THE UNIVERSITY
of EDINBURGH

Qur'ans from the Eastern Islamic World between the 4th/10th and 6th/12th Centuries

Alya Karame

Vol. 1: Text

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements of the University of Edinburgh for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

College of Humanities and Social Science
Edinburgh College of Art

The University of Edinburgh
2016

(Word count: 87,600)

Declaration of Authorship

I declare that this thesis was composed by myself, that the work contained herein is my own except where explicitly stated otherwise in the text, and that this work has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification except as specified.

17 July 2017

Alya Karame

Abstract

This thesis identifies and studies Qur'ans produced in the eastern Islamic world between the 4th/10th and 6th/12th centuries. The period coincides with major transformations in the environment of Qur'an production: the replacement of "Kufic" with newer types of scripts; the use of paper instead of parchment as a writing material; and the introduction of the vertical format, which gradually replaced the old horizontal format of Qur'an manuscripts.

It was during this period that the Seljuqs and Ghaznavids rose to power alongside other local dynasties in the eastern Islamic world following the breakdown of the Abbasid Empire in the 4th/10th century. The boundaries between these different empires, however, did not prevent the mobility of craftsmen to, from and within Greater Iran. The extant Qur'ans from this period point to a shared visual vocabulary due to the fluidity of borders and the mobility of motifs. Yet, within this common language, local trends emerged defying unified dynastic or regional labels. The similarities and differences in Qur'ans produced in Iraq, Iran, Syria, the Jazira, Khurasan and Transoxiana attest to this idea.

At the turn of the 5th/11th century, new scripts were being stylised while the illumination was in continuity with past traditions. Qur'ans that survive from Greater Iran, Baghdad and Cairo, studied in the first and second chapters, point to local manners of script and illumination stylisation. Some of their epigraphic and decorative forms find parallels on architecture, pottery, and coins pointing to the travel of motifs not only across geographic boundaries but also across artistic fields. The third chapter identifies a group of Qur'ans copied in the first half of the 5th/11th century in Nishapur and hence represent a local style of Qur'an production.

Imperial Ghaznavid and Ghurid Qur'ans copied between the second half of the 5th/11th century and the 6th/12th century, studied in the fourth and fifth chapters, exemplify trends of Qur'anic script and illumination in Khurasan. The aesthetic of the Ghaznavid Qur'ans is rooted in earlier traditions with links to Baghdad and Nishapur while that of the Ghurid Qur'ans appear in continuity with the Ghaznavid yet with new features. Their visual vocabulary resonates with the local eclectic style of architectural decoration and the ceramics, metalwork, coins and silk produced in Greater Iran. A section of the fourth chapter investigates the work of *al-warrāq al-*

ghaznawī (the Warrāq from Ghazna), a recurrent title in the colophons of Ghaznavid Qur'ans that points to a collaborative work environment, and offers insights into the production of these Qur'ans. Based on similarities with the Ghaznavid and Ghurid corpus, additional Qur'ans are attributed to Khurasan and Transoxiana in the sixth chapter. Their visual languages also draw from Qur'anic and non-Qur'anic artistic productions of Khurasan and largely that of Greater Iran.

Finally, Qur'ans copied in the 6th/12th century in the Central Islamic lands appear to be mutually related and further apart from those produced in Khurasan yet with visible links. The seventh and eighth chapters examine the aesthetic diversity in Qur'ans produced in Iran. Iraq, the Jazira and Syria. Their distinct features point to local stylisation of script and illumination that was shaped from the fluidity of motifs throughout the Mashriq.

Acknowledgments

It is difficult to acknowledge all the help I received in conducting this research. The most helpful feedback I got was from my supervisor, Professor Alain George. Without his guidance, this thesis would have never taken shape. To him, I am most grateful and forever indebted. My deepest gratitude goes to Professor Robert Hillenbrand for his generous and invaluable comments that brought the Qur'anic manuscripts studied in this thesis to life. I am grateful to Professor François Déroche who took the time to read the full manuscript and provided insightful remarks. I am also thankful to Heather Pulliam who read and commented on an early draft of the first chapter. The last draft of this thesis would have not been complete had it not been for the editorial input of Brittany Frye, to whom I am deeply thankful.

I wish to acknowledge the financial support of Edinburgh College of Art and the History of Art School, which I received at different stages of my studies. I would also like to acknowledge the financial assistance of the Barakat Trust, which allowed me to consult Qur'anic manuscripts in collections around the world. This study would have been incomplete without the kind assistance of many people in these institutions whom I have thanked in the pertinent notes.

This research would have been inconceivable without the support of my family and friends. Such a lonely task has been well surrounded. Finally, my deepest gratitude goes to my husband, Samer Frangie, without whom I would have never embarked on this path. For his patience and support I owe a lot. This thesis is dedicated to him.

Contents

Notes

Transliteration

This thesis follows the *International Journal of Middle East Studies* (IJMES) transliteration system with some minor simplifications when foreign words are commonly used in English. For example, "Khurasan" not "Khurāsān" and "Qur'an" not "Qurʾān".

All translations are mine, unless otherwise stated.
For the translation of the Qur'an, I followed: Khalidi, Tarif, trans. *The Qur'an*. London: Penguin Classics, 2008.

Dates and dimensions

Dates are given in the form Hijri/Gregorian, or if mentioned in a translated text, Hijri [Gregorian]. When a Hijri year falls on two Gregorian years, the earlier Gregorian year is noted. Dimensions are in the format of height x width cm.

Illustrations

For the convenience of the reader, I have placed the comparative figures and tables in the text and the plates in a separate volume. Numbering of the plates restarts at the beginning of each chapter.

Abbreviations

AKM: Aga Khan Museum (Toronto)
AQ: Astan Quds Razavi (Mashhad)
BL: The British Library (London)
BNF: Bibliothèque Nationale de France (Paris)
BSB: Bayerische Staatsbibliothek (Munich)
CBL: Chester Beatty Library (Dublin)
DK: Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyya (Cairo)
David: David Collection (Copenhagen)
Freer: Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution (Washington, DC)
IBM: Iran Bastan Museum (Tehran)
IRSL: Imam Reza Shrine Library (Mashhad)
IUL: Istanbul University Library (Istanbul)
Khalili: Nasser D. Khalili Collection of Islamic Art (London and Geneva)
LNS: Kuwait National Museum (Kuwait)

LU: Leiden University Library (Leiden)
Met: Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York)
NL: Nuruosmaniye Library (Istanbul)
NLR: National Library of Russia (St. Petersburg)
RRL: Rampur Raza Library (Rampur)
SBB: Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin (Berlin)
TIEM: Türk ve Islam Eserleri Müzesi (Istanbul)
TKS: Topkapı Sarayı Library (Istanbul)
UPenn: University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (Pennsylvania)
Walter: The Walters Art Museum (Baltimore)

EI1: Encyclopaedia of Islam, first edition
EI2: Encyclopaedia of Islam, second edition
EI3: Encyclopaedia of Islam, third edition
EQ: Encyclopaedia of the Qur'an
EIr: Encyclopaedia Iranica

Introduction

Qur'anic manuscripts copied in the eastern Islamic world between the 4th/10th and 6th/12th centuries have several elements in common, pointing to a large shared visual language from which local trends of Qur'an production emerged. While their script and illumination represent a long process of stylisation rooted in earlier traditions, some of their motifs are present across artistic boundaries, from architecture to the decorative arts. This fluidity in Qur'anic aesthetic reflects the mobility of craftsmen and challenges the identification of local styles. Nevertheless, different styles of script and illumination were shaped as detected in Iran, Iraq, Syria, the Jazira, Khurasan and Transoxiana. From the extant Qur'anic manuscripts, two schools can be identified. A Nishapuri trend of illumination developed in the first half of the 5th/11th century followed by a Ghaznavid script and illumination stylisation in the second half of the 5th/11th century.

The political context

Qur'ans from the 4th/10th to 6th/12th centuries were created in a context of political change. The period witnessed a shift in the importance of traditional centres of Islamic power, moving eastward to Iran. Particularly, the significance of centres such as Damascus and Baghdad was being challenged by cities in the east, such as Nishapur, Rayy, Merv and Ghazna (see map below). As Hillenbrand notes, "This dominance of eastern Islam, together with the rule of Shiʿa Fatimids in Egypt and sometimes Syria, made final that break between the eastern and western parts of the Islamic Near East which has endured virtually ever since."[1]

[1] Hillenbrand, *Islamic Art and Architecture*, 89.
[2] On the Seluqs see Bosworth et al., 'Saldjūkids', EI2.

Map of the eastern Islamic world

The hegemony of the Abbasid Empire started dissolving in the early 4th/10th century, as the Abbasid rulers lost power to various dynasties throughout the provinces. They were reduced to a figurehead under the control of the Buyids (or Buwayhids) who ruled Iraq and western Iran from 334/945 to 447/1055. The main threat to the Abbasids came first from the Fatimids in Cairo who proclaimed themselves caliphs in 297/909 and appointed the Sulayhids to rule on their behalf in Yemen from 438/1046 until 532/1137. Buyid rule ended when the Seljuqs took control of Baghdad in 446/1055 and expanded their power westwards to central Anatolia, establishing what became known as the Seljuq Sultanate of Rūm from c. 483/1090 to 707/1307.[2] The Seljuqs who first defeated another Turkic dynasty, the Ghaznavids, in Nishapur in 429/1037, ruled from 441/1040 to 652/1255 in the eastern Islamic lands. Their first capital was Nishapur, before moving it to Rayy and then Isfahan.[3] At the height of the empire, its territories spanned from Central Asia's Tian Shan Mountains in the east to eastern Anatolia in the west, and from the Caspian Sea in the north to the Indian Ocean in the south. The Seljuqs sustained the cultural atmosphere in Khurasan, which was an important province for them, and built madrasas in various towns, such as Nishapur, Merv, Herat and Balkh.[4] They also brought peace to many of

[2] On the Seluqs see Bosworth et al., 'Saldjūkids', EI2.
[3] Bosworth, 'Khurāsān', EI2.
[4] Ibid.

the region's towns, until the end of the 5th/11th century when sectarian strife broke out and the Seljuqs began losing some of their lands.

The province of Khurasan began to flourish under the Tāhirids who governed on behalf of the Abbasids in the 3rd/9th century.[5] Gradually, Khurasan emerged as a centre of Arabic and Persian literature, and of Sunni legal and religious scholarship. Reflecting its strategic position, it benefited from trade between Iraq and central Asia as well as from the fringes of the Indian world.[6] The Ṭāhirids were overthrown by the Ṣaffārids, who were subsequently defeated by the Sāmānids at the turn of the 4th/10th century. The Sāmānids whose capital was the Transoxianan city of Bukhara, governed a vast territory stretching from modern day Tehran to Uzgand in the Farghana valley.[7] They ruled from roughly 265/874 to 395/1005. Khurasan remained at the centre of Sunni religious orthodoxy and culture, but with active Khurasani theologians and traditionists who took part in theological and philosophical movements, such as the Muʿtazila and the Karrāmīyya.[8] Shiʿism found followers in the east, and Sufism was also adopted.[9] In addition to its religious importance, Khurasan played a significant role in the renaissance of the New Persian language and its literature.[10] In Bukhara, Samanid patronage cultivated prose and poetry and revived Persian literature leading to the development of several versions of the Shāhnāma culminating in the work of Firdawsi.

Historically, Khurasan included present-day north eastern Iran, northern Afghanistan and southern Turkmenistan and Transoxiana corresponds to the lands east of the Oxus river covering what is today Uzbekistan, parts of Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan. In early Islamic usage, the region of "Khurasan" included all the lands east of western Iran, which may have even stretched to the Indus valley and Sind.[11] It roughly extended from Gurgān in the southeastern Caspian region to Tukhāristān on the upper Oxus.[12] It included major cities, such as

---

[5] Bosworth, 'Khurāsān', EI2.
[6] Luxury products were exported out of Nishapur. Bosworth, *The Ghaznavids*, 145.
[7] On Bukhara see Frye, *Bukhara*. On the Samanids see Treadwell, 'The Samanids'.
[8] Mentioned in biographical works, such as Thaʿālibi's *Yatimat al-dahr*, and cited in Bosworth, *The Ghaznavids*, 145.
[9] Bosworth, *The Ghaznavids*, 147–48.
[10] Rypka, *History of Iranian Literature*, 126–36. On the connection between the rise of ethnically Iranian dynasties and Persian literature see Peacock, *Early Persian Historians and the Heritage of Pre-Islamic Iran*.
[11] Bosworth, 'Khurāsān', EI2.
[12] Bosworth, *The Ghaznavids*, 145.

Nishapur and Mashhad (now in Iran); Balkh, Herat and Ghazna (now in Afghanistan); Merv (now in Turkmenistan); and Samarqand and Bukhara (now in Uzbekistan).

It was the Turkic Ghaznavids who defeated the Samanids at the end of the 4th/10th century. However, Sebūktigin (r. 366/977-387/997), the founder of the Ghaznavid dynasty, and his son, Sultan Maḥmūd (r. 388/998-421/1030), maintained the political structure of the Samanids as well as their literary and cultural trends.[13] The Ghaznavids expanded their territory to include parts of Transoxiana and Khwārazm, ruling their empire from the capital city of Ghazna. Sultan Maḥmūd consolidated Ghaznavid power in Khurasan, which remained under Ghaznavid control for 40 years. As such, Ghazna was transformed into a great cultural centre, and men of letters, scientists and the finest Persian poets were hired for the court. This period of eminence, however, ended with the arrival of the Seljuqs.[14]

Khurasan was partly taken by the Ghurids in 581/1185, who conquered much of eastern Iran and northern India from the mid-6th/12th century to the mid-7th/13th century.[15] To the north of Khurasan, Khwārazm, which was under the control of the Seljuqs, became an independent power ruled by the Khwārazm-Shāhs who later fought with the Qarakhanids (or Ilek Khāns), another Turkic dynasty in Central Asia.[16]

The Zangids, also a Turkic dynasty, replaced the Seljuqs in Iraq and reigned over Syria from 521/1127 until 631/1233. Moreover, in 581/1185, Syria was lost to the Ayyubids who ruled Egypt, the greater part of Upper Mesopotamia and Yemen, until 648/1250 when the Mamluks began gaining power across the Levant, Egypt and parts of the Arabian Peninsula.

---

13 For the history of Khurasan in the Ghaznavid and Seljuq periods, see parts II and III in Bosworth, *The Ghaznavids*.

14 On Maḥmūd and Masʿūd's courts as cultural centres, see Bosworth, *The Ghaznavids*, 131-135. One of the most accomplished scientists of the period, Abū Rayḥān Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Bīrūnī, among others, lived and worked there. Bosworth, 'The Development of Persian Culture under the Early Ghaznavids', 38; and Yano, 'Al-Bīrūn', EI3. For the advent of the Seljuqs, see chapter VII in Bosworth, *The Ghaznavids*.

15 Bosworth, 'Ghazna', EI2.

16 The Qarakhanids became Muslims in the 4th/10th century and were a loose federation closer to tribal structures rather than the Ghaznavid administrative structure. Bosworth, 'Ilek-Khāns (or Ḳarakhānids)', EI2; and Bosworth, *The New Islamic Dynasties*, 181–84.

The aesthetic context

The manuscripts studied in this thesis were produced during a period of change in the history of Qur'anic production. Between the 4th/10th and 6th/12th centuries, Qur'ans were copied in new types of scripts, on paper instead of parchment and in the vertical format instead of the horizontal format. These shifts imply an aesthetic rupture in the historical continuum of Qur'anic production. However, as this study will show, these transformations happened gradually.

First, the scripts widely known as "Kufic" started being replaced with the "New Style" (NS), a term coined by François Déroche to indicate the scripts that replaced Kufic in Qur'ans.[17] This group of scripts has been given different descriptive names in modern scholarship, such as "broken cursive", "semi-Kufic" or "broken Kufic", as well as geographic names, such as "Eastern Kufic" and "Eastern Persian Kufic", among others.[18] NS seems the most appropriate among the terms used since this group of scripts did not develop linearly from everyday cursive scripts (as "broken cursive" implies) or from Kufic (as "semi-Kufic" or "broken Kufic" imply), and is not necessarily confined to any specific part of the Islamic lands (as "Eastern Kufic" implies). Thus, I will continue to use the term NS as an "umbrella term" even though variations within the group exist.[19]

This script transformation was accompanied by another change pertaining to the adoption of round scripts in Qur'ans. While the 5th/11th and 6th/12th centuries represent the peak of NS use in Qur'ans, the number of Qur'ans employing NS dropped significantly in the 7th/13th century as it was replaced with round scripts.[20] These round scripts, ranging from rectilinear to more

---

[17] The "New Style" is the shortening of the "New Abbasid Style" as opposed to the "Old Abbasid Style" (les écritures abbasides anciennes), which is Déroche's naming for Kufic. Even though the relation of this type of script to the city of Kufa in Iraq is not established, I will keep using this term to denote all geometric scripts before NS for reasons of convenience, having been widely in use since medieval times and in modern literature. Moreover, as Déroche himself notes, some of these examples might have been Umayyad making of "Old Abbasid Style" – thus, not a very accurate term. Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 16-17 and 132–35. Déroche compares NS to Kufic, illustrating the ways in which they belong to two different types of scripts. Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 136–37 (table VI).

[18] Blair and Déroche provide a list of the use of different terms in modern literature. Blair, *Islamic Calligraphy*, 143-144; and Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 132.

[19] Déroche notes that "NS scripts are far from homogeneous, but a precise analysis of the variations between them must await further paleographic research". Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 132.

[20] Based on the extant material, NS Qur'ans were at least six times larger in number than RS Qur'ans in the 5th/11th century. However, by the 7th/13th century, a Qur'an copied in NS was a rarity.

curvilinear styles, are rooted in non-Qur'anic copying, specifically in scripts used to copy Arabic books of all subjects during the Abbasid period. I will retain the term "non-Qur'anic bookhands", following Déroche's terminology of "*écritures livresques non-coraniques*", to indicate scripts used to copy non-Qur'anic manuscripts.[21] To avoid confusion, I will use a different term – Round Style (RS) – to refer to the round scripts that were adopted in Qur'ans. Although some features of non-Qur'anic bookhands are found in RS, the latter took a different course of codification and stylisation from the former, and hence should be noted differently. I have also refrained from employing the term *naskh* (from the verb *nasakha* – to copy) to indicate RS because it is often used to describe all scripts with a round appearance – Qur'anic and non-Qur'anic, early and late. RS, which complements Déroche's NS term, is similarly used as an "umbrella term", since these Qur'anic scripts exhibit many variations in the period under study and it was not until centuries later that they gained independent and clearly identifiable characteristics. As such, RS scripts used during this period fit within a chain of developments that eventually led to the establishment of *al-aqlām al-sitta* (the Six Pens).

The introduction and development of NS and RS between the 4th/10th and 6th/12th centuries were accompanied by changes in the format and material of Qur'anic manuscripts. By the 5th/11th century, the old horizontal format of Kufic Qur'ans had been almost completely abandoned. In addition, paper started to replace parchment as early as the 4th/10th century, as it was cheaper and less time-consuming to produce. In fact, by the 6th/12th century, a Qur'an copied on parchment would have been very hard to find, except in the Maghrib where it remained in use until the 8th/14th century alongside the square format and distinctive forms of RS scripts, generally called Maghribi.[22]

In addition to the changes in the environment of Qur'anic production, the wider artistic milieu in which these Qur'anic manuscripts were produced help us understand the ways in which their aesthetic was shaped. By comparing the Qur'an to other artistic forms, one positions the manuscript as part of a larger network of artistic productions. During this period, Greater Iran witnessed numerous artistic activities under the Samanids, Buyids, Seljuqs, Ghaznavids, Ghurids

[21] Déroche's study suggests that the characteristics of the 3rd/9th century non-Qur'anic scripts are rooted in earlier traditions of Kufic and other scripts. Déroche, 'Les manuscrits arabes datés du IIIe/IXe siècle', 360. Sperl and Moustafa call round scripts the *warrāqī* script. Moustafa and Sperl, *The Cosmic Script*, 1:91.
[22] The earliest Qur'anic fragments with characteristics of Maghribi scripts are from the 5th/11th century. Déroche, 'Tradition et innovation'; and Déroche, 'Deux fragments coraniques'.

and other smaller and short-lived dynasties. The striking similarities between Qur'anic motifs and those that appear on architecture, ceramics, metalwork, silk and coins of the period points that Qur'anic production was not isolated from other forms of art. For instance, 'Samanid' and 'Seljuq' ceramics and metalwork share a number of epigraphic and decorative motifs with the Qur'ans under study.[23] Similarly, motifs on ceramics from Ayyubid Syria also find parallels with 6th/12th century Qur'anic illumination. In addition to metalwork and ceramics, stylised epigraphic forms on Samanid, Ghurid and Qarakhanid coins can be detected in Qur'ans. The scripts and patterns that appear on Buyid silk are also visible in Qur'ans. Finally, Epigraphic and decorative elements present in the architecture of the Buyids, Seljuqs, Ghaznavid and Qarakhanid resonate in Qur'ans of the period. Hence, the material mentioned above and analysed below indicates that ceramicists and craftsmen working in various artistic milieus shared the same decorative vocabulary and calligraphic styles as those working in Qur'anic production. The translation of decorative motifs and scripts from one medium to another remains largely unstudied, given that these different artistic fields employ different techniques, tools and even scale. Until further research is conducted on the translation process of motifs and scripts to and from Qur'ans, this research will be limited to visual comparisons for the purpose of offering insights into the shaping of Qur'anic visual language. Moreover, and in view of the insufficient number of dated Qur'ans from this period, comparisons with architectural material and the decorative arts can be adduced to localise Qur'ans.

Positioning the research in the literature

The scarcity of Qur'ans copied between the 4th/10th and 6th/12th centuries, and consequently the limited research that exists on them, lends importance to this thesis, but equally poses some difficulties. The situation has changed only slightly since 1992 when François Déroche wrote in the catalogue of the Khalili Collection that "the documentation is still too limited to be an adequate guide to their [NS] chronology or to their geographical distribution."[24] Nevertheless, manuscripts in private and public collections are gradually being digitised and published in

[23] The surviving material indicates the existence of a number of metalworking centres between the 4th/10th and 6th/12th century. The results of the excavations in Nishapur show examples of metal objects circulating in Khurasan in the early Islamic period but not necessarily originating in Nishapur although there appears to be some evidence that Nishapur may have been a metalworking centre. Wilkinson, *Nishapur* and Allan, *Nishapur*. Hillenbrand provides an exhaustive study of Samanid wares in 'Content versus Context'.
[24] Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 132.

catalogues or online. The availability of this material helped me identify around 110 Qur'ans copied in NS and RS between the 4th/10th and 6th/12th centuries, which I organised into a database. The Qur'ans studied in this thesis provide an invaluable source to understand the production of Qur'anic manuscripts during a period of script transformations and from which not enough Qur'an manuscripts survive. The rest of the Qur'anic manuscripts and fragments were left out of this thesis since they offered no insights on the discussion as their illuminated folios did not survive while their scripts did not fit any of the styles discussed below. They nevertheless offer an idea of what survives from this period and are hence listed in the appendix at the end of the thesis.

With the exception of a few detailed analyses on individual Qur'ans, scholars approach this period with an aim to understand how and why new scripts were adopted for copying the Qur'an.[25] For example, seeking to answer the "how", Déroche's palaeographic study of NS represents one of the founding approaches to manuscript studies, and forms the basis of the present thesis.[26] In his book, *The Rise of Islamic Calligraphy*, Alain George approaches the subject of NS by tracing its development from the 3rd/8th century and its gradual codification.[27] George also looks into the context in which RS scripts were adopted for copying the Qur'an, and questions the role of the famous Abbasid *wazīr* Ibn Muqla (d. 328/940) in codifying the RS script.[28] Although this thesis is not concerned with answering the "why", the script analysis contained herein confirms George's assertions on the role of Ibn Muqla in the development of RS scripts.[29] Sheila Blair devotes two chapters of her book, *Islamic Calligraphy*, to the ways in which the adoption of the new Qur'anic scripts and their proliferation materialised. Blair's

[25] For examples of studies on individual Qur'anic manuscripts, see Rice, *The Unique Ibn al-Bawwāb Manuscript in the Chester Beatty Library*; and Saint Laurent, 'The Identification of a Magnificent Koran Manuscript'. The Ibn al-Bawwāb manuscript, ascribed to 391/1000, will be discussed in chapter II, while the Qarmathian Qur'an will be studied in chapter VI.
[26] Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 132–37; and Déroche, *Les manuscrits du Coran*, 136–49.
[27] George, *The Rise of Islamic Calligraphy*, 115–25.
[28] Ibid., 134–43. The role of Ibn Muqla in influencing Qur'anic script has been debated in modern scholarship with opinions ranging from questioning the existence of a reform in the first place to attributing a political meaning to Ibn Muqla's role as a script reformer. While George questions the role of Ibn Muqla as a script reformer, Yasser Tabbaa reads the transformation of Qur'anic script as a tool of political and theological propaganda during the so-called Sunni revival, positioning Ibn Muqla at its centre. Tabbaa, 'The Transformation of Arabic Writing: Part I'; and Tabbaa, 'Canonicity and Control'. The most extensive work done on Ibn Muqla is the book published in two volumes by Moustafa and Sperl, who lay out a summary of the debates around Ibn Muqla's role as a script reformer. Moustafa and Sperl, *The Cosmic Script*, 1:94–101.
[29] See chapter II.

chronological overview, which is rightly based on important manuscripts, offers guidance through the references of the period, but provides neither a picture of the period's regional stylisation of script and illumination, nor an understanding of its Qur'anic production, as this thesis seeks to present.[30] Most recently, Ahmed Moustafa and Stefan Sperl published a two-volume book entitled *The Cosmic Script,* offering insight into the forces and ideas that shaped Arabic calligraphy by identifying the geometric foundation of the round scripts. Even though this book asks questions marginal to the present research, it did help in contextualising the production of manuscripts through a number of textual references.[31]

Moreover, no extensive research thus far has brought together extant Qur'ans from the period between the 4th/10th and 6th/12th centuries with an aim to identify the Qur'anic visual languages. This thesis fills this gap in the literature by investigating the development and stylisation of scripts and illumination in Qur'ans from the eastern Islamic world. By followinga chronological order, this research provides an understanding of the extent to which a Qur'anic aesthetic expanded, highlighting the artistic interactions across media and dynastic boundaries. In addition, Qur'ans from this period represent the earliest known examples of collaborative work in manuscript production, and the analysis below offers insights into their patronage. Nevertheless, because very few Qur'an manuscripts survive from important cities such as Damascus, Baghdad and Cairo, the picture of Qur'an production during this period is still incomplete. The absence of Fatimid Qur'ans, which some scholars suggest were dispersed after the fall of the Fatimid dynasty in Egypt, does not make the task any easier.[32]

Methodology

In this thesis, dated and localised Qur'ans are studied first, from which parameters of illumination style and script type are identified. To this primary group, Qur'ans with comparable illumination and script are added, forming a secondary group of manuscripts that can be

[30] Blair, *Islamic Calligraphy*, 143–237.
[31] Moustafa and Sperl, *The Cosmic Script*.
[32] On the dispersal of Fatimid libraries, see Bora, 'Did Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Destroy the Fatimids' Books?'. On the burning of Fatimid libraries, see Sayyid, '*Khizānat kutub al-fāṭimiyyīn: hal baqiya minhā shay'?*'.

attributed to the same geographic region and/or period.[33] I have refrained from the study of vocalization, orthography and the binding of Qur'ans, since analysing script and illumination is most important to our understanding of the aesthetic employed in these Qur'ans.[34] Given that these other aspects require adequate study of their own, I leave them as avenues for future investigation. Moreover, the study of script and illumination was in itself a difficult job, which required a thorough comparative study of their constituent characteristics. In addition, substantial effort was involved in deciphering colophons and endowment notes, which, when available, served as evidence for localising Qur'ans or uncovering underlying factors in their aesthetic formation.

Because an in-depth analysis is necessary to identify the visual languages of these Qur'ans, the reader will be faced with lengthy descriptions that become relevant at later stages. Moreover, a thorough analysis of the scripts employed in these Qur'ans becomes even more crucial given the lack of primary texts from this period that provide a clear and comprehensive description or illustration of their characteristics. The primary texts that do exist are rather confusing and unclear.[35] For example, Ibn al-Nadīm (d. 388/998) mentions 19 Qur'anic scripts and 24 "*aqlām mawzūna*" ("proportioned scripts"),[36] while Abū Ḥayyān al-Tawḥīdī (d. after 399-400/1008-1009) counts 12 Qur'anic scripts.[37] The terms mentioned in these sources range from descriptive names, such as "*musalsāl*" ("chained") or *ghubār* ("dust"), to names that indicate the geographic origins of the scripts, including "*makkī*" ("from Mecca") and *madanī* ("from Medina"). Names related to the size of the pen also appear, such as "*thuluth*" ("a third") and "*thuluthayn*" ("two thirds"), as well as terms indicating a function, such as "*naskh*" ("copying") and "*sijillāt*" ("noting"). This proliferation of different terms is one of the factors that motivated me to invent the term "RS", especially because none of these terms can be used to identify the RS scripts of

[33] This method of comparing the script in dated manuscripts to the script in undated manuscripts in order to provide a date for the latter was first proposed by François Déroche. Déroche, 'The Qur'an of Amājūr', 59.
[34] Few original Qur'an bindings survive from this period, given that most manuscripts are now dispersed.
[35] Some scholars rely on these primary texts, as for example, Nabia Abbott who favours the use of primary sources for script descriptions. She lists all the terms present in primary sources of the 3rd/9th and 4th/10th centuries. Abbott, 'Arabic palaeography', 87-88. Déroche criticises Abbott's approach for the same reason cited here, see Déroche, 'La paleographie des écritures livresques dans le domaine arabe', 4-5.
[36] Ibn al- Nadīm, *al-Fihrist*, 10-11. Ibn al-Nadīm calls *al-aqlām al-mawzūna*, those that developed from four major pens: (*al-jalīl, al-ṭūmār, al-niṣf al-thaqīl and al-thuluth*), among which he mentions *thuluth*, *riqāʿ* and *riyāsi* [*riyāshī*].
[37] Rosenthal, 'Abū Ḥaiyān Al-Tawḥīdī on Penmanship', 3.

the period.[38] Relatedly, these scripts cannot be defined using later terms, such as *muḥaqqaq* or *thuluth* (established as part of *al-aqlām al-sitta* – the Six Pens), due to the fact that they had not yet reached such maturity. When characteristics from later mature scripts appear in a given RS, the name of the script will follow, as for example, RS-*muḥaqqaq*.

Having clarified the framework and methods of this thesis, one issue remains: the extant Qur'anic material from which conclusions and assumptions are drawn. The surviving Qur'ans from the three centuries under study represent only a fraction of the Qur'ans copied during this period. The medieval accounts of library holdings are a pointer in this direction.[39] Moreover, most of the published and preserved manuscripts in private or public collections were expensive commissions – a fact probably related to the interest in preserving artistically valuable objects. Hence, it is safer to assume that any picture drawn from analysis of the surviving material elucidates only one aspect of Qur'anic production at the time.

Lastly, identifying and reconstructing the corpus of Qur'ans used in this thesis – most of which were dispersed – was in itself a difficult task. Although I did my best to obtain reproductions of all the manuscripts, I was not able to personally examine each one. Those I examined in person are in private and public collections in Europe and the US, while those I could not access remain in the lands in which they were originally produced. This inaccessibility was mainly due to the fact that they are in zones of conflict, and in some cases, to the lack of institutional means of reproduction.[40] This aspect also imposes limitations on the conclusions drawn in this thesis.

Thesis outline

The first part of this thesis focuses on the script and illumination employed in Qur'ans between the 4th/10th and 5th/11th century. The first chapter traces the development of NS scripts that were becoming widely used throughout the Islamic world and identifies its stylisation between eastern and western Islamic book traditions. The second and third chapters focus on the earliest Qur'ans copied in Round Style scripts, setting the basis on which Qur'anic visual languages of later

[38] Déroche, 'Les écritures coraniques anciennes', 213–17.
[39] Eche, *Les bibliothèques arabes publiques et semi-publiques en Mésopotamie, en Syrie et en Égypte au moyen âge.*
[40] The Turkish and Islamic Art Museum in Istanbul is a case in point.

centuries can be understood. Two of these Qur'ans were copied in Baghdad, one in Egypt and five in Nishapur, providing us with a better idea of Qur'anic aesthetic trends in these cities.

The second part looks at Qur'anic production in the eastern Islamic lands by identifying and studying local aesthetic trends in Khurasan and Transoxiana from the 5th/11th to the 6th/12th century. While the fourth chapter identifies and analyses a group of Imperial Ghaznavid Qur'ans copied in the second half of the 5th/11th century, the fifth chapter studies their visual continuity into the Ghurid period. These manuscripts reflect a visual language rooted not only in earlier traditions, with visible links to Nishapur and Baghdad, but also in the larger context of artistic productions of Greater Iran. Based on similarities with this Qur'anic corpus, the sixth chapter attributes additional Qur'ans to Khurasan and Transoxiana while highlighting the development of local aesthetic trends.

Finally, the last part studies Qur'anic manuscripts from the Central Islamic lands in the 6th/12th century. The seventh chapter focuses on Qur'ans copied in Iran, Iraq, the Jazira and Syria. Even though these represent local visual languages and appear distinct from Qur'anic production in the Eastern Islamic lands, they still share common elements confirming the intersection of visual motifs throughout the eastern Islamic world. This fluidity of styles is observed in Qur'ans studied in the last chapter of this thesis. Chapter VIII, hence, discusses Qur'ans that exhibit aesthetic diversity yet point to a shared vocabulary in the Central Islamic lands.

List of Figures and Tables

List of Tables:

Chapter I:

Chapter III:

Chapter IV:

Chapter V:

Chapter VI:

Chapter VII:

Chapter VIII:

List of Figures:

Chapter I:

Chapter II:

Chapter III:

Chapter IV:

Chapter V:

Chapter VI:

Chapter VII:

Chapter VIII:

PART I

SCRIPT AND ILLUMINATION BETWEEN THE 4TH/10TH AND THE BEGINNING OF THE 5TH/11TH CENTURY

The first part of this thesis examines Qur'anic manuscripts copied between the 4th/10th and the beginning of the 5th/11th century. More specifically, it offers a closer look at the stylisation of two types of scripts and the development of illumination in the Qur'anic sphere. While the shift from Kufic to NS (New Style) and RS (Round Style) happened gradually, as the palaeographic analysis will show, the illumination appears to be in continuity with the motifs used in Qur'ans of the previous centuries. This phase witnessed other important technical changes as well, including the adoption of paper instead of parchment and the use of a vertical format rather than a horizontal one.

The Qur'ans discussed in this first part were copied during a period of significant political transformations. First, a division occurred in Greater Iran, with the Ghaznavids ruling the east and the Buyids ruling the west. By 334/945, the Buyids had conquered Baghdad, reducing the Abbasids to merely a figurehead. The land between Rayy in the north and Kirmān in the south served as the borderline demarcating this division. However, with the advent of the Seljuqs, the division between east and west disappeared, and the borderline became the centre of a new empire: the Great Seljuqs. These emerging powers shifted regional importance to cities in the east. The Ghaznavids, who had expanded their territories to include parts of Transoxiana and Khwārazm – the region of the lower Oxus River – were soon defeated by the Seljuqs in Nishapur in 429/1037. The Seljuqs made Nishapur their capital before moving it to Rayy and then Isfahan.[1]

This period also coincides with artistic productivity in Iran, from which ceramic wares, metalwork and stucco carvings are well represented. The visual language employed in the Qur'ans studied here intersect with decorative elements appearing in various artistic productions,

[1] For the political context, refer to the introduction.
[2] Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 132–36; and Déroche, *Les manuscrits du Coran*, 45–47. Déroche eventually abandons his NSII type due to its similarities with NSI and NSIII.
[3] This is due, firstly, to the relatively small number of manuscripts known to us today and, secondly, to the heterogeneity in the stylisation of letter forms.
[4] Early NS features are also detected on 2nd/8th century papyri as, for example, in the two letters copied in ink on papyrus dated 90/708 and 91/709. They are now in Dār al-Kutub in Cairo and are published in

offering a more holistic view of Qur'anic manuscript production and pointing to a common large aesthetic vocabulary across media.

The first chapter studies the stylisation of NS in Greater Iran, the Maghrib, Egypt and Baghdad between the 4th/10th and early 5th/11th centuries. Qur'ans copied in NS during this period have features in their script and illumination inherited from previous Kufic traditions, some of which reappear stylised in later Qur'ans. For instance, two main types of NS appear in fashion – the angular and the round, or NSI and NSIII respectively, as Déroche terms them.[2] Still, however, a great deal of variability exists within these two types of NS, and my attempts to develop further script typologies out of the surviving samples of manuscripts have failed.[3] Nevertheless, based on the surviving dated corpus, a clear division between eastern and western Islamic book production appears evident, with the two NS types stylised differently from region to region. The appearance of NS on different media – from ceramics excavated in Khurasan, to a textile in Egypt and non-Qur'anic manuscripts in Baghdad – illustrates the script's high degree of variability, as well as its popularity beginning in the first half of the 4th/10th century in non-Qur'anic environments.

The second chapter focuses on three Qur'ans copied in RS. The first was copied at the turn of the 5th/11th century by the renowned calligrapher Ibn al-Bawwāb, in Baghdad. The second Qur'an shares many similarities with the illumination of Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an, hence its discussion here. The third Qur'an, famously known in modern literature as the "Sulayhid Qur'an", was copied in 417/1026 most likely in Cairo. These Qur'ans offer evidence to the high level of stylisation that RS had reached in the first half of the 5th/11th century in Baghdad and Cairo and provide an idea of Qur'anic production in the Abbasid and Fatimid capitals.

Finally, the third chapter discusses a group of five RS Qur'ans that had never been studied as a group before. Copied in the first half of the 5th/11th century in RS, this group of manuscripts share a number of common features in their decoration pointing to a local Nishapuri school of

[2] Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 132–36; and Déroche, *Les manuscrits du Coran*, 45–47. Déroche eventually abandons his NSII type due to its similarities with NSI and NSIII.
[3] This is due, firstly, to the relatively small number of manuscripts known to us today and, secondly, to the heterogeneity in the stylisation of letter forms.

illumination. The RS script employed in these manuscripts appears to be consistent in form and size of letters within one manuscript but not yet codified across the group.

Chapter I

The Stylisation of the New Style between the 4th/10th and the Beginning of the 5th/11th Century

Before examining the regional stylisation of NS, a brief discussion on the roots of NS and the period preceding its Qur'anic stylisation is necessary. NS features can be traced back to the 2nd/8th century, evidenced in the famous Antinoë inscription dated 117/735 from the Nile Valley in Egypt (Plate I).[4] This inscription, first used by Alain George to convey how NS looked prior to its Qur'anic application, includes many recognizable characteristics, such as the form of initial *alif* with an oblique turn at the bottom, as seen in mature NSI.[5] In addition, the final form of *alif,* which has a thin vertical stroke that drops below the baseline, is a feature found in mature NSIII as well as non-Qur'anic bookhands.[6] Finally, initial *ʿayn*/*ghayn,* made of a short, thin top hook that meets a long, thicker horizontal stroke on the baseline, is rooted in Kufic tradition, and serves as a characterising feature of NSI.[7]

Even though this thesis is not concerned with the early development of NS, it is important to note that NS features can also be detected in Christian manuscripts of the 3rd/9th and 4th/10th centuries.[8] The scripts used to copy these manuscripts are far from homogeneous and appear

[4] Early NS features are also detected on 2nd/8th century papyri as, for example, in the two letters copied in ink on papyrus dated 90/708 and 91/709. They are now in Dār al-Kutub in Cairo and are published in Moritz, *Arabic Paleography* (plates 102, 103 and 105).

[5] The text of the inscription, which is written in ink, is made of Qur'anic verses and mentions a name and date, which George has deciphered as *wa-kataba malik bin kathīr [kuthayr?] … rajab sanat sabʿ ʿashara wa māʾa* (Written by Malik b. Kathīr (or Kuthayr) in [the month of] Rajab of the year 117). George, *The Rise of Islamic Calligraphy*, 116–17. Also published in Moritz, *Arabic Paleography* (plates 107-110).

[6] For an example of non-Qur'anic script that features final *alif* with a thin stroke that drops below the baseline, see *Masāʾil al-ḥadīth*, dated 266/879, by Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal. It is now in al-Maktaba al-Ẓahiriyya in Damascus (no. 334), and a folio from it is published in Déroche, 'Les manuscrits arabes datés du IIIe/IXe siècle' (fig. 6); and Zayn al-Dīn, *Muṣawwar al-khaṭṭ al-ʿarabī*, 38 (plate 119).

[7] Mainly in groups C and D. For Kufic types C and D, see tables III and IV, respectively, in Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 40–41 and 136 (table VI) for NSI.

[8] George lists some of these manuscripts. George, *The Rise of Islamic Calligraphy*, 121 (table 4). Some are preserved in the monastery of St. Catherine in Mount Sinai: 'The Four Gospels' (codex 72), published in: Atiya, *The Arabic Manuscripts of Mount Sinai*, (plate VI); 'The Arabic Lectionary', dated 859, published in: Evans and Ratliff, *Byzantium and Islam: Age of Transition*, 39 and 62 (nos. 34 and 39 respectively); 'The Arabic Epistles and Act', dated 253/867, with the name of the scribe Bishr b. al-Sirri who translated it from Syriac (Arabic Ms. 151), published in: Evans and Ratliff, *Byzantium and Islam*, 62 (no. 35); 'The

sometimes to mix between non-Qur'anic bookhand features, NS and Kufic characteristics. NS features can be detected in: the diagonal stroke of *jīm/ḥāʾ/khāʾ* that crosses the baseline; the diagonal shaft of *ṭāʾ/zāʾ*; the triangularity in the heads of letters; v-shaped ligatures; and the independent form of *alif* with a turn to the right at the base. In addition to Christian manuscripts, the juridical manuscripts from the 4th/10th and early 5th/11th century, now at the National Library of Qayrawan, also employ heterogeneous scripts with characteristics that mix between the roundness of the non-Qur'anic bookhands, the angularity and contrast of NS, and Kufic features.[9]

In the Qur'anic environment, NS features can be detected alongside Kufic and non-Qur'anic bookhand characteristics in Qur'ans copied on parchment, most of which were in the horizontal format.[10] The most famous example is the Khayqānī Qur'an, which was copied in the vertical format in a script that combines NS and non-Qur'anic bookhands. The Qur'an was named after the person who corrected it, Aḥmad al-Khayqānī, and is dated 292/904. It is now dispersed among various collections in the world, with the largest volume held by the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin.[11] Even though George raises doubts as to the authenticity of the note that states it was corrected in 292/904, the Qur'an could still be attributed to the 4th/10th century due to its immature script and the fact that it was copied on parchment.[12] A number of scholars have discussed the script of the Khayqānī Qur'an. Déroche, Tabbaa, and Whelan consider it as a

---

Greek-Arabic Diglot' (Greek Ms. 36), published in: Evans and Ratliff, *Byzantium and Islam*, 61 (no. 32); 'The Arabic Bible' (Parchment 52), published in: George, *The Rise of Islamic Calligraphy*, 119 and in Evans and Ratliff, *Byzantium and Islam*, 63 (no. 36); 'The Codex Arabicus', published in: Attiya, *The Arabic Manuscripts of Mound Sinai*, (plate III) and in Evans and Ratliff, *Byzantium and Islam*, 61 (no. 33). In addition, one manuscript is at the British Library: 'The Treatise on the Veneration of the Holy Icons' (Or. 4950) by the bishop of Harran Theodore Abu Qurrah, dated 877, and is published in: Evans and Ratliff, *Byzantium and Islam*, 121 (no. 81) and in Déroche, "Les Manuscrits Arabes Datés Du IIIe/IXe Siècle," (no. 10, fig. 5); Finally 'The New Testament' dated 902 copied in Jerusalem, is now at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France (Arabe 6725), published in: Vajda, *Album de Paleographie Arabe*, (plate 4) and in Tabbaa, 'Canonicity and Control', 95 (fig. 2).

[9] For example see *Kitāb Sībawayh,* published in: Bongianino, 'Le manuscript X 56 *sup*', 5-25; and Déroche, *Le livre manuscript arabe*, 69-70.

[10] For example, LNS 65 MS and LNS 1 CA in George, *Manuscripts of the Qur'an and Islamic Devotional Books: The Al-Sabah Collection*, forthcoming); BL Add. 11735 in Tabbaa, 'The Transformation of Arabic Writing: Part I', 128; Khalili KFQ32 in Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 141; Dar M. 45 in Moritz, *Arabic Paleography*, plate 45; IUL A.6626 in Derman, *Fann al-khaṭṭ*, plate 7; and BNF Arabe 383d, 382a (Gallica online).

[11] 187 folios are at the Chester Beatty Library (Is 1417); one bifolio is in the Khalili Collection (KFQ26); one folio is in the Freer and Sackler Galleries (S1997.92); and one folio is in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (26-161-1).

[12] George, 'Coloured Dots and the Question of Regional Origins in Early Qur'ans (Part I)', 21-22.

round script, while Arberry, George and James identify it as NS.[13] Blair notes that the script in the Khayqānī Qur'an exemplifies a period in which the round scripts were adopted for copying the Qur'an and which, according to the author, was not successful and eventually led to a transformation of the script into "broken cursive" (Blair's term for NS).[14] These disagreements in modern scholarship point once again to the hybridity of its script.

These "hybrid" scripts were hence employed in Qur'ans of the 4th/10th century – even probably earlier – and suggest a transitional phase in Qur'anic production between old and new traditions, namely before the establishment of NS and RS in Qur'ans. Some of the Qur'ans discussed in this chapter illustrate this mixture, as they retain clearly identifiable features from both Kufic and non-Qur'anic bookhand traditions. Indeed, as Déroche has argued, the stylisation of NS was influenced by the non-Qur'anic bookhands, while NSI appears closely linked to the Kufic tradition.[15]

As such, the stylisation of NS will be studied in nine dated Qur'ans from the 4th/10th and beginning of the 5th/11th centuries, some of which are localised (Table 1.1). Three out of the nine Qur'ans in this group were copied on parchment, while the rest on paper, and two are in the horizontal format. They were copied in scripts with clearly identifiable NS features but also retained characteristics from Kufic and non-Qur'anic bookhand traditions (Table 1.2 presents single letters from these Qur'ans).

The Qur'anic manuscripts discussed here are not the only extant NS manuscripts from this period. A number of dispersed Qur'anic folios and volumes can be dated between the 4th/10th and 5th/11th centuries that are now in various private and public collections around the world, some of which appeared in European Islamic art auction sales. Even though this material does not add any substantial information to the present discussion, it may offer us a better idea of the scope of Qur'anic production in the period under study, or rather what survived from it. Some

[13] Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 144; Tabbaa, 'The Transformation of Arabic Writing: Part I', 125; Whelan, 'Writing the Word of God', 134; Arberry, *The Koran Illuminated*, nos. 23-26; George, *The Rise of Islamic Calligraphy*, 119-120; and James, *Qur'ans and Bindings from the Chester Beatty Library*, 26.
[14] Blair, *Islamic Calligraphy*, 148–50.
[15] Déroche even suggests that NSIII may have started in 2nd/8th century papyri. He also proposes that NSI began later than NSIII, and that it might have initially been a "secular" script influenced by Kufic styles D.Vb and D.Vc. Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 132-133.

manuscripts are mentioned in relevant footnotes and all are listed in the appendix at the end of this thesis, waiting to be assembled and studied.

Manuscript	Date	Place of origin	Writing material	Script used	Height x width (cm)	L. per page	Calligraphers and illuminators
Qur'an of Ibn Shaddhan (CBL Is. 1414/III, Ms A6758)	361/971	Eastern Iran	Paper	NSI	26 x 17.8	10	• 'Alī b. Shaddhān al-Rāzī (calligrapher)
Isfahan Qur'an (Khalili KFQ900/ TIEM 455-456/ Frer F1937.34/ Met 40.184.5)	383/993	Isfahan	Paper	NSI	34 x 34.5	4	• Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Yūsuf al-Isfahānī (calligrapher)
Rayy Qur'an (Iraqi Museum/ Khalilat al-Rawda al-Haydariyya - Najaf)	419/1028	Rayy	Paper	NSIII	Vertical	16	• 'Alī b. Muḥammad al-Muḥallā (calligrapher)
Al-Saffār Qur'an (TKS H822)	388/998	Eastern Iran?	Paper	NSIII	39 x 32	20	• Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn al-Saffār (calligrapher)
Al-Rūdhbārī's Qur'an (TKS Y752)	396/1005	Eastern Iran?	Paper	NSIII	Vertical	20	• Abū Bakr ʿAbd al-Malik b. Zarʿa b. Muḥammad al-Rūdhbārī (calligrapher)
Palermo Qur'an (Khalili KFQ988-KFQ991/ NL Ms 21)	372/982	Palermo	Parchment	NSIII	17.6 x 25	17	x
Qur'an of the Nuns (Musée du Bardo/ Met 2007.191/David 25/2001)	410/1019	Qayrawan	Parchment	NSI	45 x 30	5	• 'Alī b. Aḥmad al-Warrāq
Shashak Qur'an (TIEM 12500)	325/936	Egypt	Parchment	NSIII	13 x 9.5	7	• Shashak b. Muḥammad b. ʿAbdallāh b. Shashak
Qur'an attributed to Ibn al-Bawwāb (Astan Quds Library - Qum)	392/1001?	Baghdad?	Paper	NSIII	Vertical	5	• Ibn al-Bawwāb (forged colophon?)

Table 1.1: Dated Qur'ans copied in NS in the 4th/10th and beginning of the 5th/11th century.

Table 1.2: NS letters from dated Qur'ans of the 4th/10th and beginning of the 5th/11th century.

Table 1.2 continued: NS letters from dated Qur'ans of the 4th/10th and beginning of the 5th/11th century.

The Qur'an of Ibn Shādhān

Copied by ʿAlī b. Shādhān al-Rāzi in 361/971, the Qur'an of Ibn Shādhān is the earliest known Qur'an to be copied on paper (Plate II).[16] Its script has features that are typical of NSI (Table 1.2): the triangle at the top left side of the *alif*; the diagonal stroke of initial *jīm/ḥāʾ/khāʾ,* which crosses the baseline; the shaft of *ṭāʾ/ẓāʾ* that starts with some thickness at the top left side and drops diagonally on the far left side of the body; the thin oblique top stroke of *ʿayn/ghayn*; the thin oblique tail of *mīm*; the diagonal stress in the bowl of *nūn* and tail of *wāw;* and the triangular head of *wāw*. However, a few key characteristics of NSIII can also be noted. The independent *alif* is a straight vertical stroke that does not have the oblique turn at the bottom, *dāl/dhāl* does not have a triangle at its base and the shaft of *ṭāʾ/ẓāʾ* is not long and thin as in NSI but resemble rather the NSIII type. These differences indicate that the NS of Ibn Shādhān's Qur'an includes features of both NSI and NSIII.

Kufic elements also appear in the Qur'an of Ibn Shādhān. For example, attributes of the illumination strongly resemble those found in Kufic Qur'ans, such as the chessboard-like pattern and the use of type-6 vignettes in the frontispiece (fols. 1v-2r, Plate III).[17] Similarly, the use of red dots for vocalization in Ibn Shādhān's Qur'an is a Kufic feature that was gradually replaced in later NS Qur'ans by modern vocalization. Unlike Kufic Qur'ans, however, the text in Ibn Shādhān's Qur'an is not copied in continuous writing (*scriptio continua),* and instead, includes larger spaces between words that make it easier to read. These old and new features that appear in the Qur'an of Ibn Shādhān, as well as the fact that it combines elements of both NSI and NSIII, indicate that it stands at the end of the Kufic tradition and the beginning of NS tradition.

[16] The Qur'an is dispersed among various collections in the world: 170 folios of this Qur'an are at the Chester Beatty Library (Is. 1434) and 16 folios are in Istanbul University Library (Ms. A6758), including the colophon. It is a widely published Qur'an, among which are: Blair, *Islamic Calligraphy*, 152; Derman, *Fann al-khaṭṭ*, 176 (no. 9); James, *Qur'ans and Bindings from the Chester Beatty Library*, 33–34; Tabbaa, 'The Transformation of Arabic Writing: Part I', 126; and Wright, *Islam: Faith, Art, Culture*, 105.

[17] The chessboard-like pattern can be seen in Khalili KFQ78 and in CBL Is. 1411, both produced in the 3rd/9th century. For the frontispiece of Khalili KFQ78, see Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 124; for that of CBL Is. 1411, see Wright, *Islam: Faith, Art, Culture*, 103. For type-6 vignettes see Déroche, *Les manuscrits du Coran*, 31–33. The type-6 vignette follows Déroche's typology, which is based on Qur'ans produced up until the 4th/10th century. Déroche, *Les manuscrits du Coran*, 31–33.

A characterising feature of Ibn Shādhān's script is the way in which the letter *yāʾ* is extended backwards at the end of the line to form V shapes below the previous letters as seen on fol. 22v (Figure 1.1). This gesture is similarly detected in another manuscript that Ibn Shādhān copied, entitled *Akhbār al-naḥawiyyīn al-baṣriyyīn*, authored by al-Sīrāfī and dated 376/986 (Figure .2).[18] In the colophon stating that it was copied by ʿAlī (*Katabahu ʿAlī*), the *yāʾ* of ʿAlī extends under the previous word in a similar manner as in the Qur'an. This stylisation in the extension of a letter recalls the internal transformations of letters that appears on monumental inscriptions and coins from the 3rd/9th and 4th/10th centuries. Volov traces the chronological development of these letters transformations and notes their eastward travel as they appear, for example, in the inscriptions of the Nāʾīn mosque built in the 4th/10th century east of Isfahan under Buyid rule.[19] While in the Nāʾīn mosque the addition of an arc in the middle of a ligature linking two letters recalls Ibn Shādhān's stylisation of the letter *yāʾ*, a similar gesture can be found on Samanid coin from Bukhara dated 316/928 (Figure 1.2).[20] This stylization in the extension of letters can hence have originated in earlier epigraphic forms from Iran that may well have been rooted in Umayyad copper coins from Spain and Tulunid dirhams from Egypt.[21]

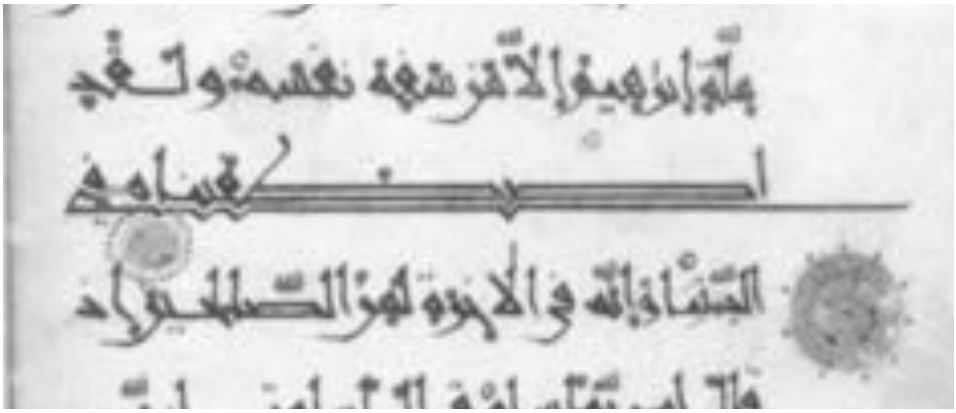

Figure 1.1: The Qur'an of Ibn Shādhān, fol. 22v, CBL Is. 1434, 361/971.

[18] The manuscript is now in the Süleymaniyye Library in Istanbul (Shāhid ʿAlī Pasha no. 1842).
[19] Volov, 'Plaited Kufic on Samanid Epigraphic Pottery', 123.
[20] On the Nāʾin mosque decoratin see Pope, A *Survey of Persian Art*, 1270-1275 (and plates 265-269). On the internal transformations in letters in the Nāʾin mosque see Volov, 'Plaited Kufic on Samanid Epigraphic Pottery', 123 (text fig. 3.a) and for the epigraphic transformation in the letter on the coin from Bukhara see fig. 15c.
[21] Volov, 'Plaited Kufic on Samanid Epigraphic Pottery', 122.

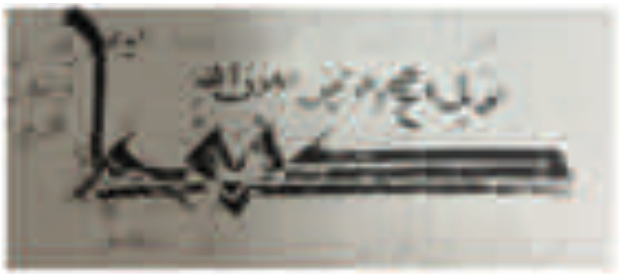

Figure 1.2: *Kitāb akhbār al-naḥawiyyīn al-baṣriyyīn,* 376/986.

Figure 1.2: Top: Inner transformation of an epigraphic form in the Nāʾīn mosque (4th/10th century); Bottom: Fals from Bukhara, 316/928.

Ibn Shādhān's *nisba* – *al-Rāzī*, meaning from Rayy – links him to eastern Iran, and George cites information pointing to his origin from the eastern Islamic lands.[22] There is, however, not enough evidence at present to securely attribute the Qur'an to eastern Iran.

[22] George, 'Coloured Dots (Part I)', 22.

The Isfahan Qur'an

The Isfahan Qur'an was copied almost two decades after the Qur'an of Ibn Shādhān in 383/993 by Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Yāsīn al-Iṣfahānī in NS on paper in the horizontal format (Plate IV).[23] The script is characterised by typical NSI features, such as high contrast between thick and thin strokes, diagonal stress in letters, and triangular letter shapes – making it similar to the Qur'an of Ibn Shādhān. Additional features of NSI that are also present in Ibn Shādhān's Qur'an (Table 1.2) the top stroke of initial *jīm/ḥāʾ/khāʾ* that crosses the baseline, the triangle at the base of *dāl/dhāl,* the thin diagonal top stroke of initial *ʿayn/ghayn* and the trapezoidal shape of the head of *wāw*.

The script, however, of the Isfahan Qur'an is stylised differently from that of Ibn Shādḥān. Comparatively, it looks more fluid, less bold and with long extended strokes at the beginning and end of letters, such as at the top of *ʿayn/ghayn* and in the tail of *mīm* and *nūn*. It also retains some Kufic features, specifically of type D.Vb, seen in the lower return of *alif*, the shafts of *ṭaʾ/ẓaʾ* and *kāf,* and the shape of some *lām-alifs*.[24] Thus, like Ibn Shādhān's Qur'an, features inherited from the Kufic tradition remain visible in the Isfahan Qur'an, the most obvious of which is the horizontal format. This is further supported by the appearance of some Kufic elements in the Isfahan Qur'an's surviving illumination. For example, the vignettes linked to its sura titles are in the form of a tip of a lance, a design rooted in the 3rd/9th century, with a base made of palmettes pointing mostly upwards (Plate IV).[25] Moreover, single-verse markers are gold rosettes with coloured dots decorating their small petals and the tenth-verse markers are medallions with radiating thin lines around them, designs seen in older Qur'ans.[26] However, the fifth-verse marker is half a circle inscribed with the word *khamsa* and topped by a diamond

[23] The folios of the Isfahan Qur'an are widely dispersed among various collections: The Khalili Collection of Islamic Art (KFQ90), The Turkish and Islamic Art Museum (453-456), The Freer Gallery of Art (F1937.34) and the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Met 40.164.5). For the Met fragments, see: http://www.metmuseum.org/Collections/search-the-collections/140006978; and for the Freer fragment, see: http://www.asia.si.edu/collections/singleObject.cfm?ObjectNumber=F1937.34 (last accessed on 22 July 2016). Some leaves were sold at different auctions at Sotheby's in London on 14 December 1987 (Lot no. 197) and 26 April 1990 (Lot no. 139). Its orthography was studied by George, 'Coloured dots', 27-33. It has been published widely: Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 154–55; George, *The Rise of Islamic Calligraphy*, 125; and Ṣahin, *The 1400th Anniversary of the Qur'an*, 197.
[24] Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 44-45 (table IV).
[25] Déroche, *Les manuscrits du Coran*, 31–33.
[26] Ibid., 27–31.

shape with dots decorating its thin blue outline – a design that would disappear from later Qur'ans.

Similarities between some letter forms in the Isfahan Qur'an and others that appear on what is generally called 'Samanid' wares should be highlighted here. For instance, the head of *wāw and fāʾ/qāf* in the Isfahan Qur'an is triangular and has a pointed tip that is similarly observed on a lustre painted bowl, now in the Samarqand Museum (Plate V).[27] These wares were found mainly in Samarqand and Nishapur, and are roughly dated to the 4th/10th century.[28] This resemblance, which recalls that between the extension of *yāʾ* in Ibn Shādhān's Qur'an and epigraphic forms from Iran, brings closer Qur'anic script stylisation to epigraphic forms that appeared on different media in Greater Iran.

The Isfahan Qur'an is related in script and illumination to Ibn Shādhān's Qur'an yet it displays a distinct visual language, indicating a local style rooted in older Qur'anic traditions. Like Ibn Shādhān Qur'ans, the Isfahan Qur'an was an expensive commission, evident by its high quality of illumination and monumental script.

The Rayy Qur'an

The Rayy Qur'an was copied by ʿAlī b. Muḥmmad al-Muḥaddith in 419/1028 as its colophon states (Plate VI):[29]

> *Katabahu ʿalī bin muḥammad al-muḥaddith bi'l-rayy fī jumāda al-ūlā sanat tisʿa ʿashara wa-arbaʿ māyat.*
> Copied by Alī b. Muḥammad al-Muḥaddith in Rayy in June 419/1028.

It was hence copied 35 years after the Isfahan Qur'an in Rayy, a city around 400 km north of Isfahan. Unfortunately, no information survives about its copyist. It employs NSIII, which is

[27] Ghouchani, *Inscriptions on Nishabur Pottery,* Pl. 132.
[28] They could have been produced a century earlier or even a century later. Hillenbrand, 'Content versus Context in Samanid Epigraphic Pottery', 60.
[29] The Rayy Qur'an is now in the Iraqi Museum in Najaf, *Khizānat al-rawḍa al-ḥaydariyya*. A folio from it is published in Zayn al-Dīn, *Badāʾiʿ al-khaṭṭ al-ʿarabī*, 41 (fig. 18). Unfortunately, no accession number is noted.

overall more curvilinear and has less contrast, appearing more compact than the monumental NSI. Its typical NSIII features include (Table 1.2): the thickness at the top left side of independent alif; the diagonal shaft of *ṭāʾ*/*ẓāʾ* that starts with some thickness on the left side; the curvilinear head of *ʿayn*/*ghayn*; and the triangular head and short diagonal tail of *wāw*. However, the script of the Rayy Qur'an has not yet reached the mature form of NSIII in that it has a more curvilinear and vertical appearance overall than in later NSIII, seen in the almost circular head and straight tail of *mīm*. These features bring it closer to non-Qur'anic bookhands than to the mature NSIII forms employed in Qur'ans of the second half of the 5th/11th century. Unfortunately, no additional reproductions are available at present from this Qur'an, thereby postponing the study of its illumination.

In sum, Ibn Shādhān's Qur'an and the Isfahan Qur'an both employ script and illumination with features from the Kufic tradition. Some of their features will continue to be in use in Qur'ans of the 5th/11th century. These two Qur'ans are evidence that NSI letter shapes were stylised in different ways in Greater Iran and that Qur'anic scripts shared similarities with other epigraphic forms. Retaining features from the non-Qur'anic bookhands point that the NSIII employed in the Rayy Qur'an stands at the beginning of the script's stylisation. The scripts of these three Qur'ans can hence be identified as part of a larger visual language belonging to Greater Iran, as will become clearer with the analysis of the Qur'ans from the Maghrib. Before moving on, however, two dated Qur'ans copied in NSIII with unknown provenance will be examined, as their features point to Greater Iran as their likely place of production.

Two Qur'anic manuscripts of unknown provenance

Two dated Qur'ans of unknown provenance were copied in NSIII, and exhibit features of Kufic, non-Qur'anic bookhands and NSI.

The first is 'al-Ṣaffār's Qur'an', named after its copyist, Muḥammad b. ʿAli b. al-Ḥusayn al-Ṣaffār. It is dated 388/998 and was copied in NSIII on paper in the vertical format. Its colophon reads (fol. 257v, Plate VII):[30]

[30] It is now at the Topkpapı Sarayı Library in Istanbul (EH22). Only one folio is published in Tabbaa, 'The Transformation of Arabic Writing: Part I', 127.

> *…Wa-faragha min kitābatihi muḥammad bin ʿalī al-ḥusayn al-ṣaffār fī shahr ṣafar min sanat thamān wa-thamānūn wa-thalāthmiʾa raḥima allāh kātibihi wa-qāriʾihi wa-li-man naẓara fīhi wa-li-man qāla āmīn rabb al-ʿālamīn.*
> … Its writing was completed by Muḥammad b. ʿAli b. al-Ḥusayn al-Ṣaffār in the month of Ṣafar of the year 388/998 may God have mercy on its copyist, its reader, the person who corrects it and on the one who says Amen Lord of the Worlds.

Even though the script of al-Ṣaffār's Qur'an retains some NSI features – such as independent *alif* with a diagonal turn at the bottom, *dāl/dhāl* with a triangle at its base and initial *ʿayn/ghayn* with a top diagonal stroke – the curvilinear aspect of the script and certain letter shapes define it as NSIII (Table 1.2). These NSIII features include independent *alif* appearing sometimes as a vertical stroke that starts with thickness at the top, the rounded head of *mīm* with its curved tail and the curvilinear bowl of *nūn*. The script also kept some features from the Kufic tradition, as seen in the form of *wāw* with its horizontal straight tail, and the form of initial *jīm/ḥāʾ/khāʾ* in that the top stroke of the letter meets a long horizontal stroke extending towards the right. This indicates that in the 4th/10th century, Kufic features were still visible in NS.[31] On folio 257r, a monumental script is used for *sūrat al-ikhlāṣ* (Q. 112), characterised by more contrast between its thick and thin strokes – a feature typical of NSI.[32] Also evident is the initial independent *alif* with a diagonal turn at the bottom, *jīm/ḥāʾ/khāʾ* with its top stroke crossing the baseline and the trapezoidal head of *mīm*, all NSI characteristics (Plate VIII).

Al-Ṣaffār's Qur'an is evidence to the stylisation of NS at the end of the 4th/10th century. While it still retained some Kufic features, the script combined NSI and NSIII, as similarly observed in Ibn Shādhān's Qur'an and the Isfahan Qur'an. These Qur'ans should thus be conceptualised as existing between two traditions – the Kufic of the earlier centuries, and the stylised NS of later Qur'ans, discussed in subsequent chapters.

The second Qur'an examined here was also copied on paper in the vertical format with a colophon that mentions the name of its copyist and date (fol. 294r, Plate IX):[33]

---

[31] This form of Kufic intial *jīm/ḥāʾ/khāʾ* is rooted in Kufic type D. Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 44.
[32] The reason behind emphasizing *sūrat al-ikhlāṣ* is probably due to its central importance to the Islamic faith, being a declaration of God's unity.
[33] It is now at the Topkapı Sarayı Library in Istanbul (Y752). A folio was published in Tabbaa, 'The Transformation of Arabic Writing: Part 1', 129.

> *Faragha min kitbatihi abū bakr ʿabd al-malik [bin?] zarʿa bin muḥammad al-rūdhbārī [rūzbārī?] yawm al-sabt [?] dhī al-ḥijja sanat arbaʿ wa-tisʿīn wa-thalāthmiʾa.*
> Its writing was completed by Abu Bakr ʿAbd al-Malik [b.?] Zarʿa b. Muḥammad al-Rūdhbārī [Rūzbārī?] on Saturday [?] in Dhu al-Hijja [September-October] 394 [1003].

The script employed in al-Rūdhbārī's Qur'an resembles the one in al-Ṣaffār's Qur'an in that it mixes between Kufic, NSI and NSIII features (Table 1.2). Kufic characteristics are detected in the form of letters such as independent *alif* with its curved turn at the bottom, and *wāw* with its horizontal tail that sits on the baseline.[34] NSI features appear in letters such as *jīm/ḥāʾ/khāʾ* that have a thick top diagonal stroke that crosses a thin horizontal one on the baseline, *dāl/dhāl* with a triangle at its base and initial *ʿayn/ghayn* with a top diagonal stroke. NSIII characteristics are detected in the overall curvilinear aspect of the script, as seen in the tail of *mīm*, the form of initial *ʿayn/ghayn* and the bowl of *nūn* that appears with varying degrees of curvilinearity throughout the manuscript.

The Qur'an of al-Rūdhbārī shares with that of al-Saffār not only common letter forms, but also the layout that fits 20 lines per page. Similar to the Qur'ans of al-Rūdhbārī and al-Ṣaffār, the Rayy Qur'an fits 18 lines per page, meaning more lines than in NSI Qur'ans. This suggests that NSIII could have been associated with more economical productions and modest commissions, especially considering that the decoration in the Qur'ans of al-Rūdhbārī and al-Ṣaffār is relatively minimal. An additional common feature between the Qur'ans of al-Rudhbārī and al-Ṣaffār is the formula used in both colophons, "*fargaha min kitbatihi*" ("completed its writing").

No frontispiece or finispiece survive from these two Qur'ans, but the decoration in the panels at the top and bottom of the first double-page spread in al-Ṣaffār's Qur'an (fols. 2v-3r, Plate X) recalls the rich stucco decoration of the Nāʾīn mosque.[35] The rectangular panel at the bottom of fol. 2v in al-Ṣaffār's Qur'an contains a repetition of gold medallions decorated with floral scrolls of trilobate flowers against a red background (Figure 1.3). The medallion has a contour made of a repetition of small flower buds that contain a dot at their centre. In between these medallions are scrolls that curl up to the right and left. These same scrolls are seen at the centre of a medallion decorating the spandrels of the arch leading to the mihrab in the Nāʾīn mosque. The medallion on the spandrels is also framed by a repetition of small flower buds that contain two

[34] The closest Kufic to the script used in al- Rūdhbārī's Qur'an is type D. Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 44–45.
[35] The images presented here were taken from the MIT Libraries, Aga Khan Visual Archive: http://archnet.org/sites/1644/media_contents/42385 (last accessed on 22 July 2016).

dots instead of one. The gold medallions on the red ground of the panel in al-Ṣaffār's Qur'an create a similar two-level effect as the carving of the stucco decoration in the Nāʾīn mosque.

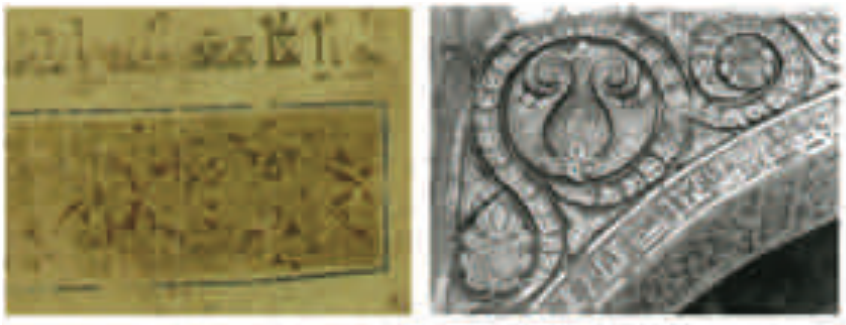

Figure 1.3: Left: Illuminated band at the bottom of fol. 2v in al-Ṣaffār's Qur'an, 388/998; Right: Stucco decoration on the spandrels of the arch leading to the mihrab in the Nāʾīn mosque, 4th/10th century.

The inscription in the band on the top right of this same first double-page spread exhibits transformations in letters that are present in monumental inscriptions, coins and ceramics of the period (Figure 1.4). For example, the interlace within letters appear on a Samanid dinar minted at Rayy in 324/935 (Figure 1.5) and on unglazed jugs from the first decades of the 5th/11th century (Figure 1.6).[36] It is also found within letters inscribed on the tom-tower at Rādkān, in Khurasan, dated 411/1020 (Figure 1.7).[37] These similarities place once again Qur'anic production within its wider geographic and artistic context suggesting that Qur'anic scripts were part of a larger historical sequence of script stylisation.

Figure 1.4: Band at the top of fol. 2v in al-Ṣaffār's Qur'an, 388/998.

[36] The jug shown here is at the Philadelphia Museum of Art (19.632) and it was published in Volov, 'Plaited Kufic on Samanid Epigraphic Pottery' (fig 11). For other unglazed jugs that exhibit similar letters see in Volov p. 128 (no. 21).
[37] These inscriptions are taken from Flury, 'Bandeaux Ornementés a Inscriptions Arabes', vol. 2 (no. 1) Plate VI.

Figure 1.5: Top: Band at the top of fol. 2v in al-Ṣaffār's Qur'an, 388/998; Bottom: Samanid Dinar, Rayy, 324/935.

Figure 1.6: Unglazed jug, beginning of the 5th/11th century, Philadelphia Museum of Art (no. 19.632).

In addition to the interlace within letters, the winged palmettes added to the extension of letters in the band on fol. 2v of al-Ṣaffār's Qur'an was similarly employed in the stucco decoration of the Nāʾīn mosque and on ceramics.[38] The tenth-verse marker in al-Ṣaffār's Qur'an looks very similar to the medallions of the stucco relief around the mihrab of the Nāʾīn mosque (Figure

[38] Volov, 'Plaited Kufic on Samanid Epigraphic Pottery', 131.

1.8). They both have a contour made of petals separated with thin rectangular negative spaces. Around the mihrab, this space is created by carving deep into the stucco, while in the Qur'an, the negative space is defined by the colour of the red background – communicating in both cases a two-level effect.

Figure 1.7: Inscription on the tower-tomb in Rādkān, 411/1020 (after Flury).

Figure 1.8: Left: Tenth-verse marker in al-Ṣaffār's Qur'an, 388/998; Right: Detail from the stucco decoration of the mihrab in the Nāʾīn mosque, 4th/10th century.

As mentioned in the colophon of al-Rūdhbārī's Qur'an, the *nisba* of its copyist indicates that he or his family came from a *rūdhbār*, which in Persian means a district along a river or one that is intersected by rivers.[39] The most significant Rūdhbārs in Islamic history were in Ṭūs; near Baghdad; and near Hamadhān.[40] Tabbaa deciphers "*al-rūdhbārī*" as "*al-rūẓbārī*" noting the letter between the *wāw* and the *bāʾ* as *zayn*. This might be an equally possible reading because the letter does look like both *dhāl* and *zayn*, leaving us with no firm conclusion as to the exact place of production of these two Qur'ans.[41] The comparisons above with the Nāʾīn mosque, Samanid pottery and the Rayy dinar point to Greater Iran as the manuscripts' broad place of origin. The motifs of the stucco in the Nāʾīn mosque resonate elsewhere, with close parallels to the decoration in the stucco mihrab of a mosque in Yazd (south east of Nāʾīn), and Pope even notes similarities with stucco decoration as far as Egypt.[42] Hence, the overlaps in the decoration of al-Ṣaffār's Qur'an and the Nāʾīn mosque cannot be used as evidence to the origin of the Qur'an but rather to the circulation of motifs throughout the Islamic world. This, obviously, makes the identification of local trends in Qur'anic production more difficult.

NS on ceramics

NS features not only in Qur'ans but also on pottery. We have already highlighted the head of the letter *wāw* stylised similarly in the Isfahan Qur'an and on a Samanid ware. These epigraphic wares have generally a white background and employ a number of script variations with Kufic and NS characteristics. For example, two white earthenware bowls excavated from the Tepe Madrasa in Nishapur have a script painted around their rim that resembles NS (Plates XI and XII).[43] The script on the first bowl exhibits triangularity in the heads of *wāw*, *mīm* and *fāʾ*/*qāf*; contrast between thin and thick strokes; thin curvilinear strokes for the tails of *wāw*, bowls of *nūn* and tails of *mīm*; and other non-Kufic elements, such as less circular *mīm* and *ʿayn*/*ghayn*

[39] Bosworth, 'Rūdhbār', EI2.
[40] Ibid. For others such as in Isfahan, Kirman, and Qumm see Schwarz, *Iran im Mittelalter*, VII: 73.
[41] Tabbaa, 'The Transformation of Arabic Writing: Part 1', 129.
[42] In comparison with the stucco patterns of Samarra, the Nāʾin stucco motifs surpass the Samarran in quality of execution and creativity but they may well have been coming from Iraq. Pope, 'Architectural Ornament', 1273–74.
[43] The excavation was organised by the Metropolitan Museum of Art in the mid-1900s and led by Joseph Upton, Walter Hauser, and Charles Wilkinson. This type of opaque white ware was imported from Iraq and copied in Nishapur. See Wilkinson, *Nishapur*, 180.

with a triangular head instead of two antennas.[44] But the script on this bowl also has different letter forms from the typical NS scripts, as, for example, in the *alif* that has a split at the top and a return at the bottom to the left instead of a slant to the right. The script employed on the second earthenware, also exhibits NS characteristics (Plate XII).[45] Similar to the script of the previous bowl, the script employed here shows thinness at the end of some letters, such as the tail of *wāw* or bowl of *nūn*, and resembles NSIII, as seen in the *alif* that looks like an inverted "S".[46]

These stylised inscriptions suggest that calligraphers may have been involved, alongside potters, in producing these wares. Hillenbrand notes that the scale and material of these ceramics must have encouraged calligraphers to experiment on their surfaces.[47] Could therefore these experiments on ceramics have influenced Qur'an calligraphy? Or were they just meant to make an aesthetic link with the Qur'anic scripts in order to communicate holiness as Hillebrand suggests?[48] In other words, did these NS characteristics appear first on ceramic wares or on paper? Even though this question will be left unanswered with the evidence in hand, looking at the technique used to draw letters on ceramics may be a pointer. The painterly technique used on the bowls is obviously different from that employed on paper. The rigidity of the reed pen, used on paper, must have been inadequate on the smooth and convex surface of the ceramics. Hillenbrand notes that some were clearly executed with a thick brush as evidenced by the traces of the fibre.[49] Ghouchani proposes that some may have been produced with a flexible stencil such as leather and Hillenbrand agrees stating that since these wares were mass-produced, the use of stencil may have provided a faster way to reproduce stylised scripts originally done by professional calligraphers.[50] If this were the case, then calligraphers must have executed their designs on a surface similar to paper before cutting out stencils. Unfortunately, no evidence point that this technique may have been used leaving us with no firm conclusions as to whether

[44] Now in the Brooklyn Museum (86.227.8), diam. 42.5 cm. The inscription on this bowl provides advice to its owner: *Al-tadbīr qabl al-ʿamal yuʾamminuka min al-nadam, al-ṣabr miftāḥ al-faraj* (Planning before work protects from regrets; patience is the key to comfort).
[45] It was also excavated from the Tepe Madrasa, and is now at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (40.170.15), diam. 35.6 cm.
[46] Additional examples of the use of NS on ceramics can be seen in, for example, other bowls at the Metropolitan Museum of Art: nos. 40.170.25 and 65.106.2; on a bowl in Iran Bastan Museum in Tehran (no. 3076) published as plate 120 in Ghouchani, *Inscriptions on Nishabur Pottery*, and on which the *kāf* and the *ṭāʾ* are NS in type. For NS letter extracts see table VI in Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition,* 136-137.
[47] Hillenbrand, 'Content versus Context in Samanid Epigraphic Pottery', 65.
[48] Ibid., 83-84.
[49] Ibid., 65.
[50] Ghouchani, *Inscriptions on Nishabur pottery*, 6.

NS stylisation happened on ceramics or paper first. The aesthetic proximity between the epigraphy on ceramics and Qur'anic scripts suggest that some NS features were in fashion in the 4th/10th century and that the realm of Qur'anic production was not isolated from that of ceramics.

Qur'ans from the Maghrib

Very few folios survive from the 5th/11th century Maghrib.[51] Only two dated Qur'ans copied in NSI exist today from the Maghrib that can help illustrate the ways in which this script was stylised there at the turn of the 5th/11th century. It is important to mention that beginning in the second half of the 5th/11th century, the aesthetic of Maghribi Qur'ans split away from the rest of the Islamic world. Maghribi Qur'ans were copied on parchment until the 8th/14th century, the square format was favoured and they employed a completely different type of script, generally called Maghribi.

