



تَعْبَادُونَ لَكُمْ وَأَيُّومَ الْاِقْدَامُونَ

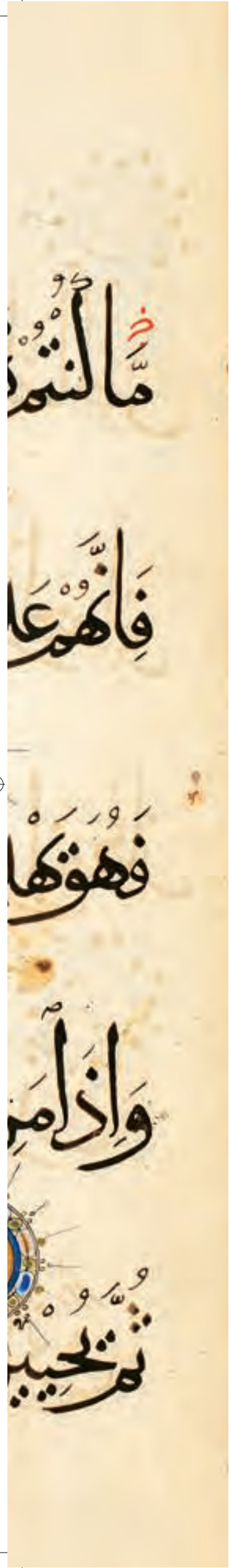
عَدُوِّي الْاَبْتِ الْعَالَمِيْنَ الَّذِي خَلَقَنِي

عَلِيْرٍ وَالَّذِي هُوَ يَطْعَمُنِي وَيَسْقِيْنِي

بِرَحْمَتٍ فَهُوَ يَسْقِيْنِي وَالَّذِي يَمِيْنُنِي

بِيْنٍ وَالَّذِي لَطَمَعَ اَنْ يَغْفِرَ لِي خَطِيْئَتِي يَوْمَ





Introduction

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In an article on the implications of collecting Islamic art, Oleg Grabar observed,

The art of the mosque is more difficult to collect and, in general, the arts and crafts of piety are, relatively speaking, less well represented in collections outside of the Muslim world. Thus as a first consequence of collecting Islamic art has been that its secular or worldly side has been far more evident than its religious and pious side....¹

Until recently, this premise applied not only to the collecting of artworks with a religious or spiritual meaning, in particular copies of the Qur'an, but also to their display as part of an integrated art historical narrative. To a degree, the separation between the spiritual and the profane in the arts of the Islamic world was motivated by the relative unavailability of Qur'anic manuscripts in the early twentieth century, when some of the large public and private collections of Islamic art were formed.² Moreover, without adequate linguistic knowledge of Arabic, most early Western collectors were less interested in the text, even if elegantly penned and richly illuminated, and preferred illustrated manuscripts with finely painted images, which were closer to Western sensibility and taste.³ When the unprecedented exhibition *Meisterwerke der Muhammadanische Kunst* opened in Munich's exhibition park at Theresienhöhe on May 14, 1910, it included 3,600 masterpieces, artfully installed in eighty rooms. Among these were "500 illustrated pages of manuscripts and the so-called art of the book,"⁴ which included one copy of an Ottoman Qur'an among Persian illustrated works from the

collection of Friedrich Sarre, one of the organizers. A few other Qur'an fragments were on view in a series of smaller rooms devoted to Syria and Egypt.⁵ In the accompanying publication, the Swiss scholar Max van Berchem included a chapter on epigraphy, and F. R. Martin introduced the arts of the book. Martin began his discussion with Qur'ans and their bindings, as a prelude to his brief overview of illustrated manuscripts. He explained the relative scarcity of calligraphic works in the main exhibition by maintaining that they needed to be held and looked at under a magnifying glass.⁶ Again, the preference was for illustrated texts and their figurative paintings. Concurrently, the Bavarian State Library in Munich organized a display of some 262 Near Eastern manuscripts, of which 155 were in Arabic. Despite the impressive scale of this second exhibition, there is little information on how the two celebrations of Islamic art in Munich related.⁷

The philological and historical study of the Qur'an, however, had already begun in the nineteenth century in the West, especially in Germany. A number of scholars, such as Abraham Geiger (died 1874), and Ignaz Goldziher (died 1921), adopted a more historical approach to the study of the Qur'an by identifying its biblical themes. With Gustav Weil (died 1889) and Theodor Nöldeke (died 1930), who focused on developing a critical history and analyzing the formation of the Qur'an, scholars laid the foundation for modern scholarship on the subject in the West.⁸

Economic recovery after World War I meant that interest in manuscripts from the Islamic world flourished. In 1921, the American collector Chester Beatty exhibited his outstanding collection of both European and Oriental manuscripts at his London residence,⁹ while in the United States, institutions, such as the Freer Gallery of Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, began collecting both Qur'anic manuscripts and fragments (fig. 1). When Arthur Upham Pope's monumental *Survey of Persian Art* was published in 1939, it included a chapter by Richard Ettinghausen on manuscript illumination. The first serious discussion of its kind, it begins with a thoughtful examination of illumination in Qur'ans until the fifteenth century, when the survey shifts attention to the designs found in literary texts.¹⁰

1.
Folio from a Qur'an, suras
38:88, 39:1. Near East,
Abbasid period, 9th
century. Freer Gallery
of Art, F1930.60.





A landmark event in the West for the arts of the Islamic world, including Qur'anic manuscripts, occurred in 1976 with the *World of Islam Festival* in the United Kingdom. Like the 1910 Munich exhibition, the intent was to highlight the artistic and cultural contribution of a region where Islam had predominated.¹¹ In Munich, the objects had been organized geographically and focused on masterpieces, while at the Hayward Gallery in London, the festival's primary venue, some 650 objects were grouped thematically to stress the unity of the artistic heritage of the Islamic world.¹² The Hayward installation had a section on the "Arts of the Book," which comprised some 140 works, including a number of Qur'ans, detached folios as well as bindings from the ninth to the fifteenth century. The section, however, was primarily devoted to illustrated manuscripts and paintings, tracing their stylistic evolution from the eleventh century to the nineteenth century.¹³

Following the Munich model, the festival also included a separate exhibition on Qur'ans, held at the Kings Library of the British Museum. Drawn from British, European, and Near Eastern collections, it included 150 works dating from the eighth to the nineteenth century. In one of two accompanying catalogues, Martin Lings lamented the inaccessibility of Qur'ans to the general public.

*...yet even a page of script, impressive though it can be in black and white, loses far more than is generally realized without the tints of paper and the ink. What then is to be said of those full-page illuminations which, apart from their formal excellence, must be counted amongst the greatest masterpieces of colour that man has achieved.*¹⁴

2. Section from a thirty-part Qur'an, sura 21:21–24. Iraq, Baghdad, 1307. Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts, TIEM 538, ff. 151b–152a (cat. 23).

The full-color publications to this exhibition introduced the principal characteristics of Qur'anic calligraphy and illumination and highlighted the sumptuous materiality of the manuscripts to a wider scholarly and general public (fig. 2).¹⁵ Encouraged by the success of these exhibitions, in 1980 the World of Islam Festival Trust supported the exhibition *Qur'ans from the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin*, which featured some of the finest works from this collection. The catalogue was another important step in underscoring the centrality of Qur'anic manuscripts to the arts of the book of the Islamic world.¹⁶ With the greater accessibility of these works in the West and the accidental but fortuitous discovery in 1972 of a cache of early Qur'anic volumes, bindings, and other religious documents in the Grand Mosque in Sana'a, Yemen, interest in Qur'anic manuscripts burgeoned.¹⁷ Since then, a new generation of scholars on both sides of the Atlantic has placed Qur'anic manuscripts in a broader historical context. They have explored the stylistic and orthographic characteristics of early scripts¹⁸ and have examined regional styles, codicological features, and offered detailed analysis on individual Qur'ans.¹⁹ Recently, some studies have also adopted a more interdisciplinary and comparative approach²⁰ or considered the "afterlife" of the manuscripts.²¹ The 2003 conference *Word of God, Art of Man: The Qur'an and Its Creative Expression* also explored the transformative artistic role of Qur'anic text on other media.²²

The recent publications of Qur'ans in public collections, such as the catalogues of the Bibliothèque nationale in Paris, Museum für Islamische Kunst in Berlin, the British Library and the Bodleian Library²³ in the United Kingdom, coupled with those in major private holdings, such as the Khalili Collection,²⁴ fostered research into the codicological, religious, and artistic importance of the Qur'anic manuscripts. Although this essay focuses primarily on the study of

3.
Two sections from a
thirty-part Qur'an, suras
68:42–69:16. Near East,
Umayyad period, before
750. Museum of Turkish
and Islamic Arts, Istanbul,
ŞE 80, f. 41a (cat. 2).



