

Arabic scripts and their characteristics as seen through the eyes of Mamluk authors by Adam Gacek

Recent years have seen the publication of a number of important Arabic texts on calligraphy¹. Naturally, not all of these works are of the same value and usefulness for the identification of various scripts. It is interesting, however, to notice that the most substantial compilations were produced in the Mamluk period. Thus, we have at our disposal *Minhāj al-iṣābah fī maʿrifat al-khuṭūṭ wa-ālāt al-kitābah* of Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Ziftāwī (d. 806/1403-4) and *ʿInāyah al-rabbānīyah fī al-ṭarīqah al-shaʿbānīyah* (also known as *Alfīyah fī ṣināʿat al-khaṭṭ*) of Zayn al-Dīn Shaʿbān ibn Muḥammad al-Āthārī (d. 828/1429), the two most important calligraphic sources of *Ṣubḥ al-aʿshā fī ṣināʿat al-inshā* by Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī al-Qalqashandī (d. 821/1418)². Among other Mamluk authors are Sharaf al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Sharīf al-Zaraʿī, known as Ibn al-Waḥīd (d. 711/1311-12)³, Aḥmad ibn ʿAbd al-Waḥhāb al-Nuwayrī (d. 733/1333)⁴, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Yūsuf, known as Ibn al-Ṣāʿigh (d. 845/1441-2)⁵, ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAlī al-Hītī (d. 891/1486)⁶ and Muḥammad ibn Ḥasan al-Ṭībī (fl. 908/1502-3)⁷. Furthermore, it ought to be remarked that the work of al-Ṭībī includes seventeen specimens of the scripts in use in his time⁸. In view of this, it is necessary to reassess our knowledge of penmanship as presented by the above mentioned authors.

Classical Arabic calligraphy boasts of a long list of scripts, most of which were associated with the chancery and used for issuing state documents and conducting correspondence. Because of the scarcity of literature on the subject we cannot say much about a number of these scripts, their exact relationship to each other or their features. With the coming of Ibn Muqlah (d. 328/940) and, later, Ibn al-Bawwāb (d. 413/1022) and Yāqūt al-Mustaʿṣimī (d. 698/1298), the greatest masters of calligraphy, the situation becomes somewhat clearer. A group of six scripts (*al-aqlām al-sittah*), namely *al-Muḥaqqaq*, *al-Rayḥān*, *al-Naskh*, *al-Thuluth*, *al-Tawqīʿ* and *al-Riqāʿ* came to establish themselves as the most widely used calligraphic hands⁹. The *aqlām al-sittah*, although not referred to in this way, feature prominently in the Mamluk texts.

Al-Qalqashandī, quoting Ibn al-Ḥusayn, states that the various Arabic scripts can be divided into two categories based on the relative roundness, curvature (*taqwīr*) or softness (*līn*), on the one hand, and straight-

ness, flatness (*baṣṭ*) or dryness, rigidity (*yabs*) of the descenders, i.e. sublinear strokes (*ʿarāqāt*, *taʿarīq*) on the other¹⁰. This distinction, referred to by al-Hītī and al-Ṣaydāwī as *al-aqlām al-muraṭṭabah* and *al-aqlām al-yābisah*, is of fundamental importance in the classification of Arabic scripts. These two categories, curvilinear ductus and rectilinear ductus, are referred to by Ibn Baṣīṣ as two bases (*aṣl*). The first *aṣl*, according to him, constitutes the rectilinear group: *al-Muḥaqqaq* and its derivatives, namely *al-Rayḥān* and *al-Naskh*¹¹. The placing of *al-Naskh* in this group is very significant as this script in the minds of many theoreticians of the art of calligraphy and some calligraphers is associated with a curvilinear ductus¹². The second *aṣl*, i.e. the curvilinear ductus, consists of *al-Thuluth* and its relatives, that is *al-Tawqīʿāt* and *al-Riqāʿ*¹³. Another characteristic of these two categories of scripts is expressed by the word *muḥaqqaq* (lit. exact, accurate, i.e. having its individual letters executed in a perfect manner) and *mutlaq* (lit. unrestrained, i.e. allowing its letters to be assimilated and interlaced)¹⁴.

Arabic scripts are often grouped according to the overall function which they are suited for. We thus distinguish another two groups: chancery hands (*khuṭūṭ al-kuttāb*) and book hands (*khuṭūṭ al-warrāqīn*), the latter having a specific category in itself known as Qurʿanic hands (*khuṭūṭ al-maṣāḥif*)¹⁵. The *khuṭūṭ al-kuttāb* are usually associated with the curvilinear ductus, whereas *khuṭūṭ al-warrāqīn* with the rectilinear ductus. There is, however, quite a lot of overlap between them, particularly regarding those chancery hands which are also often used as Qurʿanic hands. The function and size of a script, as we are reminded by N. Abbott, went hand in hand with, and had a direct bearing on, the 'angularity' (i.e. straightness) and roundness of the script: the larger the script, the straighter its descenders, and the smaller the script, the more rounded its sublinear curves. This is particularly visible in the curvilinear ductus, but is also applicable to the rectilinear category¹⁶.