The first Qur'an is the Palermo Qur'an, copied in NSIII in 372/982 on parchment and in the horizontal format (Plate XIII).[52] Typical NSIII features (Table 1.2) include the turn at the bottom of independent *alif*; the diagonal shaft of *ṭāʾ*/*ẓāʾ*; the diagonal top stroke of *ʿayn*/*ghayn*; and the triangular head of *wāw*. However the NSIII employed here differs from that employed in al-Rūdhbārī's, al-Ṣaffār's and the Rayy Qur'ans, in that the bowls and tails of its letters are almost circular. For example, the tail of *mīm* is round in the Palermo Qur'an while it is vertical in the Rayy Qur'an, almost diagonal in the Qur'an of al-Rūdhbārī and horizontal in al-Ṣaffār's Qur'an. The tail of *wāw* is also based on a circle in the Palermo Qur'an, while it is diagonal in the Rayy Qur'an and horizontal in al-Rūdhbārī's and al-Ṣaffār's Qur'ans. These differences indicate that at the end of the 4th/10th century, NSIII in Palermo was stylised differently from those of the eastern Islamic lands.

Around 500 km south of Palermo across the Mediterranean Sea, almost three decades later, the famous "Qur'an of the Nurse" (as it is referred to in modern scholarship) was commissioned in Qayrawān for the nurse of al-Muʿizz b. Bādis, the Zirid Amīr (Plate XIV). It was copied by ʿAlī

[51] On Qur'ans copied in the Maghrib from this period, see: Bongianino, *The Origin and Development of Maghribī Round Scripts*, forthcoming PhD thesis, University of Oxford.
[52] This is a dispersed Qur'an: 20 folios are in the Khalili Collection (KFQ368 and KFQ261), and an unknown number of folios are in the Nuruosmaniye Library in Istanbul (Ms. 23). Folios from this Qur'an were published and discussed in Blair, *Islamic Calligraphy*, 153; Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 147–51; Déroche, 'Cercles et entrelacs', 596–604; and George, *The Rise of Islamic Calligraphy*, 122–23.

b. Aḥmad al-Warrāq in 410/1019 in monumental NSI with five lines to the page, measuring 45 x 30 cm, and on parchment in the vertical format.[53] Typical NSI features (Table 1.2) are the top stroke of *jīm/ḥāʾ/khāʾ* that crosses the baseline; *ḍāl/dhāl* with a triangular base; the thin and diagonal top stroke of *ʿayn/ghayn*; the diagonal bowl of *nūn;* and the diagonal tail of *wāw*. The script is characterised by diagonal emphasis and contrast in strokes, similar to the NSI employed in the Qur'an of Ibn Shādhān and the Isfahan Qur'an, but this time with a contrast and diagonality taken to an extreme level. Hairline strokes appear next to bold ones, communicating a different impression of the script. In addition, some letters in the Qur'an of the Nurse differ from the NSI employed in Qur'ans from Greater Iran. For example, independent *alif* has a turn at the bottom with a tip that points upwards, a form inherited from Kufic;[54] the form of *dāl/dhāl* is more condensed and appears to fit a square shape rather than a rectangle; and the tail of *mīm* is vertical and curved while its head resembles a lozenge more than a trapezoid. Hence, as is the case with the Palermo Qur'an, the Qur'an of the Nurse employs a script with NS characteristics similar to those employed in Qur'ans from Greater Iran, but is stylised differently.

In sum, the scripts employed in the Qur'an of the Nurse and the Palermo Qur'an offer an example of how NS was stylised in the Maghrib at the end of the 4th/10th century and beginning of the 5th/11th century. These appear to have gained different characteristics from the scripts that developed in Greater Iran. Nevertheless, the NS scripts of Greater Iran were not homogeneous – while a large common trend existed, there were also local variations spanning eastern and western Iran.

In terms of illumination, the Palermo Qur'an employs elements that are different from the contemporaneous Qur'ans of Greater Iran (Plate XIII). For example, the frontispiece which was discussed by Déroche is made of an interlace design in which the colophon is integrated – a design that appears rooted in the Kufic tradition and is different from Ibn Shādhān's Qur'an

[53] The "Qur'an of the Nurse" was commissioned by the nurse of the fourth ruler of the Zirid dynasty, al-Muʿizz b. Bādis (r. 407/1016-454/1062). Déroche, *Islamic Codicology*, 187 (note 12). The "Qur'an of the Nurse" is now dispersed among various private and public collections among which is the Musée du Bardo, the Metropolitan Museum of Art (2007.191) and the David Collection (25/2003). Folios from this Qur'an have been published widely. For published folios see, for example, al-Munajjid, *al-Kitāb al-ʿarabī al-makhṭūṭ* (plate 7); Blair, *Islamic Calligraphy*, 155; Fraser and Kwiatkowksi, Ink and Gold, 58–61; Lings and Safadi, *The Qurʾān*, 31; Roxburgh, *Writing the Word of God*, 32–33; and Safadi, *Islamic Calligraphy*, 78 (fig. 75).

[54] Specifically of type D.Vc. Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 44.

frontispiece.[55] The single-verse marker is a small rosette with coloured dots, a design rooted in earlier centuries;[56] the fifth-verse marker is a Kufic *hā'* inscribed in gold and surrounded by coloured dots, a design also rooted in earlier centuries; and the tenth-verse marker is a rectangular form with a loop at each of its corners, a distinctive form not encountered elsewhere. Indeed, elements in Qur'ans copied in the Maghrib in the 5th/11th century confirm that a distinct visual language was formed in that region. One of the earliest known Maghribi Qur'ans with extant illumination in the vertical format is the Qur'an known as the Uppsala Qur'an (Plates XV-XVI). Copied in 483/1090 in the Maghribi script on parchment, the Qur'an measures 18.8 x 15.5 cm; only the last volume survives.[57] The Qur'an's frontispiece design features a chessboard-like pattern, floral scrolls and simple interlaced straight bands forming squares inscribed with Kufic words that are unfortunately illegible (fols. 1v-2r, Plate XV). Moreover, its sura titles are inscribed in Kufic in rounded rectangles with a cross-hatched background, linked to a medallion of composite palmettes in which the two palmettes at the bottom are rounded and point upwards (Plate XVI). The sura titles are inscribed in bands decorated with floral scrolls or lattice, and linked to circular medallions. On this same folio, the tenth-verse marker, which is a simple circle of type-1 surrounded by coloured dots, is a design employed in Qur'ans of the previous century, but not in the Qur'ans discussed above from Greater Iran.[58] Hence, the visual language of the extant Maghribi Qur'ans is different from that of Qur'ans produced in Greater Iran.

The New Style in Egypt

Unfortunately, Qur'ans from Egypt between the 4th/10th and 5th/11th century, have not yet been identified due to the dispersal of manuscripts after the fall of the Fatimid dynasty.[59] However, we know that early forms of NS were used in Egypt as early as the 2nd/8th century, as we already saw

[55] Déroche, 'Cercles et entrelacs', 597–99.
[56] Of type 3.A.II. Déroche, *Les manuscrits du Coran*, 30.
[57] Now at the Uppsala Universitetbibliotek, Ms. OBj. 48 (371) and published in Dodds, *Al-Andalus*, 305. I would like to thank Umberto Bongianino for providing me with information and reproductions from 5th/11th century Qur'ans from the Maghrib.
[58] Déroche, *Les manuscrits du Coran*, 29.
[59] A number of scholars have attributed Qur'ans to Fatimid Egypt. For example, Déroche suggests that TKS EH34, copied in the 4th/10th century may be from Fatimid Egypt on the basis of a Qur'anic verse that appears in its frontispiece that was commonly used in Fatimid architecture. Déroche, 'Les « pages de titre » des manuscrits coraniques', 52. Bloom attributes the famous "Blue Qur'an" copied in Kufic to Fatimid Egypt, a hypothesis rejected by Alain George. Bloom, 'The early Fatimid blue Koran manuscript' and George, 'Calligraphy, Colour and Light in the Blue Qur'an'.

in the Antinoë inscription from the Nile Valley. This section will examine two additional pieces of evidence for the use and stylisation of NS in Egypt.

The first is the Shanbak Qur'an, named after its copyist Shanbak b. Muḥammad b. ʿAbdallah b. Shanbak (Plate XVII). It was copied on parchment on the vertical format, in Egypt in 325/936, as its colophon states.[60] It is the earliest dated Qur'an among the nine NS Qur'ans discussed in this chapter. It employs NSIII with visible features of non-Qur'anic bookhands (Table 1.2), including the initial *alif* with a turn at the bottom and *jīm/ḥāʾ/khāʾ* with a top stroke that crosses the baseline. Overall, the script appears to be closer to the non-Qur'anic bookhands than to later stylised NSIII, based on the curvilinear head of *ʿayn/ghayn;* the curvilinear bowls of letters, such as *nūn* or *yāʾ,* which sometime appear with diagonal emphasis; and the round heads of letters, such as *wāw,* with short and curvilinear tails. In addition, the script also appears to have retained some Kufic features, such as the shape of final *mīm*, which is made of a circular head and a thin curvilinear tail that drops below the baseline.[61] This Qur'an could thus be considered as the earliest Qur'an to mix features of non-Qur'anic bookhands and NSIII, with the former remaining dominant.

The second piece of evidence is from a century and a half after the Shanbak Qur'an, with more stylised and mature NSIII characteristics. It is an inscription on a Fatimid Tiraz with the name of Caliph al-Mustansir (r. 427/1035–486/1093) (Plate XVIII).[62] NS features are apparent in the diagonal turn at the bottom of independent *alif*; the diagonal emphasis in the descenders of letters, such as *nūn* and the tail of *wāw*; triangular heads of letters, as in *wāw;* the diagonal shaft of *ṭāʾ/ẓāʾ*; and the straight top stroke of *jīm/ḥāʾ/khāʾ* that crosses the baseline. The features that make this script NSIII are the curvilinear head of initial *ʿayn/ghayn*, the minimal contrast in the script and the curvilinear tails of final *mīm* and *ʿayn/ghayn*. This inscription is hence evidence that NS was stylised in Egypt.

[60] The colophon of the Shanbak Qur'an is published in Déroche, 'Collection des manuscrits anciens du Coran a Istanbul', plate IV-b.
[61] Like in Kufic, type D.Vc. Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 45.
[62] It is now in Cairo National Museum (accession no. 9381) and published in Zayn al-Dīn, *Badāʾiʿ al-khaṭṭ al-ʿarabī*, 64 (plate 59).

Two non-Qur'anic manuscripts point that NS was used in Baghdad and one Qur'an, attributed to Ibn al-Bawwāb, may have reflected NS tradition in Baghdad. To start with the latter, it is an unpublished Qur'an that employs NSIII and was copied, according to its colophon, in Baghdad in 392/1001 by the famous Iraqi calligrapher, Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī b. Hilāl, known as Ibn al-Bawwāb (d. 410/1019).[63] Its colophon reads (fols. 119v-120r, Plate XIX):

> *Kataba hadhā al-jāmiʿ ʿalī bin hilal bi-madīnat al-salam sanat thānī wa-tisʿīn wa-thalāthmiʾa, ḥāmid [sic] liʾllāh taʿālā ʿalā niʿmat [sic] wa-muṣallīyan ʿala nabīyyihi muḥammad wa-ālihi wa-mustaghfiran min-dhanbihi.*
> This Qur'an[64] was copied by ʿAlī b. Hilāl in Madinat al-Salām in the year 392 [1001 AD], praiser [sic] God for his bless [sic] and praying for his Prophet Muḥammad and his family and asking forgiveness for his sins.

This colophon is contemporaneous with the Qur'an, since it was copied in the same ink hue and type of script. However, three lacunas are present in this colophon that raise doubts as to the authenticity of the manuscript. First, instead of *ḥāmidan* (praising), the copyist uses *ḥāmid* (praiser), thus omitting the alif at the end of the word and replacing it with a *fatḥa*. Second, instead of *niʿmatih* (blessing), the copyist uses *niʿmat* (bless), dropping the article "*ih*" that refers to God. Third, in *thānī* (second), *nūn* appears to have been added later in a thinner pen. These three mistakes indicate a copyist who is not very familiar with Arabic. This certainly could not have been Ibn al-Bawwāb, considering he was known for being an educated person and talented writer, as we will see in the next chapter.

Another reason to doubt the authenticity of this manuscript pertains to the quality of its script. The NSIII employed here is not of the highest quality compared to contemporaneous NSIII, as in the Isfahan Qur'an (383/993), for example, which employed a much more mature and stylised script. Because Ibn al-Bawwāb enjoyed a great reputation as a talented calligrapher and was famous for the stylisation of RS, it is likely that if his work survived today, it would be of the highest quality with a peerless level of stylisation. In fact, the famous Qur'an ascribed to him,

[63] The Qur'an is now in Āyatullāh Marʿashī Library in Qum, Iran. Unfortunately, its accession number is unknown. I would like to thank Morteza Karimi-Nia for providing me with reproductions from this manuscript.
[64] I translated *jāmiʿ* into 'Qur'an' here for ease of understanding. The literal translation of *jāmiʿ* is 'gathered', meaning the compiled folios of the Qur'an.

that at the Chester Beatty Library (Is. 1431) was copied in highly stylised mature RS. By contrast, the script employed in the Qur'an currently under discussion seems to have been executed by a poorly skilled calligrapher incapable of remaining on the baseline, with words appearing on different levels on a given line, such as on the first line of fol.2 (Plate XX), raising more scepticism as to whether Ibn al-Bawwāb was truly its copyist.

Still, the script exhibits typical NSIII characteristics (Table 1.2), as seen in the vertical *alif* with thickness at the top left; the triangular head of *wāw* with its diagonal tail; the triangular base of letter *dāl*/*dhāl*; and the diagonal tail of final *mīm*. The script also retains curvilinear features, as observed in the curvilinear head of *ʿayn*/*ghayn* and the bowls of letters such as *nūn* and *yāʾ*. In addition, some elements in the script indicate influence from non-Qur'anic bookhands, such as the small stroke that drops below the baseline in final *alif*.

The available reproduction from this Qur'an does not reveal much about its illumination. However, the surviving sura band and the vignette projecting from it suggest that it employed a different visual language from those employed in Qur'ans copied in Greater Iran. The beginning of the eighth volume (starting at Q. 6:111) is indicated by an illuminated banner at the top of the page (Plate XX), a feature commonly present in Qur'ans copied in previous centuries. The vignette linked to the banner is made of composite palmettes in the form of a tip of a lance, a design also rooted in earlier centuries.[65]

Whether this Qur'an was produced in Baghdad or elsewhere, and whether it was copied at the turn of the 5th/11th century or later, we cannot be sure at the moment and hence it will not be used as evidence of NSIII stylisation in Baghdad. In fact, with the exception of the Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an at the Chester Beatty Library (Is. 1431), no Qur'ans survive with a colophon that mentions Baghdad as their place of production, leaving us with an incomplete picture of Qur'anic production in Iraq at the turn of the 5th/11th century. However, two non-Qur'anic manuscripts can give us an idea of how and where NS was used in Baghdad.[66]

---

[65] Déroche, *Les manuscrits du Coran*, 31.

[66] There are additional 4th/10th century unlocalised non-Qur'anic manuscripts that employ NS scripts. For example: *Kitāb Sibawayh*, now in Bibiloteca Ambrosiana in Milan (56 X) and published in: al-Munajjid, *al-Kitāb al-ʿarabī al-makhṭūṭ* (plate 17); *Mukhtaṣar abī musʿab al-zahrī*, now in Khizanat al-Qarawiyyin in Fez, dated 359/970 and copied by Hussein b. Yusuf ʿabd al-Imān al-Ḥakam al-Mustanṣir bi'llāh, and published in: al-Munajjid, *al-Kitāb al-ʿarabī al-makhṭūṭ* (plate 18); *Muʿallāqāt Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-*

A genealogical treatise, entitled *Ḥadhf min nasab quraysh* and authored by al-Sadūsī (d. c. 195/810), was copied in NSIII by the famous Iraqi grammarian and scribe, Abū Isḥāq Ibrāhīm b. ʿAbdallah b. Muḥammad b. Ḥubaysh al-Najayramī (d. 343/954) (Plate XXI).[67] The note at the bottom of this same folio states that the book was read by Abū al-Ḥasan Muḥammad b. al-ʿAbbās b. Aḥmad b. al-Furāt in the year 365/975 for the shaykh Abū al-Qāsim ʿUmar b. Muḥammad b. Sayf in his house west of Baghdad.[68] A note at the beginning of the book states that it was also read in 425/1033 in Egypt before reaching the library of the Fatimid Caliph al-Ẓāfir (r. 543/1148-548/1153).[69] The manuscript was thus copied before 343/954, most likely in Baghdad, where it was used among religious scholars. While the story of the manuscript's journey to Egypt is unknown, the fact that it reached the library of a Fatimid caliph in the 6th/12th century attests to the mobility of people and manuscripts between Islamic cities, pointing to a continuous cross-regional influence in book production during this period.

Typical NSIII features can be detected in the script used for its title and author's name: the triangular heads of *wāw* and *fāʾ;* the top thin diagonal stroke of *ʿayn*; the diagonal stroke of initial *jīm/ḥāʾ/khāʾ* that crosses the baseline; angular strokes in bowls, such as *alif-maqsūra,* as well as curvilinear bowls of letters, such as in *yāʾ;* and the shape of *dāl/dhāl* with an emphasis on the lower stroke. In comparison to the Qur'an discussed above ascribed in its colophon to Ibn al-Bawwāb, the script employed here looks more mature and stylised, and penned by a steadier hand. This manuscript hence shows that by the middle of the 5th/10th century, stylised NSIII was used for transcribing books in Baghdad, making it even less probable that the above Qur'an was copied by the famous calligrapher Ibn al-Bawwāb.

Another manuscript, entitled *al-Hidāya wa'l-ḍalāla,* authored by Ibn ʿAbbād Abū al-Qāsim Ismāʿīl (d. 385/995), was copied by ʿAlī b. Ṭāhir b. Saʿd, in 364/974, as its colophon states (Plate XXII):[70]

Naḥawī al-Naḥḥās (d. 338/949), copied in 371/981 by al-Dhahabī, its present location is unknown and it is published in: al-Munajjid, *al-Kitāb al-ʿarabī al-makhṭūṭ* (plate 21).

[67] The manuscript is now in the Public Library in Rabat, Morocco. The colophon page was published in al-Munajjid, *al-Kitāb al-'arabī al-makhṭūṭ,* (fig. 64); Sayyid, 'Khizānat kutub al-fāṭimiyyīn', 28; and Zayn al-Dīn, *Muṣawwar al-khaṭṭ al-ʿarabī*, 41 (fig. 127).

[68] Sayyid, 'Khizānat kutub al-fāṭimiyyīn', 21–22.

[69] Ibid.

[70] The manuscript is now in Khizanat Majīd Muwaqqir in Tehran and published in al-Munajjid, *al-Kitāb al-ʿarabī al-makhṭūṭ* (plate 19); and Zayn al-Dīn, *Muṣawwar al-khaṭṭ al-ʿarabī*, 41 (fig. 127).

[… ?] Tāhir bin abī saʿd [?] aṭāla allāhu baqāʾahu fī al-sābiʿ min jum[ā]da al-ākhir sanat arbaʿa wa-sittīn wa-thalāthmiʾa wa'l-ḥamdu li'llāh wa-bihi astaʿīn wa-ʿalayhi tawakkulī.
[… ?] Ṭāhir b. Abī Saʿd may God prolong his existence in 7 Jumādī al-Ākhir in the year 364 [974] and praise be to God, to Him I turn and on Him I rely.

At the bottom of the colophon is an *ijāza* in the writing of the author, dated 366/976:

Bi'smihi taʿālā anhāh adām allāhu faḍlahu wa-kataba ismāʿīl bin ʿabbād […?] sanat sitt wa-sittīn wa-thalāthmiʾa […?].
In His name, finished by, may God perpetuate his bounty, and copied by Ismāʿīl b. ʿAbbād […?] in the year 366 [976] […?].

These two notes were copied in an almost identical NSIII script, indicating that the author of this theology work and its copyist were both skilled in NSIII. Typical NSIII features are the curvilinear head of *ʿayn/ghayn* and the S-type *alif*. The script also retains some NSI characteristics, such as the overall contrast between thick and thin strokes; the diagonality of descenders, as seen in the bowl of *nūn;* the triangular heads of *wāw*; and a different form of *alif*, which appears with an oblique turn at the bottom. In fact, when compared with NSI and NSIII of the Ghaznavid Qur'ans that were produced almost a century later, the script employed here appears to combine NSI and NSIII.

The author of the text, Ibn ʿAbbād, was a man of letters of the Buyid period who was remembered as a powerful *wazīr*.[71] Trained as a *kātib* from his youth, he lived in Isfahan and Rayy, and accompanied the Amir Abū Manṣūr Muʾayyid al-Dawla to Baghdad in 347/958. This manuscript, like the previous, is thus evidence that stylised NSIII was in use in Baghdad, since the date mentioned in the colophon is after Ibn ʿAbbād settled in Baghdad. Here again, the script is more stylised than that attributed to Ibn al-Bawwāb discussed above, further suggesting that if it were indeed copied by Ibn al-Bawwāb at the turn of the 5th/11th century, the manuscript should have displayed at least the level of stylisation seen here. The script of *al-Hidāya wa'l-ḍalāla* is however different from the NSIII of al-Sadūsī's manuscript, in that the latter appears closer to non-Qur'anic bookhands.

[71] He had wide knowledge in all fields of Arabic culture and wrote a number of books. Al-Tawḥīdī, *Thalāth rasāʾil*; and Cahen and Pellat, 'Ibn ʿAbbād', EI2.

As already mentioned, the mobility of people throughout the Islamic world generated many cross-regional aesthetic connections. The movement of Ibn ʿAbbād, for instance, indicates that he could have been trained in one script tradition, which he then transferred to Baghdad, especially considering that stylised NSIII was used in Isfahan and Rayy. Ibn ʿAbbād, who was a *wazīr*, also held the title of *kātib,* from *kataba* (to write), indicating that people in Abbasid state administration employed NSIII.[72] ʿAlī b. Ṭāhir was commissioned to copy this manuscript by Ibn ʿAbbād in Baghdad, suggesting that copyists penned books in NSIII in the capital of the Abbasid dynasty.

In sum, the evidence laid out in this chapter suggests that NS was stylised throughout Greater Iran, the Maghrib, Egypt and Baghdad. No conclusions can be presently drawn as to where NS was first adopted and stylised, especially because it seems to have been popular throughout the Islamic world and on different media as early as the 2nd/8th century. Local features of NS that appeared in Greater Iran and Baghdad resemble those of the NS scripts employed in later Qur'ans as will be illustrated in the second part of this thesis. These differ from the ones that were being stylised in the Maghrib, confirming aesthetic division in book production between the eastern and the western parts of the Islamic lands.

[72] *Kuttāb* (sing. *kātib*) had solid training in the art of writing and a wide knowledge in various subjects from language and poetry to the structure of the state and administration. The translation of *kātib* in modern scholarship varies: "chancery secretary", "administrative scribe" and "administrative official" are all used. On the different translation of *kātib* in modern scholarship, see Carter, 'The Kātib in fact and fiction', 45. On the different types of secretaries, see Sellheim, 'Kātib', EI2.

Chapter II

Qur'ans in Round Style at the turn of the 5th/11th century

The knowledge we have of Qur'ans copied in RS at the turn of the 5th/11th century is even more obscure than what we know about Qur'ans copied in NS in the 4th/10th and early 5th/11th centuries. The very few RS Qur'ans that survive from the first half of the 5th/11th century have unknown origins, with the exception of the Qur'an at the Chester Beatty Library (Is. 1431), which, according to its colophon, was copied by the famous calligrapher Ibn al-Bawwāb in Baghdad in 391/1000. This is the earliest Qur'an known to us to be copied in a mature form of RS. This chapter will first present a study of Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an, followed by another Qur'an that shares many similarities with it. The Qur'an famously known in modern scholarship as the "Sulayhid Qur'an" dated 417/1026 will be studied last. The study of these manuscripts informs us about Qur'anic production in Baghdad and Cairo, to their continuities and discontinuities with the past, and their relationship to each other.

The Qur'an of Ibn al-Bawwāb

A famous and well published Qur'an was copied by Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī b. Hilāl al-Kātib al-Baghdādī, known as Ibn al-Bawwāb, in Baghdad in 391/1000 as its colophon states (Plates I-VII). The manuscript is now at the Chester Beatty Library (Is. 1431), where access to it remains very limited due to its popularity. Thus, my study is based on a facsimile edition present in the Jafet Library at the American University of Beirut.[1] This famous Qur'an was studied first in 1955 by D.S. Rice who established its authenticity and in 2010 by George who agrees to its authenticity and argues that its script and illumination are rooted in the Kufic tradition.[2]

The Qur'an measures 17.5 x 13.5 cm, with fifteen lines per page copied in a legible RS with features of both *muḥaqqaq* and *naskh*. Its colophon reads (fol. 284r, Plate I):

> *Kataba hadhā al-jāmiʿ ʿalī bin hilal bi-madīnat al-sal[ā]m sanat iḥdā wa-tisʿīn wa-thalāthmiʾa ḥāmidan li'llāh taʿālā ʿalā niʿamihi wa-muṣalliyan ʿalā nabiyyihi muḥammad wa-ālihi wa-mustaghfiran min dhanbihi.*
> Copied this assembled [Qur'an] ʿAlī b. Hilāl in Madīnat al-Salām in the year 391, Praise God Almighty for His grace and give abundant prayers to His Prophet Muḥammad and to his family and ask forgiveness for his sins.

Not much information exists about Ibn al-Bawwāb's life, except what is contained in later sources.[3] He lived in Baghdad and for a short period in Shiraz, around 450 km south of Isfahan, where he was in charge of the library of the Buyid Bahāʾ al-Dawla.[4] He died in Baghdad in 413/1022.[5]

---

[1] MSR 297.122:k84kuA. I thank the team in the Archives and Special Collections Department in Jafet Library for allowing me to study this manuscript, and for providing me access to several resources during

[2] Rice, *The Unique Ibn al-Bawwāb Manuscript*, 11-28; and George, *The Rise of Islamic Calligraphy*, 127-134. Mansour studied the script of Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an by comparing it to that of the famous 7th/13th century calligrapher Yāqūt al-Mustaʿsimī. See chapter 2 in Mansour, *Sacred Script*.

[3] For his life and the manuscripts attributed to him, see Nājī, *Ibn al-bawwāb, ʿabqarī al-khaṭṭ al-ʿarabī ʿabr al-ʿuṣūr*, 21-27. A letter entitled *Rāʾiyya fī al-khaṭṭ* was attributed to Ibn al-Bawwāb and published centuries later in the commentaries of Ibn al-Baṣīṣ and Ibn al-Waḥīd (d. 711/1311), as well as in Ibn Khaldūn's *Muqaddima* (d. 808/1405), and *Jāmiʿ maḥāsin kitāb al-kuttāb* by al-Ṭibī in 908/1502. See Nājī, 'Sharḥ al-manḍhūma al-mustaṭāba fī ʿilm al-kitāba', 361. The beginning of the letter is translated in Blair, *Islamic Calligraphy*, 161-162.

[4] This is according to his own account. *Al-Ṣafadī, al-Wāfī bi'l-wafayāt*, 22:295.

[5] His date of death is given differently in various sources. Nājī, *Ibn al-bawwāb ʿabqarī al-khaṭṭ al-ʿarabī ʿabr al-ʿuṣūr*, 50–52.

Several elements appear in the illumination of the Qur'an of Ibn al-Bawwāb that are rooted in Kufic tradition, as George argues.[6] Others, however, present new features that do not appear in Qur'ans before the second half of the 5th/11th century as the present discussion will reveal. The Qur'an opens with a double-page illuminated spread enumerating the components of the Qur'an inscribed in rounded cartouches and decorated with palmette and floral scrolls, some of which are *fleur de lys* (fols. 6v-7r, Plate II).[7] This stylised flower has two sepals, two leaves and a long extended sinuous tip that curves at the end, an ornament absent from previous Kufic Qur'ans.

The second illuminated double-page spread in the Qur'an of Ibn al-Bawwāb comprises interlaced lines forming six large octagons and two smaller octagons on the vertical central axis of each page (fols. 7v-8r, Plate III). The large octagons are inscribed with a text noting that the Qur'an follows the Kufan Qur'anic reading, on the authority of ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib. It reads: "*fī ʿadad ahl al-kūfa al-murwā ʿan amīr al-muʿminīn ʿalī bin abī ṭālib ʿan muḥammad nabiyyan wa-ʿalayhi al-salām"* ("after the verse count of the people of Kūfa on the authority of the commander of the faithful ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib after the authority of the Prophet Muḥammad peace be upon him").[8] The grounds of the large octagons are decorated with floral scrolls while the smaller octagons contain stylised lotus flowers, some of which are *fleur de lys*. The design of this page was not employed in Qur'ans of the 4th/10th century. However, the Qur'an has a third double frontispiece made of intersecting circles and half circles (fol. 9r, Plate IV), a configuration present in 4th/10th century Qur'ans and continues to appear in Qur'ans of the 6th/12th century.[9] In this third frontispiece design, new shapes are generated by the overlaps of

---

[6] George, *The Rise of Islamic Calligraphy*, 127-134.

[7] *Bi'smillāh al-raḥmān al-raḥīm ʿadad suwar al-qurʾān māʾat wa-arbaʿ ʿashara sūra wa-ʿadad mā fīhi min ʾāya sittat alf wa māʾatān wa-sittat wa-thalāthūn āya wa huwa sabʿ wa-sabʿūn alf kalima wa-arbaʿ māʾat wa-sittūn kalima wa-ʿadad mā fīhi min ḥurūf al-muʿjam thlathmāʾat alf ḥarf wāḥid wa-ʿishrūn alf ḥārf wa-māʾatān wa-khamsūn ḥarfan wa-ʿadad mā fīhi min nuqaṭ al-muʿjam māʾat alf nuqṭa wa-sitta wa-khamsūn alf nuqṭa wāḥid wa-khamsūn nuqṭa* (In the name of God merciful to all compassionate to each, the number of suras in the Qur'an is 114 suras, and the number of its verses is 6,236, and the number of its words is 77,460, and the number of its letters is 321,250, and the number of its dots is 156,051).

[8] However, despite this inscription, the text follows the reading of the Basran Abū ʿAmr. Dutton, 'Red Dots, Green Dots, Yellow Dots and Blue (Part II)', 17 and 23 (note 69). This discrepancy between the frontispiece statement and the text needs further investigation.

[9] For example in the 4th/10th century Qur'an at the Freer Gallery (F1934.25-26), published in Farhad and Rettig, *The Art of the Qur'an,* 70-71; and in other Qur'ans published in Rice, *The Unique Ibn al-Bawwāb Manuscript* (plates III and IV).

circles and half circles. Similarly, the finispiece is designed with intersecting circles and half circles forming a pointed oval (fols. 284v-285r, Plate V) – a design encountered in 4th/10th century Qur'ans and also in later 6th/12th century Qur'ans.[10] One striking feature, absent from earlier Qur'ans, is the star pattern that decorates the ground of the frontispiece and finispiece of Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an (Figure 2.1). This pattern recalls the star patterns on the tomb tower of Imāmzāda Nūr in Gurgān and more specifically, the decoration on the spandrels of side 10, as termed by Hillenbrand (Figure 2.2.2).[11] This Saljuq tower is dated by Hillenbrand to the late 6th/12th century placing, once more, the decoration of Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an as part of larger artistic productions in Greater Iran.

Figure 2.1: Close up on the ground decoration of the frontispiece and finispiece of Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an, 391/1000.

In addition to the star pattern, an element of Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an decoration that is absent from older Kufic traditions of illumination is the stylised lotus flower with two straight sepals at its bottom. It and inscribed in the two spaces formed on the horizontal axis in Ibn al-Bawwāb's finispiece (Figure 2.3). Furthermore, the style of shading of the flower's petals is not seen in earlier Qur'ans and find parallels with later Qur'ans as will be discussed in Chapter VII. Hence, this technique of shading, the stylised lotus flower, star patterns and *fleurs de lys* that appear in the Qur'an of Ibn al-Bawwāb are not part of 4th/10th century Qur'anic motifs but appear in

[10] For a 4th/10th century Qur'an example see Farhad and Rettig, *The Art of the Qur'an,* 70-71; and for a 6th/12th century Qur'an example see al-Bayhaqī's Qur'an will be discussed in chapter VII (Plates X-XII).
[11] Hillenbrand, 'Saljūq Monuments in Iran. V. The Imāmzāda Nūr, Gurgān'.

Qur'ans copied in later decades, reflecting his status as innovator as is consensually agreed in modern literature.

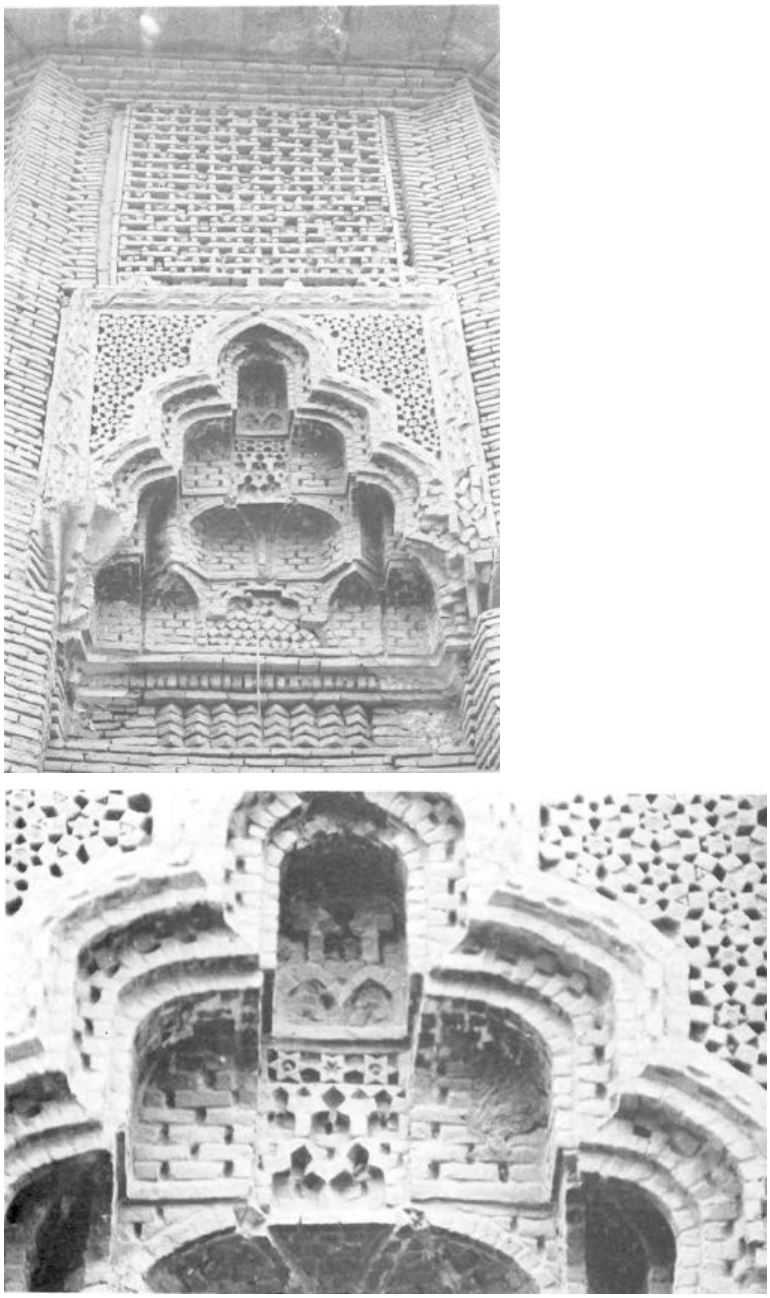

Figure 2.2: Top: Imāmzāda Nūr tower, Gurgān, late $6^{th}/12^{th}$ century, view of side 10. Bottom: Detail (after Hillenbrand).

Figure 2.3: Shading in a flower in the finispiece of Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an, 391/1000.

Like the decorative elements discussed above, another level of decoration places Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an in-between two traditions, namely the vignettes and verse markers. The design of the medallion marking every tenth-verse is based on a circle surrounded by petals that have small dashes (Figure 2.4). From the petals, hairlines extend at the bases of which are small dots. This design is not seen in the extant Qur'ans from the 4th/10th and 5th/11th centuries.[12]

Figure 2.4: Tenth-verse marker in Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an, 391/1000.

However, the vignettes that project from the illuminated panels and sura titles of Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an are based on vignette designs found in Kufic Qur'ans.[13] Through a comparative study of these illuminated devices, George illustrates how the visual repertoire of Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an is rooted in the decoration of Kufic Qur'ans.[14] The vignettes are designed with gold intertwined composite palmettes on a blue ground, at the centre of which a flower or two are formed. In addition, in line with Kufic tradition, every fifth verse in Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an is marked by a teardrop shape, while every tenth verse is marked by a small roundel inscribed with a Kufic letter corresponding to a numerical value (Plate VI).[15]

[12] Déroche, *Les manuscrits du Coran*, 27–31.
[13] They are of type-6 composite palmettes, following Déroche's typology. Déroche, *Les manuscrits du Coran*, 31–33.
[14] George, *The Rise of Islamic Calligraphy*, 133.
[15] Déroche, *Les manuscrits du Coran*, 27-31.

In summary, and in line with George's study of these illuminated devices, some features in Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an are rooted in earlier traditions, while others appear to be new innovations.[16] These new features would become more common in the visual language of later Qur'ans.

The script in the Qur'an of Ibn al-Bawwāb

Before we discuss the script of Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an, a parenthesis on the Round Scripts' terminology and description is needed. As already mentioned in the introduction of the thesis, terms such as *muḥaqqaq*, *naskh* and *thuluth* appeared in a number of early Arabic sources on calligraphy, but without a comprehensive description or illustration of their characteristics.[17] Given the absence of texts from the 5th/11th century that discuss and illustrate the characteristics of these RS scripts, we are limited to later sources for their identification, with the earliest and indeed only text being from the 7th/13th century.[18] Mamluk texts are the most extensive sources to provide a description of the script characteristics and their classification.[19] Some of these Arabic sources offer a general script categorisation that is relevant to our analysis of 5th/11th century scripts, highlighting a distinction between the scripts according to their rectilinear or curvilinear

[16] George, *The Rise of Islamic Calligraphy*, 130–33. George also compares the marginal illuminated device for a sajda in Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an to the Kufic tradition of noting a sajda.
[17] See Introduction.
[18] The earliest source that describes letter forms and includes some illustration is written by the Seljuq historian al-Rāwandī around the year 599/1202. Al-Rawandī lists the geometric features of all the letter shapes in *thuluth*, *naskh*, *riqāʿ* and *muḥaqqaq*. For a study of al-Rawandī's letter descriptions, see Moustafa and Sperl, *The Cosmic Script*, 1:167–69. For the original text, see al-Rawandī, *Rāḥat al-ṣuḍūr*, 606-618. Blair rejects al-Rawandī's description of letter shapes, stating that his letters appear to have odd proportions since the author attempts to apply proportional theories that were still at his time in the process of development. Blair, *Islamic Calligraphy*, 213. Moustafa and Sperl disagree with Blair's views, stating that al-Rawandī's view originated from earlier methods. Moustafa and Sperl, *The Cosmic Script*, 1:167. Even though al-Rawandī's text describes shapes of letters that are difficult to associate with the types of scripts we know, the text needs further analysis not only to understand the method it follows but also to compare the description of letters with contemporaneous script specimens.
[19] Moustafa and Sperl compiled an extensive list of early sources which served them as a basis to draw letters. See Moustafa and Sperl, *The Cosmic Script*, 1:160-161. Earlier than Moustafa and Sperl, Gacek had also compiled a list of Mamluk sources. See Gacek, 'Arabic Scripts and Their Characteristics as Seen through the Eyes of Mamluk Authors'. Among these texts, the earliest and most extensive sources are *Nihāyat al-arab fī funūn al-adab* by the Egyptian historian and polymath al-Nuwayrī (d. 733/1332), in which the author offers a classification of the scripts and *Kitāb ṣubḥ al-aʿshā fī ṣināʿat al-inshāʾ* by the Mamluk secretary al-Qalqashandī (d. 821/1418), which contain a section on calligraphy with an extensive description of letter shapes. For al-Nuwayrī's description, see Gacek, 'Al-Nuwayri's Classification of Arabic Scripts'. For the section on calligraphy in al-Qalqashandi, see al-Qalqashandī, *Kitāb ṣubḥ al-aʻshā*, 3:3-167.

characteristics. For example, the rectilinear scripts are referred to in texts as "*al-aqlām al-yābisa*" or "*al-mabsūṭa*", and the curvilinear scripts are called "*al-aqlām al-muraṭṭaba*" or "*al-muqawwara*".[20] The curvilinear scripts have roundness ("*taqwīr*") and softness ("*līn*") in their strokes, while the rectilinear scripts are characterised by flatness ("*basṭ*") and rigidity ("*yabs*").[21] These characteristics are mainly detected in the descenders of letters, such as the bowl of *yāʾ* and the tail of *wāw*. Hence, *muḥaqqaq* and *naskh* fall under the category of rectilinear scripts, while *thuluth*, *tawqīʿ* and *riqāʿ* fall under the curvilinear category.

These scripts are illustrated next to one another in an Ottoman calligraphy exercise (*mashq)* dated 1014/1605, identified and studied by Derman (Figure 2.5).[22] This document presents us with mature RS characteristics, which became commonly known as *al-aqlām al-sitta* (the Six Pens).[23] The Six Pens are: *muḥaqqaq*, *rayḥānī*, *thuluth*, *naskh*, *tawqīʿ* and *riqāʿ*.[24] Fol. 1v from the Ottoman *mashq* illustrates an example of *thuluth* (first line), *naskh* (second line), *thuluth* (third line), *rayḥānī* (fourth line), *muḥaqqaq* (fifth line) and *riqāʿ* (sixth and seventh lines). In general terms, *muḥaqqaq* has oblique long pointed tails in letters such as *rāʾ* and *mīm,* and shallow bowls in letters such as *nūn*. Small counters (opening in heads – such as *mīm*) also characterise *muḥaqqaq*. *Thuluth* has tails that are thin and curved at the end, and bowls that are deeper and larger than those of *muḥaqqaq,* such as in *nūn*. It has smaller counters in the heads of

[20] The *al-mabsūṭ/al-muqawwar* distinction is mentioned in a treatise by Qāsim b. Fayyra al-Shaṭibī (d. 590/1193), entitled *al-Abḥāth al-jamīla fī sharḥ al-ʿaqīla*, which does not survive today but is cited in al-Qalqashandī, *Kitāb ṣubḥ āl-aʿshā*, 3:15. Three additional sources that follow the same division of *mabsūṭ/muqawwār* are listed in Mansour, *Sacred Script*, 33-34. These are: *Mawadd al-bayān* by ʿAlī b. Khalaf al-Kātib (d. c. 436/1044); *Rāʾiyyat ibn al-bawwāb* by Ibn al-Waḥīd and Ibn al-Baṣīṣ (both d. in the first decades of the 8th/14th century); and *Lamḥat al-mukhtaṭif fī ṣināʿat al-khaṭṭ al-salif* by Husayn b. Yāsīn al-Kātib (d. after 781/1379).

[21] This distinction was made by the Mamluk secretary al-Qalqashandi, by al-Hītī and al-Saydāwī and by Ibn al-Baṣīṣ. Gacek, 'Arabic Scripts and Their Characteristics as Seen through the Eyes of Mamluk Authors', 144.

[22] Derman, 'A Remarkable Collection of Mashq'.

[23] Even though there are earlier visual examples that illustrate these scripts, none present us with an illustration of the six scripts put together. The earliest document is by Muḥammad b. Ḥasan al-Ṭībī dated 908/1503 that illustrates the letter shape not in any particular script. See al-Ṭayyibī (Ṭībī), *Jamīʿ maḥāsin kitābat al-kuttāb*. Moustafa and Sperl use, in addition to this visual evidence, the Bāysunghur Qur'an (dated c. 822/1420) as a basis to draw the letters. See Moustafa and Sperl, *The Cosmic Script*, 1:180, 182-183 and 296-297.

[24] Mansour suggests that there were seven instead of six calligraphic pens. The seventh script that Mansour identifies has both *thuluth* and *muḥaqqaq* characteristics. Called in sources the *muʾannaq*, its characteristics are more inclined towards *muḥaqqaq*. However, the only specimen that the author was able to identify which presents us with an example of this script is from the 10th/16th century, appearing in al-Ṭayyibī's treatise. Mansour, *Sacred Script*, 26–27.

wāw, *mīm* and *ʿayn*. *Naskh,* on the other hand, appears smaller in size than *muḥaqqaq* and *thuluth*, with relatively shorter ascenders and descenders and the bowls and tails of letters are more concave than in *muḥaqqaq*. When compared to *muḥaqqaq, naskh* looks a little more rectilinear even though the former retains rectilinear characteristics.

Figure 2.5: Ottoman *mashq* illustrating mature RS (fol. 1v), 1014/1605.

The script in Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an has features of both *muḥaqqaq* and *naskh*. Because it had not reach a level of maturity in either scripts, it will be termed RS-*muḥaqqaq*/*naskh*. Typical *muḥaqqaq* features are seen in the shallow bowls of letters, such as *nūn;* the diagonal tails of letters, such as *wāw*; and *tarwīs* at the top of *alif* which is a serif-like form at the top of the

letter.[25] These features are evident in the letter in *thuluth* in the Ottoman *mashq* (third line) and *muḥaqqaq* (fifth line). *Alif* in Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an has no turn at the bottom, like in the *naskh* of the Ottoman *mashq* (second line). Initial *jīm*/*ḥāʾ*/*khāʾ* is made of a stroke drawn from left to right that starts with a *shaẓiyya* (a thickness at the beginning) and inclines to the right, overlapping with a horizontal stroke on the right.[26] The *shaẓiyya* is also seen in the *muḥaqqaq* of the Ottoman *mashq* (fifth line). Moreover, *dāl*/*dhāl* is made of two strokes: a vertical one that meets a horizontal one with no curve or a thin stroke at its end like in the form of the letter in *thuluth* of the Ottoman *mashq* (first line) but rather like the form of the letter in the *naskh* script. In addition, *ṭāʾ*/*ẓāʾ* has a vertical stroke that meets the rounded body on its far left end like in both *naskh* and *muḥaqqaq* types.

Furthermore, initial *ʿayn*/*ghayn* is made of three strokes. It starts with an arc followed by an inclined stroke that meets a straight stroke sometimes lifted off the baseline. The opening of the letter is usually wider in *muḥaqqaq* than in *naskh* but in Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an it appears to be not as wide as in *muḥaqqaq*. Final *mīm* is circular in shape and its tail is thin, diagonal and long like in *muḥaqqaq* of the Ottoman *mashq* (fifth lines). Additionally, *nūn* is made of a small vertical stroke followed by a bowl, shallow like in *muḥaqqaq* (fifth line) and a little concave like in *naskh* (second line). Finally, the head of *wāw* (and *fāʾ*/*qāf*) is rounded and followed by an oblique tail that is long but not as pointed as in *muḥaqqaq* of the Ottoman *mashq* detected for example in *rāʾ* (fifth line).

Typical *naskh* features can be observed in the script's generally compact nature as well as the small openings of letters, which work to enhance legibility overall.[27] The script is codified on the basis of the circle and its diameter, the *alif*, with regular letter forms and consistent size (Plate

[25] *Tarwīs* is a term generally used to indicate this part of the letter *alif* until today. Mansour, *Sacred Script*, 61. Mansour calls the script of Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an *rayḥān*, the smaller version of *muḥaqqaq* as classified in the "Six Pens", and rightly compares it to the script in the Qur'an of ʿAbd al-Malik al-Iṣfahānī dated 495/1105. Mansour, *Sacred Script*, 91–93. Other scholars designate the text as *naskh* and the sura headings as *thuluth*. For example Rice, *The Unique Ibn al-Bawwāb Manuscript*, 85–87; and Tabbaa, 'The Transformation of Arabic Writing: Part I', 133.
[26] Moustafa and Sperl, *The Cosmic Script*, 2:326.
[27] This characteristic is also mentioned by al-Tawḥīdī (d. after 400/1010) in his *Risala fī ʿilm al-kitāba*. Rosenthal, 'Abū Ḥaiyān al-Tawḥīdī on Penmanship', 3.

VII).[28] Moreover, the lines of script adhere to the baseline and the alignment to the right and left is almost perfect, indicating great attention to layout.

In comparison to a manuscript copied by Muḥammad b. Asad (d. 410/1019), known to be Ibn al-Bawwāb's teacher, Ibn al Bawwāb's script looks more consistent in size and form, with clearly identifiable features of mature RS types (Figure 2.6).[29] In Ibn Asad's manuscript, the lines adhere to the baseline, and there appears to be an attempt to achieve consistency in the form and size of letters, even though it is not achieved. In contrast, in Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an, consistency and codification of both the script and layout are skilfully executed. This suggests that if both manuscripts were authentic, Ibn al-Bawwāb must have surpassed the talent of his teacher.[30] Indeed, while Ibn Asad's handwriting is rooted in non-Qur'anic bookhands, Ibn al-Bawwāb's is closer to later mature RS scripts, as can be detected in the shapes of letters. For example, in Ibn Asad's manuscript, the form of *ṭāʾ*/*ẓāʾ* sometimes appears angular as in NSIII (as seen in the first word of the last line in Figure 2.6) while in Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an, the form is consistently curvilinear.

In comparison to later RS Qur'ans copied in the first half of the 5th/11th century and which will be discussed in chapter III, Ibn al-Bawwāb's script appears again to be the most mature and codified without inconsistencies in the shapes of letters. In fact, the shapes of letters are generally closer to later *naskh* in Ibn al-Bawwāb's manuscript, as for example, the median *ʿayn*/*ghayn*, which appears as a triangle with sharp edges in early RS forms, but has softer lines in Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an. The script's relative maturity can also be detected in its curvilinear ligatures, whereas such ligatures appear v-shaped in Qur'ans copied in the first half of the 5th/11th century as we will see in the next chapter.

---

[28] Measuring the codification of the script on the basis of the height of the *alif* and circle was used by Alain George on the Khayqānī Qur'an. George, *The Rise of Islamic Calligraphy*, 120.

[29] The manuscript is in the Suleymaniyyeh Library in Istanbul (no. 904A). A double-page folio is published in Derman, *Fann al-Khaṭṭ*, 177; and Mansour, *Sacred Script*, 42. Al-Qalasandī mentions that, in addition to Ibn al-Bawwāb, Ibn Asad had also followed Ibn Muqla's path of handwriting. Al-Qalqashandī, *Kitāb ṣubḥ al-āʿshā fī ṣināʿat al-inshā*, 3:19.

[30] George compared the script codification and layout of Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an to earlier Qur'anic calligraphy, noting that the manuscript is visibly rooted in Kufic traditions. Even though this comparison stands, the aim here is to look at the ways in which Ibn al-Bawwāb's handwriting differs from other examples of earlier, contemporaneous or later RS.

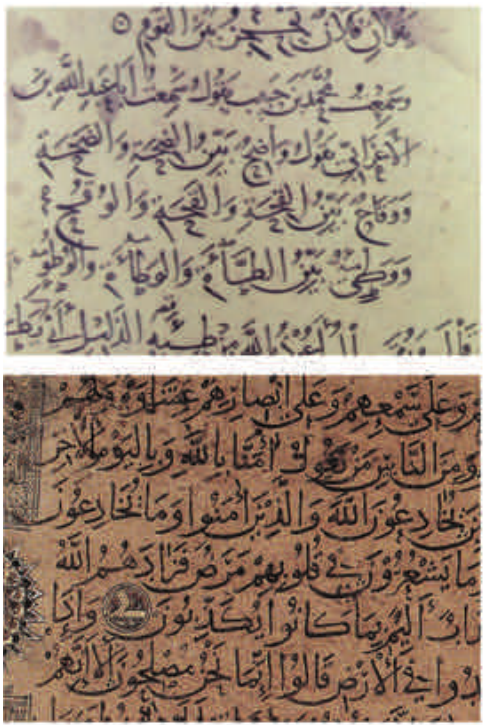

Figure 2.6: Top: Ibn Asad's manuscript, late 4th/10th century or early 5th/11th century; Bottom: Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an, 391/1000.

Two additional features appear to be innovative in Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an namely the replacement of NS with RS in the decoration, and RS sura headings with both *naskh* and *thuluth* features, executed in gold and outlined in black. Both of these features are not encountered in the earlier surviving corpus of Qur'ans.

As the above discussion suggests, the script in Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an was at the forefront of RS script stylisation at the turn of the 5th/11th century, making him truly avant-garde. Similarly, the study of the Qur'an's illumination showed how some decorative elements are inherited from the Kufic tradition, while others are new innovations, illustrating what Ibn Khallikān wrote about Ibn al-Bawwāb that *al-jamīʿ aqarr lahu bi'l-sābiqa* (everyone acknowledged that he set a precedent).[31] There is no doubt that Ibn al-Bawwāb was known for being a great calligrapher and

[31] Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-aʿyān*, 3:342–44. Other sources mention Ibn al-Bawwāb as a leading calligrapher, such as Yāqūt al-Rūmī's *Muʿjam al-udabāʾ*. Mansour, *Sacred Script*, 48.
.

for perfecting Ibn Muqla's style of writing, called *al-Khaṭṭ al-Mansūb* (Proportioned Script).[32] The earliest account we have, that of Rashīd b. al-Zubayr (d. 563/1167), reports that there were volumes written by Ibn Muqla and Ibn al-Bawwāb in the treasury of the Fatimid caliphs.[33] In his biographical dictionary almost a century later, Ibn Khallikān (d. 681/1282) insists that Ibn al-Bawwāb was the successor of Ibn Muqla, further developing and beautifying his handwriting.[34] Hence, Ibn al-Bawwāb's link with Ibn Muqla was not forgotten for centuries. According to a letter of unknown date, copyist, or author, Ibn al-Bawwāb replaced a missing part from a Qur'an originally copied by Ibn Muqla when he was in charge of Bahāʾ al-Dawla's library in Shiraz.[35] In the letter, Ibn al-Bawwāb explained, "I took what suited me and wrote out the missing volume then illuminated it and gave the gold an antique appearance… finally I made a new binding for the genuine volume and made it appear old".[36] Lastly, the fact that there has been an interest in various periods to understand and reconstruct Ibn al-Bawwāb's calligraphy attests once more to his enduring fame.[37] Hence, Ibn al-Bawwāb remained highly regarded, even centuries after his death. In modern literature, he is regarded as an innovator and his Qur'an at the Chester Beatty Library indisputably authentic. However, with the absence of 5th/11th century Qur'ans from Baghdad, the presence of new motifs and stylised RS in Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an can also be the grounds on which one can challenge the manuscript's authenticity especially that the new elements in its illumination would only become popular in later Qur'ans. This topic deviates from the aim of this thesis and opens a long parenthesis that would need additional analysis for a definite conclusion to be reached.[38] It will hence be put on hold for the moment until further research is conducted.[39]

---

[32] He also had other talents, such as as preaching and writing. Mansour, *Sacred Script*, 50.
[33] George, *The Rise of Islamic Calligraphy*, 141.
[34] Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-aʿyān*, 3:342–44.
[35] The letter is preserved in Berlin Library (registered under WE 167, foll 43-50), and is entitled *Risāla fi al-kitāba al-mansūba*. The editor of the letter, Khalīl Maḥmūd ʿAsākir, argues that the letter was initially written before Ibn al-Bawwāb's death. However there is no evidence to indicate it was contemporary with Ibn al-Bawwāb. Khalīl Maḥmūd ʿAsākir, '*Risāla fi al-kitāba al-mansūba*', 121.
[36] Rice, *The Unique Ibn al-Bawwāb Manuscript*, 80.
[37] Roxburgh, 'On the Transmission and Reconstruction of Arabic Calligraphy'.
[38] I intend to work on this subject right after the submission of this thesis.
[39] Note that another manuscript, *Dīwān* by the pre-Islamic poet Salāma b. Jandal, dated 408/1017, has been attributed to Ibn al-Bawwāb. The manuscript is in the Topkapı Sarayı Library (Bağdat 125). It has been studied by Rice, *The Unique Ibn al-Bawwāb Manuscript*, 97–101.

An undated Qur'an now in the Khalili Collection of Islamic Art, Khalili QUR284 (Plates VIII-XI) shares many similarities with Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an, based on which David James attributes it to the first half of the 5th/11th century.[40] Like Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an, this single volume Qur'an, of 202 folios, measuring 14 x 11 cm, exhibits features rooted in older traditions while others would become popular in 6th/12th century Qur'ans.

The illumination in Khalili QUR284

The design of this Qur'an's frontispiece is made of two intersecting circles forming a pointed oval at the centre (fol. 1r, Plate VIII). This configuration is similar to that of the finispiece in Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an, which is designed with intersecting circles and half circles forming a pointed oval (fols. 284v-285r, Plate V). Here, the circles and oval are inscribed with the enumeration of the components of the Qur'an.[41] A stylised lotus flower decorates the centre of the two circles, while a double palmette scroll decorates the centre of the pointed oval. The circles and pointed oval are framed with a contour decorated with dots, and at each corner of this central design is a gold lotus flower. The lotus flowers adorning the two circles on the vertical axis are stylised in the same manner as those on the vertical axis in the finispiece of Ibn al-Bawwāb's manuscript. In addition, they both have horizontally extended sepals that curl at the tip. The colour palette employed in both Qur'ans (sepia, gold and blue) adds to the resemblance of the two manuscripts.

The design of the first double-page spread with Qur'anic text is prominently illuminated in Khalili QUR284 (fols. 1v-2r, Plate IX). The first illuminated band announcing the opening chapter is wider than the illuminated band announcing *sūrat al-baqara*, and the whole page is framed with a thin gold band and blue contour. Moreover, the *basmala* is extended at the beginning of each sura, like in Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an. Similarly, the last suras in Khalili

[40] Folios from this Qur'an are published in George, *The Rise of Islamic Calligraphy*, 132; and James, *The Master Scribes*, 24-27.
[41] The top circle is inscribed in NS on a blue ground with the phrase *wa'llāhu ḥusnā waḥdahu* (God alone is Kind), and the bottom circle is inscribed also in NS on a blue ground with *mā'at alf nuqṭa wa-sittūn* (100,060 dots). The pointed oval is inscribed in NS on a cross-hatched background decorated with a repetition of floral buds with *wa-khamsūn alf nuqṭa wa iḥdā wa-thamānūn nuqṭa* (50,081 dots).

QUR284 are sandwiched between two wide illuminated bands at the top and bottom, and decorated with thin scrolls of stylised flowers, some of which resemble *fleur de lys* and have pointed, long extended tips (fols. 200v-201r, Plate X).[42] The *fleur de lys*, also employed in Ibn al-Bawwāb's decoration (fols. 6v-7r, Plate II) but absent from earlier Qur'ans, would become popular in Qur'ans copied in the second half of the 5th/11th century and in the 6th/12th century.

The surviving finispiece from Khalili QUR284 is made of two half circles, one at the right and the other at the left, intersected with two central half circles (fol. 201v, Plate XI). This configuration is related to the third double frontispiece in Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an which is made of intersecting circles and half circles (fol. 9r, Plate IV). In both designs, new shapes are created by the overlap of circles and half circles. In Khalili QUR284, the ground is decorated with floral scrolls that are either three-lobed or four-lobed, with some featuring an extended tip that curls at the end. The ground outside of these circles is decorated with hatched thin bands, and executed in gold with a lattice frame. From the panel, a vignette projects into the margin, and is made of composite palmettes at the base of which are palmettes pointing upwards. The design of this vignette, like others in the Qur'an, is rooted in old designs but employed in a mature and stylised manner. For example, the vignette linked to the top right-hand panel of the first spread with Qur'anic text (fol. 1v, Plate IX) is made of intertwined gold scrolls not seen in 4th/10th century Qur'ans.[43] However, the one projecting from the *sūrat al-baqara* headline is made of composite palmettes with truncated edges at the bottom that contain two three-lobed flower scrolls – a design rooted in the 4th/10th century and encountered earlier in Ibn al-Bawwāb's manuscript (Figure 2.8).[44] The vignette linked to the finispiece in Khalili QUR284 has at its centre a flower that is repeated again in its frontispiece and which echoes the lotus flower decorating the two spaces formed on the vertical axis in the finispiece of Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an (Figure 2.7).[45] It is made of two horizontally extended sepals that curl up at the edges with a bud surrounded by small petals.

---

[42] The top bands are inscribed with the *sura* titles, while the ones at the bottom are inscribed with the phrase *sadaqa allāhu al-ʿaẓīm wa-ṣallā allāhu ʿala muḥammad wa-ālihi ajmaʿīn* (Allah the Mighty has spoken. May God bless Muḥammad and all his line).

[43] See for example, the vignette linked to the sura heading on fols. 37v-38r in Khalili QUR87 (6th/12th century), as displayed in James, *The Master Scribes*, 38 (cat. no. 5).

[44] They are of type 6, see Déroche, *Les manuscrits du Coran*, 27-31

[45] Folios from this Qur'an are published in George, *The Rise of Islamic Calligraphy*, 132; and James, *The Master Scribes*, 24-27.

Furthermore, no device marks the end of a verse in Khalili QUR284, while a simplified teardrop shape – a design commonly employed in Qur'ans – marks every fifth verse. Finally, the tenth-verse marker appears as a medallion with radiating thin lines, a design rooted in earlier traditions.[46]

Hence, while some features establish Khalili QUR284 as part of an older Qur'anic tradition, others relate it to later artistic developments. Its resemblance to Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an points to Baghdad as its possible place of production.

Figure 2.7: Left: The flower in the vignette linked to the finispiece of Khalili QUR284, 5th/11th-6th/12th century; Middle: Flower decorating the two small half circles in the frontispiece of Khalili QUR284; Right: Flower decorating the finispiece of Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an, 391/1000.

Figure 2.8: Left: Three different vignette designs in Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an, 391/1000; Right: Three different vignette designs in Khalili QUR284, 5th/11th-6th/12th century.

[46] Déroche, *Les manuscrits du Coran*, 31-33.

The script in Khalili QUR284

The script used in Khalili QUR284, like in Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an, displays mature RS features. First, it is codified following the circle and the *alif*, hence maintaining a consistent appearance. Second, many of the script's characteristics are reminiscent of later, mature *naskh*. The bowls of letters, for example, end with an upward curve, while the bowls of letters in early *naskh* end with a horizontal stroke. Third, the ligatures are curvilinear, like in Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an, whereas they appear v-shaped in early RS and non-Qur'anic bookhands (Figure 2.9). Thus, Its script displays mature and distinct characteristics that place it at the beginning of a new script tradition. In comparison to Ibn al-Bawwāb's script, the script in Khalili QUR284 retains more *naskh* characteristics than *muḥaqqaq*. The former can be detected in the not so shallow bowls of letters (as in *nūn*), short tails (as in *wāw*), and the overall compact look of the script. Overall the script in this Qur'an appears to be less fluid than Ibn al-Bawwāb's. But like in the case of Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an, while some elements in this Qur'an are rooted in older traditions, others suggest its avant-garde position. If we were to accept Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an to have been copied in Baghdad, then this one originates from Baghdad too, following the same trend of illumination.

Figure 2.9: Top: Khalili QUR284, 5th/11th-6th/12th century; Bottom: Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an, 391/1000.

The Sulayhid Qur'an

The Sulayhid Qur'an was copied by Husayn b. ʿAbdallāh in 417/1026 and dedicated to the founder of the Sulayhid dynasty in Yemen, ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Ṣulayḥī, as the note on one of its folios indicates (Plates XII-XVI).[47] Even though the patron of the Qur'an and its place of production are unknown, its size (34 x 21 cm), with only nine lines of monumental RS-*thuluth* per page executed in gold with a black outline, confirms its imperial status. The manuscript is now in the Turkish and Islamic Art Museum (431), with two folios at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (40.164.4b).[48] Since the following analysis of this Qur'an relies solely on a few reproductions, its study should be considered incomplete until further reproductions become available.[49]

On fol. 5v (Plate XII), a rectangle intersects with a circle decorated with trilobate flower scrolls and inscribed with: *li'l-ajali al-awḥad amīr al-umarāʾ ʿumdat al-khilāfa sharaf al-maʿālī tāj al-dawla sayf al-imāra* (for the most splendid the unique commander of commanders, the supporter of the caliphate, the respectful noble, the crown of the dynasty, the sword of the emirate). ʿAlī b. Muḥammad, who rose to power in Yemen in 439/1047, was given the title of *ʿumdat al-khilāfa* (support of the Caliphate) by the Fatimid Caliph al-Mustanṣir (r. 427/1035-486/1093) in a letter dated 456/1064.[50] Therefore, the illuminated pages at the beginning of the Qur'an could not have been added to the manuscript before 456/1064, raising questions as to whether the Qur'an was

[47] Unfortunately, I do not have a reproduction of the colophon. As a result, the date of copying and the name of its copyist are based on Rice's study of the manuscript. Rice, *The Unique Ibn al-Bawwāb Manuscript*, 115. For a brief history of Yemen under the Sulayhids, see Smith, 'Ṣulayḥids', EI2.

[48] The Metropolitan Museum of Art attributes the two folios to Western Iran or Northern Iraq and to the 6th/12th century or early 7th/13th century. However, they have the same script, illumination, size, colour palette and system of vocalization as TIEM 431.

[49] The Turkish and Islamic Art Museum in Istanbul was closed at the time of this research, and my access to the collection was denied, making it impossible to get reproductions. I am grateful to Sheila Canby for providing me with the reproductions of the two folios at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. I would also like to thank Simon Rettig for generously providing me with reproductions from this manuscript while the manuscript was on display in the exhibition 'The Art of the Qur'an: treasures from the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts, Istanbul', held at the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Washington, D.C. October 2016-February 2017. Folios from this Qur'an were published in Rice, *The Unique Ibn al-Bawwāb Manuscript*, plate XVI; Ṣahin, *The 1400th Anniversary of the Qur'an*, 210–11; Tabbaa, 'The Transformation of Arabic Writing: Part 1', 134; George, *The Rise of Islamic Calligraphy*, 141-43; and Farhad and Rettig, *The Art of the Qur'an*, 166-171.

[50] Idrīs ʿImād al-Dīn, '*ʿUyūn al-akhbār*', 40. The title of *ʿUmdat al-khilāfa* was mentioned at the end of a letter sent by al-Mustanṣir to ʿAlī b. Muḥammad in response to the requests of the latter. Stern, *Fatimid Decrees*, no. 2. On al-Mustanṣir, see Gibb and Kraus, 'Al-Mustanṣir', EI2.

copied originally in Yemen, and suggesting that it may have been copied and illuminated in Cairo before it was sent as a gift to ʿAlī b. Muḥammad. On fols. 4v-5r (Plate XIII), intersecting hexagons are inscribed with roundels stating that the Qur'an was ordered (*mi'mma amara bihi*) and ends with the name of the Fatimid caliph al-Mustanṣir. Farhad and Rettig, who had the chance to examine the Qur'an closely, point that the inscription was added later, probably with the illuminated pages, not before 456/1064.[51]

The illumination in the Sulayhid Qu'an

Like the RS Qur'ans discussed above, a number of features appear in this Qur'an that indicates it stands at the end of a tradition and the beginning of a new one. For example, on fol. 5v (Plate XII), the central design is made of an intersecting rectangle and a circle, a configuration found in Kufic Qur'ans.[52] However, the two bands at the top and bottom, inscribed with Q.41: 41-42, are decorated with floral scrolls that resemble the *fleur de lys* and have pointed sinuous tips.[53] As mentioned earlier, these stylised scrolls do not appear in 4th/10th century Qur'ans but are commonly employed in the decoration of later Qur'ans. They are present in the decoration of Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an – such as in the rectangular band at the beginning of *al-fātiḥa* (Plate VII) – indicating that such decorative motifs were present not only in Baghdad but also in either Yemen or Egypt in the second half of the 5th/11th century.

Moreover, the design of fol. 2r (Plate XIV) comprises of a large central rosette made up of seven small overlapping circles intersected by five bigger half-circles – a design encountered in Kufic Qur'ans.[54] The intersection of the small and big half-circles generates pointed oval shapes filled with vegetal leaves and heptagons of concave sides. This rosette design sits on a ground of vertical straps filled with a chessboard-like pattern, commonly employed in Kufic Qur'ans. Two bands at the top and bottom frame this central design, decorated with scrolls of trilobate flowers and inscribed in NS with a Qur'anic verse and a prayer to the Prophet.[55] The design of this

[51] Farhad and Rettig, *The Art of the Qur'an: Treasures from the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts*, 167.
[52] Such as in the Chester Beatty Qur'an (Is. 1406). Ettinghausen, *Arab Painting*, 167.
[53] *Wa-innahu la-kitāb ʿazīz - lā yaʾtīh al-bāṭil min baynahu* (a Book Exalted, which no falsehood can blemish).
[54] Such as in Khalili KFQ78. Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 123-124 (no. 67).
[55] The band at the top is inscribed with an extract from Q.17: 105, reading, *illa mubashshiran wa nadhīran* (We sent you only as a herald of glad tidings, and a warner). The complete verse, which must have started on the previous folio, refers to the Qur'an that was sent down from God, reading, *wa bi'l-ḥaqqi anzalnāhu*

frontispiece is related to that of the previously discussed Qur'ans in that it is constructed on the overlap of circles but nevertheless looks distinct from them.

Similarly, fol. 4r (Plate XV) exhibits old and new features: two overlapping squares are enclosed in a circle, at the centre of which are four scrolls of trilobate flowers, a design related to Kufic frontispieces.[56] Thin interlaced bands divide the top and bottom into squares decorated, again, with chessboard-like patterns and rosettes inscribed with *al-mulku li'llāh* and *allāhu akbar*.

Lastly, on fol. 140v (Plate XVI), the flowers inscribed in the bands at the top and bottom, have similar shading to those in Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an (Figure 2.3). The single-verse marker is a rosette with petal borders surrounded by dots, and inscribed with the number of the verse, a design used in Kufic Qur'ans and in Qur'ans of the 5th/11th and 6th/12th centuries. Every five verses are indicated by a teardrop shape inscribed with *khams* (five), an element used in Qur'ans discussed above and in Kufic Qur'ans but that eventually disappears from later Qur'ans. Finally, the tenth-verse marker is a rosette with radiating lines around it, a form also found in both Kufic and later 5th/11th and 6th/12th century Qur'ans.[57]

The script in the Sulayhid Qur'an

The script of the Sulayhid Qur'an is an RS copied in gold and outlined in black. The *tarwīs* at the top of *alif,* which is also a feature of *muḥaqqaq*, as evident in the Ottoman *mashq* (third line and fifth lines), and the turn at the bottom (like in the *naskh* of the Ottoman *mashq*, second line) make this script difficult to identify. Similarly, the *shaẓiyya* in initial *jīm/ḥā'/khā'* is not accentuated like in *muḥaqqaq* but the end of the bottom stroke of *dāl/dhāl* is present, as in *muḥaqqaq* and *thuluth*. It has more concave bowls than *muḥaqqaq* and deeper tails of letters, which makes it closer to *thuluth* but it is overall more compact than *thuluth* with generally less

---

wa-bi'l-ḥaqqi nazala wa-mā arsalnāka illā mubashshiran wa nadhīran (With the Truth We sent it down, and with the Truth it descended. We sent you only as a herald of glad tidings, and a warner). The band at the bottom is inscribed with a prayer to the Prophet: *Salla allāhu ʿalayhi wa ʿala ālihi* (May God bless Him and his family).

[56] As in for example the frontispiece of a Kufic Qur'an now at the Chester Beatty Library (Is. 1411) has two central circles intersected by quarter circles at the four corners that are filled with a chessboard-like pattern, a design if adapted to a vertical format would resemble the design on fol. 4r of the Sulayhid Qur'an Wright, *Islam: Faith, Art, Culture. Manuscripts of the Chester Beatty Library*, 103 (fig. 66)

[57] Déroche, *Les manuscrits du Coran*, 27-31.

contrast between its thick and thin strokes. Hence the script appears overall to lean towards *thuluth* characteristics. Copied more than two decades after Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an, the script of the Sulayhid Qur'an appears to be as mature as that of Ibn al-Bawwāb's mixing confidently a number of identifiable characteristics of later RS scripts. The script is outlined by clouds that sit on a background of outlined floral scrolls with three blue dots. Its monumentality and the composition of its words, sometimes lay out above each other, makes it appear very different from Ibn al-Bawwāb's script. These differences on the level of both the script and illumination may have been representative of two different schools of Qur'anic production at the turn of the 5th/11th century: one in Baghdad and the other in Cairo.

In sum, like Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an, the decorative scheme employed in the Sulayhid Qur'an mixes between old and new motifs that would still appear in later centuries. The design of the three illuminated frontispieces in the Sulayhid Qur'an, based on the intersection of large forms, such as circles, squares and rectangles, is inherited from the Kufic tradition while other elements such as the *fleur de lys* characterise decoration in Qur'ans up until the 7th/13th century. The Sulayhid Qur'an may have actually been produced in Egypt. However, until additional research is conducted on this manuscript, its provenance cannot be confirmed.

There is no doubt that the scripts in Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an, Khalili QUR284, and the Sulayhid Qur'an employ later mature RS characteristics. By comparison to another Qur'an copied almost a decade after Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an in an immature RS script with *naskh* features, the Qur'ans discussed above appear to be copied by professional copyists. The Qur'an is now at the British Library (Or. 13002) where I have personally examined it (Plates XVII-XVIII).[58] It measures 12 x 7.6 cm and fits 19 lines per page, visibly not an expensive commission. It has wide margins in which the different readings of the Qur'an are noted alongside other comments suggesting that it was most likely used in a religious school.[59] According to its colophon, the manuscript was copied in 402/1011 by Saʿīd b. Muḥammad b. Asʿad al-Karkhī without mentioning its place of origin. Its script has irregular letter shapes and the size of its letters can vary, similarly to non-Qur'anic bookhands. However, its frontispiece design (Plate XVII), which is made of pointed ovals, roughly recalls the pointed oval in the frontispiece of Khalili QUR284

[58] A folio from this Qur'an was published in Tabbaa, 'The Transformation of Arabic Writing: Part 1', 132.
[59] Walid Saleh studied the different readings and comments noted in the margins of this Qur'an. Saleh, 'Word'.

(Plate VII), and those inscribed in the bands at the top of its last double-page spread with Qur'anic text (Plate X). Unfortunately, this is the only RS Qur'an to survive from this period that does not appear to have been an expensive commission due mainly to the poor execution of its script and illumination. Had such Qur'ans survived, they would have offered us an idea about more mundane Qur'anic copies and the ways in which they were used.

Chapter III

Qur'ans from Eastern Iran in in the First Half of the 5th/11th century

A group of five Qur'ans copied in RS in the first half of the 5th/11th century illustrate how RS gradually matured in Qur'an manuscripts (Table 3.1). These Qur'ans, which have unknown origins, share similar elements in their illumination allowing us to identify them as a group and propose their geographic origin. A detailed description of the illumination employed in these Qur'ans is first necessary, as a thorough analysis of their visual language establishes them as a group, thereby allowing for a comparative analysis with the illumination of previous and later centuries.[1] Once established as a group, their script and layout will be studied, followed by a discussion of their provenance.

Manuscript	Date	Place of origin	Writing material	Height x width (cm)	Calligraphers and illuminators
BL Add. 7214	427/1035	Eastern Iran	Paper	11.5 x 14	• Abū al-Qāsim Sa'īd b. Ibrāhīm b. 'Ālim Ibrāhīm b. Sālih (calligrapher) • Abū Mansūr b. Nāfi' b. 'Abdullah (illuminator)
CBL Is. 1430	420/1036	Eastern Iran	Paper	9.3 x 7.7	Al-Hasan
BL Or. 13312	5th/11th century*	Eastern Iran	Paper	7 x 5	x
TIEM 449	5th/11th century*	Eastern Iran	Paper	17 x 12.5	Forged as Ibn al-Bawwāb
TKS H389	412/1021	Eastern Iran	Paper	16.3 x 12	Abū al-Qāsim 'Alī b. 'Abdullah b. al-Hasayn al-Barjani

Table 3.1: Qur'ans copied in RS at the turn of the 5th/11th century.

[1] In his study of Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an, Rice briefly discusses three out of the four Qur'ans as the contemporaneous manuscripts to Ibn al-Bawwāb's. Rice, *The Unique Ibn al-Bawwāb Manuscript*, 105-

BL Add. 7214

The first Qur'an, now at the British Library (Add. 7214), measures 18.5 x 14 cm and was copied in 427/1035 by Abū al-Qāsim Saʿīd b. Ibrāhīm in an RS with *naskh* features. The colophon reads (fol. 74r, Plate I):[2]

> *Faragha min kitbat hādha al jāmiʿ abū al-q[ā]ṣim saʿīd ibn ibr[ā]hīm bin ʿ[ā]lim*[3] *ibr[ā]hīm bin ṣ[ā]liḥ al-mudhahhib huwa ibn tilmīdh al-jawharī ghafara allāhu lahumā bi-raḥmatihi.*
> *Tayassar al-farāghu minhu fī jumādā al-ūla sanat sabʿ wa ʿishrīn wa arbaʿ māʾa.*
> The copying of this assembled [Qur'an] was completed by Abū al-Qāsim Saʿīd b. Ibrāhīm b. ʿĀlim Ibrāhīm b. Ṣāliḥ the illuminator, the son of the student of al-Jawharī may God forgive them both.[4]
> It was completed in Jumādā al-Ūlā of the year 427 [1035 AD].

BL Add. 7214 was richly illuminated by Abū Manṣūr Nāfiʿ b. ʿAbdallāh, whose name appears within the decorative panel of the second double-page frontispiece (fols. 2v-3r, Plate II). The bands at the top and bottom of the interlaced panel are inscribed with, reading top to bottom and right to left (Figure 3.1):

> *Bi'smi'llāh al-raḥmān al-raḥīm ʿamala tadhhīb hadhā al-jāmiʿ abū manṣūr nāfiʿ bin ʿabdallāh ghafara allāhu lahu wa-li'jamīʿ ummat muḥammad ṣallā allāhu ʿalayhi wa-ʿalā ālihi wa-aṣḥābihi wa-dhurriyātihi ajmaʿīn.*
> In the name of God Merciful to all Compassionate to each, illuminated this assembled [Qur'an] Abū Manṣūr Nāfiʿ b. ʿAbdallah - may God forgive him and the whole people of Muḥammad may God bless him and his companions and his progeny all together.

---

[2] Folios from this Qur'an are published in Baker, *Qur'an Manuscripts*, 27; Déroche, *Le Livre manuscrit arabe*, 125; Ettinghausen, 'Manuscript Illumination', 926 and 928; Lings and Safadi, *The Qur'ān*, 43; Rice, *The Unique Ibn al-Bawwāb Manuscript*, plate XIII (a-b); Safadi, *Islamic Calligraphy*, 62; and Tabbaa, 'The Transformation of Arabic Writing: Part 1', 134.

[3] Rice proposes a different reading for the name of the calligrapher's father. Instead of *ʿālim*, he reads *ʿAlī*, while Ettinghausen reads *ʿalam*. Rice, *The Unique Ibn al-Bawwāb Manuscript*, 107; and Ettinghausen, 'Manuscript Illumination', 1946. The slightly opened *mīm* made Rice discern it as *yāʾ*, but if this were the case, then the extension would have no meaning. The extension of the final *mīm* in this manner is common. The *alif* has been omitted in the colophon, as seen in Ibr[ā]hīm and Q[ā]sim, making the reading of *ʿālim* the most probable, especially considering he was indeed *ʿālim*, or a man of knowledge.

[4] The names mentioned in this colophon will be discussed after the comparative analysis of the four Qur'ans.

Figure 3.1: Close up on the second double-page frontispiece (fols. 2v-3r), BL Add. 7214, 427/1035.

The design of this second double-page frontispiece is made of white interlaced lines generating different geometric forms, some of which are blue circles inscribed with *li'llāh* (to God). Similar inscription within illumination is encountered earlier in the frontispiece of the Sulayhid Qur'an (Plate XV, Chapter II). In the Sulayhid Qur'an each word of '*al-mulk*' '*li'llāh*' and '*allāh* '*akbar*' is inscribed in a small roundel in the Qur'an's frontispiece, while here only *li'llāh* is present. Decorated with trilobate flowers encircled by their own stems, the central panels of this second frontispiece are framed by gold geometric latticework that generates blue rectangles. These blue forms created in the lattice frame and in the central panels are encountered earlier in a Qur'an produced in the 4th/10th century.[5] Similarly, the use of interlaced lines to decorate Qur'anic frontispieces is rooted in the 4th/10th century and even earlier, in the 3rd/9th century and resonates in both Ibn al-Bawwāb and the Sulayhid Qur'ans.[6] In the earlier Qur'ans, the central interlace is applied in reserve on a gold background decorated with vegetal motifs. Over time, these vegetal motifs became less realistic, and eventually reached the simple trilobate flowers decorating the grounds of BL Add. 7214, as well as those of the rest of the Qur'ans in this group, illustrating the process of abstraction and stylisation of vegetal motifs in Qur'ans.[7] Hence, the frontispiece design of BL Add. 7214 is rooted in the Qur'anic illumination of previous centuries, while some of its elements appear in later Qur'ans produced at the end of the 5th/11th century.

