

The Earlier Calligraphies in the Berlin Albums: Reflections on their Origins and Purpose in a *Muraqqa'*

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1 Introduction

Albums in their varieties of form, intention, and history in diverse cultures have been called ‘multivalent objects’ by Emine Fetvacı;¹ yet, it has taken a long time for them to receive art historical study. While some paintings in Persianate albums were examined in the latter half of the twentieth century—for example, Mazhar Ş. İpşiroğlu has worked on the Istanbul and Berlin collections—illuminations and calligraphies remained widely unpublished. I still remember Ivan Stchoukine’s grumbling about the untidy Topkapı Saray and Diez albums; while cataloguing the illustrated manuscripts of the West-Berlin State Library in Marburg in 1965/66, he ceded the Diez albums to his Turkish colleague.² But at least he took notice of these after nearly 140 years of neglect in the Berlin Staatsbibliothek and an even longer period in Istanbul. The generous loan of one Saray treasure album to the enormous Munich exhibition of Muhammedan art in 1910 had not caused the deserved surprise—too unknown and perhaps too far from Orientalist taste were the images, and

too complicated appeared the art of calligraphy in comparison to painting. At the end of the twentieth century, David Roxburgh’s seminal studies on those earliest albums as art objects in their own right raised new scholarly and public interests.³ Finally, their value as documents attesting to the development and spread of motifs and styles in the pictorial as well as so-called applied arts became widely known. One particular characteristic aspect of the album typology has been noted by Roxburgh for the Saray and Diez albums: the flexibility of content in their images, drawings, and sketches, as well as in the calligraphy, according to regions, chronology, and authenticity of their origin. The aim of collecting highlights of masterful quality, as inspiration for new styles spans wide horizons, and attributions of certain album leaves to great artists tell of a typical collector’s fascinations. But the actual specimens do not facilitate easy analysis, and their disparate nature remains a challenge for art historians.

This can very well be observed in the parallel case of the twenty albums in the Berlin State Museums, the seemingly more *tidy* but just as long neglected other treasure in Berlin. After Kühnel had published eight selected calligraphy examples and other images from these albums in several articles, the first major publication of albums in the then Islamic Museum in East Berlin, edited by Regina Hickmann, presented images and calligraphies in ideal combination, with translations by a

1 Emine Fetvacı, *The Album of the World Conqueror: Cross-Cultural Collecting and the Art of Album Making in Seventeenth-Century Istanbul* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019), pp. 1–6; this is an excellent survey of the possible values and meanings of album-making.

2 Mazhar Ş. İpşiroğlu, *Saray-Alben: Diez’sche Klebebände aus den Berliner Sammlungen*, Verzeichnis der orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland, vol. 8 (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1964); Ivan Stchoukine et al., *Illuminierte islamische Handschriften*, Verzeichnis der orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland, vol. 16 (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1971).

3 David J. Roxburgh, *The Persian Album, 1400–1600: From Dispersal to Collection* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2005).

group of Iranists.⁴ These first publications took the images and, more rarely, also the calligraphies with their attributions as authentic Mughal or Iranian. But especially regarding Arab calligraphy in Persian, Arabic, and (on rare occasions) Chaghatay and Urdu (Dakhni) as a major part of many albums, expertise in the West is still insufficient, while in the East it is restricted to very exclusive and very reluctantly publishing circles.

Especially the so-called ‘calligraphy albums’ with or without a few paintings offer fascinating insights into the formation and lively innovation of scripts and the interdependency of or competition between calligraphy ateliers. Roxburgh has introduced the earliest of the calligraphy albums preserved in Istanbul with collections of most important examples: Prince Baysunghur’s album, probably created in his atelier (*kitābkhāna*) in Herat before the prince’s death in 1433,⁵ and the similar Timurid calligraphy album, also from Herat, perhaps collected over a longer period and containing examples dated between 1267 and 1434.⁶

A small number of important calligraphic leaves have been inserted between the images in the so-called ‘Timurid Workshop Album’ from Herat around 1447 to 1458 or 1479.⁷ Among the Safavid albums, the informative preface of Malik Daylami in the mixed album for Amir Husayn Beg (958 [1560/61]),⁸ as well as the calligraphy album for Amir Ghayb Beg (972 [1564/65]),⁹ represent the type of albums created by an unknown editor within a more or less brief time-period, which can be considered as exemplary models for Ottoman and later Mughal albums. Of the two Berlin albums outside the Polier and Swinton series, the album I. 4600 is such a calligraphy album curated exclusively to display the tradition of the Six Scripts. While I. 4600 shows mainly new *nasta‘līq* alphabet styles, the Swinton album I 5001 contains earlier *nasta‘līq* examples. One specific advantage of the albums as the collector’s portefeuilles is their flexibility: the leaves could easily be bound together, showing the collector’s individual taste, also in terms of illuminations and marginal ornaments. They could easily be detached and remargined, or the original calligraphy could be re-pasted into new ensembles. Not even the imperial albums remained sacrosanct in their composition—apart from being presented to esteemed guests, they were occasionally plundered, mutilated to accommodate changes of style, if not forgotten. One might also look for changes due to religious reasons or conversion.

The change from a *created album* to a *collector’s album* is a typical case for a novel expansion of the art to the rich and to new consumers. In the Mughal era, this also impacted international tastes, as the impressive series of albums in Western collections shows. The courtly artworks remained in cabinets, and the new foliation in the Western

4 Ernst Kühnel, *Islamische Schriftkunst* (Berlin and Leipzig: Heintze & Blanckertz, 1942). He began his studies on the Berlin albums late in life. He had sent a list of seventy-nine name forms of calligraphers’ signatures to the eminent specialist Mahdi Bayani in Tehran (1285–1346 SH [1906–1968]), partly the same person under different combinations of titles and few misreadings, twenty-five of them dated 971–1199 (1563–1784), according to a list in the archive of the Berlin State Museums, dated 17 November [19]57. Apparently, he had no specified reference work at his disposal. Mahdi Bayani, *Aḥwāl va Āṣār-i Khushnīvisān* (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Dānishgāh-i Tihārān) started to appear in 1345 SH (1966), after twenty-five years of collecting. He included one of the Berlin examples (I. 4599, fol. 20^v) among his references (p. 697, no. 994), not from this list, but from Kühnel, *Islamische Schriftkunst*, p. 72, fig. 74. *Indische Albumblätter: Miniaturen und Kalligraphien aus der Zeit der Moghul-Kaiser*, ed. Regina Hickmann (Leipzig and Weimar: Gustav Kiepenheuer Verlag, 1979).

5 Dispersed in the Topkapı Sarayı Museum Library, Istanbul, between H. 2310, H. 2172, fols. 1–21, 28–56, and in the Album of Shah Tahmasp, Istanbul University Library, Istanbul, F. 1422, fols. 40–41; Roxburgh, *The Persian Album*, pp. 41–83, and note 85, p. 333.

6 Topkapı Sarayı Museum Library, Istanbul, B. 411, *ibid.*, pp. 88, 106–118.

7 Topkapı Sarayı Museum Library, Istanbul, H. 2152, *ibid.*, pp. 85–106.

8 Topkapı Sarayı Museum Library, Istanbul, H. 2151, and some folios in H. 2161 and H. 2156, *ibid.*, pp. 212–223.

9 Topkapı Sarayı Museum Library, Istanbul, H. 2161, *ibid.*, pp. 223–239.

manner as well as the stains and signs of wear and tear show that the illustrations on the former backside were understandably more attractive than the illegible calligraphy. In the West, this was well known as a form of 'scrap book', and the more refined techniques of assemblage, framing, and even paper insertion by hammering without glue (*vaṣ-ṣālī*) slowly trickled into Europe.

The content of the albums preserved from the Mughal Empire looks stylistically more coherent than the fewer Iranian and early Ottoman album relics. It is remarkable, for instance, that—despite the interest among Mughal court circles—the Mughal albums in the Polier-Swinton legacy contain fewer *intercultural* examples than the earlier Iranian and contemporary Ottoman albums with their European and Chinese images. They clearly show the strong relation of Mughal calligraphic arts to Iranian masters and traditions—while in the search for new visualisations within the pictorial arts, of course, also Western styles gained attention. If one wanted to interpret this fascination with collecting as a sort of creation of an *intercultural microcosm*, then one should admit that the selection of foreign images does not contain the best choices, but rather the best available. There surely can be found a reason why no Chinese examples of either *sīnī* Arabic calligraphy or images were assembled. It is obvious that even older, local developments of the Arabic script on the Indian subcontinent (like the tradition from Bihar) were obviously not appreciated. Furthermore, branches of the script that spread to Malaysia and Java during the eighteenth century did not find their way into the albums.

This brief study concentrates on the *documentary* value of one part of the Berlin albums—that is, the earlier calligraphy of which more comparable examples have recently been published. Apart from these, they contain several leaves with various personal handwriting styles of *nasta'liq* on ascending lines and *naskh* or any other round scripts, mostly in thick, emphasised horizontal strokes on straight groundlines in letters and notes.