Qur'ans in the West, efforts to publish some of the outstanding collections in the Middle East, such as those in Jerusalem, Jeddah, Manama, Mashhad, and Istanbul have also allowed for a more comprehensive understanding of the range and depth of the subject.²⁵ The 2010 exhibition and bilingual catalogue sponsored by the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts (TIEM) introduced to the public highlights of its unparalleled collection of Qur'ans and early fragments (fig. 3, cat. 2).²⁶ Apart from the exceptional artistic quality and importance of the works, the institution itself enjoys a fascinating history, as discussed in Edhem Eldem's essay in this catalogue. The Qur'anic manuscripts, together with the other precious objects in the collection, were once endowed to religious institutions throughout the Ottoman Empire and then brought together in Istanbul in response to political turmoil at the beginning of the twentieth century. The formation of the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts offers a unique glimpse into the creation of an Ottoman national and cultural identity in the first decades of the twentieth century.

The growing interest in the study of Qur'ans is gradually transforming the field, but much work is still needed to understand their codicological, paleographic, and art historical complexities over a period of thirteen hundred years. Still, recent scholarship has encouraged a more comprehensive and integrated approach to the secular and the spiritual, which together have shaped and defined the artistic heritage of the Islamic world.

The Qur'an and Its Materiality

The fundamental orality of the Qur'an is inherent in the first five verses of sura 96, the very first to be revealed to the Prophet. Known as *al-Alaq* (the Clot) or *Iqra'* (Read!), it begins with the following command:

Recite (or Read!)

In the name of thy Lord and Cherisher, who created —

Created man out of a (mere) clot of

Of congealed blood:

Proclaim! And thy Lord is Most Bountiful — ...

The term "Qur'an" is derived from the term *qara'a*, i.e., to recite or to read, which further affirms the oral nature of the Divine Message. It comprises a series of revelations of varying lengths, which were transmitted by the angel Gabriel to the Prophet Muhammad over a period of twenty years. From its inception, therefore, the Qur'an was meant to be heard and repeated orally, and its inimitable euphony and literary quality has been regarded as proof of its divine origin.²⁷ According to one *hadith*, the Prophet claimed, "Embellish the recitation (*al-qur'an*) with your voices for the beautiful voice increases the beauty of the Qur'an."²⁸ Such oral elaborations also lent the Qur'an its singular aesthetic quality, which became a powerful force among the "early listeners" who converted to Islam.²⁹ In reference to the Qur'an, Navid Kermani maintains, "No other text has given rise to so many extreme attestations of such an intense reception. Those who believed in its message found the sound of the Qur'an nothing short of divine, we are told, while its opponents took it 'merely' as spellbinding magic."³⁰ To preserve the oral aesthetic of the sacred text, its cadence, sound, and pronunciation were regulated according to the *ilm* (science) of *tajwid*, which is practiced to this day. *Tajwid*, which means "making beautiful," is a way for Muslims to preserve the beauty of the Word of God as it was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad. According to Kristina



4. Large Qur'an in the Mashhad Ali, Cairo, with conservator Muhammad Sayf al-Shazli.

Nelson, “*Tajwid* preserves the nature of a revelation whose meaning is expressed as much by its sound as by its content and expression, and guards it from distortion by a comprehensive set of regulations....” It comprises different modes and traditions, which further enhance the inherent beauty of the Message.³¹

Notwithstanding the centrality of the Qur'an's oral dimension, which is repeatedly reinforced in the revelations, the text also frequently refers to the act of writing and the pen. In fact, the fourth verse of sura 96, titled Recite (*Iqra'*), proclaims, “He who taught the use of the Pen; Taught man that which he knew not,” thus linking verbal and textual transmission. This concept is expanded elsewhere in the Qur'an, especially in sura 68, *al-Qalam* (the Pen), which was probably the second revelation, following sura 96.³² It begins, “Nun; by the Pen, And by the (Record) which men write.” It is also through the act of writing that the deeds of men and women are recorded (Q 18:49), and the pen is referred to as an instrument for recording God's words:

*And if all the trees on earth were pens,
And the ocean (were ink),
With seven oceans behind it,
To add to its (supply),
Yet would not the words
Of Allah be exhausted ... (Q 31:27)*

Although scholars are unclear about the date when the orally transmitted Qur'an was recorded and codified, it occurred sometime after the Prophet's death in 632.³³ To differentiate between the fluid oral Qur'an and the fixed written codices, the latter were referred to as *mushaf* (plural: *masahif*), a term derived from the Arabic term *suhuf*, meaning "page" or "book." One of the first steps toward recording the Divine Revelation was to introduce orthographic consistency and clarity to the Arabic script and ensure that the basic shapes used for more than one letter as well as the long and short vowels were distinguishable. According to Daniel Madigan, "One might say that it was the *kitab* [the written corpus of the wisdom and knowledge of the Qur'an], that was responsible for the development of writing because the script was required to regulate the sounds being made in the recitation of God's speech. In this sense, the writing was the servant of *kitab's* orality."³⁴ These orthographic reforms took place during the rule of Caliph Uthman (reigned 644–56), and copies of the so-called Uthmanic Qur'an were sent to Damascus, Kufa, Basra, and Mecca, where they became the basis for later copies (fig. 4). The process was not an easy one, for a number of scholars objected to the addition of diacritical marks and vocalizations, while others opposed the introduction of any new elements, such as verse markers or sura headings to facilitate reading. These individuals saw the early transcriptions of the Qur'an as memory aids, "draft copies," made of the consonantal forms intended for recitation.³⁵

During the reign of Umayyad Caliph Abd al-Malik (reigned 685–705), the script was gradually standardized, and soon the Qur'an became the most frequently copied text in the Islamic world. By the eighth century, Qur'anic inscriptions were no longer confined to parchment alone; the script had been sufficiently regularized and the text codified to allow passages to be adapted to different

5.
Folio from a Qur'an, sura 114:1–4. Near East, Abbasid period, 9th century. Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts, TIEM ŞE 43/2 b (cat. 3).



صَبْرًا وَوَأَوْكَانُوا بآيَاتِنَا يُوَفِّقُونَ ﴿١٠١﴾ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ يَفْصِلُ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ
 الْقِيَامَةِ فِيمَا كَانُوا فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿١٠٢﴾ أَوَلَمْ يَهْدِ لَهُمْ كُرْهُهُمُ أَنْ يَمْلِكُوا
 مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ مِنَ الْقُرُونِ يَمْشُونَ فِي مَسَاجِدِهِمْ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ
 لَآيَاتٍ أَفَلَا يَسْمَعُونَ ﴿١٠٣﴾ أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّا نَسُوقُ الْمَاءَ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ فَجَرَحَ
 بِهِ زُرْعَاتًا كُلٌّ مِنْهُ لُغْمٌ لَهُمْ وَأَنْفُسُهُمْ أَفَلَا يُبْصِرُونَ ﴿١٠٤﴾ وَ
 يَقُولُونَ مَتَى هَذَا الْفَتْحُ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿١٠٥﴾ قُلْ يَوْمَ الْفَتْحِ
 لَا يَنْفَعُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِيمَانُهُمْ وَلَا هُمْ يُنظَرُونَ ﴿١٠٦﴾ فَأَعْرَضَ عَنْهُمْ

