The battle of the images
Mekka vs. Medina in the iconography of the manuscripts of al-Jazūlī’s
Dalā’il al-Khayrāt

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Introduction

The prayer-book Dalā’il al-Khayrāt by the Moroccan mystical activist Abū ‘Abdallāh Muhammad b. Sulaymān al-Jazūlī (d. 870/1465)1 is one of the most successful books in Sunni Islam, after the Qur’ān itself. It is known from the Islamic West, where it was written more than five hundred years ago, till far in South-East Asia, and everywhere in-between. There must be many thousands of manuscripts of it all over the world, and many hundreds of printed versions. The numerous editions which are currently available in the entire Islamic world2 prove that the book has lost nothing of its appeal. Most manuscripts and all printed editions of the Dalā’il al-Khayrāt are provided with two illustrations, showing either elements of the Prophet’s Mosque in Medina, or views of the Great Mosque of Mekka and the Prophet’s Mosque in Medina. Why these illustrations came to be inserted into al-Jazūlī’s prayer-book in the first place, and how they changed from one representation into another is the subject of the present paper.

The author

Abū ‘Abdallāh Muhammad b. Sulaymān al-Jazūlī al-Simlālī, the Moroccan mystical activist who was killed in 870 (1465), originated from al-Sūs al-Aqs ā, in the Southwest of present-day Morocco.3 Of his life little is known, except for elements which all have evident hagiographical features, and which are not easy to disentangle. He is said to have stayed for a number of years in Mekka and Medina; periods of seven years and forty years are both given for this stay. Upon his return to Morocco he went to Fes, where he studied in the Qarawiyyīn Library. On the basis of his study there, he wrote the prayer-book that would make him famous. At a certain stage he became a member of the Shādhiliyya order.4 He is said to have withdrawn from society for a period of fourteen years. Then he established himself in Șâfī, on the Atlantic coast, where the

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2 During a walk of a few hours in the afternoon preceding the Istanbul conference I found ten different editions in Istanbul’s bookmarket (Sahaflar Çarşı) and the book shops around the Fatih mosque.
3 His first nisba refers to Jazūla, a Berber tribe. Muḥammad al-Mahdī al-Šādhī gives his full genealogy, which goes back to the inām ‘Ali b. Abī Tālib. His nisba al-Simlālī refers to the sub-tribe Simlāla. His patronym Sulaymān refers to his great-grandfather (Mumti’, p. 1).
4 So called after its founder Abī al-Ḥasan al-Šādhīli (d. 656/1258), GAL G I, p. 449.
number of his followers grew quickly. When people started to recognize in him the long-awaited Mahdi, the governor of Sāfī had him expelled, or killed.

During his lifetime, al-Jazūlī succeeded in organizing a network of zāwiya in a period of the history of Morocco which was generally characterized as total anarchy. In addition, the Maghrib was under threat of Portuguese incursions, nor was the news about the constant Christian progress against the Muslims in al-Andalus very reassuring to the Maghribīs. Where the worldly rulers in the region failed to adequately counter these internal and external threats, the religious brotherhoods only became stronger and more united and organized themselves into groups of religion-inspired fighters. All over the country, from Tlemcen in the East to the valley of the Draa in the South-West, affiliations of al-Jazūlī’s brotherhood were established, not for quietist religious contemplation but for active resistance against the unbelievers.5 Al-Jazūlī became, especially in later Moroccan historiography, the champion of an Islamic revival against internal political and moral decay and against external threats. The year of his death is not entirely certain. Several dates between 1465 and 1470 are given.

Strangely enough, al-Jazūlī’s vicissitudes did not end with his death. His follower ‘Umar b. Sulaymān al-Shayzamī, not without reason known as al-Sayyāf (‘the executioner’), who had claimed prophethood, took possession of al-Jazūlī’s body, and let himself be accompanied by it during his twenty years of pillaging and burning in the Sūs area. Nightly devotional sessions with al-Jazūlī’s corpse lying in state on a bier are recorded in the sources. After al-Sayyāf’s violent death in 890 (1485/1486), al-Jazūlī was buried in Afughāl, in the Haha area, south of Essaouira. Later his body was moved again, now by order of Sultān Abū al-'Abbās al-'Arūj (reigned over different areas 923-955/1517-1548), who had his father’s body, which had been buried next to al-Jazūlī’s, together with the saint’s body, transported to Marrakech to be re-buried together in a place called Riyād al-'Arūj.6 Another hagiographical detail is that the saint’s body had not decomposed when it was dug up for reburial. Both al-Jazūlī’s life and afterlife are wrought with so many miraculous elements that not each and every detail in the sources should be accepted as a historical fact.