2 The Six Scripts (*aqlām-i sitta*)

One might think that, by the end of the eighteenth century, leaves by pre-Mughal or early Mughal artists had been outdated and were now sold to British collectors or their Indian *munshī* as *good enough for the West*. But it is one of the secrets of Arabic calligraphy that, while new scripts or styles were created and quickly spread to certain regions, others fell out of favour, but then re-surfaced after some time, perhaps in the form of a new design—as in the case of several old Kufi styles. Nearly all Kufi had disappeared as a functional script by the twelfth century,¹⁰ only to reappear widely in new outlines as Ornamental Kufi from the fourteenth century onwards, albeit less so in India. After the great Abbasid caliphal court secretary and vizier Ibn Muqla (d. 940) had allegedly developed the first 'proportioned script' (*al-khaṭṭ al-mansūb*) from a wide range of regional varieties, the definition of the 'six scripts' (*al-aqlām al-sitta*) was coined predominantly for calligraphy. Of these, the noble and large *thuluth* script continued to dominate in documents as well as in religious and formal Arabic quotes, especially in its monumental form in epigraphy on architecture and objects throughout the Islamic world. The simpler and smaller *naskh* script also remained essential for Arabic texts, such as Qur'an copies and scholarly and literary books, and to a lesser degree also for Persian and Turkish texts. The *muḥaqqaq* was used more often for Arab Qur'an copies and formal texts, and like *thuluth* it was also applied in monumental epigraphy, particularly in the Western Islamic world. As a slimmer version of *muḥaqqaq*, *rayḥān* ranges among the Qur'anic and literary scripts. The rare *tawqī'* script continued to be used for shorter formal documents, titles, colophons, and signatures; it is recognisable by its elegantly fluent form and several connections of letter forms, which, in fact, contravened the

10 Original leaves of Kufi Qur'an copies with Safavid illumination exist, seemingly from a collector's album context.

rules. The smaller old *riqāʿ* is so rare (or so rarely identified) that it is hard to characterise its range of different styles. Another rule applies for *riqāʿ*, *muḥaqqaq*, and *naskh*: they always remain on a straight groundline and are generally more easily legible scripts, even when applied in an ornamental function. *Rayḥān* and *tawqīʿ* as well as *thuluth* up to a certain period were likely pulled up at the end of the line.

2.1 *The Tradition of the Six Scripts and the Followers of Yaqut*

In more recent studies, the disparate development of the canon of *al-aqlām al-sitta* in the Arab regions and in the East has been emphasised more strongly, but their graphic and technical standardisation by the two great artists who have been celebrated as style-defining in all sources remains a vital point: these are the legendary Ibn al-Bawwab (d. c. 1022), of whose work very little is known and preserved, and the last Abbasid caliphal calligrapher Yaqut al-Mustaʿsimi (d. 1298), who established a regular atelier tradition with generations of preeminent pupils, and who since the Ilkhanid and Timurid periods was the most influential calligrapher and atelier-founder in the Eastern Islamic countries.¹¹ Except for a vague attribution of half a line in small *naskh* within a *quodlibet*-page

(fig. 10.1),¹² there is no explicit mention in these albums of the sober *naskh* and *rayḥān* written by him.¹³ However, mediocre examples by followers of his style of combining two scripts (such as *thuluth* and *naskh*) exist, and others show an evolution of this style, such as Maqsud's plates (see fig. 10.3). In spite of his high productivity over a long life, not many of the preserved works bearing his name are authentically signed, and the methods of copying his style or the exact meaning of the phrases in the attributions to his hand are hard to differentiate. The individual steps of the refinement of the letter forms and their 'proportioning' in words and lines are described only vaguely in the sources and still presented as controversial in studies.¹⁴ But the examples from the Istanbul albums and manuscripts, newly analysed by Bora Keskiner, help to gain a better understanding. Based on a closer examination of the possibly authentic originals, Nihat Çetin had already stated that, contrary to the generally repeated version of the main source for calligraphers' biographies (written c. 1606) by Qadi Ahmad Qummi, even Yaqut himself did not practice 'proportional' rules for all six scripts, but mainly for *muḥaqqaq* and *rayḥān* and possibly *tawqīʿ* and *riqāʿ*.¹⁵ The *thuluth*- and *naskh*-texts with plausibly

11 David James, 'The Problem of Yaqut al-Mustaʿsimi', in idem, *The Master Scribes: Qurans of the 10th to 14th centuries A.D.* (London: Nour Foundation, 1992), pp. 58–75; Roxburgh, *The Persian Album*, pp. 56–57; on the evolution of ideal master calligraphers, see David Roxburgh, 'On the Transmission and Reconstruction of Arabic Calligraphy: Ibn Bawwab and History', *Studia Islamica* 96 (2003), pp. 39–53; Sheila S. Blair, 'Yāqūt and his Followers', *Manuscripta Orientalia* 9/3 (2003), pp. 39–47; Sheila Blair, *Islamic Calligraphy* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), pp. 243–246; Nihat Çetin, 'The Era of al-Khatt al-Mansub – The Proportional Script', in *The Art of Calligraphy in the Islamic Heritage*, ed. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoğlu and Uğur Derman (Istanbul: IRCICA, 1998), pp. 24–28, here p. 27 and pp. 205–206, nos. 223–227; Bora Keskiner, *Yāqūt al-Mustaʿsimi and the Practice of Naql in Islamic Calligraphy* (London: Kent Antiques Cultural Publications, 2021), pp. 15–17.

12 In I. 4600, fol. 1^v (fig. 10.1), two hadith fragments at the centre, described as *khaṭṭ-i Yāqūt al-Mustaʿsimi* by the collector of the album.

13 But he is implicitly quoted by the famously passionate verse attributed to him about the happiness conveyed by calligraphic practice, as well as by the transfer of the dot above the letter *khāʾ* (in *khaṭṭ* ['calligraphy']) to its letters *tāʾ*, which transforms these to *ḥaẓẓ* ('pleasure'), in a plate with an Arabic hadith in beautiful *thuluth*, some lines in *tawqīʿ*, and this verse in *naskh*, signed (*mashaqaḥu*) in *riqāʿ* Muhammad [b. Husayn, cf. I. 4596, fol. 36^v, as working in Hyderabad] al-Shirazi (?) Al-Fakhkhar, Museum für Islamische Kunst, Berlin, I. 4599, fol. 34^v.

14 See Habibullah Fazaʿili, *Atlas-i Khaṭṭ* (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Mashʿal, 1352 SH [1974]); and the striving for a differentiated presentation, for instance, in Blair, *Islamic Calligraphy*, and Adam Gacek, *Arabic Manuscripts: A Vademecum for Readers* (Leiden: Brill 2009).

15 Qadi Ahmad Qummi [*Gulistan-i hunar*], *Calligraphers and Painters: A Treatise by Qāḍī Aḥmad, Son of*

authentic signatures do not show letters in uniform size nor at equal distances, as two poems by the early Arab poet Abu Mihjan al-Thaqafi (d. after 637) published recently as rather certain originals show. Furthermore, the slightly irregular upward motion of the letters at the end of a line appears lively but not suitable for equal proportioning.¹⁶ Keskiner has compared the very few most probably or possibly authentic examples by Yaquṭ's hand in *thuluth* and *naskh* with copies of the first and second generations of his famous disciples, and these also with famous calligraphers in the early Timurid period. They are preserved in the Istanbul albums of the Timurid period and one Safavid album for Bahram Mirza mainly containing texts in the 'six scripts'.¹⁷ Even when the colophons do not always express it and when no original by Yaquṭ of that particular text is known, it becomes evident that they copy exactly from authentic models made by their idol. In the late fourteenth century and the Timurid period, sev-

eral copies use the formula *naql az* or *nuqila min* ('transported from / exactly formed after') the calligraphy by Yaquṭ.¹⁸ A comparison of a copy of al-Shanfara al-Azdi's (early-sixth-century?) pre-Islamic qasida *Lāmīyat al-ʿArab* by Muhammad b. Husam Shams al-Din Baysunghuri al-Sultani,¹⁹ one of Prince Baysunghur's calligraphers and mentioned explicitly as following Yaquṭ 'step by step', with two copies of the same poem by Yaquṭ's disciple Arghun al-Kamili (d. 1343/44)²⁰ reveals changes in style and a more intense preoccupation with proportioning. It is noteworthy that Arghun already straightened the ground lines, while Shams al-Din often applied Yaquṭ's freely lifted ends of the line; yet both cared for more exact letter forms and distances.

The entire material from the schools of Yaquṭ in these albums is of remarkable value for understanding the evolution of the high aesthetic standard by means of constant training, through continuously repeating the same corpus of early Arab poems. Keskiner has mentioned as a late example the complete scroll with the qasida *Lāmīyat al-ʿArab* written by one ʿAbdallah in 1085 (1674/75) and assumes a Mughal Indian origin.²¹ The Berlin examples of fragments of exactly these Arab poems confirm that the Yaquṭian script was still exercised there, even if not in high quality. Different from the Iranian Mongol and Timurid periods, the original fragments are not cropped to fit the vertical album

Mīr-Munshī (circa A.H.1015/A.D.1606), trans. Vladimir Minorsky (Washington DC: Freer Gallery of Art Occasional Papers, 1959), pp. 57–60, see p. 58; Çetin, 'The Era of al-Khatt al-Mansub', p. 27.

16 The so-called Timurid Calligraphy Album, Topkapı Sarayı Museum Library, Istanbul, B. 411, fols. 58^v–60^r, 61^r–65^r, signed fol. 64^v, and the fragment in the so-called Ya'qub Beg Album, Topkapı Sarayı Museum Library, Istanbul, H. 2160, fol. 16^v; Keskiner, *Yāqūt al-Mustaʿşimī*, pp. 151–156, 158.

17 The signature *Yāqūt b. ʿAbdallāh*, dated 683 (1284/85), at the end of a qasida by the early Arabic poet al-Hadira (Topkapı Sarayı Museum Library, Istanbul, B. 411, fol. 14^r) is rare but possibly authentic—according to Keskiner, the form *Yāqūt al-Mustaʿşimī* appears more often. Very close to its writing and structure are another complete copy signed by Mubarak Shah b. Qutb in 731 (1330/31) (Topkapı Sarayı Museum Library, Istanbul, B. 411, fols. 42^v–49^r) and a fragment of the same text, signed by Nasrullah al-Tabib in 720 (1320/21), both according to several sources among Yaquṭ's closest disciples in the early fourteenth century (Süleymaniye, Ayasofya, ms. 3935, fol. 1^v); *ibid.*, pp. 129–139; see also two copies by ʿAbdallah al-Sayrafi, a disciple of the second generation (Topkapı Sarayı Museum Library, Istanbul, B. 410, fol. 129^r, and B. 411, fols. 68^{r-v}), *ibid.*, pp. 140–141.