Connected with the size of the script are further two features, namely the existence or non-existence of barbed heads or serifs (*tarwīs*) and the closed head-loops of 'blinded eyes' of some letters (*ṭams*). The application of *tarwīs* decreases with the size of the script, whereas *ṭams* tends to increase¹⁷.

In addition to this classification of scripts into rectilinear and curvilinear, we find another approach, based this time on the idea of principal (*aṣl*) and derived (*far'*) scripts. Al-Nuwayrī and al-Qalqashandī state that there are five fundamental scripts (*al-uṣūl al-kham-sah, al-aqlām al-uṣūl*) from which other scripts are derived. These are *al-Muḥaqqaq, al-Naskh, al-Riqā', al-Tawqī'āt* and *al-Thuluth*¹⁸. Al-Āthārī, however, divides all scripts into seven *uṣūl (al-uṣūl al-sab'ah)* and seven *furū'*: *al-Thuluth, al-Riqā', al-Muḥaqqaq, al-Naskh, al-Tawqī', al-Waddāh* and *al-Ṭumār* on the one hand, and *al-Ash'ār, al-Ghubār, al-Rayḥān, al-Manthūr, Khafīf al-Thuluth, al-Hawāshī* and *al-Musalsal* on the other¹⁹. According to al-Ziftāwī these fourteen scripts can have, in their turn, three varieties: *thaqīl* (large), *khafīf* (small) and *muwallad* (mixed), thus bringing the total number of scripts to forty-two²⁰.

It is apparent from the above that the size of the script is an important factor in the process of identification. Looking at the specimens of major scripts provided by al-Ṭībī one can arrange them as follows:

1. *Jalīl al-Thuluth, Jalīl al-Muḥaqqaq, al-Ash'ār* (ca. 25 mm.)
2. *al-Thuluth al-Mu'tād, al-Musalsal, al-Tawāqī'* (large) (ca. 15 mm.)
3. *al-Tawāqī', al-Maṣāḥif, al-Naskh al-Faddāh, al-Riyāshī, al-Lu'lu'ī* (ca. 10 mm.)
4. *al-Rayḥān, al-Manthūr* (ca. 5 mm.)
5. *al-Riqā', al-Muqtarin, al-Hawāshī, al-Ghubār* (ca. 3 mm.)

It is interesting to observe from the above that a large *Tawāqī'* is of the same size as *al-Thuluth al-Mu'tād*, but its letters are more interlocked than in *al-Thuluth*. *Al-Rayḥān* emerges as a small script, the same size as *al-Naskh*, which, even though not indicated in a specific way, is used for the most part of the introductory text and illustrated under the name of *al-Manthūr*. These same scripts as illustrated by al-Ṭībī, when arranged according to the previously mentioned classification based on the curvature of sublinear strokes, fall into three categories:

1. curvilinear (*Jalīl al-Thuluth, al-Thuluth al-Mu'tād, al-Tawāqī', al-Musalsal, al-Lu'lu'ī, al-Riqā', al-Muqtarin, al-Ghubār*)
2. rectilinear (*Jalīl al-Muḥaqqaq, al-Maṣāḥif, al-Rayḥān, al-Naskh al-Faddāh, al-Manthūr, al-Hawāshī*)
3. hybrid (*al-Ash'ār, al-Riyāshī*)

As can be seen from the list of scripts which follows, not all the authors were of the same mind when trying to describe some of these scripts. Is *al-Ash'ār* a hybrid of *al-Muḥaqqaq* and *al-Thuluth*, or *al-Muḥaqqaq* and *al-Naskh*? Is *al-Ri'āsī* another name for *al-Tawqī' al-Muṭlaq*, or is it a script based on *al-Muḥaqqaq* and *al-Naskh*? Similar questions can be asked about *al-Ghubār* and *al-Manthūr*. What are we to do with these seemingly contradictory statements? It is difficult to say at this stage. It could be that part of the problem can be attributed to individual styles or the preference

of a calligrapher. What is more important, however, is that the various statements collected below should give us a clearer and more coherent picture of the various scripts and their characteristics.

AL-ASH'ĀR (lit. hairs, hair-strokes)

Also known as *al-Mu'annaq* (lit. elegant) and *al-Musha'ar*²¹. According to Ibn Baṣīṣ, *al-Ash'ār* is a hybrid of *al-Muḥaqqaq* and *al-Thuluth* and was developed by his father²². This view is shared by al-Nuwayrī, al-Āthārī and al-Ṣaydāwī²³. It is, however, vigorously opposed by al-Ṭībī, who claims that *al-Ash'ār* is a compound (*murakkab*) of *al-Muḥaqqaq* and *al-Naskh*, and should be executed with a nib suitable for either of these two scripts²⁴. Al-Āthārī adds that the breadth of its nib is six horse-hairs²⁵. In relation to *al-Muḥaqqaq*, the letters *wāw, nūn, yā'* and *rā'* in *al-Ash'ār* are characterised by their shortness (*qaṣr*) and depth (*ta'mīq*)²⁶.