Apart from his prayer-book Dalā‘il al-Khayrāt, al-Jazūlī is the author of two other prayers. One is entitled Hizb al-Falah, a short text which is sometimes copied in the same collective volume in which also the Dalā‘il al-Khayrāt occurs, but it has not attained the same cult status as the Dalā‘il al-Khayrāt. The other prayer is entitled Hizb al-Jazūlī, or rhyming on that title Hizb subh ānā al-Dā‘im la yazūl, and is written in the vernacular, supposedly the Berber language of the Sūs.7 Two more treatises by al-Jazūlī are known, one a work on Qirāṭ, Qur’ānic readings, the other an untitled treatise of Sufi content. As Brockelmann only mentions one manuscript witness for each text, these two cannot have become very popular, if they are authentic at all and not a bibliographical hoax. Other, shorter, texts which are ascribed to al-Jazūlī are known as well.8 All of his other works are overshadowed by the immense popularity of the Dalā‘il al-Khayrāt.

The book

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5 See the resumé in A. Cour, L’établissement, pp. 29-35.
7 As M. Ben Cheneb in his EI articles calls it. With the term ‘vernacular’ only Berber can be meant here.
8 E.g. an Urjūza Mukhtarā, in MS Leiden Or. 25.619 (24). Such references need a careful analysis and will eventually contribute to an increased knowledge of al-Jazūlī’s literary output.
The full title of the al-Jazūlī’s prayer-book is Dalā’il al-Khayrāt wa-Shawāriq al-Anwār fī Dhikr al-Salāt ‘alā al-Nabī al-Mukhtar which literally means ‘Guidelines to the blessings and the shinings of lights, giving the saying of the blessing prayer over the chosen Prophet.’ In daily use the work is referred to by the first two words of its title, Dalā’il al-Khayrāt, or just Dalā’il or Dalīl. The work reads as a long litany of blessings over the Prophet Muhammad. It is organised as a manual for Muhammad devotion. Although there are clear differences between the manuscripts among themselves and also between the printed editions of the Dalā’il al-Khayrāt, especially as far the introductory and concluding prayers are concerned, and certainly in the choice of accompanying texts, most versions contain at least the following elements: the introductory prayer; the section on the virtue of invoking blessings over the Prophet; the list of the Prophet’s names and epithets; and the description of the Prophet’s grave in Medina. These short sections are followed by the body of the text, consisting of the blessing prayers over the Prophet, which are nowadays divided into eight Ahzāb, ritual sections, which are linked to eight successive days (Monday-Monday), and a concluding prayer. An apparently older division of the text in quarters, thirds and a half can be seen in many of the manuscripts. Other elements that one may find in the work were apparently freely added to the text. The order of the different elements is subject to variations between the editions from different countries. The subject-matter vouches for a luxurious execution of the manuscripts (and printed editions). In this, the skills of Qur’ānic calligraphers, especially in the Maghrib and in Istanbul, came to full fruition. In course of time several commentaries were written on the text, the best known of which are the Arabic one by al-Fāsi (a factual commentary), and the Turkish one by Qarā Dāwūd (a devotional commentary). There exists a privately printed English translation by John B. Pearson of the text as well.

Some manuscripts of the Dalā’il al-Khayrāt are provided with detailed instructions for the reader telling him how the handle the book. Ritual purity before reading is one of them, the way of holding the book in one’s hands is another. Such rules give the impression that a copy of the Dalā’il al-Khayrāt was nearly as holy as a mushaf. In Morocco till the present day it is said that having a beautiful copy of the Dalā’il al-Khayrāt at home, preferably an attractive manuscript, brings luck. And, as we shall see, the book may at a certain stage indeed have been considered a rival to the Qur’ān.

The Dalā’il al-Khayrāt in the struggle against the unbelievers

One important aspect of the Prophet Muhammad’s life must have particularly appealed to al-Jazūlī, namely his struggle against the unbelievers. In his own lifetime al-Jazūlī combined the ceremonial and liturgical use of his prayer-book with active resistance against the Portuguese attacks. Other Muslims resisting the unbelievers may have used the Dalā’il al-Khayrāt during their own struggles as well. In the corpus of manuscripts of the Dalā’il al-Khayrāt, which follows here as an appendix, there are several copies from Aceh, which were taken as war booty during the Dutch conquest of that Sultanate in North Sumatra (1873-1910). Another prominent copy in the corpus is the personal prayer-book of Imam Bonjol, the leader of the Padris, an Islamic militant movement.

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10 Kara Davud, Delā‘il-i hayrat Şerhi, Istanbul 1976. There are several printed editions of this work.
11 MS Leiden Or. 12.016 provides an example of such instructions (in Turkish, on pp. 495-497).
12 Personal information of Dr. Latifa Benjelloun-Laroui, Rabat.
13 MS Leiden Or. 1751.
which till 1837 fought devastating wars in the Padang highlands in West and Central Sumatra against the Muslim Minangkabau, the Christian Dutch and the pagan Batak.

