

Sollheil, R.

Ein illustriertes
Copy of the book

Paris 1931

De 1729
230



R. GOTTHEIL

De 1729/230

AN ILLUSTRATED COPY OF THE KORAN

Extrait de la *Revue des Études Islamiques*

ANNÉE 1931

PARIS

LIBRAIRIE ORIENTALISTE PAUL GEUTHNER

13, RUE JACOB, 13

—
1931



Richard J

Bibliothek der
Deutschen
Morgenländischen
Gesellschaft

1932/481

AN ILLUSTRATED COPY OF THE KORAN

Islam, as is well known, has always forbidden the representation in painting of animate objects (1). This was, of course, true more of the Sunnites than of the Shi'ites. The Persian love of beauty had broken through the severe inhibitions imposed by Islam on its adherents — whose theology was influenced by the unlovely surroundings of the desert in Arabia.

This unwillingness to represent animate objects was especially to be noted in connection with the Koran — although ornamentation of the opening of the Surahs was, of course, favoured; this being in the general form of a fretwork of various colors, gold predominating. No illustrations were ever put in the copies of the Koran.

And yet, one such copy has come to my attention. It is in the possession of John W. Robertson, M. D., 1133 Greenwich St., San Francisco, California. He acquired it in Constantinople in 1930, from a former Catholic priest who is noted as a collector of rarities, but who had no idea of its provenience. Of course he paid a good price for it; but as it is unique, not an exorbitant one. Dr Robertson has most kindly sent the manuscript to me here in New-York.

This manuscript contains 304 folios. The size of the page is ca. 8 × 5 inches; the text 5 1/2 × 3 1/3 inches, including the gold rim which goes around the text on each page. The titles of the Surahs and the number of verses they contain are in white upon a gold background,

(1) See BLOCHET, *Musulman Painting XII-XVII th. century*, translated by M. C. Binyon, London, 1929; MASSIGNON, *Hallāj*, p. 939.



as are also the usual words placed upon the margin *الجزو حزب* indicating certain divisions into which the Mohammedans divide the Koran. So also is written in white upon a gold background the word *سجدة* where a prostration is demanded by the ritual. Each verse is separated from its fellow by a large gold full-stop, in which there are blue and red points. The Ms. is in perfect condition; only here and there does one find a small smudge. The binding is a modern Turkish one. The script looks Eastern Mediterranean in character; but the illustrations were drawn and painted by a Persian. That is evident at first sight. The writer of the manuscript was one al-Ḥājj Ḥafīth Ibrahīm al-Fihmī ibn Ṣāliḥ — a pupill of al-Sayyid 'Uthmān, known as Dāmād al-'Afif. My colleague Professor William Popper, of the University of California, calls my attention to the fact that in Ahlwardt's *Catalogue of the Berlin Arabic Manuscripts*, there is listed in the Index one al-Dāmād 'Uthmān 'Afif Zādeh, who died in the year 1219 A. H. = 1804 A. D. There is no doubt that this is the man referred to as the teacher of the scribe, as the manuscript itself was written in the year 1232 A. H. = 1816 A. D.