سُورَةُ الْحَجْرِ وَأَنْتُمْ مِنْظَرُونَ ﴿١٠٧﴾ وَلِكُلِّ سَعْيٍ أَجْرٌ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
 يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ اتَّقِ اللَّهَ وَلَا تُطِعِ الْكَافِرِينَ وَالْمُنَافِقِينَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
 كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١٠٨﴾ وَاتَّبِعْ مَا بُوْحَىٰ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ



الحجرات

surfaces and materials, as is evident from the impressive epigraphic inscription on the Dome of the Rock, completed in 691.³⁶ Over time, scholars also underscored the benefits of reading from a *mushaf*, and as Travis Zadeh points out, “with the surrounding ritual accouterments already in play during the second/eighth century, such as the cover (*khabī'a*) and the cushion (*sāda*) for the *mushaf*, it is not surprising that later sources detail complete sanctification of the codex ... as the written form comes to represent the material trace of the divine.”³⁷

Early Qur'anic codices were copied on parchment, referred to in Arabic as *raqq*, *riqq*, or *jild*, and were made from the cleaned and cured pelts of goats, calves, and gazelles but mostly sheep. Frequently, hundreds of pieces of parchment had to be obtained, cleaned, cured, and matched, suggesting the immense expense of preparing even one copy. Based on the extant folios of a monumental early Qur'an in the Bibliothèque nationale (BNF Arabe 324), François Déroche determined that the manuscript originally comprised some six hundred folios, each one using the hide of a single animal.³⁸ The cost of parchment also may explain why some folios were scraped down and reused.³⁹ The impressive scale of some early Qur'ans and the generous spacing of the lines in the smaller, multivolume copies suggest that by the first centuries of Islam, the tradition of creating visually impressive codices was already well established, and no expense was spared in the process (fig. 5, cat. 3).⁴⁰

Paper and papermaking, which had been invented in China, traveled westward to Central and West Asia in the eighth century, where it was first adopted for chancery and official documents. By the tenth century, paper also was being used for other texts and stimulated an unprecedented literary efflorescence, from the sciences and theology to history and literature.⁴¹ In most regions of the Islamic world, paper became the preferred support for Qur'anic manuscripts and prompted the development of new regional writing formats and styles. Calligraphers and illuminators experimented with new materials, including colored sheets, inks, precious minerals, and pigments, and strived to heighten the aesthetic appeal of Qur'anic manuscripts, transforming them into objects of art (fig. 6). Most important, the availability of paper encouraged calligraphers to regulate and refine Arabic script further and experiment with new styles. Having transformed writing into “beautiful writing,” or calligraphy, worthy of transcribing the Word of God, early scripts, such as *kufic*, the “New Style,” or “eastern *kufic*,” were used and further refined for transcribing Qur'anic manuscripts until about 1200 when they gave way to more cursive styles, such as *naskh*. The legible and finely proportioned script was allegedly introduced by the calligrapher and vizier Ibn Muqla (died 940) and further perfected by the versatile Abu'l-Hasan Ali ibn Hilal, better known as Ibn al-Bawwab (died 1022). Together with the stately *muhaqqaq*, *naskh* became the preferred calligraphic style for transcribing the Qur'an. *Kufic*, a vestige of the past, was relegated to ornamental chapter headings, while a bolder script, known as *thuluth*, was reserved for monumental inscriptions on buildings and objects but also was employed to indicate headings in Qur'ans and other texts (cat. 34).⁴²

As fixed, codified texts, Qur'anic manuscripts needed certain structure and order. After all, they were transcriptions of a series of revelations of various length with no clear narrative or unifying thread. To that end, illuminators devised a decorative vocabulary, which began with simple geometric bands to distinguish the 114 suras but gradually grew into an elaborate and intricate system that marked the text and allowed for easier reading and reciting. They developed a repertoire of motifs to signal verses (*aya*, plural: *ayat*), chapters (*sura*, plural: *suwar*), and primary divisions (*juz*, plural: *ajza'*) of the Qur'an as well as other subdivisions, ranging from marking the fifth and tenth verses within each chapter to indicating the middle of the Qur'an. These illuminated aide-mémoire also served as the principal means of ornamentation and a pretext for

6. Single-volume Qur'an, suras 32:24–33:2. Iran, Timurid period, ca. 1440. Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts, TIEM 41, f. 241a (cat. 34).



embellishing the Qur'anic *mushaf*. They amplified the beauty of the Divine Message, and together word and illumination created a visual equivalent to the transformative sensory effect of recitation. The mastery of the script and the intricacy of the illumination transformed the volumes into physical works of art.⁴³

Until the fourteenth century, calligraphers were at times responsible for both text and illumination. It has been proposed that Ibn al-Bawwab both copied and illuminated his Qur'an in the year 1000–1001 (AH 391), while al-Hajj Majd al-Din b. Ahmad al-Afifi al-Qazvini, identifies himself both as the calligrapher and illuminator of an elegant Jalayirid copy (cat. 27), completed in 1385 (AH 787).⁴⁴ As illuminated designs became more complex and more prolific in Qur'anic manuscripts, especially after the fourteenth century, the art grew into its own specialty, with illuminators proudly signing their designs, as is evident from the Mamluk Qur'an (cat. 37), dated 1313–14 (AH 713), which is signed by two illuminators.

Much like a reciter, who relayed the oral beauty of the Qur'an with his carefully modulated tone and cadence, the calligrapher and illuminator used their artistic skills to underscore the endless graphic potential of the transcribed Word of God. By diligently selecting their tools and materials; by varying the size, format, script, and motifs; and by calculating the width of the lines and their relationship to each other, with each manuscript, artists created a new version of the fixed and codified Divine Message. Much like the reverberating sound of the reciter, their efforts further ensured the proliferation of the wonder inherent in the Word of God.

Qur'anic Manuscripts and Their Dissemination

After Caliph Uthman's efforts to codify and disperse copies of the Qur'anic text, the historic traditions remain silent on who were responsible for its further dissemination in a rapidly expanding Islamic world. Although a considerable number of sections, fragments, dispersed folios and complete manuscripts have survived from the first centuries of Islam, none of the published examples prior



7.
Section from a Qur'an,
sura 22:76–78. Syria,
Abbasid period, before
911. Chester Beatty
Library, Ms. 1421,
ff. 1b–2a.

to the tenth century includes a colophon with a date or the name of a patron or calligrapher. Several early fragments, however, are inscribed with the names of individuals who donated the copies to mosques and shrines as endowments (*waqf*; plural: *awqaf*). According to Islamic law, *waqf* refers to property or its yields used in trust for the upkeep and maintenance of a religious institution or other religious purposes.

One of the most celebrated early examples of a Qur'an as an endowment is the already mentioned multivolume and now dispersed copy inscribed with the name of Amajur, the governor of Damascus from 870–78 (AH 256–64). Among some two hundred folios housed today in the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts, two are dated to 876 (AH 262); one endowment deed states that Amajur donated the thirty-volume Qur'an to an unidentified mosque in Tyre in present-day Lebanon, where it was to be kept in boxes.⁴⁵ This dated *waqf* inscription also establishes a *terminus ante quem* for the completion of the volumes, or at least certain sections (*ajza'*), and as François Déroche has pointed out, allows for the development of a chronology (see fig. 3, page 64). Based on other published Qur'an fragments, the Amajur Qur'an was not the only endowed early copy; a thirty-volume copy was also endowed to the mosque in Damascus in July 911 (AH Dhu'l-qa'da 298) by Abd al-Mum'in ibn Ahmad (fig. 7),⁴⁶ and the earliest extant Qur'an copy in the collection of the Shrine of the Imam Reza in Mashhad was endowed in 973–94 (AH 363) by Abu'l Qasim Ali ibn Nasir al-Dawla Abi al-Hasan Muhammad ibn Ibrahim ibn Simjur, a descendant of Simjurid governors of Khorasan during the Samanid dynasty (819–999).⁴⁷ These inscriptions suggest that donating Qur'anic manuscripts to religious institutions was considered a highly prestigious act, which was carefully recorded.

