Sub-project B05
Forms and Functions of Layout in Arabic Manuscripts as Based on Copies of Religious Texts

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Description of the Project
The layout of Arabic manuscripts with its manifold manifestations has been studied only superficially and in an unsystematic way. Thereby the focus has been on the more elaborate and lavish codices, while manuscripts produced for daily life have been widely ignored. More extensive data based on larger corpora are still missing. Therefore the analysis of the layout of utilitarian manuscripts and its dependence on time and place of their provenance, literary genre, context of use and other aspects is highly desirable. The same applies to the interplay of practices of the transmission of knowledge and its organization in the manuscript that is achieved through the layout.

For the research in subproject B05 a number of utilitarian copies of religious texts have been selected that distinguish themselves through their huge diversity of layouts. The texts that are dealt with are the following: a) the Quran; b) al-Buḍāṣī (manual of blessings of the prophet); c) al-Būṣīrī (st. 1294): Ḍalālī l-ḥayrāt, prayer book from the 15th century. The first copy (Fig. 1) was written in the Maghreb, the second (Fig. 2) in the Iranian area.

Objectives
The subproject B05 will collect data on layout in a systematical way for the first time: dependencies of different parameters will be analyzed and the conventions of layout and their historical development will be described on the basis of selected groups of manuscripts. The analysis will be focusing especially on the following features:

- Measurement and proportion of the writing area
- Framing (creation of panels)
- Different types and sizes of script
- Use of different colors of ink
- Indention/centering
- Number of lines and character density
- Script that diverges from the usual

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