A similar design to this frontispiece appears in a stucco panel on the south corner of the *miḥrāb* of the Friday mosque in Golpayegān, western Iran (Plate III).[8] The mosque was built almost a century after the Qur'an under discussion by the Seljuq sultan Muḥammad Tapar I (r. 498/1105-

[5] Khalili QUR430. Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 152-153 (cat. no. 82).
[6] As for example, in BL Add. 11735, which has a frontispiece made of a central organic white chain-like interlace framed by a geometric lattice, published in Baker, *Qur'an Manuscripts*, 32–33. A similar 3rd/9th century frontispiece configuration is seen in CBL Is. 1407. It features a large circle intertwined with four smaller circles that are linked to an interlaced frame: Arberry, *The Koran Illuminated*, plate 14 (cat. no. 6).
[7] As for example, in the frontispiece of CBL Is. 1407. See Ibid.
[8] Pope, *A Survey of Persian Art from Prehistoric Times to the Present*, 306–8.

511/1118). The panel is decorated with interlaced lines forming different octagonal shapes some of which are inscribed with words, of which I was only able to decipher *Allah,* and decorated with floral scrolls. The similarities between the Qur'an's frontispiece design and the mosque's stucco decoration highlights once more the proximity between architectural and Qur'anic decoration and the continuity of 5th/11th century motifs through the 6th/12th century. In fact this configuration of interlaced lines is found earlier in Balkh as seen in the Masjid-i No Gunbad built in the first half of the 3rd/9th century.[9]

The first frontispiece in BL Add. 7214 follows the same configuration as the second frontispiece (fols. 1v-2r, Plate IV). The same frame is repeated but with a central panel that enumerates the components of the Qur'an in floriated Kufic inscribed in 18 circles (fol. 1r, Plate V).[10] Folios enumerating the components of a Qur'an appeared as early as the 3rd/9th century and became more elaborately designed in the 5th/11th century, as in Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an (Plate II, Chapter II) thus positioning this Qur'an, and Ibn al-Bawwāb's, as part of the larger historical continuum of Qur'anic illumination.[11]

The first double-page spread with Qur'anic text in BL Add. 7214 is prominently illuminated on which the marginal medallions are incorporated in the illuminated frame (fols. 3v-4r, Plate VI). Here, the top right band is inscribed with *fātiḥat al-kitāb* (the opening chapter), and mentions the number of verses while the top left band is inscribed with the Qur'anic verse (Q. 26:192-193), *Innahu la-tanzīl rabb al-ʿālamīn, nazala bihi al-rūḥ al-amīn* (It is indeed a Revelation from the Lord of the Worlds, brought down by the Trustworthy Spirit). This verse is also repeated in the illumination of the other Qur'ans in the group.

The finispiece in BL Add. 7214 is decorated with a chessboard-like design filled with tulip forms and framed by a repetition of tulip forms contained in circles on a hatched ground (fol.

[9] Comparable interlace to the frontispiece of BL Add. 7214 is found on the surface of the mosque's columns. Moreover, the dotting that appears in the mosque's stucco decoration echoes that in the design of the colophon page in BL Add. 7214 so do the floral medallions decorating the remaining spandrels of the interior arches of the mosque and those that appear in the frontispiece and vignettes of the Qur'an. See Melikian-Chirvani, 'La plus ancienne mosquée de Balkh'. And for images of the mosque: 'masjid-I No Gunbad' on Archnet.

[10] The enumeration counts 321,660 letters. Only the left-hand page survives.

[11] It appeared at the end of a Kufic Qur'an copied in the 3rd/9th century, now in the Haram al-Sharīf Library and published in Salameh, *The Qurʾān Manuscripts in the Al-Haram Al-Sharif,* 48 (cat. no. 5).

74v, Plate VII). At each of the four corners, a square divided by a cross is decorated with four small trilobate flowers. As has been observed, this chessboard-like design is encountered in the frontispieces of Qur'ans from the 3rd /9th century.[12] However, the plant-based designs decorating the ground of these 4th/10th century Qur'ans is absent from the decoration of BL Add. 7214. The chessboard pattern in the finispiece of BL Add. 7214 must have been executed with an ink made of iron that oxidises over time, leading to the impression of an uninked design.[13]

The vignettes linked to the illuminated panels of the first folio, frontispieces, and finispiece of BL Add. 7214 are circular in form, have symmetrically designed floral interlaced tendrils, a frame made of the repetition of flower buds and a blue polylobed contour (Table 3.2). When assessed against Déroche's typology, which is based on Qur'ans produced up to the 4th/10th century, the design of these vignettes is a mix between two types.[14] They have a circular form like type-5 vignette, but their design is taken from that of type-4 since they contain foliated scrolls (Figure 3.2). Thus, the design of the vignettes in BL Add. 7214 marks a clear departure from the past in that it is more abstract in form, even though the polylobed contour is encountered in the previous century, specifically at the centre of the frontispiece of CBL Is. 1434, dated 361/971 (Plate III, Chapter I). I will henceforth establish a new type of vignette, building on Déroche's terminology, that I will provisionally call type-7 vignette for the purpose of the present thesis. It is characterised by the following features: a circular form with symmetrically designed interlaced floral scrolls or tendrils, an outer frame with a repetition of floral buds, a blue polylobed contour, and sometimes two sinous lines extending from it. Type-7 vignettes also appear without one of the mentioned characterising features, in which case the variation will be mentioned.

[12] As for example in Khalili KFQ78. Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 124
[13] This same faded ink effect is seen in fol. 2r of Khalili QUR286. Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 142–43 (cat. no. 78). I would like to thank Ms. Nahla Nassar for allowing me to examine Qur'ans at the Khalili Collection of Islamic Art and for offering me reproductions from this Qur'an and from other Qur'ans in the collection.
[14] Déroche, *Les manuscrits du Coran*, 31–33.

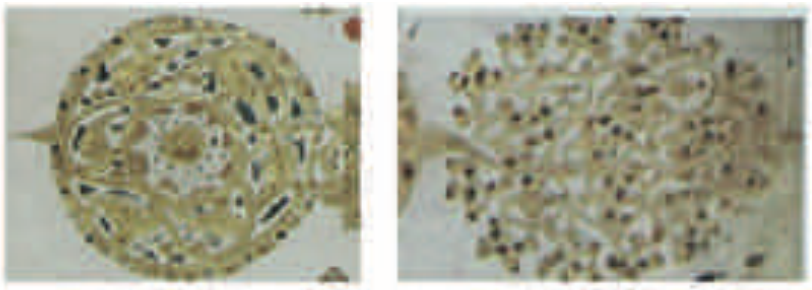

Figure 3.2: Left: Déroche's type-5 vignette (contained in a circle); Right: Déroche's type-4 vignette (decorated with foliated scrolls).

The single-verse marker in BL Add. 7214 is a rosette, also rooted in Qur'anic illumination of the previous century.[15] The fifth-verse marker is a teardrop-shape, while the tenth-verse marker is a medallion that contains an inner circle surrounded by a repetition of trilobate flowers and inscribed with *ʿashara* (ten) in NS. Hence, BL Add. 7214 exhibits elements in its illumination that are rooted in Qur'ans from previous centuries and others that moves away from the older repertoire. In comparison with Ibn al-Bawwāb's and the Sulayhid Qur'an, the illumination of BL Add. 7214 appears to be distinct even though elements from Kufic traditions appear in all of them. Neither the frontispiece/finispiece nor the designs of the beginning and end of BL Add. 7214 find parallels in either Qur'ans. In addition, the vignettes in BL Add. 7214 move away from the older designs that appear in Ibn al-Bawwāb's and the Sulayhid Qur'ans pointing to a different style of illumination, and perhaps to different local preferences.

[15] It is of type 3.2.1. Ibid., 27-31.

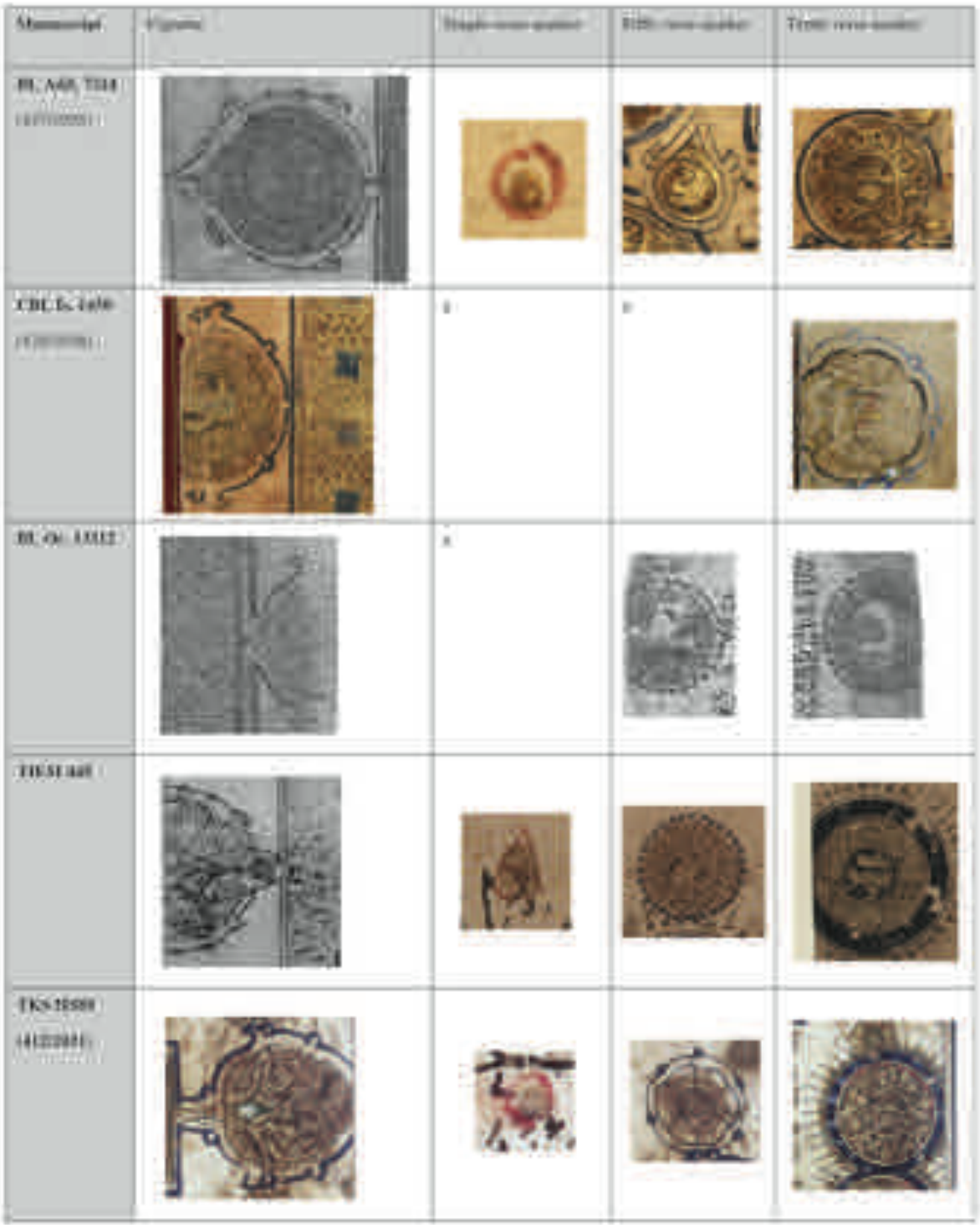

Table 3.2: Vignettes and verse markers from the group of RS Qur'ans copied at the turn of the 5th/11th century.

CBL Is. 1430

The second Qur'an, now in the Chester Beatty Library (Is 1430), is a relatively small manuscript that measures 9.3 x 7.7 cm. It was copied in 428/1036, as mentioned in its colophon (fol. 175r, Plate VIII):[16]

> *Katabahu ʿabd mudhnib musrif ʿalā nafsihi wa-faragha min kitbatihi al-ḥasan yawm al ithnayn al-ḥādī wa'l-ishrīn min rajab sanat thamān wa ʿishrīn wa arbaʿ miʾa. Raḥima allāhu man daʿā allāhu bi'l-maghfira wa li-wālidayhi wa li'l-mutamaththilīn bihi wa li-jamīʿ ummati muḥammad ṣallā allāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam.*
> Copied by a guilty slave, immoderate with himself. Al-Ḥasan completed its copying on Monday 21 of Rajab 428 [1036 AD]. May God have mercy on whoever prays to God for forgiveness and to his parents and those like him and to all the community of Muḥammad, may the prayers and blessings of God be upon him.

Unfortunately, the full name of the copyist is unclear, but the frontispiece, finispiece, and first and last double-page spreads with Qur'anic texts are identical to those in BL Add. 7214, as well as to those in the rest of the group. The frontispiece here is made of interlaced lines that generate different geometric blue forms. It is decorated with trilobate scrolls and flowers encircled by their own stems (fol. 1r, Plate IX). The blue squares that are generated by the lattice frame around the central panel are inscribed with "Allah", and a repetition of "*li'llāh*" decorates each of the squares at the four corners. All of these features are encountered in the frontispieces of BL Add. 7214. Similarly, the finispiece of CBL Is. 1430 has a geometric lattice that frames a central panel, with the so-called "Seal of Solomon" at the centre encircled by a repetition of *li'llāh* and inscribed with *fī sabīl allāh* (in the path of God) (fol. 175v, Plate X).[17]

The first double-page spread with Qur'anic text is, like in BL Add. 7214, prominently illuminated with two wide bands decorating the spread in a symmetrical fashion, with the marginal illuminated devices incorporated within the frame (fols. 1v-2r, Plate XI). The band at

---

[16] Bloom, *Arts of the City Victorious*, 110; Contadini, *Fatimid Art at the Victoria and Albert Museum*, 11; Rice, *The Unique Ibn al-Bawwāb Manuscript*, plate XIV (c-f); Tabbaa, 'The Transformation of Arabic Writing: Part 1', 135; and Zayn al-Dīn, *Muṣawwar al-khaṭṭ al-ʿarabī*, 46 (fig. 143).

[17] The design of the central panel in this finispiece resembles a design at the top of a block-printed paper scroll at the Metropolitan Museum of Islamic Art (accession no. 1978.546.32), which was attributed to Fatimid Egypt. It is unclear, however, how this attribution was supported: http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/1978.546.32/ (last accessed on 22 July 2016). In both designs, the "Seal of Solomon" is inscribed in a circle at the corners of which are ornamental motifs and at the centre of which is an inscription in floriated Kufic.

the top right-hand page is inscribed with *fātiḥat al-kitāb,* as in the other Qur'ans in the group, but, unlike these other Qur'ans, the top left band is inscribed with Q. 56: 77-78, *Innahu la-qurʾān karīm, fī kitāb maknūn* (This is a glorious Qur'an, in a book well-sheltered).

In fact, the design of this first double-page spread in CBL Is. 1430 recalls the one at the beginning of Khalili QUR284 (Figure 3.3). On both, the first illuminated band announcing the opening chapter is wider than the illuminated band announcing *sūrat al-baqara*, and the whole page is framed with a thin gold band and blue contour. Moreover, *basmala* is extended at the beginning of each sura in both Qur'ans.

Figure 3.3: Left: Right-hand page of the first spread with Qur'anic text in CBL Is. 1430 (fol. 1v); Right: Right-hand page of the first spread with Qur'anic text in Khalili QUR284 (fol. 1v).

In CBL Is. 1430, a type-7 vignette is linked to the frontispiece and finispiece panels (Table 3.2). The inner circle of the vignette linked to the frontispiece is inscribed with a word unfortunately illegible that is framed with a repetition of trilobate flowers encircled by their own stems with a polylobed blue contour. Only a tenth-verse marker is used in CBL Is. 1430, which is a medallion

with large petal borders surrounded by an outer circle with no dots around the device.[18] The similarities in the illuminations of CBL Is. 1430 and BL Add. 7214 suggest that they were produced in the same city, perhaps by the same people. They point to a local trend rooted in the Qur'anic visual language of previous centuries.[19]

BL Or. 13312

The third Qur'an, now at the British Library (Or. 13312), is a miniature Qur'an that measures 5 x 7 cm, copied in a small, round informal script. It starts with a non-Qur'anic text that aims at repelling the *jinn* (demons) and *shayṭān* (devil) away from the owner of the book, which suggests that the Qur'an was used as an amulet (fols. 1r-1v, 2r-2v and 3r).[20] The text contains formulas that are incomprehensible but that must have had magical meanings, such as *ṭaṭarūn ṭarʿūn maraʿūn,* as well as a mixture of some Qur'anic extracts.

While the colophon and some folios of the Qur'an are lost, a number of elements in its illumination can also be found in the two previously discussed Qur'ans, thereby placing it securely as part of this group. The frontispiece, for instance, is composed of geometric interlaced lines decorated with blue-coloured circles that contain *li'llāh* and are framed by a geometric lattice (fols. 3v-4r, Plate XII).[21] The first double-page spread with Qur'anic text is framed within a decorative band incorporating the marginal medallions (fols. 4v-5r, Plate XIII). On this double-page spread at the top of the right-hand page is a band inscribed with *fātiḥat al-kitāb* (the opening chapter), and at the top of the left-hand page is a band inscribed with *Innahu la-tanzīl rabb al-ʿālamīn* (It is indeed a Revelation from the Lord of the Worlds). This latter inscription is

[18] Of type 3.C.I. See Déroche, *Les manuscrits du Coran*, 29–30.
[19] A section of a Qur'an with similar illumination to CBL Is. 1430 was sold at Sotheby's in Paris (Lot 1, 22 October 2015). It was copied in NS on paper in the vertical format: http://www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/ecatalogue/lot.1.html/2015/art-orientaliste-pf1519 (last accessed on 22 July 2016). The manuscript seems to be dispersed among various collections: Two folios are in the Library of Congress, African and Middle Eastern Division (call number 1-89-154.177ab); one folio is in the Detroit Institute of Art (accession no.25.81.B); and two folios are in The Brown University Library (accession no.A983, ms. 39).
[20] The Qur'an is unpublished. I was able to examine this Qur'an and the rest of the Qur'ans at the British Library and thanks to the support of the Ralph-Pinder Wilson Award, which I obtained when I was a postgraduate student at the School of Oriental and African Studies in 2010, I got reproductions from these manuscripts.
[21] The Qur'an was wrongly assembled when rebound, collating the right-hand page of the frontispiece in front of the left-hand page of the first opening spread.

a Qur'anic extract (Q. 26:192) that stresses how the Qur'an was revealed to the Prophet, followed by Q. 26:193, *nazala bihi al-rūḥ al-amīn* (brought down by the Trustworthy Spirit), which completes its meaning. It is also present in BL Add. 7214 (fols. 3v-4r, Plate VI). Lastly, although only part of it survives from the cropped frontispiece, the vignettes in BL Or. 13312 appear to be circular in form and have two palmettes at their bottom pointing upwards – a design based on Déroche's type-6 vignette (Table 3.2). The fifth- and tenth-verse markers are rosettes with dots decorating their petals, inscribed with a letter of the *abjad* system counting progressively every ten verses.[22]

TIEM 449

The fourth Qur'an, now at the Turkish and Islamic Art Museum (449), has a similar size to BL Add. 7214, 17 x 12.5 cm. According to its colophon, it was copied in 401/1010, but this time with the name of the copyist altered (Plate XIV):[23]

> *Katabahu abū al-q[ā]sim ʿalī bin hilāl al-baghdādī, baghdād dār al-sal[ā]m, min shuhūr sanat iḥdā wa-arbaʿ māya ghafara allāhu lahu wa-li'wālidayhi wa-li'jamīʿi ummati muḥammad ṣallā allāhu ʿalayhi wa-ālihi wa-aṣḥābihi wa-sallam kathīrā.*
> Copied by Abū al-Qāsim ʿAlī b. Hilāl al-Baghdādī, Baghdad the abode of peace, in the months of the year 401/1010 may God forgive him and his parents and the people of Muḥammad, may the prayers and blessings of God be upon him and his people and his companions altogether.

The script used to copy the colophon, leaning towards *tawqīʿ*, is different from that of the Qur'anic text, but the same ink is used, except for the name and place of origin. In fact, a hand seems to have gone over the original colophon, altering it to look like the name of the famous calligrapher Ibn al-Bawwāb. Whether this was a later forgery or a contemporaneous one we cannot be sure, but the fact that Ibn al-Bawwāb's *nasab* begins here with Abū al-Qāsim and not Abū al-Ḥasan leaves no doubt that the name of the copyist of the Qur'an was altered, probably to

[22] Of type 3.2.2. See Déroche, *Les manuscrits du Coran*, 29–30.
[23] Folios from this Qur'an were published in Ertuğ, *In Pursuit of Excellence*, 18 (plate 5); Rice, *The Unique Ibn al-Bawwāb Manuscript*; Ṣahin, *The 1400th Anniversary of the Qur'an*, 208–9; Tabbaa, 'The Transformation of Arabic Writing: Part I', 136 (plate XIV g); and Farhad and Rettig, *The Art of the Qur'an*, 80, 162, 164-65. I am grateful to Simon Rettig for providing me with reproductions from this Qur'an.

give the manuscript more value.[24] However, even if the colophon is forged, the Qur'an may still be attributed to the first half of the 5th/11th century due to its script, which is not quite a mature form of RS, and its illumination, which fits well with the other Qur'ans under discussion. The colophon folio is prominently illuminated; the marginal medallions are incorporated in the outer frame. These wide illuminated bands in the right and left margins frame the first double-page spread with Qur'anic text, as in the three discussed Qur'ans.

The frontispiece and finispiece of this Qur'an (Plates XV and XVI, respectively) are, like the rest of the group, made of interlaced lines generating different geometric forms among which are stars. They are decorated with trilobate flowers encircled by their own stems – a decorative motif seen in the other three Qur'ans. The frontispiece is decorated, in addition to the trilobate flowers, with circular blue forms inscribed with "Allah", also seen in the illumination of previously discussed Qur'ans. The finispiece has a circle at its centre with the word *ʿamal* (the work of), but unfortunately the left-hand page, on which the name of the illuminator would have likely been inscribed, is lost. The central panels on both folios are framed with geometric latticework. On the frontispiece, the lattice of the frame generates blue forms containing *asmāʾ allāh al-ḥusna* (the 99 names attributed to God), while in the finispiece, squares inscribed with "Allah" appear again, tying up the beginning and end of the Qur'an. The frames of both the frontispiece and finispiece form at each of the four corners a square inscribed with *rasūl allāh* (the messenger of God), surrounded by a repetition of *al-mulku li'llāh* (sovereignty belongs to God). In addition, as in the three above-mentioned Qur'ans, the first double-page spread with Qur'anic text in TIEM 449 incorporates marginal devices; the top left band is inscribed with Q. 26:192 (Plate XVII).

In TIEM 449, the vignettes linked to illuminated pages are circular with symmetrically designed floral interlace and blue polylobed contour – features seen in the other Qur'ans in this group (Table 3.2). Single-verse markers are teardrop-shaped, which are similarly used to mark every fifth verse in Kufic Qur'ans. Such a design, however, seems to have disappeared in later centuries, replaced by marginal medallions of variably elaborate designs, as will be seen in the Ghaznavid Qur'ans. Finally, in TIEM 449, the fifth- and tenth-verse markers are rosettes of petals decorated with dots and inscribed with an *abjad* letter numeral.[25] The design of the tenth-

[24] Rice has also studied this colophon. Rice, *The Unique Ibn al-Bawwāb Manuscript*, 106. On Ibn al-Bawwāb and his *nisba*, see Sourdel-Thomine, 'Ibn al-Bawwāb', EI2.
[25] Following Déroche's typology, this would be type 3.2.2. See Déroche, *Les manuscrits du Coran*, 29–30

verse marker is a medallion with radiating lines around and an inner design identical to that of the tenth-verse marker in BL Add. 7214 (Table 3.2).

In sum, a number of common features appear in these four Qur'ans, the most obvious of which is the design of their frontispieces, finispieces, and their first and last double-page spreads with Qur'anic text (see Table 3.3 for a general overview of the design of these pages). The frontispieces are made of a central panel designed with gold interlaced lines and decorated with trilobate flowers encircled by their own stems, and blue circles inscribed with "Allah". The central panels are framed with a geometric lattice that generates blue geometric forms. A similar design is adopted for their finispieces, whereby a central panel of interlaced lines is framed by a geometric lattice band. The first and last double-page spreads with Qur'anic text in all four Qur'ans are prominently decorated with an illuminated frame running around the text and incorporating the marginal medallions on the right and left. Lastly, the right- and left-hand pages of the first double-page spread with Qur'anic text are symmetrically designed, with a top band on the right-hand page inscribed with *fātiḥat al-kitāb* (the opening chapter) and a top band on the left-hand page inscribed with a Qur'anic extract.

Table 3.3: Frontispieces, finispieces and the first and last spreads with Qur'anic text in the group of RS Qur'ans copied at the turn of the 5th/11th century.

TKS HS89

A strikingly similar illumination to the four Qur'anic manuscripts discussed above is employed in a Qur'an at the Topkapı Palace Museum (HS89) (Plate XVIII).[26] It was completed in 412/1021 by Abū al-Qāsim ʿAlī b. ʿAbdullāh b. al-Ḥusayn al-Buzjānī, who was the *raʾīs* of Ghazna during the rule of the Ghaznavid sultan Maḥmūd and later as the first vizier of the Seljuq ruler Tughril Beg in 429/1037.[27] It measures 16.3 x 12 cm, almost the same size as TIEM 449, and fits 35 lines per page. Unfortunately, only one spread reproduction is available to me from this manuscript nevertheless enough to establish a strong link with the four Qur'ans discussed in this chapter. The study of this Qur'an remains incomplete until it becomes accessible.

First, the sura headings in TKS HS89 appear to be strikingly similar to those in the four Qur'ans, specifically to BL Add. 7214 (Figure 3.4). The similarities can be seen in the way the sura title is flanked on the right and left by "Allah" (Figure 3.4, top) and in the floral scrolls that are divided across a horizontal axis (Figure 3.4, middle). Moreover, NS outlined in white is inscribed in large bands and decorated with trilobate floral scrolls (Figure 3.4, bottom). These similarities suggest that TKS HS89 was illuminated in the same trend as BL Add. 7214 if not by the same illuminator whose name appears in the illumination of its frontispiece.

In addition to the sura headings, the design of the vignettes in TKS HS89 (Table 3.2) is related to those in the four Qur'ans and specifically to those in BL Or. 13312 and BL Add. 7214. They are made of two trilobate floral scrolls at the base of which are two palmettes. The same gesture is seen in both BL Add. 7214 and TKS HS89 when a vignette overlaps with a marginal medallion, part of the vignette is left incompletely drawn (Figure 3.5).

[26] Karatay, *Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi Arapça Yazmalar Kataloğu*, 1:183 (cat no. 679 - note that the inventory number is given mistakenly as HS79). A spread from the Qur'an is published in: Roxburgh, *Turks: A Journey of a Thousand Years, 600-1600*, 94–95.; and a small text on p. 389 (no. 50).
[27] Bulliet, "Al-E Mikal," Encyclopædia Iranica, I/7, 764; an updated version is available online at http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/al-e-mikal-the-leading-aristocratic-family-of-western-khorasan-from-the-3rd-9th-to-the-5th-11th-century-descended-from- (last accessed 16 June 2017).

Figure 3.4: Left: Sura headings in BL Add. 7214; Right: Sura headings in TKS HS89.

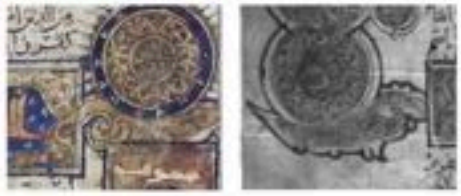

Figure 3.5: Left: Marginal medallion and vignette in TKS HS89; Right: Marginal medallion and vignette in BL Add. 7214.

The verse markers confirm further the relation of this Qur'an to the rest of the group (Table 3.2). The single verse marker is, like in BL Add. 7214, a gold dot outlined in red while the design of the tenth-verse marker is identical to that of TIEM 449. It is inscribed in NS, counting every ten verses, and surrounded by a repetition of trilobate floral scrolls. Moreover, both have thin hairlines radiating from them, extending from small dots.

The group of five Qur'ans copied in the 5th/11th century clearly exhibits three new features by comparison with their predecessors: the use of paper, the vertical format and RS. However, the design and decorative elements of their frontispieces do not present a rupture with previous Qur'anic visual repertoires, but rather appear rooted in them. In addition, these five Qur'ans have elements in their illumination that are present in Ghaznavid Qur'ans, as we will see in the next chapter.

To go back to the script employed in the five RS Qur'ans, each of the following plates (Plates XIX-XXIII) presents us with a study of (A) the script, (B) whether they adhere to the baseline and if the lines are evenly distributed, and (C) whether the heights of the ascenders and descenders are consistent. The red circles and vertical strokes show whether the script is codified, and the blue squares frame letters that have different sizes or forms.

Plate XIX shows how the letters in BL Add. 7214 are codified by overlaying a circle on the bowls of letters, and its diameter onto the height of *alifs* – the circle fits not only the *wāw*, but also the *hāʾ*, *nūn* and *lām-alif* (A). However, the script of this Qur'an is not completely consistent in size, since the eye of the *mīm,* for example, appears large sometimes and small other times (A). There is an obvious attempt to adhere to the baseline, but the lines tilt upwards towards the end (B). They are evenly spaced though, and the height of the ascenders and descenders are consistent and equal the size of the loop-height (C).[28] This last feature gives an overall impression that the script is condensed vertically, as opposed to scripts that are elongated in which the ascenders and descenders look longer than the loop-heights. The fact that the size of loop-height is equal to the heights of the ascenders and descenders could be due to the need to economise space by fitting as many lines as possible on one page and minimizing space between them. Such a decision by the copyist is the most successful way to save on space without affecting legibility.

Plate XX shows that the letters in CBL Is. 1430 are also codified, but not all have consistent sizes, such as the *mīm,* which has different openings in its medial position (A). This Qur'an is the only one in the group in which the lines of script adhere to the baseline from beginning to end and are evenly spaced out (B). Moreover, the height of the ascenders and descenders is consistent and equal to that of the loop-height, like BL Add. 7214, allowing a larger number of lines per page without compromising legibility (C).

Plate XXI presents a study of BL Or. 13312. The letters of this script are not codified on the basis of the circle and its diameter, as shown in the red circles, and some of its letters change

[28] I call the height of the looped letters, such as *fāʾ*/*qāf*, the "loop-height", following Latin typography in which it means the "x-height", or the height of lowercase x.

size and form, such as the *wāw* and *mīm*, as shown in the blue squares (A).[29] Its script does not adhere to the baseline and its lines are not evenly spaced (B),[30] while the height of its ascenders and descenders is inconsistent (C). Given the size of this manuscript (7 x 5 cm), the spacing between lines had to be minimal in order to fit 44 lines compensating on legibility.

Plate XXII illustrates how the script in TIEM 449 is codified, despite some letters appearing inconsistent in size and form, such as *ṭaʾ/ẓaʾ* that look more elongated at times (A). There is an attempt to adhere to the baseline in the Qur'an, but similar to BL Add. 7214, the lines tend to go up towards the end of the page (B). Lines are evenly spaced though, and the height of their ascenders and descenders remains consistent (C).

Plate XXIII shows that the script in TKS HS89 is also codified but some letters change form, like the *ṣāḍ* (A). The lines almost adhere to the baseline (B) and they are evenly spaced out with a consistent height of ascenders and descenders (C).

In summary, four out of the five Qur'ans employ scripts that are codified on the basis of the circle and its diameter, and all display letters that appear inconsistent in size and form. Four show adherence to the baseline, but in an irregular manner, and four have equidistant baselines. Four of the Qur'ans have consistent heights of ascenders and descenders, three of which have an x-height that equals the height of ascenders and descenders. BL Or. 13312 is the least codified Qur'an in the group, which is probably due to its miniature size that made consistency of script and layout harder to achieve.

Furthermore, even though the letter forms employed in this group of Qur'ans remain generally consistent in form within one manuscript, Table 4 below shows that in the first half of the 5th/11th century, the shapes of RS letters were not yet unified. *Alif* in BL Add. 7214 and CBL Is. 1430 is

[29] The wide openings of *mīm* in this manuscript are as big as the heads of *wāw*. This could be due to the fact that the manuscript is very small, meaning that making the openings of letters wider helped increase legibility.

[30] Usually, the adherence to a baseline is made easier when the page is ruled before copying starts. Ruling does not appear to be a common practice in these Qur'ans. I have not had the chance to examine all of the Qur'ans personally, but the ones I did examine at the British Library did not have any traces of ruling, with the exception of BL Add. 7214, which had ruling for the borders of its text box and the frames of its sura heading. These rulings appear as traces of hard point in the reproductions. Thus, if these traces usually show in reproductions, then we can assume that none of our Qur'ans had ruling.

a vertical line, while in TIEM 449 and TKS HS89 it curves at the bottom to the left and in BL Or. 13312 it curves at the top to the left. The top stroke of initial *jīm/ḥāʾ/khāʾ* does not cross the baseline in all four Qur'ans but its shape varies. Moreover, d*āl/dhāl* is curvilinear in all five Qur'ans, exhibits some inconsistencies in form but appear to have a similar shape in TIEM 449 and TKS HS89. *Tāʾ/ẓāʾ* is also curvilinear in all of the Qur'ans, but the form of its upper stroke varies throughout the group, sometimes with a small stroke at the top right side, as in BL Add. 7214, TIEM 449 and TKS HS89. The bottom stroke of initial *ʿayn/ghayn* is diagonal in all Qur'ans but its upper part appear to be round as in CBL Is. 1430 and straight in BL Add. 7214, while *mīm* is circular in all except in BL Or. 13312 where its tail is a small curve that goes backwards. *Nūn* is curvilinear with a well-defined shape of a bowl, which appears shallow and extended in TIEM 449 but deep and circular in CBL Is. 1430. Finally, the head of *wāw* is round in all of the Qur'ans, with its tail that appears round in BL Add. 7214 but straight in TIEM 449 and TKS HS89, and drops below the baseline in some white it sits on it in others. All RS letters generally have less contrast between their thick and thin strokes, placing them closer in form to the non-Qur'anic bookhands than to NSIII. The common aspects of RS discussed here thus emphasise the codification of the script within one manuscript at the beginning of the 5th/11th century, yet not a unification of RS letter forms across Qur'anic manuscripts. However, the similarities between the script of TKS HS89 and that of TIEM 449 points that they were most likely copied by the same person. The alteration of the colophon in TIEM 449 does not contradict that, since one can still read the original text at the beginning of the colophon as: *abū al-qāsim ʿalī* (Plate XIV). Abū al-Qāsim ʿAlī b. ʿAbdullāh b. al-Ḥusayn al-Buzjānī may hence well have been the copyist of TIEM 449 given the striking similarities of their scripts.

The process of stylisation of these scripts was clearly still in the making, since not all five Qur'ans show stylised letters or exhibit features of later mature RS scripts. *Muḥaqqaq* features, such as shallow bowls and tails, are present in TIEM 449 and TKS HS89, while *naskh* features, such as looped letters that are minimally open and an overall compact look of the script, appear in BL Add. 7214, CBL Is. 1430 and to a lesser extent TIEM 449 and TKS HS89. Thus, TIEM 449 and TKS HS89 have both proto-*muḥaqqaq* and proto-*naskh* features, while none of the Qur'ans exhibit *thuluth* features.

Table 4: Letters from the group of four RS Qur'ans copied at the turn of the 5th/11th century.

In comparison to the script employed in Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an the scripts employed in the group of RS Qur'ans appear to be less mature. Ibn al-Bawwāb's script is closely related to the script employed in TIEM 449 and TKS HS89 in that they display *muḥaqqaq* characteristics mixed with *naskh*. Both their script and layout are the most consistent in the group. However, in comparison to Ibn al-Bawwāb's script, the script of TIEM 449 and TKS HS89 still retains the angularity of early RS as well as some inconsistencies in script and layout. For example, the shape of *wāw* remains extremely consistent in Ibn al-Bawwāb's manuscript, while it appears to change size and form in TIEM 449 (Figure 3.6). In addition, the ending of bowls and tails of letters are abrupt in TIEM 449, while they end gradually with a thin curve upwards – a mark of mature *naskh* – in Ibn al-Bawwāb's. In fact, the shapes of letters are generally closer to later *naskh* in Ibn al-Bawwāb's manuscript, as for example, the median *ʿayn*/*ghayn*, which appears as a triangle with sharp edges in TIEM 449, has softer lines in Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an. The script's relative maturity can also be detected in its curvilinear ligatures, whereas such ligatures in the four RS Qur'ans copied in the first half of the 5th/11th century appear v-shaped (Figure 3.7).

Figure 3.6: Top: TIEM 449, probably Nishapur, first half of the 5th/11th century; Bottom: Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an, 391/1000.

Figure 3.7: Top: BL Add. 7214, probably Nishapur, 427/1035; Middle: TIEM 449, probably Nishapur, first half of the 5th/11th century; Bottom: Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an, 391/1000.

The common features in the group of five Qur'ans suggest they represent a local aesthetic trend. From the analysis laid out above, BL Add. 7214, TIEM 449 and TKS HS89 were most likely illuminated by the same person, namely Abū Manṣūr Nāfiʿ b. ʿAbdallāh while TKS HS89 and TIEM 449 were copied by the same person, Abū al-Qāsim ʿAlī b. ʿAbdullāh b. al-Ḥusayn al-Buzjānī. From the surviving colophons, BL Add. 7214 and TKS EH89 can provide some indication as to the provenance of this group of Qur'ans. Even though no information survives about the illuminator of BL Add. 7214, we know more about the professional lineage of its copyist, Abū al-Qāsim Saʿīd, who was the son of a pupil of al-Jawharī.[31] A famous lexicographer, Abū Naṣr Ismāʿīl b. Ḥamad al-Jawharī, died in the first decade of the 5th/11th century in Nishapur where he had settled after living in Baghdad.[32] In addition to his renowned dictionary, *al-Ṣiḥāḥ*, al-Jawharī copied Qur'ans while in Nishapur, with many sources comparing his beautiful handwriting to that of the famous Abbasid *wazīr* and calligrapher, Ibn Muqla. For example, in his writings, al-Thaʿālibī (d. 429/1037) mentions that al-Jawharī's handwriting is perfect, characterising it as *al-khaṭṭ al-mansūb* (the Proportioned Script), and comparing it with that of Ibn Muqla and al-Muhalhal.[33] He also notes that al-Jawharī learned calligraphy in Baghdad in addition to his linguistic studies before moving to Nishapur, where he taught calligraphy and copying of the Qur'an.[34] This comparison between the handwriting of al-Jawharī and that of Ibn Muqla was also claimed later by Yāqūt al-Rūmī (d. 629/1231) and al-Qifṭī (d. 646/1248).[35]

As mentioned above, Ibrāhīm b. ʿĀlim Ibrāhīm b. Ṣāliḥ, the copyist's father, was a student of al-Jawharī while the latter was teaching Arabic and calligraphy in Nishapur.[36] Thus, the copyist of BL Add. 7214, Abū al-Qāsim Saʿīd, traces his professional lineage back to al-Jawharī through

[31] On the name of the calligrapher, see Duda, 'Abū'l-Qāsem Saʿīd', EIr.
[32] Al-Jawharī travelled extensively and visited Syria and the Hijaz before settling in Nishapur. The death of al-Jawharī is mentioned differently in various sources. See Kopf, 'al-DJ̲awharī', EI2.
[33] Al-Muhalhal's handwriting is mentioned in Thaʿālibī, *Yatimat al-dahr*, 4:406, and also by Yāqūt al-Rūmī (d. 626/1229), who says that one cannot differentiate it from that of Ibn Muqla. See Yāqūt al-Rūmī, *Muʿjam al-udabāʾ*, 6:152-153. For others, see Sperl and Moustafa, *The Cosmic Script*, 1:96. Sperl and Moustafa also mention another scribe by the name of Ibn Bābawayh (d. 381/991) whose handwriting was associated with Ibn Muqla's and who acted as the teacher of Ibn al-Bawwāb.
[34] Al-Thaʿālibī, *Yatīmat al-dahr*, 4:406-407.
[35] Al-Qifṭī, *Inbāh al-rūwāt*, 1:194–95; and Yāqūt al-Rūmī, *Muʿjam al-udabāʾ*, 6:152–53.
[36] See; Kopf, 'al-DJ̲awharī', EI2; and Yāqūt al-Rūmī, *Muʿjam al-udabāʾ*, 6:156–57.

his father Ibrāhīm, though both had died by the time of copying, as indicated in the colophon ("*ghafara allāh lahumā bi-raḥmatihi*"). This implies that Abū al-Qāsim Saʿīd was trained in the school of al-Jawharī by his father who was also a *mudhahhib* (illuminator), as noted in the colophon. Being both a copyist and an illuminator indicates that Ibrāhīm, the father of Abū al-Qāsim, was actively involved in Qur'an production, an environment that must have impacted his son. Ibrāhīm may have even been a *warrāq* as well, since his father – the grandfather of the copyist of BL Add. 7214 – was *ʿālim,* as stated in the colophon. Considering a number of *warrāqīn* (sing. *warrāq*) were also *ʿulamāʾ,* it can be assumed that both Ibrāhīm and Abū al-Qāsim grew up in highly intellectual environments.[37]

The copyist of BL Add. 7214 must have been trained in a Nishapuri tradition, which can be traced back to Baghdad through al-Jawharī. As such, the visual language employed in BL Add. 7214, as well as in the rest of the Qur'ans in the group, has a link to both Baghdad and Nishapur. This assertion is further supported by the fact that the name of the copyist in the colophon of TIEM 449 was altered to look like Ibn al-Bawwāb, which could arguably indicate an awareness of the famous calligrapher's hand and an attempt to give more value to the manuscript. If the Qur'an was produced in Nishapur and the alteration of its colophon happened during the same period, it can thus be assumed that Ibn al-Bawwāb's reputation had by then reached Nishapur.

The colophon of TKS HS89 offers additional evidence as to the provenance of this group of Qur'ans, namely the name of its copyist. As mentioned earlier, Abū al-Qāsim ʿAlī b. ʿAbdullāh b. al-Ḥusayn al-Buzjānī served in the chancery of the Ghaznavid sultan Maḥmūd and later changed his allegiance to become the first vizier of the Seljuq ruler Tughril Beg in 429/1037. Hence he copied this Qur'an in 412/1021 when he was serving the Ghaznavid chancery and the Qur'an could have been copied in an important city of the Ghaznavid empire such as Nishapur, as BL Add. 7214 also points us to.

Along with Ṭūs and Bayhaq, Nishapur was a major urban centre in Khurasan, with vibrant commercial markets attracting merchants from Iraq and Egypt, and rivalling Baghdad in the

[37] Al-Fājālū, *al-Ḥayāt al-ʿilmiyya fī nīsābūr*, 231–40. Many *ʿulamāʾ*/*warrāqūn* were active in Nishapur. Ismāʿīl b. Muḥammad al-Dahhān Abū Muḥammad al-Nīsābūrī is another linguist student of al-Jawharī who was *ʿālim* and *warrāq*.

4th/10th century.[38] As an important centre of knowledge production with a rising number of *ʿulamāʾ*, it eventually became the capital of the Seljuq Empire when it came under the control of Tughril Beg in 429/1037.[39] The five Qur'ans discussed here could have therefore been produced by people who were trained in the Baghdadi tradition of Qur'anic production, most likely in Nishapur.

Based on the analysis of the illumination employed in the group of five RS Qur'ans, and their links to Baghdad and Nishapur, a hypothesis can be proposed building on the idea that the breakdown of the Abbasid Empire could have led to an outward diffusion of an Iraqi Qur'anic aesthetic. Baghdad, being an important artistic and cultural centre, may have been the place from which illumination and stylisation of NS and RS spread out, through the movement of people and trade of artefacts. It is this outward diffusion of aesthetic language from Baghdad that may have helped shape various local trends elsewhere. Artistic and cultural interactions between Abbasid Iraq and other regions during this period can be traced in architecture. Abbasid architectural elements, which survive outside of Iraq, point to an outward diffusion of Iraqi aesthetic.[40] Models from Iraq survive in Yemen, Egypt and the Maghrib. The ceiling of the east *riwāq*, for example, in the Great Mosque in Sanaa corresponds structurally to Syrian Umayyad architecture, but belongs decoratively to Abbasid Iraq, strongly resembling the decoration of the minbar of the Great Mosque in Qayrawan.[41] The spread of Abbasid stucco ornaments from Samarra, is another case in point. Samaran ornaments of styles A and B are also found in the 3rd/9th century nine-domed mosque in Balkh, in the 4th/10th century Nāʾīn mosque (discussed above) and in the shrine of Davāzdah Imām in Yazd (dated 429/1037).[42] Moreover, methods and techniques also travelled with people. For instance, the bevelled method of cutting Fatimid rock crystals may have been inspired by the 3rd/9th century Abbasid style seen in the stucco work of

[38] Bosworth, *The Ghaznavids*, 150. A group of influential elite was formed in Nishapur during this period composed of merchants, artisans and officials in addition to *fuqahāʾ* and traditionists. See Bulliet, *The Patricians of Nishapur*.
[39] Honigmann and Bosworth, 'Nīshāpūr', EI2.
[40] Such as a nine-dome plan and muqarnas ceilings. Terry Allen, *Five essays on Islamic Art*.
[41] Allan, 'The Transmission of Decorated Wooden Ceilings', 7. The Iraqi influence is also seen in the ceiling of the mosque of Ibn Ṭūlūn in Cairo. Another Yemeni ceiling from the mosque at Shibām is also closely related in design to the mihrab and minbar of the Great Mosque in Qayrawan, reflecting the Abbasid style in the 3rd/9th century. Allan, 'The Transmission of Decorated Wooden Ceilings', 7-8.
[42] For the mosques in Balkh and Nāʾīn, see: Ettinghausen and Grabar, *The Art and Architecture of Islam*, fig. 216 and fig. 210-13 respectively; for the shrine in Yazd see: Ettinghausen, 'The Bevelled Style in the Post-Samarra Period', 76.

Samarra, which was brought by Ibn Tulun to Egypt where its influence affected both stucco decoration and wood carvings.[43] Although no Abbasid rock crystals survive today, we know that there were rock crystal workshops in Basra and that the so-called "crystal-glass" excavated in Samarra could have been made in a technique very similar to that of the Fatimid rock crystals.[44] Hence, in the same way that architecture outside of Baghdad closely mirrored Iraqi architecture, the surviving Qur'ans from the 5th/11th century can help elucidate the nature of Baghdad's Qur'anic aesthetic, of which only Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an survives today. Although no firm conclusion can be reached at present, the study above informs us that Qur'ans produced in Baghdad, Cairo, and Nishapur had some elements in common. These were the capitals of the Abbasid, Seljuq, Ghaznavid and Fatimid dynasties, respectively, and hence may well have been important centres of Qur'anic production.

[43] Erdmann, 'Fatimid Rock Crystals', 145.
[44] Rice, 'A Datable Islamic Rock Crystal', 85.

Conclusion

NS scripts appear in Qur'anic and non-Qur'anic manuscripts of the 4th/10th and early 5th/11th centuries from the Maghrib to Baghdad and eastern Iran. They also appear on 4th/10th century earthenware excavated in Khurasan, on Tiraz bands from 5th/11th century Egypt, and on architecture from the 5th/11th century. This diffusion of NS indicates its use throughout the Islamic world, and might help explain the gradual disappearance of Kufic from Qur'ans during this period. Furthermore, the use of NS in the 4th/10th century on ceramics in Khurasan, on Fatimid Tiraz bands that were courtly productions and on documents linked to the Abbasid court, suggest that the script may have been associated with courtly circles.

The palaeographic analysis presented in this first part indicates that Qur'anic NS was stylised gradually by moving away from older Kufic and non-Qur'anic bookhand traditions and developing independent characteristics instead. Nevertheless, there appear to have been different forms of stylisation between the Maghrib on one hand, and Greater Iran, Baghdad and Egypt on the other. The stylisation of NS was not homogeneous and different local variations appear to have developed. Like NS, RS scripts, which were rooted in non-Qur'anic bookhands, matured gradually but differently in Baghdad, Cairo, and Nishapur reflecting different local schools of scripts.

The overlaps on the level of illumination employed in these Qur'ans suggest that they were part of a larger spatial and temporal visual vocabulary of Qur'anic and non-Qur'anic productions. While some of their features are rooted in earlier traditions, suggesting continuity with the past, others appear to pave the way for later developments.

Lastly, in this part, I have sought to answer the questions of how and where NS and RS were gradually stylised and codified. However, the impetus behind the abandonment of the well-established Qur'anic Kufic and its replacement with NS and RS remains largely unknown. A number of scholars have discussed the conditions that may have led to such an aesthetic transformation in Qur'ans, be they technical, social or political.[45] Although this thesis is not

[45] See introduction.

focused on exploring this question, the results of the studies conducted above indicate that the spread of paper was closely linked to the introduction of NS and RS in Qur'ans, but still may not have been the only reason behind abandoning Kufic.[46] There is no doubt that the adoption of paper led to a rise in Qur'an production, since paper was less expensive than parchment. According to Whelan and Blair, the high demand for Qur'ans necessitated the use of chancery secretaries untrained in the Kufic tradition to copy the Qur'an, which eventually led to the decline of Kufic.[47] This hypothesis can be questioned on the ground that, first, NS and non-Qur'anic bookhand features were mixed with Kufic features in some Qur'ans of the 4th/10th century, thus indicating that the copyists who penned them were familiar with Kufic writing.[48] Second, all of the surviving Qur'ans copied in these "hybrid" scripts were on parchment, suggesting that a phase of script changes had superseded the introduction of paper.

[46] Paper was introduced in the Islamic lands in the 2nd/8th century, but it was not until the 4th/10th century that paper replaced parchment in Qur'ans. Bloom, *Paper Before Print*, 35. The Abbasid administration used paper as early as the 3rd/9th century. Déroche, *Islamic Codicology*, 51.
[47] Cited in Blair, *Islamic Calligraphy*, 174.
[48] See chapter I for examples of Qur'ans copied in NS with clear Kufic and/or non-Qur'anic bookhand features.

PART II

QUR'AN PRODUCTION IN KHURASAN AND TRANSOXIANA FROM THE 5TH/11TH TO THE 6TH/12TH CENTURY

This part focuses on Qur'ans produced in Khurasan and Transoxiana between the 5th/11th and the 6th/12th century. They were copied in mature NS and RS scripts and like their predecessors appear to be in continuity with previous traditions yet reflect local trends of script and illumination. Some elements in the illumination of these Qur'ans belong to a larger visual language articulated on various artistic productions from Greater Iran, with visible links to Nishapur and Baghdad.

This period coincides with the rule of a number of dynasties in the east. The Ghaznavids ruled Khurasan and Transoxiana from their capital Ghazna, which they had transformed into a great centre of culture. The libraries and mosques of Ghazna were filled with Khurasani and Persian manuscript collections. Sultan Maḥmūd, for instance, brought back entire libraries to Ghazna from his conquests of cities such as Rayy and Isfahan, storing the manuscripts in the library of the madrasa attached to his mosque.[1] While Persian became the standard language of the court and that of literary expression Panegyric poetry was encouraged at the Ghaznavid court.[2] Moreover, we know from the account of the historian al-Bayhaqī (d. 469/1076), who describes the lifestyle of the Ghaznavid rulers, about the magnificent celebrations at the court of Masʿūd I (r. 421/1030-432/1040) and the opulent interior and furnishings of the palaces.[3] The architectural programmes of the Ghaznavids, which Sultan Maḥmūd (r. 388/998-421/1030) and his successors carried out, are evident in the remains of the richly decorated monuments, palaces, mosques, funerary structures and minarets. These were built with the help of artisans and architects

[1] Bosworth, 'The Development of Persian Culture under the Early Ghaznavids', 38.
[2] Panegeric poems were also popular under the Seljuqs. See Meisami, Medieval Persian Court Poetry, chapter II.
[3] Al-Bayhaqī wrote a monumental Persian history of the Ghaznavid dynasty but only the part that deals with the reign of Masʿūd I (r. 421/1030-432/1040) survives from it, which became known as *Tarikh-i masʿudi* and was published by Bosworth, *The History of Beyhaqi*. For a description of a celebration at Masʿud's court, for example, see Bosworth, *The Ghaznavids*, 135-137; Bosworth, *The History of Beyhaqi*, 2:78-80; and Bosworth, *The Ornament of Histories*, 94-95.

coming from Greater Iran as well as spoils from newly conquered lands east of Khurasan.[4] Moreover, Ghazna became an important metalworking centre from which two silver door rings were sent to the Kaʿba in Mecca.[5] It is against this backdrop of splendid court life and literary and artistic production within a rich eclectic architectural environment influenced by the east and west that the imperial Ghaznavid Qur'ans were commissioned.

The rule of the Ghaznavids came to an end when they were soon defeated by the Seljuqs, first in Nishapur in 429/1037, and quickly expanded their territories to include cities once under Ghaznavid rule, such as Merv, Herat and Balkh, in which they maintained a cultural atmosphere by building madrasas.[6] Consequently, Ghazna was no longer the only significant city in the province; other cities in Khurasan also witnessed artistic activities. By the second half of the 6th/12th century, Khurasan had a developed industry of metalwork with Balkh and Herat at its centre.[7]

The Ghaznavids and Seljuqs were not the only ruling powers in Khurasan. After conquering Khwārazm, the Seljuqs appointed local governors with the title of "Khwārazm-Shāh" who soon became independent from their dynastic rulers.[8] Similarly, towards the end of the 5th/11th century, the Seljuqs conquered the region of Farghāna in Transoxiana and appointed the Qarakhanids (or Ilek Khāns) to rule on their behalf.[9] Uzgand was established as the capital of the

[4] On Ghaznavid architecture, see Giunta, 'Islamic Ghazni'; Rugiadi, 'The Ghaznavid Marble Architectural Decoration'; and Rugiadi, 'As for the Colours, Look at a Garden in Spring'.
[5] This is according to Nāṣir Khusraw's travel account, written in 436/1045. Melikian-Chirvani, 'Silver in Islamic Iran: The Evidence from Literature and Epigraphy', 92.
[6] See Introduction.
[7] According to al-Bayhaqī, Balkh had a silversmithing quarter and as evidenced by the flask with the name of Shaykh al-ʿAmīd al-Sayyid Abū ʿAlī Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Shādhān, a *wazīr* of Balkh (d. c. mid. 5th/11th century). See Smirnov, *Vostochnoe serebro,* plates 81-83. In addition, a tray with the name of a Khwarazmshāh may well have been produced in Balkh. See Raby, 'Looking for Silver in Clay', 190. The earliest evidence of the use of the inlaid metalworking technique which was associated with Herat is a pen-box dated 542/1148, now at the Hermitage Museum. Giuzalian, 'The Bronze Qalamdan (Pen-Case) 542/1148 from the Hermitage Collection (1936-1965)'. An inlaid bronze ewer, now in the State Museum of Georgia, holds an inscription stating that it was decorated by Maḥmūd b. Muḥammad al-Harawī (of Herat), in Herat in 577/1181. See Mayer, *Islamic Metalworkers and Their Works*, 59; and Atil et al., *Islamic Metalwork in the Freer Gallery of Art*, 17. Al-Qazwini offers us secondary evidence from the 7th/13th century that Herat produced bronze vessels inlaid with silver. See Allen, *Nishapur*, 20; Flood, 'Islamic Identities', 99; and Ward, *Islamic Metalwork*, 57.
[8] Bosworth, The New Islamic Dynasties, 179–80.
[9] Ibid., 180.

western wing of the Qarakhanid dynasty, which eventually became independent.[10] In the first half of the 6th/12th century, however, the Qarakhanids lost a battle with the Qarakhitay, another Central Asian dynasty, compelling the whole region of Farghāna to surrender.[11] Meanwhile, in 536/1141, the Khwārazm-Shāhs invaded parts of Khurasan, including Nishapur, in an attempt to unite Khurasan and Khwārazm.[12] They eventually defeated both the Seljuqs and the Ghurids. The Ghurids had captured Ghazna in 569/1173 putting an end to the Ghaznavid dynasty.

Chapter IV, discusses a group of five imperial Ghaznavid Qur'ans, while chapter V focuses on two imperial Ghurid Qur'ans. The importance of these Qur'ans lies in the fact that they are the second group of manuscripts, in addition to the group of five RS Qur'ans discussed in chapter III, that share a common visual language pointing to a local school of illumination. In addition, it is the only group of manuscripts that can be securely attributed to Khurasan in the 5th/11th and 6th/12th centuries. Finally, Chapter VI attributes additional Qur'ans to Khurasan based on similarities in their script and/or illumination with the Ghaznavid and Ghurid corpus.

[10] Bosworth, 'Özkend', EI2.
[11] Barthold, 'Farghāna', EI1; and Bosworth, 'Ḳarā Ḵẖiṭāy', EI2. The Qarakhitay never adopted Islam. They had no central administration, but they did have a fiscal one. They appointed representatives in the Islamic lands they conquered, and in some places, local dynasties were formed.
[12] Bosworth, 'Khwāram-Shāhs', EI2.

Chapter IV

Ghaznavid Imperial Qur'ans

Five imperial Ghaznavid Qur'ans that have not been identified as such or comprehensively studied before survive today (Table 4.1).[13] Their exquisitely executed illumination, extensive use of gold and the quality of their monumental stylised scripts reflect a high calibre of craftsmanship and project the dynastic image and luxurious lifestyle of the Ghaznavids. Rooted in past traditions, the scripts and illumination employed in these Qur'ans represent a local imperial visual language that is echoed in architecture and other artistic productions.

This chapter will focus on each Qur'an's illumination and calligraphy by highlighting their similarities and differences, and placing their decoration in the continuum of Qur'anic illumination. Out of the five manuscripts, all are copied on paper, two mention the name of their patrons, all five employ monumental NS and RS and all are dated except one. The involvement of more than one person in the production of these Ghaznavid Qur'ans raises the question of their environment of production and especially the profession of *wirāqa*, since the title of *al-warrāq al-ghaznawī* appears in two of them. This subject will be addressed last.

[13] Only one of the five Qur'ans (the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm–see below) was studied in an article that I co-authored with Travis Zadeh. See Karame and Zadeh, 'The Art of Translation'.

Manuscript	Date	Place of origin	Writing material	Scripts used	Height x width (cm)	Calligraphers and illuminators	Patron
Qur'an of Sultan Ibrahim (TKS EH 209)	466/1091	Ghazna?	Paper	NSI NSIII RS-muhaqqaq RS-naskh	34 x 24.5	• 'Uthmān b. Ḥusayn al-Warrāq al-Ghaznawī (calligrapher and illuminator) • 'Alī (illuminator?) • Muḥammad b. 'Uthmān b. al-Ḥusayn (illuminator)	• Abū al-Muẓaffar Ẓahīr al-Dawla Ibrāhīm b. Masʿūd (r. 451/1059-492/1098)
British Library's Qur'an (BL Or. 6573)	9th/11th - 6th/12th century	Ghazna?	Paper	NSI RS-naskh	33.5 x 26.5	x	x
Qur'an of al-'Akbisi (IRSI, Ms 4516)	466/1073	Ghazna or Tūs?	Paper	NSI RS-muhaqqaq	30 x 25	• 'Uthmān b. Ḥusayn al-Warrāq al-Ghaznawī (calligrapher and illuminator) • Muḥammad b. 'Uthmān b. Ḥusayn al-Warrāq al-Ghaznawī (calligrapher and illuminator)	• Al-Shaykh al-Ra'īs Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-'Akbisī
'Alī's Qur'an (TKS R 14/AKM Ms 0026/1/Met 37.111.2/ Freer 1929.30/CBL Is 1607/LNS 6 MS/ SBB ord Arab 3603)	485/1092	Ghazna, Tūs or Bust?	Paper	NSI	25.5 x 19.5	• 'Alī b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Ghaznawī (calligrapher and illuminator)	x
Bust Qur'an (BNF Arabe 6041)	505/1111	Bust	Paper	RS-muhaqqaq	20.2 x 15.1	• 'Uthmān b. Muḥammad (calligrapher) • 'Alī b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān (illuminator)	x

Table 4.1: The imperial Ghaznavid Qur'ans.

Only the eighth volume survives from this multi-volume Qur'an that is now in the Topkapı Sarayı Library in Istanbul, EH 209.[14] According to its colophon, it was commissioned by the Ghaznavid Sultan Ibrāhīm b. Masʿūd (r. 451/1059-492/1098) and copied by ʿUthmān b. Ḥusayn al-Warrāq al-Ghaznawī in 484/1091. The last double-page spread of the volume reads (fols. 238v-239r, Plate I):

> *Amara bi-kitbatihi*[15] *al-amīr al-sayyid al-malik al-muʾayyad al-manṣūr al-muẓaffar al-sulṭān al-aʿẓam, mālik riqāb al-umam, malik al-islām, ʿimād al-anām, walī al-imām, ẓahīr al-dawla wa-naṣīr al-milla, wa-mujīr al-umma, ḥāfiẓ bilād allāh wa-sulṭān ʿibād allāh al-muʾayyad bi-naṣr allāh al-muẓaffar ʿalā aʿdāʾ allāh, qāhir al-mulūk, sayyid al-salāṭīn, qāmiʿ al-kafara wa'l-mulḥidīn, muʾayyid al-dīn wa-mughīth al-muslimīn, abī al-muẓaffar ibr[ā]hīm bin nāṣir dīn allāh abī saʿīd masʿūd bin yamīn al-dawla wa-amīn al-milla, niẓām al-dīn abū al-qāsim maḥmūd bin nāṣir al-dīn muʿīn khalīfat allāh, amīr al-muʾminīn, aṭāla allāhu baqāʾah wa-ʾuʿliya sulṭānahu.*
> Its writing was ordered by the amir, the sayyid, the divinely assisted king, victorious, triumphant, most magnificent sultan, king of the necks of the nations, king of Islam, pillar of the people, the delegate of the imam, the champion of the state, helper of the nation, refuge of the community, protector of the lands of God, and sultan of the servants of God, assisted by the aid of God, victorious against God's enemies, conqueror of kings, lord of sultans, smasher of infidels and heretics, supporter of the religion and refuge for the Muslims Abū al-Muẓaffar Ibr[ā]hīm, the son of the defender of God's religion, Abū Saʿīd Masʿūd, son of the right hand of the dynasty and the guardian of the nation, the ordering of religion, Abū'l-Qāsim Maḥmūd, son of Nāsir al-Dīn, the assistant to the caliph of God, the commander of the faithful, may God ensure his longevity and elevate his sovereignty.

On the verso of this double-page spread is a crown-like device inscribed with the name of its copyist and the date of its completion (fol. 239v, Plate II):

---

[14] The number of the volume is announced on fol. 2r, see below. The entire manuscript has been published under the title *al-Mujallad al-thāmin min maʿānī kitāb allāh taʿālā wa tafsīruhu al-munīr*, edited by Ḥāʾirī (Tehran, 1390/2011). A facsimile edition of the manuscript was presented as a gift to the Majlis Library in Iran. For coverage of the event, see:
www.isna.ir/fa/news/9011-09651; www.khabaronline.ir/detail/195815/culture/bookIran; www.ibna.ir/vdcdsn0fzyt0xf6.2a2y.html; www.abna.co/data.asp?lang=1&id=294933. (All last accessed 4 July 2016). Folios from this manuscript were published in Derman, *Fann al-khaṭṭ*, 177; Ḥāʾirī, *Kuhantarīn*, 63; and Sayyid, *al-Kitāb al-ʿarabī al-makhṭūṭ*, 562.

[15] *Kitbatihi* from *kataba*, to write, meaning ordered the writing of a book. See Lane, *Arabic English-Lexicon*, 2589-2590, nos. 1 and 8. It is also the noun of *iktatabahu*, which signifies he asked one to dictate it or asked one to write it for him.

Katabahu wa-dhahhabahu al-ʿabd ʿuthmān bin al-ḥusayn al-warrāq al-ghaznawī fī shuhūr sanat arbaʿa wa-thamānīn wa-arbaʿ māʾa.[16]
Copied and illuminated by the servant ʿUthmān b. al-Ḥusayn al-Warrāq al-Ghaznawī during the months of the year 484 [1091 AD].

Executed in the same scripts, ink, and decoration as the rest of the Qur'an, these original texts inform us that Sultan Ibrāhīm commissioned the Qur'an and that it was copied and illuminated by ʿUthmān b. al-Ḥusayn al-Warrāq al-Ghaznawī. *Al-warrāq* in the title of ʿUthmān indicates he was in the profession of *wirāqa* (from *waraq*, paper), a subject to which we will return. There is no mentioning of the place of origin of the manuscript, but since it was commissioned by Sultan Ibrāhīm, it is almost certain to have been produced in an important city in the Ghaznavid Empire, most likely the capital Ghazna.

The illumination in the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm

The first folio in this eighth volume is decorated with four concentric circles inlaid with tendrils of palmettes and flowers and inscribed in NS with (fol. 2r, Plate III): *al-mujallad al-thāmin min maʿānī kitāb allāh taʿālā wa-tafsīruh al-munīr* (the eighth volume of the meanings of the book of God almighty and its splendid commentary). Just below it, in a smaller script, is noted: *min taṣnīf al-shaykh al-imām wa-rukn al-islām wa-sayf al-sunna abī naṣr aḥmad bin muḥammad bin ḥamdān bin muḥammad al-ḥaddādī raḍiya allāhu ʿanhu wa-qaddasa rūḥahu* (the work of the shaykh and imam, the pillar of Islam, and the sword of the sunna Abū Naṣr Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ḥamdān b. Muḥammad al-Ḥaddādī may God be pleased with him and sanctify his soul). Al-Ḥaddādī (d. after 400/1009), the author of the *tafsīr* in this Qur'an, was a religious scholar who lived in the city of Samarqand.[17] Therefore, the manuscript, in addition to being a masterpiece on many levels, is the earliest dated copy with a Persian translation and commentary (*tafsīr*) accompanying the Qur'anic text.

The surviving illuminated double-page frontispiece is composed of a right-hand page designed with interlaced circles filled with floral motifs, some of which are encircled by their own stems. The left-hand page is decorated with interlaced lines forming geometric shapes, such as octagons

[16] *Fī shuhūr* (during the months) is not a formula that was commonly used in Qur'an colophons.
[17] For a study of the translation and commentary, see Karame and Zadeh, 'The Art of Translation', 150-186.

and lozenges, and filled with patterns made of stars and chessboard-like designs (fols. 2v-3r, Plate IV). Both of these central interlaced designs generate forms that are coloured in blue. The panel on the left-hand page (fol. 3r) is framed with a wide band of geometric latticework, intersected with a repetition of two overlapping squares coloured also in blue. The chessboard-like pattern in the central panel, as well as the blue forms generated by the framing latticework, are features found in Qur'ans of the 4th/10th century and in BL Add. 7214 dated 427/1035, indicating that the illumination in the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm fits into a continuum of Qur'anic production.[18]

At each of the four corners of the frontispiece's left-hand panel, an eight-pointed star is inscribed with (reading right to left, top to bottom): *al-warrāq* / *al-ghaznawī* / *ghafara allāhu* / *lahu* (the Warrāq / of Ghazna / may God forgive / him) (Figure 4.1).

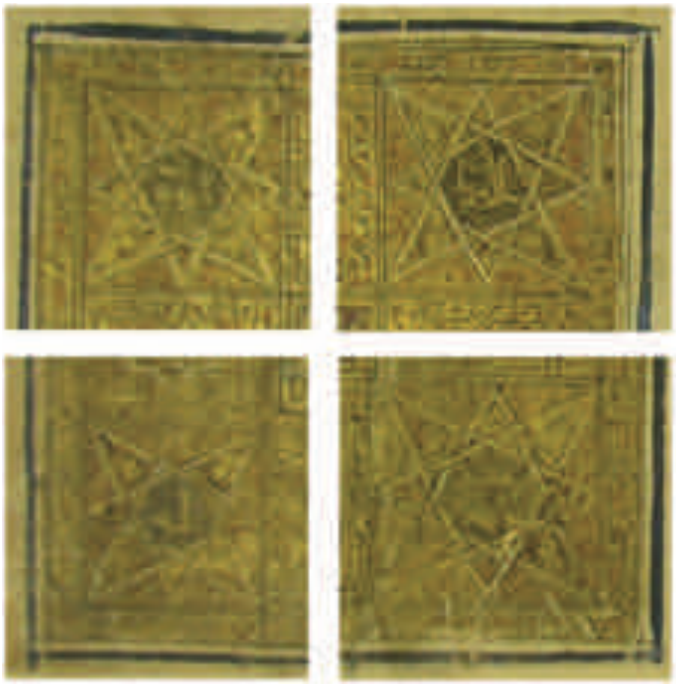

Figure 4.1: A close-up on the four corners of fol. 3r, the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm, 484/1091.

[18] For example, Khalili QUR430 copied in NS in the vertical format, published in Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 152 (cat. no. 82). And even earlier in the 3rd/9th century in Khalili KFQ78 and KFQ81, see Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 123-124 (no. 67) and 130 (no. 73). For BL Add. 7214 see plate II, Chapter III.

A strikingly similar design to that of the frontispiece in Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an appears on a double-sided illuminated folio in Sotheby's 'Arts of the Islamic World' auction sale (Lot 1, 20 April 2016) (Plate V).[19] The design on the recto of the Sotheby's folio is identical to that of the right-hand page of the frontispiece of the eighth volume, decorated with interlaced circles filled with floral motifs. In addition, the design on the verso of Sotheby's folio matches the design on the left-hand page of the eighth volume's frontispiece, made of lines forming various geometric shapes and decorated with star and chessboard patterns. The vignettes linked to each of the panels in Sotheby's folio are identical to the ones projecting from the right- and left-hand pages of the eighth volume: one has a beehive-like frame, and the other has sinuous thin lines extending from its contours. The similarities between these designs suggest that the origin of Sotheby's folio may be the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm. An additional element completes the picture; at the four corners of the verso of Sotheby's folio, an eight-pointed star – like the one that appears on the left-hand page of Sultan Ibrāhīm's frontispiece – is inscribed with (reading right to left, top to bottom): *dhahhabahu* / *muḥammad* / *bin ʿuthmān* / *bin al-ḥusayn* (illuminated [by] / Muḥammad / b. ʿUthmān / b. al-Ḥusayn) (Figure 4.2). Hence, the verso of Sotheby's folio is the right-hand page of the original frontispiece, matching in design and completing the inscription: *dhahhabahu* / *muḥammad* / *bin ʿuthmān* / *bin al-ḥusayn* / *al-warrāq* / *al-ghaznawī* / *ghafara allāh* / *lah* (illuminated [by] / Muḥammad / b. ʿUthmān / b. al-Ḥusayn / the Warrāq / of Ghazna / may God forgive / him) (Plate VI). Thus, the recto of Sotheby's folio and the right-hand page of Sultan Ibrāhīm's frontispiece originally faced each other (Plate VII).

The name of Muḥammad is repeated again in a small octagon on fol. 85r within the illuminated panel and is preceded by "*ʿamal*" ("the work of") (Figure 4.3). A second name is also discreetly inserted in the illumination of this volume, namely that of ʿAlī, appearing at the bottom of an illuminated marginal device and also preceded by "*ʿamal*" ("the work of") (Figure 4). The fact that ʿAlī's name is included in the illumination might suggest that he was, alongside Muḥammad, involved in the illumination of the Qur'an, perhaps only of its marginal devices.

[19] The leaf measures 30.2 x 23.8 cm. For lot details: http://www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/ecatalogue/2016/arts-islamic-world-l16220/lot.1.html (last accessed on 22 July 2016). I would like to thank Alexandra Roy for providing me with reproductions of this folio.

Figure 4.2: A close-up on the four corners of the verso of Sotheby's folio (Lot 1, 20 April 2016), part of Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an, 484/1091.

Figure 4.3: A close up of the illuminated banner on fol. 85r, inscribed with "ʿ*amal muḥammad*" ("the work of Muḥammad"), the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm, 484/1091.

Figure 4.4: A close up of the fifth-verse marginal illuminated device on fol. 7v, inscribed with "ʿ*amal ʿalī*" (the work of ʿAlī), the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm, 484/1091.

In regard to the vignettes that project into the right and left margins of each frontispiece, they are of type 7: circular in form and decorated with symmetrically designed interlaced tendrils with a polylobed blue contour (Figure 4.5). The design of the two vignettes projecting from the frontispiece, which is inscribed with the name of the illuminator (Plate VI), has an outer frame made of a repetition of floral buds, while the two vignettes of the second frontispiece (Plate VII) have two sinuous thin lines extending from their main contour.

In the surviving volume from the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm, the first and last double-page spreads with Qur'anic text are prominently illuminated (fols. 3v-6r, Plate VIII and fols. 237v-238r, Plate IX, respectively).[20] A thin frame of gold lattice with a red ground runs around each of the panels on these pages and generates small blue shapes. On fols 3v-6r, at the top of each page, a band contains three gilded octagonal shapes decorated with blue rosettes. The octagonal shapes are inscribed with the number of the volume and its abbreviated title: *al-mujallad al-thāmin min*

[20] The manuscript was probably rebound at some point, wrongly, as the two facing pages shown here were separated – hence the discrepancy in folio numbers.

maʿānī kitāb allāh taʿālā (the eighth volume of the meanings of the book of God almighty). Vignettes of type-7, which were used in BL Add. 7214 and CBL Is. 1430, project into the right and left margins of both spreads (Table 3.2). The background of the text on both spreads is decorated with black floral scrolls and tendrils with stylised flowers and palmettes, adding, in addition to the gilded frames, prominence to the beginning and end of the volume. Similar designs of floral scrolls and tendrils decorate the ground of the volume title on the first folio (fol. 2r, Plate III) and the ground of the colophon's text (fols. 238v-239r, Plate I), which is also framed by a gold latticework that generates blue forms and projects into the margin a type-7 vignette.

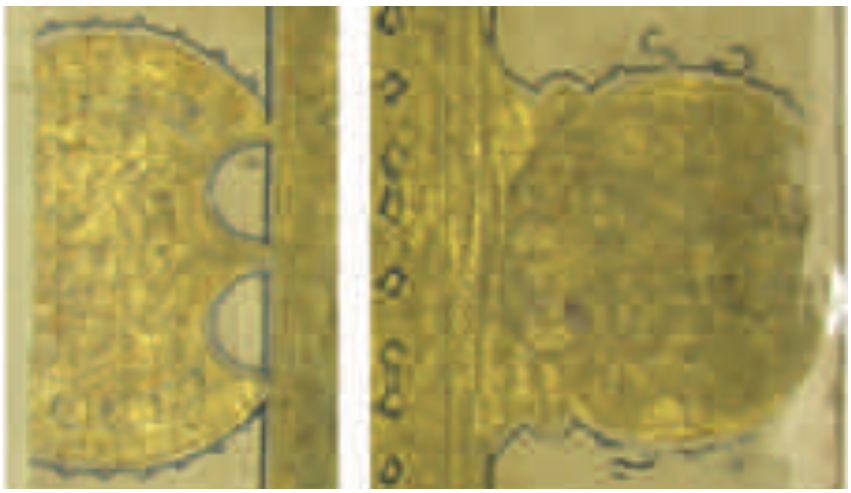

Figure 4.5: Vignette designs linked to the frontispiece panels in the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm, 484/1091.

It is important to stop at the ground decoration of these text panels in order to identify their characteristics. The background on fol. 237v is decorated with tendrils drawn as two black lines that end with stylised flowers and pointed heads which sometimes have long extended sinuous tips (Plate IX). Some parts of the flowers are coloured in light grey, creating a watercolour effect. The flowers are highly stylised: while some are trilobate, others resemble tulips and *fleurs de lys*. The latter which are made of a pointed body with two leaves and two sepals at the bottom, one on each side, has been used in Ibn al-Bawwāb's and in the Sulayhid Qur'ans (Plates II and XII, Chapter I). However, the *fleurs de lys* in Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an are more detailed have different proportions from the ones used in Ibn al-Bawwāb's and the Sulayhid Qur'ans.

Similar stylised *fleur de lys* motifs appear on a marble arched panel from the 5th/11th or 6th/12th century excavated from Ghazna (Plate X).[21] It is adorned with scrolls of *fleur de lys* that have two sepals, two leaves and a long extended sinuous tip that curves at the end, stylised in the same manner as the ones decorating the text ground of fol. 237v (Figure 4.6).[22] Moreover, on the same marble panel, flowers without extended tips are encircled in their own stems, a configuration also seen in the illumination of the second frontispiece of the eighth volume of Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an (Figure 4.7). These encircled flowers are also seen in the stucco decoration from 3rd/9th century Balkh.[23]

Figure 4.6: Left: Stylised *fleur de lys* in the background decoration of fol. 237v, the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm, 484/1091; Right: Stylised *fleur de lys* in a marble panel excavated in Ghazna or its surroundings (IG0149b), 5th/11th or 6th/12th century.

A marble panel excavated from the throne room of the palace built in Ghazna by Masʿūd III (r. 492/1098-508/1114), the son of Sultan Ibrāhīm, echoes another motif used in this Qur'an (Plate XI).[24] The panel is decorated with palmettes composed of feather-like elements, recalling the palmettes in the background of the title of the *tafsīr* in the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm (Figure 4.8).[25] On the marble panel, the feather-like elements are repeated in a circular manner forming a

[21] The excavation was led by the Italian Archaeological Mission in Afghanistan (1957-2007). For studies on these remains, see Flury, 'Le décor épigraphique des monuments de Ghazna'; Giunta, 'Islamic Ghazni'; and Rugiadi, 'The Ghaznavid Marble Architectural Decoration'. The studies are published online: http://ghazni.bradypus.net (last accessed on 22 July 2016).
[22] This panel (IG0149b) and others with similar decoration are published online (see note 21).
[23] See chapter I.
[24] The remains of the palace are published in Bombaci, The Kūfic Inscription; Rugiadi, 'The Ghaznavid Marble Architectural Decoration'; and Rugiadi, 'Marble from the Palace of Masʿūd III in Ghazni'.
[25] The panel (C2891) and others with similar decoration are published online (see note 21).

flower, while in the Qur'an, the intertwined scrolls end with palmettes composed of four or five small feather-like elements.

Figure 4.7: Left: Detail from the frontispiece of Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an, 484/1091; Right: Detail from the arched marble panel excavated in Ghazna or its surroundings, 5th/11th or 6th/12th century (reconstructed by the Italian Archaeological Mission in Afghanistan).

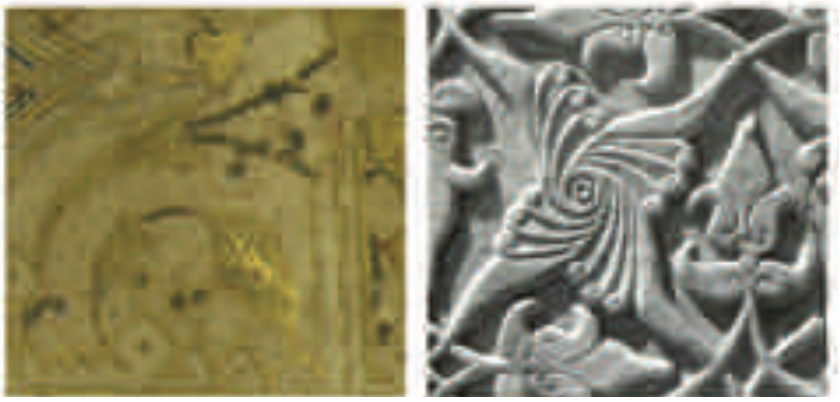

Figure 4.8: Left: Palmettes in the background decoration of fol. 2r, the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm, 484/1091; Right: Palmettes carved in the marble panel from the palace of Masʿūd III in Ghazna (C2891).

