

# INTRODUCTION TO ARABIC MANUSCRIPT STUDIES

HILL MUSEUM & MANUSCRIPT LIBRARY

June 13-24, 2022

Dr. Lucia Raggetti



## CODICOLOGY

Physical features, 'Grammar and Synthax' of the manuscript book

## PALEOGRAPHY

Deciphering, describing, dating, and locating script

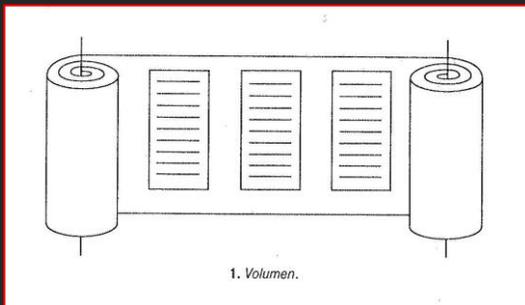
## ARABIC MANUSCRIPT STUDIES

## PHILOLOGY

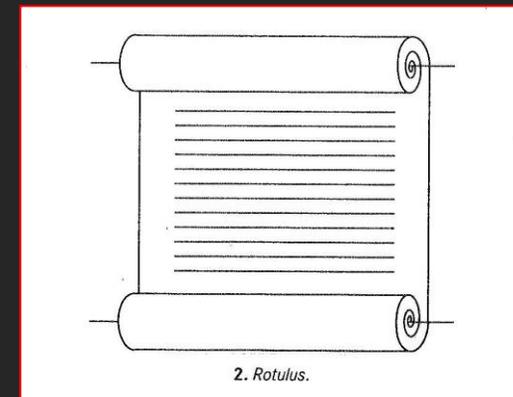
(textual criticism)  
The text and  
its transmission

14.VI.2022 – Day 2, FORMS &  
FORMATS, THE CODEX AND ITS  
MAKING

# VERTICAL ROLL (*ROTULUS*)



The horizontal roll (*volumen*) was not used in the Arabo-Islamic culture and, though very fascinating, vertical roll (*rotulus*) manifested itself in the niche of talisman making and virtuoso calligraphy.

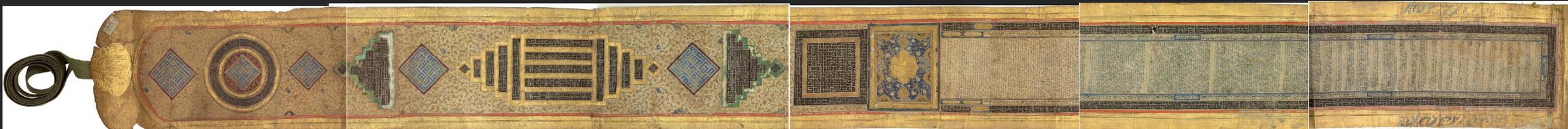


Three carbonized scrolls, second century BC-first century AD, Greco-Roman. Biblioteca Nazionale "Vittorio Emanuele III" Napoli.  
Source: getty.edu

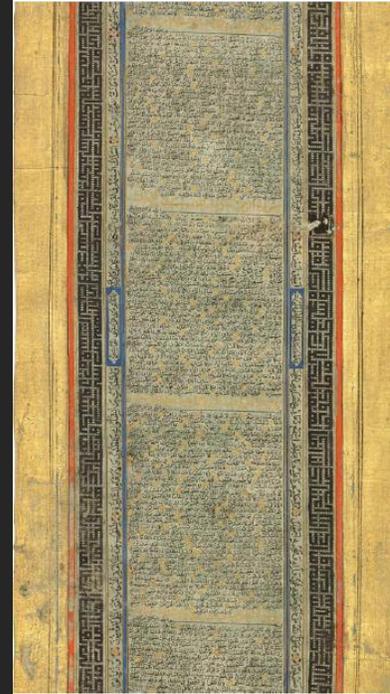
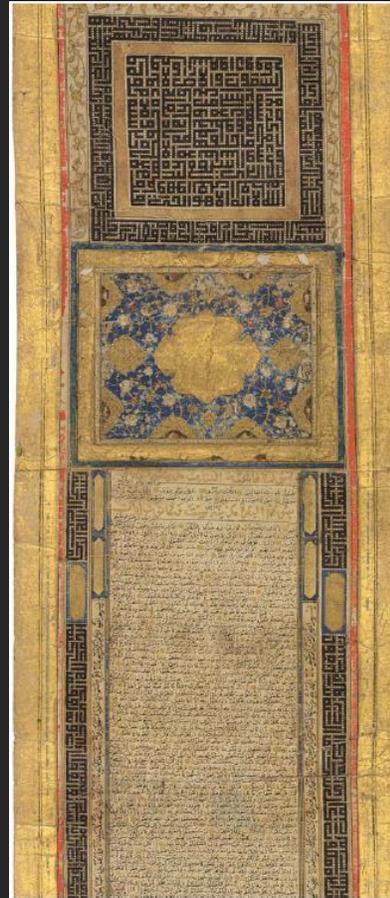


Arabo-Islamic scrolls can be made of parchment or paper (though in the early period they were also papyrus rolls). Normally, the roll is written on the inner side only, but it is not a rule.

It consists of a number of rectangular pieces glued together end to end. At its beginning, a piece of poorer quality ('protocol') was added to protect the scroll when rolled up.



MS Dublin Chester Beatty IS 1626 (8.7 x 744 cm) Source: Nünlist, *Schutz und Andacht*, 2020

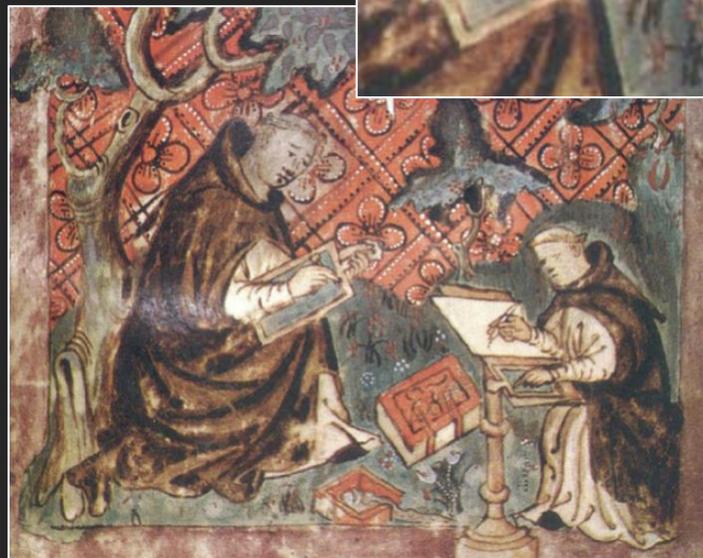


MS Dublin Chester Beatty IS 1626 (8.7 x 744 cm)  
Complete roll, 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> cent Iran  
Source: Nünlist, *Schutz und Andacht*, 2020

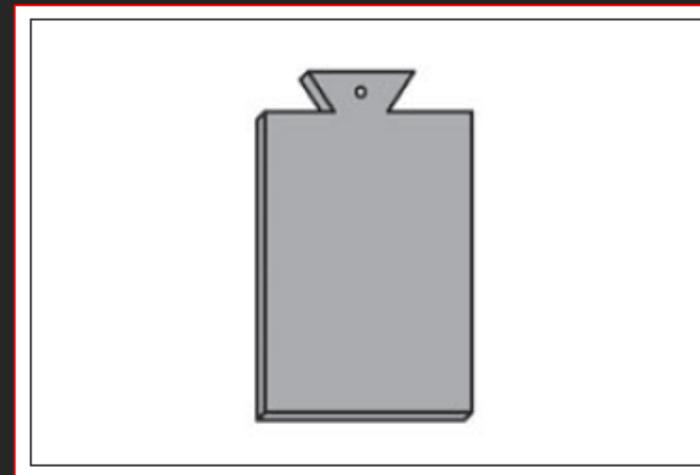
# TABULA ANSATA (TABLET WITH HANDLE/S)



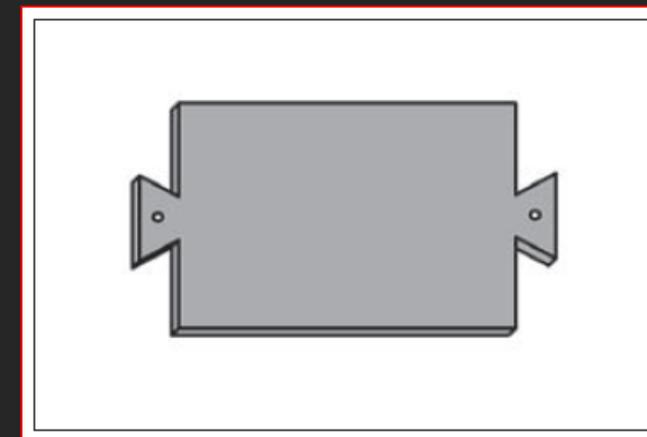
Even the Statue of Liberty holds a *tabula ansata*



The mystic Jan van Ruusbroec (1293–1381) writing on a *tabula ansata*, probably covered in green wax.  
Source: ms. Brussel kb 19.295–97, fol. 2v. (ca. 1380)



Single- and double-handle *tabula ansata* (keystone-shaped/dovetail handle)  
Source: Gacek, *Vademecum* 2009, p. 260.



# TABULA ANSATA IN CONTEXT



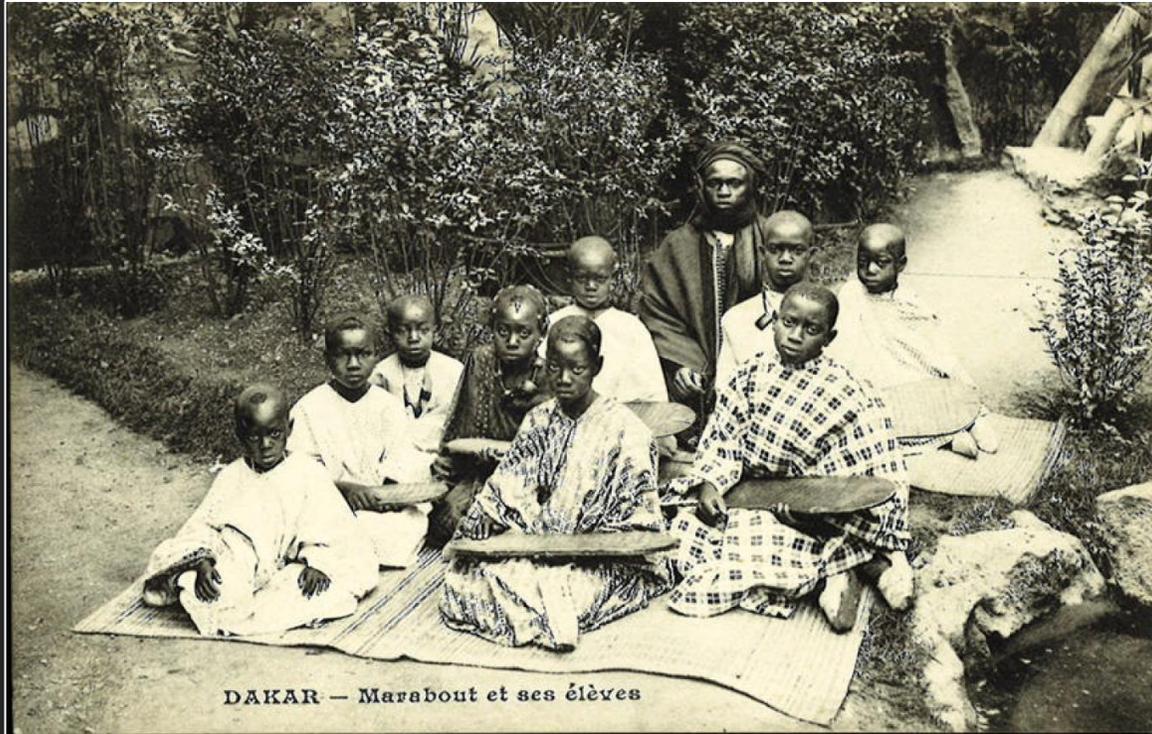
West African writing boards with handles  
Source: Artpropelled & Grain of Africa



MS Paris BnF Arabe 5847, f. 148v  
The *Maqāmāt* of al-Ḥarīrī  
Source: GallicabBnf.fr



# TABULA ANSATA & WRITING BOARDS IN POSTCARDS



DAKAR — Marabout et ses élèves

Teacher and students in Dakar  
Source: Ter Lugt Collection 2016-001-001



Photo Flandrin

2... MAROC... Une école dans le sud

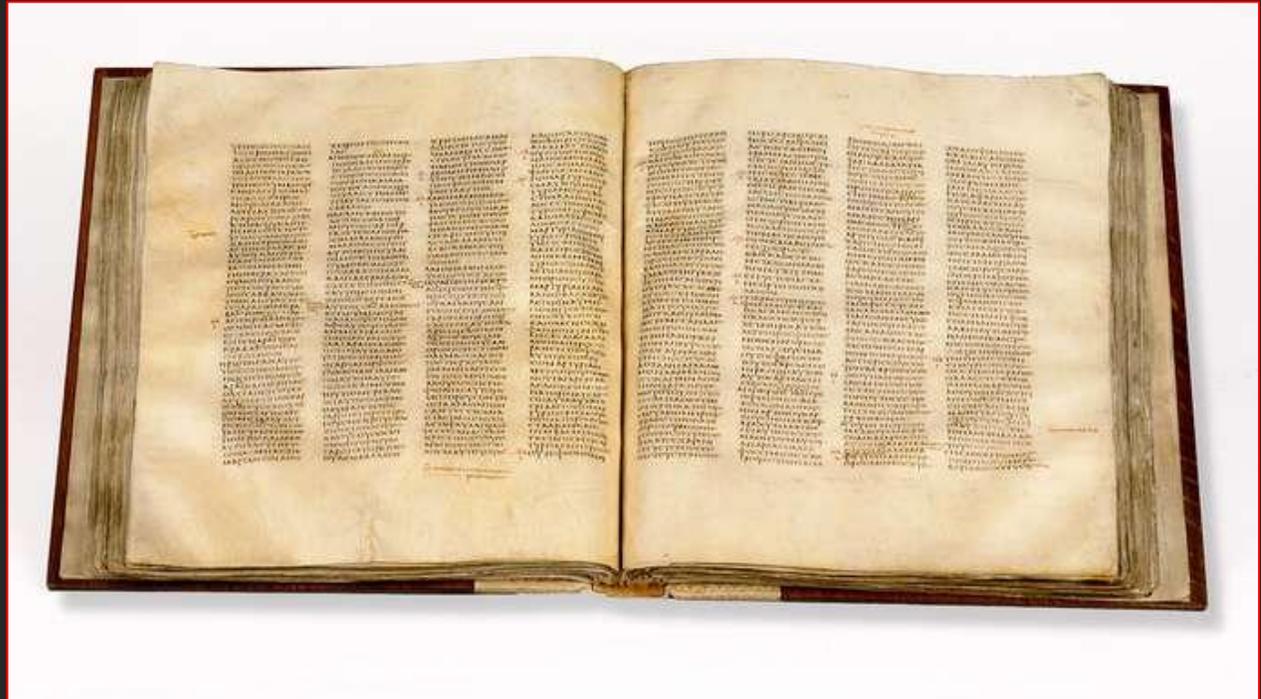
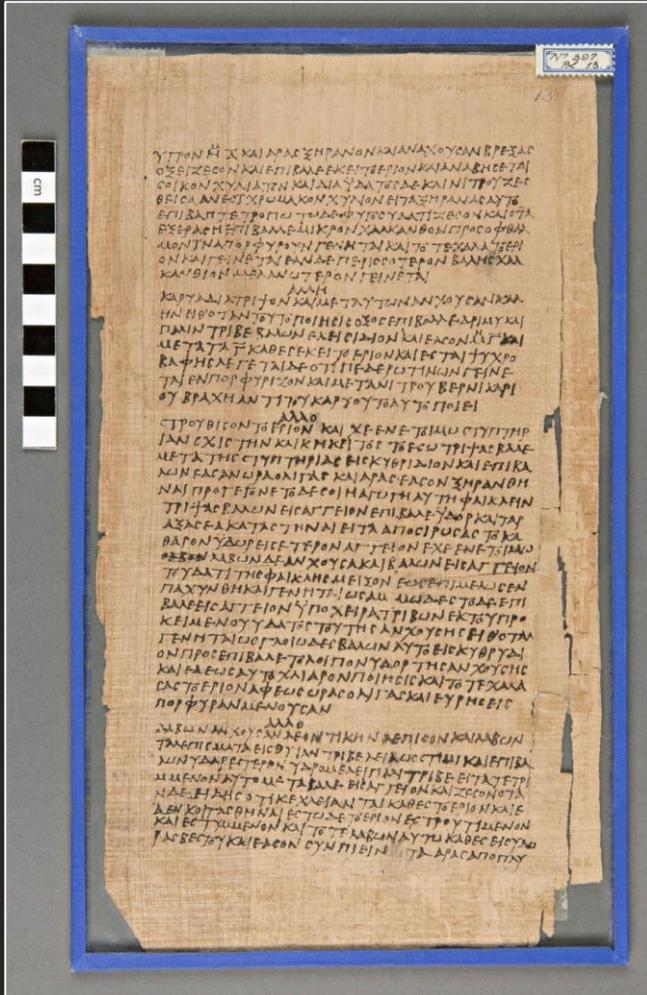
Reprod interd.

