

# A Collection of Qur'anic Codices

by Adam Gacek

*The eighteen copies of the Qur'an described below come from a larger collection of Islamic manuscripts preserved in the Department of Rare Books and Special Collections and introduced in my two previous articles published in this journal.<sup>1</sup> These Qur'anic codices clearly stand out as a small but nevertheless interesting collection covering various periods and geographical regions. From the codicological point of view, this collection consists of twenty-nine individual codices, or portions thereof, as the nos. 16 and 18 are made up of eleven and two surviving parts, respectively.*

*Les dix-huit exemplaires du Coran décrits ci-dessous proviennent d'une plus vaste collection de manuscrits islamiques du département des livres rares et des collections spéciales auquel j'ai déjà consacré deux articles.<sup>1</sup> Ces manuscrits coraniques constituent une petite collection, qui n'en demeure pas moins intéressante, sur les diverses périodes et régions géographiques. Du point de vue codicologique, cette collection comprend vingt-neuf manuscrits individuels (codices) ou parties de manuscrits puisque les numéros 16 et 18 comprennent respectivement onze et deux parties subsistantes.*

The Qur'an is traditionally regarded as the first Arabic codex *par excellence*, even though in the early years of Islam the text of the Qur'an was copied in other forms, including loose sheets and scrolls.<sup>2</sup> The terms *ṣuḥuf* (sg. *ṣaḥīfah*) and *mushaf* (or *maṣḥaf*, pl. *maṣāḥif*), which we encounter in the early Arabic sources were used very loosely and did not necessarily convey a particular form of the book.<sup>3</sup> However, according to Arabic tradition, the Qur'anic text was also copied, from an early period, in booklets (*daftar*, pl. *dafātir*, *kurrās* or *kurrāsab*, pl. *karāris*), that is sections of bi-folios consisting of perhaps eight to fourteen single leaves (folios). These booklets came to be placed between two wooden boards (*bayna al-daffatayn*) and held together by means of clasps, consisting of knobs (*zirr*, pl. *azrār*) and fasteners (*'urwab*, pl. *'uran*).<sup>4</sup> The bound codex was originally referred to as *sifr* or *mushaf*, the latter indicating something which holds *ṣuḥuf* together.<sup>5</sup> Because the companions of the Prophet disliked the word *sifr* on account of its usage among the Jews, the word *mushaf*, with the usual epithet *al-sharīf*, came to be widely accepted as referring to a copy of the Qur'an in the codex form.<sup>6</sup>

The word *mushaf* is, nevertheless, not the only word which the Muslims have used for the Qur'an. The other two words which we often encounter are *khatmah* (pl. *khatamāt*, *khitam*) and *rab'ah* (pl. *raba'āt*). The former implies a complete text in one volume and the latter takes its name from a square-shaped box of the same name, which housed a Qur'an divided into a number of codices. This number was usually seven or thirty following the traditional division of the text which allows the Muslim to recite it either in seven or thirty days.<sup>7</sup> The square-like shape of the box, also referred to in the Maghreb as *tābūt* (pl. *tawābīt*), it seems, influenced the format of the *rab'ah*. This term was predominantly used in the Maghreb (from Egypt to Andalusia). An excellent example of this kind of *rab'ah* is our codex no. 7. In the Mashriq the term predominantly used for such a box was *ṣundūq* (pl. *ṣanādiq*). It is interesting therefore to note in this connection the name of the person mentioned in the *waqf*-statement (no. 16) who is referred to as al-Ṣundūqī, i.e. the keeper of the box.

The text of the Qur'an was originally devoid not only of diacritical marks and vocalization,

but also lacked any headings, verse dividers or other editorial devices. The Arabic tradition tells us that the first thing which was introduced to the text were three dots written at the head of the verse.<sup>8</sup> Despite the controversies which existed among the early theologians and traditionists regarding the purity of the original text, with time the Qur'an was not only vocalized and provided with chapter headings, but also became an object of the greatest attention on the part of the binder, calligrapher and illuminator. Its production was an act of worship governed by a set of rules called *âdâb* (etiquette).

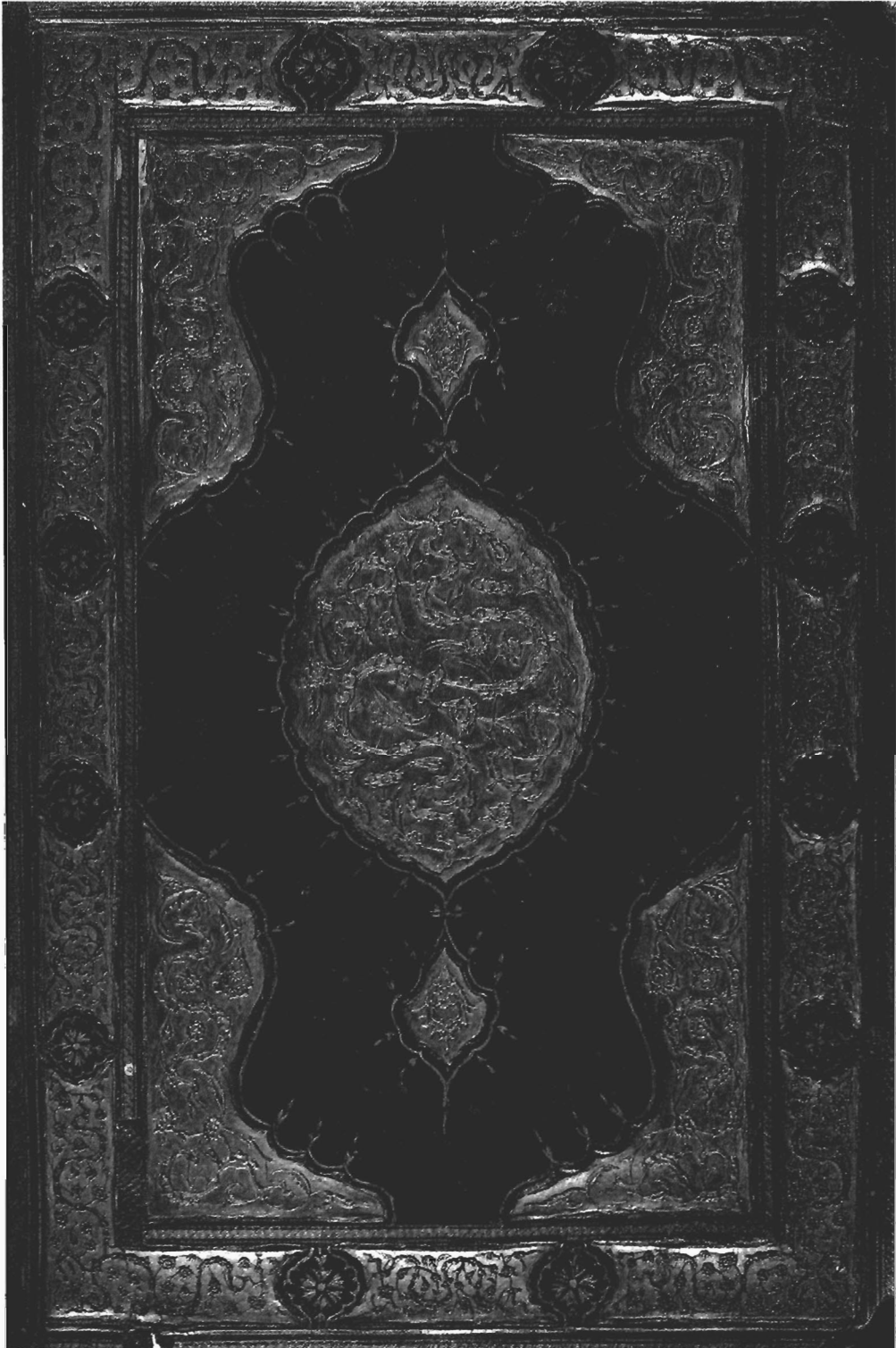
As mentioned earlier, the Qur'an was usually divided into seven or thirty parts called *manzil* (pl. *manâzil*) and *juz'* (pl. *ajzâ'*), respectively. Each *juz'* could then be sub-divided into two halves referred to as *nisf* or *hizb* and four quarters (*rub'*). Other subdivisions included *thulth* or *thalâthat arbâ'* (as in nos. 8, 10, 11) and *thumn* (no. 13). During the recitation of the Qur'an, the Muslim is instructed to perform a number of prostrations (*sajdah*) and bowings (*rukû'*, abbr. *'ayn*). There are either fourteen or fifteen prostrations all together, usually marked as such in the margin. What is more, the 114 chapters (*sûrah*) are divided into verses (*âyah*) which are often grouped into five (*khams*, pl. *akhmâs*) or ten (*'ashr*, pl. *a'shâr*) and indicated by means of medallions called *khâmisah* (pl. *khawâmis*) and *'ashirah* (pl. *'awâshir*).