AL-BAṬĀ'IQ see *al-Ghubār*

AL-DHAHAB (lit. gold)

A script which takes its name from writing in gold ink. As far as its letter-shapes are concerned it can be written either in the form of *al-Thuluth* or *al-Tawqī'*, except that it has no hair-lines (*tash'īr*) on account of the fact that its letters are outlined in another colour (*tazmīk*)²⁷.

FADDĀH al-NASKH see *al-Matn*

AL-GHUBĀR (lit. dust)

Also known as *Ghubār al-hulbah* 'the dust of the fenugreek'²⁸ and *Ghubār al-hilyah* 'the dust of the decoration'²⁹. Its other appellations are *al-Janāḥ* (lit. wing)³⁰ and *al-Baṭā'iq* (lit. slips of paper)³¹ on account of its being used for messages carried by pigeon-post. This script, being the smallest of all Arabic scripts, is often contrasted with *al-Ṭumār* which is at the other end of the spectrum³². According to al-Nuwayrī it is a smaller version (*khafīf*) of *al-Riqā'*, as *al-Hawāshī* is a smaller version of *al-Naskh*³³. However, al-Qalqashandī tells us that *al-Ghubār* is derived from *al-Riqā'* and *al-Naskh*³⁴ and al-Āthārī regards it simply as a smaller variety of *al-Naskh* (*khafīf al-Naskh*)³⁵. *Al-Ghubar*, says al-Qalqashandī, has no *tarwīs* and no *ṭams*, even though some 'blinding' of letters may be allowed³⁶. The filling-in of the 'eyes' of certain letters is certainly a feature of *al-Ghubār* as executed by al-Ṭībī³⁷.

AL-HAWĀSHĪ (lit. glosses)

A smaller variety of *al-Naskh*³⁸.

AL-JANĀḤ see *al-Ghubār*

AL-LU'LU'Ī (lit. pearly)

A script akin to *al-Thuluth al-Khafīf* but whose vertical and flat strokes (*muntaṣabāt wa-mabsūṭāt*) are less than five dots in length³⁹. For an illustration see al-Ṭībī, pp. 85-88.

AL-MANTHŪR (lit. scattered, dispersed)

A script characterised by employing large spaces between words⁴⁰. According to al-Nuwayrī it is a derivative of *al-Naskh*, but al-Āthārī regards it as version (*far'*) of both *al-Riqā'* and *al-Naskh*⁴¹.

AL-MAṢĀHIF (lit. Qur'anic codices)

Not characterised explicitly by any of the Mamluk authors, this script is, however, illustrated by al-Ṭībī⁴². It is not a larger version of *al-Naskh* but, most probably, a smaller-size *Muḥaqqaq* (*khafīf al-Muḥaqqaq*)⁴³.

AL-MATN (lit. body of the text)

Also known as *al-Naskh al-Faddāh* (lit. divulging secrets)⁴⁴, *Faddāh al-Naskh*⁴⁵ and *al-Waddāh* (lit. clear)⁴⁶. It is a larger version of *al-Naskh*⁴⁷. Al-Āthārī tells us that *al-Waḍ.ḍāh* is *al-Naskh* with open loops (*fath al-'uqad*): in other words, it has no *ṭams*, and its nib is six horse-hairs in breadth⁴⁸. Furthermore, when discussing the execution of the *basmalah*, al-Āthārī says that the *basmalah* of *al-Waddāh* is like *al-Naskh al-Jalīl*, i.e. the large *Naskh*⁴⁹. The *Faddāh* of al-Ṭībī is characterised by a complete lack of *tarwīs*.

AL-MU'ANNAQ see *al-Ash'ār*

AL-MUḤAQQAQ (lit. exact, accurate)

One of the two principal scripts (*aṣl*), *al-Muḥaqqaq* represents a rectilinear (*mabsūt, yābis*) ductus, whose individual letters are perfectly executed⁵⁰. It was created, says al-Qalqashandī, for the writing of *ṭughrās*⁵¹. *Al-Muḥaqqaq* has *tarwīs* but no *ṭams*. The end of the *alif* does not curve, unlike *al-Thuluth*, and its height is nine or ten dots⁵². Like *al-Naskh*, it employs *al-lām alif al-warrāqīyah*, that is a letter characteristic of book hands⁵³. For an illustration of a large *Muḥaqqaq* (*Jalīl al-Muḥaqqaq*) see al-Ṭībī, pp. 67-72.

AL-MUQTARIN (lit. connected, linked)

A derivative of *al-Riqā'*, *al-Muqtarin*'s main characteristic is that it is executed in lines grouped in two⁵⁴.

