95
Bahr Mārzūm (Mont., XIX, 1–9). Its Nabīlī script, at the opening of
volume 20 of the same Qurʾān.

The general style is similar to that of nos. 90–91, but there are no
marginal particular

94
Bahr al-Ḥamra (Dharmakī) and al-Isa on-Sīn (Matt., XXI, 1–
XXII, 6). It is a Qurʾān in Māliqān script, copied by Abī ʿAbdAllāh Muhammad b. ʿAbdAllāh b. ʿAbdAllāh b. ʿAbdAllāh b. Khurṣidān

The result is a ground of werek work printed on with blue.

The headings in the upper panel and the scribe in the lower panels are in white Māliqān over a gold floral decorum on a
blue ground with compartments of red and gold on either side.

Between the upper and lower scribe partitions, a half turned rose
protrudes into the outer margin.

11×3.5; 57 lines, 546 leaves.

Case 12

95
Shīr b. Nabhān (the Red), Bahr al-Ḥamra (the Red Journey), XVII,
100–106. XVIII, 1–7. It is a Qurʾān in large Nākṣī script, copied by Shāhān b. ʿAbdAllāh (Dubai), called al-Ḥajjābī al-Madīkī al-ʿAnṣārī, in 804/1402 in

The term element in the name of the calligrapher shows that he
was in the service of the Māliqān Sūfī al-ʿAnṣārī al-Ḥajjābī.

12 × 282 mm; 31 leaves, 277 leaves.

Madanbux, John Rylands University Library, 38, f. 111v–112v.

Case 10

96
Māzra al-Filūb (the Opening) and al-Bārūq (the Con., L, 1–20, 4. No. 90) in Nabīlī script, copied in 989/1582, presumably
in Egypt.

The scribe’s headings are in blue Thānūtī script on a gold ground.

The illumination surrounding the text consists of gold floral
decorum on a light blue ground, divided into several sections,
including the upper and lower scribe panels, by a thin green line
mostly marked with black.

The page layout is like a lost sūfī of the Middle Ages, a fan
representation of a year which had already been replaced elsewhere
(as, for example, no. 91 which proceeds it in date), and which was
soon to be superseded after in Egypt as a result of the Ottoman
imposition of one year later.

30 × 232 mm; 15 leaves, 304 folios.


Case 13

See Photo XVII
8th/14th century

As in Mamluk territory, the favourite scripts for the larger Qur’ans in Iraq and Persia under the Il-Khanid Mongols were Muqarnas for the text and ornamental Eastern Kufic for the surah headings. There is also a similarity in the total effect of Mamluk and Mongol frontispieces. In both, a formal frame makes finite a content which none the less succeeds in ‘escaping’, as it were, into the infinite. But a Quranic text is often omitted altogether. Thus, instead of being placed in a central square, with an upper and lower panel for the inscription, the main part of the illumination usually takes up the whole rectangle.

Another difference is that the Persian and Iraqi artists are clearly less bent on emphasising centrifugal power at the midstmost point of their illumination. The centrepiece is often undeniably radiant, but without any deliberate build-up of dynamic expansion. Much of the total effect is gained by the subtle reverberations of the ‘echo’. But this and the more direct methods of outward radiation are not mutually exclusive, as we have already seen.

The following detailed analysis of one of the more outstanding Mongol frontispieces, no. 99, will help to complete these general and summary indications. The illumination consists of a cluster of hexagons of gold floral arabesque on grounds of red or blue, with a small hexagon at the centre of each containing a gold flower on a ground of blue or red. Each of the larger hexagons is surrounded by a white-outlined hexagonal frame of gold foliar arabesque on a pale jade ground, every side of which frames one side of each of the two hexagons between which it stands. The unity of the whole is further increased by the intersection of the white outlines to form a small hexagon at every corner of the larger ones, in such a way that each of these smaller hexagons acts as centre for three of the larger ones, which it unites into a symmetrical cluster about itself. The central larger hexagon is unique, in that the blue ground of its centrepiece is projected into the scarlet outer ground with a subtle effect of radiation.