**Developments in the illustrations of the text**

Present-day editions of the *Dalā‘il al-Khayrāt* are either provided with a set of two images showing the Rawd a and the Minbar of the Prophet’s Mosque in Medina (in the Maghrib), or of two views showing Mekka and Medina (Turkey and the Mashriq). This latter fact has prompted some authors and librarians to classify the book as a work connected to the Ḥājr, the pilgrimage. This is a mistake, as is clear from the contents of the work, which does not treat *manāṣik*. I will herewith propose an explanation for the development in the ways of illustrating of the manuscripts, and thereby show how this development has come about from changing ideas about the Muhammad devotion in Islam.

**Unillustrated manuscripts**

There are indications that originally manuscripts of the *Dalā‘il al-Khayrāt* were not illustrated. This tradition of making unillustrated copies of the work has persisted to the end of the manuscript era. A manuscript may have been executed in a sober way and may have remained unillustrated for no other than that reason, or the illustration(s) may have been removed from the manuscript at some stage of its existence. As a reason for that tear and wear, vandalism or the use of the images as amulets may be surmised. But a manuscript was certainly unillustrated from the very beginning if the passage of text to which the illustration refers is continuous. So which passage in the text prompted copyists or painters to start to illustrate the *Dalā‘il al-Khayrāt*?

**Illustration of the Rawd a only**

There is a section in the early part of the *Dalā‘il al-Khayrāt* in which the grave of the Prophet Muhammad in Medina is shortly treated. It is usually introduced by the sentence: *wa-hādhihi sifat al-Rawd a al-Mubāraka*, ‘this is the description of the Blessed Garden,’ by which the burial place of the Prophet Muhammad in the Mosque of Medina is meant. This short text actually consists of two statements, one is the actual description of the Rawd a and treats the contents and relative position of the graves in the Medinan mosque, the other is a report on a predicting dream of ’Ā‘isha, the Prophet’s wife, about the graves. In translation this passage reads as follows.

This is the description of the Blessed Garden in which the Messenger of God is buried, together with his two companions, Abū Bakr and ‘Umar.

Thus is related by ’Urwa Ibn al-Zubayr: The Messenger of God was buried in the alcove (al-sawah). Abū Bakr was buried behind the Messenger of God and ’Umar Ibn al-Khāṭib was buried near the feet of Abū Bakr. The eastern alcove has remained empty, and in it is said, but God knows best, that ’Īsā b. Maryam is buried there.

About the Messenger of God is told by ’Ā‘isha. She said: ‘In my dream I saw three moons fall into my room. I related my vision to Abū Bakr and he said: ‘Ā‘isha, three people will be buried in your house, who are the best of the people on earth. When the Messenger of God died and was buried in my house, Abū Bakr said to me: This is one of your moons, and he is the best of them... .

In the unillustrated manuscripts this passage is immediately followed by the next section of the prayer-book. If that is the case in a manuscript, that manuscript belongs to the unillustrated tradition of the *Dalā‘il al-Khayrāt*. The word sifā, description, by
which the passage on al-Rawda al-Mubāraka is introduced, does not automatically mean image or picture. It means ‘description,’ a description in words which in fact it is. If it would have been meant as the caption to an image, either the word sūra, image, or shakl, drawing, would have been used. The very use of the word sifā is an additional argument that the early manuscripts were not illustrated.

This short passage on the grave of the Prophet Muhammad and the first caliphs in Medina apparently has prompted copyists and illustrators to add an image of that cluster of graves to the text of the Dalā’il al-Khayrāt. Manuscripts with just one image of al-Rawda al-Mubāraka, showing the graves of the Prophet Muhammad and his two companions, are known. The illustrations do not give more than a schematical representation of the three coffins, usually with the addition of some architectural elements.

The double image of the Rawda and the Minbar

At a later stage, this one image of al-Rawda al-Mubāraka was apparently expanded with yet another image, showing the Minbar, the pulpit, of the Prophet Muhammad in the Mosque of Medina. Adding this image, whereby an attractive double-page illustration was created, to the illustration of the three coffins, may have been prompted by a well-known Prophetic tradition: “Whatever is between my grave and my pulpit, is one of the gardens of Paradise, and my pulpit is by my basin.” It is an ‘authentic’ tradition and is reported in the Musnad of Ah mad b. H anbal, and, with textual variants, other canonical collections.14 That this was an important text for those who performed the Ziyāra, the visit to the Prophet Muhammad’s grave in Medina, before or after the pilgrimage to Mekka, is clear from a source contemporary to al-Jazūli. The pilgrim’s guide made for the Mamlūk Sultan Ān Ān Chāmqāq (reigned 842-857/1438-1452) gives the following instruction to the royal visitor of the Prophet’s Mosque in Medina:

