AYYUBID JERUSALEM

THE HOLY CITY IN CONTEXT

1187-1250

edited by
Robert Hillenbrand
and
Sylvia Auld

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Chapter 9
AYYUBID ILLUSTRATED MANUSCRIPTS
AND THEIR NORTH JAZIRAN AND
C Abbassid Neighbours

Anna Contadini

Our concern here is primarily with manuscript production attributed to Syria and Egypt from the late 12th century (Saladin [Salah al-Din], already in control of Egypt, took most of Syria around 1174) until the mid-13th (the end of Ayyubid power marked by the rise of the Mamluks in Egypt in 1250, and the Mongol invasion of Syria in 1260). The Ayyubid period was thus brief, but its political history was nevertheless complex, marked by internal rivalries, shifting alliances in the face of different external threats, and only intermittently successful attempts to subdue the Zangids and Artuqids in the North Jazira.1 As a result we encounter a patchwork of competing dynasties in the Mardin-Sinjar-Mosul quadrant, so that it is sometimes difficult to determine whether or not a manuscript from this area was produced under the aegis of an Ayyubid ruler.

Exactly what might count as an Ayyubid manuscript, even when the provenance is known, is thus not always easy to determine. But matters are further complicated by the fact that the provenance of manuscripts of this period is often uncertain, and in any case there remains the fundamental question of exactly what might be the art-historical consequence of being able to employ the label ‘Ayyubid’ in relation to them. At one level this is part of the more fundamental problem of choosing appropriate taxonomies for the productive study of pre-modern Arabic manuscripts. Some scholars do indeed advocate dynastic groupings as the most useful, but while this approach may work for later periods, such as the Ottoman or Safavid, an emphasis on dynastic affiliations seems somehow unhelpful, if not potentially misleading, when dealing with a period in which patterns of patronage are often obscure and undocumented, and the material itself does not yield relevant information. In fact, many of the manuscripts to be considered here not only fail to mention a patron, but also have no date and/or do not indicate geographical provenance.

At another level one might observe that Ayyubid rule was too short-lived and insufficiently cohesive to allow any distinctive set of conventions to emerge that might give the term significance other than as a chronological indicator. It would thus be prudent to begin by assuming that to define something as Ayyubid is in the first instance no more than a dating convention of limited usefulness. However, it implies at least reference to certain stylistic distinctions, for it is in part by appeal to these that scholars have sought to solve the problems of attribution that surround many early 13th-century illustrated Arabic manuscripts. Such differences imply in their turn lines of demarcation between what is, or is likely to be, Ayyubid, and what is better defined in other terms, so that the following discussion also provides a brief account of contemporary materials that may preferably be termed North Jaziran (Artuqid or Zangid), or that have been assigned to the so-called ‘Baghdad school’. It is hoped that the coverage is sufficient for adequate characterisation of these various groupings, but while the discussion includes the major illustrated manuscripts, it should be stressed that what follows is not intended to be a comprehensive survey of all extant materials; this will best be done in a planned monograph.

Ayyubid manuscripts

In contrast to Baghdad and North Jaziran examples, there are manuscripts that exhibit facial types, postures and features of dress that connect them closely with Byzantine iconography and style. Because of this, they are generally considered to have been produced in Syria or Egypt, so that the designation Ayyubid appears appropriate. To this group belong the 1222

1 For an overview of this complicated period, see C Hillenbrand 1985.
Maqamat (B.N. arabe 6094)2 (pls XXIV, 9.2–4) and the Kalila wa Dimna of ca 1200–1220 (B.N. arabe 3465) which is very similar3 (pls XXVI, XXXIX, 9.5), both of which have features in common with the 1180 Damietta Gospel Book4 (pls XXIX, XXX) and another Coptic New Testament dated 1249–505 (pl. XXVIII). These relate above all to the postures of the human figures and often to the delineation of faces, while the Kalila wa Dimna in addition shares identical landscape features with the Gospels Book, and also includes Coptic glosses.

Taken together, these elements would seem to point to Egypt, and presumably Cairo, as the place of origin, and the Maqamat and Kalila wa Dimna have indeed been ascribed to Ayubid Cairo.6 However, Syrian production has been more frequently suggested—by Buchthal, Ettinghausen and Grube for the Kalila wa Dimna,7 and by Buchthal, Ettinghausen, and Holter for the Maqamat, the latter opting specifically for Damascus.8 This preference may relate in part to Buchthal’s conclusion that the Damietta Gospel Book has more in common with Syrian Christian manuscripts than with Cairenes ones.9 There is, however, the further complication that Buchthal hypothesizes production in a minor Saljuq centre in North Jazira or Syria,10 which would somewhat undermine the argument for a reasonably neat geographical distinction between eastern manuscripts with Saljuq affiliations produced in the North Jazira and Baghdad, and western manuscripts with Byzantine affiliations produced in Ayubid Egypt and Syria. But, of course, contrasting styles do not necessarily point to different centres of production.

Given such general lack of certainty it is inevitable that in the following discussion problems of attribution and stylistic affiliation will recur, even if it concentrates on material for which there is a consensus that Egypt and Syria are the most likely centres of production. It begins, however, with the one manuscript that is incontrovertibly Ayubid, albeit one that by virtue of its unique subject matter and visual style can hardly serve as a reference point for others.


To the best of my knowledge, this is the only illustrated manuscript that can be called Ayubid in the specific sense that it was made for one of the Ayubid rulers. It is a treatise on arms and armour by Murda ibn ‘Ali ibn Murda al-Tarsusi,12 illustrated by fourteen striking miniatures and thirteen diagrams (giving a total of twenty-seven visual aids), and datable to the late 12th century. In the introduction it is dedicated to Saladin and at the end there is an inscription referring to Saladin’s library. The text starts on fol. 2v (or 5v of the modern pagination in Western numerals) with the basmala, and we find the first mention of Saladin on fol. 3v (6v): ‘Subduer of the power of the cross, al-Salah al-Dunya wa ‘l-Din, the Sultan of Islam and the Muslims, Abu’l-Muzaffar Yusuf ibn Ayub, the restorer of the Caliph’s dominion (qam’ abadat al-sultan Salah al-Dunya wa ‘l-Din sultan al-islam wa’l-muslimin / Abu ‘l-Muzaffar Yusuf ibn Ayub mulkhi daudat amir al-mu’minin)’ (pl.

