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(J. RUSKA)

AL-**NŪSHARĪ** or AL-NAWSHARI, Abū Mūsā ᶜĪsā b. Muḥammad, general (said to be Turkish, but perhaps an Iranian from Khurāsān, since al-Samᶜānī, *Ansāb*, ed. Ḥaydarābād, xiii, 201-2, derives the *nisba* al-Nūshārī (*sic*) from Nūshār, a village in the district of Balkh) from the guard of the ᶜAbbāsid caliphs at Sāmarrā and governor of Damascus on various occasions during the caliphates of al-Muntaṣir, al-Mustaᶜīn and al-Muᶜtazz [*q.vv.*] from 247/861 onwards. At the accession of al-Muᶜtazz in 252/866, he expanded southwards into Palestine, displacing the Arab governor of Ramla [*q.v.*], ᶜĪsā b. al-Shaykh [*q.v.*], and subsequently defended his territories against rivals; but thereafter he fades from historical mention.

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(C.E. BOSWORTH)

NŪSHIRWĀN [see ANŪSHIRWĀN].

NUSKHA (A.). 1. In the central Islamic lands. *Nuskha* is the common Arabic word for "transcript", "copy", and in the manuscript era used in the meaning of "manuscript". Semantically directly related derived forms of the stem *n.s.kh* are *nassākh* are *nāsikh*, "copyist", and forms I, VIII and X of the verb *nasakha*, all meaning "to transcribe, to copy". In the following, *nuskha* will be more specifically used in order to denote the medium of the transmission of Islamic texts with exclusive reference to manuscripts. Other words for "manuscripts" which are commonly used are the Arabic *makhṭūṭāt*, the Persian *nuskha-hā-yi khaṭṭī*, and the Turkish *yazmalar*. Where in the following the examples are mostly taken from Arabic literature, one must realise that, especially for the earlier period, no significantly different circumstances are applicable to the transmission of Persian texts, or Turkish or other Islamic texts for that matter. It must in this connection be borne in mind that the process of transmitting handwritten texts in an Islamic cultural environment persisted till well into the 20th century, in contradistinction to the transmission of European texts, which were almost exclusively distributed in printed form ever since the art of printing became practiced, from the second half of the 15th century A.D. onward. The following aspects of *nuskha* in this sense will be distinguished here.

(a) *The rôle of the book in Islam.* The importance of the written word in Islam can hardly be underestimated. Muslims have always insisted that the Ḳurʾān, the divine revelation to the Prophet Muḥammad and God's own word, was Islam's own miracle, the *muᶜdjiza* [*q.v.*], that was on equal footing with the miracles by which the earlier prophets had proved the truth of their mission. Also, the non-Muslims are divided in the *Ahl al-Kitāb*, the People of the Book who did have a divine revelation, corrupted as it had become in the course of time, and those unbelievers who had no book at all. The concept of the Celestial Book was not alien to other, pre-Islamic, cultures in the Middle East, of course, and this culture of the written word did, of course, not originate in 7th-century Arabia. The Nabataean, Syriac, Hebrew, Aramaic, Coptic, Greek, Latin, Persian, Indian and Ethiopic literatures were there already, before Islam, with a considerable production of texts. According to a report by Ibn al-Kalbī [*q.v.*], Arabic books seem even to have existed in pre-Islamic al-Ḥīra [*q.v.*]. Islam's innovation seems to have been that the Book was given divine status, or rather that this divine status was so rigorously enforced. It is probably this new accent on the importance of the Holy Book that gave the book in Islam its central rôle. In the course of time, this pivotal importance of the book in Islamic culture has only increased and the result is, today, that there are many millions of Islamic manuscripts ranging in age from the earliest period till the beginning of the 20th century. When expressed in mere numbers of texts, the Islamic literature of the manuscript era can claim to be the largest literature on earth.

The Islamic book had become in less than two centuries after the death of the founder of Islam the repository of all knowledge of an increasingly internationally orientated culture, just as the Arabic language had developed into a main vehicle of that culture. Whereas in the earlier period the language of the manuscripts was Arabic, with the emergence of the local languages and the spread of Islam, manuscripts in the other Islamic languages, most notably Persian and Turkish, were made with the use of Arabic script. The number of languages for which Arabic script is used is only surpassed by those for which the Latin script is employed. In later time, Islamic manuscripts were also written in other alphabets than the Arabic. This mostly happened on the periphery of the Middle East, in countries such as China, Thailand, Sri Lanka and Indonesia. Within the Near Middle East, Albanian Islamic manuscripts may be mentioned in this respect.