The eighteen copies of the Qur'an described below represent a variety of styles and decorative techniques used in different periods and regions. The largest group is formed of manuscripts which can broadly be characterized as being of Indo-Pakistani provenance. Here we find a superbly executed copy from Hyderabad (no. 5), bound in very elegant lacquered covers and exhibiting a Kashmirî style of decoration. The other copies worth mentioning here are: a large Bihârî Qur'an (no. 14), which is very likely to have been used originally in a mosque and another Bihârî copy (no. 16) produced in or before 908/1503 and containing a valuable *waqf*-note. There are also five copies of Turkish provenance (nos. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 9), including a seventeenth-century codex produced by the Imam of

Mehmet the Conqueror's Mosque, as well as one copy from each of the following countries or geographic regions: Egypt (7), Maghreb (6) and Sudan (13).

From the point of view of paleography and codicology this small collection provides us with a number of valuable data. It is worth mentioning here, for example, the Mamluk codex (no. 7), written on a characteristic paper of local manufacture, copied in a script which many refer to as Mamluk Naskh and bound in superbly tooled leather covers of the period. Although not dated, this codex is an excellent example of Arabic book-making in the Mamluk period. Of interest here too is the African codex (no. 13) and in particular its binding which features a single piece of leather with a leather thong attached to the end of the envelope flap. This type of binding was meant to be used as a type of portfolio holding loose leaves or quires. This appears to be one of the very early ways of "binding" Arabic codices, which survived only in Africa.<sup>9</sup> Finally, mention should be made of a group of so called Bihârî codices (nos. 8, 14, 15, 16 and 18). According to present research, sometime in the 14th century, a script peculiar to India established itself as the main Qur'anic hand of the region and came to be used extensively in the 15th and 16th centuries.<sup>10</sup> However, it is worth bearing in mind that this script was not used exclusively for the copying of the Qur'an. There is a number of extant specimens of this script used as an ordinary book hand.<sup>11</sup> I have chosen the appellation Bihârî, as the most likely, but it has to be said that this script is referred to in a variety of publications as *khatt-i bihâr*, *khatt-i bihâr*, *khatt-i bâbar*, *Bihârî*, *Bihârî* and even *Bâbarî*.<sup>12</sup>

In my description of the Qur'anic codices I have tried to indicate the existence or non-existence of *tarwîs* in a given hand. Although it is too early to draw any firm conclusions, there is no doubt that this line of inquiry will one day bear some fruit. At this stage, for example, it can be said that the use of right-sloping or left-sloping *tarwîs* in the Naskh script is indicative of the influence of either Arabo-Turkish or Persian schools of calligraphy, respectively. The *tarwîs* in this script, when executed by the calligraphers of the



**Figure 1. Codex 4, f. 112a.**



إِنَّهَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرًا • وَلَا تَرْكَبُوا إِلَى الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا فَمَا تَسْخَمُوا النَّارَ وَمَا لَكُمْ  
مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مِنْ أَوْلِيَاءَ ثُمَّ لَا تُنصُرُونَ • وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ طَرَفِي  
النَّهَارِ وَزُلْفًا مِنْ أَلَيْسَ إِلَّا الْحَسَنَاتِ يُذْهِبَنَّ السَّيِّئَاتِ ذَلِكَ ذِكْرِي  
لِلَّذِينَ كَرِهُوا • وَأَصْبِرْ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْحَسِنِينَ • فَلَوْلَا كُنَّا  
مِنَ الْفَارُونَ مِنْ قَبَائِكُمْ أُولُوا بَفِئَةٍ يَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْفَسَادِ فِي الْأَرْضِ  
إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِمَّنْ أَنْجَيْنَا مِنْهُمْ وَاتَّبَعَ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مَا أُتْرِفُوا فِيهِ وَكَانُوا  
مُجْرِمِينَ • وَمَا كَانَ رَبُّكَ لِيُهْلِكَ الْقُرَى بِظُلْمٍ وَأَهْلِهَا مُصْلِحُونَ  
• وَلَوْ شَاءَ رَبُّكَ لَجَعَلَ النَّاسَ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَلَا يَزَالُونَ مُخْتَلِفِينَ  
إِلَّا مَن رَّحِمَ رَبُّكَ وَلِذَلِكَ خَلَقَهُمْ وَتَمَّتْ كَلِمَةُ رَبِّكَ لَأَمْلَأَنَّ جَهَنَّمَ  
مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ • وَكَأَلَّا نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ أَنْبَاءِ الرُّسُلِ  
مَا نَشِئْتُمْ بِهِ فُؤَادَكَ وَجَاءَكَ فِي هَذِهِ الْحَقُّ وَمَوْعِظَةٌ وَذِكْرٌ  
لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ • وَقُلْ لِلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ أَعْمَلُوا أَعْمَالَكُمْ إِنَّا عَامِلُونَ  
وَأَنْتُمْ وَالْآنَامُ تُنظَرُونَ • وَاللَّهُ غَيْبُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَإِلَيْهِ

Figure 2. Codex 4.