Then the visitor (of the Prophet’s mosque in Medina) directs himself to the pulpit of the Messenger of God, and he performs two rak’as near the pulpit, in such a way that he faces the column next to which is the chest (al-sandūq), and so that the round line which is in the qibla of the mosque is straight in front of him, and in such a way that the pillar of the pulpit is opposite his right shoulder, since that is the position of the Prophet. He is then between the grave and the pulpit, in conformity with the words of the Prophet: “Whatever is between my grave and my pulpit, is one of the gardens of Paradise, and my pulpit is by my basin.”15

The at first sight somewhat puzzling addition “and my pulpit is by my basin” refers to an eschatological concept, the Prophet’s basin being the meeting place on the Day of Resurrection, or it may refer to the basin in Paradise.16

The reader of al-Jazūli’s Dalā’il al-Khayrāt looking with a stereoscopic view at the illustrated double page showing the Rawd a at right and the Minbar at left, would find himself exactly in the place which in the Prophetic tradition is referred to as “one of the gardens of Paradise.” A prayer-book which can place its readers on such a blessed spot is, of course, a treasure of the highest value.

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14 A.J. Wensinck (and others), Concordance, vol. VI, p. 345 (s.v. minbar). Musnad II, p. 534, gives hujratī, my room, instead of qabrī, my grave. The graves are in the former room, so the meaning is the same.


16 G.H.A. Juynboll, “Shu’ba,” pp. 213-218, and the sources quoted there. The use of the term tur’ā, water channel, in some of the traditions instead of rawḍa, garden, conforms to this idea of a basin in Paradise.
The images of the Rawdā and the Minbar are usually of schematical nature, a niche with a lamp hanging down being the framework around the representation of the graves and the minbar, sometimes together with the miḥrāb. Numerous manuscripts with these two drawings are known, both from the Maghrib and the Middle East. In the Maghribī tradition of the Dalā‘īl al-Khayrāt manuscripts this has remained the usual illustration, but in the East, in the Mashriq, Turkey and beyond, there were further developments in the way the manuscripts of the Dalā‘īl al-Khayrāt were illustrated.

The double image of Mekka and Medina

From the late-18th century or early-19th century onwards a change in the illustrations can be observed. The idea of the double image remains, but the first image now represents Mekka, the second one Medina. This is a remarkable change, as the image of Mekka is unwarranted by the text of the Dalā‘īl al-Khayrāt. The reason to include it nevertheless must therefore be sought outside the text. It is as if the unreserved veneration of the Prophet Muhammad had met with criticism and that this had to be mitigated by substituting one of the Medinan images by an image of Mekka. It looks like it that an image of the ‘House of God’ in Mekka could not be omitted if the Mosque of the Prophet in Medina received so much attention. It may reflect a reaction to the trend of Prophet veneration by putting it back into its proper balance: God first, then the Prophet Muhammad, just as in the shahāda formula.

This dogmatical reaction had iconographical consequences. The schematical, somewhat architectural drawings of the Rawdā and the Minbar had always been given in a sort of close-up, each showing one niche with visible, almost tangible, representations. Coinciding with the appearance of the Mekka-Medina double image, there is an increase in the distance between the the believer and the objects of his respect and veneration. The Mekka-Medina pair of images is not showing niches anymore, but entire buildings, either in a flat projection or, from the early-19th century onwards, drawn in perspective. In the Medinan mosque the graves have become part of an environment. Both flat projections and drawings with views in perspective are known in great numbers. The views in perspective seem to be an Ottoman Turkish innovation in illustrating the Dalā‘īl al-Khayrāt. The flat projection may have found its example in illustrated pilgrimage guides such as the Persian Futūh al-Haramayn by Muḥyī al-Dīn Lārī (d. 933/1526-1527), or it may have been inspired by images of the two holy cities of Islam on Iznik tiles. It is tempting to connect these later developments in illustrating the Dalā‘īl al-Khayrāt, namely the balancing of the two illustrations by making the House of God precede the Garden of the Prophet, and by adding a distance between the believer and the holy places, to new trends which became apparent in Islam from the late 18th century

These images in perspective have proliferated to other art forms. I have in my possession a Turkish porcelain dish painted by Serpil Öztürk in 2000, showing images of Mekka and Medina in perspective and evidently taken from an early-19th century Ottoman manuscript of the Dalā‘īl al-Khayrāt.

See MS Leiden Or. 11.079, fols. 41 ff., a fragmentary text with 14 illustrations in flat projection showing buildings and scenes in and around Mekka and Medina, and the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem. MS Leiden Or. 14.620, fols. 45 ff., is another manuscript of this text, with 15 similar illustrations. The text was composed in 911 (1515/1516 AD). The images in the exhibition catalogue The Unity of Islamic Art on pp. 68-69, No. 52, and also on the covers, come, of course, from the same work.

