

# THE QUR'AN MANUSCRIPTS FROM EARLY ISLAMIC IRAN (10th TO MID-13th AD)

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## Abstract

The Qur'an manuscripts played a dominant role in Islamic art. Our knowledge of the Islamic book in the early centuries of the Islamic era is based entirely on Qur'anic material. There are no finely illuminated Islamic manuscripts from 10th AD century Iran other than copies of the Qur'an; in fact, there are no other manuscripts at all. As to the period covered in this article, it has been found that the late 10th century was the formative period for Qur'an manuscripts. From the 11th to mid-13th centuries, the classical age when Qur'an manuscripts were perfected, we find a limitless variety of themes. The artists of these periods formulated a decorative vocabulary that became the most prominent characteristic of Islamic works of Qur'an and was used with minor modifications up to the 20th century. The classical age of Qur'an manuscripts, however, was brought to an end by the Mongol invasions in the middle of the 13th century. The arts of the Qur'an have been classified as: calligraphy, illumination, and bookbinding.

## Introduction

The arts of the book particularly Qur'an manuscripts, which were completed with special care, played a dominant role in Islamic art history. The main reason for the survival of so many Qur'an manuscripts over such a long period, despite war and the burning of libraries, natural disasters, damage, damp, and continual use is the special protection that was accorded to the sacred text they contain. Almost nothing of Persian Qur'an manuscripts under the Umayyad period (661-750) has come down to us.

The arts of the Qur'an have been classified as: calligraphy, illumination, and bookbinding. Here I shall discuss the development of Qur'an manuscripts in the early art of the book, with the exception of bookbinding. The early manuscripts were used so much because the original binding was changed over the centuries, and so we know nothing certain so far of the oldest Iranian bindings in good condition.<sup>1</sup>

The art of calligraphy, or penmanship, was cultivated by Muslim artists from earliest times, and played a dominant role in Islamic art, combined



with every sort of decorative scheme. There are two principal styles of Arabic writing: a formal style with angular letters and a cursive style with rounded letters. The first type of writing is known as kufic, from the town of Kūfa in Mesopotamia, probably the first town in which it was put into official use; the second type is known as Naskh. Both types of script were known from the early centuries.

Kufic characters were used for a period of about five hundred years in inscriptions and copying the Qur'an. The earliest Qur'ans belong to the early 8th century. Six leaves of these Qur'ans are kept in the Dar al-Makhtutat in Sanaa (around 710-715), some fragments in Bibliotheque Nationale in Paris and the Biblioteca Vaticana in Rome.<sup>2</sup> The other 8th century copy of the Qur'an, with a date 784-5 AD (168 AH), is in the Cairo library.<sup>3</sup> Most of the 'Abbasid Qur'ans belong to the 9th century. They are written on parchment in black or gold ink, and show thick, rounded Kufic letters with short verticals and exaggerated horizontals. This script was used in Egypt, Syria and Mesopotamia during the 9th century and early 10th century.

In Iran, the Arabic script had been adopted quite soon after the Islamic conquest of 642 AD, largely because it was the official script of the new state into which Iran was incorporated. The methods of writing were adopted from the 'Abbasid Kufic scripts. But Iranian calligraphers used a variation of 'Abbasid Kufic scripts in which the verticals were more emphasised than the horizontals. This style, developed by the Persians in the late 10th century, has certain characteristics which belong particularly to standard Kufic, and usually goes by the name of "Eastern Kufic". This term, like Kufic, covers a wide variety of different types. Eastern Kufic was employed for the writing of Qur'ans down to the 13th century.

Several parts and leaves of small parchment Qur'an of the 10th and 12th centuries are known to be in various places. For example, six pages of a Ghaznavid Qur'an are kept in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, from a manuscript that is said to have had a colophon dating it as 1050

AD, and signed by Ghaznavid calligraphers and illuminators.<sup>4</sup> This manuscript is characterised by the most striking combination of highly decorative Kufic in which the verticals end in arabesques. The background of this Kufic is enriched by rosettes and scrolls in gold, which shows the "Chapter of Unity" (No. 112) (Fig. 1).

