Introduction

Quranic texts on papyrus are fairly rare: the late Sergio Noja Noseda found only seven published fragments of the Quran on papyrus.¹ He could have added the P.Bad. v 143 through P.Bad. v 153 and the unpublished P.Duke.inv.274 to this total.² With the possible exceptions of P.Michael. inv. 23 and P.Noseda.Koranic, all of these texts were amulets. P.Utah.Ar. 342 is similar to these other papyri. It contains all of Sūrat al-Ikhlāṣ (q 112) and Sūrat al-Falaq (q 113), most of Sūrat al-Nās (q 114), and the first thirteen verses of Sūrat Yāʾ Sin (q 36). The four sūras are parts of prayers and rituals for the sick, dying, and dead. According to hadith literature, as the prophet Muḥammad lay dying he uttered Sūrat al-ikhlāṣ and Sūrat al-falaq (also called al-maʿūdhātayn).³ Also according to hadith literature, sūra Yāʾ-Sīn is one of the sūras one should recite over the dying and dead. In addition to the Fātiḥa (q 1) and Sūrat al-Mulk (q 67), Sūrat Yāʾ Sin, Sūrat al-Ikhlaṣ, Sūrat al-Falaq, and Sūrat al-Nās are among the most commonly recited sūras in times of sickness, dying, death, and burial.⁴ They are also among those that appear most frequently in Quranic papyrus amulets.⁵

¹ Noseda, A third 316.
² A digital image of P.Duke.inv.274 is available at Duke University’s website: http://library.duke.edu/rubenstein/scriptorium/papyrus/records/274.html.
³ For the hadith that al-Bukhārī relates in reference to the last three sūras of the Quran, see al-ʿAsqalānī, Fath al-bārī 74–79. In other editions of al-Bukhārī’s Šaḥīh, one can find these hadiths in the chapters about the moral excellence of the Quran (faḍāʾil al-qurān).
⁴ Abū Dāwūd and Ibn Mājah relate hadiths that say that Sūrat Yāʾ Sin was appropriate for prayers for the dying and in funerals. In most editions of hadith collections, one can find these hadiths under the chapters relating to funerals (al-janāʾiz) (Abū Dāwūd, Sunan Abī Dāwūd vol. 5 pt. 2, 543; Ibn Mājah, Sunan Ibn Mājah, 7:212). Al-Tirmidhī describes Sūrat Yāʾ-Sīn as “the heart of the Qurān” (al-Mubārakfūrī, Tuḥfat 196–198). This passage is in the chapter entitled “Faḍāʾil al-qurān” in most editions of al-Tirmidhī’s Jāmiʿ. These are only a few of the references to the sūras in question that one can find in the hadith literature.
⁵ P.Bad. v 147 contains the first lines of Sūrat Yāʾ Sin. P.Bad. v 145, 151, and 153 contain part or all of Sūrat al-Ikhlaṣ. P.Bad. v 143 contains each of the last three sūras. P.Duke.inv.274 contains Sūrat al-Falaq and Sūrat al-Nās.
P.Utah.Ar. 342 (21.2 × 32.5 cm)

This is a good quality brown papyrus with a small papyrus cord in the upper middle part of the papyrus. The verso has traces of writing, but it seems that these were washed out. On the verso the four vertical folding marks are also clearly visible. There is one fold in the centre, another fold mark 2.12 cm to the right of centre, another fold mark 2.9 cm to the left of centre, another fold mark 5.9 cm left of centre, and another fold mark 9.8 cm left of centre.

The recto contains separate texts on the right and left sides of the centre fold. The margin between the right and left sides of the text ranges from 2.5 to 3.5 cm. The text runs parallel to the fibres. The ink is black and the strokes are thicker than normal for a papyrus-era text. The right side of the recto contains all of Sūrat al-Ikhlāṣ and Sūrat al-Falaq. It also contains Sūrat al-Nās albeit with some omissions—the scribe omits the second verse (malik al-nās), the third verse (ilāh al-nās), and the word al-nās from the fifth verse. There is an intermittent vertical lacuna on the right side that ranges between 0.3 and 1 cm wide and runs through the text beginning between 4 and 4.5 cm from the right margin.

