# AYYUBID JERUSALEM

## THE HOLY CITY IN CONTEXT 1187-1250

*edited by*
*Robert Hillenbrand*
*and*
*Sylvia Auld*

ALTAJIR TRUST
LONDON

# CONTENTS

# Chapter 9
# AYYUBID ILLUSTRATED MANUSCRIPTS AND THEIR NORTH JAZIRAN AND ᶜABBASID 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 similar[3] (pls XXVI, XXVII, 9.5), both of which have features in common with the 1180 Damietta Gospel Book[4] (pls XXIX, XXX) and another Coptic New Testament dated 1249-50[5] (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 Gospel 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 Ayyubid 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 Cairene ones.[9] There is, however, the further complication that Buchthal hypothesises 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 Ayyubid 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 Ayyubid, albeit one that by virtue of its unique subject matter and visual style can hardly serve as a reference point for others.

Ibn Murda al-Tarsusi, *al-Tabsira fi 'l-Hurub (A Manual on Warfare)*, Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ms. Huntington 264. Egypt or Syria, late 12th century, for the library of Saladin (pls XVII-XXIII).[11]

To the best of my knowledge, this is the only illustrated manuscript that can be called Ayyubid in the specific sense that it was made for one of the Ayyubid rulers. It is a treatise on arms and armour by Murda ibn ʿAli 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 Ayyub, the restorer of the Caliph's dominion *(qamiʿ ʿabadat / al-sultan Salah al-Dunya wa 'l-Din sultan al-islam wa'l-muslimin / Abu 'l-Muzaffar Yusuf ibn Ayyub muhyi daulat amir al-mu'minin)*' (pl.

---

[2] Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, arabe 6094; see Blochet 1925, 185; Blochet 1926, 54-5 and pls IV-V; Holter 1937b, 11 no. 25; *Arts de l'Iran* 1938, 110-112; Buchthal 1940, 126-33 and figs. 1, 3, 6, 9, 13-14, 16-17, 19, 22, 29, 32, 37, 40, and 43; Buchthal, Kurz and Ettinghausen 1940, 151 no. 25; Rice 1959, 215-18 and pl. VIa; Ettinghausen 1962, 79-80 and col. pl. on p. 79; James 1977, 15; Grabar 1984, 8-9 no. 2, and subsequent references in discussions of individual *maqamat*; Nassar 1985, 85, 86, 88, 92, 94 and fig. 4; New York 1997, 418-29 no. 287, and col. pl. on p. 429; Hunt 1998a, 271-73 and figs. 27-29; Hunt 1998b, 149 and fig. 8; A Vernay-Nouri in Paris 2001, no. 97; *L'Orient de Saladin*, col. pls on pp. 88 and 196.

[3] Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, arabe 3465; see de Slane 1883-95, 603; Blochet 1926, 55-6 and pls VI-VII; Holter 1937b, 11 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 and 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, 86, 88, 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-Nouri); Hunt 1998a, 271-73 and figs 30-3; Hunt 1998b, 131-32, 149; O'Kane 2003, 218, Appendix 1. Holter 1937b, 11 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, copte 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 fig. 8a-b; A Weyl Carr in New York 1997, 380-81, no. 251; Hunt 1998b, 115-57 and figs. 1-3; A Vernay-Nouri in Paris 2001, 131 no. 94.

[5] This New Testament manuscript is now divided into the Gospels, which are in Paris, Institut Catholique, Ms. copte-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 Rizkalla 1991, 105-7 and 111-12; Hunt 1998a, 248-79 and figs. 7-16; Hunt 1998c, 13-14; Hunt 1998c, 13-14.

[6] Hunt 1998a, 271-73, 279; Hunt 1998c, 159.

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

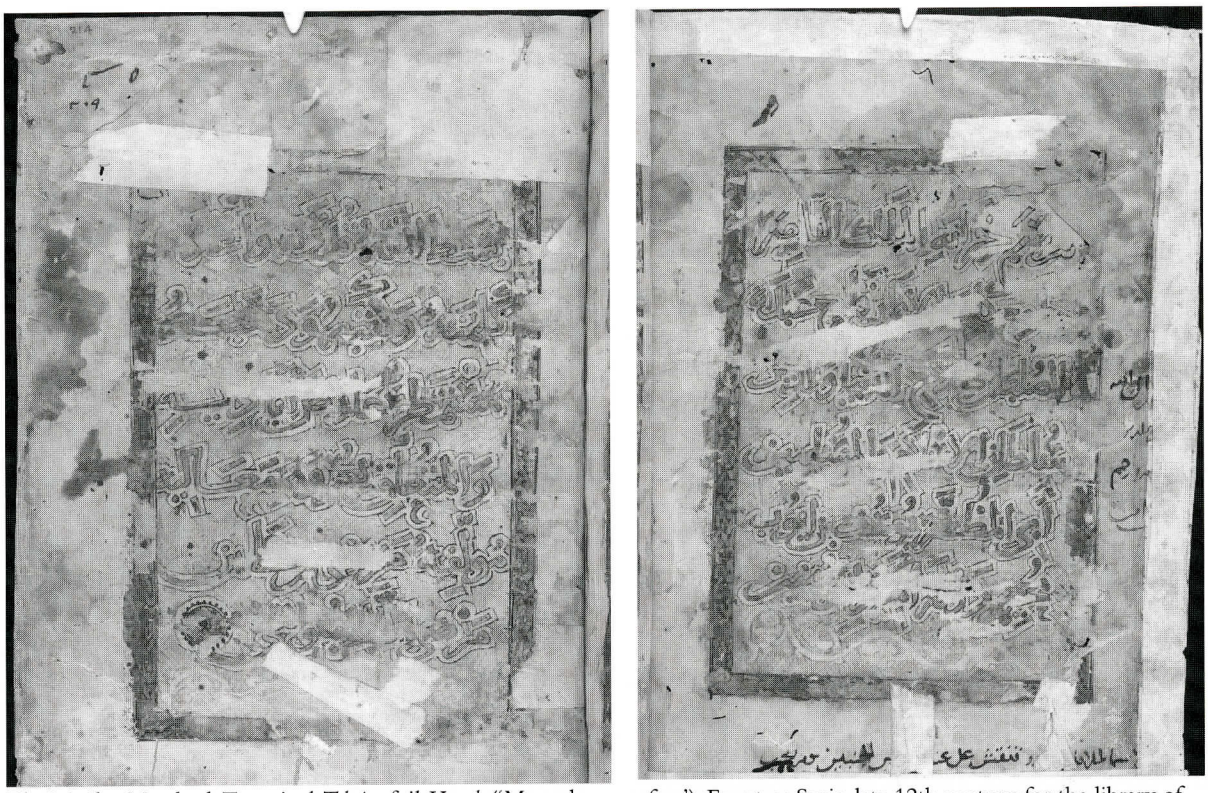
[8] Holter 1937b, 11 no. 25; Buchthal 1940, 131; Ettinghausen 1962, 79. James has likewise argued that the 1222 *Maqamat* was produced in Syria, on the evidence, he says, of 'the pronounced Byzantine character of the illustrations'; James 1977, 15.

