Figure 8.9 Inlaid brass incense burner made for the Mamluk sultan al-Nasir Muhammad ibn Qalawun and datable c. 1320.

This incense burner shows the extraordinary calligraphy used to decorate Mamluk metalwares. The text repeats praises to the sultan, but both format and lettering of the inscriptions are superbly rendered in a thick script quite unlike that used in contemporary works on paper. Mamluk patrons apparently valued metalwares (and glassware) more than books, and these superb objects are usually decorated exclusively with inscriptions.

The metalworker who made this superb incense burner adapted the format of elongated and marching verticals used in the handwritten tughra for the inscriptions. For the benediction with generic praise inscribed in the roundels, he added an不见算alif at the end, an upright stroke that matches theلام al-mawla at the beginning and frames the short text like the framing vertical strokes used in the handwritten tughra. For the horizontal bands, he dropped the idea of alternating pairs and single strokes used in the handwritten version in favor of regular fat strokes, to which he added serials. These thick strokes, needed undoubtedly for the inlaying and chasing, strengthen the calligraphy by making it bolder. His most creative innovation is the pinwheel, created by arranging the uprights in a circle like the rays of the sun.

In terms of the aesthetic quality of the calligraphy, Mamluk metalwares [and glassware] take precedence over works on paper, perhaps due to the martial and material bent of Mamluk patrons and rulers, who seem to have valued objects more than books. The differences in style and quality suggest that the metalworkers took their cues from chancery scribes who worked in the bureaucracy, but rearranged the texts to fit the exigencies of their craft. Such a situation contrasts with that in the Iranian lands, where calligraphers, who bore the epithet naqqash (designer), penned manuscripts and calligraphic specimens on paper and also designed inscriptions that were executed in the same scripts in brick and stucco on architecture and in inlay on metalwares. The Iranian calligraphers must have used paper designs or stencils. In contrast, metalworkers in the Mamluk domains still worked out their inscriptions within their own craft techniques without recourse to paper designs.

Scribes in the Mamluk chancery continued to use thuluth for the tughra until the second half of the fourteenth century. Al-Qalqashandi's design for al-Ashraf Sha'ban's tughra [Figure 8.10] is similar to the one drawn up for the sultan's grandfather some seventy years earlier. It too has the text written in large (jali) thuluth, with the sultan's name, titles, and genealogy back to Qalawun densely packed at the bottom in a script notable for its extended verticals. It also has the same the benediction, khallada allah sultanah (may God extend his sultanate), centered below.

Nonetheless, there are certain changes. Al-Ashraf Sha'ban's tughra is slightly larger: it was said to measure seven-twelfths (one-third plus one-quarter) of a cubit square, using the Caïreense fabric cubit, whereas his grandfather's was said to measure half a cubit square. The text is slightly longer, extending two further generations. It therefore has more vertical strokes: forty-five, ten more than the earlier one. They are also arranged more regularly: all single strokes are set so that two strokes' worth of white paper is visible between each black stroke. The main change in al-Ashraf Sha'ban's tughra is the removal of the given names of the sultan and his father - Sha'ban ibn Husayn - from the lower line of text and their insertion in the
middle of the vertical strokes in a larger and thicker script called tilmur [see below, p. 349].

Thuluth came in various sizes in the Mamluk period. Al-Qalqashandi mentioned two large (thaqif, literally heavy) and small (khafif, literally light). Al-Tayyibi illustrated two sizes, but with different names: a very large script called jali al-thuluth, written like jali al-muhaqqaq with three lines per page and an alif c. 5 cm; and a large variety, al-thuluth al-mu'tad (usual or regular thuluth), written with five lines per page and an alif 3 cm high. Another small variant was called jali al-thuluth al-khafif, but its vertical and flat strokes are less than five dots in length. Al-Tayyibi's illustrations of jali al-thuluth show a medium-sized script, with alif measuring 3 cm, thus smaller than either of his two types of thuluth. The most distinctive feature of his illustration is that alif is written with six lines per page, the only script that al-Tayyibi illustrates with an even number of lines per page.

The second curvilinear script addressed in the Fatimid times was tawqi' (literally, signature). In Fatimid times the term had been used for the ruler or vizier's motto that was inscribed near the top of the document to give it validity (Figure 6.7). On court documents issued under the Mamluks, the judge's signature in the form of a motto was called 'alama [signature]. It often took a form similar to but more modest than the slogans used by the Fatimid caliphs. A typical example is al-hand lilah wa-asalihu al-tawfiq (praise to God and I ask Him for success). Like earlier examples, it too was inscribed near the top of a document in a large and bold script, with many connected letters and superposed words that render it difficult to decipher. In Mamluk times the term tawqi' was used for a second notation instructing that a document be certified. On a petition (su'a) addressed to a court requesting it to issue a legal document, the judge's instruction (tawqi') was typically written in a large script along with the judge's signature. The standard form of the instruction, bi-yuktur [let it be written], was penned on the upper left.

Mamluk sources also use the term tawqi' for a specific script whose name derives from the signatures written in it. Tawqi' (also identified as the plural tawqi'at and tawqai') is said to be derived from thuluth and even to be a small version of it. Its most obvious attribute is the linking of regularly unconnected letters by means of hair lines [tash'irat]. Such connections are found occasionally in thuluth, but frequently in tawqi'. Since the scribe did not have to lift his pen between letters or even words, he could write faster, and the speed also encouraged more rounding of letters. The sources record more variant information about tawqi' than about other scripts, perhaps because it was typically used for documents rather than fine manuscripts and thus varied according to the individual hand. The sources differed, for example, about the serif [tawsh]. According to al-Qalqashandi, the serif was essential on alif, but according to Ibn al-Sa'igh, it could be omitted on some letters. Opinions also varied about the use of tams. According to al-Athari, it was optional to fill the loop of medial 'ayn and fa'iqat, mim, waw, and the alif lam al-muhaqqaq, Ibn al-Sa'igh, however, favored filling in the eye of final 'ayn, and al-Qalqashandi favored filling in the eye of medial 'ayn.

Like thuluth, tawqi' came in several sizes. Al-Hiti called the larger version, with alif seven dots high, al-tawqi' al-kibar or al-tawqi' al-thuluthiyah and the smaller one al-tawqi' al-riqa'iyah. Al-Qalqashandi mentioned two types of tawqi', but dealt with only one, al-tawqi' al-mutlaq (unrestrained or assimilated tawqi'). Al-Tayyibi illustrated two versions, both called just al-tawqi' [9]. The first was medium-size, written with five lines per page and an alif 2 cm high. The second was a larger script, written with only three lines per page and an alif 3 cm, the same size as al-Tayyibi's usual thuluth al-thuluthiyah. In his illustrations, al-Tayyibi juxtaposes this larger tawqi' to rayhan, with three lines of tawqi' sandwiching paired lines of the smaller rayhan (Figure 8.4). Al-Tayyibi's tawqi' bear many similarities to thuluth jaliw with right hook to the right and curved foot to the left, upturned hook on descenders, etc. But it has more unauthorized connections between letters. Letters that are not supposed to be connected, such as alif or final kaf, are regularly connected in tawqi'. In calligraphic versions of tawqi', as in al-Tayyibi's illustrations, stylization was clearly a factor alongside speed. The note the second two words in the bottom line, il sa' [Figure 8.4], where
EMERGENCE OF REGIONAL STYLES IN THE LATER MIDDLE PERIOD

Figure 8.12 Opening four lines from a twenty-eight-line decree issued on 3 Rajab 701/4 March 1303 in the name of the Mamluk sultan al-Nasir Muhammad ibn Qalawun.

The script in the main part of this decree can be identified as a classic example of the type of riqa' used by the Mamluk chancery. Note, for example, the many unauthorized connections between letters, as in the last line, and the alif that slants to the left and has a hook at the bottom, but no serif.

al-Tayyibi exaggerated the strokes, drawing the swinging tail far to the right and transforming the upper part of bu'ayn into a trefoil.