The left side of the recto contains most of the first thirteen verses of Sūrat Yaʾ Sīn. The left side text contains many more lacunae than the right side, including a large one (6 × 6.5 cm) in the centre that would have contained most of lines 7–11. Lines 11–12 are badly damaged, but enough text remains to offer a reconstruction. Lines 13–16 are all but obliterated, so the edition that follows is based on the amount of text that the scribe could most probably have fit on the remainder of the page. It seems that the scribe made an effort to imitate an angular script in the first few lines, but overall the script is more curved than angular. There are no consonantal diacritical marks, and there are also no symbols to separate the verses.

In the Arabic edition that follows, I have attempted to be as faithful to the original papyrus text as possible. To that end, I have not added consonantal diacritical marks, tanwīn, hamza, or any other letters or pronunciation signs except when filling in lacunae and adding scribal omissions. I have added the missing verses and words in angular brackets, but I have not corrected the scribe's use of the plural where, according to the canonical edition of the Quran, he should have used the singular. The word Allāh is spelled with shadda and alif qaṣīra.

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6 Lola Atiya's inventory says that the recto is blank and that text is on the verso. She also says that two scribes were at work. A closer analysis reveals that this was not the case (Atiya, University 32).
The English translation that follows is an adaptation of the pertinent passages of Arberry’s *The Koran Interpreted.* The chapter and verse numbers from the canonical version of the Quran appear in double parentheses. In cases in which the scribe broke words between two lines, the English equivalents are also broken in the translation. One is forced to admit that the bracketing of the portions of English words is arbitrary, but there seems to be no other way to be true to the text. The rest of the punctuation marks are standard papyrological symbols.

**Translation: Right Side**

1. ((q 112)) In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate
2. ((1)) Say: ‘He is God, One, ((2)) God the Everlasting Refuge, ((3)) who has not
3. [be]gotten, and has not been begotten ((4)) and equal to him is not
4. anyone.’
5. ((Q 113)) In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate
6. ((1)) Say: ‘I take refuge with the Lo[rd] of the [Day]break ((2)) from the
evil of what He has created,
7. ((3)) from the evil of darkness when it gathers,
8. ((4)) and from the evil of women who blow on knots
9. ((5)) and from] the ev[il] of an envier when he envies.’
10. ((Q 114)) In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate
11. ((1)) Say: ‘I take refuge with the Lord of men ⟨((2)) the King of men, ((3))
the God of men,⟩ ((4)) from the evil of the whisperer,
12. the withdrawer,8 ((5)) who whispers in the brea-
13. sts (of men) of *jinn* and me-
14. -n
15. ((Q 36)) In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate

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7 Arberry, *The Koran* 353–354.
8 Here I have diverged from Arberry and translated al-Khanās as “the withdrawer.” *Al-Khanās* refers, of course, to the Devil, who withdraws at the mention of God.
Translation: Left Side

((1)) Yāʾ Sīn ((2)) By the Wise Quran ((3)) thou art truly among the Envoys
((4)) on] a straight path ((5)) the sending down of the All-mighty,
the All-[wise ((6)) that thou mayest warn a people whose fathers
[were] never warned, so they are heedless. ((7)) The Word has been
realised against
[most] of them, yet they do not believe. ((8)) Surely We have put
[on] their necks fetters up to the chin,
[so their] heads are rais[ed; ((9)) and We have put] before them
[a bar]rier and [behind them a barrier;] and We have covered them up,
so they [do not see. ((10)) Alike it is] to them
[whether thou hast warned] them [or thou hast not warned them, they
do not bel]ieve. (((11)) Thou only
warnest him who [follows the Remembrance and] who fears the A[ll]-merciful
[in the Unseen;] so give them⁹ good tidings of forgive[ness and a gener-
ous wage. ((12)) Surely it is We who [bring the dead to life
[and write down what they have forwarded and what they have left
behind; Every-]
[thing We have numbered in a clear register.]
[((13)) Strike for them a similitude—the inhabitants of the city ...]