(b) *Material aspects of the manuscript.* The study of the material, physical, aspects of the handwritten book is called codicology. This technical term for the study of the codex [see DAFTAR] is, by extension, also employed for the study of the non-codex forms of manuscripts. The earliest writing materials in the Islamic era were papyrus, *bardī* in Arabic, and parchment [see DJILD, RAḲḲ]. There are reports on a great variety of materials on which the earliest fragments of the Ḳurʾān were recorded (see the survey in Nöldeke and Schwally, *Geschichte des Qurāns*, ii, Leipzig 1919, 13-14), but, with the possible exception of leather or parchment and palm leaves, none of those can have been in regular use for the recording of texts in the Ḥidjāz during and shortly after the Prophet Muḥammad's lifetime. It is probably because of Islam's main orientation to the Hellenistic and Mediterranean civilisations that it chose papyrus and parchment as its prime writing materials, rather than palm leaf and tree bark, which were the common writing materials of South Asia at the time. When the Chinese techniques of manufacturing of paper [see KĀGHAD] were introduced from Central Asia into the Middle East in the course of the 8th century A.D., the production of manuscripts must have received an extra impulse. The advantages of paper over papyrus and parchment are obvious. Paper is a stronger material than papyrus and cheaper, though less durable, than parchment.

The bulk of Islamic manuscripts have been written on paper, although parchment has remained in use for special purposes, such as copies of the Ḳurʾān or special letters or documents, for a long time, and more in the Islamic West than elsewhere. Manuscripts made of a mixture of materials, paper and parchment, are known as well. The Leiden Latin-Arabic glossary (Or. 231), which recently was dated (by P.S. van Koningsveld, *The Latin-Arabic glossary of the Leiden University Library*, Leiden 1976, 38-9) to Toledo 1193 A.D., consists of quires of which the outer and inner leaves are of parchment and the remainder of paper. Even if this particular manuscript was a codicological anachronism or exception, its mixed composition conveys an impression of the gradual westbound introduction of paper as *the* material of which manuscripts are made. Locally used writing materials, dating from early, possibly even pre-Islamic times, have remained in use in many areas. An example of this is apparently the use of wooden chips for notarial documents in North Africa. Another example is the use in Indonesia (see 2. below) of a great variety of natural products for the production of manuscripts, both Islamic and non-Islamic ones. For comparative codicology, the results of Beit-Arié's research in the field of Hebrew manuscripts are significant, since Hebrew copyists in the Middle East, and elsewhere, tended to use local materials and to adopt local bookmaking techniques.

The common shape of the book was, from the earliest period of Islam onwards, that of the codex as it had developed in Europe in the post-classical period (quires consisting of folded sheets, sewn through their hearts and then sewn together as to constitute a book). This shape had, well before the advent of Islam, superseded the scroll, which was the common shape of the book in classical antiquity. It would appear that Gregory's law (see Beit-Arié) concerning the positioning of parchment leaves was not observed in Islamic manuscripts. The most common composition of quires in the entire Middle East is that of five sheets, folded into ten leaves containing twenty pages.

In the entire manuscript period, however, scrolls have remained in use in the Islamic realm as vehicles for special texts, e.g. genealogies, amulets and prayers, and for special features such as micrography. The common proportions of the Islamic manuscript are vertically orientated, meaning that its height is larger than its width. Only during a relatively short period of time, Kūfic Ḳurʾānic manuscripts are known to have been made exclusively in an oblong format. A tendency in Western Islam seems to have been to produce manuscripts in an almost square format, or at least with less difference between height and width than was commonly done in the East. Yet another shape, which was in use for notebooks, is the *safīna*. Its architecture is that of an oblong-shaped book, but it is used in a vertical position, the sewing of the leaves being in the top edge, very much as present-day noteblocks.