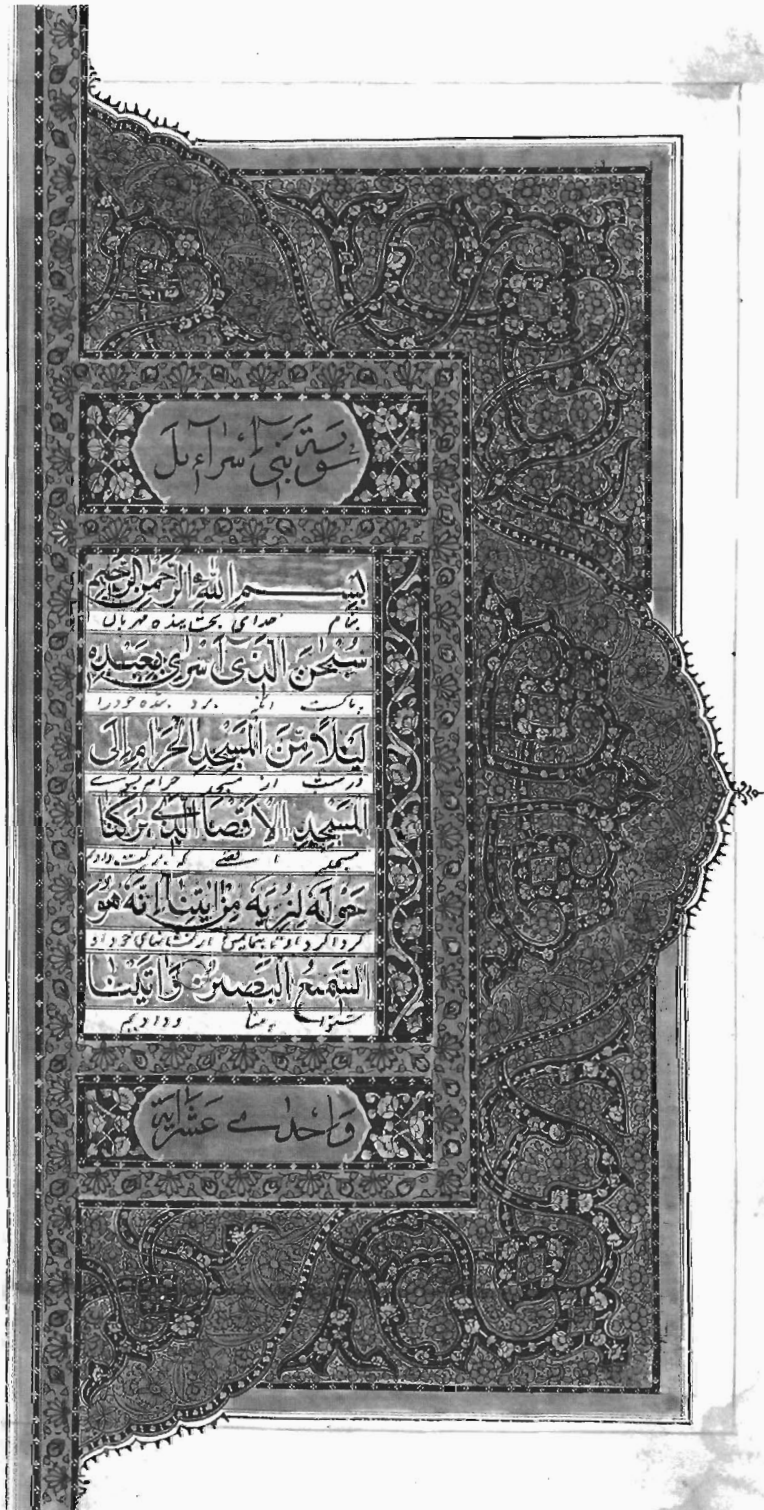
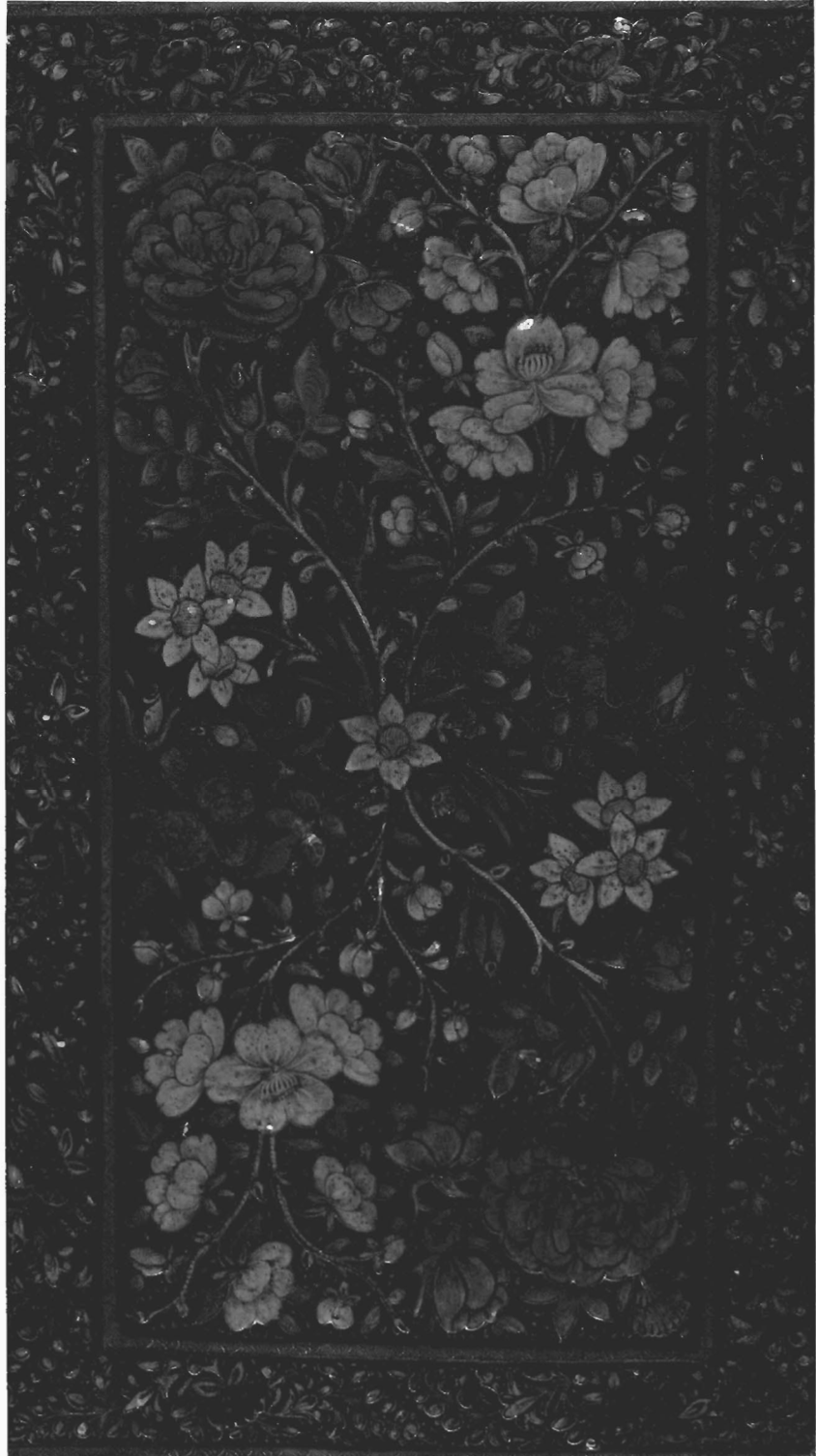


Figure 3. Codex 5, f.184b.



**Figure 4. Codex 5.**

66

الرَّسُلَ وَكُنُوا أَنْتُمْ فِدَاءَ بَرَاءِ  
جَاهِهِمْ نَصْرًا فَتَجِي مَسْرُ  
نَشَأَ وَلَا يَرُدُّ بِأَسَاخِرِ الْقَوْمِ  
الْمُجْرِمِينَ لَقَدْ كَانَ مِنْ قِصصِهِمْ  
عِبْرَةٌ لَأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ مَا كَانَ  
حَدِيثًا يُنْتَبَىٰ وَلَٰكِنَّ تَصْدِيقَ  
الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَكَ مِنْ أَهْلِ قَوْمِكَ  
شَاءَ وَهَدَىٰ وَرَحْمَةً لِقَوْمٍ مُّؤْمِنِينَ  
بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Figure 5. Codex 6, f.66a.