[9] Buchthal 1940, 132-33.

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

[11] See Uri 1787, 102 no. CCCLXXI.

[12] For a reading of the name Murda as Murdi, see Brockelmann *GAL* I, 495.



**Pl. 9.1** Ibn Murda al-Tarsusi, *al-Tabsira fi 'l-Hurub* ('Manual on warfare'), Egypt or Syria, late 12th century, for the library of Saladin. Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ms. Huntington 264, ff. 208v-209r. Double finispiece, verso and recto.

XVII). 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-rasm 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]

[13] Cahen 1948, 103. Boudot-Lamotte, 33, points out that the author's *nisba*, 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 Abi Tayyiʿ, as recorded in al-Maqrizi, reports that the Fatimid library held twelve hundred copies of al-Tabari's *Ta'rikh* 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; Heffening and Pearson 1991, 198. Among other sources for al-Fadil's collection was the library of the city of Diyarbakr (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.

[17] Pinto 1929, 225; Stellhorn Mackensen 1934-35, 99; Eche 1967, 252-54; Heffening and Pearson 1991, 198; Walker 1997, 196.

[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-Maqrizi (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 25.5cm x 19cm; page height 24.6cm x 18.3cm; text area (which is not framed) *ca* height 18.3cm x 13cm. Margins have been trimmed or repaired. The script is a fine *naskh*, in black ink, of a type associated with manuscripts of the 12th century, 11 lines to the 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 ʿAli 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 17.8cm x 12.5cm) 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-tabsira fi 'l-hurub (Manual on Warfare).*
Fol. 1v-2r: Double frontispiece again with the title of the book, and the name of the author (pl. XVII).
Fol. 3v: Dedication and mention of Saladin.
Fol. 8v: Sword *(saif)*, no miniature.
Fol. 27r: Bow *(qaus)* (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 *(duruʿ)*
Fol. 119r: Clubs and maces *(al-latt, al-ʿamud, al-dabbus).*
Fol. 125r: Mangonels *(al-manjaniqat)* (4 miniatures, on fols 128r, 129v-130r, 132r, 133; pl. XXII)
Fol. 134r: Battering rams, towers and shelters *(al-dabbabat, al-abraj, 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: Naphta *(nafut).*
Fol. 148v: Burning mirrors *(al-maraya al-muhriqa)* (13 diagrams, on fols 163r, 164r, 165r, 169r, 171v, 172v, 176r, 178r, 182v, 183r, 184v, 186r, 187v).
Fol. 192v-197v: Qur'anic verses inciting *jihad.*
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 31cm x 26cm x 5.5cm, page *ca* 29cm x 21.5cm, with 13 lines to the page, written surface *ca* 23.5cm x 17cm. It contains 187 folios and 39 miniatures. These occupy a large proportion of the page, measuring between 14cm x 20.5cm (fol. 139r) and

that remained were sold off by the students of the *madrasa* for food during the famine of 694/1294-5; Pinto 1929, 225; Stellhorn Mackensen 99; Eche 1967, 254. Another Ayyubid chancellor, the writer Abu'l-Hasan ʿAli ibn al-Qifti (1172-1248), is also recorded as having had an important library, this time located in Aleppo. Upon his death, his collection passed by his will to the Ayyubid ruler of that city, al-Nasir II (r. 634-58/1237-60). Pinto 1929, 217; Morray 1994, 37, 161. For Saladin's patronage of *madrasa*s, see Pedersen and Makdisi 1986, 1127.

[19] See note 2.

**Pl. 9.2** Al-Hariri, *Maqamat* ('Assemblies'), Egypt or Syria, 619/1222. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, arabe 6094, f. 13r. Al-Harith overhears Abu Zaid talking with his son as their caravan rests for the night (fourth *maqama*).

**Pl. 9.3** Al-Hariri, *Maqamat* ('Assemblies'), Egypt or Syria, 619/1222. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, arabe 6094, f. 147r. Abu Zaid addresses an assembly in Najran (forty-second *maqama*).

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: *ʿumila sanat tisʿ ʿashra wa sittimi'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-furatiyya)*. 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: *ʿumila fi sanat tisʿ ʿashra wa sittimi'a*. This miniature is part of the forty-sixth *maqama (al-halabiyya)*. In the same miniature, another of

**Pl. 9.4** Al-Hariri, *Maqamat* ('Assemblies'), Egypt or Syria, 619/1222. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, arabe 6094, 167r. Abu Zaid and al-Harith listening to children in a classroom (forty-sixth *maqama*).

**Pl. 9.5** Ibn al-Muqaffa', *Kalila wa Dimna*, Egypt or Syria, *ca* 1220. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, arabe 3465, f. 49v. Dimna and the Lion.

the children's tablets contains a further inscription which says *ta[mma] 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 put 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.'[20] 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 619/1222 as the date of the manuscript.

We are, however, given no indication of where it was made. In 1933 De Lorey included it in his discussion of manuscripts belonging to the 'School of Baghdad'[21] 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.'[22] 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 Saljuq Asia Minor;[23] 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.[24] 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.[25] 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.

Ibn al-Muqaffa', *Kalila wa Dimna*, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, arabe 3465. Egypt?, *ca* 1220 (pl. 9.5, pls XXV-XXVII).[26]

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, 139v, 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 by15cm; the miniatures occupy quite a large proportion of the page, measuring from *ca* 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 Lorey 1933, 11 and Fig. 5.
[22] Buchthal 1940, 131. See also Ettinghausen 1962, 79-80; Nassar 1985, 85, 86.
[23] Buchthal 1940, 131-32.
[24] Buchthal 1940, 132-33.
[25] Hunt 1998a, 271-73, 279.
[26] See note 3.

evince strong similarities with Christian manuscripts (pls 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*,[27] 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),[28] or to Egypt (O'Kane 2003) or specifically to Cairo (Hunt).[29] 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.[30] 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.[31]

Anonymous, *Kitab ghara'ib al-funun wa mulah al-ʿuyun (Book of Curiosities of the Sciences and Marvels for the Eyes)*, late 12th-early 13th century, probably produced in Cairo. Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ms. Arab c.90 (pl. 9.20).

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.[32] 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).[33]

## Possible Ayyubid manuscripts[34]

Al-Mubashshir, *Mukhtar al-Hikam wa Mahasin al-Kalim (Choicest Maxims and Best Sayings)*, Syria? early 13th century. Istanbul, Topkapı Sarai Library, Ahmet III, 3206 (pls 9.6, 9.7).[35]

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

[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.

[29] Hunt 1998a, 271-73, 279; Hunt 1998c, 159; O'Kane 2003, 218, Appendix 1.

[30] Rizkallah 1991, 111-12. See also al-Hamid 1967, 130 for further discussion in favour of an Ayyubid attribution.