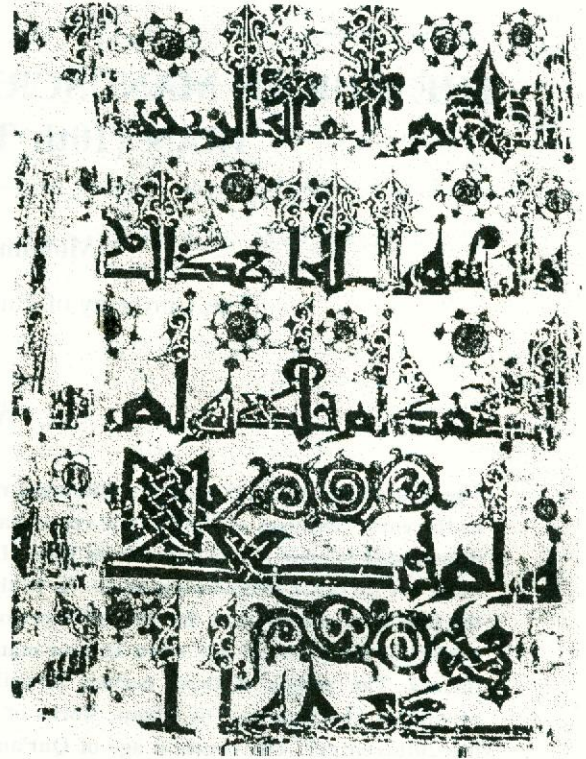


Fig. 1.

Some parts of a Ghaznavid Qur'an are also kept in the shrine of Imam Riza in Mashhad that was signed by Ghaznavid calligrapher and illuminator Usman ibn Huseen Varaq in 1073AD (466 H) (Fig. 2).

In Seljuq Qur'ans of the 11th and 12th centuries the Iranian type of Kufic is fully developed. Two leaves from a Seljuq Qur'an of 1054 AD are in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, written in Iranian Kufic, both leaves show interesting decorative features typical of the Seljuq. Here the large letters of the fourth line, with the phrase, "Muhammad is the messenger of God" is written in a highly decorative way by having the shafts end in



floral arabesques (see Fig. 6). Such decorative Kufic is known to us from Seljuq architecture and from wall paintings, for instance, in the interior of the tower of Pir-i-Alamdar at Damghan, completed in 1026 AD.

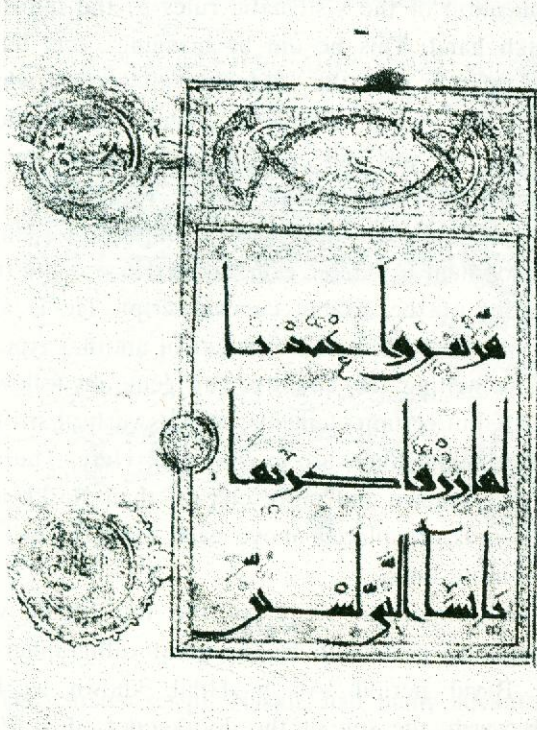


Fig. 2.