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3 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, arabe 3465; see de Slane 1883–95, 603; Blochet 1926, 55–6 and pls VI–VII; Holter 1937b, II no. 26; De Lorey 1938, 28, n. 31; Buchthal 1940, 128–33 and figs. 23, 24, 27–28, 30–31, 33–36, 38–39, 41–42, 44, 46; Buchthal, Kurz und Ettinghausen 1940, 151 no. 26; Ettinghausen 1962, 61 and col. pls on pp. 62 and 63; Müller 1979, which includes several reproductions of the miniatures; Nassar 1985, 88, 89, 92, 94, 96 and fig. 4; Grube 1990–91, 360 no. 1, 374 no. 1; Grube 1991, 43 and figs. 10, 15, 18, 24, 35, 61; Raby 1991, 26–8 and figs. 10, 15, 18, 24; Rizkallah 1991; Paris 2001, 113 with two col. illustrations and 132 no. 95 (entry by A Vernay-Nouari); Hunt 1998a, 271–73 and figs. 30–33; Hunt 1998b, 131–32, 149; O’Kane 2003, 218, Appendix I. Holter 1937b, II no. 26, suggests that the manuscript is a Mamluk production of the 14th century. It appears to have been the prototype for a copy produced in the 17th century (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, arabe 3470), perhaps in Cairo. Grube 1990–91, 360 no. 1, 366 no. 80, 400 no. 80.

4 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, copie 13. One of the three frontispieces is detached and in the Freer Gallery of Art, Washington, inv. no. 55.11; see Leroy 1974, 113–48 nos XVI and XVII, col. pls C and D and b/w figs. 41–73. See also Blochet 1926, 51 and pl. I; Buchthal 1940, 132–33 and figs. 45, 47–48; Nassar 1985, 94 and fig. 4; Hoffman 1993, 8–9 and figs. 8a–b; A Weyl Carr in New York 1997, 380–81, no. 251; Hunt 1998b, 115–57 and figs. 1–3; A Vernay-Nouari in Paris 2001, 131 no. 94.

5 This New Testament manuscript is now divided into the Gospels, which are in Paris, Institut Catholique, Ms. copie-arabe 1; and the Pauline and Catholic Epistles and Acts, which are in Cairo, Coptic Museum, M. Bibl. 94. See Leroy 1974, 157–74 no. XXI, col. pls E, F, G, and figs. 75–91; and Leroy 1974, 174–77 no. XXII, figs. 93–5 respectively. See also Rizkallah 1991, 105–7 and 111–12; Hunt 1998a, 248–79 and figs. 7–16; Hunt 1998c, 13–14; Hunt 1998c, 13–14.


7 Buchthal 1940, 131; Ettinghausen 1962, 61; Grube 1990–1, 374 no. 1; Grube 1991, 43.

8 Holter 1937b, II no. 25; Buchthal 1940, 131; Ettinghausen 1962, 79. James has likewise argued that the 1222 Maqamat was produced in Syria, on the evidence, he says, ‘of the pronounced Byzantine character of the illustrations’; James 1977, 15.

9 Buchthal 1940, 132–33.

10 Buchthal 1940, 131. An attribution of the 1222 Maqamat and the roughly contemporaneous Kalila wa Dimna to a Jazirian centre of production is also favoured by Nassar 1985, 85, 97.

11 See Uri 1787, 102 no. CCLXXI.

12 For a reading of the name Murda as Murdi, see Brockelmann GAI I, 495.

At the end of the manuscript, on fol. 208v (213v) it is also stated that the manuscript was made for the library of Saladin: *bi-nasm khizanat al-malik al-nasir ... Salah al-Dunya wa’l-Din* (pl. 9.1).

Cahen notes that the introduction relates the text to the wars against the infidel (but whether before or after the capture of Jerusalem is not stated), but that otherwise nothing is known of the author, although the fact that the text is partly couched in the form of questions addressed to a known Alexandrian armourer, Abu’l-Hasan ibn al-Abraqi al-Iskandarani (on folios 77v, 87v, 89v, 97r, 105r, 111v, 128v), is another clear pointer to Egypt, and Cahen assumes that al-Tarsusi himself lived in Alexandria.¹³

If it were not for the reference to it in the colophon of the manuscript, the very existence of Saladin’s library would be difficult to substantiate, and its whereabouts are unknown. Sources mention do not mention an Ayyubid royal library; on the contrary, it is recorded that Saladin was responsible for disbanding the celebrated palace library of the Fatimids, selling off or destroying most of its vast collection,¹⁴ which is said to have comprised well over a million and a half books.¹⁵ Between 100,000 and 120,000 of these are recorded as having been either sold or bequeathed by Saladin to his chancellor, al-Qadi al-Fadil, a famed bibliophile who amassed an enormous number of books as spoils from the cities that had been conquered by the Ayyubids.¹⁶ Al-Fadil’s collection—with the remnants of the Fatimid royal library at its core—became part of the Fadiliyya madrasa that he founded in Cairo in 580/1184–5.¹⁷ This institution appears to have constituted the largest and most important library in the Ayyubid empire—a reflection, it has been argued, of the rise at this time of the madrasa system as a buttress of Sunni orthodoxy.¹⁸

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¹³ Cahen 1948, 103. Boudot-Lamotte, 33, points out that the author’s *nida*, al-Tarsusi, seems to indicate that he came from Tarsus in Syria. But this tells us nothing about the place of production, and at the moment a Cairene provenance seems more likely.

¹⁴ The books not destroyed or given to al-Fadil are said to have been sold off at public auction over a period of ten years; Pedersen and Makdisi 1986, 1125; Pinto 1929, 238; Stellhorn Mackensen 1934–35, 99–100; Walker 1997, 196.

¹⁵ Ibn Abī Tayyīr, as recorded in al-Maqrīzī, reports that the Fatimid library held twelve hundred copies of al-Ṭabarī’s *Taʾrikh* alone, in addition to around 1,600,000 other books; Walker 1997, 196.

¹⁶ Pinto 1929, 217, 238; Stellhorn Mackensen 1934–35, 99–100; Eche 1967, 249–52; Heffen and Pearson 1991, 198. Among other sources for al-Fadil’s collection was the library of the city of Diyarbakır (Amid), which Saladin took from the Artuqids in 579/1183. From it he appropriated a vast number of volumes, estimates ranging from 150,000 to the extraordinary figure of 1,040,000. Stellhorn Mackensen 1934–35, 99; Ward 1985, 78. The numbers given for the books appropriated by al-Fadil differ wildly in the sources and are often exaggerated. See Eche 1967, 251, 252–53 and 251 n. 3.


¹⁸ Stellhorn Mackensen 1934–35, 100; Eche 1967, 393–97; Walker 1997, 196. The library of the Fadiliyya madrasa was itself dispersed not long after its inception, so that by the time of al-Maqrīzī (1364–1442), it was no longer in existence. It is recorded that the books were gradually stolen, and those
Significant as it was, however, the Fadiliyya library could hardly have been what is meant by the colophon of the manual. There is, then, considerable uncertainty surrounding this reference to a royal Ayyubid library. Nevertheless, the high quality of the manuscript's illustrations, script and paper is consonant with a royal commission, and we may therefore conclude that the work was indeed most probably produced at Saladin's behest for his own collection of books.

