



Documents & Histoire.
Le faux, le simulacre et la copie
Islam vii^e-xx^e s.

Documents & History.
The Fake, the Replica, & the Copy
Islam 7th–20th C.

ANNE REGOURD

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Anne Regourd



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Cover illustration: Qur'an manuscript, Daghistan, ca. 1800, showing the opening pages with illuminated double frame, and the final page with a spurious added colophon stating that the manuscript was copied in Sabah, part of the kingdom of Brunei. From the British Library Collection: BL Or. 15913, ff. 2^v-3^r, 277^v.
Annabel Gallop (British Library)

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Préface/Preface

Jonathan M. Bloom

Historians often concern themselves with reading and interpreting information presented in published texts; less often do they consider the materiality of a given text—such questions as who preserved it and why, from what materials was it made, when was it made, how was it made, where was it made, who made it, why was it made, is the information in it actually true, and is the text what it purports to be? Art historians, in contrast, although also concerned with questions of meaning and interpretation, have always been deeply attentive to questions of authenticity and provenance, for museums are theoretically institutions where only authentic works of art, as determined by art-historical research, are displayed. Libraries and archives, of course, have different priorities. From the fifteenth century the question of authenticity has been further complicated by the ability to create multiple equally genuine versions of texts and images through techniques of mechanical reproduction on paper such as printing with moveable type and engravings, and more recently by lithography and photography, quite apart from contemporary digital media. What exactly constitutes a “genuine” text, object or digital work of art? The importance of this question is revealed, for example, by the many words describing various degrees and types of authenticity, such as—to cite only examples in English—artificial, bogus, counterfeit, doctored, ersatz, fraudulent, imitation ..., phony, pseudo, sham, spurious, etc.

In 2008 Anne Regourd, a specialist in Islamic manuscripts with a strong interest in their materiality, presciently inaugurated a series of study days and seminars in Paris at the Musée du Louvre and the École Pratique des Hautes Études focusing on the physical characteristics of medieval Arabic-language manuscripts. Exploring these questions opened up avenues for more nuanced interpretations of the text—was the manuscript what it claims to be, was it an “innocent” fake meant to imitate an original, or was it a counterfeit or forgery meant to deceive? Continuing on this theme, three years later Regourd convened another gathering in Paris focused on the inherent nature of medieval medical documents and how they were transmitted, transported and copied in medieval times. A third study day in 2013 focused specifically on fakes, replicas and copies in Islamic manuscripts over the centuries.

In order to complete the coverage of the present volume, the essays represent a selection of the papers presented in the 2013 workshop along with some others written by individuals who had not participated in the earlier events.

They address not only various philosophical and practical aspects of fakes, replicas and copies and their differences, but also how they pertain to a variety of media, places and times. While the initial gathering had focused on the relatively narrow topic of medieval Arabic-language documents, subsequent ones expanded the subjects under consideration, so the essays in this volume include studies of Arabic religious, genealogical, and travel texts, a Judeo-Persian painting on paper, counterfeit Mamluk coins, fraudulent European-language versions of the stories known as the Arabian Nights, and masks from sub-Saharan Africa. To bring this all together, the editor has introduced these essays with an extraordinarily wide-ranging introduction exploring the historical and philosophical questions underpinning this volume. Her scope ranges from ancient Greece through the Protestant Reformation and modern times in Europe to China and the medieval Islamic lands. Taken together, the essays in this volume will raise many pertinent questions and provoke readers to think in new ways.

Remerciements / Acknowledgments

Ce livre représente l'effort de plusieurs années et je suis reconnaissante de l'appui et des critiques constructives que les collègues et amis suivants m'ont tout particulièrement apportés.

Les évaluateurs externes, anonymes, ont relu avec beaucoup d'attention l'ensemble du livre, proposant suggestions et substantielles additions.

Arnout Vrolijk, Karin Scheper et Christoph Rauch, les directeurs de la collection « Islamic manuscripts & Books », dans laquelle j'ai eu l'honneur de publier plusieurs fois déjà, ont bien voulu accepter ce nouveau livre.

Je suis extrêmement reconnaissante à Jonathan Bloom (Professeur émérite, Department of Art, Art History and Film, Boston College) d'avoir répondu généreusement présent à ma demande de rédiger la préface.

L'article d'Annabel Gallop (British Library), « Fakes or Fancies? Some 'Problematic' Islamic Manuscripts from South East Asia », *Manuscript cultures* 10, 2017 (p. 101-128), où est déclinée une palette de cas de non-authenticité dans des manuscrits islamiques d'Asie du Sud-Est, m'a suggéré l'idée d'orner la couverture de clichés pris sur un manuscrit conservé à la British Library.

Mais c'est en première ligne les contributeurs que je souhaite chaleureusement remercier pour leur patience, pour avoir cru en ce projet et être restés fidèles à leur engagement. C'est donc avec une grande tristesse que j'ai appris le décès de notre collègue Robert Graham Irwin (School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), Londres), survenu le 28 juin 2024 : il n'a pu voir sa stimulante contribution publiée.

Mon dernier mot va à la British Library pour avoir aimablement consenti la reproduction des images en couverture, ainsi qu'aux éditions Brill pour leur efficacité et leur adaptabilité, toujours renouvelées.



This has been an effort of many years, and I gratefully recognize the support and constructive criticism of the following friends and colleagues in particular.

The external reviewers for their careful reading and constructive suggestions.

The editors of the 'Islamic manuscripts & Books' collection, Arnout Vrolijk, Karin Scheper and Christoph Rauch, who have already honoured me by publishing my work in their series, for kindly accepting this new book.

I am extremely grateful to Jonathan Bloom (Professor Emeritus, Department of Art, Art History and Film, Boston College) for so generously agreeing to write the preface.

Thanks to Annabel Gallop (British Library) whose article “Fakes or Fancies? Some ‘Problematic’ Islamic Manuscripts from South East Asia,” *Manuscript cultures* 10, 2017, pp. 101–128, acquainted me with the manuscript from which the image which decorates the front-cover of this book is taken.

But it is most of all the contributors whom I wish to warmly thank for their patience, for believing in this project and for remaining faithful to their commitment. It is therefore with great sadness that I learned of the death of our colleague Robert Graham Irwin (School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), London) on June 28, 2024: I regret that he was unable to see his stimulating contribution published.

My final words of thanks go to the British Library for so graciously consenting to the reproduction of the images on the front cover, and to Brill Publishers for their efficiency and adaptability, which remain inexhaustible.

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Abréviations et symboles / Abbreviations and Symbols

Abréviations / Abbreviations

EI *Encyclopaedia of Islam / Encyclopédie de l'Islam*

A.D. *Anno Domini*

A.H. *Anno Hegirae*

Symboles, translittération des textes arabes / Symbols, for Arabic text transliterations

[] lacune dans le manuscrit / lacuna in the manuscript

... texte non lisible / illegible text

< > ajouts de l'éditeur / conjectural additions by the editor

<< >> suppressions dans le manuscrit / deletions in the manuscript

(?) lecture incertaine / uncertain reading

/ \ texte écrit au-dessus ou au-dessous de la ligne / text written above, or below, the line

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(†28 juin 2024), historien, romancier et écrivain, spécialiste de la littérature arabe. Après des études d'histoire moderne à l'Université d'Oxford, il fait des recherches supérieures à The School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), Londres, sous la direction de Bernard Lewis. À partir de 1972, il enseigne l'histoire médiévale à l'Université de St Andrews. En 1977, il abandonne la vie académique pour écrire de la fiction tout en continuant à donner des cours à temps partiel à Oxford, Cambridge et à la SOAS. Il a été rédacteur au Moyen-Orient du *Times Literary Supplement*. Il a publié une histoire de l'orientalisme et est un

expert reconnu des *Mille et Une Nuits*. [N.d.l'É.: cette courte biographie a été rédigée par nos soins à titre posthume]

Robert Graham Irwin

(† the 28th of June 2024), was a historian, novelist and writer, specializing in Arabic literature. After studying modern history at Oxford University, he did graduate research at The School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), London, under the direction of Bernard Lewis. From 1972, he taught medieval history at the University of St Andrews. In 1977, he gave up Academic life to write fiction while continuing to teach part-time at Oxford, Cambridge and SOAS. He was Middle East editor of the *Times Literary Supplement*. He published a history of Orientalism and was a recognized expert on the *Arabian Nights*. [Editor's note: this short biography was written by us posthumously]

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Anne Regourd

PhD in Philosophy, University of Sorbonne Paris-IV, CNRS. She has specialized in the study of post-modern and contemporary Islamic manuscripts, particularly in Yemen and Ethiopia, using several approaches—History of science, Anthropology, Codicology, and Material culture. Her preferred subjects are, firstly, Divination and Magic, then the paper trade and the models followed in the production of manuscripts. These latter subjects led her to deal with Global history. See, for example, the collective book under her direction, *The Trade in Papers bearing Non-Latin characters*, Leiden, Brill, 2018.

Émilie Salaberry-Duhoux

diplômée en histoire de l'art (École du Louvre et Université Panthéon-Sorbonne, spécialisée en arts africains), elle a exercé au Centre du Patrimoine mondial de l'UNESCO (Unité Afrique) avant d'être recrutée comme chargée des collections extra-européennes au musée d'Angoulême. Aujourd'hui directrice du service des musées, archives et artothèque d'Angoulême, elle mène ses missions d'étude, de conservation, d'enrichissement et de valorisation des collections du musée d'Angoulême, dans un cadre collaboratif international, en particulier avec plusieurs pays africains. Depuis 2018, elle s'est investie sous des formes diverses, à l'échelon régional, national et international, dans la réflexion sur l'histoire des collections extra-occidentales, leurs provenances et les enjeux de restitutions du patrimoine.

Émilie Salaberry-Duhoux

graduated in art history (École du Louvre and Université Panthéon-Sorbonne, specializing in African arts), worked at UNESCO's World Heritage Centre (Africa Unit) before being recruited as head of non-European collections at the musée d'Angoulême. Now Director of the Angoulême Museums, Archives and Art Library Department, she carries out her missions of study, conservation, enrichment and enhancement of the musée d'Angoulême's collections within an international collaborative framework, in particular with several African countries. Since 2018, she has been involved in a variety of ways at regional, national and international levels, in reflecting on the history of non-Western collections, their origins and the challenges of heritage restitution.

Warren C. Schultz

Doctorat (1995), DePaul University, Professeur en histoire et membre de l'American Numismatic Society est l'auteur de nombreux travaux sur l'histoire monétaire et numismatique du Sultanat mamelouk d'Égypte et de Syrie.

Warren C. Schultz

PhD (1995), DePaul University, Professor, History, and a Fellow of the American Numismatic Society has written extensively on the monetary and numismatic history of the Mamluk Sultanate of Egypt and Syria.

Système de translittération (arabe) / Transliteration System (Arabic)

Il suit, globalement, le système de la revue *Arabica* (https://www.brill.com/sites/default/files/ftp/authors_instructions/ARAB.pdf) ou ISO 233-2: 1993 (<https://www.iso.org/obp/ui/fr/#iso:std:4118:fr>) avec des ajustements dus au choix de coller à un système de translittération.

1 Consonnes

أ	ʾ	ض	<i>ḏ</i>
ب	<i>b</i>	ط	<i>ṭ</i>
ت	<i>t</i>	ظ	<i>ẓ</i>
ث	<i>ṯ</i>	ع	<i>ʿ</i>
ج	<i>ǧ</i>	غ	<i>ǧ</i>
ح	<i>ḥ</i>	ف	<i>f</i>
خ	<i>ḫ</i>	ق	<i>q</i>
د	<i>d</i>	ك	<i>k</i>
ذ	<i>ḏ</i>	ل	<i>l</i>
ر	<i>r</i>	م	<i>m</i>
ز	<i>z</i>	ن	<i>n</i>
س	<i>s</i>	ه	<i>h</i>
ش	<i>š</i>	و	<i>w</i>
ص	<i>ṣ</i>	ي	<i>y</i>

ʾ (*hamza*) omise à l'initiale.

2 Voyelles longues et brèves

a/ā, i/ī, u/ū.

3 Diphtongues

ay, aw.

4 Article défini

Aucune distinction n'est faite entre lettres solaires et lettres lunaires (ex. : *al-šams, al-qamar, Kitāb iḥyā' 'ulūm al-dīn*).

5 *tā' marbūṭa*

tā' marbūṭa final est translittéré --a (ex. : *risāla*).

6 Complément de nom ou annexion (*iḍāfa*)

Dans ce cas, un nom s'achevant par *tā' marbūṭa* sera translittéré --at (ex. : *Risālat al-tawḥīd*).

7 Prépositions précédant des noms définis et indéfinis ou des pronoms

Là où, en arabe, la préposition est accolée, d'une part, aux noms définis et indéfinis, d'autre part, aux pronoms, une marque de séparation (trait d'union) est introduite. Dans tous les cas, l'article (*al-*) est intégralement rendu (ex. : *fī al-bayt, bi-al-'aql, li-al-mamlūk, bi-allatī, li-alladīna*).

8 Conjonctions *wa-* et *fā-*

De même, une marque de séparation (trait d'union) est utilisée entre, d'une part, les conjonctions *wa-* et *fā-*, et, d'autre part, les noms définis ou indéfinis qui les suivent. Dans tous les cas, l'article (*al-*) est intégralement rendu (ex. : *wa-al-mušāhada, fā-al-mušāhada*).

9 Prépositions et conjonctions précédant des noms indéfinis commençant par une *hamza*

Ces noms sont intégralement rendus (ex. : *li-istiqbāl, wa-istiqbāl, li-amr, wa-amr*).

10 Pronoms suffixes

La présence de pronoms suffixes n'est pas marquée par un signe séparant le pronom suffixe du mot auquel il est suffixé (ex. : *kitābuhu, kitābuhā*).

11 Šadda

Le redoublement de la lettre *yā'* dans les adjectifs et les noms de relation sera noté comme suit : *'arabī*, mais *'arabīyya, 'inda al- faransiyyīn, al-insāniyya*.

12 Noms de personnes

L'article est intégralement rendu dans tous les cas.

En début de phrase ou de paragraphe, le « a » de l'article « *al-* » est en majuscule.

13 Titres, dynasties et toponymes

Les titres, dynasties et toponymes sont translittérés, sauf dans les cas d'usage bien établi (ex. Vizir, abbaside, Sanaa).



The transliteration system for Arabic broadly follows the system of *Arabica* (https://brill.com/fileasset/downloads_products/Author_Instructions/ARAB.pdf) or ISO 233-2:1993 (<https://www.iso.org/obp/ui/fr/#iso:std:4118:fr>) with some modifications due to the choice of a Transliteration System.

1 Consonants

أ	ʾ	ض	<i>ḍ</i>
ب	<i>b</i>	ط	<i>ṭ</i>
ت	<i>t</i>	ظ	<i>ẓ</i>
ث	<i>ṯ</i>	ع	<i>ʿ</i>
ج	<i>ǧ</i>	غ	<i>ǧ</i>
ح	<i>ḥ</i>	ف	<i>f</i>
خ	<i>ḫ</i>	ق	<i>q</i>
د	<i>d</i>	ك	<i>k</i>
ذ	<i>ḏ</i>	ل	<i>l</i>
ر	<i>r</i>	م	<i>m</i>
ز	<i>z</i>	ن	<i>n</i>
س	<i>s</i>	هـ	<i>h</i>
ش	<i>š</i>	و	<i>w</i>
ص	<i>ṣ</i>	ي	<i>y</i>

We do not use word-initial ʾ (*hamza*)

2 Vowels

a/ā, i/ī, u/ū.

3 Diphthongs

ay, aw.

4 Definite Article

No distinction is made between solar and lunar letters (e.g.: *al-šams, al-qamar, Kitāb iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn*).

5 *tā' marbūṭa*

Final *tā' marbūṭa* is transliterated *-a* (e.g.: *risāla*).

6 Possessive or Genitive Constructions (*iḍāfa*)

In possessive or genitive constructions, the *tā' marbūṭa* followed by a complement is transliterated *-at* (e.g.: *Risālat al-tawḥīd*).

7 Prepositions Preceding Definite and Indefinite Nouns or Pronouns

Whenever prepositions are prefixed to definite and indefinite nouns or to pronouns, they are separated by a hyphen. The article (*al-*) is maintained in full (e.g.: *fī al-bayt*, *bi-al-'aql*, *li-al-mamlūk*, *bi-allatī*, *li-alladīna*).

8 Conjunctions *wa-* and *fa-*

Hyphens are also used between such conjunctions as *wa-* and *fa-* and definite and indefinite nouns. The article (*al-*) is maintained in full (e.g.: *wa-al-mušāhada*, *fa-al-mušāhada*).

9 Prepositions and Conjunctions before Word-Initial *hamza*

Such nouns are maintained in full (e.g.: *li-istiqbāl*, *wa-istiqbāl*, *li-amr*, *wa-amr*).

10 Suffix Pronouns

Suffix pronouns are not separated from nouns (i.e. no separation marks) (e.g.: *kitābuhu*, *kitābuhā*).

11 *Šadda*

Double *yā'* in relative adjectives and abstract nouns is transliterated as follows: *'arabī*, but *'arabiyya*, *'inda al-faransiyyīn*, *al-insāniyya*.

12 Personal Names

Articles are fully maintained.

At the start of a sentence or paragraph, we capitalise the “a” of the article “al-.”

13 Titles, dynasties and toponyms

Names of titles, dynasties and toponyms are in transliteration, except those found in the *Oxford English Dictionary* (e.g. Vizier, Abbasid).

Introduction

Anne Regourd

«Festina lente»



1

«Documents & Histoire» a une histoire puisque quatre événements ont déjà pris place sous ce thème.¹ Le coup d'envoi de la série a eu lieu les 16-17 mai 2008, lors de journées d'études organisées avec le soutien du musée du Louvre et de l'École Pratique des Hautes Études (EPHE, IV^e section), «Documents et histoire/*Documents and History. Islam, vii^e-xvi^e siècle/Islam 7th–16th century*». Il s'agissait de souligner la sous-exploitation des données physiques dans l'analyse des documents manuscrits de langue arabe, y compris dans leur datation, la prééminence des données textuelles sur l'apport de l'objet dans les études philologiques arabes. La journée d'étude a fait l'objet d'Actes, publiés en 2013, dans les collections de l'EPHE chez Droz².

Le 3 octobre 2011, a eu lieu le volet II de Documents & Histoire, en partenariat avec le CNRS – UMR 7219/Université Paris-Diderot Paris 7, SPHERE

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- 1 En cours de rédaction, j'ai eu des échanges nourris avec Aurélia Hetzel (chercheur associé, EA 7347 Histara, Paris), dont le sujet actuel de recherche porte sur imitation et sacré; elle a accepté avec enthousiasme de relire cette introduction, y apportant ses remarques constructives. Tristan Vighiano (Professeur en littérature française de la Renaissance, Université d'Aix-Marseille; Directeur du Centre Interdisciplinaire d'Étude des Littératures d'Aix-Marseille (CIELAM), UR 4235), ainsi que Christine Bénévent (Professeur d'histoire du livre et de bibliographie, membre honoraire de l'IUF, École nationale des chartes – PSL), Martine Furno (Institut d'histoire des représentations et des idées dans les modernités (IHRIM) – UMR 5317, École normale supérieure de Lyon (ENS), Lyon) et Louise Katz (Docteur de l'École Pratique des Hautes Études (EPHE)) ont bien voulu aiguiller mes lectures et répondre patiemment à mes questions sur l'imprimerie à la Renaissance en France. Les suggestions de l'un des relecteurs, anonymes, m'ont permis de renforcer les quelques développements que j'avais initialement proposés sur la culture de l'imprimerie en Islam.
 - 2 A. Regourd (éd.), *Documents et histoire/Documents and History. Islam, vii^e-xvi^e siècle/Islam 7th–16th century, Proceedings of the International Study day organized by Anne Regourd for The Louvre, Islamic Arts, & the École Pratique des Hautes Études (EPHE)*, 2008, 2013.

(Science – Philosophie – Histoire)/Centre d'Histoire des Sciences & des Philosophies Arabes et Médiévales (CHSPAM), Paris, grâce à Mehrnaz Katouzian. Intitulé « *Materia medica* pratique : matériaux à valeur documentaire de médecine ancienne et médiévale », il cherchait à reposer le problème de la quiddité du document à propos de la matière et des recettes médicales, qu'elles soient transportées, citées ou copiées. Le passage à Paris d'Alain Touwaide, historien des sciences, alors Directeur scientifique, Institute for the Preservation of Medical Traditions and History of Sciences, Smithsonian Institution, Washington DC, et Professeur invité par l'Université Paris-Diderot Paris 7, en a été le déclencheur³. Il n'avait pas été prévu d'actes pour ce volet II : les journées, courtes, réunissaient quelques contributions dont certaines étaient d'ores et déjà réservées ou l'ont été immédiatement après.

C'est les 14 et 15 novembre 2013 qu'ont eu lieu les journées d'études « Le faux, le simulacre et la copie. Islam VII^e/XX^e s »⁴. Ma première idée était de prolonger la réflexion entamée en 2008 en trouvant un sujet qui implique que l'on prenne en compte davantage, mieux, les déterminations physiques de l'objet dans l'analyse du document. Se pencher sur la question des faux et imitations m'a paru un angle excellent en ce que c'est le document qui est concerné : il doit être authentique en tout, ne peut l'être en partie. Elle entraînait dans son sillage la poursuite de la collaboration avec des musées. Mais elle supposait d'ouvrir l'étude à la période contemporaine, puisque le marché de l'art du XIX^e s. a été à l'origine de nombreuses supercheries et, en conséquence, a vu apparaître des experts, qui recouraient à la matérialité de l'écrit, papiers et encres, puis à sa mise en page, pour authentifier un document. Dès lors que les bornes temporelles étaient modifiées, il paraissait intéressant de conserver une réflexion sur la durée et de capter un devenir de ces notions de faux, de simulacre et de copie. Sophie Yin, du musée de la Contrefaçon de l'Union des fabricants (UNIFAB), et Arnaud Manas, du service du Patrimoine et des Archives de la Banque de France, ont rejoint les journées d'études pour nous donner une définition actuelle de la contrefaçon ou du faux et de la lutte dialectique, donc permanente, qu'ils génèrent pour protéger les consommateurs ou les ménages, les fabricants, l'économie de pays et groupes de pays. Et ainsi avons-nous pu

3 Programme : Alain Touwaide, « Le naufrage du *Baratti* : des médicaments composés saisis sur le vif » ; Patricia Gaillard-Seux (Université d'Angers, CERHIO-CNRS UMR 6258), « Les recettes de magie médicale (1^{er}-6^e siècles) ont-elles été appliquées ? » ; Mehrnaz Katouzian-Safadi, « Cas 'particuliers de malades' et pharmacie médiévale écrite en langue arabe » ; Anne Regourd, « Feuilles de codex médicaux de la Geniza du Caire – collection DKG, Académie hongroise des sciences, Budapest », http://www.chspam.univ-paris-diderot.fr/IMG/pdf/A_Touwaide_09-10_2011.pdf

4 Programme complet : <https://diwan.hypotheses.org/3488>

bénéficier d'une réelle perspective sur la durée en termes de définition et de perception du faux, du simulacre et de l'imitation, pour caler nos notions respectives. Le titre du présent volet de la série Documents & Histoire, «Le faux, le simulacre et la copie», fait allusion à la lecture qu'a fournie Gilles Deleuze (1925-1995) des sophistes dans l'œuvre de Platon, en particulier du Sophiste et du Politique.

Toujours dans la série «Documents & Histoire» et dans la collection qui accueille le présent volume, est paru entretemps *The Trade in Papers Marked with Non-Latin Characters/Le commerce des papiers à marques à caractères non-latins*⁵. Le propos principal était de mettre en évidence que le papier, support de l'écrit, est une source primaire pour tracer les routes commerciales, pour l'histoire du commerce. Le volume a aussi conduit à réviser la manière de classer les papiers filigranés⁶.

Il s'agit donc d'une réflexion précoce et suivie sur la matérialité du document arabe.

2

Le Vrai est second. Dans une lecture célèbre de Platon, faisant des Sophistes qui dé-réalisent l'être et réduisent la philosophie au discours, une menace majeure, un aiguillon puissant de réflexion, Socrate réagit en posant l'Être, transcendant, étalon du Vrai, du Bien et du Beau⁷. La chute ontologique du simulacre, de l'imitation – servile, nécessairement – et de la copie, est alors et pourtant une problématique durable, pesant sur nos représentations, une idée diffuse et persistante jusqu'à aujourd'hui, car qui irait demander au comptoir un « faux café » ? La transcendance se décline de manière radicale dans l'anti-associationnisme, dans la théologie négative, que l'on trouve en mondes chrétiens de même qu'en terres d'Islam. Quid alors d'un être de la copie et de l'image ?

La problématique de la *mimesis*⁸, de l'illusion des images, a affecté aussi bien la Philosophie que l'Art et l'Histoire de l'Art en Europe. Suivant cette logique, la recherche de solutions de continuité a historiquement conduit à opérer un saut de l'Antiquité à l'époque moderne, à la philosophie de la connaissance de Des-

5 A. Regourd (éd.), *The Trade in Papers Marked with Non-Latin Characters/Le commerce des papiers à marques à caractères non-latins. Documents and History/ Documents et histoire*, 2018.

6 A. Regourd, « Paper in Islamic manuscripts: Refining the supporting evidence. Rethinking the typology », 2021.

7 G. Deleuze, *Logique du sens*, «Platon et le simulacre», Appendix I, 1969; G. Deleuze & R. Krauss, « Plato and the *Simulacrum* », 1983.

8 République x, dans : Platon, *La République* VIII–X, 1934.

cartes et à sa pensée de la représentation avec la postérité qu'on lui connaît en Allemagne. Cette histoire serait donc celle d'un encéphalogramme plat jusqu'à l'ère industrielle.

Or c'est à la Renaissance que prend place un événement majeur. Le livre-texte copié et recopié, puis dupliqué grâce à la typographie à caractère mobile n'a pas suscité alors de réflexion sur la question d'un être amoindri par la nouvelle technologie et par le processus de copie à l'infini de la part des Humanistes⁹. Ces derniers, d'autres ensuite, ont pensé positivement la multiplication du livre-texte sous l'angle de la diffusion du contenu et du style, des idées qui y étaient présentes, de sa valeur éducative, de l'art et la lecture jubilatoires, certes au sein de la communauté de la « République des lettres ». Et, par voie de conséquence, c'est ce qui empêchait cette diffusion qui a alimenté la réflexion ou la discussion. Par exemple, une diffusion « en clair » – dont la contrepartie est un contenu subtilisé – retenue par diplomatie du lectorat, par souci de la postérité ; la diffusion limitée à une sphère savante qui se reconnaît, se reproduit et donc s'imité ; la latitude de choix des imprimeurs¹⁰ et la concentration progressive de l'imprimerie entre les mains de familles avec les stratégies que cela implique pour s'installer comme imprimeur ou libraire-imprimeur ; les sphères de pouvoir (l'Université ou le Parlement de Paris) ou gouvernantes (les privilèges royaux accordés à des imprimeurs), leur censure, les pressions politiques, morales (mœurs) ou religieuses sur les imprimeurs et libraires, ou des événements politiques majeurs tels l'Affaire des Placards, en 1534, ou la persécution des Protestants, avec l'Édit de Fontainebleau en octobre 1685, suivi d'une déclaration du Roi Louis XIV durcissant les premières mesures, en 1686. Elles affectent aussi bien l'impression sur textiles, la fabrication des « indiennes » en France¹¹.

L'imitation est une valeur positive à la Renaissance, nombre de spécialistes l'ont souligné¹², et l'imprimerie typographique y fait ses premières armes : cette période a donc été décrite comme un laboratoire pour l'élaboration de l'accep-

9 Nous nous référerons essentiellement à la Renaissance française.

10 L. Katz, « Les presses badiennes au service des détracteurs d'Érasme et de Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples : un revirement idéologique ? », 2012.

11 La prohibition de ces tissus imposée en France est maintenue jusqu'en 1759, mais ne touche pas toutes les régions de la même façon, O. Raveux, « Au carrefour des civilisations. Consommation et fabrication des indiennes à Marseille et en Provence (xvi^e-xxi^e siècle) », 2023 (Mulhouse, connue pour ses manufactures d'indiennes, est alors une république indépendante, qui décide son rattachement à la France en 1798).

12 « Le caractère péjoratif de la reproduction que constitue la contrefaçon peut sembler anachronique pour une période qui a tant cultivé l'imitation », Ch. Bénévnt, « Érasme et ses 'contrefacteurs' », 2012, p. 268.

tion de la contrefaçon en imprimerie¹³, de même que pour le statut d'auteur et le droit d'auteur, la propriété littéraire, qui prendront corps à la fin du xvii^e s. et s'affineront au xviii^e s.¹⁴. S'y commettent les premiers actes de piraterie en imprimerie. Toutes ces innovations ne peuvent certes être perçues comme positives par ceux qui en sont les victimes, ceux-là même qui se trouvent au cœur de la machine à créer et produire des textes. Or les discussions sur la contrefaçon, le plagiat et le faux se développent sur un plan moral/éthique, légal ou commercial – et non pas ontologique. Plus exactement, les questions soulevées par la démultiplication du livre sont posées à partir des auteurs et des imprimeurs – les abus perpétrés à leur égard et la mise en place de leur défense, de la conscience d'un droit des lecteurs aussi. Elles ne portent pas sur la question du degré d'être de l'objet multiplié, i. e. le livre qui se décline en u₁, u₂, u₃, etc., ni chez les auteurs, ni chez les commentateurs.

De même que dans l'Affaire des Placards dont l'auteur présumé serait Antoine Marcourt (1490-1561), suivie de la publication par le même, dans la foulée, en novembre 1534, de son *Petit traicté très utile et salutaire de la sainte eucharistie*¹⁵, qui a entraîné jusqu'à une interdiction d'imprimer de la part du Roi, l'exil de l'éditeur Clément Marot (1496-1544) et la pendaison suivie du bûcher d'Antoine Augereau, accusé de l'impression des placards, en place Maubert à Paris, le 24 décembre 1534¹⁶, c'est moins le principe mécanique de la multiplication des textes que la question éthique et politique qui est posée à l'imprimeur (liberté de diffusion et d'opinion; liberté de contestation du pouvoir en place jusque dans ses fondements¹⁷).

13 Qui inclut les poinçons et polices de caractères, R. Jimenez, *Les caractères de civilité. Typographie & calligraphie sous l'Ancien Régime. France, XVI^e-XIX^e siècles*, 2011, p. 17-19.

14 Ch. Bénévnt, «Érasme et ses 'contrefacteurs'», 2012, p. 267-300; M. Clément & E. Keller-Rahbé (éd.), *Privilèges d'auteurs et d'autrices en France (XVI^e-XVII^e siècles)*. *Anthologie critique*, 2017. Ces auteurs ont soulevé et pesé la question d'un anachronisme terminologique au sujet de l'usage des termes de «contrefaçon», «droits d'auteur» pour la Renaissance, tout en soulignant la préexistence de formes. Certains préfèrent donc parler de «préfaçon» ou de «droit des auteurs». L'apparition précoce du piratage d'ouvrages imprimés ne fait pas débat.

15 G. Berthoud, *Antoine Marcourt, réformateur et pamphlétaire: du «Livre des marchans» aux Placards de 1534*, 1973.

16 L. Febvre, «L'origine des placards de 1534», 1945; pour une historiographie à jour, à la date, et une revue détaillée, R. Hari, «Les Placards de 1534», 1957; J. Veyrin-Forrer, «Antoine Augereau, graveur de lettres, imprimeur et libraire parisien», 1987, p. 3-50.

17 Sur la collusion entre pouvoir royal et religieux dans la contre-attaque, mise en scène, de François 1^{er}, voir P. Frei, «L'Affaire des Placards de 1534: la Renaissance et les signes d'une révolution à venir», 2020, p. 15-16. Une enquête récente reprend la question de l'émancipation de la Sorbonne à l'égard du pouvoir royal, dans la seconde moitié du xvi^e s., et sa

Un sujet vient taquiner la question de la bonne répétition d'un texte à grande échelle et de sa sortie de la sphère savante, c'est celui de la démultiplication des erreurs éditoriales commises par des imprimeurs peu savants ou scrupuleux¹⁸. Mais tant que les textes erronés tomberont entre les mains de personnes érudites, telles celles formant la République des Lettres, elles seront en mesure de procéder au décryptage nécessaire.

On est ici dans un climat différent de celui prévalant en Asie. Entre la fin du xvi^e et la première moitié du xvii^e s., les Ming connaissent un boom dans la production de cartes, géographiques ou autres, produites par impression à l'aide de bois gravés. Or il n'est pas à mettre en rapport avec une série d'innovations ou d'améliorations technologiques. Il ne signifie pas non plus, de façon mécanique, une augmentation du lectorat ou une alphabétisation accrue : c'est la variété des supports qui est en jeu, les cartes géographiques étant loin d'être exclusivement à usage de gouvernance, militaire ou financier. De nombreuses reproductions d'anciennes cartes des Song viennent en effet peupler les manuels scolaires¹⁹. Ce boom dessine une culture de l'imprimé (« a print culture »). En terres d'Islam, l'impression mécanique par ce même procédé est connue dès l'époque médiévale (iv^e/x^e-dernier quart du viii^e/xiv^e s.), sur l'ensemble du Moyen-Orient, en Andalous et jusqu'à Tabriz (1294) et peut-être au Centre-Nord de l'Afghanistan (xii^e s.)²⁰. La description d'instruments par les sources arabes laisse penser qu'elle était sans doute aussi pratiquée, par exemple à Bagdad. Autant que l'on puisse savoir²¹, ses usages pour l'écrit

« récupération » des « armes forgées par l'humanisme biblique », Th. Amalou, *La Sorbonne entre en guerre de religion. Autorité universitaire, censure et pouvoir royal en France (v. 1551- v. 1589)*, 2024.

- 18 Par exemple, lettre de Guillaume Budé à Érasme du 27 octobre 1516, dans L. Delaruelle, *Répertoire analytique et chronologique de la correspondance de Guillaume Budé*, 1969, lettre 5, p. 10 (le lecteur y trouvera les renvois aux éditions originales). C'est au motif d'erreurs d'impression dans la Vulgate sixtine, la première Vulgate autorisée par l'Église Catholique après le Concile de Trente, parue en 1590, qu'en 1592, le pape Clément VIII en fait retirer les exemplaires encore en circulation. Dans l'année, paraissait et était promulguée l'édition révisée de la nouvelle Vulgate, dite sixto-clémentine.
- 19 A. Akin, *East Asian Cartographic Print Culture. The Late Ming Publishing Boom and its Trans-Regional Connections*, 2021. Je remercie Karl R. Schaefer (Drake University) d'avoir attiré mon attention sur ce livre.
- 20 En anglais blockprint, woodblocks. R. W. Bulliet, « Medieval Arabic Ṭarsh: a Forgotten Chapter in the History of Arabic Printing », 1987 ; K. R. Schaefer, « Medieval Arabic Block Printing and Arabic Historiography », 2013.
- 21 Ceci inclut les apports croisés des sources arabes et des pièces elles-mêmes, qu'elles aient été acquises par des musées auprès de marchands ou découvertes en fouilles.

furent limités à l'impression, sur papier, d'amulettes²², de certificats de pèlerimages, peut-être d'édits et proclamations royaux, pendant un laps de temps de billets (monnaie), de courts textes commerciaux, et, sur textile, de textes le plus souvent religieux ou religieux à valeur prophylactique, répétés à l'infini²³. Dans tous les cas ici présentés, la quantité de pièces à fournir justifie production en série ou productivité (nombre de pièces par personne à l'heure, la journée), mais c'est la piété ou les croyances populaires, l'activité commerciale, etc., qui génèrent en regard un marché large et certain. La duplication massive apparaît donc clairement dans son enjeu économique et commercial. L'initiative de l'Il Khanide de Tabriz, Gayḥatū, qui émit des billets dans l'idée de relancer le commerce, sert de preuve *a contrario* : d'après la source sur le sujet, 'Abd Allāh b. Faḍl Allāh Vassāf, *Ta'riḥ-i Vassāf*, si l'expérience a été courte, c'est parce que les commerçants n'y ont pas cru ; préférant les espèces sonnantes et trébuchantes, ils se sont détournés des billets. Sur quoi, le gouvernant les fit détruire et décida d'étendre la destruction aux instruments qui avaient servi à les produire. Il est possible que des considérations sociales se soient mêlées aux raisons économiques et commerciales, catégorisant les consommateurs ou les usagers de pièces ainsi imprimées par une appartenance aux basses classes ne pouvant accéder qu'à des produits d'un coût moindre, de faible qualité. Plus intrigant encore, les nombreux talismans médiévaux réalisés avec des bois gravés sont des pièces uniques par leur texte, à de très rares exceptions près. Peut-on penser le progrès sans saut technologique et une technologie de reproduction mécanique sans productivité et production de masse ?

Notons au passage la différence cruciale entre l'impression par bois gravé et la typographie à caractère mobile : l'investissement de départ et de fonctionnement (dont le papier), la qualification des ouvriers. L'acquisition du matériel est coûteuse et, parmi les compétences requises, il y a celles que nécessite la composition des textes²⁴. Une micro-étude en pays de Meaux entre le xvii^e et le xix^e s., a montré que les montants engagés sont si élevés qu'ils entraînent des stratégies matrimoniales mises en place par les familles ou les apprentis, que les questions d'héritage sont centrales et que des imprimeurs rachètent le précieux matériel de leurs confrères ruinés ou décédés sans reprise. On observe ensuite une « cartélisation » d'imprimeurs capitalistiques, dont le nombre finit par se réduire à quelques familles. La rentabilisation peut impliquer plus qu'un

22 Les plus nombreux exemples entre nos mains, K. R. Schaefer, *Enigmatic Charms. Medieval Arabic Block Printed Amulets in American and European Libraries and Museums*, 2006.

23 Importation d'indiennes via Quşayr, A. Regourd & F. J. L. Handley, « Textiles with Writing from Quşeir al-Qadīm – Finds from the Southampton Excavations 1999–2003 », 2009.

24 On pourrait aussi comparer avec la production de papiers au moulin.

marché: une conquête de marché, avec son cortège d'exportation et de longs voyages.

En terres d'islam, la question du blocage à l'égard de l'imprimerie à caractère mobile, qui s'est poursuivi jusqu'au xix^e s., appréhendée à partir du passage d'une culture du manuscrit (*manuscript culture*) à une culture de l'imprimé (*print culture*), a fait éclater le lien entre la présence de pionniers et l'existence d'une production massive de livres en arabe, imprimés par des musulmans sur place²⁵. C'est de 1727 que date le premier livre en arabe imprimé par des musulmans; il le fut en Turquie. On le doit à l'intervention d'Ibrahim Müteferriqa (m. 1745) auprès du Sultan ottoman Ahmet III (r. 1703-1730). C'est par un *firman* qu'Ahmed III l'autorise, ainsi que Sa'ïd Efendi, à ouvrir une imprimerie à caractères arabes, à Istanbul. L'autorisation d'imprimer ne s'étend pas aux œuvres de théologie musulmane. Elle est limitée aux livres non-religieux et pratiques tels que dictionnaires, livres d'histoire, de géographie, ...²⁶.

La problématique générale ouverte par Kathryn A. Schwartz²⁷ a rebattu les cartes de l'évaluation des forces suscitant un frein à l'imprimerie et donc à l'œuvre dans le déblocage du xix^e s. Les débats que le *firman* délivré à Müteferriqa a suscités, en écho aux interdictions de 1485 et 1515 souvent citées des sultans Beyazid II (r. 1481-1512) et Selim I (r. 1512-1520) – mais jamais documentées, puis ceux sur l'élargissement des sujets imprimables, jusqu'à l'inclusion de l'impression du Coran, ont fait surgir un éventail de raisons. On retrouve la question des erreurs potentielles dans l'impression de corans; mais aussi l'inquiétude des scribes suscitée par le respect des règles de pureté rituelle dans le cas d'une méthode de reproduction inconnue; «Also, the use of heavy machinery imported from Europe to produce the Muslim Holy Book appeared to be sacrilegious and disrespectful»²⁸. De concert avec des raisons sociales ou socio-professionnelles de s'élever contre l'introduction de l'imprimerie de la part des scribes et des ulémas, des motifs religieux ont été produits contre le passage de la main à la machine et aux unités de production sérielles. Mais peut-on aller plus loin dans l'analyse tant que le corpus des sources juridiques et légales du débat, aux xviii^e et xix^e s., ne sera pas rendu aisément disponible? Et au-delà, aurions-nous ce corpus légal, que l'on pourrait se demander s'il constituerait une explication suffisante. En Europe, on prend le train en marche, les

25 T. Nemeth, «Overlooked: The Role of Craft in the Adoption of Typography in the Muslim Meadle East», 2022.

26 M. B. Wilson, *Translating the Qur'an in an Age of Nationalism. Print Culture and Modern Islam in Turkey*, 2014, chap. 1.

27 Par exemple, K. A. Schwartz, «Did Ottoman Sultans Ban Print?», 2017.

28 M. B. Wilson, *Translating the Qur'an in an Age of Nationalism. Print Culture and Modern Islam in Turkey*, 2014, p. 30 (citation), 36-37.

réactions et ajustements se font sur les conséquences ouvertes par la nouvelle technologie et l'interdiction d'imprimer de François 1^{er} devient rapidement inapplicable. En monde ottoman, Ahmed El Shamsy, dans son travail fouillé sur les débuts de l'imprimerie arabe, rappelle que de nombreuses innovations mises dès le départ au ban par les autorités sont devenues partie intégrante de la culture et que donc il faut aller chercher le flop initial de l'imprimerie ailleurs²⁹. Enfin, un interdit de livre effectif et appliqué n'entraîne pas automatiquement la ruine du lectorat, il n'empêche pas une circulation passe-muraille, il constitue même un stimulant³⁰.

Reprenant la problématique générale ouverte par Schwartz pour la creuser en contexte, Titus Nemeth ne se demande pas pourquoi les Ottomans ne se sont pas décidés en faveur de l'impression typographique à caractère mobile, mais plutôt pourquoi ils l'auraient fait. Il met en évidence l'importance de la culture visuelle, qui s'exprime par une répugnance des lecteurs à l'égard des produits de la typographie arabe à ses débuts. Le cas des deux autres acteurs étudiés par Nemeth, des pionniers majeurs de l'impression arabe à Istanbul, s'articule au propos car tous, avec Müteferriqa, partagent la même caractéristique: ils ne sont pas dépendants d'un marché pour exister³¹. On s'attend à ce qu'une culture du manuscrit ait un effet sur la constitution des bibliothèques de savants. Le cas du Yémen, où la transmission du savoir par *riwāya* a survécu jusqu'au xx^e s., lève le sujet à partir d'un exemple de conservation par/circulation entre les mêmes familles d'un précieux manuscrit, vérifié qu'il est selon cette tradition, un cas documenté grâce au contenu de ses *marginallia*³². Ce système nourrit une bibliophilie accordant que la valeur et l'unicité d'un manuscrit tient à la lettre de son texte légitimée par une chaîne définie de savants – nous ne sommes pas en train de dire que la fidélité au texte selon une chaîne de transmission est le seul critère de valeur accordé à un manuscrit en Islam. La mesure de l'impact sur une chute de la valeur du livre imprimé, sur les marchés du livre, compte tenu de la perception qu'on en avait en pays musulmans, est complexe. Le questionnement de Schwartz, repris par Nemeth, débouche sur/s'inscrit dans le courant plus large de la déconstruction des discours européocentrés, qui ont introduit une lecture biaisée de l'histoire des

29 A. El Shamsy, *Rediscovering the Islamic Classics. How Editors and Print Culture transformed an Intellectual Tradition*, 2020, p. 63-71.

30 R. Darnton, *The Forbidden Best-Sellers of Pre-Revolutionary France. The Corpus of Clandestine Literature in France, 1769-1789*, 1997.

31 Aussi A. El Shamsy, *Rediscovering the Islamic Classics. How Editors and Print Culture transformed an Intellectual Tradition*, 2020, p. 64-65.

32 A. Regourd, « *Riwaya* tardive en contexte: Zabīd-Yémen, à partir de la seconde moitié du xviii^e siècle », 2022.

autres. Ici, c'est la mission civilisatrice européenne qui est sur la scellette, il faudrait préciser que la foi dans le progrès en fait partie. À cette problématique, il paraît opportun d'ajouter le poids d'une certaine histoire des sciences et des techniques dont l'apanage a été une chasse aux précurseurs laissant de côté la réception et transmission des inventions, qu'elles soient théoriques ou celles de machines.

À la Renaissance en France, un déni radical vient de l'opposition de l'*unicum* aux livres imprimés. Les écrivains, à la charnière de l'époque qui voit apparaître la typographie avaient devant eux l'option de refuser l'impression de leurs œuvres, fussent-elles en langue française, voyant l'avantage du manuscrit richement enluminé pour des livres dédiés ou offerts à une/des personne(s) averti(es), accoutumé(es) au luxe. C'est le cas, peut-être isolé, du Lyonnais Pierre Sala (1457-1529). Si l'on s'appuie sur la seule monographie dont on dispose, déjà ancienne, il paraît plausible que son choix d'un *unicum* découle d'une volonté, sans doute celle, stratégique ou politique, du courtisan ou bien celle, plus personnelle, de l'ami, selon le cas³³. Il est difficile de déchiffrer ce « dédain »³⁴ à l'égard de l'imprimerie, mais l'*unicum* de Sala, bel objet enluminé, est riche d'une tension entre Art et Technique, emmenant avec elle la quiddité de l'authenticité de l'œuvre d'art. Ce qui fait l'œuvre d'art, c'est son *hic et nunc*, soit « l'unicité de son existence au lieu où elle se trouve », qui ensuite « détermine le concept de son authenticité » : « La totalité du domaine de l'authenticité échappe à la reproductibilité technique »³⁵.

Déclinons le problème autrement au sujet du livre. La destination du livre – être lu, solidaire d'un marché du livre, entraîne un brouillage de statut, d'être, entre l'original et la copie. Le livre-*unicum* retire le livre de la problématique de l'original concurrencé par la copie dans une économie de marché. Le marché fait que l'original n'a d'existence que par celle de copies. Mais puisqu'il n'y a pas de copie-marchandise sans original, le marché réclame non seulement des originaux, mais la multiplication d'originaux, pousse à produire de nombreux originaux. Il soulève donc une question qu'il ne peut résoudre : qu'est-ce qui fait un original ?³⁶ Et confine l'œuvre au néant d'être.

33 À quelques exceptions près de manuscrits en double exemplaire ; Ph. Fabia, *Pierre Sala, sa vie et son œuvre, avec la légende et l'histoire de l'Antiquaille*, 1934, p. 49 sq., p. 54.

34 Nous reprenons l'expression de Ph. Fabia, *Pierre Sala, sa vie et son œuvre, avec la légende et l'histoire de l'Antiquaille*, 1934, p. 49.

35 W. Benjamin, *L'œuvre d'art à l'époque de sa reproductibilité technique*, p. 18, 19, ce n'est pas nous qui soulignons.

36 J. Benoist, *Emmanuel Kant. Qu'est-ce qu'un livre ? Textes de Kant et de Fichte*, 1995, p. 28-29. Benjamin note la pression exercée sur l'art par son commerce qui, obligé de traiter avec

Sur le plan de la philosophie de la connaissance à la Renaissance, Érasme (1469-1536), dans son *De duplici copia*, réconcilie rhétorique (ou discours), style, langage (*verba*), perception de la pluralité des signifiés, avec les choses (*res*). L'expression variée (la *varietas*) reflète, rend la réalité diverse et mouvante des choses. Ici, refléter ou être analogue n'est pas négatif, sophistique, l'être dans le monde n'est pas inatteignable et figé, le discours, ses élégances et ses méandres reprennent du corps, à l'abri des classiques romains, puis grecs³⁷.

La « chosification » du faux écrit se concrétise par le biais de sciences, comparatistes, telles la diplomatique et, en général, les études philologiques, plus tard, les besoins des sciences légales et criminelles. Le faux a une existence documentaire, juridique et opérative, qui permet en retour d'authentifier (Marie-Geneviève Guesdon).

Jusqu'au dernier exclu, les travaux réunis dans ce volume, si on laisse de côté le cas particulier de la fausse-monnaie vouée à duper l'utilisateur, étudient des cas hybrides, d'imitations qui n'en sont pas, de faux sacralisés, vraisemblables,

l'essence de l'authenticité de l'œuvre, non-reproductible, créé différenciations et gradations :

« Il (i. e. le commerce de l'art) avait un intérêt évident à distinguer les différents tirages d'une planche, celle d'avant ou d'après la lettre, les différents tirages d'une plaque de cuivre, et cætera. On peut dire qu'avec l'invention de la gravure sur bois, la qualité d'authenticité fut entamée à la racine, avant même que celle-ci ait déployé ses fleurs tardives. » W. Benjamin, *L'œuvre d'art à l'époque de sa reproductibilité technique*, n. 1, p. 19.

Cela nous transporte au XIX^e s. : la collection des frères Auguste (1812-1902) et Eugène (1807-1886) Dutuit, exposée au Petit Palais, Paris (12.09.2023-14.01.2024) : « Trésors en noir et blanc : Dürer, Rembrandt, Goya, Toulouse-Lautrec », constitue une illustration lumineuse de ce moment ; catalogue, A.-Ch. Cathelineau, J. Raineau-Lehuédé & C. Roca, *Trésors en noir & blanc. Estampes du Petit Palais de Dürer à Toulouse-Lautrec*, 2023. C'est le cœur de ce processus fabriquant du rapport de propriété que vise très précocement, dès les années 1950, Győző Vásárhelyi/Vasarely (1906-1997) avec ses sérigraphies, sa manière post-Bauhaus à lui de socialiser l'œuvre d'art, M. Gauthier & A. Pierre, *Vasarely. Le partage des formes*, 2019, p. 39 ; « Multiples et dérivés », fév. 2019, p. 55 :

« Conscient que l'œuvre d'art perd sa qualité d'objet de prestige et n'est plus réservée à une élite de connaisseurs, Vasarely entend concrétiser l'idéal d'une démocratisation totale de l'art, sans hiérarchie entre un original et sa copie ; une utopie qui n'a pu être totalement réalisée, le fétichisme et la valeur marchande de l'original étant restés des moteurs du marché de l'art. »

37 I. Diu & A. Vanautgaerden, « Le jardin d'abondance d'Érasme : le *De copia* et la lettre sur les *Adages* non éditée par P.S. Allen », 2001, en ligne par 2 :

« Cette rhétorique se décline donc dans les différents genres de discours, qui relèvent plutôt désormais de l'éloquence privée, et se résument à l'art des dialogues et des épîtres ; dans le choix du style, entre tempéré et sublime ; dans l'emploi varié des termes (*verba*) ainsi que dans la perception des diverses connotations d'un même terme, capables de rendre la réalité diverse et mouvante des choses (*res*). »

convenus ou acceptés, c'est-à-dire dont la fausseté, une fois connue, ne signe pas l'arrêt de l'existence (Robert Irwin, Jean-François Faü, Kinga Dévényi, Jean-Charles Ducène, Ahmad Nazir Atassi, Sarah Z. Mirza, moi-même). Êtres complexes, ils ont un *hic et nunc* et l'on n'imaginerait plus les *Mille et une nuits* sans Mardrus et, bien sûr, un vrai café ! À l'opposé, la reproductibilité de la monnaie, *sui generis*, la fait entrer dans la dialectique du voleur et du volé. Il faut donc trouver comment la fabriquer à partir de non-reproductibles reproductibles, une entreprise sans fin (Warren C. Schultz).

En ce qui concerne l'image, c'est de la question de sa duplication mécanique dans l'art que surgit le changement. Il faut attendre Walter Benjamin (1892-1940). Dès les premières lignes de sa réflexion sur la photographie, celui-ci met en parallèle ses débuts et l'apparition de l'imprimerie : « Le brouillard qui s'étend sur les débuts de la photographie n'est pas aussi dense que celui qui recouvre l'apparition de l'imprimerie »³⁸. Or, dans son projet de montrer la valeur artistique de la photographie chez les précurseurs de l'« apogée préindustrielle », il pose très vite un jalon important :

La littérature la plus récente s'accorde sur un fait frappant : c'est au cours de sa première décennie que la photographie a atteint son apogée, correspondant à la période d'activité de Hill et de Cameron, d'Hugo et de Nadar. Or, cette même décennie précède son industrialisation. Non que, dès cette aurore, bonimenteurs et charlatans ne se fussent jetés sur la nouvelle technique pour se l'approprier : ils le firent même massivement. Mais on était alors plus près des arts forains, auxquels, il est vrai, la photographie fut apparentée jusqu'à aujourd'hui, que de l'industrie. Cette dernière commença à conquérir du terrain avec la photo-carte de visite, dont le premier fabricant, l'anecdote est révélatrice, devint millionnaire.³⁹

Mais avant les applications industrielles de la photographie, la technique est déjà opposée à l'Art et les arguments théologico-religieux sont toujours à l'ordre du jour dans l'Allemagne de la première moitié du XIX^e s., dénonçant le caractère blasphématoire de l'intention photographique : « L'homme est créé à l'image de Dieu et nulle machine humaine ne peut fixer l'image de Dieu »⁴⁰.

La réflexion de Benjamin sur l'image rejoint les préoccupations contemporaines autour de la copie numérisée de manuscrits. Dans son autre opuscule,

38 W. Benjamin, *Petite histoire de la photographie*, 2019, p. 7.

39 W. Benjamin, *Petite histoire de la photographie*, 2019, p. 8.

40 W. Benjamin, *Petite histoire de la photographie*, 2019, p. 9.

dont le premier jet a été rédigé à la même époque que celui sur la photographie – et auquel nous nous sommes déjà référés, Benjamin analyse les effets de la reproduction sur l'anéantissement de l'original, qu'il aborde par le concept d'*aura* :

Ce qui s'étiolo de l'œuvre d'art à l'époque de sa reproductibilité technique, c'est son aura. (...). *La technique de reproduction – ainsi la désigne-t-on généralement – détache l'objet reproduit du cadre de la tradition. En multipliant les reproductions, elle remplace l'autorité de sa présence unique par une existence en masse. Et en autorisant la reproduction future à entrer en contact avec le récepteur à l'endroit où il se trouve, elle actualise l'objet reproduit.* Ces deux processus conduisent à un bouleversement violent de ce qui est transmis, à un ébranlement de la tradition (...).⁴¹

Et, plus loin,

'Rapprocher' de soi les choses spatialement et humainement est pour les masses actuelles un désir tout aussi passionné que leur tendance à vaincre l'unicité de tout donné en recevant sa reproduction. Chaque jour se fait plus irrésistiblement sentir le besoin de rendre l'objet possédable par une proximité toujours plus intime, dans une image, mieux, dans une illustration, dans sa reproduction.⁴²

Aujourd'hui la copie numérisée et démocratique du manuscrit est appelée substitut (angl. *surrogate*) et la réflexion générale sur le patrimoine est obligée de tenir compte de la rupture avec la tradition qu'elle instaure et ce faisant, avec l'histoire de l'objet⁴³.

41 W. Benjamin, *L'œuvre d'art à l'époque de sa reproductibilité technique*, p. 22, ce n'est pas nous qui soulignons.

42 W. Benjamin, *L'œuvre d'art à l'époque de sa reproductibilité technique*, p. 25-26, ce n'est pas nous qui soulignons.

43 Nous avons nous-mêmes publié à ce sujet, A. Regourd, «Digitising between the lines: representation or reading? An essay», 2015. Dans «Recherche & numérisation. Le cas du ms m/h 57, Bibliothèque 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Ḥaḍramī, Zabīd (Yémen)», présenté au colloque «De la pierre au papier, du papier au numérique», à Alexandrie, en novembre 2022, nous avons montré les contresens auxquels sont exposées les études menées sur des manuscrits prélevés de leur contexte sans retour à ce contexte. Sur la persistance de freins à l'égard de la typographie à caractère mobile qui se font jour face à cet autre nouvelle technologie qu'est la numérisation en Égypte, W. Ghali Nasr, «Print or not print: is that still the question?», 2016.

En art, Benjamin souligne la dialectique qui s'est imposée entre l'œuvre d'art et sa reproduction : l'œuvre d'art reproduite devient, de plus en plus, la reproduction d'une œuvre d'art destinée à être reproduite. La série affecte donc l'original dès sa composition. Mais il est possible de retourner la problématique en tenant que chaque unité produite est susceptible de devenir un original. Lorsque j'étais étudiante en philosophie, un enseignant en Histoire de l'Art de la Sorbonne avait élaboré sur la question de l'objet une fois multiplié à une échelle industrielle, en prenant l'exemple de la voiture : en quoi le véhicule *lambda* était-il une œuvre artistique comparé au prototype ? Un prototype qui peut avoir été créé par un artiste. La piste qu'il proposait était de tenir compte de la personnalisation – on emploierait aujourd'hui l'anglicisme « customisation » – du véhicule par son propriétaire ou par son conducteur sur la durée, qui pend un objet au rétroviseur, installe un chien dodelinant de la tête sur la lunette arrière, une plume d'autruche, symbole de vitesse, sur l'avant, décore la carlingue avec des auto-collants, ou, ou... tout suppléments d'âme, prenant pour exemple les taxis du Caire. Certaines de ces additions participent d'une symbolique ou de croyances communes à une société donnée.

Un passage de l'argumentation de Benjamin, qui n'oppose pas Art et Technique, sur la période des précurseurs parle de la magie opérée par la photographie de personnes sur celui qui les contemple. Il continue sur le jeu de regards, incluant celui du sujet du cliché en direction de son spectateur, fussent-ils inconnus l'un à l'autre. L'exemple est même plus effarant que celui de portraits célèbres apparus dans des œuvres littéraires, *Le portrait* de Gogol, juste paru, pour la première fois, en 1835, et, plus tard, *Le portrait de Dorian Gray*. Du fait de la dimension technique et aussi documentaire du portrait photographié. Au-delà d'une impression d'inquiétante étrangeté, le croisement de regards entre l'« objet » et le « sujet » interroge le philosophe : non seulement il fait sortir l'objet d'une existence conditionnée (ou aliénée) à un sujet qui le pense (y compris comme « chose en soi »), mais il soulève la question de l'existence d'une vie et d'une autonomie des choses.

Dans sa synthèse de l'œuvre de Georges Didi-Huberman, la première jamais réalisée, Chari Larsson retourne significativement à la pensée de la représentation vue par Gilles Deleuze, Jacques Derrida (1930-2004) et Michel Foucault (1926-1984) pour mieux la camper dans l'histoire de la Philosophie de l'Art. Et dégager son apport. Il mentionne une source d'inspiration fondamentale à ses yeux, le mur d'Aby Warburg (Hambourg, 1866-1929), ou « Warburg wall » (*Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*), qui a de toute façon marqué profondément la pensée contemporaine sur l'Art⁴⁴. Didi-Huberman s'évade du cadre philosophique qui

44 Ch. Larsson, *Didi-Huberman and the image*, 2022, p. 11-12. Sur la rupture épistémologique

a fait de l'image une représentation jusqu'aux critiques poststructuralistes : le cadre devient objet d'étude et n'est donc pas ce par quoi nous voyons, mais au contraire ce qui nous empêche de voir, ce qui réduit la représentation à cette acception-là. De quoi la répétition est-elle, serions-nous tentés d'extrapoler, lorsque nous parlons d'apprentissage par cœur ? À l'encontre de l'illustration d'une vérité supérieure, avec l'*Atlas*, les combinaisons possibles d'images, horizontales, sont théoriquement inépuisables, imprévisibles et instables dans l'Empirie. L'*Atlas* déconstruit, dans sa prolifération, les idéaux d'unicité, de spécificité, de pureté, d'épuisement logique⁴⁵, il *démontre* dans sa construction continue de nouvelles formes possibles de connaissance⁴⁶.

Les choses, les objets, résistent, nous rappellent leur présence. Nous nous attachons à eux, mais ne nous attachent-ils pas ? Comment peut-on se débarrasser d'un objet⁴⁷ ? Il est certain que la percée de la magie comme champ d'étude à part entière, progressivement à partir des années 2000s, a contribué à l'émergence de l'idée de l'autonomie de l'objet. Un talisman dans la tradition islamique est un texte écrit, mais une fois le texte effacé (par effet d'usure, dissolution, ...), le papier peut être vu comme toujours chargé de puissance. Le papier est davantage qu'un support, il est plus qu'un décalque.

Les masques, traités par la dernière contribution à ce volume (Émilie Salaberry-Duhoux), sont un vaste sujet pertinent. Ils ne sont pas destinés à être le reflet exact de celui qui le porte, ils ne sont pas son empreinte substitutive. Porteur d'une intention propre, être non-réfléchissant, le masque est un être à part entière. Loin d'une approche sémiotique de l'image, loin d'une existence par la pensée qui le pense, comme objet d'étude ou non, loin d'une existence qui naîtrait du regard qui le croise, loin du problème du penser la chose en soi, le masque, de même que certains fétiches, a sa propre existence et son autonomie. Ce n'est donc que très récemment que des musées ont entrepris une dé-fétichisation des fétiches, jusque-là parqués en réserve en attendant la prochaine exposition, avant leur entrée en collection.

entraînée par l'*Atlas*, voir par exemple l'œuvre de Griselda Pollock et le Centre for Cultural Analysis, Theory and History (CentreCATH), Université de Leeds, dans les années 2000s.

45 G. Didi-Huberman, *Atlas ou le gai savoir inquiet. L'œil de l'histoire*, 2011.

46 Repris de : Ch. Larsson, *Didi-Huberman and the image*, 2022, p. 12.

47 Voir par ex. : *Ces objets qui nous envahissent : objets cultes, culte des objets. Anthologie*, 2014.

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PART 1

La fabrique du faux / Fakes and their Makers



Fakes, Forgers and the *Thousand and One Nights*

Robert Irwin

The production of fraudulent versions of the *Thousand and One Nights* should be understood in terms of supply and demand. On the supply side, there were impecunious Arabs resident in France who needed the money. On the demand side, from the late eighteenth century onwards, largely as a result of the publication of the *Cabinet des Fées*, there was a revival of interest in Galland's translation and an impatience to discover the presumed Arabic originals of the 'orphan stories', as well as a wish to bring the stories up to the full complement of 1001 Nights. The faking of those 'originals' and the invention of extra stories contaminated later Arabic printed editions of the *Nights* and this has led to much scholarly indignation in recent decades. But the *Nights* was never a literary work that was set in stone. The additions of Cazotte and, much later, Mardrus have some literary merit and, though the latter's 'translation' was a fraud, it was certainly an inspiring one. James Macpherson's alleged translation in 1762 of *Fingal, an Ancient Epic Poem in Six Books*, which he attributed to an ancient Celtic bard, Ossian, may serve as an example of an earlier literary fraud which nevertheless inspired writers and thinkers across Europe, including William Blake, Walter Scott, Klopstock, Schiller and Goethe—as well as Napoleon. It was a fake that has become an important part of European culture.

But first, with respect to *Nights* fakes, one should bear in mind that there were those who thought that the whole of Galland's *Nights* had been forged. According to Richard Hole's *Remarks on the Arabian Nights' Entertainments*, it used to be believed 'by the generality of the world' that Galland's *Nights* was 'a literary imposition'.¹ Just two years later, Patrick Russell, who owned an MS of the *Nights* made for him in Aleppo, felt driven to write to *The Gentleman's Magazine* affirming that there was indeed a genuine Arabic source for Galland's *Nights*, even if the latter's translation was rather free and moreover bowdlerised.² The anonymous scholar who reviewed various editions and translations of the *Nights* in 1886, harshly decreed that 'As a professed translation Galland's *Mille et Une Nuits*' is an audacious fraud, though it is not the less the best

1 R. Hole, *Remarks on the Arabian Nights' Entertainments in which the Origin of the Sinbad Voyages and Other Oriental Fictions is particularly considered*, 1797, pp. 1–2.

2 P. Russell, "On the Authenticity of the Arabian Tales", February, 1799, pp. 91–92.

story book in the world'.³ In a more restricted area, there have been those who have questioned the authenticity of such 'orphan stories' as 'Aladdin', or 'Prince Ahmed and the Fairy Peri Banou', doubting whether they were ever part of an authentic *Nights* tradition and even, in some cases, doubting that they were actually told to Galland by Hanna Diab. Such stories seem to owe rather a lot to Galland's predilections and style. But the authenticity or not of the orphan tales will not be considered here.

Before moving on from Galland, it is perhaps asking whether the publication of the *Nights* make Galland a rich man. It certainly made him famous and popular, but not it seems rich. In 1709 he had been appointed professor of Arabic at the Collège de France, but this post was not well paid and the money due came only irregularly.⁴ It is not clear how much, if anything, the bookseller [Claude] Barbin paid Galland for publishing the *Nights*. In any case, it was hard for an author to make a lot of money from even a best-seller, before the establishment of a proper copyright law—and hence the need for literary patrons. And, in order to put *Thousand and One Nights* forgeries in context, Galland himself was not honest about his sources and his *Mille et une nuits* is a composite document that is not entirely different and kind from the spurious continuation later produced by Chavis and Cazotte.

It is also instructive to look at the casual, even mendacious presentation of oriental source material by Galland's distinguished contemporary, François Pétis de la Croix (1653–1713), professor of Arabic at the Collège Royal. Pétis de la Croix published *Les Mille et un Jour[s] contes persans* (1710–1712), a story collection that must have been intended to rival the popularity of Galland's *Nights*—and indeed it did become quite popular. Its contents were allegedly translated from Persian and provided by the Dervish Moclès of Isfahan. In fact, the main source was a Turkish manuscript version of al-Tanukhi's tenth-century *Farağ ba'd al-šidda*, and the translation was then worked over by the picaresque novelist Alain René Lesage.⁵ It is disconcerting to find such a grand and erudite orientalist as Pétis de la Croix involved in literary fraud. It is one indication among several that, even where scholarly orientalists were concerned, oriental tales were more valued as entertainment than as objects of scholarship.

Dom Denis Chavis was allegedly a priest of the congregation of St Basil in Syria. (A Basilian monk is a member of an Eastern Catholic church following

3 Anonymous, "The Arabian Nights Entertainments", July, 1886, p. 168. The astute and well-informed author of this review article may have been the famous Arabist, William Robertson Smith (1846–1894.)

4 M. Abdel-Halim, *Antoine Galland, sa vie et son œuvre*, 1964, p. 119.

5 F. Pétis de La Croix, *Les Mille et Un Jours*, 2003. See also "Pétis de La Croix", 2004, vol. 2, p. 673; L. Valensi, "Pétis de La Croix", 2012, pp. 798–799.

the Byzantine rite.) He arrived in France in 1786 or 1787, having been invited by the Baron de Breteuil.⁶ His knowledge of Arabic (though defective and colloquial) found him work at the Bibliothèque du roi. Silvestre de Sacy, who occasionally employed him, came to view him as a '*crapaud*' (a toad). The literary career of Chavis is a little complicated, as he was involved in two fake continuations of the *Nights* and the stories which he put into circulation have been listed and published under widely differing titles.⁷

The Chavis 'continuations' are not part of the authentic *Arabian Nights* manuscript tradition, insofar as one can speak of such a thing. The first is based on a manuscript that he himself had compiled. In 1787 he produced a purported complete version of the *Nights*. This is MS 3616 (sup. arabe, 1716) in Chavis's hand, and dated 1787. Mostly it was a copy of the manuscript translated by Galland, though where Galland had inserted 'The Seven Voyages of Sinbad' after 'The Porter and Three Ladies', Chavis substituted 'Harun al-Rashid and the Daughter of Kisra' from MS arabe 3637 (on which more in a minute). Moreover Chavis produced what was presented as the missing completion of the three-volume Arabic manuscript that been used by Galland. This comprised the following stories: the completion of 'Qamar al-Zaman', followed by 'The History of the Sleeper and the Waker', 'The History of the Warlock and the Cook', 'The History of the Prisoner in the Bimaristan', 'The History of Ghanim, the Thrall o' Love', 'The History of Zayn al-Asnam and the King of the Jinn', 'The History of Aladdin' and 'The History of the Ten Viziers'.⁸ The Arabic 'Aladdin' in this manuscript was in fact a translation of Galland's French and it would in turn serve as the basis of Sabbagh's later improved version. It also contained stories later found in MS arabe 3637. Of course, what Chavis did, adding stories to the core text, was not very different from the practice of earlier compilers of *Nights* manuscripts in Egypt and Syria.

Presumably the laborious transcription and prolongation of the Galland manuscript had not produced enough money for Chavis, for the following year, 1788, he presented Barde, the editor of the *Cabinet des Fées*, with what he claimed a translation of the 'completion' of the Galland manuscript. Chavis claimed falsely that Galland had only translated a quarter of the work. The

6 R. Burton, *Supplemental Nights to the Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night*, 1888, vol. 7, p. i.

7 On the disreputable career of Chavis, see M. Mahdi, *The Thousand and One Nights*, 1994, pp. 51–61; *The Arabian Nights Encyclopedia*, 2004, vol. 2, p. 520.

8 V. Chauvin, *Bibliographie des ouvrages arabes ou relatifs aux arabes*, 1892–1922, vol. 4, p. 199. These stories are mostly translated in vol. 7 of R. Burton's *Supplemental Nights to the Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night*, 1888.

Italo-French manuscript he presented to Barde does not survive. However, the Arabic manuscript presented by Chavis to serve as the purported basis for the translation does. It is MS 3637 (supp arabe 1723). It is Syrian and is dated 1772. It contains the following fourteen stories: 'The Ten Vizirs', 'Haykar', 'King Sabur' (a.k.a. 'The Ebony Horse'), 'Harun and the Granddaughter of the King of Persia', 'The Calendars', 'Bard Basim', 'The Intendant, the Interpreter and the Young Man' (Burton: 'The Linguist-Dame, the Duenna and the King's Son'), 'The Doctor and the Young Caterer' (Burton: 'The Tale of the Warlock and the Young Cook of Baghdad'), 'The Unhappy Lover', 'Attaf', 'The Sultan Habib', 'The Caliph and the Fisherman', 'The Cock and the Fox', 'The Small Bird'.⁹ Some of the stories open with a Christian invocation. [Joseph Toussaint] Reinaud, the manuscript's cataloguer, guessed that this manuscript was in the hand of Chavis, but Zotenberg and Burton denied this. However, it is possible that the manuscript was in fact written by Chavis or by a Christian Syrian accomplice of his and falsely dated to a time prior to Chavis's arrival in France, since not only did Chavis draw on it for the compilation of MS 3616, but it also formed the basis of Chavis and Cazotte's French continuation.

The publisher accepted Chavis's text, but, since Chavis's French was even worse than his Arabic, the distinguished novelist Jacques Cazotte (1719–1792) was hired to rewrite and plump out what appeared to Chavis's over-literal translation. The resulting work was published in four volumes, (vols 38–41), as the last four volumes of the *Cabinet des fées* in Geneva in 1788–1789, on the eve of the French Revolution. There are quite a few stories in the *Continuation* which have no original in Chavis and which must be by Cazotte. The opening *Avertissement* announced that 'This work is the precursor of another, of a genre more serious and more important for Arabia and Persia, which we propose to publish as soon as circumstances allow us'. It is interesting to speculate what this might have been, but Cazotte was to take his project with him to the guillotine.

Contents of *Continuation* published by Barde in Geneva, 1788.

Vol. 1, 'Le Calife Voleur, ou aventures d'Haroun Alraschid avec la Princesse de Perse ...'* [= The History of al-Bundukani]

- 'Le Pouvoir du Destin, ou histoire du voyage de Giafar a Damas'* [= The Tale of Attaf, in Gautier Histoire de l'Habitant de Damas]
- 'Histoire d'Halechalbé'*
- 'L'Imbécile, ou l'histoire de Xaïloun'*

⁹ V. Chauvin, *Bibliographie*, 1892–1922, vol. 4, pp. 199–200.

- Vol. 2, 'Aventures de Simostapha & de la Princesse Ilsetilstone'* [= The tale of the Warlock and the Young Cook of Baghdad]
- 'Histoire d'Alibengiad, sultan d'Herak, & des faux oiseaux du paradis'* [inserted in Attaf]
 - 'Histoire de Sinkarib & et ses deux vizirs'* [= Haykar the Sage]
 - 'Histoire de la famille du Schebandad de Surate'*
 - 'L'amant des étoiles, conte de Cabil-Hasen'*
 - 'Les Prouesses & et la mort du capitaine Tranchemont & de ses braves'* – 'Conte de Dobil-Hasen'*
 - 'Rêve de Valid-Hasen'*
- Vol. 3 'Histoire de Bohezad, & de ses dix vizirs'*
- 'L'Obstiné ou histoire de Kaskas'
 - 'L'Imprudent, ou histoire d'Illage-Mahomet & et de ses fils'
 - 'Le Patient, ou histoire d'Abosaber'
 - 'L'Impatient, ou histoire de Bhazad'
 - 'La Résignée, ou histoire de Ravie'
 - 'Le Confiant, ou histoire de Bazmant'
 - 'Histoire de Baharkan'
 - 'Le Prudent, ou histoire de Abaltamant'
 - 'Le Prédestiné, ou histoire du sultan Hébraïm & de son fils'
 - 'Histoire de Selimanska & de sa famille'
 - 'Histoire du roi Karam & de l'Esclave'
 - 'Histoire d'Habib & Doratil goase, ou le Chevalier'* [Durrat al-Ghawwas = Pearl of the Diver]
 - 'Histoire d'Illaboufatrous, du roi Schal-goase & de Camarilzaman'
 - 'Histoire de la dame aux beaux cheveux'
- Vol. 4 'Continuation de l'Histoire de Habib' ...
- 'Epilogue de l'Editeur, au sujet du conte d'Habib' ...
 - 'Histoire du Maugraby, ou le Magicien'* (The stories which follow are framed within Maugraby)
 - 'Histoire d'Halaiaddin, prince de Perse'
 - 'Histoire d'Yamalladin, prince du grand Katay'
 - 'Histoire de baha-Ildin, prince de Cinigad'
 - 'Histoire Shahadildin, prince de Damas'
 - 'Histoire des amours du Maugraby avec soeur des planets, fille du roi d'Egypte'
 - 'Histoire de la naissance du Maugraby'.¹⁰

¹⁰ Contents list given in V. Chauvin, *Bibliographie*, 1892–1922, vol. 4, pp. 147–148. * indicates a story which has an individual entry elsewhere in Chauvin.

Evidently the authors have not taken the trouble to produce plausible Arab names for the protagonists of their stories.

Jacques Cazotte (1719–1792) and Chavis enjoyed an uneasy relationship. According to Cazotte, Chavis was idle and ceaselessly demanded money. He also thought that Chavis's Arabic had too little style. The elderly Cazotte was a well-known writer. He had already written pastiches of the *Nights*, *Les Mille et une fadaïses* and *La Patte de chat* (1741). But he was and is most famous for his fantasy novel, *Le Diable amoureux* (1772). Late in life he became involved in occultism and espoused Martinist beliefs. (The Martinists were a subdivision of the Illuminists. Martinism, which originated in the eighteenth century is an esoteric form of Christianity which is focussed on man's divine origin and his need to return to that source. The process of return is known as reintegration or illumination). Cazotte came to believe that he had the power of prophecy and it is alleged that at a famous dinner in 1788 he prophesied the death of Condorcet and other prominent Frenchmen. Cazotte's Martinism is relevant, as its doctrines infused the content of some of the stories in the *Continuation*.¹¹

Cazotte added seven of his own stories, among them 'L'Obstiné ou histoire de Kaskas', 'L'Imprudent ou histoire d'Illage-Mahomet & et de ses fils', 'Le Patient, ou histoire d'Abosaber', 'Histoire du Maugraby, ou le Magicien'. All these stories are moralised and indeed the didactically moralising content of the Chavis-Cazotte stories can be deduced from some of these titles. 'Maugraby' is the most impressive and the most mystical of the stories. In it, Habel-il-Kalib, King of Tadmur engages in spiritual combat with Maugraby, an agent of Satan. Maugraby has been travelling the world in the service of Satan. He specialises in kidnapping children, whom he takes to the caverns of Domdaniel under the roots of the sea, where they may be brainwashed and trained in the evil arts of sorcery. Habel receives guidance in dreams, studies magic and undergoes ordeals of initiation, in preparation for his battle with the shape-shifting Maugraby. The climactic shape-shifting battle is Aarne-Thompson Tale Type 325 and can be found in Arab, Danish and other folklores, but the rest of 'Maugraby' seems to have come from Cazotte's head. The weird and grim and parable was unmistakably intended by Cazotte to serve as a parable about the Martinist programme for spiritual reintegration and salvation. Charles-Joseph, Chevalier du Mayer, the publisher of the *Cabinet*, believed in the didactic role of fairy tales and Cazotte's deployment of allegorical and morally improving

11 On Cazotte's literary career and esoteric beliefs, as well as his additions to the *Nights*, see E.P. Shaw, *Jacques Cazotte (1719–1792)*, 1942; M. Mahdi, *The Thousand and One Nights*, 1994, pp. 51–61; R. Irwin, *The Arabian Nights: A Companion*, 1994, pp. 260–265; *The Arabian Nights Encyclopedia*, 2004, vol. 2, pp. 514–515.

themes may therefore have appealed to Mayer. 'Maugraby' was the only story from the *Continuation* to have been included in the edition of Cazotte's complete works.¹²

This didacticism is actually underlined with reference to the story 'Habib and Dorrat elgoasse', which is followed by an epilogue that describes itself as an intervention of the editor while Sheherezade is resting.¹³ The story of 'Habib' first appeared in the 1772 Arabic manuscript and therefore predated Cazotte's inventions. Nevertheless, the story appealed to Cazotte and in the epilogue he compared it to Fénelon's *Télémaque* (c. 1695), an early novel, or proto-novel, which a modern reader is likely judge to be a wearisome and fantastical narrative of pedagogical initiation, but which was once very popular and frequently reprinted throughout the eighteenth century. Like Prince Télémaque, Habib receives instruction and undergoes ordeals that will make him into a hero and a perfect ruler. Habib's tale also made Cazotte think of Rousseau's pedagogical novel *Émile ou De l'éducation* (1762). The educational programme for Habib includes the toughening of his body and the study of the Qur'an (whereas Émile was given *Robinson Crusoe* to study). Habib's heart has to be opened and enflamed as Émile's will be. But Habib has much less time than Télémaque or Émile to absorb his lessons, before he is obliged to put them into action. Saturated with chivalry as the story is, Cazotte thought that it might well have been composed by a member of Saladin's court. As for the handling of the love interest in this Arab tale, Cazotte found this to be closely comparable to that of Samuel Richardson's novel *Sir Charles Grandison* (1754); only, whereas Richardson's hero starts off perfect, Habib has to make himself perfect. Cazotte claimed that the Arab story was more ostentatiously literary than the other stories found in the *Nights*. Moreover its demonology, or exposition of the world of the jinn, was more sophisticated, in which the demons can only return to God by first becoming men.¹⁴ It is likely that it was Cazotte's admiration for this tale that inspired him to compose 'Maugraby'. But the French version of 'Habib' is to a considerable extent the work of Cazotte anyway. When Burton translated this tale from the Arabic, he added an appendix in which he poured scorn on Cazotte's gallicised elaborations, emendations and addition of 'insipid details'. Commenting on the editor's epilogue Burton made the following pertinent remark: 'I cannot but suspect when reading all this Western travesty of

12 On 'Maugraby', see V. Chauvin, *Bibliographie*, 1892–1922, vol. 6, pp. 32–34.

13 On this story, see V. Chauvin, *Bibliographie*, 1892–1922, vol. 6, pp. 82–84; K. Mommsen, *Goethe und 1001 Nacht*, 1981, pp. 252–262; *The Arabian Nights Encyclopedia*, 2004, vol. 1, pp. 197–198.

14 D.D. Chavis & M. Cazotte, *Continuation des Mille et Une Nuits*, 1788–1789, vol. 4, pp. 85–92.

an Eastern work that M. Cazotte, a typical *littérateur*, had prepared for caricaturing the unfortunate Habib by carefully writing up 'Fénelon', Rousseau, and Richardson; and had grafted his own ideas of *morale* upon the wild stem of the Arabian novel'.¹⁵

Robert Heron translated Chavis and Cazotte as *The Arabian Tales, or a Continuation of the Arabian Nights* (1792), but English critics were sceptical about the *Continuation*. Patrick Russell found that there was 'excessive liberty' of 'amplification' in this version.¹⁶ Jonathan Scott denounced the *Continuation* as a forgery.¹⁷ But, by the standards of the time, there was nothing so very discreditable in what Chavis and then Cazotte had done. The *Nights* were then viewed as a loose group of stories that had been put together for the purposes of entertainment. They were not quite yet the subject of academic study and Silvestre de Sacy and Von Hammer-Purgstall had yet to cross swords on the issue of their provenance. 'Maugraby', as translated by Heron, served as the basis for Southey's once famous epic poem, *Thalaba the Destroyer* (1800).¹⁸ In turn part of *Thalaba's* plot may also have been recycled in J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*, for it is *Thalaba's* destiny, like Frodo's to get rid of the magic ring. It does not seem that Chavis made much money from his fraudulent activities and he disappeared into obscurity. Cazotte was guillotined in 1792.

The Chavis manuscript had been presented to Caussin de Perceval *père* and translated by him and added to a reissue of the Galland text in 1806. In this nine-volume edition, the 'Continuation' fills volume 8 and a quarter of volume 9. Caussin de Perceval had found the Arabic for some of the stories, but he did not republish the purely French concoctions of Cazotte. Moreover, he noted that the stories were so different from Galland's stories and so far from oriental taste that scholars had expressed doubts about their authenticity.

In July 1886 the *Edinburgh Review* denounced the *Continuation* as a 'barefaced forgery'.¹⁹ Burton responded to this with typical irascible vigour: 'A barefaced forgery! When the original of twenty-eight tales out of thirty-four are perfectly well-known, and when sundry of these appear in MSS of "Thousand Nights and a Night"'.²⁰ Given Burton's contempt for Cazotte's fanciful elaborations, his intervention might at first sight seem surprising, but Burton had a particular animus against Scotsmen and besides the same anonymous article

15 R. Burton, *Supplemental Nights*, 1888, vol. 7, p. 262.

16 P. Russell, "On the Authenticity of the Arabian Tales", 1799, pp. 191–192.

17 J. Scott, quoted in R. Burton, *Supplemental Nights*, 1888, vol. 7, p. iv.

18 'Southey' in *The Arabian Nights Encyclopedia*, 2004, vol. 2, p. 707.

19 Anonymous, "The Arabian Nights Entertainments", July, 1886, p. 170.

20 R. Burton, *Supplemental Nights*, 1888, vol. 7, p. v.

had described the first five volumes of Burton's translation as unreadable, inaccurate and unreliable in indicating the source texts used.

Mamluks and Arabs—interpreters, merchants, Christian Arab clergy, collaborators and chancers followed the Napoleon's army back to France after the definitive failure in 1801 of the occupation of Egypt. In particular, some Christian collaborators feared Ottoman vengeance after the departure of the French troops. Others perhaps sensed better career opportunities in Europe. The establishment in 1790 of the *École des langues orientales vivantes* created a demand for assistants who were skilled in Arabic. There might also be opportunities in the *Collège de France* and in the *Bibliothèque Nationale*. Silvestre de Sacy, Caussin de Perceval, Champollion and Habicht were to work closely with expatriate Arab intellectuals. There was a demand for teachers of colloquial Arabic vernacular texts in order to train dragomans. Though Silvestre de Sacy and his European students scorned the colloquial and utilitarian, Dom Rafaël, Sabbagh and [Ellious] Bocthor did teach colloquial Arabic in Paris. Paris was the only centre in Europe for study of colloquial Arabic and it was probably for this reason that it also became the centre for the production of *Nights* forgeries.

Mikhail b. Niqula b. Ibrahim Sabbagh (1775–1816), a Christian Arab, was born in Acre in Ottoman Palestine. But the wealthy Sabbagh clan fled to Egypt after the downfall of Zahir al-Umar. Mikhail Sabbagh was well educated with good Arabic. During the French occupation of Egypt he was employed as interpreter by General Reynier and he also served General Sebastiani on diplomatic missions. Having attached himself to the French army in Egypt and then fearing Ottoman disfavour, he made his way to Paris and work as oriental typesetter at the *Imprimerie Royale* which eventually became the *Bibliothèque Impériale*. He moved on to become keeper of Arabic manuscripts in that library and he attracted the attention of Silvestre de Sacy with whom he worked. He taught literary Arabic and he published a treatise in verse on the Syrian pigeon post and a grammar of vernacular Syrian Arabic. He also translated French propaganda bulletins. Unlike the quasi-literate Chavis, Sabbagh was cultured and enjoyed a distinguished career. The recent *Dictionnaire des orientalistes de langue française* gives an account of his teaching and publications without apparently being aware of his activity as a forger.²¹

Jean Jacques Antoine Caussin de Perceval (1759–1835) Professor of Arabic at the *Collège de France*, has already been mentioned as the translator of the Chavis manuscript in 1806. Caussin de Perceval produced work on the fables

21 C. Huart, *Littérature arabe*, 1939, p. 404; M. Mahdi, *The Thousand and One Nights*, 1994, pp. 61–72; *The Arabian Nights Encyclopedia*, 2004, vol. 2, pp. 695–696; A. Messaoudi, "Sabbagh", 2012.

of Luqman, the *Mu'allaqāt* and the *Maqamāt* of al-Hariri.²² As already noted, in 1806 Caussin de Perceval also produced two volumes of *Suites* to Galland's *Nights*. In first decade of the nineteenth century, Sabbagh pretended to transcribe a manuscript of the *Nights* for Caussin de Perceval.²³ Allegedly Sabbagh had copied a Baghdad manuscript dating from 1703 (that is to say one year before the publication of the first volume of Galland's *Nights*). It purported to have been written by a certain Ahmed al-Taradi and, as a kind of colophon, the name Kabikaj was written several times. (Kabikaj is the name of the jinn who protects paper from worms.) In fact Sabbagh's two-volume manuscript drew on Galland, Chavis and a seventeenth-century *Nights* manuscript brought to Paris in the eighteenth century by Benoit de Maillet.

Sabbagh did not venture to provide a version of 'Ali Baba' but, as noted, he did take Chavis's tales and he added *Nights* breaks. He was a good writer who improved his source material and so he reworked and improved Chavis's 'Aladdin' into better Arabic in which Chavis's gallicisms were purged. But Sabbagh's transcription seemed to predate and authenticate Chavis's manuscript. Silvestre de Sacy's learned friend, Louis Mathieu Langlès, Professor of Persian at the École, edited 'Sinbad' from the Sabbagh manuscript.²⁴ Scholars toyed with the possibility that Hanna Diab might have brought this putative eighteenth-century manuscript to France. Sabbagh's manuscript passed from Caussin de Perceval père to fils and from him to Fleischer who thought it helpful for his editing of the Breslau text (which will be discussed shortly). It was also consulted by the editors of the Calcutta 11 edition of the *Nights* and so contaminated its text. Yet Sabbagh does not seem to have benefited significantly from his crime and he was to die in poverty.

The archivist of Oriental manuscripts at the Bibliothèque Hermann Zotenberg had been struck by how close Sabbagh's Arabic 'Aladdin' was to Galland's French version, but he still did not smell a rat and Sabbagh's forgery had the unfortunate effect of confirming Zotenberg's hesitant decision that the Chavis version must be genuine. Eventually the manuscript was acquired for the Bibliothèque by Zotenberg. In 1888 he produced an edited text of 'Aladdin', based on Sabbagh's forgery.²⁵ It was Zotenberg who initiated something approximating to scientific study of *Nights* manuscripts. However, not only was he fooled by the Sabbagh forgery, but, because he relied too much on his feel for palaeo-

22 S. Larzul, "Caussin de Perceval", 2012, pp. 201–202.

23 V. Chauvin, *Bibliographie*, 1892–1922, vol. 4, pp. 198–199.

24 L.M. Langlès, *Les Voyages de Sind-Bâd le marin et La Ruse des femmes*, 1814.

25 H. Zotenberg, *Histoire de Alâ al-Dîn, ou la lampe merveilleuse. Texte arabe avec une notice sur quelques manuscrits des Mille et une nuits*, 1888.

graphy, he dated the Galland manuscript over a century too early. In spring 1887 Burton visited Paris and Zotenberg introduced him to the Sabbagh manuscript from which he translated 'Aladdin' and 'Zayn al-Asnam'. Burton 'noticed in my translation sundry passages which appear to betray the Christian hand; but these are mostly of scanty consequence in no wise affecting the genuineness of the text'.²⁶ One has the impression that both Zotenberg and Burton wanted to be fooled. It was left to Muhsin Mahdi to expose the forgery in the following century.

Turning now to the case of Jean Varsy, or Warsy, he was a French merchant who had settled in Egypt as a trader in the late eighteenth century, but later returned to Marseille. For a while he was a student of Silvestre de Sacy. The manuscript that Warsy produced contained just two stories, 'Harun al-Rashid and the Daughter of Kisra' and 'Ali Baba' and it proclaimed that it was 'written by Jean Joseph Varsy'. Warsy inserted superfluous poetry, rhymed prose and extra phrases into a text that was otherwise based on Galland's French. While this may well have been a forgery, this was not necessarily so. It could have been produced as a student exercise or undertaken to wile away long winter evenings.²⁷

Eventually the Bodleian Library in Oxford purchased the Warsy manuscript from a Parisian book dealer. In 1910 the manuscript was discovered there by Duncan Black MacDonald (Zotenberg's successor in scientific study of the *Nights*). Macdonald deduced from its existence that Galland must have worked from a written version of 'Ali Baba', as well as his notes of Diab's story-telling. Macdonald thought that, since Warsy was a student of De Sacy, he would not have written in grammatically incorrect Arabic. (Even so, MacDonald underestimated the incorrectness of Warsy's Arabic.)²⁸

Now for Maximilian Habicht (1775–1839). As a young man he came to Paris as an attaché at the Prussian embassy (1797–1807). He took classes with Silvestre de Sacy. (This seems to have been the necessary preliminary for anyone proposing to fake a version of the *Nights*.) Habicht plunged into the world of Arab expatriates in France and he met Bocthor and Sabbagh when they arrived in Paris in 1801. He also encountered a Tunisian Jew, Mordecai Ibn al-Najjar and shared lodgings with him in Paris. Subsequently Habicht was appointed to a professorship of Arabic in Breslau in 1825, but he kept up a correspondence with Sabbagh and other Arabs. Also in 1825 he published *Tausend und*

26 R. Burton, *Supplemental Volumes*, 1888, vol. 3, p. x.

27 M. Mahdi, *The Thousand and One Nights*, 1994, pp. 72–86.

28 D.B. MacDonald, "'Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves' in Arabic from a Bodleian MS", 1910, pp. 327–386.

Eine Nacht, Arabische Erzählungen, a translation of the *Nights* in fifteen volumes, drawing on a mixture of sources.²⁹ Though Habicht claimed to have translated from a Tunisian manuscript, in fact he worked from a variety of genuine *Nights* manuscripts transcribed by Ibn al-Najjar, as well as from Galland, Scott, Cauussin de Perceval, and Sabbagh. When, in 1835, the Bulaq text was published that was also used. Habicht's text, known as the Breslau edition, was published in twelve volumes over the years 1825–1843. Since the Calcutta II edition drew on Habicht, its text was also contaminated by Sabbagh's inventions. After Habicht's death the last four volumes were published under the editorship of Heinrich Leberecht Fleischer. It is hard to understand how that austere, scholarly philologist could have committed himself to this dodgy undertaking.³⁰ Whereas Habicht merely put his sources into print, the fastidious Fleischer corrected and improved the vulgar Arabic of the stories before publishing them. As result of MacDonald's researches, the Habicht version of the *Nights* was thoroughly discredited, but until Mahdi's edition, Habicht's was the only European edition of the *Nights*.