Four incomplete hexagons, two on each side, ‘escape’ beneath the gold trellised frame which surrounds the whole rectangle, and which is itself outlined in blue, with a three-barred finial at each of its four corners. Attached to the frame in the middle of the outer margin of each page is a gold-bordered palmette, inside which a gold-outlined red peony, with central petals of jade outlined with gold, is surrounded by gold foliar arabesque on a blue ground. The blue outline of the palmette is prolonged into a compact knotted ornament, barbed on both sides, which serves as a base for a small tree-like finial (no. 99).
B-Khânîd Qur’âns are considerably rarer than Mamlûk ones, partly because the style was more quickly superseded, and partly owing to the destructiveness of the mid 9th/14th century Timurid invasion, which Egypt was spared.

97

Stair al-Aappl (the Spells of War), VIII, 41, at the opening of post 10 of a Qur’âns in thirty volumes copied in Mamlûk script by Ahmad ibn al-Shaykh al-Sulayman in 704/1304, probably in Baghdad, and illustrated by Muhammad ibn Ayyub.

The text is on bands of white with irregular foliate edges surrounded by foliate arabesque in a frame of gold tendrils prolonged to take up upper and lower panels, in which quotations or the number of the part are written in ornamental bayarûd. The whole manuscript is surrounded by a continuous band of arabesque in gold borders.

Attached to the outer ends of the panels are marginal palmate. A typically B-Khânîd feature of these is the broad band with gold-tipped edges which surrounds the small central roundel.

Many of the inscriptions in the mosques of Baghdad are by this famous calligrapher who was one of the six conspirators who submitted the bayarûd to the Khân (see Qâqî Ayyub, Calligraphers and Painters, p. 60).

20 - 1999, a Haan, 50 folios.

Tobin, Ivan Rustam Museum, 224, 47, 19–37.

Case 13

98

Frontispiece to post 10 of a Qur’âns in thirty volumes copied in gold Mamlûk script by Abû al-Muhammâd al-Hasanî in 705/1305 in Mecca for the B-Khânîd Sultan Câlîpurî and his two ministers Rashîd ad-Din and Sirût ad-Din.

To the description of the illumination already given in the introduction to this section, it may be added that the marks and signs on the right-hand page have remained somewhat more brilliance than they have on the left.

Another volume of this Qur’âns in 50, 173 in the Turkish and Islamic Museum, Istanbul, and there is also a fragment in the Austrian Museum.

The firm of the two patrons mentions mentioned above is the famous Persian historia Rashîd ad-Din Pâd Allâh.

57 - 1999, a Haan, 50 folios.


Case 13

See Plate XVIII

99


Inscribed in the upper and lower panels, in white Thuluth script on a gold background, is the name of the post, followed by two readings of the Prophet about the merit of reading this particular chapter of the Qur’âns.

68
The style, typical of Persia and Iraq under the Il-Khans (comparably fine and legible), presented itself to the reader as the actual text of the Koran, since the Persian state virtually of its mission. The Koran manuscripts of the above names were preserved family wise from the 13th century on. The Koran manuscript of Gürro, which originates from the 13th century, is the first known Koran manuscript in the Persian language. It was written in a fine, calligraphic script known as Kufic, and it is considered one of the most important manuscripts of the Koran. The manuscript is housed in the National Library in Iran.

Case 14

Plate XXVII

Material: papyrus

This manuscript is the oldest known example of the Koran written in the Persian language. It was written in the 13th century and is considered one of the most important manuscripts of the Koran. The manuscript is housed in the National Library in Iran.

Case 14

Plate XXVIII

Material: papyrus

This manuscript is also from the 13th century and is considered one of the most important manuscripts of the Koran. It was written in the Persian language and is housed in the National Library in Iran.

Case 14

Plate XXIX

Material: papyrus

This manuscript is from the 13th century and is considered one of the most important manuscripts of the Koran. It was written in the Persian language and is housed in the National Library in Iran.

Case 14

Plate XXX

Material: papyrus

This manuscript is from the 13th century and is considered one of the most important manuscripts of the Koran. It was written in the Persian language and is housed in the National Library in Iran.