صَالِحًا فَأُولَئِكَ يُدْخَلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ وَلَا  
يُظْلَمُونَ شَيْئًا جَنَّاتٍ عَدْنٍ الَّتِي وَعَدَ  
الرَّحْمَنُ عِبَادَهُ بِالْغَيْبِ إِنَّهُ كَانَ وَعْدُهُ  
مَأْتِيًّا لَا يَسْمَعُونَ فِيهَا لَغْوًا إِلَّا سَلَامًا  
وَلَهُمْ فِيهَا مَزِيدٌ مِّنْ فَسْحٍ وَأَنْعَامٍ

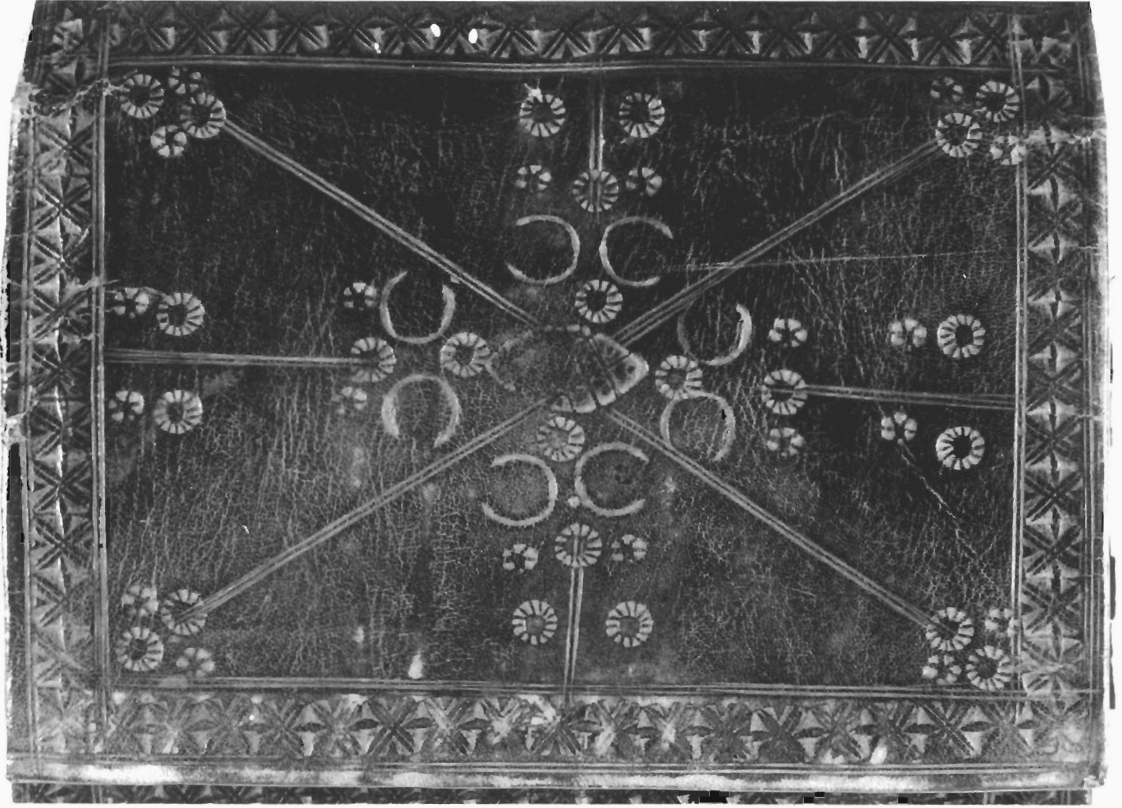


Figure 6. Codex 7, f.17b and binding.





Figure 7. Codex 11, f. 6a.



حَرْبِيَّةِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلَا يَدْرِي  
حِفْظُهُمَا وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ  
لَا إِخْرَاقَ فِي الْيَمِينِ وَلَا تَبْيِضَ الْوَجْهَ  
مِرْقَىٰ بِعَرِيكَاتٍ مُّطَوَّغَاتٍ وَيَوْمَ  
بَدَأَ فَفَجَّحْنَا الْفُجْرَةَ  
الَّذِي تَفْقَىٰ لَهُ فُجْرًا لَهَا وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ  
عَلِيمٌ اللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يُخْرِجُهُمْ  
مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا  
أُولَئِكَ لَهُمُ الظُّلُمَاتُ يُجْرَبُونَ  
مِنَ النُّورِ إِلَى الظُّلُمَاتِ أُولَئِكَ عَلَيْهِمُ  
الْعَذَابُ وَهُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ وَاللَّهُ تَعَالَى  
الْعَلِيمُ

Figure 8. Codex 13, f. 2b and binding.

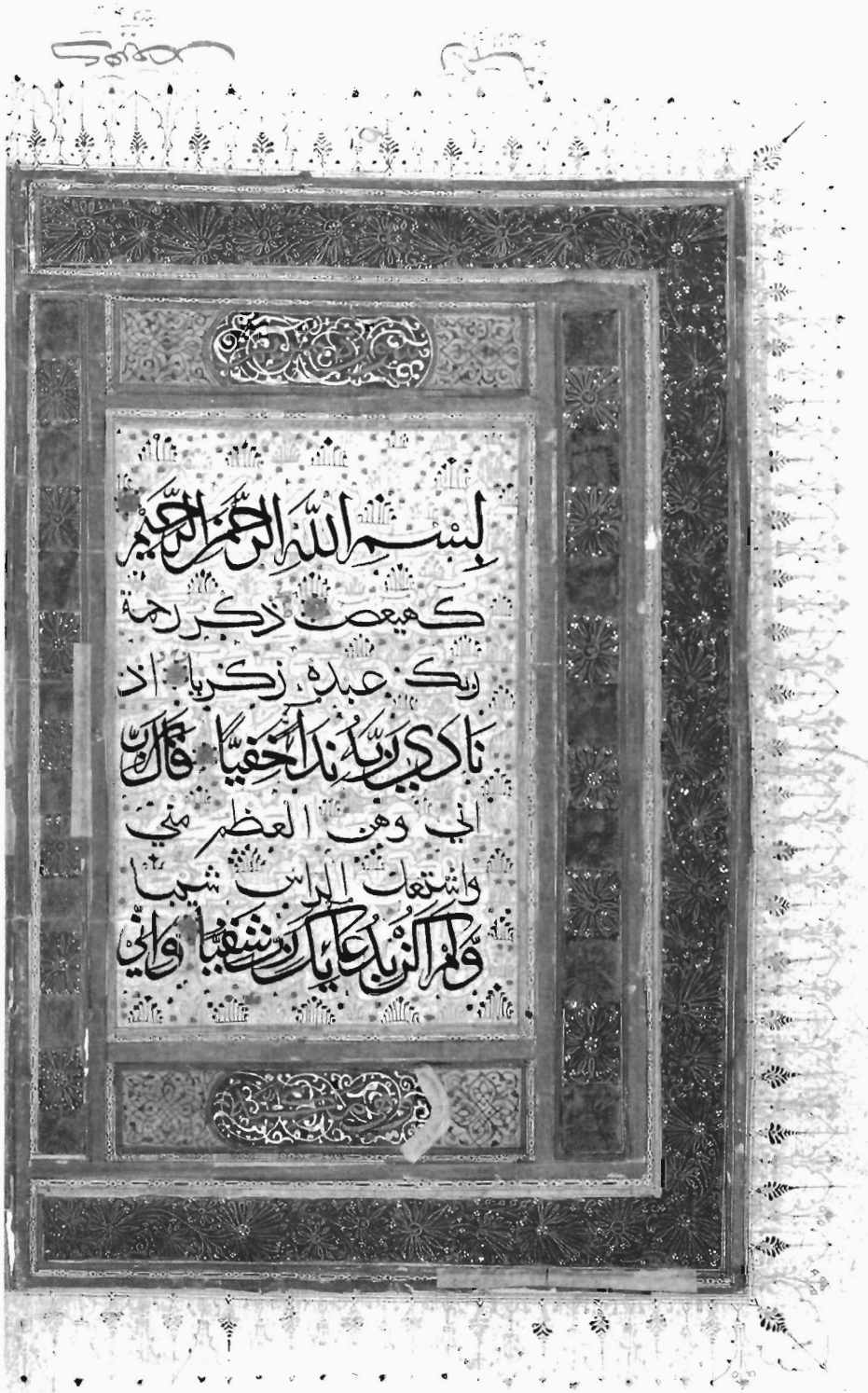


Figure 9. Codex 14, f. 217b.