In 1824 Goethe was sent the Habicht translation and this reignited his previous Galland-based enthusiasm for the *Nights* and consequently influenced the content of the second part of *Faust*.³¹ Goethe was particularly impressed by the Chavis story Habib. The last story in Habicht's collection was that of Sheherazade and Shahriyar themselves, and this inspired Borges to write a famous piece on self-reflexivity in the *Nights*.³² This 'neglected conclusion' was also the subject of a brief, but important study by Heinz Grotzfeld, which argued that it was not only authentic, but derived ultimately from the ancient Indian proto-*Nights*.³³

A further non-existent *Nights* manuscript was to be conjured up by Mardrus. Dr Joseph-Charles-Victor Mardrus (1868–1949) was born in Cairo to a family that had migrated there from the Caucasus.³⁴ He studied in Beirut and it was

29 D.B. MacDonald, "Maximilian Habicht and His Recension of the Thousand and One Nights", 1909, pp. 685–704; K. Mommsen, *Goethe und 1001 Nacht*, 1960, pp. 155–163; R. Irwin, *The Arabian Nights*, pp. 21–22; M. Mahdi, *The Thousand and One Nights*, 1994, pp. 86, 92–96; *The Arabian Nights Encyclopedia*, 2004, vol. 2, pp. 579–580.

30 On Fleischer, in general, see J. Fück, *Die Arabischen Studien in Europa*, 1955, pp. 170–172; S. Mangold, *Eine "welbürgerliche Wissenschaft"—Die deutsche Orientalistik im 19. Jahrhundert*, 2004. But Fleischer's work on the *Nights* has not received any particular attention.

31 K. Mommsen, *Goethe*, 1960, pp. 155–163.

32 "Borges" in *The Arabian Nights Encyclopedia*, 2004, vol. 2, p. 503.

33 H. Grotzfeld, "Neglected Conclusions of the *Arabian Nights*: Gleanings in Forgotten and Overlooked Recensions", 1985, pp. 73–87.

34 On Mardrus, see V. Chauvin, *Bibliographie*, 1892–1922, vol. 9, pp. 84–85; R. Irwin, *Arabian*

there that he first read the Symbolist poet, Stéphane Mallarmé (1842–1898). (Mallarmé, by the way, was famous for having improved Edgar Allan Poe by translating him into French.) Then in the early 1890s Mardrus moved to Paris where he attached himself to the salon of Mallarmé in the Rue de Rome. Later he also frequented the salons of such writers as Heredia, Robert de Montesquiou and Catulle Mendès.

But the meeting with Mallarmé was crucial, for the poet was an enthusiast for William Beckford's eighteenth-century mock-Oriental romance, *Vathek*, with its themes of incest, homosexuality and eternal damnation. Even more to the point Mallarmé had read the highly literary English translation by his good friend John Payne of the *Arabian Nights* with great enthusiasm: 'Les Mille et Une Nuits sont un charme; ta traduction une merveille. J'entends une vraie merveille, quelque chose de miraculeux. C'est les lire dans le texte ; on voit dans chacune de tes phrases, l'attitude authentique des bonhommes arabes, que l'original a calquée. Et, et puis, il y a ta voix, qui est exquisite'.³⁵ Mallarmé, enthused by Payne's work, suggested that Mardrus attempt something similar in French.

Mardrus's *Mille nuits et une nuit* (16 slim volumes containing 116 stories, 1899–1904) was first published by *La Revue blanche*, a periodical devoted to Symbolism and modernism and the publisher of Mallarmé, Regnier, Debussy, Jarry and others. Mardrus's version of the *Nights* was a huge hit and André Gide was one of its leading encomiasts. Reviewing it in the *Revue Blanche*, he compared it to travelling without any luggage. Mardrus's French was well translated into English by Powys Mathers in 1923. Mardrus published his translation in an age when literal fidelity to the text was a desideratum in a way that it had not been in the days of Antoine Galland. Moreover, it was held that one should also strive to preserve the sonorous effects of the original. Mallarmé's translations of Edgar Allan Poe were thought to be a model in this respect. So Mardrus's translation boasted of its strict literalism. In fact, his translation was an extremely bad one—so bad that it amounted to an intellectual fraud. At times the translation was absurdly and painfully literal; at other times Mardrus was simply inventing the text that he was pretending to translate. Mardrus's version of the *Nights* had heightened the opulent, the perfumed, the sensual, the obscene and the grotesque. He applied local colour in broad brushstrokes. The Oriental

Nights: A Companion, 1994, pp. 36–40; S. Larzul, *Les Traductions françaises des Mille et une Nuits : Étude des versions Galland, Trébutien*, 1996; D. Paulvé & M. Chesnais, *Les Mille et Une Nuits et les Enchantments du Docteur Mardrus*, 2004; *The Arabian Nights Encyclopedia*, 2004, vol. 2, pp. 637–638.

35 Letter to J. Payne, October 9, 1882 in S. Mallarmé, *Correspondance*, vol. 2, 1871–1885, 1965, pp. 231–232.

foods become more succulent, the girls more beautiful, the punishments more savage and the comedy more vulgar. Precious stones were scattered all around in a lapidarist's paradise. There was more racism and more misogyny. Bestiality was given special treatment. It was a Middle East of silken-clad, idle, gourmandising lechers. Extra blacks were imported into the pages of the *Nights* where they could perform servile or libidinous roles. Additional occult themes were introduced.

Mardrus invented descriptions, conversations and whole narratives. On the other hand he dumped boring stories. He cluttered up the settings with fountains, jewels, veils and whatnot. He took stuff from the orphan tales and the Breslau edition and Scott's translation as well as various Arab folktale sources. He included European pastiches and Hindustani stories. At first Mardrus claimed that his translation was based on Bulaq, but then he referred to an unknown North African ms. Professional Arabists, headed by Victor Chauvin, savaged the translation. But the unscholarly quality of his 'translation' should not damn the work out of hand, for, though he was a bad scholar, he had some abilities as a creative artist and, as we shall see, his influence on other creative artists was considerable.

The rejigged *Nights* was a *fin-de-siècle* product. Mardrus's collection was not aimed at children nor at the common reader, but it was produced for an audience of writers and painters—an audience educated by the Orientalist paintings of Gérôme and Lecomte de Nouy and the reveries of Hugo and Nerval—and, come to that, by earlier versions of the *Arabian Nights*. Writers who had already read the *Nights* in one of the earlier translations, including Rainer Maria Rilke, Alfred Jarry, W.B. Yeats, James Elroy Flecker, or Marcel Proust read it again in the Mardrus translation and found that their enthusiasm for the Arabian tales was redoubled. The translation also gave rise to a renewed vogue for opulent parties in Arabian Nights costumes and it was one of the sources of inspiration for the Ballets Russes's version of *Scheherazade*. I would go so far as to say that Mardrus's fraud bore better fruit than Lane's pedantry.

Given the contamination of Calcutta II by Habicht's text and the reliance of that text on fake manuscripts, where does this leave the status of the Pléiade translation of Calcutta II, or that by Malcolm Lyons for Penguin? Muhsin Mahdi wished to fix the text of the *Nights* in amber and he was principally concerned with the *Nights* as an object of scholarship in which the goal was to pin down the hypothetical ur-text, whereas Lyons wished to re-present the text as an event in world literature and that is what Calcutta II and its translations are (and the same would apply to the Mardrus version.)

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the boundary between scholarship and creative endeavour was not as clearly marked as it is today. One should not get too hot under the collar about the fakes, for some of the stor-

ies were genuinely valuable contributions to world literature. There never was a perfect edition of the *Nights* and there never will be. It is even hard to imagine what a perfect edition and accompanying translation would look like. As André Miquel wrote in the preface to the Pléiade translation:

De toute façon, nous n'aurons jamais sous les yeux les *Nuits* telles que les virent et lirent leurs premiers témoins, Mas'udi et Ibn an-Nadim, en ce lointain x^e siècle de notre ère.³⁶

And, as Paul Veyne remarked in *Les Grecs ont-ils cru à leurs mythes?*:

Il fut un temps où les poètes ou historiens fabulaient de toutes pièces des dynasties royales, avec le nom de chaque potentat et son arbre généalogique ; ce n'était pas des faussaires et ils n'étaient pas non plus de mauvaise foi. Ils suivaient la méthode alors normale pour parvenir à des vérités. Poursuivons cette idée jusqu'au bout et nous verrons que nous tenons pour vraies, à leur manière, ce que nous appelons fictions, une fois le livre renfermé : *l'Illiade* ou *Alice* sont vraies, ni plus ni moins que Fustel de Coulanges.³⁷

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36 A. Miquel, "Préface", 2005, vol. 1, p. xl.

37 P. Veyne, *Les Grecs ont-ils crus à leurs mythes?*, 1983, p. 11.

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PART 2

Original & copie / Original & Copy

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De faux « feuillets coufiques » ?

Le cas du ms Paris, BnF, Arabe 324

Marie-Geneviève Guesdon

Le manuscrit de la Bibliothèque nationale de France Arabe 324 rassemble 46 feuillets sur parchemin de grandes dimensions (53,7 × 62 cm), provenant de la collection de fragments coraniques constituée au Caire par Jean-Louis Asselin de Cherville¹ et dont l'acquisition, réalisée le 17 avril 1833 par la Bibliothèque nationale, avait été fortement soutenue par Antoine-Isaac Silvestre de Sacy (1758-1838).

Les feuillets proviennent d'un Coran qui se trouvait, comme la plupart de ceux que s'était procurés J.-L. Asselin de Cherville, dans la mosquée de 'Amr à Fuṣṭāṭ (Le Caire) et contenait déjà, au moment où il a été collecté, des feuillets de plusieurs mains. D'autres parties de ses composants ont été retrouvées dans diverses collections et l'ensemble a reçu le numéro CA22 dans la liste établie par le projet Paléocoran qui vise à une reconstitution visuelle de chacun des manuscrits de la mosquée de 'Amr². Cette reconstitution est esquissée pour CA22 dans un article de la revue *Techné* publié en 2021 à propos de la datation de feuillets du manuscrit par le carbone 14³.

Les fragments conservés dans le volume de la BnF Arabe 324 présentent trois mains. La plus ancienne (Arabe 324c, fragment de l'ensemble CA22a) est représentée aux f. 6, 9-27, 29-46⁴. La datation par le carbone 14 propose une date comprise entre 660 et 825, avec une plus forte probabilité entre 660 et 780. La

1 H. Dehéain, *Orientalistes et antiquaires. Silvestre de Sacy, ses contemporains et ses disciples*, 1938; P. F. Burger, «Jean-Louis Asselin de Cherville, agent consulaire et collectionneur de manuscrits orientaux», 1996; F. Déroche, «De Fourmont à Reinaud, les péripéties de l'identification des plus anciens manuscrits du Coran», 1999.

2 Paléocoran (<https://paleocoran.de/>) est un projet de la Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften et du Collège de France.

3 É. Cellard & P. Richardin, «À propos de l'emploi de la datation par le carbone 14 dans l'étude des corans anciens: le cas du Codex Amrensis 22», *Techné* 52, 2021.

4 Sur ces feuillets, voir F. Déroche, *Catalogue des manuscrits arabes. Les manuscrits du Coran: aux origines de la calligraphie coranique*, 1983, n° 45, p. 75-77 et «Of volumes and skins: The Qur'anic manuscripts of al-Mahdi», Ibrahim Shabbouh & François Déroche (éd.), *In honor of Iraj Afshar*, 2018, p. 146-172.

plus grande part conservée du volume se trouve maintenant au Caire (Dār al-Kutub, Ms 139). Quelques feuillets ont été acquis par Ulrich Seetzen (Gotha, Forschungsbibliothek, Ms A462) au début du xix^e s. et d'autres encore ont été insérés entre ceux d'un autre Coran conservé au musée des Arts turcs et islamiques à Istanbul (Env. 358).

Un autre ensemble de feuillets (f. 1-2, 4-5, 7-8), Arabe 324a ou CA22b, contient des fragments discontinus des sourates III et IV, qui ont été considérés soit comme des témoins d'une écriture très ancienne, soit comme de grossières imitations. Un feuillet isolé est à l'Institute of Arts de Détroit, sous le numéro d'inventaire DIA30.317, 61 autres se trouvent dans le manuscrit du Caire, mais cette main constitue l'essentiel du volume conservé à Istanbul (309 feuillets). Dans la description fournie par le catalogue de la BnF, la graphie est considérée comme « non classée », le contour des lettres comme dessiné puis rempli d'encre. Ajoutés à une réglure à l'encre à la base de chaque ligne d'écriture, que l'on ne rencontre dans aucun des manuscrits étudiés alors portant des écritures dites coufiques, ces éléments conduisaient à considérer ce manuscrit comme un faux. À Détroit également, le feuillet provenant de ce manuscrit était tenu comme une imitation et c'est en tant que telle qu'il avait été présenté dans une exposition intitulée *Fakes, Forgeries, and Mysteries* de novembre 2010 à avril 2011⁵.

En l'absence de tout rapprochement possible, la seule possibilité de datation de ces feuillets était l'utilisation du carbone 14. Une étude réalisée en 2013 par le Centre de Recherche et de Restauration des Musées de France⁶ a révélé que le parchemin du feuillet 5 avait été réalisé entre 1035 et 1210, avec un niveau de confiance estimé à 95,4 % : il est donc relativement ancien. Par la suite, des études plus précises de l'écriture ont montré qu'y coexistent des caractères propres aux xi^e-xii^e s. et d'autres montrant une inspiration de modèles plus anciens, que les contours avaient été tracés après les lettres – et non avant – et des rapprochements ont pu être faits avec des manuscrits anciens présentant eux aussi une réglure. Parce que, comme d'autres corans produits dans

5 D'après des documents d'archives communiqués à É. Cellard, qui en rend compte dans un ouvrage à paraître, *Le Codex Amrensis 22. Histoire d'un manuscrit attribué au calife 'Uthmān b. 'Affān, provenant de la mosquée de 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ au Caire* (titre provisoire). Les informations concernant ce manuscrit ont été actualisées dans l'inventaire de l'Institute of Arts de Détroit (<https://dia.org/collection/quran-folio-49343>): Qur'an, folio, 11th-12th, Egyptian.

6 P. Richardin & N. Gandolfo, « Datation par le carbone-14 de feuillets coraniques anciens du manuscrit Arabe 324 conservés à la Bibliothèque nationale de France », *Compte-rendu d'étude C2RMF* 25497, 17 juillet 2013. Les données sont reprises dans l'article de la revue *Techné* cité plus haut.

l'Égypte fatimide, ce manuscrit perpétue des traditions plus anciennes, É. Cellard estime qu'il pourrait avoir été produit dans ce contexte⁷.

Plutôt que d'un « faux » destiné à faire passer une production récente pour une œuvre ancienne à laquelle une valeur, esthétique ou marchande, serait attachée, ce contexte invite à penser que ces feuillets ont probablement été insérés dans les liasses qui ont constitué les volumes de Paris et du Caire en vue d'une restauration, destinée à préserver dans un volume la continuité du texte et remplacer des feuillets manquants, sans créer une rupture visuelle trop marquée. Mais nous savons maintenant que les feuillets de 324a/CA22b ne sont pas le résultat d'une production dont le seul but était de combler des manques, mais qu'ils ont été extraits d'une copie du Coran probablement complète à l'origine. Les feuillets constituant Arabe 324b et d/CA22c, avec 34 feuillets au Caire et 3 à Istanbul, quant à eux, sont bien des restaurations réalisées dans la même période, qui ne proviennent pas d'un coran démembré. Il n'y a pas de chevauchements du texte entre 324b et d/CA22c, d'une part, et Arabe 324c/CA22a, la partie la plus ancienne, d'autre part, alors qu'il y en a entre 324a/CA22b et cette dernière.

Le contexte dans lequel est conservé l'objet considéré comme faux semble ici déterminant pour émettre une hypothèse sur la fonction de son utilisation.

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⁷ É. Cellard, *Le Codex Amrensis 22. Histoire d'un manuscrit attribué au calife 'Uthmān b. 'Affān, provenant de la mosquée de 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ au Caire*, à paraître.

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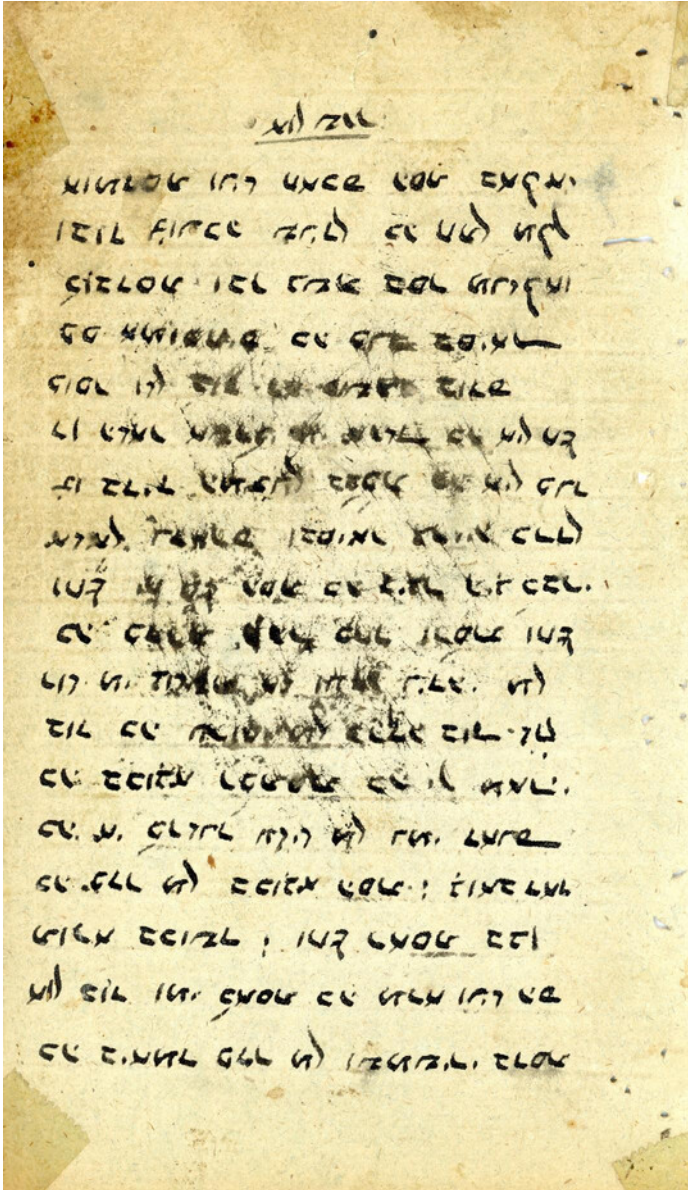
Un reflet identitaire inversé

Jean-François FaÛ



ILL. 3.1 Ms s. d., judéo-persan, recto, collection privée, Téhéran, texte en sens inverse de l'illustration.

© PHOTO : JEAN-FRANÇOIS FAÛ



ILL. 3.2 Ms s. d., judéo-persan, verso, collection privée, Téhéran.
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1 Introduction

Une des premières mesures de 'Esmā'īl 1^{er} (1501-1524)¹, le fondateur de la dynastie safavide², fut d'imposer une réforme politico-religieuse à la Perse, qui devint officiellement chiite. Ce changement provoqua une dégradation du statut de la *dimma*, en particulier lorsque Shah 'Abbās 1^{er} (1587-1629) instaura, à la fin de son règne, des lois discriminatoires pour les non-musulmans. Dès lors, le pouvoir impérial pensa l'inégalité entre musulmans et *dimmi* en système politique³.

Ainsi, pour les autorités religieuses chiites, les non-musulmans (Juifs, Chrétiens et Zoroastriens) n'étaient plus seulement considérés comme *dimmi*, mais également comme *nağis*, des êtres prétendus impurs dont le simple contact physique entraînait une souillure⁴. Cette obsession de la pureté devint paradoxalement un instrument de consolidation du pouvoir politico-religieux par une surenchère de signes d'appartenance à l'islam⁵.

Un rabbin yéménite, Zakariā al-Ḍā'irī (1531-1608), mentionna, dans sa relation de voyage, sa visite aux Juifs de Tabriz où il découvrit une communauté affaiblie et corrompue. Il qualifia ses membres « d'épicuriens », c'est-à-dire d'hérétiques, et de « débauchés ». Ces hérétiques aux yeux de Zakariā al-Ḍā'irī étaient, en fait, d'anciens convertis à l'islam ayant effectués une *teshouva*, une repentance incluant un mouvement de retour au judaïsme, et qui « naviguaient entre les deux religions, estimant qu'il y avait du bon dans les deux et demeureraient incapables de discerner la vraie religion »⁶.

Puis, sous le règne de Shah 'Abbās II (1642-1666), le Grand Vizir Muḥammad Beg entreprit d'imposer une politique de conversion forcée aux Juifs du royaume. Des campagnes de persécutions furent alors organisées, suivant un programme alliant des destructions de synagogues au port obligatoire d'un signe distinctif⁷. Ces mesures contraignantes provoquèrent une augmentation des soumissions à l'islam, dont les acteurs, nommés *anūsīm*, « ceux qu'on a forcés »⁸, étaient toujours considérés comme Juifs par les autorités rabbiniques⁹.

1 Les dates des dynasties et des personnes sont indiquées suivant le calendrier grégorien et non celui de šamsī hiğrī, le calendrier persan.

2 La dynastie safavide, une des plus significatives de Perse, régna de 1501 à 1736.

3 B. Lewis, *Juifs en terre d'islam*, 1986, p. 175.

4 W. Fischel, « The Jews of Persia, 1795-1940 », 1950, p. 148.

5 W. Bacher, « Les Juifs en Perse aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècle », 1906.

6 Z. al-Ḍāhirī, *Sefer Ha-Mūsar*, 1965, p. 28.

7 H. Levy, *Tāriq-i yahūd-i irān*, 1960, p. 540.

8 Talmud de Babylone, *Avoda Zara*, 60 s.

9 J.-F. Faü, « Le phénomène de conversions au christianisme puis à l'islam des tribus juives de la péninsule Arabique, VI^eme-XIII^eme s. », 2013, p. 472-474.

Dès lors, nombreux furent ceux qui, au sein des communautés juives de Perse, cédèrent aux pressions de l'abjuration ou choisirent l'exil. Bābā'ī Lotf (?-1662)¹⁰, un rabbin de Kachan, poète et historien, rapporta ces événements dans une chronique autobiographique nommée *Ketāb-e anūsī*, «livre d'un converti de force». Déclaré musulman sous la pression et n'ayant pu, ou voulu, émigrer à Bagdad comme bon nombre de ses coreligionnaires, il continuait secrètement à pratiquer la religion mosaïque¹¹.

Ces persécutions connurent un répit sous le règne de Nāder Shah (1736-1747), roi de la dynastie des Afshārides (1736-1749), puis reprirent avec les souverains Qājārs (1789-1925), qui renouèrent avec la politique de leurs prédécesseurs safavides concernant les minorités non-musulmanes. Les troubles sociaux se multiplièrent, alors que les autorités réactualisaient les lois infâmes, les Juifs devenant régulièrement les boucs émissaires de foules fanatisées par les prêches des mollahs. Les émeutes anti-juives se propagèrent dans tout le pays, comme celles qui ensanglantèrent la ville de Tabriz, en 1830, celle de Mashhad en 1839, nommée *Allāhdād*, la «Justice de Dieu»¹², puis celle de Shiraz en 1910, qui éclatèrent après des rumeurs d'accusation de meurtre rituel.

À partir du début du xix^e s. les mesures discriminatoires et avilissantes se généralisèrent. Il fut interdit aux Juifs de sortir par temps de pluie, de porter un *kolā*, le couvre-chef traditionnel iranien, de toucher des denrées alimentaires ou de dépasser un musulman dans la rue¹³. Les néo-musulmans, nommés *ġadīd al-islām*, se distinguaient par une double allégeance à un islam sans foi et à un judaïsme sans connaissances, tout en demeurant Juifs par la volonté de l'être¹⁴. La religiosité des crypto communautés restait essentiellement affirmée dans la sphère familiale, par le rôle donné à la mère de famille, élément central de la transmission du judaïsme et curseur identitaire de cette microsociété privée d'un encadrement religieux. Ces foyers constituèrent des cercles d'ambiguïté religieuse, développant une identité collective située à mi-chemin entre judaïsme et islam¹⁵. Les différents groupes de *ġadīd al-islām* favorisèrent la formation d'un cadre social particulier centré sur la cohésion familiale et l'endogamie. Cette déshérence religieuse encouragea l'émergence de groupes

10 Bābā'ī b. Lutf, «*Ketāb-e anūsī*», 1987.

11 A. Netzer, «A Judeo-Persian Footnote. Shāhīn et 'Emrānī», 1974, p. 258-264.

12 H. Nissimi, «“Us” and “Them”—The Formation of the Crypto-Jewish Community of Mashhad, Iran», 2005, p. 321-360.

13 G. Curzon, *Persia and Persian Question*, 1882, p. 510-511.

14 A. Kaganovich, *The Mashadi Jews (Djedids) in Central Asia*, 2008, p. 47.

15 H. Nissimi, «“Us” and “Them”—The Formation of the Crypto-Jewish Community of Mashhad, Iran», 2005, p. 321-360.

hétérodoxes au sein du judaïsme iranien qui contribuèrent à affaiblir les structures communautaires¹⁶. Sur le plan religieux, la situation demeurait précaire. La majorité des rabbins possédaient une connaissance théologique superficielle, et leurs positions conservatrices les mettaient souvent en porte-à-faux face aux aspirations modernistes de certains de leurs fidèles. Symbole de cette médiocrité religieuse, aucune école talmudique reconnue n'existait, à la fin du xix^e s, en Iran où le lien avec la tradition religieuse se maintenait faiblement grâce à des traductions de la Torah en judéo-persan et à des *piyyutim*, des poèmes liturgiques¹⁷.

Le niveau d'instruction demeurait des plus élémentaires. Les synagogues servaient d'école communautaire, car l'accès à l'enseignement public demeurait interdit aux Juifs, sauf à Téhéran et dans la région kurde, à majorité sunnite¹⁸. Les rabbins y dispensaient quelques rudiments d'hébreu et d'éducation religieuse. Seule la diffusion des idées progressistes de la foi baha'ïe d'un côté, et l'offre intellectuelle de l'Alliance Israélite Universelle d'un autre côté, semblaient offrir un espoir de vie meilleure¹⁹.

Mises à part quelques familles de médecins proches du pouvoir princier, les élites intellectuelles faisaient défaut, et la majorité des activités économiques s'affirmaient autour de la joaillerie, du commerce des textiles et de métiers considérés comme impurs (éboueur, tanneur ou boucher) ou immoraux (musicien, cabaretier, négociant de vin ou marchand d'opium). Ainsi, l'absence d'une bourgeoisie éclairée, ouverte sur le monde, demeurait chronique dans un contexte de ségrégation. Ce déclassé social s'accroissait à la fin du xix^e s., lorsque les Juifs d'Iran furent éclipsés du commerce régional par les Arméniens²⁰. En 1910, les banques privées d'Ispahan et de Téhéran comptaient une majorité de propriétaires musulmans, mais également des Arméniens, des Zoroastriens et même un Grec, mais pas un seul membre de la communauté juive²¹ dont la condition économique ne cessait de décliner jusqu'à l'arrivée de la dynastie Pahlavi, en 1925.

Cependant, cette situation sociale d'ostracisme particulière aux Juifs de Perse, à l'image d'autres communautés du judaïsme oriental, comme au Yémen,

16 H. Levi, *Tariq-e yahud-e iran*, 1960, p. 668-669.

17 A. Bombardier & L. Koochakzadeh, « Être élève en Iran au tournant des années 1900 : les écoles de l'Alliance israélite universelle », 2023, p. 32-46.

18 A. Bombardier & L. Koochakzadeh, « Être élève en Iran au tournant des années 1900 : les écoles de l'Alliance israélite universelle », 2023, p. 27.

19 La première école de l'Alliance Israélite Universelle ouvrit en Iran en 1898.

20 M. Zonis, *The Political Elite of Iran*, 1971, p. 274, 275.

21 C. Lang, « Les minorités arméniennes et juives d'Iran », 1961, p. 468.

facilita l'épanouissement d'une altérité artistique dont l'authenticité s'exprima dans l'iconographie et l'ornementation des manuscrits²².

2 Un cadre culturel affirmé

Le terme « judéo-persan » ne désigne pas une forme particulière de persan, car il n'a jamais existé une langue propre aux Juifs de cette région ; tout comme les locuteurs du persan ne constituaient pas un corpus homogène²³. Le vocable judéo-persan recouvrait plusieurs dialectes de villes du Fars et des provinces méridionales, tandis que les communautés originaires du Kurdistan, dans le Nord-Ouest du pays, s'exprimaient en dialectes judéo-araméens²⁴. Ces langues représentaient essentiellement des reliquats linguistiques locaux, anciens. Le plus ancien document rédigé en judéo-persan date du viii^e s. ; il fut découvert sur le site de Dandan-Uiliq, dans le Turkestan chinois, un carrefour commercial sur la route de la soie²⁵.

Jusqu'à la fin du xiii^e s., les manuscrits rédigés en hébreu, puis en judéo-persan, étaient dénués de décors, tel le manuscrit *Ĝāma al-Tawārīḥ*, chronique historique rédigée par Rashīd al-Dīn (1247-1318), un lettré juif originaire de Hamadan qui se convertit à l'islam en 1277²⁶.

Un calligraphe de renom arrivait parfois à former un atelier-bibliothèque, *ketāb-khāne*, rassemblant des artisans du livre dont les fonctions se déclinaient suivant le rôle des spécialités exercées au sein du processus de fabrication du manuscrit. Tout d'abord, le scribe, *kāteb*, qui dirigeait le dessinateur, *mosawer*, puis le peintre de couleurs, *naqāsh*, le responsable des enluminures abstraites, *tazīn*, des sujets figuratifs, *taswīr*, et enfin le relieur, *mojale*²⁷. Le terme d'atelier-bibliothèque revêtait une dimension spatio-temporelle d'un atelier-boutique installé dans le bazar, ainsi que le profil socio-économique d'un groupe de compagnons, structuré sous la responsabilité du *kāteb*. La *ketāb-khāne* était à la fois un foyer de création artistique et un espace de formation des différents artisans. Si le niveau de maîtrise de leur art le permettait, ces artisans du livre pouvaient changer d'atelier ; par exemple, certains miniaturistes passèrent toute leur vie

22 R. Milstein, *La Bible dans l'art islamique*, 2003, p. 45.

23 G. Lazard, « La dialectologie du Judéo-persan », 1968, p. 78-79.

24 Y. Sabar, *The Folk Literature of the Kurdistan Jews: An Anthology*, 1982, p. xxxii.

25 N. Asefi. « Une vieille lettre de Khotan : une analyse d'une ancienne lettre judéo-persane appelée Dandān-Uiliq 11 », 2023, p. 49-60.

26 H. Touati, *De la figuration humaine dans l'art islamique*, 2015, p. 83, 84.

27 M. Barry, *L'art figurative en Islam médiéval*, 2004, p. 118.

dans la même ville, voire dans le même quartier, tandis que d'autres devinrent de véritables artistes itinérants.

Nous connaissons peu de choses sur les techniques de travail de ces professionnels de l'écriture. Le scribe écrivait parfois sous la dictée, en se tenant appuyé sur son genou, comme le montrent les représentations de secrétaires sur les miniatures de manuscrits, bien qu'il s'agisse en général de *mūnkī*, de clercs, occupés à transcrire des lettres officielles²⁸. Le scribe pouvait également travailler sur un meuble bas, à l'instar de celui du *mūnkī*, comme le représente une miniature réalisée à Hérat en 1431, qui illustre un passage de *Shahār Maqāla*, ouvrage en prose de Nezāmi 'Arūzī²⁹.

En réaction à la politique anti-juive instituée par la dynastie safavide, les *soferim*, les calligraphes hébraïques, commencèrent à s'affranchir de leur charge religieuse et à s'orienter vers une production artistique profane. Cette vulgarisation de la production littéraire était concomitante à l'établissement d'une période de persécutions pendant laquelle la représentation artistique trouva un terrain d'expression particulier. Les *soferim* s'éloignèrent du cadre rigoureux de leur fonction et de sa dimension religieuse, pour devenir de simples copistes; ils n'avaient alors plus le souci de la reproduction la plus exacte de chacune des 304805 lettres formant le texte de la Torah. Ainsi, les scribes abandonnèrent progressivement la calligraphie en hébreu pour adopter celle, moins contraignante, du judéo-persan, constituant ainsi une seconde déviation de l'art géométrique des origines³⁰. En effet, le *sofer*, le « maître des écritures », expert en écriture religieuse, devait respecter des règles rédactionnelles très précises sur la forme et l'alignement des lettres. Les *soferim* demeuraient inconnus, et seuls quelques copistes purent transgresser la règle implicite de l'anonymat grâce au colophon qu'ils rédigeaient, en mentionnant parfois leur nom au recto du dernier folio du manuscrit réalisé.

Avant d'être confiée au copiste, la feuille-support du manuscrit était le plus souvent préparée sous forme d'un bi-folio destiné à être intégré dans les cahiers d'un volume. La *mistara* servait à tracer en relief des lignes légèrement saillantes, qui déterminaient l'emplacement du texte ou des miniatures. Pour cela le *mojale* confectionnait un *lūh al-tastīr*, une tablette à régler faite d'un

28 M. Szuppe & N. Balbir (Dir.), « Lecteurs et copistes dans les traditions manuscrites iraniennes, indiennes et centrasiatiques », 2014.

29 Ms 1954, Türk ve İslam Eserleri Müzesi, İstanbul. Daté de 835 de l'hégire, ce manuscrit fut réalisé pour la bibliothèque du Sultan Bâysonqor.

30 R. Benjamin, *Guide to Hebrew manuscripts collections*, 1994.

morceau de bois de la dimension des bifeuillets sur lesquels on comptait écrire. Puis, le copiste commençait son travail presque toujours avant l'intervention du miniaturiste³¹.

Les premières miniatures firent leur apparition sur les manuscrits judéo-persans à partir du xiv^e s. Cette iconographie illustre des récits profanes, des romans hagiographiques translittérés en hébreu, évoquant généralement des épopées bibliques, telle celle de Yūsuf et Zulayḥā, Joseph et la femme de Putiphar. Ces textes étaient volontiers remodelés suivant l'inspiration des auteurs, qui restituaient néanmoins les épisodes les plus populaires des gestes persanes. La transformation des personnages bibliques en héros populaires apparaît clairement dans l'œuvre d'un des pères de la poésie judéo-persane du xiv^e s., Mowlānā Shāhin-e Shirāzī (xiv^e s.), le *Mūsā nāme*, composé en 1327, dans la tradition du *Shāh Nāme* de Ferdowsī. Cette chronique, construite sur une double trame, associe celle du *Tanakh* comme référence religieuse à celle de *Shāh Nāme* comme modèle littéraire³². L'auteur y présente Moïse en personnage épique, faisant pendant à Rostam, le champion de la Perse sassanide, devenant un prophète combatif, dans un champ de composition iconographique particulier à la culture iranienne.

Dans le même genre littéraire, le *Fath Nāme*, le « livre des conquêtes », forme un recueil composé d'environ 10 000 vers écrit par le poète 'Emrānī (1454-1536)³³. Cette œuvre fut également fortement influencée par le *Shāh Nāme* de Ferdowsī; elle commente et développe les livres bibliques de Josué, Samuel et Ruth. Ce recueil fut copié en 1536, à Ispahan par plusieurs calligraphes dont on reconnaît les différentes mains dans la transcription du texte, constituant ainsi un bel exemple d'écriture croisée judéo-persane³⁴.

Cependant, l'appartenance communautaire des miniaturistes demeurait inconnue car il était impossible de savoir si telle iconographie avait été réalisée par un Juif ou par un Musulman, voire un Arménien, les productions n'étant pas signées.

Néanmoins, certains artistes purent être musulmans, comme le suggèrent des représentations de Moïse représenté en héros, portant un style vestimentaire interdit aux Juifs, la tête auréolée du *far*, un halo lumineux. Ce nimbe, emprunté à la symbolique de la Perse sassanide, permet d'identifier un saint homme³⁵ dont la gloire était associée à la geste des champions traditionnels de

31 'Abd al-Rahman al-Ahdal, « La réglure à Zabid », 2009, [en ligne].

32 J.-P. Assmusen, « Judeo-Persica I, Shāhin Shirāzī Ardashirnāma », 1964, p. 243-261.

33 D. Yeroushalmi, *The Judeo-Persian Poet 'Emrani and His Book of Treasure*, 1995, p. 27-43.

34 A. Netzer, « A Judeo-Persian Footnote. Shāhīn et 'Emrānī », 1974, p. 258-264.

35 V. B. Moreen, « Moses, God's Shepherd: An Episod from a Judeo-Persian Epic », 1991, p. 107.

la mythologie perse. Des artistes juifs purent également adopter des modèles respectant les sensibilités musulmanes sur l'utilisation des images. La version de *Ġāma al-Tawārīḥ*, illustrée à Tabriz au début du xiv^e s. représente Muḥammad recevant la révélation de l'ange Gabriel, comme de nombreuses autres iconographies de ce genre, telle la représentation du Prophète dans l'ouvrage de Aḥmad Abū al-Reḥān al-Bīrūnī, *Aṭār al-Bāqīya*, illustré au xvi^e s.³⁶. Muḥammad et Moïse apparaissent dans de nombreuses illustrations parées des mêmes attributs, tous deux nimbés de flammes. Le Prophète lui-même fut représenté en Iran jusqu'à la fin du xv^e s.³⁷. De ce fait, représenter Moïse portant les caractéristiques iconographiques de Muḥammad aurait pu être sujet à problème, si toutefois les autorités musulmanes avaient été en mesure de lire le texte en judéo-persan. Ainsi, de nombreux récits hagiographiques traitant des prophètes furent rédigés par des Juifs ou par des Musulmans dans un style semblable, et il est difficile d'identifier l'appartenance communautaire de l'auteur de la version originale³⁸.

Les discordances entre des miniatures et le texte qu'elles étaient censées illustrer³⁹ suggèrent que certains miniaturistes, qu'ils fussent Juifs ou Musulmans, ne savaient pas lire les textes, et devaient s'en remettre aux consignes de mise en page émises par le *kāteb*. Un scénario de production croisée, intercommunautaire pouvait alors allier des copistes juifs travaillant avec des miniaturistes musulmans. Cependant, certains de ces manuscrits demeuraient polémiques car ils mettaient en parallèle des héros propres au judaïsme avec des personnages sacrés de l'islam, tout en exaltant les premiers. Cette dichotomie pouvait permettre à l'artiste de prendre certaines libertés avec le texte à illustrer, en offrant un espace d'expression au miniaturiste, tout en apportant une référence d'identification supplémentaire au lecteur.

L'équilibre de la composition, effectué par un cumul de techniques de mise en page, était hérité du savoir-faire de certains ateliers indépendants qui se formèrent hors du cadre officiel de la cour royale⁴⁰, produisant des manuscrits illustrés, certains de bonne qualité et d'autres fabriqués *a minima*. Les artistes qui travaillaient dans le bazar de Shiraz au xix^e s. étaient réputés pour leurs productions en série d'éditions de qualité moyenne, notamment de *Shāh Nāme*⁴¹ ou de *Mūsā Nāme*. Au musée d'Israël, à Jérusalem, une liasse de feuillets

36 V. Van Renterghem, « La représentation figurée du prophète Muḥammad », 2012.

37 R. Tottoli, *Biblical Prophets in the Qur'ān and Muslim Literature*, 2002, p. 31-35.

38 R. Milstein, *La Bible dans l'art islamique*, 2005, p. 12.

39 Ms Supplément Persan 2082, *Khusrow ū Shīrīn*, xix^e s.

40 Y. Portier, « Des origines à l'âge d'or des xv^e-xvi^e siècles », mars 1997, p. 19.

41 R. Milstein, *La Bible dans l'art islamique*, 2005, p. 43.

TABLEAU 3.1 Localisation de fonds de manuscrits judéo-persans

Il s'agit d'une localisation, non exhaustive, de fonds de manuscrits judéo-persans, dont certains inventaires restent incomplets. Ces collections sont composées de livres de prières, de poèmes, de chroniques populaires ou épiques, de traités de magie et de débris divers.

Amérique du Nord:

- Cincinnati: Klau Library Hebrew Union College.
- Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum
- New York: Library of Jewish Theological Seminary of America.
- Berkeley: Library of University of California.
- Ottawa: Bibliothèque et Archives du Canada.

Europe:

- Londres: British Library.
- Berlin: Staatsbibliothek Preußischer Kulturbesitz.
- Cambridge: Elka Nathan Adler Collection, Cambridge.
- Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France.
- Parme: Bibliotheca Palatina.
- Rome: Bibliotheca nazionale centrale.
- Rome: Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana.
- Naples: Bibliotheca nazionale «Vittorio Emanuele III».
- Saint-Pétersbourg: The Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences.
- Saint-Pétersbourg: National Library of Russia.
- Saint-Pétersbourg: Saint Petersburg University.

Moyen Orient et Asie Centrale:

- Jérusalem: Ben Zvi Institut.
 - Jérusalem: National Library of Israël.
 - Le Caire: Bibliothèque nationale d'Égypte, «*Dār al-kutub*».
 - Téhéran: National Library and Archives of the Islamic Republic of Iran.
 - Tachkent: Uzbek Academy of Sciences *Abū Rayḥān Bīrūnī*.
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isolés provenant d'un poème persan anonyme du xviii^e s., contient des illustrations des prophètes Moïse, Jonas et David. Le style de ces illustrations judéo-persanes et leur schéma de composition ressemblent, mis à part certains détails propres au judaïsme, aux productions islamiques qui leur étaient contemporaines⁴².

3 Un manuscrit judéo-persan sans date, collection privée, Téhéran

Le document étudié a été rédigé en judéo-persan sur un feuillet isolé de papier industriel, de petit format de 17×11 cm, de couleur grise et de facture assez grossière. Non daté, il ne comporte ni contremarque ni filigrane. Ce genre de production populaire est fréquemment vendue dans les ruelles des bazars de Téhéran, de Shiraz ou d'Ispahan.

Le papier de mauvaise qualité utilisé était soit fabriqué localement, soit importé d'Inde ou du Sud de la Russie pendant tout le xix^e s.⁴³. Cependant, à la même époque, une production finnoise de la firme Kymmene⁴⁴ fut particulièrement appréciée par les calligraphes et les imprimeurs des communautés juives, qui passaient régulièrement commande. Le papier était facilement identifiable grâce à son filigrane, un griffon entouré de deux «5», surmontant des abréviations en cyrillique «AKII,OBIII». Cette observation de la qualité du papier permet d'envisager une datation de ce manuscrit, entre la fin du xix^e s. et le début du xx^e s.

Fortement pollué sur la forme, ce texte présente les discordances habituelles liées à ce genre de document. Il se compose, au recto, de cinq lignes écrites maladroitement en caractères arrondis semi-cursifs de petite taille, et inscrites dans un cadre tracé à l'encre noire. Les lignes d'en-têtes sont exécutées avec la même encre, avec des ajouts de cinabre qui permettent d'obtenir la couleur rouge des surlignages.

Le feuillet est encadré par une bordure symbolique, nommée *jadval*, reproduite lors de la mise en place des scènes du décor, calculée selon des règles précises de tracé. Le feuillet du verso, comporte 18 lignes et ne contient pas de bordure.

42 Ms Os. 3791.9.77, Musée d'Israël, Jérusalem, et R. Milstein, *Islamic Painting in the Israel Museum*, 1984, n° 88-92, p. 96-98.

43 Y. Porter, « Art du livre et illustrations », 1989, p. 159.

44 Cette firme finlandaise existe encore à ce jour, sous le nom d'UPM-Kymmene.

Le Professeur Ludwig Paul⁴⁵ identifie ici une forme moderne de judéo-persan, datant du xix^e s. comportant des caractéristiques linguistiques dues à l'influence d'un dialecte, qui aurait pu être recopiée sur un modèle plus ancien⁴⁶.

Ce texte reprend un extrait écrit en prose, et non en vers selon la tradition des récits épiques perses, et qui n'est attesté par aucune source biblique ou concordant :

... Mon père arriva, brandissant une épée à la main droite, et il voulait me tuer, et toi également... où est mon père...

Il répondit : 'Oh cher enfant, je ne sais pas où il est parti'.

Cette page manuscrite, loin de refléter la finesse des miniatures des grands ateliers impériaux, semble être le produit d'une unité de production en série, typique de la ville de Shiraz⁴⁷. On peut remarquer une réutilisation systématique de feuilles de papier liée à la pénurie de cette matière et un usage modéré de la couleur dorée, utilisée en fine couche dans la réalisation des décors⁴⁸. Ceci permet de supposer un processus de réalisation rapide d'un manuscrit commercial fait sur commande.

Les personnages se superposent sur différents niveaux, rendant une sorte de perspective dépourvue de lignes fuyantes, y compris pour l'estrade représentée de façon géométrique, reprenant les lignes d'un quadrilatère. L'illustration de qualité médiocre, réalisée tête-bêche par rapport au texte, représente quatre personnages : trois hommes et une femme. La scène demeure en phase avec les canons de l'art qādjār du xix^e s., la finesse des silhouettes allongées et la gestuelle maniérée des formes humaines s'exprimant à travers une certaine esthétique de séduction, bien que le dessin soit de qualité médiocre.

En effet, l'artiste reproduit peu de détails du relief servant de décor à cette composition, qui se résume en une mer capricieuse et une prairie fleurie parsemée de coupes et de flacons dorés. Il applique la principale règle de composition de la miniature persane : l'absence de vide, qui rend les jardins luxuriants, où la moindre parcelle du sol est recouverte de fleurs et de verdure.

45 Ludwig Paul est professeur émérite d'Iranologie à l'Université de Hambourg, en Allemagne.

46 Correspondance avec le Professeur Ludwig Paul du 21/12/2018.

47 M. Royo, « Des vers persans au vert perçant », 2018, p. 94.

48 M. Royo, « Des vers persans au vert perçant », 2018, p. 95.

Les lignes courbes du ruisseau contribuent également à la douceur et à l'harmonie de l'ensemble⁴⁹.

La palette de couleurs est riche, constituant ainsi un bel exemple d'expression culturelle populaire en conjuguant le vert, l'orange brûlé, le bleu turquoise et l'or. Le papier est sablé d'or fin, type de papier qui s'était généralisé depuis le début du xix^e siècle, suivant une technique qui consiste à rédiger les pages calligraphiées sur un papier de couleur différente, orné de pochoirs dorés et parfois sablé d'or.

Cette scène d'extérieur peut se lire sur deux registres, différents et complémentaires.

Le premier réside dans l'importance accordée aux détails: les traits des visages, les différents ustensiles ménagers, les fleurs et les touffes d'herbes folles disséminés sur le sol. Cette précision se retrouve également dans la composition des mains représentées en quelques coups de pinceau qui esquissent le galbe des doigts dont la représentation constitue une partie essentielle de l'ensemble de la scène. Les vêtements sont relativement soignés, soulignés par des drapés animés de plis verticaux permettant d'animer les effets de volume. Les tissus soulignent les formes généreuses des corps auxquels ils adhèrent, au lieu de s'en émanciper comme cela est suggéré sur certaines miniatures.

Nous retrouvons ici un agencement de la scène équilibré, avec une combinaison naïve des visages qui demeurent néanmoins assez expressifs grâce au soin particulier accordé aux yeux et aux mouvements des sourcils. Le caractère physiognomonique de ces représentations est intéressant car les faciès demeurent un reflet de la nature de chaque personnage, dont les particularités physiques sont mises en rapport avec leur caractère. Les visages ne sont pas de simples esquisses et chacun exprime une personnalité différente, une dichotomie s'affirmant entre les deux personnages principaux, visiblement antagonistes. Tous ces éléments iconographiques, reproduits avec une précision qui tranche avec la médiocrité de la calligraphie, retiennent naturellement l'attention du lecteur.

Le second registre de lecture concerne le caractère global de ce décor qui se lit comme une pièce de théâtre, en tenant compte d'une certaine distanciation entre l'image et le lecteur. La scène forme le paysage central, où chaque personnage joue son rôle, le scénario étant laissé à la libre imagination de chacun. La nature, représentée avec générosité, devient actrice, comme les quatre personnages qui prennent une expression lyrique, exaltant les plaisirs du corps suggérés par les flacons d'alcool qui jonchent le sol. Cette iconogra-

49 A. Sakisian, *La miniature persane du XII^e au XVII^e siècle*, 1929, p. 56.

phie où les ombres ne sont pas représentées, évite également toute évocation de la contemporanéité⁵⁰.

L'éloquence des gestes, rendue à travers diverses attitudes, est représentée avec précision. L'homme situé à droite de la miniature esquisse un geste de soumission. Face à lui, son interlocuteur, assis sur une estrade, adopte une attitude autoritaire et méprisante, tandis que le troisième personnage masculin ébauche une position d'implorant. La seule femme représentée croise ses mains, en signe de perplexité ou d'impuissance par rapport au déroulé de la scène. Ces gestes sont des signes d'autant mieux identifiés par le lecteur qu'ils renvoient à des usages populaires largement utilisés, comme celui de la position de la main, la paume tournée vers le sol, en signe de mépris. Bien répartis dans l'espace pictural, les personnages dénotent un grand réalisme dans l'expression et dans le geste.

Le relief du paysage, tel un décor théâtral, permet à l'image de prendre une certaine distance avec le support textuel, et de se constituer en histoire indépendante de la narration, se superposant à l'écrit grâce à la force de sa représentation. La miniature est ainsi à même de créer une histoire dans l'histoire, en s'évadant du texte pour reprendre le sens de sa propre narration au niveau de l'iconographie⁵¹.

Ce montage artistique permet, par sa nature composite, de construire un « ailleurs » imaginaire et culturel, rejoignant l'art oratoire, dans lequel la miniature occupe toute la page pour devenir indépendante de l'ouvrage. Malgré sa médiocrité artistique, cette miniature s'inscrit dans la ligne du style du miniaturiste Kamāl al-Dīn Behzād (1470-1506)⁵²; elle semble avoir triomphé des hésitations du calligraphe en ayant pratiquement éliminé le texte, en occupant toute la page, en totale indépendance.

Il est possible que cette image a été réalisée par une personne ne sachant pas lire les caractères hébreux: cela pourrait expliquer une composition iconographique faite tête-bêche par rapport au support textuel, qui en ferait une sorte de raté ou de faux. Cependant, un doute demeure car l'empiètement de la miniature sur le texte peut laisser à penser qu'il s'agit ici d'un réemploi de support, l'illustration n'ayant pas de rapport avec le sujet du texte. Nous retrouvons le même empiètement et la même non-conformité géométrique par rapport au cadre calligraphique dans des manuscrits judéo-persans de grande qua-

50 F. Richard, *Splendeurs persanes: manuscrits du XII^e au XVII^e siècle*, 1997, p. 12.

51 M. Rogers, *Mughal Miniatures*, 1993, p. 67.

52 Kamāl al-Dīn Behzād est né à Hérat vers 1455 et mort à Tabriz vers 1436. Il définit un style de miniature persane qui exerça une influence certaine sur les productions des siècles qui suivirent.



ILL. 3.3

Détail d'empiètement du cadre de la miniature sur le texte manuscrit, dans Ms Or. quart. 1680, *Ardashir Nāme* de Mowlānā Shāhin-e Shirāzi, seconde moitié du xvii^e s. © PHOTO : STAATSBIBLIOTHEK PREUßISCHER KULTURBESITZ, BERLIN

lité artistique. Par exemple, *Ardashir Nāme*⁵³, le « Livre d'Ardashir », œuvre de Mowlānā Shāhin-e Shirāzi⁵⁴ datant de la seconde moitié du xvii^e s., présente la même caractéristique. Cette clé de lecture peut confirmer l'hypothèse d'un manuscrit réalisé à deux mains, celles du miniaturiste et celles du calligraphe. En effet, la mise en page reste élaborée ; elle obéit à des principes géométriques rigoureux. La composition adopte une irrégularité dans laquelle le dessin déborde les marges, rompant avec la monotonie classique de certaines miniatures.

Dans la majorité des miniatures contemporaines, les éléments décoratifs perdent la place qu'ils occupaient dans les peintures classiques du xvii^e s. au profit de détails plus réalistes et subjectifs. On voit apparaître des scènes sans rapport direct avec le texte⁵⁵.

Le terme de « faux » peut apparaître comme antinomique lorsqu'il concerne l'imitation d'une culture traditionnelle, car la contrefaçon peut alors devenir une production artistique en soi. Cette technique de reproduction était fort ancienne puisque sont mentionnés plusieurs manuscrits contrefaits des *Robā'iyāt* de 'Omar Khayyām, dont un daté de 1208⁵⁶. Le faussaire pouvait ajouter, *a posteriori*, des illustrations sur un manuscrit inachevé, comportant des blancs dans le texte initial, des emplacements en attente d'illustration. Cette technique de rajouts de miniatures à des textes originaux incomplets, comme la copie du *Shāh Nāme* achetée en 1929 par la New York Public Library⁵⁷, connut un certain succès. Les vrai-faux manuscrits ainsi obtenus étaient vendus à des prix élevés.

53 « Ahashverosh entouré de vierges », Ms Or. quart. 1680, *Ardashir-nameh*, Staatsbibliothek Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin.

54 A. Netzer, « A Judeo-Persian Footnote. Shāhin et 'Emrānī », 1974, p. 254-258.

55 S. Canby, *The Rebellious Reformer: The Drawings and Paintings of Riza-yi 'Abbāsī of Isfahan*, 1996, p. 67.

56 M. Mīnovī, « Kāpūs-nāma-ye Ferāy, tamrīn-ī dar fann-e tazwīr-shenāsī », 1957, p. 449-465.

57 B. Schmitz, *Islamic Manuscripts in the New York Public Library*, 1992, p. 105-111.

Jean Chardin (1643-1713), un voyageur français qui séjourna quatre ans en Perse, décrivait le métier de copiste en 1674, en évoquant la question des vrai-faux :

Les copistes sont en grand nombre en Perse, surtout dans les grandes villes, mais le métier leur donne à peine du pain ; ils n'y gagnent d'ordinaire que quinze sols par jour, à écrire du matin jusqu'au soir. Le plus qu'on puisse écrire, quand on est très expert et qu'on travaille sans interruption, est de cinq à six cents distiques par jour. On peut juger combien cette cherté des livres empêche la science de se répandre, et les doctes d'approfondir les matières et de cultiver les découvertes ; mais ce n'est pas là, ni le seul, ni même le plus grand inconvénient des livres manuscrits ; il consiste en la multiplication des fautes, qui souvent sont telles qu'on ne trouve point de sens à ce qu'on lit. Ces fautes arrivent par l'ignorance des copistes, et par leur inattention, à force d'aller vite, en ne prenant pas garde à leur original, et en ne relisant pas. Or, comme, pour la plupart du temps, ils n'entendent pas ce qu'ils écrivent, ils y font mille fautes sans s'en apercevoir. Cependant il arrive que leurs livres fautifs soient copiés par d'autres scribes, qui n'en savent pas plus que les premiers, et qui ajoutent aux fautes de leur original leurs propres fautes ; de sorte que souvent elles se multiplient beaucoup avec le temps. Les gens de lettres relisent ou font relire leurs livres sur de bons originaux, et par d'habiles gens, qui mettent leur sceau au livre, comme pour approbation.⁵⁸

En miroir de ce témoignage, la conception du « faux » renvoie à certains manuscrits qui révèlent une erreur du copiste lors de la répartition du texte sur les différents feuillets qui en constituent le support. Ce type d'erreur inversée obligeait le copiste à laisser une grande partie de la page en blanc, où il notait généralement cette faute avec la formule : *ayyāz* (page laissée en blanc) et *shāhīah* (exacte, vérifiée). Le copiste était parfois contraint de récrire en marge le texte d'un vers erroné tout en laissant subsister des erreurs, décalant l'agencement des illustrations. Ces fautes de mise en page étaient parfois faites peu après la copie du texte, à l'occasion d'une relecture finale, ou lors de l'inscription – souvent à l'encre rouge – des titres. On peut citer plusieurs exemples de ce type, comme ce manuscrit exécuté en 1453 par 'Alī Pāgīr d'Ispahan, où l'on trouve des corrections marginales de sa main à même l'édition finale.⁵⁹

58 J. Chardin, *Voyage de Paris à Ispahan*, 1983, p. 281-282.

59 F. Richard, *Splendeurs persanes*, Paris, 1997, n° 123, p. 177, où est décrit le premier des deux



ILL. 3.4 Détail de corrections faites hors du cadre, et d'une illustration empiétant sur le texte, dans Ms Or. quart. 1680, *Ardashir Nāme* de Mowlānā Shāhin-e Shirāzi, seconde moitié du xvii^e s.

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Enfin, une autre catégorie de vrai-faux, se compose de fragments volontairement écartés lors d'un travail de rédaction de manuscrit. Ces renoncements pouvaient parfois être justifiés par le nombre d'erreurs de copie trop importantes pour que la tâche reste financièrement rentable. Ces manuscrits déclassés connaissaient une seconde vie grâce à d'habiles transformations de copie et d'illustrations, résultat d'un travail de remodelage du texte. Ainsi complétés, ces textes pouvaient être vendus ou cédés à moindre prix.

Dans les cas des contrefaçons les plus grossières, les illustrations étaient peintes directement en superposition sur le texte⁶⁰, créant des fractures dans la mise en page. L'iconographie s'affirme alors par la « défiguration » du texte⁶¹, où elle force la comparaison avec des contenus parfois minimalistes, comme notre sujet le montre. Cependant, la représentation est souvent confondue avec le monde intérieur de l'auteur, ainsi qu'avec son style littéraire, bien qu'elle s'en émancipe en adoptant sa propre évaluation esthétique.

En complément de cette étude, nous pouvons citer un autre exemple de production locale *a minima*, illustré par une composition mystique provenant de la communauté juive de Tabriz. Ce document, d'un format de 18 × 12 cm, a été rédigé sur un feuillet isolé d'un papier industriel de couleur crème et de facture médiocre, sans filigrane.

manuscrits reliés ensemble. Pour le second, voir *L'Étrange et le merveilleux en terre d'islam*, Paris, musée du Louvre, 23 avril-23 juillet 2001, n° 124, p. 178-179.

60 F. Richard, « Forgeries iv. Of Islamic Manuscripts », 2011, [on line].

61 P. Jaccottet, *Paysages avec figures absentes*, 1990, p. 64.



ILL. 3.5 Ms *Shiviti*, xix^e s., recto, collection privée, Téhéran.
 © PHOTO: JEAN-FRANÇOIS FAÜ

Il s'agit d'un diagramme religieux appelé *Shiviti*⁶² qui, traditionnellement, prend la forme d'une graphie agrandie du tétragramme entouré de versets de psaumes ou de prières. Ce type de manuscrit intègre plusieurs lectures du nom divin, mais qui ne doivent pas être prononcées. On remarque une différence de qualité entre la finesse de la calligraphie, réalisée de manière régulière et continue, et le coloriage brouillon, en rouge et bleu, qui déborde du double cadre.

Ce texte a été décoré par une personne ne possédant pas les règles géométriques de mise en page, ce qui explique le manque de soin porté au coloriage de l'encadrement. Ce «raté» en fait un manuscrit non conforme aux prescriptions de rédaction indiquées par la tradition juive, un document défini comme étant illicite, qui devait être retiré de la lecture, puis enterré. Il constitue, d'un point de vue religieux, un «vrai-faux».

4 Conclusion

Telles les bibles imprimées du xv^e s. que Faust, l'associé de Gutenberg, vendait à Paris sous l'apparence d'un manuscrit⁶³, le faux comporte toujours quelque chose d'étrange dans sa composition, et qui le différencie de l'original. En effet, l'illustration accompagnant ce manuscrit n'a pas été effectuée *a posteriori*; cependant elle ne semble pas avoir de rapport direct avec le texte, qui demeure partiellement lisible. Ce qui le différencie d'un faux classique; il ne s'agit pas d'une contrefaçon écrite en pseudo judéo-persan, et destinée à tromper un éventuel acheteur. Ainsi, le manuscrit étudié pourrait constituer un véritable «vrai-faux».

À partir du début du xx^e s., la généralisation de l'imprimerie permit d'accéder à un procédé artistique peu onéreux, et les images des héros bibliques regagnèrent leur popularité, surtout pour les foules qui écoutaient les *naqālī*, les contes populaires des rues, et achetaient des illustrations coloriées dans les échoppes des bazars. L'imprimerie se développa, et Téhéran devint le centre privilégié pour l'édition d'ouvrages en judéo-persan⁶⁴.

Mais ce document constitue également le témoignage d'une pratique artistique de résistance, tant du fait d'un environnement social et politique hostile que de la volonté d'affirmation d'une identité culturelle.

62 Le nom de *Shiviti* provient du premier mot du Psaume 16: 8.

63 C. Nodier & J.-F. Jeandillou, *Questions de Littérature légale: Du plagiat, de la supposition d'auteur, des supercheries par rapport aux livres*, 2003, p. 113.

64 A. Geula, *Iranian Baha'is from Jewish Background*, 2007, p. 241.

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The Harari *waqfiyyas* of Qurʾans, Their *wāqifs*, Their Copyists

Anne Regourd

This contribution is dedicated to Gerald A. Weiner for having always believed in the value of my work.



1 Introduction to the *waqfiyya* Collection

This article¹ is mainly based on the *waqfiyyas* of single volume or thirty-part (*ǧuzʾ*) Qurʾans kept in the library of the Sherif Harar Municipal Museum (Harar City). The private collection of manuscripts assembled by Abdullahi Sherif is housed in the historical home of a wealthy Indian merchant that is now a public building owned by the Ethiopian state. The several hundred manuscript books in the collection derive from Harar City and the Harar region. According to its owner, it was made by donation and by purchase.

More than a third of the 641 digitised volumes of codices in the collection² are Qurʾans. While twenty seven of them are single volumes,³ the remainder

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- 1 A first version of this article was presented at the Conference “The Qurʾān and Ethiopia—Context and Reception,” organized by Aaron Butts at The Catholic University of America, Washington D.C., on the 8th of April 2019, where it, and I, benefited greatly from the feedback of the audience. While preparing and writing the article over the subsequent years, Alessandro Gori (Copenhagen University) has patiently provided invaluable answers to my questions, Steve Delamarter (George Fox University) has helped me delve for images of the texts, and Sara Fani (ERC Project “Islam in the Horn of Africa”) resolved my every difficulty with the inventory.
 - 2 This can be broken down into 382 entries in the data base of the ERC project “Islam in the Horn of Africa,” to which should be added others. In fact, a low hypothesis would be there are 641 digitised manuscripts. As for the Qurʾans, see A. Regourd, coll. S. Mirza, *Catalogue des manuscrits du Sherif Harar Municipal Museum/Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Sherif Harar Municipal Museum*, 2024. This catalogue contains 248 entries. It will be followed by a separate publication of the other items.
 - 3 Books recited during ceremonies and rituals, such as prayer books, make up the other big

are in thirty parts (*ǧuz'*), apart from one that is in two volumes (ASH00408*4). They were often endowed, and at least 198 items from the 17th century to 1986 bear the text of a legal bequest (*waqfiyya*).⁵ As shown by the case of this library, not all the Qur'ans were in *waqf*, and conversely, not all the books in *waqf* were Qur'ans. Books were the subject of a specific debate among the jurisconsulte (*fuqahā'*) concerning their eligibility to be held in *waqf*, since they are subject to "loss:" books, unlike land, can be stolen, destroyed, become disrupted, damaged, ... Their final approval of the principle raised immediately another issue and generated a sub-discussion on what kind of books was eligible for *waqf*: Qur'ans or any book at all. As a matter of fact, the most ancient *waqfiyya* known to date is that of an endowed manuscript, a Qur'an.⁶ However, early in history, and practically, no such distinction was made.⁷

This great number of bequeathed books, albeit Qur'ans, makes the Abdullahi Sherif collection the first corpus of *waqfiyya* available for study, and *a fortiori* the first corpus of Harari *waqfiyyas*. It is possible to give a time-and-place frame for their issue and they are sufficiently numerous in the period documented to serve as a basis for a discussion. The few previous publications, usually on Qur'ans from outside Ethiopia or non-Ethiopian Qur'ans, treat a few, or even single, examples of *waqfiyyas*. As for Ethiopia, six *waqfiyyas* have already been published, all from Harari Qur'ans belonging to the Library of the Institute of Ethiopian Studies in Addis Ababa.⁸ They broadened the basis of our thoughts. The single volume and *ǧuz's* of Qur'ans collected by Abdullahi Sherif form a corpus of a kind of *waqf* for books which have to date been little, if at all, studied, that of the *waqf ahlī*, i.e. one with family members as the beneficiaries of the *waqf*. Among the Harari *waqfiyyas*, we have only a

group in the Abdullahi Sherif collection with works like the most famous *Dalā'il al-ḥayrāt* by the Moroccan sufi Muḥammad b. Sulaymān al-Ġazūlī (d. 1465), and the also well-known, and very frequent in Ethiopia, *Tanbih al-anām* by 'Abd al-Ġalīl b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad Ibn 'Azzūm al-Qayrawānī al-Murādī (d. 1553).

- 4 The *waqfiyya* of manuscripts with shelfmarks followed by an asterisk (*) are not edited here (see bibliography). Detailed information on their content are in: A. Regourd, coll. S. Mirza, *Catalogue des manuscrits du Sherif Harar Municipal Museum/Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Sherif Harar Municipal Museum*, 2024.
- 5 "Bequest statements or documents or deeds are known as *waqfiyyāt* (in the Islamic East) or *taḥbisāt* (Islamic West). They form a special category of ownership statements." See A. Gacek, "Bequest statements and documents," 2009.
- 6 F. Déroche, "The Qur'an of Amājūr," p. 59b, which bears two *waqfiyyas* dated 262/876.
- 7 We are basing our remarks on Y. Eche, *Les bibliothèques arabes publiques et semi-publiques en Mésopotamie, en Syrie et en Égypte au Moyen Âge*, 1967, pp. 68sq.
- 8 A. Gori, "Waqf certificates of Qur'ans from Harar: A first assessment," 2015.

couple of examples of *waqf ḥayrī*, i.e. for the benefit of the community or collective/public benefit.⁹

Gori's, like other earlier publications, concentrated on the text-source(s) of the *waqfiyyas* formulated in a *šāfi'ī* legal framework. Following this problematic, it is noticeable that the *waqfiyyas* of Qur'ans from Harar are often incomplete, lacking central information necessary for the validity of the *waqf*, and therefore the likely victim of their legal caducity. As a consequence, the legal standing of a book in *waqf* could be rejected in case of a dispute.¹⁰ Our point of view in this article is not to focus on the text-source(s) and legal validity of the Harari *waqfiyyas* of Qur'ans, but merely to offer context while concentrating on the process of their copying, and on their philological, historical and social aspects. In the preparation of his study, Gori had to establish the state of the art of the publications on books held in *waqf*. We will only list in our bibliography the references we have used in our analysis.

2 The *waqfiyyas* of the Harari Collection: Selection and Constitution of a Corpus

The Qur'ans studied here have been digitised in the course of several campaigns, hence the evident differences in their shelfmarks. The manuscripts digitised by the Ethiopian Manuscript Imaging Project (EMIP) are the most numerous.¹¹ The other manuscripts were digitised during three campaigns undertaken by Abdullahi Sherif, and one by the ERC project "Islam in the Horn of Africa" (see bibliography). The library of Abdullahi Sherif being originally composed of various collections, we are dealing here with books in *waqf*, and not with a bequeathed library.¹² As previously said, from our computation, we

9 "Waqf," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2d ed.

10 A. Gori, "Waqf certificates of Qur'ans from Harar: A first assessment," 2015.

11 EMIP started in spring 2005 with the goal of helping preserve images of Ethiopia's manuscript heritage and making them available for scholarly study. The Project is run by its founder, Steve Delamarter (George Fox University, Oregon).

12 On bequeathed libraries, attention should be paid to the pioneering works of Youssef Eche, Ayman Fu'ad Sayyid, Faruk Bilici, and Stoyanka Kenderova. Y. Eche, *Les bibliothèques arabes publiques et semi-publiques en Mésopotamie, en Syrie et en Égypte au Moyen Âge*, 1967; A.F. Sayyid, *Al-kitāb al-'arabī al-maḥṭūṭ wa-'ilm al-maḥṭūṭāt*, 1418/1997, vol. 2, pp. 443–448; F. Bilici, "Les bibliothèques vakif-s à Istanbul au xvi^e siècle, prémices de grandes bibliothèques publiques," 1999; S. Kenderova, "De la bibliothèque privée à la bibliothèque publique – les inscriptions de la donation du livre à titre de waqf," 2002. Collections can be in *waqf* too.

had access to 197 *waqfiyyas* in Qur'ans from the Abdullahi Sherif collection, a very few of them perhaps digitised by him in other libraries. That the *waqfiyyas* were recorded on each section of a thirty-part Qur'an has already been reported¹³ and this is the case for Harar. The most common formulation used for *ġuz*'s in Harar though, extends the scope of the *waqf* to the preceding and following sections ("hādā al-ġuz' wa-mā qablahu wa-mā ba'dahu").

In all the Abdullahi collection, we counted 56 founders (*al-wāqifs*) of these 197 *waqfiyyas*, including the case of two women who were the founders of the same Qur'an, three sisters and their brother who also were the founders of the same Qur'an, and one anonymous *waqfiyya*.

Eighty-nine *waqfiyyas*, originated by 29 founders, were taken in account in our text edition. The first to be selected were the dated *waqfiyyas* and those that could be dated through their founders, then a range of items taken from dated or datable Qur'ans in the collection: consequently, the number of items, which decreases as we approach the 20th century, reflects the contents of the collection. Few digitized Qur'ans, the images of which are available at the Museum, are actually not in the possession of Abdullahi Sherif (nos 26, 28, and Old-Q), but were selected for the purpose of the study. The twenty-nine founders of the *waqfiyyas* are:

- *aftal-garād* 'Abd (Allāh?) 'Utmān <<Ibn ...>> (no. 23)
- *al-amīr* 'Abd Allāh *ibn al-amīr* Muḥammad (r. 5 Ša'bān 1302/20 May 1885—11 Rabī' 11 1304/10 January 1887) (no. 26)
- 'Abd al-Raḥmān *ibn ḥaġġ* Muḥammad (no. 24)
- *al-amīr* Abū Bakr *ibn al-amīr* 'Abd Allāh *al-marḥūm* (d. 5 Dū al-Ḥiġġa 1144/30 May 1732; r. 10 Muḥarram 1134/31 October 1721—5 Dū al-Ḥiġġa 1144/30 May 1732) (no. 12)
- Ādam *ibn* 'Umar Ṣadīq (no. 1)
- Aḥmad from Harar (no. 29)
- *al-šayḥ* (*sic*) Amat Allāh *bint al-šayḥ* Ḥāmid (no. 5)
- Āmina Abū Bakr Ibn¹⁴ Ibrāhīm (no. 28)
- 'Ātiqa *bint* Ḥayr al-Dīn, mother of 'Abd Allāh *ibn* Ayyub/Ayub Ġāmi' (no. 9)
- Ḥadiġa *bint* 'Abd al-Maġīd (no. 7)
- *al-ḥāġġ* (*sic*) Ḥadiġa *bint al-ḥāġġ* Ādam, mother of Ibrāhīm *ibn* Mūsā and Yūsuf *ibn* Ya'qūb (no. 13)
- *kabīr* Ḥāmid Ibn *kabīr* Aḥmad (no. 11)
- Ḥaqqdīn (Ḥaqq al-Dīn) *ibn* Mubārak (no. 20)

13 D. James, *Qur'āns of the Mamlūks*, 1988, nos 35, p. 233; 40, pp. 235–236; 45, pp. 238–239; 55, pp. 242–243; 71, p. 248; 72, p. 249.

14 For ٢١.

- *amīr al-mu'minīn al-amīr* Hāšim *ibn al-amīr* 'Alī (i.e. 'Alī *ibn* Dā'ūd; d. 30 Ramaḍān 1081/10 February 1671, r. 11 Rabī' II 1073/23 November 1662—30 Ramaḍān 1081/10 February 1671) (no. 4)
- *al-sayyid* Ibrahīm (*sic*) *ibn al-sayyid* 'Aydarūs (no. 25)
- Ibrahīm (*sic*) Šayḥ *ibn* 'Alī Šayḥ *ibn* 'Adil Šayḥ (no. 19)
- *al-mawlūd ibn kabīr* [...] (no. 14)
- Karam al-Dīn (*ibn*) ḥāğğ 'Alī *ibn* Ğāmi' (no. 17)
- Maymūna *bint* Ḥasan Aḥmad, mother of Šadiq *ibn* Sirāğ (no. 16)
- *kabīr* Mawlūd *Ibn kabīr* 'Abd al-Raḥīm (no. 8)
- Nūr *bint* Ayyūb *zawğat* (?) Aḥmad, mother of 'Amr Dīn and 'Ubayd (no. 2)
- Raḥma *bint* 'Umar, the wife of ḥāğğ 'Abd al-Raḥmān *ibn garād* Aḥmad (no. 3)
- Sa'īd[a] *bint* 'Abd al-Raḥmān Faqīh (no. 21)
- *al-šarīfa* Salma *bint al-sayyid* 'Abd Allāh *zawğat al-sayyid* 'Abd al-'Azīz (no. 10)
- Šankūra *zawğat ḥāğğ* Muḥammad *ibn* 'Abd Allāh (no. 22)
- *garād* Sār[a] *bint garād* Šādiq (no. 6)
- *al-kabīr* 'Umar *šarīf* al-Muqrī *ibn sayyid* 'Alī (alive 13 Dū al-Ḥiğğa 1305/21 August 1888) (no. 27)
- 'Uṭmān *ibn* Muḥammad T ..., or: T ... 'Uṭmān *ibn* T ... Muḥammad (no. 15)
- *gīsti/kīsti* Zaynab *zawğat al-amīr/al-imām* Aḥmad (r. 26 Rabī' I 1169/30 December 1755—10 Muḥarram 1197/16 December 1782; d. 15 Ğumādā I 1197/18 April 1783) (no. 18)

3 The *formulae* of the Harari *waqfiyyas*

Arabic is the language of the Harari *waqfiyyas*. They follow *formulae* used in the *šāfi'i* context of Harar. The legally invested actors/entities are:

- *al-wāqif*: the founder
- *al-mawqūf*: the object bequeathed
- *al-ḍarīḥ*: the *mawqūf lahu* or beneficiary
- *al-ṭawāb*: the spiritual reward to so-and-so
- *al-nāzir*: the controller/*al-naẓr*

There are variations in the order of appearance in the formula of the modules that concern the conditions of use of the book and the identity of the entities (*al-mawqūf*, *al-ḍarīḥ*, etc.). Something that is not specific to this kind of text and context.¹⁵

¹⁵ See G. Khan, *Arabic Legal and Administrative Documents in the Cambridge Genizah Col*

In only three of the cases studied here is the number of the *ǧuz'* indicated, and in these it appears as the first line (nos 12 (ASH00003), 17, 21).

3.1 *Formula 1*

It is the most frequent. In a total of 35 *waqfiyyas*, which includes the 6 IES-published *waqfiyyas*, 24 follow *formula 1*. IES items following *formula 1* are: IES 1847 (*ǧuz'* 10, Gori no. 1), *waqfiyya* dated AH 1127 (1715/1716 CE), IES 1846 (*ǧuz'* 25, Gori no. 2), founded by *mawlānā amīr* Ṭalḥa b. *mawlānā amīr* 'Abd Allāh (r. 1700–1721), IES 1844 (*ǧuz'* 12, Gori no. 3), founder identified as Aḥmad I son of *amīr* Abū Bakr the brother of *amīr* Ṭalḥa (1755–1782).¹⁶ No. 27 is a complete Qur'an, its *waqfiyya* does not contain the passage about the Qur'an's sections.

1. the object of the *waqf* (*al-mawqūf*):

هذا ما

2. act of putting in *waqf*, expressed in four verbs:

وقف وحبس وسبل وتصدق

3. followed by the name of the founder (*al-wāqif*):

فلان

often introduced by *formulae* like:

الفقير الحقير الى الله تعالى

الحقير الفقير الى الله تعالى

الفقير الحقير الى الله تعالى وهي فلانة (no. 9)

الفقير الى عفوره (IES 1846)

lections, 1993, p. 98q., on the comparison of the structure, including the syntactic structure, of extant *formulae* in documents of sale in the Cairo Genizah with the structure of other extant Arabic contracts and with the model formularies that are given in the *šurūṭ* works.

16 See A. Gori, *A Handlist of the Manuscripts in the Institute of the Ethiopian Studies*, 11: *The Arabic Materials of the Ethiopian Islamic Tradition*, 2014, pp. 22, 23 for a description of the manuscript. The *waqfiyya* of the *mushaf* from the ASH described in J.-F. Faü, "À propos du colophon d'un *mushaf* harari du XIX^e siècle", 2016–2017, follows *formula 1*, but the manuscript could not be identified.

in IES 1846, followed by:

غفر الله له

Transl.

This is what the poor, humble in need of God the Highest, so-and-so placed in mortmain, piously dedicated, inalienably bequeathed and charitably donated¹⁷

4. then the object of the donation (*al-mawqūf ilayyihī*) appears. The most frequent expression is:

هذا الجزء (و) ما قبله وما بعده من اجزاء القران العظيم من تجزية ثلثين

Transl.

this *ǧuz*' and what precedes and follows it from among its 30 *aǧzā'* of the glorious Qur'an in its 30 parts

alternatively, it is seen as unnecessary to repeat هذا الجزء, the *waqfiyya* starting with "hādā:"

وما قبله وما بعده من اجزاء القران العظيم من تجزية ثلثين

also (no. 17):

هذا الجزء في مقدمة المباركة

in IES 1844, followed by:

في سبيل الله

5. then follow the beneficiary/beneficiaries (*al-mawqūf lahu* or *al-darīh*), in some cases we have a *waqf hayrī* (no. 4, IES 1846 (Gori no. 2), IES 1844 (Gori no. 3)), introduced by:

على / لـ / على ضريح

17 Throughout we follow Gori's translation in, "Waqf certificates of Qur'ans from Harar: A first assessment," 2015.

Transl.
for so-and-so

also:

الى ضريح فلان (no. 2)
الى ضريح لـ (no. 7)
مهدية ثوابه الى ضريح فلانة (no. 21)

with the addition of (nos 8, 22, IES 1847):

ولجميع المسلمين

6. followed by the conditions of use in nos 2, 8, 9, 4, 11, 15, 22, IES 1846, IES 1847:

لمدينة هرر
بمدينة هرر
بمدينة هرر المحروسة (nos 4, 22, IES 1846, IES 1847)

Transl.
in Harar City

7. followed by the establishment of the spiritual reward (*al-tawāb*):

وجعل ثوابه أو وجعل ثواب ذلك + لـ + فلان

Transl.
He/She established that the reward of this act should be given to so-and-so

8. followed by the controller (*al-nāzīr*; *al-naẓr*):

وجعل النظر لفلان
وجعل النظر بفلان (no. 11)
وجعلت النظر فلان (no. 7)
وجعل النظر في ذلك فلان (no. 15)

وجعل النظرة فلان (no. 13)

وجعلت النظرة منه لفلان (no. 21)

وجعل النظر اليه (no. 17)

وناظره لفلان (no. 27)

and the duration of his office:

في مده كذا

Transl.

he/she appointed so-and-so as the controller of the *waqf* for the duration of ...

followed by the next entitled persons, generally the children:

لفلان و فلان / ثم الى أولاد / بعد ذلك فلان و فلان

Transl.

then so-and-so

criteria for determining which children should succeed the controller

لاكبر اولاده الأعلى فالأعلى ما تناسلوا بطنا بعد بطن (nos 4, 11, IES 1847)

لأكبر اولاده ما تناسلوا بطنا بعد بطن (nos 8, 22)

لأكبر اولاده افقتههم ما تناسلوا بطنا بعد بطن (no. 9)

لاكبر اولاده فالاعلى ما تناسلوا بطنا بعد بطن (IES 1846)

لاولاد اولاده الاعلى فالاعلى ما تناسلوا بطنا بعد بطن (no. 24)

لمن يقوم بعده مقامة متاهلا ثم لصلحا المسلمين (no. 21)

ثم الى الاكبر اولاد الاعلى فالاعلى اولاده واولاده اولاده بعد ما تناسلوا بطنا من بعد بطن

(IES 1844)

ثم إلى اولاده واولاد اولاده ما تناسلوا بطنا بعد بطن (no. 15)
ثم لذريتها الاقرا فالاقرا (no. 10)

وبعد ذلك الأرشد من اولاده (no. 17)
وبعد ذلك ارشد اولاده واولاد اولاده ما تناسلوا بطنا بعد بطن بمدينة (no. 19)

g. followed (sometime preceded) by instructions related to the book's conditions of use in nos 3, 4, 11, 20, IES 1846, IES 1847

The book's conditions of use specify the permitted uses of the book, the object of endowment: "in the city of Harar;" "to the graveyards of Harar" are the usual places

ويخرج من بيته إلى مقابر المسلمين في مدينة هرر ويرجع إليه (no. 3)
ويخرج من بيته إلى مقابر المسلمين بمدينة هرر ويرجع إليه (no. 20)
ويخرج من بيته إلى مقابر المسلمين المذكورة بمدينة هرر (IES 1844)
يخرج بها إلى المدينة إلى المقابر ويرجع بها إلى المدينة الناظر بعد القراءة (no. 11)
يخرج بها من المدينة إلى المقابر وغيره ويرجع بها إلى الناظر بعد القراءة (no. 4)
وعلى مقابر المدينة إلى مقابر المسلمين ويرجع به إلى ذلك الموضع (IES 1847)
وعلى مقابر المسلمين بالمدينة المذكورة وغير ذلك (1. 5-6) / يخرج بها من المدينة إلى المقابر
وغيره ويرجع بها إلى الناظر بعد القراءة (IES 1846, l. 7-8)

Transl.

It is allowed to take it (the book) out from the house to Muslim cemeteries in the city of Harar and it should be brought back to it (the house) (nos 3, 20)

It is allowed to take it (the book) from the city, to the cemeteries, and it should be returned to the city, to the controller, after recitations (no. 11)

It is allowed to take it (the book) from the city to the cemeteries and other places, and it should be returned to the controller, after recitations (no. 4)

10. then a religious formula, where the founder addresses God's will, composed of:

قبل الله منه

(no. 10, IES 1847) لها/له الله

تقبل الله ذلك منه بمنه وكرمه وجعله خالصاً لوجهه الكريم (no. 27)

with potential additions such as the following:

(no. 8) بفضله

(nos 10, 24) بفضله وكرمه

(no. 22) بفضله ورحمته

(no. 27) بمنه وكرمه

followed by a complementary religious formula introducing the action of putting the book in *waqf*:

(no. 8) وجعله خالصاً لوجهه

وجعله/ وجعلته خالصاً لوجهه الكريم (nos 10, 22, 24, 27)

وجعله خالصاً لوجه الله الكريم (IES 1847)

وجعله خالصاً لوجهه الباقي الدائم امين (no. 12)

followed by:

وقفاً صحيحاً شرعياً

Transl.

May God accept this act from him with His grace and mercy! May God accept and consider it as a pure action done just to obtain His generous favour and as a valid and legal *waqf*

The syntax of IES 1844 is different: instead of having وقفاً صحيحاً شرعياً, and وجعله, and the verb جعل having been added between القرآن وما قبله وما بعده من أجزاء العظیم من تجزیه ثلاثین, at the beginning of *formula 1*, وقفاً صحيحاً شرعياً does not need to be introduced by *ġa'ala*, followed by the complement of the direct object. Which yields:

هذا ما وقف إنلخ فلان هذا الجزء وما قبله وما بعده من اجزاء وجعل (sic) القرآن العظيم من
تجرئة ثلثين (...) وقفنا صحيحا شرعيا إنلخ.

11. which goes with the explicit declaration of the establishment of the *waqf*, which is inalienable and eternal, followed by a reference to two Qur'anic verses (Q 19:40 and 21:89):

لا يباع ولا يوهب ولا يرهن ولا يورث حتى يرث الله الارض ومن عليها وهو خير الوارثين
”وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الْوَارِثِينَ“¹⁸(IES 1847)

Transl.

[which] cannot be sold, donated pledged nor inherited until God inherits the earth and what is on it. You are the best of the Inheritors!

waqfiyya no. 17 gives a contracted formula for nos 9 and 10:

وقفنا صحيحا شرعيا ولا يوهب ولا يورث اتباعاً لوجه الله الكريم ورجا لثوابه الجسم¹⁹

12. as closing formula, a Qur'anic verse (Q 2:181):

”فَن بَدَلَهُ بَعْدَ مَا سَمِعَهُ فَأَمَّا إِيْمُهُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ يَبْدُلُونَهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ“

Transl.

“If someone alters it after having heard it, then the sin of doing so will fall upon those who alter it. Surely God hears, He knows everything”

13. sometime followed by a *taşliyya* (nos 2, 4, 11, 22, IES 1844, IES 1846, IES 1847)

14. seldom, the place and date where/when the *waqfiyya* was issued (nos 12, 27 (in two parts), IES 1847):

18 IES 1847 quotes Q 21:89 as it is, this is the reason why it appears here between brackets and vocalised.

19 ASH00388*, section 9, same formula, last word *al-'amīm*

وقفنا صحيحا شرعيا لا يوهب ولا يورث ...
ولا يتباع اتباعاً لوجه الله الكريم ورجا لثوابه العميم

Transl.

the date/made on the date/date of the deed

3.2 *Formula 2*

no. 12, IES 1850 (*ǧuz'* 1, Gori no. 5), a *waqfiyya* dated Ša'bān 1203 (October–November 1789), IES 1845 (*ǧuz'* 18, Gori no. 6), n.d.²⁰

1. a *ḥamdala*:

الحمد لله وسلام علي عباده الذين اصمطي

with a *salām* (only in IES 1845)

الحمد لله وسلام علي عباده الذين اصمطي

2. a transition mark (*ba'diyya*), which indeed alludes to a preceding text:

وبعد

3. the beginning of an introductory passage highlighting the religious background of the act. The passage starts with the conjunction *lammā*, followed by *kāna*:

لما كان الوقف من الحسنات المحبوبة والقربات المطلوبة (no. 12, IES 1850)

IES 1845 retains only the assertion about the reference to the religious basis of the *waqf* act:

ان الوقف من الحسنات المحبوبة والقربات المطلوبة (IES 1845)

4. then, the key-verbs expressing what validates the act are *bādara ilā* and *raǧiba mā fthā*:

²⁰ See A. Gori, *A Handlist of the Manuscripts in the Institute of the Ethiopian Studies*, 11: *The Arabic Materials of the Ethiopian Islamic Tradition*, 2014, pp. 22, 23 for a description of the manuscripts. Concerning IES 1850, an erroneous date has crept in, p. 23.

بأدر إليها ورغب ما فيها
بأدرت إليها ورغبت لما فيها (IES 1845)

followed by:

رجا لوعده ربه/رهبها وخوفا لوعيده
رجا لوعده وخوفا لوعيده إليها (IES 1850)

5. with the subject of the action, i.e. the *wāqif*, preceded by self-deprecatory attributes:

العبد الفقير الحقير الذليل الى مولاه العزيز الكريم فلان (no. 12)
العبد الفقير الحقير الذليل الى مولاه الغني الكريم فلان (IES 1850)
الامة الفقيرة الحقيرة الذليلة لمولاهها الغني العزيز الكريم فلانة (IES 1845)

6. the indication of the *mawqūf lahu*:

لفلان (IES 1845)

in the case of no. 12 and IES 1850, he is a deceased person, and the preposition used is *ʿan*:

عن فلان / فلانة

no. 12 adds legal qualities to the *mawqūf lahā*:

الحرّة الطاهرة

followed by a religious formula:

تجاوز الله عنه/عنها

7. the indication of the *mawqūf*, expressed by *hādā* at this place in the formula; in no. 12 (ASH00003), the section of the Qur'an subject to the *waqf*, i.e. section 7, is indicated just above the *waqfiyya*, at least for one section of the three available. The *mawqūf* is not present in IES 1845:

هذا

Transl.

Praise be to God. *Waqf* is one of the amiable good deeds and one of the desirable actions which bring us closer to God. Therefore the poor, humble servant, contemptible in front of his Rich, Powerful and Generous Lord so-and-so, in favour of so-and-so—may God forgive him!, rapidly desired to obtain the reward which is given for those actions, hoping in the promise of his Lord and fearing His menace.

8. a *mafā'ul mutlaq*, the explicit declaration of the establishment of the *waqf*, which is inalienable and eternal, followed by the reference to two Qur'anic verses (Q 19:40 and 21:89):

وقفا صحيحا شرعيا محررا لا يباع ولا يوهب ولا يورث حتى يرث الله الارض ومن عليها
وهو خير الوارثين (no. 12)

وقفا صحيحا شرعيا محررا لا يباع ولا يوهب ولا يرهن ولا يورث حتى يرث الله الارض
ومن عليها وانت خير الوارثين (IES 1845)

وقفا صحيحا شرعيا لا يباع ولا يوهب ولا يرهن ولا يورث حتى يرث الله الارض ومن عليها
وانت خير الوارثين (IES 1850)

one of the *waqfiyyas* under no. 12, has this part closed by a *taşliya*:

... وهو خير الوارثين صلى الله لها (no. 12, ASH00065)

Transl.

This is thus a valid and legal *waqf* which cannot be sold, donated, pledged, nor inherited until God inherits the earth and what is on it. You are the best of the inheritors!

9. followed by the threat of a sanction for those who change the text of the document (Q 2:181), only in IES 1850, and IES 1845 (see above *formula 1*)

10. followed by a prayer and invocation of God's reward in the Hereafter:

قبل الله لها/له وجعله خالصا لوجهه الباقي الدائم امين (no. 12, IES 1845)

قبل الله له وجعله خالصا لوجهه الكريم الباقي الدائم امين (IES 1850)

Transl.

May God accept it and consider it as a pure action done only to obtain His eternal and everlasting favour! Amen!

11. and concludes with the place and date of the Hegira, introduced by *wa-dalika bi-madīnat kaḏā fi* + date, followed by *afḏal al-ṣalā wa-al-salām* (only no. 12, IES 1850):

وذلك بمدينة هرر في شهر مولود سنة ١١٣٥ من الهجرة على ما فيها افضل الصلاة
والسلام (no. 12)

من الهجرة النبوية على صاحبها افضل الصلاة والسلام (IES 1850)

3.3 Formula 3

nos 18, 21, IES 1848 (*ǧuz*' 9, Gori no. 4), the *wāqif* of which is *al-amīr Yūsuf ibn al-amīr Abī Bakr* (r. 1747–1755).²¹ No. 25 is a short version. For no. 26, see below. Nos 21, 25 and 26 are complete Qur'ans. No. 26 is a *waqf ḥayrī*.

1. a *ḥamdala* followed by an introductory religious formula:

الحمد لله الذي وقف لصالح الاعمال من اراد به خيرا والصلاة والسلام على محمد واله الابرار
(no. 18)

الحمد لله رب العلمين حمدا يوافي نعمه ويكافي مزيده والصلوة والسلام على سيدنا محمد واله
وصحبه اجمعين (no. 21)

الحمد لله الواقف علي سرائر ضمائر المتصدقين المطمع علي خلوص نياتهم كما هو داب المخلصين
المقيضين ابارها في طاعة الله والقيام بما يرضيه من بر الوالدين وصلى الله على سيدنا محمد
وعلي اله وصحبه الايما الراشدين (IES 1848)

2. a *ba'diyya*, which indeed alludes to a preceding text:

وبعد

اما بعد (no. 21)

21 See A. Gori, *A Handlist of the Manuscripts in the Institute of the Ethiopian Studies*, 11: *The Arabic Materials of the Ethiopian Islamic Tradition*, 2014, p. 23 for a description of the manuscript.