See for an example of this popular image Marilyn Jenkins (ed.), Islamic Art, p. 122 (showing Mekka). On the wall of the south passage from the main apse of the Aya Sofia mosque in Istanbul, almost right behind the minbar, a double image in flat projection of Mekka and Medina in Iznik tile, dated 1053 (1643/1644 AD) can be seen. Its position indicates the qibla in this Christian building. A succinct reference to the location of these tiles is in Swift, p. 101.

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onwards. What immediately comes to mind in this respect is the emergence of the Wahhābī movement.20 However, the cult of Muhāammad, for which the Dalā'il al-Khayrāt evidently was made, has its own controversies in Sunni Islam, irrespective of Wahhābī thought on the matter. It is obvious that a Muslim should serve God unreservedly, but at the same time he should pay the greatest respect to the recipient of the divine revelation, the Prophet Muhammad. An outstanding example for human behaviour is the Life of the Prophet Muhammad, which is the most useful of exemplary biographies for the believer.21 In course of time, however, this respect has developed into a cult of infallibility and holiness of the Prophet Muhammad, which risked to turn away the believer’s undivided attention from his Creator.22

A competitor of the Qur‘ān?

On the codicological level one may maintain that a work such as the Dalā'il al-Khayrāt is indeed a competitor to the Qur‘ān. Not in the real sense of the word, of course, but it cannot be denied that it was often executed in a very Qur‘ānic way, with golden frames, illuminated opening pages, golden discs between the prayer lines, provided with beautiful bindings, and kept in ornamented boxes or satchels, etc. It was much more handy, accessible, and cheaper too (because of its much smaller size), than the Qur‘ān, whereas the reward for reciting and reading its text could not be very different. The reading of the Blessings during a period of eight days was not as heavy a task as reciting the thirty Qur‘ānic ajzā‘ during one month. The text of the Dalā'il al-Khayrāt came to be divided into ceremonial parts for recitations during a specified period of time, not unlike the division in ajzā‘ and ah zāb of the Qur‘ān. It must have become, at a certain stage, a sort of easy alternative to the Qur‘ān. The number of small-size, therefore portable, manuscripts in the corpus is considerable.23

Mekka vs. Medina

The Wahhābīs in the implementation of their purist doctrines mostly turned to concrete issues. One of the best known of their actions after they had gained political power is the prohibition of the visiting of graves. That had become a widespread cult in the entire Islamic world, and it still is part of popular religion in many countries. The Wahhābīs have not dared to go as far as to destroy the Prophet’s grave in Medina, but after their conquest of the city, first in 1806 and later in 1926, the cemetery of Baq‘ār al-Gharqad, full of famous names from the early history of Islam, and a long-standing place of worship, was first demolished and then utterly destroyed. Even if the Saudi government has recently accommodated the visitors to the Prophet’s Mosque in Medina by an entirely renovated and enlarged building, with advanced airconditioning systems, with spacious underground car parks, with extensive sanitary facilities, etc.,

20 See D.S. Margoliouth, art. “Wahhābiyya,” in the Encyclopaedia of Islam, first edition. The founder of the movement, Muhāammad b. ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, lived from 1703-1787. The word Wahhābiyya is a term used by the movement’s adversaries. The politically correct term used by their adversaries nowadays is Salaifikasiya, not to be confused with the Egyptian reformist movement of that same name.
21 The mid-14th century Egyptian encyclopedist Ibn al-Akfnā, Irshād al-Qāsid (Leiden 1989, p. 401), mentions the Si‘ra in the chapter on Tadbīr al-Manzil, the management of the household, with rules for social behaviour.
22 This gradual development of the personal cult of the Prophet Muhammad is aptly described by Tor Andrae.
23 That there is nothing of blasphemy in this so-called competition to the Qur‘ān. In some Indian lithograph editions of Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī’s Mathnavī-yi Ma‘navī this work is rhyymingly referred to as Qur‘ān dar Zuhbān-i Pahlavī, the Qur‘ān in the Persian language.
the Mut awwa‘ūn, the religious police, will prevent those visitors that linger too long in front of the Prophet’s grave from doing so by their command “Imshī yā kāfīr,” ‘walk along, you unbeliever,’ and by making threatening gestures with their sticks.

The double picture of the Rawdā and the Minbar in the earlier copies of the Dalā‘il al-Khayrāt had clearly a connotation with the grave of the Prophet and the worship of that grave, and the graves of the early caliphs and grave worship in general. An unequivocal connection between the replacement of the Medinan images by the Mekka-Medina double image and the rise of the Wahhābī movement is not easy to establish. It is more sensible to assume, however, that the same purist thinking that inspired Muhammad ‘Abd al-Wahhāb to his teachings also caused the iconographical changes in that immensely popular prayer-book that was the Dalā‘il al-Khayrāt.

