Course of Islamic paleography by Jan Just Witkam

Tasks for the student:

1. Read the bibliographical description of the manuscript.

2. Carefully compare the images of the manuscript with the proposed transliteration. Get accustomed with peculiarities of this hand.

3. Transcribe in the same way a considerable portion of that part of the manuscript which has not been transliterated. Start where the given transliteration ends. See how far you come.

4. Note remarkable or unusual ligatures and make a list of these.

5. Make an inventory of all signs and peculiarities which are different from modern practice.

MS Leiden Or. 14.545 b and Or. 14.545 c.

Qur'ān. Two sheaves containing fragments from one and the Qur'ān on parchment, written in Ḥīḍāzī or Ḥīḍāzī-like script.

Fragment b, consisting of 1 leaf, with text: Qur'ān 16:96 - 16:114. A sheaf containing one leaf of the same Qur'ān as Or. 14.545c. One leaf of parchment, measuring 40 x 32 cm (approximately the original measure of the parchment), beginning with the hair side, with damaged edges. 19 lines to the page. 34 cm from the base of line 1 till the base of line 19. Brownish ink. Upright, māʾil, script, clearly readable on the recto side and rather faded on the verso side. Diacritics realized by oblique dot-like strokes. No vowel dots. Prickings in the inner margin.

The leaf bears a striking resemblance to MS Paris BnF Arabe 331 (see François Déroche, Les manuscrits du Coran. Aux origines de la calligraphie coranique. Paris 1983 (Bibliothèque Nationale. Département des Manuscrits. Catalogue des manuscrits arabes. Deuxième partie, Tome I, 1, p. 67 and plate IX), and has now been confirmed by Dr. Marie-Géneviève Guesdon of the BnF as coming from that same Qur'ān and exactly filling in the lacuna in the Paris fragment. Déroche classifies the script of the Paris manuscript Arabe 331 as Ḥīḍāzī-like.

Dividers between the āyāt: oblique strokes, sometimes two, sometimes three. On either side of the leaf is also a divider between āyāt different from this, a sort of small figure drawn in blue-grey colour over the original strokes, clearly from a later date.

Kept in and attached to a paper sheaf bearing a registration number: 24536, apparently referring to an earlier collection.

Contents: Sūra 16:96 (first words: māʿ īndakum) - 16:114 (last word: ni mata).

Fragment c, consisting of 1 leaf, with text Qur'ān 63:1 - 64:4. A sheaf containing one leaf of the same Qur'ān as Or. 14.545b. One damaged and broken leaf of parchment, measuring 35 x 34 cm (not the original measures), beginning with the hair side, with damaged edges. In all, 18 lines are wholly or partly visible. 30.3 cm from the base of line 1 till the base of line 17. Presently bound with the verso side (flesh side) first. Brownish ink. Upright, māʾil, script, clearly readable on the recto side and rather faded on the verso side. Diacritics realized by oblique dot-like strokes. No vowel dots. Prickings in the inner margin of the fragment, but here the leaf is bound in a way that the prickings can be observed in the outer margin.

The leaf bears a striking resemblance to MS Paris BnF Arabe 331 (see François Déroche, Les manuscrits du Coran. Aux origines de la calligraphie coranique. Paris 1983 (Bibliothèque Nationale. Département des Manuscrits. Catalogue des manuscrits arabes. Deuxième partie, Tome I, 1, p. 67, plate IX), and has now been confirmed by Dr. Marie-Géneviève Guesdon of the BnF as coming from that same Qur'an. Déroche classifies the script of the Paris manuscript as Ḥīḍāzī-like.

Dividers between the āyāt: oblique strokes, sometimes two, sometimes three, sometimes a conglomerate of smaller strokes, which are almost reduced to dots. On the verso side of the fragment is the division between sūra 63 and sūra 64. The last line of sura 63 has not been filled out, and between the two sūra's an extra blank line has been added. After the last word of sūra 63 is written in a smaller script almost without diacritics, possibly by the
copyist: yā alīf khatmat sūrat al-munāfiqīn, meaning: ‘yā alīf (= 11 <āya>), end of sūrat al-Munāfiqīn’. This is in exact conformity with the sūra endings in MS Paris BnF Arabe 331, as described by François Déroche.

Kept in and attached to a paper sheaf bearing a registration number: 24071, apparently referring to an earlier collection.


Or. 14.545c, recto side (Qurʾān 63:1-7):

...  

...  

Or. 14.545c, verso side (Qurʾān 63:7-64:4):

...  

...  

...
الحمد وهو على كل شيء قدير * هو الذي خلقكم فنكم كثر ومنكم ومنكم وحُكم بما تعلون بصائر * خلق السموم والأرض با لحق وصُوْرُناه * صوركم وليه ا لد، السموم والأرض و ساء تعلون والله علِم...
Leaf of a Qurʾan manuscript in Ḥiḡāzī-like script on parchment. MS Leiden Or. 14.545c, verso side (Qurʾān 63:7-64:4).
Leaf of a Qurʾān manuscript in Ḥīḍāṭi-like script on parchment. MS Leiden Or. 14.545b, recto side (Qurʾān 16:96-105).
Leaf of a Qurʾān manuscript in Ḥīḡāzī-like script on parchment. MS Leiden Or. 14.545b, verso side (Qurʾān 16:106-114).