It is often argued that little, if anything, differentiates Shi`i mosques from Sunni mosques. Art historical evidence indicates that this contention is an over-simplification at best. Furthermore, close comparison of ritual spaces in contemporary Shi`i societies provides clear evidence to the contrary. This presentation will illustrate and discuss principles that inform the conception of Shi`i mosques in national and transnational contexts, highlighting the doctrinal, and, in some cases, political, imperatives that distinguish such spaces at the turn of the 15th/21st century. Simultaneously, the presentation will explore the cognitive mechanisms that facilitate the articulation of these principles in material culture and ritual space.