School in the South of Morocco (1951)  
Source: Ter Lugt Collection 2016-002-073/74



# THE CODEx BEFORE THE ARABO-ISLAMIC PERIOD

The codex had become the predominant form of the book in the Eastern Mediterranean world already in the 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> cent. BC.

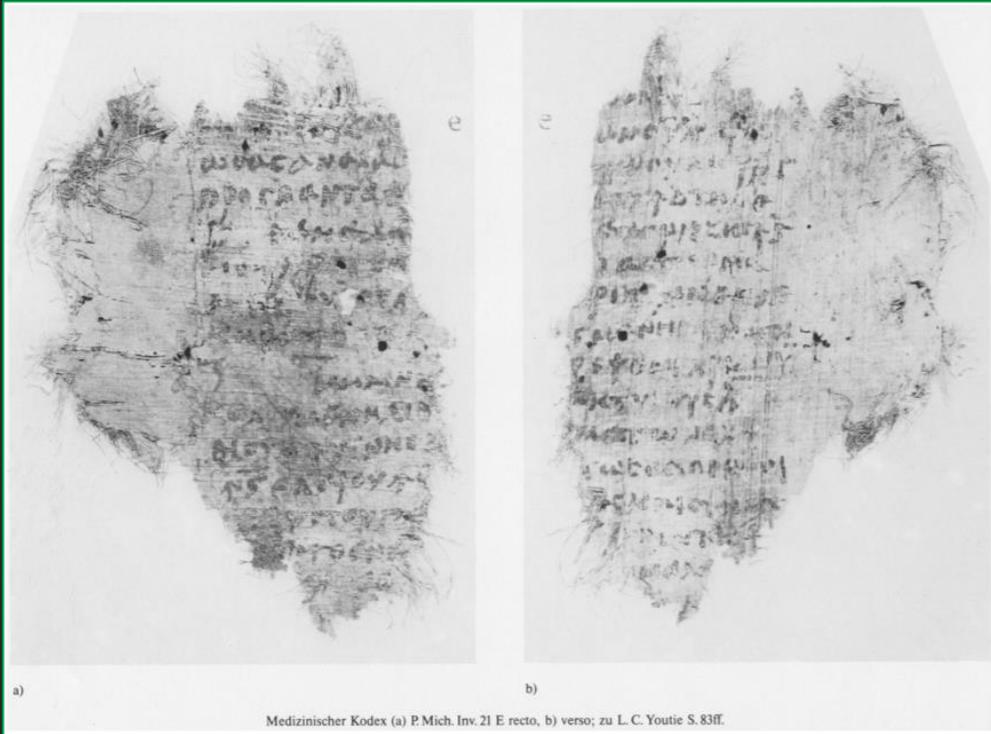


Page 13 of the Leiden codex AMS 66 (late third–early fourth century CE).  
Source: National Museum of Antiquities, Leiden.

Codex Sinaiticus (British Museum, Add. MS. 43725, fol. 260), dated to the 4<sup>th</sup> cent.

# THE CODEX BEFORE THE ARABO-ISLAMIC PERIOD – GALEN'S NOTES ON PARCHMENT

But not even this distressed me. What, then, you'll say, could be an even greater source of distress than all that you've said? I shall tell you. I was sure that I owned more remarkable drug recipes than anybody else in the entire Roman world. Gal. *PA* 31



The Michigan Papyrus Codex 21, a collection of recipes copied by a scribe  
Source: Youtie, *Michigan Codex*, 1986-1987.

In his recently discovered treatise *Peri Alypias*, Galen describes the books he lost in the great fire of the *Templum Pacis* (192 CE).

Apart from his strong ideas about the most appropriate size for scrolls (4000 ll.), Galen's text helps us understanding the development of the parchment codex.

Galen notes that a set of recipes was 'preserved with the greatest care in two parchment codices' (*pyktidi diphthéra*)

Galen parchment notebooks or *membranae* for note-taking and literary compositions (mentioned also in Martial, Horace, Persius, and Quintilianus).

Highly valued specialist notebooks for recipes, exchanges among experts, later copied by a scribe.

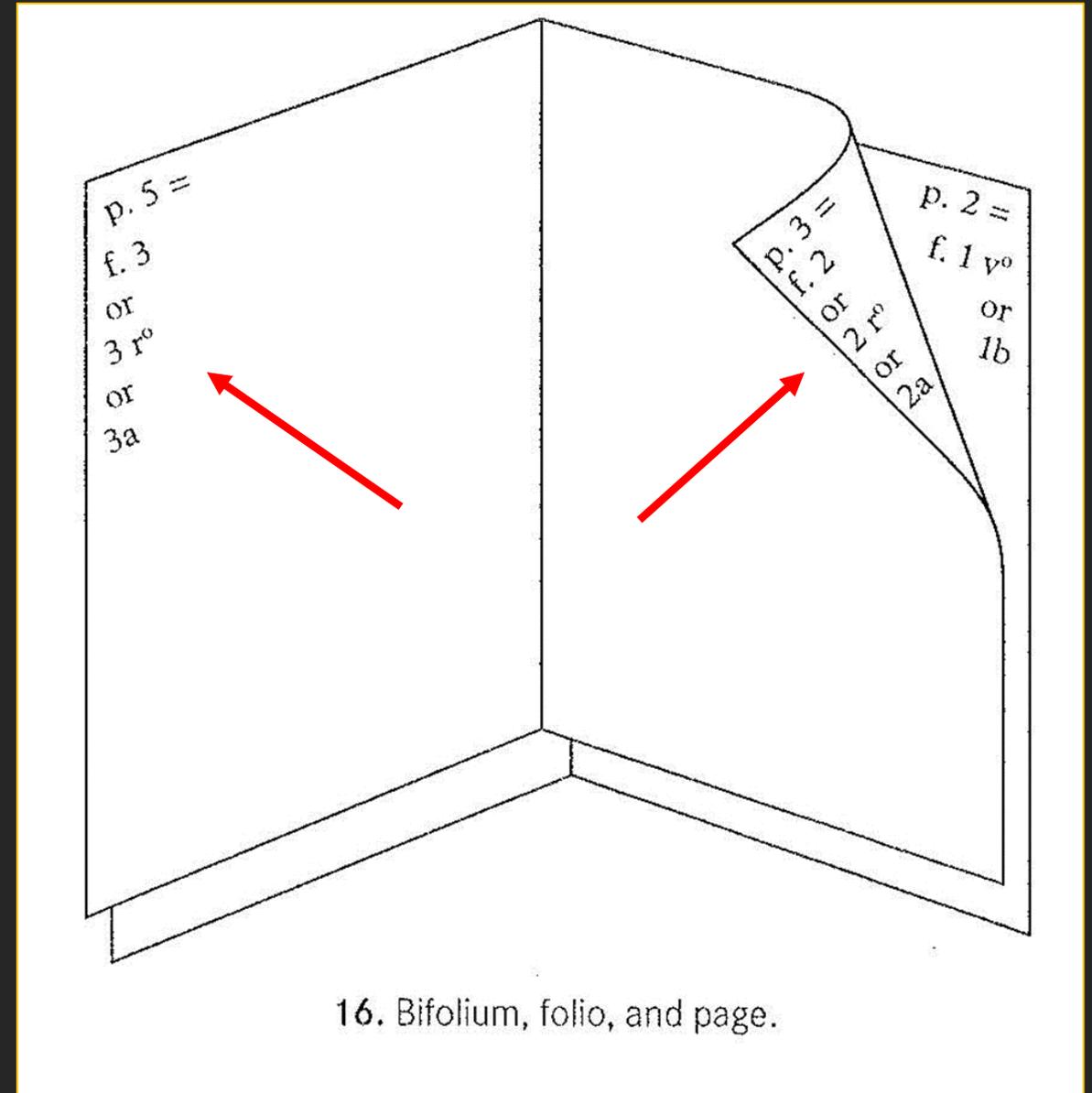
## THE CODEX & ITS QUIRES

“The codex is a handwritten book assembled from gatherings or quires (Ar. *kurrāsa*), that is, groups of any number of sheets [bifolia], folded into leaves set one within another and sewn together.”

The terms “sheet” and “bifolium” designate a piece of writing material, usually quadrangular, folded in two at its middle; each half is a folio.

In the Western tradition quires have an even number of bifolia, derived from folding method (folio, quarto, octavo, etc.)

In the Islamic world, quires were assembled in another way: bifolia were cut to the desired dimensions in advance, then gathered, usually in groups of four or five, and folded in half.”



16. Bifolium, folio, and page.

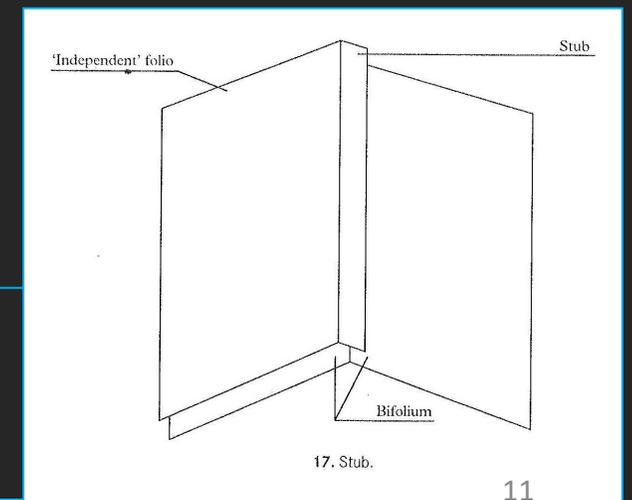
Number of bifolia	Quire type	Number of folios
1		2
2	binion	4
3	ternion	6
4	quaternion	8
5	quinion	10
6	senion	12
7	septenion	14
8	octonion	16

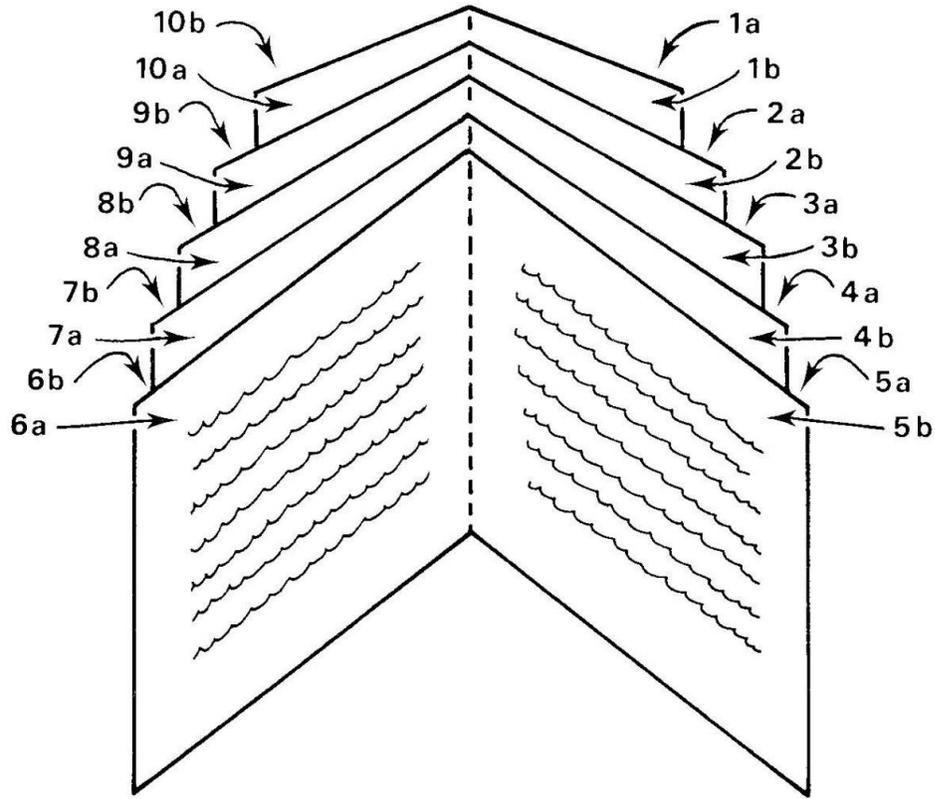
Technical denomination for **REGULAR quires**. Regular quires are made of complete bifolia.

If a quire contains more than eight bifolia, one may refer to 'gatherings of nine/ten/etc.'

There are trends in the number of bifolia that constitute a quire 5 in the Mashreq, 3 in the Maghreb, 4 in Iran and Central Asia, but no fixed rule.

**IRREGULAR quires** have a peculiar set up in which a single folio (singleton) is added to a folded bifolium by means of a stub. In this way, the single folio can be sewn with the rest of the bifolia

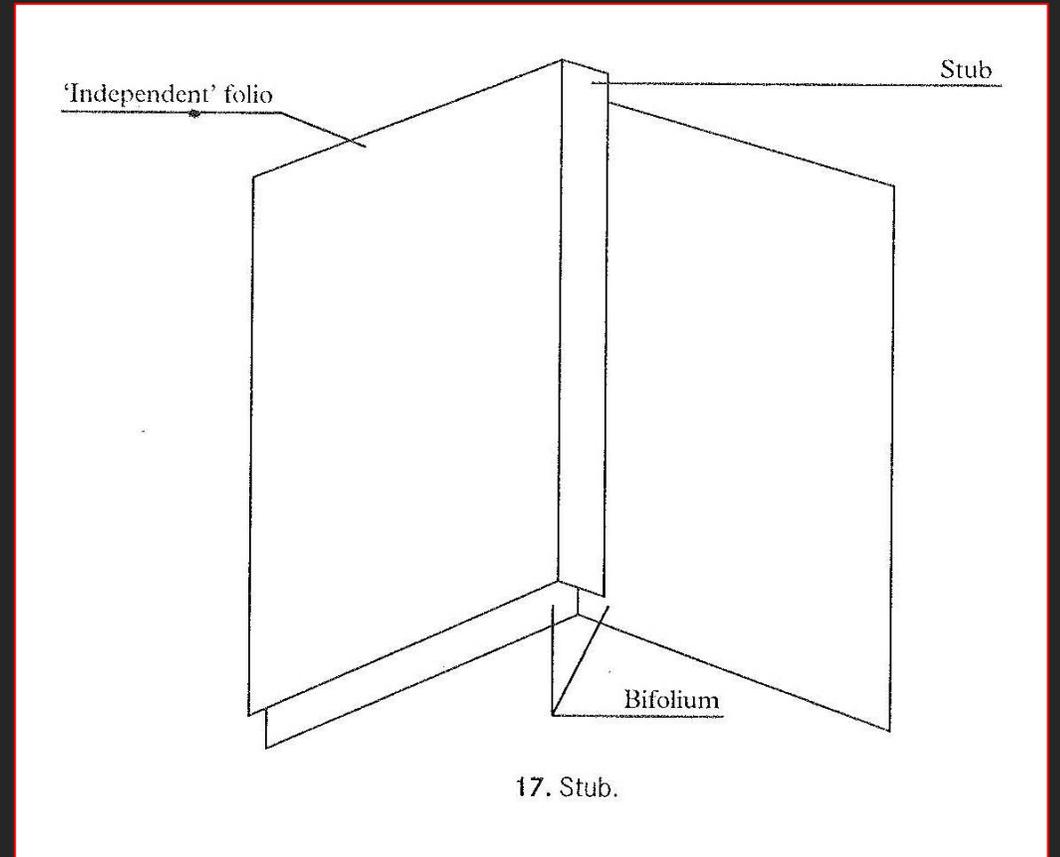




The first quire of a book, opened at its heart. It consists of five (V) sheets, folded into ten (10) leaves, which are numbered *ff.* 1a-10b.

Quinion, i.e. **regular quire** consisting of  
 5 bifolia/sheets = 10 folia/leaves = 20 pages.