The miniatures are richly decorated drawings of the various arms and war machines discussed in the text (pls XVIII–XXIII). They are placed within the relevant page and drawn without frame or background or any narrative element. They are, however, beautifully decorated with geometrical and vegetal patterns, mostly of small scrolls or interlacing patterns and predominantly in gold, red and blue. The drawings themselves are quite elaborate and show well the various parts of the weapon in question, but they do not constitute explanatory drawings of how a weapon is constructed.

The manuscript has a new binding preserving older covers in brown morocco with gold tooling, has no flap, and has 209 folios plus flyleaves. The measurements (with the binding) are: height 25.5 cm x 19 cm; page height 24.6 cm x 18.3 cm; text area (which is not framed) ca height 18.3 cm x 13 cm. Margins have been trimmed or repaired. The script is a fine naskhi, in black ink, of a type associated with manuscripts of the 12th century, 11 lines to a page, punctuated by rosettes of gold petals with red and blue dots around, similar to those commonly found later, in Mamluk manuscripts (pls XVIII, XIX, XXII). When a section ends and a new fasl begins, the rosette is more elaborate and bigger, with a gold flower in the middle, and a blue button in the centre of the flower, on a background of red varnish on gold, and blue dots, or sometimes spiky blue elements outside the rosette (pl. XIX).

The manuscript opens (fol. 1r, or 4r of the modern pagination in Western numerals) with a gold-framed cartouche with a big marginal rosette, the whole surrounded by a thin blue frame with the title of the manuscript in gold letters outlined by light black ink.

Fols 1v and 2r (4v and 5r) again have the title of the manuscript (fol. 1v) and the name of the author (fol. 2r): Murda ibn ‘Ali ibn Murda al-Tarsusi (pl. XVII). The text is written in gold letters outlined in light black ink. The text on the double spread is framed (height 17.8 cm x 12.5 cm) on both folios with a gold interlacing pattern with an inner band of dots in gold, blue and red (which has become brownish) and an outer thin blue frame which also surrounds the two marginal rosettes at either side. The background of the text is also illuminated with ink, brownish thin lines creating 'clouds' around the words.

The text is divided into the following sections (folio numbers are those of the more correct Arabic pagination, even though the following groups of pages have been misplaced—127v goes to 131r, 133v to 128r, 130v to 134r):

Fol. 1r: Title of the book in gold letters within a cartouche al-tabsin fi l-ühurb (Manual on Warfare).
Fol. 1v–2r: Double frontispiece against with the title of the book, and the name of the author (pl. XVII).
Fol. 3v: Dedication and mention of Saladin.
Fol. 5v: Sword (saif), no miniature.
Fol. 27r: Bow (qais) (5 miniatures, on fols 82r, 82v, 84v, 89r, 91r; pls XVIII, XIX).
Fol. 96r: Lances (rimah) (2 miniatures, on fols 97v, 99v; pl. XX).
Fol. 107r: Shields (atras) (1 miniature, on fol. 112v; pl. XXI of shielded crossbow).
Fol. 113r: Armour (dure).
Fol. 119r: Clubs and maces (al-latt, al-amud, al-dabbus).
Fol. 125r: Mangonels (al-majjanqat) (4 miniatures, on fols 128r, 129v–130r, 132r, 133; pl. XXII).
Fol. 134r: Battering rams, towers and shelters (al-dabbabat, al-abnaj, al-sata’ir) (1 miniature, on fol. 136v of protective net; pl. XXIII).
Fol. 137v: Triangles (muthallathat) (1 miniature made of 6 elements, on fol. 138v).
Fol. 139r: Naphtha (nafat).
Fol. 148v: Burning mirrors (al-manaqa al-muhriga) (13 diagrams, on fols 163r, 164r, 165r, 169r, 171v, 172v, 176r, 178r, 182v, 183r, 184v, 186r, 187v).
Fol. 205v: Conclusion.
Fols 208v–209r: Double finispiece with the inscription referring to the ‘Library of Salah al-Din’ (pl. 9.1).

Al-Hariri, Maqamat (Assemblies), Bibliothèque Nationale de France, arabe 6094 (pls 9.2–4).\(^{19}\)

This splendid Maqamat is dated 619/1222 and has been attributed to Syria. It has a rather large format; book size 31 cm x 26 cm x 5.5 cm, page ca 29 cm x 21.5 cm, with 13 lines to the page, written surface ca 23.5 cm x 17 cm. It contains 187 folios and 39 miniatures. These occupy a large proportion of the page, measuring between 14 cm x 20.5 cm (fol. 139r) and

\(^{19}\) See note 2.
18.2cm x 21.2cm (fol. 68r). The pages are very damaged and the borders have been restored, so that it is difficult to establish the exact size of the original.

The script is a beautiful naskh in black ink, with gold titles and many red rubrics. Some of the miniatures have been retouched, repainted, and inpainted at a later date. As with the al-Tarsusi manuscript, the miniatures are drawn without frames, and the paper serves as background. The palette is quite rich, with various shades of green, red, pink, white, blue, brown, gold, yellow, light blue and black. All the figures have a red outline.

The manuscript lacks incipit and colophon, but its date is given in two miniatures. One on fol. 68r contains a minute 'Kufic' inscription in white against the black body of the representation of a boat, and reads: 'umila sanat tis' 'asna wa sittim'a' "made in the year 619" (pl. XXIV). This folio (29cm x 23cm, miniature 18.2cm x 21.2cm) is part of the twenty-second maqama (al-funtiya). The other inscription is on fol. 167r, this time in black ink on white paint (pl. 9.4); it is purposely not very accomplished, indeed, an appropriately childish hand, on the writing tablet of one of the children represented. It gives the same date of AH 619, and reads: 'umila fi sanat tis' 'asna wa sittim'a. This miniature is part of the forty-sixth maqama (al-halabiyya). In the same miniature, another of
the children’s tablets contains a further inscription which says ta[nn]a hadha al-kitab fi’asharat ayyam—‘this book was finished in ten days.’ This is puzzling, for it seems most unlikely that such a big and heavily illustrated manuscript could have been completed in such a short time.

Rice puts forward the hypothesis that AH 619 is the date of the manuscript from which this particular one was copied, arguing that ‘on paleographic grounds alone and for many stylistic details it seems to belong to the third quarter of the thirteenth century rather than the first.’ But he does not offer any further explanation. There is no evidence that the dates are later additions and it seems to me that the style of script, the book format, the style and size of the miniatures all point to an early 13th-century date. There is no good reason, in short, to query 619/1220 as the date of the manuscript.