3. the beginning of an introductory passage highlighting the religious background of the act. The passage starts with *fa-innahu* or *fa-*, followed by *lammā*, followed by *kāna*. In no. 18, where the explanation is quite long, and includes a citation of the *muḥaddiṭ* Muslim (631/1233–676/1277), quoting Abū Hurayra,²² there is a reminder of the ‘causal’ meaning:

فانه لما كان الوقف من القربات المندوبات والطاعات المحثوثات عليها لقوله صلى الله عليه وسلم²³ فيما رواه مسلم ”اذا مات ابن ادم انقطع عمله الا من ثلث صدقة جارية وعلم ينتفع به وولد صالح يدعوله“ فلها كان الامر كذلك (no. 18)

فانه لما كانت نعم الله علي خواص عباده تترى وسعدة الدارين بادخار المثوبات تتلوا احدهما الاخري وفضل الله يوتيه من يشا من عباده ويزيد من شكر اجرا ويجمع لمن يريد من خلقه ملكا نجاشيا وثوبا وعفوا وان الذخيرة لا خير الملوك والمائة الباقية المتعطرة في صحايف الحسنات والسيرة التي تنفي الزمن وهي في الاعقاب باقية اقتناص شوارد المثوبات واقتباس انوار الهداية في سائر المطلوبات (IES 1848)

فلها كان الوقف من اعظم اسباب القربات وافضل ما اهدي ثوابه الى الاموات اذ كان من الصدقات الجاريات واولى ما فعل لاكتساب الاجر والحسنات (no. 21)

4. then, the key-verb expressing what validates the act *bādara ilā*:

بادرت (no. 18)

بادر لانفاق ما منحه الله بعد ان استخار الله في افعال توصله الى ما معاد العظمى ويجعل له مع احسن رفيق من الذين انعم الله عليهم من النبيين والصدّيقين والشهداء والصالحين وحسن اوليك قربا (IES 1848)

5. with the subject of the action, i.e. the *wāqif*, preceded by laudatory (IES 1848) or self-deprecatory attributes (no. 21). No. 18, and also no. 21, qualifies legally the *wāqifa*:

الحرة الطاهرة فلانة (no. 18)

الحرة الفقيرة الى رحمة ربها (no. 21)

22 Al-Nawawī (7th/13th c.), *Riyāḍ al-ṣāliḥīn*, 1383, Book 12, ḥadiṭ no. 8.

23 ASH00413: صلى الله عليه وسلم —ASH00043: صلى الله عليه وسلم

6. then the 'consequence', the decision of the *waqf* (*fa-waqafa* etc.), resulting from the description of the high spiritual value and reward attached to the act:

فوقفت وحبست (no. 18)

فوقف وحبس وسبل (IES 1848)

in the case of no. 21, the decision of the *waqf* is not expressed as a result (*fa-*), but the four key-verbs of the action of bequest of a book simply follow or succeed the key-verb *bādara ilā*:

بادرت اليه ووقفت وحبست وسبلت وتصدقت

7. then *formula 3* follows *formula 1*

Transl. of no. 18²⁴

Praise be to God who created the *waqf* for the good deeds of the virtuous—God bless our Master Muhammad, and peace be upon him and his family, the pious (*al-abrār*)! *Waqf* is one of the recommended actions which brings us closer to God and one of the desirable duties according to his (the Prophet's) word—God bless him and peace be upon him!—transmitted by Muslim: "When a man dies, his deeds come to an end except for three things: everlasting charity (*ṣadaqa ġāriyya*); a knowledge which is beneficial; or a virtuous descendant who prays for him (i.e. for the deceased)." Therefore the pure and free so-and-so, rapidly desired to obtain the reward which is given for those actions, and bequeathed etc.

Transl. of no. 21

Praise be to God, Lord of the worlds, for the magnitude of his benefactions which are rendered to him a hundredfold, blessing and peace upon our Master Muhammad, his family and his companions! *Waqf* is among the best means which bring us closer to God and the preferred reward given to the dead, for it is part of the eternal charities (*ṣadaqāt ġāriyya*), which one does to acquire reward, and of good deeds. Therefore, the free and poor in front of her Lord the merciful so-and-so rapidly desired to obtain the reward which is given for those actions, and bequeathed etc.

24 IES 1848 was translated by A. Gori, "Waqf certificates of Qur'āns from Harar: A first assessment," 2015, pp. 289–290.

No. 26 keeps the main structure of *formula 3*, but skips the explanatory introduction on the religious and spiritual reward of the *waqf*, including the key-verb *bādara ilā*. This contraction inevitably requires a syntactic change in the connection to *formula 1*, so that the structure of no. 26 is composed of a *ḥamdala*, the transition mark (*baʿdiyya*), *amma baʿad*, and the text of *formula 1*, with its own, genuine, syntax, being no more the result of a decision ‘caused’ by the desire to get the benefits of the *waqf* with the syntax: *bādara ilā ... fa-waqafa ...* It is a dated *waqfiyya*, the date in the Hegira calender is introduced by *dalika*, and is followed by *afḍal al-ṣalā wa-al-salām*, and *akmal taḥiya*, both addressed to the Prophet Muhammad, who did the *hiğra*.

No. 25 is incomplete in many ways. It adds a list of witnesses.

3.4 Short waqfiyyas

There are recent, very short *waqfiyyas*, of which we have only two examples, nos 28, 29, which are complete Qurʾans. No. 28, like no. 29, is perhaps a *waqf ḥayrī*.

It mainly records the founder, the bequeathed object and the beneficiary, with a date, certainly in the case of no. 29.

No. 23 and 27, two complete Qurʾans, each being the only example of its kind in our corpus, we do not provide their *formulae*, probably that of a *waqf ḥayrī* for a mosque or a shrine.

The structure of the most frequent formula (*formula 1*) is similar to that of 8th/14th–9th/15th C. *waqfiyyas* of Qurʾans issued in Mamlūk Cairo, as is at the end the reference to Q 2:181.²⁵ The explicit declaration of the establishment of the *waqf*, inalienable and eternal, followed by a reference to Q 19:40 and 21:89, stands as it is expressed in the Harari *waqfiyyas*, but can be phrased in another way. The wording of Harari *waqfiyyas* are also found in the Mamlūk period. Differences are in keywords (*al-ḍarīḥ* is Harari), or the way some modules of the formula are introduced: the conditions of use of the book starts with: *ṣarṭ an/a-lā* or *ṣarṭu al-naẓr* etc. and makes distinct the place where the book has to be stored (*al-maqarr*) and the places to which it can be taken when lent. The recurrent clarification of the reasons why the book in *waqf* can be useful (*naḥ*) to people in the Mamlūk samples, as well as the date of the writing of the *waqfiyya*, may be explained by the fact that they are *waqf ḥayrī*. The presence of “*hādā mā waqafa(t)* etc.” at the start of *formula 1* distinguishes the

25 A.F. Sayyid, *Al-kitāb al-ʿarabī al-maḥṭūṭ wa-ʿilm al-maḥṭūṭāt*, 1418/1997, vol. 2, pp. 428–433, which includes a selection of *waqfiyyas* from D. James, *Qurʾāns of the Mamlūks*, 1988, cat. 28, 32, 40, 45, 72.

waqfiyyas of Harar from documents nos 2 (Lamu Museum) and 8 (J. de Vere Allen's private coll., Qur'an, surat al-Kahf) from Lamu, Kenya.²⁶ The published documents from Lamu do not specify the permitted area for the circulation of an endowed book. Moreover, previous attempts to compare the Harari *text* of *waqfiyyas* with formulations from the Horn of Africa or the wider region have so far failed for a variety of reasons.²⁷ The ASH corpus does not contradict this: the formulations of the Harari *waqfiyyas* being dissimilar to those of other published *waqfiyyas* from elsewhere, and slight but noticeable differences with the Mamlūk *waqfiyyas* at our disposal having been pointed out, they help in some way to relate the endowed manuscripts to Harar.

4 Text Edition of the Harari *waqfiyyas*

The *waqfiyyas* have been organised in chronological order of Qur'ans, single or thirty-part items, except where the *waqfiyya* itself is dated or datable. Most attempts to date the copying of the Qur'ans with no colophon have been made on a palaeographic basis. The dates present in marginal notes of documentary value have been recorded. The papers of some Qur'ans have been noted; they do not constitute contradictory elements.²⁸ In a few cases, the *waqfiyyas* appear to be in the same hand which copied the Qur'an, while no. 26 provides an example of a difference of 149 years between the colophon of the Qur'an and the date of its *waqf* and no. 27 attests to an even greater difference of 180 years. In any case, the Qur'ans provide a *terminus a quo* for the *waqfiyyas*, while the closer the date of copying of a Qur'an gets to the 20th century, the briefer the interval between the copying and its putting into *waqf* necessarily becomes.

In view of this, we have reproduced the texts literally with their errors and inconsistencies or writing peculiarities and therefore avoided indicating them by, for example, using "sic!"

To characterise the variations arising from the copying process, we use Adam Gacek's terminology, augmented as necessary.²⁹

26 J.O. Hunwick & R.S. O'Fahey, "Some *waqf* documents from Lamu," 2002, pp. 5–6, 18–19.

27 Gori pointed this out on the basis of the six *waqfiyyas* from the IES (A. Gori, "Waqf certificates of Qur'ans from Harar: A first assessment," 2015, p. 293).

28 For the papers, A. Regourd, coll. S. Mirza, *Catalogue des manuscrits du Sherif Harar Municipal Museum/Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Sherif Harar Municipal Museum. The Qur'ans*, pp. 60–73 (French), 105–118 (English).

29 A. Gacek, "Taxonomy of scribal errors and corrections in Arabic manuscripts," 2007.

When multiple Qur'anic sections for the same founder were preserved, their text edition is arbitrarily based on the first extant section. Shelfmarks of sections are followed by '=', then the number of the *ǧuz*'.

4.1 17th Century

no. 1. Ādam ibn 'Umar Ṣadīq (*al-wāqif, al-darīḥ*)

Section of a thirty-part Qur'an, 17th century

– ASH00071 = *ǧuz*' 13; *waqfiyya*, f. 1^r, diacritics

1. هذا ما وقف وحبس وسبل وتصدق ادم بن
2. عمر صديق اوقف لنفسه وقفا صحيحا شرعيا لا يباع
3. ولا يوهب ولا يرهن ولا يورث حتى يرث الارض
4. ومن عليها وهو خير الوارثين

no. 2. Nūr bint Ayyūb *zawǧat* (?) Aḥmad, mother of 'Amr Dīn and 'Ubayd (*al-wāqifa*)

Section of a thirty-part Qur'an, 17th century

– ASH00080 = *ǧuz*' 10; *waqfiyya*, f. 2^r, no diacritics

1. هذا ما وقفت وحبست وسبلت وتصدقت به نور
2. بنت ايوب <زوجة؟> احمد لولديهم عمر دين ولعييد هذا
3. الجزء وما قبله وما بعده من اجزا القران العظيم
4. من تجزية ثلثين الى ضريح ولديهم المذكورين
5. بمدينة هرر وقفا صحيحا شرعيا لا يباع ولا يو
6. هب³⁰ ولا يرهن ولا يورث حتى يرث الله الارض³¹ و
7. من عليها وهو خير الوارثين فمن بدله بعد ما
8. سمعه فانما اثمه على الذين يبدلونه ان الله
9. سميع عليهم³²

30 Words split into two parts to comply with the left border of the written surface are frequent in Harar late production, as is evident in several *waqfiyyas* edited here, and are employed together with copyists' strategies to adjust undivided words to fit within the left border.

31 The *hamza* stands between l. 6 and 7.

32 Straight after the *waqfiyya*, a *dū'a*' in cinnabar:

1. هذا ما وقف³⁴ وحبس وسبل وتصدق وقفت رحمة بنت عمر
2. لزوجها³⁵ حاج عبد الرحمن ابن³⁶ جراد احمد³⁷ هذا الجزء وما قبله وما
3. بعده من تجزئة ثلثين من اجزاء³⁸ القرآن العظيم وقفنا صحيحا
4. شرعيا³⁹ لا يباع ولا يوهب ولا يورث حتى⁴⁰ يرث الله⁴¹ الارض ومن اعليها/
5. وجعل النظرة⁴² <<حامد ابن مبارك خلف>>⁴³ ويخرج من بيته الي⁴⁴
6. مقابر المسلمين في⁴⁵ مدينة هرر ويرجع اليه فن بدله⁴⁶ بعد ما
7. سمعه⁴⁷ علي⁴⁸ الذين⁴⁹ يبدلونه⁵⁰ ان⁵¹ الله⁵² سميع علم⁵³ ٥

no. 4. *Amīr al-mu'minīn al-amīr Hāšim ibn al-amīr 'Alī* (i.e. 'Alī ibn Dā'ūd; d. 30 Ramaḍān 1081/10 February 1671, r. 11 Rabī' 11 1073/23 November 1662—30 Ramaḍān 1081/10 February 1671,⁵³ *al-wāqif, al-nāzīr*)
Section of a thirty-part Qur'an, *terminus post quem* between 23 November 1662 and 10 February 1671; *waqf* for the shrine of *al-amīr Nūr ibn al-amīr Muḡāhid* (d. 1567, *al-ḍarīḥ, al-tawāb lahu*). It seems this shrine is frequently the repository of endowed Qur'ans.⁵⁴

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- 34 ASH00058: <<ما>>.
35 ASH00061: [لزوجها], sic for لزوجها
36 ASH00061: ابن
37 ASH00058: أحمد
38 ASH00061: اجزا
39 ASH00058: وقفنا شرعيا
40 ASH00046: حتى
41 ASH00061: الله
42 ASH00058: النظرة—ASH00061: [نظرة]
43 ASH00073, ASH00046, ASH00058: the name is crossed out using a rectangle and X (ASH00073, ASH00058), and creates a kind of frieze (ASH00046)—ASH00046: حامد الدين —ASH00061: not crossed out; مبارك؟
44 ASH00061: الي
45 ASH00058: في
46 ASH00046: بدله
47 ASH00046, ASH00058, ASH00061: ... بعد ما سمعه فانها اثمه
48 ASH00046: ؟ علي the *šadda* may be crossed out—ASH00061: علي
49 ASH00061: الذين
50 ASH00046: يبدلونه
51 ASH00061: ان
52 ASH00046, ASH00058, ASH00061: الله
53 S. Tedeschi, "Le Emirato di Harar secondo un document inedito," 1974, no. 2, pp. 488–489, 500; E. Wagner, "Hāšim b. 'Alī b. Dā'ūd," 2005, p. 1044b.
54 See IES 1846 (Gori no. 2). F.-Ch. Muth, "Nūr b. Muḡāhid," *Encyclopaedia Aethiopia*, vol. 3,

– ASH00076 = *ǧuz*' 7, has been repaired in the past; *waqfiyya*, f. 2^r, irregular diacritics

The text of the *waqfiyya* specifies another beneficiary of this Qur'an, funeral ceremonies or other cemetery practices. The conditions of use mention cemeteries beyond Harar City *intra muros*.

1. هذا ما وقف وحبس وسبّل وتصدّق وامير⁵⁵ المومنين الامير⁵⁶
2. هاشم بن الأمير علي هذا الجزء وما قبله وما بعده
3. من أجزاء القرآن العظيم من تجزئة ثلثين على ضريح
4. الامير نور⁵⁷ بن الامير⁵⁸ مجاهد بمدينة هرر⁵⁹ المحروسة وعلى
5. مقابر⁶⁰ المسلمين بمدينة المذكورة وغير ذلك وجعل
6. ثوابه لامير⁶¹ نور⁶² المذكور⁶³ يخرج بها من المدينة الى المقابر⁶⁴
7. وغيره ويرجع بها إلى الناظر⁶⁵ بعد القراءة وجعل النظر في مدة احياته/
8. لنفسه⁶⁶ ثم لأكبر⁶⁷ اولاده الأعلى فالأعلى ما تناسلوا بطنا بعد
9. بطن قبل الله منه وفقاً صحيحاً شرعياً⁶⁸ لا يباع ولا يوهب
10. ولا يرهن ولا يورث حتى يرث الله الارض ومن عليها
11. وهو خير الوارثين⁶⁹ فمن بدله بعد ما سمعه فأنما أمته
12. على الذين يبدلونه ان الله سميع عليم،،،،

2007, pp. 1209–1210. A. Zekaria, "Some Remarks on the Shrines of Harar," 2004; T. Insoll, H. Tesfaye & M. Saako Mahmoud, "Archaeological Survey and Test Excavations, Harari Regional State, Ethiopia, July–August 2014. A Preliminary Fieldwork Report," 2014, p. 101.

55 *Ihmāl* on *rā*'.

56 *Ihmāl* on *rā*'.

57 *Ihmāl* on *rā*'.

58 *Ihmāl* on *rā*'.

59 *Ihmāl* on *rā*'.

60 *Ihmāl* on *rā*'.

61 *Ihmāl* on *rā*'.

62 *Ihmāl* on *rā*'.

63 *Ihmāl* on *rā*'.

64 *Ihmāl* on *rā*'.

65 *Ihmāl* on *rā*'.

66 *Ihmāl* on *sīn*'.

67 *Ihmāl* on *rā*'.

68 *Ihmāl* on *rā*'.

69 *Ihmāl* on *rā*'.

13. وصلى الله على رسوله⁷⁰ سيدنا محمد واله وصحبه وسلم

no. 5. *Al-šayḥ (sic) Amat Allāh bint al-šayḥ Ḥāmid (al-wāqifa)*

Sections of a thirty-part Qur'an, end of the 17th century. ASH00079 bears two *waqfiyyas* (see below, no. 6). This is the only case among the selected 29 entries, and the second *waqfiyya* does not appear on the six other sections of no. 5. As for the endowment by the other founder, *garād Sār[a] bint garād Šādiq* (no. 6), only ASH00079, is known to us, but her *waqfiyya* was written on the folio (f. 2^r) which precedes that of the *waqfiyya* of *Amat Allāh bint al-šayḥ Ḥāmid* (f. 3^r)

- ASH00069 = *ǧuz'* 1;⁷¹ *waqfiyya*, f. 2^r, irregular diacritics. Fig. 4.1
- ASH00079 = *ǧuz'* 9; *waqfiyya*, f. 3^r, few diacritics
- ASH00045 = *ǧuz'* 16; *waqfiyya*, f. 2^r, few diacritics, in the same hand as ASH00053?, copied from a model common to ASH00069
- ASH00047 = *ǧuz'* 17; *waqfiyya*, f. 2^r, few diacritics, in the same hand as ASH00053
- ASH00053 = *ǧuz'* 21; *waqfiyya*, f. 2^r, few diacritics, on the same hand as ASH00047, clumsy, round
- ASH00054 = *ǧuz'* 22; *waqfiyya*, f. 2^r, few diacritics, in a hand different from ASH00056, more accomplished
- ASH00056 = *ǧuz'* 24; *waqfiyya*, f. 2^r, diacritics, in a different and more careful hand than ASH00054


The sections of this Qur'an which are in our possession were copied by the same hand. As for the *waqfiyya*, we note from the critical apparatus slight variations due to the presence or not of *hamzas*, *šaddas*, pointed *alif's maqšūra*, short vowels, *tā' marbūta* as a feminine marker. In ASH00047, l. 3, the copyist misspelt part of the name of the *wāqif* as we have al-Ḥāmid rather than Ḥāmid. This *waqfiyya* was used to practice writing or as exercise in copying for more than one advanced *ṭālib* did their best to reproduce a style of script, as is clear from documents ASH00069, ASH00054, ASH00056 [Figs 4.1a–c]. One of its characteristics is the indentation of central *yā's* in the form of a curve, which becomes half a circle when *yā'* is combined with *tā'*, and produces a special effect in the reader's eyes. Another one is two different scripts of *rā'*, and in ASH00056, the hand even tried three different way of writing it. In ASH00045, *fa-man* was rewritten above in a simpler and more handsome way with a faint black ink by a more experienced hand and is, perhaps, a teacher providing a model. Equally,

70 *Ihmāl* on *rā'*.

71 ASH00069; the text of the *waqfiyya* appears in a frame on almost three sides of four realised by a single line in black ink, probably more recently.

the *waqfiyya* of ASH00053, which was written by the same hand as ASH00047, has a *šadda* placed on *fa-innamā* by a different, experienced, hand in a faint black ink.

1. 72. هذا ما وقفت⁷³ وحبست وسببت وتصدقت⁷⁴
2. الفقير الحقيير⁷⁵ الى⁷⁶ الله تعالى⁷⁷ الشيخ⁷⁸ امة الله
3. بنت الشيخ حامد⁷⁹ وما قبله وما بعده⁸⁰ من
4. اجزاء⁸¹ القرآن العظيم من تجزية الثلثين⁸²
5. الي⁸³ ضريح صالح أحمد⁸⁴ وقفا صحيحا شرعيا
6. لا يباع ولا يوهب⁸⁵ ولا يرهن ولا يورث
7. حتي⁸⁶ يرث الله الارض ومن عليها وهو خير

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- 72 ASH00045: addition of *بسم*, more recent, on a separate line, which is therefore l. 1 in ASH00045.
- 73 ASH00079: هَذَا مَا وَقَفْتُ—ASH00045: هَذَا مَا وَقَفْتُ
- 74 ASH00079, ASH00045, ASH00053, ASH00054: —ASH00047: وحبست وسببت وتصدقت
وحبست وسببت وتصدقت
- 75 ASH00069: the indentation of central *yā*'s forms a curve which tends to close on itself, as here with *al-ḥaqūr*, and below: *al-šayḥ* (l. 3), *al-ṭalaṭīn* (l. 4), *ṣaḥīḥ* (l. 5), *ḥayr* (l. 7), *al-wārītīn* (l. 8), *ʿalīm* (l. 10); ASH00054, ASH00056 share the same feature for *al-ṭalaṭīn* (l. 4), *ḥayr* (l. 7), *al-wārītīn* (l. 7–8); when *yā*' is combined with *tā*, it forms half a circle and as reader's eyes need to go back and forth in order to identify the letter, this letter looks to be distinct from the others—ASH00045, ASH00047, ASH00053: الفقيرة الحقييرة
- 76 ASH00056: الي
- 77 ASH00079, ASH00045, ASH00053: تعالى—ASH00047, ASH00056: تعلي
- 78 ASH00056: الشيخ omitted.
- 79 ASH00047: الحامد
- 80 ASH00053: وما بعده وما قبله
- 81 ASH00079, ASH00045, ASH00047, ASH00054: اجزا—ASH00053: اجزا, with, above the *ḡīm*, a mark in the shape of a comma with a circular basis , which could be a more recent addition: maybe a *sukūn*?
- 82 ASH00047: الثلثين
- 83 ASH00079, ASH00045, ASH00053: الي
- 84 ASH00079, ASH00045, ASH00047, ASH00053, ASH00054, ASH00056: name not vocalised.
- 85 ASH00045: ولا appears twice, once at the end of l. 6 (including l. 1 of the *basmala*), the other at the beginning of l. 7: this kind of repetition is frequent practice in Qur'ans in Harar, the purpose of which is to fill out the line.
- 86 ASH00079, ASH00045, ASH00053: حتي

8. الوارثين⁸⁷ فمن⁸⁸ بدله⁸⁹ بعد ما سمعه⁹⁰ فأثمه⁹¹
 9. أثمه⁹¹ علي⁹² الذين⁹³ يبدلونه⁹² إن الله⁹³ سميع⁹⁴
 10. علم⁹⁴ ⊙

no. 6. *garād* Sār[a] *bint garād* Ṣādiq (*al-wāqifa*)

The beneficiary (*al-ḍarīḥ*) is Ġāmi‘ ‘Abd al-Qādir, Ġāmi‘, from Somali Jaamac. Section of a thirty-part Qur’an, end of the 17th century. As for the two *waqfiyyas* in ASH00079, see no. 5

– ASH00079 = *ǧuz*’ 9; *waqfiyya*, f. 2^r, few diacritics

1. هذا ما وقفت وحبست وسببت و
 2. [ت]صدقت الفقيرة الحقيرة الى الله تعالى
 3. جراد سار بنت جراد صادق وما قبله وما
 4. [ب]عده من اجزا القران العظيم من تجزئة الثلثين
 5. [ال]ى ضريح جامع عبد القادر⁹⁵ وقفا صحيحا
 6. [ش]رعيا لا يباع ولا يوهب ولا يرهن ولا
 7. [يو]ارث حتى يرث الارض ومن عليها وهو خير
 8. [ا]لوارثين فمن بدله بعد ما سمعه فأثمه
 9. [ع]لى الذين يبدلونه ان الله سميع ⊙ علم

no. 7. Ḥadiġa *bint* ‘Abd al-Maġid (*al-wāqifa*)

Section of a thirty-part Qur’an, end of the 17th century

– ASH00077 = *ǧuz*’ 8, has been repaired in the past; *waqfiyya*, f. 2^r, diacritics

87 ASH00079, ASH00045, ASH00047, ASH00053, ASH00054, ASH00056: the passage which follows is not vocalised.

88 ASH00045: *fa-man* rewritten above in a simpler/handsomer way.

89 ASH00079, ASH00045: بدله

90 ASH00053: فأثمه, the *šadda* is by a different hand from the *waqfiyya* and from the mark above the *ǧim* of *aġzā* (l. 3 and n. 81).

91 ASH00047, ASH00053: علي

92 ASH00079, ASH00045: يبدلونه

93 ASH00045, ASH00047, ASH00053, ASH00056: ان الله — ASH00054: ان الله

94 ASH00079, ASH00045, ASH00047, ASH00053, ASH00054: without closing mark.

95 *Ihmāl* on *rā*’.

There is a masculine reminder pronoun (*damīr muṭṭaṣil*) that should have been feminine.

1. هذا ما وقفت وحبست وسببت وتصدقت الفقير
2. الحقير الي الله تعالي خديجة بنت عبد المجيد وما
3. قبله وما بعده من اجزا القران العظيم ومن
4. تجزئة ثلثين الي ضريح لايه عبد المجيد و
5. جعلت النظر الشيخ محمد وقفا صحيحا شرعيا
6. لا يباع ولا يوهب ولا يرهن ولا يورث حتي
7. يرث الله الارض ومن عليها وهو خير الوار
8. ثين فن بدله بعد ما سمعه فانما اثمه علي الذين
9. يدلونه ان الله سميع عليم °

4.2 End of the 17th Century–1st Third of the 18th Century

no. 8. *kabīr*⁹⁶ Mawlūd Ibn *kabīr* ‘Abd al-Raḥīm (*al-wāqif*, *al-nāzīr*)

Sections of a thirty-part Qur’an (or of two Qur’ans), end of the 17th century–1st third of the 18th century

- ASH00044 = *ǧuz*’ 15; incomplete date in the margin: Dū al-Qa’da *awwal*; *waqfiyya*, f. 2^r, regular diacritics
- ASH00055 = *ǧuz*’ 22; on the board: 26 *šarh* Šafar sanat 1134/16 December 1721; *waqfiyya*, f. 2^r, regular diacritics

Different hands copied the two available sections of the Qur’an. And each *waqfiyya* was copied by a different hand. From the critical apparatus, we notice variations resulting from the copying process, like the omissions in the conditions of use of the book. Slight variations come from the vocalisation or not of some letters.

1. هذا ما وقف وحبس وسبل وتصدق الحقير الفقير
2. الي الله تعالي °97 مولود⁹⁸ ابن كبير عبد الرحيم
3. لوالديه هذا الجزء وما قبله وما بعده من اجزاء⁹⁹

96 For the meaning of this title, see A. Gori, “Kabīr,” 2007.

97 ASH00055: no mark.

98 ASH00055: مولود كبير إنط.

99 ASH00055: اجزا.

4. القرآن العظيم من تجزية ثلثين لوالديه ولجميع
5. المسلمين¹⁰⁰ يخرج منها الي المقابر¹⁰¹ ويرجع اليها
6. وجعل¹⁰² ثوابه لوالديه المذكورين¹⁰³ وجعل النظر
7. في مدة¹⁰⁴ حياته لنفسه ثم لأكبر اولاده¹⁰⁵ ما تناسلوا
8. بطنا بعد بطن قبل الله منه بفضلته وجعله
9. خالصا لوجهه وفقا صحيحا شرعيا لا يباع
10. ولا يوهب ولا يرهن ولا يورث حتي يرث الله
11. الارض ومن عليها وهو خير الوارثين فمن بدله¹⁰⁶
12. بعد ما سمعه فانما اثمه علي الذين يبدلونه
13. ان الله سميع عليم ﴿١٠٧﴾¹⁰⁷

no. 9. *Ātiqa bint Ḥayr al-Dīn*, mother of ‘Abd Allāh *ibn Ayyub/Ayub*¹⁰⁸ Ḡāmi‘
(*al-wāqifa*, *al-nāzira*)

Section of a thirty-part Qur’an, end of the 17th century–beginning of the 18th century

– ASH00048 = *ḡuz*’ 17; date on the board: 15 October 1726 (= 18 Safar (*sic*) 1139 A.H.); *waqfiyya*, f. 2^r, regular diacritics

1. هذا ما وقف وحبس وسبل وتصدق الفقير الحقير
2. الى الله تعالي وهي عاتقة بنت خير الدين لولدها عبد الله
3. ابن ايب جامع هذا الجزء وما قبله وما بعده من اجزاء
4. القرآن العظيم من تجزية ثلثين الي ضريح عبد الله المذكور
5. لمدينة الهرر المحروس يخرج من المدينة الي المقابر
6. ويرجع بها الي ذلك الموضع وجعل ثواب ذلك

100 ASH00055: stain from a liquid on *al-muslimin*.

101 ASH00055: الي المقابر, not extant.

102 ASH00055: وجعل

103 ASH00055: <<المك>> المذكورين, the deletion stands at the end of the line.

104 ASH00055: stain from a liquid partially hiding the following words: *al-naẓr fī mudda*.

105 ASH00055: stain from a liquid on *awlādihī*.

106 ASH00055: بدله

107 ASH00055: ﴿١٠٧﴾

108 Probably for (the prophet) Ayyūb.

7. للمذكور عبد الله ابن ايب / جامع وجعل النظر في مدة حياته
8. لنفسه ثم لأكبر¹⁰⁹ اولاده افقهم¹¹⁰ ما تناسلوا بطنا
9. بعد بطن قبل الله منه وقفا صحيحا شرعياً لا يباع
10. ولا يرهن ولا يوهب ولا يورث حتى يرث الله
11. الارض ومن عليها وهو خير الوارثين فمن بدله
12. بعد ما سمعه فانما اثمه علي الذين يبدلونه ان الله
13. سمع علم ☉

no. 10. *al-šarīfa Salma bint al-sayyid ‘Abd Allāh zawġat al-sayyid ‘Abd al-‘Azīz (al-wāqifa, al-nāzira)*

Sections of a thirty-part Qur’an, end of the 17th century–beginning of the 18th century

- ASH00064 = *ġuz’* 1, the last folio of the *ġuz’* having disappeared, the end of the section was rewritten by another hand on the recto; *waqfiyya*, f. 2^r, in a rectangular frame made with three strips: two small strips, one yellow, the other white, and a larger red strip in the middle, diacritics
- ASH00032 = *ġuz’* 4; on the board: 16 November 1730 (or 21 June 1711) (= 5 Ğumād al-Awwal *sanat* 1143 (1123?)); *waqfiyya*, f. 18^r, diacritics
- ASH00090 = *ġuz’* 5, the last folio of the *ġuz’* having disappeared, the end of the section was rewritten by another hand on the recto; *waqfiyya*, f. 1^v,¹¹¹ diacritics
- ASH00031 = *ġuz’* 6; *waqfiyya*, f. 1^v, diacritics, *šahāda* in a hand different from that of the *waqfiyya*, vertical, fills the space left empty
- ASH00033 = *ġuz’* 8, one folio was repaired and the text which was on it, rewritten, and the last folio of the *ġuz’* having disappeared, the end of the section was rewritten by another hand on the recto; *waqfiyya*, f. 2^r, diacritics
- ASH00002 = *ġuz’* 10; record of death, 29 November 1713 (= *šahr* 11 Dī al-Qa‘da *sanat* 1125 A.H.); *waqfiyya*, f. 1^r, diacritics—final *tā’* of *tašaddaqa* and *bint*

109 Above the *bā’*, maybe a crossed-out *hamza*.

110 Probably for الله أفقهم

111 The *waqfiyya* in the same hand as f. 1^v appears also on f. 20^v: the volume underwent recent restoration, most probably by Abdullahi Sherif, and it is plausible that being a separate folio preserved in the volume, the decision was taken to keep it and fix it at the volume end by mounting the folio on the paper glued to the internal board. The second folio of the manuscript as it has been imaged, bearing the text of a prayer book without beginning and end, a unique folio of its kind in the manuscript, is another episode of the story.

overwritten in red; *man* in *ḥattā yarit̃ Allāh al-arḍ wa-man ‘alayhā* overwritten in red; *hā* in *ba‘ad mā sami‘ahu* overwritten in red; *šadda* of *al-sayyid* (both places) and of *Allāh* in *qabila Allāh lahā bi-faḍlihi* in red; final closing mark in red, followed by two lines *tatimma* in red:

1. تمت وبالخير عمت تم وبالخير عم

2. تمت عمت تم عم

- ASH00004 = *ǧuz*’ 11; on the board: 13 (?) June 1734 (= 11 (?) Muḥarram 1147 A.H.); *waqfiyya*, f. 1^r, diacritics
- ASH00029 = *ǧuz*’ 12; ownership (individual), stamp, 1717 to 1727 (= 113x or 112x, the last digit is unclear); *waqfiyya*, f. 1^v, diacritics
- ASH00030 = *ǧuz*’ 13; *waqfiyya*, f. 1^r, diacritics
- ASH00028 = *ǧuz*’ 14, the last folio of the *ǧuz*’ having disappeared, the end of the section was rewritten by another hand on the recto; *waqfiyya*, f. 1^v, diacritics
- ASH00027 = *ǧuz*’ 15; *waqfiyya*, pasted on the upper board
- ASH00091 = *ǧuz*’ 16; *waqfiyya*, f. 2^r, diacritics—the *waqfiyya* appears in a rectangular frame formed of two black lines in a shape of a tablet, then in an inverted triangle reminiscent of the shape of a colophon, splitting the bottom of the rectangular frame into two other triangles, and marked with a black strip, then two thin yellow strips with, in the middle, a larger red strip. The black strip follows the bottom of the rectangular frame. The surface below the bottom of the tablet and up to the bottom of the rectangular frame is in red colour with white and black vegetal and twisted frieze. *Inna Allāh samī‘ alīm* ☉ is taken as a pen exercise, and is written above the expression, without diacritic. Fig. 4.2
- ASH00406 = *ǧuz*’ 17, the last folio of the *ǧuz*’ having disappeared, the end of the section was rewritten by another hand on the recto; *waqfiyya*, f. 1^r, diacritics
- ASH00026 = *ǧuz*’ 18; *waqfiyya*, f. 1^v, diacritics
- ASH00025 = *ǧuz*’ 19, the last folio of the *ǧuz*’ having disappeared, the end of the section was rewritten by another hand on the recto; *waqfiyya*, f. 1^v, diacritics
- ASH00024 = *ǧuz*’ 20, the *ǧuz*’ was repaired and the folio bearing the *waqfiyya* was displaced to the end as witness the red dots, and mounted upside down—the beginning of the *ǧuz*’ does not appear on the verso of the folio that bears the *waqfiyya*; *waqfiyya*, f. 23^r, diacritics
- ASH00023 = *ǧuz*’ 21; *waqfiyya*, f. 1^v, diacritics

- ASH00021 = *ǧuz'* 24; ownership, stamp of Masǧid Naṣr Allāh, 1901; *waqfiyya*, f. 1^v, diacritics
- ASH00020 = *ǧuz'* 25, the last folio of the *ǧuz'* having disappeared, the end of the section was rewritten by another hand on the recto; *waqfiyya*, f. 1^v, diacritics
- ASH00019 = *ǧuz'* 26; ownership, stamp Masǧid Naṣr Allāh, 8 July 1731 (?) (= *yawm /20\ al-ḥamīs 3 šahar Muḥarram al-ḥaram sanat 1144* (?)); *waqfiyya*, f. 1^v, diacritics
- ASH00018 = *ǧuz'* 27, the last folio of the *ǧuz'* having disappeared, the end of the section was rewritten by another hand on the recto; *waqfiyya*, f. 1^v, diacritics
- ASH00017 = *ǧuz'* 28; on the board: 14 April 1713 A.D. (= *yawm al-itnayn 18 Rabi' al-Awwal 1125 A.H.*); *waqfiyya*, f. 1^v, diacritics
- ASH00016 = *ǧuz'* 30, last folios repaired and disorder in the organisation of the folios; *waqfiyya*, f. 1^v, diacritics, red dots and marks, are traces from the next sheet.

Twenty-three of the thirty volumes of the Qur'an are extant. They are all by the same, skilled, hand. Several of the twenty-three volumes have been repaired recently, most probably by Abdullahi Sherif, others like the first *ǧuz'* have been repaired more than once. Only the folios which were repaired, generally at the section's end, were rewritten. The *waqfiyya* is in different hands, with one noticeable group: ASH00064, ASH00090, ASH00031, ASH00033, ASH00002, ASH00028, ASH00025, ASH00018. From the critical apparatus, we note slight variations due to the presence or not of *hamzas*, *šaddas*, short vowels, as well as omissions and a dittography. Among the omissions, the alteration of Q 2:181 in nine *ǧuz'*s.

1. هذا¹¹² ما وقفت وحبست¹¹³ وسببت¹¹⁴ وتصداقت¹¹⁵/

2. الفقيرة الحقيرة الى الله¹¹⁶ تعالى الشريفة¹¹⁷ سلمة¹¹⁸

112 ASH00004: هَذَا—ASH00030: [هَذَا]—ASH00026: cacography?

113 ASH00064: a strip of paper prevents the reader from knowing if there is a *šadda* on the *qāf* and the *bā'* of *وقفت وحبست*—ASH00029, ASH00028, ASH00406, ASH00018: *وقفت وحبست*

114 ASH00029, ASH00406, ASH00018: *وسببت*

115 ASH00016: *وتصداقت*

116 ASH00004, ASH00030, ASH00028, ASH00091, ASH00406, ASH00026, ASH00025, ASH00024, ASH00021, ASH00016: *الله*—ASH00016: cacography.

117 ASH00004: *الشريفة*

118 ASH00090: *سلمة*—ASH00016: *[سلمة]*

3. بنت السيد¹¹⁹ عبد الله¹²⁰ هذا¹²¹ الجزء¹²² وما قبله¹²³ و
 4. ما¹²⁴ بعده من اجزا¹²⁵ القرآن العظيم¹²⁶
 5. من تجزية¹²⁷ ثلاثين لزوجها¹²⁸ السيد¹²⁹ عبد العزيز¹³⁰
 6. وجعلت ثوابه¹³¹ له وجعلت النظر¹³² لنفسها¹³³
 7. في¹³⁴ مدة حياتها¹³⁵ ثم¹³⁶ لذريتها¹³⁷ الاقرا¹³⁸ فالاقرا
 8. وجعلته خالصا لوجهه الكريم¹³⁹ قبل الله¹⁴⁰
 9. لها¹⁴¹ بفضلها وكرمه¹⁴² وقفا صحيحا¹⁴³ <<ش>>

- 119 ASH00032, ASH00030, ASH00028, ASH00026, ASH00025, ASH00023, ASH00018: السيد—
 ASH00002, ASH00004, ASH000406, ASH00020, ASH00019: السيد
- 120 ASH00090, ASH00031, ASH00029, ASH00027, ASH000406, ASH00025, ASH00024,
 ASH00023, ASH00021, ASH00020, ASH00019, ASH00018, ASH00017, ASH00016: الله—
 ASH00004: الله <<>> عبد
- 121 ASH00004: [هَذَا] cacography—ASH00029: هَذَا—ASH000406: cacography and *hā'* (re)writ-
 ten above.
- 122 ASH00032, ASH00090, ASH00031, ASH00033, ASH00002, ASH00029, ASH00030,
 ASH00028, ASH00027, ASH00026, ASH00025, ASH00024, ASH00023, ASH00021, ASH00020,
 ASH00018, ASH00017, ASH00016: الجز—ASH000406: هذا الجز
- 123 ASH00032, ASH00090, ASH00033, ASH00002, ASH000028, ASH00027, ASH00024,
 ASH00018, ASH00017: ما قبله: ASH00030: cacography.
- 124 ASH00016: [و] وما [ب]
- 125 ASH00004: من <<تجز>> اجزا: ASH00029: "وما بعده من اجزاء" with *ihmāl* on *ġīm* for *aġzā*?
- 126 All the other *waqfiyyas*: العظيم
- 127 ASH00004: من تجزية cacography.
- 128 ASH00025: لزوجها [ب]
- 129 ASH00090: السيد not extant. ASH00033, ASH00002, ASH00027, ASH00091, ASH00018,
 ASH00016: السيد—ASH00020: [السيد]
- 130 ASH00020: عبد العزيز omitted.
- 131 ASH00018: cacography.
- 132 ASH00091, ASH000406, ASH00024: النظر
- 133 ASH00029: لنفسها omitted.
- 134 ASH00004: في
- 135 ASH00020: حيا <<ته>>تها: ASH000406: [حيا]تها
- 136 ASH00032, ASH00030, ASH00091, ASH000406: ثم
- 137 ASH00091, ASH00019: لذريتها. See A.F. Sayyid, *Al-kitāb al-'arabī al-maḥṭūṭ wa-'ilm al-
 maḥṭūṭāt*, 1418/1997, vol. 2, p. 430, 2d. *waqfiyya*, لذريته, p. 433, ذريته.
- 138 ASH00018: الاقراء
- 139 ASH00027: الكـ[ر]يم—ASH00091: الكـ[ر]يم
- 140 ASH00031, ASH00002, ASH00091, ASH000406, ASH00024, ASH00021, ASH00020, ASH00019,
 ASH00017, ASH00016: الله—ASH00004: لها <<منه>>
- 141 ASH00090, ASH00019: منها
- 142 ASH00030, ASH00026, ASH00023: الله <<منه>>ها/منها بفضلها وكرمه قبل الله omitted.
- 143 ASH00090: صحيحا

10. شرعياً¹⁴⁴ لا يبيع ولا يوهب ولا يرهن
 11. ولا يورث¹⁴⁵ حتى¹⁴⁶ يرث الله¹⁴⁷ [الارض]¹⁴⁸
 12. ومن عليها¹⁴⁹ وهو¹⁵⁰ خير [لوا]
 13. رثين¹⁵¹ فمن بدله¹⁵² بعد¹⁵³ سمـ [سعه]
 14. فإتما¹⁵⁴ ائمه على الذين¹⁵⁵ يبد
 15. لونه ان¹⁵⁶ الله¹⁵⁷ سمـ [جميع]
 16. علم¹⁵⁸ ⊙

4.3 18th Century

no. 11. *kabīr* Ḥamid Ibn *kabīr* Aḥmad (*al-wāqif*, *al-nāẓir*)

Sections of a thirty-part Qur'an (or of two Qur'ans?), first third of the 18th century

- ASH00078 = *ǧuz*' 9; *waqfiyya*, f. 1^v, regular diacritics
 - ASH00084 = *ǧuz*' 11; date from a transmission mark: 13 August 1713 (= *yawm al-iṭṭayn* 21 Raġab 1125 A.H.); *waqfiyya*, f. 1^v, regular diacritics
 - ASH00059 = *ǧuz*' 25; dated mark on the board: 9 July 1723 (= *yawm al-ǧum'a min ḥamsa fi šahr Šawwāl* 1135 A.H.); *waqfiyya*, f. 1^v, regular diacritics
- ǧuz*'s 9 (ASH00078) and 11 (ASH00084) of the Qur'an are by the same hand. All three *waqfiyyas* are by different hands. In the three *waqfiyyas*: quite regular *waṣl* for the article (*ālat al-ta'rif*). The copyists tried to reproduce a text as it

144 ASH00029, ASH00025: شرعياً omitted.

145 ASH00090, ASH00029, ASH00025, ASH00021: لا يورث omitted—ASH00027: لا يورث: /.

146 ASH00033, ASH00029, ASH00027, ASH00091, ASH00025, ASH00016: حتى

147 ASH00032: الله—ASH00029, ASH00091, ASH00025, ASH00024: الله

148 ASH00406: حتى يرث الله الارض twice.

149 ASH00027: عليها cacography.

150 ASH00018: و[1]هو

151 ASH00027: الوار[يتيـ]ين

152 ASH00033: بدله

153 ASH00032, ASH00090, ASH00031, ASH00033, ASH00002, ASH00004, ASH00029, ASH00030, ASH00028, ASH00027, ASH00091, ASH00406, ASH00026, ASH00025, ASH00024, ASH00021, ASH00020, ASH00019, ASH00018, ASH00016: بعد ما

154 ASH00023: فإتما

155 ASH00027: الذين—ASH00091: الذين

156 ASH00029, ASH00028, ASH00027, ASH00091, ASH00406, ASH00020, ASH00021: ان

157 ASH00090, ASH00033, ASH00091, ASH00406, ASH00026, ASH00025, ASH00021, ASH00019, ASH00018: الله

158 ASH00018: no final closing mark.

was in front of them, with *waṣl* for the article (*ālat al-taʿrīf*), *ihmāl* on *rāʿs*, a way to write *al-wāriṭīn* which was apparently not understood, and resulted in mistakes, i.e. *al-wāriqīn* or *al-wariqīn* instead, and a peculiar writing of *fa-al-aʿlā* with *alif+lām*-shortened *alif*, which joins the first *alif*. Two of the copyists did not understand the Qurʾanic word *ithm* for sin in “*iṭmuhu*” and wrote “*ismuhu*” instead. Other mistakes will be found in the critical apparatus, which reveals a poor level of Arabic. Most of the variations are slight ones, and come from the presence or not of *hamzas*, *šaddas*, *sukūns*, short vowels, pointed *alifs maqṣūra*. Again from the critical apparatus, we note omissions in the process of copying, errors in the spelling, and a cacography. Sourate Q 2:181 was copied incorrectly in two *waqfiyyas* of three (*sīn* instead of *tāʾ* in *iṭm*, see above). They are generally introduced by the copyist of the *waqfiyya* of ASH00084. A few cases, like *al-nāẓir*, rather than *al-naẓr*, indicate that the copyists have drawn from an available repertoire where the two possibilities co-exist: they show on the contrary, knowledge.

In ASH00078, the *alif* of *bi-hā* (*wa-yarǧaʿa bi-hā*, l. 7), rewritten by a different reed pen (*qalam*), closer to the *hāʾ*, with a faint dark ink, as well as, in *samt̄* (l. 14), the indentation of *yāʾ* prolonged using a thinner reed pen (faint dark ink?), could be from the hand of a master/teacher.

1. هذا ما وقف وحبس وسبل وتصدق¹⁵⁹ كبير
2. حامد ابن¹⁶⁰ كبير احمد¹⁶¹ هذا¹⁶² الجزء وما قبله وما بعده
3. من اجزاء¹⁶³ القرآن العظيم¹⁶⁴ من تجزية ثلثين علي ضريح والد
4. يه كبير¹⁶⁵ احمد ووالدته¹⁶⁶ فاطمة بنت ابراهيم¹⁶⁷

159 ASH00059: تصدّق

160 ASH00059: ابن

161 ASH00078: the *hamza* of Aḥmad is not written on the top of the *alif*, but placed on the line, between *alif* and *hāʾ*. In manuscripts from Ifat/Awfat, the *hamza* can be found on the line but usually before the *alif*. Here, it is a single occurrence; e.g. l. 9, the *hamza* of *awlād* is written on the top of the *alif*.

162 ASH00059: هذه ؟

163 ASH00084: اجزاء

164 ASH00084, ASH00059: القرآن العظيم

165 ASH00059: *ihmāl* mark on *rāʿ*.

166 ASH00059: والديه

167 ASH00084: without the mother's name—ASH00059: عامة ... ؟

5. هرر 168 المحروسة 169 وعلي 170 مقابر المسلمين 171 بالمدينة ألد
 6. كور وغير ذلك 172 وجعل ثوابه لوالديه المذكور 173
 7. يخرج بها الي 174 المدينة إلي 175 المقابر 176 ويرجع 177 بها الي ألد
 8. ينة الناظر 179 بعد ألقراءة 180 وجعل أنظر 181 في مدة 182 حيوته 183
 9. بنفسه 184 ثم 185 لا كبر 186 أولاده 187 أأعلى فالأعلى 188 ما تناسبو 189
 10. بطنا بعد بطن قبل 190 الله 191 منه وقفاً صحيحاً 192 شرعياً
 11. لا يباع ولا يوهب ولا يرهن ولا يورث حتى 193 <<>> يرث
 12. الله الأرض 194 ومن عليها 195 وهو خير أوارثين 196

- 168 ASH00084: هرر بمدينة هـ with a mark on *hā*'—ASH00059: *ihmāl* mark on the second *rā*'.
 169 ASH00059: مدينة هرر <<أله>> المحروسة
 170 ASH00084: علي
 171 ASH00059: المسلمين
 172 ASH00084, ASH00059: ذلك
 173 ASH00078: *ihmāl* mark on *rā*'—ASH00084: وجعل ثوابه المذكور
 174 ASH00084: إلي
 175 ASH00084, ASH00059: الي
 176 ASH00084: المقابر وغيره *ihmāl* mark on the *rā*' of *gayr*—ASH00059: المقابر وغيره
 177 ASH00059: *ihmāl* mark on *rā*'.
 178 ASH00078: *alif* rewritten by a different reed pen, closer to the *hā*' with a faint dark ink.
 179 ASH00084: الي الناظر—ASH00059: إلي الناظر
 180 ASH00084: القراءة
 181 ASH00084: الناظر—ASH00059: *ihmāl* mark on *rā*'.
 182 ASH00059: delition after *mudda*, at the line end.
 183 ASH00084: حياة: archaism for حياة, Qur'anic (see also no. 15, l. 7).
 184 ASH00084: بنفسه—ASH00059: بنفسه was corrected into لنفسه using a thinner calame.
 185 ASH00059: ثم ؟
 186 ASH00059: لاكثر was corrected, the three dots of *tā*' were crossed out.
 187 ASH00084, ASH00059: أولاده
 188 ASH00084: الأعلى فالأعلى—ASH00059: الأعلى فالأعلى
 189 ASH00084: تناسبو؟، تناسبق؟—ASH00059: تناسبوا
 190 ASH00059: قبل
 191 ASH00084: الله—ASH00059: الله
 192 ASH00084: وقفاً صحيحاً—ASH00059: وقفاً صحيحاً with, for the second word, a cacography, then the stain was 'reworked.'
 193 ASH00084: حتى the *alif maqsūra/yā*' of *hattā* was realised by a separate curve, concave, drawn under the first two letters up to the upper part of the following line—ASH00059: حتى
 194 ASH00084: الله الأرض—ASH00059: *ihmāl* mark on *rā*'.
 195 ASH00059: عليها
 196 ASH00078: أوارثين، ink stain at the end of the line—ASH00084: أوارثين followed by a mark

13. فمن بدّله بعد ما سمعه¹⁹⁷ فأثما¹⁹⁸ ائمه¹⁹⁹ على²⁰⁰ الذين²⁰¹.

14. يبدلونه²⁰² وألله²⁰³ سميع²⁰⁴ عليم²⁰⁵ اللهم²⁰⁶ صلى

15. على²⁰⁷ محمد وعلى²⁰⁸ ال محمد وسلم تسليماً²⁰⁹

no. 12. *al-amīr* Abū Bakr *ibn al-amīr* ‘Abd Allāh *al-marḥūm* (r. 10 Muḥarram 1134/31 October 1721—5 Dū al-Ḥiġġa 1144/30 May 1732, the date of his death,²¹⁰ *al-wāqif*)

Sections of a thirty-part Qur’an, name of the copyist, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān *ibn* Abī Bakr, extant in ASH00003, n.d. colophon, *terminus post quem* *ṣarh mawlūd* 1135, i.e. December 1722–January 1723. *Waqfiyya* dated *ṣarh mawlūd* 1135, i.e. December 1722–January 1723. The *mawqūf lahu* is the deceased wife of the founder, Kaṭūma *bint al-amīr* Hāšim *al-marḥūma* (d. before the *wāqif*)

- ASH00089: *ġuz*’ 1, was recently repaired; dated *waqfiyya*, *ṣarh mawlūd* 1135, i.e. December 1722–January 1723, f. 1^r, irregular diacritics
- ASH00065;²¹¹ *ġuz*’ 3, was recently repaired; dated *waqfiyya*, *ṣarh mawlūd* 1135, i.e. December 1722–January 1723, f. 1^v, irregular diacritics

of closure ۞—ASH00059: ألوارعين the mistake was finally corrected, with three dots for letter *tā*, the letter on the line looks more like a ‘*ayn* than a *qāf*.

197 ASH00084: سمعته

198 ASH00059: فأثماً

199 ASH00084: إسمه—ASH00059: إسمه

200 ASH00059: علي

201 ASH00084: الذين—ASH00059: الذين

202 ASH00084: يبدلونه—ASH00059: يبدلونه

203 ASH00084: ان وألله—ASH00059: الله

204 ASH00078: indentation of *yā*’ prolonged using a thinner reed pen (faint dark ink?).

205 ASH00084: ۞ ۞ as closure mark. ASH00059: without closing mark.

206 ASH00084, ASH00059: اللهم—ASH00078: in the *tašlīya*, *allahuma* with an ‘artistic’ *hā*, with thick dark drawn lines inside each of the two sections of the letter—ASH00084: kind of hollow script, same artistic style for *hā*’ of *allahumma*—ASH00059: idem for *hā*’ of *allahumma*, with thick dark drawn lines inside the upper of the two sections of the letter, as well as in the *šād* of *šallī*.

207 ASH00059: علي

208 ASH00059: [محمد وعلي].

209 ASH00084, ASH00059: تسليماً

210 According to the date of the posthumous *waqfiyya*, he is the ruler of Harar who ruled from 1662 until his death on 10 February 1671. S. Tedeschi, “Le Emirato di Harar secondo un documento inedito,” 1974, Abū Bakr (I), no. 5, pp. 490, 500; E. Cerulli, *L’Islam di ieri e di oggi*, 1971, p. 371; E. Wagner, “Alī b. Dā’ūd dynasty,” 2003, p. 200a; E. Wagner, “Hāšim b. ‘Alī Dā’ūd,” 2005, p. 1044b.

211 It is possible that a few lines of ASH00065 here and there were written by a different hand, e.g. f. 10^v.

- ASH00003: *ǧuz*' 7, was recently repaired; dated *waqfiyya*, *šarh mawlūd* 1135, i.e. December 1722–January 1723, f. 1^r, irregular diacritics

The sections of this thirty-part Qur'an were written by the same hand, the reed pen of ASH00003 is thicker. All three *waqfiyyas* are by the same hand, that of a trained copyist, who may have been a scribe from a *dīwān*. The place and the date of the *waqfiyya* were recorded, "*bi-madīnat Harar fī šarh mawlūd* 1135," i.e. December 1722–January 1723. ASH00003, which contains section 7, distinguishes itself by the mention of the section number at the top, *الجزء ٧ من كتاب*, and, at the end, a *tašlīya*, both in cinnabar. There are slight differences in writing words, and very few differences in the text, which could come from the virtuosity of the copyist. From the critical apparatus, we note slight variations due to the presence or not of *šaddas*, pointed *alifs maqšūra*, unpointed final *yā's*, a substitution, and a *tašhīf*.

1. ²¹²وبعد ²¹³لما كان الوقف من الحسنات المحبوبة ²¹⁴والقربات
2. المطلوبة بادرا اليها ورغب ما فيها رجا لوعده ربه
3. وخوفا لوعيده العبد الفقير الحقير الذليل الى ²¹⁵
4. مولاه العزيز الكريم الامير ابى ²¹⁶ بكر بن الامير عبد الله /
5. المرحوم <<تجاوز الله>> الى <<تجاوز الله عنها>> عن زوجته
6. الحرة الطاهرة ²¹⁷ كلثومة بنت الامير هاشم المرحومة
7. وتجاوز ²¹⁸ الله عنها هذا وقفا صحيحا شرعيا محررا
8. لا يباع ولا يوهب ولا يورث حتى يرث الله
9. الارض ومن عليها وهو خير الوارثين قبل الله لها
10. وجعله خالصا لوجهه الباقي ²¹⁹ الدائم امين ²²⁰ وذ

الجزء ٧ من كتاب الله العزيز ASH00003: ²¹²

وتعد ASH00065: ²¹³

المحبوب [ة] ASH00065: ²¹⁴

الى ASH00003: ²¹⁵

ابى ASH00065: ²¹⁶

الطاهرة ASH00065: ²¹⁷

تجاوز ASH00065: ²¹⁸

الباقي ASH00065: ²¹⁹

/. امين ASH00065: ²²⁰

11. لك بمدينة هرفى²²¹ شهر مولود سنة ١١٣٥²²²

12. من الهجرة على ما فيها افضل الصلاة والسلام²²³

no. 13. *al-ḥāǧǧ* (*sic*) Ḥadiġa *bint al-ḥāǧǧ* Ādam, mother of Ibrahīm (*sic*) *ibn Mūsā* and Yūsuf *ibn Ya'qūb* (*al-wāqifa*)

Sections of a thirty-part Qur'an, first two decades of the 18th century

- ASH00383 = *ǧuz'* 3; *waqfiyya*, f. 2^r, some diacritics. Figs 4.3, 4.3bis
- ASH00384 = *ǧuz'* 4; *waqfiyya*, f. 2^r, no diacritics
- ASH00385 = *ǧuz'* 6; *waqfiyya*, f. 2^r, no diacritics. Fig. 4.4.
- ASH00386 = *ǧuz'* 7; *waqfiyya*, f. 2^r, no diacritics. Fig. 4.5.
- ASH00387 = *ǧuz'* 9; *waqfiyya*, f. 2^r, no diacritics
- ASH00392 = *ǧuz'* 11; on the board, dated record, *bi-tārīḥ yawm al-ǧuma'a 29 fī šarḥ Raġab al-wad.. sanat 1143* (= 7 February 1731); *waqfiyya*, f. 2^r, diacritics
- ASH00393 = *ǧuz'* 12; *waqfiyya*, f. 2^r, no diacritics
- ASH00395 = *ǧuz'* 13; *waqfiyya*, f. 2^r, no diacritics
- ASH00400 = *ǧuz'* 16; *waqfiyya*, f. 2^r, no diacritics
- ASH00394 = *ǧuz'* 19; *waqfiyya*, f. 1^r, no diacritics
- ASH00403 = *ǧuz'* 20; *waqfiyya*, f. 1^r (but repaired); some diacritics
- ASH00036 = *ǧuz'* 23; *waqfiyya*, f. 1^r, no diacritics
- ASH00092 = *ǧuz'* 24; date on the board, 1133 A.H. (= 1720–1721); *waqfiyya*, f. 1^r, diacritics, apart from the last three lines
- ASH00405 = *ǧuz'* 25; *waqfiyya*, f. 1^r, no diacritics
- ASH00035 = *ǧuz'* 26; *waqfiyya*, f. 1^r, no diacritics
- ASH00404 = *ǧuz'* 27; *waqfiyya*, f. 1^r (repaired), no diacritics
- ASH00037 = *ǧuz'* 28; date on the board, Ġumād Awwal *nahār al-ḥamīs 21 sanat 1136* A.H. (= 16 February 1724); *waqfiyya*, f. 2^r, no diacritics
- ASH00039 = *ǧuz'* 29; *waqfiyya*, f. 2^r, no diacritics
- ASH00041 = *ǧuz'* 30; dates on the board, *yawm al-rubū' 6* (?) Ša'bān 1144 (1143?) A.H. (= 3 February 1732 or 14 February 1731), and *yawm al-rubū' 6* (?)

221 ASH00003: في

222 ASH00089: the digits of the year appear under *sana*, so in between the two last lines.

223 ASH00065: (with *ihmāl* mark on the *sin* of *al-salām*) سنة ١١٣٥ من الهجرة افضل الصلاة والسلام—ASH00003: (the *tašliya* is written on one line with cinnabar, apart from *wa-ṣuḥbihi wa-sallim*)

سنة ١١٣٥ من الهجرة افضل الصلاة والسلام

وَصَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلٰى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ وَسَلَّمَ /

Ša'bān 1144 (1140?) A.H. (= 3 February 1732) (18 March 1728?); *waqfiyya*, f. 2^r, no diacritics

All nineteen sections of the Qur'an are by the same hand. Apart from ASH00385, ASH00386, ASH00403, the *waqfiyyas* are in the same regular hand, that of the copyist of the Qur'an. *Waqfiyya* of ASH00385 and five lines and a half of ASH00386 are apparently by the same hand. Diacritics were added subsequently. From the critical apparatus, we note slight variations due to the presence or not of *hamzas*, pointed *alifs maqṣūras*, short vowels, and in the writing of the *hamza 'alā al-kursī*. Both spellings of Ibrāhīm, with and without an *alif*, are used. Mistakes, *tashīfs*, omissions, and an addition result from the copying process. Among them, the alteration of Q 2:181 in ASH00392. The manuscripts were recently repaired, most probably by Abdullahi Sherif.

1. هذا ما وقفت وحبست²²⁴ وسببت وصدقته خديجة²²⁵
2. بنت الحاج ادم²²⁶ وما قبله وما بعده²²⁷ من اجزاء²²⁸ القرآن
3. العظيم من²²⁹ تجزئة²³⁰ ثلثين الى²³¹ ضريح لولده ابراهيم²³²
4. ابن موسى²³³ وجعلت النظرة²³⁴ احمد ابن²³⁵ صديق²³⁶ وقفا

224 ASH00386: page number 3 above the letter *sīn*.

225 ASH00392: *الحاج خديجة*—ASH00403: mark above the *tā' marbūta* (?).

226 ASH00092: ادم

227 ASH00384: وما بعد

228 ASH00385, ASH00386, ASH00403: اجزاء القرآن—ASH00393, ASH00400, ASH00405, ASH00035, ASH00404, ASH00037, ASH00039, ASH00041: اجزا

229 ASH00039: ومن

230 ASH00383, ASH00392, ASH00092: with two dots under the *hamza 'alā al-kursī*—ASH00384, ASH00385, ASH00386, ASH00387, ASH00393, ASH00395, ASH00400, ASH00403, ASH00036, ASH00035, ASH00404, ASH00037, ASH00039, ASH00041: تجزئة—ASH00394, ASH00405: تجزئة

231 ASH00384, ASH00385, ASH00386, ASH00387, ASH00393, ASH00395, ASH00400, ASH00394, ASH00403, ASH00036, ASH00092, ASH00405, ASH00035, ASH00404, ASH00037, ASH00039, ASH00041: الى

232 ASH00385, ASH00403: ابراهيم

233 ASH00385: *ابن موسى*—ASH00400: *ابن موسى*—ASH00392: *لولده يوسف ابن موسى*—ASH00092: *موسى*—ASH00386, ASH00387, ASH00393, ASH00400, ASH00403, ASH00035, ASH00404, ASH00037, ASH00039, ASH00041: *ولولده يوسف ابن يعقوب*

234 ASH00041: *النظرة*.

235 ASH00385: *بن*

236 ASH00092: *صديق*

5. صحيحا شرعيا²³⁷ لا يباع ولا يوهب ولا يرهن
 6. ولا يورث²³⁸ حتى²³⁹ يرث²⁴⁰ الله²⁴¹ الارض²⁴² ومن عليها وهو
 7. خير²⁴³ الوارثين فمن بدله بعد ما²⁴⁴ سمعه فانما
 8. اثمه على²⁴⁵ الذين يبدلونه ان²⁴⁶ الله سميع²⁴⁷ عليم

no. 14. *al-mawlūd ibn kabīr* [...] (*al-wāqif*)

Section from a thirty-part Qur'an, first third of the 18th century

– ASH00060 = *ġuz*' 27; incomplete *waqfiyya*, f. 17^v, some diacritics

The text of the *waqfiyya* was not completed, as also shown by a rectangular framing traced by a single line following the edges and the folding area of the folio. The bifolio which contains the *waqfiyya* stands independently at the end of the manuscript, i.e. it is not part of the quires of *ġuz*' 27. It was fixed by a strip of paper to the inner board and to the last folio of the quire in the past. The manuscript in the state it was digitised lacks its first protective folio. The manuscript was damaged at the bottom left. The frame of the *waqfiyya* is not perfectly rectangular, as it accommodates the damaged area. The *waqfiyya* is then a later addition.

1. هذا ما وقف وحبس وسبل
 2. وتصدق الحقيق الفقير الى
 3. الله تعا المولود²⁴⁸ ابن كسر

no. 15. 'Uṭmān *ibn* Muḥammad T ..., or: T ... 'Uṭmān *ibn* T ... Muḥammad (*al-wāqif*, *al-nāzīr*)

Sections of a thirty-part Qur'an, first third of the 18th century

- 237 ASH00403: mark above the *rā'* (?).
 238 ASH00392: ولا يرث omitted—ASH00403: corrected with a thicker reed pen.
 239 ASH00392, ASH00092: حتى
 240 ASH00403: يرى
 241 ASH00385: الله
 242 00394: الارض omitted.
 243 ASH00403: وهو خير
 244 ASH00392: بعد سمعه
 245 ASH00392: على
 246 ASH00392: فاني، فاني؟
 247 ASH00384, ASH00392, ASH00404: closing mark 0—ASH00036: closing mark 0.
 248 ASH00403, the *lām* of the article is an addition.

- ASH00075 = *ǧuz*' 7; *waqfiyya*, f. 1^r, diacritics—until l. 7, all first words are stretched and overwritten in red; l. 8, it is *ilā*, the second word, which is overwritten in red; l. 1, *šadda* of Muḥammad in red; l. 2, red mark in a shape of a *tā' marbūta* following *al-Qur'an al-'aẓīm*; l. 7, red mark in a shape of a comma following *al-wāritīn*, and red mark of *ihmāl* in the shape of a *kāf* above the *kāf* of *dālīka*; final closing mark in red
- ASH00072 = *ǧuz*' 8; *waqfiyya*, f. 1^r, diacritics—red mark ⊙ following *al-Qur'an al-'aẓīm*; three red marks in triangle following *al-wāritīn*, and *li-waǧhihi al-karīm*; *kāf* of *al-karīm* overwritten in red; stretched *nūn* of *fa-man* in *fa-man baddalahu* overwritten in red; final closing mark in red
- ASH00082 = *ǧuz*' 11; *waqfiyya*, f. 2^r, diacritics—red dot following *al-Qur'an al-'aẓīm*; red *waṣla* on the *alif* of the article (*alat al-ta'rif*) of *al-madīna al-maḍkūra* and of *al-mawḍi'*; *yā'* of *ilā* in *ilā dālīka al-mawḍi'* overwritten in red; subscripted *ihmāl* mark under both *ḥā'* of *ṣaḥīḥ^{an}* in *waqf^{an} ṣaḥīḥ^{an}*; the ligature between the *ḥā'* and the *nūn* of *yurhan* overwritten in red; red dot following *al-wāritīn*, then between *ǧa'ala* and *al-naẓr*; *kāf* of *dālīka* overwritten in red; maybe *hamza* on initial *alifs* of *awlādihi wa-awlād awlādihi*; stretched *nūn* of *fa-man* in *fa-man baddalahu* overwritten in red; above two words/expressions, red line; final closing mark made of three red dots in triangle
- ASH00051 = *ǧuz*' 19; *waqfiyya*, f. 1^r, diacritics—red dot following *al-Qur'an al-'aẓīm*; red *ihmāl* mark for both *rā'* of Harar; red mark of *ihmāl* in the shape of a *kāf* above the *kāf* of *dālīka yaḥruǧ* and *ilā dālīka al-mawḍi'*, and *dālīka minhu*; red *waṣla* on the *alif* of the article (*alat al-ta'rif*) of *al-madīna al-maḍkūra*; red dot following *al-wāritīn*; *hamza* on initial *alifs* of *awlādihi wa-awlād awlādihi*; *kāf* of *al-karīm* overwritten in red; stretched *nūn* of *fa-man* in *fa-man baddalahu* overwritten in red
- ASH00057 = *ǧuz*' 24; *waqfiyya*, f. 2^r, diacritics—*šadda* of Muḥammad in red; three red dots following *al-Qur'an al-'aẓīm*, *al-madīna al-maḍkūra*, and *al-wāritīn*; red *ihmāl* marks on *rā'* of *maqābir*, *yurhan*, *yūraṭ*; red subscripted *hamza* on *itmuhu*; red *waṣla* and *šadda* of *Allāh* in *yarit Allāh al-arḍ*; and of *allaḍīna* in *allaḍīna yubaddilūnahu*; *kāf* of *al-karīm* overwritten in red; red line on the end of *yubaddilūnahu*

Sections of the Qur'an ASH00072 and ASH00075 are by a more skilled hand. In ASH00072, ASH00051, and ASH00057, the closing formula (Q 2:181) of the *waqfiyya* is singled out by a closing mark after *li-waǧhihi al-karīm*, then the opening of a new line, which results in a more contracted writing. In ASH00072 and ASH00051, the copyist left more space before the Qur'anic *formulae*. *Ihmāl* marks were used everywhere to confirm the writing of *rā'*s, but they were also used for *šād* (ASH00075), for *sīns* (ASH00057), the richest being ASH00051 with *ihmāl* marks also on *sīn*, *'ayn*, *kāf*, and maybe *zā'*. Slight variations in the wri-

ting of words can be observed in the critical apparatus, i.e. the presence or not of *šaddas*, pointed *alifs maqṣūra*, *waṣl*, short vowels, as well as in the text, where we have, instead of الله يقبل الله، تقبل الله—a solution available in nos 26 and 27, and few omissions: the most noticeable concerns the conditions of use, in ASH00072 and ASH00057, which should restrict the usage of sections 8 and 24. In ASH00082, the name of the founder starts with T ..., which consequently appears twice, and in the *kunya*, before the *ism*, i.e. T ... Muḥammad, and not Muḥammad T It seems that both expressions, *al-naẓr* and *al-naẓra*, were possible.

1. هذا ما وقف²⁴⁹ وحبس وسبل²⁵⁰ وتصدق عثمان بن محمد²⁵¹ | تجر...²⁵²
2. هذا الجزء وما قبله وما بعده²⁵³ من اجزاء²⁵⁴ القرآن العظيم²⁵⁵
3. من تجزية²⁵⁶ ثلثين علي²⁵⁷ ضريح والده²⁵⁸ محمد تجر...²⁵⁹ بمدينة
4. هرر²⁶⁰ وعلي مقابر²⁶¹ المدينة المذكورة²⁶² وغير ذلك²⁶³ يخرج
5. بها الي ذلك²⁶⁴ الموضوع²⁶⁵ وقفا صحيحا²⁶⁶ شرعيا²⁶⁷ لا يباع ولا يوهب ولا
6. يرهن²⁶⁸ ولا يرث²⁶⁹ حتى²⁷⁰ يرث²⁷¹ الله²⁷² الارض ومن عليها وهو

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- 249 ASH00072: [وقف].
- 250 ASH00051: *ihmāl* mark on *sīn*.
- 251 ASH00072, ASH00051: محمد
- 252 ASH00075, ASH00072: *ihmāl* mark on *rā'*—ASH00072: محمد تجر |—ASH00082: ... تجر عثمان بن محمد ... محمد
- 253 ASH00051: subscripted *ihmāl* mark for 'ayn.
- 254 ASH00072: اجزاء
- 255 ASH00072: ① العظيم
- 256 ASH00051: *ihmāl* mark on *zā'* of *tagẓiya*?
- 257 ASH00082: علي
- 258 ASH00082, ASH00051: والده؛ ASH00057: والده
- 259 ASH00075, ASH00082: *ihmāl* mark on *rā'*.
- 260 ASH00072: *ihmāl* mark on *rā'*—ASH00082, ASH00051, ASH00057: on both *rā's*.
- 261 ASH00057: *ihmāl* mark on *rā'*.
- 262 ASH00072: *ihmāl* mark on *rā'*—ASH00082, ASH00051: المدينة المذكورة
- 263 ASH00051: *ihmāl* mark on *kāf*.
- 264 ASH00051: *ihmāl* mark on *kāf*.
- 265 ASH00072, ASH00057: الموضوع omitted—ASH00082: الموضوع
- 266 ASH00082: *ihmāl* mark under both *hā'*.
- 267 ASH00057: شرعياً
- 268 ASH00075, ASH00057: *ihmāl* mark on *rā'*.
- 269 ASH00075, ASH00057: *ihmāl* mark on *rā'*—ASH00082: الا <<الله>> يرث.
- 270 ASH00082, ASH00051: حتى—ASH00057: حتى
- 271 ASH00072: *ihmāl* mark on *rā'*.
- 272 ASH00057: الله

6. الله الارض ومن عليها وهو خير الوارثين

7. فمن بدله بعد ما سمعه فانما اثمه علي الذين يبدلونه ان الله

8. سميع عليم

no. 17. Karam al-Dīn (*ibn*) *hāǧǧ* ‘Alī *ibn* Ğāmi‘ (*al-wāqif*, *al-nāzīr*)

Section of a thirty-part Qur’an, middle of the 18th century

– ASH00049 = *ǧuz*’ 18; *waqfiyya*, f. 2^r, diacritics in brownish colour,²⁹² regular *ihmāl* mark on *rā*’s in black ink as is that of the *waqfiyya*. Fig. 4.6.

[عشـ] (l. 1) was written with another reed pen using an ink which looks brownish in the image, and appears between *al-tāmin* and */min* *kitāb Allāh*. The text was corrected as this section of the Qur’an is indeed the eighteenth—and not the eighth. Further corrections appear in the text made with a reed pen and ink having similar characteristics: l. 3, *ilā Allāh ta’ālā* was vocalised, as shown in our edition of the text, then the *yā*’ of ‘*Alī*’, which was not distinctly marked from the *lām*, is first rewritten over the word, then in the space between l. 2 and 3, with *šadda* on the *yā*’. End of l. 6: the *lām* of *alif-lām* in *wa-lā* was extended as it was not high enough, and a dot at the level of the upper part of the *alif* invites comparison of this height, maybe with other *alifs-lāms* like that of *Allāh* and *al-* of *al-karīm*, enhanced with yellowish ink, or with other letters, as yellowish dots appear between l. 7 and 8, then 8 and 9; dots were the usual way to measure the height, width, and curve of letters.²⁹³ L. 10: the mark on the top of the *nūn* of *inna* (a *šadda*?) was overwritten using a different colour of ink, and the ‘unfinished’ curve of Allāh’s *hā*’ was completed and closed.

1. [الجزء الثامن امن / كتاب الله / العزيز: 294 هذا ما وقف

2. [و احبس وسبل وتصدق <<البعء>> العبد

292 A. Regourd, coll. S. Mirza, *Catalogue des manuscrits du Sherif Harar Municipal Museum / Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Sherif Harar Municipal Museum*, 2024, pp. 53 (French), 100 (English).

293 Example of model Arabic calligraphy for the second half of the 17th C. (Turkey?) in: M.-G. Guesdon & A. Vernay-Nouri, *L’art du livre arabe : du manuscrit au livre d’artiste*, 2001, notice 5 and corresponding illustration, pp. 22–23.

294 Vowel *fatha* and a vertical line prolonging first *zā*’ upwards are written with a finer reed pen and a faint dark ink. The vertical line is an indication for the *ṭālib* that he did not go high enough while writing the first *zā*’.

3. [ا]لفقير²⁹⁵ إلي الله تعالى²⁹⁶ كرم²⁹⁷ الدين حاج علي
4. بن جامع هذا²⁹⁸ الجزء في مقدمة المباركة²⁹⁹
5. علي نفسه والارشاد³⁰⁰ من اولاده من بعده بطنا
6. بعد بطن وقفنا صحيحا شرعيا³⁰¹ ولا يوهب ولا يورث³⁰²
7. ابتغاء³⁰³ لوجه الله الكريم³⁰⁴ ورجا³⁰⁵ لثوابه الجسيم
8. وجعل النظر³⁰⁶ اليه في حياته وبعد ذلك الارشاد³⁰⁷
9. من اولاده في مدينة هرر³⁰⁸ فن بدله بعد ما <<س>>³⁰⁹
10. سمعه فإنما اثمه علي الذين يبدلونه ان³¹⁰ الله
11. سميع عليم
12. ³¹¹وصلي الله على سيدنا محمد واله واصحبه/
13. وسلم³¹² تسليما⁰⁰

295 *Ihmāl* mark on *rāʿ*.

296 Red *hamza* on *yāʿ*.

297 *Ihmāl* mark on *rāʿ*.

298 *Hamza* crossing the *alif*.

299 *Ihmāl* mark on *rāʿ*.

300 *Ihmāl* mark on *rāʿ*.

301 *Ihmāl* mark on *rāʿ*.

302 *Ihmāl* mark on *rāʿ*.

303 See A.F. Sayyid, *Al-kitāb al-ʿarabī al-maḥṭūṭ wa-ʿilm al-maḥṭūṭāt*, 1418/1997, vol. 2, p. 432, 1st *waqfiyya*, ابتغاء وجه الله العظيمة, and 2d *waqfiyya*, ابتغاء لوجه الله العظيم (in the book's conditions of use); G. Marçais & L. Poinssot, *Objets kairouanais, ix^e au xiii^e s. Reliures, verreries, cuivres et bronzes, bijoux*, 1948, pp. 48, 105, 106, 124, 175, 180, 210, generally in the expression ابتغاء مرضاة الله.

304 *Ihmāl* mark on *rāʿ*.

305 *Ihmāl* mark on *rāʿ*.

306 *Ihmāl* mark on *rāʿ*.

307 *Ihmāl* mark on *rāʿ*.

308 *Ihmāl* mark on both *rāʿ*'s.

309 This kind of deletion is frequent in Qur'anic manuscripts from the Abdullahi Sherif's collection: it is one of the ways to adjust to the left alignment of the written surface and to avoid additions to the text to fill out the line.

310 The *šadda* is a tentative reading.

311 Probably the same hand.

312 For سلم

no. 18. *gīsti/kīsti*³¹³ Zaynab *zawġat al-amīr/al-imām Aḥmad* (r. 26 Rabīʿ I 1169/30 December 1755—10 Muḥarram 1197/16 December 1782; d. 15 Ğumādā I 1197/18 April 1783,³¹⁴ *al-wāqifa, al-nāzira*)

Sections of a thirty-part Qurʾan, middle of the 18th century

Old-Q = *ġuz*ʹ 5 and 7; *waqfiyya*, f. 2^r, diacritics, the 3 l. above the *waqfiyya* are a pen exercise, as well as other words below the *waqfiyya*. Fig. 4.7

– ASH00413 = *ġuz*ʹ 6; *waqfiyya*, f. 1^r (acephalos), diacritics, the 4 lines above the *waqfiyya* are a pen exercise as well as other words below the *waqfiyya*. Fig. 4.8

– ASH00043 = *ġuz*ʹ 27 recently repaired; *waqfiyya*, f. 1^r, diacritics, the two lines above the *waqfiyya* are a pen exercise. Fig. 4.9

These four sections of the Qurʾan were copied by the same hand. The text of the *waqfiyyas* is in the same hand, an elegant one. As usual, we note slight differences in the way of writing words (*ṭalat* for *ṭalāt*, *ṭalaṭin* for *ṭalaṭīn*, الصلاة *al-ṣalwa* or *tāʾs marbūṭa* instead of *maftūḥa*, and the reverse, due to the presence or not of *hamzas*, *šaddas*, pointed *alif*s *maqšūras*, short vowels). We note a *taḥrīf*. Some ‘omissions’ look sensible, e.g. *gīsti Zaynab zawġat al-Imām Aḥmad*, l. 10, which appears once simply as *gīsti Zaynab*, as she was a person whom everybody knew and could immediately identify. In these cases, it could be an interference of some kind from the copyist. Such is *al-amīr al-Aḥmad* (Old-Q, l. 2), where we hear from what follows that *gīsti Zaynab* is the wife of *al-amīr Aḥmad*. L. 12, we have twice *wa-taḥruġ bihi* (the section of the Qurʾan) and once *wa-yuḥraġ bihi*, which are both possible, while *al-naẓīr*—instead of *al-naẓr*, which are both in use in this part of the *waqfiyya*—is here a syntactic mistake. Once in three, the *waqfiyya* is not closed by a *taṣliya*. On the top of the *waqfiyya* which follows *formula 3*, is another one, which follows *formula 1*: it is incomplete and was the subject of a pen exercise for three different beginners. The usual practice in Harar, as it appears in the time frame of this corpus so far, consists of penning *waqfiyyas* at the top of the folio: this means that, here, the beginners were the one who started, then left the main part to the master’s hand.

313 *Gīsti* (plur. *gīstyach*) is a word in *ʿaġamī*. For the linguistic aspect, see section VI; for the historical depth of this honorific, see our conclusive remarks.

314 *Al-amīr Aḥmad b. Abī Bakr* (I), see S. Tedeschi, “Le Emirato di Harar secondo un document inedito,” 1974, no. 9, pp. 491–492, 500. E. Wagner, “Ali b. Dāʿūd dynasty,” 2003. Less probably *al-amīr Aḥmad b. Abī Bakr* (ca. 1820–1856), who ruled Harar from 1852 until just before his death, and married a daughter of *garād* Hirsi, the chief of the Bertiri Somali. E. Wagner, “Aḥmad b. Abī Bakr,” 2003: *formula 3* is in use in the 18th century and the writing of the *waqfiyya* looks more like a 18th century, than a 19th century one.

1. هذا ما وقف وحبست³¹⁵ وسبلت³¹⁶ وتصدق³¹⁷ الفقير
2. الحقير الي تعالي³¹⁸ كيبست³¹⁹ زينب زوجة³²⁰ الامير الاحمد³²¹
3. << >> هذا الجز:³²² ما بعده وجعل ثوات القران³²³
4. الحمد لله³²⁴ الذى وقف لصالح الاعمال³²⁵ من اراد به خيرا والصلوة³²⁶ والسلام
5. على محمد واله الابرار وبعد فانه لما كان الوقف من القربات المندوبات
7. والطاعات المحثوات عليها لقوله صلى الله عليه وسلم³²⁷ فيما رواه مسلم
8. "اذا مات ابن ادم انقطع عمله الا من ثلث³²⁸ صدقة جارية وعلم ينتفع
9. به وولد صالح يدعوله" فلما كان الامر كذلك بادرة الحرة³²⁹ الطاهرة
10. جمعت³³⁰ زينب زوجة الامام احمد³³¹ فوفقت³³² وحبست³³³ لوجه الله³³⁴ الكريم
11. هذا الجزء الكريم³³⁵ وما قبله الى تمام ثلثين جزء من كتاب العزيز³³⁶ بمدينة

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- 315 ASH00413: كسيت —ASH00043: وحبسة
 - 316 ASH00413: وسبل
 - 317 ASH00413: تصدقت
 - 318 ASH00413: الى الله تعلى —ASH00043: الي الله تعلى
 - 319 Old-Q: for *gīstī*, حبست; ASH00413: كيبست; ASH00043: the first letter is a *kāf*, rewritten on a *gīm* (or the contrary), حبست/ كيبست
 - 320 ASH00413: زوجت
 - 321 ASH00413, ASH00043: احمد
 - 322 ASH00413: هذا الجز —ASH00043: الجزء
 - 323 For *tawāb al-Qur'ān*. "ثوات" القران وجعل not extant in ASH00413, where the gap with the *waqfiyya* below is filled out by a *basmala* also as a pen exercise: first hand, بسم الله, then by another, graceless, hand, بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم —ASH00043: also not extant.
 - 324 ASH00413: الحمد لله —ASH00043: الحمد لله
 - 325 ASH00413: ? الأعمال
 - 326 ASH00413: والصلوة —ASH00043: والصلوة
 - 327 ASH00413: صلى الله وسلم
 - 328 ASH00413, ASH00043: ثلاث
 - 329 ASH00413, ASH00043: الحرة
 - 330 Old-Q, ASH00413: for *gīstī*, حبست; ASH00043: جيعست or جيعست
 - 331 ASH00043: زوجة الامام/ الامير احمد not extant.
 - 332 ASH00043: توقفت (*tahrīf*).
 - 333 ASH00413: وحبست
 - 334 ASH00043: الله
 - 335 ASH00413: هذا الجزء
 - 336 ASH00413: من كتاب الله العزيز —ASH00043: من كتاب الله العزيز

12. هرر المحمية بالله³³⁷ وتخرج³³⁸ به عند الحاجة ويعاد بالصيانة وجعلت النظر³³⁹
 13. في ذلك مدة حياتها لها ثم للاصلاح الارشد من اولادها وقفها صحيحا
 14. شرعيا³⁴⁰ لا يباع ولا يوهب ولا يورث حتى³⁴¹ يرث الله الارض ومن عليها
 15. وهو خير الوارثين فمن بدله بعد ما سمعه فانما³⁴² اثمه على الذين³⁴³ يبدلونه
 16. ان³⁴⁴ الله سميع عليم³⁴⁵

no. 19. Ibrahīm (sic) Šayḥ ibn ‘Alī Šayḥ ibn ‘Adil Šayḥ (*al-wāqif, al-nāzīr*)
 Section of a thirty-part Qur’an mid-18th century–second half of the 18th century

- ASH00401 = *ǧuz*’ 17 recently repaired; *waqfiyya*, f. 2^r, p. 1, irregular diacritics, non-senses and inconsistencies, *lacunae*.

1. هذا ما وقف وحبس وسبل وتصدق
2. ابرهيم شيخ ابن على شيخ بن عدل شيخ هذا
3. الجزء وما <<قعد>> قبله وما بعده من تجزئة
4. ثلثين على ضريح على شيخ وعلى ضريح ست مريم (؟)
5. وقفها صحيحا شرعيا لا يباع والا/ يوهب و
6. لا يورث حتى يرث الارض وهو خير الو
7. رثين وجعل النظر على ذلك لنفسه
8. وبعد ذلك ارشد اولاده واولاد
9. اولاده ما تناسلوا بطنا بعد بطن بمدينة
10. هرر حرسه الله تعالى فمن بدله بعد
11. ما سمعه فانما اثمه³⁴⁶ على الدين يبدلونه

337 ASH00043: بالله

338 ASH00413, ASH00043: ويخرج

339 ASH00413, ASH00043: النظر

340 ASH00413: شرعياً

341 ASH00413: حتى

342 ASH00043: فائماً or a mistake?

343 ASH00413, ASH00043: الذين

344 ASH00043: ان

345 ASH00413: وصلى الله على محمد واله—ASH00043: وصلى الله على محمد

346 Corrected.

12. ان الله سميع علم 347

13. تمت

no. 20. Ḥaqqdīn (Ḥaqq al-Dīn) *ibn* Mubārak (*al-wāqif*)

Section of a thirty-part Qur'an, second half of the 18th century

– ASH00081 = *ǧuz'* 11; *waqfiyya*, f. 1^r, irregular diacritics

1. هذا ما وقف وحبس وسبل وتصدق حقدين ابن مبارك
2. لولده احمد ابن حقدين هذا الجزء وما قبله وما
3. بعده من تجزئه الثلثين من اجزاء القران العظيم
4. وقفنا صحيحا شرعيا لا يباع ولا يوهب ولا يرث
5. رث حتي يرث الله الارض ومن عليها وجعل
6. النظر عبد له ابن عبد الكريم ونخرج من بيته
7. الي مقابر المسلمين بمدينة هررا/ ورجع اليه فن بدله بعد
8. ما سمعه فانما ائمه علي الذين يدلونه ان الله
9. سميع علم 348

no. 21. Sa'īd[a] *bint* 'Abd al-Raḥmān Faqīh (*al-wāqifa*)

The complete Qur'an, second half of the 18th century

– ASH00011 = *waqfiyya*, f. 1^r, diacritics

In a one-red-line frame drawn after the writing of the *waqfiyya* as witnessed by l. 13.

Letters overwritten in red, often *nūns* and *tā's*, as well as the name of the Prophet Muhammad

1. الحمد لله رب العلمين ◇ حمدا يوافي نعمه ويكافي مزيده والصلوة³⁴⁸
2. والسلام على سيدنا محمد واله وصحبه اجمعين ◇
3. اما بعد/ فلما كان الوقف من اعظم اسباب القربات
4. وافضل ما اهدي ثوابه الى الاموات اذ كان من
5. الصدقات الجاريات واولى ما فعل لاكتساب الاجر

347 The closing mark is followed by: , maybe an entwined word?

348 الصلاة

6. والحسنات³⁴⁹ بادرت اليه ووقفت وحبست وسبلت³⁵⁰
7. وتصدقت الحرة الفقيرة الى رحمة ربها سعيد بنت
8. عبد الرحمن فقيه هذا المصحف الشريف مهديّة
9. ثوابه الى ضريح بنتها خديجة بنت سيد محمد شريف
10. وعائشة بنت سيد محمد شريف رحمهما الله تعالى³⁵¹ رحمة
11. الابرار واسكنهما جنات تجري من تحتها الانهر³⁵²
12. وجعلت النظرة منه لخادم شيخ ابدال جامع ثم <<لمن>>
13. لمن يقوم بعده مقامة متاهلا <<وقفا>> ثم لصلحا المسلمين ◊ الى ان يرث الله الارض
ومن عليها/
14. وقفا صحيحا شارعيا لا يباع ولا يوهب <<وف>> فمن بدله
15. بعد ما سمعه فانما اثمه على الذي يبدلونه ان سميع علم -◊-

no. 22. Šankūra *zawġat ḥāġġ* Muḥammad *ibn ‘Abd Allāh (al-wāqifa, al-nāzira)*

Section of a thirty-part Qur’an, second half of the 18th century

– ASH00038 = *ġuz’* 29; *waqfiyya*, f. 1^v, diacritics

Verbs in the past mode have a *tā’ marbūṭa* as mark of the feminine singular.

Traces of liquid, l. 11–12

1. الجز [الت]اسع والعشرون من اجزا القران العظيم
2. هذا ما وقفة وحبسة وسبلة وتصدقة الفقيرة الحقيرة الى الله اتعد[ل]ى/
3. شنكورة زوجة حاج محمد بن عبد الله هذا الجزء ما قبله وما بعده
4. من اجزا القران العظيم من تجزية ثلثين لزوجها حاج محمد وجميع
5. المسلمين بمدينة هرا المحروسة وعلى مقابر المدينة يخرج به

349 Red *ihmāl* mark on *sīn*?

350 سبلات

351 تغلای

352 appears in many verses of various suras, and when it comes to move people to Paradise, the usual verb is *daḥala*, whereas in the prayer for deceased person it is *askana*, e.g. أسكنه الله فسيح جنّاته. *Raḥmat al-abrār* (l. 10–11), no doubt an allusion to the delights that await the righteous in the life to come (Q 83:22).

6. [من] المدينة الى مقابر المسلمين ويرجع به الى ذلك الموضع و<<ج>>
 7. [جعل] ثواب ذلك لحاج محمد وجعله النظر في مدة حياتها
 8. [لنفـ]سها ثم لأكبر اولادها ما تناسلوا بطنا بعد بطن قبل اللهـ[ه]
 9. منه بفضله ورحمته وجعلته خالصا لوجهه الكريم
 10. وفقا صحيحا شرعيا لا يباع ولا يوهب ولا يرهن ولا يو
 11. رث حتى يرث الله الارض ومن عليها وهو خير الوارثين
 12. فن بدله بعد ما سمعه فانما اثمه على الذين يبدلونه
 13. ان الله سميع عليم ٥

14. وصلى الله علي سيدنا محمد واله وصحبه وسلم

15. تسليما كثيرا كبيرا دائما

16. الى يوم الدين والحمد لله

17. رب العلمين

18. امين

no. 23. *aftal-garād*³⁵³ 'Abd (Allāh?) 'Uṭmān <<Ibn ...>> (*al-wāqif*) *aftal-garād* is a title³⁵⁴

The complete Qur'an, colophon dated, *yawm al-arbi'a waqt al-ẓuhr al-tāsi' min šahr Šafar fī sanat 1207 min al-ḥiğra al-nabawiyya* (= 26 September 1792)

The *waqfiyya* only mentions the name of the *wāqif*, without beneficiaries, but insists on the spiritual reward (*al-tawāb*) that the great number of readers could provide. It is probably a *waqf ḥayrī* for a mosque or a shrine.

