Visual Culture Studies*. Paderborn, 2015, pp. 11–12.

to consider visuality and materiality as factors constituting human culture, which however tended to be overlooked in sciences that have long been driven by the approach through language.[3] As Sophia Prinz has summarized in line with Andreas Reckwitz, even strongly discourse-oriented post-structuralist cultural sociologists such as Michel Foucault had implicitly developed vantage points from which visual and other sensual phenomena could be explored.[4] Going further, a theory of social practices (*Praxistheorie*) that understands culture as genuinely shaped by materiality is able to explain better how perception, understanding and action are interwined in human culture.[5]

A particular medium, located between image and text, can be seen in writing, and calligraphic writing in particular. Its position as intermediary between the two worlds of language and visual arts becomes clear through its properties: It assumes a form or it constitutes a form, while at the same moment being tied to language, or at least to text. The form of the written sign (the letter) has no intrinsic connection with anything that it represents through language (contrary to de Saussure's understanding of the symbol).[6] But this detachment of meaning from form does not work as a historical process. If we look at early writing, it becomes clear that the interplay of form and meaning was already a complex one at the time when writing signs, and later alphabets, developed.[7] Instead of being a merely pragmatic and arbitrary vehicle of language, the written letters not only bear their specific "linguistic" meaning through the link that is made in the human mind, but they become potentially loaded and work as symbols. This is because writing and reading go through acts of convention, learning and all kinds of cultural handling, and the form of letters becomes interconnected with actions of figuration and understanding.[8] The role of writing as an activity of human mind and culture is, in a way, comparable to that of language and of art, as a *symbolic form* in the sense of Ernst Cassirer. It partakes in both of these neighbouring realms, but cannot be fully explained by the categories that are valid in either of them. In the overarching system that Ernst Cassirer had sketched in the introduction to his *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*,[9] language and art are

[3] Reckwitz, Andreas: "Grundelemente einer Theorie sozialer Praktiken. Eine sozialtheoretische Perspektive". *Zeitschrift für Soziologie* 32.4 (2003), pp. 282–301
[4] Prinz, Sophia: Die Praxis des Sehens. Über das Zusammenspiel von Körpern, Artefakten und visueller Ordnung. Bielefeld: Transcript, 2014, pp. 10–11.
[5] Reckwitz 2003.
[6] The vast literature on the semiotics of writing cannot be rehearsed here.
[7] Haarmann, Harald: *Geschichte der Schrift* (Beck'sche Reihe, 2198). München: Beck, 2002, pp. 40–57; Rogers, Henry: *Writing Systems. A Linguistic Approach*. Malden (MA)/Oxford/Victoria (Australia): Blackwell, 2005, pp. 115–120.
[8] This complex has been addressed already with the postulate of "grammatology" as a science of writing by Jacques Derrida: *De la grammatologie*, Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1979.
[9] Cassirer, Ernst: *Philosophie der Symbolischen Formen*, 3 vols. Berlin 1923–1929, here: 4th ed. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1964, vol. I, pp. 14–27.

mentioned, together with mythological thinking, religion, and science, as those realms in which the human mind makes connections between contents and meaning through signs. As writing carries meaning trough signs and approaches the symbolic to the same degree as it is detached from the language that it conveys, it can be classified as another *symbolic form*. Consequently, it follows its own rules although it overlaps with art as well as with language.

For the periods and regions in the focus of the present book, it has frequently been stated that calligraphy played a crucial role in the visual arts. It needs no underlining that calligraphic writing enjoyed particular esteem among the elites of the Muslim societies in the Early Modern period, from North Africa to Central Asia and from the Balkans to South Asia.[10] Oleg Grabar noted the particular role of "the intermediary of writing" not only, but particularly in Islamic Art.[11] Beyond this plain fact, however, the question about the character of Islamic calligraphy as an art form instigates further exploration. How does writing work as an intermediary between language and visual form? How does this role as an intermediary depend on the texts at which we are looking, their written or unwritten contexts, their graphic layout and the possible pictorial and ornamental elements that go with the text? Considerations like these have inspired scholarly works on calligraphy by authors such as Annemarie Schimmel, Irvin Schick and Bärbel Beinhauer-Köhler.[12] Similar thoughts were already behind some of the writings by calligraphers themselves, and by Early Modern beholders who saw the forms of calligraphy imbued with deeper meaning, referring to religious and cosmological issues. For the art historian, calligraphy of the Islamic World offers another dimension, because it is apt to widen, or even to challenge, established tropes of what constitutes an image.