Whereas there developed an extensive indigenous paper production in the Islamic East and West, this only seems to have lasted till the end of the 9th/15th century. Islamic papers had no watermarks, but different types of chain lines in the paper can be distinguished. Sometimes the paper mould of Middle Eastern paper makers must have had such a fine sieve that no marks at all are visible in the structure of the indigenous paper. Natural, vegetal, components are often visible in this type of paper. Especially the older "medieval" papers have a certain thickness, sometimes verging on cardboard quality (which is particularly the case with one of the very oldest dated Arabic manuscripts on paper, the Leiden manuscript Or. 298, *Gharīb al-ḥadīth* by Abū ʿUbayd al-Qāsim b. Sallām, which dates from 252/866). Papers are often coloured, usually shades of brown or cream, whereas paper of different colours (bluish, pink) was often used to liven up a quire. By the end of the 9th/15th century, paper production had developed a firm footing in the countries across the Mediterranean, most notably in Italy. It was from there that increasingly paper was exported to the Middle East, and to such an extent that the indigenous industry became almost extinct. Only paper of very coarse quality continued to be made locally, and this was seldom used for the manufacture of the handwritten book. The Italian papers were often provided with downright Islamic watermarks, such as the *trelune*, the three crescents, or with watermarks that were not offensive to Muslims. Crosses, crowns or coats of arms of unbelieving kings in watermarks were apparently avoided in papers destined for export to Islamic countries. These imported papers were often given an extra touch, such as an extra coating, a slight colouring and a thorough polishing, so that they would have the same appearance as the earlier indigenously produced papers, which would make them more attractive to Muslims.

As a necessary by-product of the codex, the Islamic art of bookbinding (A., *tasfīr*) developed. The typical Islamic binding of the "classical" period consists of a full leather binding with a flap covering the fore-edge. The boards and flap often have a blind or gold stamped ornament in geometric shape. It might be rewarding if ornaments on Islamic bookbindings could be studied in comparison with those on Oriental carpets. Sometimes the title of the book is stamped on the outer side of the flap, but usually it is written with ink on the lower edge of the paper. Books were stored in a flat position on book shelves, and that is how their titles could be read. In a later period and more to the East (Persia and beyond, from around the 18th century onwards) also lacquer bindings were used. For Ḳurʾān manuscripts, especially those divided into a number of *adjzāʾ*, special types of furniture, cases, boxes and the like developed. About the production of ink we are reasonably well informed [see MIDĀD], but there is hardly any information on the practical use of different types of ink in Islamic manuscripts. There exists in Islam an extensive technical literature on the making of handwritten books, the manufacture of bookbindings and the production of inks.

(c) *Palaeographical aspects of the manuscript*. In the course of time, important and significant developments in the styles of writing of the Arabic script can be distinguished [see KHAṬṬ. ii, iii]. These can roughly be divided into a number of periods, and, in the later period, into geographically defined styles. The script employed in a handwritten book can, therefore, be used as a tool for the determination of the age and origin of a manuscript. From the methodological point of view, however, it must be added that the style of script is but one of a number of determining factors, and that it can, at best, be used as a corroborating argument, only in combination with other codicological and philological evidence. A holistic approach in this respect is the only safe way of looking at the handwritten book.

The discussion on the Arabic script must begin with the mention of the pre-Islamic development of the Nabataean script in and around the Arabian peninsula, which is only known from epigraphic evidence. There are no Islamic manuscripts written in this script. It is the direct forebear of the Arabic script which was used in Mecca and Medina in the first half of the 7th century A.D. to note down the divine revelation. Its basic set of graphemes had probably come into use in the Ḥid̲j̲āz around the middle of the 6th century A.D. There are reports by early Islamic historians pointing to another, ʿIrāḳī, origin of the Arabic script, but concrete evidence for this is entirely lacking. In the early Islamic period, the geometrically stylised and highly monumentalised calligraphic script of the Ḳurʾān manuscripts developed into several substyles. The original manuscript of the ʿUt̲h̲manic recension of the Ḳurʾān—the first book in Islam—and its direct copies do not appear to have been preserved, nor any other of the manuscripts of early texts, notebooks and registers, for that matter. Only Arabic papyri give contemporary evidence for this stage in the development of the Arabic script.

The best distinguished types of these so-called Kufic styles of writing are *māʾil* (used in the Ḥid̲j̲āz in the 2nd/8th century, with its characteristically right-leaning shafts), *mas̲h̲ḳ* (used in the Ḥid̲j̲āz and Syria, with its typically horizontal extensions, mainly for Ḳurʾān manuscripts and always in oblong format), western Kūfī (with round shapes) and eastern Kūfī (also called *ḳarmaṭī*, with its typically edgy forms). Later direct developments of these Kūfī script styles are *mag̲h̲ribī* (used in al-Andalus and till the present day in the Mag̲h̲rib [*q.v.*]) and *sūdānī* (used in sub-Saharan West Africa). The Kūfī and Ḥid̲j̲āzī styles, in turn, developed in the central lands of Islam into several types of bookhands. These can be seen in the (not too numerous) dated manuscripts which have survived from the 3rd/9th and 4th/10th centuries. Comparative evidence for these, now obsolete and somewhat archaic-looking bookhands is adduced in the older Christian Arabic manuscripts of that period, although the dated ones in this group appear to be even more scarce than the Islamic ones. There is no survey of this corpus of manuscripts. Only quite recently, François Déroche has succeeded in producing a more detailed typology of the script in early Ḳurʾān manuscripts on the basis of the collection in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. Application of this typology to other collections, most notably the *Şam Evrakı* in Istanbul and the fragments found in the Great Mosque of Ṣanʿāʾ, seems promising.