– ASH00251 = *waqfiyya*, f. 1^r, diacritics

1. هَذَا مَا [و]قف وصدقت \<<>> / الحقيير الفقير

2. هَذَا كِتَاب أَفْتَح جَرَاد عَبْد عَثْمَان

3. <<ابن ...>> الله تعالي ثوابه عظيم باذن

4. الله تعالي نفعه بركته كَلَامُ رَبِّ العالمين

353 In the text of the *waqfiyya*, *aftah garād*.

354 See no. 33.

5. طلبه الله اعطه يارب اعطه ثواب
6. مَنْ قَرَأَ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ يَا رَبِّ اعطه / بركة القرآن
7. اللهم صلِّ على محمد واله واصحابه [.....]³⁵⁵

4.4 End of the 18th Century–Beginning of the 19th Century

no. 24. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān *ibn ḥağğ/al-ḥağğ* Muḥammad (*al-wāqif, al-nāzir*)

Sections of thirty-part Qur’an (or of two Qur’ans?), two *ğuz*’s from the end of the 18th century–beginning of the 19th century, before 1815–1816, one seems earlier.

– ASH00074³⁵⁶ = *ğuz*’ 4; transmission mark: 23 April 1816 (or: 5 May 1815) (= *yawm al-ḥamīs 25 fī šahr Ğumādā al-Ūlā (?) sanat* [1]231 or [1]230); *waqfiyya*, f. 1^r, irregular diacritics

– ASH00083 = *ğuz*’ 11; *waqfiyya*, f. 2^r, irregular diacritics

– ASH00015 = *ğuz*’ 29 recently repaired; *waqfiyya*, f. 1^r, few diacritics

Sections of Qur’an 4 (ASH00074) and 29 (ASH00015) are by the same hand, while section 11 (ASH00083) shows a different hand. Sections 4 and 29 can be dated from the end of the 18th century–beginning of the 19th century, and before 1815 or 1816 (= [1]230 or [1]231), according to a transmission mark dated 23 April 1816 (or: 5 May 1815) (= *yawm al-ḥamīs 25 fī šahr ğumādā al-ŭlā (?) sanat* [1]231 or [1]230) in ASH00074. ASH00083 seems to be an earlier item, which, in this case, would have been added to the set to take the place of the missing *ğuz*’.

The text of the *waqfiyya* in ASH00074 and ASH00083 are in the same hand. As it appears in the critical apparatus, variations in the text of the *waqfiyya* due to the presence or not of *hamzas, šaddas*, short vowels, elision of the *alif* in “ağzāl-Qur’an” are the most numerous. There are mistakes, and maybe *tahrifs*. A known kind of omission resulting from the copying process occurs in ASH00074 and ASH00083, where وما بعده was forgotten in: اجز القرآن العظيم

355 Followed by a text which looks like a *tamlīk*, however the hand being that of a beginner, it could be a pen exercise:

1. ثبت ملك هذا الكتاب عبد الله [.....]

2. بن عبد الله عثمان [.....]

3. ورث غلمان ... تمت [.....]

356 Exceptionally, the *waqfiyya* ASH00083 was used as the model text for the edition, as the right-hand side of the text ASH00074 is concealed by a strip of paper. Because of the concealment it is possible that other variants are included in the ms ASH00074.

probably because of the similarity of وما بعده and وما قبله and in ASH00083 as well, the expression taken from the Qur'an يرث الله الارض ومن عليه is incomplete. Interesting for our purpose is the addition of *al-* to *hāğğ* (l. 2, ASH00074), as it shows the interference of the copyist. The use of *tag̃ziya* instead of *ağzā'* is not exceptional in Harari *waqfiyyas* (ASH00015). In ASH00083, the way 'alā is written, i.e. علاي, gives an idea of the knowledge of the copyist. The *kāf* of *karīm* and *karamihī* are overwritten with a yellow-brownish colour, and the curve of the 'ayn of *samī* is coloured with the same colour.

1. هذا ما وقف وحبس وسبل وتصداق/ 357 الفقير 358
2. الحقير الى الله تعالى عبد الرحمن 359 بن حاج 360 محمد
3. هذا الجز 361 وما قبله من اجز القران 362 العظيم 363
4. من تجزة ثلاثين 364 لوالده الحاج محمد 365 واخيه
5. صديق بن محمد 366 وجعل النظر لنفسه <<ثم>> في مدة
6. حياته 367 ثم 368 لا اولاد اولاده الاعلي فالاعلي 369 ما
7. تناسلوا بطنا بعد بطن وجعله خالصاً 370
8. لوجهه الكريم قبل الله 371 منه بفضله
9. وكرمه وقفا صحيحاً شرعياً 372 لا 373 يباع

357 ASH00074, ASH00015: وحبس وسبل وتصداق

358 ASH00015: العبر

359 ASH00074: عبد الرحمن

360 ASH00074: الحاج

361 ASH00015: الجزء

362 ASH00074, ASH00083: written like this, with one *alif* as final letter of the first word and starting letter of the article of the second word—ASH00015: وما قبله وما بعده من تجزي القران العظيم

363 ASH00015: without separation mark.

364 ASH00074: ثلاثين

365 ASH00074: محمد

366 ASH00074: محمد

367 ASH00074: مدة حياته [.....]—ASH00015: مدة حياته not extant. وجعل النظر في

368 ASH00074: ثم

369 ASH00015: الاعلي فالاعلي

370 ASH00015: خالصاً

371 ASH00074, ASH00015: الله

372 ASH00074, ASH00015: شرعياً صحيحاً

373 ASH00074, ASH00015: لا

10. ولا يوهب ولا يرهن ولا يورث حتى³⁷⁴
 11. يرث الله عليها³⁷⁵ وهو خير الوارثين ⊙³⁷⁶
 12. 377. فَنَ 378. بَدَلَهُ³⁷⁹ بَعْدَ مَا سَمِعَهُ فَأَتَمَّ إِثْمَهُ عَلَّايَ³⁸⁰
 13. الَّذِينَ³⁸¹ يُبَدِّلُونَهُ³⁸² إِنَّ اللَّهَ³⁸³ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ⊙³⁸⁴

4.5 19th Century

no. 25. *al-sayyid* Ibrahīm (*sic*) *ibn al-sayyid* ‘Aydārūs³⁸⁵ (*al-wāqif*)

The complete Qur’an, n.d. Dated *waqfiyya*, Muḥarrām 1238 (= September–October 1822) or 1235 (= October–November 1819).

- ASH00411 = *waqfiyya*, f. 1r, line numbers are indicative as we cannot detect if another line disappeared before ‘our’ line 1, irregular diacritics

- [] .1
 2. فلما كان ال[وقف من القربات [المندوبة ؟
 3. ابن السيد عيذاروس فوق<فك>وق[فنا شريعا ؟] صحيحا لاحمد (؟) []
 الموقوف الذي

374 ASH00074, ASH00015: حتى

375 ASH00074: يرث الله الارض ومن عليها—ASH00015: يرث الله الارض ومن عليها

376 ASH00074, ASH00015: without separation mark.

377 ASH00074, ASH00015: passage not vocalised.

378 ASH00015: سم

379 ASH00074, ASH00015: بدله

380 ASH00015: على

381 ASH00015: الذين

382 ASH00015: يبدلونه

383 ASH00074, ASH00015: ان الله

384 ASH00083 with the curve of ‘ayn rolled on itself like a snail and coloured in yellow-brownish colour.

385 There is a well-known ‘Aydārūs family, a family of Sayyids and sufis from Ḥaḍramawt (Yemen), who travelled over the Indian Ocean, and has been noticed in East Africa (Ethiopia, Kenya) and as far as the Far East (Indonesia), see *al-ṭarīqa* al-‘Aydārūsīyya, E. Peskes, “Der Heilige und die Dimensionen seiner Macht. Abū Bakr al-‘Aidārūs (gest. 1509) und die Saiyid-Šūfis von Ḥaḍramaut,” 1995; A.K. Bang, “The Riyadhha Mosque Manuscript Collection in Lamu: A Ḥaḍramī Tradition in Kenya,” 2014, p. 134, and catalogue, mss RM19, 76, 24, 28 from Abū Bakr and other ‘Aydārūs; Indonesia, A.C.S. Peacock, “Arabic Manuscripts from Buton, Southeast Sulawesi, and the Literary Activities of Sultan Muhammad ‘Aydārūs (1824–1851),” 2019. *šarīf* Abū Bakr b. ‘Abd Allāh al-‘Aydārūs al-‘Adanī known as *al-Quṭb al-rabbānī* (d. in Aden, 909/1503 or 914/1508–1509) introduced the *ṭarīqa* Qādiriyya into Harar, where he is venerated. J.O. Hunwick & R.S. O’Fahey, eds, “Sharif Abū Bakr b. ‘Abd Allāh al-‘Aydārūs al-‘Adanī,” 2015.

4. ضاع/صناع عليه الذي جعل ليقرأ عليه [السيد بنت (؟) حمدون]
 5. قبل الله منه [سنة 1238 (؟) 1235³⁸⁶ يوم الاثنين شهر ... مقدس محرم
 بحضرة بركات ومحمد حاج
 6. واحمد [على محمود وابراهيم شريف ... واحمد شريف والله خير
 الشـ[رفين ؟]مين (؟)

no. 26. *Al-amīr* ‘Abd Allāh *ibn al-amīr* Muḥammad (r. 5 Ša‘bān 1302/20 May 1885—11 Rabī‘ 11 1304/10 January 1887,³⁸⁷ *al-wāqif*)

The complete Qur’an, copied by ‘Umar *ibn* ‘Abd al-‘Azīz *ibn al-amīr* Hāšim *al-marḥūm* and dated *al-sabt waqt al-‘aṣr al-tānī ‘aṣar min šahr Dī al-Qa‘da* (...) *sanat* 1150 H (= 3 March 1738; colophon, p. 417). Dated *waqfiyya*, 1305 A.H. (= 1887–1888).

Abadir 3 = sale mark, *al-šārī mawlānā* al-Sulṭān Muḥammad *ibn* Muḥammad Ibrahīm (*sic*) *ibn faqīh* ‘Abd Allāh, *al-ġum‘a* 25 *šahr* Ġumādā al-Ūlā *sanat* 1283 H (= 5 October 1866),³⁸⁸ p. 1; *waqfiyya*, p. 425, diacritics

The beneficiary of the complete Qur’an is “ḥaḍrat šayḥ Abādir,” i.e. this Qur’an is read in the places and occasions where/when people, who certainly include those who belong to his *ṭarīqa*, gather to celebrate him. Abādir ‘Umar al-Riḍā arrived in Harar in 1216 A.D., and was elected as *šayḥ*, according to Yaḥyā b. Naṣrallā’s *Faṭḥ madīnat Harar*.³⁸⁹ He is a personality linked to the history of the religious institutions of the city.³⁹⁰ According to tradition Aw Abadir

386 The date of the year is written above the word *al-sana*.

387 S. Tedeschi, “Le Emirato di Harar secondo un document inedito,” 1974, ‘Abd Allāh (11) no. 18, pp. 498–499, 500. He is said to have died on the 11th of August 1930. E. Wagner, “Alī b. Dā‘ūd dynasty,” 2003, p. 200a. A. Zekaria, “‘Abdullāhi b. Muḥammad,” 2013.

388

1. اشتري هذا الكتاب الشريف مولانا السلطان محمد بن محمد ابراهيم
2. بن فقيه عبد الله بقيمه اشرف 40 بايجاب وقبول وتقابض وذلك بوكليهما
3. احمد بن عبد الله من جانب المشتري وحاج عبد الرحمن يعقوب من جانب الباع
4. ... الجمعة 25 شهر جمادى الاولى سنة 1283 بحضرة محمد علي وزن
5. وعبد الله جامع وجراد محمد ابا بكر وعلي صادق وحاج سلطان ايب صالح
6. ومحمد صمود وايوب يوسف والله خير الشاهدين

389 É. Foucher, “Names of Mussulmans Venerated in Harar and its Surroundings: A List,” 1988, p. 264.

390 U. Braukämper, *Islamic History and Culture in Southern Ethiopia: Collected Essays*, 2004, p. 109.

Mosque was built by Abādir in the 12th/early 13th century.³⁹¹ His tomb could have been constructed at the end of the 19th century by Indian masons and carpenters, as witnessed by a Hindi inscription dated 1892 on its wooden door.³⁹² The name attributed by Abdullahi Sherif to the Qur'an pictured is "Abadir," and it is stored in a file for books digitised outside the Museum. On the documentary side, we hear from the *waqfiyya* about a servant of the *ṣayḥ* Abādir for these kinds of rituals, who is the *nāzīr* and may be in charge of the reading.

1. الحمد لله وحده

2. اما بعد هذا <<>> ما وقف وحبس وسبله الامير عبدالله بن الامير محمد هذا

3. المصحف الشريف ليقرأ به في حضرة الشيخ ابادر وجعل له النظر

4. نخادم الشيخ وقفنا صحيحا شرعيا لا يباع ولا يوهب ولا يورث حتى يرث

5. الله الأرض ومن عليها وهو خير الوارثين تقبل الله منه بفضله

6. وكرمه امينٌ وذلك في سنة 1305 من الهجرة المحمدية على صاحبها

7. افضل صلاة واكمل تحية³⁹³

no. 27. *al-kabīr* 'Umar *ṣarīf* al-Muqārī *ibn sayyid* 'Alī, the deceased, alive in the second half of the 19th century (*al-wāqif*)

The complete Qur'an, dated *yawm al-tulātā ba'd al-ʿaṣr nahār al-tāmin fī šahr Rabī' al-Awwal sanat 1120 min al-ḥiğra al-muṣṭafā* (= 28 May 1708), and copied by *al-ḥāğğ* Ḥalīfa *ibn kabīr* Ḥāmid (f. 220r).³⁹⁴ The *waqfiyya*, dated 13 Dū al-Ḥiğğa 1305 (= 21 August 1888), appears immediately next an ownership mark, from a different hand, which testifies the transfer of property (*milk*), the same year 4 Rağab 1305 (= 17 March 1888), from Ibrahīm (*sic*) 'Abd Allāh *ibn* Ḥ.r.s (?) from the tribe of B.r.sūb (?) to the founder. What we have numbered as the first line of the *waqfiyya*, in red ink, in our text edition, marks the separation between both texts. And a line in black ink closes the text of the *waqfiyya*.

391 T. Insoll & A. Zekaria, "The Mosques of Harar: An Archaeological and Historical Study," 2019, pp. 87, 90–91.

392 E. Wagner, "Abādir 'Umar ar-Riḏā," 2003, pp. 4a–b. A. Zekaria, "Some Remarks on the Shrines of Harar," 2004. T. Insoll, H. Tesfaye & M. Saako Mahmoud, "Archaeological Survey and Test Excavations, Harari Regional State, Ethiopia, July–August 2014. A Preliminary Fieldwork Report," 2014, p. 101.

393 The diacritics of *tā' marbūṭa* are in a shape of a 'v'.

394 The following lines are blurred, it is possible that the name of the copyist as given here is complete.

Although the expression in the text, “fi al-masğid,” is not completely clear, it probably means that it is the place where the *waqfiyya* was done and that it is a *waqf ḥayrī*, the beneficiaries being the people who come to this mosque, as the expression appears in the text where usually the *mawqūf lahu* is located in the known *formulae*.

– ASH00218 (EMIP01560) = *waqfiyya*, f. 2^r, regular diacritics

1. وقف هذا المصحف الشريف³⁹⁵

2. هذا ما وقف وحبس وسبل وتصدق الفقير الحقير الي الله

3. تعلي الكبير عمر شريف المقرئ بن سيد علي رحمه الله تعلي واسكنه

4. بحبوح جنته³⁹⁶ امين وقف في المسجد وناظره لازم عبد الرحمن

5. بن كبير ابرهم في شهر ذي الحجة بعد ما مضي 13 وقت الضحي

6. وقفا صحيحا شرعيا لا يباع ولا يوهب ولا يرهن ولا يورث

7. حتى يرث الله <<وهم عا>> الأرض ومن عليها وهو خير الوارثين تقبل الله

8. ذلك منه بمنه وكرمه وجعله خالصا لوجهه الكريم تمت

9. فمن بدله بعد ما سمعه فإثما اثمه علي الذين يبدلونه ان الله سميع عليم

10. وصلى الله على سيدنا محمد وعلى آله وصحبه وسلم تسليما والحمد لله

11. رب العالمين امين <<سنة 1350>> سنة 1305 من هجرة المصطفي

12. صلى الله عليه وسلم³⁹⁷

4.6 20th Century

no. 28. Āmina Abū Bakr Ibn Ibrāhīm (*al-wāqifa*)

The complete Qur'an, beginning of the 20th century. The date of 1334 H (= 1915–1916; 1336=1917–1918?) appears under the *waqfiyya*, the text of which was struck out with a blue ball-pen, but not the date which stands at a distance below. This date was written with a black ink as was the *waqfiyya*. The beneficiary is the sufi “*šayḥ* Abādīr,” it is a *waqf ḥayrī* (see above no. 26). The name attributed by

395 In cinnabar, red ink; the diacritics of *šīn*, in *al-šarīf*, are marked with a sign in the shape of a ‘v’.

396 Hadith: “من أراد بحبوحه الجنة فليزِم الجماعة” reported by Tirmidī, “Whoever wants the most spacious (or pleasant) space in Paradise, let him cling to the majority group (*al-ġamā’a*)!” hence the expression “the people of the *sunna* and the *al-ġamā’a*.”

397 A line in black ink closes the text of the *waqfiyya*.

Abdullahi Sherif to the Qur'an pictured is "Abadir," and it is stored in a file for books digitised outside the Museum.

Abadir 1 = *waqfiyya* at the beginning,³⁹⁸ regular diacritics

Absence of the desinence for وقف صحيحاً (وقف صحيح، *manṣūb, tanwīn*).

1. >> هذا ما وقفت وحبست الفقيرة الى الله تعالى آمنة أبو بكر ابن ابراهيم
2. [الكرم وقف صحيح لشيخ أبادر لا تباع ولا توهب]
3. [حتى إيرث الارض ومن عليها وانت خير الوارثين >>

سنة 1334 (؟1336)

no. 29. Aḥmad from Harar (*al-wāqif*)

The complete Qur'an, before October 1865. Dated *waqfiyya* to the Ġami Mosque or Friday/ Congregational mosque in Harar,³⁹⁹ written with a blue ball-pen, 17 Ramaḍān 1406 (= 26 May 1986), followed by a dated donation to the Maṭḥaf al-Sharīf Ḥasan by the children of Yūsuf Aḥmad Šamīr, written with a faint blue ball-pen, the 21/7/2014 Christian calendar. L. 4 seems to have been written with the more recent ball-pen.⁴⁰⁰

– ASH00416 = record of birth of Muḥammad *ibn* Abū Bakr *ibn* garād Aḥmad *ṣubayḥa al-ḥamīs al-ḥāmīs šahr* Ġumādā al-Āḥira *hilāl^{an} wa-sādīsa ḥisāb^{an}* (...) *aḥad šuhūr sanat 1283 min hiġra al-ṭāhira al-nabawīyya* (= 26 October 1865), recto of the 3d last folio;⁴⁰¹ *waqfiyya*, f. 2^r, diacritics

398 Some preceding sheets are evident in the photograph of the *waqfiyya*, but they have not been digitised, perhaps because they were blank.

399 T. Insoll & A. Zekaria, "The Mosques of Harar: An Archaeological and Historical Study," 2019, p. 88.

400

1. هذا الكتاب > هدية لمتحف الشريف الحسن
2. من اولاد يوسف أحمد شمير
3. ... يوسف أحمد شمرو (؟) 21/7/2014
4. Abd. f (?)

(Last word in Latin characters).

401 It is a noticeable record of birth, made by a learned astrologer, who calculated the ascendant of the new-born child, which is said to be favourable and bringing good luck, and the position of some stars in the zodiac at the date of birth. He is familiar with lunar mansions, and gave the correspondence in the Persian, Syrian (*rūmīyya*) and Coptic calendars. All this gives a certainty to the date and the idea that the new-born child is from a family of *a'yān*.

1. وقف لجامع هرر
2. في 17 رمضان المبارك سنة 1406⁴⁰² هـ
3. من أحمد أبناء هرر (فاعل الخبير) (لوالديه)
4. ب—أ—ع—(ش)

5 Dates and Periods of the *waqfiyyas*

When it comes to dates, six of the Harari *waqfiyyas* of the ASH corpus are dated, five of which are *waqfiyyas* of complete Qur'ans, whereas Gori found two dates in a *waqfiyya* of a Qur'an now at the Institute for Ethiopian Studies, all ranging from 1127/1715 to 1986. And six (again) *waqfiyyas* were dated through their founders, ranging from sometime between 23 November 1662 and 10 February 1671 to sometime between 1169/1755 and 1197/1782 (the case of IES 1845's founder is uncertain). From this corpus, a first chronology of the use and appearance of *waqfiyya formulæ* from the 17th c. onwards was set up. However, *formula 1* being very popular, especially for the period from the second half of the 17th century to the end of the 18th—beginning of the 19th century, it is far from giving us an accurate *terminus ad quem* for the fabrication of manuscripts⁴⁰³ (see the summary table, including the 6 IES *waqfiyyas* below).

TABLE 4.1 Dates and periods of the *waqfiyyas*

Ref.	Qur'an in 1 or 30 vols	Colophon dated Qur'ans or tentative period of copy	Dated and datable <i>waqfiyyas</i>	Other dates of documentary relevance	Formula no.	Beneficiaries
No. 1	Ġuz' 13	17th c.			1	The <i>wāqif</i>
No. 2	10	17th c.			1	The two sons of the <i>wāqifa</i>
No. 3	4, 17, 25, 28	17th c.		1916	1	The husband of the <i>wāqifa</i>

⁴⁰² 1406 is placed above *sana*.

⁴⁰³ The documentary value of *waqfiyyas* of books is well established. See G. Marçais & L. Poinssot, *Objets kairouanais, IX^e au XIII^e s. Reliures, verreries, cuivres et bronzes, bijoux*, 1948; A. Gacek, "Ownership Statements and Seals in Arabic Manuscripts," 1987, n. 25, p. 92.

TABLE 4.1 Dates and periods of the *waqfiyyas* (cont.)

Ref.	Qur'an in 1 or 30 vols	Colophon dated Qur'ans or tentative period of copy	Dated and datable <i>waqfiyyas</i>	Other dates of documentary relevance	Formula no.	Beneficiaries
No. 4	7		Between 23 Nov. 1662 and 10 Feb. 1671		1	(Shrine of) <i>al-amir</i> Nūr <i>ibn al-amir</i> Muğāhid (d. 1567)
No. 5	1, 9, 16, 17, 21, 22, 24	End of the 17th c.			1	Şāliḥ Aḥmad (unknown)
No. 6	9	End of the 17th c.			1	Ġāmi' 'Abd al-Qādir
No. 7	8	End of the 17th c.			1	The father of the <i>wāqifa</i>
No. 8	15, 22	End of the 17th c.–beginning of the 18th c.		1134/1721	1	The parents of the <i>wāqif</i>
No. 9	17	End of the 17th c.–beginning of the 18th c.		1139/1726	1	The son of the <i>wāqifa</i>
No. 10	1, 4 to 6, 8, 10 to 21, 24 to 28, 30	End of the 17th c.–beginning of the 18th c.		1143/1730 or 1123/1711; 1125/1713; 1147/1734; 113x or 112x/1717 to 1727; 1136?/1723–1724; 1144?/1731; 1125/1713	1	The husband of the <i>wāqifa</i>
No. 11	9, 11, 25	18th c.		1125/1713; 1135/1723	1	The parents of the <i>wāqif</i>
IES 1847 (Gori no. 1)	10	<i>Terminus ante quem</i> 1127/1715	1127/1715	<i>al-amir</i> Ṭalḥa <i>ibn al-amir</i> 'Abd Allāh (r. 1700–1721)	1	The grandmother of the <i>wāqif</i> , and her son
IES 1846 (Gori no. 2)	25	First half of the 18th c.	Between 1700 and 1721		1	<i>waqf ḥayrī</i> (shrine)
No. 12	1, 3, 7		1135/1722–1723	Between 1134/1721 and 1144/1732	2	<i>waqf ḥayrī</i> (shrine)

TABLE 4.1 Dates and periods of the *waqfiyyas* (cont.)

Ref.	Qur'an in 1 or 30 vols	Colophon dated Qur'ans or tentative period of copy	Dated and datable <i>waqfiyyas</i>	Other dates of documentary relevance	Formula no.	Beneficiaries
No. 13	3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 11 to 13, 16, 19, 20, 23 to 30	First two decades of the 18th c.		1143/1731; 1133/1720–1721; 1136/1724; 1144 or 1143/1732 or 1731; 1144 or 1140/1732 or 1728	1	The sons of the <i>wāqifa</i>
No. 14	27	First third of the 18th c.			incomplete	
No. 15	7, 8, 11, 19, 24	First third of the 18th c.			1	The father of the <i>wāqif</i>
No. 16	19	First third of the 18th c.			1	The son of the <i>wāqifa</i>
No. 17	18	Mid-18th c.			1	The <i>wāqif</i> , then his sons
IES 1848 (Gori no. 4)	9	First half of the 18th c.	Between 1747 and 1755		3	The father of the <i>wāqif</i>
N° 18	5 to 7, 27	Mid-18th c.	Between 1169/1755 and 1197/1782?		3	Not extant
IES 1844 (Gori no. 3)	12	First half of the 18th c.	Between 1169/1755 and 1197/1782		1	<i>Waqf hayrī</i> (shrine)
No. 19	17	Mid- to second half of the 18th c.			1	'Ali <i>šayḥ</i> and <i>sit</i> Maryam?, unknown
No. 20	11	Second half of the 18th c.			1	The son of the <i>wāqif</i>
No. 21	The complete Qur'an	Second half of the 18th c.			3	The two daughters of the <i>wāqifa</i>
No. 22	29	Second half of the 18th c.			1	The husband of the <i>wāqifa</i> , then all the Muslims
IES 1850 (Gori no. 5)	1	<i>Terminus ante quem</i> Ša'bān 1203/Oct.–Nov. 1789	Ša'bān 1203/Oct.–Nov. 1789	<i>amūr</i> 'Abd al-Šakūr <i>ibn amīr</i> Yūsuf (r. 1783–1794) ⁴⁰⁴	2	The father of the <i>wāqif</i> , the deceased Amīr Yūsuf

404 S. Tedeschi, "Le Emirato di Harar secondo un document inedito," 1974, p. 500; A. Zekaria,

TABLE 4.1 Dates and periods of the *waqfiyyas* (cont.)

Ref.	Qur'an in 1 or 30 vols	Colophon dated Qur'ans or tentative period of copy	Dated and datable <i>waqfiyyas</i>	Other dates of documentary relevance	Formula no.	Beneficiaries
No. 23	The complete Qur'an	9 Şafar 1207/ 26 Sept. 1792			/	<i>Wafq hayrī</i> (mosque?)
No. 24	4, 11, 29	End of the 18th c.– beginning of the 19th c.		1231 or 1230/1816 or 1815	1	The father and the brother of the <i>wāqif</i>
No. 25	The complete Qur'an		Muḥarram 1238 or 1235/Sept.– Oct. 1822 or Oct.–Nov. 1819		3	To Aḥmad?
IES 1845 (Gori no. 6)	18	First half of the 18th c.	Between 1834 and 1852?		2	The husband of the <i>wāqifa</i>
No. 26	The complete Qur'an	12 Dū al-Qa'da 1150/3 March 1738 (posthumous)	1305/1887–1888	<i>al-amīr</i> 'Abd Allāh <i>ibn al-amīr</i> Muḥammad (r. 5 Ša'bān 1302/20 May 1885—11 Rabī' 11 1304/10 Janu- ary 1887); 25 Ġumādā al- Ūlā 1283/5 Oct. 1866	3	<i>ḥaḍrat al-šayḥ</i> Abādir
No. 27	The complete Qur'an	8 Rabī' al-Awwal 1120/28 May 1708	13 Dū al-Ḥiġġa 1305/21 August 1888	4 Raġab 1305/17 March 1888	/	<i>Wafq hayrī</i> (mosque)
No. 28	The complete Qur'an	Beginning of the 20th c.	1334/1915–1916 or 1336=1917– 1918?		Short <i>waqfiyya</i>	<i>Wafq hayrī</i> (shrine)
No. 29	The complete Qur'an	Before Oct. 1865	17 Ramaḍān 1406/26 May 1986	6 Ġumādā al-Āhira 1283/26 Oct. 1865; 21/7/2014	Short <i>waqfiyya</i>	<i>Wafq hayrī</i> (Ġami' Mosque or Friday/Congregational mosque)

"Some Notes on the Account-Book of Amīr 'Abd al-Shakūr b. Yūsuf (1783–1794) of Harar," 1998.

It still seems to us that the evidence of the corpus is insufficient to support the assertion that acts of *waqf* diminished from the 19th century onwards. Diachronically, we observe that *formula 1* is most frequent from at least the second half of the 17th century to the end of the 18th—beginning of the 19th century, reflecting longevity. It has varied little. The part of the text most subject to variation is that concerning future generations of controllers (*al-nāzirs*), which, beyond the choices expressed by the founder, exhibits a variety of formulations. Is this to be seen as an emphasis? *Formula 1* exists alongside other *formulae* used for thirty-part Qur'ans. And then, admittedly on the basis of a smaller number of *waqfiyya*, we can make a few remarks. First of all, *formula 3* is used for the single and thirty-part Qur'ans. From the 19th century onwards, the date of the *waqf* is regularly indicated and the witness list appears (no. 25). Dated *waqfiyyas* may be those of *ǧuz'* or single volume Qur'ans in *waqf ahli* and, conversely, donations to religious institutions may not be dated, but more often dated *waqfiyyas* seem to be those of *waqf hayrī*. However, because of the chronological element, it is likely that the legal framework has changed and with that the form of words which makes the *waqf* valid. Finally, in the 20th century, the formulation was contracted, a phenomenon observed elsewhere.⁴⁰⁵

However, it is not only the chronology of the use of the various *formulae* which deserves our attention. We are thinking in particular of *formulae 2* and *3* in comparison with *formula 1*. The 8 *waqfiyyas* following *formulae 2* and *3* have as their founder either emirs of Harar (nos. 12, 26; IES 1848, IES 1850), or *ǧīsti/kīsti*, one is the wife of an Emir of Harar (no. 18), the other of an *amīr*, whose name does not appear in the emir lists of Harar, but who, according to Tedeschi, was the *aftal garad* (Governor) of Zayla' and the father of *amīr* Abū Bakr II, who ruled Harar from 1834 to 1852 (IES 1845), or finally, someone from a literate milieu with a prestigious genealogy and undoubtedly influential in

405 F. Déroche & V. Sagaria-Rossi, *I manoscritti in caratteri arabi*, 2012, noticed that the elements of the *waqfiyyas* became more and more standardised over time, "In dichiarazioni complete di waqf – stereotipate e ripetitive nelle forme cronologicamente più avanzate (...)," among these elements are the date and the place, and the certification of witnessing, followed by the witness list, "la data e il luogo, l'attestazione di testimonianza, i nomi dei testimoni," p. 285. See the case in contemporary Ṣan'ā' (Yemen), A. Regourd, "Deux coupes magiques, biens de fondation pieuse (Nord du Yémen) : transmission du savoir et efficacité," 2007, p. 330. There are, or at least were during the second half of the 1990s, rectangular ink stamps with a short formula, which were made available to donors near the Great Mosque of Ṣan'ā': once the donated book had been marked with the stamp, they could then write their name in the box provided for this purpose. Obviously books are categorised as mobile goods, like furniture—for instance: lamps and carpets of mosques, tools, or even magico-therapeutical bowls and mirrors, and others.

Sufi networks: *al-sayyid* Ibrāhīm *ibn al-sayyid* ‘Aydarūs (no. 25). There remains the case of Sa‘īd[a] *bint* ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Faqīh (no. 21): if *faqīh* is originally a profession that has become a proper name, then Sa‘īda can be added to people from the literate milieu. *Formulae* 2 and 3 are undoubtedly more developed and complex and in a more literary and scholarly language than *formula* 1. Some of the *waqfiyyas* following these two *formulae* were written by the same copyist as the Qur’anic text and the quality of the hand at work for the *waqfiyyas* of nos 12, 18 and IES 1850 has been distinguished as more than that of a trained copyist, as one both careful and elegant, for example the hand of somebody from a *dīwān*. In the case of no. 26, we have the name of the scribe, ‘Umar *ibn* ‘Abd al-‘Azīz *ibn al-amīr* Hāšim *al-marḥūm*. So we can argue for a socially-determined use of the *formulae* 2 and 3, while remaining cautious because, firstly, the number of examples is limited and, secondly, because, if all *waqfiyyas* (or almost all) where *formulae* 2 and 3 were used, have their founder from one of the three categories we have just isolated, *formula* 1 is also used by these same categories.

6 *Waqfiyyas* as Witnesses of the Copyists at Work

Beyond the issues related to the issuance of a legal document, *waqfiyyas* testify to the nature of the copying process at work on the letter of the text. It is when whole libraries were being put in *waqf* that registration with the Ministry of Waqfs seems most likely to have occurred: in other cases, individuals without any legal position composed the *waqfiyya* of their books themselves.⁴⁰⁶

An oversight (*taṣḥīḥ*) is corrected in the margin of the text of the *waqfiyya* ASH00306*, ending with “ṣaḥḥa,” following the system of *rīwāya*. The question of an evolution of *formula* 3 by abandoning the preamble, before the *ba‘diyya*, as a result of the copying process, arises. No. 26, like the other examples of *formula* 3 we have, is a late *waqfiyya*, but the hypothesis which we wish to suggest here is that this is how *formula* 1 could have been generated. Distortions of *formulae* are frequent and well known, even among legal documents issued by legal professionals.⁴⁰⁷ Moreover, no. 18 provides an interesting example of *for-*

406 Y. Eche, *Les bibliothèques arabes publiques et semi-publiques en Mésopotamie, en Syrie et en Égypte au Moyen Âge*, 1967, p. 307: “Ce qu’on vient de dire s’applique au waqf des bibliothèques et des collections de livres. Il n’en est pas de même pour le waqf d’ouvrages en petit nombre, waqf qui, à cause de sa fréquence et de son peu d’importance, ne peut être l’objet d’un jugement de magistrat.”

407 See for al-Andalus, A. Zomeño, “Notaries and their formulas: The legacies from the University Library of Granada,” 2007, p. 72.

mula 1 reserved as an exercise for beginners, while *formula* 3 is the one written by the master copyist.

The repetition of errors in the text of the *waqfiyyas* of the same Qur'an is an indication that the copyists were following a written model (no. 11). The critical apparatus shows slight variations due to the presence or not of *hamzas*, *šaddas*, *sukūns*, short vowels, or in the way of writing letters (pointed *alifs maqṣūra*, *hamzas 'alā al-kursī*, unpointed final *yā's*, *tā's marbūta* for *tā's maftūha* and reversely), or words (*ta'alā*, not *ta'ālā*; *ṭalaṭīn*, rather than *ṭalātīn*, is common to all *waqfiyyas* of thirty-part Qur'ans over time; *Ibrāhīm* and *Ibrāhīm* are both in usage in the 18th–19th century, with a clear preference to the first spelling). The lack of desinences of direct object complements and masculine rather than feminine agreements are other known features of Arabic manuscript copies. They are not specific to Harar, but these *waqfiyyas* make it possible to grasp some of the writing variants in progress at Harar from the 17th to the 20th century. We would like to draw particular attention to the elision of *alif*, e.g. when the last letter of the first word of an annexation (*iḍāfa*) is an *alif* with the *muḍāf ilayhi* being *mu'arraḥ*: for instance, in no. 13, 24, we have the following writing “اجزء القرآن,” where the *hamza 'alā al-ḥaṭṭ* of أجزاء was ignored, as it is often the case in Ethiopia and in manuscripts from Yemen, and the Middle East, although the phenomenon is not yet dated. More interesting for our purpose are the usual characteristics of the copying process, like omissions, cacographies, *tahrīfs*, *tashīfs*, and, less often, ditto-graphy and substitution. Omission can be taken with the meaning that what was omitted should be extant, among which, with no doubt, the word *šāriyy*^{an} is. Other kinds of lacunae are however more informative about the copying process:

- قبل الله لها/منها بفضله وكرمه: was omitted three times in the 23 sections of no. 10; it does change the validity of the *waqfiyya*, its performative character, and the religious formula was not “cut out” in its middle; the other religious formula, which often goes with this one, وجعله خالصاً لوجهه الكريم, is there; its omission is not necessarily a mistake, which alters the validity of the *waqf*, but results from the process of copying because وجعله خالصاً لوجهه الكريم comes first in the text of the *waqfiyya* no. 10 (and in nos 11, 18, 24), and sometimes in second position (nos 15, 22, 27) or even stands alone.
- قبل الله منه/منها and قبل الله له/ها: both are available in Harari *waqfiyyas*, see no. 10, where the same hand used *minhā* twice out of 23.
- (وما قبله وما بعده) (instead of وما بعده وما بعده): 9 *waqfiyyas* out of the 23 sections available of no. 10 (see n. 123) are following this way, as well as nos 4, 22. Both were available, so possible. Here it means that the hand did not entirely follow a written model.

The copyists draw from a pool of texts and sometimes have several “solutions” at their disposal. More interesting still are the alterations of the text by the scribes which cause changes that make sense.


Employing the word “copyist” to designate those who write these *waqfiyyas*, if it is not abusive, covers a variety of individuals: besides the hands of the experienced copyists and, perhaps, a secretary from a *dīwān* (no. 12), there are others, belonging to apprentices of Arabic writing and, between these two extremes, the hands of unpractised adults. Only in a few cases were *waqfiyyas* written by the scribe who copied the Qur’an, i.e. was accomplished enough to copy a Qur’an (ASH00383, ASH00384, ASH00387, ASH00392, ASH00393, ASH00395, ASH00400, ASH00394, ASH00036, ASH00092, ASH00405, ASH00035, ASH00404, ASH00037, ASH00039, ASH00041, all no. 13; IES 1846 (Gori no. 2) and 1844 (Gori no. 3) are possibly or apparently in the same hand; IES 1850 (Gori no. 5)).

Eventually, a thorough examination of these *waqfiyyas* brings us to the matter of scribal apprenticeships. In the space left around the text of the *waqfiyya*, we find pen exercises, usually religious *formulae* and Qur’anic verses (e.g., ASH00069, Fig. 4.1, ASH00079), a fact which is not at all specific to Qur’ans in Harar. In some cases, it is the text of the *waqfiyya* itself which is reproduced by a less experienced hand: it may be only a few words in the margins (ASH00045, ASH00261*, Qur’an copied before September–October 1724 (= Muḥarram *sanat* 1137 A.H.)⁴⁰⁸), or between the lines of the *waqfiyya* (ASH00091, no. 10, Fig. 4.2), the reproduction of the final closing mark (ASH00004, no. 10), or start from the beginning (in ASH00271*, a set of *ǧuz*’ bequeathed at the beginning of the 17th century,⁴⁰⁹ on the blank folio at the right of the *waqfiyya*). In ASH00328*, ASH00262* and ASH00279*, the first copyist passed the task to other hands, who contributed to write the closing Qur’anic verses of *formula 1* (Figs 4.10–12). In ASH00262* and ASH00279*, *ǧuz*’ 4 and 13 of the same thirty-part Qur’an, copied at the beginning of the 17th c.,⁴¹⁰ the first hand left part of the reference to Q 19:40 and 21:89 incomplete (l. 10) with a ‘box’ for another to fill out without exceeding space provided, which in one case (ASH00262*) requires following the alignment of the writing block on the left (end of l. 10). The two missing passages were completed with a thicker reed pen than that of the first hand, the first passage in the style of script of the first hand (l. 10, ASH00262*), and the second in a different style, more angular and based on thick and thin:

408 *Du‘ā’* on the inside of lower board.

409 See the *waqfiyya* of ASH00270.

410 As it is the case of ASH00271, *ǧuz*’ 9, endowed by *al-umma al-šayḥa* Amina *bint al-šayḥ Fāriḥ*.

one can surmise it was part of the training to try out two different styles of script (l. 11–12, ASH00262*; l. 11–13, ASH00279*). However, the first passage in ASH00279* was completed by a more experienced, nervous, hand (“wa-huwa ḥayr”). The second passage in both manuscripts ASH00262* and ASH00279* looks to have been written by the same hand showing a peculiar way of writing *alladīna* above the line so that the bottom of the curve of its final *nūn* stands on the line. In ASH00328*, mid-18th c., it is true that the main copyist has better control of his reed pen, nonetheless he made mistakes (e.g. *al-rāriqīn*, with a *šadda* on the top of the first *rā'*, instead of *al-wāriṭīn*, at the end of a Qur'anic verse). The second hand, while writing the closing Qur'anic verse, shares peculiarities with the first hand, for example in the execution of *mīms*: in the middle of a word, in the case of the *sīn-mīm* sequence, the curve of the *mīm* is formed by a semicircular stroke which begins by descending from the lower part of oblique stroke of the *sīn*, then rises and finishes by making the ligature with the following letter: . Is it an exercise in memorisation of the Qur'an or in memorisation and in writing? The second hand could rely on its owner's memory rather than a model *waqfiyya* he had in front of him. In ASH00039, Q 2:181 is the subject of a pen exercise, but it was rewritten below the *waqfiyya* (*formula 1*), whereas in ASH00401, the apprentice used the blank folio on the right side of the *waqfiyya*, then attempted to vocalise Q 2:181 (the *waqfiyya* is not vocalised) having as reference a written model, then immediately started a *taṣdīq*. In ASH00260*, first half of the 18th c., we see various hands at work throughout the *waqfiyya* (Fig. 4.13), whereas ASH00385 and ASH00386 (Figs 4.4, 4.5), which are themselves different from ASH00383 of the same thirty-part Qur'an, each show two hands at work.

When the task extends to writing the whole text of the *waqfiyya*, it is even more interesting: in ASH00060 (no. 14), the frame traced around the folio indicates that the project was to write the complete text of the *waqfiyya*, which was, eventually, interrupted and the hand at work is quite laboured: it could have been a kind of training (Fig. 4.14). Ill-formed words are rewritten above or illegible letters corrected straight on the spot by a competent hand in ASH00049, l. 1, 3, 6, 8: probably his own (or a) teacher. Fig. 4.6. ASH00069 (no. 5) shows another aspect of the copy: it is the first *ǧuz'* of a thirty-part Qur'an, but the copyist wrote down *formula 1* including the part about the *waqf* extending to the sections after, but also to the section *before* (*sic*; Fig. 4.1).

These exercises may or may not be contemporary with the writing of the *waqfiyya*. In any case, the dating of the Qur'ans allows us to infer the persistence of the practices. The *waqfiyyas* are part of the texts used to learn how to memorise, write and, while doing this, read the Qur'an. The margins, blank pages and the proximity of the Book as well as religious *formulae* offer both models and a

writing medium on which to practice in a situation where paper is an imported material.⁴¹¹ ASH00019 and ASH00021 (no. 10), the shelfmark of a *ǧuz*’ endowed as *waqf ahlī*, bears the stamps of a Mosque, Mašǧid Naṣr Allāh, with two different dates, testifying to the mobility of endowed, and supposedly immobile, Qur’ans in Harar, which ended up in a place where teaching was possible.⁴¹² The repetition of the text of the *waqfiyya* over 30 volumes of Qur’ans provided an excellent opportunity for practice and memorisation. The exercises reflect the learning methods, both oral and written, of the Qur’an, as well as its paratexts, of which the *waqfiyyas* are a part. It is possible to envisage that *waqfiyyas* written by the same hand from volume to volume of the same Qur’an—a different hand from the one that wrote the text of the Qur’an, reflects a division of labour between a *šayḥ* and his students, as well as a hierarchy and the steps to be ascended on the way to writing the Book.⁴¹³ On this note, the word “*kabīr*” appears in the name of four founders cited in the *waqfiyyas*, *kabīr* Ḥāmid Ibn *kabīr* Aḥmad (no. 11), *kabīr* Mawlūd Ibn *kabīr* ‘Abd al-Raḥīm (no. 8), *al-kabīr* ‘Umar *šarīf* al-Muqrī *ibn sayyid* ‘Alī (alive 13 Dū al-Ḥiǧǧa 1305/21 August 1888) (no. 27), *al-mawlūd ibn* Kabīr (no. 14). It “is a Harari word referring to a ‘religious teacher’” and “In the town of Harär, the term K. currently refers to a teacher in traditional Islamic schools,” says Gori. Further, he quotes Abdurahman Garad and Ewald Wagner who “qualify K. as a ‘*ālim* (Arab, loanword, ‘learned man’), someone who teaches little children the *Qur’an* in the courtyard of his house.” The entry goes on with the distinction between *gidīr kabīr*, “principal teacher” and *ḫīt kabīr*, “small teacher,” or *kabīr ṭiqaššo*, an Oromo⁴¹⁴ adjective for small. The assistant *kabīr* is an advanced student who has completed the first stage of learning in the Qur’an *ǧēy* [i.e. Harari], having mastered the Qur’an text up to sura “Kaḥfayya,” which was identified by different researchers with either sura 19, Maryam, or 18, Kaḥf. Further on, “The pupil celebrates this achievement and then returns to school resuming his studies with the rank of assistant K. He thus continues his studies, but at the same time starts teaching absolute beginners (*alēfāčč*), who address him by the title K. (...), and supervises beginners during afternoon lessons.”⁴¹⁵ But contact with a *waqfiyya* text such as *formula 1*

411 This is in fact, with some exceptions, a characteristic of the Islamic manuscripts of Ethiopia from the 16th century to the present day. See A. Regourd, “Introduction to the Codicology: Papers, Ruling, and Bindings,” 2014, p. xlvii.

412 No. 29 documents the case of a Qur’an in *waqf ḥayrī* for a mosque of Harar, which was recently donated to Sherif Harar Municipal Museum.

413 See examples of reed pen, Harar Museum.

414 For the Oromos and their language, see G. Banti, “Oromiffaa,” 2010 and the following entry “Oromo” in *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*.

415 A. Gori, “Kabīr,” 2007, p. 319.

is widely shared by those who are learning to write at different stages of their apprenticeship.

The *waqfiyyas* under no. 5 provide another facet of the kinds of training allowed by *waqfiyyas*, that of penmanship. The extant *waqfiyyas*, at least five on six, share particular features in the script, which were tentatively reproduced by the apprentices, with more or less dexterity. We can, therefore, infer that the copyists followed a common model of script they had in front of them (Figs 4.1, a–c).

Words from local dialects are another way in which local copyists make themselves evident: Arabic is indeed the language of the *waqfiyyas*, but a word in ‘*aḡamī* is noticeable, *gīsti* (plur. *gistryach*).⁴¹⁶ Another feature of the *waqf* statements is that *wālidayhu* is often used to designate one of the two parents (e.g. ASH00388*).

7 Concluding Remarks

All in all, the few formulas suggest the presence of models for *waqfiyyas* in circulation in Harar between the 17th and 20th centuries. Deviation from the letter of the text, if it were to affect the elements that are legally unavoidable, would threaten the legal validity of the declaration document. It has to be recognised, however, that the formulas served as an exercise in copying while at the same time being written declarations of legal status. The *waqfiyya* is copied as many times as necessary, from the first to the thirtieth section of the Qur’ans, and none of these copies is validated or authenticated.

The variations arising during the copying process and the careful examination of these *waqfiyyas*, are rich in lessons about the transmission of knowledge and copyists’ practice in Harar during the period. As such, it is a first account of education in Harar. The *waqfiyyas* lend themselves to learning to write by repetition: the text is short and, once it has been recorded on the first *ḡuz*’ of a thirty-part Qur’an, with the names of the various actors involved in this *waqf*, copying is all that is needed to learn to write and to fix the *formula* in

416 For the linguistic aspect, Wolf Leslau, who translated it by “mistress of the house, lady, queen,” suggested that *gīsti* might be derived from an Ethiopic root or from the Galla language. As for Galla, the word would result from “a phonetic variant of *gīfti* (...) with the alternance *f* : *s* frequently occurring in Galla” (for *gīfti*, see *ibid.*, p. 69b). In the *waqfiyyas* edited here, the ‘*aḡamī* show the alternance of *k* : *g*, i.e. *kīsti* for *gīsti* (no. 18), and the spelling *جعت* (no. 18, ASH00330*), which may perhaps add to the linguistic debate (W. Leslau, *Etymological dictionary of Harari*, 1963, p. 76a, and p. 69b. See also, L. Bricchetti-Robecchi, “Lingue parlate Somali, Galla e Harari,” 1890).

memory. This first stage is, however, not pure repetition, if only because there is the available space to be taken into account. But the text of the *waqfiyyas* was also used by people who had gone beyond the stage of learning to write, by those who were coming to grips with the demands of more advanced copying. At this stage, copying was no longer essentially a matter of copying from a model placed in front of them. Some of the *waqfiyyas* in this corpus give access to methods used to progress in the copyist's art, when it is necessary to calculate precisely the space available and handle several types of writing, with each letter and ligature occupying, in turn, its own space.

The perpetuity of the *waqf*, as seen in our introduction, raises the issue of book conservation. It is sometime reflected in the conditions of circulation of the book, which allows the *nāzir* to take it out to be repaired (*ṣiyāna*; see here no. 18, middle of the 18th century). The usual practice in Ethiopia, whether Christian or Islamic,⁴¹⁷ is to keep the text and ensure its transmission by discarding the book, that is to say, by simply copying it again and leaving the 'old' one to decay slowly or be eaten by rodents or insects.

But most of all, the *waqfiyyas* allow us to make inferences about Harari society. In the whole ASH collection, twenty-six founders of 56 being women, the proportion of men and women is almost equal (IES 1845 (Gori no. 6) is one more). They are obviously women with some level of literacy. In the left margin of the *waqfiyya* of ASH00270*, *ǧuz*' 8, it is specified that the Qur'an was copied by "al-šayḥa" in 1690–1691 ("bi-ḥaṭṭ al-šayḥa sanat 1102"); the founder being *al-umma al-šayḥa* Amīna *bint al-šayḥ* Fāriḥ, she is likely to be the copyist. Three women-founders and one beneficiary have their names preceded by *ǧīsti*: *ǧīsti* Zaynab *zawǧat al-amīr/al-imām* Aḥmad (ASH00413), *ǧīsti* Kalṭūma *al-marḥūma bint garād* Maṣṣūr *umm* 'Āyša and Ḥalīma (no. 18; ASH00330*), *ǧīsti* Kalṭūma *ibn kūšim garād* (IES 1845, Gori no. 6) and *ǧīsti* Fāṭima *ǧaddat mawlānā amīr* Ṭalḥa *ibn mawlānā al-amīr* 'Abd Allāh (IES 1847, Gori no. 1, *ǧīsti*).⁴¹⁸ Another *ǧīsti* has her name attached to a library, *ǧīsti* Amat Allāh *bint al-Sulṭān* 'Abd al-Šakūr (2d half of the 13th/19th century).⁴¹⁹ This honorific has a historical depth, beyond the linguistic aspect. It refers to an episode from the

417 For Christians, Denis Nosnitsin, ERC Grant holder "Ethio-SPaRe: Cultural Heritage of Christian Ethiopia, Salvation, Preservation and Research," referred to this practice in his oral contribution to the International conference "Manuscripts and Texts, Languages and Contexts," which was held at the University of Hamburg in July 2014. There are known exceptions.

418 See E. Wagner, "Fāṭima bint Kawšan," 2005, one of the most famous *ǧīstis*, who was born ca. 1793 and died after 1885. Wagner translates *ǧīsti* by "princess," p. 507a.

419 A.J. Drewes, "The Library of Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. 'Abd al-Shakūr, Sulṭān of Harar, 1272–92/1856–75," 1983, p. 71.

end of the 16th century which has now acquired a mythical dimension, giving rise to the existence of narratives in Harar and the Silte zone, originally oral, but more than that today. Men belonging to the Harar elite left for the Silte zone in central Ethiopia. Then, a group of women, considered to be pious, went in search of their husbands near Lake Hareshiton. Among the places where these pious and venerable ladies settled, is one known as 'Five Gists Yafil Soyet,' meaning 'the five respected early mothers of Silte.' The five women then divided into two groups, and tradition records their names. Among them is a *gīsti* Šankūra, who died in Anticho, more than 500 years ago. According to the story, the five ladies departed from Harar region because of their "desire to teach and disseminate Islam." These women are regarded with admiration and deep respect for their faith and prayer and they were loved and respected by society. The social implication of the story, about the *gīstis*, affirms the dedication of Harari women to their faith.⁴²⁰ The story of the *gīstis* also shows the place of women in the Harari society, preserved by various systems of distribution of wealth.

But it is the social and spiritual significance of the act in itself of putting a Qur'an in *waqf* which is our point here. These bequests are not designed to meet the requirements of the world beyond the family and their local circle. The names (*ism*, plur. *asmā'*) are not followed by a *nisba*, or even always by their *kunya*, while the physical legacy is able to be validated only by family and local memory, with some words probably accompanying a handover, whose tenor and precise form one can no more know than their degree of accordance with a conventional form. Nonetheless, this is enough for the founder to obtain the personal, spiritual and social rewards associated with placing a Qur'an in *waqf*. On the basis of the ASH collection, it seems that the general case is for each owner/*wāqif*, to endow one Qur'an. Once, we have two *ǧuz*'s 6 endowed by the same person (namely ASH00264, ASH00265), but it is the only case within the collection as it has come to our hands: it cannot be excluded that the owner endowed an additional *ǧuz*' 6 because it was standing apart, was all that remained from another thirty-part Qur'an. To endow the Book once provides sufficient reward. Within such a tradition and a society, we cannot therefore speak of imitation or false *waqf* notes.

420 See *History of Harar and the Hararis*, Oct. 2015/2008 EC, pp. 235–236.

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⁴²¹ The *waqfiyya* of manuscripts shelfmark followed by an asterisque (*) were not edited here.

***Other Digitised Images of Manuscripts, Which May Be from
Abdullahi Sherif Library or Not***

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ASH00405, ASH00406, ASH00408*

2012 campaign, digitised by Abdullahi Sherif

Abadir Qur'an 1, Abadir Coran 3, Old-Q⁴²²

2015 campaign, digitised by Abdullahi Sherif

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Appendix



FIGURE 4.1A ASH00069 (EMIP01411) (no. 5), ġuz' 1.
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FIGURE 4.1B ASH00054 (EMIP01396) (no. 5), ġuz' 22.
 USED BY THE COURTESY OF THE ETHIOPIC MANUSCRIPT
 IMAGING PROJECT, STEVE DELAMARTER, DIRECTOR

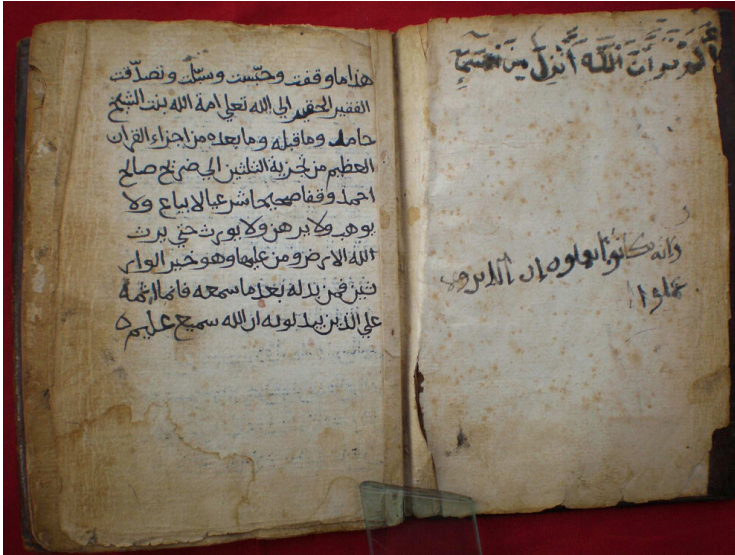


FIGURE 4.1C ASH00056 (EMIP01398) (no. 5), *ḡuz'* 24.
 USED BY THE COURTESY OF THE ETHIOPIC MANUSCRIPT
 IMAGING PROJECT, STEVE DELAMARTER, DIRECTOR



FIGURE 4.2 ASH00091 (EMIP01433). Reprise de : *Inna Allāh samī' alīm* ☉ entre
 les lignes de la *waqfiyya*.
 USED BY THE COURTESY OF THE ETHIOPIC MANUSCRIPT IMA-
 GING PROJECT, STEVE DELAMARTER, DIRECTOR

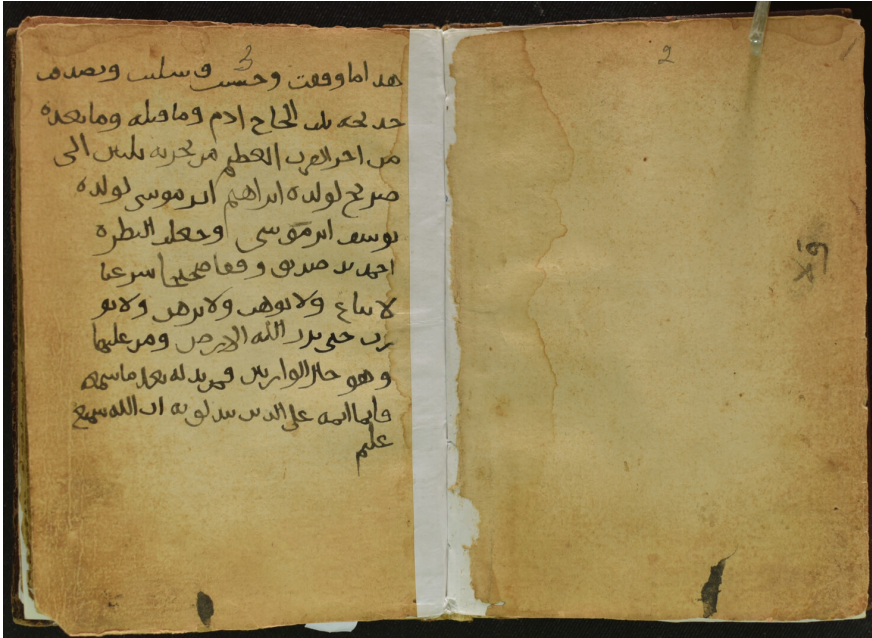


FIGURE 4.4 ASH00385 (no. 13), *ġuz*'6; *waqfiyya*, f. 2^r, of the same 30-volumes Qur'an as above, but not copied by the copyist of the Qur'an. Two different hands?

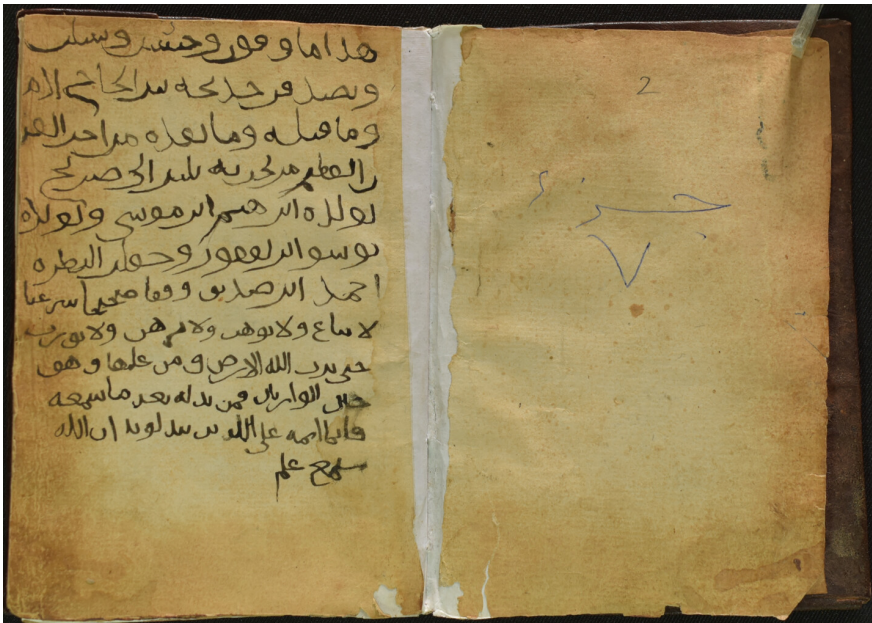


FIGURE 4.5 ASH00386 (no. 13), *ġuz*'7; *waqfiyya*, f. 2^r, not copied by the copyist of the Qur'an, but by two other hands.



FIGURE 4.6 ASH00049 (EMIP01391) (no. 17), l. 3.

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FIGURE 4.7 Old-Q (no. 18).

هذه ما وقف وحبست ومثل وتصيب والفقير
 الخبير الى الله زعمك كنت زينب زوجت
 الامير احمد هذه الجز ما بعد

السبح لله
 الحمد لله الذي وفق لصالح الاعمال من ارا به خيرا او الصلاة والى الام على
 محمد وال الابرار وبعد فانه لما كان الرق من القربات الكسوبات
 والطاعات المحثوات عليها قوله صلى الله عليه وسلم فيما رواه مسلم اذا مات
 ابن آدم انقطع عمله الا من ثلاث صدقة جارية وعلم ينتفع به وولد صالح
 يدعوه فلما كان الامر كذلك بادرة الحرة الطاهرة جعلت زينب
 زوجة الامام احمد فوفقت وهدت لوجه الله الكريم هذا الخبر وما قبله
 الى تمام تذييل خبر من كتاب الله العزيز من مدينة نهر الحمية بالله وتخرج من
 عند الحاجز ويجاد بالصيانة وجعلت النظر في ذلك مدة حياتها ثم للاصلح
 للارشد من اولادها وقفا صحيحا شريفا لا يباع ولا يوهب ولا يورث
 حتى يريك الله الارض ومن علمها وهو خير الوارثين من بدله بعد ما سمعته
 فانما اتمه على الذين يدلونه ان الله سميع علم وصلى الله على محمد

صالحه على الله من مصر
 هذا ما وقف

بسم الله وصلى الله

١٥٠١

FIGURE 4.8 ASH00413 (no. 18).

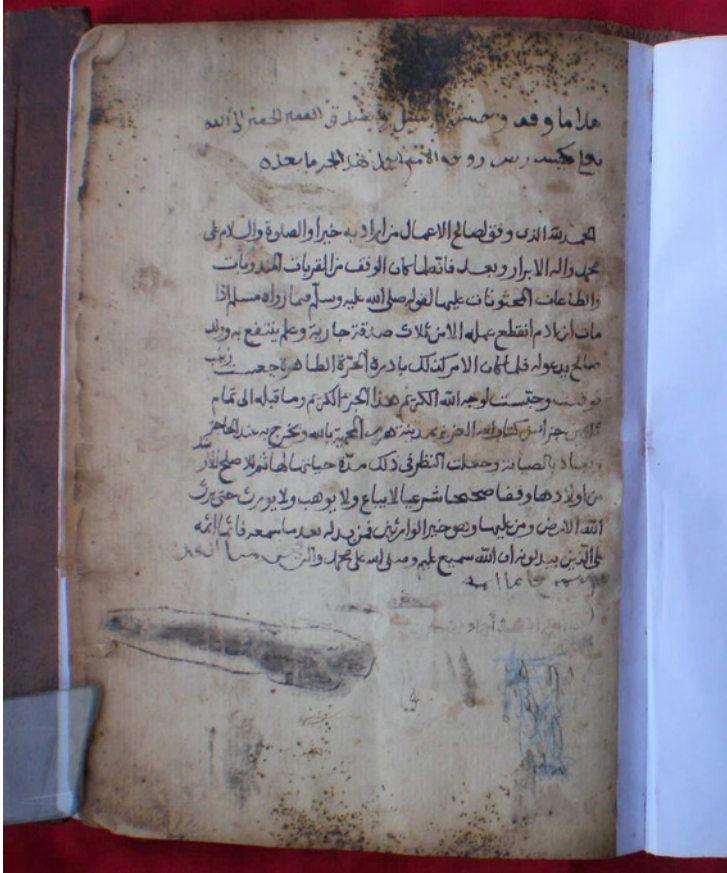


FIGURE 4.9 ASH00043 (EMIP01385) (no. 18).

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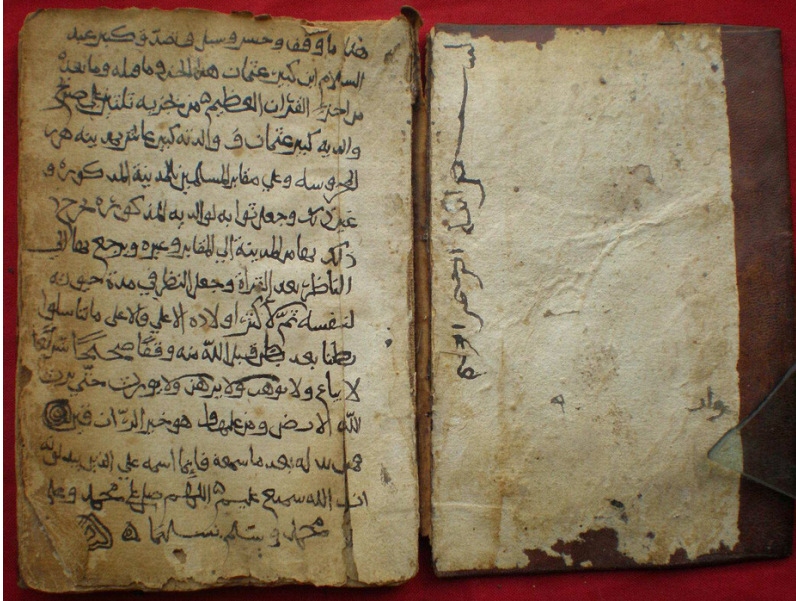


FIGURE 4.10 ASH00328 (EMIP01670)*. USED BY THE COURTESY OF THE ETHIOPIC MANUSCRIPT IMAGING PROJECT, STEVE DELAMARTER, DIRECTOR



FIGURE 4.11 ASH00262 (EMIP01604)*. USED BY THE COURTESY OF THE ETHIOPIC MANUSCRIPT IMAGING PROJECT, STEVE DELAMARTER, DIRECTOR



FIGURE 4.12 ASH00279 (EMIP01621)*.
 USED BY THE COURTESY OF THE ETHIOPIC MANUSCRIPT IMAGING PROJECT, STEVE DELAMARTER, DIRECTOR



FIGURE 4.13 ASH00260 (EMIP 1602)*.
 USED BY THE COURTESY OF THE ETHIOPIC MANUSCRIPT IMAGING PROJECT, STEVE DELAMARTER, DIRECTOR



FIGURE 4.14 ASH00060 (EMIP01402) (no. 14).
 USED BY THE COURTESY OF THE ETHIOPIC MANUSCRIPT
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PART 3

Auctorialité / Authorship



Questionable Authorship: The Case of *Al-maqṣūd fī al-ṣarf* Attributed to Abū Ḥanīfa

Kinga Dévényi

1 Introduction

The topic of the present paper is not a deliberate forgery, but a pseudo-authorship. It aims to examine a short Arabic morphological work written for pedagogical purposes, known under the title *Al-maqṣūd fī al-ṣarf* or *Al-maqṣūd fī al-taṣrīf* (The Purpose: On Morphology), and generally attributed to the great Imam of the 2nd/8th century, Abū Ḥanīfa (80/699–148/767). There are two views concerning the authorship of this work. That the author of *Al-maqṣūd* was Abū Ḥanīfa is firmly rooted in scholarship is well shown by the fact that Joyce Åkesson in her edition and translation of another Arabic morphological work wrote in 2001 that the “*Maqṣūd* [was] compiled *possibly* by the Imām Abū Ḥanīfa”.¹ That it is only attributed to and not authored by Abū Ḥanīfa is reflected, for example, by the 2003 edition of *Al-maqṣūd*.²

In the forthcoming pages the relevant chapters of Abū Ḥanīfa’s life together with the formation and development of Arabic grammatical literature—with a special emphasis on the development of morphology—will be given, together with a textual analysis of the work in question, and a brief survey of its surviving manuscripts.³

1 J. Åkesson, *Arabic morphology and phonology*, 2001, p. 5. The italics are mine. She also mentions in *ibid.*, n. 34, that “This is the usual assumption”.

2 *Al-maqṣūd*, ed. 2003. C. Brockelmann also noted (*GAL S*, vol. 1, p. 287) that this anonymous work was only later attributed to Abū Ḥanīfa. A. ‘A. al-Sa’dī (“Abū Ḥanīfa wa-istidlāluhu al-naḥwī wa-al-luḡawī ‘alā al-masā’il al-fiqhiyya”, 2006), however, advocates Abū Ḥanīfa’s authorship.

3 Figures 1–4 show excerpts from these manuscripts, which are held by the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.



FIGURE 5.1 Ms Arab O. 022/3, 1138 [1725–1726], f. 85^v.

2 The Beginnings of Arabic Grammar Writing

The beginnings of Arab grammatical activity are not well documented before the 2nd/8th century, although the relevant *ṭabaqāt* works and other sources unanimously name ‘Alī, the Caliph, as the man who gave the first impetus to grammar as a science.⁴ By this allegation, our attention is immediately called to the important position taken by grammar in later ages, as one of the sciences which serve as ancillaries to the study of law.

As for the actual forefather of grammar, the name of the 1st/7th century Abū al-Aswad al-Du‘alī (d. 69/688) is given in the sources. He allegedly became convinced of the necessity of laying down the rules of grammar on hearing an erroneous recitation of a Qur’anic verse (1x/3—[*wa-aḍānūn ...*] *anna llāha barṛun min al-muṣṛikīna wa-rasūlihi* [instead of *wa-rasūluhu*]).⁵ This story also aims to draw our attention to the fact that the prime concern of the grammarians at this age was to preserve the unequivocal meaning of the sacred text by clarifying the grammatical endings of the words.

However, no linguistic work of any kind came down to us before the age of the third generation after Abū al-Aswad. The second half of the 2nd/8th century witnessed works of great erudition which bear testimony to previous activities in this field. Baṣra was the main town where these scholars formed circles in which questions pertaining to creed, law, and language were discussed. From the end of the 2nd/8th century grammar was established as a discipline in its own right, which involved the increase in the number of professional linguists and linguistic works which came down to us. Suffice it to mention the *Kitāb al-‘ayn* by al-Ḥalīl b. Aḥmad (d. 174/790),⁶ and the first descriptive grammar by Sibawayhi (d. 180/796). Sibawayhi’s *Kitāb* is a voluminous grammar written with the aim of providing a comprehensive description of how Arabic is used. In this complex system utterances are judged both structurally and ethically.

4 See, e. g. Abū al-Ṭayyib, *Marātib*, p. 24; al-Qifṭī, *Inbāh*, vol. 1, pp. 39 ff.

5 The original story can be read, among others, in al-Sirāfi, *Aḥbār*, pp. 10–16; Abū al-Ṭayyib, *Marātib*, pp. 24–30; and al-Zubaydī, *Ṭabaqāt*, pp. 21–26. Modern scholars do not agree on the interpretation of this story and the identification of Abū al-Aswad al-Du‘alī as the founder of grammatical science. G. Weil (*Die grammatischen Schulen von Kufa und Basra*, 1913, p. 68) rejects it, H. Blanc (“Linguistics among the Arabs”, 1975, p. 1267) finds it semi-legendary, while C.H.M. Versteegh (*Greek Elements in Arabic Linguistic Thinking*, 1977, p. 5) accepts this tradition with some reservations. Ramzi Baalbaki, “Arabic Linguistic Tradition”, 2013, 5.2, emphasises that despite the fact that these reports cannot be supported with evidence, they reflect well the early need for grammars.

6 For an in-depth analysis of the history of Arabic lexicography, see R. Baalbaki, *The Arabic Lexicographical Tradition: From the 2nd/8th to the 12th/18th Century*, 2014.

The *Kitāb* includes syntax, morphology, and morphonology, based primarily on poetic examples (*šawāhid*).⁷

In the meantime, Kūfa, a rival town on the shore of the river Euphrates was inhabited by people similarly preoccupied with the intricacies of Arabic language. Their differences with the citizens of Baṣra in every aspect of various sciences gave rise to a vast literature.⁸ For our purposes, it is sufficient to point out that the scholars of Kūfa at the end of the 2nd/8th and the beginning of the 3rd/9th century were great collectors of both Qur'an readings (*qirā'āt*) and pre-Islamic poetry, and they accepted the collected material as the basis of linguistic rules, whereas Baṣran grammarians treated the rarer forms as deviations from the main rule, which cannot be followed.⁹

Already from the end of the 3rd/9th century, there is evidence of the composition of pedagogical grammars, short compendia for teaching purposes. It should also be pointed out that syntax and morphology soon started to develop separately, and the study of a full-fledged, independent morphology seems to have been introduced by a Kūfan grammarian, Abū al-Ḥasan Aḥmad (al-Ru'āsī's pupil),¹⁰ who wrote a *Kitāb al-taṣrīf*, which seems to have been followed by similar works of three other Kūfan grammarians ('Alī b. al-Ḥasan al-Aḥmar (d. 194/809), al-Farrā' (d. 207/822), and al-Aḥfaš al-Awsaṭ (d. 215/830)) in the beginning of the 3rd/9th century.

It goes without saying that later Baṣran grammarians also authored works under this title by which this genre became firmly established, so that in every century there are works which preserve the continuity of morphological tradition. Several names can be mentioned in this connection, like e. g. the 3rd/9th century Abū 'Umar al-Ġarmī (d. 225/839), Abū 'Utmān al-Māzinī (d. 249/862), al-Mubarrad (d. 285/898), and the 4th/10th century al-Rummānī (d. 384/994). In fact, the first morphological treatise which has come down to us is the *Taṣrīf* of Abū 'Utmān al-Māzinī, preserved in its commentary by Ibn Ġinnī (d. 392/1002), and titled *Al-munṣif*.

This morphological tradition continued well into later centuries with representatives like the 4th/10th century al-Fārisī (d. 377/987) and Ibn Ġinnī, and culminating in several 7th/13th century treatises, the most famous of which are the *Šāfiya* by Ibn al-Ḥāğib (d. 646/1245) and its commentary by al-Astarābādī (d. 686/1286), the *Kitāb al-Izzī* by al-Zangānī (d. 654/1256–1257), the *Mumtā'*

7 For the analysis of the *Kitāb*, see M.G. Carter, *Sībawayhi*, 2004.

8 A comprehensive treatment is Ibn al-Anbārī's *Inṣāf*.

9 See I. Goldziher, *On the History of Grammar Among the Arabs*, 1994, Chap. 3, esp. p. 35.

10 J. Åkesson, *Arabic morphology and phonology*, 2001, p. 3.

fī al-taṣrīf by Ibn ‘Uṣfūr (d. 669/1270), and the *Lāmiyat al-af‘āl* by Ibn Mālik (d. 672/1273).¹¹

3 Abū Ḥanīfa’s Life

By the time we reach this flourishing morphological literature, we are very much distanced from Abū Ḥanīfa’s lifetime. So let us now turn to his life and examine what the sources say about his activities in the field of grammar.

Abū Ḥanīfa¹² was born in the town of Kūfa, a town with a high reputation in the field of grammar, as it has been pointed out above. For most of his life he lived in this town, and it was there he rose to pre-eminence as an expert in giving legal opinion. If, however, we compare the date of his death (148/767) to those of well-known grammarians, we immediately realise that it puts him in the second generation of grammarians, predating—amongst others—al-Ḥalīl and Sibawayhi. This fact alone would raise doubts regarding the authenticity of the *Maqṣūd*.

Let us examine, however, what traces we have of his activities in the field of grammar. First of all, it should be emphasised that Abū Ḥanīfa’s name is not mentioned in genealogies of grammarians or histories of grammar. So, he was not considered as a member of this profession. Neither does the list of his teachers contain any person’s name who could be counted as a grammarian.¹³

On the other hand, there are two anecdotes about his life which distance him from grammar. According to al-Ḥaṭīb al-Baġdādī¹⁴ (d. 463/1071), it is related that he started to study grammar, but found it to be a set of rules, with no space left to exercise his mind and give his opinion. That is why he turned his attention towards *fiqh*, jurisprudence, where he could apply analogical reasoning.

Another anecdote also seems to prove that the Great Imam’s strength did not lie in his linguistic skills. The story runs as follows:

11 For an overview of the history of Arabic morphology, see Ḥ. Hindāwī, *Manāhiġ al-ṣarfīyyīn wa-maḍāhibuhum fī al-qarnayn al-tālīṯ wa-al-rābi‘ min al-ḥiġra*, 1989, and R. Baalbaki, “Arabic Linguistic Tradition”, 2013. For its early development, see, M. Al-Mubārak, “Fī tāriḫ ‘ilm al-ṣarf wa-muṣṭalahātihī”, 2000.

12 For a detailed biography, see M. Abū Zahra, *Abū Ḥanīfa: ḥayātuhu wa-‘aṣruhu—‘ārā’uhu wa-fiqhuhu*, 1960, W.S.Ġ. al-Albānī, *Abū Ḥanīfa al-Nu‘mān*, 1973, and M.A. Nadwi, *Abū Ḥanīfah: His Life, Legal Method and Legacy*, 2010.

13 See e. g. Al-Albānī, *Abū Ḥanīfa al-Nu‘mān*, 1973, pp. 57–60.

14 Al-Ḥaṭīb al-Baġdādī, *Tāriḫ*, vol. 15, p. 444 ff., no. 7249.

Al-ʿAtīqī informed us that Muḥammad b. al-ʿAbbās related that Abū Ayyūb Sulaymān b. Iṣḥāq al-Ġallāb related saying: I heard Ibrāhīm al-Ḥarbī [a Ḥanbalī scholar, d. 285/898] saying: Abū Ḥanīfa first started to study grammar, and tried to apply analogy to it, but did not succeed. He wanted to become a professor in it, so he said: *qalb wa-qulūb, wa-kalb wa-kulūb*, upon which he was told [that he should say] *kalb wa-kilāb*. So he left grammar and turned to jurisprudence [*waqaʿa fī al-fiqh*], where he could apply analogy [without limitation].¹⁵

On the basis of the above, it can be stated that there is no proof in the sources of Abū Ḥanīfa’s authorship of any grammatical work.

The time when he lived was also a period in which the first formulation of thoughts and teaching had precedence over actual writing, and accordingly it is no wonder that even his legal works seem mainly to have come down to us in the wording of his son and his disciples, Abū Yūsuf (d. 182/798) and Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Šaybānī (d. 189/805). As it is said by al-Albānī: “teaching diverted his attention from authorship”.¹⁶

There are also traditions which show that some works have been falsely attributed to him, or his disciples. We can read, for example, in al-Ḍahabī’s (673–748/1274–1348) *Manāqib* that al-Šaybānī said in connection with one of these books (*Kitāb al-ḥiyal*) that “it is not our book, it has only been thrown amongst them”.¹⁷

4 The Treatise

Let us have a closer look at the treatise itself, a morphological composition which came down to us as a work attributed to Abū Ḥanīfa. This work has been preserved in a great variety of manuscripts.¹⁸ None of the manuscripts,

15 Al-Ḥaṭīb al-Baġdādī, *Tārīḥ*, vol. 15, p. 455, transl. K. Dévényi.

16 “Al-tadrīs šaġalahu ‘an al-ta’līf”, al-Albānī, *Abū Ḥanīfa al-Nu’mān*, 1973, p. 289.

17 “Hādā al-kitāb laysa min kutubinā innamā ulqiya fihā”, al-Ḍahabī, *Manāqib*, p. 85.

18 The abundance of surviving manuscripts can be best indicated by referring to, for example, the collection of the Bibliothèque nationale de France, where 22 manuscripts containing this work are listed by G. Vajda, *Index général des manuscrits arabes musulmans de la Bibliothèque nationale de Paris*, 1953, p. 459. Several manuscripts have also been listed by the editor of the printed text (*Maqṣūd ...* ed. 2003, pp. 47–49), but that list does not aim to be exhaustive and is certainly very far from being complete. Currently nearly 300 different manuscript copies of the *Maqṣūd (el-Maksūd)* are listed at the common website of manuscripts in Turkey Türkiye Yazma Eserler Kurumu Başkanlığı, *Türkiye Yazmaları*, <https://portal.yek.gov.tr/main/> [last accessed 22 July 2024].

however, mention the name of the author, no sentence of the type “*qāla so and so*” can be found at the beginning of the texts.

Most of the manuscripts do not bear a title either, though some have as their first line: “*hādā kitāb maqṣūd*”.¹⁹ This, by a stretch of imagination, might even be interpreted as a book composed by a person called Maqṣūd, however, no grammarian of this name appears to be mentioned in any of the *ṭabaqāt* works. It seems that the title under which the work became known (*Al-maqṣūd fī al-ṣarf* or *Al-maqṣūd fī al-taṣrif*) is a late addition inferred partly from this first line and more probably from the general contents of the book.

The end of the text is also abrupt. The manuscripts end with a particular morphological question usually without a colophon indicating the name of the copyist. In some manuscripts the word *tamma(t)* (*bi-‘awn Allāh ...*)²⁰ is added followed by the year of copying, though the majority of manuscripts do not bear a date either.

After a short introductory eulogy (*tanā’*), the text starts with the definition of morphology as one of the main prerequisites of legal knowledge:

Arabic (*al-‘arabiyya*) is an aid to the legal sciences, and one of its pillars is morphology since by it the few verbs become numerous.²¹

The vocabulary used in this first sentence immediately strikes us as a sentence which could only have been written down after the crystallisation not only of Islamic law but also of the institutional framework in which it is to be taught.

It was much after Abū Ḥanīfa’s lifetime, in the beginning of the 3rd/9th century that attention was called by a jurist to the importance of the Arabic language and the necessity to be acquainted with it as the language of the Qur’an and the Sunna. This we can read in the *Risāla* of al-Šāfi‘ī (d. 204/820). In that work, however, this reference is still quite vague and al-Šāfi‘ī does not go further than emphasising the importance to learn the Arabic language since it was the language of the revelation. He claims that for those who are ignorant of this tongue the *bayān* (clear declaration) loses its intelligibility,²² and urges every Muslim to learn the Arabic tongue to the utmost of his power. He further states

19 On the regular appearance of a separate, non-illuminated title page, see M.-G. Guesdon, “Les pages de titre dans des manuscrits arabes datés antérieurs à 1500”, 2010.

20 We are reflecting the variations.

21 أما بعد فإن العربية وسيلة إلى العلوم الشرعية وأحد أركانها التصريف لأنه به يصير القليل من الأفعال
كثيرا

22 Al-Šāfi‘ī, *Risāla*, p. 49; English transl. p. 67.

that “doubts which occur to one who is ignorant [of the Arabic tongue] will disappear from him who knows it”.²³ It is clear from the relevant passages of the *Risāla*, however, that even at the beginning of the 3rd/9th century we are still very far from the development of a clear-cut terminology.

The realisation that the language of the Qur’an must be learnt, inevitably led to the introduction of the various branches of the study of Arabic language (syntax, morphology, rhetoric) into the curriculum of the developing *madrasa* system, the institutions of which were devoted primarily to the study of Islamic law, the most prestigious of the Islamic sciences and the most important for the community, and to its ancillaries, the necessary tools for studying law. That this process has been happening around the 4th–5th/10th–11th centuries is well reflected in the clear-cut definition of the *muftī*’s duties by al-Ġuwaynī²⁴ (419–478/1028–1085) who distinguishes six necessary attributes of a *muftī*, the first of which is *al-istiqlāl bi-al-luġa al-‘arabiyya*, i. e. the independent use of Arabic language. This is needed—he explains—because every component of the *šarī‘a* is in the purest of languages, ‘*arabiyya*, so it is unavoidable to be saturated by it, since it is the clue to the perception of the *šarī‘a*.

It appears clearly from al-Ġuwaynī’s text that although the topic is different, he uses the same categories and notions which can be found in the *Maqṣūd*. On the basis of this, we can state preliminarily that the 5th/11th century seems to be a *terminus post quem* for the composition of this morphological treatise.

If we continue to read the *Maqṣūd*, looking for more internal, textual evidence to support the above claim, we immediately notice the use of a well-developed technical jargon of verbal morphology, and a highly elaborate structure. These two immediately put this work in sharp contrast with its supposed contemporary (if we were to accept the authorship of Abū Ḥanīfa), i.e. Sībawayhi’s *Kitāb*, and hence point to a later composition.

Let us first examine the structural differences. There is a fundamental dissimilarity already at the starting point. The first sentence of the *Maqṣūd* makes it clear that the focus of this handbook is verbal morphology in the sense that the author derives every form from a verbal consonantal root (*aṣl*), whereas Sībawayhi looks upon verbs as forms which are similar to nouns and formed by additional elements.²⁵ This is a clear contrast in approach. The *Maqṣūd* also differs in this respect from the first surviving morphological treatise, al-Māzinī’s *Taṣrīf*, the first chapter of which—in the commentary of Ibn Ġinnī, and on the

23 Al-Šāfi‘ī, *Risāla*, p. 67; English transl. pp. 93–94.

24 Al-Ġuwaynī, *Ġiyāṭī*, p. 478, no. 571: *ṣifāt al-muftī*.

25 Sībawayhi, *Kitāb*, vol. 1, p. 12.

basis of the Sībawayhian tradition—concentrates on nouns and defines the different verbal forms on the basis of their similarities to the nouns.²⁶

Concerning the terminology of the *Maqṣūd*, the use of the term “*ġābir*” strikes us as peculiar already on the first page. It is a very special term which is hardly ever used in grammars that have come down to us. This term belongs to the *aḍḍād*, meaning the “past” (*māḍī*) and the “remaining time” (*bāqī*) as well, although in Modern Standard Arabic it has only retained the former sense. This is also the only meaning which is listed in a modern morphological lexicon under the heading *al-ġābir*.²⁷

In the *Maqṣūd* it refers to the imperfect, and in this it follows the usage of some lexicographers, like al-Ḥalīl²⁸ and al-Azharī.²⁹ What is even more atypical is that it is used together with two other terms: *mustaqbal* and *muḍārī*.

Interestingly enough, there is one other morphological treatise that we know of, where this term is used. This work is the *Daqāʿiq al-taṣrīf* of an obscure, 4th/10th century author called al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad b. Saʿīd al-Muʿaddib, who completed it in 338/949 probably in Ḥurāsān or Transoxania. This book was analysed in some detail by Ramzi Baalbaki, who characterised it as a work “not in line with the morphological tradition which we are familiar with”,³⁰ suggesting that its “terminology [may] represent a tradition that has been largely lost to us”.³¹

Though it is difficult to compare a detailed morphological treatise of about 150 folios³² to a short morphological summary like the *Maqṣūd*, the length of which is only about 10 % of the *Daqāʿiq*, it becomes immediately apparent that they do not only stand on a common footing in their terminology, but also in their structure. The *Daqāʿiq*—which seems to have survived in a unique autograph manuscript—has the same verbal perspective as the *Maqṣūd*, very different from the Sībawayhian tradition followed in morphological works like that of al-Māzinī. It has been established by Ramzi Baalbaki that the unique terminology of the *Daqāʿiq* owes a lot to the Kūfan tradition.³³ The intensive

26 Ibn Ğinnī, *Munṣif*, vol. 1, p. 7.

27 R. al-Asmar, *Al-Muʿġam al-mufaṣṣal fi ʿilm al-ṣarf*, 1993, p. 305.

28 Al-Ḥalīl, *Kitāb al-ʿayn*, vol. 1, p. 146; vol. 5, p. 355; vol. 5, pp. 245, 311, 321.

29 Al-Azharī, *Tahḍīb*, “*kay*”, vol. 10, 418, “*lam*”, vol. 15, p. 347.

30 R. Baalbaki, “Unfamiliar morphological terminology from the early fourth century”, 2006, p. 21.

31 R. Baalbaki, “Unfamiliar morphological terminology from the early fourth century”, 2006, p. 47.

32 Ms Şehit Ali 2552, Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul.

33 Cf. R. Baalbaki, “Unfamiliar morphological terminology from the early fourth century”, 2006, p. 39.

reliance upon the morphological explanation of Qur'anic verses also seems to prove it. If we accept this, then we can state that the *Daqā'iq* is the continuation of the separate morphological tradition which seems to have been introduced by the Kūfans. If—on the basis of common terminology—we accept that the *Maqṣūd* is also part and parcel of this tradition, we can link it to the home town of Abū Ḥanīfa. Without wishing to link it to the person of Abū Ḥanīfa, it seems that we might have in this work a survival of the Kūfan School of morphological teaching. At the same time, however, it is necessary to emphasise that although the same morphological tradition seems to be embodied in both works, it is probably no wonder that we see a great contrast in their dissemination. The exceptionally high number of copies in which the *Maqṣūd* has come down to us may be due on the one hand to its attribution to Ibn Mas'ūd, while on the other hand its brevity and educational use may also played a part in it. In contrast to this, it can be accepted that a long treatise written in the style of a marginalised tradition was not copied further.³⁴

Despite all the similarities between the *Daqā'iq* and the *Maqṣūd*, their respective sizes make a fundamental difference. While the author of the *Daqā'iq* intended to write an exhaustive morphological treatise, the primary aim of the author of the *Maqṣūd* was to compose a school text which could be memorised. As such, it has a very clear structure, succinctly treating all the forms that can be derived from the various types of verbs. Thanks to its size and its straightforward style, it has remained until today one of the most frequently used textbooks of Arabic morphology as attested by several websites.³⁵ Its popularity throughout the ages is also attested by the number of its manuscripts. While it is impossible to count the number of the manuscripts of the *Maqṣūd* worldwide, the nearly seven hundred manuscripts available in Turkish libraries indicates well the general availability of this textbook in Ḥanafi circles.³⁶

34 In addition, it is to be noted that although the study of morphology as an independent field seems to have been initiated by Kūfan scholars at the end of the 2nd/8th century and the beginning of the 3rd/9th century, its terminology soon became monopolised by the Baṣran grammarians. On the Kūfan origin, see J. Åkesson, *Arabic morphology and phonology*, 2001, pp. 3–4.

35 It is usually listed together with the following linguistic treatises which form the basis of Islamic education: *Kitāb al-binā'*, *Taṣrīf al-'Izzī* by al-Zanḡanī, *Marāḥ al-arwāḥ* by Ibn Mas'ūd, *Al-šāfiya* by Ibn al-Ḥāḡib, *Al-'awāmil* and *Al-aḡḡār* by Birḡivī Mehmet Efendi, Molla Ḡāmī's commentary on *Al-kāfiya* by Ibn al-Ḥāḡib, and Sa'd al-Dīn al-Taftāzānī's *Muḡtaṣar al-ma'ānī*. See, e. g. 'A.H. Yūsuf, *Ta'rīf bi-kutub al-ṣarf wa-ṣurūḡihā wa-mu'allifihā allatī tudras fī al-ma'āhid al-dīnīyya al-mu'tabara*, 2017.

36 A simple search—at Türkiye Yazma Eserler Kurumu Başkanlığı, *Türkiye Yazmaları*, <https://portal.yek.gov.tr/main/>,—yielded 694 results including the basic text and its commentar-

5 The Manuscripts

An examination of the surviving manuscripts shows that this work has often been copied as part of a collected volume, and particularly a *mağmū'a* of fixed order, a collection of short morphological treatises. This volume, in its most usual form, includes five works.³⁷ The first among the works is the *Marāḥ al-arwāḥ* by Ibn Mas'ūd, who most probably lived in the 7th/13th century and who is only known as the author of this morphological work.³⁸ The second is the *Taṣrīf al-'Izzī* written by 'Izz al-Dīn 'Abd al-Wahhāb b. Ibrāhīm al-Zanḡanī (d. 654/1256–1257), a prolific author in the field of linguistic sciences.³⁹ The *Marāḥ* and the *'Izzī* are longer works, probably composed about the same time and representing the same type of verb-based morphology as the *Daqā'iḡ* and the *Maqṣūd*, though without their special vocabulary. They are followed by the *Maqṣūd*, which, in its turn is followed by two, even shorter, anonymous compositions. The first among these is entitled *Binā'* (*al-af'āl*),⁴⁰ while the last one is a conjugation table under the title *Amṭila* (*muḥṭalifa*). None of the last three works bear the author's name, the evidence of the surviving manuscripts, however, seems to indicate that this collected volume could only have been put together in the 10th/16th century, creating a new tradition of the transmission of these texts.⁴¹

The *Maqṣūd*, however, did not only survive in this type of *mağmū'a*, though this is the most common. An undated manuscript, for example, in the Bodleian library (Pococke 155)⁴² contains the following three works: (i) *Muḥṭaṣar fī*

ies. It should, however, be noted that although these might contain a few *faux amis*, their number seems to be insignificant.