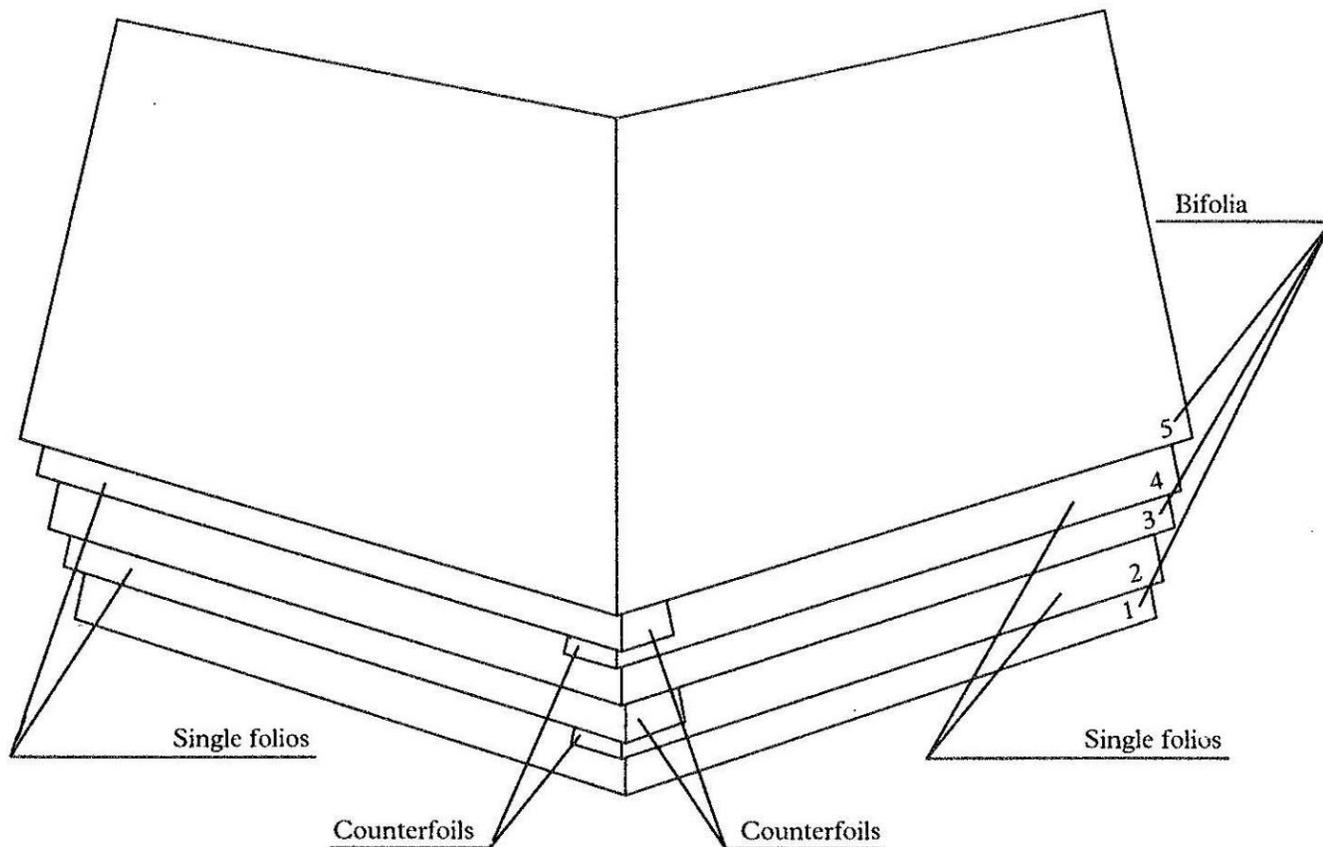
Source: Witkam *An Introduction*, 1982



**Irregular quire**, with a single folio attached to a bifolium  
 by means of a stub.

1 bifolium + 1 folium = 3 folia = 6 pages

Source: Déroche, *Islamic Codicology*, 2006, p. 65



21. Quire (quinion) comprising three bifolia and four single folios symmetrically arranged.

Reality can be more complex than that, for instance in the parchment codex MS Paris (BnF) Smith-Lesouëf 193, ff. 11a-20b

Quire of three sheets (= 6 leaves) and four single leaves (with stubs), together constituting a quire of 10 ff.

Source: Déroche, *Islamic Codicology*, 2006, p. 78

Bibliographers have devised several systems to describe quires in the form of a formula.

For an 'average' manuscript on paper such a system works as follows:

Volume of 100 leaves comprising only quires of five sheets (quinions) will be described with this formula:

**10 V (100)**

That is to say, 10 quires of 5 sheets (the 'five' indicated by the Roman numeral), with highest folio number = 100 between brackets.

Another example: A volume of 7 quires consists of 6 quires of 5 sheets and of one quire of 4 sheets.

Formula: **6 V (60), IV (68)**.

If a leaf is lacking from this last quire we write: **6 V (60), IV-1 (67)**.

If there is an extra leaf in this quire we write: **6 V (60), IV + 1 (69)**.

Sources: Witkam, *An Introduction*, 1982, pp. 13-14; Déroche, *Islamic Codicology*, 2006, p. 71.

## QUIRE FORMULA – PARCHMENT

Parchment quires can be arranged in two ways:

1. They may follow the Gregory's rule, that is with flesh facing flesh side and hair facing hair side in the same opening;
2. Or alternate flesh and hair side on the same opening

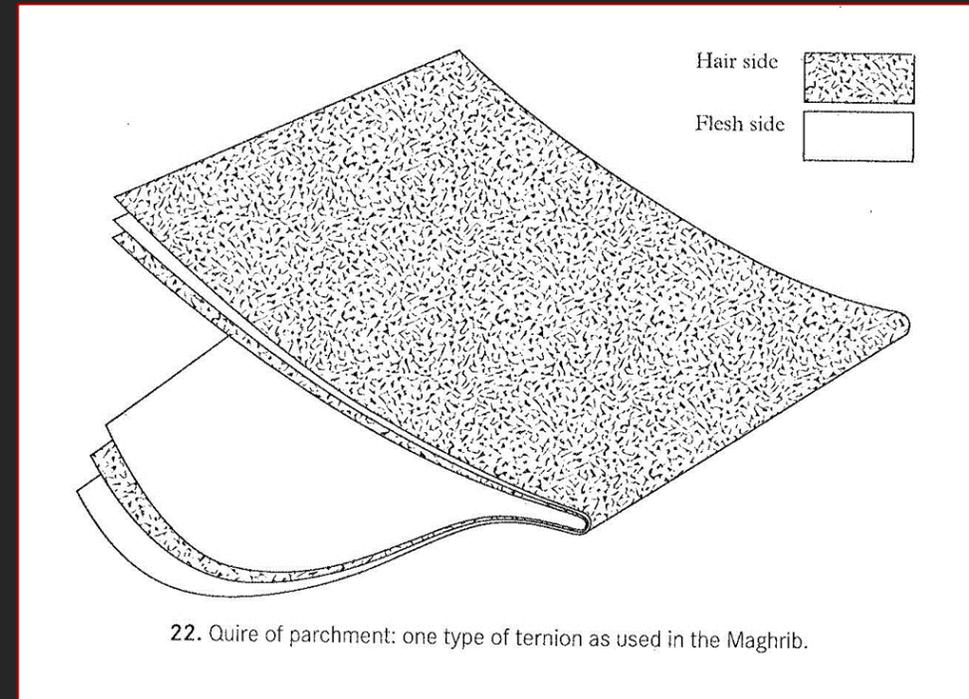


Caspar René Gregory  
(1846–1917)

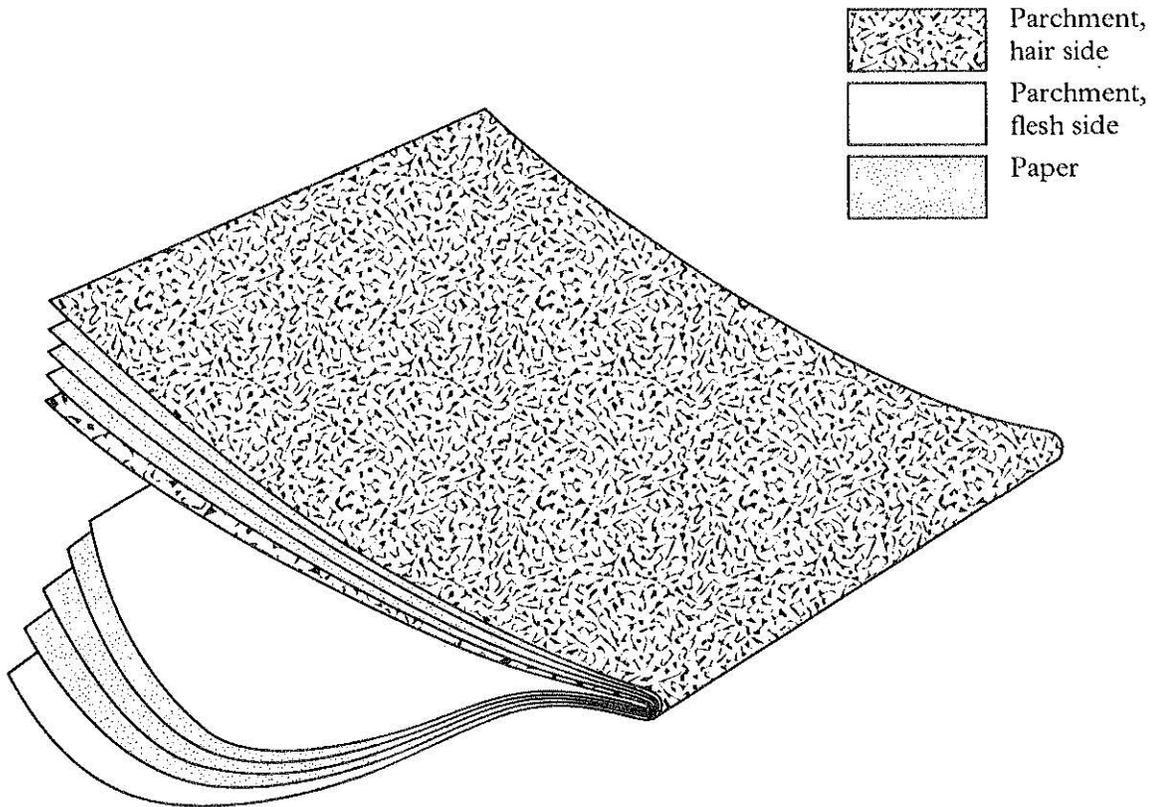
Quire of three sheets (= 6 leaves) as used in the Maghrib.

Example taken from MS Paris (BnF) Arabe 395, ff. 19a-24b, a Qur'an on parchment.

Gregory's rule is followed: hair to hair (H), flesh to flesh (F). Proposed quire formula:  
H19F F20H H21F/F22H H23F F24H



## QUIRES FORMULA – PARCHMENT / PAPER



23. Mixed quire (paper and parchment).

Note: The use of mixed materials (parchment and paper) is apparently an Andalusian feature. The second half of the twelfth century seems to be the period in which paper started to be used in al-Andalus.

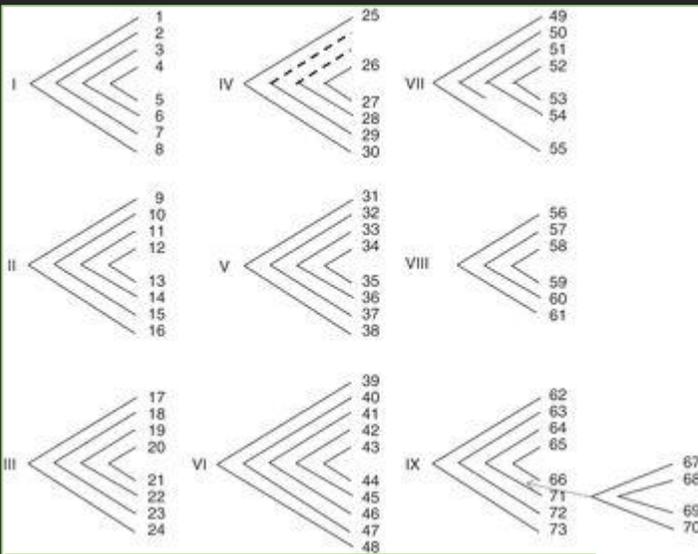
Quire of five sheets of mixed composition: outer and inner sheets are of parchment, the three inner sheets are of paper.

MS Paris (BnF) Arabe 6499, ff. 207a-216b. The MS comes from Andalusia and is dated 562/1166.

MS Leiden Or. 231 has the same set-up and is also from Andalusia (possibly from Toledo) and is dated before 1195 AD.

Source: Déroche, *Islamic Codicology*, 2006, p. 83.

# VISUALIZING THE QUIRE STRUCTURE



Source: *Cambridge Companion to Medieval British Manuscripts*

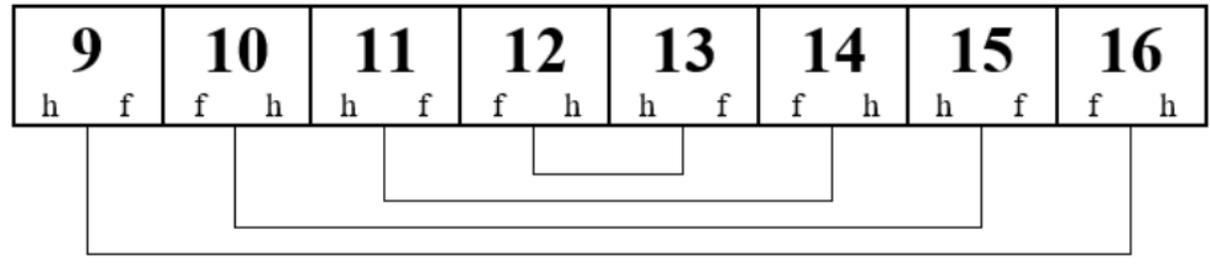
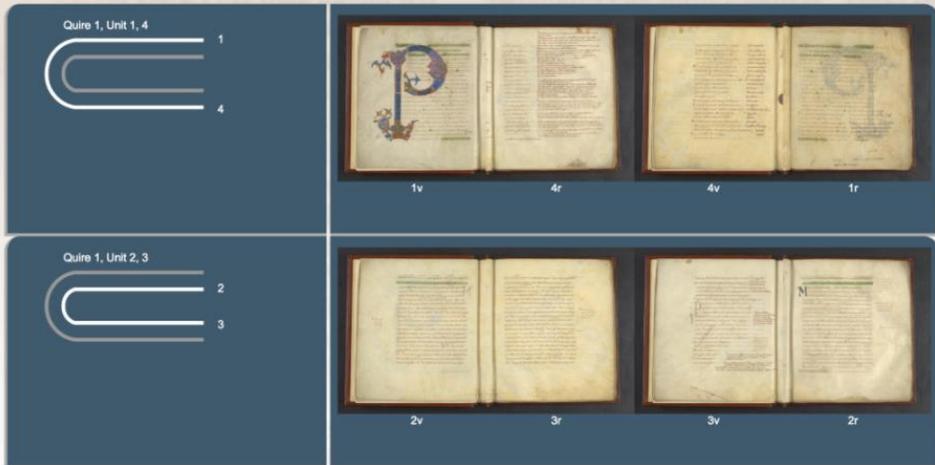


Figure 1: Paris, MS Lat. 9656, Quire 2 (fols 9-16)

Source: *thomgobbitt - early medieval laws and law-books*

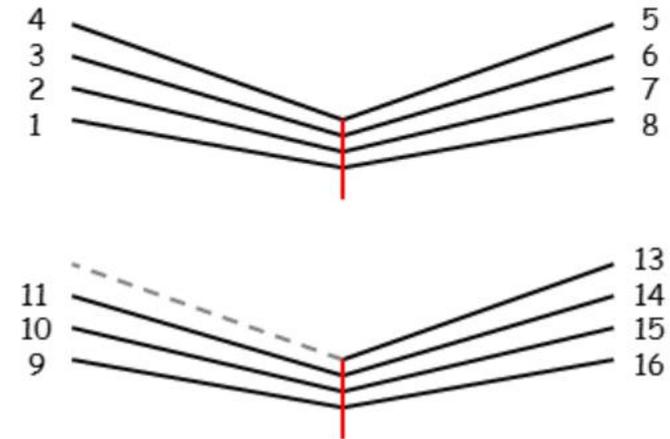
Quire 1 (4) Show All Hide All



Source: *The Schoenberg Institute for Manuscript Studies* (University of Pennsylvania)