At the same time there developed from the earliest period of Islam onwards, for daily life purposes, mainly in Arabic papyri of administrative and occasionally also literary contents, cursive styles of scripts, in which the protoforms of the later classical styles of script can already be distinguished. The canonisation of these cursives into well-regulated and respectable calligraphic forms is in the Arabic tradition usually connected with the names of famous calligraphers such as the ʿAbbāsid *wazīr* Ibn Muḳla (died 328/939 [*q.v.*]) and Ibn al-Bawwāb (died 423/1032 [*q.v.*]), who are said to have invented these styles of writing and to have laid down their rules of orientation and proportion. There is a problem of authenticity of evidence, however. The description of the different calligraphic styles is, in most cases, not based on authentic models originating from the great calligraphers themselves or even from their lifetime, but rather on reports by historians such as Ibn al-Nadīm or al-Ḳalḳas̲h̲andī [*q.vv.*]. The models that are available are often reconstructions and interpretations by later calligraphers.

The classical six styles of calligraphy, called *al-aḳlām al-sitta*, which developed near the end of the 4th/10th century, are *nask̲h̲* (the most often used style of writing, the common indication for "bookhand", in which many styles can be distinguished, and—after a long development—the forebear of present-day printing type fonts of Arabic), *t̲h̲ulut̲h̲* (a monumental and decorative script which is used for titles, inscriptions, calligraphic panels and the like, but hardly ever to copy entire texts), *muḥaḳḳaḳ* (till the 8th/15th century in use for calligraphic Ḳurʾān copies), *rayḥānī* (a smaller and more slender version of *muḥaḳḳaḳ*), *tawḳīʿ* (used in the ʿAbbāsid chanceries, a script with round and flowing shapes with many interconnections) and *riḳāʿ* (a smaller version of *tawḳīʿ*, mostly used in titles, *sūra* headings, colophons and diplomas (*id̲j̲āza* [*q.v.*]). About the first of these six classical styles, *nask̲h̲*, the bookhand, it must be added that this is, in fact, an unworkable category. In the 4th-5th/10th-11th centuries *nask̲h̲* was a clearly distinguished style of writing, but in the course of time numerous styles of writing, which are very much different from one another, have been designated as *nask̲h̲*, thereby making the term itself useless.

The most important later, regionally distinguished styles are *taʿlīḳ* (a development of *tawḳīʿ* and used in important documents and diplomas; there are two variants, Persian *taʿlīḳ* and Ottoman *taʿlīḳ*), *nastaʿlīḳ* (originated in the 8th-9th/14th-15th centuries as a mixture of *nask̲h̲* and *taʿlīḳ* and is now very much in use in Iran and the Indian subcontinent), *s̲h̲ikasta* (a highly cursive style developed from *taʿlīḳ* and *nastaʿlīḳ*, and now mostly in use in Iran, where it has become a means of expression of the new Islamic Iranian identity), *dīwānī* (developed in the Ottoman chanceries, of uncertain origin and in the Arab world still in use for decorative epigraphy), *dīwānī d̲j̲alī* (a decorative variant of Ottoman *taʿlīḳ*), *ruḳʿa* (an edgy cursive style with remarkable contrast between thick and thin which developed in the end of the 12th/18th century in the Ottoman Empire and which has reached calligraphic peaks. A more common variant of this script has now become the cursive for daily use throughout the Middle East) and *siyāḳa* (a curious stenographic-like Arabic script in which diacritics are not used; it is of uncertain origin and was in use in the lower administrative echelons of the Ottoman Empire for cash registers [see DAFTAR] and the like). See for a more extensive description of the characteristics of these styles of writing, K̲H̲AṬṬ. ii, iii.