37 This arrangement was widely used in teaching which is well shown not only by the high number of available manuscripts but also by the existing printed versions which presented these texts in the usual sequence. See also F. Sobieroj, *Variance in Arabic Manuscripts*, 2016, p. 59, where, emphasising their textbook nature, he lists copies containing the first four treatises in the same fixed order.

38 On his life, see al-Suyūfī, *Buḡya*, vol. 1, p. 151.

39 Al-Suyūfī, *Buḡya*, vol. 2, p. 318.

40 This work has sometimes been attributed to a certain 'Abd Allāh al-Dunquzī, cf. *GAL S*, vol. 2, p. 631. This attribution was questioned by J. Åkesson, *Arabic morphology and phonology*, 2001, p. 5, n. 35. This treatise is also known under the alternative title *Qirā'at al-ṣibyān* which also indicates that it was composed for the use of children, see F. Sobieroj, *Variance in Arabic Manuscripts*, 2016, p. 59.

41 Several of these 10th/16th century manuscripts were analysed by A. Vernay-Nouri, "Marges, gloses et décor dans une série de manuscrits arabo-islamiques", 2002, because of their special marginal glosses arranged into various figurative motifs.

42 *Fihrist*, https://www.fihrist.org.uk/catalog/manuscript_1392 [last accessed 22 July 2024].

al-fiqh 'alā madhab al-Imām al-Šāfi'ī by the 5th/11th century Abū Šuġā' al-Isfahānī, (ii) *Al-maqṣūd fī al-taṣrīf*, and (iii) *Šarḥ al-'unqūd fī naẓm al-'uqūd* by Aḥmad b. 'Alī al-Sandūbī (d. 1097/1686), which is a commentary on a versified grammar by Šams al-Dīn Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad al-Mawṣilī (d. 735/1335).⁴³ This compilation lands us in the 11th/17th century but is useful in giving an insight into how well spread the usage of this morphological text was in various parts of the Ottoman Empire. These texts, although differing in their subject matter, were also used in teaching. What makes this collection peculiar is that the first work is a legal treatise for the Šāfi'ī School, which seems to indicate that the *Maqṣūd* surpassed the confines of the Ḥanafī circles. Hence it can reasonably be supposed that it had once witnessed an exceptional circulation.

Several surviving manuscripts contain marginal notes in Arabic and Turkish, or slips with notes and exercises inserted, which together with the number of surviving copies demonstrate that this text formed part of the *madrassa* curriculum.

The earliest manuscripts of the *Maqṣūd*, as part of the collected volume presented above, seem to survive from the 10th/16th century (e. g. 4176 Bibliothèque nationale, copied in 925/1519), the copying of the *Maqṣūd*, however, continued well until the beginnings of the 13th/19th century,⁴⁴ when printed versions supplanted it.⁴⁵

In trying to delimit the date of its composition and the territory where it was best known, it is relevant to look at its commentaries. These are also significant from the point of view that in some of them we find the name of Abū Hanīfa as the author of the *Maqṣūd*.

From among the commentaries on the *Maqṣūd* listed by Ḥāġġī Ḥalīfa,⁴⁶ one deserves special mention. It is the *Im'ān al-anzār*,⁴⁷ written in 952/1545 by the influential and prolific Ottoman author, Birgivi Mehmet Efendi (d. 981/1573),

43 This text is not identical to a work with a similar title whose original authorship was, faute de mieux, reluctantly attributed to Ibn Ğinnī (d. 392/1002). More interestingly from our perspective, the authorship of the commentary is ascribed to the *ḥadīth* scholar Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Mawṣilī al-Ḥanbalī, known as Šu'la (d. 656/1258). For its edition, see Šu'la, *'Unqūd*.

44 See ms Arab O. 12, Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, copied in 1227/1812.

45 This text has been printed several times in Istanbul and Cairo (Būlāq) since the beginning of the 13th/19th century, the first edition appearing in Istanbul 1236/1820 and Cairo 1240/1824 respectively. The abundance of printed versions well shows the continuous interest in this text.

46 Ḥāġġī Ḥalīfa, *Kašf*, vol. 2, pp. 1806–1807.

47 Ḥāġġī Ḥalīfa, *Kašf*, vol. 1, p. 509.

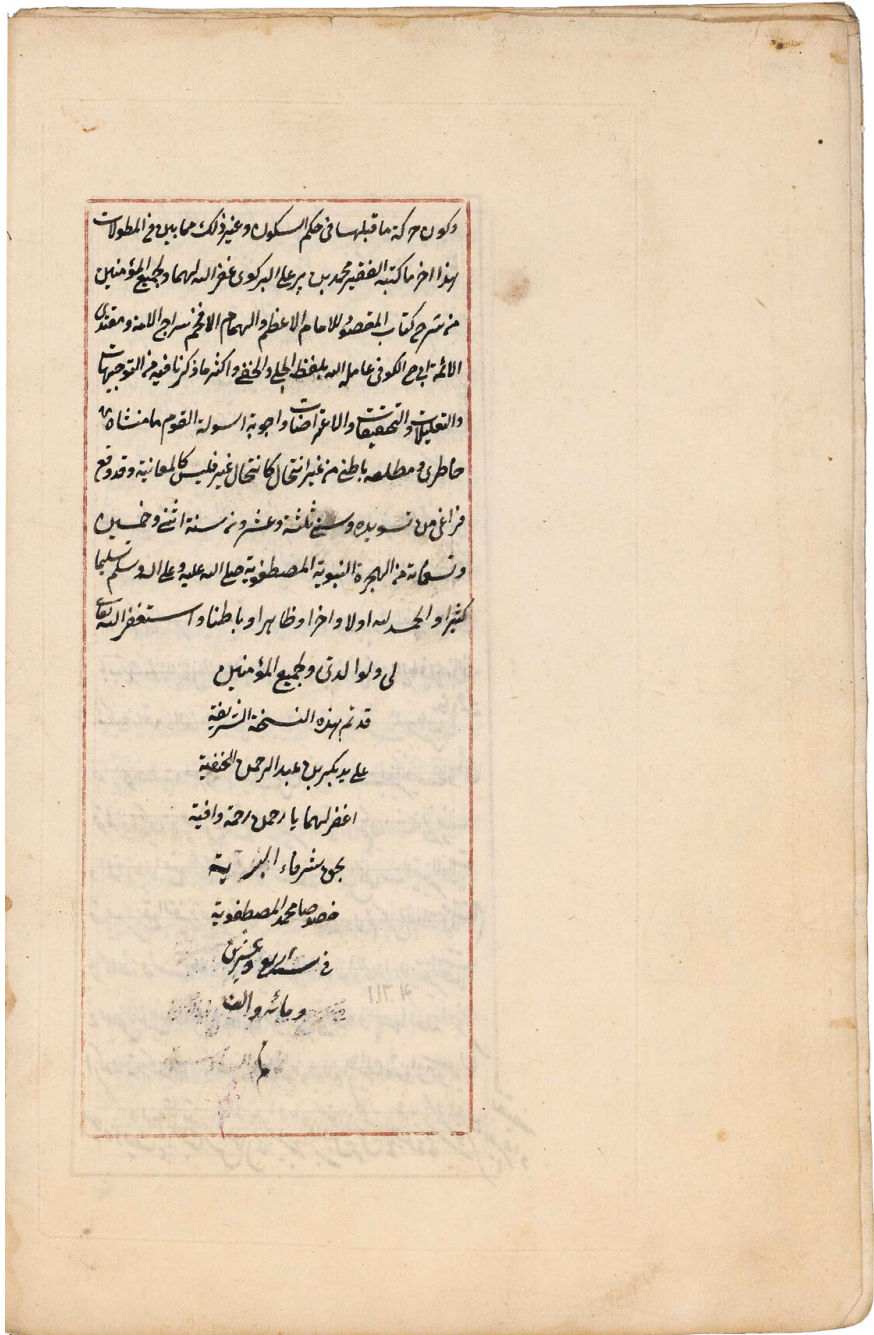


FIGURE 5.4 Ms Arab O. 109/1, Birgivi *Im'ān al-anzār*, 1124 [1712], f. 20^v.
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who in the post-face⁴⁸ to his commentary firmly established the attribution of the *Maqṣūd* to Abū Ḥanīfa, thereby elevating the prestige of the composition and his contribution to it, too.

In addition to this, there are two other commentaries, not listed by Ḥāḡḡī Ḥalīfa, which specifically attribute the authorship of the *Maqṣūd* to Abū Ḥanīfa. One of them, entitled *Al-šukriyya fī al-taṣrīf*, contains in its introductory line the name of Abū Ḥanīfa as the author of the text commented upon. The author of this commentary, however, is uncertain, and, on the basis of our current knowledge, it is impossible to date this commentary.⁴⁹ The name of the commentator is given in various forms as Aḥmad b. Ibrāhīm b. Ayyūb,⁵⁰ Aḥmad b. ʿImād,⁵¹ and Aḥmad b. ʿImād al-Sirāḡī.⁵² The second commentary is entitled *Rūḥ al-šurūḥ*, and its author is also dubious.⁵³ His name is given as ʿĪsā al-Sabrawī,⁵⁴ and more often as ʿĪsā al-Sīrawī.⁵⁵ This name was identified in a chronogram as (Muḥammad b. Muṣṭafā) al-ʿAyṣī (d. 1016/1607), a legal scholar, who was born in the town of Tire, hence having the *nisba* of al-Tīrawī or al-

48

هذا آخر ما كتبه الفقير محمد ابن بير على البركوي ... من شرح كتاب المقصود للإمام الأعظم
 “This is the end of what was written by the humble Muḥammad b. Bīr ‘Alī al-Birkawī from the commentary on *Kitāb al-Maqṣūd* by the Great Imam” [i. e. Abū Ḥanīfa], transl. K. Dévényi. This is the relevant part of the standard post-face in the extant manuscripts, also reproduced in the printed editions, e. g. ed. Istanbul, Dār al-ṭibā’a al-āmira, 1275 [1859], fig. 5.5.

49 The common website of manuscripts in Turkey (T.C. Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, *Türkiye Yazmaları*), lists altogether 14 manuscripts of the *Šukriyya*, and dates the earliest (19 Hk 2856/1) to 894/1488 [last accessed 8 Marc 2017]. Some of these manuscripts (32 Ulu 279, 26 Hk 590, 10 Dur 84/1, 45 Ak Ze 5829/2) are catalogued under the authorship of Aḥmad b. ʿImād al-Aqfahsi (750–808/1349–1405), which attribution cannot be ascertained on the basis of the information available to us. On al-Aqfahsi’s life, cf. e. g. ‘U.R. Kaḥḥāla, *Muḡam al-mu’allifīn*, 1993, vol. 1, p. 214.

50 Cf. e. g. Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyya, 5003.

51 Cf. e. g. Ph.K. Hitti, *Descriptive Catalog of the Garrett Collection of Arabic Manuscripts in the Princeton University Library*, 1938, p. 119, No. 310, an early 13th/19th century copy.

52 Cf. e. g. Ayatollah Marashi Najafi Library, Qom, No. 9610, copied in 1075/1664, *Bānk-i iṭṭilā’at-i nusah-i ḥaṭṭī*, <https://aghazozorg.ketab.ir/ShowBookDetail.177401/> *الشكرية في شرح المقصود* [last accessed 23 July 2024; access is currently restricted].

53 To establish the real identity of this author would need more research on the basis of the large number of extant manuscripts in different collections.

54 Al-Bābāni, *Īdāh*, vol. 1, p. 586.

55 Cf. e. g. Ph.K. Hitti, *Descriptive Catalog of the Garrett Collection of Arabic Manuscripts in the Princeton University Library*, 1938, p. 118, No. 307, and the descriptions of ms No. 6787/1 and ms. No. 4729 in the Library of King Saud University. This is also the form of this name in the editions printed in Istanbul between 1260/1844 and 1302/1885.

FIGURE 5.5 Birgivi *Im'ān al-anzār* printed 1275 [1859], LHAS, 772-713.

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Tīrahwī.⁵⁶ In some sources the author was identified with the Azharite scholar ʿĪsā b. Aḥmad b. ʿĪsā b. Muḥammad al-Zubayrī al-Barrāwī (d. 1182/1769), which identification also seems questionable.⁵⁷

It is very difficult to define the date of the first commentary on the *Maqṣūd*. Ḥāġġī Ḥalīfa⁵⁸ attributes it to Ibn Dāniyāl (d. 710/1310), a physician, whose fame rests on his shadow plays. The trouble with this identification is that the surviving manuscripts⁵⁹ give the author's name as Muḥammad b. Ḥalīl b. Dāniyāl, while Ibn Ḥalīl does not seem to be part of the physician's name. In addition, this very technical genre does not seem to fit into the oeuvre of Ibn Dāniyāl.⁶⁰

If we do not accept the identification of the author of this commentary as Ibn Dāniyāl, the physician, then the earliest commentary, titled *ʿUnqūd al-ġawāhir*, appears to be the one written by Ibn Qāḍī Simāwana (d. 823/1420), a well-known Ḥanafī jurist from Kütahya in Western Anatolia.⁶¹ It is followed by *Al-maḍbūt*, finished in Raġab 839 [January/February 1436] by Yūsuf b. ʿAbd al-Malik (d. 885/1480),⁶² a commentary by Aḥmad Dīkqūz (d. 855/1451),⁶³ some-

56 Cf. e. g. the description of ms No. 6344 in the Gazi Husrev-beg Library, Sarajevo, and the one kept in the Raġıp Paşa Library, as catalogued by M.S. al-Duġaym, *Fihris al-maḥṭūṭāt al-ʿarabiyya wa-al-turkiyya wa-al-fārisiyya fi Maktabat Rāġib Pāšā*, 2016, pp. 424–425, No. 1854 (1398/3).

For this identification, see M.T. Bursalı, *Osmānlı müellifleri*, 1333 [1914], vol. 1, p. 359. The *Rūḥ al-šurūḥ*, however, is not listed in the biographical literature under al-ʿAyšī's name. See, e. g. M. Süreyya, *Sicill-i ʿOsmani yāhud tezkire-i mesāḥi-i ʿOsmaniye*, 1311 [1893], vol. 3, p. 613. *GAL S*, vol. 2, p. 657, no. 25b contains Muḥammad Efendi al-ʿAyšī as the author of *Rūḥ al-šurūḥ*, whereas *GAL S*, vol. 2, p. 658, no. 25f. mentions ʿĪsā Efendi al-Sirawī as the author, without making the connection between the two texts.

57 See, e. g. the catalogue entry of ms 1319/1 copied by a certain ʿAbd Allāh al-Šubrāwī in 1107/1695 and held in the Central Library of Islamic Manuscripts, Cairo (al-Maktaba al-markaziyya li-al-maḥṭūṭāt al-islāmiyya bi-Wizārat al-awqāf al-miṣriyya), at *Fahāris awqāf al-sayyida Zaynab*, https://archive.org/details/mishref_gmail_201401/mode/2up [last accessed 24 November 2024]. This attribution supposes that the author composed it at a very early age since the copy predates the author's death by 73 years. In this manuscript, the commentary is bound together with a copy of the *Maqṣūd* which shows that it was used for the study of this particular treatise on morphology.

58 Ḥāġġī Ḥalīfa, *Kašf*, vol. 2, p. 1807.

59 E. g. the one copied in Agros, in 1053/1643, Maktabat al-Malik ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, Riyadh, No. 1520 [2630]. Or the one copied in 1104/1691 and held in the Çorum Hasan Paşa İl Halk Kütüphanesi, archive No. 19 Hk 2827/1. It is to be noted that the cataloguers established the author by referring to Ḥāġġī Ḥalīfa, *Kašf*, vol. 2, p. 1807.

60 Recently, there were some attempts to ascribe the authorship of this work to Ibn Dāniyāl, see Y. A. Zaytūn, “Šarḥ Ibn Dāniyāl al-Mawṣili ʿalā matn al-*Maqṣūd fi ʿilm al-šarf*”, 2019.

61 Cf. ʿU.R. Kaḥḥāla, *Muʿjam al-muʿallifin*, 1993, vol. 3, p. 799.

62 Cf. ʿU.R. Kaḥḥāla, *Muʿjam al-muʿallifin*, 1993, vol. 4, p. 171.

63 Cf. ʿU.R. Kaḥḥāla, *Muʿjam al-muʿallifin*, 1993, vol. 1, p. 138.

times equated with *Al-maṭlūb*, and an untitled commentary by the Egyptian Zayn al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Aynī (d. 893/1488).⁶⁴ This marks the end of the 9th/15th-century line of commentaries, to which several undated works often anonymous or by unknown authors, can be added, such as *Al-lubāb* by a certain Ibrāhīm b. Rasūl, and *Al-durr al-manqūd*. In addition to commentaries in Arabic, there are also commentaries in Ottoman Turkish, which demonstrate the popularity of this work, such as the one by Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Maġnīsāwī (d. 1000/1592).⁶⁵

6 Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be established that there seems to be enough internal and external evidence to confirm that the *Maqṣūd* was composed between the 5th/11th and 7th/13th centuries as a school textbook to be taught in *ḥanafī madrasas*. It seems highly unlikely that Abū Ḥanīfa, who did not write down his legal teachings, would have produced a linguistic work decades before the first Arabic grammar, and almost a century before the first specialised Arabic morphology. Because of its conciseness and clear examples, however, this work gained such popularity that it became one of the base texts to be memorised. It also lent itself to numerous commentaries which started to circulate soon after its composition. Being an esteemed textbook might explain its attribution to the initiator of the *ḥanafī madhhab*, a misconception which became reiterated in some of its commentaries. This false attribution might also have been originated by Birġivī to enhance the value of his commentary.

That its versification is even nowadays memorised by students of morphology is a proof that this composition—although may not have been authored by Abū Ḥanīfa—is worthy to bear his name.

Pseudepigrapha are of course well known in Arabic literature in its broadest sense and various fields, starting from philosophy, like the pseudo-works attributed to Aristotle, or al-Ġazālī, and ending in Sūfism, in the case of some of the works falsely attributed to Ibn al-‘Arabī.⁶⁶ There is a crucial difference, however, if we compare any of these works to the *Maqṣūd*, namely that they

64 Cf. ‘U.R. Kaḥḥāla, *Mu‘jam al-mu‘allifīn*, 1993, vol. 3, p. 391.

65 Cf. Ḥāġġī Ḥalifa, *Kaṣf*, vol. 2, p. 1807.

66 On famous pseudepigrapha, see among others M. Bouyges, *Essai de chronologie des œuvres de al-Ghazali (Algazel)*, 1959; O. Yahya, *Histoire et classification de l'œuvre d'Ibn ‘Arabi: étude critique*, 1964; and ‘A. Badawī, *La transmission de la philosophie grecque au monde arabe*, 1968.

could all have been written by their putative authors with the exception of the *Maqṣūd*. The fact, however, that a work of morphology was given this elevated authorship has most certainly added momentum to it in the educational circles for several centuries resulting in its fame persisting until our days.

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PART 4

La fabrique de l'illusion / Fabrications



Les fausses relations de voyage dans la littérature géographique arabe médiévale

Jean-Charles Ducène

1 Introduction

La littérature géographique occidentale médiévale connaît un certain nombre de récits de voyage inventés, depuis la *Navigation* de Saint Brandan¹ (écrit au viii^e s.) jusqu'au *Libro piccolo di meraviglie* de Jacobo de Sanseverino² (écrit 1416-1418) en passant par le *Livre* de Jean de Mandeville³ (m. 1372). Divers objectifs ont été vus derrière ces fictions, pour illustrer les exemples qui viennent d'être cités, dans le cas du premier «its author did not try to relate a factual story, but to expound moral doctrine. The *navigatio* is a fictive literary analysis of spiritual conflict; it is a theological study»⁴. Jean de Mandeville qui effectua vraisemblablement le pèlerinage à Jérusalem, continue son récit en donnant une leçon de géographie savamment compilée à partir de voyageurs antérieurs. Quant au texte de Jacobo de Sanseverino, c'est une compilation qui oscille entre le traité de géographie amusant et le récit édifiant⁵. Il est à noter que le même champ littéraire de l'hébreu médiéval fournit aussi des exemples qui laissent la critique dans le doute, évidemment avec le récit énigmatique d'Eldad ha-Dani⁶ (ix^e s.), mais également, avec un voyageur factuel comme Benjamin de Tudèle⁷ (xii^e s.).

1 Il est à remarquer que De Goeje avait déjà rapproché la *Navigation* des voyages de Sindbād notamment par le motif folklorique de la baleine sur laquelle les marins échoués font un feu et qui plonge à ce moment, M. De Goeje, 1893, «La légende de Saint Brandan».

2 Chr. Gadrat-Ouerfelli, «Le voyage merveilleux de Jacopo da Sansoverino (1416-1418)», 2025, à paraître. Je remercie Christine Gadrat-Ouerfelli pour cette référence. Pour d'autres exemples, J. K. Hyde, «Real and imaginery journeys in the later Middle Ages», 1982.

3 Chr. Deluz, *Jean de Mandeville, Le Livre des merveilles du monde*, Paris, 2000.

4 J. D. Anderson, «The *Navigatio Brendani*: a Medieval Best Seller», 1988, p. 315.

5 Chr. Gadrat-Ouerfelli, «Le voyage merveilleux de Jacopo da Sansoverino (1416-1418)», 2025, à paraître.

6 E. N. Adler, *Jewish travellers*, 1930, p. 4-21.

7 J. Sibon, «Benjamin de Tudèle, géographe ou voyageur ? Pistes de relecture du *Sefer massa'ot*», 2010 ; Fr.-X. Fauvelle, «L'interminable voyage de Benjamin, rabbin de Tudèle», 2019.

Ces fictions n'ont pas manqué à la géographie arabe. En effet, celle-ci s'alimente à partir du ix^e s. de relations de voyage qui viennent ajouter à la description des pays une dimension d'objectivité fondée sur le témoignage oculaire et l'expérience personnelle⁸, le *'iyān*. Jusque-là, le lecteur curieux des régions ou des populations inconnues n'avait à sa disposition que des « traités » qui se voulaient systématiques, écrits par des géographes en chambre. S'appuyant sur des sources orales et écrites, ils systématisaient une représentation du monde à partir d'informations de première main qui n'étaient cependant guère exposées telles qu'elles.

Or, dans le courant du ix^e s., le voyage apparaît comme expérience d'une réalité étrangère et inconnue qui tire sa véracité et sa légitimité du fait d'avoir été vécue, observée, expérimentée. Autant que l'on puisse en juger par les ouvrages conservés⁹, ces premiers textes qui enregistrent l'expérience du voyage sont de deux ordres, soit le voyageur lui-même met son expérience par écrit et fait un rapport factuel de son périple, ce qui donne ces relations de missions diplomatiques envoyées en dehors du monde musulman, par exemple, vers les Byzantins, les Bulgares ou les Nubiens. Dans ce cas, l'unité du texte provient du fait que son narrateur-auteur est unique du début jusqu'à la fin. Inversement, l'on a également l'enregistrement par un sédentaire, un littérateur, de l'expérience d'individus ayant dû voyager comme commerçants ou marins¹⁰. Le texte prend alors une autre tournure. Soit les anecdotes s'enchaînent les unes après les autres, avec comme élément de transition une thématique ou un narrateur commun, soit elles sont simplement juxtaposées, l'unité de l'ouvrage provenant plus de l'exotisme des faits rapportés. Le voyage n'y est plus exposé du début jusqu'à son terme, mais un moment en est rapporté à cause d'un événement ou d'un incident dont il fut le théâtre.

À côté de ces textes bien historicisés, d'autres cependant se révèlent à la critique historique peu vraisemblables, voire imaginaires. L'exemple extrême de ces compositions, mêlant sciemment et avec intelligence des détails réels dans une trame narrative qui construit une fiction, est évidemment les voyages de Sindbād le Marin. Paul Casanova¹¹ a montré que des éléments relevant de la réalité géographique et historique se rencontraient parmi les sept aventures

8 A. Miquel, *La géographie humaine*, 1968, p. 132-144.

9 A. Miquel, *La géographie humaine*, 1968, p. 113-151; H. Touati, *Islam et voyage au Moyen Âge*, 2000, p. 123-174; P. Charles-Dominique, *Voyageurs arabes*, 1995, p. x-xxv.

10 J. Sauvaget, *Relation de la Chine et de l'Inde*, 1948. Au nombre de ces recueils, on doit mentionner le *Al-ṣaḥīḥ min aḥbār al-baḥr wa-'ağā'ibihā* d'Abū 'Imrān Mūsā b. Rabāḥ al-Awsī al-Sīrāfī, connu anciennement comme le *Kitāb 'ağā'ib al-Hind*, 1326/2006.

11 P. Casanova, « Notes sur les voyages de Sindbād le Marin », 1922.

que ce marchand relate en tant qu'acteur principal, mais leur écriture en textes narratifs y a introduit une structure et des éléments imaginaires. Nous excluons cependant les récits où les déplacements du personnage deviennent secondaires dans l'intrigue et non plus partie intégrante, objet même de l'écriture¹². Dans ces cas d'ailleurs, il n'y a plus forcément superposition entre l'auteur et le narrateur bien que des passages dialogués en style direct puissent donner de la dynamique au récit. On sort de la relation de voyage pour entrer dans une narration parfois légendaire¹³. Dans ces textes, les descriptions des lieux, les impressions du narrateur confronté à l'inconnu, à l'étrange peuvent être présentes et servir à la construction d'un univers diégétique dont l'interprétation relève d'une autre strate sémantique, comme dans le cas du périple de Zayn al-Dīn 'Alī b. Fāḍil al-Mazandarī¹⁴ à l'île Verte (Berlin, Ahlwardt 6132, ff. 64^r-68^v) qui s'avère être un voyage initiatique chi'ite qui aboutit à la rencontre avec l'imam caché. Nous nous détournerons de ces textes pour prendre comme but de cette étude les récits de voyage donnés comme vrais par leur narrateur/auteur afin de voir comment ils fonctionnent stylistiquement pour résonner comme un récit réel alors que la critique externe les montre en inadéquation avec la réalité historique, telle que l'on peut la connaître par ailleurs. Notre propos est d'analyser quelques relations de voyage que la majorité des critiques modernes considèrent d'un point de vue historique comme fausses et d'essayer d'entrevoir leur origine ainsi que les motivations de leur écriture.

2 Relation de voyage plutôt que récit

Au sein de la littérature conservée, une série d'exemples dont le plus ancien remonte au début du ix^e s. avec Tamīm b. Baḥr al-Muṭṭawwi'ī¹⁵, envoyé chez les Turcs d'Asie centrale, nous donne à connaître des relations de voyage. Ce sont généralement des témoignages écrits sur le monde étranger à l'islam, parmi lesquels les voyages politiques comme des ambassades ou autres missions officielles prédominent. Nous disons «relations» de voyage plutôt que «récits», car selon nous, le centre d'intérêt du narrateur/auteur n'est pas le voyage en tant que tel, mais bien les informations recueillies en cours de route, le dépla-

12 Fl. Meunier, «Le voyage imaginaire dans le roman byzantin», 1998.

13 J.-Ch. Ducène, «Comment s'approcher des sources paradisiaques du Nil. L'exploration de Ḥā'id ibn Abī Sālūm», 2023. Pour une autre version portée par le ms Paris, Bnf, 6964, ff. 27^r-33^v, voir J.-Ch. Ducène, «Philologie arabe. Conférences de l'année 2022-2023», 2024, p. 43-45.

14 J.-Ch. Ducène, «Philologie arabe. Conférences de l'année 2014-2015», 2016, p. 43-45.

15 V. Minorsky, «Tamīm Baḥr's journey to the Uyghurs», 1948.

cement étant l'élément nécessaire, obligatoire à cette récolte, mais pas l'élément central ou essentiel, d'ailleurs, le titre même de *risāla*, « d'épître », leur est attribué dans certains manuscrits. Nous accordons plutôt le terme de « récit » au genre de la *riḥla* qui, elle, apparaît plus tard avec Muḥammad Ibn Ḡubayr (m. 581/1185) et Ibn Baṭṭūṭa (m. 770/1368-1369 ou 779/1377). D'abord, deux objectifs nouveaux sont attribués au voyage qui nous est raconté alors, soit le pèlerinage, soit la quête du savoir (*ṭalab al-'ilm*), parfois les deux. La quête du savoir se trouve ainsi enregistrée pour elle-même par Abū Bakr b. al-'Arabī (vi^e/xii^e s.), qui associe l'inventaire des savants rencontrés aux aléas de son voyage.¹⁶ Avec la *riḥla*, le déplacement et ses tribulations sont autant relatés par les auteurs que les nouveautés observées. Et ces auteurs revendiquent parfois leur subjectivité pour avoir le plaisir de dire avec verve ce qu'ils ont vécu, comme Muḥammad al-'Abdarī¹⁷ (vii^e/xiii^e s.). Dans la *risāla* (« l'épître »), par contre, l'auteur est souvent effacé derrière son texte, la personnalisation y est peu perceptible, il y a une distance entre les faits rapportés et ce que le narrateur a pu en penser. Rares sont les condamnations des choses qu'il ne connaît pas ou des impedimenta qu'il rencontre. Cependant, dans tous les cas, on peut aussi y trouver une prémisse d'autobiographie¹⁸ ou, en tout cas, d'éléments qui appartiennent à ce genre puisque le texte est censé fournir un témoignage personnel. Or, cette dimension autobiographique reste peu répandue¹⁹ dans la littérature arabe du temps. C'est donc bien à l'écriture rétrospective non fictionnelle qu'il faut rattacher ces récits. Ces textes sont ainsi écrits ou réécrits après coup, en vue d'être publiés – au sens médiéval du terme, et en suivant un temps de la narration qui se veut progressif. Le narrateur, qui parle en « je » narrateur se replace dans le passé et développe son récit selon une chronologie qui suit le déroulement du déplacement avec comme pauses juste des digressions explicatives ; on reste généralement au niveau de la diégèse. Ainsi la norme implicite qui sert de point de repère est beaucoup moins la conscience de l'individu que son moi social, d'autant si la mission est officielle.

Cette « relation » de voyage porte souvent le titre générique de *risāla* (c'est le cas pour Ibn Faḍlān et pour Abū Dulaf). C'est-à-dire qu'il s'agit d'une « épître » ou d'un « mémoire », soit une réponse factice à une question posée ou un rap-

16 Y. Déjournat, « À l'ombre de la Fitna, l'émergence d'un discours du voyage », 2011.

17 J.-Ch., Ducène, « La situation du Maghreb au travers de la remation de voyage d'al-'Abdarī (vi^e/xiii^e s.) », 2012.

18 D. F. Reynolds, *Interpreting the Self. Autobiography in the Arabic Literary Tradition*, 2001, p. 42, 293.

19 S. Enderwitz, « From curriculum vitae to self-narration. Fiction in Arabic autobiography », 1998.

port écrit. Dans le contexte littéraire du temps, cette « relation » de voyage répond aussi au goût du bizarre dans l'esprit des Belles-Lettres, de l'*adab*, mais d'un « extra-ordinaire » qui reste dans le domaine du vraisemblable, la place du merveilleux débridé y est excessivement réduite, car celui-ci est rejeté par l'*adab*. Ce qui étonne, en revanche, est conservé. Plus précisément, c'est ce qui rompt les habitudes de la perception, ce sont les *nawādir*, « les curiosités » ou les *'ağā'ib* « les merveilles » et l'exotisme en est un exemple parfait. En outre, la véracité du fait observé est acceptée, car reposant sur l'observation du narrateur/auteur en qui la confiance du lecteur est totale puisque celui-ci sait qu'il ne lit pas a priori une œuvre de fiction. Très souvent, le temps vécu correspond à l'espace parcouru. Les réactions de l'observateur représentent un accent de vérité, car le récit se présente comme une aventure personnelle. L'instance narrative est toujours l'observateur-acteur du voyage qui rapporte son observation comme un transmetteur de *ḥabar* donne son information. La véracité de celle-ci reposant sur la crédibilité, l'honorabilité de celui-là, de sorte que leur témoignage possède une garantie d'authenticité sur laquelle les lecteurs anciens et les orientalistes à partir du xix^e s. ont fait fond. Nous pouvons parler à juste titre pour certaines de ces observations de notices ethnographiques.

Cet espace d'écriture caractéristique des ix^e et x^e s. peut être illustré par la *risāla* d'Aḥmad Ibn Faḍlān (première moitié du iv^e/x^e s.) qui relate sa mission auprès des Bulgares de la Volga. Un exemple au-delà des Pyrénées est le voyage fragmentaire d'Ibrāhīm b. Ya'qūb al-Turtuṣī²⁰ en Europe au iv^e/x^e s. ou encore celui d'Abū Ḥāmid al-Ġarnāṭī²¹ (m. 565/1169-1170) au Proche-Orient et en Europe orientale au xi^e s. dont le récit suit rigoureusement son déplacement, mais n'est ponctué que des curiosités naturelles ou humaines observées, mais dans ce dernier cas, avec une dimension personnelle plus affirmée, l'auteur s'exprimant en « je » narrateur et livrant parfois des informations personnelles. Cette subjectivité qui se met par écrit et qui se retrouve par la suite chez nombre de voyageurs²² oriente l'épître (*risāla*) ou la relation de voyage vers le récit ou *riḥla*.

20 J.-Ch. Ducène, « 960-962. Le tour d'Europe du marchand juif catalan Ibrāhīm ibn Ya'qūb », 2019.

21 C. E. Dubler, *Abū Ḥāmid El-Granadino y su relación de viaje por tierras eurasiáticas*, 1953.

22 J.-Ch. Ducène, « Les impressions de voyage de Yāqūt al-Rūmī (m. 626/1229) : une riḥla fragmentaire », 2024.

3 Le détournement

Une conséquence étonnante de la valeur forte attribuée à ce récit de vécu portant valeur de témoignage fut l'écriture de faux, de pastiches, de textes qui ont toute l'apparence d'une relation de voyage, mais qui sont en réalité des créations imaginaires, des œuvres de fiction. En effet, la critique a relevé depuis le xix^e s. quelques relations de voyage qui semblent s'écarter de la réalité historique pour entraîner le lecteur dans un univers narratif vraisemblable, mais fictionnel. Quelles sont-elles ?

Chronologiquement, nous avons le prétendu voyage de Sallām l'interprète vers 840 à la muraille des Gog et Magog en Asie centrale que 'Ubayd Allāh Ibn Ḥurrādāḍbih²³ (m. 272/885) nous rapporte comme l'ayant entendu de Sallām lui-même. Paradoxalement, si l'essentiel des études récentes²⁴ a montré l'artifice, la construction remarquable et l'intégration avec les attentes du public de l'époque de ce texte, d'autres²⁵ y voient encore un voyage réel qui aurait abouti à la « Porte de Jade », à l'extrémité occidentale de la Grande muraille. Le récit nous est transmis par Ibn Ḥurrādāḍbih comme ayant été entendu de Sallām. La narration est ainsi rétrospective et suit le déroulement du voyage. Nous retrouvons l'agencement habile de motifs narratifs (peur d'une menace perçue en rêve) avec des effets de réel comme la quantité de vivres transportés, l'ignorance des populations du centre de l'Empire de ce qui se passe à Bagdad, l'observation des outils laissés par Alexandre, le constructeur de la muraille, qui donne du poids à la narration. Par l'objectif du déplacement lui-même, à savoir vérifier si la porte et la muraille qui protègent l'humanité des populations apocalyptiques des Gog et Magog sont encore en bon état, le lecteur est entraîné à la périphérie du monde connu et se retrouve observer des éléments relevant de l'histoire originelle (l'enfermement des Gog et Magog par Alexandre), mais aussi des temps eschatologiques puisqu'ils font partie des signes avant-coureurs du Jugement. Le lecteur s'approche ainsi d'un imaginaire légendaire puisqu'à la limite des territoires explorés et rattaché à un temps anhistorique.

D'autres récits cependant se veulent plus réalistes, moins extraordinaires, mais n'en sont pas moins suspects en leur réalité historique. Appartient à cette catégorie, le voyage d'Abū Dulaf Mis'ar (iv^e/x^e s.) vers la Chine et l'Inde, voyage

23 Ibn Ḥurrādāḍbih, *Kitāb al-masālik wa-al-mamālik*, 1889, p. 162-170 ; F. Sezgin, *Anthropogeographie*, 2010, p. 95-97 ; A. Miquel, *La géographie humaine*, 1975, p. 503-511.

24 S. Garnier, « La notice "Ṣifat sadd Yāğūğ wa-Māğūğ" dans le *Kitāb al-masālik wa-l-mamālik* d'Ibn Ḥurrādāḍbih », 2013 ; T. Zadeh, *Mapping Frontiers across Medieval Islam*, 2011.

25 E. van Donzel & A. Schmidt, *Gog et Magog in Early Eastern Christian and Islamic Sources*, 2010.

textuellement appelé *risāla* dans l'unique manuscrit (Meshhed, al-Maktaba al-Riḍawiyya 5229)²⁶ qui nous le conserve. Remarquons déjà que le manuscrit en question donne à connaître respectivement une version du *Kitāb al-buldān* d'Ibn al-Faḳīh plus complète que le *Muḥtaṣar* publié par De Goeje en 1885, les deux *risāla* d'Abū Dulaf et celle d'Ibn Faḳlān. Avec Abū Dulaf, néanmoins, le lecteur est mis en porte-à-faux, entraîné à lui faire confiance par la seconde *risāla*, une autre épître relative à un voyage réalisé en Iran, et dont l'analyse a montré toute l'exactitude²⁷. Sa première *risāla* – « première » dans le manuscrit, sa chronologie nous échappe –, quant à elle, nous conte un périple prétendument réalisé en Asie. Ce texte a d'abord été connu par les longs extraits qu'en donnait Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī²⁸ (m. 626/1229) dans son dictionnaire géographique, et le manuscrit de Meshhed découvert en 1924 en rendit possible l'édition²⁹ complète.

Abū Dulaf prétend ainsi, à l'entame de sa première *risāla*, avoir quitté sa patrie (*waṭan*) pour se rendre au Ḥurāsān alors gouverné par l'émir samanide Naṣr b. Aḥmad (301/914-331/943). Il est à Buḥārā, quand arrive une ambassade envoyée par le roi de Chine « Qālīn b. al-Šaḥīr » venue demander une alliance matrimoniale avec la dynastie samanide. Derrière ce souverain, il faudrait plutôt voir un souverain local turc. Si Naṣr b. Aḥmad refuse de donner sa fille à un prince infidèle, il accepte qu'un de ses fils épouse une princesse chinoise. Abū Dulaf accompagne l'ambassade³⁰ qui retourne vers Sandābil, identifiée de manière hypothétique à Ganzhou, chef-lieu du Gansu (Kan-su)³¹ et capitale des

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- 26 F. Sezgin, *Collection of Geographical Works by Ibn al-Faḳīh, Ibn Faḳlān, Abū Dulaf al-Khazrajī*, 1987, p. 347, 362; F. Sezgin, *Anthropogeographie*, 2010, p. 105-112; A. Miquel, *La géographie humaine*, 1968, vol. 1, p. 139-145.
- 27 V. Minorsky, *Abū Dulaf Miṣ'ar ibn Muḥalhil's Travels in Iran (circa A. D. 950)*, 1955; P. G. Boulgakov & A. B. Khalidov, *Vtoraja zapiska Abū Dulafa*, 1960; J.-Ch. Ducène, « Lieux de mémoire sassanides dans la deuxième *risāla* d'Abū Dulaf Miṣ'ar (IV^e/X^e siècle) », 2009; Š. Laṭībī, *Riḥlāt Abī Dulaf*, 2017, p. 139-193.
- 28 Yāqūt, *Muḳāmaṁ al-buldān*, 1990, vol. 3, p. 500-508, sous *al-Šīn* et traduction française par G. Ferrand, *Relations de voyages et textes géographiques arabes, persans et turcs relatifs à l'Extrême-Orient du VIII^e au XVIII^e siècles*, 1913, vol. 1, p. 208-230.
- 29 F. Sezgin, *Collection of Geographical Works by Ibn al-Faḳīh, Ibn Faḳlān, Abū Dulaf al-Khazrajī*, 1987, p. 362-390; A. von Rohr-Sauer, *Des Abū Dulaf Bericht über seine Reise nach Turkestan, China und Indien, neu übersetzt und untersucht*, 1939.
- 30 Cette mission est soumise à caution, voir C. E. Bosworth, « An Alleged Embassy from the Emperor of China to the Amir Naṣr b. Aḥmad; a Contribution to Samanid Military History », 1969.
- 31 Seul Abū Dulaf mentionne cette ville que Josef Marquart identifie de manière conjecturale à Kan-chu, dans la province de Kans-su au nord-ouest de la Chine, J. Marquart, *Osteuropäische und ostasiatische Streifzüge*, 1903, p. 84-90. Vladimir Minorsky suggère une erreur de copiste, V. Minorsky, *Ḥudūd al-'ālam*, 1937, p. 232. Hamilton précise qu'il faudrait corri-

Ouïghours occidentaux. Ce sont ces pérégrinations qui forment la matière de la première *risāla*. La délégation voyage jusqu'à Sandābīl en traversant une série de tribus turques (Petchénègues, Tughuzghuz, Kirgiz, Karlouk), mais énumérées dans un ordre qui est anachronique pour l'époque et enlève toute vraisemblance à l'itinéraire³². En outre, une partie de cette nomenclature tribale turque laisse perplexe (al-Ḥarkāh, al-Ṭaḥṭāḥ, al-Bağāh, etc.) et ressemble beaucoup aux noms que l'on donne aux tribus turques dans la version du *Kitāb al-buldān* d'Ibn al-Faqīh³³, conservé dans ce même manuscrit de Meshhed. L'in vraisemblance ultime est la rencontre d'une population arabe près de la capitale, prétendument descendante des légendaires Tubba' yéménites. En effet, l'historiographie musulmane de l'époque faisait de ces Yéménites les conquérants de la Chine du Nord. L'énumération des tribus permet à Abū Dulaf de nous décrire les mœurs, la religion, les plantes ou les gisements miniers que ces populations possèdent. Rien ne nous est dit des aléas du voyage hormis les distances entre les villes ou tribus exprimées en jours, les descriptions quant à elles sont stéréotypées. Les informations réalistes (présence chrétienne, manichéenne ou zoroastrienne) côtoient des descriptions imaginaires, comme le culte astral des Turcs dans certains temples. L'auteur aurait très bien pu glaner ces renseignements auprès de voyageurs ou dans ses lectures, ou les forger de toutes pièces de son imagination. Cette route n'est en rien un itinéraire³⁴, ne serait-ce que par les distances disproportionnées que l'auteur évoque pour la traversée des territoires de chaque tribu, seules les trois dernières étapes sont nettement identifiables : *Maqām al-Bāb* devrait correspondre à Sha-chou³⁵, *Wādī al-maqām* avec la région de Su-chou et enfin Sandābīl avec Ganzhou. À Sandābīl, Qālīn b. al-Šaḥīr fait bon accueil à la proposition de mariage ramenée par son ambassade, car une princesse est préparée et envoyée en grand arroi au souverain samanide. Naṣr b. Aḥmad étant cependant mort entre-temps, ce sera son fils Nūḥ b. Naṣr qui l'épousera. Abū Dulaf ne retourne pas au Ḥurāsān, mais décide

ger Sandābīl en Šankīk, qui serait à lire Šangyeg pour Tchang-yi, siège de la préfecture de Kan, J. Hamilton, « Autour du manuscrit Staël-Holstein », 1958, p. 129 et 137.

32 Cet itinéraire a été analysé par J. Marquart, *Osteuropäische und ostasiatische Streifzüge*, 1903, p. 74-95.

33 Ibn al-Faqīh, *Kitāb al-buldān*, 1996, p. 644-648.

34 A. von Rohr-Sauer, *Des Abū Dulaf Bericht über seine Reise nach Turkestan, China und Indien*, 1939, p. 59; V. Minorsky, *Abū Dulaf Miṣ'ar ibn Muḥalhil's Travels in Iran (circa A.D. 950)*, 1955, p. 14-15.

35 Andrea Schmidt et Emeri van Donzel préfèrent y voir Yumenguan, A. Schmidt & E. Van Donzel, *Gog et Magog in Early Eastern Christian and Islamic Sources*, 2010, p. 226.

d'aller de Sandābil à Kalah³⁶, c'est-à-dire quelque part le long de la péninsule Malaise ! Sans nous donner de détails sur ce trajet, il gagne depuis Kalah le pays du poivre, soit le Malabar, il parvient ensuite à Qāmarupa, soit l'Assam. Enfin, il retourne en terre musulmane par le Kashmīr et Kaboul, mais s'offre un détour par Kollam (Quilon), sur la côte sud-ouest indienne, dont il décrit les plantes et les minerais. Il se dirige alors vers le nord-ouest et arrive au Sind où il nous laisse la description de Multān et de son temple. Puis de Manšūra, il revient enfin en Iran par le Siġistān. C'est alors pour lui l'occasion de séjourner chez ses souverains, les Saffarides, et d'évoquer la cour de l'émir Abū Ġāfar Aḥmad b. Muḥammad³⁷ (943-963). Quant à la nature du texte, à partir de son départ de Sandābil, les notices deviennent plus détaillées et les produits mentionnés comme exportations des villes traversées se retrouvent dans notre documentation (ex. l'étain *qalaṭ* de Kalah, l'aloès de Qamarūn pour Qamarūb, l'Assam). Voyons la description de Kollam (Quilon) au sud de l'Inde :

Nous arrivâmes à une ville appelée al-Kollam (Kawlam). Sa population possède un temple, mais il n'y a ni idole ni statue. La ville dispose de plantations de teck [et de campêcine (*baqqam*). Il y en a de deux sortes, celle-ci est de qualité inférieure, l'autre appelée *al-amrūn* est excellente]³⁸. Le teck est un arbre excessivement long et grand. Il peut parfois dépasser plus de cent coudées. On y trouve aussi énormément de bambous ainsi que des roseaux. On y trouve également de la sandaraque (*sandarūs*), mais en petite quantité et de piètre qualité, la meilleure provient de Chine. Elle provient d'une source qui jaillit à la porte orientale³⁹ de sa capitale. La sandaraque ressemble à l'ambre [jaune], mais elle est plus précieuse. Il y a aussi la pierre d'aimant (*maġnāṭīs*) qui attire toute chose dès qu'on la chauffe en la frottant de la main. Ils ont aussi une pierre connue sous le nom de *sandāniyya* (littéralement "originaire de Sandān") qui est employée pour faire les toits de leurs habitations, alors que les colonnes proviennent de vertèbres de poissons morts, bien qu'ils n'en mangent pas ni n'égorgent d'animaux. La plupart d'entre eux se nourrissent d'animaux morts. La population demande à la Chine un souverain

36 M. Jacq-Hergoualc'h, *The Malay Peninsula. Crossroads of the Maritime Silk Road*, 2002, p. 195-196.

37 A. von Rohr-Sauer, *Des Abū Dulaf Bericht über seine Reise nach Turkestan, China und Indien, neu übersetzt und untersucht*, 1939, p. 39. Le manuscrit donne comme nom Muḥammad b. Aḥmad.

38 Ajout chez Yāqūt, *Muḥam al-buldān*, 1990, vol. 3, p. 507.

39 Le texte de Yāqūt donne comme variante « provient d'un genévrier ('*ar'ar*) qui pousse à la porte orientale de sa capitale », *Muḥam al-buldān*, 1990, vol. 3, p. 507.

lorsque leur roi meurt. Il n'y a pas en Inde de médecine si ce n'est dans cette ville. On y fabrique des vases en terre qui sont vendus dans nos pays comme s'ils étaient chinois, quoique la majorité d'entre eux n'en proviennent pas. [Car l'argile de Chine est plus dure que la leur et plus résistante au feu. L'argile de Kollam, avec laquelle on fabrique des vases semblables aux exemplaires chinois, est laissée au feu pendant trois jours et ne supporterait pas une cuisson de plus longue durée]⁴⁰. La majorité de l'argile chinoise est exportée, mais cette poterie [de Kollam] est de teinte plus noirâtre. Ce qui provient de Chine ou d'ailleurs est de teinte translucide ou non. Cela est fabriqué au Fārs (?) avec des cailloux, de la chaux *qalaī*, du plomb et du verre qui est malaxé en [forme] de tube, qui est soufflé et qui est travaillé avec des pinces, et les bouteilles sont soufflées comme par exemple les coupes à boire multicolores. Depuis Kollam, les bateaux voguent vers l'Oman. On y trouve de la rhubarbe, défectueuse à l'usage, la chinoise étant meilleure. La rhubarbe est une courge qui pousse là-bas et ses feuilles [ressemblent] à celles du *sādaǧ* (le malabathrum) indien. C'est la ville de Kollam qui donne son nom à plusieurs sortes d'aloès, de camphres, de résines et d'écorces. L'aloès pousse dans des îles au-delà de l'équateur dont personne n'a jamais vu les plantations ni ne connaît la pousse ni à quoi ressemble son arbre, et personne n'a jamais décrit sa feuille. (L'auteur continue sur l'origine et les sortes d'aloès). Quant au camphre, on le trouve sur les pentes d'une montagne située entre Kollam et Mandūraqin (lire Mandūrafatan) et qui donne sur la mer. C'est le cœur d'un arbre que l'on fend, et on y trouve le camphre que l'arbre recelait. Parfois, on le découvre mou, ou dur, car c'est une résine qui se situe au cœur de cet arbre. À Kollam, on trouve aussi quelques myrobolans, mais ceux de Kaboul sont meilleurs, car Kaboul est éloignée de la mer. (L'auteur développe son propos concernant les myrobolans de Kaboul). Se situent aussi à Kollam des mines de soufre jaune et des mines de cuivre. On extrait de sa combustion une excellente *tūtīyā* (le terme est polysémique, il peut désigner un minéral comme l'antimoine, de l'oxyde de zing, la marcassite, la calamine, mais aussi une préparation comme un collyre. Il s'agit manifestement ici d'une préparation). Toutes les sortes de *tūtīyā* proviennent de la combustion (*duḥḥān*) du cuivre sauf la *tūtīyā* indienne, car comme nous l'avons dit, elle est issue de la combustion du plomb *qalaī*. L'eau de Kollam et celle de Mandūraqin (lire Mandūrafatan) proviennent de citernes prévues pour conserver l'eau de pluie. Il n'y

40 Ajout chez Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-buldān*, 1990, vol. 3, p. 507.

a pas de cultures à l'exception de celle des courges qui contiennent la rubarbe, car on la cultive [même] entre les épineux (littéralement "entre les épines"). Il en est de même pour leur melon, qui est en très petite quantité. La manne (*qinbīl*) tombe du ciel et s'assemble sur des bouses de vaches, mais la manne arabe est meilleure.

Abū Dulaf continue avec le récit de son retour par Multān. Dans cette notice sur Kollam, rien n'est dit de la situation topographique de lieu, mais Abū Dulaf s'étend sur ce qu'on y trouve comme produit naturel ou artisanal de manière vraisemblable pour son lectorat et sous la forme requise par le genre littéraire. Puisque l'on est hors du monde bien connu, on peut voir apparaître des produits exotiques, mal définis. On a l'impression que l'auteur a eu à sa disposition des sources orales ou écrites plus précises ou plus diversifiées.

Que penser de ce voyage qui aurait pris place dans la quatrième décennie du x^e s.? Sans être impossibles, les invraisemblances dont le texte fait part empêchent que l'on puisse le considérer comme le récit d'un périple réellement exécuté, même à penser qu'il a été mis par écrit bien après son exécution et déformé par la mémoire. Alfred von Rohr-Sauer⁴¹ a lui-même remarqué que la fréquentation des bibliothèques de Buḥārā aurait très bien pu donner toute la matière nécessaire à Abū Dulaf pour la rédaction de son texte. Par ailleurs, Abū Dulaf a fréquenté les Būyides et nous savons par Aḥmad al-Muqaddasī⁴² (m. fin iv^e/x^e s.) que la bibliothèque de 'Aḍud al-Dawla possédait l'ouvrage géographique de Ġayhānī qui s'étendait sur la Haute Asie et était enclin à enregistrer des merveilles⁴³.

Plus tard, mais avant 377/987 puisqu'Ibn al-Nadīm (m. vers 385/995) rédige à ce moment son *Fihrist*, notre auteur est à Bagdad et semble assez crédible pour informer Ibn al-Nadīm à propos de sanctuaires en Inde⁴⁴, notamment la *Bayt al-dahab*, la Maison d'or, entre le Makrān et Qandahār. Notons qu'Ibn al-Nadīm qualifie son interlocuteur de « globe-trotter » (*ḡawwāla*). Abū Dulaf lui donne ces renseignements comme les ayant reçus d'informateurs indiens lors de son périple en Inde. Nous avons là l'indice qu'il a au moins parcouru le Sind. Si dans l'ensemble le texte est une fabrication, quelles en seraient les raisons? Selon nous, on peut constater que l'auteur possédait parfaitement les codes de l'écri-

41 A. von Rohr-Sauer, *Des Abū Dulaf Bericht über seine Reise nach Turkestan, China und Indien, neu übersetzt und untersucht*, 1939, p. 71.

42 Al-Muqaddasī, *Aḥsan al-taqāsīm fī ma'rifat al-aqālīm*, 1906, p. 4.

43 J.-Ch. Ducène, « Other Arab geographers' sources on the north: The 'Anonymous Relation' and al-Jayhani », 2023.

44 B. Dodge, *The Fihrist of al-Nadīm*, 1971, p. 829-830.

ture de la relation de voyage faite d'une suite d'observations personnelles et de l'enregistrement d'informations recueillies en cours de route, alors que l'observateur se garde d'apparaître. Ensuite, l'Asie centrale ou l'Orient étaient encore à son époque une marge dont les populations offraient assez d'exotisme pour être intrigantes. Enfin Luke Treadwell⁴⁵ a récemment argué que le volume composite de Meshhad tel que nous l'avons, avec ces quatre œuvres de géographie, présente quelques anomalies quant à son compilateur original qui permettent de douter de son authenticité en tant que recueil réunissant des œuvres de manière gratuite et inintéressée. En effet, les deux épîtres d'Abū Dulaf sont entourées par deux ouvrages, connus par ailleurs, ensuite les commentaires du compilateur anonyme montrent parfois une méfiance de bon aloi vis-à-vis des assertions d'Abū Dulaf. Et surtout, les dernières pages de l'ouvrage d'Ibn al-Faqīh, dans un style qui détonne avec les pages précédentes, énumèrent et décrivent des populations turques inconnues, mais que l'on retrouve quelques pages plus loin chez Abū Dulaf. Et Luke Treadwell d'envisager qu'Abū Dulaf lui-même aurait pu être le compilateur à l'origine de ce recueil afin de donner si pas du crédit, en tout cas de la vraisemblance à sa première *risāla*.

Ce pastiche renforce l'image de voyageur qu'a manifestement Abū Dulaf, c'était donc une affabulation qui lui était bénéfique sans qu'il ne prenne le risque d'être démenti.

À l'autre extrémité du monde musulman, l'Espagne omeyyade nous présente un autre cas de récit imaginaire, c'est l'hypothétique ambassade qu'aurait dirigée Yaḥyā al-Ġazāl⁴⁶ (iii^e/ix^e s.) auprès du Roi des Normands (*malik al-Maġūs*) quelque part au Nord de l'Europe, pour le compte de l'émir omeyyade 'Abd al-Raḥmān II (r. 206/822-238/852) en 844. Le récit nous en est cependant donné que bien plus tard par le poète Ibn Dihya⁴⁷ (m. 633/1235), témoignage autour duquel les critiques se partagent en croyants⁴⁸ et en incroyables⁴⁹.

45 L. Treadwell, « Who compiled and edited the Mashhad miscellany », 2020.

46 A. Huici Miranda, « Al-Ghazāl », 1965, p. 1062; M. Riis, « Al-Gazāl », 2012, p. 405-406; F. Sezgin, *Anthropogeographie*, 2010, vol. 2, p. 91-94.

47 Ibn Dihya, *Al-muṭrib fi aṣ'ari ahl al-Maġrib*, 1993, p. 133 et p. 138-144; A. Seippel, *Rerum Normannicarum*, 1928, p. 13-20; trad. : R. Dozy, « L'ambassade d'al-Ghazāl auprès du roi des Normands », 1881; G. Jacob, *Arabische Berichte von Gesandten an germanische Fürstenhöfe aus dem 9. Und 10. Jahrhundert*, 1927, p. 37-42.

48 R. Dozy, « L'ambassade d'al-Ghazāl auprès du roi des Normands », 1881; W. E. D. Allen, *The Poet and the Spce-Wife*, 1960; A. El-Hajji, *Andalusian diplomatic relations with Western Europe during the Umayyad period, a.h. 138–366 a.d. 755–976*, 1970; N. F. Hermes, *The [European] Other in Medieval Arabic Literature and Culture*, 2012, p. 98-110.

49 É. Lévi-Provençal, « Un échange d'ambassades entre Cordoue et Byzance au ix^e siècle », 1937; S. M. Pons-Sanz, « Whom did al-Ghazāl meet? An exchange of embassies between the Arabs from al-Andalus and the Viking », 2004.

Il est certain que Yaḥyā⁵⁰ se rendit à Constantinople, en 839-840, en réponse à une ambassade envoyée à l'émir 'Abd al-Raḥmān II par l'Empereur Théophile (r. 829-842). Le récit que l'on en a, rapporté par un chroniqueur et non par l'acteur lui-même, montre la sagacité de Yaḥyā al-Ġazāl à détourner à son avantage le protocole byzantin et à séduire l'impératrice Théodora. Quatre siècles plus tard, Ibn Diḥya rapporte la seconde ambassade selon un contemporain du principal protagoniste qui aurait lui-même participé à cette équipée, à savoir le vizir Tamām b. al-Qama (m. 283/896), qui est donc ici le narrateur supposé du texte. Nous avons ainsi un narrateur extra-diégétique, et non une relation en « je » narrateur.

Al-Ġazāl aurait été envoyé par 'Abd al-Raḥmān II pour accompagner l'ambassadeur du roi des Normands rentrant chez lui et pour discuter d'une proposition de trêve provenant des Normands, mais le souverain en question n'est jamais désigné. Il faut garder à l'esprit, en effet, que depuis 844 des navigateurs scandinaves débarquaient sur différents points de la côte de la péninsule Ibérique et faisaient des razzias, ce qui poussa le pouvoir omeyyade à réagir militairement⁵¹. Les membres de la délégation, selon Ibn Diḥya, s'embarquent à Silvès sur deux bateaux différents. Après avoir essuyé une tempête dans le golfe de Gascogne, ils accostent dans une grande île non dénommée d'où seul repart le légat du roi normand pour avertir son souverain. Al-Ġazāl est finalement autorisé à se rendre auprès du roi, à qui il délivre son message. L'absence de toute indication topographique ou onomastique et le flou qui entoure le comportement de ces « Normands » entament la véracité du récit. À l'aller, le seul toponyme cité est l'énigmatique Alūya⁵², limite occidentale de l'Andalus où les navires essuient une tempête. Au retour, il arrive à Saint-Jacques [de Compostelle]. Les descriptions sont stéréotypées et n'offrent pas de point d'ancrage réel et historique. Par exemple, pour le territoire aux mains des Maġūs :

C'était une grande île dans l'océan (*al-baḥr al-muḥīṭ*), où il y avait des eaux courantes et des jardins ; elle était à trois journées, ce qui équivaut à trois cents milles, de la terre ferme ; il y avait une quantité innombrable de Maġūs, et dans le voisinage se trouvaient beaucoup d'autres îles, grandes

50 Al-Maqqarī, 1855, 629-634 ; É. Lévi-Provençal, « Un échange d'ambassades entre Cordoue et Byzance au IX^e siècle », 1937, à partir d'un manuscrit maintenant perdu et l'auteur ne fournit que la traduction du texte arabe ; A. Melvinger, *Les premières incursions des Vikings en Occident d'après les sources arabes*, 1955, p. 58-61.

51 P. Hélio, *Os Viking em Portugal e na Galiza*, 2017, p. 55-78.

52 Le cap est identifié au cap Saint Vincent ou au cap Finistère par Abderahman El-Hajji, A. El-Hajji, *Andalusian diplomatic*, 1970, p. 197-199.

et petites, toutes habitées par des Mağūs, et le continent leur appartient aussi ; c'est un grand pays qui demande plusieurs jours pour le parcourir.⁵³

C'est factuel, certes, mais constitué de clichés et si général que cela empêche toute possibilité de contradiction.

Ibn Diḥya poursuit par la description de la religion pratiquée :

Ils étaient alors *mağūs* ; à présent ils sont chrétiens, car ils ont abandonné le culte du feu, leur ancienne religion ; seulement les habitants de quelques îles l'ont retenu ; là on épouse encore sa mère ou sa sœur et d'autres abominations s'y commettent aussi.⁵⁴

Ibn Diḥya ne nous donne ici que les lieux communs qui caractérisaient la religion des *mağūs*, c'est-à-dire des Zoroastriens. Comme le terme « *mağūs* » avait été appliqué aux Scandinaves pour des raisons encore obscures⁵⁵, l'auteur en a déduit le comportement des supposés *Mağūs* rencontrés par al-Ġazāl. Par ailleurs, au milieu du ix^e s., il n'y a encore aucune trace du christianisme en Scandinavie, si on accepte cette région comme théâtre de l'événement. Et enfin, le principal protagoniste, al-Ġazāl est toujours présenté extrêmement positivement pour le lectorat du texte. Il déjoue les « pièges » de son hôte, alors qu'il aurait dû s'incliner devant lui puisque l'entrée de la salle d'audience avait été abaissée, il préfère entrer accroupi et il reste indifférent à la richesse exposée. On nous le présente aussi dominant intellectuellement et par la force ces contradicteurs normands.

Pendant son séjour dans le pays des *Mağūs*, al-Ġazāl eut avec eux plusieurs rapports : tantôt, il disputait contre leurs savants et les réduisait au silence, tantôt il combattait avec leurs meilleurs guerriers et les perçait de ses coups (*aṭabatahum*).⁵⁶

53 A. Seippel, *Rerum Normannicarum*, 1928, p. 14-15 ; R. Dozy, « L'ambassade d'al-Ghazāl auprès du roi des Normands », 1881, p. 270.

54 A. Seippel, *Rerum Normannicarum*, 1928, p. 15 ; R. Dozy, « L'ambassade d'al-Ghazāl auprès du roi des Normands », 1881, p. 271 ; Pons-Sanz, « Whom did al-Ghazāl meet ? An exchange of embassies between the Arabs from al-Andalus and the Viking », 2004.

55 A. Melvinger, *Les premières incursions des Vikings en Occident*, 1955, p. 77-85 ; O. Pritsak, « Did the Arabs call the Vikings "Magians" ? », 1990 ; J.-Ch. Ducène, *L'Europe et les géographes arabes du Moyen Âge*, 2018, p. 47-62.

56 A. Seippel, *Rerum Normannicarum*, 1928, p. 16 ; R. Dozy, « L'ambassade d'al-Ghazāl auprès du roi des Normands », 1881, p. 272.

Comportements finalement peu diplomatiques, mais qui lui permettent tout de même à attirer l'attention de la femme du roi, une certaine Nūd, qui n'est pas insensible à sa personne !

Reinhardt Dozy mit sur le compte de l'intelligence de l'Île al-Ġazāl le silence concernant les négociations, et sur le contenu poétique du livre d'Ibn Diḥya l'absence de notations ethnographiques. Francisco Sanchèz y verrait l'évocation d'un versement d'un tribut auprès des Normands dans l'espoir d'une trêve, mais travesti sous la forme d'une ambassade⁵⁷. Mais où al-Ġazāl aurait-il débarqué ? Douglas Dunlop⁵⁸ situe l'aventure en Irlande à titre d'hypothèse, William Allen⁵⁹ plus précisément identifie la première île avec Valentia et situe la rencontre à Clonmacnoise, au centre de l'Irlande, quoique Reinhardt Dozy, Georg Jacob et Abdurrahman El-Hajji⁶⁰ voient plutôt l'ambassade aborder au Jutland, soit la partie continentale du Danemark actuel. Pour les partisans de l'hypothèse irlandaise, al-Ġazāl aurait rencontré le conquérant viking Thorġiis (lat. Turgesius, m. 845) dont l'épouse Auḏr serait à voir derrière la forme Nūd. En revanche, pour Abdurrahman El-Hajji, al-Ġazāl aurait fréquenté la cour du roi danois Horic (r. 844-854). Cependant, Évariste Lévi-Provençal⁶¹ a attiré l'attention sur les similitudes avec l'ambassade à Constantinople pour voir en ce voyage un pastiche de la première délégation. Il y a l'image générale et vague de l'île ainsi que l'absence de descriptions de coutumes particulières, et nous avons vu que c'était l'une des caractéristiques attendues de ces textes ; puis cette attirance de la reine pour al-Ġazāl, tout à l'avantage de l'envoyé est suspecte. En outre, les généralités que le narrateur nous livre sur les mœurs des *Maġūs* s'accordent avec les idées véhiculées par la littérature arabe de l'époque et n'éclaircissent pas la vie scandinave⁶². Ces éléments douteux sont cependant balancés par une description réaliste de la navigation (conditions climatiques, ports ibériques)⁶³ qui empêche de n'y voir qu'un texte entièrement inventé.

57 F. F. Sánchez, « La embajada de Yahyà al-Ġazāl ante el rey de los Normandos en 230H./845 e.c. », 2024, p. 151-174.

58 D. Dunlop, « The British Isles according to medieval Arabic authors », 1957.

59 W. E. D. Allen, *The Poet and the Spae-Wife*, 1960, p. 29-35.

60 A. El-Hajji, *Andalusian diplomatic*, 1970, p. 182-203.

61 É. Lévi-Provençal, « Un échange d'ambassades entre Cordoue et Byzance au IX^e siècle », 1937. Le nom de la reine, Nūd, que l'on ne peut rapprocher d'un nom scandinave, serait une déformation de scribe pour Tūd ou Tawd, à rapprocher de Théodora.

62 A. Melvinger, « Madjūs », 1985. Abdurrahman El-Hajji soutient que la description du pays est d'une grande précision et dénote une observation visuelle, mais aucun élément ne vient appuyer cette idée, A. El-Hajji, *Andalusian diplomatic*, 1970, p. 200.

63 Ch. Picard, *Locéan Atlantique. De la conquête arabe à l'époque almohade. Navigation et mise en valeur des côtes d'Al-Andalus et du Maghreb occidental (Portugal – Espagne – Maroc)*, 1997, p. 33-34, 46-47 et 67-68.

Pour nous⁶⁴, il s'agit plutôt de l'écriture d'une aventure imaginaire, mais à partir de quelques éléments factuels réels, réarrangés dans la trame narrative du récit inventé. Est-ce à dire que l'auteur en est Ibn Diḥya ou Tamām b. al-Qāma, le vizir qui est le narrateur et qui aurait accompagné cette mission? On peut supposer que si Ibn Diḥya avait lui-même composé ce texte, il n'aurait sans doute pas hésité à le mettre directement dans la bouche d'al-Ġazāl, au lieu de faire parler Tamām b. al-Qāma, qui nous semble, dès lors plus l'auteur du pastiche. Soulignons que la littérature arabe connaît cet exercice de style sous le terme de *mu'āraḍa*, quoiqu'il soit surtout réservé à la poésie et que l'imitation a pour but ici de rendre hommage au poète que l'on prend comme modèle.

Finalement, doit-on considérer ces textes comme des faux purement imaginaires? Il faut nuancer, car dans le cas d'Abū Dulaf, le caractère historiquement vraisemblable d'une partie des renseignements rapportés porte à croire qu'ils ont été recueillis de la bouche d'authentiques voyageurs ou puisés à des sources bien informées, mais c'est le voyage en lui-même qui est faux, qui est une fabrication. Du factuel, on est passé à la fiction, au voyage imaginaire et ajoutons ici aussi que cela a permis à ces auteurs de faire entrer cette dimension fictionnelle dans la littérature arabe médiévale savante, qui répugne au récit de fiction donné comme récit imaginaire pur⁶⁵. Il n'y a pas cet accord tacite entre l'auteur et le lecteur selon lequel ce qu'il lit est une fiction imaginaire que le lecteur accepte de croire le temps de la lecture. Le statut de la fiction dans la narration, par rapport à un récit relatant un sujet donné comme historique, remonte au début de la période musulmane, alors que l'apparition de l'écriture et le développement d'une culture littéraire ne purent qu'entérier cette distinction. Un exemple fondateur fut celui de Ġāhiz (m. 255/868) dont les fictions se veulent déterminées par l'imitation (*mūḥākāt*) en restant dans l'imaginable sans tendre vers l'impossible. Et quand la chose est le produit de l'imagination, elle doit être présentée comme telle, et non comme un fait réel. Sinon, on tombe dans le fait invérifiable qui demande que l'on suspende son jugement, récits parmi lesquels al-Mas'ūdī (m. 3^e quart du iv^e/x^e s.) classe les *isrā'īliyyāt* et les *Merveilles de la mer*. Nous pourrions y ajouter les *ḥurāfāt*⁶⁶, soit ces histoires fantastiques, tacitement considérées comme de la fiction par le lecteur. Ici, nous n'avons pas une trame narrative de conte, de récit

64 J.-Ch. Ducène, *L'Europe et les géographes arabes du Moyen Âge*, 2018, p. 155-156.

65 Al-Mas'ūdī, *Les prairies d'or*, vol. 1, 1965, p. 516-517 et 545. Pour la position ambiguë de la narration fictive à l'époque classique, S. Leder & H. Kilpatrick, « Classical Arabic Prose literature: a Researchers' Sketch Map », 1992, p. 10, et I. Gerjes, « *L'adab* et le genre narratif fictif », 1998, p. 170-171.

66 A. Regourd, « Divination par lâcher de coquillages (*wad'*) à Ṣan'ā', Yémen », 2009, p. 41-42.

qui vise à une leçon morale, mais une aventure qui collecte des informations, parfois vraisemblables. En outre, comme ces textes ont une dimension autobiographique, on touche aussi à la biographie de fiction sans cependant que les auteurs anciens n'aient développé cette critique. Enfin, le stade ultime est le récit merveilleux⁶⁷ ou plus justement le récit qui décrit une merveille ou dont la trame narrative relate une aventure dans laquelle les acteurs sont confrontés à des situations ou des objets merveilleux.

Revenons à la *riḥla*, le récit de voyage subjectif qui en connaît une réalisation exemplaire avec celle d'Ibn Baṭṭūṭa au point que son titre original, *Tuḥfat al-nuẓẓār fi ḡarā'ib al-amṣār wa-āğā'ib al-asfār* («Présent à ceux qui aiment à réfléchir sur les curiosités des villes et les merveilles des voyages»), a fini par être escamoté dans les éditions par le titre générique de *riḥla*. Et ce texte offre de nouvelles perspectives pour les problématiques entrevues.

Rappelons que le récit de voyage d'Ibn Baṭṭūṭa (703/1304-770/1368-1369 ou 779/1377) nous donne la narration de ses 30 ans de pérégrinations à travers le monde musulman et au-delà, mais selon une chronologie impossible à fixer avec exactitude⁶⁸, quoique l'on puisse diviser l'itinéraire du voyageur en plusieurs phases. Né à Tanger en 703/1304, il part en 1325 faire le pèlerinage, en profite pour parcourir l'Égypte, la Syrie, l'Iran et l'Irak durant 5 ans pour s'établir à la Mekke vers 1327. Il prend le bateau en 1330 vers le Yémen et la côte swahilie pour revenir par le golfe Persique, et repasser par la Mekke, l'Égypte et la Syrie en direction de l'Anatolie. Il sillonne les territoires au nord de la mer Noire, visite Constantinople puis se dirige vers l'Asie centrale pour atteindre la vallée de l'Indus en 1333. Là, il s'arrête sept ans à la cour du Sultan de Dehli. En 1342, il s'établit un an aux Maldives, avant de reprendre la mer vers le Sri Lanka, le golfe du Bengale, Sumatra et les ports de la Chine du Sud, d'où il aurait voyagé jusqu'à la capitale des Yuan, Khanbaliq, soit Pékin. Il revient alors au Maghreb en faisant une dernière fois le pèlerinage pour atteindre Fès en 1349. Il ne se fixe pas encore, car il visite le Sultanat de Grenade et en 1352, entreprend une traversée du Sahara jusqu'à la capitale du sultan du Mali pour être de retour à Fès à la fin de l'année 1352. Le but premier de ce Tangérois était de faire le pèlerinage et l'on perçoit aussi sa volonté de recueillir des «bénédictions» en passant par le plus grand nombre de sanctuaires secondaires. À Alexandrie, l'auteur est voué à la *siyāḥa* et au *ğawalān* par un saint homme⁶⁹, ce qui semble prémoni-

67 J.-Ch. Ducène, «Introduction. Merveilles, géographie et sciences naturelles au Proche-Orient médiéval», 2017, p. 4-5.

68 I. Hrbek, «The Chronology of Ibn Battuta's travels», 1962; J. Loiseau, «Avec Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, l'Islam est un voyage», 2019.

69 P. Charles-Dominique, *Voyageurs arabes*, 1995, p. 387.

toire et initiatique. Remarquons d'abord qu'à l'instar de Marco Polo (1254-1324), c'est un récit qui est dicté, et non écrit par l'auteur lui-même, et cette rédaction étant une commande du Sultan mérinide Abū 'Inān (r. 749/1348-759/1358). Le rédacteur est connu, Ibn Ğuzay', mais la part qui lui revient est difficile à évaluer, quoiqu'il n'ait pas été seulement celui du secrétaire, car le colophon du manuscrit autographe (Paris, Bnf, Arabe 2291, f. 110^r) atteste que la dictée s'est terminée le 3 *du l-ḥiġġa* 756/9 décembre 1355 et que le texte a été définitivement révisé deux mois plus tard, en *ṣafar* 757/ février 1356⁷⁰. On peut lui attribuer le style⁷¹, car lorsque la phrase devient ampoulée, c'est Ibn Ğuzay' (m. ca. 756-758/1355-1357) qui parle; en revanche, Ibn Baṭṭūṭa a un verbe simple qui convient à sa personnalité s'exprimant sans trop de retenue. L'auteur acquiert vite une épaisseur, car il nous décrit ses réactions de bon musulman, juriste qui plus est, sans qu'il ne mette de distance entre ses observations et ses remarques. Cependant, pour en revenir à Ibn Ğuzay', c'est sans doute à lui que l'on doit attribuer les multiples citations d'Ibn Ğubayr⁷² qu'on trouve chez Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, ce qui représente un septième de l'ouvrage. Ces citations sont parfois avouées, parfois pas, ce qui entraîne deux conséquences. La première est que nous nous retrouvons devant un cas d'intertextualité inattendu. Au lieu de citer son témoignage, Ibn Baṭṭūṭa ou son rédacteur Ibn Ğuzay' préfère citer celui d'un autre, ce qui a pour effet de changer la valeur du témoignage porté: «J'y suis allé, mais je vous dis ce qu'un autre a dit à ce sujet», mais il arrive que ce débrayage actantiel n'y soit pas, et le «je» d'Ibn Baṭṭūṭa se substitue à celui d'un autre voyageur. La deuxième conséquence est que l'on est amené à s'interroger sur la réalité du voyage de l'auteur puisqu'il y substitue le voyage d'un autre. Serions-nous en face d'un faux partiel? Souvenons-nous qu'Ibn Ḥaldūn⁷³ qui était un contemporain de l'auteur avait entendu qu'Ibn Baṭṭūṭa rapportait à propos de l'Inde des choses trop étonnantes pour être vraies. Ce scepticisme fut aussi celui des contemporains de Marco Polo⁷⁴. L'érudition a néanmoins jeté des doutes sur bien des passages d'Ibn Baṭṭūṭa comme son voyage chez les Bulgares de la Volga⁷⁵, à Constantinople⁷⁶, une part de son voyage en Chine⁷⁷ ainsi

70 P. Charles-Dominique, *Voyageurs arabes*, 1995, p. 1049-1050.

71 G. Martinez-Gros, «Les merveilles, les rois et les savants: le voyage d'Ibn Baṭṭūṭa», 2010, p. 224-227.

72 J. N. Mattock, «Ibn Baṭṭūṭa's use of Ibn Jubayr's *Rihla*», 1981.

73 P. Charles-Dominique, *Voyageurs arabes*, 1995, p. 1138.

74 Marco Polo, *Le déviselement du monde*, 2011, p. 13.

75 St. Janicsek, «Ibn Battūṭa's Journey to Bulghār: is it a fabrication?», 1929.

76 P. Charles-Dominique, *Voyageurs arabes*, 1995, p. 1140; F. Micheau, «Ibn Baṭṭūṭa à Constantinople la Grande», 1987.

77 P. Charles-Dominique, *Voyageurs arabes*, 1995, p. 1140; G. Ferrand, *Relations de voyages*

qu'une partie de son périple en Afrique de l'Ouest et même le long des côtes de l'océan Indien⁷⁸. Pire, d'autres intertextualités, emprunts (*iqtibās*) ou plagiats (*iḥṭitāf*) ont été relevés pour la Palestine, Médine et l'Égypte où Ibn Baṭṭūṭa ou Ibn Ḡūzay' met à profit al-'Abdarī⁷⁹ comme il le fait d'Ibn Ḡubayr. Doit-on y voir une manière de remédier à une mémoire chancelante ou pire une fumisterie ? Ce serait plutôt l'aboutissement d'un genre : par ce voyage – forcément biographique – l'auteur se fait une nécessité de passer par l'ensemble des points de la terre où se trouve une communauté musulmane, par son périple même il montre l'unité de l'*umma*, du Maroc à la Chine, des Bulgares de la Volga à Mombasa en Tanzanie, avec un intérêt tout aussi grand porté à la périphérie qu'au centre de la *mamlakat al-islām*. En effet, paradoxalement, les territoires au cœur de l'empire de l'islam connaissent un déclin réel à la suite des invasions mongoles, des épidémies, des divisions politiques alors qu'à la périphérie africaine et indienne, l'islam gagne des adeptes et s'étend⁸⁰. Si Ibn Baṭṭūṭa n'y a pas mis les pieds, il s'y projette en quelque sorte avec l'aide de renseignements recueillis à bonne source. Car si dans le détail, la critique ne parvient pas toujours à prouver les assertions, on reste dans le vraisemblable. C'est une « mise en récit du monde musulman » (Bertrand Hirsch). Une autre nécessité se fait jour, c'est de décrire les monuments bien connus des endroits par où on passe. Étrangement, ce sont les mêmes six monuments cairotés (mosquée de 'Amr, mosquée d'al-Ḥusayn, tombe d'al-Ṣāfi', etc.) qui se trouvent chez Ibn Ḡubayr et Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, comme s'il y avait l'apparition de « passages obligés ».

4 Conclusion

On peut dire que lorsque le voyage est devenu littérature dans le monde arabe médiéval, il a connu deux grandes expressions littéraires, la *risāla* et la *riḥla*, l'épître et le récit. La distinction des deux est chronologique, mais elle porte aussi sur la nature de la chose narrée. Dans l'épître, le narrateur-observateur

et textes géographiques arabes, persans et turks relatifs à l'Extrême-Orient du VIII^e au XVIII^e siècles, vol. 2, 1914, p. 433; H. Gibb, *Ibn Battuta. Travels in Asia and Africa 1325-1354*, 1929, p. 13-14.

78 F.-X. Fauvelle-Aymar & B. Hirsch, « Voyage aux frontières du monde. Topologie, narration et jeux de miroir dans la Rihla de Ibn Battūta », 2003; Y. Déjournat, « Nation et nations dans le récit de voyage d'Ibn Baṭṭūṭa », 2014.

79 A. Elad, « The description of the travels of Ibn Battuta in Palestine, is it original? », 1987; J.-Ch. Ducène, « La situation du Maghreb au travers de la relation de voyage d'al-'Abdarī (VII^e/XIII^e s.) », 2012, p. 692.

80 G. Martinez-Gros, « Les merveilles, les rois et les savants : le voyage d'Ibn Battuta », 2010.

s'efface derrière son autopsie : il voit et rapporte ; dans le récit de voyage, c'est l'expérience du voyage lui-même qui est racontée avec comme sujet qui l'éprouve, l'auteur, son expérience devient l'objet du récit. Dans les deux cas, il y a une superposition de l'auteur et du narrateur, la différence venant en quelque sorte de la subjectivité qui imprègne la narration de la *rihla*. Dans les deux cas également, la composante autobiographique est présente, mais de manière tacite dans l'épître. De même, les deux types de récits connaissent une « dérive », à savoir des formes écrites dont l'objet n'est plus de relater une expérience vécue, mais de fabriquer cette expérience, avec pour conséquence la superposition de l'auteur, du narrateur et maintenant d'un personnage, assimilé à l'auteur. Ce dernier se met en scène dans un périple imaginaire construit sur les codes des témoignages réels, où son rôle reste élogieux. Dans l'exemple d'Abū Dulaf, des notices « ethnographiques » sur l'Asie sont agencées, dans le cas de Yaḥyā al-Ġazāl, le diplomate séduit par son intelligence des adversaires et dans celui d'Ibn Baṭṭūṭa – Ibn Ġuzay, un monde musulman périphérique récent est mis en exergue.

Doit-on parler de faux, de tromperies, de fabrications, de pastiches ? Peut-être de faux sous le rapport de la relation avec la réalité, mais sans doute aussi de pastiches puisque les auteurs ont choisi des formes littéraires existantes et les choses rapportées sont de l'ordre du vraisemblable, on est loin de Sindbād le Marin. Nous ne sommes pas en présence de faux délictueux visant à tromper sciemment et à son détriment le lecteur, mais nous serions plutôt en face de fictions motivées, orientées pour, a minima, recréer l'auditoire, au mieux lui donner à voir une nouvelle image d'un monde dont il ne connaît qu'une petite parcelle. Le récit de voyage connaît en outre un phénomène d'intertextualité, notamment à partir du moment où certaines œuvres auront acquis un poids littéraire, le « je » du narrateur actuel transmet une expérience qu'il s'attribue, mais par le truchement du témoignage d'un autre.

Enfin, cette tentation ou ce choix délibéré est illustré parmi les orientalistes lorsqu'en 1834 Constantin Mouradega d'Ohsson publie *Des peuples du Caucase et des pays du nord de la mer Noire et de la mer Caspienne dans le dixième siècle ou le voyage d'Abou-el-Cassim*, compilant sous forme de récit de voyage des notices sur les populations du Caucase compilées notamment d'al-Mas'ūdī.

Finalement, on se rend compte que lorsque le voyage entre en littérature, sa forme écrite dépasse rapidement la forme de la simple relation de faits pour être modérément investie par l'imaginaire afin de s'ouvrir vers une fiction vraisemblable, porteuse d'un sens ajouté.

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PART 5

Les stratégies du faux / Fake Strategies



Genealogy as a Document—The Case of the Early Islamic Genealogical Works

Ahmad Nazir Atassi

1 Introduction

Genealogy was a separate genre in the early Islamic literature, i.e. writings from the second and third Islamic centuries (8th and 9th CE). Historians of early Islamic peoples and empires were and still are intrigued by the massive genealogical treatises that have reached us from that era. Are they just lists of names of no importance? Or do they hold a historical value for understanding some aspects of these early Islamic societies? What are these aspects and how can these lists be used?¹ Historians found anthropological studies of modern Arab nomads to be useful as a source of ideas to help understand the ancient Arabian tribes and the intertwining of their genealogy and history.² The leading idea that one gets from these studies is that genealogies are social artefacts that are constructed to be used, and, also, abused. Parts of these genealogies (low,

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- 1 F. Donner in his “The Bakr b. Wā’il Tribes,” 1980, and P. Crone in her “Were the Qays and Yemen of the Umayyad Period Political Parties,” 1994, used the genealogical sources, along with pre-Islamic Battle Days (*ayyām*) literature and historical reports pertaining to the Umayyad period to answer questions about the Arabian tribes, and their politics on the eve of Islam and after the Arab conquest, respectively.
 - 2 A.R. Aloshan, “*al-Qabila*,” 1987, pp. 12–22, and references therein, has a comprehensive overview of anthropological works concerning the nomads of the Middle East. E.E. Evans-Pritchard in his *The Sanusi of Cyrenaica*, 1949, applies same theory of segmentary society he developed for east African tribes to understand the Libyan tribes and their politics, pp. 29–61. Critiques of Evans Pritchard’s theory found it insufficient in explaining political alliances, pp. 11–30. E. Peters in his “The Proliferation of Segments,” 1960, emphasized the importance of territoriality in building alliances. A. Hammoudi in his “Segmentarity, Social Stratification, Political Power and Sainthood,” 1980, suggested religion as a source of power rather than just tribal solidarity. Steven C. Caton in his “Power, Persuasion, and Language: A Critique of the Segmentary Model in the Middle East,” Feb., 1987, tried to locate political power in persuasion. In the same vein, see also William C. Young, “Kinship and History: Tribes, Genealogies, and Social Change among the Bedouin of the Eastern Arab World,” 2019, pp. 9–47; and D.M. Varisco, “Yemen’s Tribal Idiom: An Ethno-Historical Survey of Genealogical Models,” 2017, pp. 217–241.

close in time to the researcher and his subject) can be accurate and do reflect kinship relations among extended families; whereas other parts (high, extend far back in history) are metaphorical and are meant to reflect political realities. One can push this idea farther to say that early Islamic genealogies are “fake” because they are mostly concerned with high genealogies, and thus with politics rather than blood-relations. As for the low genealogies, they are restricted to aristocratic lineages, who are also deeply involved in politics. Therefore, the charge of “fakeness” is not far fetched.

Historians prefer archives over historical narratives; because they supposedly reflect an objective reality, rather than a perceived, subjective, reality. Genealogies, being lists of names, have this archival feel to them; one cannot fake names. A useful term to summarize the archival “nature” of genealogies is “document,” as in contract, court decision, or official letter. In this article, we will view the early Islamic genealogies as “written documents.” The aim is to try to figure out how their compilers and readers looked at them and used them. The article is part of the continuing effort to overcome the greatest challenge about early Islamic historical material, namely, their late recording date, which impugns their truthfulness.

The end of the 2nd Islamic century is known for the prevalence of paper. The first half of the 3rd century saw the explosion of written material documenting that society’s recent and more distant past. Genealogies were a fixture of this written tradition, whether in the form of prose or poetry. Praising ancestors, boasting pedigree, claiming religious knowledge, or claiming a “government salary” (*ʿatāʾ*), the use of genealogical information is ubiquitous in this tradition. The second Caliph Abū Bakr is claimed to have been an expert genealogist (*nassāba*). The third Caliph ʿUmar is claimed to have recruited three such experts to construct the first army registry in Islamic history. The founder of the Umayyad dynasty, Muʿāwiyā, is also claimed to have consulted genealogists. However, we do not see the production of genealogical treatises until the end of the second and the beginning of the third centuries.³ These treatises were of no equal, because they were extensive and comprehensive. They tried to go as far in history as Adam; they also tried to include all the Arabs of that time in one genealogical tree.⁴

Ibn al-Nadīm (d. ca. 385/995), in his bibliographic work *Al-fihrist*, names more than two dozen aḥbārīs (transmitters of historical reports) and genealogists (the two vocations go together it seems); with more than fifty works of

3 H. Kennedy, “Arabic Genealogy,” 1997, pp. 540–541.

4 According to H. Kennedy, “Arabic Genealogy,” 1997, p. 531, Ibn al-Kalbī’s *Ġamharat al-nasab*, the extant part of it at least, contains about 35,000 names.

genealogy ascribed to them.⁵ Unfortunately, very few of these works have survived to date. The earliest genealogical treatise that reached us is Ibn al-Kalbī's (d. 206AH) *Ġamharat al-nasab*, which is a comprehensive genealogical tree of the northern and southern Arabs, the 'Adnanites and the Qahtanites, respectively. Al-Mubarrad's (d. 286AH) *Nasab 'Adnān wa-Qaḥṭān* is another attempt, albeit shorter, at comprehensiveness and exhaustiveness. The other two extant early works of genealogy are dedicated to Muḥammad's tribe, Qurayš; namely al-Zubayrī's (d. 236AH), *Nasab Qurayš*, and al-Zubayr b. Bakkār's (d. 256AH), *Ġamharat nasab Qurayš*.⁶ As for al-Balāḍurī's (d. 271AH), *Ansāb al-Ašrāf*, and Ibn Sa'd's (d. 230AH), *Kitāb al-Ṭabaqāt al-kabīr* (КТК), they combine genealogy and *aḥbār* and focus on particular categories of people, namely, the noble Arabs (*ašrāf*) for the former and the transmitters of hadith for the latter.

In this article, we will mainly investigate Ibn al-Kalbī's work. However, genealogical lists need some narrative evidence to contextualize them. For the narrative evidence, we will depend mainly on Ibn Sa'd's work, and to a lesser degree on al-Balāḍurī's. These latter sources depend heavily, for their genealogical information, on Ibn al-Kalbī's work.⁷ One type of narrative that is lacking in these two sources is the so-called Battle Days of the pre-Islamic Arabs (*ayyām al-'Arab*). For these *ayyām* we will depend on Ibn 'Abd Rabbih's (d. 328AH) *Al-'iqd al-farīd*, which dates more or less to the same early period we are focusing on, albeit being Andalusian. The rest of the extant works contain information drawn from Ibn al-Kalbī's and Ibn Sa'd's works, as well as from other earlier sources that neither seem to contradict these works nor reach their size and comprehensiveness. The works of Ibn al-Kalbī and Ibn Sa'd are the culmination of less than a century of writing and about two centuries of oral tradition. The combination of these two works is very representative of the learned atmosphere of the late second and third Islamic centuries, where the basic formation of a learned person combined genealogy and hadith, in addition to *aḥbār* and poetry. In fact, genealogy is a way of telling the story of Arabo-Islamic history; this story does not come to life without the anecdotes supplied by the works of *aḥbār*, whether *sīra* (Muḥammad's biography), history, *ayyām*, or poetry.

5 Ibn al-Nadīm, *Al-fihrist*, 1997, pp. 131–167.

6 An excellent survey of extant genealogical works can be found in I.Ḥ. al-Sakkout, *The Arab Tribe*, 1994, pp. 5–10. Al-Sakkout also discusses other sources of genealogical information such as poetry, *ayyām*, *adab*, *sīra*, geography, *ibid.*, pp. 10–17.

7 The КТК also depends on the lost work of 'Abd Allāh b. 'Amāra al-Anṣārī, *Nasab al-Anṣār* (early 3rd century), which details the genealogical lines of the Anṣār to an extent not found in Ibn al-Kalbī's works.

For a number of sentences put together, i.e. a text, to form a document, the form and content of this text must maintain some degree of stability across time and space. It has to be exchanged, to fulfill a purpose, and to do it with a certain degree of authority. This authority comes from the authority of the people who produced, preserved, or transacted with the genealogical information. A text can be oral or written, and so can a document. A genealogical line or a genealogical tree, whether in an oral or a written form, satisfies these criteria, as we will show; it is therefore a document. That is, they exhibit the following characteristics: stability, authority, and function.

