A RARE QUR'AN

Baghdad, Iraq
AH 681/CE 1282
17.4 x 12 cm (one folio)
manuscript and binding

This Qur'an is written in the very handsome and now obsolete thuluth script. The title pages are written in naskh script in gold above arabesque forms, with margins embellished by occasional side medallions. The naskh in this Qur'an represents one of the most definitive examples of this script. A remarkably handsome basmalah precedes each surah. The verse endings are marked by small gold rosettes; diacritical marks are written with a very fine nib, with other technical marks in red. The book ends with a colophon (opposite), which reads:

Written by Hajj al-Mas'ud al-Ismi during the sixth month of the year
AH 681 in the City of Peace [Baghdad]
A RARE QUR’AN

Baghdad, Iraq
AH 681/CE 1282
17 1/2 x 12 in (one folio)

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technical marks in red. The book ends with a colophon (opposite), which reads:

Written by liqat al-Mas’u’di during the sixth month of the year
AH 681 in the City of Peace [Baghdad]
A Qur'an Written by 'Abd Allah al-Siyrafi

Farsi
14th century
29 x 19 cm (one folio)
INSCRIBED AND ILLUMINATED

The importance of this Qur'an is not only in the great prestige of its calligrapher, al-Siyrafi, but in the unsurpassed beauty of its calligraphy. Al-Siyrafi is reputed to have written 36 Qur'ans before his death in 1342. He is thought to have been one of the pupils of the great calligrapher Ya'qub al-Mustas'im (d. 1298).

Al-Siyrafi is particularly famous for his superb naskh.

The top line is written throughout this hefty volume in shimmering blue turquoise thuluth, followed by four lines of naskh, a line of thuluth in gold, again followed by four lines of naskh, and a final line of thuluth in turquoise.

The opening page is profusely illuminated in turquoise and gold embellished with red and white. On the last page (opposite) we read al-Siyrafi's signature in blue thuluth. There are side medallions consisting of circles in gold on a blue ground outlined in line blue.
A Qur'an Written by 'Abd Allah al-Sayrafi

Iraq
15th Century
29 x 19 cm (11.4 x 7.5 in)
(approximate)

The importance of this Qur'an is not only in the great prestige of its calligrapher, al-Sayrafi, but in the unsurpassed beauty of its calligraphy. Al-Sayrafi is reputed to have written 30 Qur'ans before his death in 1142. He is thought to have been one of the pupils of the great calligrapher Yaqut al-Mustasimi (d. 1298).

Al-Sayrafi is particularly famous for his script naskh.

The top line is written throughout this holy volume in shimmering blue turquoise naskh, followed by four lines of naskh, a line of chabth in gold, again followed by four lines of naskh, and a final line of chabth in turquoise.

The opening page is profusely illuminated in turquoise and gold embellished with red and white. On the last page (opposite) we read al-Sayrafi's signature in blue chabth. There are side medallions consisting of circles in gold on a blue ground outlined in fine blue.
A SMALL QUR’AN WRITTEN ON BLUE-TINTED PAPER

TURKISH PERSIA
DATED AH 886/CE 1481
14.8 x 11.2 cm (one fold)

NEW AND RARE

The surah headings in this Qur’an are written in naskh script in white ink on a gold ground. The naskh script is written in a clear hand, and the generous margins are embellished by side medallions. The paper is decorated with gold ruling, which gives it a Far Eastern look. There is a reference in this Qur’an to the fact that it was sponsored by Bayzid ibn Sa’id in the year AH 886.
A SMALL QUR'AN WRITTEN ON BLUE-TINTED PAPER

TIMURID PERIOD
DATED AH 886/CE 1481
14.8 x 11.2 cm (five folios)

Aqdn and Zayn

The surah headings in this Qur'an are written in rijal script in white ink on a gold ground. The naskh script is written in a clear hand, and the generous margins are embellished by side medallions. The paper is decorated with gold marbling, which gives it a Far Eastern look. There is a reference in this Qur'an to the fact that it was sponsored by Bayazid ibn Sadiq in the year AH 886.

AN OTTOMAN PRAYER BOOK

TURKISH, OTTOMAN PERIOD
DATED AH 1084/CE 1675
23.5 x 16 cm (one folio)

Known as the Kalâm (sayings) of 'Ali, this prayer book consists of 39 folios written in naskh script in gold and black ink alternately. There is no signature or colophon in this book, but the opening page is dated and contains a very well-written statement:

There are the sayings of 'Ali [the son-in-law of the Prophet].
A Qur'an Written by Sheikh Hamedullah al-Amasi

Ottoman Period
Dated AH 907/CE 1501
35 x 24 cm (13¾ x 9½ in)

This Qur'an was written by one of the greatest calligraphers of all time, Sheikh Hamedullah al-Amasi (d. 1520). This master calligrapher was a man for all seasons and all people: in Southeast Asia he would have been appreciated for his other attributes as much as for his calligraphy.

Like a Zen master, he was a brilliant archer as well as a master of writing; he lived under the protection of the sultans and mingled with the elite. The frontispiece (opposite) is a feast of perfection in terms of both calligraphic scripts and the art of tahlab (Turkish) or tashbih (in Arabic) illumination (illumination which complements the calligraphy in an important way).

The surah headings are written in fine riga' with white ink.
A Qur'an Written by Sheikh Hamdullah al-Amasi

Ottoman Period
(Dated AH 970/CE 1561)
35 x 24 cm (13 3/4 x 9 1/2 in)
Arabic and Siq'i

This Qur'an was written by one of the greatest classic calligraphers of all time, Sheikh Hamdullah al-Amasi (d. 1520). This master calligrapher was a man for all seasons and all people; in Southeast Turkey he would have been appreciated for his other attributes as much as for his calligraphy. A Zen master, he was a brilliant archer as well as a master of writing; he lived under the protection of the sultans and mingled with the elite. The frontispiece (opposite) is a feast for the eyes in terms of both calligraphic scripts and the art of calligraphy (in Turkish) or cilih (in Persian) illumination (illumination which complements the calligraphy in an important way).

The surah headings are written in fine qalqal with white ink.
A SMALL OTTOMAN QUR’AN

OTTOMAN PERIOD
DATED AH 1189/CE 1775
16 x 10 cm (SHEET)
340B

One of the first things that catches the viewer’s eye when examining this Qur’an is the superb illumination - it displays sophisticated text and an advanced sense of design. The different shades of gold add an extra dimension to the visual impact of the page. The naskh script was written with a very fine nib, with precision and extreme care. This Qur’an has an unusual additional feature - certain words are picked out in red on both facing pages, in such a way that when the book is closed matching words fit perfectly together. For example, on the opening pages of this Qur’an the calligrapher writes the word al-dha, meaning ‘religious’, in the third line of the right-hand page in red ink. This word also occurs in the third line of the left-hand page.

This book was signed by the calligrapher Halit Mustafa Khurshad Zade al-Üskudari in the year AH 1189/CE 1775.
TTOMAN QUR‘AN

1189/1775

11000

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were picked out in red on both
and when the book is closed
gether. For example, in
Quran, the calligrapher writes
regional', in the third line of the
ink. This word also occurs
of the left-hand page.

the calligrapher Hafiz Mustafa
in the year AH 1189/CE 1775.