The resemblance between Ghaznavid architectural decorative motifs and Qur'anic illumination extends to the outline forms as seen in the trefoil shape that frames the colophon (Plate II) and the tomb of Sultan Maḥmūd (Figure 4.9).[26] Similarly, the overall configuration of the surface on a marble panel excavated in Ghazna resembles the design of the first double-page frontispiece in the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm (Figure 4.10).[27] Both designs are made of interlaced lines generating various geometric shapes, including octagons and lozenges. The frontispiece

[26] The tomb is published in Flury, *Le décor épigraphique des monuments de Ghazna*, Pl. XXIV. For another example of this form see Rugiadi, 'Marble from the Palace of Masʿūd III in Ghazni', 303 (fig. 3). This form also resonates with lobed arches which were common during this period. Hillenbrand, 'The Architecture of the Ghaznavids and Ghurids', 164.
[27] The panel (PF0005) is published online.

configuration is filled with geometric patterns, while the marble configuration is decorated with organic floral motifs.

Figure 4.9: Inscription on cenotaph of Maḥmūd b. Sebüktegin, Ghazna, 420/1029.

Similarities between Qur'anic decoration and architectural decorative motifs are thus clearly present, indicating that a common visual language was articulated across different media during the Ghaznavid period. Basing themselves on architectural excavations from Ghazna and its surroundings, scholars have argued for an eclectic style of architectural language that mixed both Indic and Iranian elements, to which these decorative elements must have belonged.[28] In

[28] The Indic influence is seen in the marble and carved decoration, while the Iranian influence is apparent in the use of brick construction and in moulded decoration. Whether the use of marble in Ghaznavid architecture reflected the impact of Indian architecture on the Ghaznavids is a debated subject in modern scholarship. See, for example, Bombaci, 'Summary Report on the Italian Archaeological Mission in Afghanistan'. Indic motifs were introduced in Ghaznavid architecture as early as the mid-5th/11th century, as noted in Bosworth, *The Ghaznavids*, 131–35. They entered the visual language of Ghaznavid architecture earlier than the expansion of the sultanate into India, a point confirmed by Flood. While presenting the Indic elements that appear in Afghan stone carving of the late 6th/12th century, Flood suggests that the presence of these Indic motifs could be due to the presence of Indian stone masons working for Muslim patrons in the Ghurid Sultanate, therefore indicating a continuous influence and flux of people between the two regions. See Flood, 'Masons and Mobility', 138. Flood illustrates this cross-cultural architectural reception and brings to light a marble relief at the Linden museum in Stuttgart, datable to 6th/12th century Ghazna, depicting a figurative scene that was framed by a capital and a column that are Indian in style. For a study of the marble relief, see Flood, 'A Ghaznavid Narrative Relief'. For a study of the use of "Indic" architectural motifs in "Islamic" architecture, see chapter 5 in Flood, *Objects of*

describing this idea of a uniquely eclectic style, the poet and historian, al-ʿUtbī (d. 427/1035), portrays the mosque built by the Ghaznavid Sultan Maḥmūd – which he calls "*ʿarūs al-falak*" ("the Bride of Heaven") – as a richly decorated monument built from the spoils of the sultan's Indian campaigns.[29]

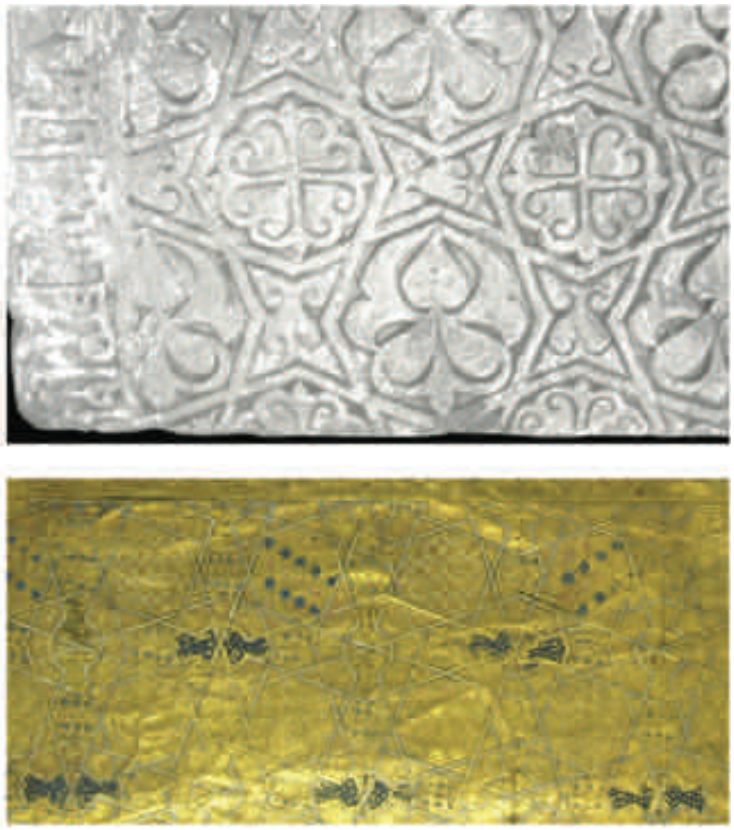

Figure 4.10: Top*:* Marble panel excavated in Ghazna (PF0005); Bottom: Close up on the frontispiece design of Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an, 484/1091.

One additional feature that appears in the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm, but is absent from Qur'ans produced in the previous century, is the marginal markers inscribed with the division of the Qur'anic text. In Qur'ans from the 4th/10th century, the beginning of a volume is indicated with

Translation, 137-226. Hillenbrand notes that the lobed arches of Ghaznavid architecture were also common in India, see Hillenbrand, 'The Architecture of the Ghaznavids and Ghurids', 164.

[29] Nothing remains from Maḥmūd's mosque, which was built around 408/1017. The findings of Indian figures and statues in Ghazna suggest that they could have been part of the palace's opulent decoration. See Bosworth, The Ghaznavids. For the description of Maḥmūd's mosque, see al-ʿUtbī, *al-Yamīnī*, 414–18.

an illuminated page or band at the top of the first volume's folio.[30] In Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an, however, in the margins of the first double-page spread with Qur'anic text (fols. 3v-6r, Plate VIII), two rectangular designs evocative of writing tablets announce that the manuscript starts at the 180th part of a division of the Qur'an into 360 equal divisions ("*al-juzʾ al-māʾa wa'l-thamānūn min thalāthmiʾa wa sittīn*"*)*. This is just one of four systems used in Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an and inscribed in illuminated devices that divided the Qur'an into equal sections, facilitating movement throughout the text. For example, the practice of dividing the Qur'an into 30 parts was designed to facilitate the reading of the entire Qur'an over a period of one month, as was common in later times. If the 30-part division is designed for the complete reading of the Qur'an in one month, the division into 60 parts could reflect a plan to read the Qur'an in two months, while the division into 180 and 360 stretches a reading of the Qur'an over a period of six months and one year, respectively.[31] Such detailed division of the text reflects different reading plans of the Qur'an to be completed within specific time frames. Even though no markers appear to indicate a detailed division of the text in Kufic Qur'ans, an account in *Kitāb al-maṣāḥif* by Ibn Abī Dāwūd al-Sijistānī (d. 316/928) suggests the habit of dividing the Qur'anic text existed in earlier centuries.[32] It is not until the 5th/11th century that such detailed division actually appears in the Qur'an, making these illuminated devices a new development in Qur'anic manuscript production as seen in the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm.

The Qur'anic text is divided into smaller parts that are marked visually to expose its structure. The illuminated banner inscribed with the title of the sura informs the reader of a new chapter, while verse markers denote the end of every verse and every group of five and/or ten verses. These devices developed gradually in Qur'anic manuscripts, and the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm presents us with an example of a developed system akin to a navigational system designed to

[30] Only the division of the Qur'anic text into 10 and 30 parts is marked by an illuminated page or an illuminated band at the top in Qur'ans from the 4th/10th century. For examples of illuminated pages, see Khalili QUR306 (cat. no. 59), QUR286 (cat. no. 78) and QUR305 (cat. no. 80) in Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 112, 142 and 144, respectively. For an example of an illuminated band, see fols. 33v-34r in CBL Is. 1417. I would like to thank Alain George for providing me with a reproduction of this double-page spread.

[31] These sections are noted in the margins of Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an and, at times, multiple divisions fall on the same folio. For example, on fols. 9v and 10r: 181/360 overlaps with 16/30 and 31/60.

[32] Ibn Abī Dāwūd mentions that the Qur'an was taught in four months and that the *ḥujjāj* (sing. *ḥajj*, pilgrim) read it every night. Al-Sijstānī, *Materials for the History of the Text of the Qurʾān*, 120.

direct the reader through the large and small divisions.[33] The end of every verse in the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm is marked by a medallion with thin lines radiating around it and decorated with dots (see Table 4.2, in which the verse markers and vignettes in this Qur'an and in the rest of the Qur'ans in this chapter are presented). It is inscribed in NS with the verse number, restarting the count after ten verses. This design appeared as a tenth-verse marker in Kufic Qur'ans.[34] A different type of rosette marks the end of a sentence in the Persian text of the commentary of Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an with coloured dots decorating its petals, a design also rooted in the illumination of earlier centuries.[35] This in-text marking is complemented with a larger marginal medallion counting every ten verses in increment, *ʿashara* (ten), *ʿishrūn* (twenty), etc., until the end of the sura. The design of this tenth-verse marker varies in the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm: Sometimes it contains the "Seal of Solomon", made of two intersecting equilateral triangles, while other times it appears decorated with opposing pairs of trilobate flowers encircled by their own stems and framed by a ring of trilobate flowers (Figure 4.11). The "Seal of Solomon" is encountered in the finispiece of CBL Is. 1430 (fol. 175v, Plate X, Chapter III). Every fifth-verse is indicated in the margin by a circular device at the top of which a crown-like form appears, and at the bottom, a thin trapezoid inscribed with the word *khamsa* (five) – a form not seen in Qur'ans from the 4th/10th century.

In sum, some illuminated devices in the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm appear to be rooted in older traditions, while others represent new forms. Even though we cannot confirm the exact origin of all the motifs employed in the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm, some elements were already part of the visual repertoire of Qur'ans produced in the first half of the 5th/11th century. For instance, the type-7 vignettes, the "seal of Solomon", the flowers encircled in their own stems and the blue forms in latticework frames, were employed in the Qur'ans ascribed to Nishapur. Similarly, *fleur de lys* scrolls stylised differently from those in Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an have been employed in Ibn al-Bawwāb's and the Sulayhid Qur'ans. The presence of these motifs in Nishapur, Baghdad

[33] In the early surviving Qur'anic fragments, each verse was marked with diagonal dashes, soon replaced by a dot or triangular arrangement of gold dots to finally reach the form of rosettes. See Arnold, *Painting in Islam*, 23. In-text or marginal medallions marking every five or ten verses were introduced in the second half of the 2nd/8th century. Sura headings developed at the end of the Umayyad period with an emphasis on architectural features. They gradually included next to the title of the sura the place of revelation (Mecca or Medina) and the number of verses each sura contains. For example, see Khalili KFQ59 (cat. no. 3) in Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 32–33.
[34] Such as in BNF Arabe 325j and Arabe 334l, see Déroche, *Les manuscrits du Coran*, 30. Déroche calls this type 4.D.II, see Déroche, Les manuscrits du Coran, 28–30.
[35] According to Déroche, this is type 3.2.2, Déroche, *Les manuscrits du Coran*, 28–30.

and Cairo were only possible with the mobility of people, books and motifs which must have helped shape a local Ghaznavid language.

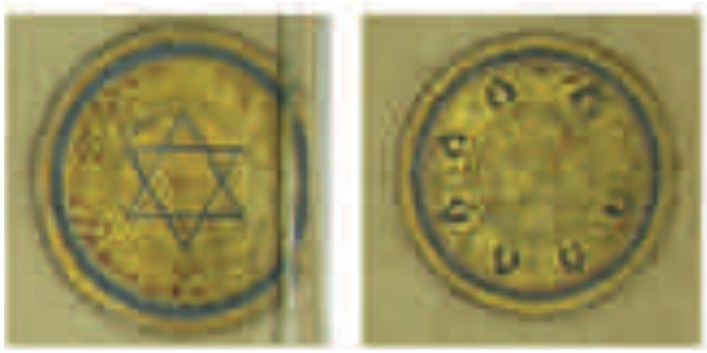

Figure 4.11: Tenth-verse markers in the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm, 484/1091.

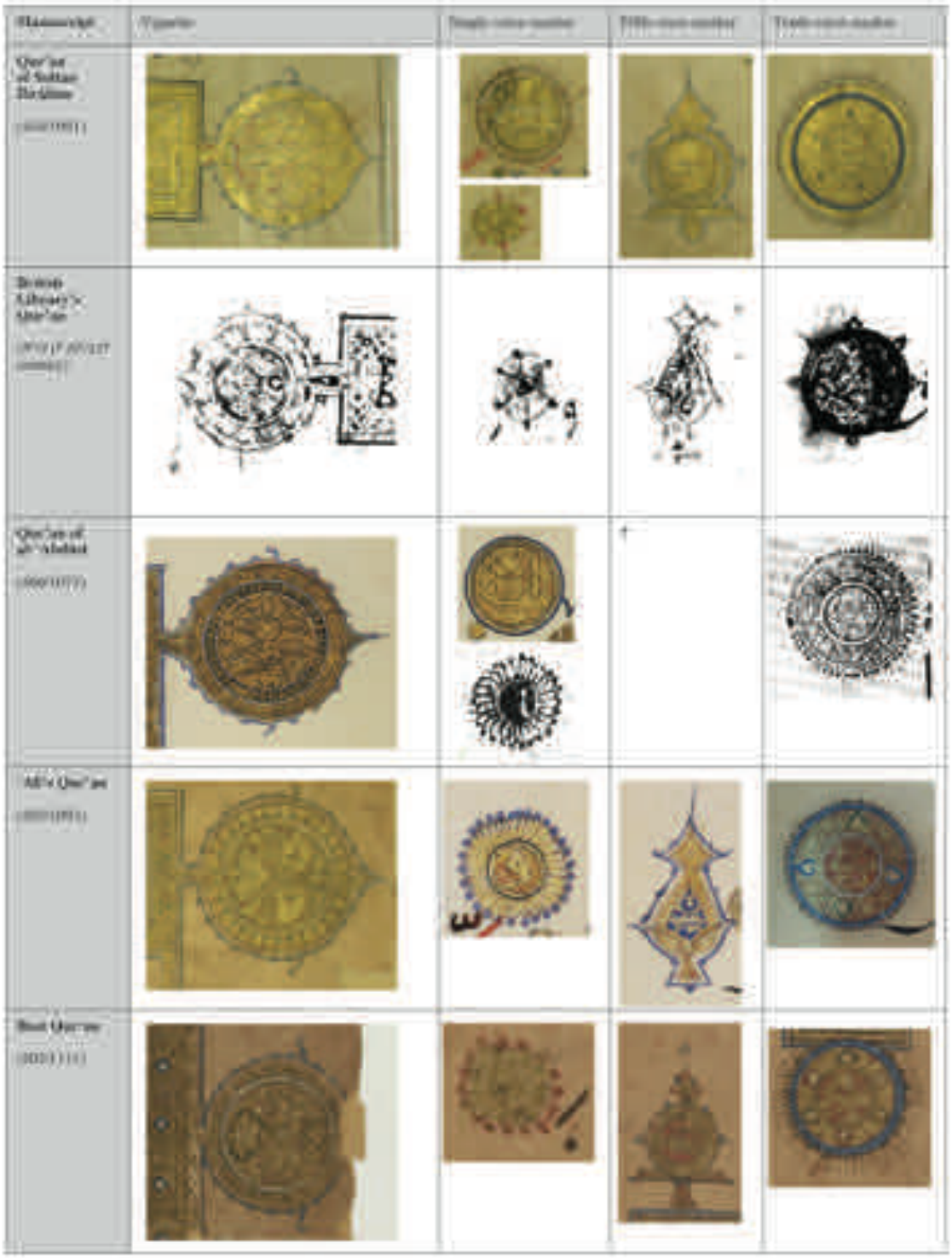

Table 4.2: Vignettes and verse markers employed in the group of Ghaznavid Imperial Qur'ans.

The scripts and layout employed in the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm

The Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm employs four different types of scripts, rooted in earlier Qur'ans. Two of the scripts fall under the category of NS, and two under RS. The Qur'anic text is copied in monumental NSI that is more angular than the smaller NSIII script used for the Persian commentary (fol. 12v, Plate XII). The non-Qur'anic Arabic passages are copied in a large RS appearing in black, blue and red (fol. 13r, Plate XII and fols. 70v-7r, Plate XIII), while the titles in Persian and the small Arabic text in the commentaries are copied in small RS (fol. 52v, Plate XIV). The scripts employed in this Qur'an and in the other Qur'ans discussed in this chapter are summarily presented in Table 4.3. In the monumental NSI script in Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an, typical features of NSI include the oblique turn at the bottom of independent *alif*; the diagonal stroke that crosses a thinner horizontal one in initial *jīm/ḥā'/khā'*; the small triangular shape at the base of *dāl/dhāl;* the thin oblique stroke at the top of initial *ʿayn/ghayn;* and the thin diagonal tails of letters, such as *mīm* and *wāw*. In the smaller script, features of NSIII include the curved upper stroke that meets the horizontal stroke of *dāl/dhāl;* the curved top of initial *ʿayn/ghayn;* the curvilinear tail of *mīm;* and the curvilinear shaft of *nūn,* which has less contrast than in NSI.

Table 4.3: Letters in the group of imperial Ghaznavid Qur'ans.

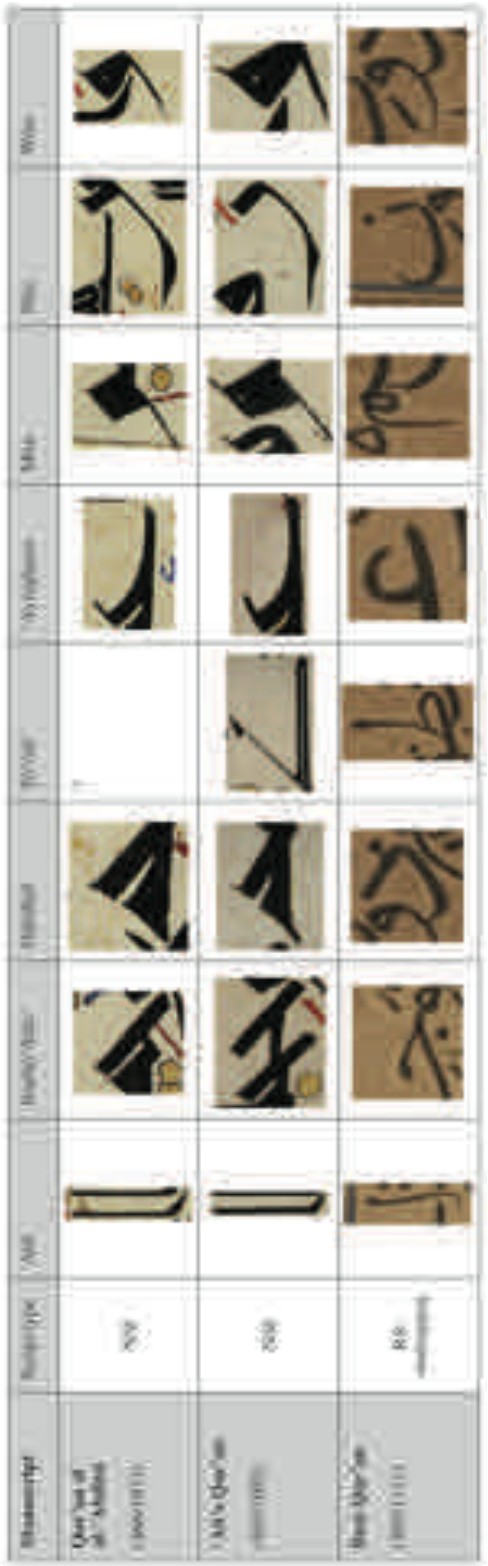

Table 4.3 continued: Letters in the group of imperial Ghaznavid Qur'ans.

The NSI employed in Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'ans shares some features with the NS of Ibn Shādhān's Qur'an (361/971) discussed in Chapter I and that mixes between NSI and NSIII (Plate II, Chapter I). These common features are: the top stroke of *jīm/ḥāʾ/khāʾ* that crosses the baseline; the thin diagonal top stroke of initial *ʿayn/ghayn*; the diagonal thin tail of *mīm*; and the triangular head of *wāw*. In general, both scripts are governed by diagonal stress, triangularity in heads, and a contrast between thick and thin strokes. These similarities suggest that the NSI of Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an represents the end of a process of stylisation in which the characteristics of NSI became dissociated from those of NSIII. The proportions between the vertical and horizontal strokes of letters mark another feature that characterises NSI in Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an, and the rest of the Ghaznavid Qur'ans, whereby the vertical strokes are elongated providing the script with an overall vertical appearance.

The large RS used for the non-Qur'anic Arabic passages in the commentary of Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an has features of both *muḥaqqaq* and *thuluth* with the former being more dominant (fol. 13r, Plate XII and fols. 70v-7r, Plate XIII). For this reason, we will term it *RS-muḥaqqaq* (Table 4.3). These features are evident in the following characteristics: *Alif* has *tarwīs*, the serif-like form at the top of the letter, and a thin turn at the bottom; *jīm/ḥāʾ/khāʾ* starts with a *shaẓiyya* (a thickness at the beginning) and inclines to the right; *dāl/dhāl* has a deep bottom stroke that ends with a thin stroke that points upwards; the vertical stroke of *ṭāʾ/ẓāʾ* starts with a *tarwīs; ʿayn/ghayn* has a wide opening and its top stroke starts with thinness to the right; final *mīm* has a long and thin tail; *nūn* has a shallow bowl; and the tail of *wāw* is pointed and straight.

On the other hand, the small RS employed for the titles in Persian and small Arabic text in the commentaries resembles the early non-Qur'anic bookhands with some features of later *naskh,* which we will call RS-*naskh* (fol. 52v, Plate XIV). *Alif* has little *tarwīs* and no turn at the bottom; *jīm/ḥāʾ/khāʾ* starts with a *shaẓiyya* too but appears to be less obvious than in RS-*muḥaqqaq*; *dāl/dhal* has a bottom stroke that looks shallower than RS-*muḥaqqaq* and does not end with a thin upward stroke; *ṭāʾ/ẓāʾ* appears more rectilinear than in RS-*muḥaqqaq* with a vertical stroke with no *tarwīs* at its beginning; *ʿayn/ghayn* has a smaller opening than in RS-*muḥaqqaq* and its top stroke has less contrast; the tail of final *mīm* is short and thicker than in RS-*muḥaqqaq*; the bowl of *nūn* is concave; finally the tail of *wāw* is curved.

The way the letters are laid out on one line, as well as the layout of lines on the page, indicate that each page was meticulously studied in the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm. For example, on fol. 13r (Plate XII), the bowls of the two *nūn* on the second large line overlap in a harmonious way, indicating a level of advanced planning, especially considering the same harmony is achieved when two *nūn* overlap again on the third and fourth lines of large script. Similarly, letters in NS are extended and placed above one another, creating parallel lines in coherence as seen in the way *yāʾ* is extended backwards below the letters of the previous word forming V shapes (Figure 4.12). Such confident and stylised gestures by the copyist are also seen in the Qur'an of Ibn Shādhān and in *Akhbār al-naḥawiyyīn al-baṣriyyīn*.[36] Thus, as these manuscripts were copied almost a century before the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm, they can be regarded the predecessor of such letter layout stylisation.

Figure 4.12: Layout of letters in the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm (fol. 4r), 484/1091.

Moreover, this attention to the composition of letters and lines is also reflected in the overall layout of Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an. Each line of NSI or RS-*muḥaqqaq* equals three lines of NSIII or RS-*naskh,* and the lines on the right-hand pages are horizontally aligned with the lines on the left-hand pages (Plates IX, XII and XIII). A 19-line grid is followed in the manuscript regardless of the type of script used on the given page. A balanced and consistent layout is therefore achieved from the beginning to the end of the volume, with different types of scripts co-existing in harmony.

A double-page spread shows the artistry of ʿUthmān b. al-Ḥusayn al-Warrāq, in which a fifth specimen of calligraphy is used in addition to the other types of script employed throughout the manuscript (fols. 70v-71r, Plate XIII). This script represents a form of old Kufic, previously used

[36] Figure 1.2.

to copy Qur'anic codices. On this spread, five monumental lines in three different scripts appear, reflecting the five instances in which the verb *wurūd* appears with different meanings in the Qur'an, following al-Ḥaddādī's discussion.[37] The first monumental line on the right-hand page, *wa-in minkum illā wāriduhā* (Q. 19:71), is an RS-*muḥaqqaq* script characterised by *tarwīs* at the top of *alif* with a sinuous thin extension at the bottom, shallow wide bowls of *nūn* and long pointed tails, as in *wāw*. This line is followed by a second monumental script in Kufic, *fa-awradahum al-nāra* (Q. 11:98), which is closest to Déroche's type D.V.[38] The third monumental calligraphic line at the bottom of the right-hand page, *ḥaṣab jahannam antum lahā wāridūn* (Q. 21:98), is also an RS with *muḥaqqaq* features, but this time slightly smaller in size.

Similarly, the first monumental line on the left-hand page, *law kāna haʾulāʾ ālihatan mā waradūhā* (Q 21:99), is also in *muḥaqqaq*. The second monumental script on this page, *wa-lammā warada māʾa madyan* (Q. 28:23), is a variation of the monumental NSI but with a compact feel. This line has the boldness of the Kufic used on the right-hand page, and employs red dots as a vocalization system. The resemblance between the Kufic line on the right-hand page and the NSI line on the left-hand page is probably a choice that the calligrapher made to offer the spread more balance between its adjacent pages. The involvement of the calligrapher in visually expressing the different meanings of *wurūd* by making each appearance different indicates a certain knowledge of al-Ḥaddādī's commentary and the Qur'an in general. Moreover, and since Kufic was no longer used in Qur'ans of the period, the calligrapher used it here as an additional sign of his calligraphic mastery.

Both NS and RS are found on the remains of funerary Ghaznavid architecture that exhibit a wide range of epigraphic scripts as ornamental devices.[39] For example, a tombstone in Ghazna is inscribed with a Qur'anic verse in NSI that is decorated with scrolls of *fleur de lys* (Figure 4.13).[40] NSI features can be detected in the lower diagonal bend to the right in *alif;* diagonal tails in letters, such as *rāʾ* and *wāw*; and initial *ḥāʾ,* which is made of a diagonal stroke that crosses a horizontal one on the baseline.

[37] This present paragraph is a summary of a detailed study of this spread in Karame and Zadeh, 'The Art of Translation', 146-148. The verb *wurūd* features five times in the Qur'an, and al-Ḥaddādī cites that four times out of the five appearances the verb has the meaning of *dukhūl* (to enter) while only once does it take the meaning of *ḥuḍūr* (to come, appear or be present).
[38] Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 44-45.
[39] For the funerary inscriptions of Ghazna, see Giunta, *Les inscriptions funéraires de Gaznī*.
[40] Pope, A Survey of Persian Art from Prehistoric Times to the Present, 1746 (fig. 601).

Figure 4.13: Tombstone in Ghazna, late 5th/11th century (drawing by Flury).

The cenotaph of Maḥmūd b. Sebüktegin in Ghazna, dated 420/1029, is carved with a stylised RS that has a bulbous effect and no specific features of *muḥaqqaq* or *thuluth* except for the thin turn at the bottom of *alif* (Figure 4.9). Another Ghaznavid inscription, two and a half decades later, exhibits some characteristics of *muḥaqqaq*, namely that of the tomb of Muḥammad al-Harawī (d. 447/1055) (Figure 4.14).[41] The shallow bowls of its letters and the thin turn at the bottom of *alif* are features seen in later *muḥaqqaq* and in the RS-*muḥaqqaq* used in Ghaznavid Qur'ans. The overall look of the script is compact as in *naskh*, with short ascenders and descenders.[42] A more mature example of RS, this time with clearer stylised *thuluth* characteristics, survives from the external northeast corner of the south dome of Isfahan's congregational mosque that was added in the second half of the 5th/11th century (c. 478/1085) by the Seljuq Sultan Malikshāh (Figure 4.15).[43] Here, mature *thuluth* features are seen in, for example, the deep bowls of letters such as *nūn*, and the concave tails of letters such as *wāw*. These three inscriptions show how RS developed in the 5th/11th century on architectural surfaces by gaining characteristics of later mature RS scripts. As in Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an, they exhibit a mix of *muḥaqqaq, naskh and thuluth* characteristics, pointing to a certain degree of RS script stylisation.

[41] Giunta, 'The Tomb of Muḥammad Al-Harawī (447/1055)', 114.
[42] *Naskh* was used in Ghaznavid inscriptions at a time when it was not very common elsewhere in the Iranian world. See Hillenbrand, "The Architecture of the Ghaznavids and Ghurids", 175.
[43] Blair, 'Surveyor versus Epigrapher', 71 (fig. 4). Originally published in Galdieri, *Isfahān: Masǧid-i ǧumʿa* (fig. 13).

Figure 4.14: Inscription on the tomb of Muḥammad al-Harawi (d. 447/1055).

Figure 4.15: Inscription around the external northeast corner of the south dome of the congregational mosque of Isfahan, c. 478/1085.

The inscriptions found in Ghazna are mostly in Arabic. In addition to being the language of religion, Arabic was used as the official language of the chancery.[44] Persian, on the other hand, was promoted as the literary language and appeared in epigraphy as part of promoting literary production.[45] Hence, the inclusion of New Persian in the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm can be understood as part of the role that the Ghaznavids played in the renaissance of the New Persian language.[46]

[44] It appears however that Persian was used at different times under Maḥmūd's first *wazīr*. See Meisami, *Persian Historiography to the End of the Twelfth Century,* 51.
[45] Allegranzi, 'The use of Persian in Monumental Epigraphy from Ghazni (Eleventh-Twelfth Centuries)'.
[46] On the this subject see Lazard, 'The Rise of the New Persian Language'.

One volume survives from a Qur'an that includes the same Persian commentary as the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm by Abū Naṣr al-Ḥaddādī, and is now at the British Library where I have personally examined it, Or. 6573 (Plates XV-XVII).[47] No frontispiece survives from the volume, but its vignettes, verse markers, scripts and layout recall the visual repertoire of Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an. First, the marginal vignette linked to one of the sura banners surviving in the Qur'an is of type-7. It is a circular form with symmetrically designed interlaced floral scrolls, an outer frame made of a repetition of floral buds, and a blue polylobed contour with two sinuous lines extending from it (Table 4.2). In addition, single-verse markers are rosettes with coloured dots decorating their petals, a similar design to the one employed in Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an that marks the end of Persian sentences. The fifth-verse marker is a teardrop shape with a triangular base and a crown-like form at the top, a design employed in another dated Ghaznavid Qur'an discussed below. The tenth-verse marker is similar to the one in Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an, in that *ʿashara* (ten) is inscribed at its centre surrounded by a repetition of trilobate flowers encircled by their own stems (Figure 4.16).

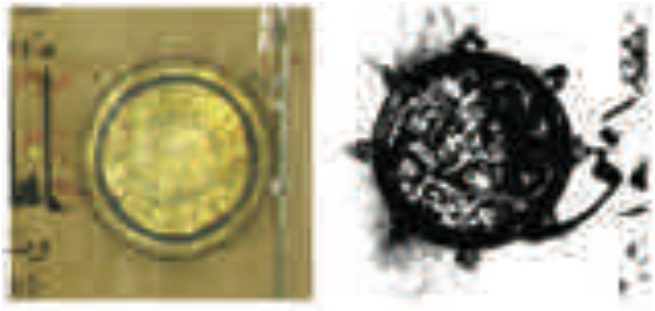

Figure 4.16: Left: Tenth-verse marker in Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an, 484/1091; Right: Tenth-verse marker in the British Library's Qur'an.

[47] It covers Q. 18:74 through Q. 25:10. An edition of the manuscript was published by the Iranian scholar Matīnī. See Matīnī, *Tafsīrī bar ʿushrī az Qurʾān-i majīd*. Folios from this manuscript were published in Baker, Qur'an Manuscripts, 24–25; and Lings and Safadi, *The Qur'ān*, 90. According to Motaghedi, the Topkapı Sarayı Library holds a part (Ms 203) with ʿUthmān's name mentioned in it as its copyist. See Motaghedi, *Warrāq-I Ghaznavi Family,* 33. Unfortunately, this cannot be confirmed until I get access to the original manuscript.

The Qur'anic text in the British Library's volume is copied in a similar NSI as the Qur'anic text in Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an, but seems slightly more curvilinear, as seen in the bowls and tails of letters (Table 4.3). NSI features can be detected in the overall triangular heads of letters such as *wāw* and *fāʾ*/*qāf*, the high contrast between thick and thin strokes and the diagonality of the descenders. Features that are typical of NSI include the oblique turn at the bottom *alif*; the thin oblique top stroke of initial *ʿayn*/*ghayn*; the diagonal top stroke of initial *jīm*/*ḥāʾ*/*khāʾ* that crosses the baseline; and the trapezoidal head of *mīm*. However, unlike the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm, the text of the Persian commentary in the British Library's volume is copied in RS with features of *naskh*. The letters of this RS-*naskh* are not consistent in shape or size, making it a less codified RS than the one used in Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an. Moreover, the lines of RS-*naskh* do not sit on a baseline and are not spaced out evenly, pointing to a less studied layout than that of Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an. Nevertheless, the layout of the British Library's Qur'an was devised in advance in which copying happened in two stages. As seen on fol. 131r, the descenders of the two final *jīm* in the last line of NSI leave gaps in order not to cross the lines of text below them (Plate XVI). This indicates that the text of the commentary was copied before the Qur'anic text and probably by two different people. In support of the latter proposition, some letters vary in the British Library's Qur'an, such as independent *alif* that appears in two forms: a straight long vertical stroke with an oblique turn at the bottom, and a vertical stroke a little inclined to the right with no turn at the bottom.[48] However, there appears to be two forms of *lām-alif* (visible on the first and second line of fol. 131r) most likely done by the same copyist and which form can also be detected on Samanid pottery. For example, the *lām-alif* in which the two vertical strokes are concave forming an oval shape is seen on a bowl at the Metropolitan Museum of Art while the same letter with parallel vertical strokes, one pointing to the left, is present on another Samanid epigraphic bowl (Figure 4.17).[49] The resemblance between letter forms of Qur'anic NS and those on Samanid ware points once more to the travel of motifs between the two environments suggesting that the same people may have been involved in both artistic productions especially that these letter forms continued to be used on ceramic wares.

[48] For example, on fol. 20v.

[49] The bowl at the Metropolitan Museum has the accession number L 975.168 while the second bowl's present place is unknown. They are published in: Ghouchani, *Nishabur*. the former as Pl. 108 and the latter as Pl. 99. Note that the signature of 'Aḥmad' appears at the centre of both bowls, executed in the same manner.

Figure 4.17: Top: Samanid ware, c. 4th/10th century; Bottom: *Lām-alif* on fol. 131r, the British Library's Qur'an.

Even though the British Library's Qur'an is not as lavishly decorated, the calligrapher's mastery appears in his artistic achievements, recalling the artistry involved in Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an. For example, the way *qiṣṣa* is drawn with an extended *ṣāḍ* balancing between the two heads at the beginning and end of the word reflects meticulous attention to detail in both the Qur'an of the British Library and the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm (Plates XVII and XVIII, respectively). The calligrapher's choice to centre the word "*qiṣṣa*" reflects a consideration to the overall balance of the page. This kind of micro- and macro-level attention to the script and layout, the use of the same *tafsīr* and the other similarities between Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an and the British Library's Qur'an in illumination, script, and size (the former is 34 x 24.5 cm, and the latter is 33.5 x 26.5 cm), all indicate that the British Library's Qur'an was most likely produced in Ghazna – probably by someone who worked in the same trend of script and illumination as Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an, if not by the same people.

The third Ghaznavid Qur'an is now in the Imam Reza Shrine Library in Mashhad, Ms 4316 (Plates XIX-XXVIII).[50] It was copied and illuminated by the same ʿUthmān al-Warrāq as the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm. His name appears several times in this 30-volume Qur'an. The most elaborate occurrence is in the colophon of the fifth volume (Plate XIX),[51] which reads:

> *Katabahu wa-dhahhabahu ʿuthmān bin al-ḥusayn bin abī sahl al-warrāq al-ghaznawī ghafara allāh lahu wa-li'wālidayhi wa-li'jamīʿ al-muʾminīn wa'l-muʾmināt wa'l-farāgh minhu fī sanat arbaʿa wa-sittīn wa-arbaʿ māʾat.*
> Copied and illuminated by ʿUthmān b. al-Ḥusayn b. Abī Sahl al-Warrāq al-Ghaznawī may God forgive him and his parents and all the believing men and women, it was brought forth in the year 464 [1071 AD].[52]

ʿUthmān is named in this colophon with a *nisba* from Abū Sahl, his paternal grandfather, who may be Abū Sahl al-Warrāq Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Sahl al-Zūzanī, from Zūzan, a region between Herat and Nishapur. Abū Sahl is mentioned by the traditionist al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī (d. 405/1014) in his biographical history of religious authorities in Nishapur, indicating that he lived there and that ʿUthmān's family originates from there.[53] This attests to the movement of people in Khurasan and specifically, in this case, towards Ghazna. In addition to being an *ʿālim*,

---

[50] The manuscript was at one point divided between Mashhad and the National Museum of Iran in Tehran. But now the entirety is housed in Mashhad, Astān-i Quds Raḍawī (Ms 4316). According to Motaghedi who inspected the manuscript in Mashhad, a *waqf* note is present in the manuscript stating that the 23rd *juzʾ* was offered to the Imam Reza Shrine Library. It consists of 2,131 folios, with an average of slightly over 70 folios for each volume. Folios from this manuscript were published in Blair, *Islamic Calligraphy*, 197; Ettinghausen et al., *Islamic Art and Architecture*, 180; Lings, *Splendours of Qur'an Calligraphy & Illumination*, 57; and Maʿānī, '*Shāhkārhāyi-i hunarī-i*', 46–64.

[51] Unfortunately the folios of this Qur'an are not numbered.

[52] "*Ghafara allāh lahu wa-li'wālidayhi*" (may God forgive him and his parents) is commonly used in Qur'an colophons and is encountered on Ghaznavid funerary architecture. See Giunta, 'Some Brief Remarks', 161. However, the second part of the invocation "*wa-li-jamīʿ al-muʾminīn wa'l-muʾmināt*" (and all the believing men and women) was rarely used in Ghazna with the exception of the tomb of ʿUmar b. Abī Ṭāhir b. al-Ḥasan al-Nishābūrī, datable to the late 4th/10th century or early 5th/11th century. The full inscription on the tomb reads: *Bi'smi llāhi al-raḥmān al-raḥīm hadhā qabr ʿumar bin abī ṭāhir bin al-ḥasan al-nishābūrī ghafara allāhu lahu wa-li-wālidayhi wa li-jamīʿ al-muʾminīn wa'l-muʾmināt tuwuffiya fī shuhūr sanat* […] (In the name of God, Merciful to all, Compassionate to each, this is the tomb of ʿUmar b. Abī Ṭāhir b. al-Ḥasan al-Nishāpūrī may God forgive him and his parents and all the believing men and women, he died in [one of the] months of the year […]). Giunta, 'Some Brief Remarks', 159-161.

[53] See *Tārīkh-i nīshābūr*, 176 § 2275. Cited in Karame and Zadeh, 'The Art of Translation', 140.

Abū Sahl's title as *warrāq* points to his profession, one that ʿUthmān had inherited, which suggests that the training of the *warrāq* might have been passed on from father to son.

Another detailed colophon that repeats the same *nisba* comes at the end of the 30th volume. It reads:[54]

> *Katabahu wa-dhahhabahu ʿuthmān bin al-ḥusayn bin abī sahl al-warrāq al-ghaznawī, ghafara allāhu lahu wa-li'wālidayhi wa-li'jamīʿ al-muʾminīn wa'l-muʾmināt wa'l-farāgh minhu fī sanat arbaʿa wa-sittīn wa-arbaʿ māʾa ḥāmidan li'llāhi taʿālā ʿalā niʿamihi wa-muṣalliyan ʿalā nabiyyihi muḥammad muṣṭafā wa-ʿalā ālihi wa-sallam kathīran al-ʿumru fānī wa'l-khaṭṭu bāqī.*
> ʿUthmān b. al-Ḥusayn b. Abī Sahl al-Warrāq al-Ghaznawī copied and gilded [this volume], may God forgive him and his parents and all the believing men and women and he finished [copying] it in the year 464 [1071 AD]. Praise God Almighty for His Grace and give abundant prayers to His Prophet Muḥammad the Chosen one and to His family. Life withers away while calligraphy remains.[55]

The patron is mentioned at the end of the tenth volume (Plate XX):

> *Amara bi-kitbati hadhā al-muṣḥaf al-shaykh al-raʾīs al-sayyid abū jaʿfar muḥammad bin aḥmad al-ʿabdūsī aṭāla allāhu fī al-ʿizz al-dawla al-dāʾima baqqāʾuhu, fī shuhūr sanat sitt wa sittīn wa-arbaʿ māʾa.*
> The writing of this Qur'an was ordered by the shaykh, the president, the sayyid Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-ʿAbdūsī may God prolong the glory of the nation permanent eternally, in the months of the year 466 [1073 AD].

The formula "*amara bi-kitbat"* was also used in the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm. Instead of the more commonly used "*al-farāgh minhu*" ("finished the copying of") or *katabahu* ("copied it"), this term implies it was copied at the request of Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-ʿAbdūsī.

---

[54] Cited in Ḥāʾirī, 'Muqaddima', 22; and Maʿānī, 'Shāhkārhāyi-i hunarī-i', 55–56 (note 6).

[55] The last statement, "*al-ʿumr fānī wa'l-khaṭṭ bāqī*" (life withers away while calligraphy remains), reflects the copyist's belief in the endurance of calligraphy. I have translated *al-khaṭṭ* as "calligraphy" and not *kitāba* (writing) since in the act of *khaṭṭ* (drawing a line) there is the inherent act of planning, which characterises calligraphy as opposed to writing. See Lane, *Arabic English-Lexicon*, 759, no.1. The difference between "calligraphy" and "writing" was mentioned a century earlier by the Abbasid court secretary Ibn Durustawayh (d. 346/957). He associates *al-khaṭṭ* with the copying of the Qur'an, defined as *ṭaṣwīran* (visual) or *naqsḥan* (inscriptive), while *al-kitāba*, he notes, is the production of *al-kātib*. See Ibn Durustawayh, *Kitāb al-kuttāb*, 16.

This might be the same Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad mentioned by Ibn Funduq who was the *naqīb* (chief) and *raʾīs* (president) of Ṭūs, a district in Khurasan that is very close to Mashhad.[56] He was appointed by Sultan Masʿūd I (the father of Sultan Ibrāhīm), and was praised in the poetry of al-Thaʿālibī (d. 429/1037).[57] He must have held the title of *naqīb*, reflecting his position as the chief of the ʿAlīds and the spokesman of the town.[58] He was also *raʾīs,* a title mentioned in the colophon and by al-Bayhaqī, meaning the local "mayor" who was responsible for the internal security and taxation of the town.[59] The position of *raʾīs* is generally held in towns with no residences or court of rulers. Besides *raʾīs*, the title of *sayyid*, which also appears in the colophon, designates a noble descendent of the Prophet and more specifically, lineage from ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib, confirming his position as the chief of the ʿAlīds.[60] The *asyād* (sing. *sayyid*) were a small, well-respected minority in Khurasan. Unlike the Ismaʿilis, who were already an organised sect, the ʿAlīds were not, which made the Ghaznavid sultans tolerate them as long as they remained uninvolved in any political activities.[61] Moreover, the *asyād* of Khurasan were landowners, meaning part of the mercantile classes used by the sultans as diplomatic envoys. They were rich, educated and had marriage alliances within elite circles.[62] Towards the end of the 5th/11th century, the *asyād* became powerful and very influential, with some even commanding their own military forces.[63] Finally, the title of "shaykh" before his name in the colophon may have had various meanings. It could have either been used to stress the fact that he was a descendent of the Prophet,[64] or to reference his old age at the time of the copying of the Qur'an in 466/1073, considering Masʿūd's reign began in 421/1030. Hence, ʿUthmān b. Ḥusayn al-Warrāq was commissioned to produce two Qur'ans: one for Sultan Ibrāhīm and the other for al-ʿAbdūsī, a wealthy man who held a high-ranking position in the Ghaznavid hierarchy.

The Qur'an of al-ʿAbdūsī has a similar size to the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm – the former is 30 x 25 cm, and the latter 34 x 24.5 cm. They are copied in identical NS scripts and have the same

[56] Ibn Funduq, *Tārīkh-i Baihaq*, 254-255, and cited in Bosworth, *The Ghaznavids*, 197.
[57] Cited in Bosworth, *The Ghaznavids*, 197.
[58] Ibid., 180.
[59] For the definition of *raʾīs*, see Havemann, Bosworth and Soucek, 'Raʾīs', EI2.
[60] The ʿAlīds came first to Nishapur and spread from there to other cities in Khurasan. See Bosworth, *The Ghaznavids*, 196–97. For ʿAlīds, see Daftary, ''Alids', EI3; and Lewis, ''Alids', EI2.
[61] Bosworth, *The Ghaznavids*, 194–95.
[62] Ibid., 194–99.
[63] Ibid., 198–99.
[64] Geoffroy, 'Shaykh', EI2.

majestic feel, especially because the Qur'an of al-ʿAbdūsī has only four lines on the page. According to the colophons that appear at the end of a number of volumes, the Qur'an was completed in about four years, with dates between 462/1069 and 466/1073.[65] Most interestingly, ʿUthmān is not the only name that appears in the manuscript; his son Muḥammad also copied and illuminated at least a section of this Qur'an, as indicated at the end of the 23rd volume (Plate XXI):

> On the right-hand page:
>
> *Katabahu*
> Copied
>
> On the left-hand page:
>
> *Wa-dhahhabahu muḥammad bin ʿuthmān bin al-ḥusayn al-warrāq al-ghaznawī ghafara allāh lahu wa-li'wālidayhi wa-li'aslāfihi wa-li'jamīʿ ummat muḥammad ṣallā allāh ʿalayhi wa sallam.*
> And gilded by Muḥammad b. ʿUthmān b. al-Ḥusayn al-Warrāq al-Ghaznawī may God forgive him and his parents and his ancestors and the whole nation of Muḥammad God's peace be upon him.

Hence, Muḥammad, whose name appears as the illuminator in the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm, worked alongside his father ʿUthmān to produce Qur'ans for the Ghaznavid elite, following the same trend of script and illumination.[66]

The illumination in the Qur'an of al-ʿAbdūsī

Three frontispieces at the beginning of three different volumes survive from the Qur'an of al-ʿAbdūsī (Plates XXII-XXIV).[67] Two look alike (Plates XXII and XXIII) in that their central

[65] It was not copied in the order of the Qur'anic text itself: Sections one, 22, 25 and 28 were copied in 466/1073, while sections four and five were copied in 464/1071 and section six was copied in 462/1069. Ḥāʾirī, *Kuhantarīn*, 33-35; and Maʿānī, '*Shāhkārhāyi-i hunarī-i*', 55-59, 65. Cited in Karame and Zadeh, 'The Art of Translation', 134 (note 16).

[66] According to Motaghedi, another Qur'an was copied by Muḥammad b. ʿUthmān and was commissioned by Muḥammad b. Abī Dallf Halfurri in 614/1217 to a shrine. A folio from this Qur'an is published in: Motaghedi, *Warrāq-I Ghaznavi Family*, 55. Unfortunately, no additional information or reproductions were made available from this manuscript at the time of the writing of this thesis, hence this information needs further research to be confirmed.

panels are decorated with stylised scrolls of *fleur de lys* that have pointed extended tips, while the third frontispiece (Plate XXIV) is composed of interlaced outlined bands decorated with a Kufic script, unfortunately unreadable from the available reproductions.[68] The scrolls of *fleur de lys* have long extended tip that curl up and are intertwined in a manner that recalls the decoration on a metal ewer now at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The ewer is datable to the 6th/12th century, it carries the name of Aḥmad b. ʿAlī al-Sijzi, and Milikian-Chirvani suggests that it may have been produced in Sistan (Plate XXV).[69] The fact that similar scrolls and treatment of motifs appear in the Qur'an decoration and on this ewer (and on Samanid ceramics as discussed earlier) suggests that a common visual language was articulated on various medium in Greater Iran between the 4th/10th and 6th/12th century.

The central panels of the three frontispieces are framed with geometric latticework.[70] In the first (Plate XXII), the latticework is intersected with the repetition of the word "Allah" in alternation with small geometric forms. In the second and third (Plates XXIII and XXIV, respectively), small geometric forms are generated by the interlaced design as seen earlier in the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm. The three frontispieces share two additional features: the latticework around the central panels is framed with a thin band made of diagonal lines, achieving consistency across the designs. A type-7 vignette – with symmetrically designed interlaced floral scrolls and a frame made of a repetition of flower buds, a polylobed contour with two extended sinuous lines – projects into the margin from each of the three panels, as in the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm.

The first double-page spread with Qur'anic text at the beginning of the first volume in the Qur'an of al-ʿAbdūsī, like in the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm, is richly decorated (Plate XXVI). At the top are two wide illuminated bands decorated with scrolls of *fleur de lys*. The band on the right-hand page is inscribed with *fātiḥat al-kitāb* (the opening of the Book – the first sura) and the band on the left-hand page is inscribed with the verse count *sabʿu āy[ā]t* (seven verses). Both titles are inscribed in Kufic in a panel made of three overlapping circles. Four vignettes of type-7 decorated with *fleur de lys* scrolls and blue polylobed contours are linked to the framed text panel, with two in each margin, one at the top and one at the bottom.

---

[67] The frontispieces from Mashhad 4316 are published in Maʿānī, '*Shāhkārhāyi-i hunarī*', 58-59.
[68] According to the caption of the original reproduction, the bands are inscribed with Qur'anic verses. Maʿānī, '*Shāhkārhāyi-i hunarī-i*', 59.
[69] Melikian-Chirvani, *Islamic Metalwork*, 75.
[70] Two additional frontispieces are published in Motaghedi, *Warrāq-I Ghaznavi Family,* 29, 49 and 52.

The first double-page spread of the tenth volume is also richly illuminated (Plate XXVII). The banner at the top of each page is decorated with two circles inscribed with the "Seal of Solomon" flanking the title of the volume, which reads: *al-juzʾ al-ʿāshir min al-thal[ā]thīn* (the tenth volume of 30). This title, unlike that at the beginning of the first volume, is copied in monumental RS. The four vignettes linked to these banners – two at the top and two at the bottom – are also of type-7, decorated with *fleur de lys* scrolls with polylobed blue contours from which two thin sinuous lines extend. The two at the top have *li'llāh* (to God) repeated around them, a feature encountered in the frontispiece of BL Add. 7214 (Plate XLI, Chapter I).

The "Seal of Solomon" reappears at the centre of one of the Qur'an's finispieces (Plate XXVIII), inscribed in a circle and framed by geometric interlaced lines generating blue geometric forms, like those in the full-page illuminations of Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an.[71] Moreover, the black floral scrolls decorating the ground of the last double-page spread with Qur'anic text in the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm (fols. 237v-238r, Plate IX) reappear here in the ground of a folio from the 24th volume (Plate XXIX). They also decorate the ground of a sura band, which projects a vignette decorated with composite palmettes and at the base of which is a V-shaped palmette with truncated edges that points downwards (Figure 4.18). This design of vignette is of type-6, following Déroche's typology, and is more generally seen in Kufic Qur'ans copied earlier than the 5th/11th century, as in for example, BNF Arabe 342a and BNF Arabe 346d (Figure 4.19Figure 4.20).[72] The fact that some designs appear to be rooted in earlier traditions of illumination places the Ghaznavid Qur'ans in the historical continuum of Qur'anic production, with features rooted in the group of five Qur'ans from Nishapur, such as the type-7 vignette designs, even though a clear departure from their repertoire is visible.

[71] Unfortunately, Maʿāni does not say to which volume this finispiece belongs. Maʿānī, '*Shāhkārhāyi-i hunarī-i*', 59.
[72] Déroche, *Les manuscrits du Coran*, 32–33.

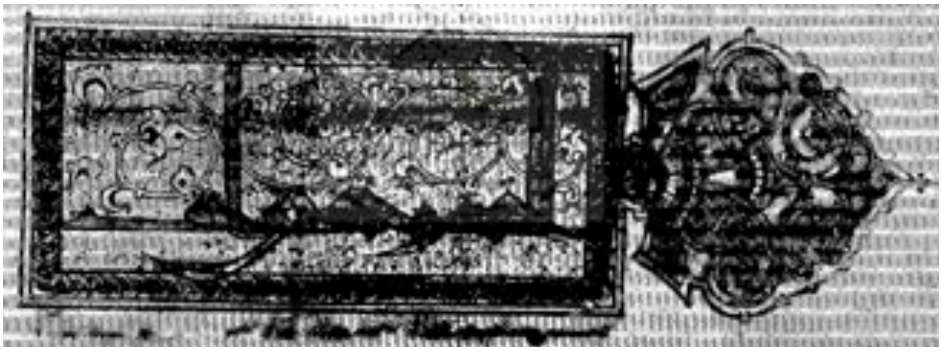

Figure 4.18: Sura banner in the Qur'an of al-ʿAbdūsī, 466/1073.

Figure 4.19: Vignette design in BNF Arabe 342a, fol. 8v, 3rd/9th - 4th/10th century.

Figure 4.20: Vignette design in BNF Arabe 346d, fol. 101r, 3rd/9th - 4th/10th century.

In addition to this vignette design, verse markers in the Qur'an of al-ʿAbdūsī are also rooted in the previous century. As such, two types of rosettes are used to mark single verses (Table 4.2). The first rosette is a simple gold circle with the word *āya* (verse) inscribed in it and decorated with a scroll of *fleur de lys*, a design based on designs of the previous century.[73] The second is a rosette with dots decorating its petals inscribed with a letter of the *abjad* system counting every

[73] It is of type 1.A.I: (1) is a simple circle; (A) a simple form; and (I) no dots around the device. Seen for example in BNF Arabe 325a. Déroche, *Les manuscrits du Coran*, 29.

tenth verse, related in design to the rosette punctuating the end of Persian sentences in the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm and also rooted in earlier-century designs.[74] Every tenth verse is additionally marked with a medallion in the margin from which thin lines radiate, a design similarly seen in earlier Kufic Qur'ans and related in design to the single-verse marker in the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm.[75]

Even though some elements in the illumination of Sultan Ibrāhīm and al-ʿAbdūsī's Qur'an are rooted in earlier manuscript tradition others resonate on contemporaneous art production Greater from Iran and specifically Khurasan.

The scripts employed in the Qur'an of al-ʿAbdūsī

The NSI employed in the Qur'an of al-ʿAbdūsī is identical to that of the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm, as shown in Table 4.3: independent *alif,* which has the oblique turn at the bottom; the top diagonal stroke of *jīm*/*ḥā'*/*khā'* that crosses the horizontal stroke on the baseline; *dāl*/*dhāl* with its small triangular shape at the base; *ṭā'*/*ẓā'* with its diagonal stroke that meets the body of the letter on the left; the head of initial *ʿayn*/*ghayn,* which is made of a thin diagonal stroke followed by a thicker stroke; the trapezoidal shape of final *mīm,* which has a thin diagonal tail; *nūn,* which starts with a thick, short stroke and ends with a stroke in a horizontal direction; and, finally, the head of *wāw* that is trapezoidal with a thin diagonal tail.[76] While NSI is used for the Qur'anic text, RS is employed for copying the colophons (Plates XIX-XXI). It is characterised by thin, curved tails in letters, such as *rā'*, as in *thuluth* (although these sometimes appear as oblique long pointed tails as in *muḥaqqaq*); shallow bowls in letters, such as *yā'* and *nūn,* as in *muḥaqqaq*; small counters in letter heads as in *thuluth;* and an *alif* with *tarwīs* at the top and the thin sinuosity at the bottom, as in both *muḥaqqaq* and *thuluth*. A similar script, characterised by the same features as this RS was used on the 6th/12th century ewer discussed above (Plate XXV).

[74] They are both of type 3.2.2. See Déroche, *Les manuscrits du Coran,* 29-30. But the rosette punctuating the end of Persian sentences in the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm has no letter inscribed in it.
[75] It is of type 4.D.II. See Déroche, *Les manuscrits du Coran,* 29-30.
[76] Unfortunately, *ṭā'*/*ẓā'* does not appear on the available reproductions from this Qur'an, but given the resemblance of its letters with those of Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an, we can assume that the form of *ṭā'*/*ẓā'* is similar to it.

The fact that the colophons are copied in RS, while the Qur'anic text is copied in NSI, reveals not only a stylistic choice aimed at differentiating the colophons from the Qur'anic text, but also the calligraphers' level of mastery in various scripts. The use of NS and RS scripts in one manuscript confirms that they were employed in the same environment and that the same people could have been skilled in both. This change in script type appears within one sentence in the colophon of the 23rd volume (Plate XXI): *katabahu* (written) on the right-hand page in NSI is followed on the left-hand page with *wa-dhahhabahu* (and illuminated) in RS. By switching to a different script within one sentence, Muḥammad b. ʿUthmān is exhibiting his skills as a calligrapher and specifically his mastery of two types of scripts.

This mixture of NS and RS is seen in another contemporaneous document, namely a *waqf* note in a Kufic Qur'an previously unpublished (Plate XXXI).[77] Its RS and monumental NSI are comparable to those employed in the Ghaznavid Qur'ans. For example, the NSI has contrast, diagonality and typical features also employed in the Ghaznavid Qur'ans, including the top diagonal stroke of *jīm/ḥāʾ/khāʾ* that crosses the baseline, the small triangular shape at the base of *dāl/dhāl* and the top diagonal stroke of *ʿayn.*

The note reads:

> *Hadhā al-muṣḥaf wa-huwa bi-khaṭṭ amīr al-muʾminīn ʿalī bin abī ṭālib ʿalayhi al-salām, wuqifa ʿalā mashhad al-sayyid al-imām al-saʿīd al-shahīd abī al-ḥasan ʿalī bin mūsā al-riḍā raḥmat allāh ʿalayhi, al-mawdūʿ bi'l-ṭūs, waqafahu mālikuhu ʿalī bin abī al-q[ā]sim al-muqriʾ li'l-(?) taqarruban ilā allāh ʿazza wa jall…*
> This Qur'an was copied by ʿAli b. Abī Ṭālib peace be upon him, endowed to the Mashhad of al-Sayyid al-Imam, the martyr in heaven, Abī al-Ḥaṣan ʿAlī b. Mūsa al-Riḍa, God's mercy be upon him, placed in Ṭūs, endowed by its owner ʿAlī b. Abī al-Q[ā]sim al-Muqriʾ (?), in devotion to God Glorified and Sublime.

The last line is unfortunately undecipherable.

[77] The Qur'an is now at Imam Reza Shrine Library (Ms. 18). I would like to thank Morteza Karimi-Nia for providing me with the reproduction of this document, which he discussed in his 25 June 2015 lecture at the Collège de France entitled, 'Manuscripts and Manuscript Studies of the Qurʾan in Iran, with Special Reference to Ms. 18 of Aste-E Quds in Mashhad'. Published online: http://www.college-de-france.fr/site/en-francois-deroche/symposium-2015-06-25-17h15.htm (last accessed on 10 July 2016).

Regardless of whether this Qur'an was originally copied by the fouth Caliph, its waqf note, which indicates that it was endowed to the shrine of the eighth Imam ʿAlī Rida in Ṭūs, confirms once more that NS and RS were stylised in this monumental form in Ṭūs – as in the Ghaznavid Qur'ans – and suggests that this could have been a local style of script stylisation.

Returning to the Qur'ans of al-ʿAbdūsī, a third script appears to be employed namely foliated Kufic, as it is inscribed in the band at the top of the folio from the 24th volume (Plate XXIX). It resembles the script inscribed in the crossing bands of a 6th/12th century bronze bucket that holds the name of Muḥammad b. Nāsir b. Muḥammad al-Harawī (Plate XXX).[78] In both scripts, the endings of the vertical strokes of letters are split with an ornament at their tip and the heads of their looped letters are governed by triangularity. Here, again, on can draw parallel between the circular design at the centre of the bucket and that at the centre of the finispiece in al-ʿAbdūsī's Qur'an (Plate XXVIII).

Hence, the Qur'ans of al-ʿAbdūsī and of Sultan Ibrāhīm employ, besides their scripts, the following common characteristics: *fleurs de lys* as ground decoration; a similar design for tenth-verse markers; type-7 vignettes with sinuous lines extending from their top and bottom; the "Seal of Solomon" as a decorative motif; latticework frames that generate blue forms; a colour palette of blue, red and white with abundant use of gold; and a similar size with an overall monumental feeling. These similarities, together with the fact that ʿUthmān b. Ḥusayn al-Warrāq and his son Muḥammad's names appear in both, suggest first that ʿUthmān and his son worked collaboratively and, second, that there was a local trend of script and illumination that appealed to the Ghaznavid elite and that was articulated in these artists' work. Given that there is around a 20-year difference between the production of the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm and that of al-ʿAbdūsī, three hypotheses are plausible. The first is that ʿUthmān and his son were based in Ghazna where they produced Qur'ans for the Ghaznavid court and elite; the second hypothesis is that they lived and worked in Ṭūs where they produced both Qur'ans; and the third suggests that they moved from Ṭūs to Ghazna at some point in their career. A firm attribution cannot be reached with the present evidence at hand. The name of the third person, ʿAlī, which appears without a *nasab* (patronym) or *nisba* (toponym) in the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm, cannot help

[78] It is now at the Hermitage Museum. Mayer, *Islamic Metalworkers and Their Works*, 71 (and Plate X).

confirm the city of origin of these Qur'ans. Interestingly, one ʿAlī is fully named in a fourth contemporaneous Qur'an to which we shall now turn.

ʿAlī's Qur'an

Folios from the Qur'an which we will refer to as "ʿAlī's Qur'an" are dispersed among various collections in the world, which I have reassembled based on the examination of the actual folios or their reproductions. The Topkapı Sarayı Library holds the 18th volume that covers Q. 23:1-25:20 (R 14), the Aga Khan Museum in Toronto has folios from the opening of the final volume that covers Q. 78:1-88:8 (MS 00261), the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York has a folio (37.111.2) that I have personally examined, the Freer Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. has another folio (F 1929.70) that I have also closely studied, the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin has one further folio (Ms 1607), the Kuwait National Museum has 22 folios from the seventh volume that covers Q. 5:83-110 and 113-120 (LNS 6 MS),[79] and the State Library in Munich holds the 20th volume that covers Q. 27:56-29:45 (cod. Arab. 2603) that I have also personally studied.[80] The frontispiece of the last one is identical to the frontispiece of the volume in the Kuwait National Museum.[81]

The Qur'an was copied in 485/1092 in 30 volumes in a monumental NS script almost identical to the one used in the previously discussed Qur'ans, and employs the same type of illumination. Its size (25.5 x 19.5 cm) is slightly smaller than that of the three other manuscripts, but has the same majestic feel with its rich illumination and abundant use of gold.

The first line in the colophon of the 18th volume, now in Istanbul, reads (Plate XXXII):[82]

> *Wa'l-farāgh minhu fī shuhūr sanat khams wa thamānīn wa arbaʿ māʾat.*
> It was completed in the months of the year 485 [1092 AD].

The second line reads:

Katabahu ʿalī.

[79] I would like to thank Alain George who provided me with reproductions from the seventh volume at the Kuwait National Museum.
[80] I am grateful to Helga Rebhan for facilitating my visit to the Bavarian State Library in Munich and providing me access to study this volume and other manuscripts in the collection.
[81] A folio from this Qur'an was published in Lings, *Splendours of Qur'an Calligraphy & Illumination*, 58.
[82] This colophon is published in Lings, *Splendours of Qur'an Calligraphy & Illumination*, 58. The author says that the colophon is now at an unknown location, and that it was last seen in Tehran in the private collection of the late Āgā Mahdī Kāshānī.

Copied by ʿAlī.

The third line is smudged but one can still read:

Ibn ʿabd al-raḥmān al-ghaznawī.
Ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Ghaznawī.

The name "ʿAlī'" appears in the illuminated medallion in the left margin of this same double-page spread preceded by an illuminated medallion in the right margin inscribed with *dhahhabahu* (illuminated). Unfortunately, we cannot be sure whether it is the same ʿAlī referred to in the colophon or whether he collaborated with other people on this project.

The illumination in ʿAlī's Qur'an

The frontispiece of this Qur'an's 18th volume is decorated with an interlaced design formed by straight and curved lines generating different shapes, such as rosettes lozenges, hexagons an dtriangles and includes the "Seal of Solomon" (Plate XXXIII), which is also seen in the Qur'ans of Sultan Ibrāhīm and al-ʿAbdūsī. In the Qur'an of al-ʿAbdūsī, it is inscribed in the top illuminated bands on the first double-page spread with Qur'anic text at the beginning of the tenth volume (Plate XXVII) and at the centre of its finispiece (Plate XXVIII). In Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an, it is present in a tenth-verse medallion (Figure 4.11). Moreover, the ground of this 18th volume frontispiece (Plate XXXIII) is decorated with gold rosettes and interlaced foliated scrolls, while the "Seal of Solomon", formed at its centre, is decorated with two pairs of convergent *fleurs de lys,* each contained in its own stem – a feature characterising the illumination of the previously discussed Qur'ans as well. The central panel is framed by latticework generating blue geometric forms, and linked to a type-7 vignette containing symmetrically designed floral scrolls, a repetition of floral buds that now resemble a beehive-like frame and a blue polylobed contour with sinuous line extension – as seen in the previously discussed Ghaznavid Qur'ans. The configuration of this frontispiece recalls the design applied on a copper alloy basin from Khurasan datable to the 6th/12th century or early 7th/13th century, pointing again to aesthetic proximity between Qur'anic motifs on those appearing on various

artistic productions from Khurasan (Plate XXXIV).[83] The basin is decorated with interlaced design forming triangles and hexagons and lozenges, very similar to the frontispiece design.

A different frontispiece design appears at the beginning of the seventh and 20th volumes of ʿAlī's Qur'an (Plate XXXV). They are made of curvilinear lines laid out symmetrically across a vertical axis and decorated with interlaces of *fleur de lys* scrolls and palmettes. They have an identical frame and type-7 vignette design, as in the frontispiece of the 18th volume.

The main configuration and interlaced design of the frontispiece of the seventh volume resembles the stucco decoration from the palace built in 505/1111 in Ghazna for the son of Sultan Ibrāhīm, Masʿūd III (r. 492/1098-508/1114), under whose reign ʿAlī's Qur'an was produced (Plates XXXVI and XXXVII). The panels are decorated with interlaced scrolls of *fleur de lys*, trilobate flowers and palmettes designed symmetrically across a vertical axis. The trilobate flowers, like in the frontispiece design of the seventh volume, have two sepals pointing downwards and very long extended pointed tips. In addition, the floriated Kufic script on the epigraphic panels surviving from the remains of the palace and in the band of the Qur'an's colophon are very similar in design (Figure 4.21). In both, ascenders are stretched vertically ending with pointed floral buds at their tips. These floral endings appear to have been used earlier in Iran as the silk with double-headed eagles from the 5th/11th century informs us (Plate XXXVIII).[84] Like the script of the epigraphic panel and that inscribed in the band on the colophon spread of ʿAlī's Qur'an, the script at the top of the silk (65 x 171 cm) has floral endings and parallel decorative ascenders suggesting that such script stylisation may have also been popular in Iran at the turn of the 5th/11th century.

[83] The basin is now part of the Khalili Collection of Islamic Art, (MTW 1242). Published in Melikian-Chirvani, *Islamic Metalwork from the Iranian World*, 63 (fig. 26) and Rogers, *The Arts of Islam*, 96-97.
[84] The silk is now in Cleveland Museum of Art (62.264). Wiet, *Soieries Persanes, 55* (no. IX and Pl. X-XI). On this and other similar pieces, see Blair et al., 'Reevaluating the Date of the 'Buyid' Silks by Epigraphic and Radiocarbon Analysis'.

Figure 4.21: Top: Epigraphic panel from the palace of Masʿūd III (C2890); Bottom: The middle band on the left-hand page of the colophon spread in ʿAlī's Qur'an.

The vignettes projecting from the frontispiece and illuminated banners of ʿAlī's Qur'an are of type-7 (Table 4.2). The single-verse dividers are rosettes inscribed with a letter of the *abjad* system counting every tenth verse, and decorated with dots. This type of rosette is used as a single-verse marker in al-ʿAbdūsī's Qur'an, and a related design punctuates the end of Persian sentences in the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm.[85] The fifth-verse marginal marker is a teardrop shape that has a triangular base inscribed with *khamsa* (five), at the top of which is a crown-like design. It is identical in design to that of the British Library's Qur'an. Each tenth verse is marked by a medallion in the margin from which thin lines radiate, a design used in the Qur'ans of Sultan Ibrāhīm and al-ʿAbdūsī.[86] At the centre of this design, *ʿashara* (ten) is inscribed and surrounded by a repetition of trilobate flowers encircled in their own stems, a design also employed in the British Library's Qur'an. Finally, the "Seal of Solomon" appears again in the manuscript in two places – in the marginal medallions of the colophon spread (Plate XXXII), and flanking the sura title in the illuminated band of a folio from the 18th volume (Plate XXXIX).

The illumination employed in ʿAlī's Qur'an therefore fits with the aesthetic of Ghaznavid courtly production. The similarities highlighted between the illumination of ʿAlī's Qur'an and

[85] They are of type 3.2.2. See Déroche, *Les manuscrits du Coran,* 28-30
[86] They are of type 4.D.II. Déroche, *Les manuscrits du Coran,* 28-30.

the architectural motifs found on the remains of the palace of Masʿūd III suggest, once more, that a local visual language was articulated in manuscripts and on architecture during the Ghaznavid period.

The script employed in ʿAlī's Qur'an

The NSI employed in ʿAlī's Qur'an is very similar to that in the Qur'ans of Sultan Ibrāhīm, the British Library, and al-ʿAbdusī, suggesting that ʿAlī was working in the same eastern Iranian calligraphy trend as *al-warrāq al-ghaznawī,* and that he could even be the same ʿAlī whose name appears in the illumination of the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm (Table 4.1). The NSI of ʿAlī's Qur'an is characterised by the following features (Table 4.3): an oblique turn at the bottom of independent *alif*; a top diagonal stroke in *jīm*/*ḥāʾ*/*khāʾ* that crosses the horizontal stroke; a small triangular shape at the base of *dāl*/*dhāl*; a diagonal stroke that meets the body of *ṭāʾ*/*ẓāʾ* on the left; a thin diagonal stroke followed by a thicker stroke forming the head of initial *ʿayn*/*ghayn*; a trapezoidal shape of final *mīm*, which has a thin diagonal tail; a thick, short stroke that ends with another horizontal one in *nūn*; and a trapezoidal head of *wāw* that has a thin diagonal tail.

Interestingly, the way *katabahu ʿalī* (copied by ʿAlī) in the colophon is laid out with the backward return of *yāʾ* and small triangular shape below the space between the letters *bāʾ* and *hāʾ*, recalls the letter layouts and stylisation in Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an, and even more so in Ibn Shādhān's manuscript (Figures 4.12 and 1.2, respectively). These similarities again point to a local trend of script stylisation in eastern Iran.

The evidence we have from the Qur'ans of Sultan Ibrāhīm and al-ʿAbdūsī indicates that such monumental Qur'ans involved at least two people in their production. Therefore, until additional colophons from ʿAlī's Qur'an are brought to light, we will be unable to draw a complete picture of the number of people behind this manuscript's production. The appearance of the name "ʿAlī" in the marginal illumination of the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhim raises the question of whether it is the same ʿAlī b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Ghaznawī of ʿAlī's Qur'an, but here again the answer will have to be postponed until additional folios from both manuscripts are revealed. ʿAlī's *nisba* of "*al-ghaznawī"* recalls that of ʿUthmān and his son Muḥammad, linking the three men to Ghazna, but this is still not enough evidence to state that it is the same ʿAlī. Nevertheless, the

resemblance of ʿAlī's Qur'an to the Ghaznavid Qur'ans discussed above indicates that it could have been copied in Ghazna or Ṭūs, or even in Bust, like the following Qur'an.

The fifth Qur'an that belongs to the group of Ghaznavid Qur'ans is now at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France in Paris, Arabe 6041.[87] Only the fifth volume (Q. 23:5-34:20) survives from this seven-volume Qur'an. It was copied in 505/1111 in Bust, 500 km south of Ghazna, according to its colophon (fol. 125r, Plate XL):

> *Katabahu ʿuthm[ā]n bin muḥammad bi-baldat bust fī shuhūr sanat khamsin wa-khamsa māyat*.
> Copied by ʿUthmān b. Muḥammad in the territory of Bust during the months of the year 505.

And just above the colophon in the illuminated band:

> *Dhahhabahu ʿalī bin ʿabd al-raḥmān*.
> Illuminated by ʿAlī b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān.

The Qur'an was therefore copied by one ʿUthmān b. Muḥammad and illuminated by ʿAlī b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān. The latter is in all likelihood the same person who copied (and maybe illuminated) the 18th volume of ʿAlī's Qur'an, and perhaps who participated in the illumination of the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm. Even though the Bust Qur'an was copied in RS-*muḥaqqaq* script – unlike the four Ghaznavid Qur'ans, which were copied in NS – its illumination and colour palette of gold, blue, red and white, bring it close to the Ghaznavid Qur'ans. The manuscript is the smallest in the group, 20.2 x 15.1 cm, yet its abundant use of gold and the quality of its script with only seven lines per page indicate it was an expensive commission.

The illumination in the Bust Qur'an

The volume opens with an illuminated folio (fol. 1r, Plate XLI) announcing the fifth volume, inscribed in two large concentric circles similar to the design of fol. 1r in the Qur'an of Sultan

[87] The manuscript is published in its entirety online: http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b8433296d.r=arabe%206041 (last accessed on 22 July 2016). A number of folios were published in Déroche, *Les manuscrits du Coran*, 121; Richard, *Splendeurs Persanes*, 37; Tabbaa, 'The Transformation of Arabic Writing: Part I', 136; Déroche, *Islamic Codicology*, 316; Blair, *Islamic Calligraphy*, 2006, 204; and Mansour, *Sacred Script*, 94.

Ibrāhīm on which four circles frame the number of the volume (Plate III). On this first folio of the Bust Qur'an, below the concentric circles, is an illuminated rectangle with rounded edges inscribed with Q. 56: 77-78: *innahu la-qurʾān karīm fī kitāb maknūn* (This is a Glorious Qur'an, in a Book well-sheltered). This verse is also inscribed in the decoration of the opening spread in CBL Is. 1430 (Plate L, Chapter I).

The double-page frontispiece in the Bust Qur'an is designed with a circle inscribed with two symmetrically arranged triangles forming the "Seal of Solomon", seen repeatedly in the decoration of the previously discussed Qur'ans (fol. 1v, Plate XLII). Each of the four corners is decorated with a stylised flower with five or seven leaves and two sepals contained in its own circular stem. The central circular design is sandwiched between two bands, each inscribed with four rosettes sitting on a ground of interlaced lines. The lattice band that frames the central design generates blue forms, a characteristic encountered previously in the three Ghaznavid Qur'ans. Moreover, a type-7 vignette with a repetition of flower buds that resemble a beehive-like frame, a polylobed blue contour and two sinuous thin lines extending from it, is linked to the central panel of the frontispiece and to the illuminated sura headings of the Qur'an. This vignette design is identical to the one projecting from the frontispiece of the 18th volume of ʿAlī's Qur'an (Table 4.2).

The first double-page spread with Qur'anic text (fols. 2v-3r, Plate XLIII) announces *al-subʿ al-khāmis* (the fifth of the seventh division) at the top, inscribed in the bands flanked by *al-mulku li'llāh* (Sovereignty belongs to God). *Al-mulku li'llāh* is repeated in the frontispiece and finispiece of TIEM 449 from the 5th/11th century, further linking these Qur'ans to the Ghaznavid Qur'ans.This double-page spread has wide illuminated bands in the right and left margins that incorporate the marginal medallions. These wide illuminated bands are also seen on the colophon spread of ʿAlī's Qur'an (Plate XXXII). Additional elements in the illumination of the Bust Qur'an relate it to the group of Ghaznavid Qur'ans, starting with the design of one sura banner in which the title is inscribed in two pointed ovals and a circle in a decorated banner, a configuration seen in the British Library's Qur'an ascribed to Ghazna (Figure 4.22).

Figure 4.22: Top: Sura heading in the British Library's Qur'an, 5th/11th-6th/12th century; Bottom: Sura heading in the Bust Qur'an, (fol. 23r), Bust, 505/1111.

Moreover, each verse is marked by a rosette with dots decorating its petals, a design employed in the Ghaznavid Qur'ans (Table 4.2) and as the fifth-verse marker in TIEM 449 from the 5th/11th century. The fifth-verse marker is a circular form inscribed with the word *khamsa* (five), at the top of which is a crown-like design and at the base is a thin trapezoid that sits on a small triangle – a design closely related to the fifth-verse marker used in the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm and comparable to that employed in ʿAlī's Qur'an. The tenth-verse marker in the Bust Qur'an is a marginal medallion with radiating thin lines around it, a design that appeared already in the Ghaznavid Qur'ans. Finally, the division of the text is noted in illuminated squares in the margins, which is comparable to the design found in the margins of ʿAlī's Qur'an in that both are inscribed in squares in foliated Kufic on a hatched ground (Figure 4.23). The square is inscribed here with *al-thālith wa'l-tisʿūn min al-māʾa wa'l-khamsīn* (the 93 of a 150), indicating that, like the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm, the Bust Qur'an was divided into 150 parts in addition to the 30-part division.

Figure 4.23: Left: Marginal illuminated devices inscribed with the division of the text in the Bust Qur'an, Bust, 505/1111; Right: Similar devices in the margin of ʿAlī's Qur'an, 485/1092.

Thus, these marginal devices marking the division of text alongside the wide illuminated bands in the right and left margins of the first double-page spread, the "Seal of Solomon", the blue forms in the latticework framing the frontispiece of the volume, the type-7 vignettes and the verse markers, all place this Qur'an securely within the same trend of the Ghaznavid Qur'ans and very closely related to ʿAlī's Qur'an. This suggests that it might have been the same ʿAlī who was involved in the illumination of both Qur'ans.

The script employed in the Bust Qur'an

The script employed in this Qur'an shares some similarities with the RS employed in the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm and the RS employed in the colophons of the Qur'an of al-ʿAbdūsī (Table 4.3). It mixes some of characteristics of later *muḥaqqaq* and later *thuluth*. The former is seen in the shallowness of the bowls and thin pointed tail of *wāw,* while the latter is seen in the variation of the letter *wāw* that appears with a more concave tail. The *alif* of the Bust Qur'an has *tarwīs* at the top with a thin turn at the bottom – features seen in both *thuluth* and *muḥaqqaq* as well as in the RS scripts employed in the Ghaznavid Qur'ans. This form of *alif* with a turn at the bottom is

also seen on a tombstone from Bust dated 595/1199 suggesting that it may have been a form favoured in eastern Iran (Figure 4.24).[88]

Figure 4.24: Tombstone, Bust, 595/1199.

The city of Bust, where the Qur'an originates, was the secondary residence of the Ghaznavid rulers, in which Sultan Maḥmūd and his son Masʿūd I built Lashkari Bazar, a complex with residential and military structures and two large palaces.[89] In addition, it was described in contemporaneous historical sources to have had an opulent court life with hunting, banquets and palace receptions.[90] As an important city for the Ghaznavid sultans, it is likely that Bust was a centre for Qur'anic manuscript production, especially considering that the Bust Qur'an was an expensive commission. Thus, this indicates that there was more than one centre of Qur'anic

[88] On the tomb see Flood, *Objects of Translation*, 198 and Hillenbrand, 'The Architecture of the Ghaznavids and Ghurids', 163.
[89] On Bust, see Sourdel-Thomine, 'Bust', EI2. On Lashkar-i Bazar, see Allen, 'Notes on Bust'; Allen, 'Notes on Bust (Continued)', 1989; and Allen, 'Notes on Bust (Continued)', 1990.
[90] Sourdel-Thomine, 'Bust', EI2.

production in Khurasan during the Ghaznavid period. In the colophons of both Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an and al-ʿAbdūsī's Qur'an, the same formula is used: In the latter, the colophon starts with "*amara bi-kitbatihi al-amīr […]*, and in the former, it starts with "*amara bi-kitbat hadhā al-muṣḥaf*". Instead of "*al-farāgh minhu*" ("finished the copying of") or "*katabahu*" ("copied it"), as is usually the case in colophons, the phrase used here implies it was copied on the demand of someone.