Several twelfth century Qur'ans also bear dates: a copy in the Bibliotheque Nationale, written in Sistan (south-east of Iran) in 1112 AD; another in the University Museum, Philadelphia, written in 1164 AD; and a third in the Chester Beatty collection, dated 1188 AD. There are fragments of other fine Seljuq Qur'ans in the National Museum in Tehran, the shrine of Imam Riza in Mashhad, the shrine of 'Abbas, the young brother of Imam Hossain, in Karbalah and in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

These Qur'ans show a highly decorative combination of one of the most beautiful decorative forms of Eastern Kufic, the so-called Qarmathian script and ornamentation. Here the Eastern Kufic characters are integrated with a richly illuminated ground

consisting mainly of floral designs and arabesques, which are painted in brown ink. The most striking feature is that the long upstrokes of letters remain completely vertical while the short strokes are inclined or bent to the left. The outstanding characteristic of these Qur'ans is the elaborate arabesque ground on which the text appears to have been written throughout and which is reminiscent of architectural inscriptions rather than Qur'anic calligraphy (Fig. 3).<sup>5</sup> Some writers on Islamic art, for instance, Safadi in his book *Islamic Calligraphy*, note that the name of this script has never been satisfactorily explained.<sup>6</sup>

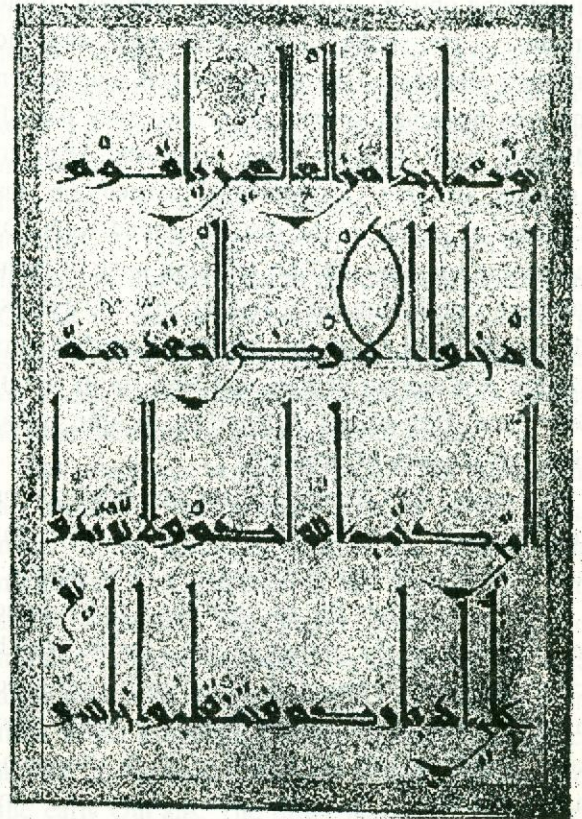


Fig. 3.

The Persian literary source, Nizam al-Mulk, the great vizier of the Seljuq, in the *Siyasat nama* points out that the origin of the Qarmati was as follows: "Ja'far as-Sadiq (may Allah be pleased with him), the sixth Imam of the Shi'ah, had a son whose name was Isma'il. He died before his father, leaving a son



named Muhammad, and this Muhammad lived until the time of Harun al-Rashid. ... Now this Muhammad had a certain Hijazi page called Mubarak, and he was a calligrapher [who wrote the letters] in the fine [nazok] script known as muqarmat; for this reason he used to be called Qarmatwaih. This Mubarak had a friend in the city of Ahvaz [in the south west of Iran] whose name was 'Abd-Allah ibn Maimun al-Qadh. The latter was one day with him in private and said, "Your master Muhammad ibn Isma'il was my friend and he told me secrets which he did not tell you or anyone else". ... He then made several statements, introducing obscure words from the language of the Imams. ... He spoke of the Messenger and the prophets and angels, the tablet and pen, and heaven and [the heavenly] throne. After that they parted; Mubarak went towards Kufa, and 'Abd-Allah to Kuhistan of Iraq. ... Mubarak carried on his activities in secret, in the district around Kufa. Of the people who accepted his teaching some of them had been called Mubarakis and the other Qarmatis. Meanwhile 'Abd-Allah ibn Maimun preached this religion in Kuhistan of Iraq, and later on in Herat, Ghur, and Transoxiana so that the people called them [his converts] Qarmatis".<sup>7</sup>

As a result, the Qarmathian Qur'ans, which are or were mainly kept in the shrines of the Imams might have been written and illuminated by these people.