18 For example, the copy of a poem by al-Hadira written by Muhammad b. Husam Shams al-Din al-Sultani 829 (1425/26) in Herat, Süleymaniye Library, Aya Sofya 3936, fols. 5^a–13^a, Keskiner, *Yāqūt al-Mustaʿşimī*, pp. 10, 144.

19 Qadi Ahmad Qummi [Minorsky], *Calligraphers and Painters*, pp. 67–68; Keskiner, *Yāqūt al-Mustaʿşimī*, pp. 186–197.

20 For Arghun, see Topkapı Sarayı Museum Library, Istanbul, Baysunghur's Calligraphy Album H. 2130 f. 35^{a-b}, and Süleymaniye, Aya Sofya 4116, fols. 2^b–15^b; for Shams al-Din al-Sultani, see Keskiner, *Yāqūt al-Mustaʿşimī*, pp. 71–78, 91–93.

21 Süleymaniye, Aya Sofya 3936, fols. 18^a–31^a; Doha, Museum of Islamic Art, inv. 288.1999; Keskiner, *Yāqūt al-Mustaʿşimī*, pp. 109–119.



FIGURE 10.1 Quodlibet-page with a central hadith fragment in *rayḥān* script, attributed to *Yāqūt [al-] Mustaʿsimi* or to his style, calligraphy album
STAATLICHE MUSEEN ZU BERLIN, MUSEUM FÜR ISLAMISCHE KUNST, I. 4600, FOL. 1^v

format but are always mounted as oblong plates. As is obvious from the folds and formats of the originals in the Istanbul albums, *Yaqūt* wrote on the archaic form of scrolls (*darj*) of paper glued together for the length of a whole *qasida*, and in the quoted examples of poetry he used two scripts in irregular sequence, only *thuluth* and *naskh*, while later examples show also three scripts, with *tawqīʿ* added for colophons at the end.²² This has an effect similar to the regular tripartite division of two or more

scripts in some luxury Qurʾan manuscripts since the twelfth century, but not the same page architecture that one finds in the Berlin albums. Arabic calligraphy signed by Iranian artists are arranged in a layout closer to the development of oblong calligraphy plates, such as the Ottoman *levha* with sayings of the Prophet or his personal description (*hiḷya*), but we cannot exclude that in these cases some paper scraps also were remnants of rolls.

2.2 The Thuluth Script as an Exemplary Reference to Calligraphic Tradition

In literary anthologies, the quotes often begin with ancient Arabic religious formulas and poetry—the pieces which appear to be the oldest in the Berlin albums are dispersed but allow to introduce Arabic quotations in compositions of the especially sober ancient scripts *thuluth* and *riqāʿ*, sometimes with

22 The copying from a *darj*—and supposedly on a *darj* again—is explicitly mentioned in an Arabic hadith text in the ‘Timurid Workshop Album’ by the calligrapher Muhammad b. al-Hajj Muhammad al-Musharriji al-Tughraʿi, after an original by ‘Abdallah al-Sayrafi (Topkapı Sarayı Museum Library, Istanbul, H. 2152, fol. 18^r); *ibid.*, pp. 36–37, fig. 4.



FIGURE 10.2

Sura 1 (*al-Fātiḥa* [The Opening]) in *nasta'liq*, signed by *Shāh Maḥmūd Zarrīn Qalam* (Golden Pen), 971 (1563/64), central panel of a page, Polier album

STAATLICHE MUSEEN ZU BERLIN, MUSEUM FÜR ISLAMISCHE KUNST, I. 4596, FOL. 25^v

the signature in *tawqīf* as the third script, and here not in *naskh*. I am not aware of a specimen with all Six Scripts on a page, as in the early-Safavid-period Istanbul albums. The albums do not start with Qur'anic texts—the only quote of a sura as a whole is on a brilliantly decorated, but inconspicuously placed leaf in an album: Sura 1 (*al-Fātiḥa* [The Opening]), signed in the name of the famous Shah Mahmud *Zarrīn Qalam* ('Golden Pen', d. 972 [1564/65] or much later), executed in Mashhad in 971 (1563/64), in *nasta'liq*, a very unusual script for the Qur'an (fig. 10.2).²³

The reasons for this choice are diverse, and a consideration of the Western owner's sensitivities

might only be one of them. Safavid Iranian albums contain specimens of old masters (and their copies) for delight and exercise at courtly ateliers, as Dust Muhammad (fl. c. 1511–1564) explains in a preface to the album for Prince Bahram Mirza (1517–1549), created before 1549.²⁴ While he still had access to authentic calligraphy works by great masters, examples of Arabic texts were brought to India mainly by sixteenth- to seventeenth-century Iranian artists as their own copies, as one can learn from the Berlin materials. This reveals how the knowledge and practice of the Six Scripts came to India also via Iran but remained a marginal exercise in which no special Mughal Indian style found acceptance (see below for a potential experiment).²⁵

23 An identical signed copy of the calligraphy with lateral inscribed cartouches but with a codex *ʿunvān* illumination above, dated Ramadan 971 (April–May 1564), was sold at Christie's, April 2023, lot 2, as part of a double page with a calligraphy signed by Sultan 'Ali Mashhadi (lot 1); see note below.

24 Roxburgh, *The Persian Album*, p. 83; for the trends in composing these scraps, see the description of the Safavid Album for Amir Husayn Beg (968 [1560/61]) there, pp. 212–223.

25 See note 46.



FIGURE 10.3 A quotation by the Prophet Muhammad in *thuluth*, signed in *tawqīʿ* by Maqṣūd al-kātib ‘in Tabriz, 974 [1566/67]’, Polier album
STAATLICHE MUSEEN ZU BERLIN, MUSEUM FÜR ISLAMISCHE KUNST, I. 4596, FOL. 4^v

Maqṣūd al-kātib al-Tabrizī,²⁶ a pupil of ‘Ala Bek Tabrizi, still in Tabriz in 974 [1566/67] signed a quote from the Prophet Muhammad on a plate (*lawḥa*), written in two lines of brilliantly free-flowing *thuluth* script without vowel signs but with

pronounced diacritical dots and a few other signs (fig. 10.3). The ascending ground line and many originally disallowed ‘hairlines’ (*tashīra*) and ligatures (*mu‘allaq*) deviate from the strict rules for *thuluth* and verge on *tawqīʿ* script. Especially the two similar-looking curved signs near the centre of the first line are an ingenious play on the sweeping strokes of the letters *Dāl* and *Yāʿ* (*sadādī*), with the minor difference of their width. In the lower frieze, seven lines of smaller script verging on *tawqīʿ* combine the end of the eulogy on the Prophet and his family with the artist’s signature. The original paper was decorated with beautiful floral gilding on a powder blue ground before the writing.

At least three calligraphy strips were glued together in the main field of another plate; afterwards, they were ruled and modestly illuminated

26 I. 4596, fol. 4^v (fig. 10.3): the Arabic formula means ‘Not that when praising God and wishing for blessings I am only concerned with the continuous settlement of my needs;’ Qadi Ahmad Qummi [Minorsky], *Calligraphers and Painters*, p. 79, points to his uncle’s name Mir Maftulband Tabrizi; see Maqṣūd’s signature in fig. 10.4 (I. 4600, fol. 13^r); he calls him by his religious title *Mawlānā*, p. 80, n. 234; another source is quoted as giving him the title *Khawāja*. Bayani, *Aḥwāl va Aṣār-i Khush-nivīsān*, vol. 3, p. 917, no. 1384, values his *thuluth*, *naskh*, and *riqāʿ* highly, but his *nastaʿlīq* script was only mediocre.



FIGURE 10.4 Two cropped lines of *thuluth* with an Arabic quotation by the philologist al-Asma'i and an address to 'Ali, three lines of *naskh* and three turned diagonally in *tawqī'*, signed by *Maqṣūd al-Maftūl-band* 'in one of the cities of India, 982 [1574/75]'

STAATLICHE MUSEEN ZU BERLIN, MUSEUM FÜR ISLAMISCHE KUNST, I. 4600, FOL. 13^R

in gold (fig. 10.4). Two cropped lines of *thuluth* script with an Arabic quote from the philologist al-Asma'i (d. 828 in Basra) and an address to 'Ali dominate the field. Between them are three lines of smaller *naskh* script and two turned diagonally in a sort of *tawqī'* script, all by *Maqṣūd* [of the Tabrizi family] *al-Maftūl-band* ('the tightly bound', i.e., bound to the ruler), who signed as 'carefully drawn' (*namaqahu*) 'in one of the cities of India, 982 [1574/75]'—it sounds as if he did not recollect where he was at that moment. The strange repetition of one word from line one to two is not a mistake—see also the quote in another plate (I. 4596, fol. 27^v, see fig. 10.5)—but serves perhaps as a catchword if the lines are separated. A third calligraphy plate shows him back in Shiraz, where he signs (*katabahu*) an over-elaborate Arabic say-

ing with swelling letters in two brilliant lines of *thuluth*, between them a frieze of multi-directional Shi'ite eulogies in *naskh*. Below these, the last word of the saying and the colophon are written diagonally in a sort of *tawqī'* by *Hājji Maqṣūd al-Tabrizī* on 14 Shawwal 998 (16 August 1590).²⁷

Interesting is the connection of *thuluth* with ancient Arabic poetry—it appears as practical study material for students of both Arabic language and calligraphy. This becomes evident from two less convincing scraps with different parts of a qasida by 'Umar b. al-Farid (d. 1235 in Cairo). Without any signature or illumination, they were clearly not very much valued by the antiquarians and by

27 Museum für Islamische Kunst, Berlin, I. 4600, fol. 18^r.

Archibald Swinton, the collector of this more modest album.²⁸ Moreover, his unnamed pre-Islamic fellow poet Laqit b. Ya‘mar (fifth/sixth century?) is copied the same way (see also fig. 10.10),²⁹ featuring rare and difficult vocabulary. The single letter forms are rather well-shaped and exactly repeated; furthermore, the ends of the lines are slightly raised, and a few words are written very small in between, but the ‘proportioning’ of words and lines on the page is not successful. It is obvious that the calligraphy training was, in all likelihood consciously, using Yaqutian models. Al-Shanfara, quoted explicitly in the *thuluth* calligraphy plate ascribed to Muhammad ‘Arif [Haravi] from Iran (fl. early eighteenth century), whom Shah ‘Alam I (r. 1707–1712) honoured with the title *Yāqūt-i Raqam Khān*, is copied more skilfully.³⁰ Some words are written diagonally, as in the preserved Yaqutian models; one overhead line and the short plate format similar to that for religious texts appear innovative.