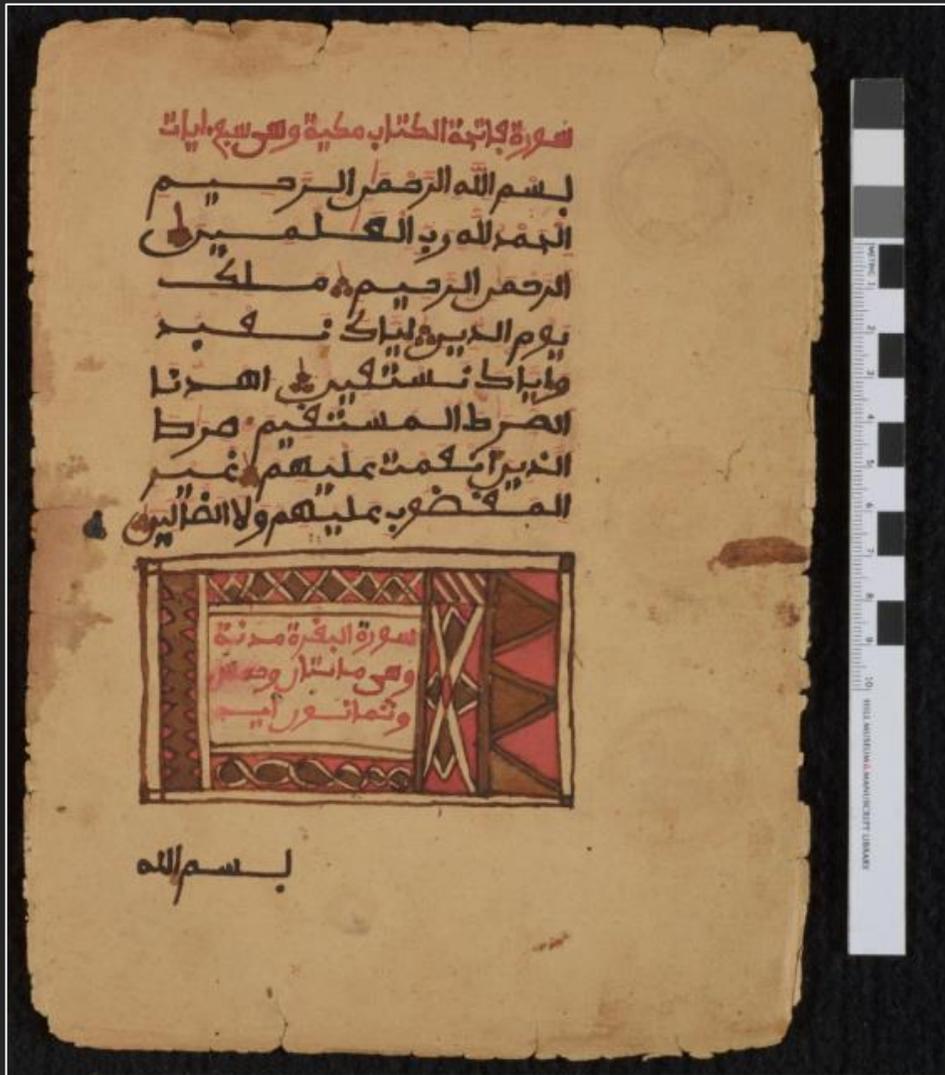
Quire 1

Quire 2

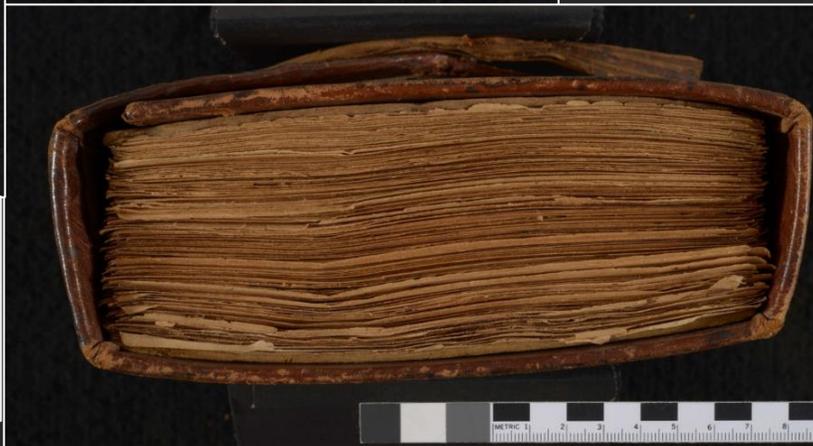


Source: *Voynich.nu*

## OR NO QUIRES AT ALL...



Qur'an on paper, Nigeria second half 18th cent.  
MS Collegeville Arca Artium Kacmarcik Ms, f. 1v  
HMML Proj. Num. AARB 00272.  
Source: VHMML



Source: Bodleian  
Library, University  
of Oxford (Access  
no. LI1434.1)



West-African manuscripts  
are usually written on  
single leaves or on  
sheets, but these are not  
made into quires.

These leaves and sheets  
are put onto a pile, and  
then kept in a satchel or  
stored in a wrap-around  
cover with strap.



# ABJAD – ARABIC ALPHA-NUMERICAL NOTATION

East

غ	ظ	ض	ذ	خ	ث	ت	ش	ر	ق	ص	ف	ع	س	ن	م	ل	ك	ي	ط	ح	ز	و	ه	د	ج	ب	أ
gh	ẓ	ḍ	dh	kh	th	t	sh	r	q	ṣ	f	‘	s	n	m	l	k	y	ṭ	ḥ	z	w/lu	h	d	j	b	’

ش	غ	ظ	ذ	خ	ث	ت	س	ر	ق	ض	ف	ع	ص	ن	م	ل	ك	ي	ط	ح	ز	و	ه	د	ج	ب	أ
sh	gh	ẓ	dh	kh	th	t	s	r	q	ḍ	f	‘	ṣ	n	m	l	k	y	ṭ	ḥ	z	w/lu	h	d	j	b	’

West

- ا (alif) = 1
- ب (bā’) = 2
- ت (tā’) = 400
- ث (thā’) = 500
- ج (jīm) = 3
- ح (ḥā’) = 8
- خ (khā’) = 600
- د (dāl) = 4
- ذ (dhāl) = 700
- ر (rā’) = 200
- ز (zāy/zā’) = 7
- س (sīn) = 60 or 300
- ش (shīn) = 300 or 1000
- ص (ṣād) = 90 or 60

- ض (ḍād) = 800 or 90
- ط (ṭā’) = 9
- ظ (ẓā’) = 900 or 800
- ع (‘ayn) = 70
- غ (ghayn) = 1000 or 900
- ف (fā’) = 80
- ق (qāf) = 100
- ك (kāf) = 20
- ل (lām) = 30
- م (mīm) = 40
- ن (nūn) = 50
- ه (hā’) = 5
- و (wāw) = 6
- ی (yā’) = 10

The order of the 28 consonants in the Arabic alphabet is different in the East and in the West.

The different order affects also the numerical value associated to the letters.

The name abjad (alphabet without vowels) is used in linguistics and it is followed by many Semitic languages. It is also associated to a mnemotechnical organization of the letters in groups of three or four.

Abjad is also associated to a mnemotechnical organization of the letters in groups of three or four.

ابجد abajid | هوز hawaz<sup>in</sup> | حطي ḥuṭiy<sup>in</sup> | كلمن kalamn<sup>in</sup> | صعفض ṣa'faḍ<sup>in</sup> | قرست quriset  
 ثخذ thakhudh | ظغش ḏaghsh<sup>in</sup>.

## Replacement of Writing (*tağyīr al-kitāba*)

You shall associate each letter of the alphabet with a day of the week, then you associate each letter to a certain hour of the day, for instance: the first hour of a certain day, the second hour of another day, and so on for all of them. This is the division of the letters on the basis of the days of the week:

Saturday: ḡ ' t n

Sunday: ḍ ġ ī k

Monday: ḥ t r z q

Tuesday: ḍ ū d

Wednesday: l ḥ ḏ h

Thursday: š m s

Friday: f ā ṣ ṭ b r

As for the five names, these are:

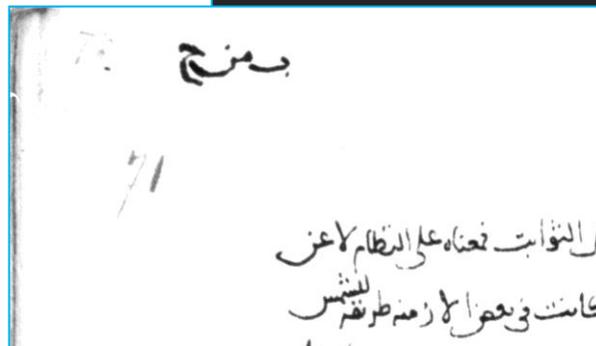
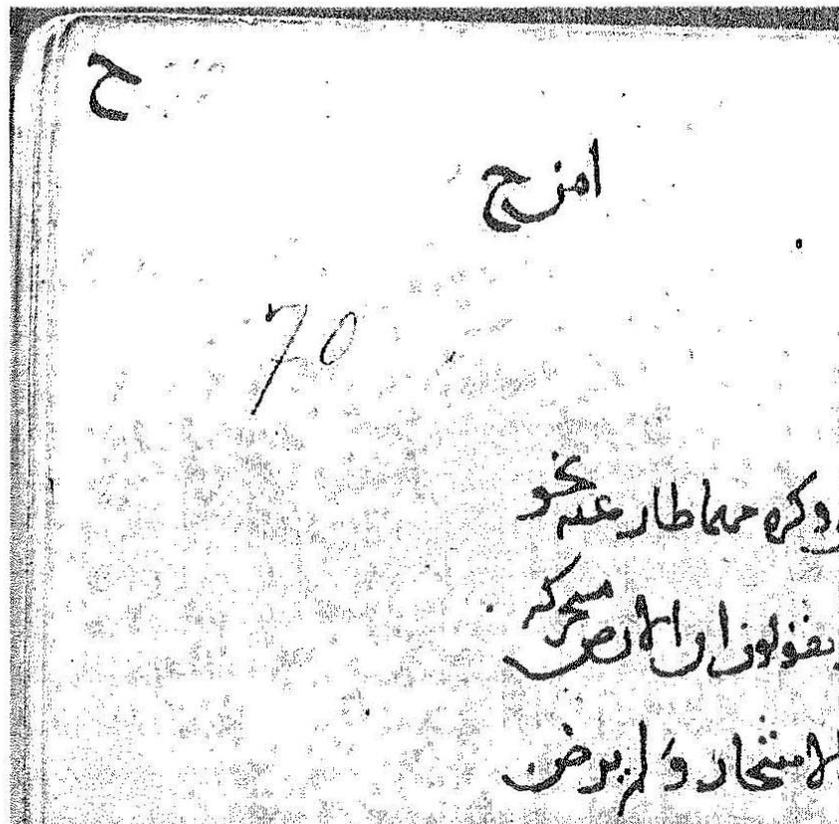
š m ī ḍ ī r \* ā ṣ ḡ ṭ ū h \* ḍ q ' l f k \* ḍ ū t ḥ s \* ḡ n b ḥ ṭ

Among these names, there are some of six letters and two of five letters, as we have just demonstrated.

The operation with the five names is similar to the one with the days of the week, keep this in mind and elaborate on it.

Al-Iskandarī, *Kitāb al-ḥiyal al-bābiliyya*

## QUIRE NUMBERING IN ABJAD (SIGNATURES)



24. Quire numbering in *abjad* (right) together with numbering of the bifolium within the quire in *abjad* (left). Text copied in 554/1159. Paris, BNF arabe 6080, f. 70 (detail).

Quire numbering in abjad:

Left upper corner:  $h\bar{a}' = 8$

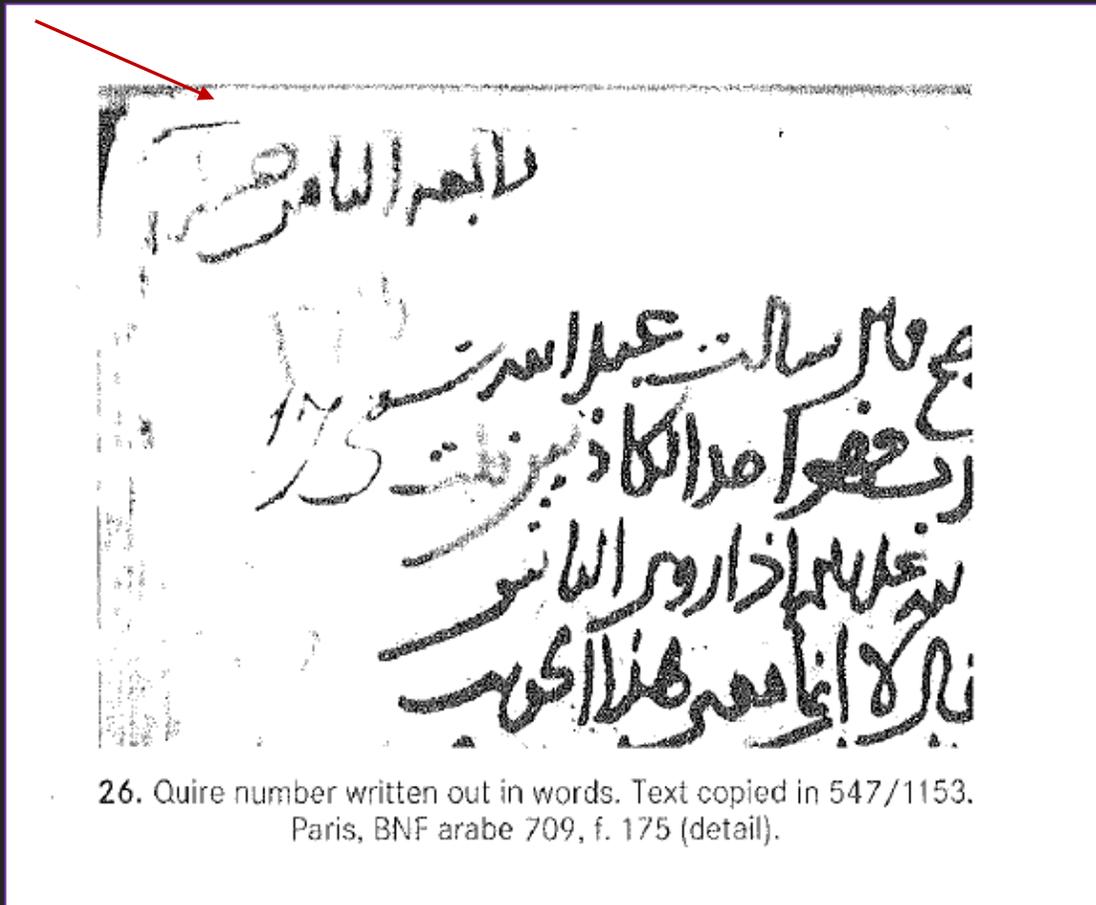
Page numbering in the quire:

Alif = 1 and  $h\bar{a}' = 8$

→ 1 of 8

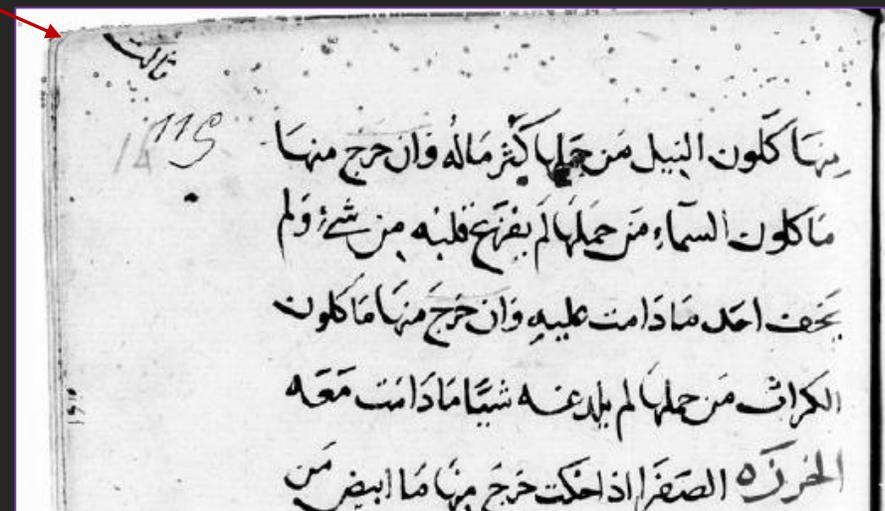
[\*min does not count as abjad, it is the preposition]