(d) *The manuscript as the medium of transmission of texts.* It should be borne in mind that, throughout the history of Islamic literatures, manuscripts have been abundantly available. They were never a rare commodity, though not all texts were available at all places at all times. The numbers given for the contents of royal libraries, exaggerated as they may seem and often are, are nevertheless a sign that numerous manuscripts were found there. Private collections of manuscripts, often with large and important holdings, were, and still are, a common feature in the Islamic world. Their existence was often guaranteed by converting them into a *waḳf* [*q.v.*]. The fact that a literary or theological education has always been an honorable pursuit and rewarding occupation for a Muslim has added to this. One can maintain that the combination of scholarly activities with texts and the respect for the book has resulted in this stupendous accumulation in Islam of handwritten books. They are in fact so numerous that their number in millions cannot precisely be estimated. The first effort ever to make a complete bibliographical survey of all Islamic manuscripts in the world is being undertaken by the London-based Al-Furqan Islamic Heritage Foundation, which was founded by Sheikh Ahmad Zaki Yamani. The publication by this Foundation of a

World survey of Islamic manuscripts has been in progress since 1992. It is an inventorisation of all known and as yet unknown collections containing Islamic manuscript materials, not only in Arabic, Persian and Turkish, but in a great number of other languages as well, including numerous materials in scripts other than Arabic.

The progress of bibliography can be illustrated by an example taken from Arabic literature. The Ottoman Turkish bibliographer Ḥādjdjī Khalīfa (died 1067/1657 [see KĀTIB ČELEBI]) mentioned around 15,000 titles in his great bibliography, *Kashf al-ẓunūn*. Almost three centuries later, Carl Brockelmann mentions around 25,000 different titles in the index of his *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur*. Brockelmann's figures concern titled works that have been preserved. Now, almost fifty years after Brockelmann, these figures must probably be multiplied by several times, due to the enormous growth of cataloguing activities in the past years.

The view by Pedersen, *The Arabic book*, 20, that scholarly activities were mainly centred on the mosque [see also MASDJID] is too narrow, even if it is exclusively applied to the pursuit of the theological sciences. Writing, reading, discussing, commenting upon books (and buying and selling them as well!) were mostly private activities which were widespread in all periods of time and in many strata of Islamic civilisation, but not primarily in a purely religious connection. With a Book as its distinguishing miracle, Islam was—one may say—bound to devote special attention and a central position to the book as a source of learning, and, thereby, give learning itself a special emphasis. It may be surmised that literacy was relatively high among Muslims and producing texts must have been a common occupation in an Islamic environment. The ensuing interrelatedness of different texts on the same subject is a problem with which philologists must try to cope.

These scholarly activities involved the copying of manuscripts and the transmission of texts. This could happen in many ways. Many manuscripts carry on their title-pages, in their margins or near their colophons information on their readership (*samāʿāt*, *ḳirāʾāt*), on the authorisation to use a certain text (*idjāza*), or on its chain of transmission (*riwāya*). Manuscripts often reveal traces of their collation (*muḳābala*) with the exemplar (*aṣl*), and sometimes with other copies as well. All these marks provide an insight in the use and manufacture of a handwritten book. They are hardly less important for our knowledge of the status of a text than the text of the manuscript itself.

The production of the handwritten book was, in most cases, a private affair between author or teacher and reader or student. Anyone who wished to own a manuscript either had to buy it, or to borrow and copy it if it was not for sale. If he wished to read it with the author or a respected authority in the field, he often had to travel around (*ṭalab al-ʿilm*). In Islamic higher education it was not uncommon that students noted down (*istimlāʾ* [see MUSTAMLĪ]) what their teacher dictated (*imlāʾ*) from his own work to them, with the casual remarks of the author often written in the margin (sometimes provided with the note *min fam al-muṣannif*, "from the mouth of the author"). From this it is clear that scriptoria of the mediaeval European type were not a common source of book production in the Islamic realm. It is known, however, that for a quick and multiple publication of a text in the manuscript era mass dictation was used. The exact circumstances of this type of mass production of manuscripts are unknown.

Royal or noble patronage made it possible that lavishly illustrated or illuminated manuscripts were produced, often in magnificent bindings, and from the Ottoman and Mughal sultans it is known that they instituted palace workshops for the production of royal copies of important texts.