In many early writings on Islamic arts of the book, scholarly interest was informed by the connoisseurship that marked art history in the 19th century. Style, understood as the artistic "handwriting" of the painter, dominated as an analytic category and was later supplemented by iconographic inquiry. This way, it is hardly surprising to see that paintings illustrating the Persian epic books were considered in complete isolation from the text that surrounds them, just like a

[10] Cf., among others, Kühnel, Ernst: *Islamische Schriftkunst*. Graz: Akademische Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 1972; Blair, Sheila: *Islamic Calligraphy*. Edinburgh: University Press, 2006; Frembgen, Jürgen W. (ed.): *Die Aura des Alif* (English Version: *The Aura of Alif*). Munich et al.: Prestel, 2010.

[11] Cf. Grabar, Oleg: *The Mediation of Ornament*. Princeton NJ: University Press, 1992, pp. 47–118.

[12] Schimmel, Annemarie: "Schriftsymbolik im Islam". In: *Aus der Welt der islamischen Kunst. Festschrift für Ernst Kühnel*. Ed. Richard Ettinghausen. Berlin: Mann, 1959, pp. 244–254; Schick, İrvin Cemil: "The Iconicity of Islamic Calligraphy in Turkey". *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, No. 53/54 (Spring-Autumn 2008), pp. 211–224; Beinhauer-Köhler, Bärbel: *Gelenkte Blicke: Visuelle Kulturen im Islam*. Zürich 2011, pp. 36–48. Also, it should be mentioned that the iconicity of Islamic calligraphy has apparently begun to move into the view of art historians at large; an example can be seen in a recent work by Jasmin Holtkötter: "Islamische Kalligraphie als Schriftikonik". [unpubl. BA thesis in art history, University of Leipzig 2017].

canvas painting from the Western Early Modern tradition. Texts written on the same page, sometimes even integrated into the composition of the painting, were frequently not read by art historians, while drawings on the margins of manuscript were disqualified as "mere ornament." At any rate, the number of art historians dealing with Islamic arts of the book was very small — an additional factor to slow down scholarly discussion and methodological change. All of this has changed through the last decades, although figural paintings still seem to dominate art historical interest in this field.

Understanding the arts of the book in the Islamic World on its own terms means to leave the perspective of an art history that values figural representations over everything else — a perspective that in some way should have become obsolete since the days when abstract art became established in the early 20th century. However, the overwhelming dominance of the figural in the perception of art seems to persist for various reasons.[13] And while the linguistic turn of the mid-20th century had paved the way for an approach that imagined every work of art as "text," few art historians actually dared to explore the potential of writing signs as art.[14] Doing justice to the Islamic arts of the book means to retrace the preferences of the elites in Istanbul and Edirne, Tabriz and Isfahan, Agra and Delhi. This is enabled by the precious manuscripts that were fabricated for the courts of the Ottomans, Safavids, Mughals and other dynasties, and also by the albums in which works of art were collected, occasionally branded with attributions to famous artists.[15] These albums contain drawings and colourful paintings, complete compositions and sketches of design elements, and also calligraphies ranking on the same level as drawings and paintings. The degree to which pictorial and calligraphic elements were intertwined is indicated by the written and painted colophons, naming and depicting the artists of both branches, which became a spectacular feature of books produced in the late 15th to early 16th centuries in India (and occasionally in Iran).[16] They were cut out and pasted together, framed and ornamented, composed and carefully stored. We know little about the social

[13] Even a rather general recent book on 'Islamic Art' almost excludes non-figural art; cf. Shaw, Wendy M. K.: *What is "Islamic Art"? Between Religion and Perception*. Cambridge: University Press, 2019, passim.