The Text: Right Side

١ نسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
٢ هل هو الله أحد الله الصمد
٣ يق[ل و لم بولع ولم يكن له كوا
٤ واحد
٥ نسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
٦ ه[ل] اعود بر[ب] الالف بس م سرم حلول
٧ ومن سر ع[ع]ا سق ادا وفع

⁹ Arberry’s translation reads “him” instead of “them.” Arberry, The Koran 144. However, as will
be explained below, the papyrus uses the plural rather than the singular.
و من س[بر] الصماد

في العد و من سر حاسد ادا حسد

نسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

فل اعود رب الناس (ملك الناس الله الناس) من الوسواس

الخنس الذي نوسوس في صد

ور (الناس) من الحرم و الباء

نسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

The Text: Left Side

1 نس و القرآن الحكيم اكمل المنرسل

2 [علي] صراط مسمعهم بيرل العبر

3 [الرحب] إنذرهم وما اندرب (ر) اناهم

4 [ف]ههم عاهلانون اند حق الفول على

5 أكثرهم و هم لا [نوسون انا حعلنا

6 [في] عهاظهم اعلال هبه الى الادهان

7 فهم] معلمهم [و جعلنا] من س اهد[بهم

8 [س]بدا و [من خلفهم سد] فاعل[شيهم

9 [ههم] لا يصرون و سواهم على ا

10 [ذنذر]هم [لا لم تنذرهم] لا يؤمهم [ا]

11 [تنذر] من [انبع الذكر و] حمي [ا]ا[لرحم

12 [بالغيب] هسسهم معبر [ة و اجركر]

13 [م انا خن خ[ى]ا]ا [الحوق]

14 [و لكتلب ما قدموا أو انثرهم و كل]

15 [شيء احصينه في امام مبين]

16 [و اضطرب لهم مثل اصلح القرية اذ]
Notes: Right Side

1. The scribe attempted to imitate the Kufic script, and there are some paleographic features of the script that are more typical of early texts than later ones. There are, for example, incomplete final upward strokes of the nūn (right side lines 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 10, and 13; left side lines 1, 4, 5, and 11), horizontally elongated oblique strokes of the kāf and sād (right side lines 2 and 3), and hooked dāl (right side lines 2 and 3).

The horizontal extension of the letter ḥāʾ in al-rahmān (the Merciful) is an example of mashq, the technique in which scribes lengthen words horizontally to fill lines for aesthetic effect.

The downward horizontal curved nūn that is extended without being completely returned to the horizontal axis of the line is typical of Arabic handwriting from the first through the third Islamic centuries.

2. The horizontal extension of the oblique stroke of the final dāl and the small upward right hook of this stroke in the words aḥad (one) and al-ṣamad (the everlasting refuge) are typical of second/eighth-century scripts. The horizontal extension of the letter sād in the word al-ṣamad also is common in the Kufic scripts of all eras. The angularity of the script in these first two lines gives the impression that the scribe was trying to execute and perform the Kufic script in the first few lines.

3. The horizontal extension of the oblique stroke of the letter kāf and the upward right hook of this stroke in the words yakun and kufuwan is typical of second/eighth-century penmanship. The scribe uses alif to indicate the

10 The script of P.Utah. Ar. 342 resembles what François Déroche describes as “the New Style” in his *The Abbasid Tradition: Qurans of the 8th to 10th Centuries*. Here Déroche argues that the traditional categories of kūfī and naskhī are not totally accurate, and, accordingly, he introduces a new category, “the New Style.” The New Style is more round than kūfī scripts but not as round as naskhī scripts. Déroche says that the New Style first appears in non-Quranic texts datable to the third/ninth century and in Quranic manuscripts datable to the fourth/early tenth century (Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition* 132–137).

11 For mashq, see Abbott, *The rise* 23–28. Al-Sijistānī relates that as early as four generations before his time, some scholars disliked the use of mashq in Quranic texts (al-Sijistānī, *Kitāb al-maṣāḥif* 134).

12 Gruendler, *The development* 100–104.

13 *P.Khalili* i, 29–32.

14 Gruendler, *The development* 88–92; *P.Khalili* i, 34–37.
accusative case of the word, kufiwan, although there are no marks to indicate tanwin. The alif in this word bends down to the right at the bottom, a tendency typical of early scripts.\textsuperscript{15}

4. From this line forward, the script becomes more curved as the scribe abandoned his attempt to imitate Kufic. Although some of the dāls/dhāls have the upward hook typical of early papyri, all of them after line 4 in the right side lack this feature.\textsuperscript{16} All of the scribal tendencies from this point forward suggest a third/ninth-century date of composition.