(e) *The end of the manuscript era.* The art of printing became widespread in the Middle East only in the course of the 19th century, although it had been practiced by Muslims in Istanbul since 1729 [see MATBAʿA. B.2]. In the end, printing superseded copying by hand. The age of transition is in this respect the 19th century. It can be observed that the manufacture and distribution of texts took place, for a while, in the shape of printed and handwritten books simultaneously. This could even mean that manuscripts were copied from printed exemplars. Those authors who had, for whatever reason, no access to the new medium of printing were more or less obliged to revert to the traditional, time-proven way of copying by hand, for the distribution of their texts. In course of time this decreased. The outward appearance of the manuscript had its direct influence on the typographical design of the early printed book. This is particularly evident from the lithograph editions, of which many have been made in the Islamic world. Lithography involves a minimum of technical requirements and therefore became immensely popular, notably in India, Persia and Morocco, to name but the best-known areas. But also the Egyptian editions from Būlāḳ, made with movable type, betray in their lay-out their handwritten models.

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the Library of the University of Leiden ... A General Introduction to the Catalogue, Leiden 1982; and idem, *Establishing the stemma. Fact or fiction?*, in *MME*, iii (1988), 88-100. The scholarly journals *Islamic Art*, *Manuscripts of the Middle East* and *Muqarnas* contain articles on many aspects of the Islamic handwritten book. Electronic databases on codicological aspects of Middle Eastern manuscripts are maintained by M. Beit-Arié (Hebrew manuscripts) and François Déroche (early Islamic manuscripts).

(J.J. Witkam)

2. In Indonesia

Naskah designates here old manuscripts, Islamic or otherwise, alongside indigenous-language terms which designate the literary form and the basic text (*ḥikayat, carita, kidung, babad, serat tarikh sejarah, wawacan, pus(t)aka, pustaha)* and also the original text before being printed. Islam brought the Arabic script of the Ḳurʾān and the Arabic words necessary for its teaching. On the model of the extra characters added to the Arabic alphabet for Persian, Turkish and Urdu, Arabic characters were adapted for the vernaculars, and were called *pegon*, *jawi* or *melayu*, for these, see INDONESIA. iii. Languages, and for the *pegon* script of West Java, see H. Sukanda, *Agama Islam ngabudayakeun Basa jeung Sastra Sunda*, in *Kongres Bahasa Sunda*, Bogor 1988. The ways of writing have not been codified, but one can distinguish two sorts of scribes: the graduates of a *pesantren* [*q.v.*] and those of a *paguron* (Sukanda-Tessier, *Centres d'enseignements traditionnels de l'Islam...* , in *Séminaire Kiyai Haji Wasyid*, Banten 1988). (The term "Nusantarian", from Nusantara, is now used for all cultural matters relating to pre-Independen (17 August 1945) Indonesia, the term "Indonesian" being used only for post-1945 matters.)

The manuscripts in indigenous scripts correspond to three socio-cultural strata, distinguished as follows:

(1) The pre-Islamic mss. have as their bases olla, *lontar*, palm leaves, *nipah*, tree bark prepared for writing, *daluwang*, thin sheets of bamboo, gold leaf or sheets of red copper. The characters used, of Indian origin, are called *aksara* (Balinese, Bugi/Makasar/Bima, Javanese/Kawi, Sumatranese (Batak, Karo, Lampung, Mandailing, Rejang, Toba), Sasak, Old Javanese, Old Malay and Old Sundanese, corresponding to the respective languages. The oldest texts, in Old Javanese, come from the 12th-14th centuries, and in Old Sundanese from the middle of the 15th century (see J. Noorduyn, *Bujangga Manik*, in *BKI* [1982]). There are numerous catalogues and critical editions of Malay and Javanese mss., but the Old Sundanese ones present difficulties of decipherment not yet completely resolved, neither for those in the Manuscript Collection of the National Library at Jakarta and in foreign collections nor for those in numerous special collections in Indonesia and the *kabuyutan* (Sukanda-Tessier, *Le triomphe de Sri en pays soundanais*, in *PEFEO*, ci [Paris 1977]).

