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PRAYER STONE FROM KERBALA, CLAY

SYRIA, DAMASCUS; 20TH CENTURY

DIAM: 7.3 CM

The Muslims' daily prayers, *salat*, can in principle be said without any accessories. It is a widespread tradition among Shia Muslims, however, to place a prayer stone on the earth or floor in front of the worshipper to be touched with the forehead.

Similar prayer stones were made of clay from the Plain of Kerbala in Iraq, so that the believer can recall the martyrdom there of Husayn, the Prophet Muhammad's grandson. The front of the stone is decorated with a mosque and the names of the most important members of the Shiites' "holy family" – Muhammad, Ali, Fatima, Hasan, and Husayn.

Published in:

Catharina Raudvere: *Islam: an introduction*, London 2015, p. 180, fig.

13;