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Brown Collection Box 6 (Acc. 1992-037, Item #1)

Qur'an Fragment (Surat al-Qamar سُورَةُ الْقَمَرِ)

North Africa? s. IV¹?

Thirty-two verses (54: 1-32) from the beginning of “Surat al-Qamar” (The Chapter of the Moon) in a 9th or 10th century fragment of Qur'an written on parchment in Kufic script.

القمر /// وإن يروا آيةً ... وَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَيْه

alqamaru /// wa-'in yaraw ayah ... wa-laqad yassarnā al-Qurāna lil-dhikr fah

[Recto]

[[اقتربت الساعة وأنشق]] القمر /// و إن يروا ايه يعرضوا ويقولو

[[سحر]] مستمر /// وكذبوا واتبعوا أهوا هم

و كل امر مستقر /// ولقد جا هم من الانبا ما فيه

مزدجر /// حكمة بالغة فما تغن النذر /// فتول

عنهم يوم يدع الداع الى شى نكر /// خشعا

ابصرهم يخرجون من الاجداث كا

نهم جراد منتشر /// مهطعين الى الداع

يقول الكفرون هذا يوم عسر /// كذ

بت قبلهم قوم نوح فكذبوا [[عب]]دنا

وقالوا مجنون و ازدجر /// فدعا ربه انى

مغلوب فانتصر /// ففتحننا ابواب ا

لسما بما منهمر /// وفجرنا الارض عيونا فا

لتقد[[ى]] الما على امر قد قدر /// و[[حملنه]] على ذ

[[ات]] الواح ودرسر /// تجرى باعيننا جزا لمن

كان كفر /// ولقد تركنها ايةً فهل من مد

كر /// فكيف كان عذابي ونذر /// و

[verso]

لقد يسرنا القران للذكر فهل من مد[[كر]] كذ[[

بت عاد فكيف كان عذابي و[[نذر]] ///

انا ارسلنا عليهم ريحا صرصرا فى يوم

نحس مستمر /// تنزع الناس كانهم اعجاز نخل منقعر ///

فكيف كان عذابي ونذر /// ولقد يسر

نا القران للذكر فهل من مدكر /// كذ

بت ثمود بالنذر /// فقالوا ابشرا منا و ا

حدا نتبعه انا اذا لفي ضلال وسعر /// القى

الذكر عليه من بيننا بل هو كذاب اشر /// سيعلمون غدا من الكذاب الاشر ///

انا مرسلوا الناقة فتنة لهم فارتقبهم وا

صطبر /// و نبئهم ان الما

قسمةً بينهم كل شر

ب محتضر /// فنادوا صحبهم فتعطى ف[[عقر]] ///

فكيف كان عذابي ونذر /// انا [[ا]] ر

سلنا عليهم صيحةً واحدة فكانوا كهش[[يم]]

المحتظر /// ولقد يسرنا القران للذكر فهـ[[ل]]

Transliteration:

[recto]

[[aqtaraba al-ssā'ah wa-anshaqqa]] al-qamaru /// wa-'in yaraw ayah yo'reḏū wa yaqūlū
[[siḥrun]] mustamir /// wa-kadhhabū wa-attaba'ū ahwā'ahum
wa-kullu amrin mustaqir /// wa-laqad jā'ahum mina al-anbā'i mā fihi
muzdajar /// ḥikmatun bālighatun fama tughni al-nnudhur /// fatawalla
'anhum yawma yad'u al-ddā'i ilá shay'in nukur /// khushsha'an
abṣāruhum yakhrujūna mina al-ajdāthi ka'a
nnaḥum jarādun muntashir /// muḥṭ'iyā ilá al-ddā'i
yaqūlu al-kāfirūna hādha yawmun 'asir /// kadhha
bat qablahum qawmu nūḥin fakadhhabū [['ab]]danā
wa qālū majnūnun wa azdujir /// fada'ā rabbahū annī
maghlūbun fantaṣir /// fafataḥnā abwāba a
l-ssamā'i bimā'in munhamir /// wa fajjarnā al-arḍa 'uyūnan fa-
altaq[[á]] al-mā'u 'alá amrin qad qudira /// wa [[ḥamalnāhu]] 'alá dh
[[āti]] alwāḥin wa dusur /// tajrī bi'a'yūnā jazā'an liman
kāna kufira /// wa laqad taraknāhā āyatan fahal min mudda
kir /// fakayfa kāna 'adhābī wa nudhur /// wa