As Qur'ans changed hands through gift, purchase, or booty, their movement continued to be documented and commemorated with inscriptions and seals, establishing the "biography" or lineage for each text. For example, an elegant Il-Khanid Qur'an from 1340–41 (AH 741) was endowed by Mihrimah Sultan, the daughter of Sultan Süleyman, to the mosque of her powerful husband, the vizier Rustam Pasha (cat. 26); another copy, dated 1286–87 (AH 685) and written in *naskh* by the



renowned calligrapher Yaqut al-Musta'simi (cat. 21), was endowed by the Ottoman sultan Mahmud II (reigned 1808–39) to the tomb of his father, Sultan Abdülhamid I. According to its inscription, a monumental Safavid copy, completed in 1599 (AH 1007), was endowed in 1719–20 by the Ottoman sultan Ahmed III (reigned 1703–30) to the tomb of Ayyub (Turkish: Eyüp). While seals and inscriptions mark temporary ownership of these manuscripts over the course of centuries, the identity of the individuals responsible for commissioning the works in the first place is not always known. In the selection from the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts, the exceptions are a number of Qur'ans associated with powerful individuals, such as the Il-Khanid viziers Rashid al-Din and Sa'd al-Din and the Mamluk sultans al-Nasir Muhammad (1294–1340) and Qa'itbay (reigned 1468–96). In these examples, the ex libris also mentions the intention or destination of the manuscript: The impressive thirty-volume Il-Khanid Qur'an (cat. 24) was commissioned by the two Il-Khanid viziers as a gift for the ruler Uljaytu, probably for his newly constructed mausoleum (fig. 8), while the two Mamluk sultans intended their copies for their respective treasuries (cat. 37, 40). Like the later added endowment notations, the ex libris emphasize the importance of disseminating the works as public gestures of piety, devotion, and respect.

Frequently, endowment notes and documents include specific instructions that explain the donors' motives and the public use of Qur'anic manuscripts. According to the endowment deed for his enormous tomb complex known as the Rabi' Rashidi in Tabriz, Rashid al-Din (died 1318), the Il-Khanid vizier under Ghazan (died 1304) and Uljaytu, employed twenty-four Qur'an reciters and ten orphaned apprentices. The text specifies that around the clock three of them should take turns reading from the short *minbar* (pulpit), separated from the tomb by a screen. In the evenings, fresh candles would be lit, and the space was perfumed "so that the sweet smell pervaded the tomb and pervaded the reciters' noses."⁴⁸ The historian al-Maqrizi (died 1442), reports that Sufis (Muslims practicing an esoteric interpretation of Islam) would gather on Fridays at the mosque of al-Hakim in Cairo, where the shaykh would distribute copies of the Qur'an for them to read before the call to prayer.⁴⁹ In 1325, when the North African traveler Ibn Battuta was in Cairo, he visited a Sufi retreat (*khanqah*) and also observed that sections (*juz'ajza'*) of the Qur'an were distributed among the Sufis. Each one was assigned a different section so that the entire Qur'an could be read.⁵⁰ The endowment deed of the Süleymaniye Mosque, built by the architect Sinan for the Ottoman Sultan Süleyman (reigned 1520–66), also provides invaluable insight into the meticulously orchestrated and carefully controlled religious life envisaged for the imperial complex. The remarkable document mentions some 213 reciters, eulogists, and salaried worshippers, of whom 173 were tasked with reading aloud specific chapters at set times in different parts of the mosque complex throughout the day, every day. For example, particular groups were tasked with reciting sura 6, *al-An'am*, and sura 67, *al-Mulk*, while others were responsible for reciting sura 36, *Ya-Sin*, after morning prayer, and sura 3, *al-i Imran*, following the afternoon prayer.

Other mosques also ensured that the message of the Qur'an was omnipresent. Nurbanu (died 1583), the wife of Selim II (reigned 1566–74) and Süleyman's daughter-in-law, employed some 148 Qur'an reciters at her mosque in Üsküdar, which was built between 1571 and 1586. These individuals were responsible for ensuring that the sound of the Qur'an permeated the building at all times, creating a powerful soundscape. Here too specific chapters were recited after morning, noon, and evening prayers.⁵¹ As certain chapters were repeatedly chosen for recitation, Ottoman calligraphers began to fashion special volumes comprising those select passages. Such volumes became known as *En'am-i Sherif* as they usually began with verses from sura 6, *al-An'am*, which was preceded by *al-Fatiha*, and followed by other chapters. Although the order varied, the volumes usually concluded

8. Endowment deed from a thirty-volume Qur'an. Calligrapher Ali ibn Muhammad al-Alawi al-Husayni. Iraq, Mosul, Il-Khanid period, dated November 1310. Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts, TIEM 540, f. 5a (cat. 24).

with the last chapters of the Qur'an. With the complex program of recitation in the later centuries, such volumes allowed for greater regularization and efficiency.⁵²

Even if the Qur'ans endowed to religious institutions were used principally for public recitations or as mnemonic devices, they often fulfilled other functions. In circa 1062, the Fatimid caliph of Egypt al-Mustansir (reigned 1036–94) presented Ali b. Muhammad al-Sulayhi (reigned 1047–67), who had founded Sulayhid dynasty of Yemen, with an impressive two-volume Qur'an, copied in gold *thuluth* script. Although the exact reasons for the gift are not stated, the manuscript may have served to commemorate officially al-Sulayhi's full religious and political legitimacy by al-Mustansir (cat. 14). When Uljaytu commissioned one of the largest and most lavish thirty-volume Qur'ans for his pious foundation at Sultaniyya, the gesture served as a testimony to Il-Khanid political, military, and religious power. As Uljaytu was also a recent convert to Islam, the endowment publicly confirmed his new faith and devotion.⁵³ Likewise, the monumental copy of the Qur'an attributed to the reign of Timur, the founder of the Timurid dynasty (reigned 1370–1405), was intended to symbolize the political power and military might of the new dynasty. For the secluded women of the Ottoman court, the practice of endowing religious complexes and fine copies of the Qur'an to mosques and tombs played a central role in defining their social identity. Nina Ergin explains, "the audience was cognizant of link between the space in which they listened to Qur'anic recitation, the patron sponsoring, the recitation program, and the message conveyed by the verses chosen."⁵⁴ Such acts of endowment made the royal women visible and lent them a powerful "voice" in the public sphere, which was otherwise closed to them.⁵⁵

Whether designed as a monumental single copy or a multivolume work, the manuscripts' sizes, formats, and materials also carried singular importance as they gave Qur'ans a distinct visual presence. Although the division of the text into smaller volumes probably was prompted by practical considerations, it meant that God's Message now could be physically disseminated and made visually accessible to a larger group. The importance of Qur'anic manuscripts as tangible objects, even as relics, was already evident in the rituals that grew around the Uthmanic copies in the eleventh century. According to the historian al-Maqrizi, once a week in the Grand Mosque of Damascus, worshippers could behold the volume, which was brought out of its box. Only the ruler had access to it at all times and could touch it. In his description of the Grand Mosque of Cordoba, the twelfth-century historian al-Idrisi claimed that,

To the left of the mihrab is a room ... in this store there is a copy of the Qur'an which required two men to lift it because of its weight. In it, there are four leaves from the Qur'an of Uthman b. Aflan, the one which he wrote with its own hand on which are drops of his blood. This Qur'an is taken out every morning by two men entrusted with the task from among the employees of the mosque. A third man precedes them with a candle. The Qur'an has a cover of splendid workmanship decorated with the most unusual, fine, and amazing decoration. In the place of prayer there is a stand upon which it is placed, and the imam then undertakes to read a hizb [half a juz] from it. Then it is returned to its place.⁵⁶

The complementary roles of the visual and the oral/aural manifestation of the Qur'an was not limited to the celebrated Uthmanic codices but became an integral part of the Islamic tradition. Although the Qur'an was to be heard, read, and internalized, it was also to be seen. Following the death of Süleyman in 1556, a war of succession ensued. In order to invoke divine blessings and establish calm, illuminated Qur'ans on stands were on view at all times in the mausoleum of the sultan's deceased son, Mehmed (died 1543). When the vizier Pertev Mehmed Pasha, an official under

Sultan Süleyman and his successor Selim II, built his complex in Izmit, the endowment included six large Qur'ans on wooden stands that were to be put next to the *mihrab*, the most visible part of the mosque.⁵⁷

When not in use or on display, Qur'anic manuscripts were kept in elaborate boxes and chests, suggesting that they were still visible and present at all times. According to the twelfth-century author al-Maqqari, the folios from the Uthmanic codex in Cordoba were kept in a mechanized box; when the key was turned one way, the Qur'an would appear, and then it would disappear when the key was turned in reverse.⁵⁸ Even if apocryphal, this description of the box adds to the aura of the folios and the special ritual orchestrated for the believers to see it.

