



A Recently Discovered Holograph Fair Copy of al-Maqrīzī's *al-Mawā'iz wa-al-ī'tibār fī dhikr al-khiṭaṭ wa-al-āthār* (Michigan Islamic MS 605)

Noah Gardiner

Doctoral candidate in the Department of Near Eastern Studies
at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA
ngardine@umich.edu

Frédéric Bauden

Professor of Arabic, University of Liège, Belgium
f.bauden@ulg.ac.be

Abstract

The article describes the recent discovery by Noah Gardiner of the holograph fair copy of the third volume of al-Maqrīzī's *Khiṭaṭ* ('description of Egypt') in the Library of Michigan University (Michigan Islamic MS 605). It is the only known Maqrīzī holograph in the Americas. The manuscript was copied well after 818 A.H. (1415) and was finished shortly after 831 A.H. (1427), when the author may have written his last additions in it. A full codicological description of the manuscript is given. The place of the manuscript in the Maqrīzian corpus is determined. Its provenance is traced to one of the collections of Abraham Shalom Yahuda (d. 1951).

Keywords

al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, Library of Michigan University, Islamic manuscripts, Egypt, Cairo, holograph, autograph, fair copy, Istanbul, Mamluks

In April of 2010, Noah Gardiner, a doctoral candidate in the Department of Near Eastern Studies at the University of Michigan working as a cataloguer in the University Library's three-year project to describe and digitize its collection of roughly 1100 Arabic, Persian, and Turkish manuscripts,¹ began a description

¹ This is the project "Collaboration in Cataloguing: Islamic Manuscripts at Michigan" (<http://www.lib.umich.edu/islamic>) supported by a "Cataloguing Hidden Special Collections and Archives" grant sponsored by the Council on Library and Information Resources with funding from the Mellon Foundation. Without this funding the manuscript most likely would have remained unrecognized for years to come. Special thanks to Project Cataloguer Eryn Kropf for her guidance in this project and her help on this article. The text of this article was submitted on October 13, 2010.

of University of Michigan Islamic MS 605, a copy of the third part of *al-Mawā'iz wa-al-i'tibār fī dhikr al-khiṭaṭ wa-al-āthār* (often called simply *al-Khiṭaṭ*) by the celebrated Egyptian historian Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad b. 'Alī al-Maqrīzī (d. 845/1442). A number of elements in the codex, including the apparent age of the paper, lacunae in the text where the dates of certain events had not been filled in, and a number of marginal addenda and sewn-in inserts containing text found in the printed editions, led Gardiner to suspect that it might be a draft copy of the work. Working with project cataloguer Eryn Kropf, he compared the predominant hand of the codex and the inserts with some published images of al-Maqrīzī's hand and felt that a match was highly likely. He then sent images of the codex to Frédéric Bauden of the University of Liège, the author of numerous articles on al-Maqrīzī autographs. Bauden confirmed that the codex was copied by al-Maqrīzī himself, and was thus a holograph. He identified it as the fair copy (the author's final version) of the third volume of *al-Khiṭaṭ*, and thus the only fair copy of any volume of *al-Khiṭaṭ* to have been found. What follows is a physical description of the codex, a dating of the codex and an examination of its relationship to the corpus of al-Maqrīzī's manuscripts, and a brief recounting of what is known of the codex's provenance.

Physical Description

The present binding of the codex is a replacement, possibly of the early eleventh/seventeenth century. It is a 'Type II' Islamic binding,² i.e. with fore-edge and envelope flaps attached to the lower cover. The covers are 245 × 170 mm., consisting of pasteboards covered with brown goatskin that is badly stained and faded in places. Both covers are framed with two broad fillets and bear a blind-stamped mandorla with a symmetrical floral design therein (Déroche type NSd 1),³ 70 mm. high along the vertical axis, with pendants above and below. The board linings are of European laid paper. The binding is in poor condition: the lower endband is entirely gone and the upper nearly gone, the spine and all of the joints are split to varying degrees, the lower cover is detaching, and leather losses along the spine have exposed the lining.

The main writing support is an Oriental laid paper with vertical laid lines, 5-6 per centimeter. Chain lines are difficult to discern with any consistency, although a set of three, spaced 9-10 mm. apart, can sometimes be seen. Other

² F. Déroche *et al.*, *Islamic Codicology: An Introduction to the Study of Manuscripts in Arabic Script*, London: Al-Furqan Islamic Heritage Foundation, 2005: 258 ff.