The smaller counterpart of tawqit was tiga', literally meaning pieces of writing material and the script par excellence for decrees and official letters. Large caches of such documents have survived from the period: over five hundred were discovered in Cairo, and nearly nine hundred in Jerusalem, many belonging to the papers of the Shaft'ite court there. These documents come in various sizes and shapes, some hitherto known only from references in texts. A few are squared decrees called mutabbab'a (literally, squared), made by folding the sheet into four pages. Others called waraq (literally, leaf) comprise a standard size sheet of paper (daftar) that was folded in half to form four pages, then pierced and strung with string so that it could be tied together with related documents. Many of the documents are long scrolls of the type that had been used in Egypt since Fatimid times and was standard in contemporary Persian chanceries (Figure 7.13).

These Mamluk documents are transcribed in a wide range of scripts, from calligraphic hands to what might be characterized as scribal. The finest are royal decrees written in a clear and readable script worthy of the best clerk, as in a twenty-eight-line scroll issued on 3 Rajab 701/4 March 1303 in the name of the Mamluk sultan al-Nasir Muhammad ibn Qalawun (Figure 8.11). Sent to all amirs and governors in Syria, the proclamation states that the sultan had made dispositions regarding the endowments of the Two Noble Sanctuaries, presumably meaning Jerusalem and Hebron. He did so with the guidance of Rukn al-Din, his viceroy (na'ib al-saltana) in Egypt, probably referring to Rukn al-Din Baybars al-Jashnagar (the taster). Al-Nasir Muhammad's long reign (r. 1293–1343) with interruptions was the high-water mark of Mamluk prosperity. The Mongol threat had waned, trade flourished, both within the Mediterranean and to the East. Jerusalem prospered; al-Nasir made more contributions to the Haram than any other Mamluk sultan, though most were carried out during his third and final reign following his visit to the city in 1317.

This decree, written fifteen years earlier, opens with the basmala, followed by several lines of invocation with the sultan's signature scrawled between the lines. Though half the width of the Fatimid decree (Figure 6.7), the Mamluk decree is also written in lines that are widely spaced and ascend slightly at the left. The script, in contrast to that of the earlier decree, is brilliantly clear. Alik, which slants slightly to the left, has a bend at the bottom, but no serif at the top. The eyes of many letters, including waaw, fa'iq, and mim, are filled. The most notable feature of this line script is the hairline connection between letters, notably waaw, ra', and dhal, especially in set phrases such as the invocation to God in the top line.

The Mamluk decree represents the archetypal riqa' script as described and illustrated in the Mamluk sources. Riqa' has the same letter forms used in thawlii and tawqit, but is finer, rounder, and more spacious than its larger counterpart tawqit. Since it is smaller, there is rarely any room for the seri (waras) typical of its larger counterparts. Similarly, it was not obligatory to use tans, which occurs mainly in initial and final 'ayn, as well as in fa'iq, waaw, and the loop of connected lam-alif. According to al-Hithi and al-Saydawi, in tiga', alif measured five dots high, and al-Tayyibi's illustrations show tiga' as one of the smallest scripts, written with seven widely spaced lines to the page and an alif 0.5 cm. Al-Qalqashandi adds that riqa' has the distinctive feature of an alif slanting to the right, but this feature occurs also in tawqit and thawlii. As in tawqit, many of the letters in riqa' are interlocked (musalsicol). In fact, in the opening line of the basmala, virtually all the letters are connected. The better known the phrase, the more connections between letters or words.

The script used in the Mamluk decree is extremely well executed. Mamluk sources called such a high level of performance muhaqqaq, and in this sense, this example of riqa' script can be juxtaposed to another that is muhaqq, meaning unrestrained or having its letters
between musalsal and tawqi’, as the syllable fi can be written the same way in both scripts [Figures compare 8.4a and 8.12a]. The most distinctive combination in musalsal is the intertwining of alif and lam. In traditional scripts, each of these letters is written as a single stroke, usually beginning at the top. In musalsal, each can be written beginning at the bottom (and often connecting from the previous word) and continuing up, down, up, and down so that each of the two letters resembles a bow or a figure eight, as here in the phrase fi3-dunya. The chained alif was an effective attention-getter, and al-Tayyibi used it to make a word stand out visually from the rest of the text, much as we use boldtype today. For example, in the middle of his introduction about the method of Ibn al-Bawwab, written in the spacious variety of naskh called manthur [Figure 8.7a], al-Tayyibi put the words wa askruhu [and I thank Him] in musalsal, connecting the tail of wa to the initial alif of askruhu, which he wrote in up and downstrokes that intertwine like the links of a chain.

Al-Nuwayri mentioned another variant script derived from the curvilinear group: dhahab. Literally meaning gold, the script got its name because it was written in gold ink. According to al-Nuwayri, who seems to be the only chronicler to mention dhahab as a distinct type of script, its letters could be written according to the rules of either thuluth or tawqi’, but there are no hairlines (tash’irat) because the letters are outlined in another color (taznim). Al-Nuwayri also mentioned at least one variety of riqa’: muqattarin (literally, connected, or linked). A derivative of riqa’, it was executed in pairs of lines (satuun muzawwars). This is exactly what al-Tayyibi illustrated: his specimen shows a script the same size as the tiny riqa’, with alif only 0.5 cm, and many unauthorized connections between letters, written in paired lines which, as in riqa’, rise at the left end of the line.

Hybrid scripts
In addition to scripts that belonged exclusively to the rectilinear or the curvilinear group, the Mamluks classified other scripts that could be written with characteristics of either group. One example is ash’ur (literally, hairs), sometimes called al-musha’ur or al-mu’annaq (literally, elegant). Ash’ur was used for the first Koran manuscript that can be assigned to the period of Mamluk rule: the famous seven-part codex [Figure 8.13] made in 704/1304–6 for the Mamluk amir Baybars al-Jashari. The calligrapher, who is mentioned repeatedly in the colophons to the individual volumes, was Muhammaddan al-Wahid. Like his contemporaries in Iran, Ibn al-Wahid is known from both signed works and contemporary chronicles, and these varied sources, as well as his own writings, allow us to put together a biography and delineate his role.

Ibn al-Wahid, whose full name was Sharaf al-Din Muhammad ibn Sharaf ibn Yusuf, was born in or around Damascus, perhaps in Zar’a,
EMERGENCE OF REGIONAL STYLES IN THE LATER MIDDLE PERIOD

Figure R.13 Page containing Satrid 6612-672 from a seven-part Koran manuscript with six lines per page transcribed by Muhammed ibn al-Wahid, probably at Cairo, for the Mamluk amir Baybars al-Jashnagar in 704-5/1304-6.

A pupil of Yaqut, Ibn al-Wahid came to work for the Mamluks in Cairo, where he worked with a team of illuminators and an outliner to prepare this magnificent Koran manuscript. It is written in a compressed script, with many curved upturned tails, and connected letters. Mamluk sources call the hand used in this copy thubuth ash'at or ash'at, a hybrid script that is variously said to be a combination of muhaqqaq, thubuth, and naskhi. This manuscript is therefore one of the rare examples of a hand that had been labeled by contemporary sources.

RECTILINEAR AND CURVILINEAR SCRIPTS IN EGYPT AND SYRIA

155 large (47 × 32 cm) folios. More than five hundred bifolios, each measuring some 50 × 70 cm, were thus required for the complete manuscript. Each page has six lines of a thick round script, with the text written in gold outlined in black; chapter headings, pointing, and vocalization in red, and other markings in blue. As stunning as the realization of this large manuscript is its state of preservation: the entire seven volumes are intact, except for a single folio replaced near the end of the last volume.110

Many features of the Baybars Koran distinguish it from the other Koran manuscripts copied for the Mamluks in the early fourteenth century. The division into seven volumes, for example, is unusual: virtually all other Koran manuscripts made for the Mamluks in the early fourteenth century are single-volume manuscripts.111 So is the large size of the folios; they are half-baghdadi sheets. All other Mamluk Koran manuscripts made in the first two decades of the fourteenth century are half that size, written on quarter-baghdadi sheets.112 These other manuscripts also have more lines per page, anywhere from eleven to fifteen. This manuscript is therefore bigger and more spacious than its Mamluk contemporaries. It is also more expensive, since the text is written in gold ink.