In the 11th century the use of Kufic script became less frequent in the copies of the Qur'an. Naskh scripts gradually replaced it, although it continued in use for chapter headings even at a much later date. Naskh reached the height of its development in the first half of the 12th century. From the very earliest Kufic Qur'ans a tendency to introduce cursive forms can be noticed. In fact, a purely cursive script had existed almost from the first centuries, employed for ordinary correspondence.<sup>8</sup> The cursive script, Naskh had many advantages over Kufic; it could be written more rapidly, and because diacritical points and vowel sounds were normally indicated it was readily understandable.

Two famous calligraphers were associated with the development of the Naskh script. The first of these was Ibn Muqla (886-939 AD), a Persian vizier to the three 'Abbasid caliphs of Baghdad.<sup>9</sup> His contribution to the art of calligraphy was not only the invention of a new script, but also the application of the systematic rules to the informal Naskh hand. This he did by bringing every letter into relation with the alif, the tall vertical which gives the Arabic script its regular harmonious rhythm; it was his genius and knowledge of geometric science which were responsible for bringing about the most important single development in Arabic calligraphy. He was the true founder of the Arabic cursive script. He is also responsible for the development of another type of cursive writing: the Thuluth. This generally followed Naskh, but certain elements, such as vertical strokes or horizontal lines, are exaggerated. Here, Thuluth is more cursive and more elegant than Naskh and the words are placed above each other in two or even more lines.

The 'proportion script' of the Ibn Muqla was brought to perfection by the great calligrapher of the Buyid period 'Ali b. Hilal, known as Ibn al-Bawwab, the son of the doorkeeper (died 1022 AD).<sup>10</sup> He was a pupil of Ibn Muqla's pupils, and he managed with an artist's soul to give grace and elegance to the geometrical harmony of the letters designed by Ibn Muqla. At the same time in the 10th century Naskh was used for writing the Qur'an. However, the earliest existing Qur'an in Naskh script is the well-known copy in the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, which has been definitely attributed to Ibn al-Bawwab, who was also active as decorator, illuminator and bookbinder. This manuscript is finely illuminated. Its pages contain all the elements that were to become part of the general repertoire of decorative motifs and also as fine examples showing certain links between pre-Islamic motifs and early Islamic motifs. This term will be discussed in the next section.





Fig. 4.

The cursive script, Naskh, had many advantages over Kufic; it could be written more rapidly and was easy to read. But the use of the Naskh script as a method of ornament was less successful, because of the system of rules for the informal Naskh hand. But an essential point about Kufic epigraphy is that it was not subject to strict rules. It gave the artist virtually a free hand in conceiving and carrying out its ornamental forms. The letters themselves began to be used as ornament, and this opened the way for the creation of ornamental letterforms. The free end of some letters, which at the beginning were simply squared off during the later centuries, began to acquire ornamental extensions.

As mentioned above, the Qur'ans are the only manuscripts which have remained from the early period of the Islamic era in Persia. In the earliest Qur'ans the individual Sûrahs were not illuminated unmarked, but later the close of a Sûrah was depicted by a band, first without and then with a

chapter heading (Sarlahûh), which indicated the end of one Sûrah and the beginning of the next. In the eighth century the decorative band became more complex. The title of the Sûrah is written in gold in the band, or in a foliated ground. The marginal design, now larger, almost circular in form, affixed only to the centre of the band, has attained such importance that it may be the sole decoration of the Sûrah heading, and then as an indication of the new Sûrah it becomes analogous to the mark of the 5th and 10th verses. In the majority of the Qur'ans of the early times, however, its subsequent transformations provide one of the main terms of Persian illumination.<sup>11</sup> Finally full-page decorative frontispieces appear as either single or double page compositions, and similarly ornamented counterparts were occasionally added at the beginning of the manuscript. They are sometimes decorated in imitation of mosaic, textiles, or architectural features. At this stage the text was written in black Indian ink, but the titles of the different parts of the Qur'an or manuscript were very often written in gold or coloured letters. The text is occasionally set in a decorative frame. Manuscripts were usually written on white or ivory-coloured paper.