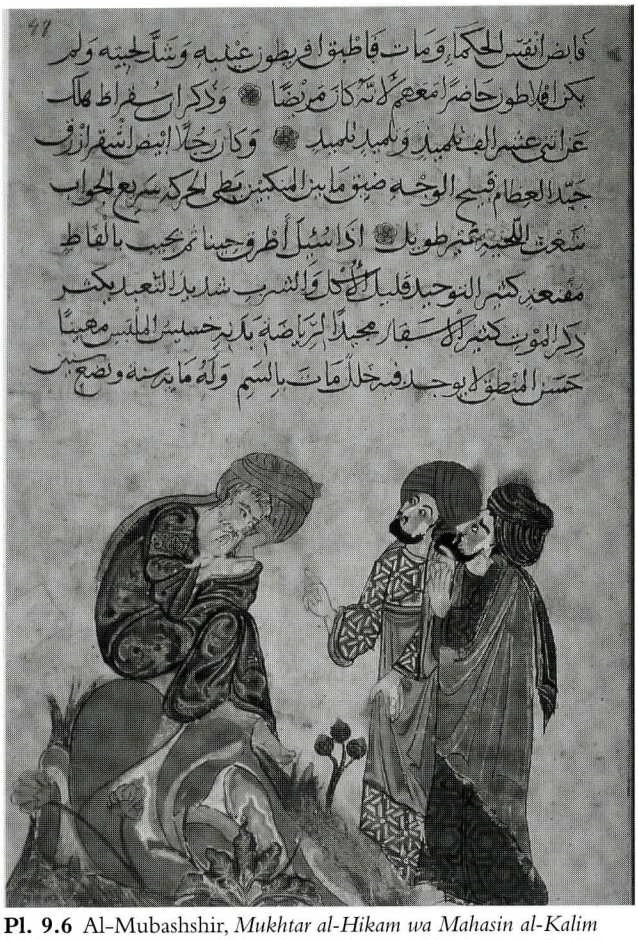
[31] This has already been signalled by Grube 1991, 42 and note 13; and illustrations 30-37.

[32] The text has now been fully edited and translated and is available at htpp://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 Ifriqiya) provenance adduced by Gray 1938 and Contadini 1998, 12 and fig. 14 still seem more convincing.

[35] Istanbul, Topkapı 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; Nassar 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.



**Pl. 9.6** Al-Mubashshir, *Mukhtar al-Hikam wa Mahasin al-Kalim* ('Choicest Maxims and Best Sayings'), probably Syria, early 13th century. Istanbul, Topkapı Sarai Library, Ahmet III 3206, f. 48r. Socrates with students.

**Pl. 9.7** Al-Mubashshir, *Mukhtar al-Hikam wa Mahasin al-Kalim* ('Choicest Maxims and Best Sayings'), probably Syria, early 13th century. Istanbul, Topkapı Sarai Library, Ahmet III 3206, f. 90r. Aristotle with students.

*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,[36] 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 *Maqamat* 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.[37] Although the manuscript presents certain similarities to the Istanbul *Automata* (pl. 9.11, pls XXXIII) and the B.N. arabe 3929 *Maqamat* (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.[38]

Dioscorides, *Khawass al-Ashjar (Properties of Plants)*, dated 642/1244, Egypt? Bologna, Biblioteca Universitaria, Cod. arab. 2954 (pls 9.8, 9.9).[39]

---

[36] An inscription in the manuscript says that it was copied for the library of Abu'l-Ma'ali Yunus al-Dawadar, in the service of the *atabeg* Yilmay.

[37] Baer 2002. Though Baer's study was the first to deal with this manuscript in any detail, two of its miniatures had already been published in colour in Paris 1996, 69, 76, no. 20.

[38] Milan, Ambrosiana Library, A 125 inf. ff. 1-37r. See Ettinghausen 1962, 143-44 and col. pl. on page 144; Löfgren and Lamm 1946; Löfgren and Traini 1975, 50 no. LXX and col. pls I-VI.

[39] For this manuscript, see Buchthal, Kurz, Ettinghausen 1940, 162 no. 1; Grube 1959, 179 and figs 15-17; Ettinghausen 1962, 66; Gabrieli and Scerrato 1979, col. pls 715-22; Sadek 1983, 18 no.V 1; Touwaide 1992, 79-80 and figs 74-6; Saliba and Komaroff 2005. For Dioscorides in general, see Dietrich 1988, Rogers 1988, Sadek 1983 and Rogers 2007.

This is a very fine copy of Dioscorides' *Khawass al-Ashjar (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),[40] 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).[41] 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,[42] 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.[43] One is a copy of al-Sufi, *Kitab suwar al-kawakib al-thabita*, now in Istanbul, Topkapı Sarai Library and dated 525/1130-31. This was possibly made in Mayyafariqin, for

**Pl. 9.8** Dioscorides, *Khawass al-Ashjar* ('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-Ashjar* ('Properties of Plants'), Egypt or Syria, 642/1244. Bologna, Biblioteca Universitaria, Cod. arab. 2954, f. 141r. Dioscorides, flanked by Luqman and Aristotle.

[40] See Gabrieli and Scerrato 1979, col. pl. 717.
[41] See Ettinghausen 1962, col. pl. on page 63.
[42] See Leroy 1974, col. Pl. E, and figs. 75, 85, 89.
[43] For an attempt to characterise Artuqid painting, see Ward 1985, 69-80.

**Pl. 9.10** Al-Sufi, *Kitab Suwar al-Kawakib al-Thabita* ('Treatise on the Constellations'), probably Mayyafariqin, 525/1130-31, Istanbul, Topkapı Sarai Library, Ahmet III 3493, f. 33v. Auriga.

the colophon states that it was copied from a manuscript belonging to a certain Abu Tahir ᶜAbd al-Baqi, who may be identifiable with a dignitary of that city (col. pl. 9.4).[44] There is a later copy, now in the Süleymaniye Library in Istanbul,[45] dated 529/1134-35, which was made in Mardin.

Another is a treatise on Ismaᶜil ibn al-Razzaz al-Jazari's Automata (*Kitab fi Maᶜrifat al-Hiyal al-Handasiyya* [Book of Ingenious Mechanical Devices or Automata]*)* dated Shaᶜban 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.[46] The distinctive double finispiece (pl. XXXIII) of this *Automata* is of particular interest; rather unusually, its

**Pl. 9.11** Al-Jazari, *Kitab fi Maᶜrifat al-Hiyal al-Handasiyya (Book of Ingenious Mechanical Devices or Automata)*, Diyarbakr, 602/1206. Istanbul, Topkapı Sarai Library, Ahmet III 3472, f. 98r. A water clock.