اللَّهُ عَلِيٌّ قُلُوبُهُمْ فَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ  
خداي علی بر دلها ی ایشان بر ایشان ندانند

۴۴

وهم  
کردی چون کلام محمد و قرآن حمید بن مثنی  
فعال نماید با برین حرف دیگر همه امیدوار گشته  
بر در کار اضعف عباد دده منزهت بن محمد کرم دده  
نصرت المصطفی من الخضر العالم منصور الملک منصور  
منصور الملک من اول نورا من عالم دام عالم حضرت امام باقر و محمد  
عبد الغنی کرم دده نصر دده المصطفی منصور الملک منصور الملک  
در این عمر بجهت خلفا صالحا تا کافه اهل السد کرم  
در انوار بدعا نماز و سرخو بی عود و عجمان پاکیزه

و تفسیر صحیح شرعی تا هیچ کسی بهیچ تا دلیلی لزم تا ویدار  
شرعی مکتب خود نسا زلا و ندران و در هر نکلند و نه بخند  
و نه فرو نژاد بدل نکلند و نه ندرن سراط تجا و ز کنگد خصم ان  
صاحب کلام مکتب العلام با نژاد بحکم قوله تعالی  
فمن بدل به بعد ما سمعها فانما اثمه علی  
الذین یبدلونہ ان الله سمیع علیم  
اگر جوی یاد دتی فو سید مولانا معود نور  
صند و تی قلعه رنهور را خیر کتند تا نویساننده  
تمام کرد اند الراج فی شهر المبارک رمضان  
عبد کاتر سماں و درجه

46

Figure 10. Codex 16, ff. 42b-43a.

## A Collection of Qur'anic Codices

Turkish school, is often hooked. Furthermore, the *alif* of Naskh (when forming part of the definite article) is in the overwhelming number of cases devoid of *tarwîs*. The use of *tarwîs* on other letters (mainly the *alif* in the *lâm alif*, initial *lâm* and *tâ'*) in this script or alternatively its complete absence may be indicative of schools of calligraphy or the individual styles of scribes and calligraphers. This is the case e.g. with the Mamluk Naskh, which, to judge from extant specimens, is executed without *tarwîs*. It could also be that an unsystematic use of *tarwîs* in Naskh is a result of carelessness on the part of the calligrapher.

### DESCRIPTION OF THE CODICES

1 (A16)

ff.[302], 177 × 110 / 123 × 68 mm., 15 lines per page. Written on European laid paper (watermark: crown and grapes; GAVLAC). Fully vocalized Naskh script in black with recitation marks in red ink and chapter headings in white on gold background. This hand uses a small hooked *tarwîs* (characteristic of Turkish hands) on the *lâm* (going to the right) and *alif* in *lâm alif al-warrâqîyah* (descending to the left). The codex opens with a rubbed double frontispiece. The text is enclosed in a golden frame and is divided by means of gold discs. The margins carry floral medallions, the words *hizb* and *'ashr*, as well as some corrections. Bound in dark-red morocco with onlaid centre medallions, pendants and corner pieces. Executed by 'Abd Allâh ibn 'Abd al-Rahmân, a pupil of Râsim Muḥammad Afandî in 1154 i.e. 1741-2.

2 (A17)

ff.[153], 175 × 112 / 135 × 74 mm., 30 lines per page. Written on European laid paper (watermark: lion passant guardant; C N A and I M C?). The text is written in a very small, fully vocalized Naskh hand in black ink, arranged into two medallions per page within a rectangular panel. This hand is characterized by the unsystematic use of *tarwîs*. The volume opens with an illuminated double page frontispiece, now rubbed and damaged. Numerous floral designs in the margins. The margins also carry a number of corrections and the word *hizb*. Bound in dark-red morocco

with onlaid centre medallions and corner pieces. Executed by Muḥammad al-Hilmî, a pupil of Muḥammad al-'Alâ'î Muḥammad 'Abd Allâh, in 1240 i.e. 1824-5. According to the colophon, this is the sixth copy of the Qur'an executed by his hand.

3 (A18)

ff.[i,305], 197 × 122 / 135 × 70 mm., 15 lines per page. Written on European glazed wove paper of biscuit tincture in a fully vocalized Naskh hand. The *tarwîs* occurs only on the letter *alif* of the *lâm alif al-warrâqîyah* and points to the left. The main text is executed in black ink; recitation marks in red and chapter (*sûrah*) headings in white on imitation gold background. The codex opens with a richly illuminated double frontispiece characterized by a floral design. Floral designs are also used for marginal medallions. There are in all fortythree of these medallions. The marginal marks indicating the division of the text are not indicated. Bound in red morocco, the main panel consists of a pattern of dots. This codex is the work of Hâfiz Aḥmad Hilmî, a pupil of Muḥammad al-Ḥamdî, known as Nafs al-Bakbâzârî Bawâsh zâda (thus), who executed it (*kataba*) in 1284, i.e. 1867-8. This is the fifth copy of the Qur'an (*muṣṣhaf*) executed by his hand (see *taṣḍîq*, f.305a).

Purchased from Dr. Patton in June 1929.

4 (A19) Figures 1 and 2

ff.[309], 267 × 180 / 190 × 110 mm., 13 lines per page. Written on thickish non-European laid paper of biscuit colour, characterized by wavy laid lines. Fully vocalized Naskh hand with the word *Allâh* in gold and recitation marks in red ink. This hand is generally devoid of *tarwîs* except in the case of *lâm alif al-warrâqîyah* where it occurs on the *alif* and points to the left. The codex opens with an illuminated double frontispiece. The text is enclosed in a golden frame and blue rule-borders. *Sûrah*-headings are executed in white on gold background and enclosed in illuminated headpieces. The text division into *juz'*, *hizb*, and *'ashr* is shown by means of illuminated marginal medallions. Bound in dark-brown morocco with blind-stamped panels, medallions and pendants filled with arabesque designs. The stamped surfaces are brushed

A Collection of Qur'anic Codices

with gilt. The spine is broken and the flap wanting. This manuscript was executed by Husayn ibn 'Alī al-Amāsī, Imam of the Abū al-Faḥḥ Sultān Muḥammad Khān (Mehmet the Conqueror) Mosque in Rabī' II, 1072 (date given in Turkish) i.e. 1661. This is the 22nd copy of the Qur'an executed by his hand. Folio 1a contains a bequest (*waqf*) note addressed to al-Sayyidah Hanīfah, daughter of a certain 'Alī Bāshā, dated 15 Jumādā I 1237 i.e. 1822.