The ornaments of the Qur'ans of the 9th century are typical of the 'Abbasid style, in which appear many of the motifs of Sasanid art, such as wing motifs and a stylised form of the "Tree of Life" with scroll branches. The highly decorative chapter heading, Sarlahûh, of these Qur'ans shows the usual arrangement of the title within a rectangular panel from which extends a stylised "Tree of Life", which is one of the most strikingly beautiful features of the early Qur'ans. The other marginal ornaments - shamsa (medallion), for example-often serve to indicate, by means of the number five or ten inscribed within them, that five or ten verses have passed. Such inscriptions, like the Sûrah heading itself, are nearly always upon a ground of arabesque.

Before discussing the development of arabesque in the art of illumination, it might be useful to look briefly at some decorative terms of the book illuminator, including the first page (shamsa), the



chapter heading (sarlaûh, 'unwan) and the last page (colophon).

The ornamentation of the first page conforms to the earlier tradition. In the centre is a medallion or rosette, known as *shamsa* (from the Arabic word for "sun"). The rosette was the shape of a slightly oval medallion. Above and below the medallion, may be ornamented cartouches and palmettes, known in Persian as 'Sar Turang.' In early Qur'anic tradition, small *shamsas* are depicted on the margins of the text. The *shamsa* take a great variety of forms, apart from the usual round ones: there are eight-pointed stars, rosettes with 'Sar Turang' and twelve-pointed stars.<sup>12</sup> The *shamsa* are most often ornamented with arabesque motifs or sometimes with combinations of flower motifs.

An inscription, the content of which is determined by the function of the *shamsa* in each particular instance, occupies the central part of the *shamsa*. It may give the name of the owner, it may play the part of a modern title-page, giving the name of the author, the title of the work and its various sections, or a list of the different works contained in the manuscript; or very occasionally it may include a dedication in Arabic or Persian. In some cases, a large *shamsa* or more than one *shamsa*, giving the names of the works contained in the manuscript, appears on two pages.

The *shamsa*, also appears frequently on carpets, metalwork, on the interiors of domes over mosques and tombs, and other decorative art in Islamic art. The *shamsa* medallion often has symbolic meaning, for example, sometimes it symbolises the central unity of God, the vault of heaven and so on

The ornamentation of the page after the *shamsa* is of two types: first is the decoration of the entire page frontispiece or sarlaûh, the other is the decoration confined to the upper half 'unwan. In the first case the illumination of the page often combines with that of the following one to form a single composition in the form of a double-page with a symmetrical design. The ornamentation on the sarlaûh serves as decoration of the beginning of the text, as decoration of a whole page and as decoration of the title page. The most interesting

aspect of the illuminator's art is often found on the opening double-frontispiece. The second is the 'unwan, a large, ornamented superscription preceding the text and occupying the upper part of the page. The main function of the 'unwan is to emphasise and ornament the beginning of a text. The 'unwan also often contains the title of the work and the name of the author (if this has not already appeared in the *shamsa* or sarlaûh). In such cases, the function of the 'unwan is the same as that of the *shamsa* and sarlaûh, which it replaces in less lavishly illuminated manuscripts.

The last page of the manuscript gives the name of the calligrapher, the date, the place where it was written and sometimes the name of the person who commissioned it. The colophons are designed in the shapes of circles or ovals and decoration was usually the same as that surrounding the chapter headings in the same manuscript. These pages are mainly decorated with arabesque motifs.

As mentioned above, one of the earliest Qur'ans is the Ibn al-Bawwab Qur'an, copied in Baghdad during the Bûyid domination in 1000-1001 AD. This complete example shows how single-volume Qur'an manuscripts of the period looked in terms of their illumination, reproducing the older designs of the Qur'an in a vertical rather than a horizontal format. The illuminated pages of this Qur'an contain all the elements that were to become part of the repertoire of decorative motifs and also as a fine example that shows certain link between pre-Islamic motifs and early Islamic motifs. The frontispiece pages occupies an intermediate stage in the development of Qur'an illumination, introducing some new motifs, such as arabesques in the shape of the symmetrical wing motifs, and the lotus motif.<sup>13</sup>