AL-MUSALSAL (lit. chained, interlocked)

A relative of *al-Tawqī'*, its main feature is that all its letters are interlocked, and the *alif* and *lām* look like links in a chain⁵⁵.

AL-MUSHA'AR see *al-Ash'ār*

AL-NASKH (lit. copying, transcription)

One of the most commonly used scripts which, along with *al-Rayḥān*, belongs to the rectilinear category⁵⁶. Ibn Baṣīṣ and al-Nuwayrī tell us that it was used for copying books of hadith, law, grammar etc⁵⁷. According to al-Ṣaydāwī it lacks exactness (*dabt*) in relation to *al-Rayḥān*, but it is close to *al-Riqā'* because of the way its letters are joined (*ta'liq*) and on account of employing *ṭams*⁵⁸. Other features of *al-Naskh* are the use of *al-alif lām al-warrāqīyah* and the absence of *tarwīs*⁵⁹.

AL-NASKH AL-FADDĀH see *al-Matn*

AL-RAYḤĀN (lit. sweet basil)

A smaller version of *al-Muḥaqqaq*⁶⁰, like *al-Hawāshī* in relation to *al-Naskh*⁶¹. All the letter-shapes in *al-Rayḥān* are the same as in *al-Muḥaqqaq*, except that they are finer⁶². According to al-Āthārī, *al-Muḥaqqaq* is bigger than *al-Rayḥān* by half of the latter's size⁶³.

AL-RĪ'ĀSĪ (lit. connected with Dhū al-Rī'āsātayn)

Also referred to as *al-Riyāsī*⁶⁴ and *al-Riyāshī*⁶⁵, this script, which takes its appellation from Dhū al-Rī'āsātayn al-Faḍl ibn Sahl (d. 200/816), a secretary of Caliph al-Ma'mūn, is regarded by al-Qalqashandī as being the same as *al-Tawqī'* *al-Muṭlaq*⁶⁶. However, Ibn al-Ṣā'igh says that this is incorrect because *al-Riyāshī* is closer to *al-Muḥaqqaq* and *al-Naskh*⁶⁷. Looking at the specimen of this script as provided by al-Ṭībī (pp. 83-84) one cannot fail to notice that the *tarwīs* of the letters *alif* and *lām* projects downwards to the left and not to the right as, for example, in *al-Thuluth* and *al-Muḥaqqaq*.

AL-RIQĀ' (lit. pieces of writing material)

Used for writing letters of a less lofty nature, its letter-forms are those of *al-Thuluth* and *al-Tawqī'*, but it is finer and rounder than the latter⁶⁸. Unlike *al-Thuluth* and *al-Tawqī'* it rarely takes *tarwīs* and as far as *ṭams* is concerned it is applied mostly for the median and final *'ayn*, as well as *fā'*, *qāf*, *mīm*, *wāw* and the loop of *al-alif lām al-muḥaqqaqah* (∩)⁶⁹. According to al-Hītū and al-Ṣaydāwī its *alif* is five dots high⁷⁰. Al-Qalqashandī adds that *al-Riqā'* has a unique feature, namely its *alif* slanting to the right⁷¹. Finally, many of its letters are interlocked (*musalsal*)⁷².

AL-TAWQĪ' (lit. signature)

Also known in its plural form: *al-Tawqī'āt* and *al-Tawāqī'*. This script takes its name from signatures and decrees issuing from caliphs and viziers⁷³. It is derived from *al-Thuluth* and, according to al-Ṣaydāwī, represents its smaller variety (*khafīf al-Thuluth*)⁷⁴. The larger version of *al-Tawqī'* is referred to by al-Hītū as *al-Tawāqī' al-Kibār* or *al-Tawāqī' al-Thuluthīyah*; he adds that its *alif* is seven dots high⁷⁵. The smaller version is referred to by him as *al-Tawāqī' al-Riqā'īyah*, thus clearly linking the three scripts (*al-Thuluth*, *al-Tawqī'* and *al-Riqā'*) together⁷⁶. Al-Qalqashandī mentions two types of *al-Tawqī'* but deals with only one, namely *al-Tawqī' al-Muṭlaq*⁷⁷. According to him the use of *tarwīs* in *al-Tawqī'* is obligatory⁷⁸, but Ibn al-Ṣā'igh allowed it to be omitted in some letters⁷⁹. As regards *ṭams*, opinions varied: for al-Āthārī its use was optional for the median *'ayn*, and *fā'*, *qāf*, *mīm*, *wāw* and the *alif lām al-muḥaqqaqah*; whereas Ibn al-Ṣā'igh favoured the *ṭams* of the final *'ayn*⁸⁰. Most certainly the filled-in loop of the median *'ayn* (*al-'ayn al-mu'allaqah*) is a feature of *al-Tawqī'* and *al-Riqā'*, says al-Qalqashandī⁸¹. Another feature of *al-Tawqī'* is that its letters are often joined by means of hair-lines (*tash'irāt*)⁸².