[14] Dobbe, Martina: "Buchstäblich Bild. Zur Schriftlichkeit des Bildes jenseits der Schrift: Cy Twombly". In: *Über den Umgang mit der Schrift*. Ed. Waltraud ›Wara‹ Wende. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann 2002, pp. 276–301, here p. 279–280.

[15] Roxburgh, David: *The Persian Album. From Dispersal to Collection*. New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 2005.

[16] Rice, Yael: "Between the Brush and the Pen: On the Intertwined Histories of Mughal Painting and Calligraphy". In: *Envisioning Islamic Art and Architecture. Essays in Honor of Renata Holod* (Arts and Archaeology of the Islamic World, 2). Ed. David Roxburgh. Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2014, pp. 148–174.

contexts in which these album leaves were viewed, except for the fact that drawings and paintings were used as prototypes for new works in the book ateliers of the respective courts, or workshops that were in contact with the courts.

Great care was taken in the design of the written word — this applies to nearly all periods of Islamic cultural history and to different materials; and while typographical standards varied (not all epitaphs or vessel inscriptions were given careful treatment), it can be said that relatively great effort was spent on writing. It seems that the way in which Arabic writing developed eased the transition from a beautiful handwriting to calligraphy as an art. There was a larger gap between the two in the Latin and Greek world. This meant also that the visual perception of writing as an aesthetic incident became realized frequently and in the most various contexts.[17] While the prerequisites and implications of this development still need further research, it seems clear that they are tied to the relationship between aesthetic design and readability.[18] It seems unproblematic to accord with the postulate that one of the results of good readability is the predominance of writing perceived as text, at the cost of the perception of aesthetic aspects. But is it true that vice versa, writing that is difficult to decipher would promote the aesthetic experience? Seen from this side, one might also argue that difficulties in legibility could as well stimulate efforts to read the text (superficially equated with "information"), whereas good readability frees the reader's attention to enable other experiences. An example can be seen in the two central inscriptions on the first gate of the Topkapı Sarayı in Istanbul.[19] Both of them are masterworks of calligraphy: The one on the lintel containing "historical" information about the construction and its patron, is ordered in regular lines. The other one, in the tympanum, contains a quotation from Qurʾān 15:45–48 and is alienated from the common appearance of writing by diagonal arrangement, intertwining and mirrored writing. It remains speculative whether for the contemporary beholders the difficulty to decipher the Qurʾanic verse had the consequence that few people read it at all, whether the qualities of the composition and the calligraphy were even better appreciated, or whether the calligraphic arrangement instigated beholders to decipher the text.

[17] Schimmel, Annemarie: *Calligraphy and Islamic Culture* (Hagop Kevorkian Series on Near Eastern Art and Civilization). New York/London 1984, passim.
[18] Ettinghausen, Richard: "Arabic Epigraphy. Communication or Symbolic Affirmation". In: *Near Eastern Numismatics, Iconography, Epigraphy and History. Studies in Honor of George C. Miles.* Ed. Dickran M. Kouymjian. Beirut: American University, 1974, pp. 2997–317.
[19] Tüfekçioğlu, Abdülhamit: "Symmetrical Compositions in Pre-Ottoman and Ottoman Architectural Inscriptions in Asia Minor". In: *Calligraphy and Architecture in the Muslim World.* Eds. Mohammad Gharipour – Irvin Cemil Schick. Edinburgh: University Press, 2013, pp. 447–462, here: pp. 454–455.