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).[47]

As for the Zangids, a copy of al-Sufi's *Kitab suwar al-kawakib al-thabita* dated 566/1171, now in the Bodleian, Hunt. 212, was most probably produced in Mosul as it appears to be dedicated to Saif al-Din Ghazi II, the Zangid ruler of Mosul from 564-572/1169-1176.[48] 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),[49] and the other, datable to the first half of the 13th century, now in

[44] This may be the same Abu Tahir who sponsored a medical *Risala* composed by ᶜUbaid Allah ibn Jibril ibn ᶜUbaid Allah ibn Bakhtishuᶜ, who we know died in Mayyafariqin: Contadini 1992, 66.

[45] Istanbul, Topkapı Sarai Library, Fatih no. 3422. The scribe signs himself as ᶜAbdullah ibn ᶜAbd al-Jabbar ibn al-Rahim ibn Sadaqa ibn ᶜAli ibn Yusuf ibn Nassam al-Jabali. See Ettinghausen 1962, 162; Holter 1937b, 3 no. 3; Wellesz 1959, 22-3; Ward 1985, 80.

[46] Istanbul, Topkapı Sarai Library, Ahmet III 3472. The manuscript was copied in Shaᶜban 602/April 1206 by Muhammad ibn Yusuf ibn ᶜUthman al-Haskafi. 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; Nassar 1985, 85, 96; Rogers 1986, 30-1 nos 7-12 and col. pls 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.

[47] For this manuscript see Day 1950, 274-76, 278-80; Grube 1959, 171-72, 171 n. 39, 184-89 and figs 12-14; 13 no. 29 and 15-16 no. 37; and London 1976, 323 no. 518.

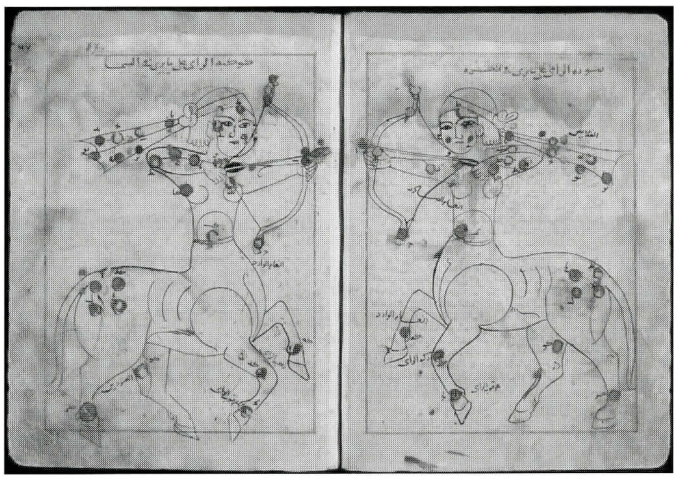
[48] Uri 1787, 195 no. DCCCXCIC; Sezgin *GAS* Bd. 6, 214; Savage-Smith 1992a, 52, fig. 2.34. The dedicatory inscription is damaged, but the honorific titles are likely to be those of Saif al-Din Ghazi. In Uri, the date given is 966/1558 and this is also reported in Holter 1937b, 4 entry h. It seems to me that the reason for this error is due to a misunderstanding of the colophon which gives the date in numerals rather than in words, and the 5 of 566 was evidently mistaken for a 9 by Uri (see col. pl. 00.26). For this and the manuscript more generally, see Wellesz 1964, 89-91. See also Savage-Smith 1992b, 14-15 and fig. 8.

[49] Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms. arabe 2964. See de Slane 1883-95, 530; Farès 1953; Ettinghausen 1962, 83- 6, 91-2 and col. pl. on pages 84-5; Melikian-Chirvani 1967, 13-16, 25-30 and figs 1-2, 7-12, who is alone in attributing the manuscript to Saljuq Iran; Hunt 1998a, 132; James 1977, 22; Nassar 1985, 85, 86, 88-90, 92, 94, 96 and figs 1, 2, 4; Paris 1996, 156 no. 87 and col. pls on pages 102-3, 156-57, 230, 233; Pancaroğlu 2001; Kerner 2007. On the *Kitab al-Diryaq* in general, see the chapter by J Mouliérac in Paris 1996, 101-3.

Vienna.[50] 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[51] 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. ʿAbd Allah* on the *tiraz* bands of the princes represented on the frontispieces (pl. 9.17).[52]

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 ʿAbd Allah al-Habbashi. It is now in Berlin, Staatsbibliothek 5658.[53] This manuscript is a further testimony to the lively artistic life in Mosul under Badr al-Din Lu'lu'.

Common to all these manuscripts is that they exhibit facial types, styles 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 *Varqa va Gulshah* (pl. XXXV).[54]



**Pl. 9.12** Al-Sufi, *Kitab Suwar al-Kawakib al-Thabita* ('Treatise on the Constellations'), Mosul, 630/1233. Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, 5658 (Landberg 71), fol. 66v-67r.

## 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).[55] This has no colophon and has been attributed to North Mesopotamia and Mosul,[56] while the dates that have been suggested are 1180-1200, the second quarter of the 13th, and the mid-13th century.[57] This *Maqamat* is a real puzzle; not only does it resemble the1206 *Automata* in certain respects (pls XXXIII, 9.11)—as signalled by Ward[58]—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).[59] This has been associated by Ettinghausen with a North Jaziran centre of production, which would

[50] Vienna, National Bibliothek, NF 10. See Holter 1937a, 1-15, pls I-II and figs. 1-10; Holter 1937b, 15-16 no. 37, who argues that the miniatures are stylistically related to glass painting in Aleppo, and that the manuscript might therefore have been produced in that city; Buchthal, 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; Nassar 1985, 85, 88, 90, 91, 92, 94, 96 and fig. 4; Hoffman 1993, 7 and fig. 3; Paris 1996, col. pls on pages 40, 100.

[51] For the connections between Jaziran/Ayyubid metalwork and painting, see for example, Holter 1937a, 42-3; Rice 1952-58; James 1977, 24; Nassar 1985, 86-95, 97 and figs 1, 2, 3; Nassar 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 Talib al-Badri. The six volumes are now dispersed: vols II, IV and XI are in Cairo, National Library, Adab Fârsî 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. VI; Holter 1937b, 15 no. 36; Buchthal, Kurz and Ettinghausen 1940, 153-54 no. 36B; Rice 1953c; Farès 1957; Farès 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, 22-4; Nassar 1985, 85, 90-1, 94, 96 and figs 2, 4; London 2005, no. 54.

[53] Ahlwardt 1893, no. 5658.

[54] Seen in the illustrated manuscript of *Varqa va Gulshah* by ʿAyyuqi, possibly Konya *c.* 1250; now in Isanbul, Topkapı Sarai 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 Perso-Saljuq influences on Jaziran painting, see Ettinghausen 1962, 61-6, 91-2; James 1977, 24; Nassar 1985, 86, 88, 92.