³ *Ibid.*: 301.

Oriental papers are also present and the quiring is chaotic, giving the impression that the codex was assembled from materials to hand.⁴ The textblock has 262 leaves plus 8 sewn-in inserts. Twenty-four folia are replacements or additions, including the first two and last two folia. Eight of these replacement folia are on watermarked European papers; the watermarks suggest a seventeenth century date for these replacements.⁵ The other sixteen replacement folia are on Oriental laid papers, some of which are sheets originally left blank by al-Maqrīzī, while others were added later. The eight sewn-in inserts are all in al-Maqrīzī's hand, and are on Oriental papers similar to the primary paper of the codex, although one scrap stands out for being tinted orange-red (pg. 220-A).⁶ The textblock is in relatively good condition—very few of the text-bearing surfaces have been destroyed. There is some minor worm damage. One leaf (fol. 143/pg. 285-286) that had been partially torn away was repaired at some point with European paper, with the missing text written in on one side but not on the other.

The primary hand is al-Maqrīzī's distinctive *naskh*, which is somewhat elongated and flattened relative to many Mamlūk-era Egyptian *naskhs*. It is sans serif with mainly closed counters, and exhibits a distinct rightward slant. Some of its most obvious idiosyncrasies include rightward pointing tails on final *yā'* and *alif maqṣūrah*, the *qāla* with a hook-shaped *alif* that curls up and over the *qāf*, and the *hum* in which the *hā'* is stacked almost directly over the *mīm*. It is rather casually pointed and unvocalized.⁷

There are two hands on the replacement folia. The first is on the folia 1, 2, 58-59, and 63-64, all of which are European papers, and is a rather inelegant but readable *naskh*. The other hand is on folia 83, 95, 97-98, 115, 143, 158-159, 203-209, 216-217, and 261-262, on both Oriental and European papers. This is a highly legible *naskh*, fully pointed and partially vocalized, with mainly closed counters and *kāf mashkūlah* (*mashqūqah*) preferred. On fol. 203a/pg. 405 the top half of the page is in al-Maqrīzī's hand, while the replacement

⁴ The full collation statement is: i, V+3 (13), III (19), VII (33), 2 V (53), V-1 (62), 2 + [V-1] (73), IV+1 (82), 1+II (87), VII (101), III (107), IV (115), 1+II (120), 2+VI (134), IV (142), VI (154), V+1 (165), IV+1 (174), V (184), VI (196), II+3 (203), V (213), III (219), V+1 (230), III (236), 2+IV (246), V (256), II+2 (262)—the whole supplemented by eight inserts.

⁵ The watermark of fol. 1 is a *tre lune*. That of fol. 58 is a crossbow with a lever, in a circle and with a cloverleaf, cf. Piccard Watermark Collections nos. 123860-123862. Fol. 64 has an anchor in a circle with a cloverleaf, similar to Heawood no. 2. The final folio has a crown with a star and crescents, similar to Heawood nos. 1131-1133.

⁶ In accordance with University of Michigan Library standards the MS has been paginated. Inserted slips have been numbered with the number of the page immediately preceding, and 'A'.

⁷ For other images of al-Maqrīzī's hand see Dozy's notice and several of Bauden's articles as mentioned in the bibliography hereafter.

hand occupies the bottom half of the page. Despite their cohabitation of the page, the latter hand was no doubt added centuries later, at the same time as some of the European papers were inserted.

Most pages in al-Maqrīzī's hand have twenty-seven lines per page and a *mistarab* appears to have been used, but many pages are only partially filled, with large spaces sometimes left blank between sections and occasionally entire pages left blank. Al-Maqrīzī used a black, carbon-based ink, and made frequent use of rubrication for headings, subheadings within the text, and occasional overlining. A rule-border of two red fillets was added to most of the pages at some point after al-Maqrīzī did his corrections and annotations, and most likely after the inserts were sewed in. Catchwords are used. Many of the pages contain corrections and marginal annotations in al-Maqrīzī's hand, which he appears to have added over time in the course of completing the text.