A corpus of manuscripts of the Dalā‘il al-Khayrāt

On this corpus of manuscripts, which comprises all Dalā‘il al-Khayrāt manuscripts in Leiden University Library, I have based my present research. Together, they form but a very small part of all manuscripts of this text in the world. Yet, I have the impression that the Leiden manuscripts form, by their number and especially by the variety of their origin, a useful sample. A few very small and insignificant fragments have been omitted from the present corpus. The first eleven manuscripts of the list were already in Leiden in 1957 and are described in Voorhoeve, Handlist, p. 56. I have purposely left out a discussion on the illustrations in the printed editions of the Dalā‘il al-Khayrāt. Interesting as it is, it would only confound the present issue.

A. The list

Acad. 32 (1).24 From the Maghrib, 332 pp., maghribī script, before 1780 (first sold in the Netherlands), on ff. 22b-23a a double illustration: Rawdā and Minbar. A collective volume with 4 devotional texts.

Acad. 33. From the Maghrib, 323 pp., maghribī script, dated Monday 10 Jumādā II 1133 (1721 AD), on p. 45 illustration of the Rawdā, but the opposite page (probably for the Minbar) has remained blank.

Or. 1220. From the Maghrib, maghribī script, 132 ff., before 1844 AD (latest possible date of purchase), on ff. 25b-26a illustrations of the Rawdā and the Minbar.

Or. 1335 (1). From the Maghrib, maghribī script, ff. 1b-103a, dated 10 Rabi‘ II 1226 (1811 AD), on ff. 16v-17r illustrations of the Rawdā and the Minbar. The first text of a collective volume of 11 devotional texts. A luxury manuscript, kept in a silk satchel.


Or. 4826. From Indonesia, naskh script, 91 ff., before 1877 (when captured in Aceh, Sumatra), without the illustrations (continuous text of the Sifat al-Rawdā on ff. 13b-14a).

24 Manuscripts with class-marks beginning with the prefix “Acad.” are part of the permanent loan of the Royal Academy of Arts and Sciences in Amsterdam. The Leiden class-marks always begin with the prefix “Or.”
Or. 4976 (4). From Indonesia, naskh script, ff. 134b-3a, an unillustrated manuscript, on f. 119b is the continuous text of the Sifat al-Rawd a, without space for illustration. A book from Aceh. In a collective volume with 4 devotional texts.

Or. 5720 (8), (9). From Indonesia, from Banten (West Java), naskh script, ff. 206v-210r: Some eulogies from the Dalāʾil al-Khayrāt; ff. 211v-218r: the introductory chapter of the Dalāʾil al-Khayrāt. At the end (f. 218r) is the Sifat al-Rawd a, with continuous text and without illustration.

Or. 7057a (6). From Indonesia (Banten, West Java), 32 ff., naskh script. A fragment of the beginning only, with an illustration of the Rawd a in Medina (f. 32b). Probably 18th cent. AD. The illustration is not full-page, and may, therefore, have been a single illustration only.

Or. 7209 (3). From Indonesia, naskh script, ff. 9v-144r. 19th cent. AD. The usual two drawings have not been executed, empty frames on ff. 25v-26r. War booty from Aceh, Sumatra, 1896. In a collective volume with 8 devotional texts, also in Acehnese and Malay.

Or. 8960 (8). From Indonesia, naskh script, ff. 117v-153r, not a complete version, without the part where the illustrations usually occur. Possibly from the late 18th-century, from Madura or East Java. Part of a collective volume containing 9 devotional texts, including some in Javanese.

Or. 10.806 (2). From Indonesia (from Sumatra), naskh script, ff. 2b-207a, dated 25 Rabīʿ I 1143 (1730 AD). On ff. 33b-34a illustrations of the Rawd a and the Minbar. In a collective volume with 6 devotional texts.

Or. 11.065. From Turkey (?), 97 ff., naskh script, dated middle Rabīʿ I 1160 (1747 AD), schematic drawing of the Rawd a and the Minbar (ff. 15b-16a).

Or. 11.785 (8). From Turkey, ff. 20b-50a, nastaʿlīq script. The drawing of the Rawd a in Medina is on f. 24b. There is no second drawing. Dated 16 Jumādā ʿIl 1116 (1704 AD). Part of a collective volume with 30 religious texts, including some in Turkish.


Or. 12.121. From Egypt (?), 171 ff., naskh script, Matʿâlī al-Masarrāt bi-Jalāʾ Dalāʾil al-Khayrāt, commentary by Muhammad al-Mahdī b. Ah mad b. ʿAlī b. Yūsuf al-Fāṣī (1063/1653) on the Dalāʾil al-Khayrāt. On f. 67b the explanation of the graves in the Prophet’s mosque, with a few illustrative drawings. The fact that there is no double illustration (Rawd a-Minbar) in this commentary, but only the Rawd a with the three graves, means that that double illustration was not considered authentic by al-Fāṣī, or was not (yet) fashionable in his time.