(2) The Islamic mss. have the same materials, with the following chronology: olla, 15th-18th centuries; tree bark, 16th-19th centuries; filigrained European papers, 17th-20th centuries; Dutch registers, local folio papers and note books, 19th-20th centuries. The Ḳurʾān, *ḥadīt̲h̲*, the combined precepts of the *rukun (al)-Islam* and *rukun (al)-Iman (share'at), fiḳh (safīnat ul-nad̲j̲ā, farāʾiḍ* and *duʿā)* are written in Arabic characters. Works on Ṣūfism, *tarekat Satariyah* and *Kodiriyah, duʿā, sulūk, ʿilmu (l)-ladunī, adab*, Arabic hagiography and epics of the Islamisation of Java/Malay, Javanese and Sundanese chronicles, not to mention an important corpus of works on the *ʿilmu falak*, cosmogony, medicinal plants, customs, rites and ancestral prayers linked to the agricultural round, calendars and propitiatory formulae of Hindo-Buddhist origin, are all written in *pegon*. The Islamic mss. are numbered in thousands, whether Malay from the various sultanates of Sumatra, Malaysia, Kalimantan, Maluku, Sulawesi and Lombok/Sumba/Sumbawa, or Sundanese from the sultanal courts of Banten and Cirebon or the princely ones of Banten, Galuh/Banyumas and Sumedang regions, or Javanese from the sultanates of Pajang, Demak, Mataram, Surakarta and Yogyakarta, or Balinese. The oldest of them, mostly from S̲h̲āfiʿī milieux, come from the beginning of the 16th century, including those of Sumatra and Banten. A large number of them are concerned with *taṣawwuf* [*q.v.*] and *ʿilm al-uṣūl*, whilst the *fiḳh* texts are comparatively few, contrary to the tendency visible from the second quarter of the 20th century and assimilated to a "fourth" wave of Islamisation. The Old Javanese mss. only stem from West Java from the middle of the 17th century onwards, legitimated by the sultanate of Mataram. Some of them, recopied in the course of Islamisation—a process which lasted for several centuries—contain a few Arabic words, such as *mas̲h̲hūr, sarwāl, wafāt, Nabī Muḥammad*, and are written in *aksara*.

(3) The first epics about Islamisation stem from pre-Islamic epics, oral and manuscript, salvaged by Islam from the 15th century onwards. Written in *aksara* on *lontar*, such as *Carita Nabī Yūsuf*, they represent a type of *daʿwa* through the didactic aspect of their message, which is no longer delivered in the form of a harangue or sermon. The heroes are of Arab origin, such as Amir Hamdjah, Umarmaya, Lukmanul Hakim, Sama'un, Ahmad Muhammad, ('ab) Durrahman-('ab)Durrahim, Abu(n) Nawas, or Malay, such as Hang Tuah, Ken Tambuhan, Indraputra and Muhammad Hanafiah, or Sundanese like Silihwangi, Kean Santang, Ogin Amarsakti, Munding Sari Wiramantri, Hasanuddin and Walangsungsang, or Javanese like Damarwulan, Candrakirana, Rara Mendut, Sekartaji, Sunan Rahmat, Raden Patah and Senapati. The historical texts recount either the first contacts with Islam (?12th-15th centuries), which met with strong resistance in West Java, or else the second Islamisation (16th century), which only affected the northern coastlands of Java and the merchant sultanates outside Java, or else the third wave of Islamisation (17th to the beginning of the 20th century).

These epics belong to a living tradition of the preservation of writings. For the scribes who copy them, the readers, reciters and listeners, they are a *amal* and a *ganjaran (baraka)* which will earn merit in the Next Life, just like good acts which are non-obligatory, *sunna*, which can entail the pardoning of sins, or the equivalent of *ʿibāda*. These much-revered epic texts are read and chanted in West Java from sunset to sunrise according to *belūk*, a vocal art which is in course of disappearing, marking religious, family and agrarian rites, and they are hedged by a narrow surveillance when, if they are very ancient ones, they were considered as sacred and preserved in the *kabuyutan* where they could only be seen at every twelfth *Mulud* (12 Rabīʿ I), together with ancient Arabic mss.

The indigenous Indonesian mss., which are of an unusual richness and number, have contributed extensively to unifying an entire nation in respect of the vast spread of differing religions and cultures. They have, moreover, given to Indonesian Islam its exceptional image of tolerance and examplariness.

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NUṢRATĀBĀD, the more recent name for the town of eastern Persia known in mediaeval Islamic times as Isfīdh, Sipih, Safīdj (written in al-Iṣṭakhrī and Ibn Ḥawḳal as Sanīdj, for *Sabīdj/Safīdj). It lay on what was the highway from Kirmān to Sīstān [*q.vv.*], and some of the classical Islamic geographers attributed it administratively to Sīstān and others to Kirmān, reflecting its position on the frontier between these two provinces. Muḳaddasī and others describe it as a flourishing and populous town with its water from *ḳanāt*s, the only town in the Great Desert. The ruins of the old town were still called by the local Balūč nomads, according to Sykes (1895), Ispi. Its modern successor Nuṣratābād (lat. 29°54′ N., long. 59°59′ E.), on the Kirmān-Bam-Zāhidān road, is the chef-lieu of a *bakhsh* or subdistrict of the same name in the *shahrastān* of Zāhidān; in *ca.* 1960 it had a population of 700 Balūč.