5 (A20) Figures 3 and 4

ff.[409], 286 × 167 / 286 × 157 mm., 13 lines per page. Written on fine, glossy and cream-coloured non-European paper having dense and regular laid lines. Fully vocalized Western Indian Naskh hand with an interlinear Persian translation in Nasta'liq. The Naskh hand has no *tarwīs* on *alif* and *lām*, except in the *lām alif al-warrāqiyah*, where it protrudes to the left. The Qur'anic text is in black and the translation in red ink. The codex opens with a superbly illuminated double frontispiece executed in Kashmiri style. Similar double-page illumination can be seen on ff.184b-185a and 408b-409a. The text is enclosed in a golden frame with inner and outer deep-blue rules. *Sūrah*-headings are enclosed in rectangular headpieces and executed in deep-blue ink on gold background. An additional outer frame is provided for marginal decorations and comments. Here we find *juz'*-numbering and short versions of *sūrah*-headings placed in corners. Other elements include illuminated medallions and the markings '*ayn*, *thalāthah*, *rub'*, *nisf* and *sajdah*. Bound in very elegant lacquer covers without flap. The central panel of the upper and lower covers consists of an intricate flower design, featuring, among others, dahlias and apple blossoms. Executed (calligraphed and illuminated) in Haydarābād between 1282/1865-6 and 1289/1872-3. The first date appears at the end of the text and therefore is likely to be associated with the copying and the second one appears in the statement on f.409b in the statement: *nivish-tah shud dar farkhundab-i bunyād-i Haydarābād dar sanah 1289*.

Purchased from Meyers and Co. Ltd. in 1943 and presented to the library by Lady Roddick.

6 (A21) Figure 5

ff.[70], 235 × 165 / 180 × 114 mm., 10 lines per page. Written on thick European laid paper (watermark: anchor, B—see e.g. ff.40, 44). Bold, fully vocalized Maghribī hand with *hamzah* indicated by a yellow dot, *tashdīd* and *sukūn* in blue and *fatbah*, *kasrah*, *dammah* and *alif* of prolongation in red. The final *fā'*, *qāf* and *nūn* are not pointed. The text begins with an illuminated headpiece containing *al-isti'ādhah* (an invocation against Satan: *a'ūdhu bi-Allāh min al-shaytān al-rajīm*) and is followed by v.93 of ch.9 (*Sūrat al-Tawbah*). It ends with v.18, ch.13 (*Sūrat al-Ra'd*), followed by the *tašdīq* (*ṣadaqa Allāh al-Aẓīm*) and colophon. The text is enclosed in one blue and two red rules. The *sūrah*-headings are written in gold in either Maghribī or ornamental "Kufi" scripts and marked out by means of marginal palmettes (there are no surrounding panels). The same applies to the words *ḥizb*, *rub'* and *nisf* written in the margins. A round medallion is used for the word *ḥizb* on ff.15a, 29a, 41b and 56b. Another medallion of conic shape is used for the word *sajdah* (f.69b). Bound in red morocco with simple blind tooling and onlaid medallions. The name of the calligrapher is not given. According to the colophon this is Volume (*juz'*) 5 of a set (*tajzi'ah*) of 12 volumes executed in 1144/1731.

Purchased from Miss Fisher in 1927.

7 (A22) Figure 6

ff.[46], 210 × 164 / 150 × 105 mm., 5 lines per page. Written on thick laid Mamluk paper characterized by the existence of chain lines grouped in threes and running obliquely across the face of the page. The distance between the chain lines is ca. 10 mm. and 45 mm. between each group. Executed in fully vocalized al-Naskh al-Faddāh hand, the main characteristics of which are the complete lack of *tarwīs*, the systematic use of *lām alif al-warrāqiyah*, and the height of the *alif* being 9-10 mm. The main text is in black ink whereas the *sūrah*-headings are executed in gold outlined in black (ff.9a, 23b) in the form of Tawqī' script, similar to the one used by Ibn al-Wahīd (see D. James, *Qur'ans of the Mamlūks*. London, 1988, pp. 35-65.).

A Collection of Qur'anic Codices

The verses of the Qur'an are divided by means of gold florettes. The codex begins with an illumination on the recto of the first folio consisting of a panel divided into a cartouche and a multi-lobed medallion carrying an inscription: *al-sâdis 'asbar min al-rab'ah al-sharifah nafa'a Allâh bibâ*. This inscription tells us that this is the sixteenth volume of the Qur'an out of most probably a set of thirty volumes. It contains v.72, ch. 18 (*Sûrat al-Kahf*) through ch.20 (*Sûrat Tâ Hâ*). The end is marked by a large circle (*shamsab*) with the inscription in decorative "Kufi": *khitâmubu misk* (perhaps the equivalent of "finis coronat opus" or "the crowning touch"). The predominant colours used in the decoration are gold and lapis lazuli.

Other illuminations include round medallions in the margins with the words *hizb, nisf, rub', sajdab*. The volume is marked throughout as *waqf* and a badly rubbed inscription on the recto of the first folio reads: *maqarruhu bi-al-Barqûqîyah bi-al-Sahrâ*, referring to al-Khânaqâh al-Barqûqîyah in the desert i.e. *extra muros*, an institution built for the Mamluk Sultan Barqûq by his son Faraj (d.815/1412), where the present copy was deposited. Bound in dark-brown leather, blind-tooled with gold dots. The centre panel consists of a typical Mamluk decoration with a ten-pointed star in the centre and a pattern of interlacings. The doublures are of blocked pressed leather. The front cover is now detached and damaged. The calligrapher of this manuscript is not known despite the statement on the last folio written in a clumsy hand attributing the work to Ibn Muqlah (d.328/940) (*barrarahu Ibn Muqlah al-Wazîr al-A'zam!*). The date is also not given. However, on the strength of the evidence which we have before us it is likely to have been executed in the 8/14th century.

Purchased from H. Khan Monif, New York.

8 (A23)

ff.506, 106 × 95 / 80 × 60 mm., 17 lines per page. Written on brown non-European paper having faint laid lines sometimes completely disappearing, giving the appearance of wove paper. Fully vocalized small Bihârî script (without *tarwîs*) using black and red ink. The text is enclosed in one blue and two red rules.

The text begins with a double page, bearing somewhat simple illumination. The same double page illumination is repeated on ff.121b-122a, 248b-249a and 374b-375a. Other illuminations include medallions with the word *juz'*. The *sûrah*-headings and recitation marks are written in red and so are the words such as *nisf, rub', sajdab, thalâthat arbâ'* and the letter '*ayn* indicating the division of the text. The margins also carry some corrections and explanations in Persian, a number of which are headed by what appears to be the word *fasl* or the abbreviation of *fâ'idat al-aşl* (cf. no.12). Bound in recent brown leather binding without flap. Copy anonymous and undated. Most probably 10/16th century or later.

Purchased from H. Khan Monif in 1928.

9 (A24)

pp. 708, 150 × 103 / 105 × 55 mm., 13 lines per page. Written on laid European paper (watermarks: 1. a cross-bow; trefoil B A 2. pascal lamb; trefoil C B 3. anchor in a circle; trefoil C B).

Copied by two Naskh-based hands, the second being very cursive and characterized by a pronounced tilt to the right. Rule-borders, *sûrah*-headings and round dots are executed in red. Bound in dark-brown morocco with blind-stamped central medallions. Anonymous and undated copy. Probably mid 13/19th century. The last *sûrah* is followed by a comment in Ottoman Turkish on the mystical significance of the Arabic letters.

10 (A25)

ff.[466], 300 × 215 / 218 × 120 mm., 11 lines per page. Written on brown, non-European paper of wove texture and very flocculent. Fully vocalized Naskh hand, using *tarwîs* only on the *alif* of the *lâm alif al-warrâqîyah*. *Sûrah*-headings and recitation marks in red ink. The text is enclosed in two red and one blue rules. The margins carry marks relating to the division of the text such as *juz', sajdab, nisf, rub', thalâthat arbâ'* and the letter '*ayn*. This copy is anonymous and undated; probably late 12/18th or 13/19th century. The main text is followed by a prayer for the Prophet Muhammad in the form of a poem (forty

## A Collection of Qur'anic Codices

verses) beginning: *al-ṣalāh wa-al-salām 'alayka yâ rasûl Allâh*. The recto of the first folio has an invocation *yâ kabîkaj* and two unintelligible notes. Bound in light-brown morocco with onlaid medallions.