# QUIRE NUMBERS (SIGNATURES) IN WORDS



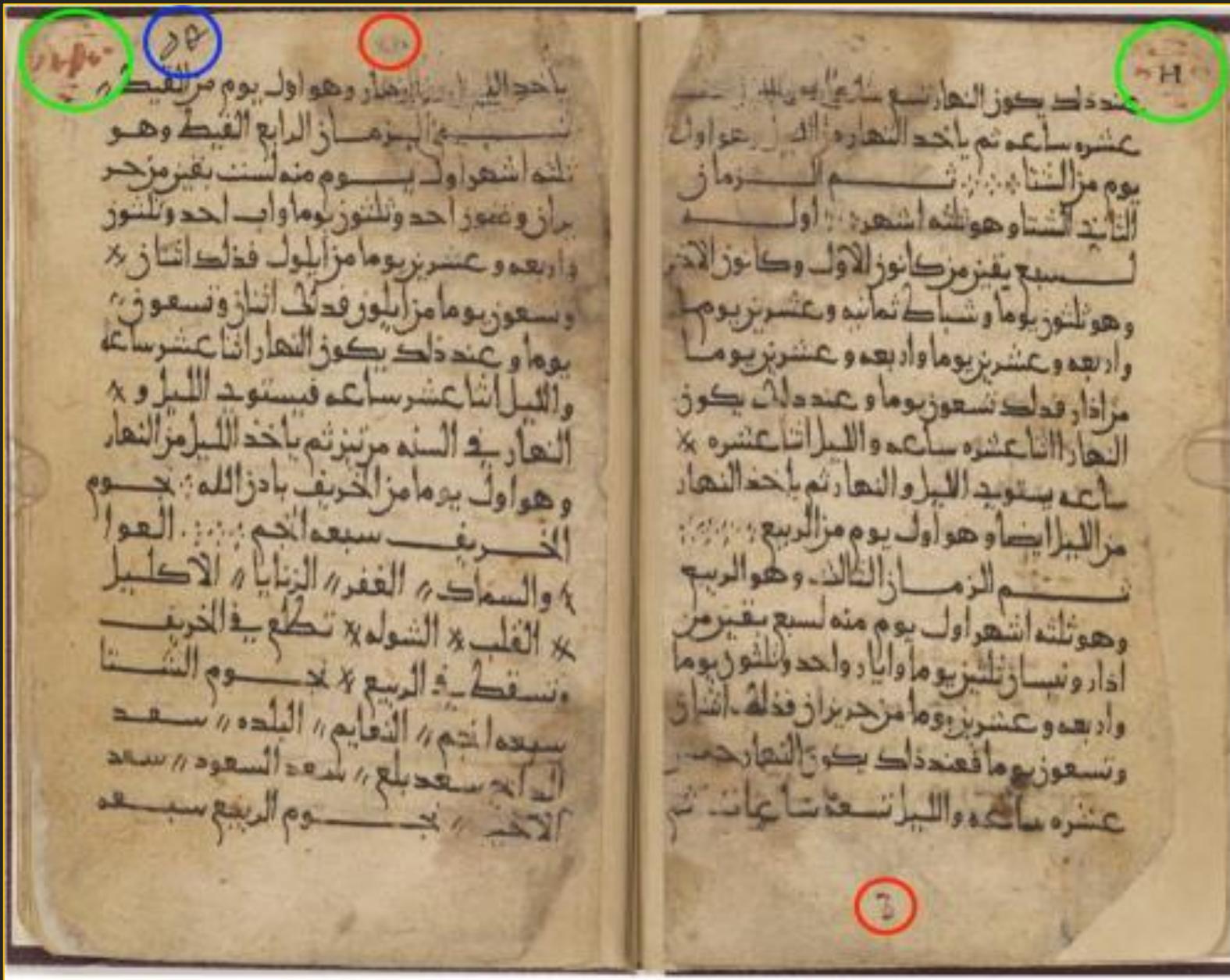
Source: Déroche, *Islamic Codicology*, 2006, p. 92.

When in extenso, quire signatures may be written in different directions (horizontal, diagonally downward or, more rarely, upward)



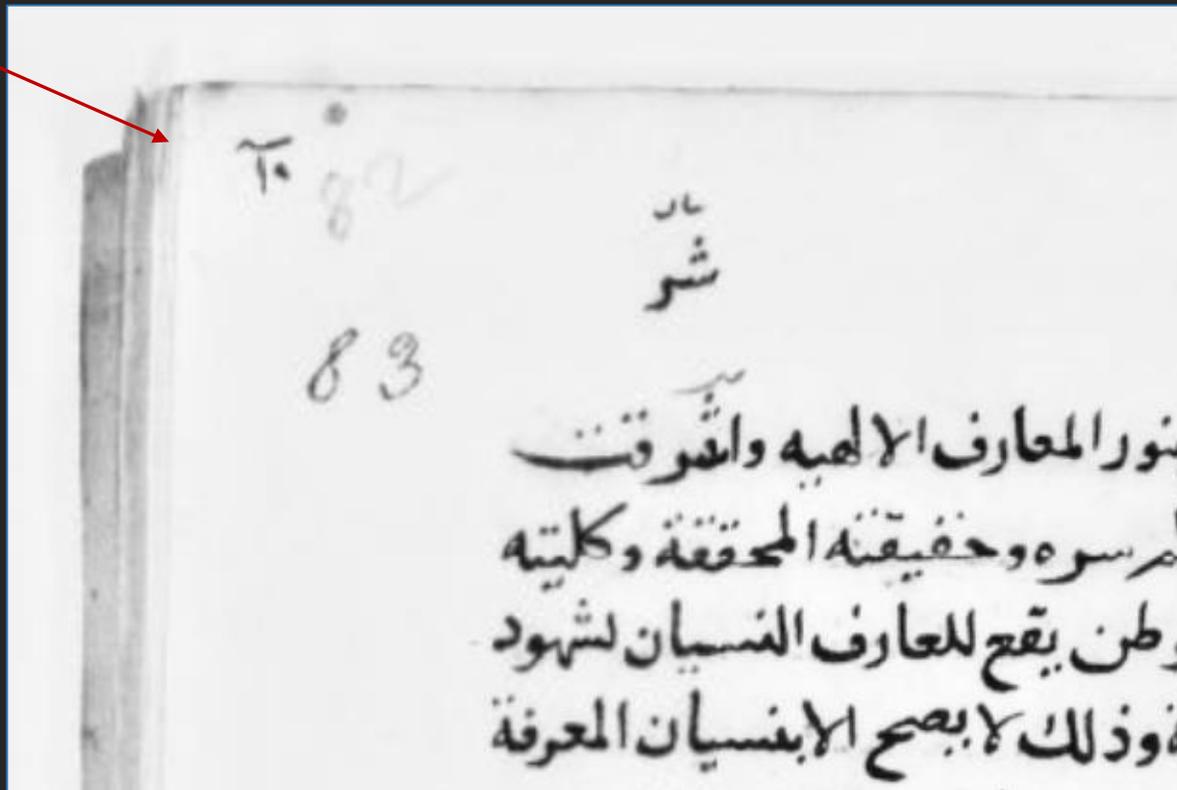
Collection of texts on stones and talismans  
MS Paris BnF Arabe 2775, f. 111r and 115r





Opening from the 'Book of Seasons' (*Kitāb al-azmina*), which displays a variety of punctuation and space-filling marks as well as Greek quire signatures (circled in green, H = 8 right and Θ = 9 left), Georgian quire signatures (circled in red, Ⴗ = 7 lower right and ⴌ = 9 upper right) and Coptic folio number (circled in blue, ⲒⲒ = 69).  
British Library, Or. 8857, ff. 10v and 17r.

# FOLIATION



Source: Déroche, *Islamic Codicology*, 2006, p. 93.

Foliation in the hand of the copyist is rather rare in early manuscripts.

The foliation marks are usually written in the same place of quire numbers, that is the left upper corner of the recto.

Foliation and pagination are usually added later (often in the occasion of a manuscript access into a library collection), either in Western or in Eastern numeral. Sometimes a manuscript contains more than one foliation/pagination.

No foliation, no reference...

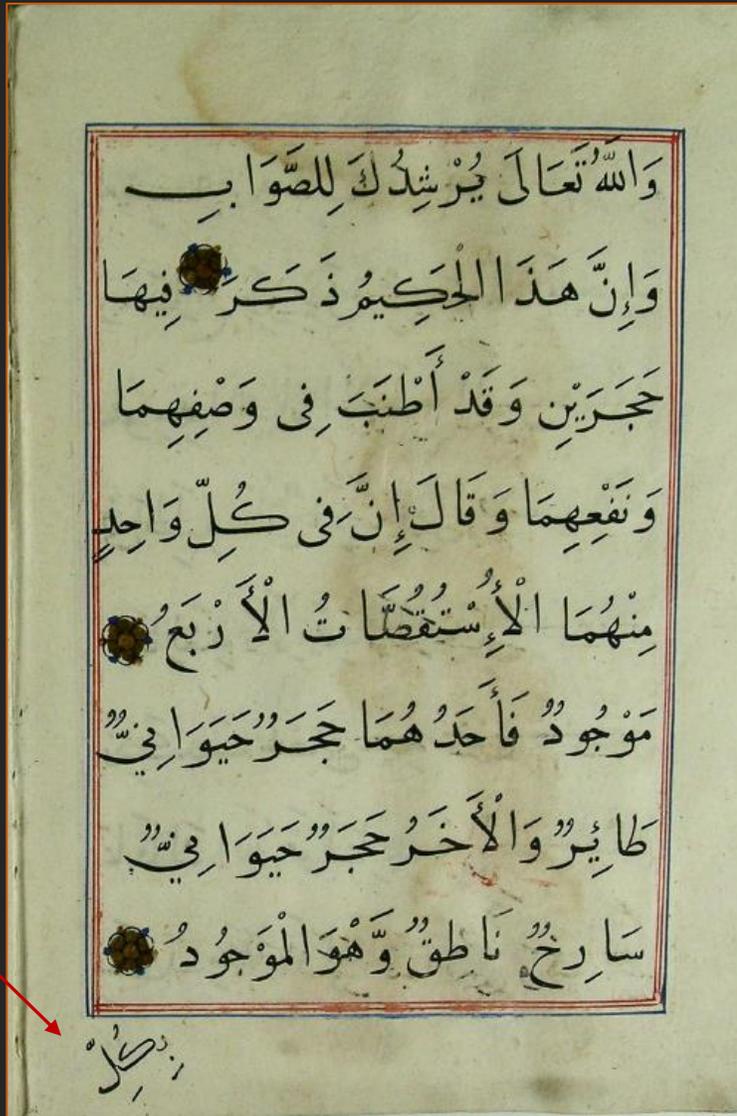
## KEEPING LEAVES IN ORDER - CATCHWORDS

The function of the 'catchword' is to ensure the correct order of the quires or of the leaves within a quire.

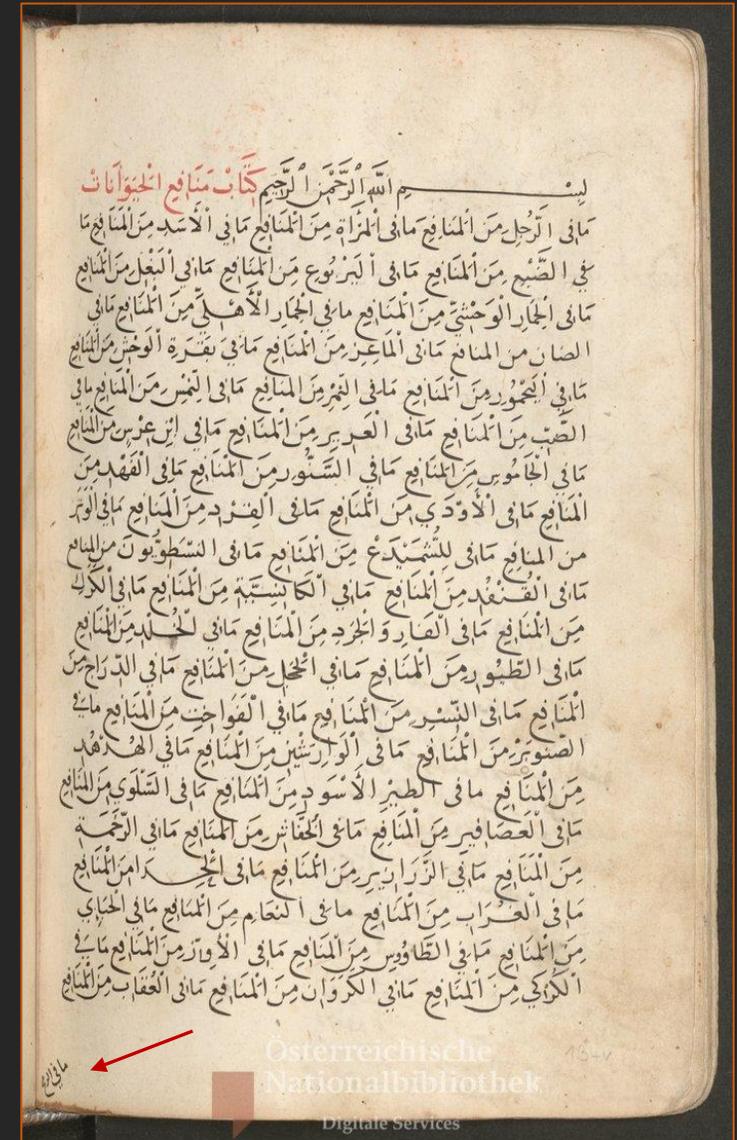
The 'catchword' is usually written on its own below the last line of the verso and it is also the first word of the recto. It can be written horizontal or oblique.

It can be from the same hand of the copyist or added later.

Catchwords are not necessarily reliable...