Fig. 1: Topkapı Sarayı, Bab-i Hümayun, exterior: Inscriptions under the central arch (photo L. Korn, 2005)

Already at a much earlier date there were calligraphic compositions in Arabic script that appear divested of their textual character through their design and context. This applies to writing that serves as an ornament filling or framing a surface. An example can be seen in the central dome hall of the Great Mosque of Golpaygan (Iran), dated 508/1114–15. Here, one of the wall surfaces in the zone of transition between the lower arcades and the vault of the dome bears the name of the prophet, Muḥammad, in manifold repetition in squared letters, formed by protruding and recessed bricks. This can be counted as one of the earliest dated examples of "square Kufic" or "*bannā'ī* writing."[20] Ordering in a rectangular grid makes the script a geometric ornament, or makes it resemble a geometric ornament, for the full lettering of the word *Muḥammad* is there, visible and readable but alienated. The character of square Kufic calligraphies is different when framed in a cartouche, distinct from the surrounding space. This mode of presenting the writing makes a difference, as it approaches the mode of a picture in a frame, or an icon — according to one of Gottfried Boehm's sentences on images and icons: "Something becomes visible and plausible as something."[21] The form of writing, set apart from its architectural surrounding, gains in autonomy and value, without necessarily highlighting its textual character. A similar effect can also be achieved when writing is integrated into non-calligraphic ornament, as a panel in the same mosque shows, in which the names of the *'ashara al-mubashshara* are inserted into a *girih* pattern: Textuality is negated by the arbitrary fragmentation of the words, and overall value of the writing played down by its

[20] Korn, Lorenz: "Architecture and Ornament in the Great Mosque of Golpayegan (Iran)". In: *Beiträge zur Islamischen Kunst und Archäologie* 3, ed. by the Ernst-Herzfeld-Gesellschaft für Islamische Kunstgeschichte und Archäologie. Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2012, pp. 212–236.
[21] Boehm, Gottfried: "Die Wiederkehr der Bilder". In: *Was ist ein Bild?* Ed. idem. München: Fink, 1994, pp. 11–38, here p. 29: "Etwas wird als etwas sichtbar und plausibel."

small scale in relation to the interlace star pattern in which it appears. Here, the character of writing oscillates between text and ornament.