AL-THULUTH (lit. one-third)

One of the two principal scripts (*aṣl*), *al-Thuluth* is the main representative of the curvilinear category (*muqawwar*, *layyin*, *muraṭṭab*)⁸³. There are two theories as to its appellation: the first is that in relation to *al-Ṭumār*, which was a typical *mabsūt*-script, only one-third of its strokes are straight; and the second, that the width of its nib is a third of the width of the nib used for *al-Ṭumār* (i.e. eight horse-hairs)⁸⁴. These two theories are not mutually exclusive but complementary. Al-Qalqashandī distinguishes two varieties of *al-Thuluth*: *thaqīl* (lit. heavy) and *khaṭīf* (lit. light)⁸⁵. The height of the *alif* in *al-Thuluth* can be seven or nine dots⁸⁶. It slants slightly to the left and 'resembles the figure of a man looking at his feet', says al-Hītī⁸⁷. The *tarwīs* in *al-Thuluth* is obligatory and there is no *tams*⁸⁸.

AL-ṬUMĀR (lit. scroll, large format of writing material)

The largest of all scripts, *al-Ṭumār* takes its appellation from the largest format of paper, known by the name of *ṭumār*⁸⁹. It was written with a nib whose breadth was twenty-four horse-hairs, and was regarded as the most rectilinear of all scripts⁹⁰. *al-Ṭumār* was used for writing signatures (*alāmāt*) of caliphs and sultans⁹¹. Al-Nuwayrī and al-Qalqashandī mention two varieties of *al-Ṭumār*: large (*al-Ṭumār al-Kāmil*) and small (*al-Ṭumār al-Mu'tād*, *Mukhtaṣar al-Ṭumār*)⁹². Al-Qalqashandī adds that there were two ways of executing it: applying either the rules of *al-Muḥaqqaq* or *al-Thuluth*⁹³. Al-Āthārī, however, states that *al-Ṭumār* should be written like *al-Muḥaqqaq*⁹⁴.

AL-WADDĀḤ see *al-Matn*

NOTES

¹ See my 'al-Nuwayrī's classification of Arabic scripts', *Manuscripts of the Middle East*, 2 (1987, p. 126-130), which contains a select bibliography of classical and post-classical texts on penmanship.

² The works of al-Ziftāwī and al-Āthārī were edited by Hilāl Nājī and published in *al-Mawrid*, 15, no. 4 (1986), pp. 185-248 and 8, no. 2 (1979), pp. 221-284 respectively. *Ṣubḥ al-a'shā* was originally published in Cairo, 1963. The information on calligraphy is to be found in vol. 2, pp. 463-465, vol. 3, pp. 1-222 and vol. 6, pp. 194-195. See also his abridgement of *Ṣubḥ al-ash'ā* called *Ḍaw' al-ṣubḥ al-musaffar*, ed. Maḥmūd Salāmah (Cairo, 1906), pp. 181-192.

³ See *Sharḥ Ibn al-Wahīd 'alā rā'iyat Ibn al-Bawwāb*, ed. Hilāl Nājī (Tunis, 1967) and 'Sharḥ al-manzūmah al-mustatābah fī 'ilm al-kitābah', ed. Hilāl Nājī, *al-Mawrid*, 15, no. 4 (1986), pp. 259-270, being an anonymous compilation consisting of comments by Ibn al-Wahīd and Ibn Baṣīṣ (also referred to as Ibn al-Baṣīṣ, d. 716/1317) on the *qaṣīdah* of Ibn al-Bawwāb. Ibn al-Wahīd is also the author of a *qaṣīdah* rhyming in *nūn* (*al-nūniyah*), excerpts of which are to be found in *Jāmi' mahāsīn* (see below) of al-Ṭībī. For biographical information relating to Ibn al-Wahīd, Ibn Baṣīṣ and

other Mamluk calligraphers see 'Abbās al-'Azzāwī, 'al-Khaṭṭ wa-mashāhīr al-khaṭṭātīn fī al-waṭan al-'arabī', *Sumer* 38, no. 1/2 (1982), pp. 284-302.

⁴ Al-Nuwayrī's text on calligraphy is included in his *Nihāyat al-arab*, vol. 5, pt. 9, pp. 220-223 (see above, note 1).

⁵ The author of *Tuḥfat ulī al-albāb fī ṣinā'at al-khaṭṭ wa-al-kitāb*, ed. Hilāl Nājī (Tunis, 1967).

⁶ See his *al-'Umdah: risālah fī al-khaṭṭ wa-al-qalam*, ed. Hilāl Nājī (Baghdad, 1970).