Few Qur'an boxes made prior to the fourteenth century have survived (see cat. 3), but extant Mamluk and Ottoman examples confirm their importance in the later medieval period. While some early examples are "box-like," rectangular, and covered with elegant inscriptions,⁵⁹ others assume the form of imposing, large-scale furnishings, which do more than merely protect the volumes. Inspired by architectural forms, several of the Ottoman examples are domed and elevated off the ground, which gives them a sense of scale and a commanding presence (cat. 64, fig. 9). Others are elaborately decorated and inlaid with ivory and mother-of-pearl, which also draws attention to their form and structure. The variety in style and shape of surviving boxes suggest that they were "made to measure" for specific Qur'ans and donated to various institutions with the volumes already inside.⁶⁰ Surviving examples were found in imperial mosques and mausoleums, suggesting their special status or at least their association with grand public institutions. Margaret Graves recently argued that the shapes of Qur'an boxes can be formally and conceptually equated with Christian reliquaries and Muslim treasuries (*bayt al-mal*), such as the one that still stands in the Great Mosque of Damascus (see fig. 1, page 62). As heirs to the Byzantine Empire, the Ottomans must have been familiar with the appearance and purpose of reliquaries and may even have possessed some examples.⁶¹ It can be argued that as miniaturized treasuries in both form and function, extant Ottoman Qur'an boxes both protected the volumes and reminded worshippers about the omnipresence of the Word of God, even when it was not visible or audible.

As discussed earlier, at least since the ninth century, individuals took great pride in endowing copies of the Qur'an to religious institutions. In part, such gifts guaranteed the dissemination of the Divine Message but also served as public expressions of an individual's religious sentiments and, in the case of a member of the ruling elite, his or her power and authority. A gift of a Qur'an was intended to secure divine blessings (*baraka*). According to Joseph Meri, the concept "lay at the foundation of Muslim and Jewish conceptions and perceptions of the sacred."⁶² In words of another scholar, "*barakah*, as an ideology as well as a set of diverse cultural practices, spanned the fluid, uneasy boundaries between scripturalist, mosque-centered Islam and the more popular or local Islamic beliefs, offering authority and religious status...[to those not in the religious hierarchy]."⁶³ The Qur'an maintains that all Muslims can strive for divine blessings, which they can attain by following the righteous path (Q 7:96), but only God can bestow those blessings (Q 41:10). By performing the five pillars of Islam—praying, fasting, pilgrimage to Mecca, alms giving, and acknowledging the profession of faith, the *shahada*—as well as other more popular rituals—such as visiting certain sacred spaces, making votive offerings, and, of course, building mosques, madrasas, and hospitals—men and women could obtain *baraka* for themselves or the community at large. Some individuals, such as the Prophet Muhammad, his descendants, other prophets, and saints, were also privileged with *baraka* because of their righteous actions.⁶⁴ Similarly, certain places (especially those associated with the Prophet) or objects (such as his sandals or his coat [*burda*])

9.
Qur'an chest. Turkey,
Ottoman period,
ca. 1525–50. Museum of
Turkish and Islamic Arts,
Istanbul, TIEM 5 (cat. 64).

were believed to have protective powers. For Muslims, the Qur'an itself is the embodiment of a divine blessing. Sura 6:155 maintains, "And this is a Book which we have revealed as a blessing: so follow it and be righteous, that ye May receive mercy," and again in sura 38:29, we read, "Here is a Book which We have sent down unto thee, full of blessings, That they may mediate on its Signs, and that Men of understanding may Receive admonition." By reading, reciting, and hearing as well as seeing the Word of God, Muslims could partake in its charisma and hope for protection and salvation. *Baraka* is considered spiritual, perceptual, and emotive, rather than conceptual.⁶⁵



Granted, the Uthmanic codices enjoyed a special status as the prime embodiment of *baraka*, but in fact all copies of the Qur'an are repository of divine blessings. The association of a volume with a certain revered person or a sacred locale, however, could potentially heighten the sense of *baraka*. For example, sections of various Qur'ans, written in *kufic*, include the "signature" of Ali ibn Abi Talib, the Prophet's cousin and son-in-law as well as the first Shi'i imam (cat. 11), or that of his son Imam Husayn. These ascriptions were added later, especially in Safavid Iran, where Shi'ism was declared the state religion at the beginning of the sixteenth century. The fragments linked with Imam Ali, the Shi'i imam and his descendants enhanced the importance of the volume and bolstered Safavid legitimacy.⁶⁶ In the sixteenth century, Ali was also identified as the originator of both calligraphy and illumination, which further linked him to the arts of the book, especially Qur'ans.

Other Qur'ans carried special *baraka* because of their provenance. The colophon of an elegantly illuminated Ottoman volume dated 1571 (cat. 61) states that it was transcribed in the prayer room of the Prophet's mosque in Medina, the destination of Muhammad's migration from Mecca and where he received many of the longer revelations (fig. 10). By singling out the volume's specific place of production, the anonymous calligrapher certainly intended to enhance its spiritual prestige. Although as individuals, calligraphers and illuminators were not a position to bestow blessings on a Qur'an, their skill in transcribing and embellishing it, like the talents of a reciter, enhanced the physical manifestation of the Divine Message. Some Ottoman scribes collected the lampblack of oil lamps in Istanbul's Süleymaniye, for they believed it carried the mosque's blessing.⁶⁷ By transcribing the Qur'an, calligraphers would partake in its blessings and, in turn, disseminate its spiritual attributes. Sultan Mahmud II (reigned 1808–39) ordered the temporary transfer of an early fourteenth-century Qur'an by the celebrated calligrapher Abdallah al-Sayrafi, a well-known student of Yaqut, from Gebze, on the northern shore of the Sea of Marmara, to Istanbul. The intent was to repair the manuscript, but the sultan also wanted to see it and probably also enjoy its blessings (cat. 25). Huma Sultan—wife of Ferhad Pasha (died 1595), a vizier and accomplished calligrapher who had studied with the celebrated master Ahmed Karahisari—endowed a copy of a Qur'an transcribed by her husband to her own tomb. She believed that reading from that particular copy would bring her special *baraka*.⁶⁸



10. Single-volume Qur'an, suras 113, 114. Arabia, Medina, Ottoman period, 1577. Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts, Istanbul, TIEM 161, f. 257a (cat. 61).

These and other manuscripts were deemed exceptional because of their material and aesthetic characteristics. Their physical and perceived spiritual attributes also partly explain their selection for endowment to special institutions. Complementing the oral transmission of the Divine Message, they were visual manifestations of the power and blessing of the Word of God. Each time a calligrapher created a new *mushaf*, he or she repeated, reaffirmed, and transmitted the Qur'an anew and maintained its centrality in the lives and aspirations of believers. In turn, these folios and manuscripts—from the earliest surviving fragments on parchment to the monumental and lavishly illuminated volumes of later centuries—represent some of the most important artistic expressions in the Islamic world.