Purchased in 1922 for \$25.00 from C. Bryant of the 2nd Queen's Regiment, who obtained it in 1897 at Tirah on the North-Western Indian frontier.

### 11 (A26) Figure 7

ff.[415], 345 × 215 / 303 × 165 mm., 11 lines per page. Written on glossy, creamy non-European paper characterized by very fine laid lines, sometimes almost invisible. Fully vocalized Naskh hand (using *tarwîs* only occasionally and unsystematically), with *sûrah*-headings and recitation marks in red ink. At the beginning and the end of the codex there are eighteen and twenty blank end-papers. The Qur'anic text opens with a double-page illumination in gold, blue and dark-red. The pages are divided into two major panels: the inner carrying the text of the Qur'an and the outer filled with a commentary in Persian by Kamâl al-Dîn Husayn Kâshifî Sabzavâri (d.910/1504-5) and entitled *Mavâhib-i 'alîyah* (published in Tehran 1317-29 A.H.). The commentary is transcribed obliquely in an elegant Nasta'liq hand. The margins carry marks relating to the textual division of the Qur'an such as *juz'*, *nisf*, *rub'*, *thalâthat arbâ'* as well as corrections and short comments. Bound in dark-brown morocco with blind-stamped medallions and panels brushed with gilt. The front cover is now detached. No date of copying or name of scribe is given; probably 12/18th century.

### 12 (A27)

ff.[517], 315 × 228 / 242 × 157 mm., 9 lines per page. Written on biscuit colour, fine non-European paper having fairly regular laid lines. Fully vocalized Naskh-based hand with an interlinear Urdu translation in Nasta'liq. One of the characteristic features of this hand is the use, though somewhat unsystematic, of *tarwîs* on the *alif* and *lâm*, protruding to the left. The Qur'anic text is in black and the translation in red ink. The text is enclosed in a golden frame with red and blue rules on each side and the *sûrah*-headings are executed in red or white on

either a plain or golden background. Polychrome illumination is also used for the division of the text (*juz'*, *nisf*, *rub'*, *thuluth*, *saj-dab*). Marginal annotations in Urdu are headed by the letter *fâ'* (initial form) or *fâ'* and *ṣâd* (initial, suspended form), the latter written above the elongated horizontal stroke of the *fâ'*. The letter *ṣâd* is also used to indicate the end of the marginal note. These letters most probably represent the words *fâ'idab* (note) and *asl* (original text, i.e. the text enclosed in the central panel), being part of the original expression *fâ'idat al-asl* (cf.no. 8). A note on f.1a-b tells us that the translation is by 'Abd al-Qâdir, son of Walî Allâh ibn 'Abd al-Rahîm Muhaddith Dihlavî, and made in 1205/1790-91. The present copy is not dated, but is likely to have been executed either in 1205 or shortly afterwards. It is bound in red morocco with onlaid medallions, pendants and corner pieces (flap missing).

### 13 (A28) Figure 8

ff.[ca.300], 215 × 165 / 160 × 105 mm., 11 lines per page. Written on brown wove European paper. Fully vocalized African (Sûdâni) hand using brown ink. The characteristic feature of this hand is the existence of a *tarwîs* on the *alif* and *lâm*, projecting in most cases to the right but sometimes to the left, as well as the 'tail' on the *alif* of prolongation. The final *nûn* and *qâf* are not dotted, but the *fâ'* is. The folios are loose and in disorder. Simple decoration can be found on the first and last folios. Additionally, the word *hizb* is enclosed in a circular medallion divided into eight compartments and an inner circle. Other textual divisions include *nisf*, *rub'*, *thumn* and *sajdab*. The margins carry a number of corrections marked with the letter *kbâ'* (initial form) superscript and the placet (*sahha*) situated at the end of the correction. The verses are separated by means of three dots arranged in the shape of a triangle and sometimes outlined to give it the shape of a three-petalled florette. The copy is anonymous and undated (mid 13/19th century). The loose folios are protected by a blind-stamped, red morocco casing with a thong attached to the extreme end of the envelope flap.

Purchased from H. Khan Monif in 1942.



14 (A29) Figure 9

ff.[439], 575 × 325 / 360 × 210 mm., 15 lines per page. Written on non-European paper of biscuit colour and having fine and regular laid lines. Executed in a large, fully vocalized Bihârî hand with the initial, median and final lines in a thicker and larger script of Thuluth type (the height of *alif* being 30 mm.), with a systematic use of *tarwîs*, descending to the right. The Bihârî hand is entirely devoid of *tarwîs*. The volume begins with a double-page illumination containing five empty medallions per page. This is followed by another double-page illumination containing the opening verses of the Qur'an. Other double-page frontispieces are located on ff.105b-106a, 217b-218a and 324b-325a. Among the illuminated pieces are medallions carrying the words *juz'*, *rub'*, *nisf*, *thalâthat arbâ'* and *sajdah*, as well as *sûrah*-headings and the word *Allâh*. The main text is enclosed in a ruled panel and surrounded by two outer panels, the first containing selected key words written in red and blue and the other glosses in Persian arranged in a zigzag form. The main text is followed by a Persian commentary on *Sûrat al-Fâtihah* and *Fâl-i Muşhaf*, a divinatory poem (also in Persian) consisting of 193 verses and divided by means of the letters of the alphabet into groups of six or seven *dû bayt*. Bound in lacquer covers with simple decoration consisting of a central medallion and floral decoration in the corners and border. This copy is anonymous and undated; probably 10/16th century or earlier.

Purchased from H. K. Monif.

15 (A30)

ff. 85, 225 × 135 / 154 × 85 mm., 7 lines per page. Written on brown non-European paper characterized by wavy and thick laid lines, sometimes not easily visible. Fully vocalized Bihârî hand (using occasionally right-sloping *tarwîs*) in black ink and *sûrah*-headings, the word *Allâh* and the interlinear Persian translation in red ink. There is no textual division except for the letter '*ayn*'. The present codex is acephalous and contains a selection of short chapters beginning with *Sûrat Yâ Sîn* (36) and ending with *Sûrat al-Nâs* (114). Bound in a recent red morocco of European style (without

flap). The codex was remargined most probably at the time of binding. The folios 51-71 were added later. The colophon reads: *tarikb-i nuhum-i mâb-i Dhî al-Hijjah yawm al-ahad sanah [...{erased!}] [bi-yad?] khâkbây-i muharrirân faqîr kabîr*. W. Ivanow gave this manuscript to Dr. Casey A. Wood who estimated that it was originally written about 1487. This date is quoted in a note pasted on the verso of the last folio, written in Colombo, Ceylon, Dec., 10, 1926 and signed by Casey A. Wood.

16 (A31) Figure 10

A collection of eleven (out of the original thirty) parts (*juz'*) of the Qur'an executed before 4 Ramaḍân 908/1503.

(1) ff.[37], 233 × 164 / 167 × 115 mm., 7 lines per page. *Al-Juz' al-thânî* (ch.2, v.142—ch.2, v.222). The present part is imperfect at the end and after f.23. Written on thick, non-European paper with laid lines only faintly visible. Fully vocalized Bihârî hand (without *tarwîs*). The codex opens with an illuminated circular *shamsah* and a double-page frontispiece. The first two pages, the word *Allâh*, discs and florettes are executed in gold. The other illuminated elements include marginal medallions (*nisf*, *thalâthat arbâ'*) and the letter '*ayn*'. The text is enclosed in blue and red rule-borders. It is provided with an interlinear Persian translation in red ink. No date.