The flip side of authority, and its eternal companion, is contestation and subversion. Authority is always challenged and/or undermined; otherwise, the social transaction that puts this authority to use will always be one-directional, thus producing very predictable winners and losers, and therefore yielding very rigid social structures. Therefore, like any document, a genealogy will be challenged, undermined, and subverted to the differing goals of the transacting parties. A genealogy, like any document, will be accused of being a fake or a forgery; that is of being of dubious authority. For historians, who strive to reconstruct the past and always assess the truthfulness of their sources, it is important to know to which extent a genealogy reflects a historical truth or a historical falsehood. This volume is dedicated to the latter type of documents, the fake ones, the ones devoid of historical truth. Accordingly, the task of this article should be to show the “fakeness” of early Islamic genealogical knowledge. However, every document is truthful to a certain extent or in certain regards, and fake to a certain extent and in other regards. We cannot actually show the absolute fakeness of any genealogy, for that is not true; nor can we show that it is absolutely accurate, for that is also not true. Our modified task must then become to show how early Islamic genealogical knowledge, seen as a document (or a collection of documents), can be true and how it can also be false; and what parts of it can be true and what parts can be false.

The field of study that has looked at genealogies as documents (oral documents mostly) is anthropology. Anthropologists agree that, for many modern Arab societies, genealogies are important cultural artifacts. They matter for inheritance, blood liability, marriage, social standing, and politics at all levels, from the local to the national levels. Moreover, specialists of many modern nomadic Arab cultures can testify that genealogical information is common knowledge among members of these societies. This knowledge is robust (stable); at least when it concerns the four generations in the immediate past or, for the more distant past, when it relates to chiefly genealogies. This knowledge is preserved through learning and sometimes through specialists; and it is

important for the survival and protection of one's social group.⁸ Therefore, for the oral cultures of the modern Arab nomads, as anthropologists have shown, a genealogical line or a genealogical tree is a type of document. We are not going to project modern anthropological findings concerning modern Arab nomads into the distant Arabo-Islamic past, for that would be anachronistic, essentializing, and historically inaccurate. However, we can take these results as suggestions, guiding ideas, or at best as hypotheses to be proven right or wrong by the ancient texts. If we call the use of theories and methods developed by anthropologists to study the modern Middle East in order to inform an investigation of the early Islamic Arab societies historical anthropology; then this article is a work in historical anthropology. The full goal of the article then becomes to use historical anthropological tools and insights in order to show that the early Islamic genealogies can be viewed as documents; then to use this result to understand the construction and use of these genealogies.

Ihāb Ḥamdī al-Sakkout distinguished three useful levels in a genealogical tree that connect several tribal entities: first, the "individual's genealogy" which is the tree of the smallest descent group (hereafter called micro-genealogy); second, the "tribal genealogy" which is the level between the smallest descent group and the tribe that is supposed to live together (i.e. the largest corporate group); third, the macro-genealogy which is the level between the tribal eponym and the all-encompassing 'Adnanite/Qahtanite division of ancient Arabs.⁹ We will adopt this tripartite division in our article.

The next section summarizes the anthropological results concerning the modern nomadic Arab tribes. The summary will be in the form of "the rules" that govern the genealogical discourse among these societies. The section that follows investigates the format in which the early Islamic genealogy is cast, and whether or not it could betray the use of rules that are similar to the ones presented in the previous section. Three sections then follow, where the documentary nature of the early genealogies will be investigated along the three

8 H. Kennedy, "Arabic Genealogy," 1997, p. 532, states that "Every Bedouin knows his great-grandfather;" thus showing that a modicum of genealogical knowledge is very common in the oral cultures of the modern Arab nomads. *Ibid.*, p. 532, testifies to the robustness across time of that genealogical knowledge: "[a] vast proportion of the groups bore the same founders name in 1973 as they had in 1914." Different genealogical segments have different longevities, *ibid.*, p. 536, for "macro-genealogies of the tribe and the line of the shaykhly house are preserved but not those of less important *fukhūdh*." That type of knowledge is important for the Arab nomads because "descendants of a common great-grandfather ... form the framework of everyday life for the Bedouin in almost all the examples described," *ibid.*, p. 532; in other words, "[t]he kin are the ones who will protect you," *ibid.*, p. 533.

9 A.R. Aloslan, "*al-Qabila*," 1987, p. 226.

themes previously identified, namely stability, authority and function. We finish with a section dedicated to cataloguing instances where the genealogy was contested and challenged. We are hoping that these instances can point us toward the tools that the ancient genealogists used to construct the exhaustive and comprehensive genealogies that have reached us. The results of the article are then summarized in a conclusion.

2 Genealogical Rules

In the works of orientalists/travelers, early anthropologists, and modern anthropologists genealogy figures prominently. Hugh Kennedy, in his “Arabic Genealogy,” set out “to examine how they compare with what we know of the Arab oral genealogies and to determine in what ways, if at all, they are different.”¹⁰ He set out to do a work of historical anthropology. He first summarized the results obtained by 19th century orientalists/travelers about Arab nomads and those obtained by 20th century anthropologists studying modern Bedouins.¹¹ The results pertain to how modern Bedouin genealogies are constructed and used. Then he used these results in order to show how the early Islamic genealogies were constructed in the same way. However, he ended up “assuming that the Bedouin Arabs of early Islamic times remembered their genealogies in more or less the same way as modern Bedouins do. Clearly, they did not remember the same genealogies, since these are peculiar to the tribe and the circumstance, but it seems likely that they structure their genealogical view along the same lines. This methodology is certainly open to challenge, but it does provide a suitable basis for investigation.”¹² Indeed, historical anthropology does provide a suitable basis for our investigation, and we hope to answer more questions about how the early Islamic genealogies were constructed and used. We start by summarizing the results detailed by Kennedy in the form of rules for the sake of clarity. They are not by any means rigid rules that modern Bedouins use in their genealogical discourses; they are rather statistical observations that fit the observed data within a good approximation.

10 H. Kennedy, “Arabic Genealogy,” 1997, p. 532.

11 Those who stand out, according to Kennedy, are: A. Musil, *The Manners and Customs of the Rwala Bedouins*, 1928 (H. Kennedy, “Arabic Genealogy,” 1997, for the discussion of genealogy see pp. 45–50); M. von Oppenheim, *Die Beduinen*, 1939; A. Jaussen, *Coutumes des Arabes au Pays de Moab*, 1948; W. Lancaster, *The Rwala Bedouin Today*, 1981 (H. Kennedy, “Arabic Genealogy,” 1997, for the main discussion of kinship and genealogy see pp. 24–35).

12 H. Kennedy, “Arabic Genealogy,” 1997, p. 532.

- Rule 1—The overarching principle: “It must have been the case;” that is, proximity by domicile, alliance, economic ties, or marriages of two or more groups is assumed to mean an old familial connection, mostly through a male figure.¹³
- Rule 2—Micro-genealogy: A micro-lineage (extended family) contains four persons; except for chiefly lineages which can contain more.¹⁴ The eponym of a clan, the putative father of all, figures fifth in a lineage.¹⁵ That is, the family connections between all persons in a four-generation tree are well known. Beyond that, only group connections are assumed.
- Rule 3—Tribal genealogy: A tribe (*qabīla*) is composed of four to six five-generation groups. They are supposed to have a common ancestor.¹⁶ Inversely, sub-tribes known to belong to a certain tribe are assumed to have a family connection.¹⁷ Between the micro-genealogy and the tribal genealogy we have a “genealogical gap” that could be left at times empty, assuming that there must be real ancestors connecting them, whose names need not be mentioned. Moreover, the names of tribes need an explanation; they must be given a meaning. Here, nature, mother, wife, and adoption can provide clues to help the tribesmen explain the meaning and origin of their name.¹⁸

13 H. Kennedy, “Arabic Genealogy,” 1997, p. 534; “That is to say that if one group intermarries with another group but not with a third, this shows that their ancestors “must have been” more closely related. This can be applied to political and commercial relationships as well.”

14 H. Kennedy, “Arabic Genealogy,” 1997, p. 532; “Every Bedouin knows his great-grandfather, whereas of his great-great-grand-father he is likely to be completely ignorant,” *ibid.*, p. 534; “The only exception to this rule is found in the case of the shaykhly kin of Sha‘lān. Here the knowledge of genealogy is essential for political reasons. In this case the real genealogy is known for some fifteen generations.”

15 H. Kennedy, “Arabic Genealogy,” 1997, p. 534; “For purposes of working together, and, in the old days, of defense, three generation *fukhūdh* were grouped together in five-generation groups; that is people who are held to share the same great-great-great-grandfather.”

16 H. Kennedy, “Arabic Genealogy,” pp. 199, 539; “Above the level of the *fakhdh* is the intermediary *qabila* of between four and six *fukhūdh* who are held to share a common ancestor. Seven of these *qabā’il* make up the al-Murra.”

17 H. Kennedy, “Arabic Genealogy,” 1997, p. 533; “Within the ‘Anaza, the sub-tribes, of which the Ruwala are one, are assigned a genealogical relationship.”

18 H. Kennedy, “Arabic Genealogy,” 1997, p. 536; “Clearly many of the Bedouins found themselves with a name they had great difficulty in explaining. The Banū Ṣakhr for example had two quite different origin myths, both equally problematic. In one they emerged from a rock (Ar. Ṣakhr) which was still shown in the Balqā’. According to the other they were the descendants of one Ṭuwayq, a founding who was brought up by a man called Dahamiḥ also known as Ṣakhr, whose daughter he married and from whom the Banū Ṣakhr are descended: why they are not called the Banū Ṭuwayq, Arab descent being strictly patrilineal, is by no means clear.”

- Rule 4—Macro-genealogy: Macro-genealogies are mostly preserved for chiefly families; they are symbolic in nature. They also need specialists to memorize them.¹⁹ Central authorities play an important role in determining the macro-structure of tribes.²⁰

3 Genealogy as a Constructed Document

By looking at how the genealogical information is given in the relevant early Islamic literature, we make inferences as to whether or not the previously listed rules could be applied to this literature.

3.1 *Designation of a Person*

Today, we identify a person by his/her first and last name. Sometimes, we need the middle name. In more official documents, we may need the mother's maiden name. In situations when the possibility of confusion is very small, we can identify a person by the first name or the last name, and sometimes by a nickname, an epithet or a title. In the genealogical treatises pertaining to early Islamic history, we encounter a similar situation. A person is usually identified by his/her first name followed by his/her father's name, following the formula X b. Y (X is the son of Y); such as 'Uṭmān b. 'Affān (the third Caliph).²¹ If the person is famous and hence known to the audience, then a first name and an epithet would suffice, such as Muḥammad Rasūl Allāh, or Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq. In the case of less known persons, and in order to dispel any confusion with persons of the same name, the tribal adjective (adjective of *nisba*) would be added to the sequence "first name b. father's name," such as Sabra b. Ma'bad al-Ġuhanī, i.e. from the tribe of Ġuhayna.²²

19 H. Kennedy, "Arabic Genealogy," 1997, p. 535; "A few points are worth stressing here, the Sha'lān genealogy is remembered because they are the shaykhly family [of the Rwala] and their actions have a political importance for the whole tribe. Secondly they need specialists to inform them and keep them right about their genealogy."

20 H. Kennedy, "Arabic Genealogy," 1997, p. 538; "Once again we see that outside authorities work through the shaykhs and give the tribal organization a structure it would otherwise lack. In 1856 the Turks agreed that the Zullām should pay taxes directly and not through the shaykhs of the Tiyāhā tribe and this move marked the acceptance of Zullām as a separate tribe (*aṣīra*). Equally, the Israeli administration registered the tribes and sub-tribes (*rubī'*) shortly after 1950 and since then the evolution has become fossilised so that none of the *rubū'* can now become independent tribes."

21 КТК, vol. 3, p. 52, "ḍikr islām 'Uṭmān b. 'Affān;" *ibid.*, 3, p. 23, "ṣifat 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib;" *ibid.*, 3, p. 251, "ḍikr hiḡrat 'Umar b. al-Ḥaṭṭāb."

22 КТК, vol. 5, p. 265.

3.2 *Designation of a Clan*

As we mentioned earlier, the clan's or tribe's name is assumed to be that of an ancestor; usually a male, but female names can also be used (see later). One of the building blocks of a genealogy, in addition to a person's name (given by the X b. Y formula), is the first eponymous name, which designates the clan. It would be interesting to see the common practice for such designations, does a personal name suffice or more is given? In fact, when talking about a specific person, the tribal affiliation will be declared using an adjectival (*nisba*) form of the clan's ancestor, such as Abū Darr al-Ġifārī (of the tribe of Ġifār).²³ In the genealogical treatises, when several persons are listed as members of a clan, the clan's designation (i.e. the ancestor's name) is given in the same format as a person's name, i.e. as X b. Y.

In the KTK, for example, for the companions who fought in the Battle of Badr, a number of persons are lumped under their clan's name, which is used as a title. This title is quite indicative of how clan names are formatted:

- Either a personal X: *Ḥulafā'* (allies) Banū (clan of, children of) 'Abd Šams; *ḥulafā'* Banū Maḥzūm; *min* (from) al-Aws; *ḥulafā'* Banū Zafar.
- Or a sequence of "X b. Y:" Banū 'Abd al-Dār b. Quṣayy; *ḥulafā'* Banū Zuhar b. Kilāb; *ḥulafā'* Banū 'Abd Šams *min* Banū Sulaym b. Maṣšūr; *ḥulafā'* Banū 'Abd al-Ašhal b. Ġušam.
- Or a sequence of "X b. Y b. Z:" Banū 'Abd Šams b. 'Abd Manāf b. Quṣayy; Banū 'Abd b. Quṣayy b. Kilāb; *ḥulafā'* Banu Asad b. 'Abd al-'Uzzā b. Quṣayy; Banū Zuhra b. Kilāb b. Murra; Banū Taym b. Murra b. Ka'b; Banū 'Adiyy ('Adī) b. Ka'b b. Lu'ayy.

3.3 *From a Person to a Clan's Eponym*

The last name or two in a sequence of names, i.e. a lineage or a genealogical line, will be the eponymous ancestor. For example: 'Uṭmān b. 'Affān b. Abū al-'Āšī b. Umayya b. 'Abd Šams b. 'Abd Manāf is listed under the title Banū 'Abd Šams b. 'Abd Manāf b. Quṣayy,²⁴ who is the eponymous ancestor. So, this lineage is a sequence of a person's name and then five ancestors: three names separate the person's name from the eponym. In the case of Abū Bakr b. Abī Quḥāfa b. 'Āmir b. 'Amr b. Ka'b b. Sa'd b. Taym b. Murra, he is listed under the title Banū Taym b. Murra b. Ka'b, the eponym of the clan;²⁵ we have here a lineage that is a sequence of seven ancestors; five names separate the person's name from the eponymous ancestor. In the case of Mu'āwiya b. Abī Sufyān b. Ḥarb b. Umayya

23 KTK, vol. 4, p. 205.

24 KTK, vol. 3, p. 51.

25 KTK, vol. 3, p. 155.

b. ‘Abd Šams b. ‘Abd Manāf, we have a sequence of five ancestors, three names to the eponym.²⁶ Finally, in the case of Abū Ayyūb (al-Anṣārī) who is Ḥālīd b. Zayd b. Kulayb b. Ta‘laba b. ‘Abd ‘Awf b. Ġanm, he is listed under a title of a nested clan name: Banū al-Nağğār then Banū Mālik b. al-Nağğār, then from Banū Ġanm b. Mālik b. al-Nağğār; so we have five ancestors, and 4 names to the eponym.²⁷

From these observations we can infer that Rule 2 makes some sense. We do not always have a lineage of exactly five persons, but we have a lineage that starts with a person’s name, followed by the names of his father and a number of his ancestors (three, four, five, or even ten), and ends with the eponymous name of the clan. There is no eponymous name between the two. When a new clan is asserting its separate existence as such, one of the in-between ancestors (an important one) could become the eponym. That does not mean that the tribal eponym will change. The so-called “genealogical gap” enters into play here; it is that genealogical murky space that allows for unity while accepting lower-level changes. Another observation that is not part of Rule 2 is that a clan’s or a tribe’s eponym is often given following the very personalized formula of X b. Y. The tribal “fathers” are not fatherless themselves. Based on our extensive dealings with early Islamic genealogies, we can also make the observation that the most common formula used to identify a person in the genealogical treatises is X b. Y. b Z, plus maybe a tribal adjective.

If this is the common “educated” practice (the one used in a work of genealogy), then there is no reason to believe that the average free Arab in early Islamic times memorized more than that, i.e. his name, his father’s name for immediate identification, a few of his ancestors for matters of marriage and blood money/vengeance, his clan’s eponym and maybe his tribe’s eponym for political matters such as war. We are also inclined to believe that any ancient written archival record that might have existed, and on which the genealogists depended, could not have recorded more than that information for any given person.

4 Stability and Change—Sources for Early Islamic Genealogies

Like *sīra* works harmonize reports about Muḥammad, Ibn al-Kalbī harmonized oral genealogical segments, Umayyad and Abbasid state records, known polit-

²⁶ KTK, vol. 6, p. 15.

²⁷ KTK, vol. 3, p. 449.

ical alliances, the Biblical tradition, Arabian folklore, poetry, *sīra*, and *ayyām* literature in one history whose backbone is the patrilineal genealogical tree. We expect written traditions to be stable because they are put on paper. However, the fact that we called our material “traditions” implied that they have reached a stable form over time even in their oral stages. Our task next is to show that the genealogies showed a great degree of stability because of the sources that supplied the different components and segments of the greater genealogical tree.

4.1 *Biblical Genealogy*

Ibn Sa’d gives us the lineage of Ismā’īl b. Ibrāhīm;²⁸ he is: Ismā’īl b. Ibrāhīm b. Tāriḥ b. Nāḥūr b. Sārūg b. Arḡowā b. Fāliḡ b. ‘Ābir b. Šāliḡ b. Arfaḥšad b. Sām b. Nūḥ b. Lamak b. Matūšalaḥ b. Ḥanūḥ (Idrīs) b. Yāriḍ b. Mahalā’īl b. Qīnān b. Anūš b. Šīt b. Ādam.²⁹ Ibn Sa’d transmitted these ancient lineages on the authority of Hišām b. Muḥammad b. al-Sā’ib al-Kalbī (aka. Ibn al-Kalbī), who transmitted the knowledge of Ibn ‘Abbās (an ancestor of the Abbasid dynasty) via Abū Šāliḡ and then via Muḥammad b. al-Sā’ib, his father. According to the Hebrew bible, this lineage reads as follows (in Latin transliteration): Ishmael b. Abraham b. Terah b. Nahor b. Serug b. Reu b. Peleg b. Eber b. Shelah b. Arpachshad b. Shem b. Noah b. Lamech b. Methuselah b. Enoch b. Jared b. Mahalalel b. Kenan b. Enosh b. Seth b. Adam.³⁰ Further down the road, Ibn Sa’d, always on the authority of Ibn al-Kalbī, gives alternative pronunciations for some of the names in the lineage: “it has been said Šarūg b. ‘Arḡowā,” “Fāliḡ b. ‘Ābir,” “Šāliḡ b. Arfaḥšad,” “Matūšalaḥ b. Ḥanūḥ,” and “Alyāriḍ b. Mahalā’īl.”³¹ All of these variants are possible Arabizations of the corresponding Hebrew names.

28 КТК, vol. 1, pp. 36–37.

29 The vocalization of these names is approximate given that Ibn Sa’d, and his later copyists, did not vocalize the names.

30 Genesis 16:15; in Genesis 17:5 Abram became Abraham. Genesis 11:18–29. Genesis: 5:1–32. The Hebrew vocalization is: ‘Ishmā’ēl b. Abrāhām b. Teraḥ (Tāraḥ) b. Nāḥōr b. Sērūg b. Re’ū b. Peleg b. ‘Ēber b. Shelah b. ‘Arpachshad b. Shēm b. Noah b. Lemech b. Methūshelah (Methūshālah) b. Ḥanōch b. Yered (Yāred) b. Mahalal’ēl b. Qēnān b. Enōsh b. Sheth b. Ādām. One should account for the *begadkepat* rule of Hebrew pronunciation where, after a vowel, these hard letters are softened; that is *g* is pronounced *ḡ*, *d* is pronounced *d̄*, *k* is pronounced *ḵ*, *p* is pronounced *f*, and *t* is pronounced *t̄*. When passing from Hebrew to Arabic, some transformations occur: *š* sometimes becomes *s*, *p* becomes *f*, *ē* becomes *ā* or *ī* (sometimes *a* diphthong *ay*), *ō* becomes *ū*, and sometimes *ḥ* becomes *ḡ*. By applying these rules of pronunciation and transformation we can see the Hebrew names easily becoming the Arabic equivalents. We cannot however fully account for Sērūg becoming Sārūg, Re’ū becoming ‘Arḡowā and Mahalal’ēl becoming Mahalā’īl.

31 КТК, vol. 1, p. 41.

Ibn al-Kalbī does not tell us that he or his sources got the lineage from the Hebrew Bible. However, it is clear from this example, and there are many more, that the ultimate source of Ibn al-Kalbī's information, and by chain of transmission that of Ibn 'Abbās's, is just another written document, namely the Hebrew Bible.

Based on the authority of Ibn al-Kalbī, but not based on the knowledge received from his father, Ibn Sa'd gives two lineages for Ma'add b. 'Adnān, the eponymous ancestor of the northern Arabs. Both lineages start with Ma'add b. 'Adnān b. Udad and end with Qayḍar³² b. Ismā'īl b. Ibrāhīm. Al-Kalbī drops a disclaimer to explain the noticeable differences between the two lineages: "A man from Palmyra nicknamed Abū Ya'qūb, a Muslim from Banū Isrā'īl, who read their books and learned their knowledge, mentioned that Būrekh b. Nārayyā,³³ Jerimiah's scribe, has recorded the lineage of Ma'add b. 'Adnān ... it is close to the aforementioned names. It is possible that the differences are dialectal, because these names were translated from Hebrew."³⁴ Then Ibn Sa'd gives two more variants, this time on the authority of Muḥammad b. Iṣḥāq, the famous compiler of the earliest extant biography of the Prophet Muḥammad. In order to account for the many variants in the lineage of Ma'add, Ibn Sa'd adopts Ibn al-Kalbī's theory while adding to it a further conclusion that is very relevant for us: "I did not see the compilers disagreeing that Ma'add is from the line of Qayḍar b. Ismā'īl. As for the differences in the lineages, they prove that it was not preserved (or memorized), but was based on what Ahl al-Kitāb (i.e. the Jews) have translated for the compilers, who later disagreed amongst each other. Had the lineage been preserved, the Prophet of God would have known about it and would not have instructed us to stop at Ma'add b. 'Adnān and refrain from going all the way to Ismā'īl b. Ibrāhīm."³⁵ In fact, Ibn Sa'd is referring to a prophetic hadīth, tellingly also on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās via Ibn al-Kalbī, where the Prophet used to stop at Ma'add b. 'Adnān b. Udad when asked to list his lineage, while exclaiming that "*al-nassābūn* (genealogists) are liars."³⁶

Although it is important to prove that Muḥammad is a descendant of Abraham, tracing a long lineage becomes a tricky business that needs to be approached with caution. Ibn Sa'd and his source, Ibn al-Kalbī, both acknowledge that ancient lineages that are based on a written source, i.e. the Hebrew Bible,

32 Biblical Kedar (Chronicles 1, 1: 28–31), Hebrew Qēdār.

33 Biblical Baruch b. Neriah (Jeremiah 36:4), Hebrew Bārūkh b. Nēriyyāh.

34 KTK, vol. 1, p. 39.

35 KTK, vol. 1, p. 40.

36 KTK, vol. 1, p. 38.

are susceptible to errors, at least because of translation, and hence must not always be trusted because after all “*al-nassābūn* are liars.”

The later compiler, al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923), directly cites the Hebrew Bible, “al-Tawrāt”³⁷ (The Torah) and “Ahl al-Tawrāt” (the people of the book or the Jews),³⁸ usually after mentioning the claims of Ibn Ishāq. When cited after Ibn Ishāq’s material, al-Ṭabarī sometimes frames the Judaic sources as “those of Ahl al-Tawrāt other than him (meaning Ibn Ishāq).”³⁹ Apparently, for Ṭabarī, the latter is part of “Ahl al-Tawrāt.” According to Ṭabarī the Hebrew Bible yields the following lineage for Ishmael: Ismā’il b. Ibrāhīm b. Tārah b. Nāhūrā b. Sārūg b. Argowā b. Fāliḡ b. ‘Ābir b. Šālah b. Qaynān b. Arfaḡšad b. Sām b. Nūh b. Lamak b. Matūšalah b. Aḡanūh (Idrīs) b. Yard b. Mahalā’il b. Qaynān b. Anūš b. Šīt b. Ādam.⁴⁰ Barring the differences in vocalization, which fall within the realm of variant transliterations from Hebrew, this is the same lineage given in the Bible. However, we notice that Ṭabarī added Qaynān between Šālah and Arfaḡšad. Ṭabarī has his own theory which explains this deviation from the Hebrew Bible: “Arfaḡšad b. Sām begot Qaynān, who was not named in the Tawrāt, and on whose account it was said that he did not deserve to be mentioned in the heavenly books because he was a sorcerer and he claimed to be a god.”⁴¹ According to this claim Abraham’s lineage that is given in the Hebrew Bible should read: Shelah b. Kenan b. Arpachshad b. Shem instead of the usual Shelah b. Arpachshad b. Shem.

Ṭabarī usually transmits together statements drawn from several sources for the sake of comparison. In addition to Ibn Sa’d (and through him Ibn al-Kalbī), he lists the claims of an older authority, namely Ibn Ishāq, the compiler of the oldest extant biography of Muḡammad. That part of Ibn Ishāq’s compilation is lost; but we get a glimpse of it thanks to Ṭabarī’s work. Ismā’il’s lineage according to Ibn Ishāq is the same as his lineage according to Ṭabarī’s citation of the Bible,⁴² except for Anūsh becoming Yānosh. The major difference however in what Ibn Ishāq transmits is the fleshing out of the story with names of wives: Shith copulates with his sister Ḥazūra,⁴³ Yānosh copulates with his sister Na’ma,⁴⁴ and Qaynān copulates with Dīna the daughter of Barākīl b. Maḡūil

37 Al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīḡ al-Umam wa-al-Mulūk*, vol. 1, pp. 91, 103, 107.

38 Al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīḡ al-Umam wa-al-Mulūk*, vol. 1, pp. 90, 100, 102, 103, 104, 108, 114.

39 Al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīḡ al-Umam wa-al-Mulūk*, vol. 1, pp. 104, 106, 108.

40 Al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīḡ al-Umam wa-al-Mulūk*, vol. 1, pp. 129, 130, 127, 126, 127, 106, 103, 102.

41 Al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīḡ al-Umam wa-al-Mulūk*, vol. 1, p. 126.

42 Al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīḡ al-Umam wa-al-Mulūk*, vol. 1, pp. 92, 102, 106, 108, 125.

43 Al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīḡ al-Umam wa-al-Mulūk*, vol. 1, p. 102.

44 Al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīḡ al-Umam wa-al-Mulūk*, vol. 1, p. 102; it corresponds to the Biblical Namah (Genesis 4:22), Hebrew Na’amāh. In Genesis, she is the daughter of Lamach from his wife

b. Ḥanūḥ b. Qayn b. Ādam.⁴⁵ Ibn Ishāq also fleshes out the story of Cain and Abel by giving to each a twin sister to whom he is not to wed by order from Adam. However, always according to Ibn Ishāq, Cain did not want to give his twin sister to Abel, who formally asked for her. This animosity between the brothers prompted Adam to ask both of them to make an offering to God thus leading to the death of Abel on the hands of Cain.⁴⁶ Ibn Ishāq claimed that his sources are “some people who are knowledgeable about the first Book” (*‘an ba‘ḍ ahl al-‘ilm bi-al-kitāb al-awwal*), referring to the Hebrew bible but not necessarily to the Jews (*Ahl al-Kitāb*). It seems that Ibn Ishāq is referring to oral tradition or to popular religion where Biblical names float freely and join other names in stories that add drama to the Biblical narratives.

Ṭabarī gives us another glimpse of the popular religion of the time, or of the transformation of Biblical names as they enter other cultures, such as the Zoroastrian Persian culture. Ṭabarī designates his sources of the Persian tradition by the generic term “Persian scholars” (*‘ulamā’ al-furs*), “Persian genealogists” (*nassābat al-furs*), or simply the “Persians” (*al-furs*).⁴⁷ According to those sources, Adam is identified with Gayūmart or with Gomer b. Japheth b. Noah,⁴⁸ and the lineage Oshahnag (Hushang) b. Farwāk (Afrawak) b. Syāmak b. Mīshē (Mashi) b. Gayūmart is to be identified with Mahlā’il b. Qaynān b. Anūsh b. Shīth b. Ādam.⁴⁹

It is clear that a good part of the grand genealogical tree of all the Arabs is either taken literally from or inspired by the Hebrew Bible. This fact lent a great source of stability to the early Islamic genealogical treatises that have survived until today. We have explained a large chunk of the grand Arab genealogy, and we have learned to keep the genealogical gap between ‘Adnān and Ismā‘il as vague as it has always been, for the Prophet Muḥammad himself refrained from clarifying it.

Zillah, and the sister of Tubal-Cain from the same mother. Ṭabarī, 1: 104, on the authority of Ibn Ishāq, repeats the Biblical narrative that Lamach married Zillah (Šillāh) and fathered Tubal-Cain (Tūbalqayn), but fails to mention their daughter Namah. However he makes Ḥanūḥ (Enoch) the father of ‘Īrad (Irada), Maḥūil (Mehuḥael), and Anūšīl (Methusael) instead of Enoch being the father of Irada, Irada being the father of Mehuḥael, and Mehuḥael being the father of Methusael.

45 According to Genesis 4:17–18 the lineage should read Mehuḥael b. Irada b. Enoch b. Adam. There is no mention of Dīna in the Hebrew Bible.

46 Al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīḥ al-Umam wa-al-Mulūk*, vol. 1, pp. 89–90. More details on the twins in *ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 92.

47 Al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīḥ al-Umam wa-al-Mulūk*, vol. 1, pp. 92, 97, 107.

48 Al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīḥ al-Umam wa-al-Mulūk*, vol. 1, p. 92; Ğāmīr b. Yāfīt b. Nūḥ.

49 Al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīḥ al-Umam wa-al-Mulūk*, vol. 1, p. 97.

4.2 *Arabic Written Sources*

A good number of historical monographs have been built around lists, whether lineages or lists of participants in a pivotal event such as the Battle of Badr. All of the early sources of the *sīra* had a list of those early companions of Muḥammad who participated in the Battle of Badr.⁵⁰ Ibn Sa'd used these lists to build the first volume of his biographies of hadith transmitters. As the good 3rd century compiler that he was, Ibn Sa'd faithfully compared between all of his sources and gave us his best guess. These instances of comparisons are very revealing as to the nature of the sources and the nature of the genealogical information they contained. One of these companions is given by Ibn Sa'd as Ma'bad b. Qays b. Ṣayfi b. Ṣaḥr b. Ḥirām b. Rabī'a b. 'Adiyy b. Ġanm b. Ka'b b. Salima; Salima being a clan of the Aws, one of the two major tribes in Medina at the time of Muḥammad, both collectively known as al-Anṣār. Al-Wāqidī and Ibn al-Anṣārī named him and gave his lineage in that form, along with Ibn al-Kalbī's *Kitāb Nasab al-Anṣār*. As for Mūsā b. 'Uqba, Ibn Ishāq and Abū Ma'ṣar, they said "Ma'bad b. Qyas b. Ṣaḥr, and did not mention Ṣayfi."⁵¹ This is not an omission that can be blamed on a harried scribe, for Ibn Sa'd himself notified us of the discrepancy between his sources. Was it a mistake that Mūsā b. 'Uqba, Ibn Ishāq and Abū Ma'ṣar have committed while copying the lineage from the source as the other compilers? Or was the lineage in question the result of different attempts at joining two segments, one for the X b. Y b. Z portion plus the clan's eponym Salima, and the other for what connects Ma'bad with the eponym, Salima? It is hard to tell; however, dropping/adding a name from/to the list of ancestors in a lineage was a common occurrence as we will see.

Another possible old, written Arabic source of genealogical information is the famous imperial army registry. "The sons of al-Ṣalt ... immigrated to Medina where they resided and became allies of Banū Ġumaḥ b. 'Amr b. Qurayṣ. Their *dīwān* and *da'wa* are still with [Banū Ġumaḥ] up to the time of al-Mahdī who moved them from Banū Ġumaḥ and entered them in the allies of al-'Abbās b. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib. Therefore, their *da'wa* today is with [al-'Abbās], whereas their descendants are still in Banū Ġumaḥ."⁵² This is not a rare occurrence in Ibn Sa'd's KTK. The context is always the same, so and so have the same *dīwān/da'wa* or they have been assigned to another *dīwān/da'wa*. *Dīwān* occurs

50 Ibn Sa'd used the *sīra* and *mağāzī* of Muḥammad b. 'Umar al-Wāqidī (d. 207 AH); Muḥammad b. Ishāq (d. 150 AH); Mūsā b. 'Uqba (d. 141 AH); Abū Ma'ṣar (d. 170 AH); and Ibn Abī Nağīḥ (d. 131 AH); in addition to the genealogical works of Hišām b. Muḥammad b. al-Sā'ib al-Kalbī (d. 206 AH) and 'Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. 'Amāra al-Anṣārī (d. 3rd century AH).

51 KTK, vol. 3, p. 538.

52 KTK, vol. 7, p. 13.

in many, but related contexts. We infer that it means an entry into the imperial registry that allows a person to receive a “government salary” (*‘aṭā’*). The place where the registry is kept is where the person should go to receive his/her salary. We also understand that the entries, though targeting individuals, are organized by clan and tribe; thus, the *dīwān* of Banū al-Ṣalt could be moved under a different clan whereas their descendants would remain under their original clan. As for *da‘wa*, it could mean “the call to duty,” possibly military in nature, and it is tied to the concept of allegiance. Therefore, with al-Mahdī’s (r. 158–169AH) alteration of the registry, he made Banū al-Ṣalt as dependents of the Abbasids and hence liable to serve for the latter’s benefit (although by his time these persons were long gone, which makes his alteration purely symbolic for some unknown political reason). We do not know whether this *dīwān* is inherited from the Umayyads or a purely Abbasid endeavor. What interests us is that it was probably still in existence during the compiler’s life and that he seems to know how it functioned, which could make it a possible source for his compilation.

A third possible written source for genealogical information is the contracts of manumission and allegiance. A slave could be freed through a contract between the master and the slave whereby the slave would buy himself from the master. The master could also free the slave without monetary payment as a pious act. In this case also the manumission would be preserved in a document that contained genealogical information.⁵³ Freed slaves and their descendants preserved these contracts in order to prove their freedom at all times and in order to determine their allegiance. Freed-slaves, if the master requested it, owed allegiance (homage) to their old masters.⁵⁴ That allegiance could also be sold and bought by the masters; these transactions were also documented in contracts.⁵⁵

53 KTK, vol. 9, p. 340, “‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Iṣḥāq the judge related to me: ‘Alī b. al-Ġa’d brought to me his father’s manumission contract (*siḡill*) whereby Um Salama freed him. My [‘Abd al-Raḥmān’s] grandfather, Ibrāhīm b. Salama, was a witness along with another relative [or dependent].”

54 KTK, vol. 7, p. 603; “Ḥātim b. Ismā’il said: Muḥammad b. ‘Umar said: He [Ḥātim] made me bear witness that he was a *mawlā* of Banū ‘Abd al-Maddān b. al-Dayyān from Banū al-Ḥārīt b. Ka’b. He gave me his father’s manumission contract (*siḡill*) and said: do not mention it [to anybody] until I die.”

55 KTK, vol. 8, p. 408; “[the Kufan *fuqahā’*] ‘Alqama, al-Aswad, Ibn Nuḍayla and Ibn Ma’qil allowed Sālim b. al-Ġa’d to sell the allegiance of a *mawlā* of his.”

4.3 *Oral Sources and the Limits of Historical Memory*

For Ibn al-Kalbī, and after him Ibn Sa‘d and Ṭabarī, the father of the northern Arabs, namely Ma‘add b. ‘Adnān, is securely in the line of Ismā‘īl b. Ibrāhīm despite the murky knowledge of the other ancestors in between. As for the alleged southern branch of the Arabs, namely Qaḥṭān, Ibn Sa‘d gives us, on the authority of Ibn al-Kalbī, two possible lineages: one that goes back to Ismā‘īl⁵⁶ and another that goes to Noah without passing by the Abrahamic line. Ibn Sa‘d claims that Ibn al-Kalbī, his father, and the father’s sources, leaned more toward connecting Qaḥṭān to Ismā‘īl. The second variant is however important to us; it reads: Yaḳṭān (“he is Qaḥṭān”) b. Fāligh b. ‘Ābir b. Šāliḥ b. Arfaḥšad b. Sām b. Nūḥ.⁵⁷ Again, Ibn al-Kalbī does not acknowledge his Biblical sources, according to which Eber had two sons Peleg and Yoktan, making the latter’s lineage as follows: Yoktan b. Eber b. Shela b. Arpachshad b. Shem b. Noah.⁵⁸ It is not surprising that Fāligh here is considered to be the father of Qaḥṭān, whereas in the Bible they are brothers, because this is a common occurrence in genealogy as we will see later. If Qaḥṭān and ‘Adnān were part of some Arab folklore, then we must not ignore the urge to “tweak” that “memory” to conform to a source whose authority is considered to be beyond any doubt. This is our first attempt at qualifying the possible oral sources of genealogical information.

Let us now look at the Arab lineages between the two ancestors, ‘Adnān and Qaḥṭān, and the Prophet Muḥammad and his contemporaries. According to Ibn Sa‘d, on the authority of Ibn al-Kalbī, Muḥammad’s lineage reads as follows: Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib b. Hāšim b. ‘Abd Manāf b. Quṣayy b. Kilāb b. Murra b. Ka‘b b. Lu‘ayy b. Fihr (Qurayš) b. Mālīk b. al-Naḍr b. Kināna b. Ḥuzayma b. Mudrika b. Ilyās b. Muḍar b. Nizār b. Ma‘add b. ‘Adnan.⁵⁹ As for his alleged companion Abū Sabra, his lineage, according to the same sources, reads as follows: Abū Sabra Yazīd b. Mālīk b. ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Du‘ayb b. Salama b. ‘Amr b. Duhl b. Marrān b. Ġu‘fi b. Sa‘d al-‘Ašīra⁶⁰ b. Mālīk (Maḍḥiġ) b. Udad b. Zayd b. Yašġub b. ‘Arib b. Zayd b. Kahlān b. ‘Āmir (Saba’) b. Yašġub b. Ya‘rub b. Qaḥṭān.⁶¹

There are several points that we can make here. The first concerns the more ancient portions of the lineages, specifically the names that we know are those

56 KTK, vol. 3, p. 388. The first variant reads (approximate vocalization): “Qaḥṭān b. al-Hamaysa’ b. Taymun b. Nabit b. Ismā‘īl b. Ibrāhīm.”

57 KTK, vol. 3, p. 388. However, in KTK, vol. 1, p. 26, Fālīġ is dropped.

58 Genesis 10:21–32.

59 KTK, vol. 1, p. 37.

60 KTK, vol. 8, p. 172.

61 W. Caskel, *Ġamharat al-Nasab*, 1966, vol. 1, diagrams 176, 258, 266, 268.

of full-fledged tribes. According to the Arabian tradition, the fact that tribal names appear in the genealogical lines as those of persons should not be surprising because tribes are always thought to have been named after a male (sometimes a female) ancestor, an actual person. Just as the Hebrews in the Bible are named the Sons of Israel (who is identified with Jacob), the tribe of Muḥammad, namely Qurayš, are the sons of Fihr who is identified as Qurayš. Also, the tribe of Abū Sabra, namely Madḥiğ, is composed of the sons of Mālik who is identified as Madḥiğ. In the two lineages given above we identify a number of famous ancestors: Nizār, Ma'add, Madḥiğ, and Saba'. The latter, 'Amir who is identified as Saba', is no other than the Biblical Sheba; the ancient civilization of Yemen that flourished in the 1st millennium BC up to the rise of the Himyarites in the 3rd century AD. This observation connects well with Rules 3 and 4 whereby tribes are connected through imagined ancestors (anthropomorphism); these ancestors have a symbolic value, such as Saba', which connects the southern Arabs to the ancient kingdom of Sheba in Yemen.

We note that between Muḥammad and Nizār there are seventeen ancestors. If we consider the reasonable assumption that 20 to 50 years have elapsed between each two consecutive ancestors, then about 340 to 850 years separate Muḥammad from Nizār. Given that Muḥammad died in 632AD, a simple calculation places Nizār as a person who lived between the end of the 3rd century BC and the end of the 3rd century AD. According to the Namara inscription, the tombstone of the famed Arab king and poet Imru' al-Qays, a full-fledged tribe named Nizār existed around the early 4th century AD (the inscription is self-dated to 328AD), which the famed king had defeated during his lifetime.⁶² If we push the Arabian tribal theory to its logical conclusion, the descendants of Nizār were so many as to form an army in the early 4th century AD. Nizār's offspring has had between 30 to 500 years to multiply and become a large tribe. The population of Syria doubles every 20 years since the end of the 19th century; but that cannot be said for ancient civilizations, certainly not for the descendants of one person. If the descendants of Nizār and Ma'add had enough time to multiply and become great tribes; the same cannot be true for the descendants of Madḥiğ, which was also mentioned as a tribe in the Namara inscription. According to a similar calculation, Madḥiğ as a person should have lived between 180 and 450 years prior to Muḥammad; that is between the end of the second and the middle of the 5th century. That estimate does not give

62 R. Dussau, "L'inscription," 1902, and J.A. Bellamy, "A New Reading," 1985. For the latest research on the distribution of Arabian tribes before Islam see J. Schiettecatte & M. Arbach, "The Political Map of Arabia and the Middle East in the Third century AD Revealed by a Sabaeen Inscription," Nov. 2016, pp. 176–196.

his offspring enough time to become a tribe around 328AD (less than two centuries in the best of cases). These names could be those of real persons, even ancestors, but what advanced record-keeping has allowed for the preservation of the names of all of these ancestors! It seems more plausible that some names in these lineages have some truth to them, as far as being in use at some time in the past, but not necessarily as names of actual persons but of fabled persons or tribes, as the Namara inscription shows for the case of Ma'add, Nizār and Madhīḡ.

Let us take another example, a famous companion of Muḥammad who allegedly died in the Battle of Badr. His lineage, according to Ibn al-Kalbī, reads as follows: Sa'd b. Ma'ād b. al-Nu'mān b. Imri' al-Qays b. Zayd b. 'Abd al-Ašhal b. Ğušam b. al-Ḥarīṭ b. al-Ḥazraġ b. 'Amr b. Mālik b. al-Aws b. Ḥārīṭa b. 'Amr b. 'Āmir b. Ḥārīṭa b. Imri' al-Qays b. Ṭa'labā b. Māzin b. al-Azd b. al-Ġawṭ b. Nabīṭ b. Mālik b. Zayd b. Kahlān b. Saba' b. Yašġub b. Ya'rub b. Qaḥṭān.⁶³ Note that, according to the Islamic narrative, Abū Sabra and Sa'd were contemporaries of each other, and descended from the same ancestor, Qaḥṭān; the Islamic narrative locates Sa'd in al-Aws and locates the latter in the Yemeni tribes. There are 19 ancestors between Abū Sabra and Qaḥṭān, and 27 ancestors between Sa'd and Qaḥṭān. Remembering all these names is beyond the ability of one interested person, or even a scholar. Some sort of written records must have been kept; but Ibn al-Kalbī, the foremost authority in Arabian genealogy, does not give any source other than his father. If the rabbinic tradition has given us the Hebrew Bible, which has been extensively used for ancient lineages by the Muslim genealogists as we have shown, Ibn al-Kalbī does not give any hint as to the existence of a similar tradition in ancient or late antique Arabia. It is our task to either find this tradition or figure out possible ways that Ibn al-Kalbī and other Muslim genealogists have constructed the Arabian genealogies.

The early Islamic genealogies are written documents that draw at least a part of their information from other written sources. This fact gives them a degree of stability and also authority. As for oral sources, they certainly exist, but we cannot qualify them fully as we did with the Biblical sources. What we did instead is show how oral sources could partially be metaphorical in the sense that they related to something in the past but not necessarily anthropomorphic or genealogical; such as the case of Sheba, Nizār, and Madhīḡ. The Biblical and oral sources also indicate that the metaphoric nature of some segments of the genealogy is political in the sense that they are lists of ancient kings, leaders, and peoples with whom any association gives pedigree, prestige, and justification.

63 KTK, vol. 3, pp. 388–389; W. Caskel, *Ġamharat al-Nasab*, 1966, vol. 1, diagrams 176, p. 179.

Finally, we note that genealogical lists do not exist alone and that they always exist within a narrative context that gives them meaning. The Biblical lineage does not mean much outside the Judaic tradition to which Islam claimed affinity; and the Arabian lineage does not mean much if not accompanied by an oral tradition that preserves some memory of famous/fabled ancient tribes, kings, gods, and civilizations along with anecdotes that explain them and connect them into a coherent whole. Genealogy is history, or at least cannot be separated from history.

5 Authority and Fakeness

We set out here to show that the early Islamic genealogy enjoyed a great deal of authority because of who preserved, transmitted, defended and used/consumed it.

The bibliographer Ibn al-Nadīm mentioned that the genealogist ‘Ubayd b. Šariyya al-Ġurhumī (d. 67AH) was brought from Šan‘ā by the founder of the Umayyad Dynasty, Mu‘āwiya b. Abī Sufyān (d. 60AH), to answer the latter’s questions about “ancient history, Arab and Persian kings, why languages diverged, and people spread out throughout the earth.” Then Mu‘āwiya, the report goes, ordered that ‘Ubayd’s answers be written down and be attributed to him.⁶⁴ Regardless of whether this report is authentic or not, it indicates that Muslims of later generations believed that genealogy/history was a knowledge worth having and worth imparting on it a royal approval; and that such knowledge can be obtained from specialized persons such as ‘Ubayd al-Ġurhumī. Another report mentioned by Ibn al-Nadīm on the authority of the linguist and poetry expert Abū al-‘Abbās Ta‘laba (d. 291AH) claims that “[the Umayyad Caliph] al-Walid. b ‘Abd al-Malik (d. 96AH) collected the ‘Dīwān of the Arabs,’ their poetry, history, genealogy, and dialects; but he claims that the Dīwān was attributed to Ḥammād [al-Rāwiya] (d. 155AH) and Ġannād [b. Wāšil] (2nd century), [two famous poetry experts from Kufa].”⁶⁵ Ḥammād and Ġannād were two Kufan *mawlās* of non-Arab origin who were famous for memorizing Arabian poetry and *aḥbār* (reports/anecdotes) and constituted a major source for pre-Islamic poetry and reports for 2d and 3rd century compilers. However, their

64 Ibn al-Nadīm, *Al-fihrist*, 1997, p. 118. The memorization capacity of ancient genealogists was always admired (maybe part of promoting the profession and the knowledge for other ends). Al-Balāḏurī, *Ansāb al-Ašraf*, 1996, vol. 12, p. 373; “You [Diġfil b. Ḥanzāla *al-nassāba*] know everything; tell me when I am going to die.”

65 Ibn al-Nadīm, *Al-fihrist*, 1997, p. 120.

linguistic skills and their understanding of what they were transmitting were always questioned by later intellectuals, which could be part of the 3rd century struggle between supporters and detractors of Arab dominance and culture, i.e. the *šu'ūbiyya* controversy. It is possible here that Abū al-'Abbās Ṭa'labā or other transmitters of the report up to Ibn al-Nadīm disapproved of the attribution of such an important knowledge as genealogy to such mediocre, but prolific, non-Arab sources. Genealogy, for those transmitters, is a knowledge and an intellectual work that is ancient and worthy of famous and ancient kings; however, this knowledge ends up in the hands of sometimes “unworthy specialists” such as Ḥammād and Ğannād. Despite the mediocrity of the supposed transmitters, the knowledge itself is not impugned. Both past kings and specialists impart on genealogy a halo of importance and authenticity. The fact is, this report highlights the importance of specialists in collecting and transmitting genealogical knowledge in early Islamic history, and also the fact that that knowledge was considered to exist and to be true independently of the transmission vessel.

As we have mentioned in the introduction, the authority and the contestation of authority go hand in hand. Genealogy as a contract has its obligations and privileges which can be either dreaded or coveted. When mounting a smear campaign against the character of a political opponent, a powerful political tool, could be to impugn his pedigree; in a tribal society, this leads immediately to casting doubts on the person's character. If that fails, impugning the pedigree could scare the opponent by threatening his identity, his very existence as a social being in a tribal society where knowing the father and the male ancestors meant being a legitimate member of the tribal community. Contesting pedigree was such a powerful tool that a statement attributed to Muḥammad circulated in which the Prophet ascertained the apostasy of whomever impugns someone's lineage “al-ṭa'n fi al-nasab.”⁶⁶ According to another report, Muḥammad himself was not immune of such an attack, to the point that several hadiths circulated in which Muḥammad asserted his belonging to Muḍar and not to any other branch of the Arabs.⁶⁷ It is because of its

66 “On the authority of Abū Hurayra, the Prophet said: Two traits in people are Kufr, impugning lineage and wailing after the dead,” Muslim, *Al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, 1955, vol. 1, p. 82.

67 КТК, vol. 1, p. 6, “The Prophet said: Ğibrīl tells me that I am a man from Muḍar;” КТК, vol. 1, p. 7, “[Oh Prophet of God] some people from Kinda are at your door claiming that you are one of them, then the Prophet said: this is something that al-'Abbās b. 'Abd al-Maṭṭalib and Abū Sufyān b. Ḥarb used to say to guarantee their safety when travelling in Yemen. God forbid that we make our mother commit adultery or accuse our father of committing adultery. We are Banū al-Naḍr b. Kināna and whoever says otherwise is a liar.” Al-Aṣ'at b. Qays, a prominent companion and general on 'Alī's side, continues in another version of

authority that a document can be falsified, distorted, accused of error, and challenged. The more authoritative (read rigid and unchanging/unchangeable) a document is, the more others will try to change it, make it more malleable by producing a variant and claiming that all the authority of the “original” should be moved to the “variant.” Persons, families and clans always claimed that they belonged to a certain tribe or a region in order to improve their social or political status. Many of these claims, if they did not suit their opponents, were challenged. Mawālī claimed to be “pure” Arabs, and Arabs claimed belonging to a different tribe of better repute.⁶⁸

6 Functions of Arabian Genealogy

Scholars of modern Middle Eastern tribes highlight the importance of genealogy for the construction of identity, social and economic solidarity, inheritance, marriage, blood money, mediation, social and religious status, land rights, patronage, and political alliances.⁶⁹ Even early Islamic genealogies can be used to extend a modern tribal lineage into the distant past, thus increasing the tribe’s prestige and probably its territorial claims.⁷⁰ In Islamic law, a minimum knowledge of genealogy is required for avoiding the violation of marriage taboos as detailed in the Qur’an, i.e. marrying prohibited family members (*maḥārim*); also for inheritance as detailed in the Qur’an; for executing private endowments (*waqf ḥāṣ*) because they could stipulate the execution over a long period of time covering several generations of the family; for blood money (*dīyya*); and for basic social relations (*ṣilat al-raḥim*). According to a statement attributed to the Prophet Muḥammad, one must know enough of his/her genealogy to connect with kins (*ta’allamū min al-nasab ma taṣilūn bihi arḥāmakum*).⁷¹ In early Islamic times, genealogy also fulfilled several functions.

the same report saying: “If I hear anyone denying that Qurayš is from [the line] of al-Naḍr b. Kināna, I will flog him the prescribed [number of lashes] (*al-ḥadd*).”

68 КТК, vol. 7, p. 485; “[The family of ‘Imrān b. Abī Anas] claimed that they belonged to [Banū] ‘Āmir b. Lu’ayy [from Qurayš], but people claimed that they were *mawālī*; later on, they decided to belong to Yemen.” КТК, vol. 7, p. 557; “The descendants of Hānī’ [a *mawlā* of ‘Uṭmān b. ‘Affān] claimed to belong to Hamdān [in Yemen] after the killing of ‘Uṭmān.”

69 I.Ḥ. al-Sakkout, *The Arab Tribe*, 1994, pp. 215–217; “The function of genealogy amongst modern tribes.” A.R. Aloshan, “*al-Qabila*,” 1987, pp. 130–136 and 136–142; “Regional and political characteristics of tribal levels.”

70 A.R. Aloshan, “*al-Qabila*,” 1987, p. 128.

71 Al-Tirmidī, *Sunan al-Tirmidī*, 1997, vol. 3, p. 419.

6.1 *Territoriality*

According to Rule 1, groups who frequently interact with each other may claim to belong to a common ancestor, thus forming a tribe. Contrary to the common romantic view that portrays a nomadic tribe as a self-sufficient group that wanders about the desert aimlessly searching for grazing grounds, any tribe in the Middle East, whether nomadic, semi-nomadic or settled, inhabits a specific area that constitutes its vital geographic domain where it dwells, moves around and performs the activities that makes it a corporate group. That geographical domain is claimed by the tribe as its land, its territory (*bilād*), for the control of which it goes to war against enemies who threaten to take it away or to share it with the tribe against its will. According to Abdulaziz Rashid Aloshan, the tribal confederation of Banī Shiher, both its settled and nomadic tribes, in southwestern Saudi Arabia occupies a well delimited territory that it calls its own, and from which it derives a sense of identity: “al-Qabīla is both a territorial and a political unit.”⁷² The genealogy of the tribe reflects that geographical proximity and translates it into shared ancestry.⁷³ Do we observe the same connection between geography and genealogy in the early Islamic genealogical works?

One can find on the internet several maps showing the approximate locations of the different pre-Islamic Arabian tribes within the confines of the Arabian Peninsula.⁷⁴ These locations are assigned based on scanty information collected from a wide variety of sources such as *sīra*, *ayyām*, *buldān* (geography), *tārīḥ*, or *ansāb*. According to al-Sakkout, territories associated with different tribes are consistent throughout the *ayyām* literature. Moreover, enemies and allies are consistently neighbors of each other.⁷⁵ This geographical proximity, whether making two tribes allies or enemies, is reflected in the genealogy. In order to illustrate this point, let us take Muḥammad’s lineage, locate within it the different tribal eponyms, locate the territories of these tribes according to

72 A.R. Aloshan, “*al-Qabīla*,” 1987, p. 142; furthermore, “[t]he sense of identity created by al-Qabīla is ecologically circumscribed by the micro-environmental context within which al-Qabīla practices its specific subsistence activities on a specific territory.” See also I.Ḥ. al-Sakkout, *The Arab Tribe*, 1994, p. 69 for a further review of related literature.

73 A.R. Aloshan, “*al-Qabīla*,” 1987, p. 155; “Villages, village clusters, small and medium-sized hamlets, and pastoral sections combine to form a Qabīla.” E. Peters, “The Proliferation of Segments,” 1960, p. 30; “Another feature of the Cyrenaican genealogy is that its branches show an intimate relationship with ecological areas. Thus, the major division into two branches stemming from Sa’ada represents the eastern and western halves of the country with associated and clear differences in ecology.”

74 See I.Ḥ. al-Sakkout, *The Arab Tribe*, 1994, Appendix 1, p. 254 for a number of these maps.

75 I.Ḥ. al-Sakkout, *The Arab Tribe*, 1994, pp. 70–79.

the literature, and then show that geographically close tribes are also genealogically close.

As given by Ibn Sa'd, Muḥammad's lineage reads as follows (the tribal eponyms are underlined): Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh b. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib b. Hāšim b. 'Abd Manāf b. Quṣayy b. Kilāb b. Murra b. Ka'b b. Lu'ayy b. Fihir (Qurayš) b. Mālik b. al-Naḍr b. Kināna.⁷⁶ Mecca and its hinterland are supposed to be the home of a single tribe, Qurayš, and its allies and dependents. Qurayš is also supposed to be composed of descendants of one ancestor, namely Fihir (third eponym) whose nickname is Qurayš (some sources claim that Qurayš is the latter's alleged grandfather, al-Naḍr). Qurayš is usually divided between the town dwellers, occupying the valley where the sacred house is (*baṭn, baṭḥā'*), and the nomads (*ahl al-bādiya*), occupying the hinterland around the town (*zāhir*). The town dwellers are sometimes called Qurayš al-Bawāṭin or al-Biṭāḥ, and the nomads are sometimes called Qurayš al-Ḍawāhir. These two groups bifurcate in the genealogical tree at Lu'ayy, whose son Ka'b fathered the town dwellers⁷⁷ and whose other son 'Āmir fathered a part of the nomads. The other nomads around the town are grafted to the tree at various points below the eponymous ancestor Fihir: Taym (the eponym of Banū Taym al-Adram) is considered the brother of Lu'ayy; they both share Ġālib as a father; Muḥārib and al-Ḥāriṭ (the eponyms of Banū Muḥārib and Banū al-Ḥāriṭ) are considered the brothers of Ġālib; all three are the sons of Fihir.⁷⁸

The fourth eponym, Kināna, is the name of a cluster of tribes: Banū 'Abd Manāt, Banū Mālik, Banū Milkān, in addition to Banū al-Naḍr/Qurayš, among others. All four eponyms are considered the sons of Kināna.⁷⁹ Banū 'Abd Manāt is also a cluster of tribes such as Banū Ḍamra, Banū Ġifār, Banū Layṭ, and Banū Mudliġ, to name a few. All four of these tribes are connected genealogically, as follows: Ḍamra and Layṭ are the sons of Bakr b. 'Abd Manāt; Ġifār is the son of Mulayl b. Ḍamra b. Bakr b. 'Abd Manāt; Mudliġ is the son of Murra b. 'Abd Manāt.⁸⁰ All these tribes are attested in the literature as living between Mecca and the Red Sea to the west and northwest. In one of his campaigns,

76 KTK, vol. 3, p. 6.

77 Qurayš al-Biṭāḥ: all the clans up to Quṣayy, Banū Zuhra, Banū Taym, Banū Maḥzūm, Banū 'Adiyy, Banū Sahm, and Banū Ġumaḥ. Quṣayy and Zuhra are considered brothers (sons of Kilāb); the latter two with Taym and Maḥzūm are considered cousins (connected at Murra). Murra, 'Adiyy, Sahm, and Ġumaḥ meet at Ka'b, the father of the town-dweller; see W. Caskel, *Ġamharat al-Nasab*, 1966, vol. 1, diagram 4. It is noteworthy that Ka'b and Ka'ba (the sacred house of Mecca) are from the same Arabic root denoting a rock.

78 Al-Balāḍurī, *Ansāb al-Ašraf*, 1996, vol. 11, p. 53.

79 W. Caskel, *Ġamharat al-Nasab*, 1966, vol. 1, diagram no. 3.

80 W. Caskel, *Ġamharat al-Nasab*, 1966, vol. 1, diagrams no. 36, 42, and 44.

Muḥammad made a non-belligerence (*muwādaʿa*) pact with a chief from Banū Ḍamra in a place called al-Abwāʿ (northwest of Mecca).⁸¹ In another campaign, Muḥammad reached a place named Dū al-Uṣayra, “a water hole” belonging to Banū Mudliḡ in the area of Yunbuʿ (on the coast between Mecca and Medina). Two companions of Muḥammad from Ġifār⁸² are claimed to be dwellers of Ġayqa, in the same area.⁸³ Surāqa b. Mālik, from Mudliḡ, went after Muḥammad in the vicinity of Mecca but his horse’s legs got stock in the sand.⁸⁴ When Muḥammad and Abū Bakr fled Mecca to Medina, their guide was from Banū al-Layt.⁸⁵ According to Ibn ‘Abd Rabbih, the Banū Firās, a sub-tribe of Banū Mālik b. Kināna, were raided in their country which is called Barza/Burza (west of Mecca).⁸⁶ The clans of Qurayš live in and around Mecca; the tribes of Kināna, to whom Qurayš belongs, live to the west and northwest of Mecca. Geographical proximity in these cases translates into genealogical proximity.

6.2 *Marriage, Kin-Based Social Relations*

We mentioned previously that genealogy is important for the application of social rules and for determining social obligations. Paying respect to family members (*ṣilat al-raḥim*), dividing inheritance, avoiding taboo marriage, and ascertaining paternity are all subjects discussed in the Qur’an.⁸⁷ The pedigree of a future wife must be known, the future husband and wife must be equal in their pedigree (*akiffāʿ*).⁸⁸ As a *mawlā*, Ibn ‘Awn (a famous *muḥaddith*) was

81 KTK, vol. 2, p. 7. Al-Abwāʿ is to the northwest of Mecca, see ‘Ā. b. Ġ. al-Ḥarbī, *Maʿjam al-maʿālim*, 1982, p. 14.

82 KTK, vol. 2, p. 9. Yunbuʿ, see ‘Ā. b. Ġ. al-Ḥarbī, *Maʿjam al-maʿālim*, 1982, p. 340; al-Abwāʿ and Yunbuʿ are not far from each other. Banū Ḍamra and Mudliḡ are neighbors, cousins, and allies; see *ibid*.

83 KTK, vol. 7, p. 486; the entry for Muḥallad b. Ḥafāf b. Īmāʿ b. Raḥḍa. Ġayqa, see ‘Ā. b. Ġ. al-Ḥarbī, *Maʿjam al-maʿālim*, 1982, p. 207.

84 KTK, vol. 6, p. 148.

85 KTK, vol. 1, p. 196, their guide was ‘Abd Allāh b. Urayqiṭ al-Laytī.

86 Ibn ‘Abd Rabbih, *Al-ʿIqd*, 1984, vol. 6, p. 38. Burza/Barza, see Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Muʿjam al-buldān*, 1995, vol. 1, pp. 383, 410 and vol. 3, p. 105.

87 Inheritance al-Nisāʿ:11, 12, and 176; marriage taboo al-Nisāʿ:22; *ṣilat al-raḥim* al-Nisāʿ:1 and al-Raʿd:21; paternity al-Aḥzāb:5. KTK, vol. 3, p. 41; the biography of Zayd b. Ḥārīṭa.

88 Muslim, *Al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, 1955, vol. 2, p. 1086, no. 1466; “On the authority of Abū Hurayra, the Prophet said: A woman is to be taken as a wife for four [reasons]: her wealth, her pedigree, her beauty, and her piety, [blessed be] who chooses the pious one.” Al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanz al-ummāl fī Sunan al-aqwāl wa-al-afʿāl*, 1981, vol. 16, p. 318, no. 44700; “Preserve your lineages, in order to marry your equals and connect with your kin.” There are contradictory statements attributed to Muḥammad concerning the importance of pedigree in marriage, some statements emphasize good lineage and the marriage of equals, others absolutely reject that for the sake of piety and equality among all

flogged by Bilāl b. Abī Burda, a governor of Basra under the Umayyads, for marrying an Arab woman.⁸⁹

6.3 *Political Alliances*

The case of Ziyād b. Abīh is in point. He was a successful and brutal governor of the Umayyads in Iraq. However, his mother was alleged to be a prostitute. His father was alleged to be Abū Sufyān b. Ḥarb, the father of the first Umayyad Caliph Mu'āwiya b. Abī Sufyān. It was said that Mu'āwiya declared Ziyād to be his brother, the illegitimate but unrecognized son of his father. By establishing this family connection, he elevated Ziyād to the ranks of the nascent Arab aristocracy and also established kin loyalty (and mutual support) with his employee. Nonetheless, Ziyād was always reminded by his opponents of his base birth and doubtful pedigree. In a report on the authority of Ibn Ishāq, Ibn Sa'd shows Ziyād writing the first book of "maṭālib" and handing it to his children saying: "use it to shield yourselves from the Arabs, for indeed they will desist from attacking you [when you use it]." Supposedly, Ziyād wrote the book when he was "vanquished and his lineage impugned" (*ẓufira 'alayhi wa-'alā nasabihī*).⁹⁰ *Maṭālib* is usually translated as "character defects;" however, character is closely related to lineage; and some "character defects" could be just being of lowly birth or having a scandal (such as a military defeat) associated with one's ancestors or tribe. Therefore, the best defense against "lineage impugning" is an attack on character which subsumes the former. This is the case of a political alliance solidified by a claim of common descent; challenging that claim was considered a political attack by way of character smearing.

Conversion to Islam, which was in itself a political move, can be facilitated by finding an ancestral connection with the Arabs, just like the Arabs found an ancestral connection to Abraham and his lineage of chosen people. We have seen how Gayūmart and other foundational characters in Zoroastrian/Persian mythology were equated, according to Ṭabarī, with the Biblical foundational characters Adam and his descendants. Sarah Bowen-Savant observes that "ninth and tenth-century litterateurs and historians encouraged the Persians' assimilation into Islam by depicting them as descendants of Muslim prophets, thus urging them to see Islam as a religion that was as Persian as it was Arab in origin."⁹¹

Muslims; which is indicative of an early Islamic debate about class and race differences and their influence on social relations, especially marriage.

89 КТК, vol. 9, p. 262.

90 Ibn al-Nadīm, *Al-fihrist*, 1997, p. 117.

91 S. Bowen-Savant, *Finding*, 2006, p. 245.

A political alliance between tribes cannot be solidified with a contract, or a document that functions as a contract, this is where genealogy comes into play. According to Kennedy, through studying military and political alliances in Umayyad times, Werner Caskel showed how genealogies were modified to reflect these alliances:

He shows how Rabī'a was developed in Basra to incorporate Bakr and tribes allied to it, how 'Āmila, Lakhm and Judhām became 'brothers' in southern Palestine and how the victory of Kalb at Marḡ Rāhiṭ in 64AH/683AD led to the incorporation of Salīḥ and Tantūkh in Quḍā'a but also, in response, led to the solidarity of Qays under the leadership of Ẓufar b. al-Ḥārith.⁹²

7 Construction of a Lineage

Can a genealogy be altered and how? If we push the fakeness theme a bit further, we can pose the questions: can a genealogy be manipulated and in what ways? If we imagine one or more persons taking the conscious decision to make alterations to an existing genealogy, how can they go about doing that and still produce a document that has some authority? Can anyone contemplate such an act, or should one always suspect a specialist? Is it really a conscious and premeditated decision, or does it simply happen naturally while life and social interactions happen? In order to change a genealogy, shouldn't there be an official or an authoritative one so to make changing it worthwhile? The anthropological literature may help give some answers to some of these questions, but they also add complexity to them, such as: in what context can a genealogy be changed, what parts of it are more frequently subject to change, who can have access to "official" and widely accepted genealogies in order to change them, do oral genealogies change in different ways than written genealogies, what social groups or classes are more interested than others in altering genealogies?

First of all, genealogies do naturally evolve because there are always more people to add, more people to "deactivate" such as those of low social significance as in the case of lower casts, forgotten ancestors, vanished male lines, childless persons, or women in a patrilineal society. Even a state bureaucracy cannot keep records of all of its subjects over a very long period of time, some things must be ignored, and other things must be forgotten. Moreover,

92 H. Kennedy, "Arabic Genealogy," 1997, p. 542.

anthropologists realize that when keeping genealogies, societies practice a sort of “forgetfulness.”⁹³ Other authors talk about a “genealogical gap between the eponyms of corporate lineages—called by William Lancaster ‘minimal sections’—and those of the tribal sections to which these groups belong.”⁹⁴ Aloshan views this genealogical gap as a necessity, rather than a human error, or an unintended forgetfulness.⁹⁵ Kennedy claims that “[e]very Bedouin knows his great-grandfather, whereas of his great-great-grand-father he is likely to be completely ignorant.”⁹⁶ If a genealogy is to be a useful social artefact it must be “flexible” in order to reflect new social and political realities on the ground, such as new powerful families, the rise of new tribal alliances, and the tribal reshuffling done during the rise of empires and powerful states. Nonetheless, some families, in a Muslim and Middle Eastern context, insist that they know their genealogy, with certainty, up to Muḥammad through his cousin and son-in-law ‘Alī and through other members of Muḥammad’s family and their descendants.⁹⁷

There must be therefore a balance between “certainty” and “necessary flexibility.” This flexibility can be seen even in the strictest of situations, such as when claiming Muḥammadan descent, i.e. “nasab šarīf.” The Egyptian associ-

93 J.T. Irvine, “When Is Genealogy History? Wolof Genealogies in Comparative Perspective,” 1978, pp. 651–653, reviews several scholarly opinions as to what socially “causes” that forgetfulness. Irvine’s aim was to show that in certain cases genealogies have some historical truth. Irvine also suggests that genealogies of illiterate people, such as the west African Wolof of Senegal, that are compiled by researchers from oral testimonies highly depend on who is being interviewed and in what context, p. 562. The Wolof people have specialized genealogists, *gewel* (similar to the early Islamic *nassāba*), who can also be singers and who use genealogies in two different contexts, formal recital and informal conversation, with different versions of the tribal genealogy used in each context; idem, p. 656.

94 I.Ḥ. al-Sakkout, *The Arab Tribe*, 1994, p. 217, discussing W. Lancaster’s important work about modern Arab nomad’s *The Rwala Bedouin Today*, 1981.

95 A.R. Aloshan, “*al-Qabila*,” 1987, p. 155, when talking about the larger tribe, beyond the extended family and the close-knit clan, says: “This grouping can be viewed as a maximal lineage composed of groups who view themselves as descendants of a great common male ancestor many generations in the past, whose descent line is usually telescoped to avoid confusion resulting from the continuous fissioning of various groups.”

96 H. Kennedy, “Arabic Genealogy,” 1997, p. 532. He is repeating a statement made by A. Musil, whose *The Manners and Customs of the Rwala Bedouins*, 1928, constitutes the classical account of early 20th century Arab nomads.

97 A.R. Aloshan, “*al-Qabila*,” 1987, p. 166, within the context of one tribe, Banī Šīher, talks about a religious elite that claims connection to Muḥammad through descent from Ḥasan b. ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (al-Šaraf), through the latter’s brother Ḥusayn (al-Sāda), through ‘Alī’s brothers Ġa‘far or ‘Aqīl (al-Ṭālibiyyīn), or through Muḥammad’s uncle al-‘Abbās (al-Hāšim-iyyīn).

ation of Ašrāf, Naqābat al-Ašrāf, requires an applicant to present a notarized document to the effect that he is a *šarīf* from another recognized “naqābat ašrāf;” authentic marriage, endowment, or genealogical tree (*mašğara*) documents proving descent from a recognized descendent (*šarīf*) such as one who appears in old and trusted works of genealogy; and/or the testimonies of authoritative witnesses (*šuhūd udūl*).⁹⁸ In other words, in order to produce an authoritative document, one needs other types of authoritative document such as a state/court document, testimony sanctioned by a religious oath, or an old genealogical work that acquired authority because it is old. It is therefore very legitimate to assume that genealogies can be altered, manipulated, as well as preserved. In what follows we present instances from the early Islamic genealogical tradition when a lineage was clearly altered. We do not ascertain that these instances give us the exact tools by the use of which the genealogy has been altered. We can glean however through these instances the ways in which the balance between “certainty” and “flexibility” can be struck intentionally or unintentionally.

7.1 *Getting the Name Wrong*

Ancient Arabic scripts, all handwritten, are notorious for their ambiguity because of the option that the scribe can make of using or omitting diacritical marks (dots and short vowels); some scribes even omit long vowels and diphthongs. For example, without the distinctive dots, letters such as ب ت ث ي can be homeomorphs; without the short vowels the syllables ب ب ب can also be homeomorphs. Because of the highly cursive nature of Arabic scripts, certain shapes, because of hurried handwriting, can be read in many different ways. This could lead to one person becoming two persons, or two persons being identified as the same person, or a person being given the wrong name and have later his/her identity contested. The most common example is “عبد” which can be read as ‘Abd or ‘Ubayd, and in some cases ‘Abbād; let alone that it could be a short form of ‘Abd Allāh or ‘Ubayd Allāh. Another common case is dropping the silent *wāw* of ‘Amr (عمرو), thus transforming it into ‘Umar (عمر).⁹⁹ Furthermore, there are a few old Arabic names that consist of two words such as Abū Bakr, Abū Sufyān, and Abū al-Āṣ/Āṣī. The fact that the second name is also a recognizable first name makes the dropping of Abū undetectable to the non-specialist in genealogy. The person that Ibn Sa’d reports as ‘Amr b. Abī Sufyān

98 Based on the website “al-Masry al-Youm,” an article by Usāma Maḥdi, “Mā hiya Naqābat al-Ašrāf? Ta’arraf ‘alā Šurūṭ al-Intisāb ilayhā,” June 1, 2022, <https://www.almasryalyoum.com/news/details/2612218> (last accessed, Sept. 8, 2025).

99 Ibn al-Kalbī, *Nasab Ma’add*, 1988, vol. 1, p. 363; “Umar, he is Mazīqiyā (...) some say he is ‘Amr Mazīqiyā.”

b. Asīd b. Ġāriya of Taqīf is reported by none other than al-Buḥārī as ‘Amr b. Sufyān al-Taqaḥfī (very faithful to the formula X b. Y plus a tribal adjective).¹⁰⁰

Compilers of the 3rd Islamic century and beyond were quite aware of these situations, and therefore reported faithfully what they found in their sources. When Ibn Sa’d reported about a certain Surāqa b. Ka’b b. ‘Amr b. ‘Ab al-‘Uzzā b. Ġaziyya (غزوية), he pointed out that sources on the authority of Ibn Ishāq (d. 150AH) reported two versions of the last ancestor, namely ‘Urwa (عروة) and ‘Uzra (عزرة).¹⁰¹ These two readings can arise from a writing that did not dot the ‘ayn and the rā’ and that scrambled the *yā’/rā’/wāw*. In another case the name Sahl b. ‘Atīk (عتيك) was reported by Abū Ma’sar as Sahl b. ‘Ubayd (عبيد).¹⁰² We can also imagine other compilers claiming in the first case the name to be Ġuzayya, and in the second case to be Suhayl b. ‘Atīk or Suhayl b. ‘Ubayd. It is worth noting here, that such variants or errors can only arise from reading from a written source and not because of oral transmission. One can imagine old sources whose scripts are not entirely readable by a 3rd century compiler who resides in Baghdad and who is accustomed to professional teachers and a systematized education and script. The different “readings” of the Qur’an is a case in point.

7.2 *Dropping or Adding a Name*

A certain Ma’bad b. Qays b. Ṣayfi b. Ṣaḥr, as reported by Ibn Sa’d, is named as Ma’bad b. Qays b. Ṣaḥr, with Ṣayfi dropped, on the authority of Mūsā b. ‘Uqba, Ibn Ishāq, and Abū Ma’sar.¹⁰³ In this case the great grandfather in one version becomes a grandfather in another version. In another case, Ibn Sa’d claims that one of his sources mis-identified a companion, thus confusing the father with the son; thus al-Aswad b. Nawfal b. Ḥuwaylid as identified by Ibn Sa’d becomes Nawfal b. Ḥuwaylid in the account of Abū Ma’sar.¹⁰⁴ Ibn Sa’d here stuck with the majority of his sources. One could imagine another option that must have occurred to Ibn Sa’d, which is to make both the father and the son companions. However, this option is more difficult than others since his sources claim that the person in question was among the very early Muslims (*qadīm al-islām*), and also among the first wave of Muslims to take refuge in Abyssinia, which makes

100 KTK, vol. 7, p. 250. Muḥammad b. Ismā’il al-Buḥārī, *Al-tārīḥ al-kabīr*, vol. 6, p. 310.

101 KTK, vol. 3, p. 451. Note that, when Ibn Sa’d does not mention Ibn al-Kalbī, it means that the latter agrees with his preference. In the extant version of Ibn al-Kalbī’s *Nasab Ma’add*, vol. 1, p. 393, the name occurs as Surāqa b. Ka’b b. ‘Abd al-‘Uzzā b. Ġaziyya, with no mention of ‘Amr. There are more striking cases such as reading “عز” as “غني,” “معارة” as “قتادة,” or “عصم” as “عصر,” Ibn al-Kalbī, *Nasab Ma’add*, vol. 1, pp. 73, 91, and 113, respectively.

102 KTK, vol. 3, p. 472.

103 KTK, vol. 3, p. 538; KTK, vol. 3, p. 503.

104 KTK, vol. 4, p. 113.

claiming companionship or denying it akin to a sin (the difference between saving Nawfal's soul or condemning it to eternal residence in Hell).

It turns out that omitting an ancestor or even a number of them was a common practice. After all, all members of Quraysh are simply the "children" of Fihri/Qurayš, i.e. Banū Fihri. If one's grandfather was more famous than his father, it was an acceptable act to omit the father. Ibn Sa'd claims that for some sources to report Ġundub b. 'Abd Allāh b. Sufyān al-Baġalī as simply Ġundub b. Sufyān al-Baġalī is a case of simply "connecting him to his grandfather" (*nasa-bahu ilā ġaddihi*), for in both cases he is "one and the same person" (*wa-huwa wāḥid*).¹⁰⁵ In the case of a very famous but distant ancestor, a person can be connected to that ancestor with the simple formula X b. Y. This is the case of 'Abd Allāh b. Šaddād b. Usāma b. 'Amr b. al-Hād, which can be shortened to 'Abd Allāh b. al-Hād, where al-Hād is the famous ancestor; it is a simple case of (*yunsab ilā ġaddihi*) according to al-Balāḍurī.¹⁰⁶

7.3 *Switching Father and Son or Grandfather and Grandson*

Just like in the inversion of letters, the obtain colloquialism "aks" for "ask," the formula X b. Y can be inverted to become Y b. X. One can imagine a non-linguistic reason such as the social custom of namesake, i.e. naming the child after his grandfather. This results in X b. Y b. X and thus in two persons: one who is X b. Y and his father who is Y b. X. This latter situation can lead to switching person and grandfather because they have the same first name. For example, Ibn Sa'd reports about a person whose father is Zayd b. 'Abd Rabbih b. Ṭa'labā b. Zayd, and then mentions that one of his sources objected saying that the right lineage should be read Zayd b. 'Abd Rabbih b. Zayd and that the only Ṭa'labā he knows of is Ṭa'labā b. 'Abd Rabbih b. Zayd; that is the brother of Zayd and the grandson of Zayd.¹⁰⁷

7.4 *The Uncle and Nephew Issue*

Abū al-A'war (a nickname) is Ka'b b. al-Ḥārīt, another source said Abū al-A'war is in fact al-Ḥārīt and Ka'b is his uncle. Thus al-A'war became the father rather than the son and the son became the uncle.¹⁰⁸ This could happen when it is common to name a child after his uncle, maybe a deceased uncle.

Among those who participated in the foundational Battle of Badr, Ibn Sa'd lists, on two authorities, Ġabr b. 'Atīk b. Qays and his uncle al-Ḥārīt b. Qays. He

105 KTK, vol. 8, p. 157.

106 Al-Balāḍurī, *Ansāb al-Ašraf*, 1996, vol. 11, p. 96.

107 KTK, vol. 3, p. 397.

108 KTK, vol. 3, p. 476.

also reports that two different authorities listed only one person who is Ġabr b. ‘Atīk b. al-Ĥārīt. Ibn Sa‘d, as a careful scholar, mentioned the second possibility to his first and living sources (the other two were long dead). Their reply was simple, “the [dead] source connected him to his uncle” (*nasabahu ilā ‘ammihī*), a phrase that occurs as frequently as “nasabahu ilā ġaddihī” and is considered also as a known practice.¹⁰⁹

7.5 Adoption—Claiming a Father/son

Adoption in the sense of bringing up a child in one’s home is not prohibited by Islam. What is prohibited is to falsely claim a father or to claim a child (*idda‘ā ibnan/tabannāhu, idda‘ā aban*); the Qur’an says “ud’ūhum li-ābā’ihim” (al-Aḥzāb, Q33:5). Therefore, any pre-Islamic lineage by adoption must be corrected, so Zayd b. Ĥārīṭa of Kalb was Zayd b. Muḥammad of Banū Hāšim; al-Miqdād b. ‘Amr of Quḍā’a was al-Miqdād b. al-Aswad of Zuhra; and ‘Āmir b. Rabī’a of Asad was ‘Āmir b. al-Ĥattāb of Banū ‘Adī. These are the ones we know of.¹¹⁰ Adoption is also common in the case of a step-son (*rabīb*), as in the case of al-Miqdād b. al-Aswad, whose mother became the wife of al-Aswad b. ‘Abd Yaġūt.

7.6 Invoking the Mother Connection

Banū X are supposed to be Banū Y, but X was their mother “so by force of habit they were connected to her” (*fa-ġalabat ‘alayhim*).¹¹¹ Banū ‘Adwān and Banū Fahm are collectively called Banū Ġadīla, because “the mother of ‘Adwān and Fahm is Ġadīla *bint* Murr b. Ṭābilḡa, so they were connected to her” (*fa-nusibū ilayhā*).¹¹² Another case when the mother connection can be used is when the maternal lineage is more prestigious than the paternal one. In the case of Tawba al-‘Anbarī it is a bit more complicated since he was a *mawlā*, but a powerful one. His mother was an Arab from Banū Namīr b. ‘Āmir. He became famous as the governor of Sābūr and later al-Ahwāz (in Persia) during the reign of the Umayyad Caliph Hišām b. ‘Abd al-Malik. As a person of repute and status, it was desirable that he acquire an Arab lineage, so “his maternal uncles from Banū Namīr tired of convincing him to belong to them but he refused” (*ġahidū an yud‘ā fihim fa-abā*); of course some of Banū ‘Anbar, whose *mawlā* he was, tried the same.¹¹³

109 KTK, vol. 3, p. 434.

110 KTK, vol. 3, pp. 40, 41, 359.

111 KTK, vol. 3, p. 512, Banū ‘Amr b. ‘Amāra are known as Banū Ġuḍayna, “she is a mother of theirs from Balī, so they were connected to her.”

112 KTK, vol. 8, p. 347.

113 KTK, vol. 9, p. 239.

7.7 *Raised by a Slave*

The case of a step-son becoming a son has a less “prestigious” equivalent, that of being reared by a slave of the household. So Qyas b. ‘Aylān b. Muḍar was probably, according to one report mentioned by Ibn al-Kalbī, the son of Muḍar but was reared by one of the latter’s slaves, one named ‘Aylān, so people assumed a parental connection (*fa-nusiba ilayhi*), thus becoming Qays b. ‘Aylān. This is to explain a connection that was supposed to be direct but was made less direct through the insertion of an unknown father between the claimed father-son link.¹¹⁴ It is noteworthy that the root of ‘Aylān (‘-y-l) means to rear and support a child, which is the same root of ‘ā’ila (family) and ‘iyāl (children). A linguistic etiology is always the first option to be explored.

7.8 *Claiming a Different Ancestor/Tribe*

A certain Banū al-Azraq who lived in Mecca during Umayyad times claimed that their eponymous ancestor al-Azraq was part of the royal tribe of Ġassān and that he was in Mecca as an ally of Banū Umayya. With a hint of indignation and surprise, Ibn Sa’d admits that Banū al-Azraq became prominent in Mecca, married into the Umayyads and fathered children together (“šarufū bi-Makka wa-tazawwaġa al-Azraq wa-banūhu fi Banī Umayya wa-kāna la-hum minhum awlād”).¹¹⁵ Ibn Sa’d has a convoluted story to explain this far-fetched but successful attempt at acquiring a pedigree. Al-Azraq, according to Ibn Sa’d, was a freed slave of Greek origin (*rūmī*), one of the slaves of Banū Ṭaqīf who were lured by Muḥammad’s promise of freedom during the siege of Ṭā’if, a move that changed the outcome of the battle in Muḥammad’s favor. Al-Azraq, being a newly freed slave and a new convert to Islam, married Sumayya the mother of another freed slave, ‘Ammār b. Yāsir, who had a prominent position in the early Muslim lore. That still does not explain much; but then there is this poetry verse attributed the Umayyad court poet al-Aḥṭal eulogizing a fellow named ‘Abd Allāh b. Sa’īd in which al-Aḥṭal said: “You [‘Abd Allāh] bring together the lineages of Nawfal and ‘Ukb, both clans hit the bull’s eye.” Being part of the Umayyad aristocracy, ‘Abd Allāh is allegedly the son of the famous Umayyad companion Sa’īd b. al-‘Āš from a marriage to the granddaughter of al-Azraq through the latter’s daughter from a marriage to Ġubayr b. Muṭ‘im b. ‘Adī b. Nawfal (the Nawfal connection).

The “women” route to a pedigree is always a handy explanation; it is a middle ground between refusing a paternal connection but accepting some connec-

114 Al-Mubarrad, *Nasab Adnān wa-Qaḥṭān*, p. 1.

115 KTK, vol. 3, p. 228.

tion nonetheless; it is a “half” noble pedigree. There is more, the road to nobility is fraught with enemies; the ‘Ukb part of the poem must also be explained. In Sa’d claims that Banū al-Azraq did not claim Ghassanid ancestry directly, they first claimed to belong to Banū ‘Ukb of Taġlib (given the poem). “But Ḥuzā’a played with their mind” (“*afsadathum Ḥuzā’a*”) and called on them to claim connection to Yaman (alluding to the allegation that Ḥuzā’a itself did the same by moving from Qam’a b. Qays b. ‘Aylān to Ḥimyar of Yaman). Ḥuzā’a reminded Banū al-Azraq of their Greek connection, a blemish in fact, and told them that “nothing could wash away the Greek blemish” (*lā yaġsilu ‘ankum dīkra al-rūm*) except by claiming to belong to an Arab tribe that was close to the Romans; there is no better choice than claiming ancestry in Banū Ġas-sān, the famous Roman vassals of the 6th century. From the Ġassanids they can move to the Umayyads as equals by virtue of an alliance (*ḥilf*) and not allegiance (*walā’*), because the latter connection does not allow them to intermarry with the Umayyads whereas the former does. So Banū al-Azraq had to wash away the Greek *mawlā* blemish by connecting themselves to the Ġassanids by ancestry and then to the Umayyad by alliance in early Islamic times. All of that because of al-Aḥṭal’s verse, because a verse can be a genealogical record.

7.9 *Confusing Domicile and nasab*

A tribe is a territorial unit, whether nomadic or settled. Even the Arab garrison city of Basra was planned as a grid of land plots with each belonging to a tribe and called after it. So Banū X in Basra lived in the neighborhood of X. With time, a person could end up, for some reason, living in a plot that was allotted to a tribe different than his original tribe. In this case his descendants could claim to be part of that new tribe if it suits them. Ibn Sa’d introduces a 2nd century *muḥaddiṭ* from Basra as Sulaymān b. Ṭarḥān al-Taymī. One of his Basran informants Yazīd b. Hārūn objected to the appellation, saying: “He is not a Taymī but a Murri who lived in the [neighborhood of] Taym so he was connected to them (*nusiba ilayhim*).”¹¹⁶

7.10 *Confusing Alliance and nasab*

In a rigidly patrilineal and class-conscious society, such as the early Islamic Arab society of the conquerors, even a change of allegiance could mean a social bump. He was the *mawlā* of X, but since he was frequently seen in the com-

116 KTK, vol. 9, p. 251.

pany of Y, so he was joined to Y's allegiance. That is the usual formula for an alleged/contested allegiance.¹¹⁷

8 Conclusion

Historical anthropology is a very instructive and fruitful approach to early Islamic genealogy. We cannot transfer entire results and project them into the past, but we can use modern results as guiding ideas to investigate the ancient literature in what concerns tribes, their culture and their politics. The genealogical rules that we attributed to Kennedy were not entirely confirmed by the old genealogical literature, but lineages can be segmented and understood using these rules in a meaningful way. Any written records, or even oral ones, that the early Islamic genealogies may have used as sources could not have included more than the person's name using the formula X b. Y, a very limited number of ancestors (three to five), and the tribal adjective. All genealogical connections beyond the first or second eponyms are probably metaphorical. The genealogical gap is a necessity to allow flexibility in forming and breaking alliances. The absence of micro-lineages is very telling about the malleable (manipulated) nature of these higher-level, macro-genealogies. The fact that the micro-genealogies that we might have, in addition to the long lineages of certain persons, concerning *ašrāf*/aristocrats/tribal leaders strengthens the suspicion that the extant genealogies were primarily political documents. Modern genealogies confirm the existence of such a trend.

Looking at genealogies as documents (almost contracts) allowed us to deal with the issue of fakeness as an integral part of the genealogies' nature and not as a mere critique of their authenticity and truthfulness. Authority and contention can now be talked about as flip sides of the same coin and not as contradictory facts. Documents are stable in their content, authoritative/contented, and useful. They are living social artifacts that are meant to be used and abused. Biblical influence, a possible archival influence, as well as an oral influence were all grouped together to give some degree of stability/authority to the early Islamic genealogies. These characteristics are not contradictory or mutually exclusive anymore, they are part of the natural life of a document that is meant to be used.

Different possible irregularities in the early Islamic genealogies were revealed through the mechanism of claiming and contending authority. Whether

¹¹⁷ KTK, vol. 7, p. 175; vol. 8, p. 53, the cases of Abū Murra and Ibn Ğurayġ, respectively.

all or some of these “techniques” were used in the construction of the early Islamic genealogies needs further investigation. We do not have to figure out the exact instances and places of cutting/pasting/insertion/omission, we just have to find plausible examples and support them with a strong argument. We know that they have some truth and some fakeness that are hard to disentangle. But we also know that they were constructed and used over a long period of time; and that is exactly what makes them historical. They do not have to be accurate to hold a historical value or false to lose that value. The historical value comes from that combination that gives them life.

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Copies More Authentic Than Originals: The Prophet's Letters and Covenants as Heritage Objects

Sarah Z. Mirza

1 Introduction

Today, the most widely known of the documents attributed by tradition to the Prophet Muḥammad are the letters to rulers, such as the letter to “al-Muqawqis, chief of the Copts” displayed in a gold casket in the Pavilion of the Sacred Relics at Topkapı Palace, Istanbul. Also well-known are agreements or “covenants” with non-Muslim minorities, the most famous of which may be the document granted to the monks at St. Catherine’s Monastery on Mount Sinai. Although the early Islamic literary sources accord more than two hundred documents of various types to the Prophet, including notes of manumission and sale, diplomatic correspondence, taxation regulations, and various agreements with Arab tribes,¹ the documents that circulate in the modern period are exclusively the diplomatic and proselytizing “letters to kings” and the “covenants” with non-Muslim communities.

This paper traces the biographies of these objects, a total of eleven documents. Eight of these are on leather, all letters to rulers, and three are paper documents: a manuscript copy of concessions to the monks of Mount Sinai, a manuscript copy of concessions to the Jews of Ḥaybar and Maqnā, and a lithograph copy of concessions granted to Zoroastrian descendants of Salmān al-Fārisī. I discuss the function of these documents as modern relics in the context of their relationships with medieval source material, their publication history, internment in heritage institutions, and modern popular traditions. The documents participate in a culture of copies in which non-uniqueness and derivativeness are used to re-negotiate the notion of authenticity. The letters to kings are unabashedly housed at multiple institutions and private holdings where

1 See M. Hamidullah, *Maḡmū‘at al-waṭā‘iq al-siyāsīyya li-al-‘ahd al-nabawī wa-al-ḥilāfa al-rāšīda*, 1956 for a collection of these documents, and S. Mirza, *Islamic Origins, Arabian Custom, and the Documents of the Prophet*, 2022 for a comparison of the legal and epistolary formulae of the Prophet’s documents with Arabic papyri.

authenticity and originality are no longer attached to singularity. The covenants with non-Muslims share a self-reflexive nature; all three self-consciously refer to themselves as copies, but they exceed their medieval referents not only within the texts of the documents but in the extensive textual appendages they have acquired by way of introductory matter, records of related traditions, and lists of extra witnesses. In this sense, these documents are somewhere between “fakes” and “replicas”. They are more like hyper-copies, repeating the texts of the originals not by mimesis but by resemblance² and deliberately calling our attention to their status as copies in order to claim efficacy in their modern contexts.

2 History of Publication and Installation as Relics

2.1 *Letters to Rulers*

In the medieval Islamic sources, the multiple redactions of the letters to kings do not vary widely in their wording, and, with some exceptions, the texts of the leather documents conform to these medieval redactions. The medieval redactions exhibit variants that are typical of manuscript transmission, consisting mostly of transposition of lines and words, omission and addition of typical formulae and of individual words, and substitution by synonyms.