NOTES

1. My sincere thanks to Sana Mirza for all her bibliographic help on this essay. Oleg Grabar, "The Implications of Collecting Islamic Art," in *Discovering Islamic Art: Scholars, Collectors and Collections, 1850–1950*, ed. Stephen Vernoit (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2000), p. 199.
2. For an overview of early collections of Islamic art, see Stephen Vernoit, "Islamic Art and Architecture: An Overview of Scholarship and Collecting, ca. 1850–ca. 1950," in *Discovering Islamic Art*, pp. 1–61.
3. Stephen Vernoit also maintains that "administrative formalities prevented most collectors from taking notice of manuscripts in libraries and museums, and the fact that manuscripts tended to be stored separately from other artefacts exasperated the problem; Vernoit, "Islamic Art and Architecture," p. 23.
4. Avinoam Shalem, "The 1910 Exhibition 'Meisterwerke Muhammedanischer Kunst' Revisited," in *After One Hundred Years: The Exhibition Meisterwerke Muhammedanischer Kunst Reconsidered*, ed. Andrea Lerner and Avinoam Shalem (Leiden and Boston: Brill Publications, 2010), p. 8.
5. Eva-Maria Troelenberg, "Regarding the Exhibition: The Munich exhibition *Masterpieces of Muhammadan Art* (1910) and its scholarly position," *Journal of Art Historiography* 6 (June 2012), pp. 16–18.
6. F. Sarre, F. R. Martin, and M. van Berchem, *Die Ausstellung von Meisterwerken muhammedanischer Kunst in München 1910*, vol. 1 *Miniaturen und Buchkunst*, (Munich: F. Bruckmann, 1912), p. ii; the publication also includes a number of reproductions of illuminated Qur'an folios, which are titled "Decorated Pages," emphasizing the illumination over the text; see pls. 35 and 36. Claus-Peter Haase, "Arabisch für Nichtleser," in *After One Hundred Years*, p. 117.
7. Shalem, "1910 exhibition," pp. 9–10. In his essay, Haase mentions that another exhibition in Berlin's Museum of Applied Arts (Kunstgewerbe Museum) displayed 412 manuscripts and calligraphic folios. He suggests that both exhibitions were organized by the German art historian Ernst Kühnel; see Haase, "Arabisch für Nichtleser," p. 118. For a partial list of the works in the 1910 exhibition, see *Wunder der Schöpfung: Handschriften der Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek aus dem islamischen Kulturbesitz* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz Verlag, 2010).
8. For the history of Western scholarship of the Qur'an, see Jane Dammen McAuliffe's essay in this volume; see also Andrew Rippin, "Western Scholarship and the Qur'an," in *The Cambridge History of the Qur'an*, ed. Jane Dammen McAuliffe (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 235–55; Angelika Neuwirth, "Neither of the East nor of the West (*lā sharqīyya wa lā gharbiyya*, Q 24:35): Locating the Qur'an with the History of Scholarship," in *Scripture, Poetry and the Making of a Community: Reading the Qur'an as a Literary Text*, ed. Angelika Neuwirth (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2014), pp. 3–19.
9. Jonathan M. Bloom and Sheila S. Blair, eds., *The Grove Encyclopedia of Islamic Art and Architecture*, vol. 2 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 58. The Chester Beatty collection of Islamic manuscripts, especially Qur'ans, remains one of the finest in the West.
10. Richard Ettinghausen, "Illuminated Manuscripts," in Arthur Upham Pope, *A Survey of Persian Art from Prehistoric Times to the Present*, vol. 3 (London and New York: Oxford University Press, 1938–1939), pp. 1937–974.
11. Strangely, Mughal/Islamic India was not included. It also is worth noting that many of the countries represented were enjoying a tremendous economic boom, thanks to the price of oil.
12. Oleg Grabar, "Geometry and Ideology: The Festival of Islam and the Study of Islamic Art," in *A Way Prepared: Essays on Islamic Culture in Honor of Richard Bayly Winder*, ed. Farhad Kazemi and R. D. McChesney (New York and London: New York University Press, 1988), p. 147.
13. See "Arts of the Book" in *The Arts of Islam* (London: Arts Council of Britain, 1976), pp. 309–72. The section is devoted primarily to the arts of the book from Iran, and some of the Qur'an folios seem to have been added here to fill lacunae in the chronological narrative.
14. Martin Lings, *The Qur'anic Art of Calligraphy and Illumination* (New York: Interlink Books, 1976), book flap. Vernoit, *Discovering Islamic Art*, p. 23.
15. Martin Lings and Yasin Hamid Safadi, *The Qur'an* (London: World of Islam Festival Publishing Company, 1976).
16. David James, *Qur'ans and Bindings from the Chester Beatty Library* (London: World of Islam Festival Publishing Company, 1980). A list of the Qur'anic manuscripts had been already published; see A. J. Arberry, *The Koran Illuminated: A Handlist of the Korans in the Chester Beatty Library* (Dublin: Hodges Figgis & Co. Ltd., 1967).
17. Most of the Sana'a material still awaits publication. See Hans-Casper Graf von Bothmer, "Masterworks of Islamic Book Art: Koranic Calligraphy and Illumination found in the Great Mosque of Sana'a," in *Yemen: 3000 Years of Art and Civilization in the Arabia Felix*, ed. Werner Daum (Innsbruck, Austria: Pinguin-Verlag, 1988), pp. 178–81; Bothmer, "Architekturbilder im Koran: Eine Prachthandschrift der Umayyadenzeit aus dem Yemen," *Pantheon* 45 (1987), pp. 4–20. Ursula Dreiholz, "Some Aspects of Early Islamic Bookbindings from the Great Mosque of Sana'a, Yemen," in *Scribes et manuscrits du Moyen Orient*, ed. François Déroche and Francis Richard (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France, 1997), pp. 16–34; Gerd R. Puin, Marilyn Jenkins, and Ursula Dreiholz, *Maṣāḥif Ṣan'ā* (Kuwait: Dar al-Athar al-Islamiyyah, Kuwait National Museum, 1985); Tayyar Altukulac, *Al-mushaf al-sharif al-mansub ila 'Ali ibn Abi Talib: nuskhat San'a* (The holy Qur'an manuscript attributed to Ali ibn Abi Talib: The Sana'a facsimile) (Istanbul: Research Center of Islamic History, Art and Culture, 2011). Another cache of Umayyad fragments was rediscovered and published in 1964 and 1965 by the French scholars Janine Sourdel-Thomine and Dominique Sourdel. The fragments had been transferred from the Damascus Mosque to the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts (see the catalogue section and François Déroche's essay in this volume).
18. The bibliography on this topic is extensive, but I would like to mention E. Whelan, "Writing the Word of God: Some Early Qur'an Manuscripts and Their Milieux, Part 1," *Ars Orientalis* 20 (1990), pp. 113–47; Yasser Tabbaa, "The Transformation of Arabic Writing: Part I, Qur'anic Calligraphy," *Ars Orientalis* 21 (1991), pp. 119–48; Tabbaa, "The Transformation of Arabic Writing: Part 2, the Public Text," *Ars Orientalis* 24 (1994), pp. 119–47; Alain George, *The Rise of Islamic Calligraphy* (London and Berkeley: Saqi, 2010); George, "Coloured Dots and the Question of Regional Origins in Early Qur'ans (Part 1)," *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 17, no. 1 (2015), pp. 1–44; George, "Coloured Dots and the Question of Regional Origins in Early Qur'ans (Part 2)," *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 17, no. 2 (2015), pp. 75–102; François Déroche, *Qur'ans of the Umayyads: A First Overview* (Leiden: Brill, 2013); Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition: Qur'ans of the 8th to 10th Centuries* (New York: Nour Foundation in association with Azimuth Editions and Oxford University Press, 1992); Déroche, "Un critère de datation des écritures coraniques anciennes: le kāf final ou isolé," *Damaszener Mitteilungen* 11 (1999), pp. 87–94 and pl. 15–16; Déroche, *La transmission écrite du Coran dans les débuts de l'islam: Le codex Parisino-petropolitanus* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2009).