We are, however, given no indication of where it was made. In 1933 De Lory included it in his discussion of manuscripts belonging to the ‘School of Baghdad’ but the relationship of its miniatures to Byzantine manuscripts is well established and, as noted above, Buchthal has hypothesised a provenance from a northern Syrian/Anatolian centre where ‘direct contact with Christian art was frequent and easy. This would point to one of the minor courts of the local Seljuk princes in Syria or Asia Minor.’ He puts forward two main points in support: similarities of the (rather stylised) architectonic features in the manuscript with the contemporary architecture of northern Syria and Seljuk Asia Minor; and similarities with the 1180 Damietta Gospel Book (pls XXIX, XXX), a manuscript which, according to him, has very little in common with earlier Coptic art, its miniatures being very reminiscent of those in manuscripts from early Byzantine times produced in Syria or Asia Minor. But the second argument fails to convince; the point at issue is not the iconographical source but the place of production, and, if anything, similarities with a manuscript produced in Damietta would suggest an Egyptian rather than a Syrian provenance. Indeed, Hunt has argued that the similarities shared by the manuscript with both the Damietta Gospel Book and the 1249-50 New Testament (col. pl. 9.1) make an attribution to Egypt—and specifically to Cairo—more than likely. It is, however, possible to suggest that Damascus could have been the centre of production, as we have evidence for manuscript production in both Syria and Egypt at that time.


The manuscript has 146 folios, a number of which are later additions, and 98 miniatures (eight added later—those on fols 3r, 3v, 22r, 25v, 138v, 139r, 141r, 143r). The pages are in a somewhat poor condition, and have been restored. It is clear that they have been cut at the margins, sometimes cutting off part of the miniature, so that it is difficult to know the exact measurements. However, an average size of the page is height 27cm x width 20cm; there are 15 lines to the page; the written surface is some 22cm by 15cm; the miniatures occupy quite a large proportion of the page, measuring from a height 14cm x 20cm (fol. 33r) to ca 20.6cm x 15.7cm (fol. 34r), to ca 18.1cm x 17.3cm (fol. 121r).

The miniatures have no frame and the background is the paper itself. They have been retouched, sometimes heavily, sometimes lightly, and inpainted. The texture of the original colour is very good. The palette is vivid and rich: bright red, many shades of green, blue, light blue, grey, white, brown, gold, pink, black, and yellow. Where the miniature is not damaged the colours are still very bright, compact, and shades of the same colour have been used. For example the leaves are painted in tones of very dark green, then lighter, then even lighter, then a thin touch of yellow. Often, the names of the personages or the animals are written over them. The figures have been outlined in red.

Datable on stylistic grounds to 1200 to 1250, this manuscript is the only known 13th-century illustrated copy of Kalila wa Dimna. It is stylistically related to the 1222 Maqamat (pl. 9.2-4, pls XXIV) as well as to the 1180 Damietta Gospel Book (pls XXIX, XXX) and the 1249-50 New Testament (pl. XXVIII). Indeed, several elements of the landscape in particular

20 Rice 1959, 216.
21 De Lory 1933, 11 and Fig. 5.
22 Buchthal 1940, 131. See also Etinghausen 1962, 79-80; Nassar 1985, 85, 86.
23 Buchthal 1940, 131-32.
evince strong similarities with Christian manuscripts (pl XVIII, XXIX, XXX). Also the posture and general iconography of human groups is Byzantine in style.

Regarding the stylistic similarities between the *Kalila wa Dimna* and the *Maqamat*, we may notice, for example, that there is an analogous motif of the slender sage-like figure with mantle and hood, grey beard and moustache (pl. 9.3); there are also parallels in the posture of some of the figures, in the folds of the garments and the shape of the turbans (pls 9.3, XXV). The floral details are very similar (pl. 9.2), as are the architectural elements and the thrones (pl. 9.5). In both manuscripts there is a thin white line within the outline of the nose, but in the *Maqamat* manuscript in many cases there is also a line around the eyes. This is darker, giving a sense of depth, and is reminiscent of the particular dark green of Byzantine mosaics. As this additional feature suggests, the miniatures of the *Maqamat* are more refined than those of the *Kalila wa Dimna*; the drawings are much finer, and the colours are done with great care and more delicacy.

The connections with the two Christian manuscripts are remarkable, particularly, in my opinion, those between the *Kalila wa Dimna* and the Damietta Gospel Book of 1180. They relate not only to iconography and style, but also to specific landscape elements, notably the distinctive flowers with a domed cap (pls XXIX, XXX), and the way in which the strip of grass is rendered by painting each blade in black and then passing over a line of green. Exactly the same model and painterly technique seems to have been used in both manuscripts (pls XXVI, XXIX).

The *Kalila wa Dimna* has been attributed to Syria (Buchthal, Ettinghausen and Grube), or to Egypt (O’Kane 2003) or specifically to Cairo (Hunt). For Rizkallah, the Coptic numbering of the manuscript indicates that it was in Egypt during the Ayyubid period, but neither this nor its similarities to the 1249-50 New Testament prove an Egyptian attribution, and she suggests that it might have been produced either in Egypt or in Syria, on the assumption that political union would probably have generated a common artistic tradition. But this, as explained in the introduction to this article, is hardly the case with the Ayyubids, and the strong common elements with the 1180 Damietta Gospel Book in particular make a powerful case for the manuscript having been produced in Egypt, probably during the early part of the 13th century.

One interesting aspect of this manuscript is its preservation of ‘archaic’ features, in particular the names of the various animals written on top of the figures, and the fact that the lion attacks the bull from the rear (fol. 71v) rather than from the front as it does in other, later representations. The iconography of a ‘back attack’ belongs to an ancient oriental tradition as seen in a Persepolis relief of the first half of the 5th century BC, and in even earlier examples.


This is an important, newly-discovered Arabic cosmography. It was acquired by the Bodleian Library in 2002, and has thus only recently come to the attention of scholars. It lacks a colophon, but on the basis of the script, and analyses conducted on paper and pigment, it is likely that the manuscript was copied in Egypt or Syria in the early 13th century.

It is a copy of a Fatimid text and is divided into two parts; celestial matters and earthly matters. This manuscript is highly significant for the history of cartography, containing many interesting maps and a particularly interesting picture of the town of Mahdiya (Tunisia; pl. XXXI).

### Possible Ayyubid manuscripts


Another manuscript which may be considered as Ayyubid is the only known illustrated copy of al-Mubashshir’s *Mukhtar*...