This Nuṣratābād is to be distinguished from the town of the same name in Sīstān proper, in the 19th century the administrative centre of the region and the modern Shahr-i Zābul; for this, see sīstān.

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NUṢRATĪ, Muḥammad Nuṣrat, Deccani Urdu poet of the 11th/17th century, whose work marks a stage in the history of Urdu language and literature. Born in the Carnatic as a relative of the ruling family there, he at first lived as a dervish but then moved to Bīdjāpūr [*q.v.*], where he became an official and the poet-laureate of the ᶜĀdil-Shāhī ᶜAlī II b. Muḥammad (1066-83/1656-72 [see ᶜādil-shāhs]. He wrote many poems, including *ḳaṣīda*s and *ghazal*s, but more especially a number of *mathnawī*s of substantial length. The most important of these was his *ᶜAlī-nāma*, a eulogy of his patron and the history of his wars with the Mughals and Marāthās [*q.vv.*], and this he claimed to be a new form, an amalgam of Hindu and Persian epics; Sadiq, 48, states that this was no idle claim. His romantic *mathnawī*s include the *Gulshan-i ᶜishḳ*, *Guldasta-yi ᶜishḳ* and *Taʾrīkh-i Iskandarī*.

The language of this poetry is archaic and difficult compared with modern Urdu, and characterised by hyperbole and conceits, but according to Saksena, 40, sweet, flowing and melodious.

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NUṢUB (a.), pl. *anṣāb*, Hebrew *maṣṣebōt*. The plural, more often used, denotes the blocks of stone on which the blood of the victims sacrificed for idols (*awthān*, *aṣnām*) was poured, as well as sepulchral stones and those marking out the sacred enclosure (*ḥimā*) of the sanctuary (cf. J. Wellhausen, *Reste*^{2}, 101-2; W. Robertson Smith, *Religion of the Semites*, 201 ff.). In nomadic circles, the *nuṣub* has been regarded in a few rare instances as the symbol of the divinity (cf. Ibn Saᶜd, *Ṭabaḳāt*, iv/1, 159-60; R. Dozy, *Essai sur l'histoire de l'Islamisme*, translated from the Dutch by V. Chauvin, Paris-Leiden 1879, 9, quoting, after Ibn Ḳutayba, a contemporary of the Prophet, Abū Radjāʾ al-ᶜUṭāridī. For the two examples, see T. Fahd, *Panthéon*, 26). Among sedentary populations, the *nuṣub*, a rough stone, has become the *ṣanam*, "a stone carved with the image of the idols of the Kaᶜba" (Yāḳūt, *Buldān*, iv, 622: *fanaḥata-hu ᶜalā ṣūrat aṣnām al-Bayt*). "In every house", writes Ibn Hishām, "the occupants took an idol (*ṣanam*) which they worshipped. Whenever one of them set out on a journey, the last thing which he did before leaving, and the first on his return, was to touch it" (*Sīra*, 54 = al-Azraḳī, *Akhbār*, 78: *tamassaḥa bihi*; cf. Gen. xxxi, 14), as a token of benediction for a successful enterprise and as an act of thanksgiving (on the *masḥ* and its magical and therapeutic power, see Ibn Saᶜd, ii/2, 14, 47; Goldziher, in *Or. Stud. Th. Nöldeke gewidmet*, i, 327, where numerous references to *ḥadīth* are to be found). To explain the proliferation of *anṣāb*, Ibn Hishām (51-2) makes them symbols of the Kaᶜba, brought with them by the sons of Ishmael when they finally left Mecca, while Yāḳūt (iv, 622) asserts that "the cult of stones among the Arabs in their encampments has its origin in their deep attachment to the idols (*aṣnām*) of the *ḥaram*." These texts reflect a state of affairs prior to the reform of Ḳuṣayy

THE ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF ISLAM

NEW EDITION

PREPARED BY A NUMBER OF
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EDITED BY

C.E. BOSWORTH, E. VAN DONZEL, W.P. HEINRICHS AND G. LECOMTE
ASSISTED BY P.J. BEARMAN AND MME S. NURIT

UNDER THE PATRONAGE OF
THE INTERNATIONAL UNION OF ACADEMIES

VOLUME VIII

NED — SAM

LEIDEN
E.J. BRILL
1995