In the same four-line-scheme and in the three scripts *thuluth*, *naskh*, and *tawqī‘*, one can observe a plate with sayings of ‘Ali on the virtue of calligraphically embellishing the invocation of God (*Basmala*), executed by the famous Safavid calligrapher ‘Ali Riza al-Tabrizi, signed (*katabahu*) and dated in 992 (1584/85) (fig. 10.5).³¹ He was praised

especially for his *nasta‘liq* calligraphy, and Habib has mentioned his epigraphy for the Shaykh Lutfullah Mosque and the Safavid Friday Mosque in Isfahan.³² Bayani has seen *thuluth* and *nasta‘liq* scripts of his until the date 1038 (1628/29), also signing *mashaqahu* (‘writing calligraphically’—or ‘rushing’) and *namaqahu* (‘writing calligraphically’), but he was famous for all seven scripts.³³ Here, in the most elegantly balanced *thuluth* he formed an eccentric pun at the beginning of the first line on the right, by leading the sweeping stroke of the letter *Nūn* at the end of the second word directly from the curve of the first letter of the third word and having it end in its fourth letter. The fourth word in this line, which is the first word of the invocation of God (*Basmala*), the subject of this text, is extended in the centre. Less elegantly written in the same format and in the three scripts are other sayings of ‘Ali by one Muhammad Nayi (?) al-Shirazi, 1026 (1617); they have remained unornamented.³⁴ A further refined presentation of a plate in dark brown has two lines of very straight *thuluth*, between them two lines of *naskh*, and a smaller continuation diagonally; one word continues below, as the first of five lines of *rayhān*. This late example of the old script is signed (*mashaqahu*, ‘calligraphed’, also ‘copied’ or ‘made for copying’) by ‘Abdallatif al-Husayni al-Shahrastani, 1096 (1684/85), with added rulings, clouds, and delicate illumination in gold and silver.³⁵

28 Museum für Islamische Kunst, Berlin, I. 4589, fols. 14^v, 36^v; for folio 45^r containing a dedication to Swinton, see Will Kwiatkowski’s essay in this volume and the appendix (fig. 1). The upright page in I. 4600, fol. 2^r, shows a larger fragment from the same qasida *Saqatni Humaiya* of ‘Umar b. al-Farid by the Iranian calligrapher ‘Abdalbaqi al-Tabrizi in *thuluth*, *naskh*, and diagonally in *tawqī‘*, dated 1034 (1624/25), whom Bayani, *Aḥvāl va Āṣār-i Khushnīvisān*, vol. 2, p. 364, no. 509, only knows for his six-scripts calligraphies.

29 Museum für Islamische Kunst, Berlin, I. 4589, fol. 39^r.

30 Museum für Islamische Kunst, Berlin, I. 4600, fol. 17^r, probably the vigorous, but less known calligrapher of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, whose album in the Library of the Shrine in Mashhad was noted by Bayani, *Aḥvāl va Āṣār-i Khushnīvisān*, vol. 3, p. 784, no. 1136.

31 Museum für Islamische Kunst, Berlin, I. 4596, fol. 27^v,

starting with ‘Whoever perfects the writing of the *Basmala* goes straight to Paradise without reckoning of his deeds [...]’; published in Jens Kröger and Desirée Heiden (eds.), *Islamische Kunst in Berliner Sammlungen* (Berlin: Parthas, 2004), pl. 87, p. 117.

32 Habib, *Khaff ve Khaṭṭātān* (Istanbul: Ebu l-Ziya, 1305 [1887/88]), p. 207.

33 Qadi Ahmad Qummi [Minorovsky], *Calligraphers and Painters*, pp. 80–82, 171; Bayani, *Aḥvāl va Āṣār-i Khushnīvisān*, vol. 2, pp. 456–461, no. 655.

34 Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Berlin, I 5003, fol. 5^r; the calligrapher could not yet be identified.

35 Museum für Islamische Kunst, Berlin, I. 4594, fol. 19^v; as yet unidentified.



FIGURE 10.5 Sayings by 'Ali in *thuluth*, continued and signed in *tawqif* by 'Alī Rīzā al-Tabrīzī, 992 (1584/85), Polier album STAATLICHE MUSEEN ZU BERLIN, MUSEUM FÜR ISLAMISCHE KUNST, I. 4596, FOL. 27^v

The rare *letter images* in these albums in upright or oblong position very liberally use the *thuluth* script for compositions of expanded letters in symmetrical or balanced design, playing with line divisions horizontally and diagonally. In the Berlin albums, a beautifully balanced plate in *thuluth tughrā'ī* script presents an Arabic saying on the 'rhetoric of lovers failing to help' (fig. 10.6).³⁶

Among other albums are some with thick, swelling *thuluth* letters which could represent a special Mughal variation.³⁷ As far as we know, in Iran let-

ters were formed into zoomorphic images since the late sixteenth century,³⁸ much like the *Basmala* in the shape of a dove after an Iranian original on the title page of Adam Olearius' encyclopedic travel account on Iran.³⁹ A late reflection of this development are the two *Basmala*-doves flanking a Persian prose text in the oblong Polier album I 5005, fol. 6^v (Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Berlin). Only the right one is by a master.

36 Perhaps reading: يا رب ... بلاغة الاحبا لا نفعتم ... يا رب *balāghat al-ahibbā' lā nafa'athum* [...] *yā rabb* ('The rhetoric of lovers did not help them [...] oh Lord').

37 For example, Museum für Islamische Kunst, Berlin, I. 4590, fol. 26^v, and I. 4596, fol. 2^v, published in Hickmann, *Indische Albumblätter*, pl. 20.

38 Qadi Ahmad Qummi [Minorsky], *Calligraphers and Painters*, pp. 132–133, mentions that Mawlana Mahmud Chapnivi 'invented a style of writing in which combinations of letters formed images of men and beasts.' Bayani, *Ahvāl va Āsār-i Khushnīvisān*, vol. 3, p. 615.

39 Adam Olearius, *Offt begehrte Beschreibung der Newen Orientalischen Reise* (Schleßwig: Zur Glocken, 1647).



FIGURE 10.6 Arabic saying on the rhetoric of lovers, Iran or Mughal India, seventeenth/early eighteenth century, Polier album
STAATLICHE MUSEEN ZU BERLIN, MUSEUM FÜR ISLAMISCHE KUNST, I. 4594, FOL. 25^v

One rare example of *muḥaqqaq* script, with the vowel signs typically written with another pen, is unsigned but elevated by preciously illuminated margins of the time of Shah Jahan or earlier (fig. 10.7).⁴⁰ Among the model Arabic alphabets (*mufradāt*) and alphabetic series, usually also with combined letters (*murakkabāt*) in these albums, the only *thuluth* example among several *nasta'liq* plates is distinguished by its beau-

tiful strokes, typically in full pen width (Museum für Islamische Kunst, Berlin, I. 4600, fol. 25^r). On the facing folio and with the same marginal ornament follows what is evidently a text sample of this style, probably by the same hand, with the beginning of an ancient Arabic qasida praising the Prophet, titled *Bānat Su'ād* ('Su'ād has departed') by Ka'b b. Zuhayr (d. c. 661), also called *Qaṣīdat al-Burda* (Poem of the Mantle) (fig. 10.8).⁴¹ Very similar in style but in smaller *thuluth* script

40 Museum für Islamische Kunst, Berlin, I. 4599, fol. 29^v: the text 'And we bound his hope on you, so fulfil his command in what is like us and you and him', meant as God's command to the Prophet Muhammad's community, sounds like an extra-Qur'anic revelation (*hadīth qudsī*). واعلقتناك امله فافعل في امره ما يشبهنا ونشبهك (wa-a'laqnāka amalahu fa-f'āl fī amrihi mā yushbihunā wa-yushbihuka wa-yushbihuhu). To our knowledge it is not listed in the usual compendia.

41 Museum für Islamische Kunst, Berlin, I. 4600, fol. 24^v; other single fragments of this poem are found in Museum für Islamische Kunst, Berlin, I. 4599, fol. 16^v, and I. 4600, fol. 7^v, in the large lower line. Further parts of the poem appear in a slightly pressed *thuluth* style on ten pages, spread to Museum für Islamische Kunst, Berlin, I. 4594, fol. 2^v; I. 4595, fols. 9^v and 30^v; I. 4596, fols. 16^v and 29^v; I. 4598, fol. 23^v; I. 4599, fols. 14^v, 19^v, 23^v and 26^v.



FIGURE 10.7

Two lines of *muhaqqaq* script, unsigned, Mughal India (?), but elevated by precious illuminated margins of Shah Jahan's period or earlier, Polier album

STAATLICHE MUSEEN ZU BERLIN, MUSEUM FÜR ISLAMISCHE KUNST, I. 4599, FOL. 29^v



FIGURE 10.8

Beginning of an Arabic qasida praising the Prophet, *Bānat Su'ād* ('Su'ad has departed'), also called *Qaṣīdat al-Burda* (Poem of the Mantle) by Ka'b b. Zuhayr (d. c. 661) in Yaqutian-style *thuluth* script, Iran or India, end of sixteenth/seventeenth century, calligraphy album

STAATLICHE MUSEEN ZU BERLIN, MUSEUM FÜR ISLAMISCHE KUNST, I. 4600, FOL. 24^v

and with one line written overhead is the beginning of another qasida ascribed to al-Shanfara, with prose texts added in *naskh* (Museum für Islamische Kunst, Berlin, I. 4600, fol. 17^r), which the creator of the album ascribed to the calligrapher Muhammad 'Arif.⁴² But not only Arabic texts are

written on such plates: while there is the Arabic quote in large *thuluth*, one can also find plates in *naskh* for three Dakhni-Urdu verses and a larger plate in *naskh* verging on *riqā'*, vertically, with the beginning of a Dakhni epic, signed by the as

42 Possibly the artist registered by Bayani, *Aḥvāl va Āṣār-i Khushnīvisān*, vol. 3, p. 784, no. 1136, as tenth/eleventh

(sixteenth/seventeenth centuries), documented in an album in the Library of the Shrine of Mashhad.