19. For example, see Elaine Julia Wright, *The Look of the Book: Manuscript Production in Shiraz, 1303–1452* (Seattle: University of Washington Press and Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, 2012); Sheila S. Blair, "Transcribing God's Word: Qur'an Codices in Context," *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 10, no. 1 (2008), pp. 71–97; Blair, *Islamic Calligraphy* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006); For examples of studies on individual manuscripts, see D. S. Rice, *The Unique Ibn Al-Bawwāb Manuscript in the Chester Beatty Library* (Dublin: E. Walker, 1955); and more recently, Jonathan M. Bloom, "The Blue Koran Revisited," *Journal of Islamic Manuscripts* 6, nos. 2–3 (January 1, 2015), pp. 196–218; Blair, "The Ilkhanid Qur'an: An Example from Maragha," *Journal of Islamic Manuscripts* 6, nos. 2–3, pp. 174–95; Eloïse Brac de la Perrière and Monique Burési, eds., *Le coran de Gwalior: Polysémie d'un manuscrit à peintures* (Paris: Éditions de Boccard, 2016), and Elaine Wright's forthcoming study on the Chester Beatty Library's Qur'an copied and illuminated by Ruzbihan.
20. Tabbaa, "Transformation of Arabic Writing," parts 1 and 2; Yasser Tabbaa, *The Transformation of Islamic Art during the Sunni Revival* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001); Anna Contadini, "Travelling patterns: a Qur'anic illumination and its secular source," in *Safavid Art and Architecture*, ed. Sheila R. Canby (London: The British Museum Press, 2002), pp. 58–67.
21. Nina Ergin, "The Soundscape of Sixteenth-Century Istanbul Mosques: Architecture and Qur'an Recital," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 67, no. 2 (June 2008), pp. 205–11.
22. Fahmida Suleman, ed., *Word of God, Art of Man: The Qur'an and Its Creative Expressions: Selected Proceedings from the International Colloquium, London, 18–21 October 2003* (Oxford: Oxford University Press in association with the Institute of Ismaili Studies, 2007).
23. Some of the major publications include the following: François Déroche, *Les manuscrits du Coran, aux origines de la calligraphie coranique* (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France, 1983); Bibliothèque nationale de France, *Splendeur et Majesté: Corans de la Bibliothèque nationale* (Paris: IMA-BN, 1987); François Déroche and Almut von Gladiss, *Der Prachtkoran. Buchkunst zur Ehre Allāhs im Museum für Islamische Kunst* (Postdam: UNZE Verlagsgesellschaft, 1999); this publication also includes a number of copies from the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts. Colin F. Baker, *Qur'an Manuscripts: Calligraphy, Illumination, Design* (London: British Library, 2007); Keith E. Small, *Qur'āns: Books of Divine Encounters* (Oxford: Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, 2015). Additional Qur'ans from the Chester Beatty collection are also included in Elaine Wright's more recent publication, *Islam: Faith, Art, and Culture: Manuscripts of the Chester Beatty Library* (London: Scala, 2009).
24. François Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition: Qur'ans of the 8th to 10th Centuries* (New York: Nour Foundation in association with Azimuth Editions and Oxford University Press, 1992); David James, *The Master Scribes: Qur'ans of the 10th to 14th Centuries AD* (New York: Nour Foundation in association with Azimuth Editions and Oxford University Press, 1992); James, *After Timur: Qur'ans of the 15th and 16th Centuries* (New York: Nour Foundation in association with Azimuth Editions and Oxford University Press, 1992); Manijeh Bayani et al., *The Decorated Word: Qur'ans of the 17th to 19th Centuries* (London; New York: Nour Foundation in association with Azimuth Editions and Oxford University Press, 1999).
25. Khidr Ibrāhīm Salāmah, *The Qur'an Manuscripts in the Al-Haram Al-Sharif Islamic Museum, Jerusalem* (Reading: Garnet, 2001); *The Holy Quran in Manuscript: A Selection of Fine and Rare Holy Quran Leaves and Manuscripts Exhibited by the National Commercial Bank of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia* (Jeddah: National Commercial Bank, 1991); Nazem Chouhfeh and Samar Al Gailani, *Beit Al Qur'an* (Bahrain: Beit Al Qur'an, 1996); M. Uğur Derman, *Ninety-Nine Qur'an Manuscripts from Istanbul* (Istanbul: Kültür Ajansı, 2010); *The 1400th Anniversary of the Qur'an* (Istanbul: Antik A.Ş. Cultural Publications, 2010); Mehdi Bahrami and Mahdi Bayani, *Rāhnāmā-yi Ganjīnah-i Quran dar Muzīh-i Iran-i Bastan* (Guide to the Qur'ans of the National Museum of Iran) (Tehran, 1328; repr. 1949); *A Selection of Koran Manuscripts in the Museum of the Islamic Period* (Tehran: National Museum of Iran, 1375/1996); Olga V. Vasilyeva, "The Collection of the Qur'an Manuscripts in the National Library of Russia," *Mélanges d l'Université Saint-Joseph* 59 (2006), pp. 395–406; Banu Mahir, "Topkapi Saray Kütüphanesi'nin Kur'an Koleksiyonu," *Türkiyemiz* 67 (1992), pp. 16–27. Many institutions throughout the region are digitizing their manuscript collections, which is transforming the study of the field; for more information, see "Alphabetical list of Open Access Islamic Manuscripts Collections," *Access to Mideast and Islamic Resources (AMIR)* (blog), December 10, 2010, accessed April 15, 2016, http://amirmideast.blogspot.com/2010/12/alphabetical-list-of-open-access_10.html.
26. *The 1400th Anniversary of the Qur'an*.
27. Navid Kermani, *God Is Beautiful: The Aesthetic Experience of the Quran*, trans. Tony Crawford (Cambridge, UK and Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2015), p. 2; Kristina Nelson, "The Sound of the Divine in Daily Life," in *Daily Life in the Muslim Middle East*, ed. Donna E. Bowen and Evelyn A. Early (Bloomington: Indiana University Press), p. 258.
28. As quoted in William Graham, "Orality," in *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'an*, vol. 3, ed. Jane Dammen McAuliffe (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2003), p. 584.
29. Kermani, *God Is Beautiful*, pp. 14–24, 31–32.
30. Kermani, *God Is Beautiful*, p. 49.
31. Kristina Nelson, *The Art of Reciting the Qur'an* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1985), p. 14; Kermani, *God Is Beautiful*, p. 141; see also William Graham and Navid Kermani, "Recitation and Aesthetic Reception," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Qur'an*, ed. Jane Dammen McAuliffe (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 118–19.
32. Abdullah Yusuf Ali, *The Meaning of the Holy Koran*, 10th ed. (Beltsville, MD: Amana Publications), p. 1505.
33. Angelika Neuwirth states, "The Qur'an became the 'the book' only after the death of Muhammad, when the divine voice was no longer to be heard"; Neuwirth, "Structure and the Emergence of Community," in *The Blackwell Companion to the Qur'an*, ed. Andrew Rippin (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), p. 144. See Jane McAuliffe's essay in this volume for more on the transcription of the Qur'an.
34. Daniel A. Madigan, *The Qur'an's Self-image: Writings and Authority in Islam's Scripture* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), pp. 39–40.
35. Madigan, *Qur'an's Self-image*, pp. 23–42; Travis Zadeh, "Touching and Ingesting: Early Debates over the Material Qur'an," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 129, no. 3 (July–Sept. 2009), p. 458.
36. Following the pioneering work of Oleg Grabar on the significance of the inscription of the Dome of the Rock—"The Umayyad Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem," *Ars Orientalis* 3 (1959), pp. 33–62—much has been written on the subject. For recent references to the stylistic importance of the inscription, see Finbarr B. Flood, "The Qur'an," in *Byzantium and Islam: Age of Transition, 7th–9th Century*, ed., Helen C. Evans with Brandie Ratliff (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), p. 266; Blair, *Islamic Calligraphy*, pp. 89–92.
37. Zadeh, "Touching and Ingesting," p. 463.
38. "Manuscripts of the Qur'an," in *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'an*, p. 261.
39. François Déroche, *Islamic Codicology: An Introduction to the Study of Manuscripts in Arabic Script* (London: Al-Furqan Islamic Heritage Foundation, 2006), pp. 32–45.
40. Sheila Blair has proposed that the smaller Amajur Qur'an probably used up 750 skins; see "Transcribing God's Word: Qur'an Codices in Context," *Journal of Qur'anic Studies*, 10, no. 1 (2008), p. 76.
41. For an overview of the importance of paper in the Islamic world, see Jonathan M. Bloom, *Paper before Print: The History and Impact of Paper in the Islamic World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001).