Early sources in which the entire texts of the letters appear include Muḥammad b. Sa’d’s (d. 230/845) *Kitāb al-ṭabaqāt*, Ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥakam’s (d. 257/870–871) *Futūḥ Miṣr wa-al-Maḡrib*, Aḥmad b. Abī Ya‘qūb al-Ya‘qūbī’s (d. 284/897) *Ta’rīḥ*, and al-Ṭabarī’s (d. 310/923) *Ta’rīḥ al-Rusul wa-al-Mulūk*. All of these letters are collected in one chapter by a later source, Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Qastallānī’s (d. 923/1517) *sīra* work, *Mawāhib al-ludaniyya bi-al-minaḥ al-muḥammadiyya*.

The medieval Islamic sources date the dispatch of the letters to rulers to 6/627–628/630. Ibn Sa’d (d. 230/845) states that a group of six messengers set out in the month of Muḥarram in 7 A.H.³ The letter to the sons of Ğulandā was sent in the month of Ḍul-Qa’da in the year 8 A.H.,⁴ and al-Munḍir’s letter is not dated. According to Ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥakam (d. 257/870–871), the mission to al-Muqawqis of Egypt was sent in 6 A.H.⁵ Al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923) dates the letters

2 This concept of repetition is introduced by Zainab Bahrani for the image culture of the Ancient Near East. See Z. Bahrani, *The Graven Image: Representation in Babylonia and Assyria*, 2003, p. 129.

3 Ibn Sa’d (d. 230/845), *Kitāb al-ṭabaqāt al-kabīr*, vol. 1/ii, 1904–1940, p. 15.

4 Ibn Sa’d, *Kitāb al-ṭabaqāt*, vol. 1/ii, p. 18.

5 Ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr wa-al-Maḡrib*, 1866, p. 65.

to al-Muḡawqis, Nağāšī, Kisrā, Hiraql, the sons of Ğulandā, and al-Ḥārīt to Dū al-ḥiğğa in 6 A.H.⁶ He dates al-Munḍir's letter to 8 A.H.⁷

The letters to rulers are brief and entirely formulaic. In the biographical and historical literature, the individual letters are seen as part of a set and placed within the narrative context of the diplomatic relations of the Prophet conducted during the later Medinan period. Between introducing the Prophet's religious mission and concluding with mention of his political ambition, they cite one or two points of Islamic ideology, usually by way of quoting the Qur'an. The texts of the letters, with the exception of the letter to the Negus, share the following formulary. They open with the *basmala* and address (*min fulān ilā fulān*) followed by a greeting formula, "peace be on whomever follows the right guidance" (*salām 'alā man ittaba'a al-hudā*), the transition marker (*ammā ba'du*), and a body which consists almost entirely of a quotation from the Qur'an. The Qur'anic phrases often feature alterations to the verbs in order to suit the syntax of the document, for example replacing the Qur'anic *li-yunḍira* with *li-unḍira* ("so that I warn" for "so that he warns", Qur'an 36:70). The medieval redactions frequently agree in this textual substitution. As an exception to the typical formulary, the letter to the Negus has a blessing within the closing (repeating the *salām 'alā man ittaba'a al-hudā* formula otherwise found as introductory greeting), and uses a partial quotation of Qur'an 59:23 not in the body of the letter but as an introductory blessing formula, which is agreed upon by several of the redactions of this text.

None of these letters as found in the medieval sources have closing formulae such as scribes, witnesses, and dating formulae, although the scribal clause is one of the most frequently found closing formulae in the legal documents attributed to the Prophet,⁸ and lengthy lists of scribes seem to be an integral feature of the "covenants" to non-Muslims. Such concluding formulae are regularly found in early Arabic papyri, in both letters and legal documents. Early Arabic legal papyri typically use the passive construction, *wa-kutiba* ("was written"), as a closing without giving *scribes'* names, following the list of witnesses and followed by the date. See, for example, two quittances from 104 A.H. and a quittance for land tax dated 194 A.H., where the passive construction occurs immediately after the body of the document and is followed by the date.⁹ This

6 Al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923), *Annales quos scripsit Abu Džafar Mohammed ibn Džarir at-Tabarī*, vol. III, 1879–1965, pp. 1559–1560.

7 Al-Ṭabarī, *Annales*, vol. III, 1879–1965, p. 1600.

8 S. Mirza, *Islamic Origins*, 2022, pp. 63–68.

9 P.Khalili I 9 (two quittances from 104 A.H.), P.Khalili I 10 (quittance for land tax from 194 A.H.).

phrase can also signal closure at the end of a letter.¹⁰ Although scribal clauses are rarely found in Arabic private and business letters from the first to fourth centuries A.H.,¹¹ they do occur in the corpus of Qurra b. Šarīk, governor of Egypt (90/709–96/714). In the Qurra corpus, the scribal clause gives the name of the scribe and is usually followed by a dating clause. The formula is *wa-kataba fulān sana ...*¹² More frequently, the term *kataba* is used to signal a witness clause, in legal documents from the first three Islamic centuries.¹³ Signature witness clauses appear in second/eighth century Arabic legal documents, which refer to the witness' name written "with his handwriting/hand" or "with his permission", *bi-ḥaṭṭihi/bi-yaddihi* or *bi-amrihi*. For example, P. Michaelides B59, a lease from 180 A.H., refers to both types of testimony, *bi-amrihi* and *bi-yaddihi*, and is the earliest reference to an autograph witness in Arabic documents. The signature witness clause is one of the radical changes to legal formulae that occur in the second to third Islamic centuries.¹⁴

The medieval literary sources listed above have been compared for variants among themselves as well as matches with the modern relics, the leather documents of the letters to kings, as published by M. Hamidullah and H. Aydın.¹⁵ The leather documents show no substantial deviations from the medieval accounts. It is clear that these relics are drawing on the literary accounts of the Prophet's

10 P.Khalili I 25 (letter concerning delivery of textiles).

11 E.M. Grob, *Documentary Arabic Private and Business Letters on Papyrus, Form and Function, Content and Context*, 2010, pp. 86–88.

12 P.Heid.Arab. I 1, P.Heid.Arab. I 2, P.Heid.Arab. I 3, P.Heid.Arab. I 4, P.Heid.Arab. I 10, P.Heid.Arab. I 11, P.Heid.Arab. I 18, P.Qurra 1, P.Qurra 2, P.Qurra 3, P.Qurra 4, P.Qurra 5, P.Cair.Arab III 147, P.Cair.Arab III 148, P.Cair.Arab III 150, P.Cair.Arab III 151, P.Cair.Arab III 153, P.Cair.Arab III 154, P.Cair.Arab III 155.

13 Found in quittances: P.KarabacekPapyrusfund 2, P.KarabacekPapyrusfund 3; leases: P.Cair.Arab. 89, P.Cair.Arab. 90, P.Cair.Arab. 93, P.Cair.Arab. 122; hire of employees: P.Cair.Arab 96; written obligations: P.Cair.Arab. 98, P.Cair.Arab. 100, P.Cair.Arab. 104, P.Cair.Arab. 114, P.Cair.Arab. 115; P.Marchands I 2, P.Marchands I 3, P.Marchands I 4, P.Marchands I 5, P.Marchands I 6, P.Marchands I 8, P.Marchands I 10; sale contracts: P.Cair.Arab 121, P.Cair.Arab 124; divorce statements: P.World p. 199 (= ChrestHoury I 20); and marriage contracts: P.Cair.Arab 39, P.Cair.Arab. 41.

14 G. Khan, "The Historical Development of Early Arabic Documentary Formulae", 2013, p. 201.

15 Images of six documents have been published by Muhammad Hamidullah (M. Hamidullah, *Six Originaux des Lettres du Prophète de l'Islam : étude paléographique et historique des lettres du prophète*, 1985); al-Muqawqis, al-Munḍir b. Sāwā, the Negus, Kistrā, Heraclius, and the sons of Ġulandā. The same images of the letters to al-Muqawqis and al-Munḍir b. Sāwā, as well as images of letters to al-Ḥārīṭ b. al-Ġassānī and Musyalama have been published by Hilmi Aydın (H. Aydın *Hirka-i Saadet Dairesi ve Mukaddes Emanetler* Istanbul, Kaynak Kitaplı, 2004).

correspondence. Images and transcriptions of the four leather documents now held by Topkapı Sarayı can be found in the Appendix. Images and transcriptions of the remaining four documents can be found in M. Hamidullah's *Six Originaux des Lettres du Prophète de l'Islam*; their current whereabouts remain unconfirmed.

As letters, the Prophet's documents are meant to travel and remain in the possession of individuals and groups distant from the Prophet and even politically at odds with him. Their biographies as objects begin at the point when they reach recipients outside of their sacred geography. However, in their modern context as heritage objects, the letters to kings are treated as intimate possessions of the Prophet and as providing access to his authority. There is no distinction between the eight letters in their value as relics, except possibly in the context of nationalistic icons.¹⁶ They are interred in national heritage institutions, and as objects include not only text but visual elements such as the seal image, and they can function as communal symbols.

The published leather documents include the following eight texts. M. Hamidullah has already traced the early publication history of most of these.¹⁷

2.1.1 Al-Muqawqis (See Appendix 1)

The letter to al-Muqawqis, "leader of the Copts" (*ʿaẓīm al-qibt*), was found in 1850, within the binding of a manuscript, by French Egyptologist Étienne Barthélemy in a monastery at Akhmim in Upper Egypt. It was first published in the *Journal Asiatique* in 1854.¹⁸ There is no information on which manuscript it was found in, nor on the date of the binding of this manuscript. The document was presented to Ottoman Sultan Abdul Mağīd I (r. 1839–1861)¹⁹ and is now in the Pavilion of the Sacred Relics of the Topkapı Sarayı in Istanbul.²⁰ The origin and meaning of the Arabic term al-Muqawqis is unclear. It is most frequently used in the Islamic sources to refer to a figure during the Conquest of Egypt, possibly Cyrus, the Melkite Patriarch of Alexandria installed by Heraclius in 631. The identity of an earlier figure, who would be the addressee of

16 Thanks to Olga Andriyanova for informing me of the public display of the published image of the letter to the sons of Ğulandā in modern Oman.

17 M. Hamidullah, *The Life and Work of the Prophet of Islam*, vol. 1, 1998.

18 C. Belin, "Lettre à M. Reinaud, Membre de l'Institut, sur un Document Arabe Relatif à Mahomet, par M. Belin", 1854, pp. 483–484.

19 M. Ali, "Prophet's Letters to His Contemporaneous Potentates", 1917, p. 50.

20 Topkapı Sarayı, T.P.M. 21–174; see Appendix 1. The January 1917 issue of the *Islamic Review* provides a reproduction of the letter with its transcription into modern Arabic script, as it is displayed in the Museum. The transcriber is given as Dr. P. Badger, who "declared it to be genuine" (M. Ali, "Prophet's Letters", 1917, p. 51).

the Prophet's letter, is disputed.²¹ Al-Muqawqis may refer to a Coptic Patriarch prior to 631, or to a leader who was a Copt.

Comparison to literary sources:

The text follows the customary formulary with the body consisting almost entirely of a quotation of Qur'ān 3:64 (ll. 7–12). The complete text of this letter is found in Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam's *Futūḥ Misr*, which differs from the leather document in slight additions and omissions. Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam's address reads, *min Muḥammad rasūl Allāh*, missing the word 'abd (l. 1). Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam's text is missing line six in the leather document: *fa-in tawallayta fa-'alayka itm al-Qibt*, "but if you turn away then upon you will be the sin of the Copts".²² Al-Qastallānī's text matches that of the leather document.²³

2.1.2 Al-Mundīr (See Appendix 2)

The letter to al-Mundīr b. Sāwā or Sāwī was acquired in 1861 by the attaché of the Prussian Embassy in Constantinople, from an antiquarian in Damascus. It was first published in the 1863 issue of *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft (ZDMG)*.²⁴ Now it is held by Topkapı Sarayı. Al-Mundīr was chief of the Banū Dārim section of Tamīm, appointed control of Arab tribes in the area of Hajar in eastern Arabia by the Sassanians.²⁵

Comparison to literary sources:

Al-Qastallānī's text, which is the Prophet's reply to al-Mundīr's acceptance of his initial invitation to Islam, almost exactly corresponds with that of the leather document. On line three al-Qastallānī has *illā huwa*, "except him", rather

21 K. Öhrnberg, "al-Muqawqis", *ET*².

22 Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ*, pp. 66–67.

23 Al-Qastallānī (d. 923/1517), *Al-mawāhib al-laduniyya bi-al-minaḥ al-muḥammadiyya*, vol. II, 1991, p. 143.

24 H. Busch, "Aus Briefen an Prof. Brockhaus, von Herrn Dr. Busch", 1863, pp. 385–389; Topkapı Sarayı, T.P.M. 21–397. See Appendix 2. In September of 1914 the editor of the *Islamic Review*, Ḥwaḡa Kamāl al-Dīn, seems to have examined a second document also addressed by the Prophet to al-Mundīr. This letter was held by the family of Salāḥ al-Dīn in Damascus. Comparing the document to a copy of the al-Muqawqis letter discovered earlier, Kamāl al-Dīn concluded that their hands are similar (M. Ali, "Prophet's Letters", 1917, pp. 52–53). In 1932, yet another manuscript from the Prophet addressed to al-Mundīr was said to be in the custody of the Quwwatī family in Damascus. In 1939, a colleague of Muḥammad Hamidullah, Mr. Reich, confirmed that this second manuscript was in Damascus. In 1956 Dr. Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Munaḡḡid confirmed to Hamidullah that this manuscript was still with the Quwwatī family (M. Hamidullah, *The Life and Work*, vol. 1, 1998, p. 291).

25 M.J. Kister, "al-Mundhir b. Sāwā", *ET*².

than *gayruhu*, “other than him” as in the leather document. The *‘abduhu*, “his servant”, on line four of the document is missing from al-Qastallānī’s text.²⁶

2.1.3 Nağāšī

The letter to the Negus (Nağāšī) of Ethiopia was first published in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* in 1940 where Douglas Dunlop relates that the letter’s present owner bought it in Damascus from an Ethiopian priest some years prior. Dunlop acquired it in 1938, and took it to be examined at several institutions including the British Museum, before returning it to its private owner. The British Museum concluded that the letter could not be as old as it claims.²⁷ The Arabic sources variously give the name of this Negus as As’hamah or Ašam son of Abğar. The identity of the Negus addressed in this letter remains disputed, since the Prophet was already in contact with another friendly Negus who received the Prophet’s followers in 614 before the Hijra.

Comparison to literary sources:

In al-Ṭabarī’s text of this letter, on line two the Negus’s name is provided as al-Ašham, and his title as “King of Abyssinia”. In the address, al-Qastallānī also has *Malik al-Ḥabaša*, “King of Abyssina”, rather than *‘aẓīm*, “great chief” as in the leather document.²⁸ On line two al-Ṭabarī has *silmun anta*, “may you be at peace”, another greeting formula frequently found in the documents of the Prophet, replacing the entire formula, “peace be on whomever follows the right guidance”. The major difference between the document and the medieval sources concerns an additional two lines on the sending of messengers.²⁹ Al-Ṭabarī has, on line fourteen, before the closing, “and I summon you and your army”, and “and I am sending to you my paternal cousin Ğa’far, and a group of people with him from among the Muslims. When the group arrives, receive them hospitably, leaving aside all arrogance”.³⁰ Al-Qastallānī also has the additional line on sending Ğa’far following the phrase “so accept my advice” on line sixteen, but is missing the request for hospitality that al-Ṭabarī’s text provides.³¹

26 Al-Qastallānī, *Al-mawāhib*, vol. II, p. 145.

27 D.M. Dunlop, “Another Prophetic Letter”, 1940, pp. 59–60.

28 See the image and transcription in M. Hamidullah, *Six Originiaux*, 1985, pp. 137–138.

29 Al-Ṭabarī, *Annales*, vol. III, p. 1569; al-Qastallānī, *Al-mawāhib*, vol. II, p. 141.

30 Al-Ṭabarī, *Annales*, vol. III, p. 1569.

31 Al-Qastallānī, *Al-mawāhib*, vol. II, p. 141.

2.1.4 Kistrā

The letter to Khusraw/Chosroes (*Kistrā*), presumedly the Sassanian ruler Khusraw II (r. 590–628), was first published by Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Munaḡḡid in the Beirut daily *Al-ḥayāt* on May 22, 1963 and was then in the possession of Henri Pharaon, former Minister of Foreign Affairs in Lebanon.³²

Comparison to literary sources:

The leather document³³ does not exactly match any of the redactions from the sources surveyed, but it differs only in the use of synonyms and additions/omissions of formulaic phrases, differences that are typical of medieval manuscript transmission.³⁴ For example, the document and the redactions of al-Ya'qūbī and al-Ṭabarī have *fa-in abayta*, “so if you refuse”, on line thirteen, rather than *wa-in tawallayta*, “and if you turn away”, as given by al-Qastallānī.

2.1.5 Hiraql

The letter to Byzantine emperor Heraclius (r. 610–641) (*Hiraql 'aẓīm al-rūm*) is the only document whose publication is accompanied by results of scientific examination. Its image was first published by the Tunisian newspaper *Al-'amal* on May 5, 1974. On May 8, 1974, the newspaper *Al-ḥilāl* reported that the Governor of Abu Dhabi acquired the document, and that it was examined by his cultural adviser 'Izz al-Dīn Ibrāhīm, who reported that the ink of the document is iron-gall and not carbon-based and thus could not date to the first/seventh century.³⁵ It has recently been installed in the Prophet Muhammad Museum at King Hussein Mosque in Amman. The sources associate this letter with the Companion Dihya al-Kalbī (d. ca. 50/670). Dihya's destinations are given variously in different traditions as Busrā, Īlyā (Jerusalem), Damascus, and Hums, the confusion compounded by the variety of titles given to the figure Dihya met, which include *Hiraql*, *Qaysar* (Caesar), *Malk al-Rūm* (King of the Romans), and *Ṣāhib al-Rūm* (Master of the Romans).³⁶

32 M. Hamidullah, *The Life and Work*, 1998, vol. 1, pp. 274–280.

33 See the image and transcription in M. Hamidullah, *Six Originaux*, 1985, pp. 177–178.

34 Al-Ya'qūbī (d. 284/897), *Tārīḥ*, vol. 11, 1960, p. 77; al-Qastallānī, *Al-mawāhib*, vol. 1, p. 139; al-Ṭabarī, *Annales*, vol. 111, pp. 1571–1572; Ibn Sa'd, *Kitāb al-ṭabaqāt*, vol. 1/ii, p. 16. Al-Ṭabarī provides two texts, which differ only minimally in wording.

35 Dr. Reeds of the University of Leeds in general confirmed 'Izzuddin's examination (M. Hamidullah, *The Life and Work*, 1998, vol. 1, pp. 261–262).

36 S. Bashear, “The Mission of Dihya al-Kalbī and the Situation in Syria”, 1997, p. 77.

Comparison to literary sources:

The variants between the medieval redactions and between the redactions and the leather document involve the term *al-arīsiyyīn* on line four of the document.³⁷ The leather document follows al-Ya‘qūbī’s wording but switches the order of the final two lines.³⁸ Al-Ṭabarī’s report has *itm al-akkārīn*, “sin of the farmers”, instead of *itm al-arīsiyyīn*, and is missing the quotation of the Qur’ānic verse found at the closing in the manuscript.³⁹ Al-Qastallānī has the same text as al-Ya‘qūbī with the order of the last two lines matching with the document, the reference to sin followed by quotation of Qur’ānic 3:64.⁴⁰

2.1.6 Ğayfar and ‘Abbād/‘Ubād the Sons of Ğulandā

The letter to Ğayfar and ‘Abbād/‘Ubād the sons of Ğulandā was discovered by Professor Al-Rasāsi, former Ambassador of Oman to Iran, in the possession of a Lebanese collector. It was first published in the Tunisian daily *Al-ṣabāḥ* in 1975.⁴¹ The image, provided by Hamidullah, is however a drawing rather than a photo.⁴² ‘Umān (Oman), in the extreme south of the eastern Arabian coast, at the time of the Prophet, was under the joint rule of these two brothers, who had been recognized by the Sassanians. After the Byzantine defeat of the Sassanians at Niniveh in 627 C.E., ‘Umān had become independent of the Persian capital of Ctesiphon.

Comparison to literary sources:

Al-Qastallānī’s text matches that of the leather document, with minor variants that include additions and omissions of single words and particles. The other sources surveyed here do not provide the text of this letter.

2.1.7 Al-Ḥārīt b. Abī Šamr al-Ġassānī (See Appendix 3)

The letter to al-Ḥārīt b. Abī Šamr al-Ġassānī⁴³ was first published in 2004 by Hilmi Aydın, the manager of the Pavilion of the Sacred Relics at Topkapı, but without information on its acquisition. The Ġassānids were a Christian Arab division of the tribal group al-Azd, allied with the Byzantines since 502–503.⁴⁴

37 See the image and transcription in M. Hamidullah, *Six Originaux*, 1985, pp. 149–150.

38 Al-Ya‘qūbī, *Ta’rīḥ*, vol. II, p. 77.

39 Al-Ṭabarī, *Annales*, vol. III, p. 1565.

40 Al-Qastallānī, *Al-mawāhib*, vol. II, pp. 137–138.

41 M. Hamidullah, *The Life and Work*, 1998, vol. I, pp. 316–317.

42 Al-Qastallānī, *Al-mawāhib*, vol. II, p. 146. The image and transcription of the leather document are given by M. Hamidullah, *Six Originaux*, 1985, pp. 201–202.

43 Topkapı Sarayı, T.P.M. 21–674. See Appendix.

44 I. Shahīd, “*Ġhassān*”, *ET*².

Comparison to literary sources:

Al-Ṭabarī provides an extract from this letter, without the opening or closing formulae, and otherwise agreeing with the leather document.⁴⁵ Al-Qastallānī's report agrees with al-Ṭabarī's, but includes the customary opening and closing addresses found in the document.⁴⁶

2.1.8 Musaylama (See Appendix 4)

The letter to Musaylama⁴⁷ was also first published in 2004 by Hilmi Aydın. Musaylama b. al-Ḥabīb of the Banū Ḥanīfa, the prophet of al-Yamāma, rose to prominence sometime after 630 and the death of Ḥawḍa b. 'Alī the chief of the Banū Ḥanīfa.⁴⁸

Comparison to literary sources:

Ibn Hišām and al-Ṭabarī agree on the text with a minor variant: al-Ṭabarī's report is lacking the definite article on the *salām* in the greeting.⁴⁹ They both agree with the leather document, except that the document contains an additional final clause which is unclear due to losses in the text.

The greatest substantive differences between the leather documents and the medieval redactions of the letters to kings are the substitution of *arīsiyyīn* with *akkārīn* in Heraclius' letter (terms that were considered synonyms for "farmers/peasants" by later writers), and the absence of two lines regarding the embassy of Ġa'far b. Abi Ṭālib in the Negus' letter. Ibn Sa'd, who does not provide the text of the letter to the Negus, recognizes in his report that two separate letters were sent, one an initial proselytizing letter and the other dealing with marriage to Umm Ḥabība who had emigrated to Ethiopia.⁵⁰ The other sources provide, as Muḥammad Hamidullah observes, what is probably an amalgam of two letters, resulting in the additional lines.⁵¹ The leather document thus appears to clean up this confusion in the traditional accounts, by presenting only the text of the proselytizing letter and not text relating to the emigration of Muslims to Ethiopia.

45 Al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīḥ*, vol. III, p. 1568.

46 Al-Qastallānī, *Al-mawāhib*, vol. II, p. 149.

47 Topkapı Sarayı, T.P.M. 21–169. See Appendix.

48 W.M. Watt, "Musaylima", *ET*².

49 Ibn Hišām (d. 218/834), *Das Leben Muhammed's nach Muhammed ibn Ishāk bearbeitet von Abd el-Malik ibn Hishām*, 1858–1860, p. 955; al-Ṭabarī, *Annales*, vol. IV, p. 1749.

50 Ibn Sa'd, *Kitāb al-ṭabaqāt*, vol. I/ii, p. 15.

51 M. Hamidullah, *The Life and Work*, 1998, vol. 1, p. 233.

Less substantive variants resemble the variants of medieval manuscript transmission, including words repeated for emphasis, the replacement of words by their synonyms, such as *malik* for *ʿaẓīm* or *illā huwa* for *ġayruhu*, missing words and formulaic phrases, and in one case a switch in the sequence of lines. The leather documents, the modern relics, thus do not challenge the traditional accounts and should be seen as directly related to the traditional accounts and not as independent artifacts.

Based on comparison to the corpus gathered by Beatrice Gruendler in *The development of the Arabic scripts: from the Nabatean era to the first Islamic century*,⁵² many of the leather documents show a superficial similarity with the script of second Islamic century Arabic papyri, and thus rely on some visual knowledge of early manuscripts or inscriptions. Typical of these documents is the interruption of single words across line breaks. There is no punctuation or visual indication of Qurʾānic text being quoted. Umayyad era palaeographical features⁵³ found in the leather documents include *alif* with rightward bottom hook, the horizontal extension of *dāl/kāf*, *sīn/šīn* given with teeth, and spaces between letters and words (found in the letters to al-Muqawqis, Kisrā, Hiraql, Ğayfar and ʿAbbād/ʿUbād, al-Ĥarīṭ b. al-Ġassānī, and Musaylama). Some letter shapes are very unusual and do not closely correspond to anything in the first and second century papyri gathered by Gruendler. In the letter to al-Muqawqis, the unusual shapes include the letters: *ġīm/ḥāʾ/ḥāʾ*, *dāl/dāl*, *sīn/šīn*, *ʿayn/ġayn*, *ṭāʾ*, *qāf*, *mīm*, and *hāʾ*. The open loop of the medial *ʿayn* and single loop for medial *hāʾ* are shapes unknown in first and second century Arabic papyri, though the open loop of medial *ʿayn* occurs thrice in the eighth century Qaṣr Ḥarāna painted inscription.⁵⁴ There are also striking cases of defective orthography in some of the manuscripts.⁵⁵ This includes, in the al-Muqawqis letter, Allāh spelled without the second *lām* (l. 10). This is rare in later ʿAbbasid papyri, but is found earlier, including in one of the two earliest known/dated papyri: PERF 558 Vienna, dated 22/643. Also in the al-Muqawqis letter, the final word

52 B. Gruendler, *The development of the Arabic scripts: from the Nabatean era to the first Islamic century according to dated texts*, 1993.

53 As identified by G. Khan, *Arabic Documents from early Islamic Khurasan*, 2007, pp. 66–80.

54 L. 6 and l. 8 of Ḥarāna A (N. Abbott, “The Kaṣr Kharāna Inscription of 92 H. (710 A.D.). A New Reading”, 1946, p. 193).

55 Muhammad Hamidullah argues that a forger would not likely employ the grammatical and orthographic peculiarities found in the letters, considered errors according to today’s usage, for fear of offending potential buyers. This leads him to conclude that although these characteristics cannot be taken so far as to affirm the authenticity of the documents, there are more chances of their being authentic than forged (M. Hamidullah, *Six Origin-aux*, p. 214).

fā-in seems to feature a very irregular second *alif* and no *nūn* (l. 10). Defective orthography in the letter to Ğayfar and ‘Abbād/‘Ubād is seen in *tazharu* written with two initial teeth (l. 13). In the letter to the Negus, *ittaba’ā* is spelled with two *tā’s* (l. 16). The scribal hands of some of the documents are neater; some hands are totally divergent, such as in the letters to Heraclius, Chosroes, and Ğayfar and ‘Abbād/‘Ubād. Each of the documents concludes with the seal of the Prophet in ink. However, the seal is not cited in the redactions of the full texts of the letters as given by sources such as al-Ṭabarī and al-Qastallānī.

The Prophet’s letter to al-Muqawqis as the first published manuscript is distinct in its situation of discovery and in its palaeography and may be both the earliest such extant relic as well as influential in the “discovery” of the other seven manuscripts. Particularly striking in the letter to al-Muqawqis are the following resemblances to Umayyad era features: spaces between words and letters of words; words broken at end of the line to continue on the next (l. 11–12); *alif* of *alif-lām* distant from the *lām* and with a rightward bottom hook; horizontally elongated final *kāf*; backward bending final *yā*; *dāl* with upward top bend; horizontal stroke of initial ‘*ayn* extended to the right; head of medial ‘*ayn* as two oblique strokes without joining line; and *sīn* written with teeth rather than as single stroke. The leather documents may be referencing each other in their script and physical features, especially considering the time gaps between the publication of the first in 1854 and the subsequent discoveries of the other documents.

The relics also demonstrate their familiarity with traditional accounts on the material writing supports used by the Prophet. Leather is invariably cited as the writing support in medieval traditions on these texts and is the material most universally associated with the correspondence of the Prophet.⁵⁶ The four Topkapı documents all show wear along the fold lines as well as signs of insect damage. The superficial similarity with Umayyad era palaeographical features, the use of leather, and the reliance of several of the documents (al-Muqawqis, al-Mundir, Ğayfar and ‘Abd, al-Ḥārīt) on the redactions by al-Qastallānī, suggest that these may be early modern artifacts. As the al-Muqawqis letter was bound into a manuscript, it must date prior to its year of discovery in 1850. Without an investigation of their materials, however, we cannot date these documents.

Four of the leather documents are now housed in the Pavilion of the Sacred Relics, the *Hırka-i Saadet Dairesi*, in Topkapı Sarayı, Istanbul. They are not on permanent exhibition except for the letter to al-Muqawqis, which is kept in a gold casket. The relics held at Topkapı play a part in the Ottoman narrat-

56 Al-Qalqaşandī (d. 821/1418), *Şubḥ al-a’šā’ fi şinā’at an-inšā’*, vol. 11, 1964, p. 486.

ive of power and universal religious authority as the new seat of the Caliphate. A 1965 brochure on the Pavilion provides a brief history of the Museum that focuses on the reception of holy relics as the spoils of Ottoman conquest. It notes that with the Ottoman conquest of Mamluk Egypt in 1517 under Sultan Selim I (1512–1520), the territories under Mamluk control, including the cities of Mecca and Medina, with their relics, passed to the Ottoman state treasury. The transfer of Islamic sacred relics from both public and private collections all over the Muslim world, to the new seat of the Caliphate, continued after this time. The *Hırka-i Saadet Dairesi* was built in 1478 by Mehmet II (1465–1478), and the relics were transferred to Istanbul under Mahmut III (1574–1595). Topkapı Palace was converted into a museum in 1924 after the proclamation of the Turkish Republic.⁵⁷

The letter to al-Muqawqis is kept in an exhibition case beside hairs from the Prophet's beard, soil from his grave, the keys to the Ka'ba, the Prophet's footprint, and his seal. According to a brochure published by the Turkish Ministry of Tourism and Information in 1966, an examination and cleaning of the letter showed that it "belonged to the Prophet", emphasizing the document as a relic.⁵⁸ The most famed relic kept in the Pavilion is the mantle of the Prophet, kept by Sultan Ahmet I (1603–1615) behind his throne in the Imperial Chamber, an indication of the authorizing function of this heritage object. The Pavilion also claims to hold belongings of the Prophets Abraham, Moses, and Joseph. Of the remaining published letters to kings, it appears that the letter to Heraclius has been installed in Amman, in the recently opened Prophet Muhammad Museum.⁵⁹ In their current housing, the documents are stripped of their historical or legal significance in order to perform as relics of religious authority and territorial claims. As suggested by Hamidullah's investigations into private holdings of multiple letters to al-Mundir, and the experience of scholars today who are shown various documents with the claim that they are the letters of the Prophet,⁶⁰ the modern relics function within a context of non-uniqueness. In this way the initial publication of the letters does not seem to have generated competing claims of the possession of unique originals but has resulted instead in multiple repetitious claims.

The letters to kings draw directly and explicitly on the medieval textual tradition and possibly also Arabic papyri and epigraphy, but they are more

57 Z. Erkins, *The Topkapi Palace Museum*, 1965, pp. 24–25.

58 Turkish Ministry of Tourism and Information, *Relics of Islam: Topkapi Museum, Istanbul*, 1966.

59 Jordan News Agency, "King Inaugurates Prophet Muhammad Museum", 2012.

60 Thanks to Oliver Watson for mentioning this experience at the Study Day.

than simply reproductions of textual and iconographic information. They have found installation at heritage institutions not as historical records but as sacred possessions. In these institutions, they function within the context of heritage as nationalistic and thus exclusive. As David Lowenthal notes, “we exalt heritage not because it is true but because it *ought* to be. To exclude others, heritage cannot be universally true; to those beyond the pale its tenets must defy reason”.⁶¹

2.2 *Covenants with Non-muslims*

The nineteenth and early twentieth centuries also saw the publication and circulation of copies of the Prophet’s agreements with non-Muslim communities, publicized as timeless “covenants” with religious minorities that are granted special privileges. These texts are also based on accounts of the Prophet’s military and diplomatic relations in sources such as al-Wāqidī, Ibn Sa’d, al-Ḥatīb al-Baġdādī, and al-Qastallānī. The histories of these texts are particularly interesting for their conceptions of models and copies. Graphic elements are transmitted across copies and redactions over time, including the seal impression and visual positioning of names of witnesses, while even the material support of the original is often verbally cited in the copy. All of these features serve as eye-witness links to the original while at the same time stressing the derivative and secondary nature of the copy. These manuscripts also refer directly to themselves as “copies”. However, their publication history and textual and graphic modifications also show that these derivatives are acutely relevant, even more relevant than the medieval texts, to contemporary social issues. The centrality of the concept of copy, and a culture of copies as relics, comes to the fore in this set of texts in their structural components and self-referencing as copies.

2.2.1 *Achtiname* for Christians at St. Catherine’s Monastery (See Appendix 5)⁶²

The document held by St. Catherine’s Monastery on Mount Sinai, regularly called the *Achtiname*, is a paper scroll that introduces itself a copy (*nusha*)

61 D. Lowenthal, “Fabricating Heritage”, 1998, p. 8.

62 St. Catherine’s Monastery, Arabic scroll no. 2. See Appendix 5. For transcription of this document, see N. Şuqayr, *Tārīḥ Sinā al-qadīm wa-al-ḥadīṯ wa-ġuġrāfiyyatuhā: ma’a ḥulāṣat tārīḥ Miṣr wa-al-Şām wa-al-’Irāq wa-Ġazīrat al-’Arab wa-mā kāna baynahā min al-’alā’iq al-tiġārīyya wa-al-ḥarbiyya wa- ġayrihā ‘an ṯarīq Sinā’ min awwal ‘ahd al-tārīḥ ilā al-yawm*, 1916, pp. 496–498, and B. Moritz, *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Sinai-Klosters im Mittelalter nach Arabischen Quellen*, 1918, pp. 6–8.

addressed to “all Christians”. Like the text of a similar covenant given in the medieval *Chronicle of Séert*, it grants special privileges to Christians, forbidding the imposition of the *ǧizya*, and including various clauses on protection and good treatment of the religious community as well as guarantees for the perpetuity of the covenant. It ends with a list of twenty witnesses organized into seven columns in red ink, the scribe is ‘Alī, the location “*masǧid al-nabī*”, and the date year 2 A.H. The document verbally refers to the visual impression of the Prophet’s seal on the original, which is kept in the treasury of “the Sultan”. The Turkish language copy of the same text also held by the Monastery includes a handprint in gold leaf as a signature. John Andrews Morrow has collected a number of reports from early modern European commentators, some of whom allege that the handprint was considered a relic by the Turks.⁶³

There are no medieval redactions that exactly match this document. Scholars have suggested that the *Achtiname* is a later redaction of the covenant with the Christians of Naǧrān, which is the source for more extensive texts found in medieval Nestorian and Jacobite sources, including the ninth or tenth century C.E. *Chronicle of Séert*, which are addressed to “all Christians”.⁶⁴ The antecedent for St. Catherine’s *Achtiname* is thus the tradition of a covenant between the Prophet and the Christians of Naǧrān, and the text of this agreement was copied several times in the medieval period until it found its re-iteration in the *Achtiname*. All of these texts exhibit overlaps in their formulae, while the *Chronicle of Séert* text and the *Achtiname* share the stylistic feature of including extraneous elements; however, the *Chronicle of Séert* text and the *Achtiname* are not the same text and have different scribes and lists of witnesses.

Medieval Islamic sources for the covenant with the Christians of Naǧrān include Ibn Sa’d’s *Kitāb al-ṭabaqāt* and al-Balāḍurī’s *Futūḥ al-buldān*. These sources have a much shorter text than the *Chronicle of Séert*, less rhetorically elaborate and composed of the customary formulae used in agreements attributed to the Prophet. The agreement is addressed to “the people of Naǧrān”, and the operative section includes a detailed list of tribute due,⁶⁵ a protection

63 J.A. Morrow, *The Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of the World*, 2013, p. 68.

64 B. Waghmar, “A Note on Parsi Islamology”, 2001, pp. 252–258. The texts of the treaty with the Christians of Naǧrān, the covenant given in the *Chronicle of Séert*, and a covenant with the Christians of Mesopotamia attributed to ‘Umar have been compared by A. El-Wakil, “The Prophet’s Treaty with the Christians of Najran: An Analytical Study to Determine the Authenticity of the Covenants”, 2016.

65 Ibn Sa’d’s text does not make mention of tribute but includes the other clauses (Ibn Sa’d, *Kitāb al-ṭabaqāt*, vol. 1/ii, p. 21).

clause, a guarantee clause for the document, and a closing with five witnesses.⁶⁶ In return the people of Nağrān receive various freedoms including the right to govern themselves and practice their religion.⁶⁷ The sources include reports on a copy existing among the Christians and being renewed by Abū Bakr and ‘Umar. In al-Balāḍurī’s account, Yahyā b. Ādam sees a copy (*kanat nushatahu šabayhatan bi-hāḍihi al-nuṣṣa*) in the hands of the people of Nağrān, at its bottom a scribal clause naming “‘Alī b. Abū Ṭālib”.⁶⁸

The covenant with the Christians of Nağrān, as cited by the *Chronicle of Séert*, was first published in Arabic and French in 1919 by Addai Scher in *Patrologia Orientalis*. According to the *Chronicle of Séert*, the document was copied from a manuscript held in the possession of a monk in Iraq in the year 265 A.H. (878–879 C.E.). The original document is said to be on ox leather and features the Prophet’s seal impression. The text of the document itself is preceded by introductory material that repeats many of the clauses found in the document and is addressed to “those given the Book amongst the Christians, those of them who are of the religion of Nağrān or any of the creeds of Christianity”.⁶⁹ This introduction includes a lengthy Qur’ānic quotation on the preference for intimacy of Muslims with Christians over Jews and polytheists and includes several rhetorical points given in rhymed prose (*sağ’*)⁷⁰ of contrasts made between Christians on the one hand and Jews and polytheists on the other, while also addressing the latter two directly. It enjoins obedience of the covenant (called *‘ahd*) on all Muslims after the Prophet’s death and more than once forbids any change in its terms. This introduction leads directly into the citation of the document, introduced as a copy, which has a monumental opening (the phrase *hādā kitāb katabahu*) followed by an address to the chief of Ibn al-Ḥārīt b. Ka’b and “the people of his sect and all those who adhere to the call of Christianity”.⁷¹ The document ends with a list of thirty witnesses, all major Companions, and

66 Al-Balāḍurī (d. 279/892), *Liber expugnationis regionum* [*Futūḥ al-buldān*], 1866, pp. 65–66.

67 Milka Levy-Rubin characterizes this document as a “disparity treaty” and the result of negotiation, pointing out that its wording and terminology are distinct from those of Conquest-era treaties and that it features demands that pertain only to the situation in Arabia. Levy-Rubin argues that these features suggest the text’s authenticity as a representative of agreements from the time of the Prophet (M. Levy-Rubin, *Non-Muslims in the Early Islamic Empire: from surrender to coexistence*, 2011, pp. 53–55).

68 Al-Balāḍurī, *Liber expugnationis regionum*, p. 66.

69 A. Scher, “Histoire Nestorienne (Chronique de Séert), Second Partie”, 1919, pp. 601–618.

70 Use of *sağ’* is seen elsewhere, though infrequently, in documents attributed to the Prophet. Werner Diem argues that *sağ’* is an inauthentic and anachronistic stylistic feature as found in the Prophetical corpus (W. Diem, “Arabic Letters in Pre-Modern Times, A Survey with Commented Selected Bibliographies”, 2008, p. 858).

71 A. Scher, “Histoire Nestorienne”, p. 610.

Mu'āwiya as the scribe. The *Chronicle of Séert* provides the graphic ordering of the witnesses' names in three columns of eight names each.

Claude Cahen sees the *Chronicle of Séert* text as a "pious forgery" of Nestorian monks from the third/ninth century, comparable and a foil to the *šurūt 'Umar*.⁷² The text thus aims to oppose more restrictive interpretations of the rights of *dimmi* communities in an era when these were under debate.⁷³ This skepticism and contextualization of the discovery of this document in the debates and political changes of the second/eighth and third/ninth centuries is echoed by Harry Munt.⁷⁴ However, it should be stressed that the *Chronicle of Séert* text is an echo and an extension of a text known in early Islamic literary sources, bearing some resemblance but not identical to the agreement with the Christians of Nağrān. Not only is the Nağrān text widespread in early Islamic tradition, but the tradition includes accounts of existing copies also copied by traditionists. We can thus presume that the discovery of the document in the possession of Nestorian monks intended to put forward an "original" with all the force of its authority while not being unaware of a variant text found in tradition. The same applies to the *Achtiname* of St. Catherine's Monastery.

The *Achtiname* of St. Catherine's has been referenced by early modern historians who note that it was confirmed by Sulaymān the Magnificent (r. 1520–1566) while the original was taken to Istanbul (where it has not been located).⁷⁵ Athansios Paliouras, in his illustrated introduction to the Monastery's history and holdings, notes the debate over its authenticity and settles on an indirect endorsement of its historicity.⁷⁶ The *Achtiname* is also related to but not identical with an early modern publication of a covenant with Christians, the "treaty with the Christians of the world" first published in Arabic with Latin translation by Antoine Vitre and edited by Gabriel Sionata in 1630 as *Testamentum et pactiones*. This document is attributed to a discovery by Father Pacifique Scaliger in 1629 of a manuscript dated 1538. The *Testamentum et pac-*

72 For the various versions of this text and their sources see M. Levy-Rubin, *Non-Muslims in the Early Islamic Empire*, 2011. Levy-Rubin argues that the *šurūt 'Umar* is a text that was canonized through scholarly and legal debate on the definition and status of religious minorities in the early third/ninth century, a debate that began with the changes under 'Umar b. 'Abd al-Azīz and al-Mutawakkil.

73 C. Cahen, "Dhimma", 1991, p. 228.

74 H. Munt, "No Two Religions": Non-Muslims in the early Islamic Hijāz", 2015, p. 266.

75 A.S. Atiyeh, *The Arabic Manuscripts of Mount Sinai: a hand-list of the Arabic manuscripts and scrolls microfilmed at the library of the Monastery of St. Catherine, Mount Sinai*, 1955, p. xxix.

76 A. Paliouras, *The Monastery of St. Catherine on Mount Sinai*, 1985, p. 16.

tiones was reprinted in several editions and translated eventually into German, French and English. Its citation, print, and dissemination found diplomatic uses in French-Ottoman relations in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.⁷⁷

2.2.2 Agreement with the Jews of Ḥaybar and Maqnā

Also falling within the tradition of the Prophet's agreements with non-Muslim communities is a paper copy of an agreement with the Jewish inhabitants of Ḥaybar and Maqnā from the Cairo Genizah collection which includes documents on papyrus and paper dating from the tenth to thirteenth centuries, at the University of Cambridge Library.⁷⁸ This document was translated and published by Hartwig Hirschfeld in the *Jewish Quarterly Review* in 1903. The document is in Judeo-Arabic on a paper folio, and consists of three interconnecting texts: an account of a *ḥuṭba* by a Jew of the Ḥanīna in Ḥaybar who converted to Islam, the covenant of the Prophet to the Ḥanīna and the people of Ḥaybar and Maqnā, and the Prophet's genealogy which explicitly links him to the Jews of Ḥaybar through his marriage to Ṣafiyya. Directly preceding the text of the covenant is a reference to the occasion upon which it was written (after the Prophet's marriage to Ṣafiyya) and a description of how someone (this may be an individual whose name is missing through losses in the text) would take out, kiss, and read the manuscript. The paper copy thus provides its own verbal evidence for its status as relic or object with talismanic effects. Among the correspondences between this copy and the medieval redactions of the text is the orthography "Alī bin Abū Ṭālib", which can be found in al-Balāḍūrī's redaction, which he claims is a copy of a manuscript dictated to him.⁷⁹ Hirschfeld dates the document to the fourth/tenth century if not earlier.⁸⁰ It may be the earliest of the documents discussed here.

In the medieval Islamic sources, this document is associated with the developments of the years 8–9 A.H. and the agreements made by various towns, including Ayla on the Red Sea, Dūmat al-Ġandal, and Taymā', after a number of their neighboring nomadic tribes consolidated with the Prophet.⁸¹ In

77 J.A. Morrow, *The Covenants of the Prophet*, pp. xv–xviii, pp. 139–176.

78 University of Cambridge Library, T-S 16.353 (formerly, T-S.8 ka.1).

79 Al-Balāḍūrī, *Liber expugnationis regionum*, pp. 78–81.

80 Hirschfeld amends the date given in the document to year 9 rather than year 5, in order for the day of the week given (Friday) to correspond to the month (Ramaḍān) and in order to effect agreement with the year given in traditions on the dispatch of documents by the Prophet (H. Hirschfeld, "The Arabic Portion of the Cairo Genizah at Cambridge", 1903, p. 172).

81 See F. Donner, *The Early Islamic Conquests*, 1981, p. 109.

the *aḥbār*, Ayla and Nağrān are associated with Christian communities, and Maqnā, Adhruḥ, and Ğarbā with Jewish inhabitants.⁸²

There are several references in the medieval Islamic sources to documents granted to Jewish communities settled in the Arabian Peninsula. The sources attest two separate documents granted to the Jews of Ḥaybar and of Maqnā. The closest match to the paper copy is the security contract with the “people of Maqnā” given in sources such as al-Wāqidī’s *Kitāb al-mağāzī*, Ibn Sa’d’s *Kitāb al-ṭabaqāt*, and al-Balāḍurī’s *Futūḥ al-buldān*. Al-Wāqidī paraphrases the letter to Maqnā with the opening guarantee of safe-conduct, which corresponds with the paper copy, and the imposition of a tax consisting of a fourth of fishing and of date palm revenue,⁸³ a condition not found in the paper manuscript. Ibn Sa’d’s account provides the whole text, which he notes was intended for “the Banū Janba who were the Jews of Maqnā”. The document forgives them their sins and assures them of security, friendship, and protection by the Muslims, and adds to the tax cited by al-Wāqidī a fourth of what is hunted by their army, otherwise exempting them from the *ğizya*.⁸⁴ Al-Balāḍurī has the document addressed to “the Banū Ḥabība and the people of Maqnā”, and it closely resembles the text as given by Ibn Sa’d, with the exception of providing a scribal and dating clause.⁸⁵ Al-Balāḍurī states that a resident of Egypt saw the document “with his eyes” on red leather and written in a studious hand. This man copied it and dictated the text to al-Balāḍurī who records it in his book.⁸⁶ The paper manuscript shares several of these clauses (of security and exemption from the *ğizya*), but is a much longer text which explicitly provides several other freedoms including exemptions from tributes and military occupation but also from several prohibitions well-known from the *šurūṭ* ‘Umar including restrictions on clothing, riding horseback, and carrying arms.

The Cairo Genizah manuscript addressed to the Jews of Ḥaybar and Maqnā exhibits a linguistic and structural relationship with the texts cited by medieval literary sources. However, it is not identical with either the document addressed to Maqnā or that addressed to Ḥaybar. In the sources, the Maqnā text is witnessed by ‘Alī,⁸⁷ and the Ḥaybar text is witnessed by ‘Alī, Mu‘āwiya and Sa’d b. Mu‘āḍ. The paper manuscript is witnessed by Ibn Yāsir, Salmān al-

82 Al-Wāqidī’s reports in Ibn Sa’d, *Kitāb al-ṭabaqāt*, vol. 1/ii, pp. 37–38.

83 Al-Wāqidī (d. ca. 207/822), *Kitāb al-mağāzī*, vol. III, 1966, p. 1032.

84 Ibn Sa’d, *Kitāb al-ṭabaqāt*, vol. 1/ii, pp. 28–29.

85 Al-Balāḍurī, *Liber expugnationis regionum*, pp. 78–81.

86 Al-Balāḍurī, *Liber expugnationis regionum*, pp. 78–81.

87 The witness clause is only provided in al-Balāḍurī’s version, who is also the only source with a date (year 9). The paper manuscript is dated to the day and month of year 5 A.H.

Fārisī and Abū Ḍarr. The paper manuscript is also physically contiguous with several other texts that are related by subject matter and found on the same folio. It is thus self-consciously a copy or reproduction explicitly related to a certain cultural and political context.

The Cairo Geniza document, as well as the various versions of the covenant with the “Christians of the world”, are representative of the circulation in medieval Jewish and Christian communities under the Muslim polity of traditions on concessions and covenants granted by the Prophet Muḥammad, including the formulaic language used in medieval Islamic sources to construct these texts. These copies are thus based on medieval redactions, some of which may have been transmitted in now lost non-Arabic or non-Muslim sources. Another manuscript that can be seen in this light is the paper copy of a document of concessions granted to the Zoroastrian descendants of Salmān al-Fārisī.

2.2.3 The *‘ahd nāma* to the Family of Salmān al-Fārisī

A lithographed copy of a manuscript in *nasta‘līq* script concerning concessions, including exemption of the descendants of Salmān al-Fārisī from paying the *ḡizya*, was first published by Sorabjee Jamshetji Jejeebhoy in Bombay in 1851. The lithograph text purports to be a document granted to the apocryphal figure of Salmān al-Fārisī’s brother named Farruḥ b. Šaḥšan. The politics behind this initial publication and possible legal claims are suggested by references to the existence of several copies of this document in multiple languages (Gujarati, Persian, Arabic).⁸⁸ The history of these publications is given by ‘Abd al-Mu‘īd Khan who also notes that the publications had been studied by Parsi scholars. The paper manuscript is referred to as the *‘ahd nāma* and the lithograph was first published by Jejeebhoy along with an *‘ahd nāma* of the Caliph ‘Alī. The publication notes that the scroll from which the text was copied was held by a member of the Jejeebhoy family in Bombay, which is itself a copy of a document on red leather held by a Parsi in 1841 which cannot be traced. Khan notes that a second edition of the *‘ahd nāma* also circulates with Persian translation and bears a publication date of 1851. This document is thus one in a series of related publications, and copies of the covenant have been circulating and re-published along with studies on Salmān al-Fārisī’s identity and origins in the scholarly Zoroastrian community in the latter half of the nineteenth century and first half of the twentieth, an activity that led to the text being sent to *Islamic Culture* for publication. ‘Abd al-Mu‘īd Khan does the work of tracing the text to traditions on this document in the medieval Islamic sources, and

88 ‘A. al-M. Khan, “Authenticity of an important document of the Prophet”, 1943.

concludes definitively against its authenticity as well as finding the concessions cited in the medieval redactions to be suspect.

In medieval Arabic sources a document held by the family of Salmān al-Fārisī is mentioned in the *Ṭabaqāt al-Muḥaddiṭīn* of Iṣbahān by Ibn Ḥayyān (d. 369/979) and in the *Aḥbār Iṣbahān* of Abū Nu‘aym Aḥmad b. ‘Abd Allāh b. Aḥmad al-Iṣḥāq (d. 430/1038). The latter refers to an eye-witness report of a document (in the hand of ‘Alī with the seal of the Prophet) from a little-known figure who flourished at the end of the third century A.H.⁸⁹ These redactions are compared to the transcription published in Bombay in 1851 by ‘Abd al-Mu‘īd Khan who finds some overlaps between them but large portions of extra material and anachronistic vocabulary (such the noun *sulṭāniyya*) in the Bombay publication.⁹⁰

The text published by Jejeebhoy includes introductory matter and is, like the *Achtiname* held by St. Catherine’s Monastery and the Cairo Geniza document to the Jews of Ḥaybar and Maqnā, self-consciously a copy of another text. In this introduction, the text refers to itself as a copy of a document, now lost, which was on red leather in the hand of ‘Alī and owned in 1840 by a “Parsi gentleman”. It begins with a rhetorical address based around scriptural quotation and sermonizing elements and is lengthy at fifty-one lines. The sermonizing elements raise the question of whether this was at some point a sermon or oral tradition in the Parsi community. Given in first person, presumably in the voice of the Prophet, the text pronounces the *ṣahāda*, praises God’s creation using Qur’ānic phrases (e.g. *kullu nafsin dā‘ikatu al-mawt* 3:185), and includes addresses in third-person plurals using phrases commonly found in *ḥutbas* (e.g. *yā ayyuhā al-nās ittaqū rabbakum*). This diction continues into the terms of the document proper which grant security (*ḍimma*) to the children, possessions and land of those who believe in God, his religion, his messengers, and are amongst the ranks of those who are victorious. Following the introduction, the actual text of the document is introduced by the monumental opening formula “*wa-hāḍā kit-ābī*” (l. 28). The text, like the *Chronicle of Séert* version of the covenant with “the Christians of the world” and the paper manuscript of the document to the Jews of Ḥaybar and Maqnā, explicitly counters many of the propositions of *ṣurūṭ ‘Umar* by prohibiting imposition of the *ḡizya* and regulations on clothing, riding mounts, and funeral processions, as well as prohibiting regulations of what the Zoroastrians maintain from their religion which the document stresses as preferable amongst all religions of the *ahl al-ḍimma*. The text concludes with

89 ‘A. al-M. Khan, “Authenticity of an important document”, 1943.

90 ‘A. al-M. Khan, “Authenticity of an important document”, 1943, pp. 96–104.

a list of twelve witnesses, blessings on the Prophet, and a verbal description of the seal imprint (introduced by “*hādā al-ḥātim ...*”). Though the text includes phrases adopted from the medieval redactions, neither the overtly sermonizing elements, particularly the references to the presence of a congregation, nor the prohibitions mentioned above, except for the exemption from the *ḡizya*, are found in the medieval redactions. The text thus conveys the concept of an original text as being an inspiration or baseline for a more timely and relevant, and updated, later copy, which is yet presumed to be identical to the original in efficacy, authenticity, and reality. The document’s obvious relevance to Parsi scholars in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century attests to its timeless authority.

These copies of covenants with “the Christians of the world”, the Jews of Ḥaybar and Maqnā, and the Parsi descendants of Salmān al-Fārisī do not seek to correspond exactly to the medieval redactions of these texts. These documents include obviously introductory and extraneous material that self-consciously reflects on their status as copies, and they are freely transmitted in other scripts and languages. They also include substantial additions to the texts as given in the medieval sources. The documents for the Jews of Ḥaybar and Maqnā and the descendants of Salmān al-Fārisī are even directly preceded by and related to the transcription of a sermonizing text.

These documents are not just forgeries or claims for good treatment. They make their own claims to the tradition of the Prophet, not only through their content but through their forms. They circulate narratives of religious minorities maintained by “cultural memory”, a concept introduced by Jan Assman to refer to collective memory that is institutionalized and engages with and forms tradition.⁹¹ These documents engage in a counter-narrative of Muslim sacred history and are in negotiation with the legal debate surrounding the *ṣurūṭ ‘Umar* through circulation of traditions and documents that claim legal value. Even when they are formulaically aberrant from the medieval redactions, they are in dialogue with Muslim scholarly debate on religious minorities as well as early Muslim traditions on the existence of copies of documents granted to non-Muslims. Yet they adopt and modify that discourse while still relying on their verbal and graphic relationships to documents attributed to the Prophet, and find their claim to authority in this extension of his person. As Patrick Geary notes, relics belong to a category of objects that are both per-

91 Jan Assman offers the term “cultural memory” in order to extend Maurice Halbwachs’ concept of “collective memory” into a consideration of tradition, transmissions over time, and institutionalization (J. Assman, “Communicative and Cultural Memory”, 2008, p. 110).

sons and things,⁹² for which authenticity means efficacy in terms of communal needs.⁹³

The intertextual and performative aspects of these documents corroborate recent research into the complexity and intermingling of social and cultural identities in the medieval period, across what we now see as religious divides. The work of Arietta Papaconstantinou, Milka Levy-Rubin, and Uriel Simonsohn have challenged the historiographical narratives given by both Muslim and non-Muslim literature from the medieval Islamic world, in which religious identity is represented as socially and culturally autonomous and strictly demarcated.⁹⁴

3 Popular Tradition

Local traditions may also have surrounded these modern relics and suggest their use in rituals, processions, and popular tradition. Barthélemy's report accompanying publication of the al-Muqawqis letter recounts a Coptic tradition that four copies of the letter were sent, and one was kept in the Kénisa amba Mārcos of Cairo along with the Prophet's response to al-Muqawqis' reply.⁹⁵ Hamidullah notes that the letter to the Negus may also be accompanied by a modern tradition on its talismanic status. In 1936 the Cairo daily *Al-balāḡ*, quoting the Ethiopian journal *Burhān Islam*, reported that during the Italian invasion of Ethiopia (1935–1936), the Negus took this letter out of his treasury to show it to the inhabitants, a ceremony which was performed during times of calamity.⁹⁶ The Parsi scholarship on the document for Salmān al-Fārisī's descendants, as traced by 'Abd al-Mu'īd Khan and Burzine Waghmar, outline its use in popular tradition on the figure of Dastūr Dīnyār, the pre-Islamic figure of a Zoroastrian priest who becomes Salmān al-Fārisī.⁹⁷

92 Geary writes in the context of a theory of relics in medieval Europe, in which locality and a concern with physical transference is central to authenticity (P. Geary, "Sacred Commodities: the circulation of medieval relics", 1986, p. 169).

93 P. Geary, "Sacred Commodities", 1986, p. 181.

94 A. Papaconstantinou, "Between Umma and Dhimma: The Christians of the Middle East under the Umayyads", 2008; M. Levy-Rubin, *Non-Muslims in the Early Islamic Empire*, 2011; U. Simonsohn, "Conversion to Islam: A case study for the use of legal sources", 2013.

95 C. Belin. "Lettre a M. Reinaud, Membre de l'Institut, sur un Document Arabe Relatif a Mahomet, par M. Belin", 1854, pp. 498–499, n. 1.

96 M. Hamidullah, *The Life and Work*, 1998, vol. 1, p. 232.

97 'A. Khan, "Authenticity of an important document", 1943; B. Waghmar, "A Note on Parsi Islamology".

Images of documents of the Prophet tend to appear and disappear on the internet. As of March 2012, an image of the “Constitution of Medina” was available online⁹⁸ but with no details of provenance. The letters to kings continue to be curated on the internet with other more famous relics such as beard hairs, sandal, seal, sword, and mantle. The images are usually those of the publications cited in this paper, although one also finds transcriptions of the published documents transposed on papyrus, and the documents can be misidentified since the texts are irrelevant to their relic status. As David Lowenthal argues, dismissal as ahistorical is part of the construction of heritage objects and does not preclude their reverence.⁹⁹ According to Lowenthal, objects seem to increase in relic-status the less verifiable they are by historical report, and the more by faith, attachment, and a history of veneration. Following the museum exhibits at Topkapı and Amman, websites place the letters within the context of the Prophet’s relics, as remnants of the Prophet’s life and career, significant in their status of physical intimacy with the Prophet.

In their modern use for interfaith dialogue, the covenants of the Prophet approach the literalist authority of scripture. St. Catherine’s *Achtiname* remains part of a living tradition. This document is used frequently in promoting Christian-Muslim dialogue and is referenced by both communities. The covenants with the Christians of Nağrān and with the monks of Mount Sinai are also referred to in the context of Israel-Palestine to debate the interpretation of scriptural sources on legal rights to land, particularly in the context of covenants of land granted in perpetuity.¹⁰⁰ Such a reading is clearly expressed in “The Covenants Initiative” authored by John Andrew Morrow and signed by several Muslim professionals and academics globally in 2013. The Covenants Initiative reads:

We the undersigned hold ourselves bound by the spirit and the letter of the covenants of the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) with the Christians of the world, in the understanding that these covenants, if accepted as genuine, have the force of law in the *shari’ah* today and that nothing in the *shari’ah*, as traditionally and correctly interpreted, has ever contradicted them.

98 Accessed March 2012, www.faithinallah.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/quran-manuscript.jpeg. Thanks to Shehzad Saleem for bringing this to my attention.

99 D. Lowenthal, *The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History*, 1998.

100 M. al-Hussaini, “The Qur’an’s Covenant with the Jewish People: Claims to the Holy Land”, 2009, pp. 9–14.

As fellow victims of the terror and godlessness, the spirit of militant secularism and false religiosity now abroad in the world, we understand your suffering as Christians through our suffering as Muslims, and gain greater insight into our suffering through the contemplation of your suffering.

May the Most Merciful of the Merciful regard the sufferings of the righteous and the innocent; may He strengthen us, in full submission to His will, to follow the spirit and the letter of the covenants of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of the world in all our dealings with them. In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful. Praise be to Allah, the Cherisher and the Sustainer of the Worlds.¹⁰¹

As of 2014, this understanding was also institutionalized through literature such as the UNESCO documentation on the site of St. Catherine's Monastery, which referenced the *Achtiname* as providing the foundation for the Monastery's current ties with Muslim authorities.¹⁰²

4 Conclusion

Since the mid-nineteenth century, we have seen the publication of several manuscripts that claim to represent documents authored by the Prophet Muḥammad. These have generally been assessed by Islamicists as being modern forgeries, while historical criticism has brought into question the historicity of documents cited in early Islamic historiography. The letters to kings on leather may be pious fakes meant to function as relics. They follow the medieval textual tradition closely, and show some familiarity with early Arabic palaeography. The choice of writing support also aligns with the materials used by the Prophet as described in early Islamic tradition. The "covenants" with non-Muslim communities however, are a different category of object. These are all on paper, and do not just claim to be copies of documents attributed to the Prophet, but records of the history of claims put forward by these communities to the Muslim authorities. These documents have a life outside of Islamic historiography and continue to be cited in the context of the relations between Muslim and non-Muslim communities. The claims of intimate contact and

101 The Covenants of the Prophet Foundation. "The Covenants Initiative", 2024. <https://covenantsoftheprophet.org/thecovenantsinitiative/>

102 UNESCO. "Saint Catherine Area", 1992–2014. This reference to interfaith ties is no longer part of the documentation online.

access to the Prophet's authority made on the basis of these texts do not require a distinction between the text as found in medieval sources and extraneous textual material and traditions that have accrued around these texts as they are claimed by various communities over time. They are a unique type of object that show a self-referential relationship to their own copy-status and convey the concept of copy as updated and more efficacious original.

In their uses as heritage objects, these documents are institutionalized, performed, and embedded in accounts of religious and national identity that are reminiscent of medieval treatments of *ḥadīth* and the physical aspect of *ḥadīth*. Eerick Dickinson illustrates the linguistic and experiential overlap between *ḥadīth* and sandal, both conceived as traces of the Prophet. The popular medieval relic of the Prophet's sandal was installed by the Ayyūbid prince al-Ašraf Mūsā in the Ašrafiyya *ḥadīth* school in Damascus. The word for relic, *aṭar*, is also regularly treated as a synonym for *ḥadīth*, for example by al-Nawawī (d. 676/1277).¹⁰³ In a similar way, the documents of the Prophet as relics navigate both the literary tradition and the changing vernacular.

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103 E. Dickinson, "Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ al-Shahrazūrī and the Isnād", 2002, p. 484.

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Appendix: Documents of the Prophet Held by Topkapı Palace Museum and St. Catherine's Monastery

Appendix 1: To al-Muqawqis



FIGURE 8.1 The Prophet's Letter to al-Muqawqis, *Topkapı Sarayı*, T.P.M. 21–174.
WITH PERMISSION FROM TOPKAPI PALACE MUSEUM

- (1) بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ مِنْ مُحَمَّدٍ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ إِلَى الْمُقَوَّقِسِ عَظِيمِ الْقِبْطِ .
- (2) سَلَامٌ عَلَى مَنْ اتَّبَعَ الْهُدَى أَمَا بَعْدُ.. فَأَيُّ أَنْ تُؤَكِّدَ بِعَمَانَةِ الْإِسْلَامِ أَسْلِمْتَ . يُؤَدِّعُكَ اللَّهُ أَجْرَكَ مَرَّتَيْنِ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّيْتَ فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ إِثْمُ الْقِبْطِ .
- (3) يَا أَهْلَ الْكِنَابِ تَعَالَوْا إِلَى كَلِمَةٍ سَوَاءٌ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ أَلَّا نُلْقِيَ إِلَهِ اللَّهِ وَلا نُشْرِكَ بِهِ شَيْئًا وَلا نَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّيْنَا فَقَوْلُوا اشْهَدُوا بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ .
- (4) [ادعوك دعاية الاسلام اسلم تسلم واسلم
- (5) [يوثي]ك الله اجر ك مرتين
- (6) فان توليت فعليك اثم القبط
- (7) [يا] اهل الكتاب تعالوا الى كلمة
- (8) سوى بيننا و بينكم الاتعبد الا الله
- (9) ولا [نشرك به شيء و] لا يتخذ بعضنا

(10) بعدضا [اربابا من دون] اله فا

(11) تولوا فقولوا اشهد (انا) مس

(12) لمون

Appendix 2: To Mundīr b. Sāwā



FIGURE 8.2 The Prophet's Letter to al-Mundīr b. Sāwā, *Topkapı Sarayı*, T.P.M. 21-397.
WITH PERMISSION FROM TOPKAPI PALACE MUSEUM

- (1) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم من محمد رسول الله الى
- (2) المنذر بن سوى سلام عليك فاني احمد الله
- (3) اليك الذي لا اله غيره واشهد الا اله الا
- (4) الله وان محمد عبده ورسوله اما بعد فاني اذكر
- (5) لك الله عز وجل فانه من ينصح فانما ينصح لنفسه وانه من يطيعو
- (6) رسله و يتبعوا امرهم فقد اطاعني] و من نصح لي

- (7) فان رسلي قد اثموا عليك خيرا واني قد شفعتك في
 (8) قومك فاترك للمسلمين ما اسلم عليه و عفوت عن اهل
 (9) الذنوب فاقبل منهم فانك مهما تصلح فلن نعزلك عن عملك و من
 (10) اقام على يهوديته و مجوسيته فعليه الجزية

Appendix 3: To al-Ḥārīt b. al-Ġassānī



FIGURE 8.3 The Prophet's Letter to al-Ḥārīt b. al-Ġassānī, *Topkapı Sarayı*, T.P.M. 21-674.
 WITH PERMISSION FROM TOPKAPI PALACE MUSEUM

- (1) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم من محمد
 (2) رسول الله الى الحارث ابن ابي
 (3) شامر سلام على من اتبع الهدى وامن به
 (4) وصدق واني ادعوك الى ان تؤمن ب
 (5) الله وحده لا شريك له يبقى
 (6) لك ملكك

Appendix 4: To Musaylama



FIGURE 8.4 The Prophet's Letter to Musaylama, *Topkapı Sarayı*, T.P.M. 21-169
WITH PERMISSION FROM TOPKAPI PALACE MUSEUM

- (1) بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ مِنْ مُحَمَّدٍ رَسُولِ
- (2) اللَّهِ إِلَى مَسْلَمَةَ الْكَلْبِ أَنْ إِسْلَامَ عَلِيٍّ مِنْ
- (3) اتَّبَعَ الْهُدَى أَمَا بَعْدَ فَانِ الْأَرْضِ لِلَّهِ
- (4) ... يورثها من يشاء من عباده والعاقبة للمتقين [متقين]
- (5) مد الله
- (6) ومن تبومعك

Counterfeits, Forgeries, and Imitations in Medieval Islamic Numismatics: Four Case Studies

Warren C. Schultz

1 Introduction

The theme of this volume poses several challenges to those of us who work with numismatic evidence. One set of challenges is that of the basic assumptions we employ in the analysis of money. Simply stated, the way our money works today is very different from how coins functioned in the medieval period. Today's money is fiat money (also called petty or fiduciary money). All three adjectives reflect the fact that most money in circulation today has little or no intrinsic value. The physical monetary items we carry with us are made of substances of very low value, and since most of the world's money supply today exists as digital records with no physical form at all, those monies have no substance-based (intrinsic) value at all. To put it another way, the combined value of all the material that is found in any five Euro note does not come close to being worth five Euros. Moreover, the value of that individual five-Euro note is predictable in that it is always worth five Euros. This does not mean that the value of five Euros does not fluctuate when compared to other currencies or commodities, as those exchange relationships can and do fluctuate. It does mean, however, that a five Euro note is always worth five Euros in an exchange, not two Euros or four. The physical object, in this case the note, is always equivalent to the denomination printed upon it. Finally, in terms of circulation, the zones in which our money is used as well as the amount of money in circulation are usually controlled to a certain extent, and within those zones the issuing authorities can remove certain denominations from circulation and to prohibit the use of other currencies as legal tender.

None of the above factors or observations, however, can be automatically assumed to have been in place for the coins in circulation in the medieval Mediterranean world. It was possible, for example, that a single coin could be worth more or less than its denominational value. This was always a possibility for medieval coins made from the precious metals of gold and silver. The intrinsic value of an individual coin could vary depending on how much or how little of those precious metals was present. This bullionist interpretation, where the

intrinsic value of the metal within a coin is more important to its total extrinsic value (which may include some sort of guaranteed additional value on the part of the issuing authority), is also affected by the degree to which any medieval polity was able to control the coins in circulation in its territory. The documents in the Cairo Geniza, for example, contain references to coins from across the Mediterranean basin in use in Fustat.¹ Nor can one assume that the coins minted by medieval rulers were always stuck to a fixed weight standard. They may have been, of course, but it is not safe to assume such precision without first checking the metrology of the coins under consideration. Nor was there a direct correlation between the date a coin was struck and how long it was “current,” as Middle Islamic period hoard evidence suggests that coins could be in use for decades or even longer after their initial entry into the monetary marketplace.

A second set of challenges is that of terminology. The entries for terms such as counterfeit, forgery, and imitation found in modern dictionaries establish clear categories of meaning.² Those clear categories often seem quite simple to apply to cases of modern counterfeiting. We would have trouble comprehending why anyone would go to the trouble of making fake hundred dollar notes today for any reason other than deception and the subsequent monetary gain. But what about a case (as in number 4 below) where the production of coins in imitation of those of a neighbor may be explained for reasons other than fraudulent profit? In other words, one must be open to the existence of blurred zones between those clear categories found in denotative dictionary entries.

Finally, there are the challenges of geography and chronology. The differences in monetary practice, metrology, and preferences varied tremendously across the geographic and chronological breadth of the medieval *Dār al-Islām*. Confronted with this diversity, one cannot assume similarity across all places and time. For this article, the case studies are drawn exclusively from the region of Egypt and *Bilād al-Šām* from the 5th–9th Islamic centuries, 11th–15th centur-

1 S.D. Goitein, *A Mediterranean society*. Vol. 1: *Economic Foundations*, 1967, pp. 229–272.

2 See, for example, these definitions taken from *The Random House Dictionary of the English Language* (1975): “Counterfeits: Adjective. 1. made in imitation with intent to deceive; not genuine; forged. Noun. 3. An imitation intended to be passed off as genuine; Forgery: Noun. 1. Law: the false making or alteration of a writing by which the legal rights or obligations of another person are apparently affected; 2. The production of a spurious work that is claimed to be genuine; 3. Something produced by forgery; 4. The act of fabricating or producing falsely; forgery; Imitation: Noun. 4. A counterfeit, a copy. Adjective. 9. Designed to imitate a genuine or superior article or thing.” For both forgery and counterfeiting, an attempt to deceive is implicit in these definitions.

ies CE. As a final clarification, all the evidence discussed here, whether material or literary in nature, is from that period. I do not address the question of modern forgeries of medieval Islamic coins. A major reason for this is that the coinage of the regions and periods addressed below have not been, for the most part, particularly attractive to modern forgers. When one does occasionally catch wind of a probable forgery, it is almost invariably of a gold coin and not the more common silver or copper coinages. Thus, when I use the word contemporary in this paper, I am referring to the historical contemporary.

With these challenges and limits established, I present four case studies. They are offered as illustrative examples of the challenges which the themes at the center of this volume pose to those who work with numismatic material. The first case study consists of accounts found in Mamluk-era chronicles of two occasions of counterfeiting of copper coins in the 8th/14th century. The subsequent discussion focuses on the limits of the available numismatic evidence to shed additional light on the chronicle accounts of counterfeiting. The second is an examination of an actual Mamluk counterfeit silver dirham from the 9th/15th century. While the specimen is not discussed in any chronicle, it does allow me to explore how such fake coins were produced. The third is focused upon the small glass disks produced in great quantity in Fatimid Egypt and is used to explore the repercussions of how different assumptions used in the study of these objects can lead to different conclusions. The final case study is a brief look at a well-known oddity of 6th/13th century numismatics in the eastern Mediterranean—Crusader imitations of Ayyubid dirhams—which provides a lens through which to examine the blurred boundaries between categories of analysis.

2 Accounts of Counterfeiting in Mamluk Chronicles and Numismatic Evidence

The Mamluk Sultanate was an economic power of the eastern Mediterranean for much of its 267-year existence (648–923/1250–1517), and it struck coins in gold, silver and copper in several mint cities.³ Mamluk-era historical chronicles also contain many mentions of monetary events. Two recent monographs have each highlighted a different passage from a major Mamluk chronicle about the counterfeiting of copper coins and the subsequent disruption those counter-

3 For an introductory overview of Mamluk coin production, see W.C. Schultz, “Mamluk Monetary History: A Review Essay,” 1999, pp. 183–205.

feits caused in the marketplace. I first summarize those two instances and then discuss them in terms of what additional insight, if any, the surviving numismatic evidence sheds upon them.

In his book on crime in the Mamluk sultanate, Carl Petry summarized how Mamluk jurists understood the crime of counterfeiting.⁴ They viewed it as a smart crime, requiring specialized knowledge, skill and tools, and therefore held it subject to severe sanction. As Petry summarized, Mamluk chronicles noted four types of monetary crime: the act of reducing the weight or debasing the value of individual coins; the hoarding of bullion stores; the unlicensed possession of counterfeiting tools; and the production of false coins. This latter was by far the most common offense noted. Petry provided several references to several accounts of counterfeiting, but his main analysis focused on an event from 720/1320 during the third reign of Sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad (709–741/1310–1341). As described by al-Maqrīzī, in that year the exchange rate between copper coins in both Cairo and Damascus was set at 48 copper *fulūs* to one silver dirham.⁵ Counterfeiters subsequently flooded markets with imitative Damascene coppers which were lightweight, and this disrupted the exchange rate and caused hardship. In response to this development, the Sultan ordered the minting of new coins to be exchanged at that same 48:1 rate in order to “restore confidence and alleviate the emergency.”

The second episode of counterfeiting of copper coins is found in Kristen Stilt’s study of the *muḥtasib* in Mamluk Egypt. She highlighted an account also taken from al-Maqrīzī.⁶ This episode occurred in 745/1344 during the brief reign of Sultan al-Ṣāliḥ Ismā‘īl (743–746/1342–1345). The presence of light-weight counterfeit coins in the markets was in this case exacerbated by the introduction of forged coins made from lead as well as small metallic bits apparently cut from imported Syrian coppers. Just as in the previous example, al-Maqrīzī wrote that the solution to these difficulties was the issuance of a new copper coin from the official mints.⁷

Both of these accounts indicate that the influx of large numbers of counterfeit coins caused economic hardship by disrupting exchange rates. The mech-

4 C.F. Petry, *The criminal underworld in a medieval Islamic society: narratives from Cairo and Damascus under the Mamluks*, 2012, pp. 267–271. The episode discussed is found in al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-sulūk li-ma‘rifat duwal wa-al-mulūk*, 1956–1973, vol. 2, p. 205.

5 Al-Maqrīzī, *Al-sulūk*, vol. 2, p. 205.

6 K. Stilt, *Islamic law in action: authority, discretion, and everyday experiences in Mamluk Egypt*, 2011, pp. 176–181. The episode is found in al-Maqrīzī, *Al-sulūk*, vol. 2, p. 669.

7 Al-Maqrīzī, *Al-sulūk*, vol. 2, p. 669.

anisms by which this rate disruption would have happened need further comment. Mamluk copper coinages are considered to be a fiat money since the intrinsic value of their copper content is low. Most of their value is thus usually said to be determined by extrinsic factors, chief among them the actions taken by the issuing authority to set a fixed exchange rate with silver or gold coins.⁸ One means by which an exchange rate could be fixed was to limit the number of officially sanctioned, low-intrinsic-value coins in circulation. A limited quantity of these official copper coins in circulation thus assured a known upper limit to the amount of higher-value coinages needed to exchange with those copper coins and thereby guarantee their value. An influx of counterfeits such as is described in these two accounts would increase the total number of low-intrinsic value coins in circulation. This in turn would lower the value of all such coins including the official ones, thus disrupting the exchange rates unless the issuing authority provided more higher intrinsic value coins for exchange. Doing that, however, would cause financial loss to the issuing authority as more silver (or gold) was spent to support the guaranteed value of the copper coins.

I addressed the available numismatic evidence relating to both examples in an earlier study.⁹ In both cases specimens survive of specific coins of an identifiable design, what numismatists term a “type,” which by both date and mint are related to these episodes.¹⁰ In the earlier episode, there are coins which clearly bear the mint name Cairo and the date 720. A central common stylistic feature of these coins is a rectangular frame on one side. There also survive similarly designed copper coins from Damascus bearing the same year.¹¹

8 A classic explanation of this process is found in C. Cipolla, “The big problem of the petty coins,” 1956, pp. 27–37.

9 W.C. Schultz, “Mamluk Egyptian copper coinage before 759/1357–1358: A preliminary inquiry,” 2001, pp. 25–43. That article also addressed the wider repercussions of the establishment of a weight standard for copper coins, an issue of some controversy. That topic is beyond the scope of this paper.

10 The shared characteristics that define a “type” include mint of origin, metal, and die design. The basic numerical typology of Mamluk coinage is that established by P. Balog, *The Coinage of the Mamluk Sultans of Egypt and Syria*, 1964. Since it was based on simple numerical order, it has proved inadequate to the challenge of accounting for the inevitable new types discovered since its publication.

11 P. Balog, *The Coinage of the Mamluk Sultans of Egypt and Syria*, 1964, p. 156. The Cairo type is no. 242. This design was also used for the copper coins of the follow year, 721 H. See type no. 243. The Damascene coin, Balog type no. 244, is not illustrated with a line drawing.

242. Border: circular line.

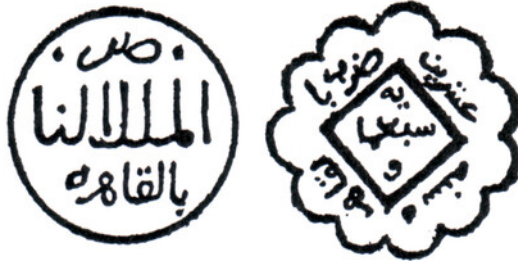


FIGURE 9.1 Copper coin from Cairo, 720 H.

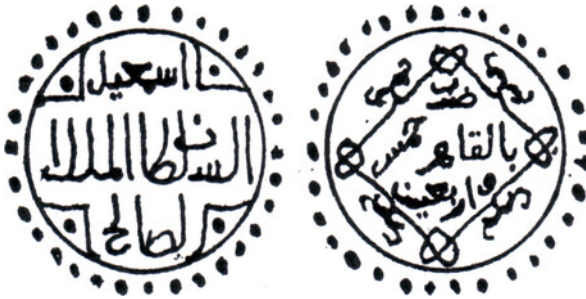


FIGURE 9.2 Copper coin from Cairo, 745 H.

For the later episode, there is also a type from Cairo dated 745. These coins have designs on both faces described respectively as “a cross-shaped cartouche” on one side and a “linear square standing on edge. Arabesque knot in the corners. A floral scroll on each side” on the other.¹²

In both cases the dates on the illustrated coins suggest that these are the new types issued by order of the respective sultan to address the hardships caused by counterfeit coins. This linkage is not completely certain, however, nor does it by itself shed additional light on the respective accounts by al-Maqrīzī. This assertion requires wider contextualization. Mamluk copper coinage of the 7th/14th century contains many undated types as well as several without mint name. Thus, while each of these two respective coin types are unique for their era, it is impossible to ascertain with certainty which coin types came immediately before them. Without that determination, we are

12 P. Balog, *The Coinage of the Mamluk Sultans of Egypt and Syria*, 1964, p. 156, type no. 285. This design was also used for the copper coins of the follow year, 746 H. See type no. 286.

unable to determine which set of surviving Mamluk copper coins were counterfeited.

Numismatic specialists will note that there are other problems which complicate our understanding of these two cases. For example, the second account mentioned the presence of lead counterfeits and cut coin pieces. While lead bits and copper pieces do survive, few have any provenance or can be reliably dated, and fewer still are published.¹³ Given the current state of the evidence, none can be linked definitively to this account. In addition, implicit in both accounts is that these new coins of 720 and 745 were minted at a set weight standard. In the case of the Cairo coins dated 720 there are simply not enough specimens published with their weight provided to enable us to determine what that standard was. In the case of those from 745 we have a larger surviving sample—thanks primarily to published hoard evidence—which suggests these coins were struck to a standard around three grams.¹⁴ But as mentioned above, without a definitive set of earlier coins against which to compare this metrological data, we lack the numismatic evidence to corroborate the counterfeiting accounts. As if often the case with numismatic evidence, for both these episodes the surviving coins help corroborate but do not completely confirm the literary accounts.

3 The *fourré* Method of Counterfeiting

Both examples cited above were events in which large amounts of problematic copper coins were introduced into the market in a short period and were said to have caused significant disruption to economic life in Mamluk Cairo. In contrast, accounts of counterfeiting silver or gold coins found in those chronicles usually focus on individuals who were caught committing the crime and were subsequently executed. There was apparently no attempt to purposely manipulate gold and silver exchange rates on a large-scale in the Mamluk period. Rather we read of individuals in pursuit of their own illicit financial gain and brief references to the material used to make their counterfeit coins.¹⁵ One of

13 Lead objects are easily distinguishable from copper. There is only one episode currently known where lead was used for what was apparently officially produced coinage. See P. Balog, *The Coinage of the Mamluk Sultans of Egypt and Syria*, 1964, pp. 253–254.

14 Frequency tables for the weights of these two coin samples are found in W.C. Schultz, “Mamluk Egyptian copper coinage before 759/1357–1358: A preliminary inquiry,” 2001, pp. 41 and 43.

15 C.F. Petry, *The criminal underworld in a medieval Islamic society*, 2012, pp. 269, n. 34 and 270, n. 35.

the most common methods of forging counterfeits was described by Paul Balog, whose publications established the foundation for Mamluk numismatic studies, in this way:

In our experience, counterfeit Islamic coins are always *fourré* coins, covered with a thin gold or silver pellicle and containing an inner copper core (...). The counterfeiter of Islamic coins in the Middle Ages applied the pellicle of precious metal on the copper flan, then proceeded to heat it and struck the red-hot piece with the dies.¹⁶

Anyone who has spent time examining the gold and silver coinage of the Fatimid through Mamluk eras has likely encountered examples of contemporary counterfeits made by this method. Unfortunately, these objects are seldom published.¹⁷ This case study is based on one such unpublished counterfeit. Figure 9.3 illustrates a typical late 9th/15th century Mamluk silver dirham from the reign of Sultan al-Zāhir Ḥuṣqadam (865–872/1461–1467). While the mint is missing on this specimen, it is attributed to the Damascus mint by die design.¹⁸ Figure 9.4, however, illustrates a contemporary forgery of that coin type prepared by the *fourré* method.¹⁹

Viewed today, the pitted nature of the forged coin and the very clear wearing-away of the silver pellicle which reveals its copper core together make it easy to identify that this is not an officially minted Mamluk dirham. But when the content and layout of the legends found on the object are compared to an official dirham, it is striking how similar they are. In this case, in fact, it appears that the *fourré* object was struck with an official die or one so closely imitative that it very difficult to distinguish. It is impossible to determine whether the act of striking the fake core with the die was done at the mint or whether a die was smuggled out of the controlled environs where authorized minting

16 P. Balog, *The Coinage of the Mamluk Sultans of Egypt and Syria*, 1964, pp. 253–254. For a broader discussion of counterfeiting in the Mamluk period, see Ḍayf Allāh Yaḥyā Zahrānī's *Zayf al-nuqūd al-islāmīyya min ṣadr al-Islām ḥattā nihāyat al-ʿaṣr al-mamlūkī*, 1993/1413.

17 I am preparing a study of nine *fourré* specimens, all silver-plated, from the Undeland collection of Mamluk coins at Princeton University.

18 This coin is Balog 1964 type no. 792. Its diameter is 14 mm and its weight is 1.50 g. The dark spots on the coin are stains. While it is not a particularly well-preserved coin, it is of silver alloy throughout.

19 The diameter of this object is 15 mm and its weight is 1.40 g. Both the coin and the *fourré* are from a private collection. Note that the *fourré* object has a large divot near the middle. It is possible that this was the result of someone attempting to verify whether the object was silver alloy throughout.



FIGURE 9.3
Official silver dirham of al-Malik al-Zāhir Ḥuṣḡadam.



FIGURE 9.4
Fourré counterfeit dirham of al-Malik al-Zāhir Ḥuṣḡadam.

took place.²⁰ Either possibility would indicate a level of corruption by those involved in official minting. It is thus easy to understand why, to use Petry's term, such a "smart" crime was subject to the death penalty.

As mentioned, it is not yet possible to link any individual surviving example of such *fourré* counterfeits to any specific chronicle account. The survival of such specimens, however, provides the basic yet essential confirmation that this method of counterfeiting mentioned in the chronicles was used. An implication of Balog's passage above is that the only contemporary counterfeits he was able to identify were made in this manner. It should be mentioned, however, that his experience of encountering only *fourré* coins does not mean that other methods of counterfeiting were not in use in medieval Egypt and Syria.

4 Fatimid Glass Disks

The final two case studies pre-date the Mamluk period. Case three focuses upon the small glass disks produced in great quantities in Fatimid Egypt (359–567/969–1171).²¹ Unfortunately the historical chronicles dating from the Fat-

²⁰ Nor do we know how the copper core was produced or the pellicle applied, but it was likely via a silver wash. Counterfeiters left no written descriptions of their methods.

²¹ These glass objects were also produced in Egypt during the Ayyubid and Mamluk periods.

imid era and after are silent about these objects. Thus, all analysis is based upon the surviving specimens only. Many hundreds if not thousands of these objects survive and there is longstanding disagreement as to what function they served. I have labeled the two main interpretive schools of thought about these glass disks with the names of the primary proponents of the opposing views. The first camp is that of Paul Balog. Balog argued that these objects were produced to serve as a token (i.e. fiduciary) coinage.²² Since there appears to have been very little or no copper coinage produced in Fatimid Egypt, he believed these glass objects fulfilled the need for small change. The position of the opposing camp was articulated by Michael L. Bates. Bates dismissed the possibility that these objects filled any official role as money. Instead, he argued, that these objects were produced for the purpose of weighing coins.²³ This explanation is based in part upon the observation that contemporary Fatimid silver dirhams (as well as those of surrounding contemporary polities) were irregular in weight. This means that the value of any dirham would vary according to its weight, and coin weights would be necessary to determine that value. This is not the venue to go into the details of the wider debate nor attempt to gain adherents for either camp.²⁴ Rather I focus on the objects themselves because the different labels used by specialists to describe them provide a clear example of how the assumptions which underlay an analysis shape the conclusions reached by it. As I have argued elsewhere, this is an important issue in the field of medieval Islamic numismatics.²⁵ In the case of these Fatimid jetons, I explore this issue via the analysis of a commercial pricelist and its terminology of description and identification.

While this discussion is limited to the Fatimid objects, many of its observations apply to the later objects as well.

- 22 Balog was the first to study these objects systematically, and his catalogue, "The Fatimid glass jeton," 1971–1972, pp. 175–264, remains an essential reference for the field. His thoughts about how these objects were used evolved over the course of his life. The clearest statement of his view that they were petty coins is found in his "Fatimid glass jetons: token currency or coin-weights?," 1981, pp. 93–109.
- 23 See Bates, "The Function of Fatimid and Ayyubid glass weights," 1981. The opposing nature of these analyses is emphasized by placement of this essay directly after the just mentioned Balog article in the 1981 volume of *JESHO*. For a comprehensive presentation of the Bates camp, see M.L. Bates, "How Egyptian glass coin weights were used," 1993, pp. 539–545. In the interest of full disclosure, I fall firmly in the Bates camp.
- 24 Abdelhamid Fenina has contributed a recent study to this discussion. See his "À propos de la fonction des disques légers en verre à inscriptions arabes d'époques fāṭimide et post-fāṭimide : *ṣanaḡāt* ou jetons fiduciaires ?," 2016.
- 25 W.C. Schultz, "The monetary history of Egypt, 642–1517," 1998, pp. 319–324.

Figure 9.5 contains a May 2009 pricelist (titled “glass weights”) offered for sale by Stephen Album of Santa Rosa California.²⁶ Seven of the 12 objects are Fatimid and are called jetons.²⁷ The use of the word jeton is revealing. The word is a synonym with marker or token, but it is also applied to fiduciary money. While the price list features the words “glass weights” in its title, all the Fatimid objects are called jetons which suggests that Album is in the Balog camp. The first two jetons bear the name of the Fatimid Caliph al-Mustaʿlī (495–524/1101–1130). The remaining five are identified as contemporary forgeries. What these last five objects share is that none bear the name of a Fatimid caliph and they either lack inscriptions or those they have are illegible. Further study of additional Album auction lists featuring these objects revealed that this was a consistent pattern of usage. Fatimid glass disks which featured the name of a caliph, 97 in all, were categorized as simply jetons. Those objects which did not bear a caliphal name, 41 in all, were labeled as jetons but with the additional description of contemporary forgery or imitation.²⁸ The presence of a caliphal name is the apparent criteria for discernment between the two categories.

If you start with the Balog view that these objects were made to serve as petty coins, then the presence of a caliphal name may be understood to represent official production. Adding to that assumption the fact that one of the methods used to guarantee a fixed exchange rate for fiduciary money is to limit the number of these objects in circulation, then it would follow that the objects without caliphal names are imitations or forgeries. Each of them would represent an act of fraud in which the producer attempted to capture the higher extrinsic value of the official jetons by substituting the cheaply produced imitation in a transaction. And, like the first case study discussed above, the introduction of additional low value objects would disrupt the established exchange rates with higher value coins containing precious metal.

If, however, you start you start your analysis with the Bates view that these objects are coin weights, then the presence or absence of a caliphal name becomes less crucial. While admittedly the presence of such a name might be a marker of official production under sultanic sanction, the most important aspect of a weight is its mass. For the Bates camp, then, the weight of these surviving specimens is the crucial factor. These weights would need to be as

26 I thank Mike Berry at Stephen Album Rare Coins for providing me an electronic copy of this pricelist.

27 Objects 814148–814153 on the May 2009 pricelist.

28 Eighteen auction lists from December 2007 through January 2014 were examined. Once Album began to offer auction list in addition to pricelists, Fatimid glass objects appeared from auction 11 (September 2011) onwards. See www.stevealbum.com.

