Glossary

Abbasi (Ar.), the term for the letters of the Arabic alphabet when used to indicate numerical values.

Arf (Ar.), a military commander.

Hāshāb al-jaysh (Turk., Ar.), commander-in-chief of the Manlikul army.

Avrād al-nūr (Ar.), the children of the people, i.e., of the Manlikul sarīn.

Āyāt (Ar.), a verse of the Holy Qurān.

Āyāt al-Kūfī (Qur’ān II, 255). Muslims make no distinction among the verses of the Qur’ān, but certain āyāt, in particular Āyāt al-Kūfī, are believed to ward off evil. It was favoured above all other āyāt for use on buildings and portable objects.

Āyāt al-Nīn (Qur’ān XXIV, 35). This verse begins as follows: “God is the light of the heavens and earth.” It has been commonly used by artists on mihrāb and mosque lamps.

Bahr (Ar.), literally, “of the sea”, but in Egypt it had the meaning of “of the Nile”, and was applied to the Manlikul regiments whose barracks were on Roda (al-nīn) Island in the Nile.

Basmah (Ar.), the Arabic phrase, “kūsamall ah-lal-nīn al-sāhih”, “his name of God, the Companionate, the Most Beautiful”.

Bayilik (Turk.), the territory ruled by a bey. At the beginning of the fourteenth century the Turkish emirates of Asia Minor were known as Beyilik.

Biha (Ar.), an angular forms of nūn used in Indian Qur’āns of the fourteenth- and fifteenth-century.

Calhun (Ar.), pen. qalam (Ar.), a reed pen.

Chagatay, a Central Asian dialect of Turkish.

Chīpān (Ar.), one of the leading Mongol families of Il-Khānīd Iran. The most prominent member was Amir Chīpān who died in 1347.

Dīr al-maṣūfīf (Ar.), one of the buildings in the complex built by the Il-Khānīd statesman and scholar Rūḥān al-Dīn, near Tabriz. It was the house (dīr) in which Qur'āns (maṣūfīf) were copied.

Dīrūrī (Ar.), the gold unit of Islamic coinage. The silver unit was the dīrām.

Faqīh (Ar.), legal, juridical expert on fiqh (jurisprudence).

Gandah-Nārat (Pers.), meaning “The one who writes in large characters”.

Hādīk (Ar.), a tradition of the Prophet Muhammad. Second only to the Holy Qur’ān as a source of Islamic Law.

Hünkay (Ar.), a semicircular piece of decoration projecting outwards into the vertical border of a page.

Hilātiliyah (Ar.), lunar, referring to the Islamic calendar, which is a lunar one.

İln (Ar.), son of.

İmsām (Ar.), the term for both the spiritual head of the Islamic Community, i.e., the Caliph, and the appointed prayer-leader in the mosque.

İnsah (Ar.), the process of diplomatic and civil-service protocols required by a scribe or secretary for the composition of official letters and documents.

İşıq (Ar.), a non-hereditary grant of land.

İmāmī (Ar.), congregational mosque where the Friday prayers are performed, as well as daily prayers.

İnhāragī (Pers.), caret. A prominent post at the Manlikul court in Cairo.

Jān (Ar.), 1. pl. ājnī (Ar.), a thirteenth section of the Holy Qur’ān.

Karām (Ar.), the cube-shaped Holy Sanctuary of Mecca to which all Muslims turn in prayer and which is the focus of the ḥajj, or pilgrimage.