FIGURE 10.9 *Thuluth* script for an Arabic quote, *naskh* for three Dakhni-Urdu verses, and a larger *naskh* verging on *riqā'* vertically for the beginning of a Dakhni epic, signed by *Muhammad Rizā*, Mughal India, seventeenth century, Polier album

STAATLICHE MUSEEN ZU BERLIN, MUSEUM FÜR ISLAMISCHE KUNST, I. 4596, FOL. 15^v

yet unidentified *kamtarīn-i ghulāmān* Muhammad Riza (fig. 10.9).⁴³ Only in a later example an Arabic *qasida* is given the form of a tripartite high rectangle, by the Mughal calligrapher Muhammad Taqī b. Hajjī ‘Abdallāh (d. 1120 [1708]?), as in the

43 Museum für Islamische Kunst, Berlin, I. 4596, fol. 15^v; Arabic: ‘He who shouts at a begging person suffering hunger will be punished by God for 1,000 years’. Muhammad Riza is the name of several calligraphers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; Habib, *Khaff ve Khaṭṭātān*, p. 224, mentions a disciple of Mir Sayyid Ahmad as emigrant from Mashhad to India, for whom more details are given by Will Kwiatkowski in this volume. I thank Jake Benson cordially for the information about the Dakhni text and epic, starting with: یوسف کاهور قصه زلیخه کاجل بهریا (*Yūsuf kāhur qiṣṣa Zalkhā kājal bahriyā*).

earliest Iranian albums: verses by Laqit b. Ya‘mar al-Iyadi, a pre-Islamic poet perhaps of the fifth or sixth century, from Hira in Irak, are written in three lines in *thuluth*, with the ending rhyme words diagonally written between them in the same *naskh* script that is also used for two prose anecdotes about the jester Bahlul and the virgin ‘Adhra and horizontally for the signature (*namaqahu*) in the last intermediate line (fig. 10.10).⁴⁴

44 On Museum für Islamische Kunst, Berlin, I. 4600, fol. 12^v, the same calligrapher has written the book page with Arabic anecdotes from the life of the Prophet in *thuluth* and at the top some tales in *naskh* from the court of the Umayyad Caliph ‘Abdalmalik (r. 685–705). Bayani, *Aḥvāl va Āṣār-i Khushnivīsān*, vol. 3, p. 669,



FIGURE 10.10

Verses by Laqit b. Ya‘mar al-Iyadi (c. fourth or sixth century?), three lines in *thuluth* and intermediate *naskh* script used for two prose anecdotes about the jester Bahlul and the virgin ‘Adhra, signed (namaqahu) *Muhammad Taqī b. Ḥājī ‘Abdallāh*, Mughal India, seventeenth/eighteenth century, calligraphy album

STAATLICHE MUSEEN ZU BERLIN, MUSEUM FÜR ISLAMISCHE KUNST, I. 4600, FOL. 22^v

3 The New Scripts and *Haft Qalam* Excellence

In biographical and literary sources, usually a difference is made between the six scripts defined in the early Abbasid Caliphate and the later creation of the new *canonical* scripts, to which *nasta‘liq* and its derivatives is sometimes added in Iranian and Mughal sources, naming them the ‘seven scripts’ (*haft qalam*). It is unknown whether *ta‘liq* was included as well. This unofficial canon of Seven

Scripts with the various new styles of *nasta‘liq* won over in Iranian, Eastern Turkic (Chaghatayi), and more rarely Arabic texts from the fourteenth century onwards. After Iranian calligraphers introduced it to the Ottoman Empire at the end of the fifteenth century, a slightly different style was developed also for Ottoman Turkish, especially for poetic and literary works. The modern literature about the origins of *nasta‘liq* ‘is rather confused’ and contradictory.⁴⁵ The style rose in the East-

no. 943, adding Marvarid to his name and correcting the doubts of Müstaqim-zade, *Menāqib-i hünerverān*, about his father’s name as it is also given here. Another poem of Laqit is quoted on Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Berlin, I. 4599, fol. 35.

45 Elaine Wright, ‘The Calligraphers of Shiraz and the Development of the *Nasta‘liq* Script’, *Manuscripta Orientalia* 9/3 (2003), pp. 16–26; refined in the chapter on Ilkhanid and Timurid calligraphy in eadem, *The Look of the Book: Manuscript Production in Shiraz, 1303–1452* (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution, 2012),

ern Islamic regions and developed into one of the most refined arts of the pen, together with its variation (*nasta'liq*-) *shikasta*—since the late nineteenth century the main script in Iran—which was developed after the second half of the sixteenth century. These so-called 'hanging scripts', often without diacritical marks, are especially difficult to read. It appears that in the Eastern Islamic regions the Arabic scripts were subject to greater and more profound changes than in the West, certainly for different reasons. *Nasta'liq* replaced mostly the old straight scripts *naskh* and *riqā'*, as well as the slightly ascending *rayhān* for refined manuscripts since the fifteenth century. Also rare became the sweeping *ta'liq*, which since the fourteenth century, if not earlier, according to some sources, had been developed as an offspring of *riqā'*.⁴⁶ The more densely *hanging* and less flexibly outlined script and its derivations have seen revivals from time to

time for documents, particularly during the eighteenth century in Mughal India, as documented by examples in the Berlin albums dated, for instance, 1152 (1739/40).⁴⁷

The Timurid and early Safavid Iranian master ateliers of calligraphy brought these new scripts to extreme heights in aesthetic refinement, while recording the Abbasid tradition and applying selected techniques and philosophies to the new script styles. Genealogies of master teachers and their circles of pupils formulated ever more detailed aesthetic rules of *nasta'liq*, systematising and hierarchising the operations in court and private ateliers (*kitābkhāna*). At the Mughal courts, this script outnumbered any other, a development that Will Kwiatkowski has convincingly explained based on the contribution of early-fifteenth-century Timurid court artists (such as Tajuddin Salmani and Ja'far Sadiqi Baysunghuri) to its formal perfection—after all, the Timurids served as genealogical and political roots for Mughal imperial ideology.

Exalting exemplary master calligraphers resulted in a cult of aesthetics connected to princely courts, where the collecting rage caused increases in artworks' economic value. Next to the ever more richly sweeping and swelling *nasta'liq* calligraphy and their effectively staged illuminations, the *thuluth* script and other forms of the six scripts' plates appear sober and conservative, but they were not given up. The training of Iranian masters in the tenth (sixteenth) century may have declined later, but any worthwhile collection obviously still had to include standard examples from this canon. One can imagine what happened when these were sold out—the market should never be exhausted, and

pp. 231–254. According to the treatise by Sultan 'Ali Mashhadi in 920 (1514/15) and biographical works on calligraphers, *nasta'liq* was 'invented' in the fourteenth century by one Mir 'Ali Tabrizi, but nothing by him is known to have survived with any certainty. Wheeler Thackston comments that the 'eponymizing' of an originator, like of 'Ali, the cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet, for other scripts, is a typical predilection in sources for any new endeavour. Apart from devotional reasons, these master scribes may be remembered for the systematisation of a script; see 'Dost-Muhammad's Introduction to the Bahram Mirza Album (951 [1544/45]); in *A Century of Princes: Sources on Timurid History and Art*, ed. and trans. Wheeler Thackston (Cambridge, MA: The Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture, 1989), pp. 335–350, here p. 341 and n. 34; Wheeler Thackston, *Album Prefaces and other Documents on the History of Calligraphers and Painters* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), pp. 6–7.

46 According to, for instance, Mir Sayyid-Ahmad's Introduction to the Amir Ghayb Beg Album (1564/65), in Wheeler Thackston (ed.), *A Century of Princes*, p. 354; Thackston (ed.), *Album Prefaces*, p. 25; its 'creation' or formalization is usually ascribed to Tajuddin Salmani and in a different style to 'Abduhayy Astarabadi Munshi, secretaries at the Timurid and Aqqoyunlu courts, respectively. But similar scripts appear in documents and texts already in the fourteenth century. Later, it became incorrectly conflated with the Ottoman *divānī* script.

47 Museum für Islamische Kunst, Berlin, I. 4594, fol. 29^v, signed by Mir Khalilullah *Haft Qalamī*, published by Kühnel, *Islamische Schriftkunst*, p. 73, fig. 76; [C.P. Haase] in Kröger and Heiden (eds.), *Islamische Kunst in Berliner Sammlungen*, p. 122 and fig. 90, both to be corrected accordingly; see Bayani, *Ahvāl va Āṣār-i Khushnīvisān*, vol. 1, p. 180, no. 299, 'in Lahore probably 1134 (1721/22)' (altered to 1034 [1624/25]); see below for the masters of the seven scripts.