Case 14

Plate XXXI

Material: papyrus

This manuscript is from the 13th century and is considered one of the most important manuscripts of the Koran. It was written in the Persian language and is housed in the National Library in Iran.

Case 14

Plate XXXII

Material: papyrus

This manuscript is from the 13th century and is considered one of the most important manuscripts of the Koran. It was written in the Persian language and is housed in the National Library in Iran.

Case 14

Plate XXXIII

Material: papyrus

This manuscript is from the 13th century and is considered one of the most important manuscripts of the Koran. It was written in the Persian language and is housed in the National Library in Iran.

Case 14

Plate XXXIV

Material: papyrus

This manuscript is from the 13th century and is considered one of the most important manuscripts of the Koran. It was written in the Persian language and is housed in the National Library in Iran.
The Qur'ān

106

50th Eid (the Lesser Fast), XXXVIII, 9–14, in gilded Rayhānī with blue inks, in part of a Qur'ān in many volumes.
Many folios are missing from this part, and there is no indication of a date, date or place, but the style compares with that of 115 and 116; it suggests that it is from the 12th century, at least or Persia.
30 × 22 cm. 15 lines, 48 folios.
Case 13

107

An opening in a Qur'ān in Nashī script copied by ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd Allāh in 758/1356 in Persia.
The scribe, who was also a great master of Thulūd script, is the author of a treatise on calligraphy, and he wrote the text on both sides of the page, that is, the upper and lower parts of the page.
Nimrīd (also known as Nimrīd or Nimrūd) is a major city in Assyria, located in the upper Tigris Valley of modern-day Iraq.
28.8 × 20 cm. 15 lines, 303 folios.
Masoud, Iranian Rova Library, 275.
Case 13

108

51st Palm (the Second of the Palms), XLVIII, 1–4, in a Qur'ān copied in gold Rayhānī script by ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd Allāh in 758/1356 in Persia.
The scribe, who was also a great master of Thulūd script, is the author of a treatise on calligraphy, and he wrote the text on both sides of the page, that is, the upper and lower parts of the page.
28.8 × 20 cm. 15 lines, 303 folios.
Masoud, Iranian Rova Library, 275.
Case 13

109

52nd Palm (the First of the Palms), XLVIII, 1–4, in a Qur'ān copied in gold Rayhānī script by ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd Allāh in 758/1356 in Persia.
The scribe, who was also a great master of Thulūd script, is the author of a treatise on calligraphy, and he wrote the text on both sides of the page, that is, the upper and lower parts of the page.
28.8 × 20 cm. 15 lines, 303 folios.
Masoud, Iranian Rova Library, 275.
Case 13

110

53rd Palm (the Second of the Palms), XLVIII, 1–4, in a Qur'ān copied in gold Rayhānī script by ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd Allāh in 758/1356 in Persia.
The scribe, who was also a great master of Thulūd script, is the author of a treatise on calligraphy, and he wrote the text on both sides of the page, that is, the upper and lower parts of the page.
28.8 × 20 cm. 15 lines, 303 folios.
Masoud, Iranian Rova Library, 275.
Case 13

111

54th Palm (the First of the Palms), XLVIII, 1–4, in a Qur'ān copied in gold Rayhānī script by ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd Allāh in 758/1356 in Persia.
The scribe, who was also a great master of Thulūd script, is the author of a treatise on calligraphy, and he wrote the text on both sides of the page, that is, the upper and lower parts of the page.
28.8 × 20 cm. 15 lines, 303 folios.
Masoud, Iranian Rova Library, 275.
Case 13

112

55th Palm (the Second of the Palms), XLVIII, 1–4, in a Qur'ān copied in gold Rayhānī script in 770/1367–8 in Iran.
The scribe, who was also a great master of Thulūd script, is the author of a treatise on calligraphy, and he wrote the text on both sides of the page, that is, the upper and lower parts of the page.
28.8 × 20 cm. 15 lines, 303 folios.
Masoud, Iranian Rova Library, 275.
Case 13