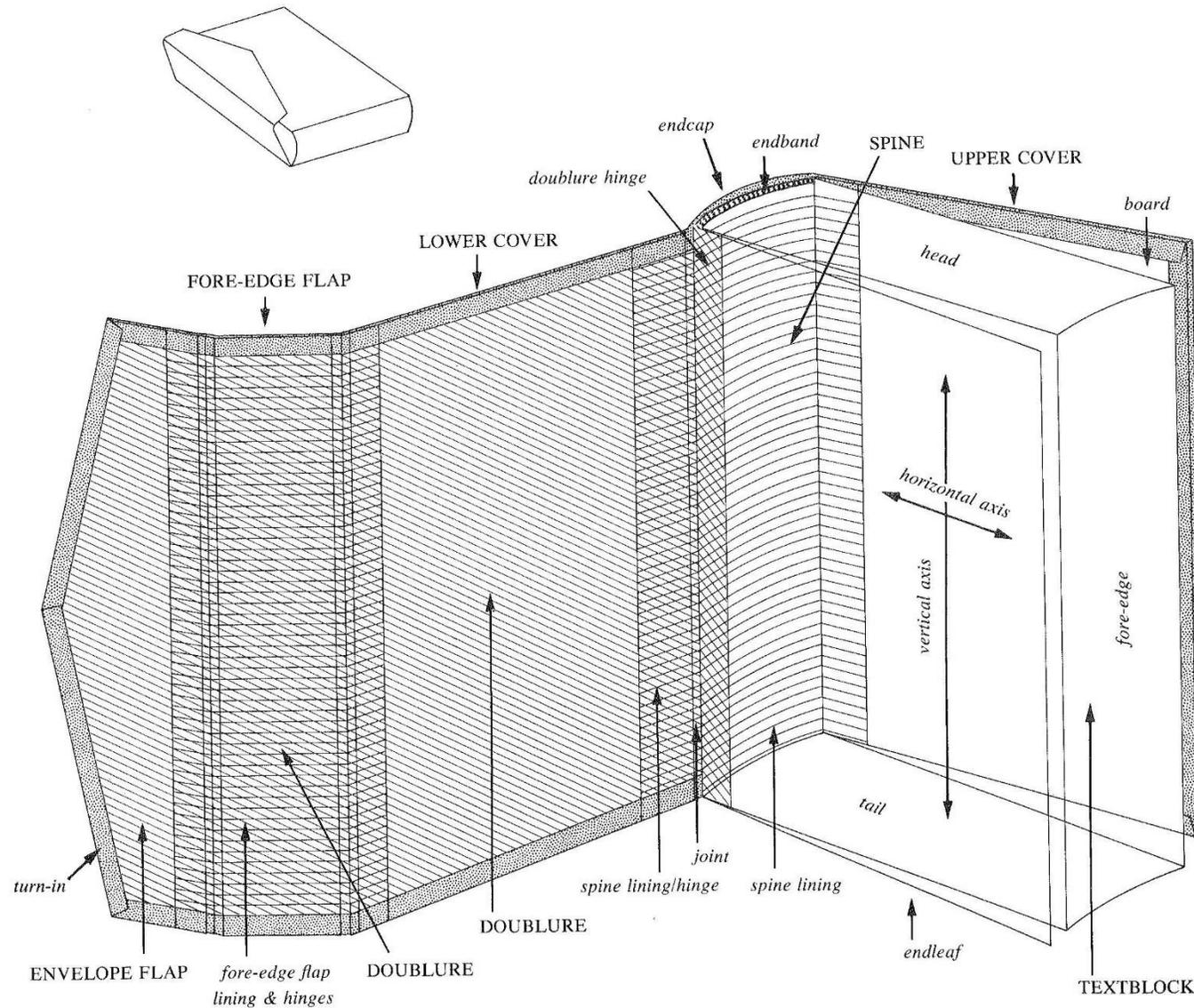


Pseudo-Aristotle's *Book of Stones*  
MS Istanbul Aya Sofia 3610, f. 3v



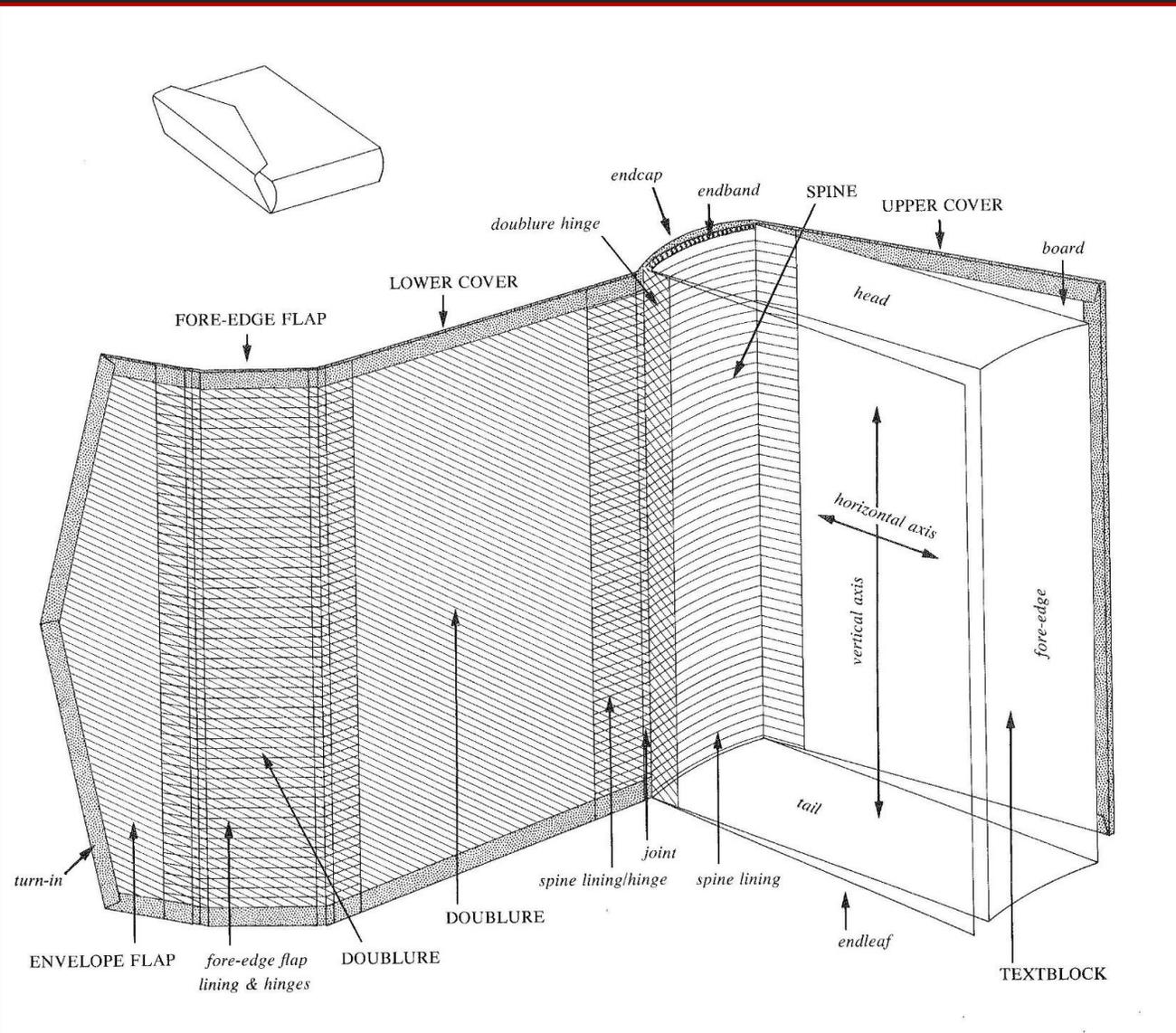
Book of the Useful Properties of Animal Parts  
MS Wien Or. 119, f. 134v

# BOOKBINDING – TECHNICAL TERMINOLOGY



Source: Bosch (a.o.),  
*Islamic bindings.*  
Chicago 1981, p. 38.





ISLAMIC BOOKBINDINGS are realized with a great variety of solutions and materials, offering a range of more or less economical solutions.

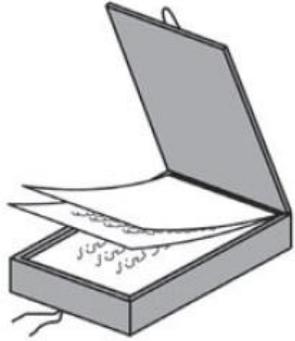
Islamic book bindings are usually divided in three groups (I, II, III). All of them have covers and spine in common. They also share the absence of a shoulder, i.e. the edges of the quires are on the same level of the covers.

The most widespread and iconic is Type II (“flap binding”). It takes its name from the fore-edge flap and the envelope flap, connected to the lower cover by means of flexible hinges.

The block is attached directly to the endleaves, which makes the book a bit still, hence the necessity for **cradle** bookstand.

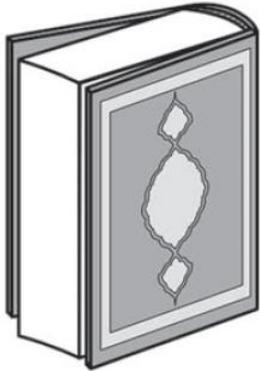
Source: Bosch (a.o.), *Islamic bindings*. Chicago 1981, p. 38.

## TYPES OF ISLAMIC BINDINGS



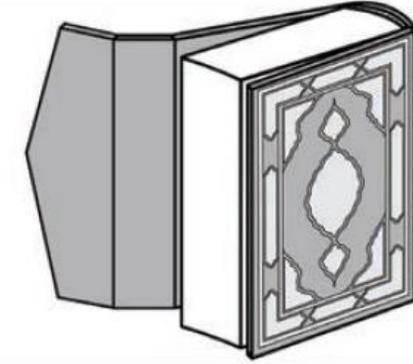
### Type I - Box-binding

The earliest type, especially for oblong Qur'ans, very little material evidence survived



### Type III

Very similar to type II, without the flap.



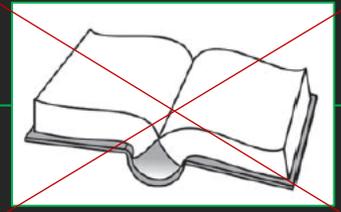
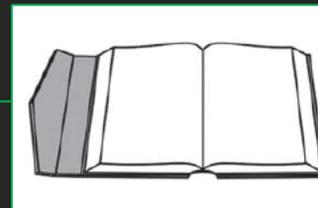
### Type II

The archetype of Islamic binding, with the characteristic flap

'roundback': the covers flow smoothly into the spine without a ridge.

No 'hollowback: the spine adheres to the quires.

Covers have the same size of the text-block.



# THE CODEX IN CONTEXT



MS British Library  
Or. 2784, f. 96v  
Source: British  
Library



MS Paris BnF Ar.  
2964, p. 38  
Theriaca of Paris:  
Ancient Greek  
physicians and Islamic  
book culture  
Source: Gallica.bnf.fr



MS Paris BnF Ar. 5847, f. 5v  
Hariri's *Maqāmāt* copied illustrated by al-Wāsiṭī  
in Baghdad in the year 1237. It shows how  
books were stored in a library  
Source: Gallica.bnf.fr

# SEWING THE QUIRES I

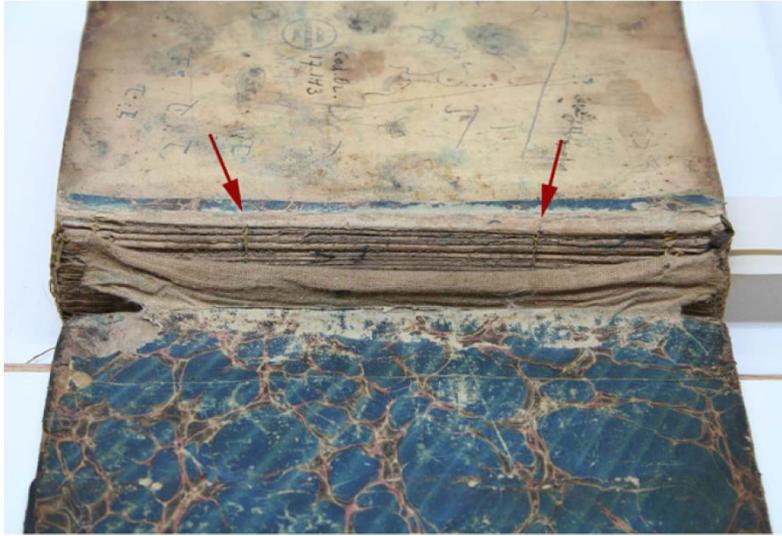


FIGURE 27 Or. 17.143. A link-stitch on two stations seen on the spine, visible because the cloth spine-lining has become detached.

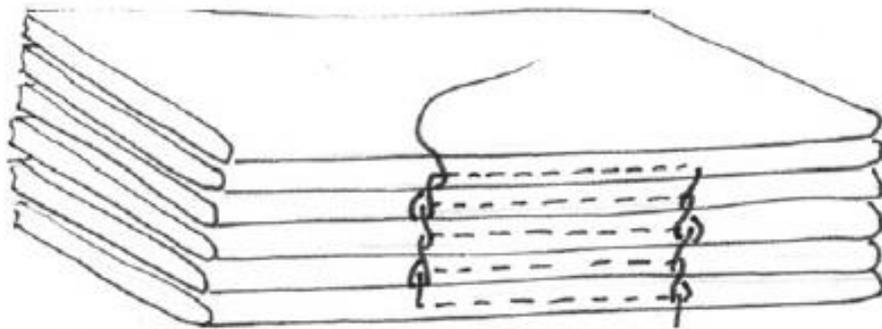


FIGURE 25 A link-stitch on two stations. The thread exits one gathering in order to pass to the next, it is then taken behind the point of exit in the previous gathering, thus forming a chain of linkages.

The most common Islamic binding is the **link-stitch sewing** on two stations.

Usually the sewing structure is unsupported and its aim is to create a compact, flat, and straight text block.

Variation: distance between the stations, colour and material of the thread.

Only quires with a fold can be sewn in this way.

Source: Scheper, *Islamic Bookbinding*, 2015, p. 62-65.

# SEWING THE QUIRES II

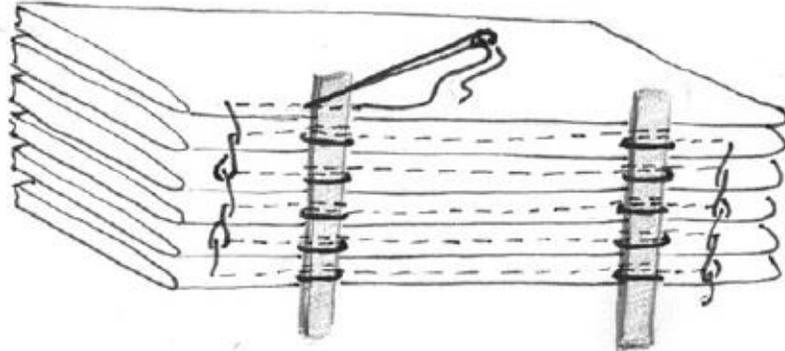


FIGURE 45 Drawing of a supported sewing, with the thread sewn around the supports, using two strips of leather or parchment.

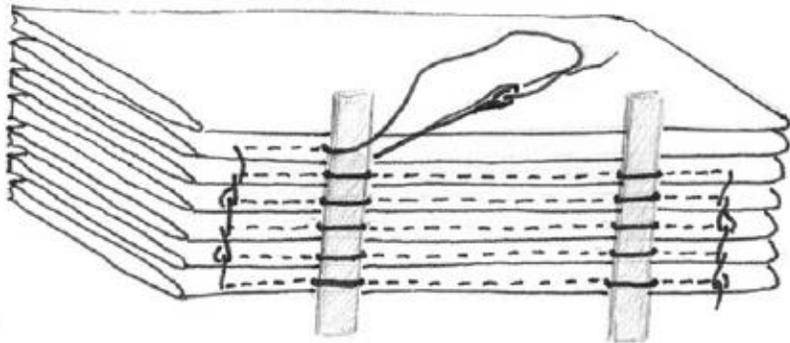


FIGURE 46 Drawing of a supported sewing, with the thread sewn across the supports, using two strips of leather or parchment.

Source: Scheper, *Islamic Bookbinding*, 2015, p. 75-76.



FIGURE 47 Or. 6997 (1851). The textblock was sewn on three tanned leather supports, which have deteriorated rather badly.

## SEWING ON SUPPORTS:

Rather unusual binding, more frequent in South East Asia.

The supports are usually made of leather or parchment.

This sewing technique can be applied to loose folia.

# SEWING THE QUIRES III

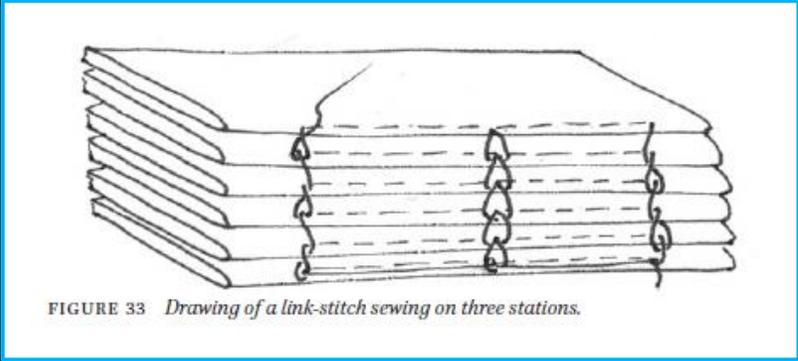


FIGURE 33 Drawing of a link-stitch sewing on three stations.

Link-Stitch binding with three, four, or five stations.

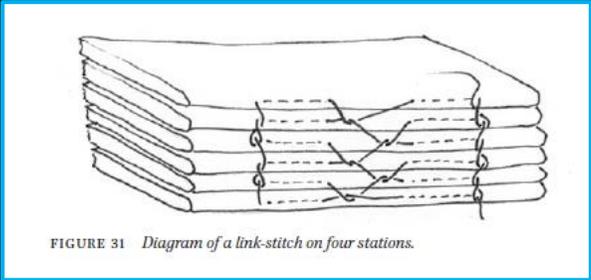


FIGURE 31 Diagram of a link-stitch on four stations.

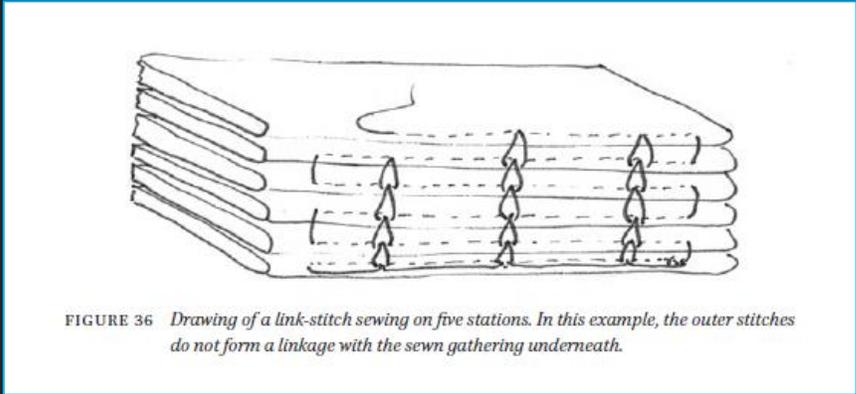


FIGURE 36 Drawing of a link-stitch sewing on five stations. In this example, the outer stitches do not form a linkage with the sewn gathering underneath.



FIGURE 42 Or. 25.693 (187). A manuscript with a stabbed sewing, parallel to the spine and using three stabbed holes.

## Stabbed sewing:

The thread goes to transversal hole in the text block.

This sewing technique can be applied to loose folia.

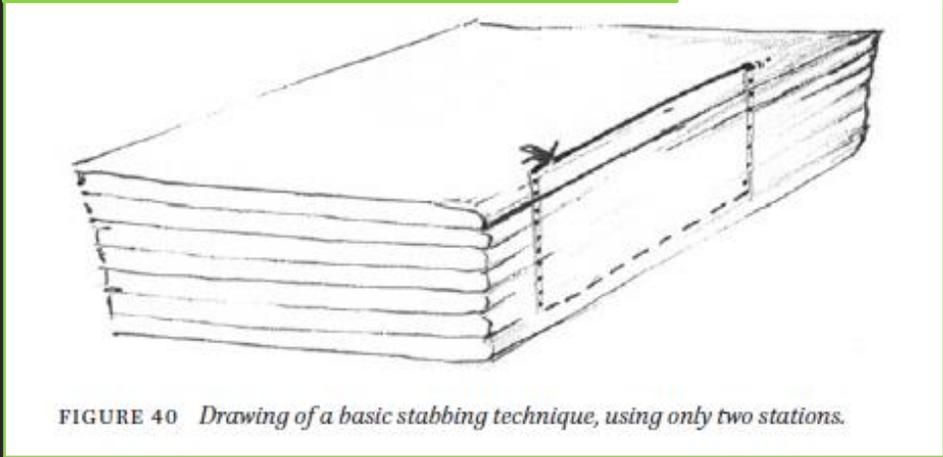


FIGURE 40 Drawing of a basic stabbing technique, using only two stations.