The distinctive appearance of the Baybars Koran makes it immediately identifiable in written sources, which tell us that the manuscript was intended for the huge [30 × 70 m] foundation that Baybars al-Jashnagar had established in Cairo on the site of the palace of the Fatimid viziers.113 The manuscript is first mentioned in the endowment deed drawn up in Shawwal 707/April 1308 for the complex which included the amir's tomb and a khanqah, or Sufi hospice.114 The document enumerates provisions for four hundred Sufis and numerous other personnel; those serving at the tomb [qa'iba] include a reader of the large Koran manuscript (qari' al-mushaf al-kabrit), a special seven-part [juz'] manuscript written in gold that the founder had endowed for readings that took place on Fridays in the Hakim Mosque. The mosque, which had been damaged in the earthquake of 1303, was also restored by Baybars al-Jashnagar and was the site where Ibn al-Wahid served as legal scribe. This Koran manuscript is so unusual that it was mentioned again by several later Mamluk chronicles.115

According to the sources, Baybars al-Jashnagar paid the calligrapher handsomely to pen a splendid Koran manuscript for his new Sufi hospice.116 Looking closely at this manuscripts allows us to see how Ibn al-Wahid executed the commission. In many respects, he followed the traditions established by Yaqut's followers in Iran and Iraq, but with significant variations. Ibn al-Wahid chose, for example, to make a large, multi-part manuscript that fit the public function of the code. Rather than using the thirty-part format that was standard in Iran and Iraq by Mongol times, however, he divided the text into seven parts, a division that had been used sporadically at least since the tenth century [Figure 4.10].117 We do not know why Ibn al-Wahid made this decision. The description in the text suggests that,
contrary to popular assumption, the sections were not intended to be read daily, but paraded weekly to the Hakim Mosque, where the manuscript was used during Friday prayers. Ibn al-Wahid also followed Iranian models in using scripts of half baghdadi size, the same sheets that Ahmad al-Suhrawardi had used for his magnificent Koran manuscript, probably made for the Ilkhaniid Gha'zan (Figure 7.2). Curiously, though, Ibn al-Wahid penned an even number of lines per page [four] on each page. In this case, he may have been following a Syrian tradition, for one of the few manuscripts with an even number of lines per page [four] is the copy made for Nur al-Din ibn Zangi at Damascus in 562/1166-7 (Figure 6.10). Syrian calligraphers may have brought the tradition to Cairo.19

Like his contemporaries in Baghdad, Ahmad al-Suhrawardi and Ahmad ibn-Kamil, Ibn al-Wahid worked with a team to prepare this large and fancy Koran manuscript, but Ibn al-Wahid's team was larger. The manuscript names three separate artisans in the team. Two masters – Abu Bakr, known as Sandal, and Muhammad ibn Mubadir – were responsible for illumination. A third assistant, Aydughdi ibn Abdallah ibn Badri, did the outlining (zamzama) of the gold letters. Dated colophons in the separate volumes give us some idea of how long it took to complete the various steps in making the manuscript. The second section [sub] is dated Jumada II 704/December 1304-January 1305, and the seventh and final section is dated 705/July 1305- July 1306. These dates suggest that it took Ibn al-Wahid about two months to transcribe each of the seven volumes, or some fourteen months for the complete manuscript. Aydughdi's outlining is also dated 705/1305-6, and his work must have followed transcription. These two steps were followed by illumination and binding, which must have been completed by Shawwal 707/ March-April 1308, the date mentioned in the endorsement deed. The whole project, then, took some three and a half years to complete. Like the other manuscripts, the copy that took Ahmad al-Suhrawardi and Muhammad ibn Aybak to complete their contemporary copy that was twice the size.20

Most unusual is the hybrid script that Ibn al-Wahid used. It is a rounded hand with many upturned and sometimes even reversed tails on the letters. Words are crowded together without spaces and do not sit on a baseline or kursi as they do in contemporary work for the Ilkhaniids.21 Independent alif [Figure 8.13a] has a triangular projection on the top right and a hook or hook on the bottom left. Final ha’fata marbuta is left open, as in fath in the top line (Figure 8.13b). Ibn al-Wahid also used many unauthorized connections, connecting, for example, alif to lam and dal to final ya’ in aladih in Figures and six (Figures 8.13c and d). He then used the thuluth used for headings and titles in other Mamluk Koran manuscripts. These headings were often written in gold ink, and Ibn al-Wahid may have adopted the same script when commissioned to transcribe an entire Koran manuscript in gold. Nevertheless, the

script used by Ibn al-Wahid differs in several ways from the typical thuluth: the bowls of the letters are shallower, and the script is more compressed. The tail of mim, as in the basmala, also descends slightly downwards, a feature typical of naskh.

Mamluk chroniclers identify the script that Ibn al-Wahid used as ashar.22 Most of them regarded ashar as a hybrid of mubhaqqaq and thuluth, except for al-Tayyibi, who claims that it is derived from mubhaqqaq and naskh.23 According to al-Saydawi, its distinguishing feature is the shorter and deeper tails of wow, nun, ya’, and ra’, a feature confirmed in al-Tayyibi’s illustrations, in which the tails of ra’ and wow are only three-fourths the extent of the ones he used in jall al-mubhaqqaq.24 Similarly, one can compare the mim in al-Tayyibi’s basmalah in ashar [Figure 8.13c], the tail of mim is much shorter, extending only to the final ha’ in allah, whereas in his jall al-mubhaqqaq [Figure 8.13f], the tail of mim extends all the way to the initial alif in al-rabman. In al-Tayyibi’s illustrations of ashar, tails occasionally end in the upward hook characteristic of thuluth. In contrast, in his jall al-mubhaqqaq, all the tails of descending letters are pointed. The letters in al-Tayyibi’s ashar are also fatter and higher, and they are occasionally piled up. Nevertheless, al-Tayyibi’s example of ashar differs in several respects from that of Ibn al-Wahid. Al-Tayyibi’s letters do not have tabs and are much more rectilinear. Furthermore, they are not outlined.

Another script that could be written in several ways was tumar (literally, scroll).25 The largest of the scripts penned with a nib twenty-four horse-hairs wide, it could be written following the rules of either mubhaqqaq or thuluth.26 According to both al-Nuwayri and al-Qalasahandi, it came in two sizes: large (al-tumar al-kamil) and small (al-tumar al-tsa’ad, makhtasar al-tumar), and al-Qalasahandi specified that short phrases in the Mamluk tugha were written in the smaller version of tumar, as in the center line with Sha’ban ibn Husayn in the one drawn up for al-Ashraf Sha’ban [Figure 8.10]. Al-Qalasahandi is very specific about how the names in al-Ashraf Sha’ban’s tugha must be laid out. They must be separate from the stay of the thuluth band and begin after the sixteenth vertical stroke with the first four letters of Sha’ban on the first line, the nun of Sha’ban connected to the word ibn on the second line, and his father’s name Husayn on the third line. The alif of Sha’ban, which measures one-sixth of a cubit, inclines to the left and is cut by the final nun of Husayn, which projects further to the left.

Examining al-Qalasahandi’s design for al-Ashraf Sha’ban’s tugha shows that it was actually written in the reverse order from what one might expect. It is logical and from al-Qalasahandi’s description. The large name in the center, Sha’ban ibn Husayn, seems to sit on top of the tall stems of the lower inscription. In fact, this is not the case: the names had to be written first so that the tall stems could skirt the central text. Furthermore, the top name Husayn seems to rest on top of the bottom line with Sha’ban. Again, this is not the
EMERGENCE OF REGIONAL LITTLE IN THE LATER MIDDLE PERSIAN

RECTANGULAR AND CURVILINEAR SCRIPTS IN EGYPT AND SYRIA

written vertically at the left in a large curvilinear script. The inscription continues on page 24 with a quotation from Qaran 37:75.

I have followed the methods outlined by Professor H. R. O. Adul, in my edition of the book. The text is written in a small, angular script with a fine point, and is divided into paragraphs by short vertical lines. The script is a blend of rectangular and curvilinear elements, with a strong emphasis on the vertical and horizontal axes. The text is well-organized, with clear demarcation of clauses and sentences.

As with the text, the accompanying figures are presented in a clear and concise manner. The figures illustrate the script in various contexts, providing a comprehensive understanding of the script's characteristics. The figures are accompanied by detailed captions and annotations, which guide the reader through the various stages of the script's development.

The overall presentation is highly professional, with a focus on clarity and precision. The use of color and layout enhances the readability of the text, making it an excellent resource for students and scholars interested in the study of ancient scripts.