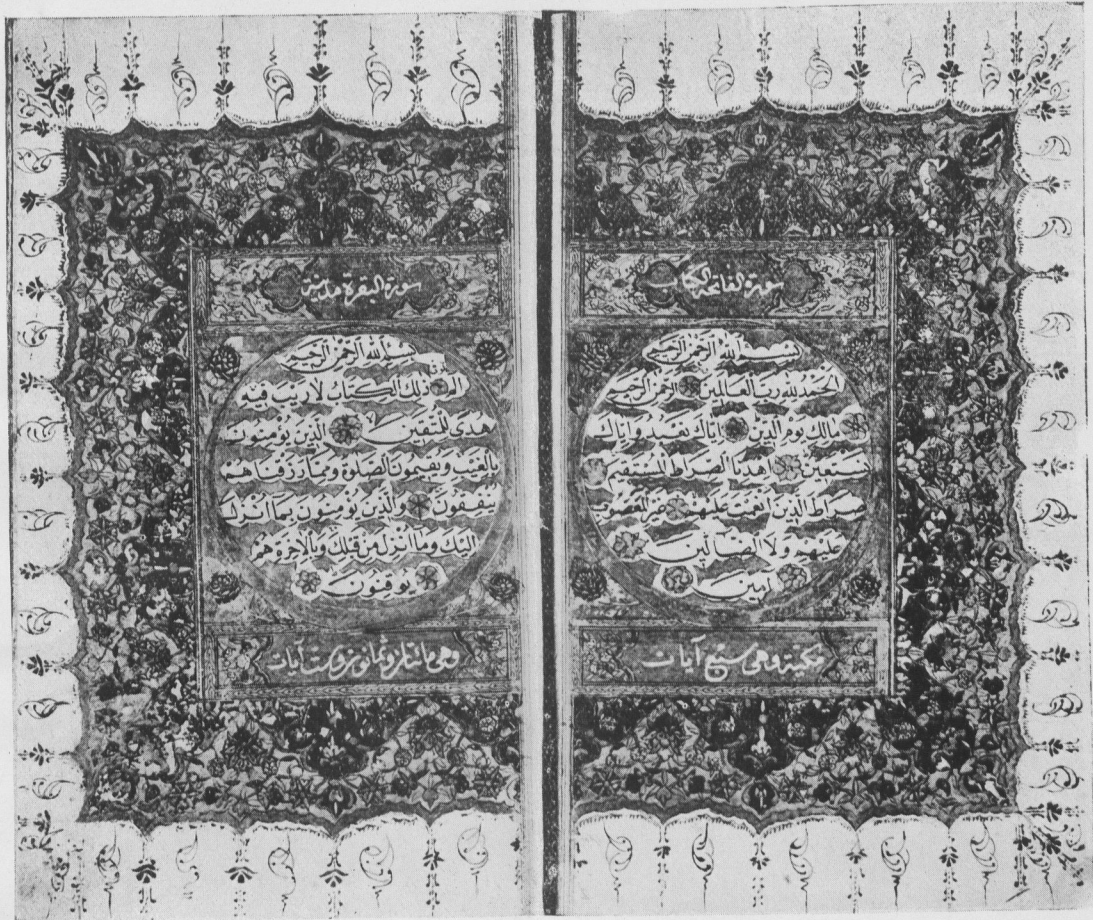
That the scribe was not a very good Arabic scholar may be seen from the fact that he writes at the head of the first Surah (1) *سورة الفاتحة الكتاب*, as also *بسة اثني وثلاثون وماتين ولف*.

Another curious feature about the illustrations is that they are later additions. A part of the text has been expunged in order to make it possible to insert the paintings. Where this was done I do not know, and there is no indication; but that they were inserted is the interesting fact. The expunging has been so well done as to leave no trace whatsoever on the pages, or on the back of the pages.

As regards the illustrations, I should like to give the following details:

(1) The two opening pages, fols. 1*b* and 2*a*, present nothing remar-

(1) It is possible that he meant to write simply *سورة الفاتحة*; and, later, added *الكتاب*, forgetting to delete the article in *الفاتحة*.



ff. 1 b-2 a.

Bibliothek der
Deutschen
Morgenländischen
Gesellschaft







f. 83 a.

Bibliothek der
Deutschen
Morgenländischen
Gesellschaft







f. 119 b.

Bibliothek der
Deutschen
Morgenländischen
Gesellschaft



الصالحات يجعلهم الرحمن وذا * فإنا نسترناه
 بلسانك لتبشيره المتقين وتذريه قوما لدا *
 وكذا هلكنا قبلهم من قذرت هل تحس *
 منهم من أحد أو سمع لهم ركدا *
 سورة مائدة

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
 طه * مما أنزلنا عليك القرآن لتشقى * إلا نذكرك *
 لينحسنى * تنزيلنا من خلق الأرض والسموات العلى
 الرحمن على العرش استوى * له ما فى السموات وما فى
 الأرض وما بينهما وما تحث الترى * وإن يجهر بالقرآن
 فإنه يعلم السر والحفى * الله لا اله الا هو له الاسماء
 الحسنى * وهما بينك حديث موسى * إذ نادانا فعلا
 لأهله فكفوا ابى أننت نار العلى انكم منها يقبسون
 احد على النار هدى * فلما اتها نودى موسى * انى
 اتارتك فأنتم تغليك انك بالواد المقدس طوى *

وانا

وانا اخترتك فاستمع ليايوسى * انى انى الله لا اله الا
 انى فاعبدنى * وقرأ الصلوة لذكري * ان الساعه
 انى اكا داخيمها لى كل نفس بما استوى * فلا يصعدك

f. 158 a.