⁷ The author of a very important album of calligraphy entitled *Jāmi' mahāsīn kitābat al-kuttāb*, ed. Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Munajjid (Beirut, 1962). To this list of Mamluk authors has been added 'Abd al-Qādir al-Ṣaydāwī, even though we are not sure when exactly he lived. His work 'Waḍḍāḥat al-uṣūl fī al-khaṭṭ', ed. Hilāl Nājī (*al-Mawrid*, 15, no. 4 (1986), pp. 156-172) uses the language of al-Hītī. Indeed, one has the impression that his *urjūzah* is a versified version of al-Hītī's 'Umdah.

⁸ In fact, there are nineteen scripts illustrated in his album. The invention of two of these scripts is attributed to al-Ṭībī himself (*wada'ahu kātibuhu*). They are *al-'Iqd al-Manzūm* (similar to *al-Musalsal*) and *al-Ta'līq*. The *Ta'līq* of al-Ṭībī is however quite different from the Persian *Ta'līq*, a chancery hand proper, which is characterised by its *tarwīs* protruding to the left (as opposed to the right, as in most cases) and its *alif* having a well-defined hook, at its lower end, which often joins with the following letter, in particular the letter *lām*.

⁹ Gacek, 'al-Nuwayrī's classification', note 8.

¹⁰ Al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ*, vol. 3, p. 11.

¹¹ 'Sharḥ al-manzūmah', p. 269; al-Qalqashandī, *ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 11.

¹² See e.g. Mohamed U. Zakariya, *The calligraphy of Islam, reflections on the state of the art* (Washington, 1979), p. 25 and *Idem*, 'Observations on Islamic calligraphy', *Fine print*, 4, no. 4 (1978), p. 100. One of the features of this group is the *alif lām al-warrāqīyah* (ﻻ), which is not found in the curvilinear ductus. The sublinear strokes in Persian and Turkish *Naskh* are much rounder and, perhaps, this is the reason for looking at this script as being based on *Thuluth* rather than *Muḥaqqaq*. A comparison between *al-Naskh al-Faddāḥ* of al-Ṭībī and *al-Maṣāḥif* confirms the fact that these two scripts share many common characteristics (cf. note 59).

¹³ 'Sharḥ al-manzūmah', p. 269; al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ*, vol. 3, p. 11.

¹⁴ Al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ*, vol. 3, p. 22.

¹⁵ N. Abbott, *The rise of the North Arabic script and its kur'ānic development* (Chicago, 1938), pp. 17, 20. *Idem*, 'Arabic paleography', *Ars Islamica* 8 (1941), p. 95.

¹⁶ Abbott, *North Arabic script*, p. 32.

¹⁷ For the discussion of *tarwīs* and *tams* see al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ*, vol. 3, pp. 46-47.

¹⁸ Al-Qalqashandī, *Ḍaw' al-ṣubḥ*, p. 184; al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab*, vol. 5, pt. 9, p. 220; Gacek, 'al-Nuwayrī's classification', p. 126-7.

¹⁹ Al-Āthārī, 'al-'Ināyah al-rabbāniyah', p. 229.

²⁰ Al-Ziftāwī, 'Minhāj al-iṣābah', p. 192.

²¹ See al-Ziftāwī, 'Minhāj', p. 241; al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ*, vol. 2, p. 463; *ibid.*, *Ḍaw' al-ṣubḥ*, p. 177; al-Ṣaydāwī, 'Waḍḍāḥah', p. 164; al-Ṭībī, *Jāmi' mahāsīn*, pp. 18, 90-94.

²² 'Sharḥ al-manzūmah', p. 269.

²³ *Nihāyat al-arab*, p. 222; 'al-'Ināyah', p. 270; 'Waḍḍāḥah', p. 164.