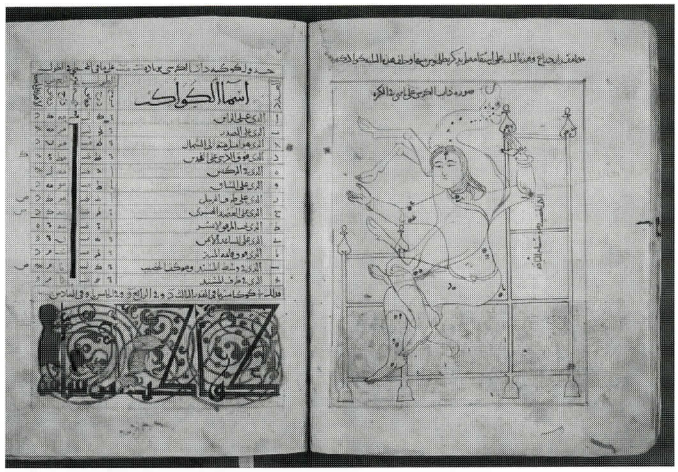
[55] Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, arabe 3929. See de Slane 1883-95, 639; Blochet 1926, 53-4 and pls II-III; Holter 1937b, 9 no. 18; Buchthal, Kurz and Ettinghausen 1940, 150 no. 18; Rice 1959, 215-18 and pl. 4a; Grabar 1974, 92-7, 103 and pls VI-VII, IX-X; Grabar 1984, 8 no. 1 and subsequent references in discussions of individual *maqamat*.

[56] Respectively by Blochet 1926, 53 and Ettinghausen 1962, 83.

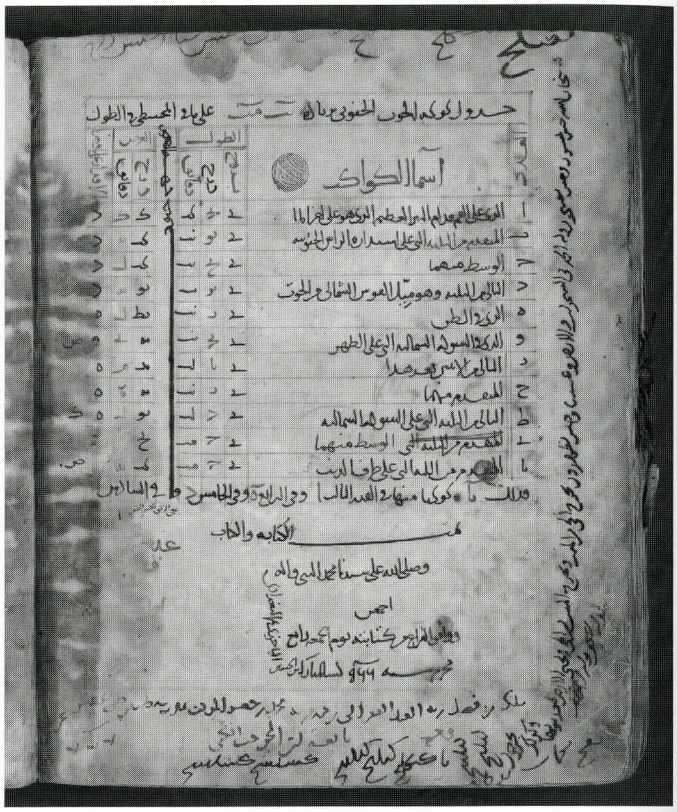
[57] Respectively by Blochet 1926, 53; Ettinghausen 1962, 83; and Grabar 1984, 8 no. 1.

[58] Ward 1985, 76-7.

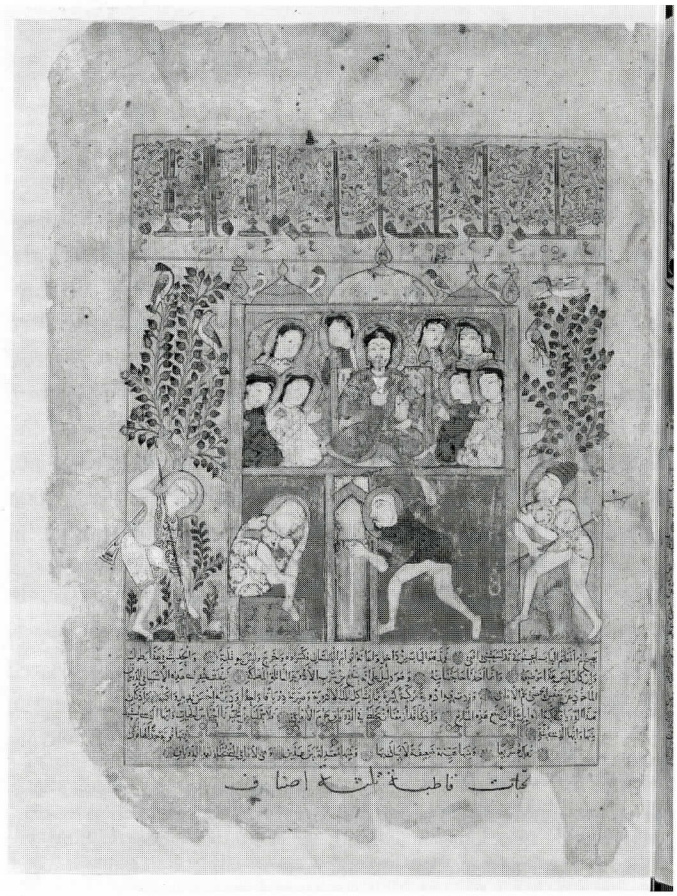
[59] Istanbul, Topkapı Sarai Library, Ahmed III, 2127. See Grube 1959, 178-79; Ettinghausen 1962, 67-74 and col. pls on pages 68-9, 71-3; James 1977, 15; Sadek 1983, 17 no. IV 1; Nassar 1985, 86-8, 92; Rogers 1986, 31-32 nos 16-19 and col. pls 16-19; Hoffman 1993, 8-12 and figs 1a-b, 9; Paris 1996, col. pl. on page 96; New York 1997, no. 288, 429-33 and col. pls on pages 430-31; Hunt 1998b, 149 and fig. 7; Hunt 1998c, 154-57 and figs. 2-3.



**Pl. 9.13** Al-Sufi, *Kitab Suwar al-Kawakib al-Thabita* ('Treatise on the Constellations'), probably Mosul, 566/1171. Oxford, Bodleian Library, Hunt. 212, ff. 40v, 41r. Coordinates for, and a drawing of, the constellation Cassiopeia.



**Pl. 9.14** Al-Sufi, *Kitab Suwar al-Kawakib al-Thabita* ('Treatise on the Constellations'), probably Mosul, 566/1171. Oxford, Bodleian Library, Hunt. 212, f. 173v. Colophon.



**Pl. 9.15** Pseudo-Galen, *Kitab al-Diryaq*, probably Mosul, 595/1199. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Arabe 2964, p. 27. The poisoned favourite at the king's pavilion.