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27 For a detailed account of the similarities between the two manuscripts, see Buchthal 1940, 128-30.
28 Buchthal 1940, 131; Ettinghausen 1962, 61; Grube 1990-1, no. 1, 374; Grube 1991, 43.
31 This has already been signalled by Grube 1991, 42 and note 13; and illustrations 30-37.
32 The text has now been fully edited and translated and is available at [http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/bookofcuriosities.](http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/bookofcuriosities) See Savage-Smith E, and Y Rapoport 2008.
33 See Johns and Savage-Smith 2003, 17.
34 The Fustat fragment with a representation of a battle between Arabs and knights (London, British Museum 1938.3-12.01) has been recently attributed to the Ayyubid period, Egypt, 13th century: Sheila Canby in L’Orient de Saladin, no. 62. However, this attribution is doubtful, and the reasons for a Fatimid (Egypt or Iraq) provenance adduced by Gray 1938 and Contadini 1998, 12 and fig. 14 still seem more convincing.
35 Istanbul, Topkapi Sarai Library, Ahmet III 3206. For the text of this manuscript see Rosenthal 1937 and Rosenthal 1961. For this copy see Ettinghausen 1962, 74-9 and col. pls on pages 75-7; James 1977, 15; Nasser 1985, 86, 88, 92, 94; Rogers 1986, 32 no. 20, and col. pl. 20; Hoffman 1993, 12-16 and fig. 2; Hunt 1998B, 149; Hunt 1998c, 158-9 and fig. 4.
al-Hikam. The manuscript gives neither date nor provenance but it indicates that it was written for the secretary of an atabeg who, unfortunately, has not been identified, and is therefore undatable, although the style of the miniatures points to the early 13th century. The atabeg connection together with the strong Byzantine affiliation of its miniatures makes it likely that this manuscript was produced in Syria. Some of the landscape features, such as the flowers and rock formation, are very similar to those found in the 1200 to 1220 Kalila wa Dimna B.N. arabe 3465 (pl. 9.5, pls XXV-XXVII). Further, the iconography of the miniatures, the costumes, facial features and other details, such as the low chair where—for example—Aristotle is seated (fol. 90r, pl. 9.7), can be related not only to the Kalila wa Dimna 3465 but also to the Magamat 6094 and to the Christian manuscripts discussed above.

Ibn Butlan, Da'wat al-atibba' (Banquet of Physicians), Syria? second quarter of the 13th century. Jerusalem, LA Mayer Memorial Institute (col. pl. 9.3).

This manuscript has come to the attention of scholars only recently, with an article by Eva Baer who has published all thirteen miniatures in colour. Although the manuscript presents certain similarities to the Istanbul Automata (pl. 9.11, pls XXXIII) and the B.N. arabe 3929 Magamat (pl. 9.18)—both discussed below—which should probably be considered Artuqid, Baer argues that there is not enough evidence for an Artuqid school of painting. Instead she suggests that on stylistic grounds the Jerusalem manuscript may have been produced in Syria in the second quarter of the 13th century. This would make it a possible Ayyubid manuscript, preceding the early Mamluk manuscript of the same text, dated 672/1273, now in the Ambrosiana Library.

Dioscorides, Khuwass al-Ashjar (Properties of Plants), dated 642/1244, Egypt? Bologna, Biblioteca Universitaria, Cod. arab. 2954 (pls 9.8, 9.9).
This is a very fine copy of Dioscorides’ *Khawass al-Ishjar (Properties of Plants)*, otherwise known as *De Materia Medica*; it is written in a good naskh in black ink with red rubrics. It contains no fewer than 475 illustrations, rather delicately drawn and shaded. The few human figures represented are in a Byzantine style, in particular the one on fol. 160r (pl. 9.8), and are similar to those in the *Kalila wa Dimna* B.N. arabe 3465 (pl.XXV). The parallels between the two manuscripts extend also to the treatment of animals: the dog, for example, on fol. 66r of the Dioscorides recalls the depiction of the jackal on fol. 49v of the *Kalila wa Dimna* (pl. 9.5). And just as the *Kalila wa Dimna* can be related to contemporary Coptic manuscripts, so too can this manuscript. Indeed, the iconography and stylisation of the frontispiece (pl. 9.9), which depicts a seated Dioscorides, flanked by Luqman and Aristotle (identified by inscriptions), are very reminiscent of certain Christian manuscripts. For instance, the miniatures of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John on folios 1v, 65v, 105v and 174v of B.N. copte-arabe 1 dated to 1249–50, provide many parallels to the frontispiece portrait. Like the evangelists, Dioscorides is shown seated on a bench which is spread with a carpet, his legs astride so that the voluminous drapery of his clothing falls in long modelled folds into his lap. Above him, as in the Christian manuscripts, is an arch—round like that of Mark—which springs from slender columns, and from which hangs a drawn curtain.

In turning now to consider those contemporary manuscripts which are probably or definitely not to be associated with Ayyubid patronage, we shall begin with a cohesive group from the disputed territory of the North Jazira (for which the more appropriate labels may be Artuqid and Zangid).

**North Jazira: Artuqid and Zangid manuscripts**

Here we are fortunate in possessing a core group of manuscripts in which the colophon states the place of production, with locations ranging over territories ruled mostly by the Artuqid and Zangid dynasties. As before, it is on the basis of similarities with these that a regional provenance can reasonably be assigned to a number of other manuscripts.

The surviving manuscripts that can thus be classified as Artuqid deal with star charts, botany, and mechanical contrivances. One is a copy of al-Sufi, *Kitab suwar al-kawakib al-thabita*, now in Istanbul, Topkapi Sarai Library and dated 525/1130–31. This was possibly made in Mayyafarqin, for

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*See Gabrieli and Scerrato 1979, col. pl. 717.*
*See Ettinghausen 1962, col. pl. on page 63.*
*See Leroy 1974, col. Pl. E, and figs. 75, 85, 89.*
*For an attempt to characterise Artuqid painting, see Ward 1985, 69–80.*

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**Pl. 9.8 Dioscorides, Khawass al-Ishjar (‘Properties of Plants’), Egypt or Syria, 642/1244. Bologna, Biblioteca Universitaria, Cod. arab. 2954, f. 160r: A man extracting balsam from plants.**

**Pl. 9.9 Dioscorides, Khawass al-Ishjar (‘Properties of Plants’), Egypt or Syria, 642/1244. Bologna, Biblioteca Universitaria, Cod. arab. 2954, f. 141r: Dioscorides, flanked by Luqman and Aristotle.**
the colophon states that it was copied from a manuscript belonging to a certain Abu Tahir 'Abd al-Baqi, who may be identifiable with a dignitary of that city (col. pl. 9.4). There is a later copy, now in the Sileymaniye Library in Istanbul, dated 529/1134–35, which was made in Mardin.