Bibliothek der
 Deutschen
 Morgenländischen
 Gesellschaft





f. 238 a.

Bibliothek der
Deutschen
Morgenländischen
Gesellschaft

1746





f. 265 a.

Bibliothek der
Deutschen
Morgenländischen
Gesellschaft



kable. The borders are made up of variegated flowers in true Persian style and with a free use of color.

(2) Fol. 83*a* contains a picture of Moses changing the rod into a serpent. The last words above the picture are فالقى عصاه فاذا هى ثعبان Surah VII, 104. And the following pages commences with موسى واهرون in verse 119.

(3) Fol. 119 *b* has a picture that takes us to Surah 12, the last words of which in our manuscript are ولا انت بمومن لنا in verse 17 ; and the picture shows us Joseph left by his brethren in the well ; he is visited — as some commentators observe — by the angel Gabriel (1). At the bottom of the page is the word نفسه though the following page begins with وغلقت, in Verse 23.

(4) Surah 20 (2). This picture, on fol. 158 *a*, seems to be misplaced. The last words in the text are فلا يصدنك at the beginning of verse 17 ; and the next page begins with ولقد مننا in verse 37. The Prophet is here shown on a horse, which has the head of a woman and the tail of a peacock. To the left is the Angel Gabriel and in the air are other angels flying about. It should have formed part of the beginning of Surah 17. On Burak (as the animal is called in Mohammedan legend), see the references in the *Encyclopedia of Islam*, s. v.

(5) In this picture, on fol. 238*a*, which comes after Surah 40, 52, we have Abraham represented as about to slaughter Isaac — or, as some Mohammedan traditions have it — Ishmael (3). It evidently belongs to Surah 37, 107, and is also misplaced. Abraham is prevented from slaughtering his son by the Angel Gabriel, who carries a ram in his arms.

(6) Fol. 265*a*. Here a whole page has been expunged, containing the end of Surah 53 and the text up to Surah 54,5 فما تغنى النذر. The

(1) See *al-Kaṣṣāf*, ed. Calcutta, p. 65.

(2) *Muḥammad 'Alī's*, ed. of the Koran, note 211*b*.

(3) In the title the و is missing from وخمس.

picture is meant to illustrate the words *وانشق القمر* 54,1. « and the moon was divided ». The unbelievers asked Mohammed, who has his two hands raised, for a sign; and with his two hands he points to the moon (1). At the left side was the word *السجدة* from which the article has been dropped. This reference was probably to 53,62 *فاسجدوا*. See Zamakhshari, on the passage, where we find *السجدة* on the margin.

Professor Popper, who also has carefully examined the manuscript, calls my attention to a passage in the *Hawādith* of Ibn Taghrī Bardī (vol. 8, p. 383, line 20 — not yet published) in which the story is told of a Muḥtasib (2) of Cairo named Yār 'Alī al-Khurasānī, who died in the year 862 A.H. (1457 A. D.). It is said: « At the beginning of his history (امرأ) there happened to him something grave (امر عظيم) on account of which some charged him with unbelief (كفره بعضهم). It was this: He wrote a document (كتب عقدة) in which was contained the Koranic verse (وصور الحمار) *انظر الى حمارك* (2,26) and he made a picture of an ass. The story about him is well known. May Allah pardon him ».

And I add, May Allah pardon Ḥāfīth Ibrahim al-Fihmī!

RICHARD GOTTHEIL.

(1) On the « Mosque of the Moon's splittings-asunder », the site on which Muhammad is said to have stood when this took place, see ELDON RUTTER, *The Holy Cities of Arabia*, 1930, p. 238.

(2) See *Z. A.*, VII, 73.





TOURS. — IMPRIMERIE ARRAULT ET C^{ie}



D: Dc17 29 / 230

ULB Halle
000 876 011

3/1