[verso]

laqad yassarā al-Qur'āna lil-dhikri fahal min mudda[[kir /// kadhha]]
bat 'ādun fakayfa kāna adhābī wa [[nudhur ///]]
innā arsalnā 'alayhim rīhan ṣarṣaran fī yawmi
naḥsin mustamir /// tanzi'u al-nnāsa ka'annahum a'jāzu nakhlīn munqa'ir ///
fakayfa kāna 'adhābī wa nudhuri /// wa-laqad yassar
nā al-Qur'āna lil-dhdhikri fahal min muddakir /// kadhha

bat thamūdu bi-al-nnudhuri /// faqālū ‘abasharan minnā wā
ḥidan nattabi’uhu innā idhan lafī ḍalālīn wa-ssu’ur /// ulqiya
al-dhdhikru ‘alayhi min bayninā bal huwa kadhdhābun asir /// saya’lamūna ghadan mani al-
kadhdhābu al-ashiru ///
innā murselū al-nnāqati fitnatan lahum fartaqibhum wa-a
ṣṭabir /// wa nabbi’hum anna al-mā’a
qismatun baynahum kullu shir
bin muhtaḍar /// fa-nādū ṣāḥibahum fata’āti fa[[’aqara ///]]
fakayfa kāna ‘adhābī wa nudhuri /// innā [[a]]r
salnā alayhim ṣayḥatan wāhidatan fakānū kahash[[īmi]]
al-muḥtaziri /// wa-laqaḍ yassarnā al-Qur’āna lil-dhdhikri faha[[I]]

Translation:

[One of the best existing translations of Qur'an is a translation done by Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Caner K. Dagli, Maria Massi Dakake, Joseph E.B. Lumbard, and Mohammed Rustom and published by HarperOne which contains commentary about differences between interpretations from versus between Shi'a and Sunni factions of Islam.](#)

Notes & Comments:

1. For transcription, I haven't been able to find any universal protocols. Therefore, I decided to use the conventions we have for Latin texts, as they are most probably known by paleographers of any language (Clemens and Graham 75–77).
2. There was also the problem of letter forms, as in Kufic letters, many diacritics of Modern Arabic are not written, which not only can lead to so many misunderstandings of the text, but also those forms of letter are not created as computerised fonts. Therefore, some of the diacritics (mostly dots) are used in the transcription which cannot be found in the main text. The symbol /// is used as the closest shape to the symbol used in the fragment, which is a symbol for dividing verses.
3. For transliteration, I had a hard time finding a universal convention. While the Latinisation protocol in many of my sources are DMG (whose updated version is known as DIN), a scholarly and linguistically meaningful transliteration that takes into account every actual grapheme of the original has not yet been defined for Oriental studies (Kerr and Milo xxvii–xxviii). However, I found ALA

(American Library Association) easier to read and use for future researchers and also more commonly in use by ordinary people. Therefore, for this text I decided to go with ALA protocol (*ALA Table*).

4. In ALA protocol it does not distinguish the practice between transliteration of ا (al) at beginning of a “sun letter” and a “moon letter”. While I followed this practice, there was one huge shortcoming to this and that was when a “sun letter” would get a “shidda” (◌َ) which could hugely disrupt the pronunciation of the words if I would treat it similar to a “moon letter” when “shidda” is dismissed in pronunciation. In these cases, although ALA makes no comments, after sun letters I followed ALA rules about using “shidda”.

Transcription, Transliteration and the detective work on the nature of the script is done by Sohrab Mosahebi as part of coursework for a manuscript studies class with Dr. Adrienne Williams Boyarin (University of Victoria, June 2022).

Bibliography:

ALA-LC Romanization Tables. <https://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpsd/roman.html>. Accessed 8 June 2022.

Clemens, Raymond, and Timothy Graham. *Introduction to Manuscript Studies*. Cornell University Press, 2007.

Kerr, Robert M., and Thomas Milo. *Writings and Writing: Investigations in Islamic Text and Script*. Archetype, 2013.