Or. 12.455. From Turkey, 91 ff., naskh script, dated 1253 (1837 AD), illustrations of Mekka and Medina in perspective on ff. 15b-16a. A luxury manuscript, apparently from Istanbul.

Or. 12.461. From Turkey, naskh script, 128 ff. On f. 19b two rectangular spaces are reserved for illustrations, which were never added. On ff. 124b-127b are illuminated
prayers for the Prophet Muhammad and the four righteous caliphs. A luxury manuscript.

**Or. 14.119 (1)**. From the Maghrib, *maghribi* script, ff. 2b-109b, illustrations on ff. 18b-19a (*Rawd a* and *Minbar*), in a collective volume with 9 devotional texts.


**Or. 14.351 (3)**. From the Maghrib, *maghribi* script, ff. 14b-125b, before 1305 (1888 AD), on ff. 32b-33a illustrations of the *Rawd a* and the interior (but not showing the *Minbar*) of the Medinan Mosque, in a collective volume of 5 devotional texts. A luxury book.

**Or. 14.462**. From Egypt, *naskh* script, 98 ff., dated 4 Safar 1284 (1867 AD), illustrations of *Minbar* and *Rawd a* (reverse order!) made of strips of coloured wall-paper pasted on the page (ff. 16b-17a).

**Or. 17.162**. From Turkey, *naskh* script, 78 ff., dated 1155 (1742 AD), on ff. 13b-14a two open spaces for illustrations which were never added.

**Or. 22.958**. From the Indian subcontinent, 133 ff., text in Arabic (*naskh*) and interlinear translation into Persian (*nasta’īq*). Illustration of the *Rawd a* only, twice executed in different styles.

**Or. 22.963**. From the Indian subcontinent, *naskh* script, 68 ff., illustrations of Mekka and Medina in flat projection on ff. 18b-19a.

**Or. 23.263 (1)**. From the Maghrib, *maghribi* script, ff. 4a-126a, dated Thursday, 4 Jumādā II 1271 (22 Feb. 1855 AD), on ff. 21b-22a illustration of *Rawd a* and *Minbar*. Collective volume with 6 devotional texts.

**Or. 23.723 (1)**. From Morocco, possible the Sūs, ff. 1b-78b, *maghribi* script, dated beginning Muharram 1134 (1721 AD). With a single drawing of the *Rawd a* in Medina only (f. 10b). The page opposite this illustration was originally blank, but has been used later for prayer texts. In a collective volume with 7 devotional texts, including some in Sūs-Berber.

**Or. 25.293 (1)**. From Morocco, ff. 1a-19b, 27b, a disorderly fragment only of the final part of the text, dated Saturday 4 Muharram 1190 (24 Feb. 1776 AD). The section *Sifat al-Rawd a* al-Mubāraka is not present.

**Or. 25.396 (2)**. From Morocco, 82 ff., *maghribi* script, originally with the two illustrations, now removed (between ff. 11-12). In a collective volume of 4 texts, among which one in Sūs-Berber.

**Or. 25.418**. From West-Africa, 174 ff., loose leaves (some lacunae), West-African script, a copy which never had illustrations: the *S ifat al-Rawd a* starts on f. 8a, but there is only continuous text. Remarkable leather satchel.

**Or. 25.426**. From the Maghrib, c. 100 ff., *maghribi* script, damaged and incomplete copy, once a luxury booklet. Illustrations apparently removed.

**Or. 25.428 (1)**. From Morocco (Agadir), ff. 1a-155a, *maghribi* script, incomplete copy (beginning missing), dated Sunday 20 Rabī’ II 1187 (11 July 1773 AD), illustration of the *Minbar* only (f. 18a), the illustration of the *Rawd a* was apparently removed (lacuna between ff. 17-18). On f. 17b a note on al-*Rawd a*, not belonging to the text. In a collective volume with 2 devotional texts. Remarkable embroidered satchel.