Kārīk (Ar.), secretary or clerk. It also had the meaning of scribe.
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Kılıb al-shari`ah (Ar.), secretary of an Islamic court.
Khamasah (Ar.), a marginal, usually pear-shaped, ornament in the border of a Qur'an page. It marks the end of every fifth ayah, bearing the Arabic for “fifth,” khamasah.
Kändik (Pers.), an endowed foundation headed by a dā'īyy with provision for the residence of ṣāhib. Khaft (Ar.), literally, “a line,” but used in Cairo to mean a system or quarter.
Khitżnāw (Ar.), means both treasury and library.
Khāddā-ḫānnāw (Pers.), literally, “house of God,” a building in which copies of the Qur’an are kept. In Arabic it was known as khārī al-maṣīḥī.
Kīmphak, the dialect of Turkish spoken by the Bahrij Mamluks in their homeland north of the Caspian Sea in the Volga-Danube steppes.
Kīra (Ar.), literally “a chain.” It means a reading-stand for a copy of the Holy Qur’an in Mamluk times, but is now used to refer to the free-standing metal or wooden containers which hold copies of the Holy Qur’an.
Maddawāh (Ar.), college for the teaching of theology, tradition and canon law.
Mamluk (Ar.), a slave, most often with the meaning of a slave-soldier.
Mīḥānīm (Ar.), hospital. From the Persian word ḥānāmīn.
Mīrāb (Ar.), a niche in the wall of a mosque indicating the direction of Mecca.
Mūḥīth (Ar.), an illuminator, or painter.
Mukhsīr (Ar.), or makhtāsh, meant a teacher of writing.
Mutsawwī (Ar.), administrator of a waqf.
Nagīṣ (Ar.), originally meant a metalworker, from the verb ṣawṣaḥ, to engrave, but there is at least one example of an illuminator calling himself “al-masḥīḥī.”
Nīrāb (Ar.), that part of a name which indicates the bearer’s profession, al-ḥāshī, lineage, al-ṣawṣāḥi, geographical origins, al-dawrī, patron, or in the case of a slave, owner, al-ṭaḥṣīlī.
Nīğ (Ar.), a half.
Qīrā’ (Ar.), or Qīrā’ (Ar.), the seven authorized readings of the text of the Holy Qur’an.
Qūr (Ar.), a copy of the Holy Qur’an in multi-part form. It also means the container in which such copies are kept.
Riğī (Ar.), a smaller version of the taqqu script.
Sa’d (Ar.), used after the names of ancestors. In literal meaning is “happy,” and it implies that the person has gone to Paradise.
Sūdah (Ar.), prayer room or prayer. Certain points in the text of the Holy Qur’an requiring prostrations were marked by medallions in the margin.
Shaḥīd (Ar.), refers to a Muslim who dies in the cause of Allah, and originally meant martyr. Later it could be used to refer to any deceased Muslim.
Sūkath (Ar.), literally, “small ear.” Used to describe the portion which marks the end of an ayah on a page of the Holy Qur’an.
Shūrīr, pl. ashrīr (Ar.), a span of the hand.
SNY (Ar.), a section of a text which represents the leadership of Ali ibn Abi Talib, the fourth Caliph.
Sītiq (Ar.), six. There were six clan bands in Islamic calligraphy: sītiq, sītiq, sīhtiq, riği, riği and riği. The expression “al-sītiq,” “The Six,” is also used for the six famous prophets of Yaqūt al-Matarī’s sītiq.
Sik (pl. sikh (Ar.), a seventh section of the Holy Qur’an.
Sīft (Ar.), a member of a mystical order under the control of a dā’īyy. The word comes from sīft, wood, referring to the wooden robe worn by ascetics.
Sunūt (Ar.), any Muslim who follows the sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad, i.e. his sayings and doings, together with the Law established by the Holy Qur’an.
Sīrāk (Ar.), a chapter of the Holy Qur’an.
Sūrāq (Ar.), sūrāq, the decorated title of a sūrat. Apart from the name of the sūrat, the verse-count and place of revelation are normally given.
Tahāsh (Ar.), illumination, from the verb dhāshah, to paint.
Tash’īr (Ar.), the surrounding letters with hair-like strokes.
Taqqu (Ar.), a script used for sūrāq-headings, colophons and subsidiary elements, in which the letters are joined by additional ligatures, giving the illusion of being rapidly-written sītiq or sīhtiq.
Umūn al-sūrūn (Ar.), the mother of the sūrat.
Uṣūdī (Ar.), (also al-da‘īr), major-domo, or paymaster-general under the Mamluks.
Wūf (Ar.), endowment, usually a pious foundation.
Waqf (Ar.), waqf, waqf (Pers.), a deed of endowment (waqf). In the case of a manuscript bequeathed to a mosque or religious institution, the deed was written on the opening page.
Wazīr, minister.
Zādī (Ar.), or Zādī (Ar.), a suffix meaning "son of".
Zāhīr (Ar.), the cover of a manuscript.
Zūlūq (Ar.), a sūrat foundation, sometimes endowed like the kūnāq but more loosely organized.

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