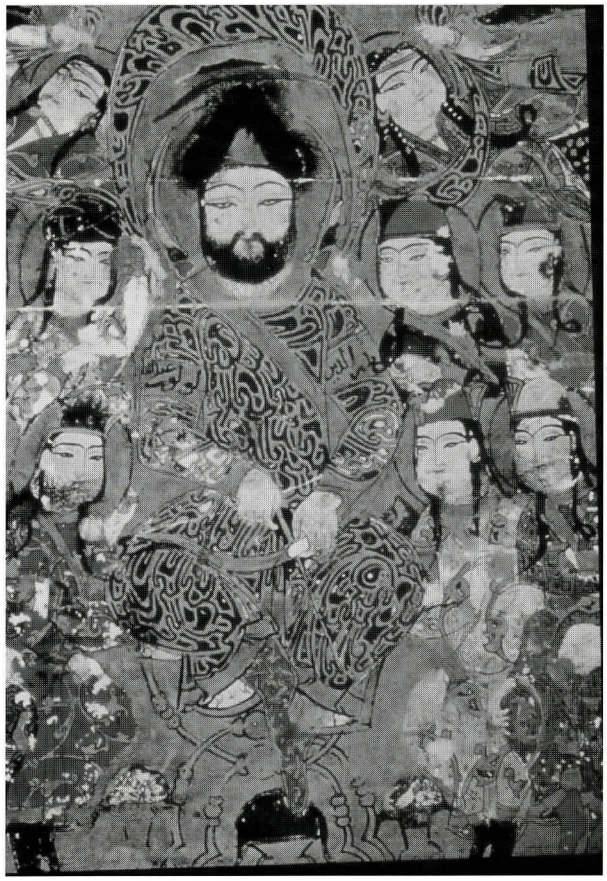
**Pl. 9.16** Pseudo-Galen, *Kitab al-Diryaq (Book of Antidotes)*, probably Mosul, first half of the 13th century. Vienna, Nazionalbibliothek, AF 10, f. 1r (frontispiece). Scenes of courtly life.

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-Fada'il Muhammad by Yusuf Bihnam ibn Musa ibn Yusuf al-Mausili, who—according to Linda Komaroff[60]—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.

## ʿAbbasid 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-Baitara (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;[61] while the colophon of the later one names the same scribe and gives the date 1210,[62] 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.[63] 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 point either to differences in the text (an 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),[64] which has



**Pl. 9.17** Al-Isfahani, *Kitab al-Aghani* ('Book of Songs'), vol. XVII, probably Mosul, *c.* 1218-19. Istanbul, National Library, Feyzullah Efendi 1566, f. 1r (frontispiece). A prince (possibly Badr al-Din Lu'lu') enthroned.

in common with the other two faces of an 'oriental' type; styles of hair and costumes; distinctive landscape conventions; and a similarly naturalistic rendition of animals (especially horses) distinct from that in the Saljuq-influenced Zangid and Artuqid manuscripts referred to above, where animals tend to be depicted less naturalistically and with some parts of their body marked in different colours (pl. 19.13).

It is on the basis of some degree of similarity across these features that several other unprovenanced manuscripts have been attributed to Baghdad, including in the first place the St Petersburg *Maqamat* (pl. 9.22, 9.23).[65] Here the stylistic

[60] In New York 1997, 433 no. 288.

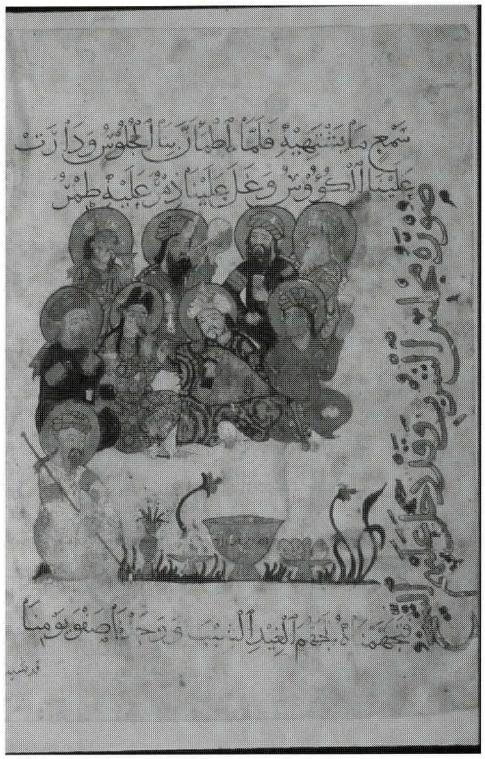
[61] National Library, Cairo, Khalil Agha F8. This manuscript was copied in Ramadan 605/March 1209 by ʿAli ibn Hasan ibn al-Hibatallah. See Froehner 1936, 39-55 and figs on pages 43-55; Holter 1937b, 11 no. 24; Buchthal, Kurz and Ettinghausen 1940, 150-51 no. 24; Buchthal 1942, 19-20 and fig. 2; Ettinghausen 1962, 97-100; Grube 1967, 3140-44 and pl. 3143 A-D; James 1977, 19.

[62] Istanbul, Topkapı Library, Ms. Ahmet III 2115. For this manuscript, see Ettinghausen 1962, 100 and col. pl. on page 97; Grube 1967, 3140, 3144-47 and pls 1523-24 A-E; James 1977, 19; Rogers 1986, 31 nos 13-15, and col. pls. 13-15.

[63] Ettinghausen 1962, 100.

[64] Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms. arabe 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 Kuwarriha 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. pls on pages 114, 116-19, 121-22; Grabar 1974, 85-6, 87-8, 92, 94, 97-9, pls I-II,V,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.

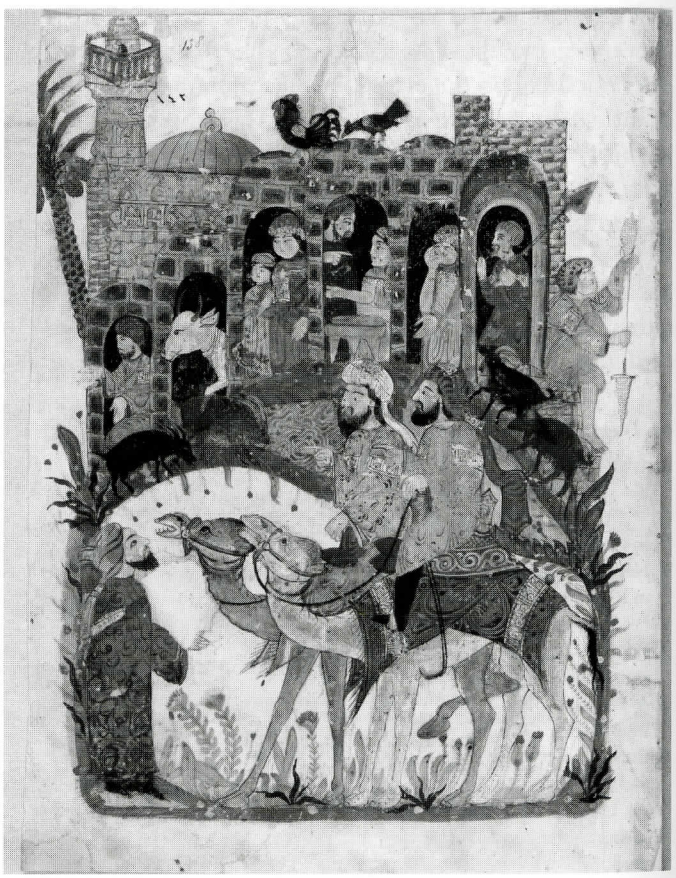
[65] Academy of Sciences, Ms. S 23. See Holter 1937b, 13-14 no. 32; Buchthal, Kurz and Ettinghausen 1940, 153 no. 32; Rice 1959, 215, 217, 218 and pl. I; Ettinghausen 1962, 104-11 and col. pls on pages 106-8, 111-113; Grabar 1974, 97-8 and pl. III; James 1974, 305-6, 314-16 and fig. 4; James 1977, 20-2; Grabar 1984, 11 no. 4 and subsequent references in discussions of individual *maqamat*; Pétrosyan 1994, 116-27, which include 16 colour reproductions.