- ²⁴ *Jāmi' mahāsin*, p. 18.
- ²⁵ 'Al-'Ināyah', p. 270.
- ²⁶ Al-Ṣaydāwī, 'Waddāḥah', p. 164; al-Ṭībī, *Jāmi'*, p. 18. M.U. Zakariya believes that 'most scripts that are identified as Muḥaqqaq are actually Ash'ār' (see his *Calligraphy*, p. 22).
- ²⁷ Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab*, p. 222. See also Gacek, 'Al-Nuwayrī's classification', note 23.
- ²⁸ See e.g. Ibn al-Sīd al-Batalyawī (d. 522/1127), *al-Iqtidāb fī sharḥ adab al-kuttāb* (Beirut, 1973), pp. 88, 90.
- ²⁹ See e.g. Ibn al-Ṣā'igh, *Tuḥfah*, p. 37. Both *ḥulbah* and *ḥilyah* might be appropriate, for as M. Levey remarks: 'The dust was spread on parchment and then blown off. A thin film remained on which the design was drawn. It was later inked in.' ('Mediaeval Arabic bookmaking and its relation to early chemistry and pharmacology', *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, 55, 4, 1962, p. 41, note 289).
- ³⁰ Al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ*, vol. 3, p. 128.
- ³¹ Ibn al-Ṣā'igh, *Tuḥfah*, p. 100.
- ³² Al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ*, vol. 3, p. 48.
- ³³ *Nihāyat al-arab*, p. 222
- ³⁴ *Ṣubḥ*, vol. 3, p. 128.
- ³⁵ 'Al-'Ināyah', p. 270.
- ³⁶ *Ṣubḥ*, vol. 3, pp. 128-129.
- ³⁷ *Jāmi' mahāsin*, pp. 58-63.
- ³⁸ Al-Nuwayrī, *op. cit.*, p. 222; al-Āthārī, *op. cit.*, p. 270; al-Ṭībī, *op. cit.*, pp. 17, 89-90.
- ³⁹ Al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ*, vol. 3, p. 100.
- ⁴⁰ Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab*, p. 222; al-Ṭībī, *Jāmi' mahāsin*, p. 40.
- ⁴¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 222; *op. cit.*, p. 270.
- ⁴² *Jāmi' mahāsin*, pp. 54-57.
- ⁴³ Al-Ṭībī does not illustrate a regular-size *Muḥaqqaq*; instead we find in his album *al-Maṣāḥif*, which is the same size as the large *Naskh* (*al-Naskh al-Faddāḥ*). Furthermore, al-Ṭībī states that *al-Rayḥān* in relation to *al-Muḥaqqaq* is like *al-Ḥawāshī* to *al-Naskh* (*op. cit.*, p. 17). It seems, therefore, that to him a smaller-size *Muḥaqqaq* is *al-Maṣāḥif*. This is corroborated by al-Āthārī (*op. cit.*, p. 270) who says that *al-Muḥaqqaq* is bigger than *al-Rayḥān* by half the size of the latter. *Al-Muḥaqqaq* in this case can only be of small size. It is most probably to *al-Maṣāḥif* that al-Nuwayrī refers when he states that *al-Muḥaqqaq* branches off into its smaller version (*khaṭīf*) and also into *al-Rayḥān* (*op. cit.*, p. 221). See also Zakariya (*Calligraphy*, p. 25), who says that 'Maṣāḥif, used for copying of the Qur'ān (and occasional copies of the Bible) is a smaller and a slightly less stiff version of *Muḥaqqaq*'.
- ⁴⁴ Al-Ṭībī, *op. cit.*, p. 63-67.
- ⁴⁵ Ibn al-Ṣā'igh, *op. cit.*, p. 39.
- ⁴⁶ Al-Āthārī, *op. cit.*, pp. 270, 273; al-Ṣaydāwī, *op. cit.*, p. 166.
- ⁴⁷ Al-Nuwayrī, *op. cit.*, p. 222.
- ⁴⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 270.
- ⁴⁹ *Op. cit.*, p. 273.
- ⁵⁰ Al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ*, vol. 3, p. 11.
- ⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 48.
- ⁵² Al-Ḥitī, *al-'Umdah*, p. 12 and al-Ṣaydāwī, 'Waddāḥah', p. 166 respectively.
- ⁵³ Al-Ziftāwī, 'Minḥāj al-iṣābah', p. 236 and al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ*, vol. 3, p. 97.
- ⁵⁴ Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab*, p. 222; al-Ṭībī, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

⁵⁵ Al-Āthārī, *op. cit.*, p. 270; Ibn al-Ṣā'igh, *op. cit.*, p. 43; al-Qalqashandī, *op. cit.*, vol. 3, p. 12; al-Ṭībī, *op. cit.*, pp. 58-63.

⁵⁶ 'Sharḥ al-manzūmah', p. 269.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 269; *op. cit.*, p. 221.

⁵⁸ Al-Ṣaydāwī, *op. cit.*, p. 164.

⁵⁹ Al-Ziftāwī, *op. cit.*, p. 236; al-Qalqashandī, *op. cit.*, vol. 3, p. 97; al-Ṭībī, *op. cit.*, pp. 63-67. That *al-Naskh* was very close to *al-Muḥaqqaq* is attested by the statement that Muḥammad ibn Asad, one of the teachers of Ibn al-Bawwāb, wrote poetry in *al-Naskh* verging on (*qarīb min*) *al-Muḥaqqaq*, and distinguished between *al-Matn* and *al-Maṣāḥif* ('Risālah fī al-kitābah al-mansūbah', ed. Khalīl Maḥmūd 'Asākir, *Majallat Ma'had al-Makhḥūṭāt al-'Arabīyah*, 1 (1955), p. 126. This close affinity can be seen in the so-called 'Naskhī' of Ibn al-Bawwāb, characterised by having *tarwīs* and looking like a version of *al-Maṣāḥif* (see e.g. M. Lings, *The Quranic art of calligraphy and illumination*. London, 1976, pl. 22). The *Naskh* of al-Ṭībī has no *tarwīs*. It is interesting to note, however, that the Persian and Turkish *Naskh* often have a *tarwīs* on the letter *lām*, projecting either to the right or to the left. The left-sloping *tarwīs* seems to be the characteristic of Persian *Naskh* (see in particular specimens of calligraphy by Ḥāfiẓ 'Uthmān and Aḥmad Nayrīzi).