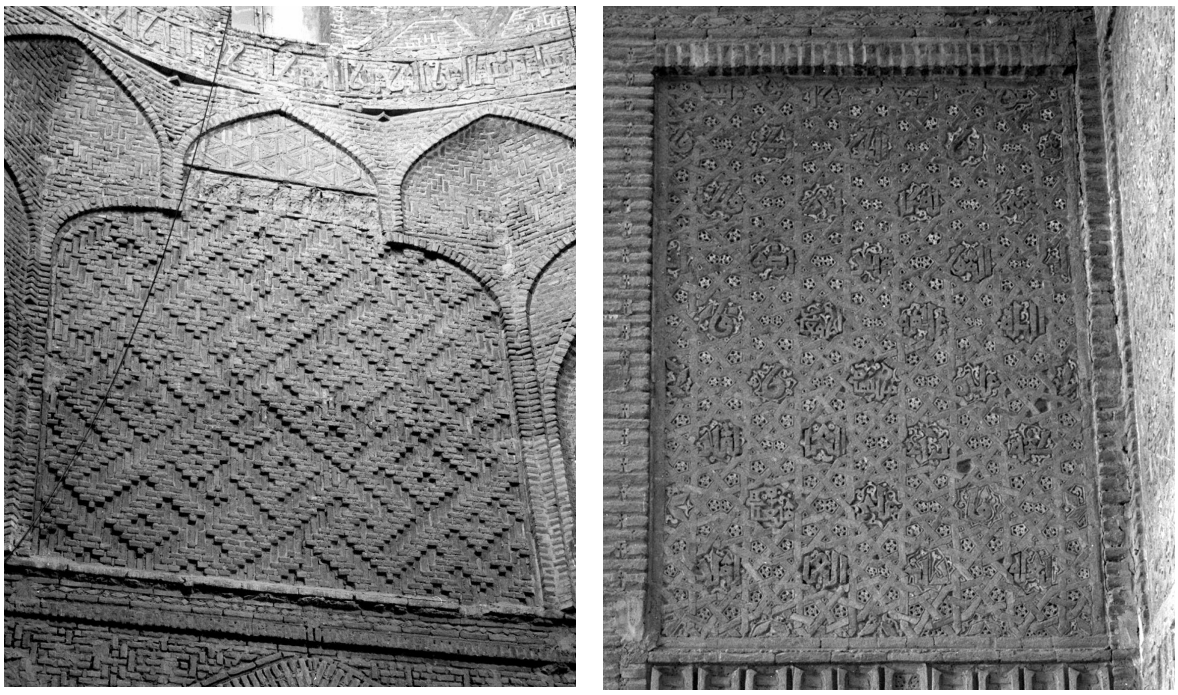

Fig. 2: Golpaygan, Great Mosque, dome hall (508/1114–15): Calligraphy constituting architectural ornament (left) and calligraphy blending in with architectural ornament of brick and terracotta (right) (Photos: L. Korn, 2008)

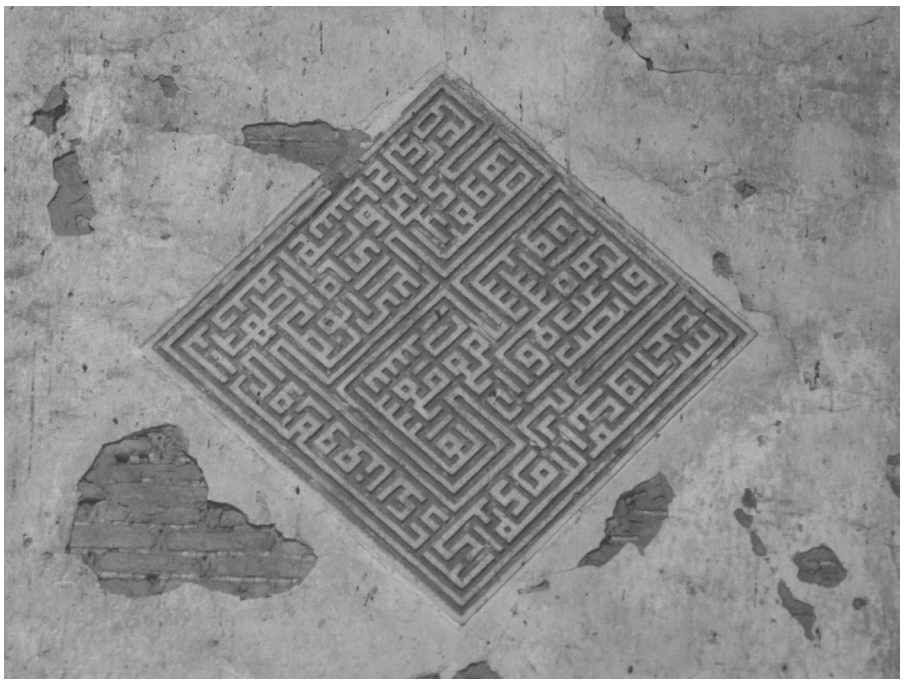

Fig. 3: Isfahan, Great Mosque ("Friday Mosque"), southern dome hall (c. 475–80/1082–88 and later): Square Kufic calligraphy on the NE wall, probably Safavid period (photo: L. Korn, 2004)

Similar to the square Kufic cartouche, calligraphies on paper were also framed and presented to the viewer. As one of many examples, the so-called St. Petersburg Muraqqaʿ, mounted c. 1150/1737–38, presents calligraphies by Mīr ʿImād al-Ḥasanī (961–1024/1553–1615) along with figural paintings by several artists, in a strictly regular combination of one calligraphy with one painting.[22] Calligraphies and paintings are treated at equal level, and the use of the same kind of frame assimilates them further to each other. The calligraphed texts were by no means alienated from readability; Mīr ʿImād's writing is characterized by great clarity. Still, they work similar to the images with whom they are paired in the album, as compositions with a strong visual impact that operates parallel to the "contents" of the works.