Dating and Position in the Corpus

The manuscript corresponds to the final version of *al-Khiṭaṭ* as it was 'published', and thus represents the fair copy. A proof of this is that MS Ayasofya 3480 (dated 878/1473) was copied from this very manuscript—the copyist worked scrupulously indicating the blank spaces, marginal notes, and slips he said he found in the autograph, which exactly tally with what is found in Michigan, Islamic MS 605. In Istanbul, there are only two volumes of the draft, roughly covering volumes two (unrecovered) and three of the fair copy. Thus, part of the material found in Michigan, Islamic MS 605 is also found in the draft.⁸ From the textual point of view, the manuscript brings almost nothing new to the table, since MS Ayasofya 3480 was Ayman Fu'ād Sayyid's source for the third volume of his edition, although Sayyid added in the text parts of the draft, thus producing a new text which does not correspond to al-Maqrīzī's.⁹ For the purpose of research on al-Maqrīzī's *modus operandi*, however, Michigan, Islamic MS 605 is an invaluable witness.

As for the dating of the manuscript, Bauden has argued elsewhere that the draft was prepared between A.H. 811 and 816, and that the fair copy, at least some parts of it, could only have been elaborated shortly after A.H. 831.¹⁰ Given that we now have a volume of the fair copy, it is easier to get a better

⁸ MS TK, E. Hazinesi 1405 and MS TK, Hazine 1472.

⁹ See F. Bauden's review of the first two volumes in *Mamlūk Studies Review* XI/2 (2007), 169-176.

¹⁰ F. Bauden, "Maqriziana VII" and "Maqriziana XII."

picture of its dating. First of all, the manuscript ends with a section dedicated to the rulers of Egypt since the building of the citadel. This was written in one go, with the same kind of handwriting and the same ink. As it ends with Barsbāy, who was enthroned in 825/1422 (as the manuscript states), this section can be dated after that date and before his death in 841/1438. Furthermore, on fol. 225a/pg. 449, speaking of the *maẓālim*, al-Maqrīzī writes that ‘it prevails until our time, that is 819’ (*wa-al-amr ‘alā dhālik mustamirr ilā waqtinā hādhā wa-huwa sanat tis ‘asharah wa-thamānī mī’ah*). One may interpret this in two ways: either that this section was written on that date, or that al-Maqrīzī did not modify the date when he copied it. Favoring the first interpretation, one may consider that al-Maqrīzī elaborated the new version of the *Khiṭaṭ* over a long period of time. The draft was certainly completed by A.H. 816 and the fair copy was started well after A.H. 818 for some parts while other, new parts (like the one on the rulers just quoted) were perhaps added later because he considered that these new parts were necessary. Many passages were added to this fair copy in the margins, at the end of a text, or on inserted slips; these additions provide dates that range from A.H. 820 to 828. One thus can conclude that the fair copy was surely started well after A.H. 818-819 and that al-Maqrīzī added material to it until at least A.H. 831 for this volume, and after A.H. 831 for the yet-unrecovered fourth volume.

Provenance

Michigan, Islamic MS 605 is the twenty-third autograph manuscript of al-Maqrīzī’s to have been identified, and the first to have been found in the Americas.¹¹ Its journey from al-Maqrīzī’s hands to the Midwest United States cannot yet be traced with any degree of detail. It is clear that at some point the codex was recognized as being in al-Maqrīzī’s hand. In the upper left-hand corner of fol. 144a/pg. 287 is written in Arabic, “this is in the hand of the learned al-Maqrīzī” (*hādhā bi-khaṭṭ al-‘allāmah al-Maq[rīzī]*, the last few letters having been lost to page trimming). This hand does not obviously match any of the others in the codex. An inscription on the interior of the upper cover reads *‘al-Shaykh Abū al-Su‘ūd*, and can be only as early as the covers themselves. A somewhat blurred octagonal seal impression of fol. 1a/pg. 1, one of the folia of European paper, yields no useful information.

The manuscript at some point entered the collection of the Orientalist Abraham Shalom Yahuda. Born in Jerusalem of a Baghdad family in 1877,

¹¹ F. Bauden, «Maqriziana II,» 115-16.

Yahuda studied Semitics at Heidelberg and Strasbourg, where he was a student of Theodor Nöldeke, and taught in Berlin, Madrid, and New York. He died in New Haven, Connecticut in 1951.¹² Yahuda accumulated an extensive and valuable collection of Jewish and Islamic manuscripts during frequent travels in the Middle East, North Africa, and Eastern Europe. The University of Michigan purchased two hundred and sixty-five manuscripts from his collection around 1926, while other parts went to the United States National Library of Medicine and Princeton University in the early 1940s.¹³ Michigan, Islamic MS 605 was part of this 1926 purchase. At this time we are unaware of any documentation regarding when or where it was obtained by Yahuda, and his brief notes accompanying the manuscript give no indication that he was aware that it was a holograph. In its time at Michigan the manuscript has received only cursory examination prior to this cataloguing project. While, due to its fragile condition, it has not been digitized as part of the current workflow, it is hoped that images of the manuscript eventually will be made available online.