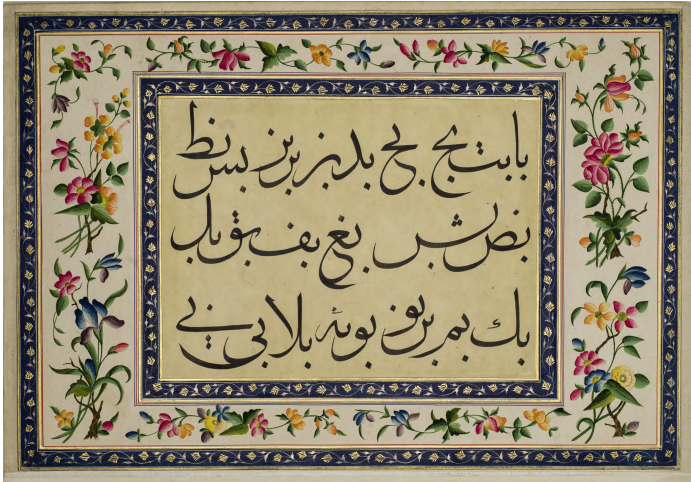


FIGURE 10.11

Calligraphic plate with part of a varied *thuluth* alphabet with the letter *bā'* in combinations (*murakkabāt*), Mughal India, eighteenth century (?), Polier album

STAATLICHE MUSEEN ZU BERLIN, MUSEUM FÜR ISLAMISCHE KUNST, I. 4594, FOL. 37^v

less wealthy collectors should also have a chance to participate. Formalised training sometimes led to a kind of standstill—for example, when repeating the hardly understandable Arabic pre-Islamic poetical texts—but these had been laid down by the great Yaqut and his Mongol- and Timurid-period successors.

The respect for and veneration of the Old Masters in the East was stylised as a distinguishing feature of avantgardism in Western eyes; however, to understand calligraphy one has to learn about the very subtle changes and refinements in the aesthetic of lines and the balance of letters within a text block on the page, in order to recognise regional and personal styles. Copying and re-copying examples by earlier artists remain the one most important exercise for improving the command of the calligrapher's fingers and entire body, for focusing the calligrapher's eyes with the firm intention to achieve the best possible artwork. Still, albums can also preserve fragments of pages or specimens by less perfect calligraphers, either because of their noble author or due to a special relationship to the original owner, and if this is not annotated by the latter, or by the *munshī* who assembled them, then the modern reader is unhappily lost. Still, as modern creations show, the Arabic calligraphy allows for many more revolutionary changes without losing its attraction. How such changes came about

and were spread among the schools may be observed thanks to a plate with a *thuluth* alphabet (*mufradāt*) in which the traditional letter form is further modified in the final forms of *ʿayn*, *jīm*, and so on, with sweeping backward strokes at the end and prolonged curves (fig. 10.11). I dare not speculate whether this was an Indian invention—backward sweeps in final *thuluth* letters are also known from occasional late Ottoman examples.⁴⁸

3.1 Highlights of Nastaʿlīq

The presentation of *nastaʿlīq* mostly follows the form of an upright rectangle but can also be found in quite varied compositions. An early, most elegant example in all Berlin albums is probably the pastiche of four Persian ghazals by Hafiz (d. c. 1390), in seemingly unspectacular, small and only slightly larger old *nastaʿlīq*, written in two pens on three strips, with hardly swelling letter strokes but some beautiful elongations, suprapositions, repetitions, and differentiations of letters (fig. 10.12).

In an exciting twist, at the bottom right one can discover within a ghazal the minute signature

⁴⁸ Museum für Islamische Kunst, Berlin, Polier album, I. 4594, fol. 37^v. For an Ottoman example in the final form of the letters *ʿayn*, *jīm*, and so on in a calligraphy textbook, see Mehmed ʿIzzet, *Khuṭūṭ-i ʿosmaniyye* (n.p. 1309 [1891/92]), pp. 4, 6, 7, 9.



FIGURE 10.12

Pastiche of four ghazals by Hafiz in early *nasta'liq*, signed by *Sulṭān 'Alī al-Mashhadī*, and fragments of Turki ghazals, Herat, and Mashhad (?), late fifteenth/early sixteenth century, calligraphy album

STAATLICHE MUSEEN ZU BERLIN, MUSEUM FÜR ASIATISCHE KUNST, I 5001, FOL. 4^r

al-'abd Sulṭān 'Alī al-Mashhadī—the most famous Timurid and early Safavid calligrapher (active since 1453, d. 1520 in Mashhad), friend of the Chaghatay poet Mir 'Ali Nava'i at the court of Sultan Husayn Bayqara (r. 1469–1506) in Herat (fig. 10.13).⁴⁹ The work can indeed be considered authentic, when compared with the beautiful ex-

amples of his writing assembled in the imperial album for Jahangir around 1620 on a folio in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, signed *Sulṭān 'Alī al-kātib*, and with the famous Hafiz manuscript from the library of Jahangir (r. 1605–1627) in London.⁵⁰ How nearly clumsy appear the large, probably slightly later *nasta'liq* lines of the Persian verse

49 Blair, *Islamic Calligraphy*, pp. 279–281; Wheeler M. Thackston, s.v. 'Sultan 'Ali Mashhadi', in *Grove Art Online*. <https://www.oxfordartonline.com/groveart/search?siteToSearch=groveart&q=sultan+ali+mashhadi&searchBtn=Search&isQuickSearch=true> (last accessed 30 May 2023).

50 Staatsbibliothek Berlin, Libri picturati A 117, fol. 24^r (https://www.qalamos.net/receive/DEIllustration_illustration_00005212 [last accessed July 2023]), which has been described in Kröger and Heiden (eds.), *Berliner Sammlungen*, pp. 248–249, no. 201; British Library, London, MS. Or 4139.

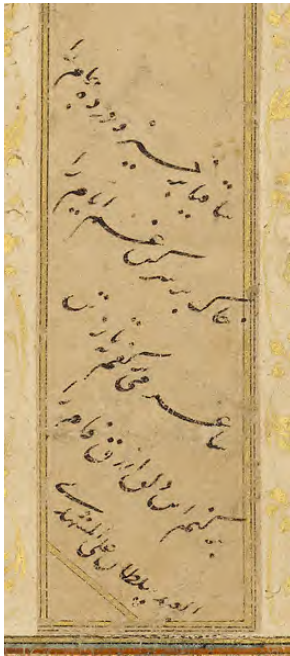


FIGURE 10.13

Detail of Figure 12: Hafiz's ghazal signed by *al-'abd Sulṭān 'Alī al-Mashhadī*, Herat or Mashhad (?), last quarter of fifteenth century/early sixteenth century (?), calligraphy album STAATLICHE MUSEEN ZU BERLIN, MUSEUM FÜR ASIATISCHE KUNST, I 5001, FOL. 4^R

below, when compared to these delicate lines and the thick script of the Chaghatay verse fragments squeezed horizontally into the left side. To complicate the differentiation of artists, one not only has to distinguish the earlier 'Ali Tabrizi with the lower-rank title of 'Mir', but Sultan 'Ali also had a pupil named Mir 'Ali (d. 1544), who during his long life used to sign with different forms of his name. In his youth, in reference to his service at the same court of Sultan Husayn Bayqara in Herat, he called himself 'Ali (*al-kātib al-*) *sulṭānī (al-Ḥusaynī)*, as on another folio from the Jahangir Album in Washington.⁵¹ Later, he signed as Mir 'Ali Haravi. To the latter, the biographer Qadi Ahmad Qummi refers as the calligrapher 'laying down the foundations of Nasta'liq' in a canon and differentiating the large and the small style of this script.⁵²

Another highlight in the albums is a folio combining three of the greatest Iranian calligraphers, two Persian double verses signed Sultan Muhammad Khandan, presumably by attri-

bution (d. after 1550 in Iran),⁵³ and underneath two double verses signed by his teacher Sultan 'Ali Mashhadi. The latter is said to have signed the works of his pupil so as to encourage and recommend him. To these are added four double verses by (Mulla) Muhammad Husayn Tabrizi (d. 1577 in Qazvin), grandson and pupil of the famous Mir 'Ali Haravi (d. 1544) (fig. 10.14).⁵⁴

More difficult to decide is the authenticity of two signatures on a solidly structured pastiche of several borders and strips around a central paper with a Persian *rubā'ī* in bold *nasta'liq* diagonally written, as it becomes more common in the Safavid period and is copied in ever growing thickness in Mughal India (fig. 10.15). Here, the signature is not squeezed into the triangle but added horizontally: 'written calligraphically [or rapidly, *mashaqahu*]

51 Freer Gallery of Art, Washington DC, inv. F1954.116.

52 Qadi Ahmad Qummi [Minorsky], *Calligraphers and Painters*, pp. 126–131.

53 Bayani, *Aḥvāl va Āṣār-i Khushnivīsān*, vol. 1, p. 268, no. 384.

54 This has been published in Kröger and Heiden (eds.), *Islamische Kunst in Berliner Sammlungen*, pp. 222–223, no. 177. Muhammad Khandan is the calligrapher of the famous Kevorkian Album in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (inv.no. 55.121.10).



FIGURE 10.14

A folio combining three master calligraphy pieces: two double verses (top right) ascribed to *Sulṭān Muḥammad Khandān*; two double verses signed by his teacher *Sulṭān 'Alī Mashhadī* (below); and four double verses by (Mulla) *Muḥammad Ḥusayn Tabrīzī* (left)

STAATLICHE MUSEEN ZU BERLIN, MUSEUM FÜR ASIATISCHE KUNST, I 5001, FOL. 23^a

by the servant 'Ali al-Husayni, in the city of Herat'. The calligraphy of medium-sized *nasta'liq* is brave but uninspired, the dots appear untidy, and a little too flashy are the long strokes of the letter *kāf*, said to have been introduced by the famous Sultan 'Ali Mashhadī, who also signed some of his works in Herat. But the name could also belong to another 'Ali working there, or it could be a wishful addition to this work. However, in the smallest scraps of paper pieced together on the right- and left-hand margins on grey-blueish ground the signature of this famous calligrapher appears in pious modesty, similar to the authentic previous object: 'Among what was written, it wrote the poor sinning servant Sultan 'Ali *kātib* (the secretary), may his sins be forgiven and his misdeeds be hidden, 905 (?) [1499/1500], in Holy Mashhad (*andar nivishte shud / katabahu al-'abd al-faqīr al-mudhannib Sulṭān 'Alī*

kātib / ghafara dhunūbahu wa satara 'uyūbahu 905 / dar Mashhad-i muqaddas'). At that time, the authentic Sultan 'Ali Mashhadī was reportedly still in Herat, from where he re-emigrated to his hometown only after the death of Sultan Bayqara in May 1506.⁵⁵ His pupil 'Ali (*al-kātib al-*) *sulṭānī* Haravi stayed there as well. On all sides of the border, a double verse in thick *nasta'liq* from the *Masnavī-yi ma'navī* (Spiritual Epic; vol. 2, within part 59) by Jalal al-Din Rumi (1207–1273) is glued in between the small scraps, so that one should believe that the signature belongs to these—although this is not certain. While the central paper is nearly without ornament, the bordures belong to the period of the

55 Qadi Ahmad Qummi [Minorsky], *Calligraphers and Painters*, pp. 102, 101–106; for his treatise on calligraphy, see pp. 106–125.