In addition, if ʿAlī b. Abd al-Raḥmān is the same person as whose name appears in ʿAlī's Qur'an, it means that ʿAlī's Qur'an could have been produced in Bust or Tūs, due to its resemblance with the Qur'an of al-ʿAbdūsī or even in Ghazna, if it is the same ʿAlī whose name is mentioned in Sultan Ibrāhīm's illumination. This suggests that the people behind the production of these Qur'ans were mobile and that they might have travelled between cities in Khurasan producing Qur'ans for the elite and spreading a specific style of script and illumination in important Ghaznavid cities of Khurasan.

Indeed, a non-Qur'anic manuscript, the earliest in the group of Ghaznavid Qur'ans, shares features in its illumination and script with the Ghaznavid corpus (Plates XLIV-XLVI).[91] It is a book on the moral and physical characteristics of the Prophet, entitled *Kitāb khalq al-nabī wa-khulqih*. Its colophon states (Plate XLIV):[92]

> *Katabahu abū bakr muḥammad b. abī rāfiʿ al-warrāq bi-ghazna, ḥarasahā allāhu taʿālā.*
> Copied by Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Abī Rāfiʿ al-Warrāq in Ghazna, may God preserve it.

It was commissioned by the Ghaznavid Amir Abū Mansūr ʿAbd al-Rashīd (r. 441/1049-444/1052), the son of Maḥmūd of Ghazna, which allows us to date it to c. 441/1049 (fol. 1r, Plate XLV): [93]

[91] The manuscript is now at Leiden University Library (BRU Ms 437). See Stern, 'A Manuscript from the Library of the Ghaznavid Amir ʿAbd al-Rashid'; and Voorhoeve, *Handlist of Arabic Manuscripts*, 162. Folios from this manuscript were also published in Atil, *Islamic Art and Patronage*, 103; and Blair, *Islamic Calligraphy*, 202.
[92] Unfortunately this folio is not numbered on the available reproduction.
[93] Based on the decipherment by Stern, 'A Manuscript from the Library of the Ghaznawid Amir', 12-14.

> *Li'khizānat kutub al-amīr al-sayyid al-malik muʿizz dīn allāh wa-muẓāhir khalīfat allāh abī manṣūr ʿabd al-rashīd bin yamīn al-dawla amīn al-milla abī al-q[ā]sim maḥmūd bin nāṣir al-dīn naṣīr amīr al-muʾminīn aṭāla allāh baqāʾahu wa-[aʿazza] anṣārahu.*
> For the library of the prince, the sayyid, the king who glorifies God's religion and assists God's Caliph, Abū Manṣūr ʿAbd al-Rashīd the son of the right hand of the empire, the trustee guardian of religious community, Abū al-Qāsim Maḥmūd, the son of the helper of religion, assistant of the commander of the faithful, may God prolong his life and give glory to his victories.

The title of *warrāq* here indicates that *warrāqūn* were also commissioned to copy non-Qur'anic manuscripts by the Ghaznavid elite. The use of gold and the quality of script and illumination employed in this manuscript are comparable to that of the five Ghaznavid Qur'ans and confirms that the manuscript was an imperial commission. The beginning of the text is marked by a wide illuminated band inscribed with the title of the book, *Kitāb khalq al-nabī,* and decorated with *fleur de lys* scrolls and trilobate flowers (fol. 1v, Plate XLVI). It projects into the margin a type-7 vignette, inscribed with symmetrically designed floral scrolls and framed by a repetition of floral buds and a blue polylobed contour, typically encountered in the Ghaznavid Qur'ans and identical to those employed in ʿAlī's and the Bust Qur'ans (Table 4.2). However, the manuscript was completed almost four decades earlier than ʿAlī's Qur'an and almost half a century earlier than the Bust Qur'an, suggesting that the decorative elements that make up the local Ghaznavid style spanned a period of time, and continued to be used up to the 6th/12th century.

Finally, the RS employed in this manuscript has both *naskh* and *muḥaqqaq* characteristics, suggesting that RS was already used in such a stylised manner around the middle of the 5th/11th century in Ghazna. The characteristics of *muḥaqqaq* are seen in the shallow bowls of letters, the oblique straight pointed tails, and the *tarwīs* at the top of *alif* with a thin turn at its bottom. Overall, the script is characterised by a compact look, which is a feature of *naskh*, but with slightly more rigidity in its strokes. The most comparable script is the one used to copy the colophon of the fifth volume in the Qur'an of al-ʿAbdūsī (Plate XIX). Both are very legible scripts, with *naskh* and *muḥaqqaq* features.

The earliest known manuscript that mixes *naskh* and *muḥaqqaq* characteristics in a mature and stylised manner as in *Kitāb Khalq al-Nabī* is Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an. However, the script in *Kitāb khalq al-nabī* differs in a number of ways from that of Ibn al-Bawwāb as seen the bowls

of letters, which are deeper, and the *alif* that has a thin sinuosity at the bottom (Figure 4.25). This indicates different local trends of RS stylisation in the 5th/11th century.

Figure 4.25: Top: *Kitāb khalq al-nabī,* Ghazna, *c.* 441/1049; Bottom: Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an, 391/1000.

In sum, a number of characteristics in the script and illumination of the Ghaznavid Qur'ans resonate on various media from architecture to ceramic and metalwork produced in Khurasan between the 5th/11th and 6th/12th century. These resemblances point that there was a larger visual repertoire out of which the idiosyncratic visual language of the Ghaznavid Qur'ans developed. In addition, some elements in the illumination of the Ghaznavid corpus have also been used in the group of five Qur'ans copied in the first half of the 5th/11th century ascribed to Nishapur, confirming further the point stated above. Nevertheless, the Ghaznavid Qur'ans exhibit characteristics absent from these five Qur'ans, such as the sinuous lines extending from the type-7 vignettes and the stylised *fleurs de lys*, and employ more mature RS. In that sense, the Ghaznavid RS is closer to the maturity of the scripts employed in Ibn al-Bawwāb's and the Sulayhid Qur'ans in that it retains many features of later mature RS scripts. Finally, the *fleur de lys* which appears in Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an but stylised differently point that the aesthetic of the Ghaznavid Qur'ans does not only belong to a larger contemporaneous visual language

formed in Greater Iran but also fits in a continuum of script and illumination developments that appeared in Qur'ans at the beginning of the 5th/11th century in Iraq and Egypt.

The visual language of the Ghaznavid Qur'ans is, however, closer to that of the five Qur'ans ascribed to Nishapur, farther apart from that of the Isfahan and the Palermo Qur'ans (Plate IV and XII, Chapter I, respectively), and shares many similarities with the Qur'an of Ibn Shādhān, copied most likely in eastern Iran.

The fifth *juzʿ* of a thirty-part Qur'an copied in NS from the 5th/11th century further strengthens the link between the visual repertoire employed in the group of five Qur'ans and that of the Ghaznavid Qur'ans. The Qur'an is now at the Turkish and Islamic Art Museum (555).[94] It was copied in a monumental NSI that is almost identical to the one employed in the imperial Ghaznavid Qur'ans (Plates XLVII-XLVIII).[95] The Qur'an employs five lines per page, communicating a similar monumental impression as the Qur'ans of both Sultan Ibrāhīm (copied in 484/1091) and al-ʿAbdūsī (copied in 466/1073) even though its size is smaller (19 x 14 cm).

The frontispiece of this NS Qur'an (fol. 1r, Plate XLVIII) is designed with gold interlaced lines and decorated with trilobate flowers encircled in their own stems. This central panel is framed with a geometric lattice in which a design of four trilobate flowers decorates each of the four corners. Its central design is closely related to that of the Qur'an of al-ʿAbdūsī (Plate XXXIII) and almost identical to the frontispieces of the group of five RS Qur'ans in that it is made of interlaced lines framed by a geometric lattice (Table 3.3). In addition, in TIEM 555, four dark-coloured circles inscribed with "Allah" lie at each of the four corners of the central panel, a characterising feature in the frontispieces of the five RS Qur'ans as well. A marginal circular vignette linked to the central panel is decorated with an outer circular repetition of scrolls and an inner repetition of *li'llāh*. This feature is present in the top two marginal vignettes linked to the panel of the first-double page spread of the tenth volume in the Qur'an of al-ʿAbdūsī. The

[94] Folios from TIEM 555 are published in: Farhad and Rettig, *The Art of the Qur'an*, 174-175; and Ṣahin, *The 1400th anniversary of the Qur'an*, 212-215. Iseems another juzʾ of this Qur'an is in the Sarikhani Collection. See Holberton, *The Sarikhani Collection*, 42-45.

[95] It has high contrast between its thick and thin strokes, and accentuated diagonality and triangularity of heads. Moreover, *alif* has a diagonal slant at the bottom; *dāl*/*dhāl* has the triangular form at the base; *ʿayn*/*ghayn* starts with a thin short diagonal stroke meeting a long horizontal stroke on the baseline; *mīm* is trapezoidal and has a thin diagonal stroke; *nūn* is made of three strokes and has a triangular base; and *wāw* has a triangular head followed by a thin diagonal stroke.

polylobed blue contour and the sinuous line extended from it – a distinctive mark of type-7 vignettes – appears here but in a more simplified manner whereby the lobes are spaced out and the sinuous line looks shorter and without a swirl, closer to the vignette in BL Add. 7214 (Table 3.2). An additional feature that connects this Qur'an to the Ghaznavid manuscripts is the marginal vignette linked to the sura banner inscribed with three scrolls symmetrically designed, similar to the one linked to the sura banner in ʿAlī's Qur'an dated 485/1092 (Figure 4.26). Therefore, this Qur'an shares a number of features with, on the one hand, the group of five Qur'ans ascribed to Nishapur and, on the other hand, with the Ghaznavid Qur'ans. This aesthetic proximity may well have been reflecting the geographic proximity between Nishapur and Ghazna.

Finally, an undated endowment deed on fol. 1r of TIEM 555 indicates that the manuscript was offered to a mosque in Mosul by Ḥājj Yūsuf b. Ibrāhīm b. Shaʿbān al-Ḥallāj (Plate XLVIII). Even though no date is noted in this endowment, we know that the Qur'an was at some point in Iraq after the time of its production before it reached the Ottoman treasury.[96] This attests yet again to the circulation of books and people between Iran and Iraq, and hence, to the continuous aesthetic interactions that likely happened between the two regions.

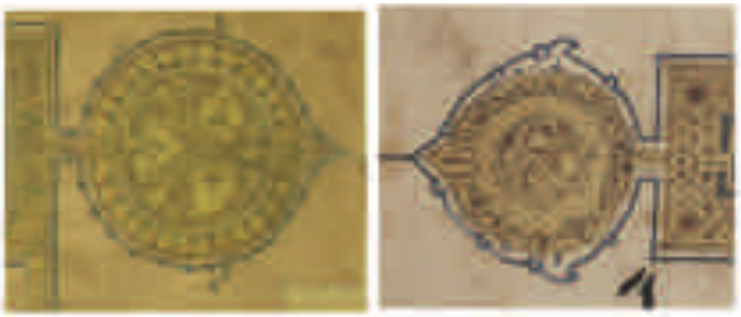

Figure 4.26: Left: Marginal vignette linked to the sura banner in ʿAlī's Qur'an, 485/1092; Right: Marginal vignette linked to the sura banner of TIEM 555, 5th/11th century.

In sum, common elements were found in the script and illumination of Ghaznavid manuscripts copied in Ghazna, Bust, Ṭūs or other important city in Ghaznavid Khurasan. This visual

[96] Additional marks, namely the stamp of Sultan Selim II (r. 973/1565-981/1573) and a *waqf* stamp recording its endowment to the library of Sultan Maḥmūd I (r. 1142/1729-1167/1753), show it later belonged to the Ottoman treasury.

language was formed as part of a larger visual language due to the mobility of people to and within Greater Iran and specifically Khurasan. ʿUthmān b. al-Ḥusayn al-Warrāq and his son Muḥammad must have been renowned in the sphere of Qur'anic production. Forgeries with the name "ʿUthmān b. al-Ḥusayn al-Warrāq" survive today and they are of much lesser quality, as François Déroche rightly suggests.[97] It is to this issue that I now turn.

[97] Déroche, 'Une reliure du ve/xie siècle', 4-6; and Déroche, *Islamic Codicology*, 188 (note 14).

Let us first put together the evidence we have gathered from the Ghaznavid Qur'ans on the production and commissioning of these manuscripts. Three names appear in Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an. The first name is that of ʿUthmān b. Ḥusayn al-Warrāq, which is in the colophon of the surviving eighth volume, and informs us that he was its copyist and illuminator (fol. 239v, Plate II). The second name is that of his son, Muḥammad, which is inscribed in the reconstructed frontispiece (Plate VI) and in an illuminated band on fol. 82r (Figure 4.2). The third name is that of one ʿAlī, which appears in a marginal device on fol. 85r (Figure 4.3). Because the names of Muḥammad and ʿAlī are integrated in the illumination of the Qur'an in small size, perhaps their role was secondary to ʿUthmān's, who may have been the one responsible for the project. On the other hand, in the Qur'an of al-ʿAbdūsī, ʿUthmān and Muḥammad were each responsible for the illumination and copying of a volume, as evidenced by the surviving colophons (Plates XIX and XXI). This indicates that their involvement in this Qur'an could have been more equal than in that of Sultan Ibrāhīm's. We do not know whether each of them in addition to their collaborative projects worked independently as illuminators or copyists, but the evidence at hand indicates that in some of their collaborative projects, each was in charge of its copying and illumination.

The name of ʿAlī in Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an reappears in two Qur'ans that share identical features in their illumination. He is mentioned as the illuminator and calligrapher in one volume of ʿAlī's Qur'an, and as the illuminator of the Bust Qur'an. The overlap of names, as well as the similarities in the visual repertoire of these Qur'ans, point once more to collaboration among copyists and illuminators, and to their travels from one city to another – perhaps with the movement of Ghaznavid members of the court who, as mentioned earlier, held secondary residencies in Khurasan.

The analysis of a number of folios from the Ghaznavid corpus indicates that this collaborative attitude was present during the production of these manuscripts and that planning had happened in advance before copying started. For example, the small script was done after the large script as illustrated on fols. 3v and 12v in Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an (Plates VIII and XII, respectively). In the former, the small NSIII text is aligned in a way to fit in between the two vertical ascenders

of the last large NSI line, while in the latter, the small NSIII script continues the large script of the third NSI line. In other cases, the small script was copied first and followed by the large script as indicated on fol. 131r of the British Library's Qur'an (Plate XVI). On this folio, the descenders of the two letters *jīm* on the last line are drawn with gaps in order to not go over the small text.

In addition, verse markers were executed after the texts were copied in the Ghaznavid Qur'ans, as seen on fol. 3v of Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an on which space was left for a rosette to mark the end of each Persian sentence (Plate VIII). The background decoration was executed last in the Ghaznavid Qur'ans, as seen in the colophon spread of ʿAlī's Qur'an in the way the background decoration frames the text with the medallions, dots and vowels (Plate XXXII).

Finally, the illuminated borders framing the texts were done after copying was completed in the Ghaznavid Qur'ans. For example, in the Qur'an of al-ʿAbdūsī, the frame goes around the bowl of *nūn* on the last line of the left hand-page of a spread (Plate XXVI), or goes over a letter at the end of the first lines of another spread (Plate XXVII). These various stages of copying and illumination indicate that a plan had to be devised in advance and that there might have been someone responsible for the whole project and the completion of each of its phases.

The title *al-warrāq,* which ʿUthmān held, could refer in different contexts to various aspects related to the production of books from their copying to their selling.[98] Al-Samaʿānī (d. 562/1166) offers a definition of the *warrāq* as someone who copied the Qur'an, Ḥadīth and other texts, and in Baghdad, as someone who manufactured and sold paper.[99] A couple of centuries later, in his *Muqaddima,* Ibn Khaldūn (d. 808/1405) associates the profession of *wirāqa* with copying, correcting, binding and other related matters.[100] Most relevantly, the "Nurse's Qur'an", which was endowed to the great mosque of Qayrawan in 410/1019, suggests that the title of *al-*

[98] Déroche, *Islamic Codicology*, 188–89. In addition, those that held the title of *warrāq* had other professions such as poets, judges and *ʿulamāʾ*. For the different types of *warrāqūn*, see Khayrallāh, *Warrāqū baghdād fī al-ʿaṣr al-ʿabbāsī*, 299-317; and Zayyāt, *al-Wirāqa wa-ṣināʾat al-kitāba wa-muʿjam al-sufun*, 15–30.

[99] Al-Samaʿānī, *al-Ansāb* XII, 236. In the early days, a Warrāq was the author's assistant as illustrated by an anecdote stating that the philologist al-Farrāʾ (d. 207/822) had two Warrāqs who copied his *tafsīr* during his public lecturing on the command of the Caliph al-Maʾmūn (r. 197/812-217/832). Pedersen, *The Arabic Book*, 45–46.

[100] Ibn Khaldun, *al-Muqaddima*, 974.

warrāq was also linked to the supervision of the manuscript, as argued by Déroche.[101] Hence, it is not far-fetched to think of ʿUthmān al-Warrāq al-Ghaznawī as the supervisor of the Qur'ans of both Sultan Ibrāhīm and al-ʿAbdūsī, especially because two additional names, that of his son and one ʿAlī, appear in the illumination.[102]

Based on the Ghaznavid corpus, we are unable to conclude whether ʿUthmān or Muḥammad were working independently or whether they were on the payroll of the sultan as part of a court workshop.[103] Nevertheless, we have evidence that the Abbasid court had employed *warrāqūn* since their names appear on the payroll in the budget of the Caliph al-Muʿtaḍid (r. 279/892-289/902). We also know that some *warrāqūn* copied Qur'ans only for caliphs, as early as the first Islamic century.[104] If ʿUthmān was indeed the supervisor of the production of Sultan Ibrāhīm and al-ʿAbdūsī's Qur'an, then he was probably the one who was commissioned by the court, and whose fame and style expanded throughout Khurasan province.

Hence, the family of al-Warrāq al-Ghaznawī developed a local distinctive style of Qur'anic script and illumination that was based on older motifs and appear to have been part of a larger visual language. This local style remained in fashion in the 6th/12th century as evidenced by the two Ghurid Qur'ans discussed in the next chapter.

In sum, the illumination of these five Qur'ans is mainly characterised by *fleurs de lys,* flowers encircled by their own stems, stylised palmettes of feathery elements, long extended tips of flowers and floriated Kufic with extended vertical endings and pointed buds. These elements also appear on the remains of Ghaznavid architecture, revealing overlaps between architectural decoration and Qur'anic illumination, and pointing to a common visual language that was

---

[101] The "Qur'an of the Nurse" was commissioned by the nurse of the fourth ruler of the Zirid dynasty, al-Muʿizz b. Bādis (r. 407/1016-454/1062). Déroche, *Islamic Codicology*, 187 (note 12).
[102] Kianoosh Motaghedi wrote about the family of al-Warrāq al-Ghaznawī. Motaghedi, *Warrāq-I Ghaznavi Family*.
[103] By the 4th/10th century, Baghdad had established a *sūq al-warrāqīn*, a market with 100 shops of *warrāqūn*, indicating that it was by then an established profession. On *sūq al-warrāqīn* in Baghdad, see Khayrallah, *Warrāqū baghdād fī al-ʿaṣr al-ʿabbāsī*, 329-352. Even though some suffered from the pay, others were well paid as evidenced by a number of contemporaneous anecdotes. For example, al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdadī, *Tārīkh baghdād*, 7:329-330; and al-Samaʿānī, *al-Ansāb*, 396. Both cited in Sayyid, *al-Kitāb al-ʿarabī al-makhṭūṭ*, 147-149. Also see Zayyāt, *al-Wirāqa wa-ṣināʾat al-kitāba*, 8.
[104] For the relationship of the Abbasid court to *warrāqūn*, see Toorawa, *Ibn Abī Ṭāhir Ṭayfūr*, 57; and Zayyāt, *al-Wirāqa wa-ṣināʾat al-kitāba*, 15–16.

developing in Ghazna. The architectural style of Ghazna is said to have been an "eclectic" style, which was echoed in literature as well.[105]

The Ghaznavid Qur'ans complement the highly decorative architectural programme exemplified by the surviving Ghaznavid monuments and in which they must have left a powerful visual impact due to their rich illumination, excessive use of gold and monumental stylised scripts. These lavishly illuminated Qur'ans indicate that, just as they were great patrons of architecture, the Ghaznavid elites were also great patrons of the book. This is supported by the fact that the education of the Ghaznavid sultan included training in scripture, as indicated by an anecdote mentioned by the historian Ibn al-Athīr (d. 630/1232), who notes that each year Sultan Ibrāhīm would copy in his own hand a Qur'an that he would send along with other charitable donations to Mecca.[106] This interest in scripture must have been one of the driving forces that led the Ghaznavid sultans to commission these splendid Qur'ans, the other being an interest in projecting the image of a strong dynasty supported by the Abbasids and competing at times with the Seljuqs. It was through their patronage of the arts that the Ghaznavid rulers sought to communicate a strong and radiant image of their empire, which was reinforced by Persian poets recruited to write and recite panegyric poems.[107]

[105] Note that the literary style that was formed in Ghazna showed some local traits of its own, especially that there was no local literary tradition. Bosworth, *The Ghaznavids*, 133.
[106] Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, 8:456. Cited in Bosworth, *The Later Ghaznavids*, 74. Masʿūd I, Ibrāhīm's father, is also known to have added sections in his own hand to official chancellery documents of an excellence unseen in good secretarial hands. Bosworth, *The Later Ghaznavids*, 130.
[107] Rypka, *History of Iranian Literature*, 196–97.

Chapter V

Ghurid Qur'ans

Two Qur'ans copied during the Ghurid rule are studied in this chapter (Table 5.1). Their script and illumination appear to be in continuity with the visual language of the Ghaznavid imperial Qur'ans yet exhibit differences away from them pointing to local trends of script and illumination. While some features appear to link these Qur'ans to their predecessors, others place them as part of a larger contemporaneous visual vocabulary that belonged to Greater Iran, articulated across dynastic boundaries and artistic productions.

The two Qur'ans were produced after the Ghurids had captured Ghazna in 569/1173 in an effort led by Sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn Muḥammad and his brother, Muʿizz al-Dīn Muḥammad, consequently putting an end to the Ghaznavid dynasty.[1] The two brothers ruled in condominium – the former ruled over the western part of the sultanate, while the latter ruled from Ghazna eastward. Jām (or Fīrūzkūh) became the summer capital of the Ghurid dynasty, from which very few architectural remains are known, as it is still largely unexcavated. However, we know it was home to many artists, poets, philosophers and religious scholars, and probably a centre of Qur'anic production.[2]

Manuscript	Date	Place of origin	Writing material	Scripts used	Height x width (cm)	Calligraphers and illuminators	Patron
Qur'an of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī (TKS EH42)	573/1177	Khurasan	Paper	NSI NSIII RS-*muḥaqqaq*	18 x 15	• Abū Bakr b. Aḥmad b. ʿAbdallah al-Ghaznawī (calligrapher and illuminator)	x
Qur'an of Sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn (IDM 3496)	584/1188	Herat or Jām?	Paper	RS-*muḥaqqaq*	41 x 33	• Muḥammad b. ʿĪsā b. Muḥammad ʿAlī al-Nishābūrī al-Laythī (calligrapher)	Sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Sām

Table 5.1: Ghurid Qur'ans

[1] Bosworth, *The Later Ghaznavids*, 111–20.
[2] Flood, *Objects of Translation*, 105; and O'Neal, 'Ghurids', EI3.

A Qur'an now at the Topkapı Sarayı Library, EH42, survives in its wholeness in one bound volume.[3] Two hundred and eighty one folios that measure 18 x 15 cm make up this volume that employs three different scripts. The rich illumination and extensive use of gold indicate that the manuscript was an expensive commission.[4] It was copied and illuminated by Abū Bakr b. Aḥmad b. ʿAbdallah al-Ghaznawī in 573/1177, without mentioning its place of production (fol. 281r, Plate I):

> *Katabahu wa-dhahhabahu al-ʿabd al-rājī ilā raḥmati allāh abū bakr ibn aḥmad ʿubaydallāh al-ghaznawī ḥāmidan allāhu taʿālā ʿalā niʿmatihi wa muṣalliyan ʿala nabīyyihi muḥammad wa ālihi fī al-muḥarram sanat thalāth wa sabʿīn wa khamsu māyat taqabbala allāhu minhu.*
> Copied and illuminated by Abū Bakr b. Aḥmad ʿUbaydallāh al-Ghaznawī, the slave asking for God's mercy, praising God for his blessing and praying for his Prophet Muḥammad and his progeny during Muharram of the year 573 [1177 AD] may God accept from him.

No information survives on the calligrapher and illuminator of the Qur'an, but his *nisba* "al-Ghaznawī" indicates a link to Ghazna. The resemblance of its visual language to that of the imperial Ghaznavid Qur'ans further supports this link. This Qur'an, however, also features a number of differences when compared to the Ghaznavid tradition, thus pointing to a local variation and perhaps a different centre of production.

The illumination in the Qur'an of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī

On the colophon page, the monumental NS script and black *fleur de lys* scrolls decorating the ground strongly resemble the Ghaznavid tradition, as the ground decoration of fol. 237v in the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm shows (Figure 5.1). In addition, the vignette linked to the panel of fol.

[3] Folios from this manuscript were published in Derman, *Fann al-khaṭṭ*, plate 17; Lings, *Splendours of Qur'an Calligraphy & Illumination*, 59; and Tabbaa, 'The Transformation of Arabic Writing: Part I', 125. The third volume was exhibited in Boston and New York in 1949, as discussed in Bahrami, *Iranian Art*, 23 (no. 52). Another or the same volume was exhibited in London in 1976, according to Jones and Mitchell, *The Arts of Islam*, 320 (cat. no. 509).

[4] The stop signs (*waqf*) were marked in red ink by letters that indicate when it is compulsory, not permissible, or permissible to stop while reciting the Qur'an. They were probably added after the copying of the manuscript, as well as the variant readings in the margin, since the same red ink was used for both.

281r is of type-7, inscribed with symmetrically designed floral scrolls and a frame made of a repetition of flower buds and blue polylobed contour with sinuous line extension, as encountered in the Ghaznavid Qur'ans.

Figure 5.1: Left: *Fleur de lys* scrolls on fol. 237v in the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm, Ghazna, 484/1091; Right: *Fleur de lys* scrolls on fol. 281r in the Qur'an of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī, 573/1177.

The manuscript begins with a folio decorated with a large rosette of four lobes inscribed in floriated Kufic with what most likely is *al-jāmi' al-qaḍīm* (the eternal assembled),[5] decorated with *fleur de lys* stylised in the same manner as the scrolls in Figure 5.1 (fol. 1r, Plate II). This folio, akin to a title page, is not encountered in Ghaznavid Qur'ans, and is followed by two double-page illuminated frontispieces. The first has a central panel on each side inscribed with two verses from *sūrat al-ḥashr* (Q.59: 21-22) emphasising the miraculous aspect of the Qur'an. The verses appear in white RS on a blue ground decorated with gold floral scrolls of pointed, long extended tips, some of which are *fleur de lys* (fols. 1v-2r, Plate III). Each panel on this double-page spread is framed with the typical Ghaznavid latticework generating blue rectangular forms from which a type-7 vignette projects into the margin. The vignette is decorated with symmetrically designed floral scrolls and palmettes framed by a repetition of flower buds and a blue polylobed contour with two sinuous thin line extensions (Table 5.2).

[5] The use of *qaḍīm* in reference to the Qur'an refers to the theological debate around the 'createdness' of the Qur'an. This chapter discusses this issue in a later section. On this subject, see Martin, 'The Createdness of the Qur'an', EQ.

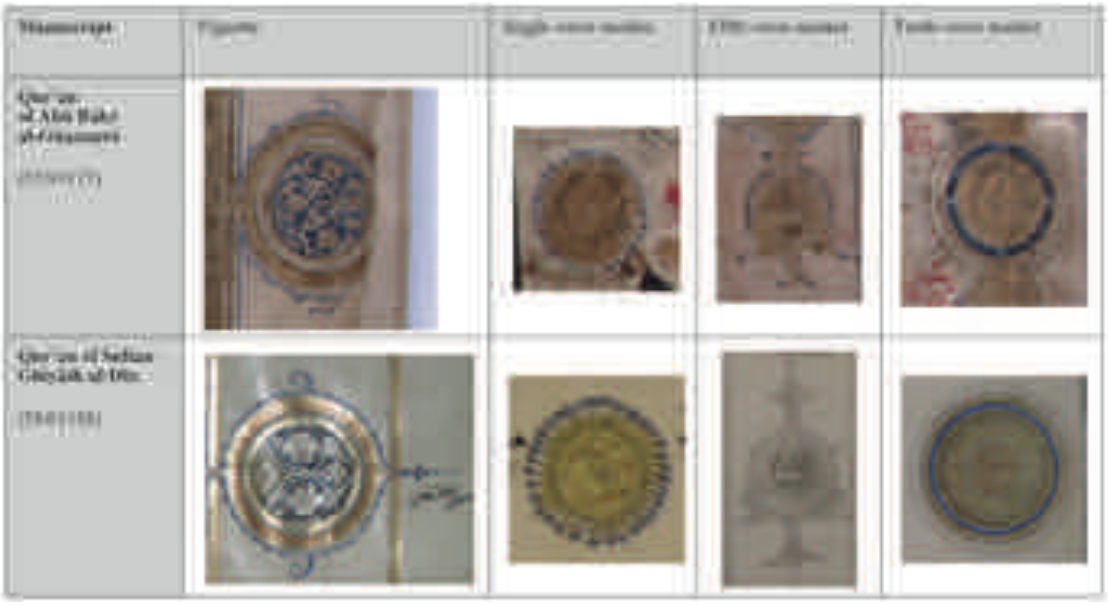

Table 5.2: Vignettes and verse markers employed in imperial Ghurid Qur'ans.

The second double-page frontispiece has on each side a large central rosette made of overlapping polylobed circles inscribed with two Qur'anic verses (Q.56: 79-80): *Lā yamassuhu illā al-muṭahharūn; tanzīl min rabb al-ʿālamīn* (That only the pure can touch; a Revelation from the Lord of the Worlds) (fols. 2v-3r, Plate IV). This circular central design is sandwiched between two bands and framed by the typical Ghaznavid latticework that generates blue forms. The overall design of this frontispiece resembles that of the frontispiece from the Bust Qur'an (505/1111), in that both have a central circular design – a large rosette in the case of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī's Qur'an, and an encircled "Seal of Solomon" in the Bust Qur'an – sandwiched between two bands and framed by latticework (Plate XLII, Chapter IV). Moreover, the Qur'anic verses Q.56: 77-78 present on fol. 1r of the Bust Qur'an precede the two verses used on the second double-page frontispiece of the Qur'an of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī (Plate XLI, Chapter IV).[6] These four verses first appeared in the illumination of Qur'ans from the 4th/10th century.[7]

The first double-page spread with Qur'anic text is prominently illuminated and copied in the

[6] Kister, 'Lā yamassuhu illā'l-muṭahharūn: Notes on the Interpretation of a Qur'anic Phrase'. This Qur'anic citation refers to the legal debates that started in the 2nd/8th century in Qur'an commentaries and Ḥadīth collections on ritual purity (*ṭahāra*) and the question of Muslims in a state of impurity handling the Qur'an.

[7] Déroche, 'Les pages de titres', 55-56. Déroche lists other extracts that appear in Qur'an frontispieces copied between the 7th/13th and 10th/16th centuries.

monumental NSI, as opposed to the NSIII used to copy the Qur'anic text (fols. 3v-4r, Plate V). The illuminated bands at the top resemble those of the first double-page spread with Qur'anic text in the Qur'an of al-ʿAbdūsī (Plate XXVI, Chapter IV), inscribed with *fātiḥat al-kitāb* (the opening of the book – the first sura), followed on the left-hand page with the verse count, *sabʿ āy[ā]t* (seven verses). It also shares some similarities with the colophon spread of ʿAlī's Qur'an (Plate XXXII, Chapter IV), as well as the first double-page spread with Qur'anic text in the Bust Qur'an (fols. 2v-3r, Plate XLIII, Chapter IV), in that the marginal medallions are incorporated in wide illuminated bands, giving visual prominence to the overall spread.

Additional features bring this Qur'an close to the visual language of the Ghaznavid Qur'ans. The single-verse marker, which is a rosette with dots decorating its petals, is also seen in the Ghaznavid Qur'ans (Table 5.1). The design of the fifth-verse marker, identical to the one used in Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an and the Bust Qur'an, is a circular device at the top of which is a crown-like design supported by a thin rectangle (Table 4.2). The tenth-verse marker is a circle with thin lines radiating around it, a design repeatedly used in the four Ghaznavid Qur'ans and indistinguishable from the one employed in Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an. Hence, a number of elements in the illumination of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī's Qur'an are present in the Ghaznavid Qur'ans. Nevertheless, one feature is absent from the Ghaznavid Qur'ans which is the division of the Qur'an according to the five times of prayers. On fols. 4v-5r, a rectangle inscribed with *ṣalawāt* (prayers) is in the right margin, and a similar one inscribed with *al-fajr* (dawn) is in the left margin (Figure 5.2). In fact, prayer times – indicated in marginal illuminated devices – fall on every thirtieth verse in this Qur'an: *al-fajr* (dawn), *al-ẓuhr* (noon), *al-ʿaṣr* (afternoon), *al-maghrib* (sunset) and *al-ʿishāʾ* (night) (Figure 5.3). This division reveals a daily reading plan of 150 verses, based on times of prayers.

The scripts and layout employed in the Qur'an of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī

Like the illumination, the scripts employed in the Qur'an of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī share many similarities with the scripts in the Ghaznavid Qur'ans. The first script is a monumental NSI used for the first and last suras (fols. 3v-5r, Plate V and fol. 281r, Plate I). The NSI employed here has common features with that of Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an, except that in the latter the script looks

bolder and more monumental.[8] As Table 5.3 summarises, the letters in the Qur'an of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī are characterised by the following features: independent *alif* has an oblique turn at the bottom; initial *jīm*/*ḥāʾ*/*khāʾ* has a diagonal stroke that crosses a thinner horizontal one; *dāl*/*dhāl* is made of two strokes that meet on the baseline with a small triangle at its base; *ṭāʾ*/*ẓāʾ* has a diagonal stroke that meets the body on its far left end and which starts with a *tarwīs* and ornament; initial *ʿayn*/*ghayn* is made of a thin diagonal stroke followed by a thicker one that meets a horizontal stroke on the baseline; final *mīm* is trapezoidal in shape with a thin diagonal tail; *nūn* has an upper thick diagonal stroke that meets a thin shaft ending in a horizontal direction; and the head of *wāw* (and *fāʾ*/*qāf*) is almost trapezoidal and bold, followed by a thin diagonal tail.

Figure 5.2: Marginal devices inscribed with the time of prayer, the Qur'an of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī, 573/1177.

[8] The NSI of Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an is used here as representative of the NSI in the Ghaznavid Qur'ans. See Table 4.3.

Figure 5.3: Times of prayers inscribed in illuminated marginal medallions in the Qur'an of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī, 573/1177.

The second script employed in the Qur'an of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī is used for copying the Qur'anic text. It has NSIII features and even though it resembles the NSIII of Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an (the only Qur'an that employs NSIII in the group of Ghaznavid Qur'ans), it differs from it in minor ways. For example, independent *alif*, which is a vertical stroke that starts with thickness at the top, is not as accentuated as the one in the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm.[9] In addition, the top stroke of initial *jīm*/*ḥā'*/*khā'* is not curvilinear as in Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an, even though its top stroke crosses the baseline. *Dāl*/*dhāl* is made of a curvilinear upper stroke that has a serif-like form at its top – a form not used in the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm. Final *mīm* has a wide opening, horizontal base and long tail in Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an, while it has a small counter, diagonal base and short tail in Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī's Qur'an. Similarly, *nūn* appears wide and more curvilinear with less contrast in the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm, and smaller with a diagonal emphasis and more contrast in the Qur'an of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī. The form of *ṭā'*/*ẓā'* and that of initial *'ayn*/*ghayn* are similar in the two Qur'ans in that the former has a diagonal shaft with a thick left-inclined enlargement, and the latter has a curvilinear head made of a curved upper stroke that meets the horizontal stroke on the baseline. Finally, *wāw* has a triangular head in both Qur'ans and a short diagonal tail.

[9] Table 4.3.

Table 5.3: Letters in the Ghurid imperial Qur'ans.

The third script in the Qur'an of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī is an RS with *muḥaqqaq* and *thuluth* features, used for the Qur'anic citation in the first double-page frontispiece (fols. 1v-2r, Plate III) and for some sura titles (fol. 280v, Plate I). *Muḥaqqaq* features in the Qur'an are mainly seen in initial *jīm*/*ḥāʾ*/*khāʾ*, made of a stroke drawn from left to right that starts with a curve and inclines to the right; *dāl*/*dhāl* composed of an inclined stroke and a horizontal stroke, ending with a curvature and thin stroke pointing upwards; and initial *ʿayn*/*ghayn,* which starts with an arc followed by an inclined stroke forming a wide opening to the letter. *Thuluth* features, although minimal, can be detected in the deep bowls of letters, such as *yāʾ* and in the curved tail of *wāw*. The main difference between this RS script and the one used in the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm is that the former exhibits *thuluth* features, which are absent from the latter. In addition, in comparison to the RS-*muḥaqqaq* employed in the Bust Qur'an, the RS-*muḥaqqaq* of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī is a little more condensed and bulbous. Nevertheless, independent *alif* in the Qur'an of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī has sinuosity at the bottom, which is also present in both Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an and the Bust Qur'an.[10] Finally, a small size RS is used for the colophon with features of what later became known as *riqāʿ*, characterised mainly by linking letters between words and by an inclined baseline.[11]

The layout in the Qur'an of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī is well-thought out. There are 17 lines per page, with each sura title taking the space of two lines. Lines of script on a given page are accurately aligned with those on the facing page, indicating that the copyist worked from already assembled quires. The illumination was executed after the Qur'anic text was copied, since the illuminated bands at the beginning of a sura encompass the last words of the previous sura (fol. 280v, Plate I and fol. 215r, Plate VI). This indicates a two-stage production, and a significant amount of planning in advance. The overall layout, except for the beginning and end, is not monumental as in the Ghaznavid Qur'ans, which fit fewer lines per page. Furthermore, by using RS, NS and floriated Kufic, the Qur'an employs three different scripts for the sura titles (fols. 214v-215r, Plate VI), which indicates a calligrapher, or group of calligraphers, well-trained in various types of scripts. Lastly, the *basmala* at the beginning of a new sura has an extension between *ḥāʾ* and *mīm* of the word *raḥmān*, giving visual prominence to the beginning of each sura – a feature encountered in the group of five RS Qur'ans ascribed to Nishapur in which the

[10] Table 4.3.
[11] For an example of later *riqāʿ*, see the sixth and seventh lines of the Ottoman *mashq* example in chapter II.

sīn of *b'ism* is extended (as for example in CBL Is. 1430 (428/1036) (Plate VI, Chapter III). This feature can be traced back to Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an and Khalili QUR284 (Plates VII and IX, Chapter II, respectively).

Two additional features appear in the Qur'an of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī that indicate its copyist worked within the trend of Ghaznavid Qur'anic aesthetic. The first is the stylisation of letters such as *hāʾ* that has a thin curved extension from its head, a feature present in the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm (Figure 5.4). The second feature is the stylisation in the layout of letters. For example, in the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm, the horizontal lines in the letters *ṣāḍ* and *kāf* in *iṣṭanaʿtuka* are paralleled to the drawn baseline linking the letters of the word, a gesture similarly seen in the Qur'an of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī in which the horizontal lines of the letter *ṣāḍ* in *ṣabr* are doubled in order to accentuate the horizontality of the letter (Figure 5.5.5).

Figure 5.4: Left: Stylisation of medial *hāʾ* on fol. 5r in the Qur'an of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī, 573/1177; Right: Stylisation of medial *hāʾ* on fol. 36r in the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm, Ghazna, 484/1091.

Unfortunately, the last folio of the Qur'an, on which one would expect to have the name of the patron, is empty or its text has been wiped off. It holds now a text enumerating the components of the Qur'an (fol. 281v, Plate VII). Nevertheless, the attention to detail, level of artistry and rich illumination with abundant use of gold employed in the Qur'an of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī all indicate it was an expensive commission. As in the case of the imperial Ghaznavid Qur'ans, such commissions could have involved more than one person in their production, pointing to the possibility that Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī was, like ʿUthmān b. Ḥusayn al-Warrāq al-Ghaznawī, the supervisor of the project.

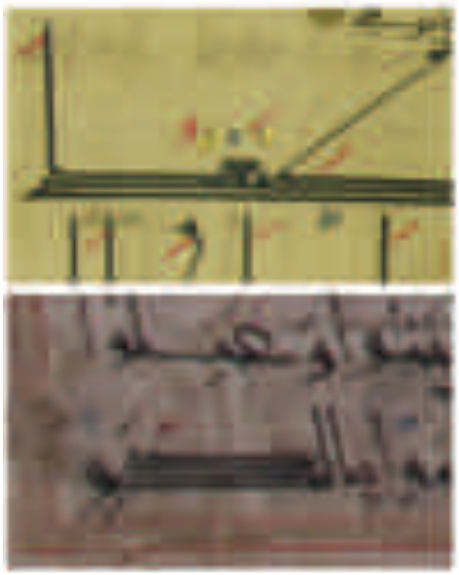

Figure 5.5: Top: Stylisation of letter layout on fol. 98r in the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm, Ghazna 484/1091; Bottom: Stylisation of letter layout on fol. 279r in the Qur'an of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī, 573/1177.

Although nearly a century separates them, the resemblances between the Qur'an of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī and the Ghaznavid Qur'ans indicate that Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī worked within the tradition of the Ghaznavid Qur'ans, thus underlining the popularity of this local aesthetic trend. While the *nisba* of Abū Bakr relates him to Ghazna, it cannot be confirmed whether the Qur'an was indeed produced in the ex-Ghaznavid capital, which by then had come under Ghurid rule. It is, however, most certain that the Qur'an was commissioned in an important city in Khurasan, and that it followed the visual trend seen in the work of ʿUthmān b. al-Ḥusayn al-Warrāq long after his death.

Expanding on this point, the design of the Qur'an's first frontispiece (fols. 1v-2r, Plate III) resembles that of a band on the west facade of a Qarakhanid mausoleum in Uzgand, a town in Farghāna (Plate VIII and Figure 5.6).[12] The similarities are seen in the bulbous effect of the bowls of letters, the stylised *fleur de lys* and the palmettes with thin stems that decorate the ground of both inscriptions. Dated 582/1186, the tomb is believed to be for a senior member of the Qarakhanid family.[13] Located almost 1,500 km northeast of Ghazna, Uzgand became the

[12] The inscription is published in Zayn al-Dīn, *Badāʾiʿ al-khaṭṭ al-ʿarabī*, 8 (fig. 18). The mausoleum is the southernmost of the three connected Qarakhanid mausoleums.

[13] I thank Richard McClary for providing me with a photo of the mausoleum and information about it. The inscription on its façade has not been fully deciphered yet. McClary also highlighted resemblance between

capital of the western wing of the Qarakhanid dynasty in the 5th/11th century and was an important city in which Turkish rulers minted coins.[14] The visual language articulated on the Uzgand tomb was the work of the Qarakhanids who ruled first on behalf of the Seljuq and then the Qarakhitay.[15] Similarly, comparable floral scrolls and inscriptions to Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī's frontispiece adorn the mural painting that remains from the citadel in Samarqand, datable to the second half of the 6th/12th century and beginning of the 7th/13th century.[16]

Figure 5.6: Top: Inscription on the lower left-hand side of the vertical inscription on the west facade of the southernmost of the three connected Qarakhanid tombs in Uzgand, 582/1186; Bottom: Detail from the frontispiece panel in the Qur'an of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī, 573/1177.

Furthermore, the script used to copy *sūrat al-ḥashr* on fols 1v-2r in Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī's Qur'an is stylised in the same manner as the one inscribed on an Iranian bronze cup inlaid and engraved with silver, datable to the early 7th/13th century (Figure 5.7).[17] The cup is categorised as

---

the first frontispiece of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī's Qur'an and the inscription on the portal of the Magok-i Attori mosque in Bukhara, which is datable to the 6th/12th century.

[14] Bosworth, 'Özkend', EI2.

[15] Additional resemblances can be noted between Qarakhanid inscriptions and Ghaznavid inscriptions as pointed out by Allegranzi. See Allegranzi, 'The Use of Persian in Monumental Epigraphy from Ghazni', 33-34. Moreover, the author argues that the use of Persian in monumental inscriptions was part of promoting literary production in New Persian in the Eastern Islamic dynasties.

[16] Karev, 'Qarakhanid Paintings in the Citadel of Samarqand'.

[17] The cup is now at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (91.1.543) and is published in Ettinghausen, 'The Flowering of Seljuq Art', 115.

'Seljuq' art in modern literature, which generally mixes between 'Persian', 'Islamic', and 'Central-Asian' motifs. The similarities between the two inscriptions can be detected in the form of letters, such as *alif* with thickness at the top, the form of *wāw* with a bulbous tail, and in the overall effect of the script. The human faces at the top of the *alifs* that are engraved on the cup are absent from the Qur'an's inscription and instead replaced with floral motifs. The script with human faces was common during this period as seen for example on a bronze pen-case that carries the signature of Shādhī with the date 607/1210 and the name of the Khwarazmshāh *wazīr* Sharaf al-Dīn al-Muẓaffar.[18] Inscriptions with the ascenders of letters ending with faces also appear on metalwork attributed to Herat in the 6th/12th and early 7th/13th century.[19] The most famous bucket that employs similar script was made in Herat and is famously know as the 'Bobrinski bucket'. It is dated 559/1163 and hold the name of the people involved in its production.[20]

[18] The patron of the pen case was the highest official after the sultan and hence Merv, the capital, may have been the place of its production. On this pen-case see Herzfeld, "A Bronze Pen-Case". A similar type of script also appears on an ewer excavated in Nishapur and datable to the 5th/11th or 6th/12th century. Allan, *Nishapur*, 82–84.

[19] Allen, *Silver:* 'The Key to Bronze in Early Islamic Iran'; and 'The Survival of Base Metal Objects from the Medieval Islamic World'.

[20] The names of the two craftsmen are Masʿūd b. Aḥmad al-Naqqāsh and Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Waḥīd who was its inlayer (*ḍarb*). An inscription states it was made it for the merchant Rashīd al-Dīn ʿAzīzī al-Zanjānī. See Mayer, *Islamic Metalworks and Their Works*, 61-62. The bucket is widely published. See Atil, *Islamic metalwork in the Freer Gallery of Art*, 11.

Figure 5.7: Top left: fol. 2r from Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī's Qur'an; Top right: Seljuq cup, early 7th/13th century; Bottom: Detail of the inscription on the Seljuq cup.

This overlap in aesthetic across dynastic boundaries points further that a larger visual language – articulated in Qur'ans, architecture, silks, coins, ceramics and metalwork – existed in Greater Iran and Transoxiana and from which local Qur'anic variants developed. The Qur'an of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī, whether produced in Ghazna, Bust or any other city of eastern Iran is hence evidence that the Ghaznavid visual language was one among many trends that emerged in the 5th/11th century and continued to be in fashion in the 6th/12th century with the movement of craftsmen, especially since the *nisba* al-Ghaznawī indicates the origin of the artist's ancestors from Ghazna.

A Qur'an copied in 584/1188 by Muḥammad b. ʿĪsā b. Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Nīshābūrī al-Laythī has a text at its end addressed to the Ghurid Sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Sām (r. 558/1163-599/1202), and is now in the Iran Bastan Museum in Tehran, Ms 3496.[21] It is a monumental four-volume Qur'an, measuring 41 x 33 cm that took five years to complete in RS-*muḥaqqaq* with interlinear Persian translation.[22]

The text mentioning the name of the Ghurid sultan (starting from the eighth line from the bottom) reads (fol. 198r, Plate IX):

> *[…] al-malik wa'l-sulṭān al-muʿaẓẓam shāhanshāh al-aʿẓam malik riqāb al-umam sulṭān al-salāṭīn fī al-ʿālam ghiyāth al-dunyā wa'l-dīn muʿizz al-islām wa'l-muslimīn qāhir al-kafara wa'l-mulḥidīn qāmiʿ al-bidʿa wa'l-mutamarridīn ʿaḍud al-dawla al-qāhira tāj al-milla al-ẓāhira jalāl al-umma al-bāhira niẓām al-ʿālam abū al-fatḥ muḥammad ibn sām, qāsim amīr al-muʾminīn [...].*
> […] the chief and great sultan, the greatest kings of kings, king of the necks of the nations, sultan of the sultans in the world, succour of the world and religion, the glory of Islam and the Muslims, smasher of infidels and heretics, suppressor of heresy and the seditious, the supporting arm of the victorious state, crown of the radiant people, glory of the shining nation, order of the world, Father of Victory, Muḥammad b. Sām, partner of the commander of the believers [...].

On the verso of this same folio is a text mentioning the date and name of its copyist. It reads, starting on the seventh line from top (fol. 198v, Plate X):

> *[…] al-farāgh fī aṣfā ḥullat al-ʿawāfī wa-abhā ḥālat al-salāma ilā ahnā al-masāʿi (?) min intisākh hadhā al-muṣḥaf al-majīd bi-ʿawn allāh al-ʿazīz al-ḥamīd yawm al-ithnayn al-thāmin min shuhūr rabīʿ al-ākhir sanat arbaʿ wa-thamānīn wa-khamsamāʿa […].*
> […] finished, in the most purest and peaceful form for the most pleasant of endeavour, the copying of this glorious Qur'an with the assistance of God Almighty the

[21] I am grateful to Barry Flood for providing me with photographs of this Qur'an.
[22] Flood, 'Islamic Identities and Islamic Art', 96-99. The Qur'an was studied by Flood as evidence of a Karrāmī document (see discussion below). The colophon was published in Flood, *Objects of Translation*, 95. The rendition was transcribed and translated by Flood in 'Ghurid Monuments and Muslim Identities: Epigraphy and Exegesis in Twelfth Century Afghanistan', 267. A double-page spread from the Qur'an was exhibited in London in 1976, as told by Jones and Mitchell, *The Arts of Islam*, 320 (cat. no. 509). The rest of the Qur'an is otherwise unpublished.

praiseworthy on Monday the eighth in the month of Rabīʿ al-Ākhar in the year 584 [5 June 1188 AD].

At the bottom of this same page in the diagonal direction is written, in the same ink hue and script as the text above it:

Al-kātib aḍʿaf ʿibād allāh wa-akhlaṣ duʿātihi muḥammad ibn ʿisā ibn muḥammad ibn ʿalī al-nīshābūrī al-llīthī ghafara allāhu lahu wa-li'wālidayhi wa-li'jamīʿi ummati muḥmmad ṣalla allāhu ʿalayhi wa-sallam.
The copyist, the weakest of God's servants and the most faithful of His believers, Muḥammad b. ʿĪsa b. Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Nīshāpūrī al-Līthī may God forgive him and his parents and all the people of Muḥammad, may the prayers and blessings of God be upon him.

Hence, the textual evidence in the manuscript indicates that the Qur'an was a commission by the fifth Ghurid Sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn, copied by a *kātib* who must have held a position at the Ghurid court, possibly in the summer capital Fīrūzkūh, Herat or any other important city in the western part of the sultanate. The *nisba* of the copyist, al-Nishābūrī, suggests that he or his family came from Nishapur. Its script and illumination confirm that its visual language is in continuity with the 5th/11th century imperial Ghaznavid Qur'ans.

The illumination and script of Sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn's Qur'an

The manuscript starts with an illuminated frontispiece (fol. 3r, Plate XI) that is closely related in design to the frontispieces of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī's Qur'an and the Bust Qur'an. It includes a central design, here a circle decorated with floral scrolls, sandwiched between two bands. The bands at the top and bottom of the frontispiece in the Qur'an of Sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn are inscribed with Q.56: 77-80: *Innahu la-qurʾān karīm, fī kitāb maknūn, lā yamassuhu illā al-muṭahharūn, tanzīl min rabb al-ʿālamīn* (This is a glorious Qur'an, In a Book well-sheltered, That only the pure can touch; A Revelation from the Lord of the Worlds) – a verse also encountered in Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī's Qur'an and the Bust Qur'an. The central design of this frontispiece is framed by a wide band of geometric latticework that generates blue forms, as seen in the Qur'an of Abu Bakr al-Ghaznawī, the imperial Ghaznavid Qur'ans copied almost a century earlier, and even the five RS Qur'ans ascribed to Nishapur and copied a century and a half earlier. These blue forms are inscribed with the word "Allah", exactly like in the group of

five RS Qur'ans.[23] From this frontispiece, a type-7 vignette projects into the margin with a frame made of a repetition of circular forms that resemble beehives, a blue polylobed contour and a sinuous line extension. Similarly, the finispiece design in the Qur'an of Sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn (fols. 195v-195r, Plate XII) is decorated with floral gold scrolls on a red ground and is framed by a band of latticework that also generates blue forms. This central design of floral scrolls is a configuration used in the Qur'an of al-ʿAbdūsī, copied in Ghazna or Ṭūs in 466/1073 (Plates XXII and XXIII, Chapter IV).

An additional feature that brings this Qur'an close to the imperial Ghaznavid Qur'ans is the black scrolls of *fleur de lys* that decorate the ground of fol. 7r (Plate XIII) used, for example, in the Qur'an of Ghaznavid Sultan Ibrāhīm and in the Qur'an of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī. It was also employed in Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an, stylised in the same manner with a sinuous tip that curls at the tip (Figure 5.8).

Figure 5.8: Top: Ibn al-Bawwāb's manuscript; Middle: Sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn's Qur'an, 584/1188; Bottom: Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī's Qur'an, Khurasan, 573/1177.

On the top of this same folio in Sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn's Qur'an is a sura banner inscribed with the title of *surat al-baqara* and the number of verses it contains, written in floriated Kufic in reserve on a dark blue ground decorated with stylised *fleur de lys* scrolls with thin extended tips. In addition to this sura banner design, the Qur'an employs other designs for its sura titles inscribed with NS, RS-*naskh* and RS-*muḥaqqaq*, thus highlighting the manuscript's artistic

[23] See Table 3.3.

mastery (Figure 5.9). Some of these epigraphic forms find parallels on Ghurid coins. The vertical extension of letters and the ornamental return in the upper stroke of *dāl* as seen in the second header of Figure 5.9, resembles that of the inscription on a Ghurid dinar stuck in Ghazni in 590/1193 (Figure 5.10).[24]

Figure 5.9: Sura headings in the Qur'an of Sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn, 584/1188.

[24] Tübingen University Collection, 2003.16.177. Published in Flood, *Objects of Translation*, 103. Epigraphy on Qarakhanid coins find other parallels with NS used in the Ghurid and even Ghaznavid Qur'ans as detected for example in the form of *lām-alif* and the horizontal extensions of letters. See Federov, *The Qysmychi Hoard of Qarakhanid Dirhams*, plates 30-31.

Figure 5.10: Ghurid Dinar stuck at Ghazni, 590/1193.

The rich variation in the design of sura banners is also evident in the marginal illuminated devices dividing the Qur'anic text according to the daily prayers, much like in the Qur'an of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī (Figure 5.11). These marginal devices are decorated with stylised *fleur de lys* scrolls of pointed long extended tips, typical of the imperial Ghaznavid visual repertoire. The single-verse markers are rosettes with dots decorating their petals, inscribed with the word *āya* (Table 5.2) – a design repeatedly used in the imperial Ghaznavid Qur'ans. The fifth-verse marker is a marginal circular device supported by a triangle, at the top of which is a crown-like design, as seen in the Qur'an of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī and the imperial Ghaznavid Qur'ans.[25] However, unlike these Qur'ans, the margins of the Qur'an of Sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn include decorative motifs that do not serve any function to the Qur'anic text, such as those extended from the fifth-verse markers (Figure 5.12).

[25] For the Ghaznavid Qur'ans, see Table 4.2, and for Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī's Qur'an, see Table 5.2 above.

Figure 5.11: Marginal illuminated devices inscribed with prayer times in the Qur'an of Sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn, 584/1188.

Figure 5.12: Decorative motifs linked to the marginal fifth-verse marker in Sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn's Qur'an, 584/1188.

The Qur'an is lavishly decorated and employs red in a prominent manner, unlike the imperial Ghaznavid Qur'ans, which mainly use green, blue and gold. The layout features margins that are ruled in gold, creating space to include marginal notes and probably Qur'anic variant readings (fol. 195r, Plate XIV). This additional aspect in the layout indicates that the Qur'an might have been used for study purposes.

In sum, features in the illumination of the Qur'an of Sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn were commonly used in the Ghaznavid imperial Qur'ans copied almost a century earlier. These features include the design of the frontispiece and finispiece, the floral scrolls decorating the ground of the text on fol. 7r and the sura banners and the vignettes and verse markers. These elements characterise not only the Ghaznavid Qur'ans but also the Qur'an of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī, and some can even be traced back to Qur'ans copied in the first half of the 5th/11th century indicating that local Qur'anic trends developed in the 5th/11th and 6th/12th centuries out of a larger common visual language. The main differences from the Ghaznavid visual language are the decoration extended from the marginal medallions, the ruled layout and the prominence of red in the colour palette. These differences point to a local aesthetic variation from the Ghaznavid Qur'ans, specifically in the western part of the sultanate where Sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn ruled.

This local variation is further evident in the script of Sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn's Qur'an (Table 5.3). It is RS with *muḥaqqaq* features, as seen in the overall shallowness of the bowls and diagonality in the descenders of letters. It bears some resemblance to the script used for the Arabic exegetical text in Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an, but more to the script of the Bust Qur'an, with contrast between its thick and thin strokes.[26] The sinuosity at the bottom of *alif* in the Qur'an of Sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn resembles the letter as it appears in Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an and the Bust Qur'an. However, unlike them, the tails of letters such as *wāw* and *rāʾ/zayn* are very thin, and the head of final *mīm* has no opening. Moreover, some letter shapes appear differently in the Qur'an of Sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn, such as initial *jīm/ḥāʾ/khāʾ,* which has no *shaẓiyya* (the thickness at the beginning). In addition, the bowl of *nūn* is more inclined diagonally than that of Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an, and wider than that of the Bust Qur'an. The script is also different from the one employed in the frontispiece of the Qur'an of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī, even though the latter has *muḥaqqaq* characteristics. The script here, for example, is not as bulbous, has a higher

[26] See Table 4.3.

contrast between thick and thin strokes, more diagonality in descenders and shallowness in bowls. These variations in RS-*muḥaqqaq* in Qur'ans produced between the 5th/11th and 6th/12th centuries indicate that the script still displayed heterogeneous characteristics.

The origin of Sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn's Qur'an and its tafsīr

The Persian *tafsīr* in the Qur'an is identified by Flood as being a popular Karrāmī *tafsīr* written by Abū Bakr ʿAtīq b. Muḥammad al-Sūrābādī (d. 495/1101).[27] The Karrāmīyya, a sect that emphasised faith over acts, became popular in Khurasan and frequently reached out to the poor, with a strong presence in Nishapur, Herat and Samarqand, according to the geographer Abū ʿAbdallāh al-Muqaddasī (fl. 375/985).[28] Its prominence in Khurasan was also due to links between the leaders of the sect and the Ghurid sultans.[29] Sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn, for instance, built educational institutions and mosques for the Karrāmīyya sect, of which he stayed a supporter until 595/1198.[30] Hence, the inclusion of this specific *tafsīr* in the Qur'an indicates that the manuscript was most likely commissioned by Sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn for a Karrāmī educational institution. Specifically, Flood suggests that the manuscript could have been a commission by the sultan for a *madrasa* in Herat, located around 500 km east of Nishapur.[31] Flood's hypothesis is based on two points. The first is the fact that al-Sūrābādī's *nisba* was al-Harāwī (meaning from Herat), suggesting a connection to the city. The second point is the endowment note at the beginning of the Qur'an, which states that in 654/1256, the Qur'an was presented to the shrine of shaykh Aḥmad b. Abī al-Ḥasan al-Nāmiqī al-Jāmī at Turbat-i Shaykh Jām, now a border town west of Herat.[32]

Still, however, additional possibilities exist as to the origin of this Qur'an, especially considering that Karrāmī *madrasas* and *khānqas* were built in major cities throughout Khurasan and

[27] Flood, 'Islamic Identities', 99. On Surābādī, see chapters 11 and 12 in Zadeh, *The Vernacular Qur'an*.
[28] Karame and Zadeh, 'The Art of Translation', 177–78.
[29] Bosworth, 'Karrāmiyya', EI2.
[30] Bosworth, 'The Early Islamic History of Ghur', 130-133; and Flood, 'Ghurid Monuments and Muslim Identities', 281. In 595/1198, Sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn and his brother became more inclined to the Shāfiʿī and Ḥanafī madhhab. Sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn built Shāfiʿī madrasas and a mosque in Ghazna, while his brother Muʿizz al-Dīn became a Hanafī.
[31] Flood, 'Islamic Identities and Islamic Art', 99.
[32] Ibid.

Transoxiana.[33] Ghiyāth al-Dīn was known for being a great builder of mosques and madrasas, and a patron of the arts.[34] In fact, he ordered the construction of the minaret of Jām, now in west-central Afghanistan, which dates to *c*. 570/1174. Its surface is decorated with floral scrolls encircled by their own stems, some of which resemble *fleur de lys* and thus echo the floral scrolls found in his Qur'an.[35] The minaret is inscribed in Kufic with *sūrat maryam* (Q.19), which holds themes of prophecy, revelation, promise and warning that were all fundamental to Karrāmī belief. The choice of inscription though is unusual, and Flood notes how the part that says *Kun fa yakūn* (Be! And it is!) (Q.19: 35), central to Karrāmī polemic, takes a key position on the minaret even though it is not visible from the ground.[36] Based on the fact that this minaret predates Ghurid expansion into India, he argues that the presence of such a statement on architecture reflects an intra-Sunni polemic rather than a statement addressed to non-Muslims.[37] In other words, the minaret served as a medium through which Karrāmī theology was exhibited, promoted and disseminated. The Qur'an, like the minaret, with its choice of Karrāmī *tafsīr* aimed at disseminating Karrāmī theology, was addressed not only to other dynasties in Khurasan but also to other groups within the Ghurid dynasty that favoured other Sunni sects. Hence, the Qur'an of Sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn, with its lavish decoration and choice of *tafsīr*, sought to project a powerful and luxurious image of the Ghurids both internally and externally, reflecting an inter-religious polemic.

In sum, the Qur'ans of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī and Sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn exhibit a number of common features with the imperial Ghaznavid Qur'ans positioning them in the historical continuum of Qur'anic production. The Qur'an of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī could have been copied in any city in Khurasan or Transoxiana while the Qur'an of Sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn was most likely produced in a city west of Ghazna, such as Jām or Herat, since Ghiyāth al-Dīn ruled over the western part of the sultanate. The visual language of these manuscripts was shaped from

[33] Bosworth, 'Karrāmiyya', EI2.
[34] Bosworth, 'Ghūrids', EI2.
[35] Interestingly, the minaret was signed by a Nishapuri. For a study of the minaret, see Flood, 'Islamic Identities', 93-95; Flood, Objects of Translation, 98-101; Flood, 'Ghurid Monuments and Muslim Identities', 278-279; and Pinder-Wilson, 'Ghaznavid and Ghūrid Minarets', 166–71.
[36] Flood, 'Ghurid Monuments and Muslim Identities', 276.
[37] See studies by Flood cited in note 35 as well as Zadeh, The Vernacular Qur'an, 465–66. Among those who rejected the Karrāmīyya were the Sufis of Khurasan and Transoxiana, and the leading Ḥanafī officials from the city of Samarqand who spoke out against the Karrāmīyya, rejecting many of their theological tenets as heretical.

a common vocabulary articulated across media in Greater Iran and is evidence to the development of local trends of Qur'anic production in 6th/12th century Khurasan.

Chapter VI

Local Qur'anic Artistic Variants

This chapter localises a group of Qur'ans datable to the 5th/11th and 6th/12th centuries, by comparing them to the Ghaznavid and Ghurid corpus discussed in chapters IV and V (Table 6.1). The comparative analysis uncovers local Khurasani and Transoxianan artistic variants in Qur'an production during this period. However, some elements in the script and illumination of these Qur'ans relate them to the wider geographic and artistic context in which they were produced, reminding us of the mobility of motifs. Hence, the main questions pursued in this chapter are: To what extent can we talk about a Khurasani/Transoxianan visual repertoire to which these local trends belonged? What are the elements that developed throughout Khurasan, and what are the characteristics that differentiate between local styles of script and illumination? Finally, how does the visual language of these Qur'ans link to the Qur'anic and non-Qur'anic artistic productions of Greater Iran?

The Qur'ans studied in this chapter suggest a certain fluidity in Qur'anic aesthetic as illustrated by the temporal and geographic intersection of motifs within and across Qur'anic and non-Qur'anic spheres. Even though Ghaznavid Khurasan was eventually divided, the area continued to flourish with interactions between the major cities never ceasing to exist. The *nisba* that appears after the names of calligraphers and illuminators in the colophons of Qur'ans reveal their link to cities other than those they worked in, confirming the mobility of craftsmen throughout Greater Iran. The resemblance between motifs employed, on the one hand, in Ghaznavid and Ghurid Qur'ans, and on the other on ceramics, metalwork and architectural surfaces reinforces this point. Neither geographic nor dynastic boundaries stopped influx of people across the eastern Islamic lands. As an example, poets and men of letters moved between Ghaznavid and Seljuq courts, and sometimes addressed panegyrics from one court to another.[1] Artistic

[1] Under the reign of Sultan Ibrāhīm (the patron of the Ghaznavid Qur'an studied in chapter IV), the bonds between the Ghaznavids and Seljuqs were strengthened. See Bosworth, *The Later Ghaznavids*, 51–55. Sultan Ibrāhīm signed a peace treaty with the Seljuqs. His aim was to maintain territories under his control rather than attempting to regain what his father lost. Peace did not last long before war broke out again under the Seljuq Malik Shāh Sultanate (r. 465/1072). However, the social and cultural interactions between the two empires, as well as their marriage alliances, remained strong – specifically the union

influences attesting to cultural interactions between these two dynasties are recorded in textual sources, such as the lion symbol, which was on both Sultan Ibrāhīm's banner (*rāya*) and the Seljuq flag.[2] It would therefore be more accurate to talk about a regional rather than a dynastic aesthetic during this period. Nevertheless, Qur'ans studied in this chapter share a number of elements with the Ghaznavid visual repertoire and appear farther apart from that employed in Qur'ans from western Iran, the Jazira, Syria and Iraq as will become clear in the third part of this thesis.

Manuscript	Date	Place of origin	Writing material	Scripts used	Height x width (cm)	Calligraphers and illuminators	Patron
SMQ 1200	5th/11th-6th/12th century	Khurasan/ Transoxiana	Paper	NSI	?	x	x
Qarmathian Qur'an (Widely dispersed – see note in text)	5th/11th-6th/12th century	Khurasan/ Transoxiana	Paper	NSI	34 x 24	x	x
Khalili Qur'an (Khalili QUR19)	5th/11th-6th/12th century	Khurasan/ Transoxiana	Paper	NSI	36.5 x 23.8	x	x
Freer Qur'an (F1937.46)	5th/11th-6th/12th century	Khurasan/ Transoxiana	Paper	NSI	31.3 x 20.1	x	x
TKS R10	5th/11th-6th/12th century	Khurasan/ Transoxiana	Paper	NSIII	?	x	x

Table 6.1: Qur'anic manuscripts from Khurasan orTransoxiana, 5th/11th-6th/12th century.

between the son of Seljuq ruler Alp Arslan and the daughter of Ibrāhīm in the year 456/1063. The movement of poets and men of letters between the two courts is supported by a number of anecdotes listed in Bosworth, *The Later Ghaznavids*, 55–56.

[2] Ibid., 56–57.

[3] A double-page spread from this Qur'an was published in Lings, *Splendours of Qur'an Calligraphy &*

SMQ 1200

A Qur'anic manuscript, now in the Holy Shrine Museum in Qum (1200), displays a number of similarities with the Ghaznavid Qur'ans (Plates I-III).[3] Unfortunately only four folio reproductions are available from this Qur'an, nonetheless enough to establish strong aesthetic links with the Ghaznavid corpus. Even though the size of the manuscript is unknown, its three lines per page indicate it was a monumental Qur'an. Copied in NSI with lavish decoration, the manuscript's overall feel echoes that of the imperial Ghaznavid Qur'ans.

The script in SMQ 1200

The NSI employed in this Qur'an is very close to the monumental NSI scripts of the Ghaznavid Qur'ans as can be detected in the diagonal slant at the bottom of *alif,* the diagonal upper stroke of *jīm*/*ḥāʾ*/*khāʾ*, the triangular base in *dāl*/*dhāl* and the trapezoidal heads of letters such as *wāw* and *fāʾ*/*qāf* (Table 6.2).[4] Nevertheless, the script appears to be more curvilinear than the Ghaznavid NSI and displays less contrast between its thick and thin strokes. Unlike the NSI of the Ghaznavid Qur'ans, here the shaft of the letter *ṭāʾ*/*ẓāʾ*, the bowl of letters such as *nūn* and the tail of letters *mīm* and *wāw* are more curvilinear and hence closer to NSIII. This variation on the Ghaznavid NSI indicates a different type of NS stylisation and may even reflect a local trend of Qur'anic script stylisation. However, the way in which the copyist laid out letters above each other (Plate I) recalls similar gestures employed in the Ghaznavid imperial Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm (Figure 4.12), ʿAlī's Qur'an (Plate XXXII, Chapter VI), and can even be traced back to Ibn Shādhān's Qur'an (Figure 1.1). Some letters appear in different forms as seen, for instance, in the letter *alif* which sometimes appear with a curved stroke at its bottom suggesting the involvement of more than one person in the copying of this manuscript.

[3] A double-page spread from this Qur'an was published in Lings, *Splendours of Qur'an Calligraphy & Illumination*, 57. Two additional folios were published in Motaghedi, *Warrāq-I Ghaznavi Family,* 20. Following a conversation with Motaghedi who had inspected the Qur'an, a fake date (198/813) is noted on its first folio with the name of Hārūn al-Rashīd.
[4] For the Ghaznavid NSI see Table 4.3.

Table 6.2: Letters from Qur'ans copied in Khurasan or Transoxiana, 5th/11th-6th/12th century.

The illumination in SMQ 1200

The illumination of this Qur'an points again to a link with the Ghaznavid aesthetic. The background decoration on the available reproductions is a repetition of floral scrolls encircled by their own stems communicating a similar effect to that of the colophon spread in ʿAlī's Qur'an (Plate XXXII, Chapter IV). Moreover, the two flowers drawn between the two NSI lines of a folio in SMQ 1200 (Plate II) echo those in the background of the colophon spread in Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an (Plate I, Chapter IV). Both have shading creating depth in the flower petals. In addition, like in ʿAlī's Qur'an each folio has a gold frame and a blue outline. The frame is executed after the script and the background, but before the verse markers as seen in the way the verse marker goes over the frame on one folio (Plate I). A wide illuminated band inscribed with the number of verses, words and letters marks the beginning of each sura, a feature not detected in the Ghaznavid Qur'ans but present in BL Add. 7214 copied in 427/1035 in Nishapur (Plate V, chapter III). From these illuminated banners, vignettes rooted in earlier Kufic tradition are projected into the margin (Table 6.3) as in the Qur'an of al-ʿAbdūsī (Figure 4.18). And finally, the verse markers are designed with a circular repetition of floral scrolls, at the centre of which is inscribed the verse number, as seen in the tenth-verse marker in BL Add. 7214 (Table 3.2), a design also linked to the tenth-verse marker in al-ʿAbdūsī's Qur'an (Table 4.2).

Based on the similarities in its script and illumination with the Ghaznavid corpus, SMQ 1200 can be dated between the second half of the 5th /11th century and the 6th/12th century. The dissimilarities with the Ghaznavid visual language point to a variant school of Qur'anic production. The Qur'an's lavish decoration and the fact that it only has three lines of monumental NSI per page suggest that it was an expensive commission, most likely produced in an important city of Khurasan.

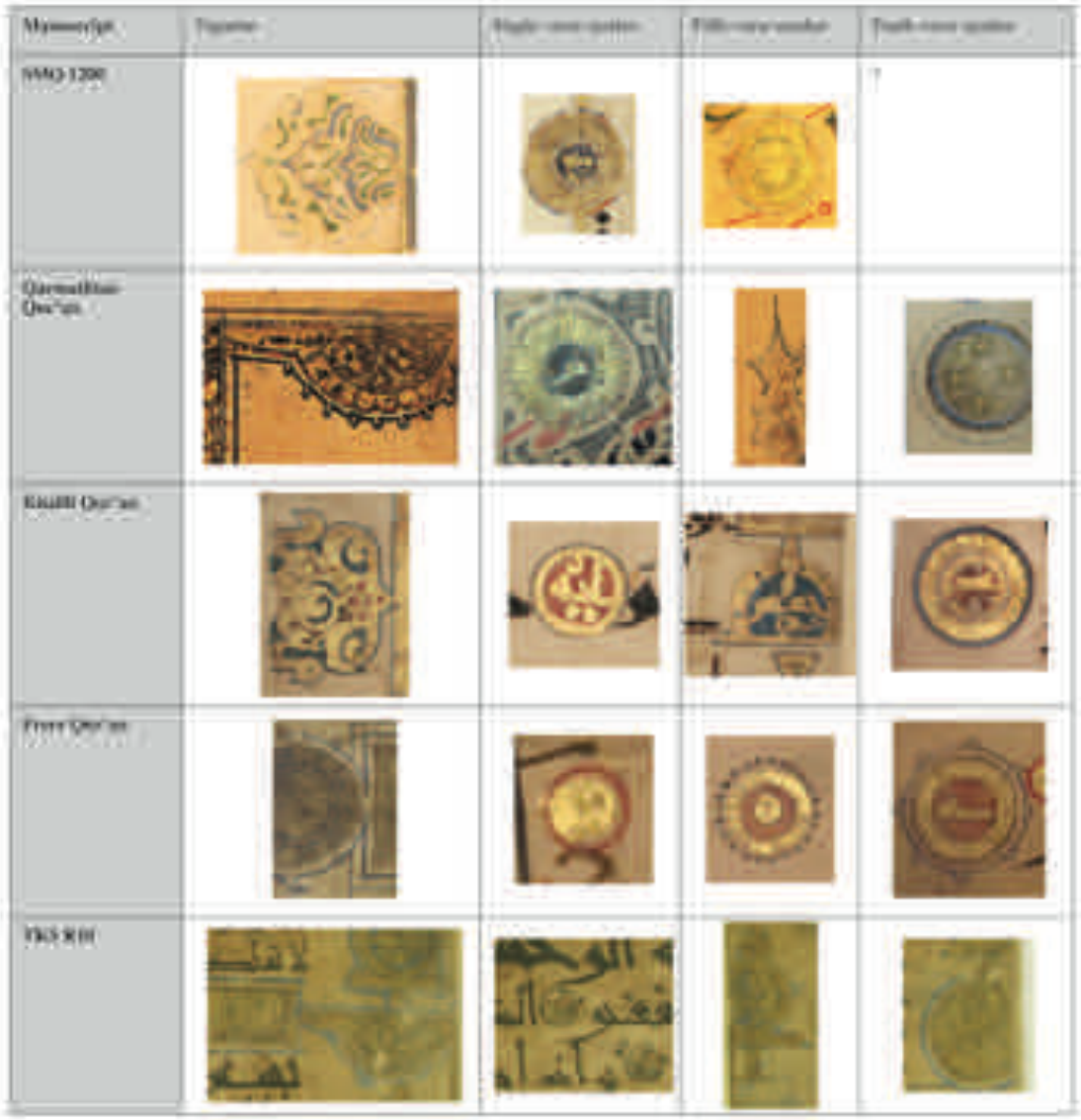

Table 6.3: Verse markers employed in Qur'ans from Khurasan or Transoxiana, 5th/11th-6th/12th century.

The Qarmathian Qur'an[5]

A Qur'an popularly referred to in modern scholarship as the "Qarmathian Qur'an" is now dispersed among various private and public collections throughout the world (Plates IV - V).[6] It is a large (34 x 24 cm) and lavishly decorated Qur'an copied in monumental NSI in thirty volumes, making a total of 2,250 folios.[7] The manuscript is attributed by a number of scholars to 5th/11th or 6th/12th century eastern Iran.[8] Even though these attributions were not necessarily based on a thorough analysis of the manuscript, they nevertheless prove to be accurate, as the discussion below will show.

The illumination in the Qarmathian Qur'an

One frontispiece from the Qarmathian Qur'an – probably the only one to survive – has a central panel decorated with floral scrolls sandwiched between two bands and framed by a wide geometric latticework band linked to a typical type-7 vignette, but without a sinuous line extension (Plate IV).[9] This frontispiece is closely related in design to other frontispieces from 6th/12th century Qur'ans, namely the Bust Qur'an (Plate XLII, Chapter IV), Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī's Qur'an (Plate IV, Chapter V), and Sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn's Qur'an (Plate XI,

[5] This term is used in modern scholarship, with Safadi offering two explanations for its origin. One is linguistic from "*qarmaṭa fī al-khāṭṭ*", meaning a fine script that has tight ligatures. The other explanation relates to the Qarāmiṭa, a rebellious Islamic movement that started in Egypt in the 3rd/9th century and spread to Khurasan, which may have been responsible for the development of the script. Saint Laurent, who undertook the most detailed study on the manuscript, suggests an additional interpretation, arguing that a special term was given to the manuscript by someone who sought to inflate its value in the European art market in the 13th/19th or 14th/20th century. I will keep using this term for practical reasons, until additional information on its copyist or patron are revealed. Safadi, *Islamic Calligraphy*, 12-13; and Saint Laurent, 'The Identification of a Magnificent Koran Manuscript', 120.

[6] A nearly complete volume is at the Topkapı Sarayı Library in Istanbul (EH 12); six folios are at Dār al-Āthār a-Islāmiyya in Kuwait (LNS 63 MS); 11 folios are at the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin (Is. 1436); one folio is in the Aga Khan Collection of Islamic Art (AKM00256); one folio is at the Pergamon Museum in Berlin (Ms I.499); and three folios are at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (29.160.23, 29.160.24 and 29.160.25). The most detailed study on this Qur'an was undertaken by Saint Laurent, 'The Identification of a Magnificent Koran Manuscript'. Leaves from the Qur'an are widely published, among which are Blair, *Islamic Calligraphy*, 199; Lings, *Splendours of Qur'an Calligraphy & Illumination*, 59; and Roxburgh, *Writing the Word of God*, 29. Additional collections and publications are listed in nos. 2-5 in Saint Laurent, 'The Identification of a Magnificent Koran Manuscript'.

[7] Saint Laurent, 'The Identification of a Magnificent Koran Manuscript', 117.

[8] Ibid., 116.

[9] The frontispiece, which is now in a private collection, was published in Saint Laurent, 'The Identification of a Magnificent Koran Manuscript', (plate XVB).

Chapter V). The primary feature common to these Qur'ans is a central design that is sandwiched between two bands. In Sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn's Qur'an, the bands are inscribed with Q.56: 79-80, and in those of the Qarmathian Qur'an, only the last part of these verses are legible, reading, *rabb al-ʿālamīn* (Lord of the Worlds). These Qur'anic verses also appeared in Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī's Qur'an and the Bust Qur'an.

Every folio in this Qur'an has a golden frame with a ground decoration of floral scrolls encircled by their own stems, similar to that of SMQ 1200, and executed in black, light or dark brown, or blue, providing the manuscript with richness.[10] The marginal vignettes are of type-7, framed by a repetition of floral buds and a polylobed contour – features that similarly characterise the vignettes in the Ghaznavid and Ghurid Qur'ans. A rosette with dots at the tip of its petals, inscribed with an *abjad* letter numeral, marks the end of each verse. This type of verse marker was also used in the Ghaznavid Qur'ans as well as the Qur'ans of Sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn and Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī.[11] In addition, a design closely related to those employed in the Ghaznavid Qur'ans marks every fifth verse in the Qarmathian Qur'an, which is a circle with a small crown-like design at the top (Table 6.3). A marginal medallion with radiating lines around it marks every tenth verse, as encountered in the Ghaznavid Qur'ans and Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī's Qur'an. More specifically, a repetition of trilobate flowers encircled by their own stems frames the inner circle of the tenth-verse marker in the Qarmathian Qur'an, a design identical to that of the tenth-verse marker in ʿAlī's Qur'an and in BL Add. 7214 (Figure 6.1). In these designs, two opposing pairs of trilobate flowers are positioned on the vertical and horizontal axis. Thus, this resemblance in the vignettes, verse markers and frontispiece between the Qarmathian Qur'an and the Qur'ans produced in Khurasan suggest that the Qarmathian Qur'an may have been produced in Khurasan.