113

56th Palm (the Third of the Palms), XLVIII, 1–4, in a Qur'ān copied in gold Rayhānī script in 770/1367–8 in Iran.
The scribe, who was also a great master of Thulūd script, is the author of a treatise on calligraphy, and he wrote the text on both sides of the page, that is, the upper and lower parts of the page.
28.8 × 20 cm. 15 lines, 303 folios.
Masoud, Iranian Rova Library, 275.
Case 13
Timurid and early Ottoman

9th/10th century

The Mongol style of Qur'ān illumination continued after the fall of the Il-Khānids almost until the end of the 8th/14th century when it began to be gradually replaced by the style that is named after Timūr (Tamburlaine). The replacement in question was of a kind that has often taken place in the arts of various civilizations, the change from a large-featured beauty of grandeur and magnificence to an exquisite beauty of the finest intricacy. None the less, Timurid illumination belongs inseparably to the same era as that of the Mongols and Mamluks. It marked, in the end of the era and, as often happens when a movement draws to its close, on the one hand it is something of a herald of the new that is to come, while on the other hand it pushes certain features of the old to an extreme. The 8th-9th/14th-15th centuries span what might be called the age of the large Qur'āns. But no Qur'āns were larger than some of the Timurid ones. The following anecdote is not irrelevant. 'Umar Aqta', left-handed because he had lost his right hand, wrote a minute Qur'ān in Ghībār script, from accounts considerably smaller than no. 168 in this exhibition, and presented it to Timūr, who disdained to accept it. The great calligrapher went away and wrote a Qur'ān of which each line was more than a cubit long. He put it on a barrow and took it to the Palace. Timūr with all his dignitaries came out to meet him, and loaded him with honours.

To take an example of a different kind, the ornamental Eastern Kūfī script heading, in virtue of its somewhat mysterious and feminine delicacy, was a perfect complement to the virel Muḥaṣṣaq, in which the Quranic text itself was written. The Timurids pushed the delicacy in question almost to the verge of invisibility, giving the lines of the letters sometimes no more thickness than the threads of a spider's web, not, as it must be admitted, without a certain beauty of effect. As to the sitār palmette, it continued to be an essential feature of Qur'ānic illumination until Timurid times. Then, instead of the single ornament, the palmette was often multiplied (see nos. 115 and 116). But also, as it were in anticipation of what was to come, it was often omitted altogether as in no. 119. Another anticipation of the 10th/16th century and afterwards, was the use of different sizes of script on the same page. It became a common practice in Timurid times to write the first, middle and last line in large Thuluth or Muḥaṣṣaq script and the intervening lines in Nashki or small Rayḥāni (see no. 117).

1 An example of this is to be found as early as the 6th/12th century (see A. J. Arberry, The Koran Illustrated, plate 277) but it was 30 doubt considered too much of a liberty to be accepted at that time, nor was it ever fully accepted by the Amirs themselves.
The Qur'an

117 An opening in a Qur'an copied in Rayhani and Naqshî script in the 9th/10th century, probably in Persia. The verse, middle and last lines (1, 5, 6) are in Rayhani and the remainder in Naqshî, all in black except for the middle line which is in gold. The signature Yusef al-Mu'addal can scarcely be authentic.

55 x 43 cm; 7 lines; 346 folios.

Masoud, Iran Rice Library, 430.

Case 16

118 An opening in a Qur'an copied in Rayhani script in the 9th/10th century, probably in Persia.

59 x 43 cm; 7 lines; 170 folios.

Masoud, Iran Rice Library, 430.

Case 16

119 Shir al-Fatihat: The Opening (1-6) at the beginning of part 1 of a Qur'an in thirty volumes copied in Rayhani script in the 9th/10th century in Persia. The text on these pages is in gold lettering, the eyes of some of the letters being filled with blue.

60 x 44 cm; 9 lines; 44 folios.

Masoud, Iran Rice Library, 440.

Case 16

50 Plate XXII

120 Shir al-Fatihat: The Opening (1-6) at the beginning of part 1 of the same Qur'an in Rayhani script, 63 x 46 cm; 5 lines; 47 folios.