**Pl. 9.18** Al-Hariri, *Maqamat* ('Assemblies'), perhaps North Jazira, early 13th century. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Arabe 3929, f. 165v. An outdoor party (twenty-fourth *maqama*).

**Pl. 9.20** Ahmad ibn al-Husain ibn al-Ahnaf, *Kitab al-Baitara* ('Book of Farriery'), Baghdad, 606/1210. Istanbul, Topkapı Sarai Library, Ahmet III 2125, f. 57r. Two riders on horseback.

**Pl. 9.19** Dioscorides, *Khawass al-Ashjar* ('Properties of Plants'), Northern Mesopotamia or Syria, 626/1229. Istanbul, Topkapı Sarai Library, Ahmet III 2127, ff. 1v-2r (double frontispiece). Dioscorides with students.



**Pl. 9.21** Al-Hariri, *Maqamat* ('Assemblies'), probably Baghdad, 634/1237. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Arabe 5847, f. 138r. Al-Harith and Abu Zayd meet a youth as they ride into a village (forty-third *maqama*).

**Pl. 9.22** Al-Hariri, *Maqamat* ('Assemblies'), probably Baghdad, c. 1225. St Petersburg, Academy of Sciences, Ms. S 23, p. 174=f. 88r. Abu Zayd approaching al-Harith, whose camel has been stolen (twenty-seventh *maqama*).

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 *Kawakib* 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]

[66] James 1974, 306; Contadini 1995, 29.

[67] This copy of the *Kitab Suwar al-Kawakib*, which includes the *Qasida* 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 ʿAli ibn ʿAbd al-Jalil ibn ʿAli 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.

**Pl. 9.23** Al-Hariri, *Maqamat* ('Assemblies'), probably Baghdad, c 1225. St Petersburg, Academy of Sciences, Ms. S 23, 288 = f. 145r. A Bedouin shows Abu Zayd a sandal bought in Hadramaut (forty-third *maqama*).

**Pl. 9.24** Dioscorides, *Khawass al-Ashjar* (Properties of Plants), probably North Jazira, 621/1224. Washington, Freer Gallery of Art, F1947.5. ~~Erasistratos~~ A sage with an assistant.

## 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)[69] and the *Kitab Na't al-Hayawan* of *ca* 1220 (pl. XXXVII).[70] However, closer examination of these two reveals a more complex picture. The *Na't*, 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,[71] 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 (pls XXXVI). Although entitled *Risalat al-Sufi fi 'l-Kawakib (Al-Sufi's Treatise on the Stars)*, the text consists of the *urjuza* poem that sometimes follow the treatise and is ascribed to a certain Ibn al-Sufi.[72] 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't al-Hayawan* (pl. XXXVII),[73] 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-Baitara* of 1209.[74]

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.

---

[69] The bulk of the manuscript is in the Süleymaniye 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 Ettinghausen 1940, 151-52 no. 27; Buchthal 1942, 20-34 and figs 4-31, 42; Grube 1959, 172-78 and figs 1-4; Ettinghausen 1962, 87-90 and col. pls 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. I 1; Touwaide 1992; Paris 1996, 254 no. 194 and col. pls on pages 46, 82, 85, 87, 92, 98-99, 254.

[70] 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 *Manafi' 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 Ettinghausen 1940, 153 no. 33; Buchthal 1942, 34-5 and figs 34-36, 39, 41; Ettinghausen 1962, 136-37; and Hunt 1998b, 150 and fig. 10.

[71] 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.

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

[73] 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't* are those on fols 3v and 4r (two figures enthroned). But there are also similarities of postures and style with the miniature of Ibn Bakhtishu' 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't* (fol. 100v) and the constellation Leo in the al-Sufi (p. 16).

[74] For 13 reproductions of the 39 miniatures of the *Kitab al-Baytara* of 1209, see Froehner 1932-36.

**XVI** Cairo, Cenotaph of Husain (1154-71). After Williams 1987.

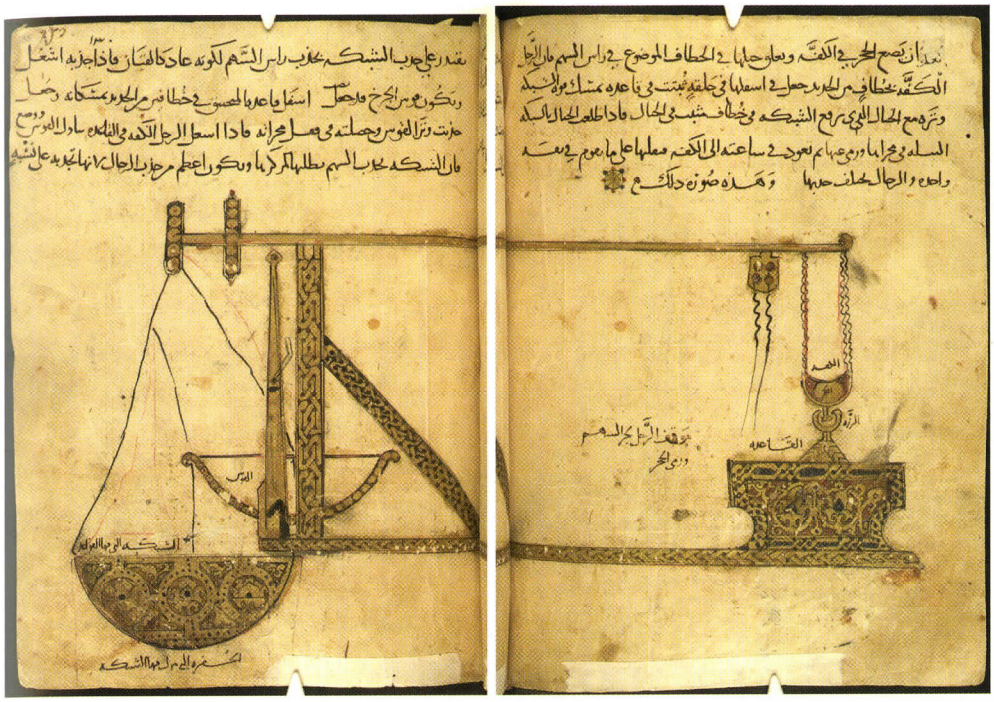
**XVII** Ibn Murda al-Tarsusi, *al-Tabsira fi'l-Hurub* ('Manual on warfare'), Egypt or Syria, late 12th century, for the library of Saladin. Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ms. Huntington 264, ff. 1v-2r. Double frontispiece.