GLASS WEIGHTS - SPRING 2009

Revised May 14 2009
 Previously Listed Lots Have Been Sold

For Terms and Conditions see www.stevealburn.com





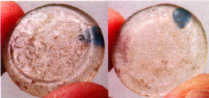







	<p>63259. ABBASID: Yazid b. Hatim, 762-769, glass weight (1.4g), B-429, weight for one third mithqal; inscribed <i>san'at kamil</i> ("made by Kamil") on reverse, vf, RR</p>	<p>\$250</p>		<p>814150. FATIMID: Anonymous, glass jeton (3.00g), ND, A-746A, 21mm, dark blue, opaque, contemporary forgery, g</p>	<p>\$40</p>
	<p>70025. UMAYYAD: Hayyan b. Shurayh, finance director, 717-721, Glass weight (11.87g), [Egypt], ND, B-40-43, inscribed <i>qist tin waf</i>, "a qist of figs, full measure", cast from the same die as Balog-42, a seal applied to a bag of figs, confirming the total weight of the figs, not the weight of the seal, ef, RR</p>	<p>\$750</p>		<p>814151. FATIMID: Anonymous, glass jeton, ND, A-746A, 20mm, blue, transparent, devitrifying, chipped, contemporary forgery with meaningless inscription, vf</p>	<p>\$45</p>
	<p>70032. BURJI MAMLUK: Zahir, 14th-15th C, Glass jeton (2.9g), [Egypt], ND, A-1046, yellow-gray, f-vf, R</p>	<p>\$125</p>		<p>814152. FATIMID: Anonymous, glass jeton (5.87g), ND, A-746A, 24mm, tan, opaque, contemporary forgery with little inscription, f-vf</p>	<p>\$60</p>
	<p>70033. BURJI MAMLUK: 'Abd Allah Ashrafi, 14th-15th C, Glass jeton (2.93g), [Egypt], ND, A-1046, yellow-gray, good vf, R</p>	<p>\$145</p>		<p>814153. FATIMID: Anonymous, glass jeton (2.86g), ND, A-746A, 23mm, green, transparent, contemporary forgery with illegible 2-line inscription, late Fatimid period, vf</p>	<p>\$85</p>
	<p>814148. FATIMID: al-Musta'li, 1094-1101, glass jeton, ND, A-728, B-348, 26mm, milky green, opaque, second line defaced or defective, f, R</p>	<p>\$100</p>		<p>814154. FATIMID: Anonymous, glass jeton (6.06g), ND, A-746A, 27mm, clear, transparent with occlusions, geometric design, contemporary forgery, vf, RR</p>	<p>\$80</p>
	<p>814149. FATIMID: al-Musta'li, 1094-1101, glass jeton (1.54g), ND, A-728, B-359, 11mm, turquoise, opaque, weak vf</p>	<p>\$90</p>		<p>814193. BURJI MAMLUK: Anonymous, glass jeton, ND, A-1046, 22mm, deep rose, translucent, with 4 milky white bands, citing <i>al-Afafi</i> (with an addition unread word), as NLC-6079ff, lovely vf</p>	<p>\$160</p>

FIGURE 9.5 Stephen Alburn "Glass Weights" pricelist, May 2009.

consistent as possible since they were how the value of the irregular-weight coins used in a transaction would be determined.

These individual weights would not be important for the Balog camp, however, since if they were fiduciary coins, they would pass by count. The presence or absence of more or less glass in these objects would not change the extrinsic value of the objects themselves. Figures 6 and 7 are frequency tables

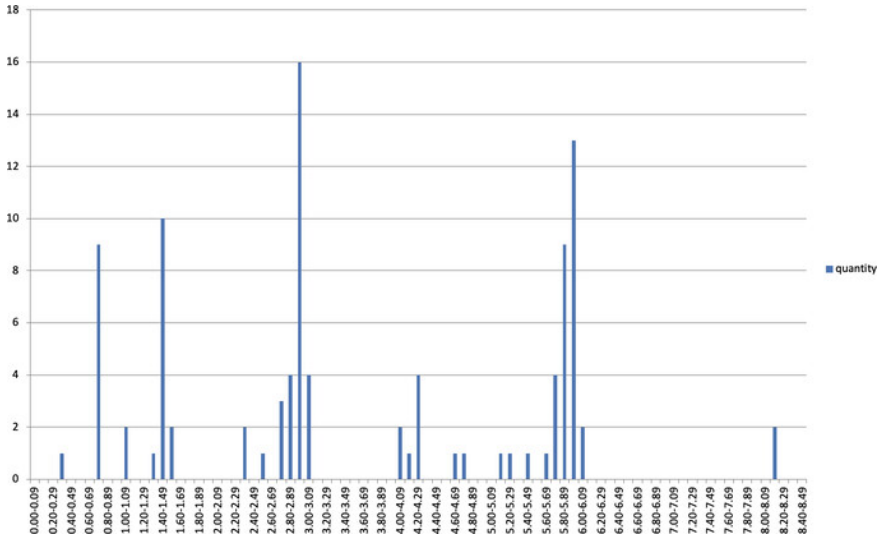


FIGURE 9.6 Frequency table A: Album's glass objects with caliphal names.

of the two Album data sets using his labels of jetons and contemporary forgeries/imitations. Frequency tables are a useful tool to discern patterns of weight distribution among like objects.²⁹ One axis (in this case the vertical) charts total numbers, and the other axis (in this case the horizontal) tracks increasing weight in set intervals. For both tables the horizontal axis increases from zero in 0.1g increments.

Figure 9.6 plots the weights of the 97 objects bearing the name of a Fatimid Caliph. There are clear peaks in the graph around the two intervals of 2.90–2.99g and 5.90–5.99g, with subsidiary peaks at the two intervals 0.70–0.79g and 1.40–1.49g. Two observations arise. The first is that these peaks suggest that these objects were prepared with some attention to metrological precision. Forty-eight of the coins fall in these intervals and another 22 are in those intervals which precede or follow those four. The second observation is that these four clusters are close to the expected weight values for the quarter dirham, half dirham, dirham and double dirham, assuming a dirham weight of slightly less than three grams.³⁰

29 For both tables, any specimens which were labeled as broken, chipped or otherwise damaged were excluded from the data sets.

30 When one examines the actual material evidence of medieval Islamic weights, the actual weight of any metrological unit varies from place to place and era to era. I do not believe the physical evidence allows for highly precise measurements for these units, see W.C.

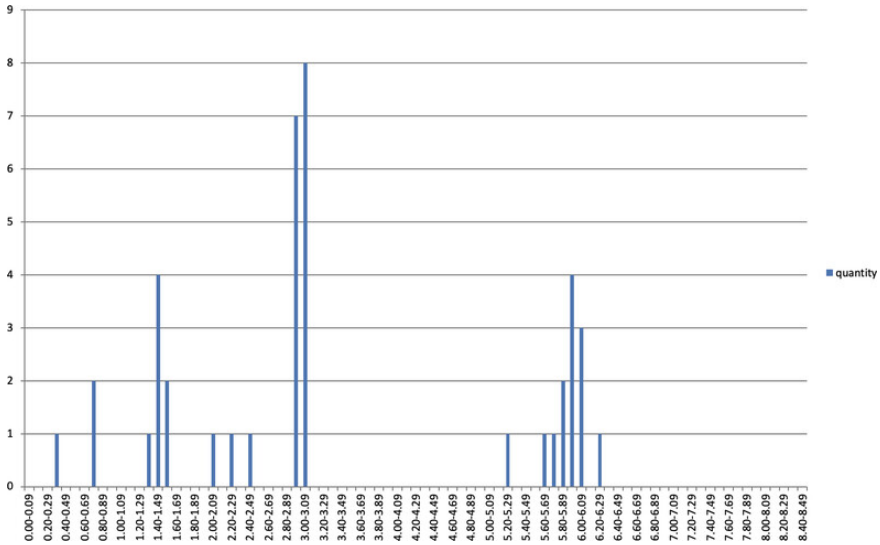


FIGURE 9.7 Frequency table B: Glass objects identified as contemporary forgeries or imitations

Figure 9.7 plots the weights of the 41 Fatimid jetons described in the auction lists as contemporary forgeries or imitations. These objects fall into almost the exact same clusters of metrological value as those found in Figure 9.6. The main difference is that the highest peak falls in the 3.00–3.09g interval, containing one more object than the 2.90–2.99g slot. (Given the small sample size, however, I am reluctant to read too much into a difference of one coin.) What is more significant for the discussion here, however, is that both sets of objects exhibit the same metrological patterns. If you accept the Bates view that these are coin weights, then both sets of objects were prepared with a level of metrological precision that would allow them to be used to weigh silver coins. The presence or absence of a caliphal name might still be an indicator of official versus unofficial production, the function of all the objects would be the same—to weigh the irregular-weight silver coins. As coin weights, the total number of these items would not matter since regardless of who produced them, they would not have a transactional value. Following the coin-weights school of thought, the objects lacking a caliph name would be contemporary, and perhaps even imitative, but could still have functioned as accurate coin weights due to their consistent weight. They may have been unofficially pro-

Schultz, “Mamluk metrology and the numismatic evidence,” 2003, pp. 55–79. It is safe to assume that for the Fatimid era the dirham weight unit was slightly less than three grams.

duced but they were not forgeries in that they were not produced to deceive someone. If they were then we would expect them to be lighter in weight. That would enable a different type of fraud, that of under-weighting a good. This admitted small data set would suggest that they are not underweight, and their ability to fulfill their function accurately would suggest that they are not fraudulent counterfeits.

5 Crusader Imitations of Ayyubid Dirhams

The final case study examined is based upon a more widely known set of objects. In the first decades of the 7th/13th century, the Crusader states of Outremer minted silver coins in imitation of their Ayyubid neighbors. Since examples of these coins were first published in 1952, several studies have addressed them.³¹ Thus the various reasons why they have been identified as Crusader imitations and not as authentic Ayyubid issues are not included here other than to repeat the oft-asserted assertions that distinguishing whether any individual coin in hand was minted by the Ayyubids or the Crusaders can be extremely difficult and that more study is needed of these coins.

This last discussion is based upon two series of these coins.³² One consists of those coins imitative of the dirhams of al-Zāhir Ġāzī of Aleppo 582–613/1186–1216.³³ Whether Ayyubid or Crusader-imitative, these coins are recognizable by their design which features a central frame defined by a six-pointed star. The outline of the star consists of three parts: a solid line, an interior line of dots, and an exterior solid line. The star itself is enclosed by a circle, and that circle is defined by the same three-part combination of line, dots, line. The central field of the star bears contains a two-line legend. The probable Crusader-

31 The following works establish the basic parameters of current knowledge: P. Balog, *The Coinage of the Ayyubids*, 1980, pp. 206–207 and 248; M.L. Bates, “Thirteenth century Crusader imitations of Ayyubid silver coinage: a preliminary survey,” 1974, pp. 393–409; M.L. Bates & D.M. Metcalf, “Crusader coinage with Arabic inscriptions,” 1989, pp. 421–473; S. Heidemann, “Economic growth and currency Ayyubid Palestine,” 2009, pp. 275–299; R. Irwin, “The supply of money and the direction of trade in thirteenth-century Syria,” 1980, pp. 73–104; R. Kool, “Currency and coins in the Frankish east (1099–1291),” 1999, pp. 273–279; A.G. Malloy, I.F. Preston, A.J. Seltman & A.G. Berman (eds), *Coins of the Crusader States*, 1994, pp. 133–137; and D.M. Metcalf, *The coinage of the Crusades and the Latin East in the Ashmolean museum Oxford*, 1995, pp. 98–106.

32 Not addressed here are the famous coins with Christian legends in Arabic, with or without a central cross. These coins date after the two types discussed here.

33 First described in M.L. Bates, “Thirteenth century Crusader imitations of Ayyubid silver coinage: a preliminary survey,” 1974, pp. 401–405.



FIGURE 9.8
Dirham of al-Zāhir Ġāzī, Ḥalab, 613 H.



FIGURE 9.9
Crusader imitation of dirham of al-Zāhir Ġāzī, Ḥalab, 62x H.

minted, imitative coins all have post 613 dates down to 629, thus overlapping with the reign of Ġāzī's son, al-'Azīz Muḥammad (613–634/1216–1236).³⁴ The second series of Crusader imitations were modeled after the dirhams bearing the name of al-Šāliḥ Ismā'īl, the Ayyubid ruler of Damascus (635/1237 and 637–643/1239–1245).³⁵ These coins feature a central field inscription surrounded by a linear square frame. That linear frame is itself bordered by a square of dots. The central field on both sides contains a three-line inscription.

One face of a specimen of an Ayyubid dirham of al-Zāhir Ġāzī is illustrated in figure 9.8, and the coin shown in figure 9.9 is a Crusader imitation of that coin type.³⁶ The coin in figure 9.8 is identified as an authentic Ayyubid dirham based on its date of 613 H, which is the last year of Ġāzī's reign. The coin in figure 9.9, however, is identified as a Crusader imitation due to its partial date of 62x H, several year's after Ġāzī's death.³⁷ Yet comparing these two images illus-

34 The earliest known silver coins minted in Aleppo by Muḥammad b. Ġāzī are dated 614. P. Balog, *The coinage of the Ayyubids*, 1980, type no. 696, p. 218.

35 These coins first described in P. Balog, "Études numismatiques de l'Égypte musulmane II," 1952, pp. 17–55.

36 Both coins are from a private collection.

37 Coins of this type feature a complete date with century, decade, and then year. The usage

trates how hard it can be to determine which series a coin belongs to. At the risk of simplistic reductionism, the imitative coin in figure 9.9 looks more like a typical Ayyubid dirham of the 7th/13th century than the apparently authentic one found in figure 9.8. Its legend is written in the usual thick script that one sees on hundreds of contemporary coins, while that of figure 9.9 is written in a thin and spindly script. It is only by deciphering the marginal legends that the distinguishing criterion of date is noted. As others have noted, if it is so challenging for modern numismatic scholars to distinguish between these coins, how did contemporary users do so?³⁸

That observation leads to the question of motive: Why were they produced? Given that we have no literary evidence yet, Crusader or Ayyubid, that provides an answer, an obvious next question is how could these coins have been used? One common conclusion is that they were produced to facilitate trade with the surrounding Muslim states. This interpretation in turn depends on two additional points. The first is that the silver coinage the Crusaders minted for their internal usage was radically different from these imitative coins. Over the course of the almost two centuries of the Latin East, most silver coins were either minted locally or imported from Europe were billon deniers.³⁹ These coins were of very low silver content and extremely light, usually less than one gram. They featured crude central images (often portraits, crosses, or simple outlines of buildings) surrounded by Latin inscriptions. By the early 7th/13th century, however, the dirhams of the surrounding Muslim states, however tended by much heavier and were made of a higher fineness of silver.⁴⁰ This leads to the second point. As Bates has pointed out, many silver coins were in circulation in the Ayyubid lands encircling the Crusaders. Not only could these coins originate from different Muslim states, within the Ayyubid domains themselves there were many different coin types (defined above as specific combinations of design, mint, date, ruler, etc.) in circulation.⁴¹ While these Ayyubid coins were of similar silver purity, their weight could vary from less than two grams

of the final x in the date 62x indicates that the digit for the year is either missing or not legible on this particular coin.

38 M.L. Bates & D.M. Metcalf, "Crusader coinage with Arabic inscriptions," 1989, p. 459.

39 See D.M. Metcalf, *The coinage of the Crusades and the Latin East in the Ashmolean museum Oxford*, 1995, pp. 1–21, 52–97.

40 M.L. Bates & D.M. Metcalf, "Crusader coinage with Arabic inscriptions," 1989, pp. 431–436.

41 It must need be pointed out that one cannot assume that coins were "current," meaning that they were only of value and in use during the reign of the sultan who issued them. Hoard evidence across the region indicates that coins spanning several decades could be in circulation at the same time.

to more than four. Given this reality, Bates has argued quite persuasively that Ayyubid coins circulated by weight and not by count.⁴²

All this suggests that it seems highly unlikely that Crusader deniers would have been accepted in commerce by Muslim traders, primarily due to their low total silver content. As Metcalf has pointed out, it is likely that an average Ayyubid dirham would contain 15 to 20 times more silver than an average billon denier.⁴³ The minting of the imitative dirhams would have provided a coinage that would have fit into the existing market realities of the Ayyubid period. They not only looked right in terms of design and wording, they felt right in terms of size and shape. Both the presumed-Crusader and presumed-Ayyubid coins are consistently inconsistent when it comes to weight, and following Bates' argument cited above, what would have mattered in any transaction involving these coins was the total weight of the coins changing hands and not their total number.⁴⁴

There seems little doubt that these Crusader coins were imitations of Ayyubid dirhams. But are they counterfeits? If you accept the interpretation summarized above that they were made to fit into the transactional practices of the Crusader's Muslim neighbors, then they were not counterfeits since there was no apparent intent to achieve economic deception or fraud. Yet that explanation holds only if you interpret the wider contextual numismatic evidence to reach the conclusion that in this time and in this region, silver coins were weighed rather than counted for most transactions.

6 Conclusion

The four case studies provided above focus on some of the problems of counterfeiting, forgery and imitation encountered when investigating the monetary

42 M.L. Bates & D.M. Metcalf, "Crusader coinage with Arabic inscriptions," 1989, p. 423.

43 D.M. Metcalf, *The coinage of the Crusades and the Latin East in the Ashmolean museum Oxford*, 1995, p. 99.

44 A metrological analysis of the dirhams linked to al-Şāliḥ Ismā'īl has shown that on average, the apparently authentic dirhams are about 0.10g heavier than the apparent imitations, M.L. Bates, "Thirteenth century Crusader imitations of Ayyubid silver coinage: a preliminary survey," 1974, p. 404. As Bates pointed out, however the size of the sample of authentic dirhams he was able to study was quite small, and certainly not the final word on the subject. The coin in figure 9.8 weighs 2.40g, and that in figure 9.9 weighs 2.94g. The metrological aspects of these both sets of coinages need additional study, as does the analysis of their silver fineness. Analyses of coin weights for both coinages are in my "The Metrological Context for Crusader Imitations of Ayyubid Dirhams," 2020, pp. 241–257.

and numismatic history of the medieval Dār al-Islām with the aim of introducing these problems to those who may not be familiar with numismatic techniques or approaches. By necessity, each has focused only on a small part—that relevant to the themes of this volume—of the wider problem involved. Nevertheless, they all illustrate the need to approach cases of suspected counterfeiting, forgery and imitation with a broad awareness of the local and contemporary situation (as knowable through the surviving evidence of all types), as well as with an appreciation for how your assumptions of how money works (circulates, is valued, etc.) will shape your conclusions.

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PART 6

Par-delà le Vrai & le Faux
/ Beyond the Real & the Fake



Du vrai et du faux dans les arts d'Afrique subsaharienne : la notion d'authenticité en question

Émilie Salaberry-Duhoux

Je ne suis pas un pays des Diallobé distinct,
face à un Occident distinct, et appréciant d'une tête froide
ce que je puis lui prendre et ce qu'il faut que je lui laisse en contre-
partie.

Je suis devenu les deux. Il n'y a pas une tête lucide entre deux termes
d'un choix.

Il y a une nature étrange, en détresse de n'être pas deux.

CHEIKH HAMIDOU KANE, *L'aventure ambiguë*, 1961.



1 Introduction

Nombre de préjugés ou idées tenaces concernant les arts d'Afrique subsaharienne ont été mis à mal ces dernières années par des chercheurs en sciences humaines. On a longtemps considéré par exemple que chaque « ethnologie » avait « un style » bien défini, une conception qui épousait le découpage ethnographique simpliste des pays africains opéré par les colonisateurs. Cette conception allait de pair avec un anonymat des productions artistiques lié à leur caractère sériel, à leur considération comme objet de curiosité avant leur reconnaissance tardive comme art. Étroitement liée à cette idée, se trouvait celle du caractère usuel des arts africains qui sous-entend qu'il n'existe pas « d'art pour l'art » et que nous avons plutôt affaire à de l'artisanat. Ces trois critères du style, du caractère sériel et de la destination usuelle des objets d'art africain sont en quelques sortes la pierre angulaire d'une définition des arts encore bien souvent nommés premiers ou primitifs et qui serait le gage de leur authenticité. Ces mêmes critères ont fondé les normes d'appréciation et de différenciation des objets produits sur le continent africain ainsi que leur cote actuelle au sein

d'un marché de l'art florissant. Ils ont guidé la constitution de nombre de collections de musées ou privées, et ont été théorisés au fil des décennies du xx^e s. pour être encore assez largement le cadre « scientifique » de référence. Cet article tendra justement à les mettre en perspective critique et, à la lumière d'études récentes dans les champs de l'histoire de l'art, de l'archéologie ou de l'anthropologie, tentera de mettre en évidence que la réalité culturelle des pays africains est bien plus complexe et que nombre d'objets et d'usages sortent de ce cadre établi par l'Occident. Abordant tour à tour la question du style, des modes et contextes de productions, d'usage et de circulation des œuvres africaines, nous tâcherons, tout en nous efforçant de définir les notions de vrai et de faux, d'interroger la notion d'authenticité des arts d'Afrique sub-saharienne. Nous verrons que le style n'est pas un critère d'appréciation fermé, figé et homogène propre à un groupe aux contours bien délimités mais que, au contraire, les identités sont fluctuantes.

Une attention particulière sera accordée aux contextes de production islamisés dans lesquels l'objet, davantage que l'écrit bien souvent absent, sera notre document d'étude privilégié. Objets usuels, ornementaux ou de culte, leur analyse formelle et l'appréhension des conditions de leur création et de leur usage sont révélateurs de mécanismes d'imbrications culturelles, d'influences, voire de métissages plus profonds. Ils sont les témoins éloquentes d'une histoire continentale longue, riche et éminemment complexe. Les quelques exemples choisis – mais bien d'autres existent – incarnent sous des angles divers, des arts de la relation à l'autre qui peut être le semblable, le voisin ou l'étranger.

Si les objets évoluent au fil des siècles au gré des rencontres, la délimitation des statuts entre objets « vrais » en usage, objets « faux » copies ou simple simulacre destinés à la vente, se fait de plus en plus complexe au fur et à mesure que les échanges s'intensifient durant la période coloniale puis dans l'ère post-coloniale et de mondialisation. Des cas étonnants de mise en usage de pièces touristiques ou importées d'autres continents achèvent de brouiller ces catégories et montrent l'ambivalence des œuvres produites dans la seconde moitié du xx^e s. et, à travers ces phénomènes, le caractère bien vivant de la création plastique africaine.

2 Une ethnie, un style ?

Nous nous attacherons pour commencer à la question des corrélations entre style et ethnie, qui est toujours le prisme de présentation des œuvres dans les parcours muséographiques et inventaires des musées détenteurs et qui a véri-

tablement fondé toute l'étude occidentale des arts africains au cours du xx^e s. Des recherches remettent en question cette approche binaire. En effet, des anthropologues tels que Jean-Loup Amselle ont mis en évidence la porosité de la notion d'ethnie et démontré qu'elle n'était pas un cadre bien délimité pour appréhender la réalité culturelle des pays africains.

Le travail de terrain mené par Jean-Loup Amselle au Sud du Mali, au Nord-Est de la Guinée et au Nord-Ouest de la Côte d'Ivoire, sur un ensemble de populations voisines : Peul, Bambara, Malinké, Senoufo et Minyanka a permis de reconsidérer trois notions capitales de l'anthropologie : celles d'ethnie, de culture et d'identité.

L'Afrique autrefois perçue comme un continent abritant plusieurs centaines d'ethnies aux langues, systèmes religieux, politiques et économiques fixes et distincts, apparaîtrait alors, bien au contraire, comme perméable aux influences et aux changements. Ses enquêtes de terrain ont montré en effet que les appartenances ethniques, culturelles et identitaires étaient extrêmement souples avant la colonisation et que : « on n'était pas Peul, Bambara ou Malinké de toute éternité, mais qu'on le devenait. De multiples changements d'identité ont pu ainsi être observés dans le domaine ethnique, religieux, politique et économique. Des Peuls pouvaient ainsi devenir Bambaras, puis Malinkés, et inversement ; des païens devenir musulmans, puis retourner au paganisme ; des sociétés villageoises devenir des royaumes, puis retomber dans l'anarchie ; des sociétés, produisant pour leurs stricts besoins, pouvaient s'ouvrir au marché, puis se replier en autarcie »¹. Ces « logiques métisses » ont été mises en avant pour attirer l'attention sur le caractère composite de chaque culture, de chaque identité ou de chaque forme artistique avant la conquête coloniale de l'Afrique, prédisposant le continent, contrairement aux idées reçues, à l'ouverture sur la « modernité » coloniale et postcoloniale.

Cette perméabilité culturelle est manifeste dans plusieurs « icônes » des arts africains. Prenons tout d'abord le cas des masques baoulé. Une légende raconte que la Reine Abla Pakou, à la suite d'un conflit de succession, emmena ses partisans du peuple Assabou vers l'ouest, en partant de Denkyra, poursuivie par ses ennemis. Arrêtés par les eaux impassibles de la Comoé, la Reine sacrifia son enfant et les eaux se séparèrent. Alors le peuple put traverser en toute sécurité. D'autres versions affirment que des crocodiles ou hippopotames apparurent, permettant à la Reine et ses fidèles de traverser². Les migrants se seraient

1 J.-L. Amselle, *Afrique, la croisée des mondes*, 2015, p. 14-20.

2 S. Vogel, *L'art Baoulé, du visible et de l'invisible*, 1999, p. 34.

d'abord dirigés vers la ville de Tiassalé, puis seraient allés au nord, près de Bouaké. Certaines versions évoquent le site de Gosan, qui était un campement Gouro vers le xvii^e s., ce qui prouverait que la région était alors habitée par des peuples mandé³.

Longtemps on a réduit l'histoire des migrations baoulé à celle des Assabou du milieu du xviii^e s., qui fut la dernière. Le groupe des Baoulé est en fait une création récente, agglomérat de populations de migrants venus du Ghana avec des populations autochtones Senoufo, Gouro et Malinké installées depuis longtemps dans leur zone d'implantation, au centre de la Côte d'Ivoire. La société baoulé est généralement décrite comme une société acéphale. On constate que les populations de migrants akan ne construisaient pas dans ces régions leur large structure étatique centralisée d'origine. La plupart des sources décrivent un royaume très décentralisé, plus proche d'une confédération de tribus jouissant chacune d'une certaine autonomie. Cela est encore visible aujourd'hui par le fait que le peuple est constitué de sous-groupes attachés à leur identité : les Elomue du secteur de Tiassalé, les Alangira de Dimbokro, les Agba Bonu de Bocanda, les Abe de Mbahiakro, les Satikran de Botro, les Nzipri de Didiévi, d'autres encore⁴.

Chez les Akan, on dénombre très peu d'institutions de masques et les rares existants sont sans doute, selon René Bravmann, plutôt liés à la présence des populations Gur et mandingues (groupes de langue mandé) à la frontière du Ghana⁵. *A contrario*, les traditions masquées sont nombreuses chez les peuples installés en territoire baoulé actuel et assimilés, ou chez leurs voisins du Sud-Ouest (Gouro, Yaure), de l'Ouest (Wan, Mona) et du Nord (Senoufo). Les immigrants Akan qui formeront le peuple baoulé en s'installant dans la région centre de la Côte d'Ivoire ont donc probablement adopté un certain nombre de traditions masquées des populations rencontrées dans la région. D'ailleurs, comme le souligne Alain-Michel Boyer, ces derniers ont toujours considéré que les cultes achetés à des voisins étaient plus puissants⁶.

Les deux masques ici reproduits, l'un d'origine Gouro [Fig. 10.1] et l'autre Baoulé [Fig. 10.2] illustrent bien la proximité stylistique existant entre les œuvres créées par ces groupes voisins : les visages sont de forme effilée et se terminent en pointe, les chevelures très élaborées, les nez longs et fins à l'arête saillante, les bouches mutines et les patines noires brillantes.

3 A.-M. Boyer, *Baule*, 2008, p. 11.

4 A.-M. Boyer, *Baule*, 2008, p. 6.

5 R. Bravmann, *Islam and Tribal Art in West Africa*, 1979.

6 R. Bravmann, *Islam and Tribal Art in West Africa*, 1979, p. 14.



FIGURE 10.1 Masque Gouro, Côte d'Ivoire. Bois, pigments. Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle de La Rochelle.

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FIGURE 10.2 Masque Baoulé, Côte d'Ivoire. Bois à patine noire. Musée d'Angoulême. Philippe Zandvliet.

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Ainsi, nous pouvons dire que l'art baoulé résulte de la fusion de styles multiples, qui se rassemblèrent dans ce creuset. Les travaux de Suzanne Vogel sur le statut des artistes baoulé et les questions de style, plutôt fondés sur l'étude de la statuaire anthropomorphe et des objets usuels et d'apparat, ont mis en évidence que la majorité des artistes rencontrés, ce, dans les années 1968, étaient des autodidactes, le métier étant non héréditaire. Dans cette société aux structures politico-sociales souples où l'individualisme et la tolérance dominent, une relative liberté existe pour déterminer la fonction et la forme des objets. Par ailleurs, la grande mobilité des artistes et des commanditaires, ainsi que la possibilité de commander dans son village une réplique d'un objet rapporté d'une autre région, engendre paradoxalement une certaine homogénéité stylistique formant le style baoulé, résultat du mélange de styles épars individuels.

Il n'y a donc pas un style par «ethnie» – cette notion même devant être reconsidérée – défini dès la formation d'un groupe mais des styles résultants de croisements culturels ou d'emprunts dans un continent où les mobilités des personnes et des objets sont constantes.

Des chercheurs tels que Sidney Littlefield Kasfir⁷ ou encore Peter Mark⁸ ont très justement analysé cette construction coloniale des styles qui composeraient une histoire des arts africains. Peter Mark souligne et met en évidence la construction occidentale de la notion d'art africain qui s'appuie sur des critères établis à l'aune d'une vision, celle de l'Occident. Rappelons que cette dernière est nourrie des théories évolutionnistes du xix^e s., plaçant les sociétés africaines dans un état primitif de développement à rapprocher de celui des hommes préhistoriques. Nous serions donc en dehors de l'Histoire et face à des objets, devenus œuvres au début du xx^e s. – par le regard curieux ou fascinés de nos avant-gardes artistiques – qui puisent leur forme d'un cadre de production et d'usage des plus anciens, dont seule la colonisation serait venue perturber la permanence et la pureté originelle. De là ce découpage encore très présent entre un art «traditionnel» issu de ce supposé long lignage et des formes modernes inauthentiques, corrompues par le temps colonial. Les modalités de la collecte des objets arrivés avant et pendant la colonisation dans nos musées, dissociés d'un nom d'artiste, ont contribué à installer cette idée d'une permanence des formes et d'un carcan fermement établi, elles ont conditionné la lecture devenue la norme des productions matérielles africaines au départ perçues comme des curiosités puis des documents ethnographiques et enfin des

7 S. Littlefield Kasfir, «One tribe, One Style? Paradigms in the Historiography of African Art Author(s)», 1984.

8 P. Mark, «Est-ce que l'art africain existe?» in *Revue française d'histoire d'outre-mer*, tome 85, n° 318, 1^{er} trimestre 1998.

œuvres d'art. De permanence il n'y en a guère, ni dans les formes ni au sein des sociétés productrices, l'histoire du continent africain étant au contraire marquée par des dynamiques migratoires et des échanges constants.

3 Des formes et des usages transfrontaliers, des artistes mobiles

La question de la mobilité des hommes est une donnée à mettre en exergue avec insistance. Pendant longtemps, la perception des populations africaines, considérées comme des populations fixes géographiquement et immobiles en terme de structuration sociale et politique, a prévalu et, avec elle, l'idée d'un immobilisme des formes et d'une pérennité des usages. Cette vision sous-tendait celle de cultures sans véritable mutation à travers les siècles.

Bien au contraire, des recherches telles celles menées par Évelyne Pinault-Paradis dans le cadre de sa thèse de doctorat soutenue en 2001⁹, sont un témoignage probant de la mobilité non seulement des personnes, mais aussi des formes et des usages. Sa démonstration prend appui sur un important corpus d'objets conservés en différents points du monde, que nous ne pouvons ici faire figurer mais dont nous présentons quelques exemples.

Évelyne Pinault-Paradis a fait le constat du pluralisme cohérent des masques heaumes horizontaux du Haut Niger au Mali, au Centre-Ouest du Ghana, en intégrant la Côte d'Ivoire. Quelles sont les populations concernées par cette étude ? Il s'agit de groupes Mandé, Gur et Akan. Les Mandé se divisent en deux sous-groupes, les Mandé du Nord ou Manding (Malinke, Bamana) et les Mandé du Sud (Gouro, Wan), implantés au niveau de la Côte d'Ivoire actuelle. Le second ensemble est dit « voltaïque » et comprend notamment les Sénoufo et les Koulango installés entre le fleuve Volta et la Comoé. Enfin, vient l'ensemble akan situé à l'Est et dans l'actuel Ghana comprenant les Abron et Anyi, au Centre les Baoulé et au Sud ceux appelés « les lagunaires ».

La question posée par Évelyne Pinault-Paradis dans ses travaux est celle du mécanisme complexe de la mobilité artistique et du processus d'emprunt. L'axe de diffusion observé est nord-sud. Un acteur important se détache, à savoir le forgeron, et les motivations sont sociales, politiques et économiques. L'hypothèse que l'auteur défend et qu'elle parvient à étayer est que cette expansion a à voir avec l'aire d'influence culturelle de l'Empire du Mali et les itinéraires commerciaux des rives du Niger aux régions forestières du Ghana et de la Côte d'Ivoire.

9 É. Pinault-Paradis, « De la forme à l'histoire. Les masques heaumes horizontaux à l'ouest des Volta : étude comparative, plastique et sémantique », 2001.

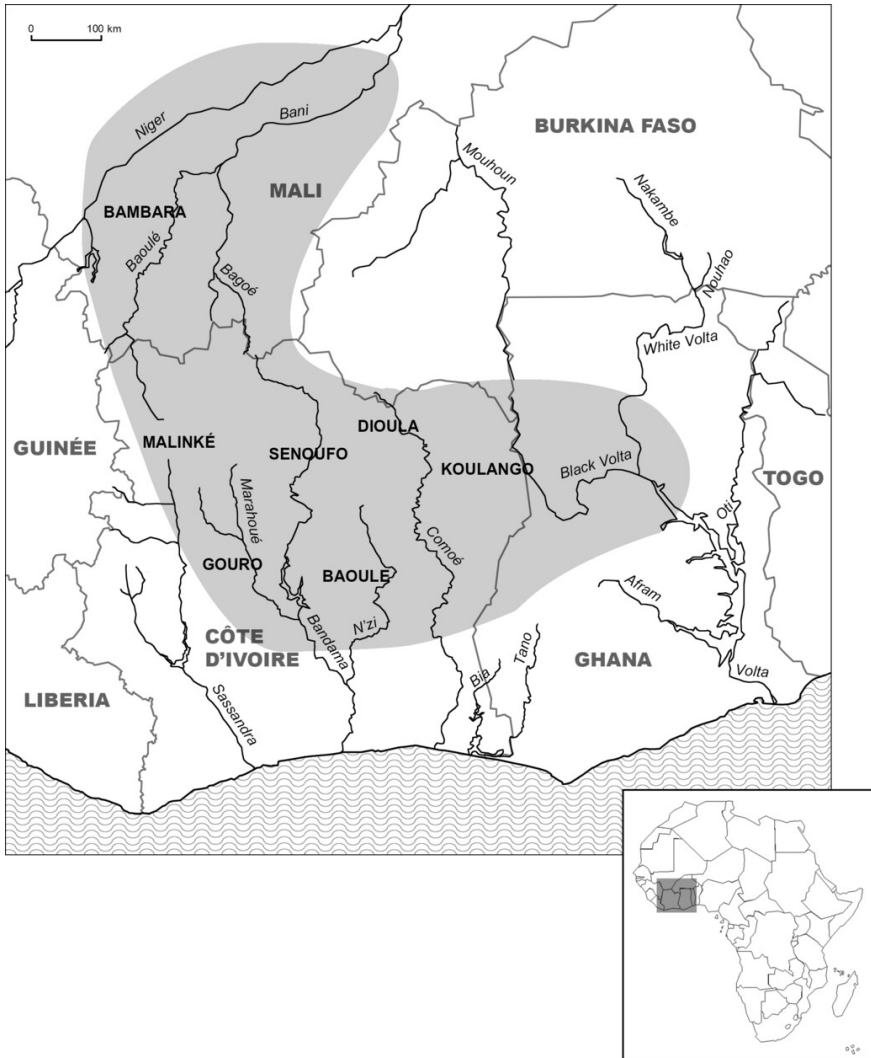


FIGURE 10.3 Champ d'étude d'Évelyne Pinault-Paradis. Aire d'extension des masques heaumes.

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C'est sur l'étude de l'art dit sénoufo, bambara, baoulé et koulango que l'auteur appuie sa démonstration. Plus précisément, elle a porté son attention sur un ensemble de masques heaumes, à savoir: les masques komo, nama et kono bamana [Fig. 10.4], le masque poniugo sénoufo (lui-même décliné en 5 variantes dont le korobla) [Fig. 10.5], le masque gyé gourou [Fig. 10.6], les masques goli, bonu amuen et dyé baoulé [Fig. 10.7], ainsi que le masque numu gbain (dont

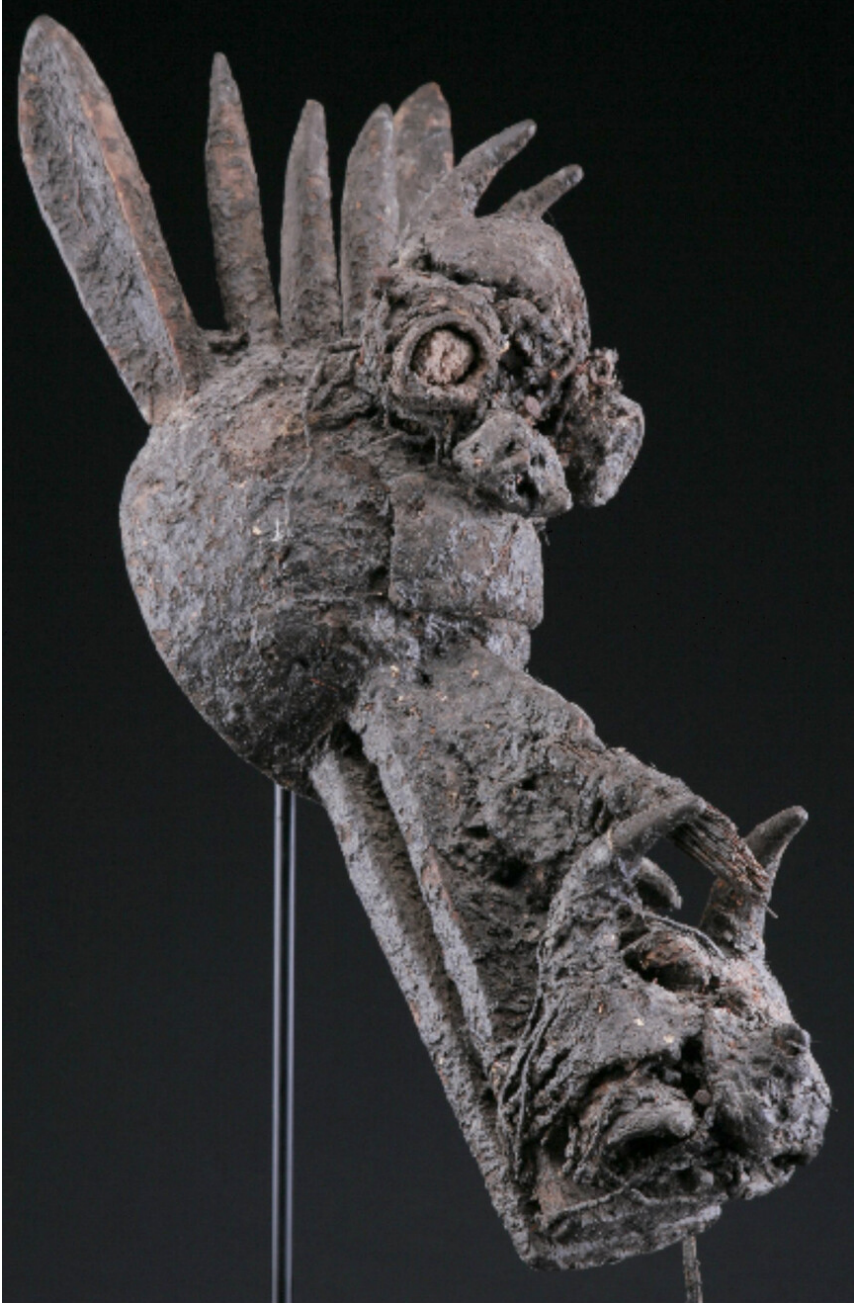


FIGURE 10.4 Masque du komo Bamana, Mali. Bois, fibres, cornes, terre et matières sacrificielles diverses. Collection privée.

© COLLECTION SARGOS



FIGURE 10.5 Masque Poniugo, Senoufo, région de Korogho, Côte d'Ivoire. Bois, poils, peau, résine. Muséum d'histoire naturelle de La Rochelle.

© MUSÉUM D'HISTOIRE NATURELLE DE LA ROCHELLE

très peu d'exemples sont conservés). Ce dernier est d'ailleurs partagé par plusieurs populations de la région frontalière autour de Bondoukou, à l'Est de la Côte d'Ivoire jusqu'à Wonchi, au Centre Ouest du Ghana et au Nord de la Volta Noire, les Koulango, les Degha, Nafana, Hwela islamisés et par des groupes d'immigrants mandé comme les Dyula, commerçants islamisés, les forgerons Numu et les Ligbi islamisés.

L'auteur met en évidence que le principe de construction de ces objets est identique. Ils sont échafaudés parallèlement à une base heaume, puis s'organisent en forme tripartite horizontale, sur la règle d'une image composite. L'analyse plastique de son corpus fait ressortir l'interrelation entre ces masques du point de vue formel mais en même temps la présence de détails propres à chaque groupe. Le masque baoulé [Fig. 10.7] horizontal a par exemple une forte ressemblance avec ceux des Senoufo [Fig. 10.5], mais le choix récurrent de la figure de la panthère, sujet fréquent dans l'art akan, lié à la notion de chefferie politique, matérialise leur origine différente akan. On constate également l'importance de l'encroûtement, de surcharge de matériaux hétéroclites comme les plumes et les piquants de porc-épic plus fréquents sur les masques bamana. En revanche, des influences mutuelles, au niveau de ces détails de composition sont perceptibles, surtout dans les zones frontalières. Ainsi, certains masques du komo bamana, montrent une influence senoufo par l'intégration de longues mâchoires non dentées, étroites et parallèles tandis que des masques korobla senoufo sont faits dans le style bamana avec représentations d'animaux à quatre pattes, inhabituelles dans l'art senoufo.



FIGURE 10.6 Masque Gouro, Côte d'Ivoire. Bois, pigments. Collection privée.
© COLLECTION SARGOS



FIGURE 10.7 Masque Baoulé, Côte d'Ivoire. Bois, pigments. Collection privée.
© COLLECTION SARGOS

L'interrelation de ces masques ne se situe pas uniquement au niveau formel mais aussi au niveau symbolique puisque l'on y retrouve les références aux mythes de création via la figuration des animaux mythiques, tel le serpent, référence au python fo chez les Senoufo, qui est l'un des cinq animaux primordiaux. L'auteur, au cours de son étude a pu d'ailleurs découvrir des représentations partagées de ces animaux: c'est justement le cas de la figure du serpent qui apparaît sur un masque bonu amuen baoulé alors qu'il ne fait pas partie du répertoire iconographique akan, preuve des influences exercées entre les groupes.

Ce qui est commun également à ces masques c'est qu'ils s'accompagnent d'un imposant costume de fibres qui cache complètement le porteur et dissimule toute apparence humaine, qu'ils se manifestent dans une même ambiance sonore (le choix des instruments est commun) et que la mouvance, mais aussi le registre thématique, sont semblables. C'est donc à un rituel complet commun que nous avons à faire, ce qui indique que nous sommes en présence des mêmes figures masquées.

Pour chaque masque, l'auteur a fait l'étude de leur place respective au sein des ensembles de masques de chaque société. Il apparaît à chaque fois, sauf dans le cas des masques bamana, que nous sommes face à des objets puissants, interdits aux femmes et aux non-initiés. Ce sont des masques (dié, gyé, korobla et gbain) qui se dégagent de l'ensemble des autres masques heaumes horizontaux. La raison de sa supériorité et de sa puissance serait sa référence au temps du mythe où la dissociation entre l'homme et l'animal n'a pas encore été opérée. Ces masques matérialisent l'opposition existante entre le monde de la brousse et le monde civilisé, figuré par les masques anthropomorphes. Ils sont un instrument de puissance et de pouvoir pour ceux qui les possèdent et ont trois fonctions essentielles: la chasse aux sorciers, l'accompagnement des rites funéraires et le contrôle social.

L'image de la hyène est plus particulièrement rattachée à ce type de masque et ce en lien avec ses fonctions, car elle est un symbole du monde de la brousse et une référence à la perception du forgeron-sculpteur auquel on prête des facultés de sorcellerie et notamment sa capacité à se transformer en hyène. La hyène mythique des Mandé est un personnage central de la cosmogonie bamana et un symbole de l'Empire du Mali.

Ce qui se matérialise à travers ce corpus d'objets, c'est un phénomène de création dans la continuité, d'évolution et de transformation dans une histoire n'impliquant pas nécessairement l'abandon et le remplacement de la formule d'origine. Le cas est visible chez les Baoulé, Senoufo, Gouro et Koulango, où l'on observe la persistance de masques anciens, avec peu d'évolution de la forme, les écarts formels se concentrant dans le détail. Dans le même temps, certains

masques comme le dié sont devenus rares, utilisés par une petite fraction de la population baoulé, tandis que d'autres comme le korobla, de la famille des masques poniugo, sont toujours très présents chez les Senoufo, la forme n'ayant été que très peu modifiée, les évolutions se situant davantage au niveau des accessoires.

L'étude d'Évelyne Pinault-Paradis est à la fois intra- et trans-ethnique, elle procède à une analyse formelle et symbolique comparative à partir desquelles elle cherche à relever sur le plan synchronique des éléments structuraux faisant référence à l'organisation sociale et, sur le plan diachronique, une éventuelle évolution avec emprunts, adjonctions ou abandons d'éléments formels.

Il est important de souligner que l'artiste travaille dans le cadre de commandes avec un lexique formel donné et une image mentale fournie par la formation qu'il a reçue. La liberté intervient davantage dans les détails, dans les choix d'agencements des éléments selon sa personnalité ainsi que son habileté ou sa maladresse. Cette manière propre à l'artiste d'interpréter et de réaliser les images engendre des styles qui peuvent ensuite devenir la marque d'ateliers ou de maîtres individualisés. Les masques sont le produit de faits sociaux et religieux mêlés, de ce fait l'expansion d'un rite complet mise en évidence par Évelyne Pinault-Paradis ne peut être le simple résultat de voisinages mais est nécessairement liée à des facteurs socio-historiques.

Elle fait alors l'hypothèse d'une diffusion liée à la circulation des forgerons-sculpteurs dans les différents groupes étudiés, dont l'origine se situe dans un foyer au Mali. La structuration de l'artisanat en caste remonte à l'époque de l'Empire du Mali. C'est également l'époque d'un grand essor commercial et de la diffusion de produits de l'artisanat à travers l'Afrique.

On situe le développement de l'Empire du Mali au *xiii^e s.*, époque où le Roi Soumangourou Kanté, roi Soussou rattaché au groupe des Mandé, originaire de l'Est du Haut Sénégal conquiert l'ancien Ghana puis s'attaque à un Royaume mandé fondé dans la région du Haut Niger par le clan des Keita. En 1235, Soundiata, à la tête des Keita vainc à son tour Soumangourou. Les Soussou auraient alors migré vers le Fouta-Djalou, à l'Ouest des sources du Niger et du Sénégal, et atteignent le littoral au *xviii^e s.* D'autres migrations de groupes mandé, nombreuses, ont lieu, vers des zones peu peuplées. Sur cette même période, on assiste à la dissémination de marchands convertis à l'islam qui forment des réseaux puissants s'étendant de l'Atlantique au pays haoussa au nord du Nigéria actuel. Le nom de Dioula s'applique aux marchands mandé qui se livrent au commerce de la cola et de l'or à partir du *xiv^e s.* Soundiata Keita devient le maître des pays mandé et fonde l'Empire du Mali. Son fils Mansa Moussa (1312-1337), par ailleurs le premier mansa (roi) à faire le pèlerinage à La Mecque, étend l'Empire jusqu'à l'Atlantique et conquiert

la boucle du Niger, marquant son apogée. Son cœur se situe au niveau des villes de Gao, Niani la capitale et Djenné. L'autorité repose sur une armée puissante et des gouverneurs nommés en région, ainsi que sur l'appui de rois ou chefs traditionnels préexistants à la conquête, qui versent des tributs annuels et fournissent des troupes. C'est la puissance centralisée qui permet le maintien de l'Empire. Sa richesse est fondée sur le commerce de l'or vers le nord, à travers le Sahara, échangé contre le sel et les produits de luxe ou d'intérêt militaire comme les chevaux. De nombreux esclaves faits prisonniers pendant les guerres de conquête transitent également par ces voies commerciales, ils servent de main d'œuvre ou de biens d'échange. Des querelles de succession, qui fragilisent le pouvoir central, conduisent au déclin de l'Empire à partir de 1360. L'expansion mandé court sur cinq siècles, du xiii^e au xviii^e s., elle est liée à l'essor puis au déclin de l'Empire du Mali. Elle s'intensifie avec le déclin de cet Empire qui perd ses possessions les plus à l'est de la boucle du Niger.

L'itinéraire de diffusion des masques suit celui des Mandé avec pour acteur principal le forgeron-sculpteur itinérant, créateur et utilisateur de cette figure masquée. Il part du Nord-Est de la région de Dia, dans le Macina, avant de longer le fleuve Niger jusqu'à Djenné puis de descendre vers le sud jusqu'à Begho, au Ghana, autour des xiv-xv^e s. et de pénétrer la Côte d'Ivoire par l'intermédiaire des Mandé-Dioula et des forgerons Numu. Les premières installations des forgerons Numu ont lieu dans la région de Bondoukou, puis en région Senoufo, chez lesquels les premiers témoignages de cette tradition masquée indiquent qu'elle était entre les mains des Mandé-Dioula, enfin en pays baoulé et gouro.

Les fonctions de maintien de l'ordre de ces masques ont sans doute facilité leur adoption car partout, la quête de l'efficacité pour lutter contre la sorcellerie et les fléaux est présente. Par ailleurs, ils jouent un rôle de formation de l'identité collective en palliant le caractère segmentaire de l'organisation territoriale engendrée par cet ordre guerrier et sont donc un outil d'unification des communautés mandingues hétéroclites. Le Gyé gouro, dié baoulé, korobla senoufo, gbain de la région pluri-ethnique de Bondoukou et du Centre-Ouest du Ghana peuvent être considérés enfin comme descendants du komo bamana, rituel véhiculé et utilisé comme instrument de pouvoir par les marchands et forgerons mandé qui circulaient sur les routes de commerce du Mali à la Côte d'Ivoire en passant par le Ghana.

Cette passionnante et très scrupuleuse étude opère, comme le dit son auteur, un véritable retournement de point de vue par rapport à celui d'un William Fagg, qui écrivait :

sur le plan artistique, la forme est un univers en soi [...] ces univers sont réellement fermés l'un à l'autre et leur horizon artistique s'arrête à leurs propres frontières.¹⁰

Ou encore :

On ne peut, certes, parler de pluralité que si ces univers sont fermés l'un à l'autre, et si leur horizon artistique s'arrête à leurs propres frontières. Or ceci semble être un trait caractéristique de la société tribale : la tribu est un groupe fermé, exclusif, pour lequel l'art est un moyen, parmi d'autres, d'exprimer sa solidarité interne et son autarcie, et, inversement, de se différencier de tous les autres groupes.¹¹

Ces recherches se placent davantage dans la veine des travaux menés par René Bravmann et Philippe Ravenhill¹², qui poussent à envisager les objets dans le contexte régional dépassant le cadre des frontières ethniques héritées de l'époque coloniale. Ainsi, comme ils le soulignent, si on considère un ensemble plus vaste, on perçoit un tissu relationnel sur lequel les formes confrontées se répondent les unes aux autres par un jeu d'oppositions et de similitudes. L'histoire des styles peut alors s'envisager de la manière dont le préconise Louis Perrois, telle :

une trame à plusieurs niveaux, d'un dynamisme constant dans le temps et dans l'espace, dont les éléments seraient plus ou moins perméables entre eux.¹³

4 Des œuvres métisses

Les premiers exemples relatés démontrent que le continent africain a toujours été un continent ouvert sur le monde, traversé par des hommes d'origines culturelles variées qui ont contribué à essaimer des idées, des formes et des usages nouveaux. On constate à travers les études des œuvres produites (masques, statues, parures corporelles ou objets utilitaires) qui sont, pour les chercheurs

10 W. Fagg, *Sculpture africaine*, 1965.

11 W. Fagg, *Sculptures africaines I Le Bassin du Niger*, 1966, p. 5.

12 R. Bravmann, *Islam and Tribal Art in West Africa*, 1979.

13 L. Perrois, *Pour une anthropologie des arts de l'Afrique Noire dans la collection Barbier-Mueller*, 1988, p. 42.

spécialisés sur l'Afrique, les principaux documents de travail pour appréhender véritablement l'histoire du continent, que nous assistons dans chaque cas non pas à un remploi brut d'un « produit » étranger mais bien à une absorption en profondeur d'une ou plusieurs facettes de ces biens exogènes. Les mutations des sociétés africaines liées à la pénétration de l'islam sur le continent et à la colonisation ont ainsi engendré la production d'objets métis, syncrétiques qui viennent brouiller la vision « puriste », « primitiviste », pourrait-on dire qui prévaut dans l'appréciation de l'authenticité des œuvres d'art africain.

Ce sont les Arabes qui propagent eux-mêmes, dès le vii^e s., l'islam sur le continent africain. Cette religion gagne d'abord l'Égypte, le Maghreb, la moyenne vallée du Nil et les côtes orientales de l'Afrique. L'islamisation de l'Afrique dite soudanaise, i. e. du Sénégal au Tchad, est postérieure à l'An Mil et se fait de manière très progressive. Elle débute avec le commerce transsaharien, puis connaît deux périodes d'accélération, aux xviii^e-xix^e s. d'abord, époque de renouveau de l'islam, puis au xx^e s. lorsque les autorités coloniales prennent appui sur les structures sociales musulmanes pour encadrer la population. Sa progression se poursuit aujourd'hui. Les conversions prennent souvent la forme d'une adoption, la religion nouvelle se glissant pour partie dans un substrat culturel préexistant. Cette ouverture vers l'Orient via l'islam se double d'échanges commerciaux nombreux avec le Moyen- et l'Extrême-Orient, dès la fin du 1^{er} millénaire après Jésus-Christ. Ces contacts s'intensifient au cours de l'époque coloniale, les puissances occidentales achevant le rapprochement entre les différentes côtes de l'océan Indien.

Les arts africains pré- et post-coloniaux sont donc des arts de la relation comme le dit Jean-Loup Amselle et non la figure d'un passé maintenu intact¹⁴. Les cultures et les arts africains ont en effet constamment témoigné d'une grande ouverture vers l'extérieur et ont toujours été porteurs d'une historicité liée à leur insertion dans de grands courants d'échanges commerciaux et dans des relations entre formations politiques de poids inégal. Face à la vision « primitiviste » des arts africains, il faut au contraire mettre en évidence leur très grande adaptabilité à des conjonctures nouvelles, et notamment à la colonisation. Bien des statues et des masques que l'on qualifie de « traditionnels » ont été produits à destination des Européens, et cela dès le début des contacts. D'autres objets témoignent quant à eux de l'impact sur la création africaine de ces échanges avec l'Occident. Ce phénomène transparaît dans des usages de matériaux comme le laiton, la perle de verre ou des produits manufacturés au

14 J.-L. Amselle, *Afrique, la croisée des mondes*, 2015, p. 14-20.

cœur des transactions commerciales ou dans l'apparition de formes nouvelles issues notamment du Christianisme.

Les statuettes funéraires en terre cuite de la Côte de l'Or sont, par exemple, un probable témoignage d'une première christianisation¹⁵. Les terres cuites funéraires dites « akan » proviennent du Ghana et du Sud-Est de la Côte d'Ivoire [Fig. 10.8]. Elles ont été collectées et décrites dès la première moitié du xx^e s. Timothy Garrard avança en 1984 l'hypothèse que ces statuettes funéraires étaient issues de contacts, à partir de la fin du xv^e s., avec les Portugais et leurs pratiques missionnaires¹⁶.

Les statuettes funéraires s'inscrivent dans des pratiques encore décrites au début du xx^e s. À la mort d'une personne, la potière confectionne le portrait idéalisé du défunt en terre cuite, qui est ensuite peint et paré de linges avant d'être transporté en procession dans un lieu particulier où sont déjà assemblées les représentations des membres défunts du lignage. Des libations et des offrandes lui sont alors offertes. Tous les ans, le jour de la fête de l'igname, les villageois vont sur le site afin de rendre hommage à leurs ancêtres représentés par ces statues.

Si les sites à statuettes funéraires présents sur les côtes sont mentionnés par les textes de Pieter de Marees dès 1602, ce n'est qu'au xx^e s., grâce aux découvertes archéologiques, que l'on met au jour la présence de sites à l'intérieur des terres. L'identification de ces derniers (un peu plus de 70) grâce à différentes sources, textes anciens, traditions orales et fouilles, permet de dessiner une carte sur laquelle on peut constater une concentration de sites sur la côte et le long de quelques axes intérieurs, vers les sites aurifères. Les statues ne livrant pas d'indications chronologiques fiables et précises, c'est l'analyse des contextes archéologiques qui fournit des indicateurs chronologiques. Ainsi, les archéologues proposent, pour les sites à l'intérieur des terres, quelques dates toutes postérieures au contact des populations côtières avec les Européens. De plus, la présence de matériel occidental (bouteilles en verre ou pipes) accompagnant les sculptures sur les sites intérieurs conforte l'hypothèse de Garrard selon laquelle ce phénomène est d'origine côtière et postérieur à l'arrivée des Européens au xv^e s. Le premier fort, Saint Georges de la Mine, est élevé en 1482 sur la Côte d'Or afin de détourner l'or des mines situées à l'intérieur du pays, jusque-là emporté vers le nord par les caravanes. Dans les forts, les Portugais transposent leur mode de vie et, la diffusion de la religion catholique étant le moteur officiel de l'intrusion de l'Europe en Afrique, bâtissent des lieux de culte

15 J. Polet & N. l'Haridon, « Les statuettes funéraires en terre cuite de la Côte de l'Or témoignent-elles d'une première christianisation ? », 2005, p. 65-86.

16 T. F. Garrard, « Figurine Cults of the Southern Akan », 1984, p. 167-187.

dès 1503. Or, en associant sur une même carte les sites de statues funéraires, l'emplacement des forts et des édifices religieux, on constate un regroupement à Elmina, Mori et Axim, ainsi que l'existence de sites peu éloignés des forts. On peut remarquer aussi que les sites s'égrènent le long des voies commerciales, des chemins conduisant des régions aurifères aux forts ou autres lieux d'exportation (Côte d'Ivoire). Plus on s'éloigne de l'Atlantique – et de l'influence des Européens, plus les sites se font rares.

Pour afficher la puissance de Dieu, pour convertir la population par des démonstrations publiques, les Portugais importaient tout le matériel liturgique nécessaire, dont des statues de saints qui étaient exposées lors de grandes processions. Elles étaient alors parées de vêtements en soie de couleur vive, de bijoux, disposées sur des palanquins et promenées dans toute la ville, accompagnées de chants et d'aspersion d'eau bénite. Les missionnaires fondèrent avec la population locale des confréries chargées de ces déambulations ostentatoires. Au fil du temps et des conflits, elles s'éloignèrent de cette fonction première et créèrent leur propre culte incluant de nouveaux rites et changeant le nom des saints.

Si l'on compare les rituels qui accompagnent les sorties des saints et ceux des statues en terre cuite funéraires du xx^e s., on constate de nombreuses similitudes. Grâce à leur tradition de sculptures, les Africains de la Côte de l'Or auraient pu « innover » en créant des figures de terres cuites s'inscrivant dans le culte des ancêtres, à l'image des saints, figures qu'ils ont déposées dans le lieu le plus sacré : celui des rapports aux défunts. Le culte rendu aux statues funéraires en terre cuite est donc probablement lié aux dévotions rendues par les Portugais aux statues de saints. Elles sont sans doute le fruit de la lente réappropriation de pratiques des premières tentatives de christianisation, rendues possibles par le même fondement du rapport du monde au divin.

Un dernier exemple nous est donné par les recherches menées en pays San, au nord-ouest du Burkina Faso actuel, par Jean-Célestin Ky, dans le cadre de sa thèse de doctorat soutenue en 1994¹⁷. Il décrypte les différentes formes de masques en usage dans le Sud du territoire san, dans une dizaine de villages uniquement. L'usage des masques aurait été emprunté, selon les sources orales, à leur voisins Nuna, dans le courant du xviii^e s. Les masques zoomorphes produits par les San sont constitués d'une tête en bois sculptée et d'un costume de fibres. Buffle, antilope et hyènes sont les figures initialement les plus fréquentes, les cornes seules permettant de dissocier les différentes espèces.

17 J.-C. Ky, « Des masques en pays san (Nord-Ouest du Burkina Faso). Recherche des origines à travers l'histoire, le culte et l'art », 1994.



FIGURE 10.8 Têtes funéraires mma, Anyi, Côte d'Ivoire. Terre cuite. Musée d'Angoulême. Patrick Blanchier.

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FIGURE 10.9
Loubagnin ou masque hippotrague. Dessin
de Jean-Célestin Ky.

© JEAN-CÉLESTIN KY



FIGURE 10.10
Zóbagnin ou masque d'une antilope. Dessin de Jean-Célestin Ky.

© JEAN-CÉLESTIN KY

Plus récemment, le bestiaire s'est enrichi avec l'apparition du calao, du bélier, du singe, du canard ou encore du lièvre. Ces masques zoomorphes coexistent avec les masques dits « à lame » eux-mêmes à figures zoomorphes ou aux formes non figuratives.

On constate que l'arrivée des religions révélées sur le territoire a conduit à une évolution formelle des masques sans que leur usage ne soit remis en question. Les cultes dits « traditionnels » conservent le plus d'adeptes et ceux qui se seraient convertis à l'une ou l'autre des religions les pratiquent également sous des formes syncrétiques ou, dans certains villages ou villes qui ont connu

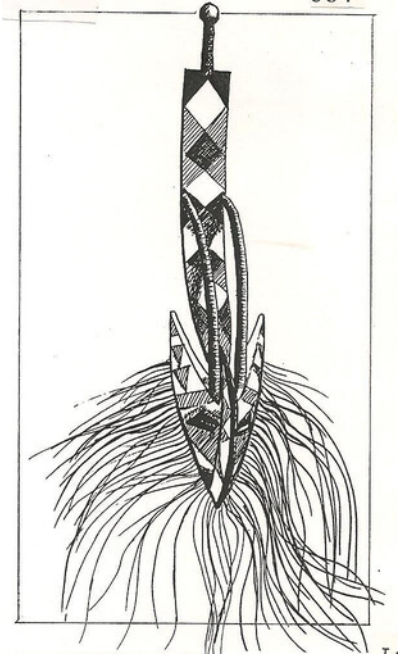


FIGURE 10.11
Bagnindan de Nimi. Dessin de Jean-Célestin Ky.
© JEAN-CÉLESTIN KY

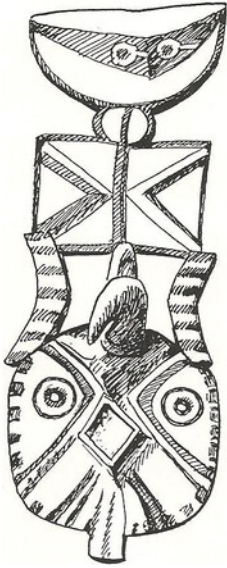


FIGURE 10.12
Bagingoulé de Goson. Jean-Célestin Ky.
© JEAN-CÉLESTIN KY

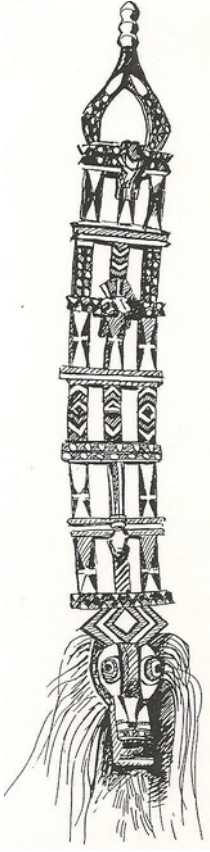


FIGURE 10.13
Le masque missiri. Dessin de Jean-Célestin Ky.
© JEAN-CÉLESTIN KY

des conversions plus massives, de manière secrète. L'islam serait arrivé en pays San au xix^e s., probablement via des marchands partenaires¹⁸, tandis que le Christianisme fait son apparition via une congrégation de missionnaires Pères Blancs à Toma en 1913¹⁹. Jean-Célestin Ky a rencontré au cours de ses enquêtes de terrain deux sculpteurs, Djinkounoun Kouo, du village de Goson et Adama Nyamba originaire de Nimi qui s'inspirèrent librement de l'iconographie nouvelle apportée par les religions monothéistes dans l'évolution formelle des masques.

Un bel exemple est offert par les masques à lame missiri. Le nom arabe désigne la mosquée et la forme elle-même du masque, toute en longueur et

18 I. Paré, « Islamisation et colonisation dans le sud san de 1840 à 1960 : cas de la circonscription de Koungny », 1990, p. 68.

19 M. E. Zamane, « Le christianisme en pays san (1913-1973) », 1990, p. 51.



FIGURE 10.14
Gouobagnin de Nimi. Jean-Célestin Ky.
© JEAN-CÉLESTIN KY



FIGURE 10.15
Sculpture représentant la vierge Marie. Jean-Célestin Ky.
© JEAN-CÉLESTIN KY

superposition de niveaux, évoque la forme du minaret agissant comme symbole de la mosquée.

Très manifeste est l'inspiration chrétienne dans la composition de masques à lames comme celui photographié dans le village de Nimi par Jean-Célestin Ky [Fig. 10.14] où la croix chrétienne surmonte l'objet. D'autres exemples étonnants donnent corps aux figures du Christ ou de la Vierge Marie comme dans les masques sculptés par Adama Nyamba. L'un de la famille des masques Nakoro [Fig. 10.15] montre de manière très naturaliste une vierge Marie en position de



FIGURE 10.16

Sculpture représentant Jésus Christ cloué sur la croix sur une tête de masque canard. Jean-Célestin Ky.

© JEAN-CÉLESTIN KY

prière, l'autre, découvert dans le salon des prêtres de la paroisse de Tôma, est de la famille des masques canards, qu'achève une statuette du Christ en croix [Fig. 10.16].

On peut véritablement considérer les objets africains comme des documents à part entière, supplantant l'écrit bien souvent absent, pour appréhender et comprendre des phénomènes culturels complexes. Les différents cas étudiés dans ce chapitre témoignent de l'arrivée de religions nouvelles sur le continent et des modalités de leur pénétration au sein des populations. Ces croyances nouvelles sont souvent incorporées à des cultes préexistants pour former des religions syncrétiques quand elles ne sont pas de « simples » source d'inspiration formelle venant enrichir les répertoires et pratiques antérieures. L'analyse fine ou lecture pourrait-on dire de ces objets, qu'il s'agisse de masques, de statuettes ou parures corporelles, est une source historique à considérer comme telle et à envisager au même titre que l'archive écrite parce qu'elle contient dans sa forme, dans son usage mais aussi dans son parcours d'objet, nombre d'informations éclairantes sur les sociétés étudiées.

5 De la production à l'usage des faux

Ces objets métis, qui illustrent des changements culturels ou esthétiques au sein de sociétés, ont pu être considérés comme des formes altérées au regard de ce qu'était l'art africain véritable, alors qualifié de « traditionnel ». Cet adjectif sous-tend l'idée que nous sommes face à des sociétés sans véritable évolution culturelle ou sociale avec une certaine permanence des formes et des usages. Ces phénomènes de métissage plastique démontrent au contraire que la nouveauté peut s'insérer dans la « tradition » et que cette notion est bien relative et n'a de sens que sur une durée limitée. Ces évolutions formelles sont le signe de mutations plus ou moins profondes des sociétés productrices des œuvres étudiées. La colonisation a été un accélérateur sans précédent de changements, en profondeur, des systèmes politiques, sociaux et culturels et à travers elle, des modalités de production et d'usage des œuvres d'art. Ces bouleversements ont favorisé non seulement la revente d'objets anciens consacrés devenus abscons, mais également la production édulcorée de « faux » sur le modèle devenu trop lointain des « vrais ».

La collecte d'objets sur tout le continent à l'époque coloniale a donné naissance à un marché de l'art que l'on a d'abord appelé « nègre » puis « primitif » et aujourd'hui « premier » ou « tribal ». Le développement de ce marché de l'art extra-européen a eu pour effet de bouleverser les modalités de production des objets, qu'ils soient rituels ou domestiques. À travers la demande occidentale, la volonté au départ était d'illustrer un propos, celui d'un empire tout-puissant faisant acte de civilisation chez les peuples barbares. La valeur marchande était alors minime, puis s'est accrue au fur et à mesure de la popularité acquise, notamment auprès des artistes d'avant-garde tels que Vlaminck, Derain, Picasso ou Braque. Ces premiers amateurs et collectionneurs d'objets d'art dit « nègres » ont vu dans ces œuvres lointaines de véritables révolutions formelles inspirantes.

Réginald Groux²⁰ met en évidence des biographies de négociants sénégalais et maliens comme Sow Gouro et Mamadou Scylla ayant fait fortune en collectant et revendant des objets anciens ou récents. C'est tout un réseau de rabatteurs, courtiers, antiquaires, marchands et collectionneurs qui va se structurer progressivement jusque dans les années 1970 et sillonner le continent. Un marché des pièces anciennes usagées a été rendu possible par les mutations profondes voire la désintégration que traversent nombre de populations à travers le continent. Ainsi, les objets support de rites deviennent les

20 R. Groux, « Restitutions: et si on faisait un peu d'histoire... », 2018.

témoins encombrants d'un passé révolu. L'historienne de l'art et marchande Hélène Leloup, qui fut, avec Henri Kamer, l'une des pionnières d'un marché des arts africains avant les Indépendances, en témoigne. Dans une interview récente²¹, elle raconte comment elle traitait dès les années 1950 avec des marchands maliens, guinéens et ivoiriens. Les contextes étaient particuliers: en Guinée par exemple où elle sillonne le pays baga en 1957, les autodafés sont monnaie courante pour purifier les villages avant de devenir un véritable programme politique de démythification porté par le président Sekou Touré, lors de l'indépendance du pays en 1958. C'est ainsi que des œuvres aujourd'hui maîtresses de collections muséales, tels les serpents baga, ont pu être achetées en toute légalité dans certains villages.

Parallèlement, la production de « faux » se fait grandissante au fur et à mesure que la demande côté occidental augmente. Des événements internationaux majeurs comme l'Exposition coloniale de 1931 ont été des accélérateurs. Ils marquent véritablement le début d'une production structurée de copies destinées à la vente pour les colons, exposées tant sur les étals de marchés africains que dans des boutiques de brocanteurs parisiens. Cette production cohabite avec la recherche de pièces « anciennes » portant des traces d'usage ou collectées directement en contexte.

Les collections les plus anciennes du Musée d'Angoulême léguées dans les années 1930, mais rassemblées entre la fin du xix^e et le début du xx^e s., sont le parfait reflet de cette mixité des parcours d'objets. En effet, certains objets sont clairement des productions modernes destinées à la vente, des copies d'objets en usage reprenant tous les codes formels et stylistiques de ces derniers, d'autres que l'on pourrait qualifier de simulacres d'objets africains authentiques sont carrément dénués d'une fausse patine d'usage ou de trous de fixation des masques, tandis que d'autres enfin, semblent plus vraisemblablement venir d'un contexte d'usage spécifique.

Au mitan du xx^e s., la mise en place d'un marché des arts africains a conduit à l'établissement de critères pour tenter de différencier l'objet faux (copie trompeuse ayant vocation à imiter parfaitement l'objet modèle) de l'objet vrai. Le marchand Henri Kamer les a formalisés dans un article éloquent²². Il soulève notamment la complexe question de la datation des œuvres. En l'absence bien souvent d'un contexte de collecte et d'archives écrites, nous sommes en peine non seulement de dater les œuvres conservées dans nos musées et celles que les chercheurs peuvent découvrir sur le terrain. Cette absence de sources ou leur

21 H. Leloup, « Les restitutions d'œuvres annoncées ne doivent pas être détournées de leur sens », 2018.

22 H. Kamer, « De l'authenticité des sculptures africaines », 1974.

nombre limité rendent difficile l'écriture d'une histoire des arts africains dans laquelle l'objet puisse être replacé et appréhendé. On ignore bien souvent les débuts d'une production artistique et les évolutions au fil du temps que cette dernière a pu connaître. Ce n'est donc pas l'ancienneté qui prime dans l'appréciation des œuvres africaines qui est d'ailleurs bien souvent très relative, les objets conservés dans nos musées sont très rarement – sauf pièces archéologiques – antérieurs au xix^e s.

Pour être qualifiée de vraie, c'est plus particulièrement l'usage d'une pièce qui sera regardé et nous nous rendons compte finalement qu'une pièce « inauthentique » peut s'avérer être antérieure, plus ancienne, qu'une pièce « authentique ». L'analyse fine de la patine sert souvent d'argument pour établir cette distinction entre l'objet vrai et l'objet faux mais la prudence doit être de mise, car il est parfois impossible de distinguer une véritable patine d'usure d'une fausse patine destinée à tromper l'acquéreur. Le marché de l'art africain florissant a engendré notamment dans les dernières décennies du xx^e s. et le début du xxi^e s., une maîtrise absolue de l'art de fabriquer des fausses patines. Par ailleurs, une pièce « inauthentique » et une autre pièce « authentique » peuvent provenir de la main d'un même artiste. C'est dans ce cas non seulement la trace d'usage qui classera l'objet dans la catégorie des « vrais » mais aussi sa destination première. Ainsi, on entend par « vraie », une œuvre qui a été produite dans le but de servir une pratique culturelle. L'objet usagé est donc l'objet « vrai » par opposition à l'objet fabriqué sur le modèle de l'objet usagé, mais destiné à la seule vente et qui, de ce fait, n'a jamais été « consacré ».

Cependant, nous savons que les objets produits sont, dans de nombreuses sociétés africaines, remplacés par d'autres sur un même modèle voire un modèle légèrement différent quand ils ont cessé d'être « efficaces ». Qu'en est-il donc de l'objet neuf qui va se substituer à celui usagé ? N'est-il pas en passe d'être plus important que l'objet ancien devenu inutile ? De plus, l'objet dit « faux », copie réalisée sur le modèle de celui dit « vrai » ne contient-il pas, lui aussi, les éléments plastiques recherchés par les Occidentaux pour servir de support à l'étude de ces sociétés ? Si nous poussons ce point de vue, ne pourrions-nous pas nous demander s'il ne serait pas plus légitime de collecter le « faux » pour nos musées et ainsi ne pas déposséder les populations africaines de leurs objets en usage, ayant une valeur particulière à leurs yeux ?

Comment alors considérer certaines productions dans des contextes de commande, donc à caractère lucratif et non usuel tels que les ivoires afro-portugais ? Parmi les premiers objets d'Afrique noire qui gagnèrent en effet les collections européennes étaient les ivoires, collectés ou commandés en Afrique de l'Ouest par les Portugais dans les dernières années du xv^e s. Ces objets n'étaient pas conçus pour un usage quotidien mais comme des pièces de col-

lections prenant place dans les cabinets de curiosité des personnes de haute qualité. En effet, la plupart de ces objets de valeur se trouvaient dans les collections européennes royales ou ducaltes : on mentionne par exemple dès 1560, cinq cuillers du Royaume de Bénin dans un inventaire des biens de Côme 1^{er} de Médicis, Grand-Duc de Florence. Ces objets sont aujourd'hui désignés par le terme générique d'ivoires « afro-portugais ». Ce terme recouvre des productions diverses comme des cuillers, salières, fourchettes, olifants et des manches de dagues.

Il existait deux centres de production, au Sierra Leone et au Nigeria (Royaume du Bénin). Les Sapi de Sierra Leone sont vraisemblablement les premiers sculpteurs d'ivoires à avoir commercé avec l'Europe puisque l'on mentionne leur production dès 1505. Les ivoires de l'ancien Royaume du Bénin, plus nombreux dans les collections, démontrent que, bien que leur production soit plus tardive (puisqu'on ne les mentionne pas avant le xvi^e s.), elle fut plus étendue dans le temps que celle des Sapi. Ces œuvres d'une extrême finesse et aboutissement formel, bijoux de nombre de collections occidentales, doivent-elles être considérées comme des « faux » du fait de leur finalité commerciale ? Doit-on les extraire du champ de l'histoire des arts africains si l'on se limite aux critères d'appréciation du style et de l'usage ?

Une étude de terrain menée par l'historienne de l'art africain Monica Blackmun-Visona²³ brouille encore davantage ces délimitations établies pour distinguer l'objet faux de l'objet vrai. Elle s'est intéressée aux phénomènes d'emprunt et d'usage d'objets étrangers ou destinés à la vente, dans différentes sociétés d'Afrique de l'Ouest. Elle relate des enquêtes auprès d'artistes yoruba du Nigéria qui ont montré que ces derniers sculptaient des statues pour des rituels yoruba mais aussi pour des étrangers de passage. Les seules différences perceptibles entre les deux statues étaient liées aux soins apportés par leurs propriétaires. Le constat a été fait aussi de l'usage de poupées d'importation en plastique à la place de statuette en bois pour certains rituels comme celui des jumeaux ibeji utilisés par les mères yoruba pour prendre la place des jumeaux décédés. Ces objets, véritables doubles des enfants défunts, fonctionnent tels des simulacres de l'enfant vivant, lavés, nourris et choyés. Pièces tangibles, ils incarnent pourtant la part immatérielle des êtres, les âmes ou esprits ayant rejoint le monde des morts mais toujours en prise avec le vivant. Si l'on retient le critère de l'usage et de la patine comme critère d'appréciation de l'authenticité de l'œuvre, ces poupées en plastiques bien souvent « made in China » sont donc d'authentiques ibeji yoruba !

23 M. Blackmun-Visona, *Afrique, la croisée des mondes*, 2015, p. 144-156.

Des phénomènes semblables existent au sein des populations akan (Ghana et Côte d'Ivoire). À partir des années 1980, de jolies poupées étrangères sont en effet devenues des remplacements acceptables des statuette en bois plus anciennes. Il arrive également que ce soit des œuvres produites dans une autre région qui sont mises en usage. Le constat a été fait notamment par Monica Blackmun-Visona lors de ses enquêtes de terrain, de l'usage de statuette senoufo dans des rites akan de la région lagunaire de la Côte d'Ivoire. Il n'est pas rare en effet que les devins se fournissent pour leur propre pratique sur les marchés locaux, en objets initialement destinés à la vente aux touristes [Fig. 10.17]. Dans tous ces cas, c'est la forme qui prévaut et qui suffit à rendre convenable un objet pour un usage donné. Ainsi de purs objets inauthentiques peuvent devenir de véritable pièces « authentiques » par leur mise en fonction, bien que leur forme soit parfaitement étrangère ou grossière et leur destination première purement commerciale.

Ce constat ébranle tout un pan du discours muséal qui, en l'absence de données précises sur les conditions de collecte des objets, les rattache par leur forme à tel pays et telle population voire à tel usage. Les témoignages de terrain relatés par Monica Blackmun-Visona nous poussent à plus de transparence et d'honnêteté intellectuelle. Ces objets orphelins de contexte devraient être présentés avec une plus grande prudence : un objet de style dit « senoufo » acheté et mis en usage par un devin baoulé n'est pas davantage baoulé que sénoufo ? Même si sa forme ne correspond en rien à celle établie comme « canonique » au xx^e s.

Un autre pan de la création artistique moderne africaine pose question, celui de l'art directement lié à la présence coloniale. Restons en Côte d'Ivoire chez les Baoulé. Ces derniers croient en un univers invisible, le blolo, parallèle au nôtre. Lors de sa naissance, chaque individu y laisse une famille, dont son Blolo bian (homme du blolo) ou son Blolo bla (femme du blolo), le conjoint auquel il est uni par des liens indissolubles. Lorsque les Baoulé rencontrent des problèmes à l'âge adulte, tels que l'impossibilité d'avoir un enfant, de trouver un compagnon durable ou font des rêves dans lesquels apparaît une personne de l'autre sexe jamais vue auparavant, le devin leur conseille d'aller voir le sculpteur afin qu'il réalise une statuette représentant le conjoint mystique. Ce dernier, jaloux de son époux terrestre qui l'aurait négligé, est à l'origine de ses maux. Une fois sculpté, le Blolo bian ou le Blolo bla est installé dans la chambre du conjoint terrestre qui en prend soin, l'habille, le nourrit et respecte certains interdits comme la chasteté un jour au moins par semaine.

Ces figurines de bois auxquelles sont parfois adjoints des ornements perlés ont été produites en quantité. Il est intéressant de noter que leur forme évolue avec le temps, intégrant des éléments de la modernité, comme sur une



FIGURE 10.17 Deux figures sculptées dans un style baoulé, couvertes de peinture argentée, utilisées par un devin de la région lagunaire (1984). Monica Blackmun-Visona.
© MONICA BLACKMUN-VISONA

sculpture du musée Africain de Lyon qui porte un bikini. Parmi ces évolutions formelles, on observe l'emploi de la couleur rouge pour représenter la carnation de certains blolo. Cette couleur serait une évocation de l'Européen à la peau rougie par le soleil, la couleur blanche étant, elle, réservée au monde des morts et des ancêtres. Ces statuettes sont des représentations idéalisées de l'autre sexe, force est de constater que la physionomie occidentale a pu être partie prenante de cette esthétique. Ainsi, est-on face à un objet authentique à l'esthé-



FIGURE 10.18
 Masque Gouro, Côte d'Ivoire. Bois peint. Milieu du
 xx^e s. Musée d'Angoulême. Philippe Zandvliet.
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tique nouvelle ou à ce que l'on dénomme l'art colon? Un très beau masque Gouro du musée d'Angoulême [Fig. 10.18] montre également une intégration dans le répertoire iconographique d'un élément de la modernité, la vespa, faisant vaciller ce qui serait l'ordre formel immuable imposé par la « tradition ». Il n'en est pas moins un objet qui a pu être mis en usage de la même manière que ses prédécesseurs.

6 Des objets ambivalents

L'authenticité a bien souvent été érigée en frontière entre des arts anciens et modernes, pré- et post-coloniaux, entre le vrai qui s'inscrit dans une tradition formelle et un usage donné et le faux produit pour la vente aux étrangers. Des objets produits dans la deuxième moitié du xx^e s. que l'on qualifie à



FIGURE 10.19 Céramiques téké. République du Congo. Milieu du xx^e s. Terre cuite peinte. Musée d'Angoulême. Philippe Zandvliet.
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ce titre de « modernes » viennent chacun à leur manière ébranler cette dichotomie. Le terme Batéké désigne un ensemble de groupes aux noms divers qui se reconnaissent comme Téké et occupent une aire située sur la rive droite du fleuve Congo. Les poteries présentées proviennent des rives du fleuve Congo entre l'Oubangui et le Pool Malébo. Les bancs d'argile de dépôts alluviaux qui s'y trouvent ont permis le développement et la production de céramiques. Les prospections archéologiques réalisées sur ces rives ont mis au jour l'évolution des poteries fabriquées depuis le xi^e s. Ces poteries, richement ornées de divers motifs incisés, se distinguent des productions du début du xx^e s. mises au point souvent à l'intention des Européens [Fig. 10.19]. Ces dernières sont caractérisées par des formes fermées, gargoulettes ou dames-jeannes, obtenues en ajustant et en soudant deux parties moulées puis montées au colombin. Après un séchage de plusieurs semaines, des lignes rouges ou orangées sont peintes sur l'objet à l'aide d'une solution minérale riche en oxydes de fer. Les poteries sont ensuite cuites longtemps à basse température puis plongées encore chaudes dans un bain d'huile de palme pour remédier à leur porosité. La confection des

céramiques est réservée aux femmes qui, dans la deuxième moitié du xix^e s. travaillent dans la quasi-totalité des villages riverains. Les poteries sont acheminées sur de longues distances via le fleuve Congo et ses affluents dont elles alimentent les marchés. Il est intéressant de noter que ces objets ont deux destinées possibles : ils sont commercialisés par les villages riverains du fleuve qui en font parfois leur principale activité économique, mais ils peuvent aussi être utilisés au quotidien pour contenir de l'eau, comme ustensile de cuisine, mais aussi à des fins funéraires ou prophylactiques. En effet enterrées ou posées sur les sépultures, ces terres cuites offrent la nourriture des morts (noix de cola et viande de poulet blanc) et sont le réceptacle des forces invisibles. Les céramiques à multiples panses serviraient quant à elles à capturer les mauvais esprits. Ces productions sérielles modernes oscillent donc entre simple produit commercial désincarné et support de dévotion aux vertus prophylactiques.

Un autre exemple tout-à-fait intéressant nous est donné par des masques du Zimbabwe [Fig. 10.20]. Les rites d'initiation constituent un élément central de l'organisation des sociétés du Zimbabwe. C'est à l'issue de la circoncision qui marque l'entrée des jeunes garçons dans la communauté des hommes que de grandes danses masquées sont exécutées par les hommes : les *makishi*. Ils représentent un modèle de la vieille société *bunda*, *luvale*, *lozi* et *chokwé* et fournissent aux jeunes gens qui rejoignent le groupe des adultes, une visualisation codée et dramatique des enseignements acquis lors de leur retraite initiatique en brousse. Vingt-deux masques principaux entrent en scène. Les *makishi* accompagnent les futurs initiés pendant leur retraite, les terrorisent, les conseillent aussi. À la fin de l'initiation, ils les escortent pendant leur retour au village, semant la terreur ou déclenchant le rire parmi les habitants.

Il y a une dizaine d'années, les costumes, sortes de collants tricotés, ainsi que les masques étaient faits d'un tressage de fines lanières d'écorces. Celles-ci étaient teintées en rouge, blanc et noir, ces couleurs provenant de substances minérales et végétales. De nos jours, les lois concernant la protection de la nature au Zimbabwe imposent aux villageois de s'abstenir d'utiliser ces ressources naturelles. Les costumes sont de ce fait désormais fabriqués en coton tricoté, les masques sont en jute teinte et les couleurs blanche et noire sont d'origine industrielle. Seule la couleur rouge provient d'un minéral pilé. Jusqu'en 1920, les *makishi*, au Zimbabwe et dans les différents pays alentour, n'étaient exécutées qu'à l'occasion des rites de circoncision. Aujourd'hui, ils jouent aussi le rôle de danses sociales ou de danses de divertissement²⁴. On

24 F. Gründ, *Makishi, danses masquées des peuples du Zambèze, Zimbabwe*, 1999.



FIGURE 10.20 Masque Likulukulenge. Bambou, jute, peinture, fibres végétales, fil, laine, crin. Fin du xx^e s. Maison des Cultures du Monde, Centre français du patrimoine culturel immatériel, Vitré.

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dénombrer une vingtaine de masques principaux auxquels ne cessent de s'ajouter de nouveaux types. Loin d'être figé, l'usage des masques makishi est une pratique vivante dans les villages dont les formes et les fonctions évoluent au fil du temps. Ces masques sont un exemple du caractère changeant des « traditions ». Ceux ici présentés, fabriqués à la fin du xx^e s., peuvent prendre place dans un contexte rituel ou de divertissement, ils se sont d'ailleurs produits dans le cadre purement folklorique pourrions-nous dire du Festival de l'imaginaire, à Paris, en 1999.

7 Conclusion

Les différents cas examinés au cours de cet article ont mis en évidence que les critères d'appréciation ethniques, stylistiques ou formels, et de relative ancienneté des objets d'art africain qualifiés trompeusement de « traditionnels » sont mis en branle par des études récentes en histoire, histoire de l'art, archéologie et anthropologie. De même, l'anonymat des artistes longtemps considéré comme inhérent à l'étude des arts africains n'est que relatif étant donnée l'exis-

tence de commandes à longue distance auprès d'ateliers ou d'artistes célèbres et leur mobilité parfois importante. Nous l'avons vu également, l'artiste n'est pas l'artisan qui reproduit à l'infini un objet sur un modèle canonique établi, mais il peut introduire la nouveauté au cœur de ce dernier. Enfin, les mutations elles-mêmes des sociétés au fil des siècles et leur contact avec le monde extérieur intra ou extra-continentale ont engendré des usages et des formes nouvelles. Il n'y a donc pas un objet « vrai » immuable et un objet « faux » post-contact mais bien des objets reflets des cultures en constante évolution. Ils cohabitent avec des copies rigoureuses ou simple simulacres voire avec des faux dont la finalité est bien l'imitation fidèle de l'objet en usage. Cette question même de l'usage comme preuve fondamentale de l'authenticité d'une œuvre est dans certains cas mise en cause, des objets à destinée commerciale pouvant servir à des fins rituelles ou d'autres alterner entre objets de culte et objet purement mercantile.

Nous nous pencherons, pour conclure, sur des cas de créations plastiques contemporaines non considérées comme de « l'art contemporain » et qui, ne collant pas avec la définition tenace et encore attendue d'un art « usuel », semblent condamnées à l'indifférence.

Certains collectionneurs comme Philippe Brissaud, ce sont intéressés à des objets non « historiques » mais bien contemporains et dont la finalité usuelle a elle-même disparu. Il a constitué une vaste collection de terres cuites figurées modernes [Fig. 10.21] qui témoignent d'une très grande maîtrise technique et d'une créativité sans borne. Ces objets s'inspirent pour certains de formes plus anciennes aujourd'hui disparues mais dont ils ont détourné la finalité. Comme le dit Philippe Brissaud, au regard d'un certain marché de l'art et milieu scientifique :

La tare fondamentale d'un objet plus ou moins récent, mais de belle facture, est d'avoir été conçu avec l'idée de le vendre à des Occidentaux. Il est curieux de reprocher à un artiste de vouloir vendre ses œuvres. [...] Il est tout aussi curieux de considérer qu'un objet « authentique » aurait été fabriqué « gratuitement » dans sa société d'origine, alors qu'il devait obligatoirement rendre soit un service rituel, soit un service relationnel, en étant offert à des notables de l'ethnie d'origine ou d'une autre. La finalité dans les deux cas est la même : la vie du groupe. [...] Les objets « historiques », entrés dans les collections européennes avant la fin du XIX^e s., ou bien les objets collectés par des missions scientifiquement organisées et un nombre non négligeable d'objets erratiques peuvent constituer un socle de référence pour caractériser une « authenticité de bon aloi ». Mais les autres ?²⁵

25 Ph. Brissaud, *Afrique, la croisée des mondes*, 2015, p. 160-181.



FIGURE 10.21
Terre cuite Mangbetu. Hauteur 65 cm. République démocratique du Congo. Philippe Zandvliet.
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En effet, comment considérer tout un pan de la création contemporaine qui témoigne de savoir-faire, d'esthétiques et réappropriations partielles des œuvres du passé? Doit-on ranger leurs créateurs comme de bons exécutants ou ne devrait-on pas les reconnaître pour ce qu'ils sont, des artistes vivants?

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The ten studies that make up this book refuse the polar opposition of the true and the false, and reject the persistent idea that the copy is a mimetic equivalent of the original. They begin an inventory of the ambiguous cases that are ranged between true and false. Neither non-being, nor non-object, the fake and its inflection, the unfaithful copy, do not exist by default, but are the object of these contributions, grouped as: Fakes and their Makers, Original & Copy, Authorship, Fabrications, Fake Strategies, Beyond the Real & the Fake. Taking us beyond antonymy, they re-interrogate the notions of illusion, tradition, authenticity and legality, by placing them in literary, historical, social, anthropological and cultural contexts. The texts, illuminations and materiality of the works in question will take you from Europe and the Middle East to Asia and Africa, from Arabic, Arab-*aḡamī* and Judeo-Persian manuscripts to medieval Arabic coins and African masks.

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