Other illuminated pages of this manuscript that show the arabesque appearing behind the script are two pages which state that the verse-count of the Qur'an is that of the people of Kûfa, on the authority of the Commander of the Faithful, 'Alî ibn Abî Talib, and these inscriptions are interwoven with arabesque ornaments (Fig. 5).<sup>14</sup> The pages of contents are also decorated with the floral arabesque design.<sup>15</sup> The arabesque scrolls are



applied as bands to the beginnings and ends of various canonical sections of this Qur'an.<sup>16</sup>

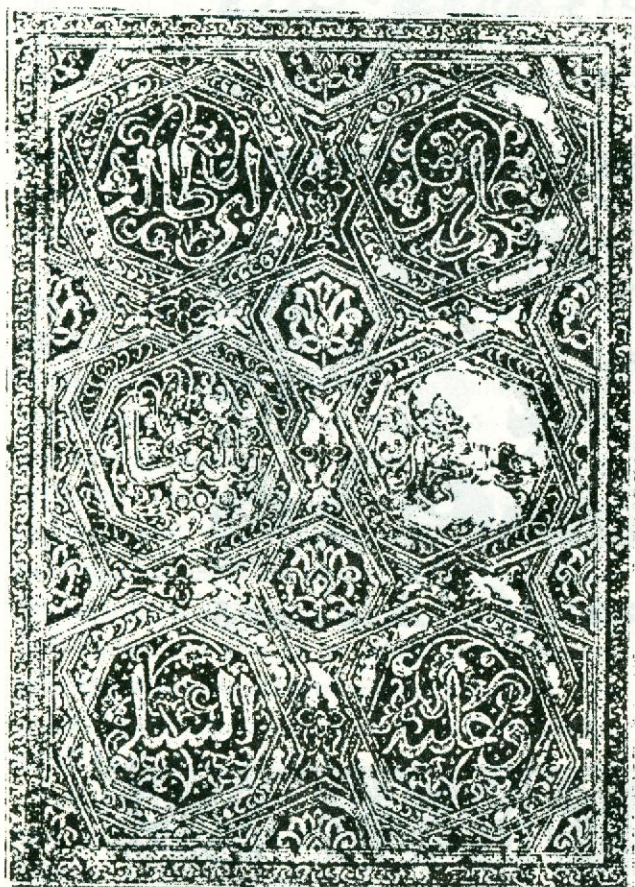


Fig. 5.

As mentioned above, during the early Iranian dynasties the Kufic script became an important element in Islamic art, used either as script or as a decorative factor. This employment of calligraphy as a method of ornament forms the most significant contribution of the Samanid period (819-1005).

One type of Kufic, in which the letters are ornamented with arabesque-like designs, was frequently used in manuscript illumination during the 11th and 12th centuries under Ghaznavids and Seljuqs. This sort of Qur'anic illumination, which was produced during these periods, shows us that the art of illumination was not separated from calligraphy. In fact, the illuminator and the calligrapher was the same person, as was often the

case in later periods.

Of the best examples of this kind of design are some pages of a Ghaznavid Qur'an in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, which are dated at 1050 AD. The illumination of this page shows the remarkable ability to combine calligraphy and ornament into a decorative pattern (see Fig. 1). This manuscript is characterised by the most striking combination of highly decorative Kufic in which the vertical letters are finished with arabesques. The decorative motifs at the end of each vertical letter achieve a symmetrical balance with the same decoration of the next vertical letter. Arabesque scrolls and rosettes in gold also enrich the background of the Kufic, in which there is no vertical letter. This style of the Ghaznavid illumination also appears in the letters of the fourth line of a page of the Seljuq Qur'ans in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, which contains the last verses of Surah 48, "The Victory," and the title of Surah 49. Here the sentence "Muhammad is the messenger of God" is depicted in large letters and in a highly decorative way by having the shafts end in floral arabesques and heightening (Fig. 6). The same design can be found in architectural ornament, for example, in the Nizamiyah of Khargird, middle of the eleventh century, which has letters with carefully sculptured outlines, each letter ending with floral arabesques (Fig. 7).