It seems possible that the iconic character of these calligraphies has one of its roots in a process of recognition that begins from the shape of the whole word rather than deciphering letters and assembling them. The way in which the perception of words as a whole functions, and whether it is fundamentally different from other ways of reading, seems to have been little explored for the Arabic script.[23] Research about the perception of script seems to focus on Latin and East Asian scripts,[24] or on the way in which individual letters are recognized.[25] Even a work dealing with word recognition in Arabic does not squarely address the question of whole word recognition but rather asks in which way the root structure of Semitic languages influences reading cognition.[26] However, the experience of

[22] Akimushkin, Oleg: "The Calligraphy of the St. Petersburg Album". In: *The St. Petersburg Muraqqaʿ. Album of Indian and Persian Miniatures from the 16th through the 18th Century and Specimens of Persian Calligraphy by 'Imad al-Ḥasanī*. Ed. Francesca von Habsburg. Milano: Leonardo Arte, 1996, pp. 39–46.

[23] Linguists have been concerned with the potential application of whole word perception (as so-called "sight words") for the purpose of the teaching of literacy. In this context, postulates of the Whole Language philosophy have apparently largely been discarded by linguists (cf. Dehaene, Stanislas: *Reading in the Brain. The New Science of How We Read*. New York: Penguin, 2010, p. 222–228: "… the global contours of words play virtually no role in reading. We do not recognize a printed word through a holistic grasping of its contours, because our brain breaks it down into letters and graphemes," ibid, p. 224). It seems that the polemics of this debate have overruled discussion of the cognitive process of word recognition in those minds who have already coped with learning to read. For the Arabic script, research on whole word perception seems to be a lacuna. Explanations of the character of the Arabic script and comparisons between Latin and Arabic calligraphy does not address the process of recognition, cf. Blair, *Calligraphy*, 11–16.

[24] Bergen, Benjamin – Ting Ting Chan: "Writing Direction Influences Spatial Cognition". *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society* 27 (2005), https://escholarship.org/uc/item/4tt0k00j (last viewed 11.11.2021) – We are gratefully indebted to Geoffrey Haig for this and the two following references.

[25] Carreiras, Manuel et al: "Neural Correlates of Visual versus Abstract Letter Processing in Roman and Arabic Scripts". *Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience* 25.11 (June 2013), DOI:10.1162/jocn_a_00438 (last viewed 11.11.2021).

[26] Hansen, Gunna Funder: *Visual Word Recognition in Arabic. Towards a Language Specific Reading Model*. (Centre for Contemporary Middle East Studies University of Southern Denmark, Working Paper Series, 13), Odense 2008.

Fig. 4: A leaf from the so-called St. Petersburg Muraqqaʿ. Recto: Emperor Jahangir giving books to shaykhs. Verso: Calligraphic exercise (*mashq*) by Mīr ʿImād al-Ḥasanī, 1020/1611–12, border 1169/1755. Washington DC, Freer Gallery of Art, inv. no. F1931

anyone fluent in reading Arabic would probably confirm that certain words are recognized as whole forms and not from the addition of their components.[27] The obvious word for which this statement would probably be generally accepted is the word *Allāh*, which can be easily detected within surrounding text for its characteristic shape and for which even a complete single grapheme exists in computer typeface.[28] Consequently, it should be stated that there are words that are perceived as icons, and the frequency of ligatures in Arabic writing supports the view that in many cases "reading" proceeds through perception of letter-groups and complete words. The production of calligraphy then relates to these shapes by enhancing and harmonizing them, or conversely by breaking them up and alienating them from their familiar shape.

The iconic character is also highlighted by modern reproductions of classic calligraphies, particularly in a "foreign" environment. Ahmed Karahisari's mid-

[27] Bärbel Beinhauer-Köhler, *Gelenkte Blicke* 2011, p. 36, postulates a way of seeing that is in the middle between successive and immediate perception, and terms it "focussing" (Fokussierung). The text maintains that this way of seeing pertains specifically to the religious sphere and terms it "orthodox," which appears problematic; this way it becomes fraught with many other concepts that distract from the act of perception.
[28] Unicode FDF2.