**XVIII** Ibn Murda al-Tarsusi, *al-Tabsira fi 'l-Hurub* ('Manual on warfare'), Egypt or Syria, late 12th century, for the library of Saladin. Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ms. Huntington 264, f. 82r. Crossbow *(qaus)*.

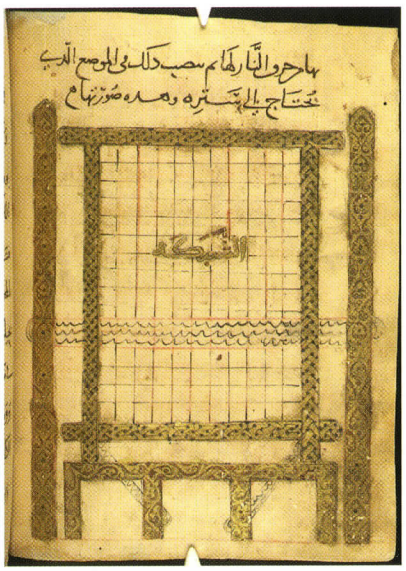
**XIX** Ibn Murda al-Tarsusi, *al-Tabsira fi 'l-Hurub* ('Manual on warfare'), Egypt or Syria, late 12th century, for the library of Saladin. Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ms. Huntington 264, f. 84v. Crossbow mechanism.

**XX** Ibn Murda al-Tarsusi, *al-Tabsira fi 'l-Hurub* ('Manual on warfare'), Egypt or Syria, late 12th century, for the library of Saladin. Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ms. Huntington 264, f. 97v. Lance *(rimah)*.

**XXI** Ibn Murda al-Tarsusi, *al-Tabsira fi 'l-Hurub* ('Manual on warfare'), Egypt or Syria, late 12th century, for the library of Saladin. Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ms. Huntington 264, f. 112v. Shielded crossbow *(atras)*.



**XXII** Ibn Murda al-Tarsusi, *al-Tabsira fi 'l-Hurub* ('Manual on warfare'), Egypt or Syria, late 12th century, for the library of Saladin. Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ms. Huntington 264, ff. 129v–130r. Mangonels *(manjaniqat)*.



**XXIII** Ibn Murda al-Tarsusi, *al-Tabsira fi 'l-Hurub* ('Manual on warfare'), Egypt or Syria, late 12th century, for the library of Saladin. Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ms. Huntington 264, f. 136v. Protective net.

**XXIV** Al-Hariri, *Maqamat* ('Assemblies'), Egypt or Syria, 619/1222. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, arabe 6094, f. 68r. Abu Zaid on a boat on the Euphrates (twenty-second *maqama*).

**XXV** Ibn al-Muqaffa', *Kalila wa Dimna*, Egypt or Syria, *ca* 1220. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, arabe 3465, f. 20v. Barzuya before the enthroned King Nushirwan.

**XXVI** Ibn al-Muqaffa', *Kalila wa Dimna*, Egypt or Syria, *ca* 1220. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, arabe 3465, f. 71v. The lion killing the bull.

**XXVIII** New Testament, Egypt, 1249-50. Paris, Institut Catholique, copte-arabe 1, f. 65v. St Mark and a donor.

**XXVII** Ibn al-Muqaffa', *Kalila wa Dimna*, Egypt or Syria, *ca* 1220. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, arabe 3465, f. 77r. Dimna's trial.

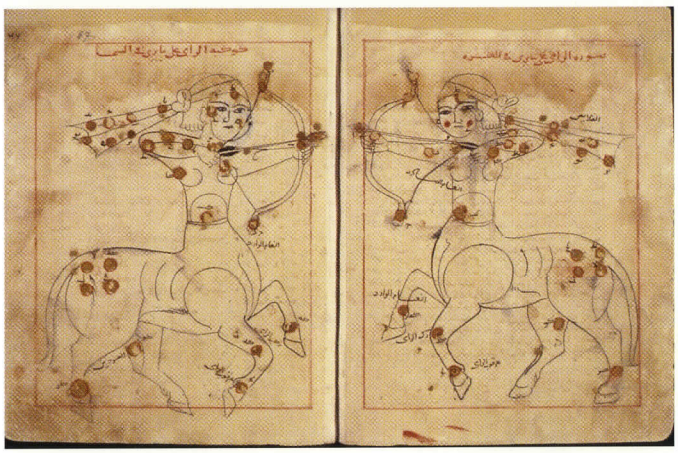
**XXIX** *Gospel Book*, Damietta, Egypt, 1180. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, copte 13, f. 167v. The Transfiguration.

**XXX** *Gospel Book*, Damietta, Egypt, 1180 Paris. Bibliothèque Nationale de France, copte 13, f. 276r. Joseph and Nicodemus carrying the body of Christ.

**XXXI** Anonymous, *Kitab ghara'ib al-funun wa mulah al-ʿuyun* ('Book of Curiosities of the Sciences and Marvels for the Eyes'), probably produced in Cairo, late 12th-early 13th century. Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ms. Arab c.90, f. 34r. The city of Mahdiya in Tunisia.

**XXXII** Ibn Butlan, *Daʿwat al-atibba'* ('Banquet of Physicians'), probably Syria, second quarter of the 13th century. Jerusalem, LA Mayer Memorial Institute, f. 4v. Two figures in an apothecary's shop.

**XXXIII** Al-Jazari, *Kitab fi Maʿrifat al-Hiyal al-Handasiyya* ('Book of Ingenious Mechanical Devices or Automata'), Diyarbakr, 602/1206. Istanbul, Topkapı Sarai Library, Ahmet III 3472, f. 165v-166r. Double-page finispiece with geometric design.



**XXXIV** Al-Sufi, *Kitab Suwar al-Kawakib al-Thabita* ('Treatise on the Constellations'), Mosul, 630/1233. Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, 5658 (Landberg 71), fol. 66v-67r.

**XXXV** *Warqa wa Gulshah*, probably Iran, possibly late 12th century. Istanbul, Topkapı Sarai Library, Hazine 841, 9r.

**XXXVI** Ibn al-Sufi, *Risalat al-Sufi 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.

**XXXVII** Ibn Bakhtishuʿ, *Naʿt al-Hayawan* ('Book of Animals'), probably North Jazira, c 1220. London, British Library, Or. 2784, f. 96r. Aristotle with a student.

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