# ENDBAND



FIGURE 50 Sewing of the endband on a mock-up: the tiedowns pass over a leather core, and through each gathering.

'Endbands' are a structural and decorative component at the head and tail of a book spine.

Primary endband: sewing at the head or tail of the text-block, it goes through each quire and helps their coherence.

Secondary endband: coloured threads woven through the primary endband, frequently with a decorative pattern.

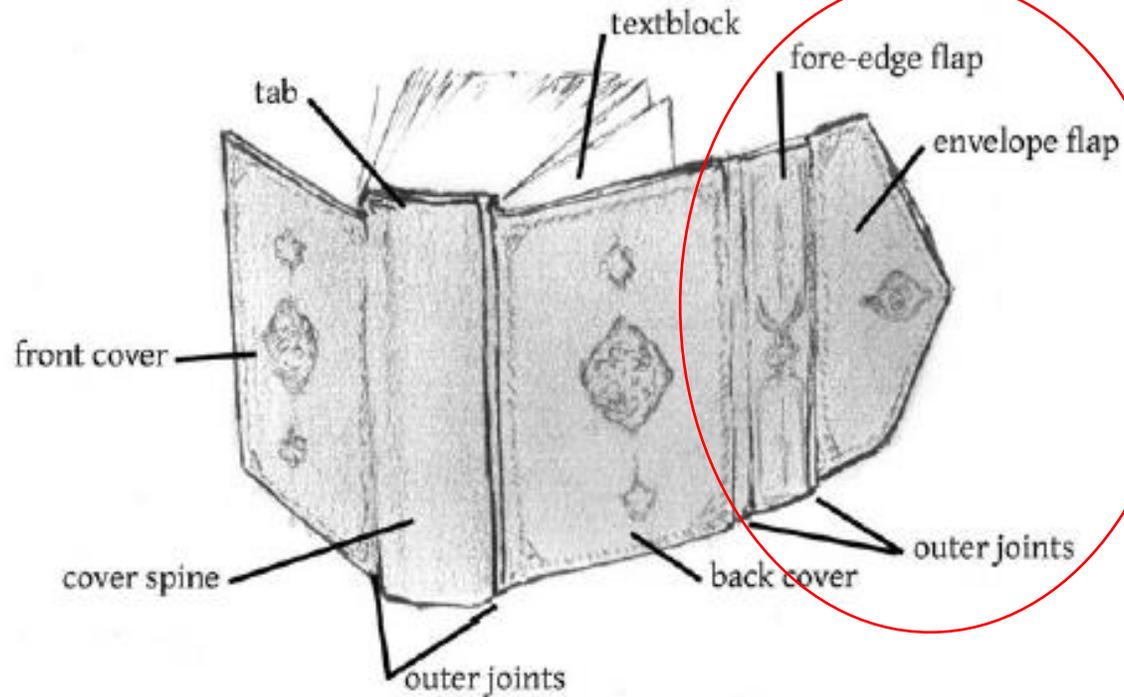
Endband core: a piece of cloth, leather, parchment, fibers etc. placed within a supported endband.



FIGURE 56 *Or. 546* (1224, though resewn). The endband core consists of a tightly rolled up material, possibly parchment.

Source: Scheper, *Islamic Bookbinding*, 2015, p. 78, 82.

# FLAP



Source: Scheper, *Islamic Bookbinding*, 2015, p. 56.

Current short form for both **'fore-edge flap'** and **'envelope flap'**. Typical element of Islamic bindings.

The **'fore-edge flap'** extends from the back cover with a flexible joint and protects the fore-edge of the manuscript (made of a board and its covering materials).

In Arabic: *qanṭarat al-lisān*, *mistar*, *al-marji' al-aṣghr*, *ṭablah*, *rābiṭ*, *muqaddam*, *ṣadr*.

The **'envelope flap'** has often a pentagonal shape, is connected to the fore-edge flap with a flexible joint. In Arabic: *lisān*, *udhn*, *al-marji' al-akbar*, *sāqiṭ*, *sāqiṭah*, *miqlab*, *raddah*, *ra's*.

It is inserted under the front cover or between the leaves.

# DECORATION OF THE BINDING

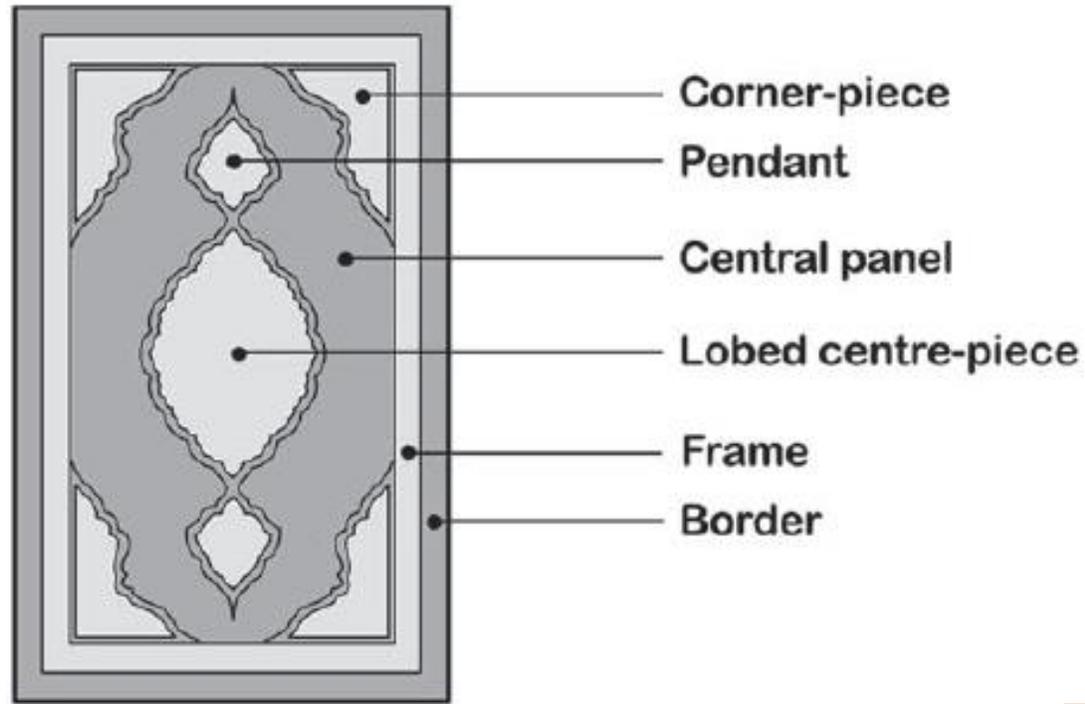


Fig. 24: Various parts of a bookcover design

Source: Gacek, *Vademecum*, 2009, p. 30 and 253.

The study of the designs decorating Islamic book bindings is considered part of art history.

When the cover is made of leather, the decoration results from a blind stamping or golden stamping. Before stamping, cords covered in leather create an embossed decoration on the cover.

Stamping uses full decorated panes, while tooling creates the decorative pattern thanks to the repeated use of small tools.



a



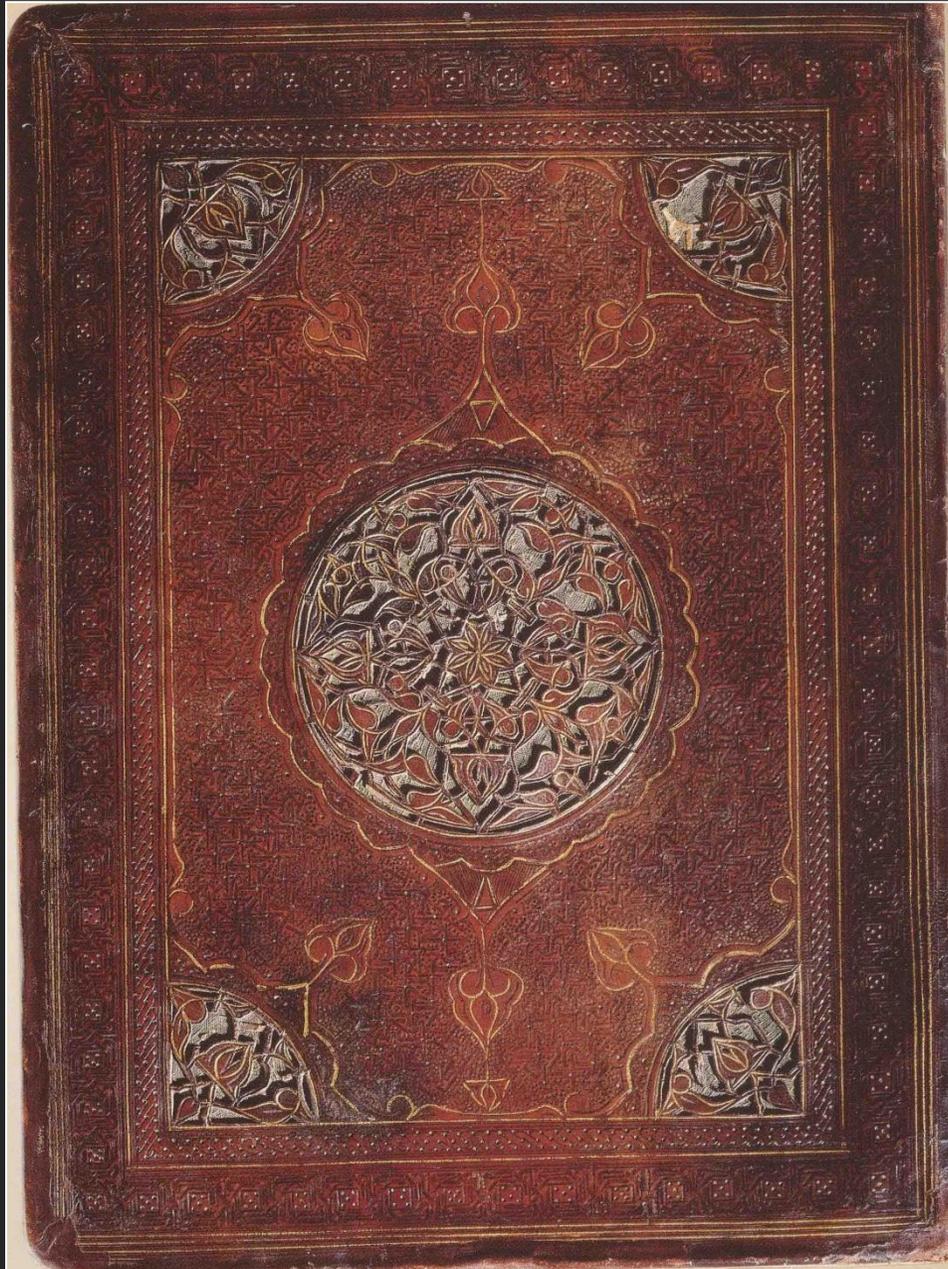
b



Binding of guz' 30 of a set of thirty,  
of a Mamluk Qur'an, Egypt, end of  
14th century. *Waqf* of Sultan Barquq.

Paris, BnF, Arabe 5846.  
Format: 37,4 x 26,2 cm

Source: Gallica.bnf.fr



Binding of guz' 21 of a set of thirty of a Mamluk Qur'an. Egypt, end 14th century.

Filigree work against a background of green silk.

Paris, BnF, Arabe 5845.  
Format: 37.3 x 26.4 cm

Source: Gallica.bnf.fr



The **mandorla** (*lawzah, turanj*):  
an almond-shaped ornament  
frequent in the decoration of book  
covers.

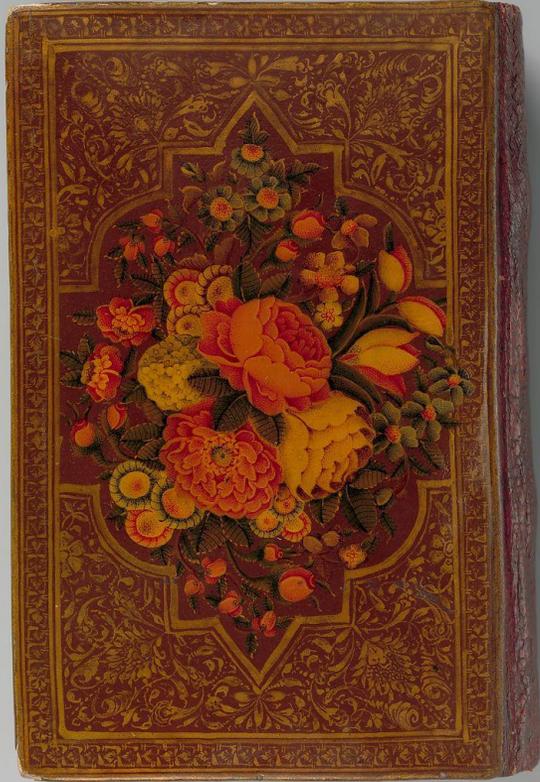
Binding of *al-Farag ba`d al-Shidda*,  
by al-Muhassin b. `Ali al-Tanūkhī (d.  
384/994)

MS dated 890/1485.

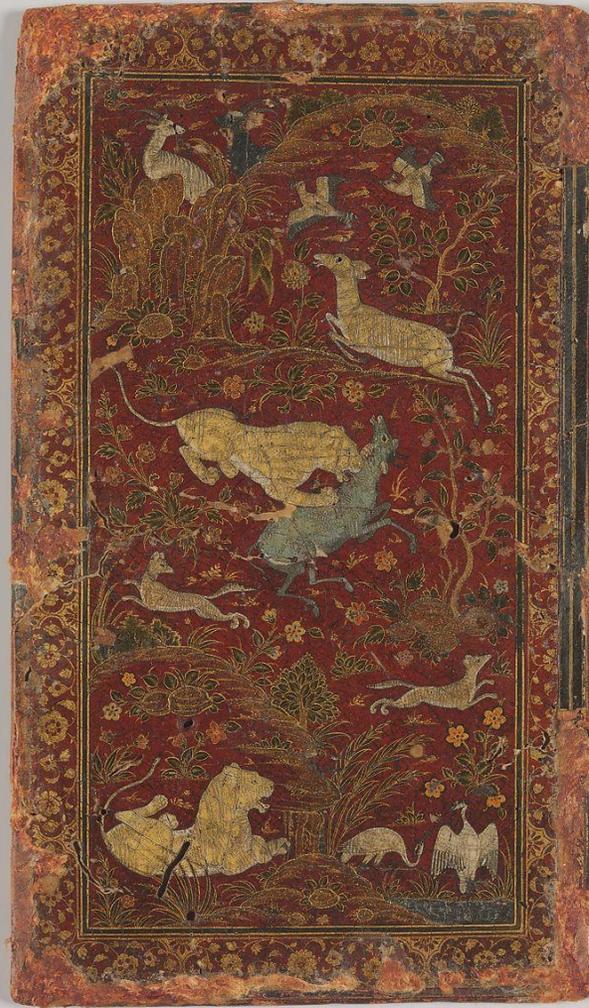
Format: 26.9 x 17.3 cm

Source: MS Leiden, Or. 61

## LACQUERED BINDINGS



Iran, pocket Qur'an used as talisman and dated 1785  
Source: MET Museum

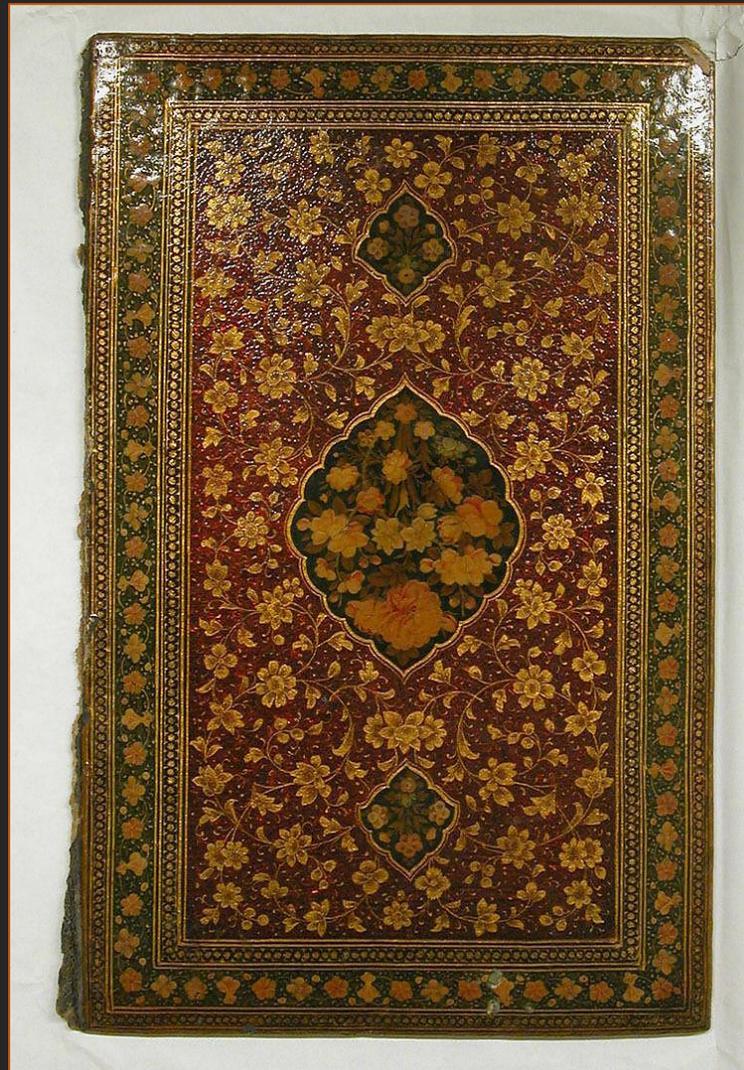


India, Jami' poem about Yusuf and Zuleyka, lacquer on papier maché  
Source: MET Museum

Lacquer varnish is applied on pasteboards and also on papier maché supports, rarely on leather. They are often decorated with pictorial and figurative designs, including humans, animals, and plants (often distinctive still life-like flowers).