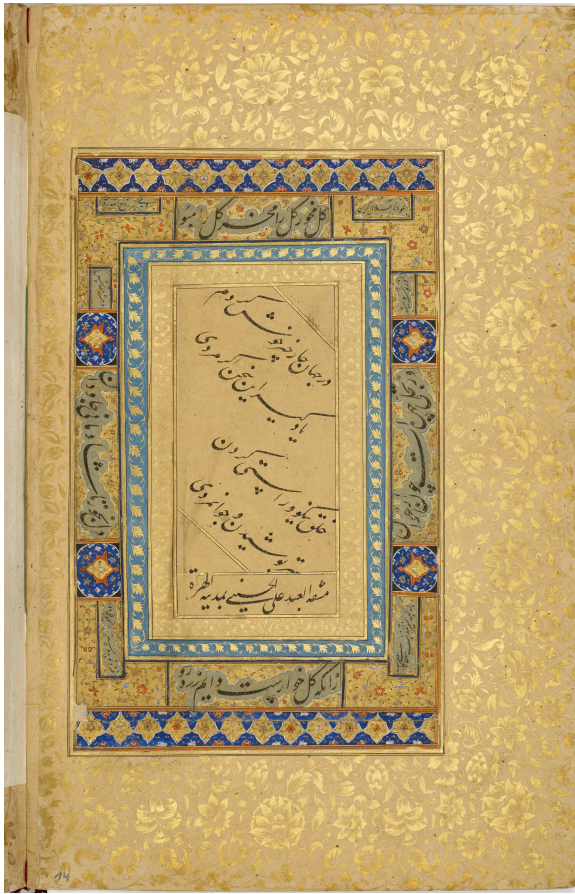


FIGURE 10.15

Pastiche of several borders and strips around a central paper with a Persian *rubā'i* in bold *nasta'liq*, signed by 'Alī al-Ḥusaynī 'in the city of Herat', while the margin's calligraphy contains a signature by Sulṭān 'Alī kātib '[...] in Mashhad', Iran, probably early Safavid period, calligraphy album

STAATLICHE MUSEEN ZU BERLIN, MUSEUM FÜR ASIATISCHE KUNST, I 5001, FOL. 14^B

album's creation, and the marginal ornaments may belong to that of the calligraphy.

Another scrap paper, fixed rather untidily onto an album page with figurative gold margins, shows a similar style of medium-sized bold *nasta'liq* in three somewhat imbalanced lines, with the beginning of the testament of the founder of the Sasanian dynasty, Ardashir Babak (d. 241 or 242 CE) for his son, later assigned to the calligrapher 'Alī al-kātib.⁵⁶ How this is to be understood may be plain from three *nasta'liq* alphabets represented in the Berlin albums. One starts with a concocted title page, announcing an 'alphabet (*mufradāt*) of *naskh-ta'liq* following the original style of Mir 'Alī

al-Tabrizi, may God wrap him in his bounty', consisting of four paper scraps in a lavishly illuminated margin and later borders dating to the time of the album's creation (fig. 10.16). There follow six pages of this alphabet comprising also compound letters (*murakkabāt*), three with five lines alternating with fine flower ornament friezes, the last page with three lines, of which the final again names *al-mudhannib* 'Alī al-kātib pieced together from three small scraps.⁵⁷ The thick *nasta'liq* letters correspond to the form which the later Iranian and Mughal schools obviously believed to be the original *nasta'liq* style, while in fact they are far from the first known dated examples of this

56 Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Berlin, I 5004, fol. 19^r (13^v).

57 Museum für Islamische Kunst, Berlin, I. 4594, fols. 35^v, 34^v, 33^v, 32^v, 31^v, 30^v.



FIGURE 10.16
Title page, announcing 'the alphabet (*mufradāt*) of *naskh-ta'liq*', comprising also compound letters, allegedly in the style of Mir 'Ali al-Tabrizi, Mughal India, seventeenth century (?), and later, album-period borders, Swinton album STAATLICHE MUSEEN ZU BERLIN, MUSEUM FÜR ISLAMISCHE KUNST, I. 4591, FOL. 16^v

script. Besides, no authentic work can be connected to the 'inventor' in the early fifteenth century, Mir 'Ali Tabrizi. Another 'poor needy Mir 'Ali' modestly signed a Persian *rubā'ī* in medium-sized floating calligraphy—but this signature in a different pen and style is found on a paper triangle glued to the cropped paper as the lower right corner.⁵⁸ A similarly floating style of bold *nasta'liq* is used for two Persian double verses with the same signature, but in the same size as the text, on a page with lavishly gilded blue borders and margin.⁵⁹ The sweeping strokes, one in each line, are rather well balanced and cleverly applied to different letters, but this is also surely not the famous Mir 'Ali Tabrizi. More consistent with the steep medium-sized *nasta'liq* script of a Persian *rubā'ī* is the tiny signature (*al?-*) *faqīr al-mudhannib 'Ali al-kātib* ('the poor sinner') and even more so the thin *ghafara dhunūbahu* ('may [He] forgive his sins'), but one cannot prove that these are on the same paper. It has been framed with a similar margin and borders, as the valuable first calligraphy by Maqsud (Museum für Islamische Kunst, I. 4596, fol. 4^v, see fig. 10.3) and the Arabic and Dakhni Urdu

texts (I. 4596, fol. 15^v), but here combined with the marginal single flowers outlined in gold, of a late courtly album.

The thickest style of *nasta'liq* is presented on a richly ornamented page with two Persian double verses by Sa'di (c. 1210–c. 1292): 'You who boast of the mercy of God, what did one say of his mercy: even when rain is assured—until a drop falls, nothing grows' (fig. 10.17).⁶⁰ They are written diagonally and signed below the triangle for sake of modesty, in a line set off horizontally, by Mir 'Ali al-Sultani. This is an abbreviated form of the name of Sultan 'Ali Mashhadi's most famous pupil, Mir 'Ali *al-kātib al-sultānī* al-Haravi; but is the work in his style of *nasta'liq*? The verses are spread on the page rather elegantly, yet the elongated script is very *quiet*. Of the four sweeping strokes, only one is for a letter other than *tā'*, and only the one word in the middle of the last line (*nayafkanī*) also ascends somewhat higher than the groundline. This would not be an exciting oeuvre, so why, then, is it signed so boldly? One wonders whether all the bold and thick scripts signed in this manner are really by him, and not perhaps by a Mughal Indian calligrapher who thought he might develop the style further.

58 Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Berlin, I 5004, fol. 13^r (19^v).

59 Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Berlin, I 5001, fol. 24^v.

60 Translation by the author.



FIGURE 10.17

Two Persian double verses by Sa'di, signed *Mir 'Alī al-Sulṭānī* (al-Haravi), but perhaps Mughal India, seventeenth century, Polier album STAATLICHE MUSEEN ZU BERLIN, MUSEUM FÜR ISLAMISCHE KUNST, I. 4595, FOL. 19^v

Still rather thin and elegant is the model of the letter *ba* combined with the whole alphabet (*mufradāt*) in medium-sized *nasta'liq* on an unornamented page.⁶¹ It is set next to a marbled paper on which a Persian double verse is written slightly larger and boldly signed (*mashaqahu*) by Mir Khalil in the same style, surrounded by friezes inscribed with a Praise God quote from Sa'di's *Būstān* (Orchard) and other love poems in minute, thin *nasta'liq*.⁶² Mir Khalil is thought to have been

the famous calligrapher Khalilullah from Mashhad or from 'Iraq-i 'Ajam, who after several travels was active in the Deccan at the court of Ibrahim 'Adilshah II (r. 1580–1627), where marbled paper was especially in use.

The calligraphies on the album folio I. 4596, fol. 25^v, are arranged classically, similar to the solid structure of I 5001, fol. 14^r (fig. 10.15). Of the paper strips with three styles of *nasta'liq*, the largest in the centre represents the first sura of the Qur'an, *al-Fātiḥa*, unusual in medium-sized *nasta'liq* with

61 Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Berlin, I 5003, fol. 10^v.

62 Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Berlin, I 5003, fol. 11^r; Bayani, *Aḥvāl va Āṣār-i Khushnivīsān*, vol. 1, pp. 177–180,

no. 297. For a later calligrapher, Khalilullah *Haft Qalamī*, see note 47.