42. Qur'ans from Islamic Spain, Sicily, and North Africa are the exception and developed their own tradition. For a succinct introduction, see Sheila S. Blair, *Islamic Calligraphy* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh Press, 2006), pp. 392–99. For a discussion of the different scripts, see Simon Rettig's essay in this volume.
43. See the essays by Simon Rettig and Zeren Tanındı in this volume for a more detailed discussion.
44. Folio 318a; in this Qur'an, the word *tazhib* appears above the rest of the line identifying the calligrapher, suggesting that it was originally omitted and added as an afterthought. From an artistic perspective, the illumination is as impressive as the calligraphy and confirms the remarkable skill of this individual.
45. François Déroche has written extensively on this Qur'an in several articles, including: "The Qur'an of Amāgūr," *Manuscripts of the Middle East* 5 (1990–91), pp. 59–61; "Les écritures coraniques anciennes: bilan et perspectives," *Revue des études islamiques* 48 (1980), pp. 207–44. See also Alain George, "The Geometry of the Qur'an of Amājūr: A Preliminary Study of Proportions in Early Arabic Calligraphy," *Muqarnas* 20 (2003), pp. 1–16; Blair, "Transcribing God's Word," pp. 72–80.
46. Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, Ms. 1421; see David James, *Qur'ans and Bindings from the Chester Beatty Library: A Facsimile Exhibition* (London: World of Islam Festival Trust, 1980); Sheila S. Blair, "On Giving to Shrines: Generosity Is a Quality of the People of Paradise," in *Gifts of the Sultan: The Arts of Giving at the Islamic Courts*, ed. Linda Komaroff (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2011), pp. 62–63.
47. See Ramazan-Ali Shakiri, *Ganj-i hizar-sala: kitabhkhana-yi markazi astan-i quds razavi qabi va ba'd az inqilab* (A thousand-year treasury: The library of the sacred shrine before and after the revolution) (Mashhad: Kitabhkhana-i markazi astan-i quds razavi, 1989), no. 3004, pp. 29–30, 69. See also Blair, "On Giving," p. 63.
48. In Sheila S. Blair, "Ilkhanid Architecture and Society: An Analysis of the Endowment Deed of the Rabi'-i Rashidi," *Iran* 22 (1984), p. 81.
49. Al-Maqrīzī, Ahmad ibn 'Alī, *al-Mawā'iz wa-al-i'tibār bi-dhikr al-khiṭaṭ wa-al-āthār, al-ma'rūf bi-al-Khiṭaṭ al-Maqrīziyah*, ed. Muhammad Zaynhum and Madīhah al-Sharqāwī, vol. 3 (Cairo: Maktabat Madbūlī, 1998), pp. 571.
50. Ibn Battuta, *The Travels of Ibn Battuta*, trans. H. A. R. Gibbs, vol. 1 (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1958), pp. 44–45; see also François Déroche, "Le Livre du Dieu," in *Le livre manuscrit arabe: Prélude à une histoire* (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France, 2004), p. 32.
51. Ergin, "Soundscape of Sixteenth-Century Istanbul Mosques," pp. 205–11.
52. Déroche, "Manuscripts of the Qur'an," p. 272.
53. Today, only Uljaytu's magnificent mausoleum remains, but the complex originally comprised a hospital and a place for prayer and Qur'an reading and recitation. It probably served as a model for the tomb complex of his vizier Rashid al-Din, discussed above. For a description of the complex, see Sheila S. Blair, "The Mongol Capital of Sultāniyya, 'the Imperial,'" *Iran* 24 (1986), pp. 139–51, especially pp. 144–47.
54. Nina Ergin, "Ottoman Royal Women Spaces: The Acoustic Dimensions," *Journal of Women's History* 26, no. 1 (spring 2014), p. 100. For a discussion of the norms governing the patronage of Ottoman women, see Leslie Pierce, "Gender and Sexual Propriety in Ottoman Royal Women's Patronage," in *Women, Patronage, and Self-Representation in Islamic Societies*, ed. D. Fairchild Ruggles (Albany: SUNY Press), pp. 35–53.
55. The following are some of the recently published works in the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts that were endowed by Ottoman women; TIEM 135, TIEM 19, TIEM 232 (cat. 42), TIEM 247 (cat. 49), TIEM 395, TIEM 397 (cat. 56), TIEM 423 (cat. 44), TIEM 503, TIEM 512, TIEM 533 (cat. 40); for details, see the catalogue section in this volume and *The 1400th Anniversary of the Qur'an*.
56. For the Uthmanic Qur'an in Damascus, see Jean-Michel Mouton, "De quelques reliques conservées à Damas au Moyen-Âge," *Annales Islamologiques* 27 (1993), pp. 245–54; for Cordoba, see Amira K. Bennison, "The Almohads and the Qur'an of Uthmān: The Legacy of the Umayyads of Cordoba in the Twelfth Century Maghrib," *Al-Masāq* 19, no. 2 (September 2007), p. 140.
57. See Gülru Necipoğlu, *The Age of Sinan: Architectural Culture in the Ottoman Empire* (London: Reaktion Books, 2010), pp. 194, 396.
58. A. Dessus Lamare, "Le mushhaf de Cordoue et son mobilier mécanique," *Journal Asiatique* 230 (1938), pp. 561–63; Margaret Graves, "Treasures, Tombs, and Reliquaries: A Group of Ottoman Qur'an Boxes of Architectural Form," in *The Meeting Place of British Middle East Studies: Emerging Scholars, Emergent Research and Approaches*, ed. Amanda Phillips and Refqa Abu-Remaileh (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009), p. 88, n. 32.
59. The published rectangular boxes include one in al-Azhar Mosque in Cairo is dated 1322–23 and signed by Ahmad b. Bara al-Mawsuli. A second box is in the Museum of Islamic Art, Cairo. A third box is in the collection of the Museum für Islamische Kunst in Berlin and was made by Muhammad b. Sunqur and inlaid by Hajji Yusuf al-Ghawabi. A fourth box in wood is in the collection of the Dar al-Athar al-Islamiyya in Kuwait; see also Sheila S. Blair and Jonathan M. Bloom, *The Art and Architecture of Islam 1250–1800* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1994), pp. 100–101, fig. 130.
60. Graves, "Treasures, Tombs, and Reliquaries," p. 83.
61. Graves, "Treasures, Tombs, and Reliquaries," p. 97.
62. Josef Meri, "Aspects of Baraka (blessings) and ritual devotion among medieval Muslims and Jews," *Medieval Encounters* 5, no. 1 (1999), p. 46.
63. Julia Clancy-Smith, "Barakah," in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Islam and Women*, ed. and rev. by Natana J. Delong-Bas (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), accessed July 4, 2015, doi:10.1093/acref:ois/9780199764464.001.0001.
64. Oliver Leaman, "Baraka," in *The Qur'an: An Encyclopaedia* (London: Routledge, 2005), p. 111.
65. Meri, "Aspects of Baraka," p. 63.
66. Blair, *Islamic Calligraphy*, p. 102; Sheila R. Canby, *Shah Abbas: The Remaking of Iran* (London: The British Museum Press, 2009), cat. 95. For a recent study of another copy attributed to Ali ibn Abi Talib from San'a, see *Al-Mushaf al-Sharīf Attributed to 'Alī b. Abī Tālib (The copy of San'a)*, ed. Tayyar Altıkulaç (Istanbul: Research Center for Islamic History, Art, and Culture, 2011).
67. Annemarie Schimmel, *Calligraphy and Islamic Culture* (New York and London: New York University Press, 1984), pp. 40, 86.
68. Necipoğlu, *The Age of Sinan*, pp. 400–401.