[10] The background decoration is likely to be contemporaneous with the manuscript production since it complements the monumentality of the manuscript and the attention given to decoration.
[11] See Table 4.2 for the Ghaznavid Qur'ans, and Table 5.2 for the Qur'ans of Sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn and Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī.

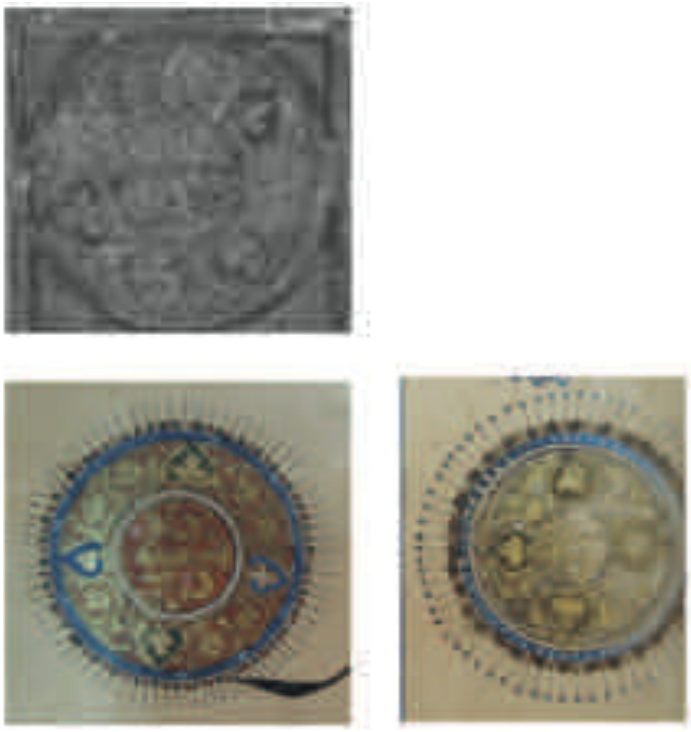

Figure 6.1: Top: Tenth-verse marker in BL Add. 7214, probably Nishapur, 427/1035; Left: Tenth-verse marker in ʿAlī's Qur'an, 485/1092; Right: Tenth-verse marker in the Qarmathian Qur'an, 5th/11th-6th/12th century.

Another feature that brings the Qarmathian Qur'an close to the Khurasani corpus, specifically to Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī and Sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn's Qur'ans, is the division of the Qur'anic text based on prayer times.[12] Inscribed in two overlapping squares in the margin, *al-ẓuhr* (the midday prayer) indicates the manuscript presented a reading plan according to the schedule of daily prayers (Figure 6.3). In addition, the *sajda* mark is inscribed in a "Seal of Solomon", as in the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm (Figure 6.4). However, on fol. 63v in Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an, the sign appears more ornate and was inscribed in floriated Kufic, whereas in the Qarmathian Qur'an it was copied in RS.

The most notable difference between the Qarmathian Qur'an and comparative Ghaznavid manuscripts is the ground decoration of the former, which is repeated on every folio (Plate V). The scrolls comprising this ground decoration resemble those used on metalwork excavated in Central Asia. For example, a silver bucket from the 3rd/9th century, excavated in Perm province in Russia exhibits floral scrolls that are stylised in a similar way as those in the ground of the

[12] See Figures 5.2 and 5.3, and 5.11 respectively.

Qarmathian Qur'an (Plate VI).[13] Two sepals at the bottom and a pointed bud at the top characterise these flowers. The leaves making the flower are reduced to small dashes in the Qur'an's background, while they appear in full form on the metal bucket. The way the scrolls curve to contain the flowers, and the leaves that extend from their stem, appear to be very similar in both the Qur'an ground decoration and on the bucket. Moreover, the small, thin abstract scrolls in the background of the Qarmathian Qur'an, and the hatches in the background of the bucket, create a background/foreground effect in both designs. Thus, the resemblance of the Qarmathian Qur'an to, on the one hand, the decorative scheme found on metalwork excavated in Central Asia and on the other hand to Ghaznavid Qur'ans, points that its place of origin, may have been Khurasan or Transoxiana and specifically in cities of the northeast such as Samarqand or Bukhara. In support of this idea, a strikingly similar floral scroll appears on Samanid pottery from Samarqand and on metalwork attributed to Khurasan or Transoxiana pointing to a local preference of decorative motifs. As Allan and Raby noted, ceramics copied metalwork shapes and motifs, and Allan had traced this flower scroll stylised similarly on both media (Figure 6.2).[14]

Figure 6.2: Top, from left to right: Soghdian silver; Samarqand pottery; Soghdian silver; Samarqand pottery. Bottom, from left to right: Samarqand pottery except for the last motif: Silver

[13] Published in Darkevich, *Khudozhestvennyi*, 44–45 (no. 80, plates 12-13); and Smirnov, *Vostochnoe*, no. 134. It is now in the Hermitage Museum (T35). It was excavated in 1886, 1 km from Shirokovskoe in Perm province in Russia.

[14] Allan, 'The Survival of Base Metal Objects from the Medieval Islamic World', 195; Raby, 'Looking for Silver in Clay: A New Perspective on Sāmānid Ceramics'.

and nielo bottle with the name of Abū Ibrāhīm, Khurasan or Transoxiana, 5th/11th century. (After Allan).

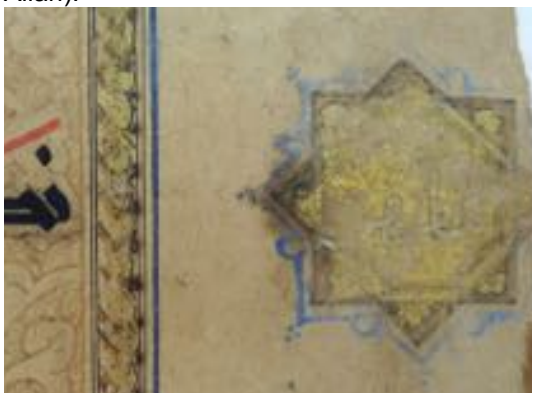

Figure 6.3: A marginal medallion inscribed with the noon prayer time (*ṣalāṭ al-ẓuhr*) in the Qarmathian Qur'an, 5th/11th-6th/12th century.

Figure 6.4: Left: Sajda marker in the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm, Ghazna, 484/1091; Right: Sajda marker in the Qarmathian Qur'an, 5th/11th-6th/12th century.

The script in the Qarmathian Qur'an

In addition to the motifs that point to Khurasan or Transoxiana as the place of origin of the Qarmathian Qur'an, the script of this Qur'an is a monumental NSI that resembles the Ghaznavid's but which appears bolder and horizontally more condensed (Table 6.2).[15] Specifically, it displays more diagonality and greater contrast between thick and thin strokes, and has sharper thin edges than the Ghaznavid NSI. It still includes typical Ghaznavid NSI features though, such as the oblique slant at the bottom of *alif* and the trapezoidal head of *wāw* with a diagonal thin tail. It also employs the *lām-alif*, which is made of two symmetrical curved shafts that meet at the bottom to form a triangular body (as seen on the second line of Plate V)

[15] For the NSI of the Ghaznavid Qur'ans see Table 4.3.

employed in Ghaznavid Qur'ans and on Samanid pottery.[16] However, *dāl/dhāl* also has a peculiar form, and looks closed with a thin extension that curves at the top (as seen on the first line of Plate V). Similarly, *kāf*, with its long curved shaft that drops on what looks like the form of *dāl/dhāl*, is also different from the form of the letter in Ghaznavid Qur'ans pointing to a different local school of script.

In addition to their distinct stylisation, the letters of the Qarmathian Qur'an are consistent in shape and size, thus pointing to an experienced copyist. Such commissions, as we have seen with the imperial Ghaznavid Qur'ans, could have involved more than one person during production. Indeed, Saint Laurent suggests that at least two scribes were involved in the copying of the Qarmathian Qur'an, based on two observations: the first being the appearance in the 14th volume of *sīn* with three sublinear dots, a form that does not appear in any other volume; and second, the fact that letters in this same volume do not always respect the text margins as in other volumes.[17] Unfortunately, noting such differences amongst volumes needs a thorough analysis of the text from a reconstructed manuscript – a difficult task at present. However, from the available folios, we can tell that planning for the production of the manuscript happened in advance, as seen in the way the background decoration outlines the text, verse markers and vowel signs, which indicate that it was done after the text was copied and the medallions executed.[18] In addition, lines on facing pages are aligned, and the frames around them are on the same level, suggesting that both the copyist and illuminator considered the manuscript as open double-page spreads.[19]

The production of the Qarmathian Qur'an was undoubtedly an expensive undertaking, most likely commissioned by a ruler or a member of a court due to its size, monumental NSI script, lavishly decorated folios, abundant use of gold and artistic mastery. Although the Qarmathian Qur'an's exact place of production cannot be confirmed at present, the fact that elements of its illumination and ground decoration strongly resemble Qur'ans copied in Khurasan, as well as

[16] Figure 4.17.
[17] Saint Laurent, 'The Identification of a Magnificent Koran Manuscript', 119.
[18] The frame appears to have been done at the very end, as seen in a folio published in Blair, *Islamic Calligraphy*, 199. On this same folio, the calligrapher, left with no space to continue the last word on the last line, wrote it on top.
[19] Saint Laurent suggests that some corrections were made to the text before illumination was applied. For example, on the folio from the Aga Khan Collection, the letter *kāf* was added in the last word of the first line to correct the calligrapher's mistake in the verb *katabna*. Saint Laurent, 'The Identification of a Magnificent Koran Manuscript', 119.

metalwork and ceramic from Central Asia, indicate that it was most likely produced in an important city in Khurasan or Transoxiana between the second half of the 5th/11th century and the 6th/12th century.

A seven-volume monumental Qur'an that shares several features with the Khurasani corpus is now in the Khalili Collection, QUR89 (Plates VII-IX).[20] In total, 122 folios survive from different volumes of the manuscript, some of which I have examined at the Khalili Collection in London.[21] The Qur'an measures 36.5 x 23.8 cm, and was undoubtedly an impressive manuscript. Its eight lines of NSI per page, along with its rich and varied illumination, leave a memorable impression, and suggest that it must have been an expensive commission.

The illumination in the Khalili Qur'an

The surviving left-hand page of the illuminated frontispiece from the first volume enumerates the components of the Qur'an (fol. 1r, Plate VII): 69,434 words and 1,025,000 diacritical points. These are inscribed in NS in eighteen decorated squares, and framed by a gold lattice band. The squares in the column at the centre are decorated with a hatched background and chessboard pattern, while the ones on the right and left are decorated with foliated scrolls. The vignette linked to this frontispiece is of type 6, made of composite palmettes and rooted in the previous century's design, as is the chessboard pattern.[22] The configuration employed on this folio is not encountered in Qur'ans from Khurasan. However, an illuminated folio that enumerates the components of the Qur'an in a table format is present in BL Add. 7214, copied in 427/1035 in Nishapur.[23]

The first spread with Qur'anic text in the Khalili Qur'an, as in the Khurasani Qur'ans, is prominently illuminated (fols. 1v-2r, Plate VIII). Two wide illuminated bands at the top of the spread announce *fātiḥat al-kitāb* (the opening of the book – the first sura) and *surat al-baqara* (the second sura). The former is inscribed in NS in reserve on a gold ground, while the latter, also copied in NS, is in gold on a decorated ground of small leaves. Illuminated rectangles are

[20] This Qur'an was studied by Déroche, and folios from it are published in Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 156-165 (cat. no. 84).
[21] I am thankful to Nahla Nassar for facilitating my visit and providing me with reproductions from this manuscript and others in the collection.
[22] See note 17 in Chapter I.
[23] Plate V, Chapter III.

placed in the right and left margins, some of which resemble writing tablets that are similar to the marginal designs used in the opening spread of the eighth volume of Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an.[24] These rectangles are inscribed with the place of revelation of the sura and the volume's number. Vignettes of type-6 are linked to these illuminated banners, and to others in the Qur'an with varying designs that add richness to the decoration (Figure 6.5).

Sura titles in this Qur'an are copied in NS, with some still retaining Kufic characteristics. They appear either in gold or reserve on a ground decoration that ranges from abstract stylisation of leaves to various palmette scroll designs, thus pointing to a confident and skilled illuminator who, while alternating the designs, maintained an overall coherency throughout the manuscript. Single-verse markers are medallions with small petals and dots at their end, inscribed with the number of verse and alternating between green, blue and red (Table 6.3). The design of this single-verse marker appears to vary on the surviving folios, suggesting the involvement of more than one illuminator (Figure 6.6).[25] The design of one single-verse marker, for instance, has small petals and is identical to the single-verse marker in the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm.[26] The marginal tenth-verse marker is of the same type as this single-verse marker, inscribed with *ʿashara* (ten) while every fifth verse is marked in the text with a gold *hāʾ* that is complemented in the margin by a truncated circle at the base of which is a thin rectangle, inscribed with *khamsa* (five) on red, green or blue ground (Plate VIII). A gold band frames the text on the last spread of the sixth volume on which only four lines fit (fol. 15v, Plate IX). At the top and bottom of this folio wide illuminated bands decorated with chessboard patterns frame the text, recalling the illumination of 4th/10th century Qur'ans.

[24] Plate VIII, Chapter IV.
[25] Déroche, The Abbasid Tradition, 160. Déroche suggests that illumination varies slightly from one part of the manuscript to the other.
[26] See Table 4.2.

Figure 6.5: Sura banners and vignette designs in the Khalili Qur'an, 5th/11th-6th/12th century.

Figure 6.5 continued: Sura banners and vignette designs in the Khalili Qur'an, 5th/11th-6th/12th century.

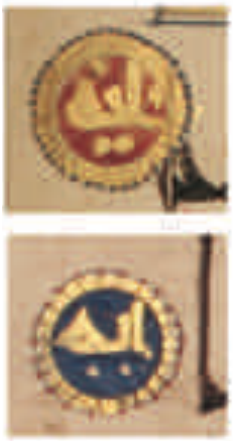

Figure 6.6: Single-verse markers in the Khalili Qur'an, 5th/11th-6th/12th century.

The main decorative elements in the sura banners are palmette scrolls and flower bud designs, while the vignettes are composed of symmetrically designed palmettes that resemble wings, some of which are decorated with strips of dashed patterns. Such elements are similarly found on 4th/10th or 5th/11th century Samanid earthenware and metalwork excavated in eastern Iran and Central Asia. For example, the wing-like design on the crown of a seated prince painted on a Samanid bowl resembles the design used in the vignettes of the Khalili Qur'an, specifically in c. and e. of Figure 6.5 (Plate X).[27] On this same bowl, the pattern designs of the textile worn by the prince include dots and small dashes forming lines, also echoing the patterns in the vignette designs of a., c., d., f., i., and j. of Figure 6.5. Moreover, the chessboard pattern at the top of the prince's outfit is seen in the illuminated bands on the last spread of the Qur'an (Plate IX). The pointed palmette scrolls that decorate the background of the sura banners (a., b., d., g., i., and j. of Figure 6.5) are stylised in the same manner as the vertical extensions from the letters painted around the rim of another earthenware bowl from 4th/10th or 5th/11th century Nishapur or Samarqand (Plate XI).[28] The dotted and dashed patterns in the strips of the outfit of two wrestlers painted on a third earthenware bowl from 4th/10th or 5th/11th century Nishapur similarly mirror the designs of the vignette in the Khalili Qur'an (c., d. f., i., and j. of Figure 6.5) (Plate XII).[29] Green is employed on this bowl, which also appears in the Khalili Qur'an, but rarely appears in Qur'ans from Khurasan. Lastly, the wing-like design of palmettes in the Qur'an's vignettes also appear on a fourth bowl excavated in Nishapur and ascribed to the 4th/10th or 5th/11th century

[27] The bowl is in the Khalili Collection (inv. no. POT 99). Rogers, *The Arts of Islam*, 50 (cat. no. 32).
[28] The bowl is in the David Collection (inv. no. 22/1974). Folsach, *Art from the World of Islam*, 136 (cat. no. 115).
[29] The bowl is in the David Collection (inv. no. 13/1975). Ibid., 138 (cat. no. 122).

(Plate XIII).[30] The scrolls painted on this bowl resemble the scrolls used in the decoration of the sura banners, and in the table on fol. 1r enumerating the components of the Qur'an (Plate VII).

Some of the decorative elements that appear in the sura banners of this Qur'an echo those on textiles produced in Iran during the Buyid period. For instance, the dashes, palmettes, and the patterns making the shapes of the head and tails of the birds on a textile we have already discussed recall those in the Qur'an's sura banners (Plate XXXVIII, Chapter IV). Furthermore, wing-like palmette motifs, stylised flowers and the relation between foreground and background created in the sura banners of the Khalili Qur'an are also seen on another silk from the Buyid period (Plate XIV).[31] The wing-like palmettes which appear at the top of the flower at the centre of the design on the textile is composed of two sepals and a bud surrounded by leaves – a pattern repeatedly seen in the sura banners and in the illuminated table in the beginning of the Qur'an (Plate VII).

These resemblances show how a similar range of motifs and patterns used on ceramics, metalwork and textile were also employed in Qur'ans, as we have repeatedly seen. They suggest that the aesthetic employed in the Khalili Qur'an belonged to a larger visual language that had developed a century earlier in Greater Iran, yet appears closely related to that of Khurasani Qur'ans.[32]

The script and layout in the Khalili Qur'an

The NSI employed in the Khalili Qur'an resembles the monumental NSI employed in the Ghaznavid Qur'ans, Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī's Qur'an, and the Qarmathian Qur'an – but it also differs from them in a number of ways.[33] The similarities are seen in the diagonal turn at the bottom of independent *alif*, the triangular form at the base of *dāl/dhāl,* the thin diagonal stroke of

[30] The bowl is in the David Collection (inv. no. 27/1962). See Folsach, Art from the World of Islam, 138 (cat. no. 124).
[31] It is now in the Cleveland Museum of Art (61.34). Wiet, *Soieries Persanes,* Pl. IV. It has the date 393/1002. On the revaluation of this textile and similar others see Blair et al., 'Reevaluating the Date of the "Buyid" Silks'.
[32] Hillenbrand has made a parallel between book painting and ceramic drawing in the 7th/13th century. Hillenbrand, 'The Relationship between Book Painting and Luxury Ceramics in 7th/13th Century Iran.'
[33] Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 156. Déroche compares the script in the Khalili Qur'an to that in the Qur'an of al-ʿAbdūsī.

initial *ʿayn/ghayn* and the trapezoidal head of *mīm* and *wāw* (Table 6.2). The differences are detected in the curvilinear nature of the script, such as in the bowls of letters, and in the turn at the bottom of *alif* and tail of *mīm* – both of which are more curvilinear than the straight diagonal bowl or tail of the letters in the Ghaznavid Qur'ans. In that sense the script in the Khalili Qur'an is closer to that employed in SMQ 1200 than to the scripts employed in Ghaznavid and Ghurid Qur'ans. The characteristic feature of the script in the Khalili Qur'an resides in the noticeable *tarwīs* (serif) at the top of all vertical strokes, such as *alif*, and the diagonal shafts of letters, such as *ṭāʾ/ẓāʾ* and *kāf*. Even though *tarwīs* is present in, for example, Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an, it appears much more subtle than it does in the Khalili Qur'an.[34] This could be due to the large size of the script in the Khalili Qur'an, which consequently makes the serifs more visible. In addition, the shaft of *ṭāʾ/ẓāʾ* starts with a thickness at the top and gradually curves to become a straight diagonal line. This stylisation is not present in the NSI employed in Khurasani Qur'ans. Therefore, this feature as well as the *tarwīs* may have represented a local trend of stylising NSI.

The size of the script, which Déroche notes to be roughly around 4 cm in height, means that a large pen was used that must have imposed some difficulties on the copyist (or copyists), and hence, on the consistency of letter forms.[35] Nevertheless, the layout in the Qur'an remains consistent, and like most of the Qur'ans during this period, spreads were considered all at once with the ruling done in dry point. Advanced planning took place between the copyist and the illuminator, who may have been the same person, as the level of balancing between the script and illumination indicates.[36]

In sum, several features point to Khurasan or Transoxiana as the Khalili Qur'an's general place of origin with roots in the visual language of Greater Iran. However, differences from the Khurasani corpus were noted – such as the use of green olive in the colour palette, which is a

[34] See Table 4.3.
[35] Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 156. Some inconsistencies in letter forms appear on the surviving folios, which Déroche suggests point to the involvement of more than one calligrapher. For example, the tail of final *mīm* appears on fols. 1v-2r as either a diagonal stroke or a vertical one, while on fols. 37v-38r, the stroke is horizontal. In addition, initial *ʿayn/ghayn* appears condensed on fols. 1v-2r, but is horizontally stretched on fols. 37v-38r. However, these variations could be due to space management by the copyist, in which the form of letter has to adjust based on the letter succeeding it and how much space is left to finish the line.
[36] Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 160. Déroche provides the example of fol. 38r on which the last two words of a sura are incorporated within the illuminated band of the next sura, and which also imposed a three-part division on the sura band to balance the design.

similar hue to the one used on the earthenware discussed above, and the stylisation of NS. The aesthetic proximity between Qur'anic motifs and those appearing on earthenware, silverware and textile from Khurasan and Central Asia thus anchors this manuscript in the region, possibly its northeastern part, as the Qur'an's likely place of production.

The second volume of a two-part Qur'an, now at the Freer and Sackler Gallery of Arts in Washington, DC, F1937.46, exhibits a number of features in its script and illumination that relate it to Qur'ans copied in Khurasan (Plates XV and XVII).[37] Like the other Qur'ans discussed in this chapter, the Freer Qur'an is a large manuscript that measures 31.3 x 20.1 cm.[38]

The illumination in the Freer Qur'an

The double-page frontispiece is made of two central panels. At the centre of each is the "Seal of Solomon" sandwiched between two horizontal bands and inscribed in white with a statement on the createdness of the Qur'an, to which I shall later return (Plate XV).[39] Scrolls of *fleur de lys* encircled by their own stems decorate the ground of this frontispiece, some of which have long extended tips – features typical of the decoration in the imperial Ghaznavid Qur'ans. Three bands frame the central panels of this frontispiece. The first – the closest to the central design – is a tightly knit geometric gold interlace with a small flower at each corner encircled by its own stem in gold against a blue background. The second is a more organic interlace that generates four-petal flower shapes, and the third and outermost frame is a bead chain design.

The design of this page echoes the frontispiece of the fifth volume in the Bust Qur'an (Plate XLII, Chapter IV), the second double-page frontispiece in the Qur'an of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī (Plate IV, Chapter V), the frontispiece of the Qur'an of Sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn (Plate XI, Chapter V) and the frontispiece of the Qarmathian Qur'an (Plate IV). All are based on a central design that is sandwiched between two bands. In the Freer Qur'an, three vignettes of type-7 are linked to the frontispiece, which most likely originally numbered four prior to the manuscript's restoration (Figure 6.7). The one at the bottom right has a frame with a repetition of flower buds,

[37] The manuscript was heavily restored and its folios were pasted at some point onto pink paper. Folios from the manuscript are published in: Farhad and Rettig, *The Art of the Qur'an*, 172-173. Also online: http://www.asia.si.edu/collections/edan/object.php?q=fsg_F1937.46 (last accessed on 8 July 2016). There appears to be a folio from this second volume in Tareq Rajab Museum in Kuwait and another one in Astan-i Quds Razavi's library in Mashhad.

[38] I am thankful to Massumeh Farhad and Simon Rettig for granting me access to examine this manuscript and others in the collection.

[39] The right and left pages were swapped when the frontispiece was restored.

while the one on the left has a polylobed contour and a sinuous line extension – both features of type-7 vignettes used in the Ghaznavid Qur'ans.[40] The three medallions are decorated with symmetrically designed scrolls, also a characteristic of the vignettes employed in Qur'ans from Khurasan.

Figure 6.7: Left: Medallion linked to the left panel; Middle: Medallion linked to the right panel at the top; Right: Medallion linked to the right panel at the bottom of the Freer Qur'an frontispiece, 5th/11th-6th/12th century.

Illuminated bands at the top and bottom of the left-hand page of the double-page spread in the beginning of the 16th volume (Plate XVI) are inscribed with the Qur'anic extract (Q.56: 78-79): … *kitāb maknūn lā yamassuhu illā al-muṭahharūn* (… a Book well-sheltered, That only the pure can touch). It is inscribed in NS, indicating that the lost right-hand page also had illuminated bands at the top and bottom containing the beginning of this Qur'anic verse. This same verse has already been seen in a number of Khurasani Qur'ans, including the Bust Qur'an (Plate XLI, Chapter IV) and the Qur'an of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī (Plate IV, Chapter V). In the Freer Qur'an, it appears on a decorated ground of gold scrolls flanked by two squares of geometrically interlaced lines inscribed with "Allah". These illuminated bands recall the design of the sura bands in TIEM 555 and the British Library's Qur'an, which are decorated with latticework with the word "Allah" inscribed in a square (Figure 6.8). In both the Freer Qur'an and the British Library's Qur'an, a square flanks each side of the sura title, while in TIEM 555 three squares are formed in the banner and inscribed with "Allah". In addition, the marginal vignettes that project from the illuminated bands in the Freer Qur'an are of type-7 with a polylobed contour and inner circular repetition of *li'llāh*. Including *li'llāh* in the illumination of Qur'ans is a feature seen

[40] See Table 4.2.

repeatedly in the Ghaznavid Qur'ans, as for example, in the vignette linked to the first double-page spread with Qur'anic text in the tenth volume of the Qur'an of al-ʿAbdūsī, and also in the vignette linked to the frontispiece of TIEM 555 (Figure 6.9).

Furthermore, as seen in the Ghaznavid Qur'ans, a simple gold circle outlined in blue marks the end of every verse in the Freer Qur'an, while a rosette with dots decorating its petals marks every fifth verse.[41] In addition, a marginal medallion with large petal borders and a polylobed contour is used to mark every tenth verse in the margin, as seen in CBL Is. 1430 copied in 428/1036, in Nishapur (Figure 6.10). Therefore, a number of features appear in the illumination of the Freer Qur'an that consequently relates it to Qur'ans produced in Khurasan. However, as the following section will demonstrate, its script distinguishes it from the group in that it exhibits a number of peculiarities.

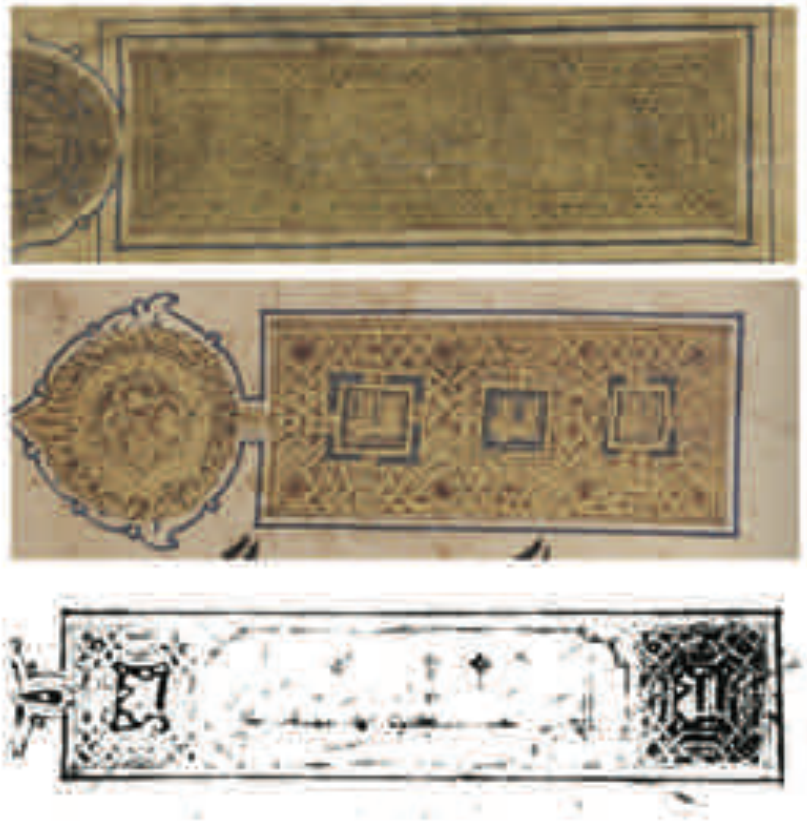

Figure 6.8: Top: Sura banner in the Freer Qur'an, 5th/11th-6th/12th century; Middle: Sura banner in TIEM 555; Bottom: Sura banner in the British Library Qur'an, 5th/11th-6th/12th century.

[41] See table 4.2.

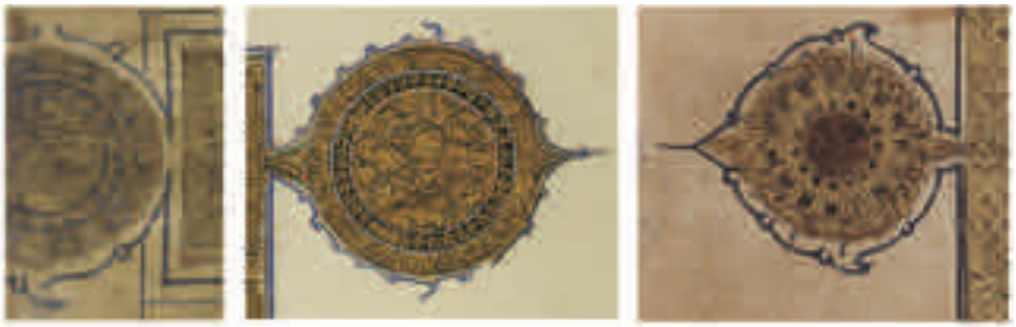

Figure 6.9: Left: Vignette in the Freer Qur'an, 5th/11th-6th/12th century; Middle: Vignette in ʿAlī's Qur'an, 485/1092; Right: Vignette in TIEM 555, 5th/11th-6th/12th century.

Figure 6.10: Left: Tenth-verse marker in CBL Is. 1430, probably Nishapur, 428/1036; Right: Tenth-verse marker in the Freer Qur'an, 5th/11th-6th/12th century.

The script in the Freer Qur'an

The script used in the Freer Qur'an is characterised by general NSI features, such as the contrast between thick and thin strokes, the triangularity in heads of letters and the diagonal emphasis of descenders. More specific shapes of letters that are typical NSI include the diagonal turn at the bottom of independent *alif*, the triangular base of *dāl*/*dhāl* and the diagonal shaft of *ṭāʾ*/*ẓāʾ* (Table 6.2). However, the script is also characterised by curved descenders, and the bowls of letters are shallow and open widely with high contrast between the bold thick centre and the thin beginning and end. It is comparable to scripts on Samanid bowls in that it combines triangular heads with fluid stroke endings (Figure 4.17). In addition, letters such as initial *jīm*/*ḥāʾ*/*khāʾ* have a hairline extension at the far right that drops below the baseline. Similarly, ligatures are hair-like inverted triangles, which add to the overall contrast of the script and give a distinct feel. Some letters have unusual forms, such as *mīm*, which is almost a square that sits on the baseline with its tail dropping vertically before it extends horizontally – a form not encountered in Khurasani Qur'ans. These uncommon features point to a local trend of NSI stylisation within Khurasan or Transoxiana, especially given that *hāʾ* appears in a similar form – with a top

curvilinear extension – as it does in the Ghaznavid Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm and the Qur'an of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī (Figure 6.11).

Figure 6.11: Left: *Hāʾ* in the Qur'an of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī, 573/1177; Middle: *Hāʾ* in the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm, Ghazna, 484/1091; Right: *Hāʾ* in the Freer Qur'an, 5th/11th-6th/12th century.

The layout of the Freer Qur'an was well-thought out, with lines that adhere to the baseline and that align with those of the opposite facing page, indicating that both sides of the bifolium were ruled at the same time. The choice of ten lines per page on 31.3 x 20.1 cm makes this manuscript a comfortable read at arm's length. When a page has sura banners it fits only four lines, as on plate XVI. Moreover, the consistency and stylisation of the script indicate an experienced copyist (or copyists), and the size and quality suggest a wealthy person probably commissioned it.

Nevertheless, one issue in this Qur'an remains unsolved. On the back of its frontispiece, which is now pasted on cardboard, is the beginning of Q.15. The text is copied in monumental NS, different from that of the manuscript, with typical NSI characteristics, such as the lower diagonal turn of independent *alif,* triangular base in letter *dāl/dhāl,* triangular head of *wāw* and the overall diagonal emphasis of the script and contrast between thick and thin strokes (Plate XVII). Even though these characteristics are present in NSI of the Khurasani Qur'ans, the script on this folio of the Freer Qur'an looks less mature and less steady. I have personally examined this folio at the Freer Gallery of Art, and it is still unclear how the Qur'an was restored. The NSI side of the folio could have been from a different manuscript, which may be the reason why it was pasted on cardboard on the verso of the Qur'an's frontispiece. Alternatively, the Qur'an may have originally been copied in two different types of NS scripts, and when restored, leaves were mixed up.

Finally, in regard to the statement in the frontispiece design of the Freer Qur'an, it reads: *al-qurʾān kalām allāh ghayr makhlūq wa man qāla makhlūq fa-huwa kāfir bi'llāh al-ʿaẓīm* (The Qur'an is the word of God not created and he who says it is created is a disbeliever in God the most Great). This statement reflects the theological debate that started in the 2nd/8th century on the createdness of the Qur'an, and grew in popularity during the 3rd/9th and 4th/10th centuries.[42] The Karrāmīyya believed that the Qur'an was not created (*makhlūq*), and that it consequently did not exist within a limited period of time but was co-eternal with God.[43] The Ḥanbalīs also believed it was co-eternal with God, while the Ashʿarīs and Shāfiʿīs took a neutral position by making a distinction between God's words, which were deemed co-eternal with God, and the created expressions by prophets, including promises and commands. Other sects had a different view, such as the Muʿtazila, adherents of a heterodox theological school, who believed that the Qur'an was created and thus not co-eternal with God.[44] By the 5th/11th century, such movements propagating the createdness of the Qur'an were considered by many Islamic theologists to be heretical.

Therefore, the appearance of this creed in the illumination of the Freer Qur'an reflects the inter-religious debates taking place at the time, and makes a claim in support of certain theological beliefs. The inclusion of such a statement in Qur'anic illumination, however, is not new, with the earliest known appearance being in the Palermo Qur'an, dated 372/982.[45] Given that Khurasan was the stronghold of the Karrāmī sect, and that it was favoured by the Ghurids as discussed in the previous chapter, the Qur'an was likely commissioned for a supporter of the Karrāmīyya. However, this cannot be confirmed since other Sunni sects also supported this view.

[42] Richard, 'The Createdness of the Qur'an', EQ.
[43] On the Karrāmīyya sect, see Bosworth, 'Karrāmiyya', EI2; Bosworth, 'The Rise of the Karāmiyyah in Khurasan'; and Malamud, 'The Politics of Heresy in Medieval Khurasan'.
[44] On the Muʿtazila, see Schmidtke, 'Muʿtazila', EQ.
[45] Déroche, 'Cercles et entrelacs', 600. The statement also appears in the opening pages of a Qur'an dated 432/1040 and sold on 26 April 2005 at Christie's in London (Lot 15), and in the frontispiece of a Qur'an at the Walters Art Gallery (W. 557): http://art.thewalters.org/detail/21410/quran-13/ (last accessed on 10 July 2016).

An unpublished Qur'an now in the Topkapı Sarayı Library, R10, displays many similarities with Qur'ans produced in Khurasan as well as with one of the RS Qur'ans ascribed to Nishapur in chapter III (Plates XVIII-XIX).[46] Copied in NSIII, it is an incomplete Qur'an with a lost frontispiece.

The illumination in TKS R10

It now begins with a text framed by an illuminated border (fol. 1r, Plate XVIII), on which the gilded top band is inscribed with an illegible text and decorated with floral scrolls. The band is divided with lines, creating two crosses at the right and left of the title – a configuration similarly seen at the top of the colophon page in the Qur'an of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī (fol. 281r, Plate I, Chapter V). The illuminated band at the bottom of this same folio is decorated with a gold lattice in which four-petal flower shapes are inscribed, just like in the middle band of the frontispiece frame of the Freer Qur'an (Figure 6.12).

Figure 6.12: Top: Band at the bottom of fol. 1r in TKS R10, 5th/11th century; Bottom: Middle band of the frontispiece frame of the Freer Qur'an, 5th/11th-6th/12th century.

The text on the last folio enumerates the components of the Qur'an (fol. 235r, Plate XIX). It is copied in a monumental gold NSI and decorated with *fleur de lys* scrolls with pointed tips,

[46] The Qur'an is unpublished. Its accession number has been associated with a different Qur'an by Yasser Tabbaa. Tabbaa, 'The Transformation of Arabic Writing: Part I', 130.

reminiscent of Ghaznavid visual language. In addition, this last folio in TKS R10 is framed with two bands, the outermost of which is a lattice that generates blue forms projecting a medallion with flower bud repetition and polylobed contour into the margin, as in the Ghaznavid Qur'ans.

In addition to these elements that suggest TKS R10 was produced in Khurasan, the design of the sura bands, vignettes and verse markers is also closely related to those used in the group of RS Qur'ans attributed to Nishapur. More specifically, the design of sura bands in TKS R10 is very similar to those in CBL Is. 1430, in that the sura titles are inscribed in foliated Kufic with bulbous extensions to the letters (Figure 6.13). They are flanked by two squares to the right and left, each decorated with trilobate flowers encircled by their own stems. In relation to the marginal vignettes linked to these banners in both Qur'ans (Figure 6.14), one interesting feature is that not enough space exists in either to draw the vignette due to a preceding marginal verse marker. Instead of overlapping them, the illuminators do not complete the full circular design of the vignette. As a result, the vignette is cut in half with a straight top in TKS R10, while it is partially drawn and overlaps the preceding medallion in CBL Is. 1430.[47] In addition, every fifth verse in TKS R10 is marked by an illuminated circular device inscribed with *khamsa* (five), topped by a crown-like design and supported by a thin rectangle, echoing the fifth-verse marker in the Bust Qur'an (Figure 6.15). A medallion decorated with a circular repetition of vegetal scrolls marks every ten verses, a design also encountered in CBL Is. 1430 (Figure 6.16).

Figure 6.13: Top: Sura heading in TKS R10, 5th/11th century; Bottom: Sura heading in CBL Is. 1430, probably Nishapur, 428/1036.

[47] A similar truncated medallion is also present in the Qur'an of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī, on fol. 214r.

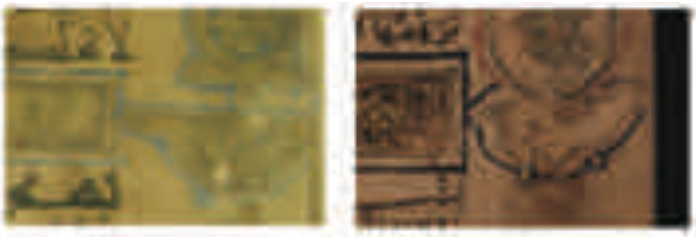

Figure 6.14: Left: Marginal vignette in TKS R10, 5th/11th century; Right: Marginal vignette in CBL Is. 1430, probably Nishapur, 428/1036.

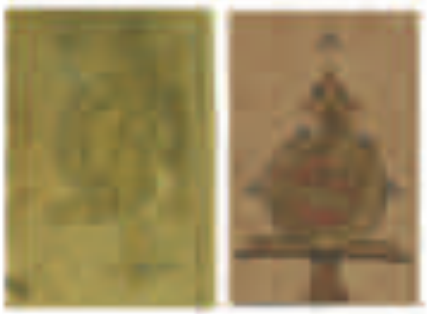

Figure 6.15: Left: Fifth-verse marker in TKS R10, 5th/11th century; Right: Fifth-verse marker in the Bust Qur'an, Bust, 505/1111.

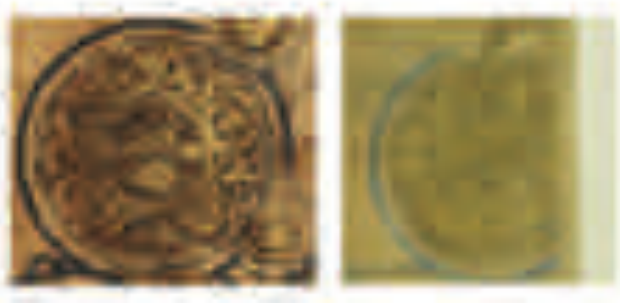

Figure 6.16: Left: Tenth-verse marker in CBL Is. 1430, probably Nishapur, 428/1036; Right: Tenth-verse marker in TKS R10, 5th/11th century.

Another aspect that brings TKS R10 close to Qur'ans coied in Khurasan is the marking of daily prayers, similarly employed in the Qur'an of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī, that of Sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn and the Qarmathian Qur'an. Resembling a writing tablet, the illuminated marginal device in TKS R10 is inscribed with *ṣalaw[ā]t al-ẓuhr* (noon prayers), a reading plan that was also adopted in the Qarmathian Qur'an (Figure 6.3) and seems to be a popular feature in Qur'ans produced in Khurasan. Hence, a number of elements present in TKS R10 fit in with the Khurasani Qur'anic aesthetic.

Figure 6.17: Illuminated device in the margin indicating *ṣalawāt al-ẓuhr* (noon prayers), TKS R10, 5th/11th century.

The script in TKS R10

The script employed in TKS R10 has NSIII features characterised, in general terms, by the curvilinear and compact nature of the script that fits twenty-two lines per page. In regard to specific letter forms, typical NSIII characteristics prevail (Table 6.2), as in initial *alif* without the oblique turn at the bottom, the short and curvilinear shaft of *ṭā'/ẓā'*, and the short and curved tails of *mīm* and *wāw*. However, features of NSI also appear, such as the trapezoidal form of *mīm* and the initial *jīm/ḥā'/khā',* which has a top diagonal stroke that crosses the baseline. Given the close resemblance of its illumination with CBL Is. 1430, TKS R10 can be ascribed to the 5th/11th century. Moreover, because its script combines elements from both NSI and NSIII – a mixture encountered in a number of Qur'ans copied at the end of the 4th/10th and beginning of the 5th/11th centuries – its attribution to the first half of the 5th/11th century is indeed likely.

The Qur'ans discussed in so far were most likely produced in Khurasan or Transoxiana, in important cities that were centres of Qur'anic production, such as Bust, Herat, Bukhara, Samarqand and Uzgand. This hypothesis is based on a comparative analysis with the Ghaznavid Qur'ans and with other artistic productions in Greater Iran and Central Asia. This visual language thus places them securely between the 5th/11th and 6th/12th centuries. The following dispersed Qur'anic folios can also be ascribed to Khurasan or Transoxiana during this same period.

A number of scattered Qur'anic folios exhibit elements in their illumination and script that are related to Khurasani Qur'ans. These elements are not homogeneous, but nevertheless exhibit similarities that point to local variations from a larger visual repertoire.

The Met folios[48]

Four folios survive from a Qur'an, now at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (40.164.2, 40.164.2a, 40.164.2b and 45.140), which exhibit features related to Qur'ans from Khurasan and other decorative motifs from Greater Iran (Plates XX-XXIII). At the beginning of each sura, the Qur'an includes a text in smaller size, identified as *Faḍā'il al-ṣuwar*, which is a genre of Ḥadīth that discusses the importance and benefits of reading specific suras.[49] This text was copied in small size NS, while the Qur'anic text was copied in NSIII. On Plates XX and XXI, the decorated extended tips from the *basmala* and name of the Prophet – both written in large stylised NSIII scripts – are very similar to an inscription around the interior of the dome chamber of the Haydariyya mosque in Qazvin in western Iran, datable to the 6th/12th century (Figure 6.18).[50] The resemblance with the Haydariyya mosque point once more that a common visual language was articulated in Greater Iran on various media and from which local styles may have developed. Similarly, the decorated extension of letter *dāl* in the name of the prophet resemble that of the same letter on a Ghurid coin stuck at Ghazni in 590/1193 (Figure 5.10).

However there are other common features with Qur'ans attributed to Khurasan or Transoxiana suggesting that this Qur'an, from which only these leaves survive, may have been produced there. For instance, the top of the vertical strokes in the *basmala* and the name of the prophet end with floral pointed decoration, which mirrors the tips of the inscription on the palace of the

[48] I have personally examined these folios. They are published online: http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/449693 and http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/450575 (last accessed on 10 July 2016).
[49] Another Qur'an that includes *faḍā'il al-suwar* is BL Or. 13002 (see chapter I). For a discussion on including *faḍā'il al-suwar* in Qur'anic manuscripts and its use in BL Or. 13002 specifically, see Saleh, 'Word', and the conclusion of this thesis.
[50] The inscriptions are published in: Kühnel, *Islamische Schriftkunst*, 19; and Pope, 'Architectural Ornament', 1297 and plates 313-316.

Ghaznavid Sultan Masʿūd III, as well as the extended tips from the colophon of ʿAlī's Qur'an, produced in Ghazna in 485/1092 (Figure 4.21).

Another feature of these two folios that points to a link with Qur'ans attributed to Khurasan or Transoxiana is the way in which letters are laid out above each other on the last line of the first folio (Plate XX), and on the third line of the second folio (Plate XXI). This feature is seen in Ibn Shādhān's Qur'an (Figure 1.1), Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an (Figure 4.12), ʿAlī's Qur'an (Plate XXXII, Chapter IV) and SMQ 1200 discussed above (Plate I). Further resemblances can be detected between the type of vignette used on Plate XXII and the one used in the Khalili Qur'an discussed above. The former vignette, linked to the sura banner, has winged palmettes and a similar colour palette (olive green, blue and here, orange instead of red) to the vignettes in the Khalili Qur'an (Figure 6.5).

Figure 6.18: Top: Inscription from the Haydariyya mosque in Qazvin, Iran, 6th/12th century; Bottom: Headline from Met 40.164.2a, 5th/11th-6th/12th century.

Lastly, in somewhat of an uncommon practice during this period, certain elements of the Qur'an are emphasised on these folios. In addition to the name of the Prophet which is copied in larger script with decorated letters, *surat al-ikhlāṣ* (Q. 112) is inscribed with large foliated Kufic (Plate XXIII). These elements indicate that the calligrapher (or calligraphers) behind this work exercised a certain level of artistic freedom. Moreover, the script of *surat al-ikhlāṣ* resembles epigraphic pottery and architecture. For example, the inscription on the minaret of Masʿūd III in Ghazna, datable to the period 482/1089-509/1115, exhibits similarities with letters on the mentioned folio (Figure 6.19). The interlace in the vertical extension of letters, the parallel ornaments at the tip of the ascenders, and the overall geometry of the script are characteristics seen in both epigraphic forms. These features are also found in the Ghurid inscriptions in the Great Mosque of Herat (597/1200) pointing that they may have been commonly used in east Iranian epigraphic forms of the 5th/11th and 6th/12th century.[51]

Figure 6.19: Top: Headline Met 45.140; Bottom: The minaret of Masʿūd III, datable 482/1089-509/1115.

Moreover, an ewer now at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, exhibits similar extensions and interlace within letters as the ones that appear in the met folios (Figure 6.20). More specifically,

[51] The inscription is published in: Flood, *Objects of Translation*, 106.

the ornament at the end of the diagonal extension from the letter *dāl* of 'Muḥammad' echoes the one extending from the letter *nūn* on the ewer. Volov, as part of her study of epigraphy, had drawn the letters on this Samanid pottery (Figure 6.21).[52] Her study shows clearly the interlace within letters and the ornaments at the end of letters which find parallels with the script used for *sūrat al-ikhlāṣ* (Plate XXIII) and which goes back to al-Ṣaffār's Qur'an (388/998) (Plate X, Chapter I).

Figure 6.20: Ewer, c. 4th/10th century, Metropolitan Museum of Art, L. 56.34.6.

[52] Volov, 'Plaited Kufic on Samanid Epigraphic Pottery', 131.

Figure 6.21: Inscriptions on ewer, Metropolitan Museum of Art, L. 56.34.6 (after Volov).

While these similarities place the Met folios within the broader aesthetic language of Greater Iran, others bring it closer to the visual language of Qur'ans copied in Khurasan or Transoxiana. As a last example in support of this idea, the extensions of letters and ornaments that appear on the Met folios resonate with those of the epigraphy of Ghaznavid monuments (Figure 6.22).[53] Both have ornamental extensions in their vertical strokes that appear to be mirrored and foliated endings pointing upwards.

[53] Flury, 'Le décor épigraphique des monuments de Ghazna', Pl. XII.

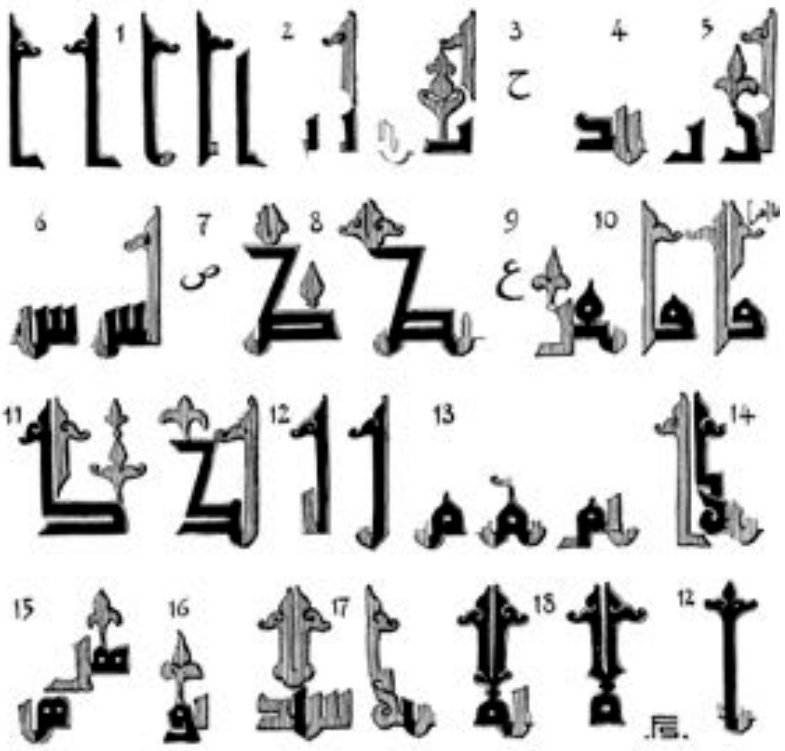

Figure 6.22: Letters from an inscription with the name of Sultan Ibrāhīm (after Flury).

Unfortunately, only one folio survives from an additional Qur'an exhibiting common features with Qur'ans from Khurasan, now in the David Collection in Copenhagen, 52/2000 (Plate XXIV).[54] Copied in NSIII in a relatively small size (19.2 x 16 cm), the sura band on the surviving folio is decorated with two octagons inscribed with the title of the sura in gold foliated Kufic. The title appears on a cross-hatched background decorated with stylised *fleur de lys,* as previously seen in the Ghaznavid Qur'ans and in the background of some folios from the Qur'an of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī (573/1117). The octagonal forms in the band recall the design of the top bands on the first double-page spread with Qur'anic text in the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm (Plate VIII, Chapter IV). In addition, the marginal vignette linked to the sura band in David 52/2000 is of type-7, meaning a circular design decorated with symmetrically designed floral scrolls with a blue polylobed contour from which two sinuous thin lines extend. The design of this vignette is similar to the Ghaznavid Qur'ans, specifically to the one that projects from the frontispiece of the Qur'an of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī. The scrolls decorating the vignette have thin stems that interlace with long pointed and extended tips (Figure 6.23). Both David 52 and Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī's Qur'an feature a colour palette of blue, white and gold. Moreover, the single-verse markers are rosettes with dots decorating their petals, a design encountered in the Ghaznavid Qur'ans as well as in those ascribed to Khurasan or Transoxiana, such as the Qarmathian Qur'an (Table 6.3).

Figure 6.23: Left: Marginal vignette linked to sura banner in David 52/2000, 5th/11th-6th/12th century; Right: Marginal vignette linked to the frontispiece of the Qur'an of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī, 573/1177.

[54] The folio is published in Folsach, *Art from the World of Islam*, 56 (fig. 4). I thank Mette Korsholm for providing me with a high-resolution image of this folio.

The script in David 52/2000 exhibits NSIII features, such as independent *alif,* which is a vertical stroke with no oblique turn at the bottom, *nūn* with its curvilinear bowl and *ṭāʾ*/*ẓāʾ* with its diagonal shaft that starts with thickness at the top. However, NSI features are also detected in the script, including the thin diagonal tail of *wāw*; the *ʿayn*, which starts with a thin diagonal line followed by a curved stroke that meets a horizontal line on the baseline; trapezoidal *mīm*; initial *jīm*/*ḥāʾ*/*khāʾ*, which has a top diagonal stroke that crosses the baseline; and *dāl*/*dhāl* that has a triangular base, sometimes as it does in NSIII with a thin serif at the top. Thus, the script of David 52/2000 places it in the 5th/11th century, as it still mixes NSI and NSIII features. Its illumination indicates it was produced in the second half of the 5th/11th century, since it shares a number of characteristics with the Ghaznavid Qur'ans as well as those discussed in this chapter that were most likely produced in cities in Khurasan and Transoxiana during the same period. As such, this Qur'an may have been copied at the beginning of the 5th/11th century and its illumination added later, possibly in the second half of the 5th/11th century or 6th/12th century. Alternatively, this Qur'an may have been copied and illuminated in the second half of the 5th/11th century or 6th/12th century by a copyist who still retained old script features.

F2001.16A-B

One last unpublished and peculiar fragment of a thirty-volume Qur'an is now at the Freer and Sackler Gallery of Arts (Plates XXV-XXVI).[55] The first double-page spread at the beginning of a new section in the Qur'an (Plate XXV) is decorated with an illuminated frame with little swirls decorating the text ground, similar to the Bust Qur'an (Plate XL, Chapter IV). The illuminated bands at the top are inscribed with Kufic indicating that it is the twentieth section of a thirty-volume Qur'an. The bands on the sides are richly decorated with floral scrolls, some of which are inscribed in their own stem, executed in gold. These flowers recall those that appear in the decoration of the Qarmathian Qur'an and on ceramic and metalwork from Khurasan and Transoxiana (Figure 6.2). From the side frames, triangles are projected into the margin communicating a different feel from the opening spreads that we have seen so far and adding to the overall distinct visual language of this Qur'an.

[55] Farhad and Rettig, *The Art of the Qur'an*, 176–77.

The script employed in the Qur'an is unusual (Plate XXVI). While it retains NSI features – such as diagonality, contrast between thick and thin strokes, trapezoidal heads of letters *wāw/fā'/qāf,* triangular form at the base of letter *ḍāl/dhal*, diagonal thin top stroke in *ʿayn/ghayn* – other features appear very distinct. For example, the heads of letters have only minimal counters and the vertical ascenders of letters *alif* and *lām* have a disjuncture that gives the script a different character from the NS scripts employed in the manuscripts studied so far. The script in this Qur'an is hence as peculiar as its illumination, yet mature and with confident strokes pointing to a local school of NS stylisation. An exact similar script was employed in another Qur'anic fragment, now at the Chester Beatty Library (Is. 1419) (Plate XXVII).[56] It was most likely copied by the same copyist but this time with a tenth-verse marker identical to the one used in the Qarmathian Qur'an (Figure 6.1). The overlaps in script and illumination with the Qur'ans already studied suggest that the manuscript was copied in the 5th/11th or 6th/12th century in Greater Iran, with a possibility of it being produced in Khurasan or Transoxiana.

Even though the size of the manuscript is modest (15.8 x 11.6 cm), its decoration and the sprinkling of gold on each page point to an expensive commission. The manuscript holds a few mistakes and has no verse markers, Rettig notes that this section was unusable but because of the quality of its script and because the Word of God cannot be destroyed, the section survived.

The analysis of scripts and illumination employed in the Qur'ans discussed in this chapter reveals that even though they share some characteristics with the Ghaznavid group, they also present similarities with artistic productions from Greater Iran and Central Asia. These commonalities and differences suggest that the visual languages of these Qur'ans may be representing local variants that developed out of a larger common visual repertoire articulated on various artistic media in the 5th/11th and 6th/12th centuries. Nevertheless, the fact that the characteristics of their script and illumination are closer to Qur'anic and non-Qur'anic productions in Khurasan and Transoxiana allow us to propose that they may have originated from there and suggest that there may have been a common Khurasani aesthetic. This hypothesis, which builds on the idea the formation of a regional rather than dynastic aesthetic in Qur'anic production, resonates in architecture as well.[57] However, the mobility of artisans and

[56] Arberry, *The Koran Illuminated*, 11 (Plate 21).
[57] A similar argument is developed in regard to architecture in Rugiadi, 'Ghaznavid Art and Architecture', EI3.

merchants, certain books, motifs and techniques makes it difficult to create typologies of script and illumination within this larger aesthetic, thus precluding the identification of specific trends.

Furthermore, the palaeographic analysis presented in this chapter indicates that different types of NS were in use between the 5th/11th and 6th/12th centuries, some of which displayed uncommon or peculiar features. Similarly, the variations in illumination that were identified, and their resemblance with architectural decorative motifs, metalwork and earthenware, reveal certain local preferences, but not to the extent that could establish exact geographic provenances of the Qur'ans. Further comparative analysis with Khurasani and Transoxianan epigraphy may help localise and identify these trends.

Lastly, the quality of script and illumination, in addition to the use of gold in the Qur'ans discussed in this chapter, leave no doubt that they were expensive commissions. The Qur'an as a physical object did not only provide prestige to the Khurasani elites and rulers, but it also helped propagate their exegetical preferences and theological beliefs. The inclusion of a Karrāmī *tafsīr* and statement on the nature of God's words indicate that the Qur'anic manuscript not only reflected current debates and religious practices, but that it was also used as a vehicle through which political or religious authorities communicated their preferences.

Conclusion

This second part examined Qur'ans produced in Khurasan and Transoxiana between the 5th/11th and 6th/12th centuries. Most employed mature NS and RS, some of which appear to have been stylised locally. While common features brought the Ghaznavid and Ghurid Qur'ans together, new features appeared in the Ghurid Qur'ans suggesting local trends of script and illumination.

The Ghaznavid visual repertoire belonged to a larger visual language with links to Baghdad and Nishapur. This was most likely due to the strong interaction between the east and the west and especially between Baghdad and Ghazna, given that the Ghaznavids maintained close relations with the Abbasids, presenting themselves as the defenders of Sunni orthodoxy in the East.[58] Nevertheless, as the analysis of the Ghaznavid script and illumination illustrated, the visual language of these Qur'ans was stylised and shaped locally echoing contemporaneous motifs visible in various artistic productions. Moreover, the work of al-Warrāq al-Ghaznawī provided insight into the making of these manuscripts and uncovered the collective efforts behind its production.

The Ghurid Qur'ans were visibly linked to the Ghaznavid Qur'ans but their script and illumination pointed to variant local aesthetic schools of Qur'anic production. Like in the Ghaznavid Qur'ans, motifs in the Ghurid Qur'ans find parallels with other artistic productions in Greater Iran. Nevertheless, they still appeared closer to the Ghaznavid corpus. Similarly, a group of Qur'an manuscripts appeared aesthetically closer to the Ghaznavid and Ghurid Qur'ans even though they shared motifs with Qur'anic and non-Qur'anic productions of Greater Iran. The study of these Qur'ans suggests the emergence of a number of local variants in Khurasan and Transoxiana.

Hence, there appears to be a number of local trends of Qur'an production in Khurasan and Transoxiana that exhibit many similarities allowing us to propose that they belonged to a common visual vocabulary, rooted in Greater Iran. Local motifs seem to have developed

[58] Sultan Ibrāhīm had received a number of honorifics from Baghdad in return for public recognition of the Abbasids in the *khuṭba* and on coinage, as well as for the expensive gifts sent from Ghazna to Baghdad from their Indian booty. Bosworth, *The Later Ghaznavids*, 79.

throughout Khurasan, in a fluid manner differentiating between local styles of script and illumination.

Lastly, it is important to note that the Qur'ans studied in this part were produced in a cultural atmosphere that was created by the elite, to be used and enjoyed in elite circles.[59] Unfortunately, we do not know much about the less expensive Qur'ans as they do not survive today.

[59] Ibid., 132–33.

PART III
QUR'AN MANUSCRIPTS FROM THE CENTRAL ISLAMIC LANDS IN THE 6TH/12TH CENTURY

Introduction

This part focuses on a group of Qur'ans copied in 6th/12th century Central Islamic lands. Four Qur'ans, studied in chapter VII, were copied in Iran, Iraq, the Jazira and Syria while the rest are of unknown provenance. Although each of these Qur'ans appears distinct from Qur'ans copied in Khurasan and Transoxiana, they nevertheless have elements in their scripts and illumination that recall it. These aesthetic overlaps point once more to the existence of a large visual language from which various aesthetic trends developed, suggesting significant artistic interaction within the eastern Islamic world.

The four Qur'ans of known provenance were copied under the Seljuq, Zengid, Ayyubid and Abbasid rules. The decentralisation of political power in Iran, Syria and Iraq began with the takeover of Baghdad in 446/1055 by the Seljuqs who put an end to Buyid rule and maintained power over western Iran until 551/1156. Anatolia came under the control of the Rūm Seljuqs – a branch of the Seljuq family in 483/1081. Salah al-Dīn al-Ayyūbī had earlier reached Cairo to end Fatimid rule and establish the Ayyubid sultanate in 566/1171 before reaching Yemen in 569/1174 and Syria in 575/1180. The Zengids had reigned over Syria from 521/1127 and Iraq remained under their rule until 631/1233. As such, no single Qur'anic aesthetic style developed in this region, but rather different local trends emerged and that were shaped across geographic and dynastic boundaries.

Seljuq artistic production appears to be much larger than that of earlier centuries. With such increased productivity came more patronage, not only from the courts but most likely from the urban elite as well.[1] Indeed, royal and small provincial mosques from this period attest to the

[1] Hillenbrand, *Islamic Art and Architecture*, 90.

new popular dimension of artistic patronage, giving rise to several local schools of architecture and ceramics throughout Iran.[2]

Ayyubids artistic production was centred on ceramic and metalwork, specifically luster painted wares and inlaid metalwork. Mosul was the centre of production of the latter while Syria witnessed the emergence of the former. This period was also marked by the establishment of madaras for religious learning in Syria and Egypt and as the endowment notes on some of the Qur'ans indicate. It is hence against this background of expanding artistic patronage and developing artistic local trends that the aesthetic of the Qur'ans discussed in this part were shaped.

[2] Ibid., 90-91 and 86–110.

Chapter VII

Qur'ans from Iran, Iraq, the Jazira and Syria

This chapter studies the visual repertoires employed in four localised and dated Qur'ans. The first Qur'an is from Hamadhān, in northwest Iran; the second Qur'an is from a region at the borders between Iraq, Turkey and Syria; the third is from Damascus; and, finally, the fourth is from Baghdad. These Qur'ans, listed in Table 7.1, present us with examples of Qur'anic production in these different regions and uncover similarities and differences with Qur'ans copied in the eastern Islamic lands in the 5th/11th and 6th/12th centuries. Even though these Qur'ans do not illustrate the only Qur'anic aesthetic styles in these cities, they nevertheless offer us an idea about it in the second half of the 6th/12th century.

Manuscript	Date	Place of origin	Writing material	Scripts used	Height x width (cm)	Calligraphers and illuminators	Patron
Hamadhān Qur'an (UPenn NEP-27)	559/1164	Hamadhān	Paper	BS-*naskh* NS Kufic	42 x 27.9	• 'Uthmān Muḥammad b. al-Ḥusayn al-Kātib al-Kirmānī (calligrapher)	x
Quṭb al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Zengī's Qur'an (TKS Y095/Khalili QUR497 and others at sections – see note in text)	c. 594/1197-616/1219	Sinjar/ Nusaybin/ Khabur	Paper	BS-*muḥaqqaq-thuluth* NS	23.5 x 16.6	x	• Quṭb al-Dīn Abū al-Muẓaffar Muḥammad b. Zengī b. Mawdūd (r. 594/1197-616/1219)
Nūr al-Dīn Maḥmūd b. Zengī's Qur'an (Keir VII)	562/1166	Damascus	Paper	BS-*naskh* NS	19.5 x 16	'Alī b. Ja'far b. Asad al-Kātib (calligrapher)	Nūr al-Dīn Maḥmūd b. Zengī
Qur'an of Muḥammad b. Abī al-'Abbās (widely dispersed – see note in text)	555/1192	Baghdad	Paper	BS-*muḥaqqaq* Kufic	19.6 x 14.2	x	The son of the Abbasid Caliph Abū al-'Abbās al-Nāṣir

Table 7.1: Qur'anic manuscripts copied in Round Style, of known provenance, from the 6th/12th and early 7th/13th century.

The Hamadhān Qur'an

A large Qur'an measuring 42 x 27.9 cm was copied in 559/1164 in the city of Hamadhān, northwest of Isfahan, established in the second half of the 6th/12th century as a Seljuq capital (Plates I-III).[3] The manuscript has 215 folios and it is preserved at the University of Pennsylvania Museum, NEP27, where Renata Holod conducted a workshop around it in February 2013.[4] It was copied in a clear RS-*naskh,* and illuminated, according to its colophon, by Maḥmūd b. al-Ḥusayn al-Kātib al-Kirmānī (fols. 211v-212r, Plate III), reading from top to bottom:[5]

> *Katabahu wa dhahhabahu maḥmūd bin al-ḥusayn al-kātib al-kirmānī – bi-madīnat hamadhān ḥarasahā allāhu taʿālā fī awākhir – jumādā al-ūlā sanat tisʿ wa-khamsīn wa-khamsa māya – wa'l-ḥamdu li'llāhi rabbi al-ʿālamīn wa ṣalawātihi ʿalā muḥammad wa-ālihi wa ghufratihi.*
> Copied and illuminated by Maḥmūd b. al-Ḥusayn al-Kātib al-Kirmānī in the city of Hamadhān may God protect it, at the end of Jumādā al-Ūlā of the year 559 [April 1164 AD], Praise be to God, Lord of all creation, and His prayers on Muḥammad and his progeny and His forgiveness.

Unfortunately, no information survives about the copyist, except his *nisba* that points to his family's origin from Kirmān, a city in southeastern Iran, which prospered in the first half of the 6th/12th century during the rule of the Seljuqs. His title, *kātib*, suggests that he held an official position in the Seljuq state administration.[6] This is supported by the manuscript's lavish decoration, use of gold and large size.

---

[3] Frye, 'Al- Hamadhān', EI2.
[4] http://sites.sas.upenn.edu/nep27wksp (last accessed on 16 July 2016). Folios from this manuscript were published in Blair, *Islamic Calligraphy*, 209; Ettinghausen et al., *Islamic Art and Architecture*, 182; Hillenbrand, *Islamic Art and Architecture*, 103; and Jones and Mitchell, *The Arts of Islam*, 52.
[5] The Hamadhān Qur'an has an endowment note stating that it was offered by Amīr Aḥmad Jāwīsh (d. 1201/1786), but does not mention the date. The note states that the Amīr was the follower of Amīr Ḥusayn Jāwīsh Qazdughli during the time of Sheikh al-Islām al-Ḥifni (d. 1181/1767), who was the sheikh of al-Azhar Mosque in Cairo between 1170/1757 and 1180/1767. Amīr Aḥmad Jāwīsh was, according to the Cairene historian al-Jabarti (d. 1240/1825), a pious military man who was in the circle of the princes. Ettinghausen, 'A signed and dated Seljuq Qur'an', 520. This endowment note attests to the fact that the manuscript was at some point in Cairo, one of the cities before it reached its final destination in the library of the University of Pennsylvania.
[6] During the Seljuq period, the *kuttāb* (sing. *kātib*) were educated in religious institutions (madrasas). In addition, during the Abbasid period, *kuttāb* were also *udabāʾ*, representatives of literary culture, since they had wide knowledge in various subjects from language to poetry. Sellheim et al., 'Kātib', EI2.

The frontispiece of this manuscript is decorated with interlaced lines forming various geometric shapes, among which are twenty-one forms inscribed in white Kufic with the variant readings of the Qur'an (fol. 2r, Plate I):

> *Wa-fī ʿadad ahl al-madīna sittat alf wa-māʾatān wa sabʿat ʿasharat āya wa-fī ʿadad ahl al-baṣra sittat alf wa-māʾatān wa arbaʿ ʿasharat āya wa-fī ʿadad ahl al-kūfa sittat alf wa-sittmāʾat wa-sitta wa-sittūn āya minha.*
> And the people of Medina established the number of verses of the Qur'an as 6,217 verses, and the people of Basra as 6,214 verses, and the people of Kufa as 6,666 verses.

The text on this folio confirms that the right-hand page of this frontispiece is missing, which must have noted the number of verses of the Qur'an as established by the people of Mecca and Damascus. Each of the twenty-one shapes on this extant folio is decorated with two scrolls of flowers that resemble *fleur de lys,* with extended long tips outlined in black on gold ground, while six are on blue ground. Scrolls of *fleur de lys* were employed in a similar manner in the Ghaznavid and Ghurid imperial Qur'ans, as for example, in the Qur'ans of Sultan Ghiyāth al-Din (584/1188) and Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī (573/1177), in which the *fleur de lys* has a pointed, extended and curled tip (Figure 7.1).

Figure 7.1: Left: Ground decoration in the frontispiece of the Hamadhān Qur'an, Hamadhān, 559/1164; Right: Ground decoration in the Qur'an of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī, Khurasan, 573/1177.

The rest of the shapes formed by the interlaced lines in the frontispiece of the Hamadhān Qur'an are decorated with various patterns, on a blue ground, some of which are lattice-like while others echo the star-like patterns employed in Sultān Ibrāhīm's frontispiece. In fact, the overall design of this frontispiece recalls the configuration of the frontispiece in the Ghaznavid Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an (484/1091), in that lines intersect to form different geometric shapes that are decorated with a variety of patterns (Figure 7.2). Still, however, these two frontispieces differ in a number of ways. First, the frontispiece of the Hamadhān Qur'an is inscribed with the enumeration of the Qur'an's components, a feature absent from the frontispiece of Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an (Plates VI and VII, Chapter IV). Second, the latticework framing the central design in the Hamadhān Qur'an is of a different type than that in Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an, in that it is thinner and does not generate blue geometric forms. Third, no vignette is linked to the central design in the Hamadhān Qur'an, while a type-7 vignette projects into the margin from the frontispiece of Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an.

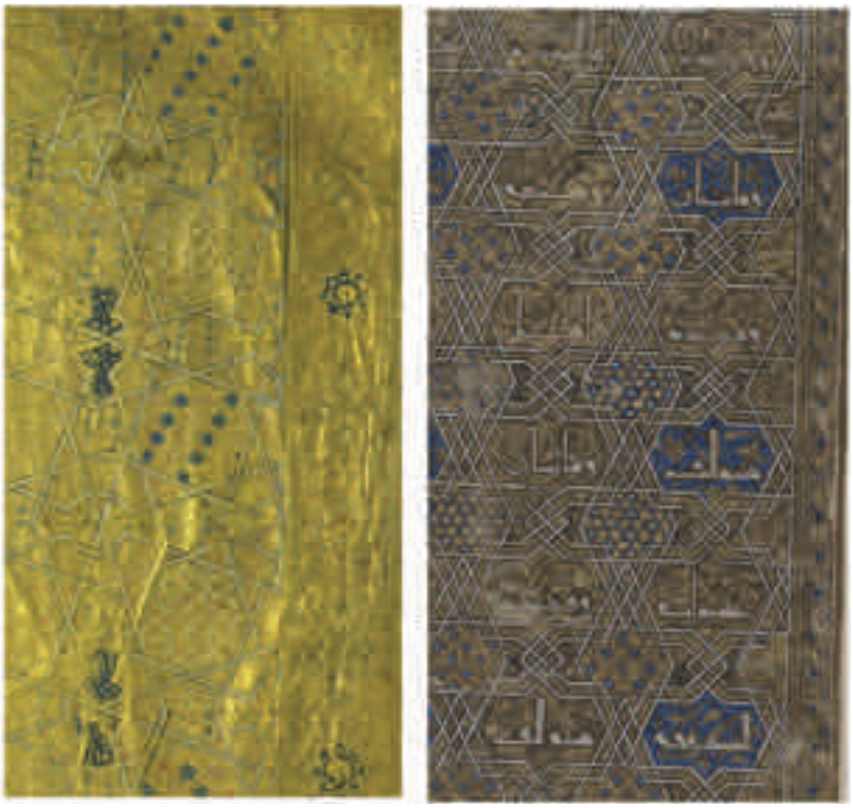

Figure 7.2: Left: Close up on the frontispiece of Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an, Ghazna, 484/1091; Right: Close up on the frontispiece of the Hamadhān Qur'an, Hamadhān, 559/1164.

The first spread with Qur'anic text in the Hamadhān Qur'an has illuminated rectangular bands at the top and bottom (fols. 2v-3r, Plate II). The bands on the right-hand page are inscribed with an incomplete statement that enumerates the components of this specific Qur'an manuscript:

> *[…] ḥarf wa māʾatān ḥarf wa khamsūn ḥarf wa ʿadad kalimātuhu*
> *[…] kalima wa ʿadad āyātuhu sittat alf wa māyatān sitta wa sittūn āya.*
> […] 251 letters and the number of its words
> […] word and the number of its verses is 6,266 verses.

The bands on the left-hand page are inscribed with the title of *sūrat al-baqara* and the number of verses it contains, followed by Q.56: 79-80, a Qur'anic verse inscribed in the illumination of a number of Qur'ans from Khurasan:[7]

> *Al-sūra al-latī tudhkar fīhā al-baqara wa-hiya māyatān wa thamānūn wa sabʿ āyāt*
> *lā yamassuhu illā al-muṭahharūn, tanzīl min rabb al-ʿālamīn.*
> The *sūra* that cites al-Baqara and it is 287 verses
> That only the pure can touch; A Revelation from the Lord of the Worlds.

Even though the two central panels with Qur'anic text are in sequence and use the same type of *naskh*, ink hue and rosettes as the rest of the Qur'an, a number of features appear on this double-page spread that indicate the frames were not originally facing each other or conceived along with the central panels. First, the white background of the right-hand page protrudes into the left frame and cuts the decoration at the top, indicating that an original illuminated folio was cut out to create a window for the current central panel. Second, two different types of scripts are employed in the bands of this double-page: RS was used in the bands of the right-hand page, and Kufic in those of the left-hand page. This incoherency in design confirms that when the manuscript was restored, illuminated folios that were not originally facing each other were cut and rearranged. Consequently, the inscriptions at the top and bottom of these folios are incomprehensible. Furthermore, the borders of these facing pages are different from one another. For instance, the frame on the right-hand page is decorated with circular lattice forms and generates blue forms, while the band on the left-hand page is designed with straight interlaced lines. The inscription in the bands on the right-hand page indicates that the beginning of the text is missing, which must have been inscribed on a lost folio that had initially preceded this one. Having said that, the illuminated folios that now make the frames of this double-page spread are

[7] As for example in the Qur'an of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī (Plate IV, Chapter V).

nevertheless part of the original manuscript, since they employ the same colour palette of gold, blue and white as the Qur'an, and the same decorative motifs, such as the *fleur de lys*.

The double-page finispiece in the Hamadhān Qur'an features a lozenge shape inscribed with a large gold rosette (fols. 211v-212r, Plate III). The diamond meets the frame, overlapping with half a circle on each side. The four corners are filled with a chessboard-like pattern, seen in the decoration of Qur'ans from the 4th/10th century.[8] Here again, *fleurs de lys* appear in the ground of the diamond alongside scrolls of flowers made of three, four or five lobed leaves, some of which have long curled tips. The top bands, which are inscribed with the colophon, sandwich the central design, a configuration seen in a number of frontispieces from Khurasan.[9]

The visual resemblances between, on one hand, the frontispiece and finispiece of the Hamadhān Qur'an and, on the other, those of the Qur'ans copied in various cities in Khurasan, suggests aesthetic proximity between Qur'anic production of eastern and western Iran. However, and in addition to the differences noted above with the Khurasani corpus, the finispiece of the Hamadhān Qur'an was designed with a large lozenge shape inscribed with a rosette – a configuration absent from Khurasani Qur'ans nevertheless present in the Sulayhid Qur'an. Fol. 2r in the Sulayhid Qur'an is based on a similar configuration: a central rosette that is constructed by overlapping circles. Thus, despite similarities, the visual language of the Hamadhān Qur'an varies from the Khurasani in important ways, indicating a local style of illumination that was shaped from various aesthetic languages.

The design of sura headings, vignettes and verse markers confirm the ways in which the Hamadhān Qur'an differs from contemporaneous productions. Sura titles are inscribed in NS and RS in rectangular bands varied in design, and are divided into three parts (Figure 7.3). The place of revelation is inscribed in squares flanking the title of the sura, a design not employed in the Qur'ans studied so far. The ground of these sura banners, however, is decorated with floral scrolls similar to *fleur de lys* with extended tips.[10] In addition to the design of sura headings, the

[8] See note 17 in Chapter I.
[9] Such as in the Bust Qur'an dated 505/1111 (Plate XLII, Chapter IV); the Qur'an of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī dated 573/1177 (Plate IV, Chapter V); the Qur'an of Sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn dated 584/1188 (Plate XI, Chapter V); and the Freer Qur'an (Plate XV, Chapter VI).
[10] The use of NS and Kufic for sura titles became common in RS Qur'ans starting in the 6th/12th century across the Islamic lands, indicating their new decorative role.

vignettes of the Hamadhān Qur'an are different from those employed in Qur'ans from Khurasan or Transoxiana. Their varying designs are based on intertwined gold scrolls, appearing in some instances on a neutral ground and in others on a blue ground (Figure 7.3 and Table 7.2). In some vignettes, this organic interlace of scrolls generating floral shapes has a pointed bud at the tip, from which a thin line extends with a blue contour. Moreover, the design of the fifth verse marker in the Hamadhān Qur'an differs from the one used in the Khurasani/Transoxianan Qur'ans in that it is a marginal gilded pear-shaped device inscribed with the word *khamsa* (five). The tenth-verse marker is made up of two gold concentric circles framed by small petal shapes and painted with shades of blue, a design also absent from the previously discussed Qur'ans. Nevertheless, the single-verse markers closely resemble those employed in the Khurasani Qur'ans, appearing as simple gold rosettes of petals decorated with dots, rooted in previous traditions. The illumination in the Hamadhān Qur'an hence shares a number of elements with the visual repertoire employed in Qur'ans copied in Khurasan, yet differs from it in many ways.

Figure 7.3: Three different sura banners and vignette designs in the Hamadhān Qur'an, Hamadhān, 559/1164.