Another is a treatise on Isma‘i‘l ibn al-Razzaz al-Jazari’s Automata (Kitab fi Marifat al-Hiyal al-Handasiyya [Book of Ingenious Mechanical Devices or Automata]) dated Shab‘an 602/April 1206 and produced in Diyarbakr (pl. 9.11, pl. XXXIII). This is the earliest surviving copy of the celebrated work on mechanical devices which was commissioned by the Artuqid ruler, Nasr al-Din Mahmud (r. 1201–22) from his court engineer, al-Jazari, probably at the turn of the 13th century, and presumably written and illustrated under al-Jazari’s supervision. The distinctive double finispiece (pl. XXXIII) of this Automata is of particular interest; rather unusually, its  

46 This may be the same Abu Tahir who sponsored a medical Risala composed by ‘Ubaid Allah ibn Jibril ibn ‘Ubaid Allah ibn Bakhtishu, who we know died in Mayyafariqin: Contadini 1992, 66.


48 Istanbul, Topkapı Sarai Library, Alhmet III 3472. The manuscript was copied in Shab‘an 602/April 1206 by Muhammad ibn Yusuf ibn ‘Uthman al-Hankafi. Twelve of its folios are later additions. See Holter 1937a, 37 no. 3; Holter 1937b, 6 no. 10; Buchthal, Kurz and Ettinghausen 1940, 148 no. 10; James 1977, 15; Nasar 1985, 85, 96; Rogers 1986, 30–1 nos 7–12 and col. plb 7–12; New York 1997, 427–28 no. 286 and col. pl. on page 428; London 2005, 111–2, no. 55 and fig. 33; Ward (1985, 69–80 and figs 1–4, 8) highlights the confusion that has surrounded the dating of this manuscript: some scholars have misinterpreted the colophon and consequently have placed the work several decades later. Of the earlier scholars Holter (1937a, 37 no. 3, 1937b, 6 no. 10) and Rogers (1986, 30–1 nos 7–12) are correct in dating the work to 1206. For al-Jazari’s Automata more generally, see Ettinghausen 1962, 95–6, 162; Hill 1974; James 1977, 15.


greater part is decorated with an ornamental geometric pattern, while its border is formed of a bold Kufic inscription against a scrollwork background—a far more common device that occurs in a considerable number of the Zangid and Artuqid manuscripts.

The other subject areas of this group are represented by a Dioscorides kept in the Imam Riza Shrine Library in Mashhad. Its foreword states that it was copied by Mihran ibn Mansur for Najm al-Din Alpi, the Artuqid prince of Mayyafariqin, between 547 and 572 (1152–76).

As for the Zangids, a copy of al-Sufi’s Kitab suwar al-kawâlikh al-thabita dated 566/1171, now in the Bodleian, Hunt 212, was most probably produced in Mosul as it appears to be dedicated to Sa‘if al-Din Ghazi II, the Zangid ruler of Mosul from 564–572/1169–1176. Like the Artuqid Automata, the manuscript features striking Kufic inscriptions overlaid on scrollwork backgrounds (pls XXXIII, 9.11).

There are also two copies of the Kitab al-Diryaq, one dated 1199 and now in Paris (pl. 9.15, 9.16), and the other, datable to the first half of the 13th century, now in
Vienna. Both were in all probability produced in Mosul. The grounds for thinking this are twofold—the presence of Kufic inscriptions within cartouches with a scroll background, which are very similar to those in the 1171 al-Sufi manuscript described above (pl. 9.10); and the strong stylistic affiliations both with metalwork produced in Mosul and with the multi-volume 1216-1219 Kitab al-Aghani (Book of Songs) of Abu’l-Faraj al-Isfahani, which was most likely produced in Mosul for Badr al-Din Lu’lu’. This is indicated by the words Badr al-Din Lu’lu’ b. ‘Abd Allah on the ring bands of the princes represented on the frontispieces (pl. 9.17).

Another copy of al-Sufi’s Kitab suwar al-kawakib al-thabita is dated 630/1233 and was produced in Mosul (pl. 9.12). The scribe was a certain Farah ibn ‘Abd Allah al-Habbashi. It is now in Berlin, Staatsbibliothek 5658. This manuscript is a further testimonial to the lively artistic life in Mosul under Badr al-Din Lu’lu’.

Common to all these manuscripts is that they exhibit a similar variety of styles, types of dress and headgear, as well as a rather frequent use of red for backgrounds (pls XXXIII, 9.11), that connect them to a Saljuq artistic environment, seen again in Mosul metalwork and in the Persianate (but Saljuq) illustrated manuscript of Vanga va Golshah (pl. XXXV).

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50 Vienna, National Bibliothek, NF 10. See Holter 1937a, 1-15, pls II-IV and figs. 1-10; Holter 1937b, 15-16 no. 37, who argues that the miniature is stylistically related to glass painting in Aleppo, and that the manuscript might therefore have been produced in that city; Bachthal, Kurz and Ettinghausen 1940, 154 no. 37; Ettinghausen 1962, 92, 145, 147 and col. pl. on page 91; Melikian-Chirvani 1967, 3-4, 21-30 and figs 16-23, who is alone in attributing this manuscript to Saljuq Iran; James 1977, 22; Nasr 1985, 88, 90, 91, 92, 94, 96 and fig. 4; Hoffmann 1993, 7 and fig. 3; Paris 1996: pls on pages 40, 100.

51 For the connections between Jazirat/Ayyubid metalwork and painting, see for example, Holter 1937a, 42-3; Rice 1952-58; James 1977, 24; Nasr 1985, 86-95, 97 and figs 1, 2, 3; Nasr in L’Orient de Saladin, 140-41 no. 114.

52 Of this twenty-volume edition, only six volumes survive. It was copied by Muhammad ibn Abi Tālib al-Badri. The six volumes are now dispersed: vol. II, IV and XI are in Cairo, National Library, Abd Ar-Raziq 579; vols XVII and XIX are in Istanbul, National Library, Feyzullah 1565 and 1566; vol. XX is in Copenhagen, Royal Library, no. 168. Volumes XI and XX are dated respectively 614/1217 and 616/1219-20. For these volumes, see Holter 1937a, 37-8 no. 4, and pl. VII; Holter 1937b, 15 no. 36; Bachthal, Kurz and Ettinghausen 1940, 153-54 no. 36B; Rice 1952-53c; Forès 1957; Forès 1961; Ettinghausen 1962, 61-5, 147 and col. pls on pages 58, 65; Stern 1957; Melikian-Chirvani 1967, 3-4, 16-21, 25-30, 32-3 and fig. 5, who again rejects the scholarly consensus and argues for an Iranian provenance; London 1976, 322-23 nos 515-17; James 1977, 22; Nasr 1985, 85, 90-1, 94, 96 and figs 2, 4; London 2005, no. 54.