Masoud, Iran Rice Library, 470.

Case 16

121 An opening at the beginning of part 17 of the same Qur'an in Rayhani script, with headings in ornamental Eastern Kufi.

62 x 43 cm; 5 lines; 53 folios.

Masoud, Iran Rice Library, 530.

Case 16

122 An opening in a Qur'an copied in Rayhani script in the 9th/10th century, probably in Persia.

56 x 28 cm; 11 lines; 316 folios.

Masoud, Iran Rice Library, 316.

Case 16

123 An opening in a Qur'an copied in alternate bright blue and gold Rayhani script in the 9th/10th century in Persia.

30 x 23 cm; 14 lines; 308 folios.

Masoud, Iran Rice Library, 308.

Case 16

124 Shir al-Fatihat: The Opening at the beginning of the 9th/10th century in Turkey. The verse headings are in blue or red Thuluth script written on Rouj. The verse divisions are gold incised.

The original colophon has been effaced. But instead of an earthen base being substituted, as is usual in such cases, this relatively early

Ottoman manuscript is past-dated by over 300 years to 1308/1793-4, in order that it may be attributed to the famous Sultán caligrapher Dervish Bili.

29 x 20 cm; 15 lines; 186 folios.


Case 16

125 Shir al-Fatihat: The Opening and Shir al-Saqbah (the Cover), 1-6, at the beginning of a Qur'an in Naqshî script. The text is in gold on blue.

The text is in a ground of deep blue, tinted green, on an ivory gold background.

56 x 43 cm; 9 lines; 46 folios.


Case 16

126 Shir al-Fatihat: The Opening and Shir al-Saqbah (the Cover), 1-6, at the beginning of a Qur'an in Naqshî script, on bright tinted paper, in the 9th/10th century, probably in Turkey. The text is in a ground of deep blue, tinted green, on an ivory gold background.

56 x 43 cm; 9 lines; 46 folios.

London, British Library, Add. 24255 ff. 10v-10v.

Case 16

127 Shir al-Fatihat: The Opening and Shir al-Saqbah (the Cover), 1-6, at the beginning of a Qur'an in Rayhani script, copied by Muhammad Mrash in the 9th/10th century in Turkey. The text is in a ground of deep blue, tinted green, on an ivory gold background.

56 x 43 cm; 9 lines; 46 folios.

St Andrews University Library, 22.5 ff. 10v-10v.

Case 16
10th-16th century and later

Amongst the most striking characteristics of the inter-regional style which prevailed from the beginning of the 10th/16th century is a deepening of the tint of blue and a general increase of the use of reds and other hitherto subsidiary colours, though the more or less exclusive combination of blue and gold is always preferred by certain artists. Apart from colour, everything now depends on the arabesque. The Timurids had made little use, in illumination, of the geometrical element, which by the time of the Safavids had become a thing of the past, together with the sūras palmette and the ornamental Kufic sūrah heading. There was still an occasional frontispiece, but it now consisted of two large star-shaped medallions of arabesque on opposite pages, with or without a Qurʾān verse in the centre of each. A fine example is to be seen in no. 133. More often, however, the manuscript opened in the middle of the page containing the first chapter of the Qurʾān in Naṣīḥī script and surrounded by panels of arabesque, sometimes so extensive as to leave only a small margin. The adjacent panels are nearly always distinct from each other in colour, but the arabesque is often shared. An example is to be seen in no. 139, where beneath the text itself are fine gold spiral stems which spread out on all sides, considerably less visible than the small flowers which they scatter sparingly over the whole illumination. Another typical feature to be seen on these same pages is in the loops and festoons of knotted ribbon-work, powerfully suggestive of the Far Eastern influence which had haunted the Middle and Near Eastern arts of the book ever since the time of the Khānids (see also nos. 132 and 140).
There are upper red lower panels for title and author, and the illustration in these and elsewhere consists mainly of gold medallions of various shapes on a rich blue ground framed with gold and overlaid with polychrome floral arabesque.

The manuscript was probably at that time in the library.