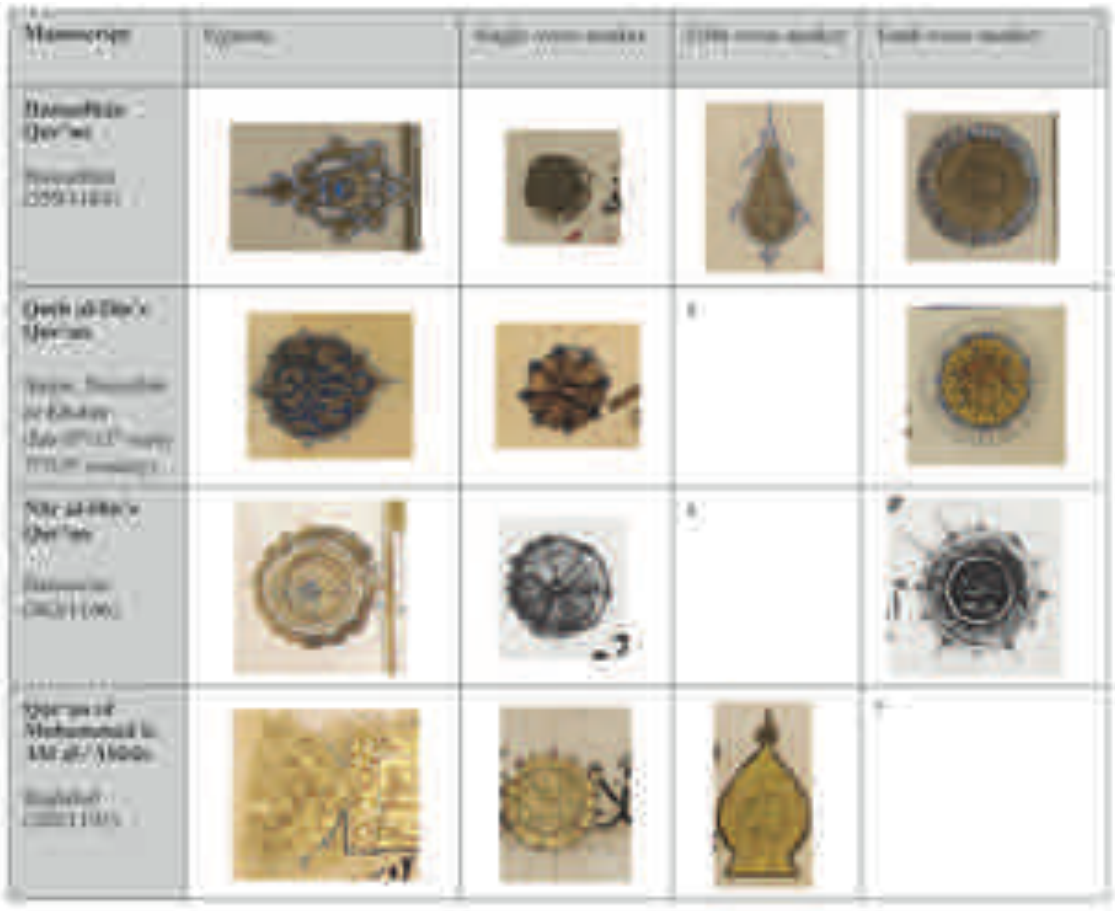

Table 7.2: Vignettes and verse markers in RS Qur'an manuscripts of known provenance, 6th/12th century and early 7th/13th century.

On the level of script, the RS-*naskh* of the Hamadhān Qur'an generally appears to be of lesser quality than the RS employed in Khurasani Qur'ans. In comparison to the Bust Qur'an (505/1111) (Plate XL, Chapter IV), the script in the Hamadhān Qur'an appears mush less stylised, and in comparison to RS from the previous century, such as in TIEM 449 (Plate XIV, Chapter III), the script appears less codified as shown by the varying shapes and sizes of letters. For example, *dāl/dhāl* and *wāw* vary in size and form, indicating that the copyist did not necessarily excel in *naskh* (Plate III). These comparisons earlier and contemporaneous RS illustrate the script employed in the Hamadhān Qur'an had not reached a certain level of maturity that existed at the time. As a *kātib*, Maḥmūd b. al-Ḥusayn must have copied official documents for the court in a legible script. This perhaps explains the legibility of the script employed in the Hamadhān Qur'an, achieved mainly through the wide openings of letters.

Whether the *kuttāb* in Hamadhān excelled in copying Qur'ans, during the Seljuq period we cannot conclude based on one manuscript. Unfortunately no other Qur'an survives from the city.

Quṭb al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Zengī's Qur'an

A majestic Qur'an copied in 30 volumes is now dispersed among various collections, including the Topkapı Sarayı Library, the Khalili Collection, the Chester Beatty Library and the Bibliothèque Nationale de France (Plates IV-VIII).[11] It was commissioned by Quṭb al-Dīn Abū al-Muẓaffar Muḥammad b. Zengī b. Mawdūd, a member of the Zengid dynasty who ruled over Sinjar (in northern Iraq, at the border with Syria), Khabur (in northeast Syria) and Nusaybin (or Nisibis, in south-east Turkey at the border with Syria) on behalf of the Seljuqs between 594/1197 and 616/1219.[12] James suggests that it was commissioned for the Hanafi madrasa founded by Quṭb al-Dīn in Sinjar, considering he was known for being devoted to the Hanafi sect.[13] This suggestion may well be right, especially because such monumental Qur'ans copied in multiple volumes were commonly linked to madrasas, as seen in previous chapters.[14] However, not enough evidence exists to confirm this theory. Nevertheless, the Qur'an illustrates an example of Qur'an production in the Jazira.

The manuscript measures 22 x 15.6 cm, with five lines of gold RS per page outlined in black. Each volume opens with illuminated double-page frontispieces, in which the number of the volume is inscribed in gold NSI. Although these surviving frontispieces have different design configurations, they are decorated with the same floral motifs and employ the same frame, colour palette and execution, leaving no doubt that they belonged to the same manuscript.

The opening of the 28th volume comprises two vertically pointed ovals, at the top and bottom of which are four medallions, each made of a square and four half circles (fols. 1v-2r, Plate IV).

---

[11] Part of the first volume is in the Archaeological Museum in Bursa (K. 19); part was in the Homayzi Collection in Kuwait (ms. I/442); the 6th juzʾ is in the Topkapı Sarayı Library (Y898); the 12th *juzʾ* is at the Chester Beatty Library (Is. 1448); the 28th *juzʾ* is in the Khalili Collection (QUR497); and the 26th *juzʾ* is at the Bibliotheque Nationale (Arabe 5949). See other folios in James, 'Qur'ans and Calligraphers', 351 (note 38). Folios from this Qur'an were sold at Sotheby's in 1989 (Lot 184), while 51 folios were sold at Christie's on 10 April 2014 (Lot 48). This Qur'an was studied by James, and folios from the Khalili Collection volume were published in James, *The Master Scribes*, 44–49 (cat. no. 7).

[12] Heidemann, 'Zangids', EI2. Quṭb al-Dīn's father was the grandson of ʿImād al-Dīn Zengī. The certificate of commissioning is at the beginning of the 28th volume, which is in the Khalili Collection of Islamic Art. Rogers, *The Arts of Islam*, 79. An unknown Qur'an published in Moritz's *Arabic Palaeography* (plate 86) was copied in naskh and dated 599/1202, and could have also possibly been commissioned by Quṭb al-Dīn.

[13] James, 'Qur'ans and Calligraphers of the Ayyubids and Zangids', 351.

[14] Such as Sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn's Qur'an.

The two pointed ovals are decorated with gold palmette scrolls, while the four medallions are inscribed with gold NSI that announce the beginning of the volume. Their blue ground has gold floral scrolls some of which are *fleur de lys* scrolls with extended tips, as previously seen in the Khurasani Qur'ans and in the decoration of the Hamadhān Qur'an. The two pointed ovals and medallions sit on a ground decorated with star-shaped patterns similar to the ones employed in the frontispieces of Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an and the Hamadhān Qur'an. These patterns have also been seen in the Qur'an of Ibn al-Bawwāb, copied at the turn of the 5th/11th century, thereby placing the illumination of this Qur'an in the broader regional and temporal aesthetic of Qur'an production (Figure 7.2).[15]

The sixth volume begins with a frontispiece designed with interlaced lines forming four heptagons at each of the four corners, and a six-pointed star at the centre (Plate V). These forms are inscribed with the number of the volume in gold NSI on a blue ground, as in the frontispiece of the 28th volume. The design of this frontispiece is constructed on the same principle as the second frontispiece design of Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an whereby interlaced lines divide the page into geometric shapes (fols. 7v-8r, Plate III, Chapter II). In addition, the shape of the "Seal of Solomon" that appears at the centre of the design was used in the imperial Ghaznavid Qur'ans, the manuscripts ascribed to Khurasan and the Qur'ans ascribed to Nishapur.[16] Lastly, the ground is decorated with a star pattern and *fleur de lys* scrolls, as seen in the frontispiece of the 28th volume.

Moreover, the right-hand page of the 12th volume's frontispiece is made of an octagon inscribed with gold NSI on a blue ground and decorated with white buds that sit atop a hatched ground (Plate VI). The octagon is linked to the bands at the top and bottom, which are inscribed in gold NS on a red ground and decorated with *fleur de lys* scrolls of extended, twisted tips. The abundant use of gold, lapis blue, and the layer of red beneath the gold used here and in the other frontispieces, enhance the majesty of this Qur'an, and serve as evidence of its wealthy patronage.[17]

---

[15] The star patterns were also seen in the frontispiece of al-Bayhaqī's Qur'an (Plate XIII, Chapter IV).
[16] For example, in the finispiece of CBL Is. 1430 ascribed to Baghdad (Plate X, Chapter III), and in that of the Ghaznavid Qur'an of al-ʿAbdūsī (Plate XXVIII, Chapter IV).
[17] Blair associates it with the flourishing school of book painting that developed at the Artuqid court in the Jazira. Blair, *Islamic Calligraphy*, 231 (note 27).

Finally, the right-hand page of the fourth volume's frontispiece features five circles inscribed with a round script in reserve on a dark blue ground (Plate VII). The contour of the circles is a gold latticework that generates blue forms, a feature characteristic of the frames in the illuminated central panels of the Khurasani Qur'ans. In addition, the contour of the central circle is decorated with a repetition of three-lobed flowers encircled by their own stems, a feature characteristic of many medallion frames found in the imperial Ghaznavid Qur'ans.[18] The five circles sit on a blue ground decorated with palmettes and large three-petal flower scrolls encircled by their own stems.

The design of vignettes in this Qur'an is linked to those in the Khurasani Qur'ans. For example, the vignette projecting from the panel of the 28th volume's frontispiece is decorated with interlaced palmette scrolls and has a blue polylobed contour, typical of the Ghaznavid vignettes. The vignette projecting from the frontispieces of the 12th and fourth *juzʾ* has a central flower surrounded by a repetition of trilobate flowers contained in their own stems, a design also related to the Khurasani vignettes.[19] A vignette linked to the frontispiece of the 6th volume, however, employs star pattern – a feature not encountered in earlier of contemporaneous Qur'ans studied in this thesis.

Sura titles in this Qur'an are copied in gold stylised NS (Plate VIII), from which a vignette designed with interlaced gold scrolls extends across a blue ground. Such a configuration resembles the vignettes projecting from sura headings in the Hamadhān Qur'an (Figure 7.4). Furthermore, each verse in Quṭb al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Zengī's Qur'an is indicated with a rosette surrounded by dots, a feature used in previous centuries and encountered in the Ghaznavid Qur'ans as well as other Qur'ans ascribed to Khurasan.[20]

[18] See ʿAlī's Qur'an dated 485/1092 for the latticework frame (Plate XXXIII, Chapter IV). Also see Table 4.2 for the medallion frames.
[19] See Table 4.2.
[20] Ibid.

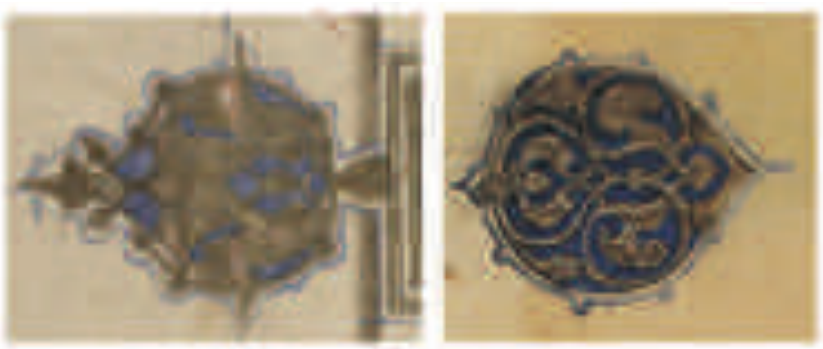

Figure 7.4: Left: Vignette projecting from the sura heading of the Hamadhān Qur'an, Hamadhān, 559/1164; Right: Vignette projecting from the sura heading of Quṭb al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Zengī's Qur'an, Sinjar, Nusaybin or Khabur, late 6th/12th or early 7th/13th century.

Thus, as the above discussion indicates, Quṭb al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Zengī's Qur'an employs features in its illumination that mixes between elements used in Qur'ans copied in Hamadhān, in Khurasan, and even in Baghdad from a century earlier. Still, the Qur'an communicates a distinct visual language by developing new elements and mixing already existing ones.

Expanding on this idea, some of the decorative elements that appear in Quṭb al-Dīn's Qur'an can be linked to motifs that appeared in other artistic productions. For example, the vignette design in Quṭb al-Dīn's Qur'an is closely linked to the type of interlaced scrolls and plamettes that became part of the decorative scheme of Ayyubid ceramic production. To illustrate this resemblance, a ceramic bowl from Ayyubid Syria, previously attributed to Anatolia, is decorated with intertwined scrolls designed on a vertical axis in exactly the same way as in the Qur'an's vignette (Figure 7.5).[21] Furthermore, the vegetal scrolls decorating the ground of the 28th volume frontispiece in Quṭb al-Dīn's Qur'an resemble those on an Ayyubid Syrian jug (Figure 7.6).

[21] The bowl is now in Los Angeles County Museum of Art (M.2002.1.75). Jenkins, *Raqqa Revisited*, 84.

Figure 7.5: Ceramic bowl, Ayyubid Syria.

These motifs, like others on various media, may have been coming from elsewhere as suggested by the travel of Khurasani metalworkers who became active in Anatolia and the Jazira.[22] For example, the appearance of elements from the repertoire of Herati metalwork on the inlaid brass vessels produced in northern Iraq and Syria in the first half of the 7th/13th century attests further to the mobility of motifs and specifically in this case their travel westward.[23] This, as has become clear in this thesis, continuously challenges our attempts to identify local styles yet allows us to understand the ways in which local Qur'anic visual repertoires were shaped.

[22] Melikian-Chirvani, 'The Westward Progress of Khorasanian Culture Under the Seljuqs'.
[23] Rice, 'Inlaid Brasses from the workshop of Ahmad Al Dhaki Al Mawsili'; and Baer, *Metalwork in Medieval Islamic Art*, 204-207.

Figure 7.6: Top: Ceramic jug, Ayyubid Syria (Metropolitan Museum of Art, 57.61.1); Bottom: Detail from the frontispiece of the twenty-eighth volume in Quṭb al-Dīn's Qur'an.

The script of Quṭb al-Dīn Muḥammad's Qur'an is a mature RS and has features of both *muḥaqqaq* and *thultuth*. The former can be detected in the shallow bowls and tails of letters that curve up to reach the following letters, while the latter is evident in the overall curvilinear aspect of the script and the fact that the ascenders are not as tall as they usually appear in later mature *thuluth*. This mixture of later script characteristics can be traced back to Ibn al-Bawwāb. The script used to copy the sura titles in Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an is a hybrid between *naskh* and

thuluth and exhibits similarities with the script used to copy the Qur'anic text in Quṭb al-Dīn's Qur'an as seen in the tails and heads of letters and in the execution of the script in gold with black outlining (Figure 7.7).

Figure 7.7: Top: Sura heading in Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an; Bottom: Sura heading in Quṭb al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Zengī's Qur'an, Sinjar, Nusaybin or Khabur, late 6th/12th century or early 6th/13th century.

The script Quṭb al-Dīn's Qur'an is also comparable to that of Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an, copied in Ghazna almost a century earlier, except here it has less contrast between its thick and thin strokes and looks more condensed both vertically and horizontally (Plate XII, Chapter IV). James notes that the script is similar to the *tawqīʿ* used in the manuscript of the famous Syrian Mamluk calligrapher Ibn al-Waḥīd, copied between 704/1304 and 705/1306.[24] At the time, this script was called *ashʿār*, and mixed elements from *thuluth* and *muḥaqqaq*.[25] Given that the script in Quṭb al-Dīn Muḥammad's Qur'an also mixes from *thuluth* and *muḥaqqaq*, it can be seen as a predecessor to the Mamluk *ashʿār*. Indeed, the script of this Qur'an presents us with an example of mature RS that can be positioned within the chain of RS development between on the one hand the RS-*naskh*/*thuluth* of Ibn al-Bawwāb and RS-*muḥaqqaq* of Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an and on the other the later Mamluk RS scripts. Lastly, like in most of the 6th/12th century Qur'ans, the NS in this Qur'an takes a decorative role for headlines as it appears in the illuminated frontispieces and sura banners.

[24] James, 'Qur'ans and Calligraphers of the Ayyubids and Zangids', 351.
[25] Ibid.

Nūr al-Dīn Maḥmūd b. Zengī's Qur'an

A sixty-volume Qur'an dated 562/1167 was commissioned by Nūr al-Dīn Maḥmūd b. Zengī (d. 569/1174), the ruler of Aleppo and Damascus (Plates IX-XI).[26] Only three volumes survive from this 60-Qur'an, including the 53rd volume that is now in the Keir Collection (Ham ms. VII).[27] It is a humble manuscript that measures 19.5 x 16 cm with four lines of RS-*naskh* per page. Nūr al-Dīn offered it for the Ḥanafī madrasa that he built in Damascus, the capital of the Zengid dynasty, as the endowment notice at the beginning of the 53rd volume reveals (Plate IX):[28]

> *Waqafahu wa-ḥabasahu al-malik al-ʿādil nūr al-dīn rukn al-islām wa'l-muslimīn abū al-q[ā]sim maḥmūd b. zengī b. āqsanqar adāma allāh dawlatuhu ʿalā al-madrasa al-ḥanafiyya allatī anshaʾahā bi-dimashq ḥarasahā allāhu taʿālā wa-sharaṭa an yuqraʾ fīha wa-lā yukhraj minhā ṭāliban li-murḍāt allāh wa-thawābuh taqabbala allāhu dhalika minhu bi-munna wa-karma fa-man baddalahu baʿdamā samiʿahu fa-innamā athmuh ʿalā al-ladhīn yubaddilūnahu inna allāha samīʿ ʿalīm wa-dhālik fī-dhī al-ḥijja sanat ithnayn wa-sittīn wa-khams māyat h.*
> This manuscript was endowed and held by the righteous king, the light of faith, the pillar of Islam and Muslims Abū al-Q[ā]sim Maḥmūd b. Zengī b. Āqsanqar, may God preserve his reign, to the Ḥanafī school that he established in Damascus, protected by God Almighty, and he stipulated that it should be read in it and that it doesn't leave it seeking to please God and get his reward God accepted this from him with kindness and generosity, as for those who change in it after hearing it being recited, these be considered sinful, for God is all Hearing and Knowing, and this was copied during the month of al-Ḥijja of the year 562 [September 1167 AD].

The Qur'an was copied by ʿAlī b. Jaʿfar b. Asʿad al-Kātib who also copied a Qur'an commentary endowed to the same madrasa, suggesting that he could have been the copyist affiliated to Nūr al-Dīn's madrasa.[29] The script, which appears generally compact, has *naskh* features characterised by straight *alifs* that become thin at the bottom, and by the bowls and tails

---

[26] Elisséeff, 'Nūr al-Dīn Maḥmūd b. Zengī', EI2. Folios from this Qur'an are published in Blair, Islamic Calligraphy, 210; Canby et al., *Court and Cosmos*, 282 (no. 182); James, Qur'ans of the Mamluks, 20; Lings and Safadi, The Qur'ān, 46 (cat. no. 55); and Safadi, Islamic Calligraphy, 63.

[27] It is on long term loan by Ramros Universal S.A. to the Dallas Museum of Art. According to James, one volume is in Damascus in al-Maṭḥaf al-Khaṭṭ al-ʿArabī (ms. 2627), and the other is in Paris. James, 'Qur'ans and Calligraphers of the Ayyubids and Zangids', 352 (note 42).

[28] According to James, this notice appears at the beginning of each volume. James, 'Qur'ans and Calligraphers of the Ayyubids and Zangids', 352. The patron of this Qur'an was devoted to beautiful handwriting, as he himself was trained in calligraphy. Ayyubid and Zengid rulers were known for being trained in calligraphy. James, 'Qur'ans and Calligraphers of the Ayyubids and Zangids', 352–53.

[29] The Qur'an commentary is now in the National Library in Cairo, no. 507. James 'Qur'ans and Calligraphers of the Ayyubids and Zangids', 352.

of letters that have no diagonal emphasis, unlike in *muḥaqqaq* (Plates X-XI). Nevertheless, the monumental size of the script is unusual for a *naskh*, which in later centuries would appear in small size complementing monumental *thuluth*. Monumental RS-*naskh* was not employed in the Khurasani Qur'ans in which NS or RS-*muḥaqqaq* maintained primacy, but it was used to copy the Hamadhān Qur'an discussed above.

Unfortunately, analysis of this Qur'an is limited to its extant reproduced folios. Nevertheless, some elements in its illumination suggest similarities and differences with contemporaneous Qur'ans. The text on the opening spread of both the 13th and the 53rd volumes is framed with two wide rectangular bands inscribed with the number of the volume in NS on a blue ground and decorated with gold palmette scrolls (Plates X and XI, respectively). On these double-page spreads, the Qur'anic text sits in clouds, similar to those used in earlier Qur'ans, such as Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an. The clouds are surrounded by a chessboard-like pattern, as observed in Qur'ans from previous centuries, in contemporaneous Qur'ans and in the finispiece of the Hamadhān Qur'an (Plate III).[30]

The vignettes linked to the gold frames that surround the text on these double-page spreads are circular in design and framed with a repetition of scrolls contained in their own stems, at the centre of which is a flower. The design of this vignette is similar to that of Quṭb al-Dīn's Qur'an and both have a blue outer contour, which looks like a polylobed contour, recalling that of type-7 vignettes.

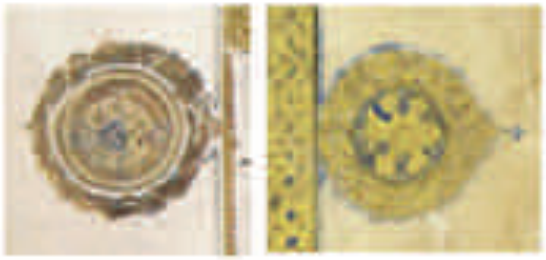

Figure 7.8: Left: Vignette from Nūr al-Dīn's Qur'an, Damascus, 562/1166; Right: Vignette from Quṭb al-Dīn's Qur'an, Sinjar, Nusaybin or Khabur, late 6th/12th or early 7th/13th century.

In addition, another folio published from this Qur'an clearly portrays the design of sura headings

[30] See note 17 in Chapter I.

and their vignettes (Figure 7.9). The sura title here is inscribed in a rectangle decorated with scrolls similar to *fleur de lys* scrolls, with its associated vignette appearing closely related to the ones used in the Hamadhān Qur'an and Quṭb al-Dīn's Qur'an. They are constructed based on organic interlace of scrolls and palmettes that form flower shapes, have a pointed tip and a blue contour.

Figure 7.9: Sura heading and vignette in Nūr al-Dīn's Qur'an, Damascus, 562/1166.

Every verse in Nūr al-Dīn's Qur'an is indicated with a gold rosette inscribed in a circle (Table 7.2), while every tenth verse is marked in the margin by a medallion surrounded by thin-rayed lines. This design – based on a circle surrounded by petals that have small dashes and from which hairlines extend at the bases of which are small dots – was encountered earlier in Ibn al-Bawwāb's manuscript and in Khalili QUR284, copied in Baghdad (Plate VI and IX in Chapter II, respectively).

Hence, the Qur'an of Nūr al-Dīn copied in Damascus has elements in its visual language that appeared in the Hamadhān and Quṭb al-Dīn's Qur'ans, and seems to be loosely related to Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an and to Qur'ans copied in Khurasan in the 5th/11th century. However, because the available folios from Nūr al-Dīn's Qur'an do not offer a complete picture of its illumination, two additional contemporaneous manuscripts will be examined that would contribute to our understanding of the visual decorative scheme employed in Syria at the time.

The first manuscript is a manual on warfare entitled, as its frontispiece states, *Tabṣirat arbāb al-albāb fī kayfiyyat al-najāt fī al-ḥurūb min al-aswāʾ wa-nashr aʿlām al-ʿalam fī al-ʿadad wa al-*

ʾālāt al-muʿayyana ʿalā liqāʾ al-aʿdāʾ (Plate XII).[31] It is a treatise on armour, written by Marḍā b. ʿAlī al-Ṭarsūsī (d. 589/1193) and commissioned for his library by the founder of the Ayyubid dynasty, Ṣalāh al-Dīn al-Ayyūbī (d. 589/1193), who ruled Syria and Egypt from 569/1174 to 589/1193.[32] The vignette projecting from this frontispiece panel has characteristics seen in Qur'ans produced in Khurasan in the 5th/11th and 6th/12th centuries, as in, for example, the vignettes of the Bust Qur'an and the ones in ʿAlī's Qur'an (Figure 7.10). All feature three floral scrolls encircled by their own stems and symmetrically designed in a circular medallion framed by a blue polylobed contour.

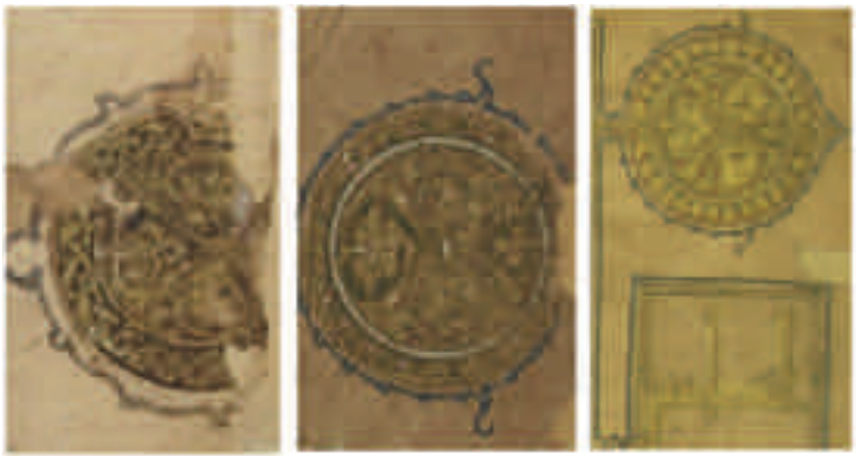

Figure 7.10: Left: Vignette linked to the frontispiece panel of *Tabṣirat arbāb al-albāb,* Syria or Egypt, second half of the 6th/12th century; Middle: Vignette from the Bust Qur'an, Bust, 505/1111; Right: Vignette from ʿAlī's Qur'an, Ghazna, Ṭūs or Bust, 485/1092.

The second manuscript, entitled *Shawārid al-amthāl*, is a collection of proverbs with a note of ownership at the beginning stating it was made for the library of Abū al-Muẓaffar Yūsuf. The first folio (fol. 1r) in the book is decorated with a cartouche inscribed with the title of the book in a round script (Plate XIII). Below the cartouche is a hexagon contained in a circle inscribed with the phrase, *li-khizānat mawlāna al-sultān al-malik al-nāṣir ṣalāḥ al-dunyā wa'l-dīn abī al-muẓaffar yūsuf* (for the library of the Sultan the King al-Nāṣir Ṣalāh al-Dunyā wa'l-Dīn abī al-Muẓaffar Yūsuf), and right beneath it, *ibn al-malik al-ʿazīz khallada allāh mulkahu* (the son of

[31] The manuscript is now at the Bodleian Library in Oxford (Ms. Huntington 264). The frontispiece was published in Hillenbrand and Auld, *Ayyubid Jerusalem*, vii (figure xvii).
[32] The note is present on fols. 134v-135r.

the glorious king may God maintain his eternal kingdom). Thus, the patron of this book was the son of al-Malik al-ʿAzīz, the lord of Aleppo, who succeeded his father in 634/1236, and by the middle of the 7th/13th century was made sultan and entered Damascus.[33] The manuscript was therefore commissioned in Syria, either in Damascus or Aleppo. Three elements appear on the title page of *Shawārid al-amthāl* that recall features in the illumination of Qur'ans studied in tshi thesis. The first is the shape of the cartouche, which was encountered on the frontispiece of the Bust Qur'an (505/1111) (Figure 7.11). The second element is the scrolls that decorate the oval, which resemble *fleur de lys* scrolls with long extended tips. These have been used in Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an, the Sulayhid Qur'an and stylised in a specific manner in Qur'ans from Khurasan. The third is the script inscribed in the oval, which is comparable to the script found on Seljuq metalwork and in Ghaznavid and Ghurid Qur'ans, as for example, in the frontispiece of the Qur'an of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī. They have a bulbous appearance and an *alif* that starts with a thick top and ends with a thin sinuous turn at the bottom.

[33] The manuscript is now in Leiden University Library (Ms Or. 1073). I am grateful to Jan Just Witkam for providing me with a reproduction of this manuscript. On Abū al-Muẓaffar Yūsuf, see Zetterstéen, 'Al-Nāsir', EI1.

Figure 7.11: Top: Cartouche on the first folio of the Bust Qur'an, Bust, 505/1111; Middle: Close up on the frontispiece of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī's Qur'an, Khurasan, 573/1177; Bottom: Cartouche of the title page of *Shawārid al-amthāl*.

In addition to these features, the blue shading in the frame of the cartouche is similar to the shading of the frame around the medallion that marks every tenth verse in the Hamadhān Qur'an (Figure 7.12). This shading is distinct and features rarely in Qur'ans copied between the 5th/11th and 6th/12th century. It seems to be executed in a painterly technique with an aim to create layering and depth to the contours of forms.

Figure 7.12: Top: Marginal medallion marking every ten verses in the Hamadhān Qur'an, Hamadhān, 559/1164; Bottom: The frames of the cartouche and hexagon on the title page of *Shawārid al-amthāl*.

These common elements between, on the one hand, two Ayyubid manuscripts, and on the other, Qur'ans from Khurasan and the Hamadhān Qur'an, attest once more to the shaping of local aesthetic languages out of a larger visual repertoire that links Damascus to Greater Iran and beyond. As seen in Nūr al-Dīn's Qur'an, elements that once appeared in Hamadhān, Baghdad and Khurasan are present here, pointing to a continuous interaction between these regions. This is indeed possible with the movement of craftsmen.

In support of this idea, and in addition to the travel of Khurasani metalworkers and motifs westward to the Jazira and Anatolia as discussed above, the Ghaznavid manuscript *Kitāb khalq al-nabī wa khulqih,* discussed in chapter IV, offers an example of how manuscripts travelled westwards. The manuscript was commissioned by the Ghaznavid Amīr Abū Mansūr ʿAbd al-Rashīd (r. 441/1049-444/1052), and has typical characteristics of the Ghaznavid aesthetic. Its ownership note, however, links it to people from Syria and Egypt, as the illuminated band on the title page conveys: *li'shaykh al-zakī fakh[r] al-tujjār abī ʿabdallāh muḥammad bin shibl al-ḥimṣī* (for the Sheikh Zakī al-Dīn, Glory of the Merchants Abū ʿAbdallāh Muḥammad b. Shibl al-Ḥimṣī) (Plate XLI, Chapter I).[34] The *nisba* of this owner indicates that he or his family came from Ḥimṣ in Syria. Moreover, the script of this note is a mature NS, which was popularly used in the 5th/11th and 6th/12th centuries before subsequently dropping out of fashion, suggesting that

[34] Stern, 'A Manuscript from the Library of the Ghaznavid Amir ʿAbd Al-Rashid', 21.

the manuscript shifted ownership not long after the 6th/12th century. On this same page, a later inscription in black at the top left corner was added that reads, *yathik bi'l-ghafūr mūsā bin yaghm[ūr]* (Mūsa b. Yaghm[ūr] trusts in the forgiving God).[35] Stern notes that this later owner may have been the famous Ayyubid prince in Egypt, Mūsa b. Yaghmūr, who was the *wazīr* of al-Kāmil, the Ayyubid ruler of Egypt and Damascus in the 7th/13th century.[36] If the name of the person noted on this folio is indeed the Ayyubid prince, then the manuscript must have been in Egypt or Syria in the 7th/13th century before it finally reached Istanbul by the 11th/17th century.[37]

In addition to the circulation of this manuscript westwards, we know that in the 5th/11th and 6th/12th centuries, scholars travelled from Ghazna to study in Damascus, drawn, as Barry Flood suggests, by the strength of the Shāfiʿī *madhhab* that was favoured in Ghazna.[38] Interestingly, tales about Ghazna started appearing in 5th/11th century Syrian texts, highlighting the flow of people, ideas and books.[39] Lastly, a westward movement of people can be traced in the region's architecture. Iranian builders travelled west to Anatolia, bringing with them architectural techniques and motifs, and influencing the style of local brick muqarnas, as Richard McClary argues.[40] Indeed, the names of Iranian craftsmen appear on several Anatolian brick muqarnas of the 7th/13th century, further supporting the idea of aesthetic interaction in the eastern Islamic lands.[41]

[35] Ibid.
[36] Ibid., 22–23.
[37] Stern notes other ownership marks with undeciphered nisba on this same folio. Stern, 'A Manuscript from the Library of the Ghaznavid Amir ʿAbd Al-Rashid', 23.
[38] Flood, 'A Ghaznavid Narrative Relief', 270.
[39] Ibid.
[40] McClary notes that the plans of the balconies of two minarets, namely the Sivas Great Mosque minaret and the Eğri minaret in Aksaroy, built at the beginning of the 7th/13th century in central Anatolia are similar to the stellate plans of eastern minarets, such as the Ghaznavid minaret of Masʿūd III (r. 492/1099-508/1115) and the Ghurid Quṭb Minār at Delhi (599/1202). McClary, 'The Rūm Saljūq Architecture of Anatolia 1170-1220', unavailable pagination.
[41] McClary, 'Brick Muqarnas on Rūm Seljuq Buildings'. unavailable pagination.

A Qur'an, which measures 19.6 x 14.2 cm, was copied in RS-*muḥaqqaq* with five lines to the page in Baghdad in 588/1192 (Plates XIV-XV). The date of its production is mentioned in a lengthy colophon at the end of its final volume.[42] The colophon has a dedication to Abū ʿAbdallāh Muḥammad b. Sayyidinā al-Khalīfa al-Imām Amīr al-Muʾminīn (d. 623/1226), who was the son of the Abbasid Caliph Abū al-ʿAbbās al-Nāṣir al-Ẓāhir Muḥammad b. al-Nāsir (r. 576/1180-622/1225). Abū al-ʿAbbās designated this son as his successor as early as 585/1189, only to later change his mind and choose his younger son, ʿAlī, who died in 612/1215, making Muḥammad the heir once again.[43] From this sequence of events, we can infer that the Qur'an was copied in Baghdad for Muḥammad with the understanding that he was not going to become caliph.

It is a dispersed manuscript of leaves sold in auction houses since 1977, with the latest sale being in 2013.[44] The reconstruction of this manuscript has proven difficult, especially because most of its folios are currently untraceable. Thus, the following analysis is limited to reproduced folios. In terms of script, the features *muḥaqqaq* characteristics, as seen in general terms, by shallow bowls of letters and pointed diagonal tails. In comparison to the RS-*muḥaqqaq* used in Qur'ans from Khurasan, the one employed here is more rigid, bolder, and has less contrast between its thick and thin strokes. In comparison to the script employed in Quṭb al-Dīn's Qur'an, it appears rougher, bolder and less refined. The diagonal tails of its letters end with the same thickness, and the bowls of letters, such as *nūn*, are made of a diagonal steep stroke followed by a small curve upwards.

Furthermore, the illumination employed in this Qur'an appears to rely on a distinct visual language. To start, the text on the first double-page spread at the beginning of the 30th volume is inscribed in outlined clouds that sit on a ground of floral scrolls decorated with a motif of three

[42] The final volume of this Qur'an was sold at Christie's on 10 October 2000 (Lot 11).
[43] Zetterstéen, 'Al-Ẓāhir', EI1.
[44] Leaves from this Qur'an were sold at Christie's King Street on 14 October 2003 (Lot 1 – 9), November 1977 (Lot 67), and 22 November 1984 (Lot 111). They were also sold at Christie's South Kensington on 5 October 2012 (Lot 552) and 26 April 2013 (Lot 510). Finally, leaves were also sold at Sotheby's on 14 October 1999 (Lot 9).

dots (Plate XIV). These clouds are present in Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an, in the Ghurid Qur'ans and in Nūr al-Dīn's Qur'an, which was copied in Damascus (Pate X) and hence are not specific to a local style. The stylised flower scrolls with three blue dots that decorate the ground of the text and the borders which are not based on a geometric interlace but rather include floral scrolls (neither of *fleur de lys* nor of trilobate flowers) point to the use of new motifs and reflect local aesthetic preferences.[45] Moreover, sura headings in this Qur'an are inscribed in Kufic, framed by a repetition of abstract swirls in red and green on a gold ground, an idiosyncratic configuration that signals a difference from contemporaneous Qur'anic motifs (Plate XV).

Finally, the vignettes that project from these sura bands are circular in form with a contour that resembles the polylobed contour employed in the Khurasani Qur'ans, except with thin long lines radiating from them. Fourth, single-verse markers are medallions with petals that contain an inner circle inscribed with the word *āya,* and that feature very long thin rayed lines extending outwards. The dots around these medallions alternate between blue and red. Such design, again, is not seen in earlier Qur'ans.[46] Finally, the marginal fifth-verse markers are large and made of a circle with a triangular base and pointed top (in some variations the top looks like a crown), decorated with gold floral scrolls on a green ground. This design appears for the first time in the group of Qur'ans produced between the 5th/11th and 6th/12th centuries.

Hence, the illumination of this Qur'an represents Qur'anic visual language that surely had its roots in Baghdad but that visibly represents a departure from Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an. Having been an important centre of Qur'anic production since the 4th/10th century, Baghdad must have developed numerous visual languages shaped and reshaped by the continuous flux of people through the city. Thus, this Qur'an represents only one example from what could have been a centre of diverse Qur'anic aesthetics.

The diffusion of Iraqi style, discussed in chapter I, continued until the 7th/13th century, as McClary's study suggests by highlighting the common features between the funerary

[45] A comparable border design is found in a Qur'an copied at the beginning of the 8th/14th century in Iraq. James, The Master Scribes, 102–5 (cat. no. 21).
[46] It is closest to type 5.D.II used in earlier Qur'ans. See Déroche, *Les manuscrits Coraniques*, 31-32.

architecture of Mosul and that of Central Asia, specifically that of the Khwārazm-Shāhs.[47] This link between Iraq and the eastern Islamic lands is also discussed by Flood, who argues that the trade of artefacts and booty, as well as the movement of people, between India and the Islamic world, brought interactions and connections of ideas between Baghdad and Sind as early as the 2nd/8th century.[48]

In sum, each of the Qur'anic manuscripts discussed in this chapter represent a local aesthetic that developed in Hamadhān, the Jazira, Damascus and Baghdad. Even though their general aesthetic appears distinct, they mixed elements present in Qur'ans copied in the 5th/11th and 6th/12th centuries in Greater Iran and Iraq. While the Hamadhān Qur'an was copied by a *kātib* in the Seljuq state administration, the rest of the Qur'ans were commissioned by rulers or ruling family members signalling that these Qur'anic manuscripts may have been representing one of the cannon schools of script and illumination in western Iran, the Jazira, Syria and Iraq during the Seljuq, Zengid, Ayyubid and Abbasid periods, respectively.

[47] Private communication with Richard McClary; PhD thesis submitted to the University of Edinburgh in 2015 entitled, 'The Rūm Saljūq Architecture of Anatolia 1170-1220'.
[48] Flood, Objects of Translation, 19–20. As Flood suggests, "The maritime and terrestrial routes connecting the central lands of the ʿAbbasid Caliphate in Iraq and its eastern frontier regions in what today are Afghanistan and Pakistan were conduits not only for raw materials and high-value goods but also for religious and political dogmas, artistic ideas, and for the human agents who made and traded the objects in which they were manifest." Ibid., 16.

Chapter VIII

Aesthetic Diversity in Qur'ans

This chapter focuses on six dated Qur'anic manuscripts and two datable to the 6th/12th century (Table 8.1). The study of their script and illumination will help identify the visual language employed in these Qur'ans. Based on comparative analysis with the Qur'ans studied so far in this thesis, the eight Qur'ans studied here appear to have developed a hybrid aesthetic that draws on already existing visual languages.

Manuscript	Date	Writing material	Scripts used	Height x width (cm)	Calligraphers and illuminators	Patron
Al-Zanjānī's Qur'an (Met 1996.294.2/3 i996.238.3/ 1996.294.1)	531/1137	Paper	NSIII	25.7 x 19	• Muḥammad b. Muḥammad [...] al-Zanjānī (calligrapher)	x
Qur'an of al-Kātib al-Malikī (CBL Is. 1430)	532/1106	Paper	RS-*muḥaqqaq*	43 x 31.5	• ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Bakr b. ʿAbd al-Raḥīm al-Kātib al Malikī (calligrapher)	x
Al-Bayhaqī's Qur'an (CBL Is. 1435)	592/1195	Paper	RS-*muḥaqqaq*	20 x 14.5	• Abū Naʿīm b. Ḥamza al-Bayhaqī (calligrapher)	x
Al-Kātib al-Iṣfahānī's Qur'an (DK 144)	555/1160	Paper	RS-*muḥaqqaq*	40 x 30	• Masʿūd b. Muḥammad al-Kātib al-Iṣfahānī (calligrapher)	x
Qur'an of ʿAbd al-Malik al-Iṣfahānī (DK 227)	495/1105	Paper	RS-*muḥaqqaq*		• ʿAbd al-Malik al-Iṣfahānī (calligrapher)	x
Qur'an of Muḥammad b. Altūn Ṭāsh (TKS Y752)	533/1106	Paper	RS-*muḥaqqaq-naskh*	32.5 x 24	• Muḥammad b. Altūn Ṭāsh b. ʿAbdallāh al-Maqarrī al-Kātib al-Baghdādī • Abū al-Qāsim b. Abī al-Najīb b. Abī al-Qāsim	x
Al-Jabalī's Qur'an (CBL Is. 1439)	6th/12th century	Paper	RS-*naskh*	39 x 33	• Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Jabalī al-[...] (calligrapher) • ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad al-Ṣūfī (illuminator)	x
Golden Qur'an (IISH cod. Arab. 1112)	6th/12th century-early 7th/13th century	Paper	RS-*naskh-muḥaqqaq*	?	x	x

Table 8.1: Qur'ans of unknown provenance attributed to the Central Islamic lands, 6th/12th – early 7th/13th century.

Only eight folios, measuring 25.7 x 19 cm, survive from al-Zanjānī's Qur'an, now at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Plate I-XI).[1] Copied in NSIII in 531/1137, 28 years earlier than the Hamadhān Qur'an, by Muḥammad al-Zanjānī, its colophon – inscribed in the frame that runs around the Qur'anic text – states (Figure 8.1):

> *Faragha*
> *min taḥrīr hadhā al-muṣḥaf muḥammad bin muḥ […]*
> *[…] Allāh al-zanjānī yawm al-thulathāʾ al-thāmin wa'l-ʿishrīn min jumādā al-ūlā sanat iḥdā wa thalāthīn wa khamsa māʾa.*
> Completed
> the editing of this Qur'an Mohammad b. Muh […]
> […] Allah al-Zanjānī, on Tuesday 28 Jumādā al-Ūlā
> of the year 531 [1137 AD].

Figure 8.1: The colophon of al-Zanjānī's Qur'an, 531/1137.

This spread, like the others, had undergone restoration whereby parts of the original folios were pasted on modern paper, and the missing Qur'anic text was replaced by RS-*naskh* instead of NS (Plates I and VI). In terms of its calligrapher, no information survives, while his *nisba* indicates his family's origins in Zanjān, north of Hamadhān.

The visual repertoire of this Qur'an employs elements that have already been seen in Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an, the Hamadhān Qur'an and the Khurasani Qur'ans. First, its frontispiece is designed with four half circles linked to the four sides of the central panel and interlaced with other half and quarter circles, generating different geometric shapes at the centre of which is a stylised lotus flower (Plate II). This configuration is related to the third double frontispiece in Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an made of intersecting circles and half circles (fol. 9r, Plate IV, Chapter

[1] They have the following accession numbers: 1996.294.7; 1996.294.6; 1996.294.5; 1996.294.4;

II). It is also related to the finispiece of Khalili QUR284 which was ascribed to Baghdad based on the similarities of its illumination with Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an (fol. 201v, Plate XI, Chapter II). A pointed oval is formed by the overlap of the two half circles in the frontispiece of Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an, exactly like in the frontispiece of al-Zanjānī's Qur'an and the finispiece of Khalili QUR284. In all three designs, new shapes are generated by the overlaps of circles and half circles. The circle created at the centre of the frontispiece of al-Zanjānī's Qur'an is surrounded by floral scrolls of lotus flowers and star patterns in gold on blue and green grounds. The lotus flower scrolls are similar to those decorating the ground of the octagons in the frontispiece of Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an (Figure 8.2). Encircled by their stems, these flowers are made of two large petals, two sepals, a pointed bud at the top and a small bud at the centre. The star pattern was also used in Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an, namely in its frontispiece and finispiece (Figure 8.3). In addition, the stylised lotus flower that decorates the centre of the frontispiece in al-Zanjānī's Qur'an is similar to that inscribed in the two spaces formed on the horizontal axis in Ibn al-Bawwāb's finispiece (Figure 8.4). They both feature straight sepals upon which a pointed bud sits with two large leaves on each side and smaller leaves on top.

In addition to its similarities with Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an, some motifs in al-Zanjānī's Qur'an overlap with those characterising the decoration of the Hamadhān and the Khurasani Qur'ans. For instance, star patterns as the ones that appear in the decoration of al-Zanjānī's Qur'an are observed in both Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an and the Hamadhān Qur'an (Figure 7.2). In addition, the four half circles at the edges of the central panel are a configuration used in the finispiece of the Hamadhān Qur'an (Plate III, Chapter VII). Similarly to the decoration in the Hamadhān Qur'an, the ground of al-Zanjānī's frontispiece is decorated with simple trilobate flowers, palmette scrolls, stylised lotus flowers and *fleurs de lys,* which also characterise the decoration of the Khurasani Qur'ans. Finally, the colour palette of al-Zanjānī's Qur'an includes green, which similarly appears in the ground of the finispiece of the Hamadhān Qur'an (Plate III, Chapter VII).

Figure 8.2: Left: Flower scroll from al-Zanjānī's Qur'an, 531/1137; Right: Flower scroll from Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an, 391/1000.

Figure 8.3: Ground decoration in the frontispiece and finispiece of Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an, 391/1000; Bottom: Ground decoration in al-Zanjānī's Qur'an, 531/1137.

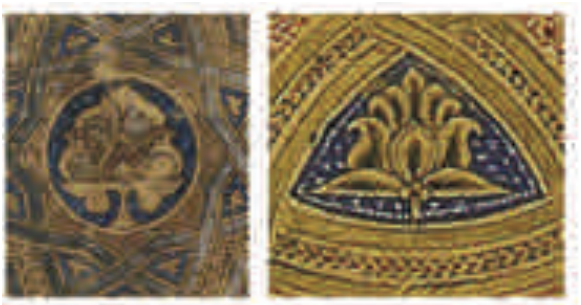

Figure 8.4: Left: Flower at the centre of the frontispiece of al-Zanjānī's Qur'an, 531/1137; Right: Flower decorating the finispiece of Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an, 391/1000.

Hence, the frontispiece of al-Zanjānī's Qur'an appears to bring together features we have already encountered in Qur'ans copied in Baghdad, western Iran, and Khurasan. Some of these decorative elements, as we have already seen in previous chapters, appear on architecture. Here, the configuration of al-Zanjānī's frontispiece is strikingly similar to that of the inner northeastern dome of the Seljuq Isfahan's Friday mosque that was added in 481/1088 (Figure 8.5).[2] In both, pointed ovals are formed by overlapping of arcs and at the centre of which is a small circle.

[2] Under the request of the *wazīr* Taj al-Mulk, the dome was added for Malik Shāh's wife and daughter Oleg. Grabar, *The Great Mosque of Isfahan*.

Figure 8.5: Top: Central design of al-Zanjānī's frontispiece; Bottom: Inner dome of Isfahan's Friday mosque, 481/1088.

Additional elements appear in the illumination of al-Zanjānī's Qur'an that strengthens its aesthetic link to western Iran is the design of its frontispiece's frame (Plate V) is closely related to the one around *sūrat al-baqara* in the Hamadhān Qur'an (Plate II, Chapter VII). It is a wide band made of gold geometric lattice tightly knit in the diagonal direction – a design not part of

the Khurasani Qur'ans. In al-Zanjānī's Qur'an, this latticework band is sandwiched between two thinner bands of gold vegetal scrolls. This combination of an organic frame next to a geometric one appears around the central illuminated panels of the folios enumerating the components of the Qur'an (Plates III and IV). As in the Hamadhān Qur'an (Plate I, Chapter VII), these first illuminated folios list the components of the Qur'an and are decorated with interlaced lines and floral gold scrolls.[3] On one of these folios (Plate VI), five shapes comprising a large circle and two small circles are inscribed with NS, of which only the middle and last lines remain clear:

> *Alf wa-māyatān wa sitt wa-sittūn āya*
> *wa-arbaʿat ʿashara āya fī ʿadad ahl al-kūfa.*
> A thousand and two hundred and sixty six verses
> and fourteen verses following the counting of the people of Kufa.

The number of verses noted here is exactly the same as in the Hamadhān Qur'an, indicating that the same verse count is adopted in both Qur'ans, and that the two Qur'ans may have been produced in the same region. Moreover, the outer frame of this panel is made of circular forms and stylised flower buds that are painted in shades of blue, a feature encountered earlier in the tenth-verse marker of the Hamadhān Qur'an (Table 7.2). This type of shading resonates with the shading of the flower petals in the finispiece of Ibn al-Bawwāb's (Figure 8.6). Hence, this technique of shading, the stylised lotus flower, star patterns and *fleurs de lys* link al-Zanjānī's Qur'an to western Iran but appears to be rooted in earlier centuries decorative Qur'anic motifs.

Figure 8.6: Left: Shading in a flower in Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an, 391/1000; Right: Shading of the border in al-Zanjānī's Qur'an, 531/1137.

The second folio that notes the enumeration of the components of al-Zanjānī's Qur'an has a peculiar wide frame made of interlaced circles – an attribute seen for the first time among the

[3] Due to the fragmentary state of these folios, it is unclear which verse count is adopted in this Qur'an.

surviving Qur'ans produced between the 4th/10th and 6th/12th centuries (Plate IV). The central panel of this folio is designed in a similar manner as the first, in that it is made of interlaced lines and half circles forming shapes inscribed in NS and RS. Unfortunately, the extant parts of the text are not enough to make sense of the original inscription. The background of the text is decorated with vegetal scrolls, some of which are scrolls of *fleur de lys*. The opening spread with *fātiḥāt al-kitāb* and *sūrat al-baqara* is prominently illuminated with wide top and bottom bands decorated with intersecting lines and overlapping geometric shapes filled with floral scrolls, some of which are also *fleurs de lys* (Plate V). This band design recalls the design of a sura heading in Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an in which three sets of two overlapping squares frame the title of the sura (Figure 4.3).

Out of all the aforementioned Qur'ans, the decorative elements in al-Zanjānī's Qur'an most resemble the visual language of the Hamadhān Qur'an. In addition, the vignette designs of al-Zanjānī's Qur'an prove distinct from the tradition of the Khurasani decoration even though it shares some elements with it. For example, the designs that project from the illuminated panels of the colophon spread in al-Zanjānī's Qur'an are made of three concentric circles, each decorated with floral scrolls (Plate I), while those linked to the *basmala* at the beginning of each sura vary in design and are made of intertwined gold scrolls on blue or gold grounds (Figure 8.7). These designs are not encountered in any of the Qur'ans copied in Khurasan. In addition, some vignettes have a pointed bud at their tip (Table 8.2), a configuration encountered in the Hamadhān Qur'an, but absent from the Khurasani Qur'ans (Table 7.2).

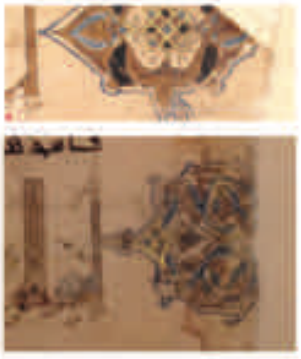

Figure 8.7: Two vignettes linked to the *basmala* at the beginning of a sura in al-Zanjānī's Qur'an, 531/1137.

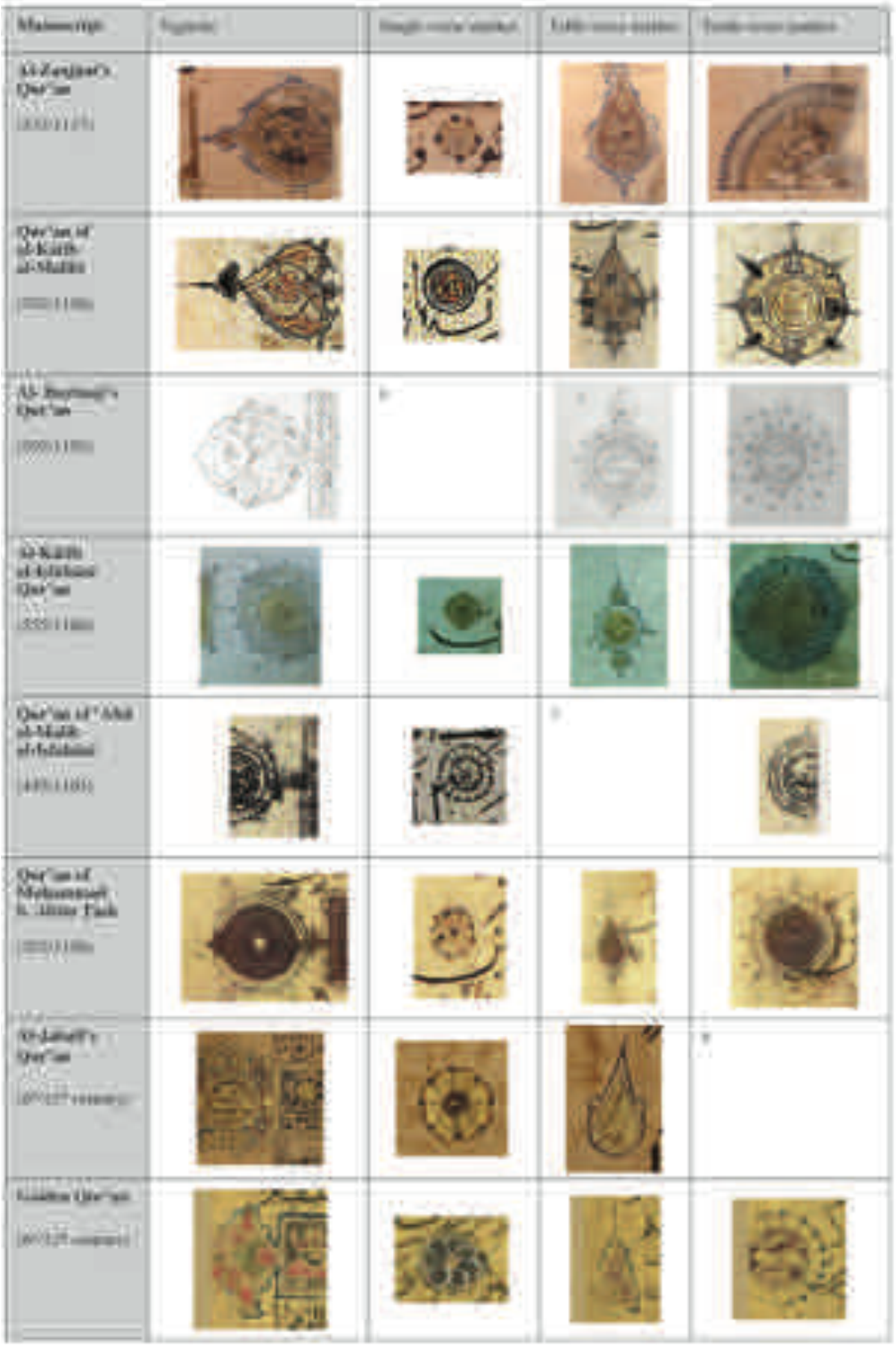

Table 8.2: Vignettes and verse markers in Qur'ans of unknown provenance, attributed to the Central Islamic lands, 6th/12th- early 7th/13th century.

An additional feature brings al-Zanjānī's Qur'an closer to the Hamadhān Qur'an but also rooted in previous Qur'anic traditions is the emphasis on the *basmala* at the beginning of each sura. Here it is inscribed in NS and with a long extension between *ḥāʾ* and *mīm*, framing the sura banner (Plate VI). Emphasizing the *basmala* is adopted in the Hamadhān Qur'an (Plate II, Chapter VII) and can be traced back as early as Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an (Plate VII, Chapter II).

The elements that separate further al-Zanjānī's Qur'an from the Khurasani corpus, are the verse markers. The rosette with petals decorated with coloured dots marking the end of every verse in al-Zanjānī's Qur'an is not typically used in Qur'ans from Khurasan (Table 8.2). Similarly, the fifth-verse marker, a pear-shaped and inscribed with *khamsa*, is related in design to the fifth-verse marker in the Hamadhān Qur'an (Table 7.2). Lastly, the tenth-verse marker is a medallion that has radiating lines around it, a variation from the design of the tenth-verse marker in the Ghaznavid Qur'ans (Table 4.2).

The NSIII script employed in al-Zanjānī's Qur'an clearly contains influences from non-Qur'anic bookhands, as seen in the bowls and tails of letters. Unlike the NSIII employed in Khurasani Qur'ans, however, the one in al-Zanjānī's Qur'an retains some Kufic characteristics, such as the turn at the bottom of *alif* and the form of initial *mīm*. This is the only Qur'an in the group discussed in this chapter that employs NS for the main text, suggesting that RS had started to gain more popularity in western Iran by the end of the 6th/12th century.

In sum, the surviving folios from al-Zanjānī's Qur'an indicate that a wealthy patron had commissioned the manuscript, given its high quality of illumination and abundant use of gold. Some features in its illumination closely mirror the visual repertoire employed in the Hamadhān Qur'an, while others resemble the Khurasani visual repertoire yet appear distinct from it. This suggests that al-Zanjānī's Qur'an may have been produced in western Iran, employing a Qur'anic aesthetic that was shaped by east and west Iran, and rooted in earlier Qur'anic motifs.

The Qur'an of al-Kātib al-Malikī

The Qur'an of al-Kātib al-Malikī was copied, according to its colophon, in 582/1186 by ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Bakr b. ʿAbd al-Raḥīm al-Kātib al-Malikī, Zarrīn Qalam (Plates VII-IX).[4] The last part of the title indicates that he was a royal scribe (al-Kātib al-Malikī), and that he was known for his golden pen (Zarrīn Qalam) – a metaphor for his good handwriting. Because he was a royal scribe, it is likely that an official of high rank at the court commissioned the Qur'an, a claim further supported by an analysis of the Qur'an's script, illumination and large size of 43 x 31.5 cm.

The right-hand page of the frontispiece in the Qur'an is designed with overlapping circles, of which two are large, and at the centre of which is inscribed the verse *lā yamassuhu*, referring to *lā yamassuhu illā al-muṭahharūn* (That only the pure can touch), seen repeatedly in the illumination of the Khurasani Qur'ans (fol. 1v, Plate VII).[5] The frame around this central design is made of interlaced thin lines forming various shapes, in which some are coloured in darker ink. A similar frame is used in al-Zanjānī's Qur'an, in which intersecting areas of the circles are coloured in dark brown (Plate IV). The left-hand page of the frontispiece is decorated with ten circles, with every two merged together and inscribed with the enumeration of the components of the Qur'an, unfortunately illegible from the available reproduction (fol. 2r, Plate VII). Given that the design of the right-hand page is different from that of the left-hand page, it is likely that these folios were not originally facing each other, but rearranged as such when the Qur'an was restored.[6]

Moreover, as in al-Zanjānī's Qur'an, the beginning of a sura in al-Kātib al-Malikī's Qur'an is indicated by the *basmala* that appears larger than the sura title (Plates VIII and IX). Sura titles are copied in a small gold RS in the space formed by the extension between the two *lām* of the word "Allah" in the *basmala* (Figure 8.8.8). They are decorated with floral scrolls of extended tips.

---

[4] It is now in the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin (Is. 1438). Folios from this Qur'an were published in Arberry, *The Koran Illuminated*, 16 (Plate 27); Ettinghausen et al., *Islamic Art and Architecture*, 181; Mansour, *Sacred Script*, 97; and Tabbaa, 'The Transformation of Arabic Writing: Part I', 138.

[5] Unfortunately, the available reproduction of this frontispiece is not of high resolution, making it difficult to read the text inscribed within the illumination.

[6] It is evident that the Qur'an was restored, since the frame is in good condition, while the folios that it surrounds are damaged.

Illuminated bands are present at the top and bottom of fol. 218v (Plate VIII), probably to indicate the beginning of a new volume. The bands are decorated with overlapping circles and ovals, inscribed with various Qur'anic verses, such as *Innahu la-qur'ān karīm, fī kitāb maknūn* (This is a Glorious Qur'an, in a Book well-sheltered), used in illuminated bands of several Khurasani Qur'ans.[7] The designs of these bands are roughly comparable to the design of sura bands in the Hamadhān Qur'an, in which the text is inscribed in intersecting circles and ovals on a decorated ground of floral scrolls (Figure 8.9).

Figure 8.8: Sura title in the Qur'an of al-Kātib al-Malikī, 582/1186.

Figure 8.9: Top: Sura title in the Hamadhān Qur'an, 559/1164; Bottom: Illuminated band at the bottom of fol. 218v in the Qur'an of al-Kātib al-Malikī, 582/1186.

[7] As on fol. 1r of the Bust Qur'an (505/1111), Plate XLI, Chapter IV.

The vignettes linked to the *basmala* headline in the Qur'an of al-Kātib al-Malikī are made of interlaced lines with a pointed bud at their tip that extends into a thin line – a feature present in the vignettes of the Hamadhān Qur'an, but absent from those in the Khurasani Qur'ans.[8] However, the vignettes linked to the illuminated bands at the top and bottom of fol. 218v have polylobed contours from which sinuous lines extend, a characteristic of Ghaznavid imperial Qur'ans and more generally, Khurasani Qur'ans. Single-verse markers are simple gold circles in which the word *āya* is inscribed, a design rooted in the previous century and not commonly used in the Khurasani Qur'ans (Table 8.2).[9] Every fifth verse is indicated in the margin by a circular device, the top of which is pointed, as seen in the Hamadhān and al-Zanjānī Qur'ans. Finally, the design of the tenth-verse marker, from which the fifth-verse marker is derived, is based on a medallion with floral buds from which thin lines extend and at the centre of which is inscribed the number of every tenth verse (*ʿashr*, *ʿishrūn* etc.). Interestingly, a polylobed contour frames these marginal medallions, a feature characterising the vignettes and medallions of the Khurasani Qur'ans.[10]

Hence, the Qur'an of al-Kātib al-Malikī exhibits a few elements that were employed in Qur'ans from Khurasan. However, in contrast to the Khurasani RS scripts, the RS-*muḥaqqaq* employed here, characterised by shallow bowls and diagonal tails, is rigid and has steeper diagonal descenders (Figure 8.10). The RS-*muḥāqqaq* employed in the Khurasani Qur'ans, such as Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an (484/1091), the Bust Qur'an (505/1111) and Sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn's Qur'an (584/1188), appears overall more curvilinear with greater contrast between its thick and thin strokes, and its descenders are not as steep as those found in the Qur'an of al-Kātib al-Malikī. Some letter shapes also differ in form, such as *alif*, which has a thin turn at the bottom in the three Khurasani examples, but remains straight in al-Kātib al-Malikī's Qur'an. Although the scripts in both al-Kātib al-Malikī's Qur'an and the Khurasani Qur'ans contain features characteristic of later *muḥaqqaq*, the above-noted differences nevertheless indicate a local preference, which may have been due to the cut of the pen's nib that altered the form of letters as well as the contrast between their thick and thin strokes.[11] In fact, the script of al-Kātib al-Malikī is closer to the one employed in the Qur'an of Muḥammad b. Abī al-ʿAbbās copied in Baghdad,

[8] For the Hamadhān Qur'an see Table 7.2; for the Khurasani Qur'ans see Tables 4.2 and 5.2, and Table 6.3.
[9] A similar single-verse marker was used in the Qur'an of al-ʿAbdūsī. See Table 4.2.
[10] See Table 4.2.
[11] On the cut of the nib, see Moustafa and Sperl, *The Cosmic Script*, 1:163 and 249–50.

in that the diagonal tails of letters end with the same thickness, and the bowls of letters, such as *nūn*, are made of a diagonal steep stroke followed by a small curve upwards.

Finally, the layout employed in this Qur'an juxtaposes large and small scripts, with lines of large script sandwiching lines of smaller script, a feature not employed in Khurasani Qur'anic layouts. This constitutes one of the earliest appearances of such a layout, which eventually became common in Qur'ans of later centuries.[12] Another new feature absent from Khurasani Qur'ans is the copying of the word "Allah" in gold and, as mentioned earlier, enlarging the size of the *basmala* at the beginning of suras. Such elements also became popular in Qur'ans of later centuries.

Figure 8.10: Top: Sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn's Qur'an, 585/1188 (left) and Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an, 484/1091 (right); Bottom: The Bust Qur'an, 505/1111 (left) and the Qur'an of al-Kātib al-Malikī, 582/1186 (right).

In sum, this Qur'an shares a number of features with the illuminations of the Hamadhān Qur'an and al-Zanjānī's Qur'an, and fewer resemblances with the Khurasani Qur'ans. In addition, the script in al-Kātib al-Malikī's Qur'an pulls it further away from the *muḥaqqaq* employed in Qur'ans from Khurasan, indicating a Qur'anic tradition distant from Khurasan. Although this

[12] Blair mentions a supposedly earlier example that employs such a layout, which is a copy of the poem by Salāma b. Jandal thought to be copied by Ibn al-Bawwāb in 408/1018. See Blair, *Islamic Calligraphy*, 168–69.

Qur'an's exact place of origin cannot be confirmed, its copyists calls himself the "royal scribe", and given its resemblance with Qur'ans west of Khurasan, it could have been copied in western Iran, in a Seljuq city such as Isfahan or Merv.

Al- Bayhaqī's Qur'an

The Qur'an of al-Bayhaqī was copied in 592/1195 in RS-*muḥaqqaq*, by Abū Naʿīm b. Ḥamza al-Bayhaqī (Plates X-XII).[13] It is an incomplete Qur'an of 118 folios that measure 20 x 14.5 cm. Its repertoire of illumination shares some similarities with the Khurasani visual language, but overall contains different configurations.

The extant frontispiece from al-Bayhaqī's Qur'an comprises two pointed ovals inscribed with the enumeration of the components of the Qur'an in NS (Plate X). A similar design is present in Khalili Qur284 specifically in its use of pointed ovals and circles inscribed in NS with the enumeration of the components of the Qur'an, and decorated with stylised flowers framed by a gold latticework band (Plate VIII, Chapter II). Pointed oval shapes are also formed at the centre of the frontispiece of al-Zanjānī's Qur'an (Plate II), which, like al-Bayhaqī's Qur'an, is decorated with florets and stylised flowers, some with pointed tips (Figure 8.11).[14] At each of the four corners of the central panel of al-Bayhaqī's Qur'an is a quarter circle, and to the right and left of the panel are two half circles, all inscribed with star-shaped patterns similarly encountered at the corners of al-Zanjānī's frontispiece (Plate II) and which are rooted in Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an (Plate V, Chapter II). The central panel is framed with a geometric lattice that projects into the margin a vignette of type 6 made of composite palmettes, at the bottom of which truncated palmettes point upwards – a design encountered in previous centuries, but rarely in Khurasani Qur'ans.[15]

[13] The colophon was transcribed in Arberry, *The Koran Illuminated*, 16. Two folios are also published as plates 29 and 30. Other folios from this Qur'an are published in Mansour, Sacred Script, 96; Tabbaa, 'The Transformation of Arabic Writing: Part I', 139; and Zayn al-Dīn, *Badāʾiʿ al-khaṭṭ al-ʿarabī* (plate 13).
[14] Even though it is not very clear at present, indicating that perhaps a facing page was lost, the oval at the top is inscribed with the number of words (45,212 words), while the oval at the bottom is inscribed with the number of letters. The top oval, reading from top to bottom: *wa māʾatā kalima wa-ithnatā ʿashara kalima - wa-huwa khamsat wa-arbaʿūn alf* (and two hundred and twelve words - and it is forty five thousand). The bottom oval, reading from top to bottom: *māʾat ḥarf wa-ithnān wa-tisʿūn - ḥarfan wa-sittat asbāʿ ḥarf* (?) (one hundred and ninety two letters - letter and six part of seven letter (?)). The top oval is inscribed with: *ḥarf wa-thamān* (a letter and eight), and the bottom one is inscribed with: *wa-khamsa sajdāt* (and five prostrations).
[15] See Figures 4.18-20.

Figure 8.11: Top: Detail from the frontispiece of al-Bayhaqī's Qur'an, 592/1195; Bottom: Details from the frontispiece of al-Zanjānī's Qur'an, 531/1137.

The end of the eighth volume in al- Bayhaqī's Qur'an is indicated in illuminated banners at the top and bottom of the last folio (Plate XI).[16] These banners are decorated with stylised tulip flowers and star patterns, also used in the frontispiece of al-Zanjānī's Qur'an. Marginal medallions and rectangles are inscribed with the division of the Qur'anic text, such as *awwal al-subʿ al-rābiʿ wa-awwal al-sābiʿ min ajzāʾ arbaʿat ʿashar* (the beginning of the fourth seventh and the beginning of the seventh of fourteen parts) (Plate XII). Inscribed in NS, these types of divisions are also noted in the imperial Ghaznavid Qur'ans.[17] The medallion that appears in the margin of this folio resembles the single-verse marker in Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an (Figure 8.12) as well as the tenth-verse markers in ʿAlī's Qur'an (485/1092) and the Bust Qur'an (505/1111).[18] Likewise, the tenth-verse marker (Table 8.2) employed in al-Bayhaqī's Qur'an is made of two

[16] The top banner is inscribed in NS with: *ākhir al-subʿ al-rābiʿ min al-Qur'ān* (the end of the fourth section from the division of seven parts). The bottom banner is inscribed with: *wa ākhir al-juzʾ al-thāmin min ajzāʾ arbaʿat ʿashar* (and the end of the eighth volume from the division of 14 parts), indicating that the Qur'an was divided into 14 volumes and seven parts.
[17] For example, see Sultan Ibrāhīm's Qur'an (Plate VIII, Chapter IV).
[18] Table 4.2.

concentric circles with dots decorating its petals surrounded by thin ray lines, a design also used in the Khurasani Qur'ans, in Khalili QUR284 (Plate IX, Chapter II), in Nūr al-Dīn's Qur'an from Damascus, Figure 8.13) and is even related to Quṭb al-Dīn's Qur'an from the Jazira (Table 7.2). Thus, in sum, certain elements in the illumination of al-Bayhaqī's Qur'an are present in Qur'ans from Khurasan, western Iran, Baghdad and Syria. This, even though makes it more difficult to identify local trends and the place of the manuscript's production, it points that there was in eastern Islamic lands, one manner of Qur'an production, that is even larger than Greater Iran, and from which local variations are formed.

Figure 8.12: Left: Single-verse marker from the Qur'an of Sultan Ibrāhīm, 484/1091; Right: Marginal medallion from al-Bayhaqī's Qur'an, 592/1195.

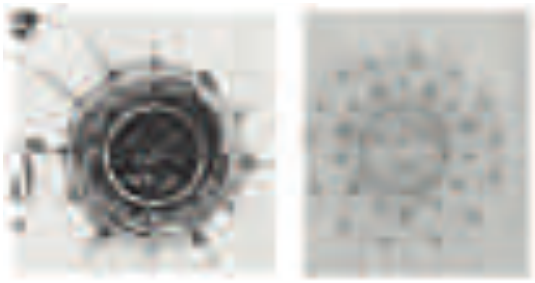

Figure 8.13: Left: Tenth-verse marker in Nūr al-Dīn's Qur'an, Damascus, 562/1166; Right: Tenth-verse marker in al-Bayhaqī's Qur'an, 592/1195.

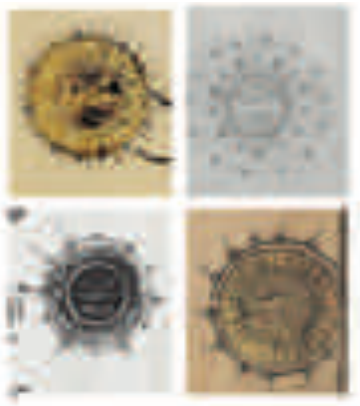

Figure 14: Top: Tenth-verse marker in Ibn al-Bawwāb's Qur'an, 391/1000 (left) and tenth-verse marker in al-Bayhaqī's Qur'an, 592/1195 (right); Bottom: Tenth-verse marker in Nūr al-Dīn's Qur'an, Damascus, 562/1166 (left) and tenth-verse marker in Khalili QUR284, 5th/11th-6th/12th century (right).

Furthermore, the RS-*muḥaqqaq* employed in al-Bayhaqī's Qur'an includes typical *muḥaqqaq* features, such as the shallow bowls of letters and pointed diagonal tails.[19] But unlike the Qur'an of al-Kātib al-Malikī, the script employed in al-Bayhaqī's Qur'an has more roundness in its descenders and greater contrast between its thick and thin strokes. In this sense, it is closer to the Khurasani RS-*muḥaqqaq*, specifically to the RS-*muḥaqqaq* employed in the Bust Qur'an with the *alif* that has a thin turn at the bottom (Figure 8.15). This resemblance on the level of script and illumination places al-Bayhaqī's Qur'an closer to the Khurasani group than the other Qur'ans discussed in this chapter so far. Indeed, the *nisba* of its copyist indicates he or his family are originally from Bayhaq, a district in western Khurasan, suggesting that the copyist may have been trained there in the Khurasani tradition of RS-*muḥaqqaq*.

[19] Because the RS scripts of the 6th/12th century mixed between what later became known as *thuluth* and *muḥaqqaq*, Arberry identifies the script used in al-Bayhaqī's Qur'an as *naskh*, James calls it *thuluth* and Mansour sees it as *muhaqqaq*. Arberry, *The Koran Illuminated*, 16; James, *Qur'ans and Bindings*, 36; and Mansour, *Sacred Script*, 95.

Figure 8.15: Top: The Bust Qur'an, 505/1111; Bottom: al-Bayhaqī's Qur'an, 592/1195.

A Qur'an now at Dār al-Kutub in Cairo (no. 144), was copied in 555/1160 by Masʿūd b. Muḥammad al-Kātib al-Iṣfahānī in RS-*muḥaqqaq* (Plate XIII).[20] Typical RS-*muḥaqqaq* features detected in the script include the shallow bowls and diagonal pointed tails of letters.[21] However, it is different from the RS-*muḥaqqaq* employed in Qur'ans from Khurasan, resembling more the Qur'an of Muḥammad b. Abī al-ʿAbbās copied in Baghdad and al-Bayhaqī's Qur'an (Figure 8.16). In al-Kātib al-Iṣfahānī's Qur'an, the heads of letters, such as *fāʾ/qāf*, appear rounder than in, for example, the Bust Qur'an. In the latter, the tails of letters are hairline – a characteristic noticeably absent from al-Kātib al-Iṣfahānī's Qur'an. Moreover, *alif* has no curvilinear turn at the bottom, as in the Khurasani Qur'ans, but is relatively straight with a vertical stroke, like in the Qur'ans of Muḥammad b. Abī al-ʿAbbās and al-Bayhaqī. However, compared to these two, the script of al-Kātib al-Iṣfahānī's Qur'an exhibits more contrast between its thick and thin strokes, and has thinner endings of tails and bowls.[22] An additional feature that brings the Qur'an of al-Kātib al-Iṣfahānī close to the Qur'ans ascribed to western Iran is the copying in gold of the word "Allah" – a feature present in the Qur'an of al-Kātib al-Malikī, but absent from the Khurasani Qur'ans reflecting perhaps a local tradition.

[20] Folios from this Qur'an were published in Blair, *Islamic Calligraphy*, 208; and Safadi, *Islamic Calligraphy*, 68. It was exhibited in London in 1976. Lings and Safadi, *The Qur'ān*, 49 (cat. no. 60).
[21] Lings and Safadi consider it to be the earliest *muḥaqqaq*. Lings and Safadi, *The Qur'ān*, 49 (cat. no. 60).
[22] This may be due to a different cut of the pen's nib.

Figure 8.16: Top: The Qur'an of Ibn Abī al-ʿAbbās, Baghdad, 588/1192 (left) and Al-Kātib al-Iṣfahānī's Qur'an, 555/1160 (right); Bottom: The Bust Qur'an, Bust, 505/1111 (left) and Al-Bayhaqī's Qur'an, 592/1195 (right).

In sum, the script used in al-Kātib al-Iṣfahānī's Qur'an is closer to that of the Qur'ans produced in Baghdad and western Iran than to those produced in Khurasan. This observation is paralleled in illumination, but unfortunately, analysis of the illumination in this Qur'an is limited to a reproduction of one double-page spread only. Nevertheless, two features appear in the illumination that recall that of the Hamadhān Qur'an (559/1164). The first is the sura banner design, which is a blue rectangular band inscribed in NS in reserve with the title of the sura and flanked by two squares (Plate XIII). The second is the tenth-verse marker that has the same design and type of shading as in the Hamadhān Qur'an (Figure 8.17). Hence, both the script and available illumination from the Qur'an of al-Kātib al-Iṣfahānī suggest that its visual repertoire is closer to that of western Iran and Baghdad than to that of Khurasan. However, one feature in this Qur'an that reminds us of the fluid nature of motifs and ornaments is the vignette linked to the sura banner. It has polylobed contours and sinuous line extensions from each side, a typical feature of the Ghaznavid Qur'ans.

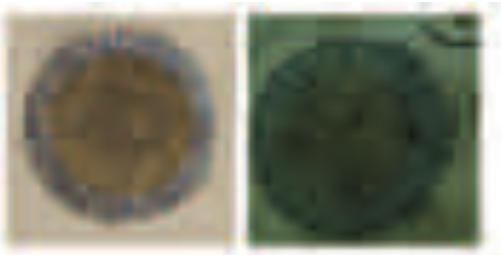

Figure 8.17: Left: Tenth-verse marker in the Hamadhān Qur'an, Hamadhān, 559/1164; Right: Tenth-verse marker in al-Kātib al-Iṣfahānī's Qur'an, 555/1160.

Hence these noted characteristics point to western Iran or Iraq as the place of production of this Qur'an. The father of the Qur'an's copyist provides us with additional pointers. He might have been Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Kātib al-Iṣfahānī (ʿImād al-Dīn Muḥammad), who was a politician and a man of letters living between Iraq and Syria.[23] ʿImād al-Dīn was the governor of Wasit under the *wazīr* Ibn Hubayra in the middle of the 6th/12th century, and upon his appointment as *kātib* by Nur al-Dīn b. Zengī in Damascus, finally settled at the court of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ayyūbī.[24] If ʿImād al-Dīn were the father of our copyist, then the date of the Qur'an (555/1160) would coincide with ʿImād al-Dīn's residency in Iraq with his family, indicating that the Qur'an may have been copied in Baghdad or Wasit.[25] This could be a possibility, given that the script in al-Kātib al-Iṣfahānī's Qur'an is similar to the script employed in the Qur'an of Muḥammad b. Abī al-ʿAbbās, copied in Baghdad in 588/1192.

Finally, the titles in ʿImād al-Dīn's name indicate that, as a *kātib,* he must have had training in the art of writing, and as *al-Iṣfahānī,* he or his family originated from Isfahan. Whether ʿImād al-Dīn was trained as a *kātib* in Isfahan, and whether he subsequently had an influence on his son's training as a *kātib,* we cannot be sure. These possibilities would suggest that even if the Qur'an was copied in Iraq, an aesthetic link to western Iran was present during the training of our copyist. It is unknown whether al-Kātib al-Iṣfahānī was affiliated to the court in Baghdad or any other court in western Iran, but what is certain is that the Qur'an he copied is aesthetically related to Qur'ans produced in western Iran. Given its resemblance to the Qur'an from Hamadhān, if al-Kātib al-Iṣfahānī's Qur'an were indeed copied in Iraq, it may indicate the existence of more than one aesthetic tradition in Iraq. In support of this hypothesis, the Qur'an of

[23] A point highlighted by Lings, Safadi and Blair. See Blair, *Islamic Calligraphy*, 207; and Lings and Safadi, *The Qur'ān*, 49 (cat. no. 60).
[24] Massé, 'Imād al-Dīn', EI2.
[25] A point also highlighted by Lings and Safadi, *The Qur'ān*, 49.

Muḥammad b. Abī al-ʿAbbās, also attributed to Iraq, employs a different repertoire of illumination. Such a conclusion would reflect the nature of the Abbasid dynasty's capital as an artistic melting pot in the 6th/12th century. Given that all of this is speculative, however, we can only conclude that the origin of the manuscript may have been Iraq, with possible influence from western Iran, based on an analysis of the Qur'an's script and illumination.