The art of illumination was developed in the courts of the Seljuq period as well as the other arts. It is always extremely beautiful in design, especially in the Seljuq Qur'ans. The decoration of the Seljuq Qur'ans is remarkable in design and colour, and here too the main ornamental motif is the arabesque. All Seljuq Qur'ans start with the frontispiece, many of them with a whole series of such pages. At the ends of the books are fully decorated pages, sometimes carrying a colophon. These Qur'ans must indeed rank as some of the greatest accomplishments in the art of the book. Even more important are the purely decorative frontispieces, which are outstanding in, design, their arabesque decoration astonishingly varied.





Fig. 6.

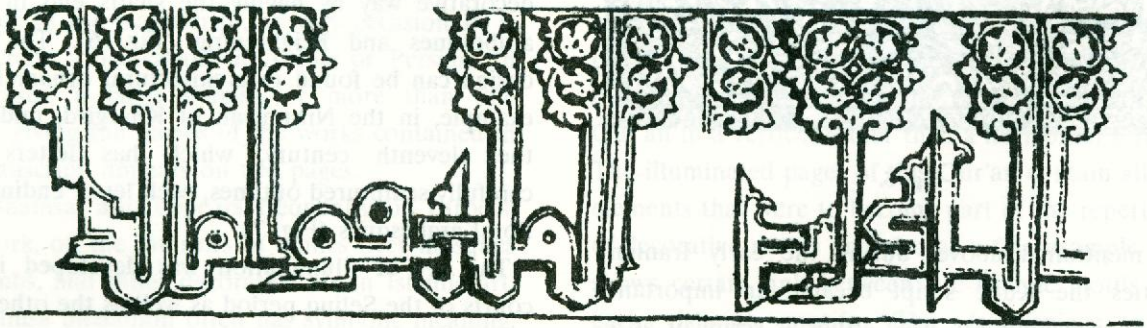


Fig. 7.

Among the most notable illuminated manuscripts of the Seljuq period are the enormous Qur'ans known as Qarmathian Qur'ans, which are divided among several collections throughout the world. As noticed above, they are written in a superb script called Qarmathian. These Qur'ans show a highly decorative combination of fine Kufic script and ornament, consisting mainly of arabesque scrolls and floral designs, painted in brown ink. Furthermore, the spaces between lines and letters have been

completely covered with endless arabesque scrolls in every empty space. It is almost as though the writing is set against a rich background of plant forms, even though the design itself is carefully separated from the writing. The outstanding characteristic of these Qur'ans is the elaborate arabesque ground on which the whole text appears to have been written and which is reminiscent of architectural inscriptions rather than Qur'anic calligraphy.<sup>17</sup>



The idea of this type of decoration, the combination of endless arabesque and scroll forms, reminds us of the form of the "Tree of Life" in the pre-Islamic art of Persia. Here the Muslim artists applied this motif with a new significance as "Sidra" or "Tuba", a tree in the garden of Paradise whose height is beyond man's knowledge. Because of this concept the centre of these forms composed of arabesque-scroll motifs seems to have no beginning and no end.

Sixteen disjointed parts of Qarmathian Qur'ans are kept in the Imam Riza Shrine Library in Mashhad. These were copied and illuminated by 'Uthman ibn Husayn al-Warraq, the illuminator and calligrapher in the court of Mahmûd in Ghazni,<sup>18</sup> and have an illuminated frontispiece, dating back to 1073 AD. The headings at the top of these pages are decorated with Kufic on a florid ground of arabesque motifs, below which are four lines written in Samanid Kufic script. In the margins are two gold-illuminated shamsa, in which the arabesques are designed in the form of symmetrical wings. This manuscript is a classic example of the early Persian paper Qur'an.<sup>19</sup>

Another 12th century Qur'an is in four volumes with interlinear commentary and Persian translation kept in the Iran Bastan Museum in Tehran. It was copied in Thuluth for the Ghûrid amîr Ghiyath al-Dîn Muhammad (1163-1203 AD), in 1188 AD, in Khurasan. The margins of these Qur'ans bear a vertical rectangular design which uses Kufic script and the highest quality of arabesque motifs as background.

The outstanding characteristic of the Seljuq Qur'an is the elaborate arabesque ground for Kufic and Naskh script, which is fully developed in the decorative arts particularly in architectural inscriptions in the following periods.

As we have seen, the classical age of Qur'an manuscripts, however, was brought to an end by the Mongol invasions in the middle of the 13th century.