FIGURE 10.18

Persian verses by Mir 'Ali Nawa'i in *nasta'liq*, signed *Mir 'Alī-yi ḥāfiẓ-i 'Alī-yi Suhravardī*, Iran or Mughal India (?), seventeenth century, calligraphy album STAATLICHE MUSEEN ZU BERLIN, MUSEUM FÜR ASIATISCHE KUNST, I 5001, FOL. 13^R

white verse dividers and ornaments around the letters, as well as four coloured vignettes in the corners. Below, a modest signature by Shah Mahmud 960 (1553/54) mentions a very famous name, but the script's style is not very well balanced, and the same letters and words look unequal.⁶³ The stronger script style at the margins features

the *nasta'liq* alphabet and two letter combinations (*murakkabāt*) in heavily swelling lines over ornamental patterns, while the small cartouches filled with lines written in a tiny thin style present a Persian *rubā'ī*.⁶⁴

A fine example of *nasta'liq* playing with the extremely manifold, expanded, sweeping strokes of different letters quotes a Persian verse by Mir 'Ali Nawa'i, to which is added at the bottom on a paper 'written by the poor sinner' *Mir 'Alī-yi ḥāfiẓ-i 'Alī-yi Suhravardī*—but the dash of the first letter starts on the other paper, and another pen has

63 Published in Hickmann, *Indische Albumblätter*, no. 8 and pp. 138–139. Shah Mahmud Nishapuri (d. 972 [1564/65]), or much later, Bayani, *Aḥwāl va Āṣār-i Khushnīvisān*, vols. 1–2, pp. 295–307, no. 410. See the well-balanced lines and word and letter spacing in his Persian text in the album Freer Gallery, inv. F1937.35^{r-v}, and above note 22.

64 Museum für Islamische Kunst, Berlin, I. 4589, fol. 30^v.

been used (fig. 10.18).⁶⁵ The boastful signature is hard to identify, despite its formal modesty, as it is written in the same size as the text: it could mean the most famous Mir 'Ali Haravi, according to other convincing monumental pieces and its similarity to the name of the author. It is impossible to make out the reason for the second part of the signature, in which he either proves his veneration for the Shi'i saint 'Ali or recalls his tradition of a famous predecessor, but in either case a calligrapher named 'Ali of the Suhrawardi family is not known; the lineage is more famous for its philosopher and several Sufis by other names. The illumination with split leaf scrolls has been applied to the album folio, as it is repeated on the small paper scrap with Persian verses in minute *nasta'liq*.

The way in which this script made it through the ateliers is *documented* best in the only double page softly mirrored in structure and content.⁶⁶ It shows eight examples from the tiniest to the boldest monumental size in various directions, none of them signed or assigned, and the layout is left rather crude. Maybe these are examples of Mughal Indian exercises after the Iranian masters. One of the most famous among Mughal calligraphers was the unlucky Prince Dara Shikoh (1615–1659), the first son of Shah Jahan (r. 1628–1658). Like several Safavid princes of the sixteenth century, he was a highly gifted artist, a famous author, and a promoter of literati and artists, but he lost his life in an unsuccessful political conflict. His calligraphic studies in Ajmer began with Rashida ('Abdurrashid Daylami, d. 1670), a nephew of the brilliant Iranian master of *nasta'liq*, Mir 'Imad al-Hasani (d. 1615). He sometimes worked on specially coloured or prepared paper, and his works were so famous that, even after his fall from favour and execution, they

were kept, often with his name effaced. Of his three works in the Berlin albums, this happened in two cases, but one which he signed as 'drawing this' (*rāqamahu Dārā Shikuh*)—the verses from a ghazal by Khaqani (d. 1190)—slipped the attention of his critics (fig. 10.19).⁶⁷ Less interesting is the work represented in the Berlin albums under the name of Mir 'Imad [al-mulk al-Hasani] (1557–1615). This ingenious artist of calligraphic lines, proportions, and balance received general appreciation rather late, even though he showed the way out of the narrow copying of calligraphy schools, which dampened innovative attempts and experiments in the manner of Meistersinger conservatism. The way in which he treated the *nasta'liq* script on his many single pages finally proves that these were received as images of the word, but the three pages in his name, as well as one copy by his alleged pupil 'Abdallah in the Berlin collection, do not prove this in any way (fig. 10.20).⁶⁸ Two of the rather dry calligraphies are not embellished at all and thus not valued, but this example mounted on an ornamented paper has received a rather rich floral margin. They are either selected as less innovative on purpose, or due to a lack of better examples. In Iran, did his inventions perhaps foster the trend towards developing the *shikasta* style of *nasta'liq* ('broken' *nasta'liq*)? One should be on the lookout for more of his works in former or still existing Indian collections in order to define his possible impact on at least some contemporary Mughal Indian masters. Dara Shikoh did not develop his style into free

65 خورشید جهانتاب تو از جانب صبح | یا ماه جهانگرد من از جانب شام
(*Khurshīd-i jahāntāb-i tu az jānib-i ṣubḥ / yā māh-i jahāngird man az jānib-i shām*). 'The world-illuminating Sun of yours comes from the morning, oh world-spanning Moon, I am from the evening' (translation by the author).

66 Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Berlin, I 5001, fols. 10^r–19^v.

67 His works are spread also historically in many collections, and his famous album with calligraphy pieces and paintings for Nadira Begum is in the India Office Library, Add Or 3129. Annemarie Schimmel, in *Elr* VII, pp. 2–5.

68 Muhammad Mahdi Zari'dar and Amir Ahmad Falsafi, *Pādshāh-i mamālik-i khaṭṭ: Mīr 'Imād al-Ḥasanī / Mīr 'Emad al-Hassani, the Master of Calligraphy* (Karaj: Honarkadeh, 1392 SH [2013]). This is an uncritical selection from various official and private collections. The exact copy by his pupil 'Abdallah (*az khaṭṭ-i Mīr 'Imād naql namūd*) is in Hickmann, *Indische Albumblätter*, pl. 58 and pp. 168–169.



FIGURE 10.19 Persian ghazal by Khaqani, 'Dara Shikuh had drawn it' (*Dārā Shikūh rāqamahu*), Mughal India, before 1659, Polier album
 STAATLICHE MUSEEN ZU BERLIN, MUSEUM FÜR ISLAMISCHE KUNST, I. 4594, FOL. 36^v



FIGURE 10.20

Calligraphy signed *Mīr 'Imād, Iran* (?), dated 1006 (1597/98), of doubtful authenticity, Polier album STAATLICHE MUSEEN ZU BERLIN, MUSEUM FÜR ISLAMISCHE KUNST, I. 4597, FOL. 6^v

associations and changes, but perhaps some others can be detected. Yet, the 'broken' style no longer found appreciation in Mughal India—with the long reign of Emperor Aurangzeb (r. 1658–1707), the cultural ties to Iran for the sake of innovative inspiration also seemed to diminish.

4 Illuminating the Calligraphic Works

It is easier to recognise changes in illumination styles and in the composition of text fields and frames or intersecting devices. Contrary to the Abbasid tradition, when Yaqut varied only scripts and letter sizes by paragraphs on his scrolls, since late-Mongol- and Timurid-period calligraphy was rarely shown without frames—they convey the emphasis on scripts as art objects in their own

right. The *architecture* of a page—with its text and illumination, varying writing directions, and choices determining the flow and bounce of the letters—in the ideal case, as we know from an early Timurid introductory text, is created by a specific artist (*jadval-kash*) who structures luxury album leaves with the help of rulings.⁶⁹

Two types of page architecture had been developed at Timurid courts, with certain variations. The conservative illumination frames a usually transversal format, within which the calligraphy in varying scripts changes direction and size. Espe-

69 *Arzādāsh*t, probably by Ja'far-i Baysunghuri around 1430, on the sort of work of Khwaja Ata *jadval-kash* at the princely atelier (*kitābkhāna*) in Herat; see Thackston (ed.), *A Century of Princes*, pp. 324–325; Thackston (ed.), *Album Prefaces*, p. 43.

cially Arabic texts in old scripts are mostly pasted transversally, giving them the character of a separate 'plate' (Arabic *lawḥa*), as it was used traditionally for religious formulas and texts. But the margin frames are illuminated with stylish Mughal motives of the eighteenth century. In the high rectangular format, the calligraphy may be distributed in separate cartouches in a symmetrical composition around a central field. The more modern composition is used mostly for poetic *nasta'liq* calligraphy, written diagonally. The illumination frames the four or more lines in a rectangle, within which the upper right triangle often contains an invocation to God, and the lower left a signature of or attribution to the artist, both often colourfully illuminated. The latter is also often written in a frieze below the texts. For an album page, the rectangular paper fields in portrait-orientation are sometimes pieced together in pairs of three or four—this seems to offer the beholder an occasion for comparison.

Among the calligraphies, only very few examples of a double-page illumination can be observed, while more have been described by Friederike Weis for the juxtaposition of painting and calligraphy (see the article by Weis in this volume).⁷⁰ The question emerges as to whether pages with old-style calligraphy find companions in similarly traditional pictorial styles. Even when a calligraphy's paper does not show traces of having been torn from a manuscript, the *book page* structure is sometimes recalled by the positioning of margins and borders, either by a clear vertical alignment, or by shifting the main field from a central axis slightly towards the fold. Specific-

ally created ornaments and even *quodlibet*-like pastiche compositions with multi-directional layout are exceptional.⁷¹ Altogether, this lends an intriguing versatility to the presentation of dry paper scraps (*qiṭ'a*). They appear as poetry fragments from an anthology, with the visual effect of a *Wunderkammer*, even without the drawings or images added to the pages, as in the earlier Saray albums (see fig. 10.1). This style still lives on in Iran today.

70 Mainly in the albums with a majority of calligraphies, as in Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Berlin, I 5001, fols. 4^r, 5^v; structured in a strict manner are fols. 8^v, 11^v, 12^v; double page composition occurs on fol. 9^v–10^r, and the so-called 'exercise page' (*siyāh mashq*) on fol. 7^v is composed with the following page (*inshā'*); simple are fols. 9^r, 10^v, 11^r, 12^r, 16^v, 17^r, 18^r–21^r, 23^r, 25^v, 27^r–28^v. For the page structures of the Safavid Iranian albums, see Roxburgh, *The Persian Album*, pp. 261–269; see pp. 88–90.

71 Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Berlin, I 5001, fols. 13^r and 29^r, show elaborate ornamentation and an interesting structure of ornament; Museum für Islamische Kunst, Berlin, I. 4600 fol. 1^v (see fig. 10.1) is unique in its slightly irregular, nearly free structure, and its extremely varied assemblage of script styles.