8. In the word al-naffāthāt, the scribe of P.Utah. Ar. 342 writes mater lectionis alif after the fā‘ but not after the thā‘. According to al-Dānī, the word al-naffāthāt should be spelled without alif, although in modern editions of the Quran, one finds alif qaṣīra in place of mater lectionis alif.\textsuperscript{17}

9. The rightward bend of the yā‘ in fī is typical of all papyrus-era texts.\textsuperscript{18}

11. In the canonical versions of the Quran, there are two more verses than there are here. These verses come between the words bi-rabb al-nās and al-waswās. These two verses are short (two words each), and both end with the word al-nās.\textsuperscript{19} Such omissions are common in Quranic papyri.

Notes: Left Side

1. Size is the main difference between the scripts of the right and left sides. In the left side of the text, the scribe writes his letters smaller, avoids mashq entirely, and decreases the space between lines. This reduced size of the letters is most apparent in the final forms of sīn, nūn, and yā‘. None of the letters with the exception of the kāf‘ in line 1 exhibit features common in early papyri.

\textsuperscript{15} Abbott, The rise plate v; P.Khalili i, 27–29.
\textsuperscript{16} P.Khalili i, 29–32.
\textsuperscript{17} al-Dānī, Kitāb al-Muqni‘ 24.
\textsuperscript{18} Gruendler, The development 112–116; P.Khalili i, 38–42.
\textsuperscript{19} Ibn Wathiq al-Andalusī (d. 462/1070) mentions that some people added words to this sūra and thereby lengthened it, but he does not say that there are any instances of its having been shortened (1988, 150).
2. The scribe spells ṣirāṭ mustaqīm with mater lectionis alif. According to al-Dānī (d. 462/1070), the ‘ulamā’ of all regions agreed that it should be written without it.20

4. In the last word of the line, ‘alā, one sees the omission of the alif maqṣūra that is typical of Arabic papyri.21

6. The orthography of the word aghlāl here is interesting. Al-Dānī says that scribes spelled aghlālan with alif qaṣīra (or no alif at all) in place of the mater lectionis alif between the ʾāms, and with tanwīn fatha seated on a prosthetic alif marking the accusative case at the end of the word. Here the scribe uses the mater lectionis alif between the first and second ʾāms and omits the alif of tanwīn fatha. Al-Dānī does not record this spelling of aghlāl.22

12. The phrase fa-bashshirhum merits comment because it ends with the third person plural enclitic pronoun -hum whereas the now-standard version of the Quran contains the singular -hu. If line 11 were intact, one could examine it to find out if the scribe treated the verb ittabʿa the same way.

This is not a variant known from the different lists of qirāʾāt. Rather, scribal error explains the scribe’s use of -hum instead of -hu as well as the missing āya. Verse 11 of Sūrat Yā’ Sīn reads innamā tundhiru man-ittabʿa al-dhikra wa khashiya al-raḥmāna bi-l-ghaybi fa-bashshirhu bi-maghfiratin wa-ʾajrin karīmin. The conjunctive particle man is singular and indeclinable; however, it can convey a collective meaning (i.e. those, those who).23 Perhaps the scribe assumed that he was to take man to mean “those who” rather than he who and then added -hum to fa-bashshir- accordingly.24 That a constructio ad sensum lies behind this variant is an attractive thought as it appears in many other Quranic

20 al-Dānī, Kitāb al-Muqni‘, 97.
21 Hopkins, Studies, 57–60.
22 al-Dānī, Kitāb al-Muqni‘, 19.
23 For a treatment of man, see Wright, Grammar 2:273.
24 Another explanation for the use of -hum is that the scribe made a careless mistake because of the context in which verse 10 appears. Throughout this part of Sūrat Yā’-Sīn, God is speaking to the Prophet about other groups of people: those who have heard no revelation (verse 6), those who refuse to listen to revelation (verse 7), those whom God has shut off from the light of revelation and punished (verses 8–10), and the dead (verse 13). The first person subject is always plural. The second person subject is always singular. With the exception of verse 10 all third-person subjects and objects are plural. Therefore, the third person singular that one finds in verse 10 is, in a sense, out of place.
papyrus fragments. Regardless of how one explains it, the use of the plural pronoun here does not change the meaning of the verse. It is a minor variation that is most likely due to scribal error.

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