### Conclusion

The Qur'an manuscripts played a dominant role in Islamic art. Our knowledge of the Islamic book

in the early centuries of the Islamic era is based entirely on Qur'anic material. There are no finely illuminated Islamic manuscripts from 10th AD century Iran other than copies of the Qur'an; in fact, there are no other manuscripts at all. The main reason for the survival of so many Qur'anic manuscripts over such a long period, is the special protection that was accorded to the sacred text they contain.

All the other decorative arts, ceramics, tiles, stucco, stonework, woodcarving, metalwork, textiles and carpet weaving, used motifs originated by the illuminator and calligrapher, using the decorative motifs. In fact, decorative motifs were transferred from the arts of the book particularly Qur'an manuscripts, to other arts. The materials, techniques and functions might differ, but the designs remained the same. This direct connection between the artists of the book and those practising other decorative arts, mainly in carpet and tile design, has continued until the present day.

### Notes:

<sup>1</sup> There is one exception; the earliest binding on display in the Chester Beauty library comes from 10th century Iran; this shows a simple repeat pattern covering the entire surface and bearing stamped inscriptions. With this exception it is not certain that any binding came from an early period, see D. James, *Qur'ans and Bindings*, London: World of Islam Festival Trust, 1980, pp. 118-19, Fig. 96.

<sup>2</sup> The Nasser D. Khalili. (1992). *Collection of Islamic Art*, vol: 1.1, *The Abbasid Tradition Qur'ans of the 8th to the 10th centuries AD*, London: The Nour Foundation, p. 32.

<sup>3</sup> M. S. Dimand. (1947). *A Handbook of the Muhammadan Art*. New York: Hartsdale House, p. 67.

<sup>4</sup> Metropolitan Museum of Art. (c1982). *The Art of Islam, Masterpieces from The Metropolitan Museum of Art*. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art Press, p. 62.

<sup>5</sup> D. James. *Qur'ans and Bindings*, p.25.



<sup>6</sup> Y. H. Safadi. (1978). *Islamic Calligraphy*. London: Thames and Hudson Limited, 1978, pp. 12-13.

<sup>7</sup> Nizam al-Mulk *Siyasat-nama* or *The Book of Government or Rules for Kings*, Trans. H. Darke. (1978). London: Routledge, pp. 208 and ff.

<sup>8</sup> D. James. *Qur'ans and Bindings*, p. 22.

<sup>9</sup> For more information see Y. H. Safadi. *Islamic Calligraphy*, p. 17.

<sup>10</sup> For more information see Y. H. Safadi. *Islamic Calligraphy*, p. 18.

<sup>11</sup> R. Ettinghausen "Manuscript Illumination" *A Survey of Persian Art*, p. 1941.

<sup>12</sup> For example, it can be seen in the Ibn al-Bawwâb Qur'n, see Oleg Grabar. (1992). *The Mediation of Ornament*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, p. 73, Fig. 47-48.

<sup>13</sup> The Lotus is the oldest, the most adaptable, and in itself one of the most beautiful motifs. It is a flower that engaged the attention of artists in all media for thousands of years, from Egypt to China. From an early period it has been a symbol of fertility, and it also became a symbol of the sun. Both in profile and in the full-face form of a rosette it plays a major part in Achaemenid design, though always in stylised, abstract forms. By the Sasanid period it had become greatly elaborated. See Pope. *A Survey of Persian Art*, p. 2410.

<sup>14</sup> David James. (1988). *Qur'ans of the Mamlûks*, London: Alexandria Press, pp. 16, 24-25.

<sup>15</sup> Oleg Grabar. (1992). *The Mediation of Ornament*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, p. 73, Fig. 49.

<sup>16</sup> Oleg Grabar. *The Mediation of Ornament*, Fig. 48.

<sup>17</sup> D. James. (1980). *Qur'ans and Bindings*, London: World of Islam Festival Trust, p.25.

<sup>18</sup> A. M. Takistani. (1993). *The Art of Illumination*, Tehran: Soroush Press, p. 194.

<sup>19</sup> Hayward Gallery. (1976). *The Arts of Islam*. London: The Arts Council of Great Britain, p. 318, Fig. 504.

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