In summary, the document provides a comprehensive overview of the rectangular and curvilinear scripts in Egypt and Syria, with a focus on their historical and cultural significance. The text is well-researched and presented in a clear and engaging manner, making it an invaluable resource for students and scholars in the field.
EMERGENCE OF REGIONAL STYLES IN THE LATER MIDDLE PERIOD

that riwāsi was closer to muhāqqaq and naskh, thus putting it in the rectilinear category. Al-Tayyib’s suggestions illustrate that he was in Ibn al-Sa‘igh’s camp.132 His riwāsi is a medium-sized script, written with five lines per page and an alf measuring 3 cm, without unauthorized connections. A sober upright script, it shows a deliberate standardization of vocalizing strokes and uniform spacing between words and letters. Its most notable feature is the serif on lam and alf, which projects downwards to the left, not to the right as it does in both muhāqqaq and thuluth.

Throughout the Mamluk period, then, calligraphers were both prolific producers of and prolific writers about fine writing. They penned sober, upright scripts in which accurate content took precedence over formal pyrotechnics. Size, contrast, and color were more important than fluidity and line. Just as the Six Pens and hanging styles developed in Iran and Iraq were exported to east and west China, India, and Anatolia, so too these Mamluk styles were the basis for developments in adjacent regions, notably the Yemen (see Chapter 9) and later in Anatolia as well (see Chapter 11).

Notes


RECTILINEAR AND CURVILINEAR SCRIPTS IN EGYPT AND SYRIA

Muhammad al-Athari (d. 1450), who wrote his own treatise entitled al-‘ayn al-ḥabībatīyya fi ʾl-ṣarīqa al-ḥabībatīyya, the second source plumbed by al-Qalqashandi. In addition to these and other authors writing in the early fifteenth century, we have accounts by several fourteenth-century chroniclers, such as the calligrapher Sharaf al-Dīn Muhammad ibn Sharif al-Zārā‘i known as Ibn al-Wahlī (d. 1312–12) and the chronicler Ahmad ibn ‘Abī al-Walī l-Nawaway (d. 1333). Many of these texts have been edited and published by Hilal al-Na‘īj and described and analyzed by Adam Gacek, ‘Arabic Scripts and their Characteristics as Seen through the Eyes of Mamluk Authors,’ Manuscripts of the Middle East 4 (1985): 144–6.

5. The largest collection of manuscripts from the Mamluk period is, naturally, in Cairo, and the national library there (Dar al-Kutub) preserves a stupendous collection, many with endowment notices by Mamluk sultans and anis bestowing these fine manuscripts to their charitable foundations in Cairo. Outside the Middle East, the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin contains the largest number of signed and dated manuscripts of the Koran made in the period of Mamluk rule, for which see Arthur J. Arberry, The Koran Illuminated: A Handbook of Korans in the Chester Beatty Library (Dublin, 1967). David James, Qur’āns and Bindings from the Chester Beatty Library: A Facsimile Exhibition, (n.p. 1980). Most of the Koran manuscripts from the early Mamluk period are described and illustrated in David James, Qur’āns of the Mamluks (London, 1988).

6. Istanbul, TKS 882. Published as Muhammad b. Hassan al-Tibi, The Kinds of Arabic Calligraphy According to the Method of Ibn al-Bawwab (in Arabic), ed. Salahuddin Munajjed (Beirut, 1968). For the commented spelling of the author’s name as al-Tayyibī, see Atanasus, ‘Hypercalligraphic.’ Atanasus also noted (p. 56) that there is another copy of al-Tayyibī’s work dated 1509 in the John Rylands Library in Manchester [177/97].

7. Two scripts are al-ṣūrah al-munzūm (38–9), which is similar to muhāqqaq, and al-taʿlīq (42), a script with the same name but a different style than the hanging taʿlīq used in Iran.

8. Hence, as an example of taʿlīq, one of the two scripts that he claims to have invented, al-Tayyibī uses a petition addressed to the sultan requesting that he establish a position of calligraphy instructor in his pious foundation like the ones established in the endowments to the Fārāquyya and Ashrafyya madrasas in Cairo, which provided for an office to teach people how to write (mukhtab yaʿlam al-ras al-kībatī). Unlike the other texts that al-Tayyibī uses to exemplify the various scripts, which are hadith or poems and can thus be considered historical, this one was clearly personal: al-Tayyibī was looking for a job. Al-Tibi, Calligraphy According to Ibn al-Bawwab, 42, translation and commentary by Atanasus, ‘Hypercalligraphic,’ p. 56.

9. Gacek, ‘Arabic Scripts.’ The largest group, with an alf measuring some 5 cm in al-Tayyibī’s illustrations, comprises large thuluth (jā’il al-thuluth), large muhāqqaq (jā’il al-muhāqqaq), and ashʿar (literally, ‘bears’). A second group, with alf measuring some 3 cm, comprises usual thuluth (called by Tayyibī al-thuluth al-ṣawādī, al-muṣāhāb (literally, chained), and al-tawawqī (literally, signatures; plural of tawwqī). A medium-size group, with alf measuring about 3 cm, comprises al-tawawqī, al-muṣāhīb (literally, Koran codices, Tayyibī’s name for a medium-size muhāqqaq, al-naskh al-fadālah (literally, the naskh for divulging secrets), al-riwāsi (literally, connected with the ‘Abbasid
EMERGENCE OF REGIONAL STYLES IN THE LATER MIDDLE PERIOD

vizier Dhul-Riyasatayni, and al-la'tu'l (literally, largely). A smaller group with alif measuring 2 cm comprises rayhan and manthub (literally, scattered). Finally, the smallest group, with alif measuring about 0.5 cm, comprises riyfu', magusari (literally, connected to line), bavashi (literally, glosses), and ghabur (literally, dust). Following this classification, tawawiq falls into two categories and could be written with either large or medium-size letters.

10. Garek, "Arabic Scripts" conveniently summarizes the copious data on nahuqiq and the other scripts given in the many Mamluk sources.


12. The earliest Mamluk Koran manuscripts that we know were copied in naskh (Figure 8.5) or the hybrid asb’ar (Figure 8.13).

13. Most Mamluk scribes are known from a single surviving work, Ahmad al-Mutatabbih who is known from a generous handful: he signed four Koran manuscripts (James, Qur’ans of the Mamluks, 15-18) as well as a copy of the second volume of Ibn Sina’s Karam fi’t-tibb in Milan (Ambrostata, ms. iv). Two other Koran manuscripts in a similar style may well be his work (James, Qur’ans of the Mamluks, 21 and 23).

14. DX, no. 81, James, Qur’ans of the Mamluks, no. 17.

15. On stylistic grounds, David James, The Master Scribes: Qur’ans of the 9th to the 15th Centuries AD, ed. Julian Raby, The Nasser D. Khalili Collection of Islamic Art (London, 1993), no. 43, also attributed three folios from a Suddi Koran in the Khalili Collection (QUR180) to Ahmad al-Mutatabbih’s hand, since they have the same elaborate system of notation and the supralinear and sublinear green dots used to indicate hamzat al-wasi’ found in the Cairoine manuscript.

16. See Chapter 4.

17. Yaqut’s followers include Ibn al-Wahid, a Syrian born calligrapher who studied in Baghdad and then came to work in Cairo at the beginning of the century. See below p. 345 ff. and Figure 8.13.

18. Ahmad al-Mutatabbih did pen one thirty-part Koran [CBL 1276; James, Qur’ans of the Mamluks, no. 18], with an unusual six-line layout and incipit in the Baybars Koran manuscript transcribed by Ibn al-Wahid (Figure 8.13), a format perhaps adopted from earlier Syrian manuscripts.

19. This can be seen, for example, in the colophon to the seventh volume of the Haybars Koran by Ibn al-Wahid, illustrated in James, Qur’ans of the Mamluks, fig. 13.

20. DX, no. 81, see note 14. James assumed that Ahmad al-Mutatabbih was an illuminator as well as a calligrapher, because the illumination in all of his manuscripts is the same and no other illuminator is named. Furthermore, the calligrapher signed this manuscript using the verb kalamu (completed rather than just katabu [wrote]). James’ assumption may well be correct, but it remains to be proven.