Case 18

140

Stuart al-Filihi (the Opening) and Shahr al-Baghdad (the Cow), 1 -111, q. in a Qur'an copied in gold Rayhani script by 'Abd al-Malik ibn Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Khayyat in Persia in 1230/1814.

The wakas are in blue. The silver headings are in white Rayhani script on a gold ground surrounded by polychrome floral arabesque on an alternating blue and white ground, which is decorated with rows of gold medallions surrounded by gold arabesque on an alternating blue and white ground, with three panels projecting into the margin.


Case 17

141


There are upper red lower panels for title and author, and the illustration in these and elsewhere consists mainly of gold medallions of various shapes on a rich blue ground framed with gold and overlaid with polychrome floral arabesque.

The manuscript was probably at that time in the library.


Case 18

140

Stuart al-Filihi (the Opening) and Shahr al-Baghdad (the Cow), 1 -111, q. in a Qur'an copied in gold Rayhani script by 'Abd al-Malik ibn Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Khayyat in Persia in 1230/1814.

The wakas are in blue. The silver headings are in white Rayhani script on a gold ground surrounded by polychrome floral arabesque on an alternating blue and white ground, which is decorated with rows of gold medallions surrounded by gold arabesque on an alternating blue and white ground, with three panels projecting into the margin.


Case 17

141

The Qur'an

145 Since Quf (the Lesser Quf) and sitrat al-Darih (the Waving Words), L. 44 – L. 50, is a Qur'an in large Naskhi script copied for Mahran Khan, Bustamay by Ladi-Mujammar bin Qasim Muhammad bin 'Abd al-'Aziz in 920/1514 in Afghanistan. The silted headings are in Ruhf script.

It is alleged by oral tradition that this Qur'an was given by an Afghan prince to the Sufi Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan and is said to have been commissioned by him. It is recorded that the manuscript came into the possession of the Nawab of Oudh.

24.5 x 14.50cm; 14 (15) lines; 449 folios.
London, British Library, Or. 12905, ff. 367r–368r.
Case 18

146 Silar al-Darih (the Poor) and sitrat al-Nabi (the Arc), XXVII, XXVII, II, is a Qur'an in Indian Thuluth script copied in the 982/1477 century in India.

The silted heading is in gold Thuluth script over a gold folio background. The verse divisions are gold roundels and the text is enclosed in thin frames of blue and gold. These are contemporary with the script.

Case 19

147 Silar al-Darih (the Opening) and sitrat al-Baqarah (the Cow), I, 1–114, is a Qur'an in Indian script copied in the 984/1578 century in India.

The silted heading is in gold roundels with blue frames. The verse divisions are gold roundels and the text is enclosed in thin frames of blue and gold. These are contemporary with the script.

Case 20

148 Silar al-Darih (the Opening) and sitrat al-Baqarah (the Cow), I, 1–114, is a Qur'an in Indian Naskhi script copied in the 984/1578 century in India.

The silted heading is in blue Ruhf script over a gold background.

The script is black on gold, with an imitation Persian translation in small red Naskh script on white. Beyond a square frame of flowers on a gold ground there is a broad band of gold floral arabesque on a bright blue ground interrupted by a sequence of gold palm-tree-like motifs. This sequence is itself interrupted by fine blue and gold lines in shape between a triangle and a sine-circle, which project into the sun corner inscribed on all four sides.

21 x 12.50cm; 16 (17) folios.
Case 21

149 Silar al-Darih (the Opening) and sitrat al-Baqarah (the Cow), I, 1–114, is a Qur'an in Indian Naskhi script copied in the 984/1578 century in India.

The silted heading is in blue Ruhf script on a gold ground.

The script is black on gold, with an imitation Persian translation in small red Naskh script on white. Beyond a square frame of flowers on a gold ground there is a broad band of gold floral arabesque on a bright blue ground interrupted by a sequence of gold palm-tree-like motifs. This sequence is itself interrupted by fine blue and gold lines in shape between a triangle and a sine-circle, which project into the sun corner inscribed on all four sides.

21 x 12.50cm; 16 (17) folios.
Case 21