A Qur'an copied in 495/1101, almost half a century earlier than al-Kātib al-Iṣfahānī's Qur'an, by ʿAbd al-Malik al-Iṣfahānī, is now in Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyya in Cairo (no. 227) (Plates XIV-XV).[26] The script used in this Qur'an is characterised by *muḥāqqaq* features with little contrast between thick and thin strokes, unlike the RS-*muḥaqqaq* employed in Khurasani Qur'ans at the end of the 5th/11th century and beginning of the 6th/12th century (Figure 8.10). It is very similar to the script of al-Kātib al-Iṣfahānī in that the rigid tails of letters such as *wāw* and *rāʾ* almost never curve upwards as they do in the Khurasani scripts (Figure 8.18). Moreover, the shapes of letters *alif*, *hāʾ*, *lām* and *kāf* are almost identical in both Qur'ans, suggesting that the Qur'an of ʿAbd al-Malik al-Iṣfahānī might have been produced in Iraq or western Iran. Given that "al-Iṣfahānī" is present in the titles of both copyists, it is probable that either they or their families originated from Isfahan, which may be evidence of an Iṣfahānī school of script especially that Isfahan was the Seljuq capital between 443/1051 and 512/1118 and both Qur'ans were produced during this period.

Figure 8.18: Top: Al-Kātib al-Iṣfahānī's Qur'an, 555/1160; Bottom: The Qur'an of ʿAbd al-Malik al-Iṣfahānī, 495/1101.

[26] Mansour, *Sacred Script*, 92. It is considered by Lings, Safadi and James to be the earliest Qur'an copied in *muḥaqqaq*. See Lings and Safadi, *The Qur'ān*, 49 (no. 60); and James, *The Master Scribes*, 16.

The illumination employed in this Qur'an is unfortunately not very clear in available reproductions. Nonetheless, one could still observe in that none of the defining features of the Khurasani aesthetic are represented in the surviving illumination.

The Qur'an of Muḥammad b. Altūn Ṭāsh

A Qur'an copied in 583/1187 by Muḥammad b. Altūn Ṭāsh b. ʿAbdallah al-Maqarrī al-Kātib al-Baghdādī, and illuminated by Abū al-Qāṣim b. Abī al-Najīb b. Abī al-Qāṣim, is now at the Topkapı Sarayı Library (Y742) (Plate XVI).[27] The calligrapher mentions after his name that he was born in Baghdad.[28] While only one folio reproduction is available, a few observations can still be noted that point to a visual repertoire closer to Qur'ans produced in western Iran or Iraq than to those in Khurasan. The tripartite sura heading, for example, is seen earlier in al-Kātib al-Iṣfahānī's Qur'an and in the Hamadhān Qur'an (Plate XIII and Figure 7.3, respectively). The fifth-verse marker is a teardrop shape outlined with thin line decoration (Table 8.2), comparable to that in the Hamadhān Qur'an (Table 7.2). Finally, the tenth-verse marker is a medallion with a frame of small petals that is similar, again, to the one found in the Hamadhān Qur'an.

The script in TKS Y742 is distinct, but it still relates to the type of RS-*muḥaqqaq* employed in Qur'ans ascribed to western Iran or Iraq. For example, the form of *alif* without a turn at the bottom is generally used in Qur'ans from Iraq and western Iran. In addition, rigid tails of *wāw*, and the endings of *dāl* and *lām*, recall the script of the Hamadhān Qur'an, appearing in general closer to Nūr al-Dīn's Qur'an than to the Khurasani scripts. The script employed here has some *naskh* characteristics, specifically in the form of *alif* that appears without a serif at the top, and in the bowls of letters, which in many instances, appear deep rather than shallow. The script also maintains an overall compactness with minimal diagonality. Thus, the illumination and script employed in TKS Y742 display more resemblances to Qur'ans from western Iran and Iraq than to those from Khurasan.

[27] Folios from this Qur'an are published in Derman, *Fann al-khaṭṭ*, 180; and Mansour, *Sacred Script*, 43. Derman notes that in the colophon, which is unavailable to me at present, the copyist mentions that he was 80 years old when he copied this Qur'an. Derman, *Fann al-khaṭṭ*, 120.
[28] Derman, *Fann al-khaṭṭ*, 120.

The Qur'an of al-Jabalī, named after its illuminator, exhibits a visual language loosely related to that of the Khurasani Qur'ans, although it also presents several key differences. It is now at the Chester Beatty Library (Is. 1439). According to its colophon, inscribed in the top and bottom bands of the last double-page spread with Qur'anic text, it was copied by Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Jabalī al-...r...ī (al-Marvazī? – the name is unclear) and illuminated by ʿAbd al-Rāḥmān al-Ṣūfī (Plate XVII).[29] It is an undated Qur'an of 368 folios that can be ascribed to the 6th/12th century, on the basis of its script and illumination. Like the Qur'an of al-Kātib al-Malikī, this manuscript is large, measuring 39 x 33 cm, and is lavishly decorated, indicating a wealthy patron probably with courtly affiliations. The background of the bands where the names of the illuminator and copyist are inscribed in NS is decorated with scrolls of stylised *fleur de lys* with extended, twisted tips. This design is closely related to the scrolls in the background of the frontispiece in the Qur'an of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī, dated 573/1177 (Figure 8.19).

Figure 8.19: Top: Ground decoration of the colophon text in al-Jabalī's Qur'an, 6th/12th century; Bottom: Ground decoration of the frontispiece in Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī's Qur'an, Khurasan, 573/1177.

[29] James notes the names of the calligrapher and illuminator of the Qur'an. James, *Qur'āns of the Mamlūks*, 26. Unfortunately, the right-hand page of the colophon spread is not available at present. Folios from this Qur'an are published in Arberry, *The Koran Illuminated* (plates 2 and 31); and Canby et al., *Court and Cosmos*, 284 (no. 184).

The frontispiece of this Qur'an includes 48 circles in which the components of the Qur'an are enumerated, inscribed in NS on alternating grounds of blue and red and decorated with scrolls of stylised *fleur de lys* of extended, twisted tips (Plate XVIII). The circles sit on a ground decorated with gold scrolls and framed by a gilded lattice that generates blue forms, typical of the frames found in the Khurasani Qur'ans, specifically in that of Abū Bakr al-Ghaznawī (Plate III, Chapter V).[30] The vignette linked to this frontispiece is composed of gold palmettes on a blue ground, and is based on the type-6 design that appears in previous centuries, except without palmettes at the base. The overall configuration of this folio is not employed in Khurasani Qur'ans, but some of its elements belong to the visual repertoire of Greater Iran.

This blending of old and new motifs is also observed in the sura titles, which are inscribed in NS in bands decorated with gold scrolls of tulip-like designs, lotus flowers and *fleur de lys* on blue or red grounds (Figure 8.20). Although this specific design is not seen in Qur'ans studied in this thesis, the NS and *fleurs de lys* are elements common to the Khurasani visual repertoire. The vignettes linked to these bands are made of organic scrolls, at the centre of which is a circle inscribed with the sura's place of revelation and decorated with *fleurs de lys* with long, extended and twisted tips. This vignette design is closely related to those projecting from the illuminated bands of the last double-page spread with Qur'anic text in Khalili QUR284, which also feature a circle at the centre inscribed with the sura's place of revelation (Figure 8.21). As such, both Qur'ans include illuminations that appear rooted in older centuries, but that also feature new and mature characteristics. Lastly, a simple gold rosette marks every verse in al-Jabalī's Qur'an, while a teardrop-shaped device marks every fifth verse – attributes also encountered in the Qur'ans discussed in this chapter (Table 8.2).

The script employed in al-Jabalī's Qur'an has mature *naskh* features, and resembles the script employed in Khalili QUR284. Both include more mature characteristics than those employed in the group of four Qur'ans copied in the first half of the 5th/11th century, evident in the curvilinear bowls of letters and the vertical form of *alif* with *tarwīs* at the top. In addition, the script in al-Jabalī's Qur'an is more stylised than the *naskh* used in the Hamdhān Qur'an. These more mature *naskh* elements include independent *alif* with a *tarwīs* at the top; final *alif* that no longer has a thin stroke dropped below the baseline, as inherited from the non-Qur'anic bookhands; and

[30] For example, see the frame in the frontispiece of TKS EH42 (Plate III, Chapter V).

bowls of letters that are consistently curvilinear with thin endings, such as in *nūn*. Thus the script in this Qur'an places it in the 5th/12th century. In addition, even though this Qur'an contains some resemblances to Qur'ans from Khurasan, its distinct visual language points to a local Qur'anic aesthetic that is probably related to the region of western Iran or Iraq. The size of the manuscript its opulent sura headings, and the quality of its script and illumination point that the Qur'an was an expensive commission.

Figure 8.20: Sura banners in al-Jabalī's Qur'an, 6th/12th century.

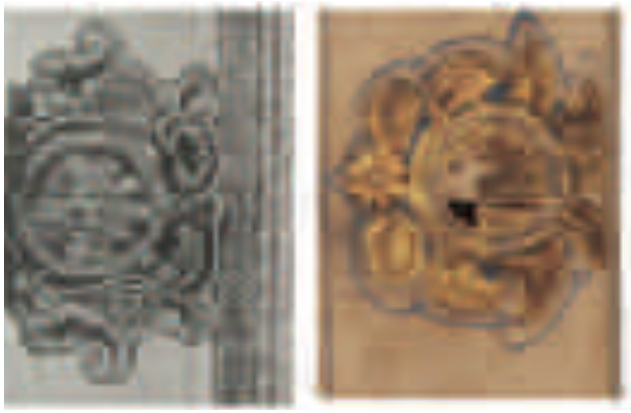

Figure 8.21: Left: Vignette linked to the colophon panel of al-Jabalī's Qur'an, 6th/12th century; Right: Vignette linked to an illuminated sura banner in Khalili QUR284, 5th/11th– 6th/12th century.

The Golden Qur'an

As its name suggests, the Golden Qur'an was copied on gilded paper in black RS-*naskh* on 184 folios (Plates XIX-XXI). It is now in the Bavarian State Library in Munich, Cod. Arab. 1112. While the library attributes it to 5th/11th century Iraq or Iran, earlier catalogue entries ascribe it to somewhere between the 6th/12th-8th/14th centuries, and a recently published study by Ritter and Ben Azzouna on this long ignored Qur'an attributes it to the Jazira between the late 6th/12th century and early 7th/13th century.[31] However, inaccessibility to this recent study and the original manuscript restricted my analysis of this Qur'an.[32] Nevertheless, from the available reproductions, it is noticeable that only few elements in its illumination resemble the visual repertoire in Khurasani Qur'ans, while others point to a different aesthetic, closer to Qur'ans from Iran, Iraq, the Jazira and Syria.

First, the sura headings are copied in both RS and Kufic in bands decorated with various floral scrolls, among which are *fleur de lys* with pointed tips seen in the Khurasani Qur'ans but also in Qur'ans from Iraq and western Iran (Plates XX and XXI). Some of these sura heading designs are similar to those in the Hamadhān Qur'an (Figure 7.3) in that two squares flank the sura title. Moreover, the frontispiece is made of interlaced lines forming octagons and other geometric shapes, inscribed with NS and decorated with stylised flowers – a configuration neither seen in Khurasani Qur'ans nor in those copied in Iran, Iraq or Syria (Plate XIX). Finally, small rosettes mark the end of each verse and a marginal teardrop marks every tenth-verse (Table 8.2). The latter has a polylobed blue contour, a common feature of the Khurasani Qur'anic aesthetic. It alternates with a marginal medallion inscribed with *khamsa* (five), and is of a similar type to the tenth-verse markers in both al-Bayhaqī's Qur'an and Khalili QUR284.

The script of the Golden Qur'an is mature and stylised, as seen, for example, in the bowls of letters that end with an upward curve, as opposed to earlier RS in which they end with a horizontal stroke. Additional features characteristic of mature RS include curvilinear ligatures, independent *alif* with *tarwīs* at the top and final *alif* that has no vertical stroke and does not drop below the baseline. Overall, the script shares resemblances on the one hand to the script of

[31] Ritter and Ben Azzouna, *Der Goldkoran*, 125–26.
[32] The manuscript was studied by Ritter and Ben Azzouna. Only a small part of it was available to me at the time of this research. Unfortunately, the book was not available in any UK library.

Khalili QUR284 copied in RS-*naskh*, and on the other, to that of al-Kātib al-Malikī's Qur'an copied in RS-*muḥaqqaq* in 582/1186. In regard to the former (Plate IX, Chapter II), it shares certain *naskh* features, such as the tail of *wāw* that sometimes ends with an upward curve. For the latter (Plate VIII), it shares some *muḥaqqaq* features, such as the shallowness of letter bowls with their horizontal extension as well as the shape of independent *dāl*/*dhāl*, in which the lower stroke is lifted up in a diagonal direction. Thus, the script employed in the Golden Qur'an further indicates the 6th/12th century as its production date, in between early and later mature RS traditions.

This Qur'an was undoubtedly an expensive undertaking, and Ritter and Ben Azzouna propose that it could have been commissioned by one of the Atabeg rulers.[33] The provenance of the manuscript cannot be confirmed from available reproductions. Some features appear to be inherited from older traditions, while others link the Qur'an to Central Islamci lands , suggesting that Ritter and Ben Azzouna's attribution to the Jazira is indeed probable, as one of the schools that shares a number of characteristics with other local aesthetic schools.

[33] Ritter and Ben Azzouna, *Der Goldkoran*, 178.

Conclusion

These last two chapters showed that the visual language employed in Qur'ans copied in Iran, Iraq, the Jazira and Syria in the 6th/12th century was distant from those copied in Khurasan and Transoxiana even though they shared a number of elements. Additional Qur'ans were added to this group since they shared a number of elements with them, appeared more distant from east Iranian manuscript traditions and closer to the visual repertoires that developed in the Central Islamic lands. Nevertheless, the illumination in Qur'ans attributed to the Central Islamic lands is hybrid with no clear aesthetic division between the Iranian and the Iraqi manners. On the other hand, some repetitive motifs in these Qur'ans point to local aesthetic preferences. This fluidity of aesthetic between Iran and Iraq may be traced back to the Qur'an of Ibn al-Bawwāb in which many decorative elements were found in later Qur'ans from western Iran and Khurasan. These artistic overlaps are the result of the movement of craftsmen and the circulation of manuscripts, in a continuous manner between the eastern and western parts of the Mashriq. Here, the possibility of an earlier aesthetic diffusion starting in the 4th/10th century, outwards from cities such as Cairo or Baghdad, should be considered.

Finally, unlike the group of Ghaznavid and Ghurid Qur'ans, the surviving Qur'ans under Seljuq rule are stylistically more heterogeneous. This may be due to the nature of artistic patronage of the central Ghaznavid and Ghurid courts, as opposed to the Seljuq patronage.

Conclusion

In this thesis I have identified local styles of Qur'anic script and illumination in the Mashriq between the 4th/10th and 6th/12th century. The group of Qur'ans copied in Nishapur in the first half of the 5th/11th century presented us with a local trend of Qur'an production that proved to be linked to Qur'ans produced in Baghdad and Cairo at the turn of the century. Similarly, the Ghaznavid and Ghurid Qur'ans copied in the second half of the 5th/11th century shared a number of characteristics in their script and illumination. This group also represented a local trend of Qur'anic production and allowed us to question the extent to which they belonged to a larger Khurasani aesthetic given that a number of Qur'ans exhibited similarities with it. Qur'ans produced in Khurasan employ features in their script and illumination that were part of a larger visual language articulated in various artistic productions from Greater Iran emphasising the mobility of motifs and their translation across media. Furthermore, Qur'ans produced in Iran, Iraq, Syria and the Jazira in the 6th/12th century presented us with a number of local trends in Qur'an production that were separate from the Khurasani Qur'ans even though they shared some motifs with it confirming further the fluidity of motifs across the Mashriq. Hence, Qur'ans of the Ghaznavids, Seljuqs, Khwārazm-Shāhs, Qarakhanids, Ghurids, Abbasid, Ayyubid and Zengid were aesthetically related but to different degrees, forming at points local aesthetic trends that often resonate on other artistic medium.

The transformations in Qur'anic aesthetic between the 4th/10th and 6th/12th centuries were undoubtedly linked to the introduction of paper, which revolutionised manuscript production and precipitated a boom in literary culture at the turn of the 4th/10th century.[1] However, these transformations were not only aesthetic or technical. As we saw in the second part of this thesis, the Ghaznavid Qur'ans must have played a role in conveying a dynastic image of the Ghaznavids by reflecting the lavishly decorated context in which the manuscripts were commissioned.

Furthermore, three additional aspects appear to add layers of meaning to Qur'anic manuscripts, providing the basis for future avenues of research. The first is related to the use of the

[1] On this subject see Toorawa, *Ibn Abī Ṭāhir Ṭayfūr*.

manuscript as more than just a copy of the sacred text but also an instrument for studying the Qur'an. For example, the marginal illuminated devices that divide the text offer the reader a structured daily or yearly reading plan. Another example is the interlinear Persian translation, specifically seen in the Qur'ans of Sultan Ibrāhīm and Sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn, which indicates that the manuscript was used to study the Qur'an. Variant readings and other comments are noted in the margins of Sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn's Qur'an, further pointing to a reliance on the actual manuscript for study of the Qur'an. The second aspect pertains to the role of Qur'anic manuscripts in propagating theological and philosophical ideas. As we have seen in the scond part of this thesis, the Qur'an became a platform on which inter-religious debates were visible – whether through the inclusion in the illumination of a statement on the createdness of the Qur'an, or the choice of a specific interlinear *tafsīr*. Lastly, the third aspect is related to the manuscript's role as an object beyond its role in supporting recitation. For example, the miniature Qur'an BL Or. 13312 was without doubt perceived as an amulet, especially because it has a text at its beginning that is of talismanic nature.

These aspects point to a physical dimension of the Qur'an, reaching beyond its recited text. Walid Saleh discusses this dimension in relation to another Qur'an manuscript at the British Library, Or. 13002, dated 402/1011.[2] *Fadāʾil al-sūwar*, which are part of *Faḍāʾil al-qurʾān* – a genre of Hadīth literature that developed in the 3rd/9th century and offers juridical and theological opinions concerning the Qur'an as a physical object and oral text – appear at the beginning of each sura in this Qur'an.[3] These passages cite the benefits gained by reading a specific sura, including rewards, such as good health, and equate the reading of chapter 96 to the reading of the whole Qur'an.[4] As Saleh argues, the appearance of this type of non-Qur'anic text in the Qur'an points to its value as a physical object. The text of *faḍāʾil al-suwar* is similarly seen on the dispersed folios of a Qur'an examined in chapter VI, now at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and ascribed to 5th/11th – or 6th/12th – century Khurasan or Transoxiana.

In addition to *Fadāʾil al-sūwar, Faḍāʾil al-qur'an* highlights another aspect of the Qur'an that can be related to its physical dimension, namely its supernatural power.[5] It is evidence that the

[2] See Chapter II.
[3] *Faḍāʾil al-qurʾān* was authored by Abū ʿUbayd b. Sallām (d. 224/838). Saleh, 'Word', 359-360.
[4] Ibid., 364–65.
[5] Ibid., 367–68.

relation of the Qur'an to magical powers, as for example, reciting specific verses for curing illnesses, was already a debated subject in the 3rd/9th century. Moreover, in *al-Muṣannaf*, Ibn Abī Shayba (d. 235/849) lists juridical debates on the talismanic use of the Qur'an, and includes the story of Mughīra b. al-Miqsam al-Ḍabbī (d. c. 136/753) who attached an amulet with a Qur'anic verse to his forearm whenever he had a fever.[6] These debates and anecdotes suggest that the link between the Qur'an and amulets had emerged earlier than the 5th/11th century. However, the earliest Qur'an we know to be copied in such a small size and with talismanic text at its beginning is BL Or. 13312 copied at the turn of the 5th/11th century, most likely in Nishapur.

In addition to the inclusion of *faḍāʾil al-suwar* in one manuscript and the use of the Qur'an as an amulet, the physical dimension of the Qur'an appears in another ritualistic aspect, namely the debate on ritual purity (*ṭahāra*) and the question of Muslims in a state of impurity handling the Qur'an.[7] Such debates developed within the early traditions of Islamic jurisprudence, as Travis Zadeh argues, and are reflected in a number of Qur'ans discussed in this research, intertwined within the illumination, such as Q.56: 77-80: *innahu la-qurʾān karīm, fī kitāb maknūn, lā yamassuhu illā al-muṭahharūn, tanzīl min rabb al-ʿālamīn* (This is a glorious Qur'an, in a book well-sheltered, That only the pure can touch; A revelation from the Lord of the Worlds). The physicality of the codex had thus already been perceived as early as the 2nd/8th century, but it is not until the 4th/10th century that this physical dimension became visible in the Qur'an.[8] This prompts the question: what changes can be noted in the 4th/10th century that allowed such aspects to appear in Qur'anic manuscripts? The answer most likely lies in the transformations that happened in the environment of Qur'anic production, namely the introduction of paper which made the Qur'an manuscript available to a larger number of people, allowing it to reflect the different environments in which it was used.

---

[6] Mentioned in Abū ʿUbayda and in Ibn abī Shayba's Kitāb al-ṭibb. Cited in Zadeh, 'Touching and Ingesting', 465.

[7] Other examples that indicate the physical dimension of the Qur'an and were disputed pertain to the written transmission of the Qur'an, the sale of Qur'anic codices, the perfuming of the codices and the use of the Qur'an in mosques. Zadeh, 'Touching and Ingesting', 445 and 448.

[8] Zadeh mentions anecdotes from various sources that support this argument, such as *Kitāb al-maghāzī wa'l-mubtadaʾ* of Ibn Isḥāq (d. c. 150/767). Zadeh relies on many references for the discussion on the materiality of the Qur'an, among which are: Faḍāʾil al-qurʾān of Abū ʿUbayd; *Kitāb al-maṣāḥif* of Ibn abī Dāwūd; and the *Muṣannaf* collection of juridical traditions of the companions, the successors (*tābiʿūn*) and early scholars by ʿAbd al-Razzāq (d. 211/827) and Ibn Abī Shayba (d. 235/849).

Lastly, a concluding parenthesis on the use of the Qur'an as an amulet may set a basis for future studies. Three different elements appear in the illumination of several Qur'ans discussed in this thesis that indicate influence from the visual repertoire of amulets: the "Seal of Solomon"; *al-mulku li'llāh,* and its shortened version *li'llāh;* and the 99 names of God (*asmā' allāh al-ḥusnā*). As noted, these elements were used on amulets of the same period, which witnessed the development of the imagery of magic in Muslim cultures. Emilie Savage-Smith discusses how the iconography of magic developed in the 5th/11th century from the older repertoire based on visuals such as scorpions and pseudo-writing, to the newly developed talismanic designs such as the "Seal of Solomon".[9] Solomon also appears in Jewish magical texts, and was perceived in Islamic culture as a figure with magical powers in addition to being a prophet and king. "Solomon's seal" appears on paper amulets from the period, like the one attributed to Fatimid Egypt, now at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.[10] Similarly, *al-mulku li'llāh* appears on amulet paper scrolls and on seals with stones believed to have amuletic functions.[11] As for the 99 names of God, they too appeared on amuletic objects and are generally inscribed on talismans.[12]

The use of the 99 names of God, "Solomon's seal" and *al-mulku li'llāh* in the decoration of both Qur'ans and amulets indicate a functional proximity between the two objects, a subject that needs further research. By shedding light on the role of the Qur'anic manuscript in ritualistic practices, as well as its use in studying and as a tool to promote specific beliefs, we position the Qur'an as part of the context in which it was used and as part of the many ways in which it was perceived. This highlights the importance of the Qur'an not only as the Holy text in Muslim communities, but also as an object with different symbolic meanings that people constantly shaped and reshaped.

---

[9] Savage-Smith, *Magic and Divination in Early Islam*, 23. It is sometimes marked as a five-pointed star. See also Porter, 'Islamic Seals', 146. It is believed that the seven seals represent the seals of the prophets, and that they are linked to the seven planets and seven days and when put together, form the name or "Seal of the Almighty". For more details, see Canaan, 'The Decipherment of Arabic Talismans', 169–70.
[10] Acc. no. 1978.546.32. Solomon's Seal appears on a number of amulets. See Graham, 'The Seven Seals of Judeo Islamic Magic'.
[11] Porter, 'Islamic Seals: Magical or Practical?', 180.
[12] For the 99 names of God on objects, see Schaefer, *Enigmatic Charms*, 50. For a discussion on the presence of the 99 names of God on talismans, see Canaan, 'The Decipherment of Arabic Talismans', 133. For a discussion on the amulet at the British museum, see Porter, 'Amulets Inscribed with the Names of the "Seven Sleepers" of Ephesus', 128. Three of the names of God – *ḥayy* (ever-living), *qayyūm* (eternal) and *ḥakam* (judge) – are engraved on one side with the *basmala*.

Bibliography

Abbott, Nabia. ‘Arabic paleography’. *Ars Islamica* 8 (1941): 65–104.

———. ‘The Contribution of Ibn Muklah to the North-Arabic Script’. *The American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures* 56, no. 1 (1939): 70–83.

Allan, James W. *Nishapur: Metalwork of the Early Islamic Period*. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1982.

———. ‘Silver: The Key to Bronze in Early Islamic Iran’. *Kunst Des Orients* 11, no. 1/2 (1976): 5–21.

———. ‘The Survival of Base Metal Objects from the Medieval Islamic World’. In *Pots & Pans: A Colloquium on Precious Metals and Ceramics in the Muslim, Chinese and Graeco-Roman Worlds, Oxford 1985*, edited by Michael J. Vickers, 57–70. Oxford Studies in Islamic Art 3. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986.

———. ‘The Transmission of Decorated Wooden Ceilings in the Early Islamic World’. In *Learning, Language and Invention: Essays Presented to Francis Maddison*, edited by Willem Dirk Hackmann and Anthony John Turner, 1–31. Aldershot and Paris: Société Internationale de l’Astrolabe, 1994.

Allegranzi, Viola. ‘The Use of Persian in Monumental Epigraphy from Ghazni (Eleventh-Twelfth Centuries)’. *Eurasian Studies* 13, no. 1–2 (2015): 23–41.

Allen, Terry. *Five Essays on Islamic Art*. Sebastopol: Solipsist Press, 1988.

———. ‘Notes on Bust’. *Iran* 26 (1988): 55–68.

———. ‘Notes on Bust (Continued)’. *Iran* 27 (1989): 57–66.

———. ‘Notes on Bust (Continued)’. *Iran* 28 (1990): 23–30.

Arberry, Arthur. J. *The Koran Illuminated: A Handlist of the Korans in the Chester Beatty Library*. Dublin: Hodges, Figgis, 1967.

Arnold, Thomas Walker. *Painting in Islam: A Study of the Place of Pictorial Art in Muslim Culture*. New York: Dover, 1965.

ʿAsākir, Khalīl M. ‘Risāla fi al-kitāba al-mansūba’. *Majallat Ma’had Al-Makhṭuṭat al-’Arabiyah* 1 (1955): 121–27.

Atil, Esin. *Islamic Art and Patronage: Treasures from Kuwait*. New York: Rizzoli, 1990.

———. W. T. Chase and Paul Jett. *Islamic Metalwork in the Freer Gallery of Art*. Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1985.

Atiya, Aziz Suryal. *The Arabic Manuscripts of Mount Sinai: A Hand-List of the Arabic Manuscripts and Scrolls Microfilmed at the Library of the Monastery of St. Catherine, Mount Sinai*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1955.

Baer, Eva. *Metalwork in Medieval Islamic Art*. New York: State University of New York Press, 1983.

Bahrami, Mehdi. *Iranian Art: Treasures from the Imperial Collections and Museums of Iran*. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1949.

Baker, Colin F. *Qur'an Manuscripts: Calligraphy, Illumination and Design*. London: British Library, 2007.

Bearman, P., Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel and W.P. Heinrichs, eds. *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Second Edition. Brill Online, http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/browse/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2.

Beyhaqi, Abu'l-Faẓl. *Introduction and Translation of Years 421–423 A.H. (1030–1032 A.D.).* Vol. 1 of *The History of Beyhaqi: The History of Sultan Mas'ud of Ghazna, 1030–1041.* Translated by Clifford Edmund Bosworth. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011.

Blair, Sheila. *Islamic Calligraphy*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006.

———. 'Surveyor versus Epigrapher'. *Muqarnas* 8 (1991): 66–73.

———. 'The Madrasa at Zuzan: Islamic Architecture in Eastern Iran on the Eve of the Mongol Invasions'. *Muqarnas* 3 (1985): 75–91.

———. *The Monumental Inscriptions from Early Islamic Iran*. Vol. 5. Studies in Islamic Art and Architecture. Leiden: Brill, 1992.

———. 'Transcribing God's Word: Qur'an Codices in Context'. *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 10, no. 1 (2008): 72–97.

Blair, Sheila, Jonathan Bloom and Anne Wardwell. 'Reevaluating the Date of the 'Buyid' Silks by Epigraphic and Radiocarbon Analysis'. *Ars Orientalis* 22 (1992): 1–41.

Bloom, Jonathan. *Arts of the City Victorious: Islamic Art and Architecture in Fatimid North Africa and Egypt*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007.

———. *Paper Before Print: The History and Impact of Paper in the Islamic World*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001.

———. 'The early Fatimid Blue Koran manuscript'. *Graeco-Arabica* no. 4 (1991): 171–8.

———. ‘The Expression of Power in the Art and Architecture of Early Islamic Iran’. In *Early Islamic Iran*, edited by Edmund Herzig and Sarah Stewart, 102-119. London: IB Tauris, 2012

Bolshakov, Oleg. ‘Arabskie nadpisi na polivnoĭ keramike Sredneĭ Aziĭ IX-XII vv’ (Arabic inscriptions on glazed ceramics from Central Asia IX-XII centuries). *Epigrafika Vostoka* 12 (1958): 23-38.

Bombaci, Alessio. ‘Summary Report on the Italian Archaeological Mission in Afghanistan. Introduction to the Excavations at Ghazni’. *East and West* 10, no. 1/2 (1959): 3–22.

———. *The Kūfic Inscription in Persian Verses in the Court of the Royal Palace of Mas’ūd III at Ghazni*. Reports and Memoirs 5. Rome: Instituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente / Centro Studi e Scavi Archeologici in Asia, 1966.

Bongianino, Umberto. ‘Le manuscript X 56 *sup. (Kitāb Sībawayh)* de la Bibliothèque Ambrosienne et les écritures de l’Occident arabe avant la diffusion du magribī arroundie’, 5-25. *Paléographie des écritures arabes d’al-Andalus, du Maghreb et de l’Afrique susaharienne.* Les Rencontres du Centre Jacques Berque, no. 6, Rabat, 2015.

———. *The Origin and Development of Maghribī Round Scripts*, PhD thesis, The University of Oxford, 2017.

Bora, Fozia. ‘Did Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Destroy the Fatimids’ Books? An Historiographical Enquiry’. *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 25, no. 1 (2015): 21–39.

Bosworth, Clifford Edmund. ‘Recent Contributions to the History of the Early Ghaznavids and Seljuqs’. In *Ferdowsi, the Mongols and the History of Iran. Art, Literature and Culture from Early Islam to Qajar Persia*, edited by Robert Hillenbrand, A.C.S. Peacock, and Firuza Abdullaeva, 46–51. London: I. B. Tauris, 2013.

———. ‘The Development of Persian Culture under the Early Ghaznavids’. *Iran* 6 (1968): 33.

———. ‘The Early Islamic History of Ghūr’. *Central Asiatic Journal* 6, no. 2 (1961): 116–33.

———. *The Ghaznavids: Their Empire in Afghanistan and Eastern Iran, 994-1040*. Edinburgh University Publications: History, Philosophy & Economics 17. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1963.

———. *The Later Ghaznavids: Splendour and Decay. The Dynasty in Afghanistan and Northern India, 1040-1186*. Persian Studies Series 7. Edinburgh: University Press, 1977.

———. *The New Islamic Dynasties: A Chronological and Genealogical Manual*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1996.

———. *The Ornament of Histories: A History of the Eastern Islamic Lands AD 650-1041. The Persian Text of Abu Sa'id 'Abd Al-Hayy Gardizi*. London: I.B.Tauris, 2011.

———. 'The Rise of the Karāmiyyah in Khurasan'. *The Muslim World* 50, no. 1 (1960): 5–14.

Bulliet, Richard W. 'Local Politics in Eastern Iran under the Ghaznavids and Seljuks'. *Iranian Studies* 11, no. 1/4 (1978): 35–56.

———. *The Patricians of Nishapur: A Study in Medieval Islamic Social History*. Harvard Middle Eastern Studies 16. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972.

Canaan, Tewfik. 'The Decipherment of Arabic Talismans'. In *Magic and Divination in Early Islam*, edited by Emilie Savage-Smith, 125-177. Formation of the Classical Islamic World 42. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004.

Canby, Sheila, Deniz Beyazit, Martina Rugiadi, and A. C. S. Peacock. *Court and Cosmos: The Great Age of the Seljuqs*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2016.

Carter, Michael G. 'The Kātib in Fact and Fiction'. *Abr-Nahrain* 11 (1971): 42–55.

Melikian-Chirvani, Assadullah Souren. 'Eastern Iranian Architecture: Apropos of the Ghūrid Parts of the Great Mosque of Harāt'. *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London* 33, no. 2 (1970): 322–27.

———. *Islamic metalwork from the Iranian World 8th-18th Centuries*. London: Victoria & Albert Museum, 1982.

———. 'La plus ancienne mosquée de Balkh'. Arts Asiatiques 20 (1969): 3-19.

———. 'Silver in Islamic Iran: The Evidence from Literature and Epigraphy'. In *Pots & Pans: A Colloquium on Precious Metals and Ceramics in the Muslim, Chinese and Graeco-Roman Worlds, Oxford 1985*, edited by Michael J. Vickers, 89–106. Oxford Studies in Islamic Art 3. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986.

Contadini, Anna. *Fatimid Art at the Victoria and Albert Museum*. London: Victoria & Albert Museum, 1998.

Daftary, Farhad. *Ismailis in Medieval Muslim Societies: A Historical Introduction to an Islamic Community*. London: I.B.Tauris, 2005.

Daftary, Farhad and Wilferd Madelung, *Encyclopaedia Islamica 3*. Leiden: Brill, 2011.

Darkevich, V. P. *Khudozhestvennyi metall vostoka VIII-XIII vv. Proizvedeniia vostochnoi torevtiki na territorii evropeiskoi chasti SSSR i Zaural'ia*. Moscow: Nauka, 1976.

Derman, Uğur. *Fann al-khaṭṭ: tārīkhuh wa-namādhij min rawā'i'ih 'alā marr al 'uṣūr.* Translated by Ṣāliḥ Sa'dāwī. Istanbul: IRCICA, 1990.

———. ‘A Remarkable Collection of *Mashq*’. In *Art turc: 10eme Congrès international d’art turc,* edited by François Déroche et al, 251-259. Geneva: Fondation Max Van Berchem, 1999.

Déroche, François. *The Abbasid Tradition: Qur’ans of the 8th to 10th Centuries AD*. The Nasser D. Khalili Collection of Islamic Art 1. London: Nour Foundation, 1992.

———. ‘Cercles et entrelacs : format et décor des corans maghrébins médiévaux’. *Comptes-rendus des Séances de l’Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* (2001): 593–620.

———. ‘Collections de manuscrits anciens du Coran à Istanbul : Rapport préliminaire’. In *Etudes médiévales et patrimoine turc*, edited by J. Sourdel-Thomine, 145–65. Paris, 1983.

———. ‘Deux fragments coraniques maghrébins anciens au Musée des arts turc et islamique d’Istanbul’. *Revue des Études Islamiques* 59 (1991): 230–33.

———. ‘Les écritures coraniques anciennes : bilan et perspectives’. *Revue des Études Islamiques* 48, no. 2 (1980): 207–24.

———. *Islamic Codicology: An Introduction to the Study of Manuscripts in Arabic Script*. London: Al Furqān Islamic Heritage Foundation, 2005.

———. ‘La paléographie des écritures livresques dans le domaine arabe’. *Gazette du livre médiéval* 28 (1996): 1–8.

———. *Le livre manuscrit arabe : Préludes à une histoire*. Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale de France, 2004.

———. ‘Les manuscrits arabes datés du IIIè/IXè siècle’. *Revue des Études Islamiques* 55–57 (1987-89): 343–79.

———. *Les manuscrits du Coran : Aux origines de la calligraphie coranique.* Catalogue des Manuscrits Arabes : Manuscrits musulmans 2. Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale de France, 1983.

———. ‘Les « pages de titre » des manuscrits coraniques’. *Histoire et Civilisation du Livre : Revue Internationale* 6 (2010): 43–64.

———. ‘The Qurʾan of Amājūr’. *Manuscripts of the Middle East* 5 (1990-91): 59–66.

———. ‘Tradition et innovation dans la pratique de l’écriture au Maghreb pendant les IVe/Xe et Ve/XIe siècles’. In *Numismatique, langues, écritures et arts du livre, spécificité des arts figurés,* edited by S. Lancel, 239–41. Paris: CTHS, 1999.

———. ‘Une reliure du Ve/XIe siècle’. *Nouvelles des Manuscrits du Moyen-Orient* 4, no. 1 (1995): 2–8.

Dodds, Jerrilynn, ed. *Al-Andalus: The Art of Islamic Spain*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1992.

Dutton, Yasin. 'Red Dots, Green Dots, Yellow Dots and Blue: Some Reflections on the Vocalisation of Early Qur'anic Manuscripts (Part II)'. *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 2, no. 1 (2000): 1–24.

Eche, Youssef. *Les bibliothèques arabes publiques et semi-publiques en Mésopotamie, en Syrie et en Égypte au Moyen âge*. Damascus: Institut Français de Damas, 1967.

Erdmann, Kurt. '"Fatimid" Rock Crystals'. *Oriental Art* 3, no. 4 (1951): 142–46.

Ernst J. Grube. *Cobalt and Lustre: The First Centuries of Islamic Pottery*. The Nasser D. Khalili Collection of Islamic Art 9. London: Nour Foundation, 1992.

Ertuğ, Ahmet. *In Pursuit of Excellence: Works of Art from the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Art*. Istanbul: Türk ve Islam Eserleri Müzesi, 1993.

Ettinghausen, Richard. *Arab Painting*. New York: Skira, 1962.

———. 'A Signed and Dated Seljuq Qur'an'. In *Islamic Art and Archaeology Collected Papers*, edited by Myriam Rosen-Ayalon, 510–20. Berlin: G. Mann, 1984.

———. 'Manuscript Illumination'. In *A Survey of Persian Art from Prehistoric Times to the Present*, edited by Arthur Upham Pope. Vol. 5. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964.

———. 'The 'Beveled Style' in the Post-Samarra Period'. *Archaeologica Orientalia in Memoriam Ernst Herzfeld* (1952), 72-83.

———. 'The Flowering of Seljuq Art'. *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 3 (1970): 113–31.

Ettinghausen, Richard, Oleg Grabar, and Marilyn Jenkins-Madina. *Islamic Art and Architecture, 650-1250*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001.

Evans, Helen C., and Brandie Ratliff. *Byzantium and Islam: Age of Transition*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012.

Farhad, Massumeh, and Simon Rettig. *The Art of the Qur'an: Treasures from the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts*. Washington DC: Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, 2016.

Fājālū, Muḥammad al-. *al-Ḥayāt al-ʿilmiyya fī nīsābūr khilāl al-fatra 290/548 - 901/1153*. Mecca: Maʿhad al-Buḥūth al-ʿIlmiyya wa-Iḥyāʾ al-Turāth al-Islāmī – Jāmiʿat Umm al-Qurā, 2010.

Fedorov, Michael. 'The Qysmychi Hoard of Qarakhanid Dirhams (1002-1021)'. *The Numismatic Chronicle* 160 (2000): 171–202.

Fleet, Kate, Gudrun Krämer, Denis Matringe, John Nawas, and Everett Rowson, eds. *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Third Edition. Brill Online, http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/browse/encyclopaedia-of-islam-3.

Flood, Finbarr Barry. 'A Ghaznavid Narrative Relief and the Problem of Pre-Mongol Persian Book Painting'. In *Siculo-Arabic Ivories and Islamic Painting 1100-1300,* edited by David Knipp, 257–72. Munich: Hirmer Verlag, 2011.

———. 'Ghurid Monuments and Muslim Identities: Epigraphy and Exegesis in Twelfth-Century Afghanistan'. *Indian Economic and Social History Review* 42, no. 3 (2005): 263–94.

———. 'Islamic Identities and Islamic Art: Inscribing the Qur'an in Twelfth-Century Afghanistan'. In *Dialogues in Art History, from Mesopotamian to Modern: Readings for a New Century*, edited by Elizabeth Cropper, 91–118. Washington, D. C.: National Gallery of Art, 2009.

———. 'Masons and Mobility: Indic Elements in Twelfth-Century Afghan Stone-Carving'. In *Fifty Years of Research in the Heart of Eurasia*, edited by Anna Filigenzi and Roberta Giunta, 137–60. Rome: Insituto Italiano per l'Africa et Oriente, 2009.

———. *Objects of Translation: Material Culture and Medieval 'Hindu-Muslim' Encounter*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009.

Flury, Samuel. 'Bandeaux Ornementés à Inscriptions Arabes: Amida-Diarbekr, IXe Siècle'. *Syria* 1, no. 3 (1920): 235–49.

———. 'Bandeaux Ornementés à Inscriptions Arabes: Amida-Diarbekr, XIe Siècle'. *Syria* 1, no. 4 (1920): 318–28.

———. 'Bandeaux Ornementés à Inscriptions Arabes: Amida-Diarbekr, XIe Siècle'. *Syria* 2, no. 1 (1921): 54–62.

———. 'B. Ornamental Kufic Inscriptions on Pottery'. In *A Survey of Persian Art from Prehistoric Times to the Present*, edited by Arthur Upham Pope and Phyllis Ackerman, 1743–69. London: Oxford University Press, 1938.

———. 'Le décor épigraphique des monuments de Ghazna'. *Syria* 6 (1925): 61-90.

Folsach, Kjeld von. *Art from the World of Islam in the David Collection*. Copenhagen: The David Collection, 2001.

Fraser, Marcus, and Will Kwiatkowksi. *Ink and Gold: Islamic Calligraphy*. London: Paul Holberton Publishing, 2006.

Frye, Richard N. *Bukhara: The Medieval Achievement*. Centers of Civilization Series. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1965.

Gacek, Adam. 'Arabic Scripts and Their Characteristics as Seen through the Eyes of Mamluk Authors'. *Manuscripts of the Middle East* 4 (1989): 144–49.

———. 'Al-Nuwayri's Classification of Arabic Scripts'. *Manuscripts of the Middle East* 2 (1987): 126–30.

Galdieri, Eugenio. *Isfahān: Masǧid-i ǧumʿa.* 3 Volumes. Rome, 1972.

George, Alain. 'Calligraphy, Colour and Light in the Blue Qur'an'. *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 11, no. 1 (2009): 75–125.

———. 'Coloured Dots and the Question of Regional Origins in Early Qur'ans (Part I)'. *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 17, no. 1 (2015): 1–44.

———. *Manuscripts of the Qur'an and Islamic Devotional Books: The Al-Sabah Collection* (Forthcoming).

———. *The Rise of Islamic Calligraphy*. London: Saqi, 2010.

Ghouchani, ʿAbdallah. *Inscriptions on Nishabur Pottery*. Tehran: Reza Abbasi Museum, 1986.

Giunta, Roberta. 'Islamic Ghazni An IsIAO Archaeological Project in Afghanistan: A Preliminary Report (2004-2005)'. *East and West* 55, no. 1/4 (2005): 473–84.

———. *Les inscriptions funéraires de Gaznī*. Naples: Università di Napoli "L'Orientale" and Fondation Max van Berchem, 2003.

———. 'Some Brief Remarks on a Funerary Stele Located in the Ġaznī Area (Afghanistan)'. *East and West* 51, no. 1/2 (2001): 159–65.

———. 'The Tomb of Muḥammad Al-Harawī (447/1055) at Ġaznī (Afghanistan) and Some New Observations on the Tomb of Maḥmūd the Ġaznavid'. *East and West* 51, no. 1/2 (2001): 109–26.

Giuzalian, L. T. 'The Bronze Qalamdan (Pen-Case) 542/1148 from the Hermitage Collection (1936-1965): To the Memory of My Teacher, Academician I.A. Orbeli'. *Ars Orientalis* 7 (1968): 95–119.

Golčın Maʿānī, Aḥmad, *Rāhnemā-ye ganjina-ye Qorʾān-e Ketāb-ḵāna-ye Āstān-e qods-e raẓawi.* Mashhad: 1968.

———. 'Shāhkārhāyi-i hunarī-i shigift-i angīzī az qarn-i panjum hijri wa-sar ghusht-i ḥayrat āwar-ī', *Hunar wa-mardum* 157 (1354/1975), 45-65.

Grabar, Oleg. *The Great Mosque of Isfahan*. London: Tauris, 1990.

Ḥāʾirī, Sayyid Muḥammad ʿImādī. *Kuhantarīn nuskha-i mutarjam-i qurʾān: taḥlīl-i matn, bar rasī-i dastniwisht, zībāyī-shināsī-i hunar-i qudsī*. Tehran: Mīrāth-i Maktūb, 1389.

———. 'Muqaddima'. In *al-Mujallad al-thāmin min maʿānī kitāb allāh taʿālā wa-tafsīruh al-munīr*, edited by Sayyid Muḥammad ʿImādī Ḥāʾirī, 9–41. Tehran: Kitābkhāna, Mūzih wa-Markaz-i Asnād-i Majlis-i Shūrā-yi Islām, 2011.

Hennequin, Gilles. 'Grandes Monnaies Sāmānides et Ghaznavides de l'Hindū Kush, 331-421 A.H. Etudes Numismatique et Historique'. *Annales Islamologiques* 9 (1970): 127–77.

Herzfeld, Ernst. 'A Bronze Pen-Case'. *Ars Islamica* 3, no. 1 (1936): 35–43.

Herzig, Edmund, and Sarah Stewart, eds. *Early Islamic Iran*. London: IB Tauris, 2012.

Hillenbrand, Robert. 'Content versus Context in Samanid Epigraphic Pottery'. In *Medieval Central Asia and the Persianate World. Iranian Tradition and Islamic Civilisation*, edited by A.C.S. Peacock and D.G. Tor, 56–107. London: I.B.Tauris, 2015.

———. 'Eastern Islamic Influences in Syria: Raqqa and Qalat Jabar in the Later 12th Century'. In *Hillenbrand, Studies in Medieval Islamic Architecture*, 1:190–224, 2001.

———. *Islamic Art and Architecture*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1999.

———. 'Saljūq Monuments in Iran. V. The Imāmzāda Nūr, Gurgān'. *Iran* 25 (1987): 55–76.

———. *Studies in Medieval Islamic Architecture*. London: Pindar Press, 2001.

———. 'The Architecture of the Ghaznavids and Ghurids'. In *The Sultan's Turret: Studies in Persian and Turkish Culture in Honour of Edmund Bosworth*, edited by Carole Hillenbrand, 2:124–206. Leiden: Brill, 2000.

———. 'The Relationship between Book Painting and Luxury Ceramics in 7th/13th Century Iran.' In *The Art of the Saljūqs in Iran and Anatolia: Proceedings of a Symposium Held in Edinburgh in 1982*, edited by Robert Hillenbrand, 76–102. Islamic Art and Architecture 4. Costa Mesa: Mazda, 1994.

———. 'The Scramble for Persian Art: Pope and His Rivals' in Kadoi, *Arthur Upham Pope and A New Survey of Persian Art*. Leiden: Brill, 2016.

———. 'The Islamic Architecture of Persia' in *The Arts of Persia*. Edited by R.W. Ferrier. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989.

Hillenbrand, Robert, and Sylvia Auld. *Ayyubid Jerusalem: The Holy City in Context 1187-1250*. London: Altajir Trust, 2009.

Holberton, Paul. *The Sarikhani Collection: An Introduction.* London: Paul Holberton, 2011.

Houtsma, M. Th., T. W. Arnold, R. Basset, and R. Hartmann, eds. *Encyclopaedia of Islam, First Edition (1913-1936)*. Brill Online, referenceworks.brillonline.com/browse/encyclopaedia-of-islam-1.

Ibn Abī Dāwūd, Abū ʻAbdallāh al-Sijstānī. *Materials for the History of the Text of the Qurʾān: The Old Codices*. *The Kitāb al-maṣāḥif of Ibn Abī Dāwūd*. Edited by Arthur Jeffery. Leiden: Brill, 1937.

Ibn Abī Shayba, ʿAbdallāh b. Muḥammad. *Al-kitāb al-muṣannaf fī al-aḥādīth wa-al-āthār*. Edited by M. Shāhīn. 9 vols. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1995.

Ibn al-Athīr, ʿIzz al-Dīn. *The Annals of the Saljuq Turks: Selections from "al-Kāmil fiʾl-Taʾrīkh of Ibn Al-Athīr"*. Translated by D. S. Richards. London and New York: Routledge, 2002.

Ibn al- Nadīm, Muḥammad b. Isḥāq. *al-Fihrist*. Beirut: Dār al-Masira, 1988.

Ibn Durustawayh, ʻAbdallāh ibn Jaʻfar. *Kitāb al-kuttāb*. Edited by Ibrāhīm Sāmarrāʾī and ʻAbd al-Ḥusayn Fatlī. Kuwait: Dār al-Kutub waʾl-Thaqāfa, 1977.

Ibn Khaldūn. *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*. 2nd ed. Bollingen Series 43. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967.

Ibn Khallikān, Aḥmad ibn Muḥṣammad. *Wafayāt al-aʿyān*. Edited by Ihsan Abbas. Vol. 3. Beirut: Dār Ṣāḍir, 1970.

Idrīs ʻImād al Din. ''ʿUyūn al-akhbār'. In *The Fatimids and Their Successors in Yaman: The History of an Islamic Community*, edited by Ayman Fuʾād Sayyid. Vol. 7. London: I.B. Tauris, 2002.

Jabbūrī, Maḥmūd al-. *al-Madrasa al-baghdādiyya fī al-khaṭṭ al-ʿarabī*. Vol. l. Baghdad: Bayt al-Ḥikma, 2001.

James, David. 'The Commentaries of Ibn Al-Baṣīṣ and Ibn Al-Waḥīd on Ibn Al-Bawwāb's "Ode on the Art of calligraphy" (rāʻiyyah fī al-khaṭṭ)'. In *Back to the Sources: Biblical and Near Eastern Studies in Honour of Dermot Ryan*, edited by Kevin J. Cathcart and John F. Healey, 164-91. Sandycove: Glendale Press, 1989.

———. *The Master Scribes: Qur'ans of the 10th to 14th Centuries AD.* Vol. 7l. The Nasser D. Khalili Collection of Islamic Art 2. London: Nour Foundation, 1992.

———. *Qur'ans and Bindings from the Chester Beatty Library: A Facsimile Exhibition*. London: World of Islam Festival Trust, 1980.

———. ‘Qur’ans and Calligraphers of the Ayyubids and Zangids’. In *Ayyubid Jerusalem: The Holy City in Context 1187-1250*, edited by Robert Hillenbrand and Sylvia Auld, 28–32. London: Altajir Trust, 2009.

———. *Qur’āns of the Mamlūks*. London: Alexandria Press in association with Thames and Hudson, 1988.

Jenkins, Marilyn. *Raqqa Revisited: Ceramics of Ayyubid Syria*. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2006.

Jones, Dalu, and George Mitchell. *The Arts of Islam. Exhibition Catalogue Hayward Gallery*. London: Arts Council of Great Britain, 1976.

Karame, Alya, and Travis Zadeh. ‘The Art of Translation: An Early Persian Commentary of the Qurʾān’. *Journal of Abbasid Studies* 2, no. 2 (2015): 119–95.

Karatay, Fehmi Edhem. *Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi Arapça Yazmalar Kataloğu*. Vol. 1. Istanbul: Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi, 1962.

Karev, Yury. ‘Qarakhanid Wall Paintings in the Citadel of Samarqand: First Report and Preliminary Observations’. *Muqarnas* 22 (2005): 45–84.

Khayrallah, Saʿīd. *Warrāqū baghdād fī al-ʿaṣr al-ʿabbāsī*. Markaz al-Malik Fayṣal li’l-Buḥūth wa’l-Dirāsāt al-Islāmiyya. Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 1421/2000.

Kister, Meir J. ‘Lā yamassuhu illā’l-muṭahharūn: Notes on the Interpretation of a Quranic Phrase.’ *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 34 (2008): 309–34.

Kühnel, Ernst. *Islamische Schriftkunst*. Graz: Akademische Druck-u. Verlagsantalt, 1972.

———. ‘Die Kunst Persiens Unter Den Buyiden’. *Zeitschrift Der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 106 (n.F. 31), no. 1 (1956): 78–92.

Lazard, Gilbert. ‘The Rise of the New Persian Language’. In *The Cambridge History of Iran*, edited by Richard N. Frye, 595–632. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975.

Lewis, Agnes Smith. *Forty-One Facsimiles of Dated Christian Arabic Manuscripts: With Text and English Translation*. Studia Sinaitica 12. Cambridge: Cambridge: University Press, 1907.

Lings, Martin. *Splendours of Qur’an Calligraphy & Illumination*. Liechtenstein: Thesaurus Islamicus Foundation, 2005.

Lings, Martin, and Yasin Hamid Safadi. *The Qur’ān: A British Library Exhibition*. London: World of Islam Publishing for the British Library, 1976.

Malamud, Margaret. ‘The Politics of Heresy in Medieval Khurasan: The Karramiyya in Nishapur’. *Iranian Studies* 27, no. 1 (1994): 37–51.

Mansour, Nassar. *Sacred Script: Muhaqqaq in Islamic Calligraphy*. London: I. B. Tauris, 2011.

Maricq, Andre and Gaston Wiet, Le minaret de Djam. La découverte de la capital des Sultans Ghorides (XII-XIII siècles). Mémoires de la Délégation Archéologique Française en Afghanistan, Tome XVI. Paris: 1959.

Marshak, Boris. I. *Sogdiiskoe serebro. Ocherki po vostochnoi torevtike*. Moscow: Nauka, 1971.

Matīnī, Jalāl, ed. *Tafsīrī bar ʿushrī az qurʿān-i majīd*. Tehran: Bunyād-i Farhang-i Irān, 1352.

Maʿānī, Aḥmad Gulchīn. ‘Shāhkārhāyi-i hunarī-i shigift-i angīzī az qarn-i panjum hijri wa-sar ghusht-i ḥayrat āwar-ī’. *Hunar Wa-Mardum* 157 (1354/1975): 45–65.

Mayer, L. A. *Islamic Metalworkers and Their Works*. Geneva: Kundig, 1959.

McClary, Richard. ‘Brick Muqarnas on Rūm Saljuq Buildings - The Introduction of an Iranian Decorative Technique into the Architecture of Anatolia’. *E-Journal für Kunst und Bildgeschichte*, 2014.

———. ‘The Rūm Saljūq Architecture of Anatolia 1170-1220’. PhD thesis, The University of Edinburgh, 2015.

Meisami, Julie Scott. *Persian Historiography to the End of the Twelfth Century*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999.

Melikian-Chirvani, Assadullah Souren. ‘Eastern Iranian Architecture: Apropos of the Ghūrid Parts of the Great Mosque of Harāt’. *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London* 33, no. 2 (1970): 322–27.

———. *Islamic Metalwork from the Iranian World, 8-18th Centuries*. London: Victoria & Albert Museum, 1982.

———. ‘Silver in Islamic Iran: The Evidence from Literature and Epigraphy’. In *Pots & Pans: A Colloquium on Precious Metals and Ceramics in the Muslim, Chinese and Graeco-Roman Worlds, Oxford 1985*, edited by Michael J. Vickers, 89–106. Oxford Studies in Islamic Art 3. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986.

———. ‘The Westward Progress of Khorasanian Culture Under the Seljuqs’. *In The Art of Iran and Anatolia from the 11th to the 13th Century A.D.*, edited by William Watson, 110-126. London: University of London, 1974.

———. ‘The White Bronzes of Early Islamic Iran’. *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 9 (1974): 123–51.

Moritz, Bernhard. *Arabic Palaeography. A Collection of Arabic Texts from the First Century of the Hidjra till the Year 1000.* Vol. 16. Publication of the Khedivial Library. Cairo: Khedivial Library, 1905.

Motaghedi, *Warrāq-I Ghaznavi Family*, publishing information not provided.

Moustafa, Ahmed, and Stefan Sperl. *The Cosmic Script. Sacred Geometry and the Science of Arabic Penmanship*. 2 vols. London: Thames and Hudson, 2014.

Munajjid, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn. *al-Kitāb al-ʿarabī al-makhṭūṭ ilā al-qarn al-ʿāshir al-hijrī*. Vol. 1. Cairo: Maʿhad al-Makhṭūṭāt al-ʿArabīya, 1960.

Nājī, Hilāl. *Ibn al-bawwāb ʿabqarī al-khaṭṭ al-ʿarabī ʿabr al-ʿuṣūr*. Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1994.

———. ʻSharḥ al-manḍhūma al-mustaṭāba fī ʿilm al-kitāba'. *Al-Mawrid* 4 (1986): 259–70.

Pancaroglu, Oya. 'Serving Wisdom: The Contents of Samanid Epigraphic Pottery'. In *Studies in Islamic and Later Indian Art from the Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University Art Museum*, 58–68. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012.

———. 'Feasts of Nishapur: Cultural Resonances of Tenth-Century Ceramic Production in Khurasan'. In *In Harmony: The Norma Jean Calderwood Collection of Islamic Art*, 25–36. Cambridge: Harvard Art Museums, 2013.

Patel, Alka. 'Architectural Cultures and Empire: The Ghurids in Northern India (ca. 1192-1210)'. *Bulletin of the Asia Institute* 21 (2007): 35–60.

Peacock, A. C. S. 'Court Historiography of the Seljuq Empire in Iran and Iraq: Reflections on Content, Authorship and Language'. *Iranian Studies* 47, 2 (2014): 327–45.

———. 'Early Persian Historian and the Heritage of Pre-Islamic Iran'. In *Early Islamic Iran*, edited by Edmund Herzig and Sarah Stewart, The idea of Iran: 59–75. London: I.B. Tauris in association with the London Middle East Institute at SOAS and the Faculty of Oriental Studies, University of Oxford, 2012.

———. *Early Seljūq History: A New Interpretation*. Routledge Studies in the History of Iran and Turkey. London: Routledge, 2010.

———. *The Great Seljuk Empire*. Edinburgh History of the Islamic Empires. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015.

———. 'Utbī"s Al-Yamīnī: Patronage, Composition and Reception'. *Arabica* 54, 4 (2007): 500–525.

Pedersen, Johannes. *The Arabic Book*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984.

Pétrosyan, Yuri. *De Baghdad à Ispahan. Manuscrits islamiques de la Filiale de Saint-Pétersbourg de l'Institut d'Etudes Orientales, Académie des Sciences de Russie*. Fondation ARCH (Art Restoration for Cultural Heritage), Paris-Musées, 1994.

Pinder-Wilson, Ralph. 'Ghaznavid and Ghūrid Minarets'. *Iran* 39 (2001): 155–86.

Pope, Arthur Upham. *A Survey of Persian Art from Prehistoric Times to the Present*. London: Oxford University Press, 1964.

Porter, Venetia. 'Amulets Inscribed with the Names of the "Seven Sleepers" of Ephesus'. In *Word of God, Art of Man: The Qur'an and Its Creative Expressions*, edited by Fahmida Suleman, 123–34. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

———. 'Islamic Seals: Magical or Practical?' In *Magic and Divination in Early Islam*, edited by Emilie Savage-Smith, 179–200. Formation of the Classical Islamic World 42. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004.

Porter, Venetia, and Mariam Rosser-Owen, eds. *Metalwork and Material Culture in the Islamic World: Art, Craft and Text; Essays Presented to James W. Allan*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2012.

Qalqashandī, Abū al-ʿAbbās Aḥmad al-. *Kitāb ṣubḥ al-aʿshā fī ṣināʿat al-inshā*, edited by Muḥammad Ḥussein Shamseddine. Vol. 3. Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1987.

Qifṭī, ʿAlī b. Yūsuf al-. *Inbāh al-rūwāt ʿalā anbāʾ al-hūḥāt*. Edited by Muḥammad Ibrāhīm. 4 vols. Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Maṣriyya, 1950.

Raby, Julian. 'Looking for Silver in Clay: A New Perspective on Sāmānid Ceramics'. In *Pots & Pans: A Colloquium on Precious Metals and Ceramics in the Muslim, Chinese and Graeco-Roman Worlds, Oxford 1985*, edited by Michael J. Vickers, 179–204. Oxford Studies in Islamic Art 3. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986.

Rawandī, Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-. *Rāḥat al-ṣuḍūr wa-āyat al-surūr fī tārīkh al-dawla al-saljūqiyya*. Edited by Ibrāhīm Amīn al-Shawārbī, ʿAbd al-Naʿīm Muḥammad Ḥasanayn, and Fuʾād ʿAbd al-Muʿṭī al-Ṣayyāḍ. Cairo: Dār al-Fikr, 1960.

Rice, David S. 'A Datable Islamic Rock Crystal'. *Oriental Art* 2, no. 3 (1956): 85–93.

———. 'Inlaid Brasses from the workshop of Ahmad Al Dhaki Al Mawsili', Ars Orientalis 2, 1957, 283-326.

———. *The Unique Ibn al-Bawwāb Manuscript in the Chester Beatty Library*. Dublin: Emery Walker, 1955.

Richard, Francis. *Splendeurs Persanes: Manuscrits du XXIIe au XVIIe siècle*. Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale de France, 1997.

Ritter, Markus, and Nourane Ben Azzouna. *Der Goldkoran aus der Zeit der Seldschuken und Atabegs / The Golden Qur'an from the Age of the Seljuks and Atabegs.* Graz: Akademische Druck-u Verlagsantalt, 2015.

Rogers, J. M. *The Arts of Islam. Masterpieces from the Khalili Collection*. London: Thames and Hudson, 2010.

Rosenthal, Franz. 'Abū Ḥaiyān al-Tawḥīdī on Penmanship'. *Ars Islamica* 13 (1948): 1–30.

Roxburgh, David J. 'On the Transmission and Reconstruction of Arabic Calligraphy: Ibn Al-Bawwab and History'. *Studia Islamica* 96 (2003): 39–53.

———. *Writing the Word of God: Calligraphy and the Qur'an*. Houston: Museum of Fine Arts, 2007.

Roxburgh, David J, ed. *Turks: A Journey of a Thousand Years, 600-1600*. London: Royal Academy of Arts, 2005.

Rugiadi, Martina. '"As for the Colours, Look at a Garden in Spring". Polychrome Marble in the Ghaznavid Architectural Decoration'. In *Proceedings of the 7th International Congress on the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East*, edited by Roger Matthews and John Curtis, 254–73. Wiesbaden, 2012.

———. 'The Ghaznavid Marble Architectural Decoration: An Overview'. *Aga Khan Project in Islamic Architecture*. Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2010.

———. 'Marble from the Palace of Masʿūd III in Ghazni'. In *Proceedings of the 19th International Conference on South Asian Archaeology, Ravenna, 2th-6th July 2007, Volume 2,* edited by Pierfrancesco Callieri and Luca Colliva, 297-306. Oxford: Archaeopress, 2010.

Rypka, Jan. *History of Iranian Literature*. Edited by Karl Jahn. Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1968.

Safadi, Yasin Hamid. *Islamic Calligraphy*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1978.

Ṣafadī, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Khalīl b. Aybak al-. *al-Wāfī bi'l-wafayāt*. Edited by Hellmut Ritter and Franz Steiner. 24 vols. Istanbul: Wiesbaden, 1949.

Şahin, Seracettin. *The 1400th Anniversary of the Qur'an: Museum of Turkish and Islamic Art Qur'an Collection*. Istanbul: Antik A.Ş. Cultural Publications, 2010.

Saint Laurent, Beatrice. 'The Identification of a Magnificent Koran Manuscript'. In *Les manuscrits du Moyen-Orient, essaies de codicologie et de paléographie*, edited by François Déroche, 115–23. Istanbul-Paris: L'Institut Français d'Études Anatoliennes d'Istanbul and Bibliothèque Nationale de France, 1989.

Salameh, Khader. *The Qur'ān Manuscripts in the al-Haram al-Sharif Islamic Museum, Jerusalem*. Jerusalem: UNESCO and Garnet Publishing, 2001.

Saleh, Walid. 'Word'. In *Key Themes for the Study of Islam*, edited by Jamal J. Elias. Oxford: Oneworld, 2010.

Samʿānī, ʿAbd al-Karīm b. Muḥammad al-. *Kitāb al-ansāb*. Edited by D. S. Margoliouth. Leiden: Brill, 1912.

Savage-Smith, Emilie. *Magic and Divination in Early Islam*. Formation of the Classical Islamic World 42. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004.

Sayyid, Ayman Fuʾād. 'Khizānat kutub al-fāṭimiyyīn: hal baqiya minhā shayʾ?', *Majallat Ma'had al-Makhṭūṭāt al-'Arabiyya* 42 (1998): 7–32.

———. *al-Kitāb al-ʿarabī al-makhṭūṭ wa-ʿilm al-makhṭūtāt*. 2 vols. Cairo: al-Dār al-Miṣrīyya al-Lubnāniyya, 1997.

Schaefer, Karl R. *Enigmatic Charms: Medieval Arabic Block Printed Amulets in American and European Libraries and Museums*. Leiden: Brill, 2006.

Schwarz, Paul. *Iran Im Mittelalter Nach Den Arabischen Geographen.* Vol. VII. Leipzig: O. Harrassowitz, 1896.

Smirnov, Ia. I., ed. *Vostochnoe serebro. Atlas drevnei serebrianoi i zolotoi posudy vostochnogo proiskhozhdeniia, naidennoi preimushchestvenno v predelakh Rossiiskoi imperii. Izdanie imperatorskoi arkheologicheskoi kommissii ko dniu piatidesiatiletiia eia deiatel'nosti*. St. Petersburg, 1909.

Stern, S. M. 'A Manuscript from the Library of the Ghaznawid Amir ʿAbd Al-Rashid'. In *Paintings from Islamic Lands*, edited by Ralph Pinder-Wilson, 7–31. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1969.

———. *Fāṭimid Decrees. Original Documents from the Fāṭimid Chancery*. London: Faber & Faber, 1964.

Tabbaa, Yasser. 'Canonicity and Control: The Sociopolitical Underpinnings of Ibn Muqla's Reform'. *Ars Orientalis* 29 (1999): 91–100.

———. 'The Transformation of Arabic Writing: Part I, Qur'ānic Calligraphy'. *Ars Orientalis* 21 (1991): 119–48.

———. 'The Transformation of Arabic Writing: Part II, The Public Text'. *Ars Orientalis* 24 (1994): 119–47.

Tawḥīdī, Abū Ḥayyān al-. *Thalāth rasāʾil li-abī ḥayyān al-tawḥīdī*. Edited by Ibrāhīm al-Kīlānī. Damascus: Institut Français d'Etudes Arabes de Damas, 1961.

Ṭayyibī (al-Ṭībī), Muḥammad b. Ḥasan al-. *Jamīʿ maḥāsin kitābat al-kuttāb*. Edited by Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Munajjid. Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-Jadīd, 1962.

Tetley, G. E. *The Ghaznavid and Seljuk Turks: Poetry as a Source for Iranian History*. London and New York: Routledge, 2008.

Thaʿālibī, ʿAbd al-Malik b. Muḥammad al-. *Yatīmat al-dahr fī maḥāsin ahl al-ʿaṣr*. Edited by Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd. Cairo: Matbaʿat Ḥijāzī, 1947.

Toorawa, Shawkat. *Ibn Abī Ṭāhir Ṭayfūr and Arabic Writerly Culture: A Ninth-Century Bookman in Baghdad*. Curzon Studies in Arabic and Middle-Eastern Literatures 7. London and New York: Routledge, 2005.

Treadwell, Luke. 'The Samanids: The First Islamic Dynasty of Central Asia'. In *Early Islamic Iran*, edited by Edmund Herzig and Sarah Stewart, The idea of Iran: 3–15. London: I.B. Tauris in association with the London Middle East Institute at SOAS and the Faculty of Oriental Studies, University of Oxford, 2012.

ʿUtbī, Abī al-Naṣr Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Jabbār al-. *al-Yamīnī fī sharḥ akhbār al-sulṭān yamīn al-dawla wa-amīn al-milla maḥmūd al-ghaznawī*. Edited by Iḥsān al-Thāmirī. Beirut: Dār al-Ṭalīʿa, 2004.

Vickers, Michael J., ed. *Pots & Pans: A Colloquium on Precious Metals and Ceramics in the Muslim, Chinese and Graeco-Roman Worlds, Oxford 1985*. Oxford Studies in Islamic Art 3. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986.

Volov, Lisa. 'Plaited Kufic on Samanid Epigraphic Pottery'. *Ars Orientalis* 6 (1966): 107–33.

Voorhoeve, P. *Handlist of Arabic Manuscripts in the Library of the University of Leiden and Other Collections in the Netherlands*. Second edition. Codices Manuscripti 7. Leiden: Leiden University Press, 1980.

Ward, Rachel. *Islamic Metalwork*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1993.

Watson, Oliver. *Ceramics from Islamic Lands*. London: Thames & Hudson, in association with the al-Sabah Collection, Dār al-Āthār al-Islamiyya, Kuwait National Museum, 2004.

Watson, Oliver. 'Pottery and Metal Shapes in Persia in the 12th and 13th Centuries'. In *Pots & Pans: A Colloquium on Precious Metals and Ceramics in the Muslim, Chinese and Graeco-Roman Worlds, Oxford 1985*, edited by Michael J. Vickers, 205–12. Oxford Studies in Islamic Art 3. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986.

Watson, William. *The Art of Iran and Anatolia from the 11th to the 13th Century A.D.* London: University of London, 1974.

Whelan, Estelle. ‘Writing the Word of God: Some Early Qurʾān Manuscripts and Their Milieux, Part I’. *Ars Orientalis* 20 (1990): 113–47.

Wiet, Gaston. *L’Exposition persane de 1931*. Cairo: l’Institut français d’archéologie orientale, 1933.

———. *Soieries Persanes*. Cairo: Imprimerie de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 1948.

Wilkinson, Charles. ‘Life in Early Nishapur’. *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 9, no. 2 (1950): 60–72.

———. *Nishapur: Pottery of the Early Islamic Period*. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1973.

Wright, Elaine. *Islam: Faith, Art, Culture. Manuscripts of the Chester Beatty Library*. London: Scala Publishers Ltd., 2009.

Yarshater, Ehsan, ed. *Encyclopaedia Iranica [Electronic Resource]*. New York: Columbia University Center for Iranian Studies, 1996.

Yāqūt al-Rūmī. *Muʾjam al-udabāʾ: irshād al-arīb ilā maʿrifat al-adīb*. Edited by David S. Margoliouth. 2nd ed., 7 vols. Cairo: Maṭbaʿa Hindiyya, 1929.

Zadeh, Travis. ‘Touching and Ingesting: Early Debates over the Material Qurʾan’. *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 129, no. 3 (2009): 443–66.

———. *The Vernacular Qur’an: Translation and the Rise of Persian Exegesis*. Qur’anic Studies Series 7. Oxford: Oxford University Press and The Institute of Ismaili Studies, 2012.

Zayn al-Dīn, Nājī. *Badāʾiʿ al-khaṭṭ al-ʿarabī*. 2nd ed. Baghdad and Beirut: Maktabat al-Nahḍa and Dār al-Qalam, 1981.

———. *Muṣawwar al-khaṭṭ al-ʿarabī*. Baghdad: Al-Majamaʿ al-ʿIlmī al-ʿIrāqī, 1968.

Zayyāt, Ḥabīb. *al-Wirāqa wa-sināʿat al-kitāba wa-muʿjam al-sufun*. Beirut: Dār al-Ḥamrā, 1992.

Appendix

Qur'anic mss. copied in NS 4th/10th C.	Writing material	Height x width (cm)	L. per page	Publication
BL Add 11735	Parchment	Vertical	24	Tahbaz, 'The Transformation of Arabic Writing, 120; Lings & Safadi, *The Qur'an*, 10; Lings, *Splendours of Qur'an Calligraphy & Illumination*, 7.
Khalili KFQ32	Parchment	10.6 x 16	7	Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 141.
Khalili KFQ48	Parchment	13.5 x 20	6	Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 130-139.
IUL A.6626	Parchment	14.5 x 10.2	25	Derman, *Fann al-Khatt*, Pl. 7.
LNS 1 CA	Parchment	17 x 19.7	15	George, *Manuscripts of the Quran and Islamic Devotional Books: The Al-Sabah Collection*. Forthcoming.
BNF Arabe 379c	Parchment	14.4 x 19.1	8	Gallica online; Déroche, *Catalogue des Manuscrits Arabes 2nd, I:1*, 130.
BNF Arabe 340j	Parchment	12.6 x 19.7	14	Gallica online; Déroche, Catalogue des Manuscrits Arabes 2nd, I:1, 130.
BNF Arabe 379e	Parchment	16 x 20.2	8	Gallica online; Déroche, *Catalogue des Manuscrits Arabes 2nd, I:1*, 130.
BNF Arabe 379f	Parchment	14.5 x 19.6	6	Gallica online; Déroche, *Catalogue des Manuscrits Arabes 2nd, I:1*, 130 (Pl. XXII A).
RL 6093D	Parchment	Vertical	26	Abbott, "Arabic palaeography", 81, (fig. 1-2); Ardhi, *A Catalogue of the Arabic Manuscripts in the Raza Library*, no. 3; Blair, *Islamic Calligraphy*, 160 (fig 5.7).
TIEM SE 3275/3276	Parchment	9.6 x 15	x	Sahin, *The 1400th Anniversary of the Qur'an*, 192-93.
DK M. 46	Parchment	Horizontal	6	Moritz, *Arabic Palaeography*, Pl. 46.
BNF Arabe 383d	Parchment	14.4 x 9.6	9	Gallica online.
BNF Arabe 382a	Parchment	13.8 x 18.9	7	Gallica online.

Qur'anic mss. copied in NS 4th/10th–5th/11th C.	Writing material	Height x width (cm)	L. per page	Publication
LNS 65 Ms	Parchment	13.3 x 19	9	George, *Manuscripts of the Quran and Islamic Devotional Books: The Al-Sabah Collection*. Forthcoming.
Khalili QUR286/ LNS 20 CA	Parchment	15.5 x 11	13	Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 142-143.
Khalili QUR305	Parchment	9.6 x 7.3	10	Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 144-145.
TKS 44	Paper	Vertical	24	Al-Munajjid, *Dirāsāt fī tārīkh al-khaṭṭ al-ʿarabī*, 55-57 (figs 42, 43 and 44).
SBB Or. 3036	Paper	Horizontal	4	Unpublished.
Met 62.152.6	Paper	36.2 x 30.2	15	Met online.
BNF Arabe 6430	Paper	16.4 x 13.4	10	Déroche, *Catalogue des Manuscrits Arabes 2ème, I:1*, 137.
BNF Arabe 383a	Parchment	15 x 10.0	7	Déroche, *Catalogue des Manuscrits Arabes 2ème, I:1*, 136.
BNF Arabe 383c	Parchment	15.1 x 11	10	Déroche, *Catalogue des Manuscrits Arabes 2ème, I:1*, 137.
TIEM SE 2509	Parchment	13.1 x 10.7	7	Sahin, *The 1400th anniversary of the Qur'an*, 105.
BNF Arabe 342b	Parchment	24.5 x 17.7	9	Déroche, *Catalogue des Manuscrits Arabes 2ème, I:1*, 136 (Plate XXI).
LNS 21 Ms/Freer S 1998.11	Paper	13.7 x 3.3	5	George, *Manuscripts of the Quran and Islamic Devotional Books: The Al-Sabah Collection*. Forthcoming.
TKS R38	?	Vertical	10	Unpublished.
Khalili QUR150	Paper	16.4 x 11	5	Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 170-171.
Khalili QUR155	Paper	14.3 x 10	5	Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 166-167.
Freer S1998.5	Paper	16.3 x 10.7	6	FreerSackler online.
Freer S1998.4	Paper	17.7 x 12.5	27	FreerSackler online.
Khalili QUR430	Parchment	7.3 x 6	30	Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 152-153.
NLR E-4/3221	Parchment	11 x 8	28	Pétrosyan, *De Bagdad à Ispahan*, 59.
BNF Arabe 5178d	Parchment	21.5 x 15	15	Déroche, *Catalogue des Manuscrits Arabes 2ème, I:1*, 142.
Khalili KFQ40	Parchment	12.4 x 10	7	Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 140.
Khalili QUR253	Paper	19 x 15.0	7	Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 172.
Freer S1998.10	Paper	19.3 x 16	16	FreerSackler online.
BL Or. 12884	Paper	?	17	Baker, *Qur'an manuscripts*, 26.

Qur'anic mss. copied in NS 5th/11th C.	Writing material	Height x width (cm)	L. per page	Publication
TIEM 4155	Scroll	60 x 13.5	52	Sabin, *The 1400th anniversary of the Qur'an*, 216.
Khalili QUR124	Paper	12.5 x 8	22	Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 168-169.
Khalili KFQ088.3	Paper	27.1 x 20.3	23	Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 163.
Khalili QUR105	Paper	15.7 x 10.8	11	Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 167.
BNF Arabe 7263	Paper	17.5 x 11	6	Gallica online.
Khalili KFQ 73 +MET 26.73.2	Paper	20 x 10	22	Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 173.
Freer S1998.2	Paper	27.2 x 20.5	23	FreerSackler online.
Khalili KFQ74	Paper	29 x 12.5	17	Deroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 179.
LNS 228 Ms	Paper	20.6 x 19.1	22	George, *Manuscripts of the Quran and Islamic Devotional Books: The Al-Sabah Collection*. Forthcoming.
Freer F2001.16	Paper	15.4 x 12	4	FreerSackler online.
Khalili KFQ72	Paper	21.5 x 17.7	7	Deroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 176-177.
David 35/1995	Paper	40 x 34.3	9	Falsach, *Art from the world of Islam in the David Collection*, 56 (fig 3).
TKS 208	Paper	Vertical	19	Zayneddine, *Mujawwar*, 27 (fig 5b). Munajjid, *Al-Kitab al-'arabi al-makhtut* (Pl. 5).
BL Add 7213	Paper	26.5 x 18	17	Lings and Safadi, *The Qur'an*, 36.
Khalili KFQ79	Paper	15.7 x 9.7	7	Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 174.
Freer S1998.9	Paper	20.3 x 10.5	22	FreerSackler online.
TIME SE 2160	Parchment	12.5 x 15.1	5	Sabin, *The 1400th Anniversary of the Qur'an*, 103-09.

Qur'anic mss. copied in NS 5th/11th C.	Writing material	Height x width (cm)	L. per page	Publication
TIEM 4155	Scroll	60 x 13.5	52	Sahin, *The 1400th anniversary of the Qur'an*, 216.
Khalili QUR124	Paper	12.5 x 8	22	Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 168-169.
Khalili KFQ88.3	Paper	27.1 x 20.3	23	Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 183.
Khalili QUR105	Paper	15.7 x 10.8	11	Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 167.
BNF Arabe 7263	Paper	17.5 x 11	6	Gallica online.
Khalili KFQ 73 +MET 26.73.2	Paper	25 x 10	22	Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 173.
Freer S1998.2	Paper	27.2 x 20.5	23	FreerSackler online.
Khalili KFQ74	Paper	29 x 12.5	17	Deroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 179.
LNS 228 Ms	Paper	21.6 x 19.1	22	George, *Manuscripts of the Quran and Islamic Devotional Books: The Al-Sabah Collection*. Forthcoming.
Freer F2001.16	Paper	15.4 x 12	4	FreerSackler online.
Khalili KFQ72	Paper	21.5 x 17.7	7	Deroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 176-177.
David 35/1995	Paper	40 x 34.3	9	Falsach, *Art from the world of Islam in the David Collection*, 56 (fig 3).
TKS 208	Paper	Vertical	19	Zayneddine, *Mujawwar*, 27 (fig 56). Munajjid, *Al-Khitb al-'arabi al-makhtut* (Pl. 5).
BL Add 7213	Paper	26.5 x 10	17	Lings and Safadi, *The Qur'an*, 36.
Khalili KFQ79	Paper	15.7 x 9.7	7	Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 174.
Freer S1998.9	Paper	21.3 x 10.5	22	FreerSackler online.
TIME SE 2160	Parchment	12.5 x 15.1	5	Sahin, *The 1400th Anniversary of the Qur'an*, 155-59.