

**The significance of the Qur'anic quotation 'Mā shā' Allāh' on both Ottoman and Greek heritages in the Balkans, with a special reference to the extant inscriptions on Ottoman buildings in Greece**

العنوان باللغة  
الإنجليزية

### **Abstract**

**Mā shā' Allāh is an Arabic expression used as a spoken amulet in in Arabic culture prior Islam, and continued in Islamic culture, to protect from the evil eye or to bring good luck even. In an encounter with a Greek lady in Lesvos, the author heard the Qur'anic expression 'Mā shā' Allāh' pronounced in its Greek pronunciation masalah with the same concept as the expression used in Islamic culture. Therefore, after research, I found that the 'Mā shā' Allāh' still used in Greek -as in all areas that were part of the Ottoman Empire until early 20th century- especially by the elderly villagers, who use this expression frequently to protect from the evil eye.**

**This paper surveys the 'Mā shā' Allāh' inscriptions on Ottoman buildings in Greece, including the newly published inscriptions. These inscriptions are analysed considering functional, regional, and chronological categories. The meaning of the 'Mā shā' Allāh' inscription is further defined, either as a direct message or as a mirror reflects some aspects of the period and society to which belong. Finally the writing and significance of Mā shā' Allāh in Greek alphabet 'Μάσαλα and Μασαλαχ' are examined on Christian buildings and objects.**