Fig. 5: Murat Dursun Tosun: Wooden casket decorated with Ahmed Karahisari's basmala, 2012 (URL: https://muratdursuntosun.wordpress.com/karahisari-besmele-i-serif/, last accessed 21 April 2021)

Fig. 6: Advertising for a large-format basmala wallpaper decal, 2021: ebay: "Wandtattoo Wandsticker Wandaufkleber Bismillah Arabisch Gott Islam Allah W1482"

16th century *basmala* (Türk ve İslam Eserleri Müzesi, Inv. 1443) has been reproduced by the thousands and millions since the 1980s, as stickers to be affixed to cars and buses, in workspaces and private homes. The popularity of this motif was by no means hindered by the shape of the individual letters, which have a potential of being mis-read if seen in isolation. On the contrary, the unmistakable calligraphic form of the whole seems to have raised its recognition value. Of course, two or three generations after Mustafa Kemal's alphabetic reforms, knowledge of the Ottoman-Arabic letters had been as good as eliminated in Turkish society. This means that no competence in deciphering can be expected on the part of the beholders. Nevertheless, the Arabic *basmala* as such, and particularly in Karahisari's calligraphy, enjoyed a huge popularity throughout decades of Ottoman-Arabic illiteracy (it can be noted that the Turkish Latin alphabet version, *Bismillâhirrahmanirrahim*, was also widely present as a graphic sticker, and the question is whether it functions in a similar way as its Arabic counterpart). In addition, as Edhem Eldem has justly underlined, the mere use of Arabic

lettering lens a religious-Islamic aura to every writing, even in cases when the text and context has been everything but religious.[29]

These examples indicate that calligraphy from the Islamic World is apt to substantiate a wider notion of iconicity. Long before Robert Indiana's *LOVE* graphic (1966) und sculpture (1970), calligraphers in the Muslim World created works in which writing emphasizes its intermediary character between text and image and gained strength from this position, as a visual statement of its own — a statement that, similar to metaphors in language, is apt to create associations without consummating them in the explicicy of comparison. Islamic calligraphers created a world of images that are non-mimetic, but also different from "pure" form.

The present volume is the result of a workshop titled "Writing as Intermediary: Text-Image Relations in Early Modern Islamic Cultures," held at the University of Bamberg in October 2019. This little conference was organized by a research group on calligraphy, in which Emine Küçükbay took part together with the present editors.[30] Participants of the workshop were scholars from various disciplines, with a focus on (but not restricted to) the visual cultures of the Safavid and Ottoman periods. One of its declared aims was not only to elaborate text-image relations from materials belonging to these cultures, but to analyse them under the theorem of an expanded concept of the image (*erweiterter Bildbegriff*). From this particular perspective, it seemed possible to address the complexity and diversity of the topic. This refers to the diverse research questions, methodological approaches, materials examined, and conclusions drawn by the authors. Nevertheless, there were considerable intersections between the papers, which were all dealing with the various roles that images and writing assume in relations to each other and to their context. Thus, they can all be seen as contributions to enriching the concept of the image. While the cultural area of most papers can be termed "Islamic," the observations that are presented here can be taken as relevant for art history at large, and possibly even for the field of Western art history.

Research Questions and Methodological Approaches

The aforementioned reflections on the relationship between language, image, and writing are echoed in many ways in the contributions gathered in this book. Two central questions come up repeatedly: To what extent must writing be regarded as detached from language? And in which way does writing adopt a particular mediating role, as our book title suggests?

[29] Eldem, Edhem: "Writing Less, Saying More: Calligraphy and Modernisation in the Last Ottoman Century". In: *Calligraphy and Architecture in the Islamic World*. Eds. Mohammad Gharipour – Irvin Cemil Schick. Edinburgh 2013, pp. 465–483.

[30] Funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG) under the title "Was Schrift vermittelt. Text-Bild-Verhältnisse in islamischen Kulturen der frühen Neuzeit" (DFG project no. 344870700).