**Or. 25.637 (1)**. From Morocco, *maghribi* script, ff. 1a-94a, on f. 9a is the illustration of the *minbar* of the Prophet in the mosque of Medina. The illustration of the *Rawd a* is now missing (lacuna). Collective manuscript with two Arabic and one Sūs-Berber text.
B. The evaluation of the list

1. Distribution by origin, from West to East:\n   West Africa: Or. 25.418
   Morocco: Or. 25.293 (1); Or. 25.396; Or. 25.637 (1)
   Morocco, the Sūs: Or. 23.723 (1); Or. 25.428 (1)
   Maghrib: Acad. 32 (1); Acad. 33; Or. 1220; Or. 1335 (1); Or. 14.119 (1); Or. 14.351 (3); Or. 23.263 (1); Or. 25.426
   Balkans, Istolni Belgrad: Or. 11.886 (1)
   Turkey: Or. 11.065; Or. 11.785 (8); Or. 12.461; Or. 17.162
   Turkey, Istanbul: Or. 12.016 (3); Or. 12.455, Or. 14.233
   Egypt: Or. 12.121; Or. 14.462
   Kashmir: Or. 14.276
   Indian subcontinent: Or. 22.958; Or. 22.963
   Indonesia, Aceh: Or. 4826, Or. 4976 (4); Or. 7209 (3)
   Indonesia, Sumatra: Or. 10.806 (2)
   Indonesia, Bandar Natar (Sumatra): Or. 1751 (14)
   Indonesia, Banten (West Java): Or. 5720 (8), (9); Or. 7057a (6);
   Indonesia, Madura or East Java: Or. 8960 (8)

2. Chronological index:\n   18th century (?): Or. 7057a (6); Or. 8960 (8)
   1704: Or. 11.785 (8)
   1721: Acad. 33; Or. 23.723 (1)
   1730: Or. 10.806 (2)
   1742: Or. 17.162
   1747: Or. 11.065
   1773: Or. 25.428 (1)
   1776: Or. 25.293 (1)
   before 1780: Acad. 32 (1)
   1781-1786: Or. 11.886 (1)
   19th century: Or. 7209 (3)
   1811: Or. 1335 (1)
   1814: Or. 1751 (14)
   1837: Or. 12.455
   1838: Or. 14.233
   before 1844: Or. 1220
   1855: Or. 23.263 (1)
   1858: Or. 12.016 (3)
   1867: Or. 14.462
   before 1877: Or. 4826
   1888: Or. 14.351 (3)

3. Classification of the illustrations:

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25 Established on the evidence of the script, of the place of copying, or of the place of original purchase. Doubts have been omitted.
26 Established on the evidence of the colophon, of owners’ marks or of information of acquisition, but usually not on paleographical evidence. Undated manuscripts are omitted from the list.
- Manuscripts without illustration and with uninterrupted text showing that they were never illustrated: Or. 4826; Or. 4976 (4); Or. 5720 (9); Or. 25.418.
- Manuscripts with one illustration of al-Rawd a al-Mubāraka only: Acad. 33; Or. 7057a (6); Or. 11.785 (8); Or. 12.121; Or. 22.958; Or. 23.723 (1).
- Manuscripts with a double Medina illustration, showing al-Rawd a al-Mubāraka (right) and the Prophet’s Minbar (left): Acad. 32 (1); Or. 1220; Or. 1335 (1); Or. 10.806 (2); Or. 11.065; Or. 12.016 (3); Or. 14.119 (1); Or. 14.351 (3); Or. 23.263 (1); Or. 25.428.
- Manuscripts with a double Mekka-Medina illustration in flat projection: Or. 1751 (14); Or. 14.276; Or. 14.462; Or. 22.963.
- Empty frame or space for one illustration: Or. 11.886 (1).
- Empty frames (place reserved for illustrations, which were never made): Or. 7209 (3); Or. 12.461; Or. 17.162.
- Insufficient information about the illustrations: Or. 8960 (8); Or. 25.293 (1); Or. 25.396; Or. 25.426; Or. 25.637 (1).

4. Additional peculiarities in the present corpus:

Commentary: Or. 12.121.
Persian translations of the text in Or. 14.276; Or. 22.958.
Other languages in the same volume, but not translations of the Dalā’il al-Khayrāt.
- Acehnese: Or. 7209.
- Malay: Or. 1751; Or. 7209.
- Sūs Berber: Or. 23.723; Or. 25.396; Or. 25.637.
- Turkish: Or. 11.785; Or. 11.886; Or. 12.016.
Satchels: Or. 1335; Or. 25.418; Or. 25.428.

Bibliography


Or. 25.418, f. 8a. Unillustrated manuscript from West Africa.
Or. 7057a (6), f. 32b. Single illustration (Rawd a) from Banten, West Java.
Or. 12.121, f. 67b. Single illustration (Rawd a) in al-Fāṣīs commentary, in a manuscript from Egypt.
Or. 23.263, ff. 21b-22a. Double image, Rawd a and Minbar of Medina. Manuscript from the Maghrib.
Or. 10.806, ff. 33b-34a. Double image, Rawda and Minbar of Medina. Manuscript from Sumatra.
Or. 1751 (14), pp. 127-128. Double image of Mekka and Medina, in flat projection. Manuscript from Sumatra, the prayer book of Imam Bonjol.
Or. 12.455, ff. 15b-16a. Double image of Mekka and Medina, in perspective. Manuscript from Turkey.