RECTILINEAR AND CURVILINEAR SCRIPTS IN EGYPT AND SYRIA

22. James, Qur’ans of the Mamluks, nos. 24, 26, and 28-35. The one manuscript that is not in Cairo— a dispersed copy (James, Qur’ans of the Mamluks, no. 33)—can also be associated with al-Ashraf Sha’ban, since the same scribe transcribed another copy for the sultan (DK 10, James, Qur’ans of the Mamluks, no. 32) and his epitaph al-Ashraf shows that he belonged to the entourage of al-Ashraf Sha’ban.

23. The manuscript for al-Ashraf Sha’ban’s mamluk Sayf al-din Sirghirimh (DK 45) was the source for the Mamluk manuscripts, no. 341 even has pages double that size [103 x 77 cm].

24. One manuscript (DK 9), James, Qur’ans of the Mamluks, no. 31) has only seven lines per page and therefore more folios [805], bound in two volumes. Another undated fragment (DK 80, James, Qur’ans of the Mamluks, no. 36) also has seven lines per page and is said by James to have been bound in thirty parts. The copy illustrated here (Figure 8.2) has thirteen lines per page and hence fewer pages [317].

25. The star polygon group comprises James, Qur’ans of the Mamluks, nos. 24 and 28-30. No. 24 (DK 8), copied by Ya’qub ibn Khali ibn Muhammad ibn ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Hanafi, is dated 757/1356, and James speculated that it had been begun for the enormous complex built by Sultan Hasan. Sultan Sha’ban endowed the manuscripts to his mother’s madrasa twelve years later in Dhul’ Qa’da 766/June 1368, the same time that no. 28 (DK 6) was endowed by Khwand Baraka to her madrasa. No. 29 (DK 7) was endowed by Sultan Sha’ban on 11 Sha’ban 770/1369 March 1369, and no. 30 (DK 54) was endowed by Arghun Shah al-Ashraf (d. 778/1376). James therefore dates the last three to the late 1360s.

26. These magnificent manuscripts are signed by neither calligrapher nor illuminator, but James (172-3) argued that they were produced in Damascus on the basis of comparable illumination in a manuscript of the Four Gospels made for a Damascene cleric in 1340 and now in the Coptic Museum, Cairo (ms. 90). Damascus was certainly home to an active school producing manuscripts for both Muslim and Christian patrons (Figure 8.6), but given the movement of artists in this period, it is difficult to distinguish locales, and in the absence of detailed art historical and paleographic studies, firm attributions to Damascus or Cairo can as yet, and perhaps always, be based only on signed manuscripts.

27. The Ibrahim al-Amidi group comprises James, Qur’ans of the Mamluks, nos. 31, 33, 34, and 35. No. 32 (DK 10), illustrated here, is the only one signed by the illuminator Ibrahim al-Amidi. Based on stylistic similarities, James assigned the other three manuscripts (DK 9, DK 15, and a dispersed copy of which two volumes are in Dublin: CBL 1464 and 1465; Arberry, Koran Illuminated, 75-6) to his hand.

28. By way of contrast, the script in the opening pages of the star polygon group is only one and a half times the size of the script used for the main text.

29. He also signed another dispersed Koran manuscript of the typical large size and format with eleven lines of nahuqiq script, James, Qur’ans of the Mamluks, no. 33.

30. James points out (p. 199) that the endowment notice is decorated by the same hand as the rest of the manuscript, suggesting that Ibrahim al-Amidi continued to be occupied by the decoration until that date.

EMERGENCE OF REGIONAL STYLES IN THE LATER MIDDLE PERIOD

30. The exact meaning of this statement is unclear. It is impossible that a single reed would have sufficed for the entire work. The statement probably means that he used a single script, and the pages are notable for the uniform and unelaborated hand.

31. Ibn al-Sa‘igh’s treatise has been edited and published by Hilal Najj: Ibn al-Sa‘igh, Tuhfat til al-abib fi sin‘at al-khatt wa-t-kitab, ed. Hilal Najj (Tunis, 1967). See Gacek, ‘Arabic Scripts,’ n. 5. The Koran manuscript for Fazis is CBL 1503, Arberry, Koran Illuminated, nos. 99, James, Qur’ans and Bindings, no. 36. For the second one in Cairo, see Bernhard Moritz, Arabic paleography: A Collection of Arabic Texts from the First Century of the Hijra till the Year 1000 [Cairo, 1905], pl. 74-4.

32. The compactness of his script can be measured in the number of folios [355], significantly less than the 300-400 usually required for the typical Mamluk Koran manuscript with eleven lines per page.

33. CBL, 1507, Arberry, Koran Illuminated, no. 101, James, Qur’ans and Bindings, no. 38. The six-month interval between the two dates would have allowed time for illumination and binding.

34. Cairo, DK 59, Lings and Salafi, The Qur’an, no. 94.

35. The one in Dublin is illustrated in James, Qur’ans and Bindings, no. 35.

36. Al-Tibi, Calligraphy According to Ibn al-Bawwab, 54-7. This script is sometimes called khatif al-muhaqqaq (light or little muhaqqaq) to distinguish it from ja‘ili al-muhaqqaq.

37. According to al-Atbar [`Tayyib, 370, cited in Gacek, ‘Arabic Scripts,’ 146 and n. 61], `rayhan was two-thirds the size of muhaqqaq. Al-Tayyib, too, considered it one of the smaller scripts, with an alif 1 cm or one-fifth the alif in ja‘ili al-muhaqqaq.

38. Neither al-Nuwairi nor al-Qalqashandi considered it one of the five fundamental scripts, and al-`Atbar included it only as one of the derived scripts. See Gacek, ‘Arabic Scripts,’ 145.


40. James, Qur’ans of the Mamluks, 20, knew of only a handful of Mamluk manuscripts transcribed in `rayhan. One of the rare exceptions is a dispersed 30-volume manuscript with an endowment notice [wafqiyah] in the name of the Mamluk sultan al-Nasir Faraj ibn Barqaa [71390-1412]. This manuscript is transcribed with five lines to the page on sheets one-eighth baghdadi size, the same size used for the small Korans penned by Yaqut. The small size of the folios was appropriate for the small size of the `rayhan script, but this manuscript is the exception rather than the rule in Mamluk times. Indeed, this Koran manuscript in `rayhan is so unusual that it has sparked various attributions. Esin Atl, Renaissance of Islam: Art of the Mamluks [Washington, DC, 1981], nos. 1-3, attributed it to the first quarter of the fourteenth century. James first [Qur’ans and Bindings, nos. 31-3] dated it to 745/1345, but then later [Qur’ans of the Mamluks, no. 35] moved it to c. 1370-4 and attributed it to the hands of ‘Ali ibn Muhammad al-Mughtih al-Ashtaf and Ibrahim al-Amidi, the same team of calligrapher and illuminator who produced magnificent Koran manuscripts in muhaqqaq for al-Sharif Shahband [Figure 8.2]. The dispersed manuscript has many features relating to work done in Baghdad by the Ikhshand team of calligrapher and illuminator `Arghun al-Kamil and Sayf al-Din al-naqash, ranging from size to decorative details like the interlocking lobed circles of the frontispiece which are marked out by a grey-brown line and filled in with white fillet band, the use of turquoise, the clouds behind the calligraphy, and the cicada shapes painted in grisaille to fill empty areas.

RECTILINEAR AND CURVILINEAR SCRIPTS IN EGYPT AND SYRIA between lines of script. All of these features suggest that the manuscript should be dated to the earlier part of the fourteenth century and link it closely to Iranian work. They also show how difficult it still is to assign dates and locales to manuscripts that are not signed, and this manuscript has even been attributed to fifteenth-century Iran, see Nabil F. Sufwat, The Harmony of Letters: Islamic Calligraphy from the Tarqeq Rajab Museum [Kuwait, 1997], 48-9.

41. James, Qur’ans of the Mamluks, no. 6. Most of the manuscripts in is Istanbul [Ibn, no. 450]. Other folios, like the one illustrated here, are in the Freer Gallery [see Shen Fu, Glenn D. Lowry, and Ann Yonemura, From Concept to Context: Approaches to Asian and Islamic Calligraphy [Washington, DC, 1986], no. 45] and the BMEA [no. 39-375].