53 Ashvarte 1893, no. 5658.

54 Senn in the illustrated manuscript of Vanga va Golshah by ‘Ayyub, possibly Konya c. 1250; now in Istanbul, Topkapı Saray Müzesi H.841. For this manuscript, see Melikian-Chirvani 1970; Daneshvari 1986; Rogers 1986, 50 nos 21-24, and col. pls 21-24; London 2005, 111 and col. fig. 32. For discussion of the Pesho-Sa`uja influence on Jazirat painting, see Ettinghausen 1962, 61-6, 91-2; James 1977, 24; Nasr 1985, 86, 88, 92.

Problematic manuscripts

As was to be expected, some manuscripts appear to be transitional, sharing characteristics of one group or another, or else provide conflicting indications as to possible provenances. An example is a volume in Paris (B.N. arabe 3929) of al-Hariri’s Maqamat (9.18). This has no colophon and has been attributed to North Mesopotamia and Mosul, while the dates that have been suggested are 1180-1200, the second quarter of the 13th, and the mid-13th century. This Maqamat is a real puzzle; not only does it resemble the I206 Automata in certain respects (pls XXXIII, 9.11)—as signalled by Ward—on the basis of which an Artuqid attribution might be proposed, but it also exhibits features that would connect it to the so-called Baghdad school of manuscripts (pls 9.12, 9.18-20), while in yet other respects—details of iconography and features of style—it stands apart.

Another example of a mixture of stylistic features that make provenance problematic is a copy of Dioscorides dated 626/1229 (pl. 9.19). This has been associated by Ettinghausen with a North Jazirat centre of production, which would...


Pl. 9.16 Pseudo-Galen, Kitab al-Diryaq (Book of Antidotes), probably Mosul, first half of the 13th century, Vienna, Nationalbibliothek, AF 10, f. 1r (frontispiece). Scenes of courtly life.
tend to place it in the Artuqid/Zangid camp. But Christian links are suggested by the presence of a Syriac blessing in the colophon, and the manuscript exhibits very pronounced Byzantine influences. The manuscript was copied for Shams al-Din Abu'l-Fadl Muhammad ibn Yusuf Bihnam ibn Musa ibn Yusuf al-Mausili, who—according to Linda Komaroff—was a Christian; this may have been a factor behind the strongly Byzantine character of the manuscript. In this way, although it may well have been produced in Northern Mesopotamia or Syria, it exhibits features that align it less with the previous manuscripts than with Ayyubid ones, with their Byzantine affiliations. It is thus ultimately to that group that it might better be assigned.

**‘Abbasid manuscripts: the Baghdad School of painting and related problems**

The starting point in Western art history for this designation is a pair of manuscripts of the *Kitab al-Batiana* (Book of Farriery) by Ahmad ibn al-Husain ibn al-Ahnaf. The colophon of the earlier one specifies the name of the scribe, its date (1209), and also that it was produced in Baghdad; but the colophon of the later one names the same scribe and gives the date 1210, but does not mention the place of production (pl. 9.20). Because of the closeness in date, the fact that it was written by the same scribe, and the strong stylistic similarities in the miniatures of both, this too can be confidently attributed to Baghdad. There is, nevertheless, one crucial feature which indicates that the 1210 manuscript is far from being a straightforward copy. It has a different cycle of miniatures, which could therefore be an earlier aspect yet to be studied, to different painters, or possibly to different ateliers.

But discussion of the characteristics of the ‘School of Baghdad’ usually centres on three manuscripts, the third being the 1237 *Maqamat* by al-Wasiti (pl. 9.21), which has

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60 In New York 1997, 433 no. 288.
61 National Library, Cairo, Khalil Agha F8. This manuscript was copied in Ramadan 605/March/July 1209 by ‘Ali ibn Hasan ibn al-Hibatalah. See Frohner 1936, 39-55 and figs on pages 43-55; Holter 1937b, 11 no. 24; Buchthal, Kurz and Ettinghausen 1940, 150-51 no. 24; Buchthal 1942, 19-20 and fig. 2; Ettinghausen 1962, 97-100; Grube 1967, 3140-44 and pl. 3143 A-D; James 1977, 19.
63 Ettinghausen 1962, 100.
64 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms. arabie 5847. This manuscript is dated 6 Ramadan 634/3 May 1237, and was both written and illustrated by Yahya ibn Mahmud ibn Yahya ibn Abi ‘l-Hasan ibn Kuvwarra al-Wasiti. See Blochet 1925, 125-26; Blochet 1926, 56-58 and pls. X-XIII; Holter 1937b, 13 no. 31; Buchthal, Kurz and Ettinghausen 1940, 152-53 no. 31; Buchthal 1942, 35-7 and figs 32-33, 37-38; 40; Rice 1959, 215, 216-18 and pl. III; Ettinghausen 1962, 104, 114-24 and col. pl. on pages 114, 116-19, 121-22; Grabar 1974, 85-6, 87-8, 92, 94, 97-9, pls I-II, VIII, XI; James 1974, 304-6, 307-9, 313-15, 316-17 and figs 1, 5; James 1977, 20-22; Grabar 1984, 10-11 no. 3 and subsequent references in discussions of individual maqamat; Hoffman 1993, 15 and figs 6a-b.
65 Academy of Sciences, Ms. S 23. See Holter 1937b, 13-14 no. 32; Buchthal, Kurz and Ettinghausen 1940, 155 no. 32; Rice 1959, 215, 217, 218 and pl. I; Ettinghausen 1962, 104-11 and col. pl. on pages 106-8, 111-13; Grabar 1974, 97-8 and pl. III; James 1974, 305-6, 314-16 and fig. 4; James 1977, 20-22; Grabar 1984, 11 no. 4 and subsequent references in discussions of individual maqamat; Pétronyan 1994, 116-27, which include 16 colour reproductions.


similarities are so close that the hypothesis has been put forward that it may in fact have served as a model for the al-Wasiti Maqamat.66 Other manuscripts that have recently come to light include another al-Sufi Kasukib dated 1125, this time produced in Baghdad, its provenance being established in its long and unusually informative colophon.67 There is also a Dioscorides dated 637/1239, for which the colophon also gives the name of the scribe, al-Hasan ibn Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Nashawi, and an even more specific place of production, a Nizamiyya madrasa, presumably the one in Baghdad.68