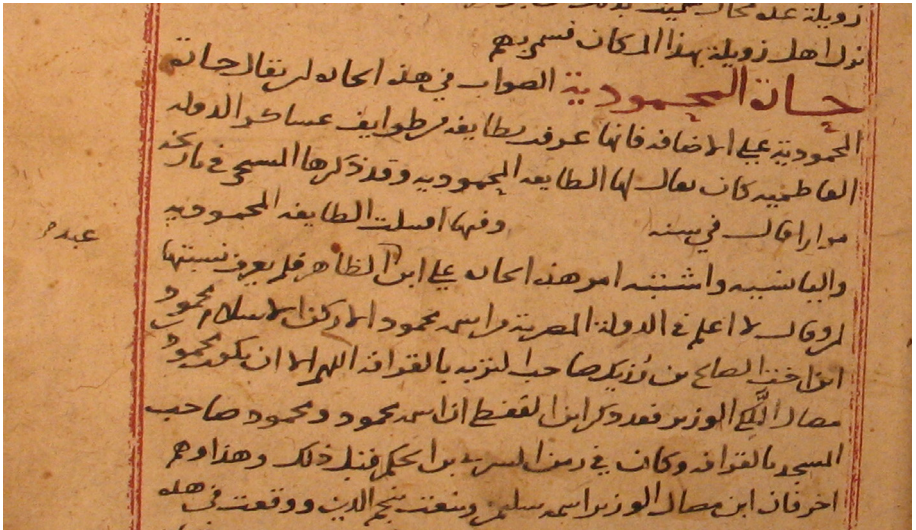
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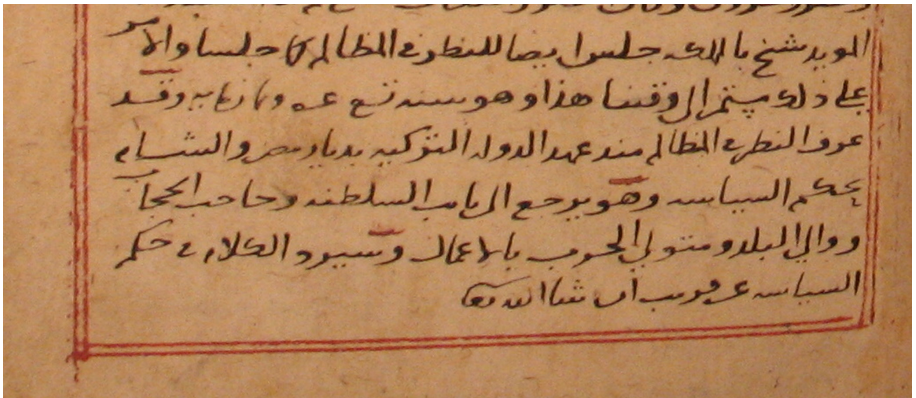
¹² Martin M. Plessner, "Yahuda, Abraham Shalom," in *Encyclopædia Judaica*, 2nd ed, ed. M. Berenbaum and F. Skolnik, Detroit: Macmillan Reference, 2007: Vol. XXI, 272.

¹³ Roberta Dougherty, "Islamic Manuscripts at the University of Michigan: the Yahuda Collection," University of Texas: Austin, July 2009.

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Mich. Isl. MS 605, fol. 4a/pg. 7. Note the missing date in the 5th line, the distinctive *qāla* on the 5th line, and the distinctive *hā* and *mīm* in the *bi-him* and *hum* of the 1st and 10th lines.



Mich. Isl. MS 605, fol. 225a/pg. 449, beginning at the end of the 1st line: *wa-al-amr 'alā dhālik mustamirr ilā waqtinā hādhā wa-huwa sanat tis 'ashrah wa-thamānī mī ah.*



Mich. Isl. MS 605, fol. 110b-111a/pg. 220-221, with insert numbered pg. 220-A. An example of al-Maqrizi's marginal and inserted notes.