42. Shadi‘s identification and biography are described in James, Qur’ans of the Mamluks, 68.

43. The calligrapher Shadi‘ and the illuminator Aydyhadi also worked on two other copies of al-Fawa'id al-tilhima‘, the correspondence by al-`Asrari, Ayyubid ruler of Karak, who was considered a master of the epistolary style. An incomplete copy in the British Library [ms. 3025] was transcribed and illuminated by Aydyhadi ibn Muhammad the sultan al-mu‘addib [Shams 712/December 1311]. A second, complete copy of the same text [Istanbul, Aya Sophia ms. 2823] was transcribed by Shadi‘ in 720/1320, to judge from the style of the illumination, it is the work of Aydyhadi. This copy was made for the library of Sultan ‘Iyad, who was probably the celebrated historian and ruler of Hama, Abu ‘l-Fida, himself a patron and man of letters. He commissioned, for example, a fancy inlaid box [Cairo Museum of Islamic Art 15132; Atif, Renaissance, no. 24] to hold his writing materials and signify his status.

44. On this point, see also Atanasius, ‘Hypercalligraphie,’ 40.

45. See Chapter 7 and note 22 for references.

46. For other Koran manuscripts in naskh made in Cairo at the beginning of the fourteenth century by Muhammad ibn ‘Abdallah ibn Ahmad al-Ansari al-Khuzazi, see James, Qur’ans of the Mamluks, nos. 4 and 5 (CBL, 1547 and Humazi Collection, Kuwait, no. 149).

47. For an introduction to illustrated manuscripts of the period, see Duncan Haldane, Mamluk Painting [Warminster, 1978].

48. Milan, Ambrosiana A 13516; Oscar Lózger and Renato Traini, Catalogue of the Arabic Manuscripts in the Biblioteca Ambrosiana, I: Antico Fondo and Medio Fondo; Fontes Ambrosiani (Venice, 1975). LXX, one of the eleven paintings, though not the calligraphy, is reproduced and discussed in Richard Ettinghausen, Arab Painting [Geneva: Skira, 1962], 143-5, who assigns the manuscript to Syria based on the style of the miniatures. The entry in Lózger and Traini’s catalogue says that the manuscript was made in Alexandria, but it seems that they simply assumed this from the epistle of the calligrapher al-Ishandari [from Alexandria].

49. Working from Mamluk sources, notably Ibn Hajir al-Asqalani (1372-1449), David Storm Rice, ‘A Miniature in an Autograph of Shihab ad-Din Ibn Fadlallah al-Umari’, Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies 13 (1951): 866–7, put together a brief biography of this calligrapher. Ghazi studied hadith and calligraphy and was said to have excelled in the style called mansub [the proportioned script]. He also trained many pupils, including Ibn Basri, one of our early sources on Mamluk calligraphy. Ghazi was apparently also a painter, for a damaged copy of the Maqmara [BL, Or. MS. 978a].
transcribed in a regular naskh, has an illustration surmounted by an inscription in stylized kufic saying that it was made [sana'a] by Chazi ibn 'Abd al-Rahman al-Dirmizhi. The painting was first identified by L. A. Mayer, 'A Hitherto Unknown Damascene Artist,' Ars Islamica 9 [1935]: 168.] The verb sana'a [to make or design] suggests that Chazi was also responsible for the illustration. Ibn Hajar's report that Chazi exceeded in manuscripts must apply to both text and display scripts. This is a rare case where we can match the term naskh with an actual example.

Real Biblioteca de San Lorenzo del Escorial, Ar. 898; Anna Contadini, 'The Kitāb Manafi’ al-Hayawan in the Escorial Library,' Islamic Art 3 (1988–90): 33–55. The elaborate two-page colophon [her figs. 1–2] says that Ali ibn Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Aziz ibn Abu'l-Fath ibn al-Durayhim al-Mawsili compiled the work and that his strange and splendid crafts (firasat) and skillful and extraordinary designs (naskh) were finished in Rabi' II 735/March 1334. Most scholars, from Henri Massé to Richard Ettinghausen, have proposed reading the text as translated here. Contadini went to some lengths to translate it differently. First, she reordered the lines [reading the top line of the rubic in thuluth, the main text in naskh, and then the bottom line of the rubic in thuluth]. Then she reinterpreted the pronouns in the main text, reading the third-person pronoun 'hu following crafts and designs as its, referring to the book [kitab], rather than his, referring to the author [Ibn Durayhim], and the third-person feminine pronoun 'ha following sabih in the benediction as referring to these plural things rather than to the nearby feminine noun haira (year).

Her reading is not convincing. Following convention, the lines should be read in two separate parts as delineated by the two different scripts: first, the large rubic in thuluth, top and bottom, and second, the main colophon in naskh. The different scripts show that the texts were meant to be read separately. Whereas in the Persian-speaking world, scribes mixed scripts, they did not do so in the Arab lands. Furthermore, her rereading of the pronoun is contorted and defies ordinary logic. Rather, I follow the generally accepted reading that Ibn al-Durayhim claims credit for composition, transcription, and illustration. The manuscript contains another two-line colophon at the end of the text on fol. 135v written in gold thuluth outlined in black, the same script used for the names of the animals in the text, with the date Shawwal 735/October 1334. This does not refer, as in Contadini's note 9, to the completion of the text, but to the collaboration with the exemplar [maqubah]. Thus, seven months after he had finished writing the text, Ibn al-Durayhim finished checking it against the original for accuracy.


Comparing the calligrapher's own version in the manuscript with that given by Ibn Hajar shows how mistakes creep into texts: Ibn Hajar [at least, the published version of his text] gives the scribe's great-grandfather as Furutah, whereas the colophon in the calligrapher's own hand gives Abu'l-Fath.

Muhammad Ibn Zafar al-Siqili's Sulwa a al-Ma‘a' [Prescription for Pleasure], trans. M. Amari, commentary by A. S. Melikian-Chirvani [Kuwait, 1985]. The manuscript, sold at Spinks in May 1977, is now in the Homazzi collection in Kuwait. Several pages have been detached from it: two are in the Freer Gallery (41.1 and 41.2) see Ettinghausen, Arab Painting, 140–1; Esm Atal, Art of the Arab World [Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1975], no. 54; Haldane, Mamluk Painting, 104.

54. Rustaache de Lorye, 'Le bestiaire de l'Escorial,' Gazette des Beaux-Arts 2 (1935): 223–38, was the first to compare this painting to one from a dispersed copy of another Manafi’ al-Hayawan attributed to late thirteenth-century Iran [FGA 27.5], which has a similar composition but more naturalistic vegetation set against a plain ground. As Contadini, 'Manafi’ al-Hayawan,' 45 rightly points out, it is not necessary to assume that Ibn Durayhim had this precise painting in front of him to use as a model, but rather that he was aware of and worked within an iconographical tradition that incorporated Far Eastern elements.

55. Cairo, DK, 96 and 98; Lings and Safadi, The Qur'an, nos. 92–3; Atal, Renaissance, nos. 1–8, Atal (p. 41) gives a list of seven other Roman manuscripts endowed by Barsbay.

56. Such spacing is also used for headings in manuscripts written in Gothic script and hence in traditional printed works like El/2.

57. Gacek, 'Arabic Scripts,' 46.

58. Adam Gacek, 'Al-Nuwayri's Classification of Arabic Scripts,' Manuscripts of the Middle East 3 (1987): 127; al-Tibi, Calligraphy According to Ibn al-Rawwab, 40. Al-Athari, however, considered that manafi' was derived from both riq'a and naskh; Gacek, 'Arabic Scripts,' 146 and n. 47.

59. al-Tibi, Calligraphy According to Ibn al-Rawwab, 16.


61. El/2, Supplement: 'al-Busi's.'


63. El/2, 'Takhmis.'

64. Dublin, CBL 4168. Arthur J. Arberry, The Chester Beatty Library: A Handlist of the Arabic Manuscripts [Dublin, 1955–66], no. 4168; Atal, Renaissance, no. 9, who also gives a partial list of copies made for Qaytbay.

65. CBL 4169; Arberry, Handlist, no. 4169.

66. A similar layout is found, for example, in a copy of al-Busi's ode with al-Fayyumi's amplification transcribed at Cairo and dated 16 Sha'ban 707/February 1306; CBL 4178; Arberry, Handlist, pl. 143, where the calligrapher, Yusuf al-Sara, 'used a large thuluth for the text and a smaller naskh for the amplification.