Nourane Ben Azzouna and Petra Schmidl ask about the criteria according to which pictorial representations are chosen by authors and artists: Ben Azzouna does this with regard to the arrangement of illustrations in Turcoman manuscripts of Niẓāmī's Khamsah, Petra Schmidl with regard to the pictorial or textual design of *qibla* schemes in a 13th-century Rasulid manual of astronomy. Berenike Metzler and Sophie Schweinfurth scrutinize texts for text-image relations, asking to what extent modern concepts of text and image coincide with historical concepts in the original languages. Tobias Heinzelmann examines *ḥilye* texts according to the interrelation of content and representation, namely, calligraphy and illustration. Emine Küçükbay and Margaret Shortle go a step further in terms of semiotics, examining metaphors that were shared by several media levels: Shortle with regard to the phenomenon of "sensory instability," Küçükbay with regard to the metaphor of the body, which finds its expression in the Ottoman *ḥilye* in terms of text, illustration, and performance. Birgit Mersmann includes the theme of the body in the range of primary categories to be investigated, and examines it by means of modern East Asian art installations.

The materials studied include (partly digital) art installations, manuscripts, paper and theological, astronomical and literary texts. The majority of contributors work with straightforward method of observation, analytic description and contextual comparison. Three other approaches complement these: Ilse Sturkenboom uses scientific analyses, prepared and evaluated together with a team of researchers, for her work on the meaning and use of Chinese paper. Berenike Metzler and Sophie Schweinfurth carry out terminological research in Persian-Arabic and Greek primary texts. Bilal Badat investigates the interrelation between readability and design on the basis of his own calligraphic experience.

Conclusions

Studies from the field of Islamic Art are also able to enrich the Western, extended concept of the image. This includes the following observations: In order to determine text-image relations, it is essential to analyze contemporary texts in original languages that show how these boundaries have historically been reflected in language. This reveals the language-bound nature of our considerations, but also the difference that arises between object language and meta-language. For historically working scholars, these textual investigations are very important sources, even if the extra-linguistic reality is not expressed in them and usually has to remain in the dark. Thus, it is necessary to develop mechanisms to find out how contemporary viewers perceived the visual art forms, whether the focus was on their reading, viewing or recognizing. Furthermore, it is necessary to break

through the rigid boundaries of the various media levels and to search for common factors, such as metaphors like, for example, in the present case the "sensory instability" as well as the body.

Especially the significance of writing or calligraphy in Islamic cultures can lead to a further enrichment of the expanded concept of the image (*erweiterter Bildbegriff*). The special art form of calligraphy as a hybrid between image and text encourages the questioning of strict categorizations in text and image. This leads to the creation of new concepts such as "scripturality" (Mersmann) and thus to the search for pictorial and textual elements in the respective visual representation, as James Elkins has already suggested: "This is the way I would prefer to understand the relation, if it has to be put this way, between pictures and writing: not as a duality with some imbrication, but as an articulated continuum of signs, so that every marked surface will have a measure of pictoriality and a measure of writing."[31] It is important to understand the strict categories as a continuum, within which the boundaries between text and image are constantly being renegotiated, as Voßkamp and Weingart have postulated, or in individual cases also merge, as appears to be the case in individual contributions of the present volume with regard to the aspect of the perception of visual art.

Thanks

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all authors for their participation in the workshop and for their conscientious and reliable post-processing of their texts and illustrations. We extend our thanks to the reviewers, whose work has significantly improved the quality of contributions. We are gratefully indebted to the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft for their financial support, enabling us to hold the workshop and to publish its results. At the University of Bamberg, Elisabeth Diethelm was invaluable for her work in the background of administering our research group as well as the conference and its publication. Margret Sloan took a large portion of language editing, and Steven Lüke adopted the arduous task of formal editing and shaping the book in its layout. The University of Bamberg Press adopted the book in its programme and the colleagues of the Institute of Oriental Studies agreed to publish it in the series of the *Bamberger Orientstudien*. Sincere thanks are given to them all.

Sources of Illustrations

Fig. 1–3: L. Korn — Fig. 4: Washington DC, Freer Gallery of Art — Fig. 5: Murat Dursun Tosun — Fig. 6: eBay https://www.ebay.de/itm/292118079045 (last viewed 28.03.2022)

[31] Elkins, James: *On Pictures and the Words that Fail them*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, p. 158.