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67 This copy of the Kitab Samur al-Kasukib, which includes the Quida of Ibn al-Sufi, was sold in London on 29 April 1998, and is now in the Museum of Islamic Art in Doha, Qatar. Its colophon informs us that its calligraphy and illustrations are by ‘Ali ibn ‘Abd al-Jalil ibn ‘Ali ibn Muhammad at Baghdad for himself, between Muharram and Safar 519 (February–March 1125). The scribe-painter moreover states in the colophon that the text and images of his copy are modelled on those of a (now lost) copy dated 427 (1036), with certain alterations being made on the basis of another earlier edition that had been corrected and added to by al-Sufi himself. See Sotheby’s 1998, 32-48.
68 Oxford, Bodleian Cod. Or. d. 138. The colophon does not mention Baghdad, as often reported in the literature. On f. 2v of the manuscript is found an author portrait. For this manuscript see Buchthal, Kurz and Ettinghausen 1940, 164 no. 11; Grube 1959, 179 and fig. 9; Robinson and Gray 1972, 9-10 no. 2; London 1976, 325 no. 522; James 1977, 19; Sadek 1983, 18 no.V2; entry by L Komaroff in New York 1997, 433 no. 289 and col. pl. on pages 402, 432; Hunt 1998b, 150 and fig. 9.
Problematic manuscripts

Complications also arise in relation to the so-called 'Baghdad school'. On the basis of certain similarities with manuscripts known to have been produced in Baghdad, several other manuscripts without a provenance have been attributed to this school, among them the Dioscorides dated 621/1224 (pl. 9, 24) and the Kitab Na'īt al-Hayawan of ca 1220 (pl. XXXVII). However, closer examination of these two reveals a more complex picture. The Na'īt, for example, can be related iconographically to manuscripts produced near Mosul in a Christian monastic environment, most notably the 1219-1220 Mar Mattai Syriac Gospels, which suggests that the manuscript may well have been produced in a more northerly region. This, in turn, has implications for the 1224 Dioscorides which is very similar stylistically. In short, certain attributions to the so-called Baghdad school may need to be revised.

We may conclude with a Tehran manuscript without a provenance that has only recently come to the attention of Western scholars and raises yet further problems (pl XXXVI). Although entitled Risalat al-Sufi fi 'l-Kawakib (Al-Sufi's Treatise on the Stars), the text consists of the mu'adda poem that sometimes follow the treatise and is ascribed to a certain Ibn al-Sufi. The main issue here, however, concerns not the text but its double frontispiece (pl. XXXVI) and the style of the constellation drawings. These bear a striking resemblance to the Kitab Na'īt al-Hayawan (pl. XXXVII), which would therefore suggest a date in the early 13th century, whereas the one given in an inscription in the manuscript is 554/1159. But this inscription does not follow a standard formula, and it seems to have been added later. Further, the known illustrated manuscripts which are close to this date, whether from an Artuqid, Zangid or Fatimid environment, all have a different style in depicting human figures, whereas the earliest of those showing similar features is the Kitab al-Baitana of 1209.

But whatever the final verdict on this particular issue may be, and whatever revisions may have to be made to assessments of stylistic affiliation and provenance among the other manuscripts discussed, taking this and the previous group together it is indisputable that we have a considerable number of manuscripts almost certainly produced in Iraq and the North Jazira. These, then, complement those that can be more securely ascribed to centres of production under Ayyubid control to produce, for the period in question, a fuller map of Arab manuscript illustration, its range of subject matter, and the variety of stylistic affiliations it exhibits.

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60 The bulk of the manuscript is in the Stilemanliye Library of Istanbul (Ayasofya 3703), with a number of its folios being dispersed in other collections. The colophon names the scribe as 'Abdallah ibn al-Fadl, and gives the date 'Rajab 621 (July-August 1224). See Holter 1937b, 11-12 no. 27; Buchthal, Kurz and Etinghhausen 1940, 151-52 no. 27; Buchthal 1942, 20-34 and figs 4-31, 42; Grube 1959, 172-78 and figs 1-4; Etinghhausen 1962, 87-90 and col. pl on pages 87, 89, and James 1977, 20. For a discussion of certain folios, see British Museum 1935, 88-90 and pl. XXIV; Day 1950, 271-80; London 1976, 324 nos 520-21; Sadek 1983, 14 no. 11; Tourvaile 1992; Paris 1996, 254 no. 194 and col. pl on pages 86, 87, 92, 98-99, 254.

61 London, British Library, Or. 2784. For this manuscript see Contadini 1992, Contadini 1994, Contadini 2003, Contadini 2004, Contadini 2007a. One folio is published in London 1976, 325 no. 523, where the title is erroneously given as Mawfi al-Hayawan. Another folio is reproduced in colour in Paris 1996, 66 no. 13. See also Holter 1937b, 14 no. 33 (where the work is again mistitled); Buchthal, Kurz and Etinghhausen 1940, 153 no. 33; Buchthal 1942, 34-5 and figs 34-36, 39, 41; Etinghhausen 1962, 136-37; and Hunt 1998b, 150 and fig. 10.

62 Vatican Library, Syr. No 559; see Jerphanion 1940; Leroy 1964, 280-302 and col. pl between pp. 4 and 5; Hunt 1998c, 11. For the connections between Christian painting of the Mosul area and Islamic painting, see Buchthal 1939, 146-50.

63 Tehran, Reza Abbasi Museum, M. 570. See Welles 1959, 1, n. 2. For a full discussion of this manuscript, indicating its reconstruction and its artistic affiliations, see Contadini 2006.

64 In the Tehran manuscript, on pages 2 and 3 (in this manuscript the pages are numbered rather than the folios), on the right, an enthroned figure holds an astrolabe; on the left, a similarly enthroned figure holds a book. The two face each other in a semi-profiled position. This theme is found in many scientific manuscripts and is that of the transmission of knowledge: it does not necessarily identify any particular person. The corresponding frontispieces in the Na'īt are those on fols 3v and 4r (two figures enthroned). But there are also similarities of pose and style with the miniature of Ibn Bakhshis and a student seen on fol. 101v: Other striking similarities are with the animals, such as, just to give one example, the lions in the Na'īt (fol. 100v) and the constellation Leo in the al-Sufi (p. 16).

65 For 13 reproductions of the 39 miniatures of the Kitab al-Baytana of 1209, see Froehner 1932-36.


XXXV *Wang wa Gulshah*, probably Iran, possibly late 12th century. Istanbul, Topkapi Sarai Library, Hazine 841, 9r.
XXXVI Ibn al-Sufi, Risālat al-Sufī fi l-Kawakib (Al-Sufi’s ‘Treatise on the Stars’), probably North Syria, early 13th century(?). Tehran, Reza Abbasi Museum, M. 570, pp. 2-3 (double frontispiece). Two enthroned figures, one of them probably al-Sufi.


XXXVIII Ayyubid capital, London art market (courtesy of Christie’s).