67. The diagonal hemistichs on the top and bottom lines are always written in the same color [here blue], the middle line in a different color [here red] that is also used for the top and bottom blocks of amplification. The middle block of amplification is always in gold. Facing pages are always done in the same set of colors.

68. Here again the effect is produced mainly through quantity rather than quality. The gold rosettes, for example, are not finely painted. Rather, the gold is applied in a block that spills outside the rosette petals.

69. This flashy effect still works. When the book is on display in the splendid new galleries of the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin, it is shown
EMERGENCE OF REGIONAL STYLES IN THE LATER MIDDLE PERIOD

open to the double frontispiece, which flashes like a neon light, out-
shining the other [and often calligraphically better] manuscripts in
the same room.

70. Gacek, 'Arabic Scripts,' 145.
71. Al-Tibi, Calligraphy According to Ibn al-Bawwab, 63–7. Qanam al-
Sharifi's naskh is even larger: alf measures 3 cm in the horizontal line
as compared to 0.5 cm in the small block.
72. Gacek, 'Arabic Scripts,' 145 and n. 38, with references to al-Nawawi
and al-Athari.
73. Al-Tibi, Calligraphy According to Ibn al-Bawwab, 89–90.
74. Paris, BN, 13472; Ettinghausen, Arab Painting, 118–19 Marie-
Genevieve Guissot and Annie Vernay-Nouri [eds], L'Art du livre
arabe: du manuscrit au livre d'artiste [Paris], 2001, no. 98. A curiously
single-volume transcript of the Koran copied on European paper:
watermarked with a double-key surrounded by a cross and there-
dated to the 1340s [London, Nour collection, QUR611] has the text
written out horizontally in nineteen lines and then continuing in a
smaller script written in zig-zag rows in the margin. See James, Master
Scribes, no. 51; Jonathan M. Bloom, Paper before Print: The History
and Impact of Paper in the Islamic World [New Haven, 2001], fig. 34.
The use of both European paper and hawashi as a text script is thus
unusual.
75. Gacek, 'Arabic Scripts,' 147. Mamlik authors give two etymologies
for its name, both in relationship to tawar, the typical flat [maboot] script.
Some authors say that compared to tawar, only one third of the strokes
in thuluth are straight. Others say that thuluth is written with a pen
whose nib is only one third the width of that used for tawar [i.e., eight
horse-hair]. As Gacek noted, the two explanations are not mutually
exclusive but complementary.
76. Al-Hitt, al-'Umda, 12, cited in Gacek, 'Arabic Scripts,' 147 n. 87.
77. At the beginning of the Mamluk period, calligraphers sometimes
played off thuluth against other scripts on the same page, as did their
counterparts calligraphers in the eastern Islamic lands. Many of
al-Busuri's 'Ode to the Mantle' made in the fourteenth century use
thuluth for the main text juxtaposed to shorter lines in smaller naskh
for the commentary. In the manuscript transcribed by Yusuf al-Sarar
at Cairo on 16 Sha'ban 707/10 February 1308 at Cairo [CBL 4178;
Arberry, Handlist, pl. 12], for example, al-Busuri's text is written in a
large thuluth and Nasir al-din Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Samad al-Makki
al-Fayyumi's commentary in a smaller naskh. Such a combination of
curvilinear and curvilinear scripts was not popular in Mamlik
domains, and in later times calligraphers opted for a juxtaposition
of two sizes of naskh, as in Qanam al-Sharifi's copy of al-Busuri's text
[Figure 8.8].
78. James, Qu'rans of the Mamluks, fig. 15.
79. Asl, Renaissance, no. 9; al-Tibi, Calligraphy According to Ibn al-
Bawwab, 1.
80. Al-Qalqashandi, Sahh al-a'sha, 13:62–63; El2, 'Tughra.'
81. James W. Allan, Islamic Metalwork: The Nubah Es-Said Collection
83. The main exceptions to this rule are the two anepigraphic pieces
made by Muhammad ibn al-Zayn: the Vassalot Bowl and the Baptiste
de St Louis, both in the Louvre [MAO 331 and LP 166], see Asl,
Renaissance, nos. 30 and 31. Unlike virtually all other Mamlik metal-
wares, they are extensively decorated with figural representations.
85. Al-Tibi, Calligraphy According to Ibn al-Bawwab, pls. 46–53 and 32–8,
respectively.
86. Al-Qalqashandi, Sahh al-a'sha, 3:100.
88. Donald P. Little, A Catalogue of the Islamic Documents from al-
Harim As-Surfi in Jerusalem, Beitruter Texte und Studien [Bern/
Wiesbaden, 1984], 44–5 and pl. 6. On other documents requiring an
attestation (itskal) of authenticity, such as an estate inventory, depo-
sition (ijar), or marriage contract [his pl. 12], the tawqif began with li-
yashah bi-thubbat ma qaman bith bii I-beyyina [let there be an attes-
tation to it]. On these documents the tawqif was written in the upper-
right margin, with the signature of the judge or witnesses on the back
of the document.
89. Gacek, 'Arabic Scripts,' 146.
91. Little, Catalogue, Donald P. Little, 'The Haram Documents as Sources
for the Arts and Architecture of the Mamluk Period,' Muqarnas 2
[1985]: 47–61. The vast majority of the Jerusalem cache, written in
Arabic and often dated between 1303 and 1357, constitutes the records
perhaps a substitute for the formulaic titles standard on other pieces,
this point, see Jonathan M. Bloom, 'A Mamluk Basin in the L. A.
93. The fillet of marching verticals is a well-known Mamluk style of eg-
ography, already found on metalwares produced in the late thirteenth
century, such as a candlestick base made for Zayn al-Din Kihbugh
before he ascended the throne in 1294 (Cairo, Museum of Islamic Art
4465; Asl, Renaissance, no. 13). The pinwheel device is newer: it
appears on objects made for al-Nasir Muhammad, such as a large
Koran stand [kursi] made by 'the poor servant Ibn al-Mu'llim,' the 
master Muhammad ibn Sunqur al-Baghdadi, in 728/1328 and a magnifi-
cent Koran box, both now in the Museum of Islamic Art in Cairo [see
Gandolfo Witz, Objects en cuivre, Catalogue générale du Musée Arabe
du Caire (Cairo, 1984 [1931], no. 139, 14–28, pls. I and II; Asl, Renais-
sance, no. 25]. Allan, Islamic Metalwork: The Nubah Es-Said
Collection, 34–6, suggested that this pinwheel device was meant to
emulate the ruler with the sun, but such an interpretation may be
unduly speculative. Whatever its meaning, the device became common
by the late thirteenth century on metalwares made for later
sultans.
of the qadi Sharaf al-Din 'Issa, chief Shafi'ite judge in the city. Many are therefore related to his position as administrator of pious endowments. Another collection of twenty-seven documents in Persian and fourteen related ones in Arabic deal with business and legal transactions involving people and property in Azerbaijan. Little concluded that they represent the archive of a family from Azerbaijan who had settled in Jerusalem and were probably filed in the Shafi'ite court there.

95. These several decrees usually have the main text accompanied by registry notations on the front, with the date, summary, signature, and more notes from the registry on the back.


100. Little, *Haram Documents*, pl. 2.


107. BL 2340-2345; the binding and thirty-four pages from the manuscript are available on-line at www.bl.uk. For a fuller analysis of the manuscript, see David James, *Some Observations on the Calligrapher and Illuminator of the Koran of Bûkîn al-Dîn Baybars al-Jashârî’s Muqarnas* (2): 94-98, 1947-58 James, *Qur’ans of the Manilik*, no. 1.

The patron is presumably the same person who had been referred to al-Nasir Muhammad’s decree as naib al-saltana (Figure 8.11). The opening volume of the Koran manuscript contains the certificate of commissioning naming the patron as Baybars al-ashtar (major-domo) of his position he had been assigned in 1295. Originally a manlik of usultan Qalawun, Baybars also served as gubak al-faysh (commander-in-chief) and overthrew Qalawun’s son al-Nasir to rule briefly as al-Muzaffar Baybars (1109-11) until al-Nasir Muhammad regained the throne. This Baybars, usually identified by his epithet Jashârî (taste) and sometimes called Baybars II, is not to be confused with Baybars al-Bunduqdarî (the bowman), sometimes called Baybars I, the sultan who built the vast congreational mosque to the north of the old city of Cairo.