The technique was probably in use from the 15th century but was greatly developed by painters in Safavid Iran (1501-1736). It gained more and more popularity and many lacquered binding that have come down to us are from the Qajar period (1789-1925)

Lacquered bindings may imitate traditional patterns, or propose more peculiar representations



Iran, late 18th - early 19th cent.  
Source: MET Museum

Iran, mid-18th cent., Bookcover with Christian themes  
Source: MET Museum





Simple carton boards and stamped paper, *Dalā'il al-khayrāt*, 1763

MS Khalidi Library Jerusalem 339

HMML Proj. Num. AKDI 01136 0339

Source: VHML

## PECULIAR FORMATS - ALBUMS & PORTRAITS



Often in form of codex, but not only, albums are a peculiar kind of Arabo-Islamic manuscripts, made of individual cut-outs (painting, drawing, sketches, calligraphic pieces).

The cut-outs were mounted on paper sheets, assembled and bound.

Deccani portrait album

Free Library of Philadelphia, Special Collections, MS Lewis O 191, 44-45

عبد المحمود (right), مصطفى خان (left, with transliteration by a Western hand)

Source: OPenn

## ALBUMS – ILLUSTRATIONS & CALLIGRAPHY



Persian calligraphy (left) and illustration album (right, alchemist and epic battle), specimens of Persian songs, writing, illustrations and illuminations by different artists, mounted in a scrapbook.

Columbia University, Rare Books & Manuscript Library, MS X892.8

M31

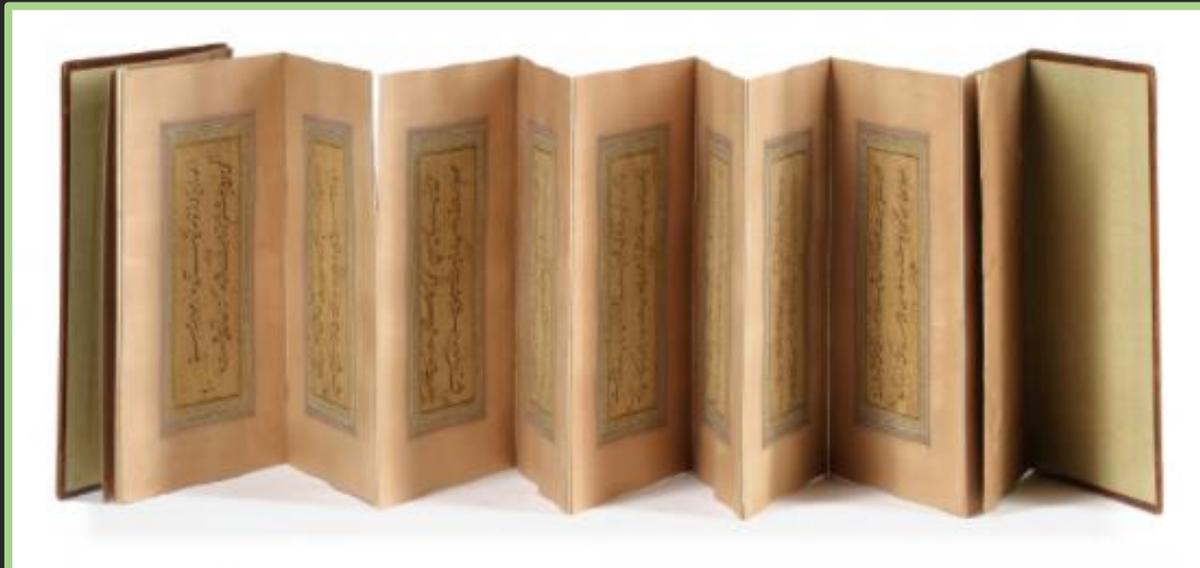
Source: OPenn

## CONCERTINA / LEPORELLO / ACCORDION BOOK



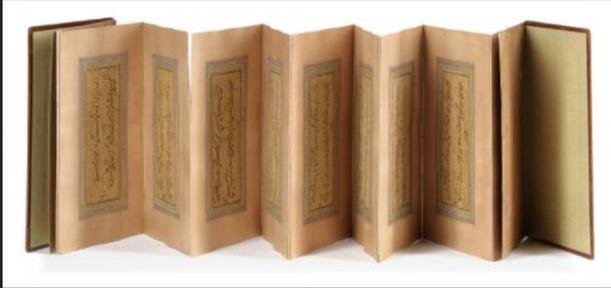
Made of pieces of pasteboard (later carton boards) held together by flexible cloth hinges.

Islamic Leporello books open up vertically, like a roll.



A Persian concertina-style album of nasta'liq calligraphy, dated 1337/1919. Auctioned off at Christie's in August 2020. Source: Oriental Art Auctions

## \*POSTILLA: AN HISTORIAN LOOKING AT AUCTIONS



LOT 275 - A PERSIAN CONCERTINA-STYLE ALBUM OF NASTA'LIQ CALLIGRAPHY, SIGNED 'FAKIR SHAD', IN FARSI, ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPT ON PAPER, QAJAR PERSIA, DATED JUMADA AL-THANI 1337 AH/1919 AD

### CONCERTINA-STYLE ALBUM OF NASTA'LIQ CALLIGRAPHY,"

Concertina-style album of nasta'liq calligraphy, signed Fakir Shad, in Farsi, illuminated manuscript on paper [Qajar Persia, dated Jumada Al-Thani 1337 AH/1919 AD] 12 panels, each single column, 2 lines fine black nasta'liq per card, each panel individually signed by the artist in the space around the text, calligraphy on gold speckled paper, mounted on cards with numerous decorative borders surrounding the text panels, in green, blue and gold, very slight surface soiling, overall clean and presentable condition. text panels 7 by 16.5 cm.; folio 17 by 26 cm.; modern calf, ruled in gilt.

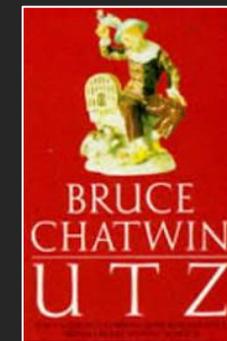


Auctions are one of the sources for the images of this course.

Auction catalogues are incredibly rich sources for our study, the description of the lot is often rather informative and accurate.

A window open on material culture, an invaluable occasion to acquire experience.

Save the images and note the source when you see an interesting item.



## SAFĪNA ('THE SHIP')



*Safina* from the Leiden University Library, Anonymous anthology of poetry from Turkey, MS Leiden Or. 1097

Source: <https://www.islamicmanuscriptconservation.org>

The *safina* is an oblong shaped codex, in which the text is usually written in parallel to the spine. This format is often associated with poetical compositions.



*Safina* notebook on calligraphy, dated 1170/1756

Source: MET Museum



## SAFĪNA IN CONTEXT

Anthology of Persian Poetry in oblong Format (*safīna*)  
dated A.H. 905/A.D. 1499–1500. Source: MET Museum

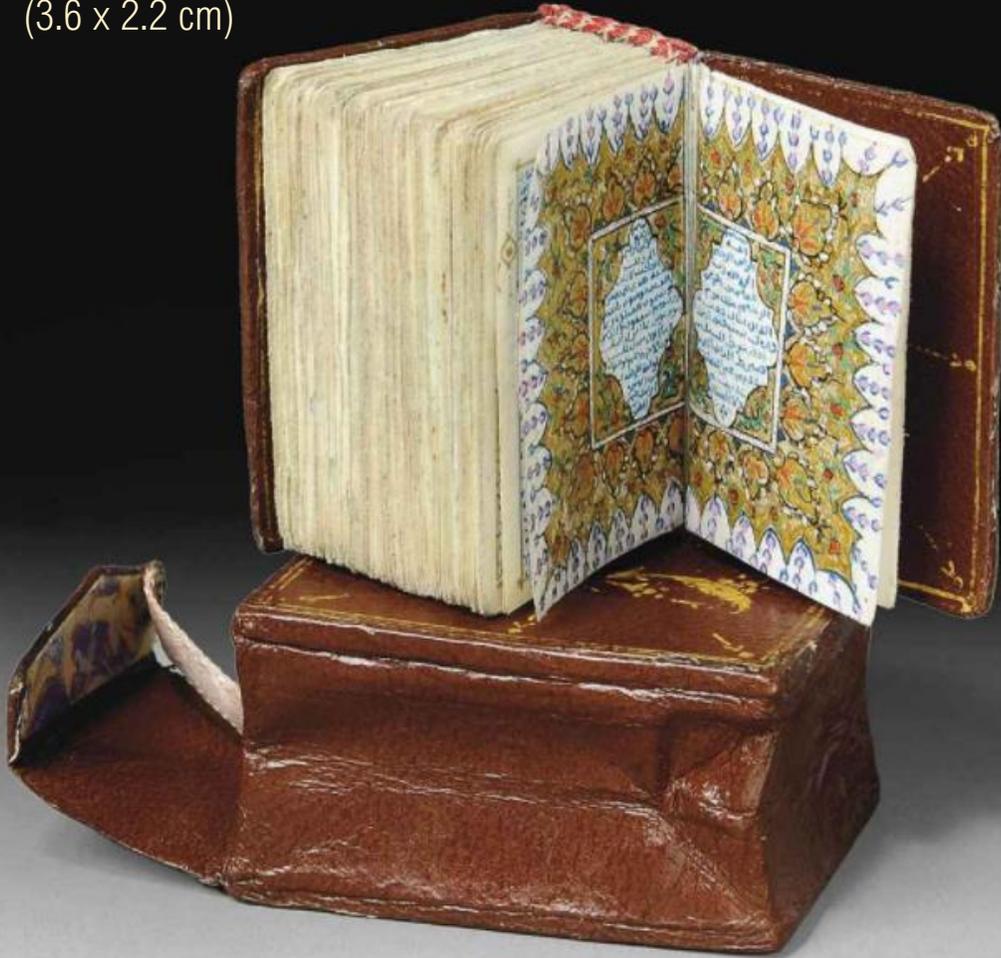


Reciting poetry in a garden, ceramic-tiles panel (Iran, 17th cent.), the kneeling figure garbed in yellow holds a *safīna*. Source: MET Museum



## MINIATURE QUR'AN

(3.6 x 2.2 cm)



Ottoman miniature Qur'ans (3.6 x 2.2 cm) and its leather pouch (Turkey, 1275/1858-59).

Source: Christie's (<https://www.christies.com/en/lot/lot-5422312>)



Stock of contemporary miniature Qur'ans and their boxes sold in Abebooks. Source: Abebooks

## OCTAGONAL QUR'AN

Miniature octagonal Qur'ans are called *rumḥī* in Arabic (*rumḥ*, 'spear'), and *sancak* in Turkish (after the *sancakdār*, 'standard-bearers' who attached them to military flags as talismans). These small Qur'ans were also worn as personal good-luck charms and were frequently encased in silver boxes.



Miniature octagonal Qur'an and its silver box (17th cent.). Source: The Morgan Library & Museum



Miniature single-volume Qur'an (Turkey, 15th cent.). Source: The Khalili Collections, QUR 371.

## EXTRA-LARGE QUR'AN

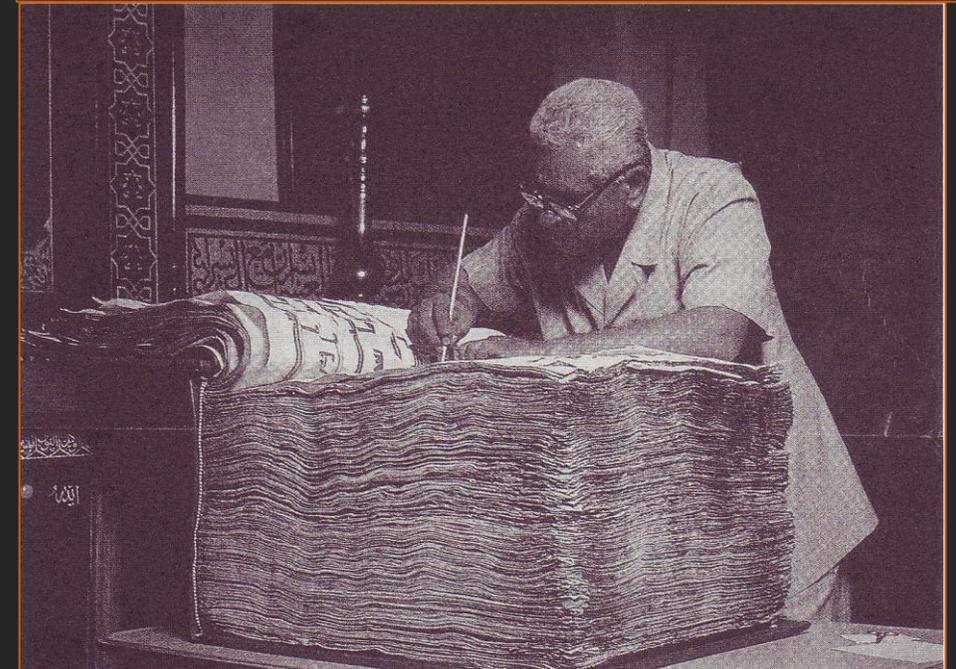


Qur'an of Qanṣūh al-Ghūrī (r. 1501-1516), the last Mamluk Sultan, now in the collection of the John Rylands Library in Manchester.

Source: Getty Images

Restoring a parchment codex. The Qur'an in the Husayn mosque in Cairo.

Source: F. Déroche, *Le livre manuscrit arabe*, 2004, plate 4.



## THE AMBITION FOR THE LARGEST QUR'AN



Palembang, capital of South Sumatra Province in Indonesia. 30 ajza' of the Qur'an carved on wooden panels by Shofwatillah Mohzaib

# REFERENCES I

- BOSCH, G., CARSWELL, J., PETHERBRIDGE, G., 1981. *Islamic bindings and bookmaking* (Chicago: The oriental Institute, 1981)
- DÉROCHE, F. 2006. *Islamic Codicology: an Introduction to the Study of Manuscripts in Arabic Script* (London: Al-Furqān Islamic Heritage Foundation, 2006)
- GACEK, A. 2009. *Arabic Manuscripts. A Vademecum for Readers* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2009)
- KEPPEL, E. 2019. 'Nineteenth-century Islamic Manuscripts and Printed Books: Revisiting a survey of the Michael Abbott Collection, State Library Victoria', *AICCM Bulletin* 40/1 (2019) p. 3–15. [Synthetic glossary]
- NÜNLIST, T. 2020. *Schutz und Andacht im Islam: Dokumente in Rollenform aus dem 14.–19. Jh.* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2020)
- PARODI, E. L. (ed.) 2014. *The Visual World of Muslim India: The Art, Culture and Society of the Deccan in the Early Modern Era* (London/New York: Tauris, 2014)
- SCHEPER, K. 2015. *The Technique of Islamic Bookbinding. Methods, Materials and Regional Varieties* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2015)
- WITKAM, J. J. 1982. *Catalogue of the Arabic manuscripts in the Library of the University of Leiden [...]. An Introduction to the Catalogue* (Leiden: 1982)
- YOUTIE, L. C. 1986-1987. 'The Michigan Medical Codex: P. Mich. Inv. 21', *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 65 (1986) p. 123–149; 66 (1986) p. 149–156; 70 (1987) p. 73–103

## REFERENCES II

E13

Déroche, F. “Codicology”

Paul Hepworth and Karin Scheper (Islamic manuscript conservation) —  
<https://www.islamicmanuscriptconservation.org/index.html>