⁶⁰ Al-Nuwayrī, *op. cit.*, p. 222; al-Ṣaydāwī, *op. cit.*, p. 163.

⁶¹ Al-Ṭībī, *op. cit.*, pp. 17, 73-77. For al-Ṣaydāwī (*op. cit.*, p. 166) the *alif* in *al-Rayḥān* and its parent (*aṣl*) is about ten dots high (!). It is difficult to understand this statement, unless one dismisses it as textual corruption (cf. note 63).

⁶² Al-Ṭībī, *op. cit.*, p. 17; al-Ṣaydāwī, *op. cit.*, p. 163.

⁶³ *Op. cit.*, p. 270. Looking at the illustration of *al-Rayḥān* provided by al-Ṭībī, this script emerges as being of the same size as *al-Naskh* and, therefore, smaller than *al-Maṣāḥif*. *Al-Rayḥān* should not be confused with the so-called *Rayḥānī*, which, in various publications, is characterised as having been invented by 'Alī ibn 'Ubaydah al-Rayḥānī (d. 219/834), and being a variant of *al-Thuluth* and a later regular *Naskhī* or *Naskhī*, *Thuluth* and *Muḥaqqaq* (see Abbott, *North Arabic script*, p. 36 and Y.H. Safadi, *Islamic calligraphy*, London, 1978, pp. 20, 72).

⁶⁴ Al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ*, vol. 3, p. 100.

⁶⁵ Ibn al-Ṣā'igh, *op. cit.*, p. 42; al-Ṭībī, *op. cit.*, p. 83.

⁶⁶ *Op. cit.*, vol. 3, p. 100.

⁶⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 42.

⁶⁸ Al-Qalqashandī, *op. cit.*, vol. 3, p. 115. *Al-Riqā'*, although the plural of *ruq'ah* should not be confused with the latter. *Al-Ruq'ah* (Turkish *Riq'a*) is a script used in the Arab world for normal purposes of handwriting (see T.F. Mitchell, *Writing Arabic: a practical introduction to Ruq'ah script*, Oxford, 1978, p. 5). It is unfortunate that an otherwise excellent work of Mohamed U. Zakariya is marred by this confusion (see his *Calligraphy*, p. 24, where the word appears as *Ruqā'* and 'Observations', p. 100, where it is given as *Ruq'ah*).

⁶⁹ Al-Āthārī, 'al-'Ināyah', p. 242; al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ*, vol. 3, p. 115.

⁷⁰ *Al-'Umdah*, p. 12; 'Waddāḥah', p. 166.

⁷¹ *Op. cit.*, vol. 3, p. 115.

⁷² Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab*, p. 222.

⁷³ Al-Qalqashandī, *op. cit.*, vol. 3, p. 100; al-Nuwayrī, *ibid.*, p. 221.

⁷⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 164.

⁷⁵ *Op. cit.*, pp. 12, 13, 17, 21. For al-Şaydāwī (*op. cit.*, p. 166), however, the height of the *alif* is five dots in both *al-Tawqī'* and *al-Riqā'*.

⁷⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 21.

⁷⁷ *Op. cit.*, vol. 3, p. 100.

⁷⁸ *Op. cit.*, vol. 3, p. 115.

⁷⁹ *Op. cit.*, vol. 3, p. 101.

⁸⁰ *Op. cit.*, vol. 3, p. 101.

⁸¹ *Op. cit.*, vol. 3, p. 77. See also al-Ziftāwī, *op. cit.*, p. 230.

⁸² Al-Nuwayrī, *op. cit.*, p. 222.

⁸³ Al-Qalqashandī, *op. cit.*, vol. 3, p. 11; 'Sharḥ al-man-zūmah', p. 269. The word *muraṭṭab* (also *raṭṭb* and *tarṭīb*) is used by al-Hītī and al-Şaydāwī.

⁸⁴ Al-Qalqashandī, *op. cit.*, vol. 3, p. 48.

⁸⁵ *Op. cit.*, pp. 58-100.

⁸⁶ Al-Şaydāwī, *op. cit.*, p. 166 and al-Hītī, *op. cit.*, p. 12 respectively.

⁸⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 12.

⁸⁸ Al-Qalqashandī, *op. cit.*, vol. 3, p. 58.

⁸⁹ Al-Qalqashandī, *op. cit.*, vol. 3, p. 49.

⁹⁰ *Op. cit.*, vol. 3, p. 48.

⁹¹ Al-Nuwayrī, *op. cit.*, p. 222; al-Qalqashandī, *op. cit.*, vol. 3, p. 47.

⁹² *Op. cit.*, p. 223 and *op. cit.*, vol. 3, pp. 49, 55.

⁹³ *Op. cit.*, pp. 50, 55.

⁹⁴ *Op. cit.*, pp. 270, 273.