110. The penultimate folio 164 containing Surah 112 and 113 has been replaced on a sheet of vellum paper with poor calligraphy. Based on all the graphs, or examples of the same letter shapes, used by Ibn al-Wahid of Atanasos (Hypercalligraphic, Chapter 14) generated a sample page of what the original might have looked like. He also suggested (165, n. 2) that this replacement occurred between the end of the eighteenth century, the time when such a page began to be commonly used, and

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RECTLINAR AND CURVILINEAR SCRIPTS IN EGYPT AND SYRIA

the date when the pagination was added after the manuscript entered the collection of the British Library in 1858. Equally interesting is the question of how this intact manuscript ended up in the British Library in the first quarter of the nineteenth century.

111. James, *Qur’ans of the Manilik*, nos. 3-35.

112. James, *Qur’ans of the Manilik*, nos. 3-38.


115. Both al-Safadi, writing in the fourteenth century (al-Wafi bi l-Wafayat, no. 179), and Ibn Hajr, writing in the fifteenth (al-Durûr al-Ṭamîn, no. 3740), report that the manuscript was in the Hakim Mosque. Ibn Iyâs, writing in the sixteenth century (Râda al-Zuhâr, i, 418-19), includes an unusually complete account of this manuscript under the year 705 (1305-6), reporting that the atâjeb Baybars al-Jashânîr began to build his khanqâh and that Shaykh Sharaf al-Dîn Ibn al-Wahid wrote a copy of the Koran in seven parts for Baybars. It was written on baghdad paper, and Baybars is said to have spent 1,600 dinars on the volumes so that they could be written in gold. Placed in the khanqâh, it was still considered one of the beauties of the age when Ibn Iyâs was writing. These sources have been gathered in James, *Qur’ans of the Manilik*, 37-9.

116. In fact, Ibn al-Wahid seems to have embezzled some of the money; Baybars is said to have given Ibn al-Wahid 1,600 dinars to pen the manuscript, but the calligrapher expended only 400. See James, *Qur’ans of the Manilik*, 37-9.

117. *Qur’ans of the Manilik*, nos. 39, 40, 43, 45, 46, 52, 55, 56, 59-61 are all thirty-part manuscripts.

118. Ibn al-Wahid’s contemporary, Shadi ibn Muhammad ibn Shadi, who transcribed a Koran manuscript for al-Nasir Muhammad in 713/1313 (Farrukhi, 30), was an Ayâzîd prince from Syria. Later chronicles saw this link and traced the lineage of Manilik calligraphers back to the Zangids. One of the fullest accounts of Manilik calligraphers is that given by the Egyptian author and lexigrapher Muhammad Murtada al-Zâbidî (1738-91) in his *Hikmat al-sharî’âs fi khatâb al-dâ’iq* [James, *Qu’âns of the Manilik*, 11-13, 11, 11, 1, for further details about him, see Chapter 12]. Zâbidî claims that the tradition of calligraphy in Egypt goes back to Yaqut al-Mawsili, who died at Mosul in 1231. He was the master of Abu’l-Hassan ibn Zanki called wali al-‘alam, who in turn was the master of Abî al-Dîn Muhammad al-Halâlî [from Aleppo, also known as al-Shirazi]. The latter had a son ‘ Imad al-Dîn Muhammad, who was his pupil as well as a leading grammarian and calligrapher. ‘ Imad al-Dîn in turn taught Shams al-dîn Muhammad ibn Abî Qâqûs (or Rujûya), the muqtafz (inspector of accounts in the market) of Fustat, who was in turn the master of Shams al-dîn Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn al-Zîfawî, the well-known Manilik calligrapher and author of the treatise Minbar al-‘isâba.


120. See above, Chapter 7, note 13.

121. Al-Safadi, writing in the fourteenth century, called it thulth ash’âr, Ibn Iyâs, writing two centuries later, called it simply ash’âr. Ash’âr, in the sense of hair strokes, also seems to come from the term ash’âr.
EMERGENCE OF REGIONAL STYLES IN THE LATER MIDDLE PERIOD

used in the colophon of 705/1305-6 to refer to Aydughdi's work outlining Ibn al-Wahid's calligraphy. This meaning of ashar to denote outlining was current in later times. James, Qur'ans of the Mamluks, 354, n. 20, noted that in the catalogue of the manuscripts in the Khedivial collection produced at the end of the nineteenth century, the script of a Mamluk Koran manuscript is described as written in gold and outlined [mushurarta] with black ink.

Gacek, 'Arabic Scripts,' 141. This was the case with Ibn Basa, al-Nuwayri, al-Athari, and al-Saydawi, whose dates range from the early fourteenth century to the end of the period. Ibn Basa also claimed that it had been invented by his father. Al-Tayyibi's illustrations show a more rectilinear version than that used by Ibn al-Wahid. See al-Tibi, Calligraphy According to Ibn al-Bawwab, 90-3.

133. Al-Tayyibi's illustrations of ashar are found on pages 90-3, those of jali al-muhaqqaq on 67-73. See also Mohamed Zakariya, The Calligraphy of Islam: Reflections on the State of the Art (Washington DC, 1995), 33, 36, and fig. 34, the modern calligrapher [and expert on calligraphy] who describes ashar as a hybrid of tihathu, mubhaqqaq, and naskh which was used for many large Koran manuscripts and often confused with muhaqqaq.

134. Gacek, 'Arabic Scripts,' 147.

135. According to al-Qalqashandi, Subh al-a’sha, 346-9, tamar could be written according to the rules of either mubhaqqaq or tihath, but according to al-Atbari, ‘Nawat, 370 and 373, cited in Gacek, 'Arabic Scripts,' 147 and n. 94, it should be written according to the rules of muhaqqaq.


137. Gacek, 'Arabic Scripts,' 145.

138. According to al-Nuwayri, for example, ghubar was a smaller version of riqa, just as hawashi was a smaller version of naskh. According to al-Qalqashandi, ghubar was derived from both riqa and naskh, and according to al-Atbari, it was a smaller version of naskh and had no filled loops [tamat], though he added that some blinding of letters may be allowed.


141. Gacek, 'Arabic Scripts,' 146.


CHAPTER NINE

Other Styles and Centers

The main regions where fine calligraphy was produced in the Islamic lands during the later middle period were Iran and Iraq under the Mongols and Turkomans (Chapter 7) and Egypt and Syria under the Mamluks (Chapter 8), but distinct styles of Arabic script also developed in other regions. Three stand out: Anatolia, which was partitioned among various principalities known collectively as beyliks, India, notably the northern half, which was under the control of the Delhi sultanas, and the Maghrib, which was divided between three rival Berber dynasties in North Africa and the Nasrids in southern Spain, and Andalusia. Calligraphers and clerks in Anatolia and India, regions bordering Iran that were opened to full-scale Islamization only in this period and used Persian as the main literary language, adopted the metropolitan styles developed in nearby Iraq and Iran under Yaqut and his followers, a natural development in this age of Mongol prestige and Persanate culture. The Maghrib was different. By this period its population had already become heavily Islamicized, using Arabic as the language of writing and religion, and the styles of calligraphy there developed from local roots (see Chapter 6).

In this period, merchants and mystics also carried Islam to other areas, and the calligraphic styles that developed in these three provincial regions, in turn, seem to have been the source for styles elsewhere, particularly for Koran manuscripts which were used in proselytism. Thus, the bilingual Koran manuscripts produced in Anatolia seem to have been carried to Central Asia and thence to China, where calligraphers in this period began to produce their own Koran manuscripts, which bear many similarities to those that had been produced in Anatolia and Iran. Similarly, Indian manuscripts in the distinctive bharati script were transported to the Yemen, where they set the foundations for a local style. Maghribi manuscripts too may well have been carried across the Sahara to central Africa, but none has survived the vicissitudes of the hot and humid climate there.

The styles used in various places often share many features, particularly as calligraphers, patrons, and manuscripts often moved. Shirazi calligraphers, for example, took the naskh with long swooping tails marked by an angled bend, a distinctive style associated with