(2) ff.[45]. Written by the same hand as above, this codex contains *al-juz' al-khâmis* (ch.4, v.24—end of ch.4). It is provided with a *waqf*-note in Persian (ff.45a-b) dated 4th of Ramaḍân 908/1503. The note gives the founder's name as Karam Allâh Naşr Allâh al-Mukhâtib, an official in charge of property (*Mutaşarrîf-i Mamâlik-i Dîvân-i 'Alî*) in the ministry of Shâh Bâbâr (thus), Mañşûr al-Mulk ibn Mañşûr al-Mulk and states that if there is anything missing from this *juz'*, it should be brought to the attention of Mas'ûd Nûr Sundûqî (i.e. the keeper of the *şundûq*, a box for housing copies of the Qur'an) of the fort (*qal'ah*) R.τ(?)h.h.w.r, perhaps a corruption of Ranthambhor.

(3) ff.[33]. Executed by the same hand as the preceding parts, this is *al-juz' al-thâmin* (ch.6, v.111—ch.7, v.87). There is a lacuna after f.26

and the folios 27-33 had been supplied in a different and later hand, without Persian interlinear translation.

(4) ff.[43]. This is *al-juz' al-'âshir* (ch.8, v.41—ch.9, v.93) of the same copy of the Qur'an. The folios 20-25 are badly mutilated. Appended to this part is the same *waqf*-note as above dated 4 Ramaḍân 908/1503.

(5) ff.[48]. *Al-juz' al-khâmis 'ashar* (ch.17, v.1—ch.18, v.74). The folios 42-48 were supplied later and have not Persian interlinear translation.

(6) ff.[38]. *Al-Juz' al-sâdis 'ashar* (ch.18, v.75—ch.20). Provided with the same *waqf*-note as above.

(7) ff.[37]. *Al-Juz' al-tâsi' 'ashar* (ch.15, v.21—ch.27, v.59).

The folio 37b carries the introductory portion of the same *waqf*-note as above.

(8) ff.[42] *Al-Juz' al-hâdî wa-al-'isbrûn* (ch.29, v.45—ch.33, v.30). The folio 42a contains the end portion of the *waqf*-note.

(9) ff.[40]. *Al-Juz' al-râbi' wa-al-'isbrûn* (ch.39, v.32—ch.41, v.46). There is a lacuna after f.38. Appended to this *juz'* is the same *waqf*-note, dated 4 Ramaḍân 908/1503.

(10) ff.[44]. *Al-Juz' al-khâmis wa-al-'isbrûn* (ch.41, v.47—ch.45). It contains the initial portion of the same *waqf*-note.

(11) ff.[34]. Various fragments such as a portion of *al-juz' al-thâmin* and *al-juz' al-thâmin 'ashar*. The last folio carries the same *waqf*-note as above, dated 4 Ramaḍân 908/1503.

#### 17 (A32)

ff.[7], 220 × 155 / 180 × 105 mm., 11 lines per page. A portion of the Qur'an containing *Sûrat al-Mulk* (67), *Sûrat al-Dabr* (76) and *Sûrat al-Mursalât* (77). Written on non-European laid paper with thickish laid lines. Fully vocalized Naskh (with occasional but unsystematic use of *tarwîs*), Muḥaqqaq and golden Tawqî' scripts. The Muḥaqqaq is used in the initial, median and final lines of the page and the Tawqî' for headings. The fragment begins with a badly damaged circular medalion and a double-page illumination and has

the text divided into panels. The *sûrab*-headings, discs, rosettes are executed in gold and blue. The folios have been remargined. On the verso of the last folio there is a *waqf*-note written in the same hand as in no. 16 and dated Ramaḍân 908/1503.

#### 18 (A33) Two parts (*juz'*) of the Qur'an.

(1) ff.[37], 230 × 155 / 193 × 107 mm., 9 lines per page. *Juz'* 22 (ch.33, v.31—ch.36, v.21). Written on non-European paper having thick and fairly regular laid lines. Fully vocalized Bihârî hand, with occasional left-sloping *tarwîs*. The *sûrab*-headings, recitation marks and rule-borders are in red ink. The verses are divided by means of a yellow circle with one red dot inside and four dots on the circumference. Note on the verso of folio 37. No date (early 10/16th century).

(2) ff.[35], 210 × 150 / 170 × 108 mm., 7 and 9 lines per page. *Juz'* 23 (ch.36, v.22—ch.39, v.31). Executed by the same hand as above (1). No date.

\* \* \* \* \*

## Notes

I am greatly indebted to Dr. Eric Ormsby, Director of McGill University Libraries, for reading the final draft of this article and making valuable suggestions.

1. Adam Gacek, "Arabic calligraphy and the 'Herbal' of al-Ghâfiqî, a survey of Arabic manuscripts at McGill University," *Fontanus* 2 (1989), 37-53; idem, "Early Qur'anic fragments," *Fontanus* 3 (1990), 45-64.
2. See e.g. Solange Ory, "Un nouveau type de muṣḥaf; inventaire des Corans en rouleaux de provenance damasquine conservés à Istanbul," *Revue des études islamiques* 33 (1965), 87-49.
3. Nabia Abbott, "Arabic paleography," *Ars Islamica* 8 (1941), 67; A.F.L. Beeston et al. *Arabic literature to the end of the Umayyad period* (Cambridge; Cambridge University Press, 1983), 22-23, 527, 528.
4. This is e.g. the case of the codex of Khâlid ibn Ma'dân (d. 103/721-2), see 'Abd Allâh ibn Abî Dâ'ûd al-Sijistânî, *Kitâb al-maṣâhib* (Beirut: Dâr al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, 1985), 150.
5. 'Alî ibn Ismâ'îl ibn Sîdah, *Kitâb al-mukhassaṣ* (Cairo, 1318-20 A.H.), v.4, pt.13, 8.
6. Itimâd Yûsuf al-Qusayrî, *Fann tajlîd al-kitâb 'inda al-Muṣlimîn* (Baghdad: al-Mu'assasah al-'Âmmah lil-Âthâr wa-al-Turâth, 1979), 12.
7. Adam Gacek, "The ancient *sijill* of Qayrawan," *MELA Notes* 46 (1989), 26, 29, no. 11.
8. Jalâl al-Dîn al-Suyûtî, *al-Itqân fî 'ulûm al-Qur'ân* (Osnabrück, 1980), 2:869-870.
9. See Bakr ibn Ibrâhîm al-Ishbîlî (d. 628 or 629/1231 or 1232), "Kitâb al-taysîr fî ṣinâ'at al-tasfîr," *Revista del Instituto de Estudios Islamicos en Madrid* 7-8 (1959-60), 25. The use of a string or a leather thong of this kind can also be seen on outer, usually envelope-shaped cases used for extra protection of the bound codex.
10. Jeremiah P. Losty, *The art of the book in India* (London: British Library, 1982), 38-40.

11. See e.g. Adam Gacek, *Arabic manuscripts in the libraries of McGill University, union catalogue* (Montreal: McGill University Libraries, 1991), nos. 3/2, 13, 131, 140/1, 151, 225.

12. "Khatt," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, new ed., (4), 1127; F. Déroche, *Catalogue des manuscrits arabes, les manuscrits du Coran* (Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale, 1985), 13, 140; D. James, *Islamic calligraphy, sacred and secular writings* (Geneva: Musée d'art et d'histoire, 1988), 166.