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KARABUK UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

THE HISTORY OF THE MAGHREBI SCRIPT

MASTER'S THESIS

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Karabuk

SEPTEMBER, 2017

TEZ ONAY SAYFASI

Karabük Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Müdürlüğü'ne,

Saeeda Abulgasem AZZABI'ya ait "The History of Maghrebi Script" adlı bu tez çalışması Tez Kurulumuz tarafından Tarih Yüksek Lisans programı tezi olarak oybirliği / oyçokluğu ile kabul edilmiştir.

	Akademik Unvanı, Adı ve Soyadı	İmzası
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Tez Sınavı Tarihi :27.09.2017

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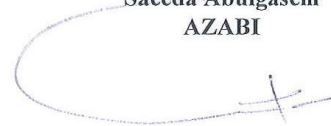
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HANKS AND APPRECIATION

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Asst. Prof. Dr. Murat Ađarı his supervision, special guidance, suggestions, and encouragement through the development of this thesis.

It is a pleasure to express my special thanks to my family for their valuable support.

**Saeeda Abulgasem
AZABI**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

THESIS APPROVAL FORM	Hata! Yer işareti tanımlanmamış.
DECLARATION OF COPYRIGHT	Hata! Yer işareti tanımlanmamış.
THANKS AND APPRECIATION	iii

CHAPTER ONE

PROLOGUE

1.1. STUDY QUERY	5
1.2. STUDY HYPOTHESIS.....	5
1.3. STUDY OBJECTIVES.....	5
1.4. STUDY EXTENT	5
1.4.1. Objective Limits.....	5
1.4.2. Limits of Place	6
1.4.3. Limits of Time	6

CHAPTER II

THE CREATION & DEVELOPMENT OF ARABIC CALLIGRAPHY

2.1. DEFINING THE ARABIC CALLIGRAPHY & ITS CONNECTION TO WRITING.....	7
2.1.1. The Linguistic & Terminological Definition of Calligraphy	7
2.1.2. The Creation of Arabs Ancient Scripts.....	7
2.1.3. The Creation and Evolution of Writing.....	8
2.2. HISTORY OF ARABIC WRITING & CALLIGRAPHY.....	12
2.2.1. Arabic Calligraphy During the Jahiliyyah.....	12
2.2.2. Arabic Calligraphy During the Life of Muhammad (PUBH).....	17
2.2.3. Arabic Calligraphy During the Caliphs Rashidun Era.....	18

2.2.4. Arabic Calligraphy During the Umayyad Era.....	19
2.2.5. Arabic Calligraphy During the Abbasid Era	20
2.2.6. Arabic Calligraphy During the Andalusian Era.....	22
2.2.7. Arabic Calligraphy During the Fatimid Era.....	24
2.2.8. Arabic Calligraphy During the Ottoman Era.....	25
2.2.9. Arabic Calligraphy in Iran	28
2.2.10. Arabic Calligraphy in Europe	29

CHAPTER III

THE VARIETIES OF ARABIC SCRIPTS

3.1. THE KUFIC VARIETY.....	31
3.2. THE RUQA'H VARIETY	33
3.3. THE NASKH VARIETY	33
3.4. THE THULUTH VARIETY.....	34
3.5. THE PERSIAN VARIETY	37
3.6. THE TAWQI VARIETY	38
3.7. THE DIWANI VARIETY	39
3.8. THE TUGHRA VARIETY	40
3.9. THE TAJ VARIETY	41
3.10. THE MAGHREBI VARIETY`	42
3.11. TRANSCRIPTION OF QURAN.....	42

CHAPTER IV

THE CREATION & EVOLUTION OF THE MAGHREBI SCRIPT

4.1. INTRODUCTION	46
4.2. THE ESSENTIAL EVOIUTION STAGES OF THE MAGHREBI SCRIPT.....	48
4.3. THE EVOIUTION OF MAGHREBI VARIETIES THROUGHTIME.....	54
4.3.1. Earlier Islamic Eras – Until The end of Mughrawa & Ifranids Reign..	54
4.3.2. The Almoravids Era	55
4.3.3. Almohads Era.....	58

4.3.4. Marinids & Wattasids Era.....	64
4.3.5. The Saadi Era.....	72
4.3.6. The Alaouite Era.....	78
4.3.6.1. The First & Second Alaouite Reign.....	78
4.3.6.2. The Third Alaouite Reign.....	80
4.3.6.3. The fourth Alaouite Reign.....	83
4.3.6.4. The fifth Alaouite Reign.....	84

CHAPTER V

THE ARTISTIC & AESTHETIC FEATURES OF MAGHREBI SCRIPTS

5.1. INTRODUCTION.....	88
5.2. SUB-VARIETIES OF THE MAGHREBI SCRIPT.....	89
5.2.1. The Moroccan Kufic.....	90
5.2.2. The Mabsout.....	90
5.2.3. The Moroccan Thuluth.....	91
5.2.4. The Mojawher.....	95
5.2.5. The Musnad [Zammami].....	95
5.2.6 The Mudmaj Script.....	95
5.3. THE SPREAD OF MAGHREBI SCRIPT.....	96
5.3.1. Maghrebi Scripts in North Africa.....	96
5.3.2. Maghrebi Scripts in Western Africa.....	96
5.4. THE AESTHETIC CHARACTERISTICS OF MAGHREBI SCRIPTS....	97
5.5. THE AESTHETIC RELATIONS OF MAGHREBI COMPOSITIONS..	101
5.6. THE AESTHETIC AND ARTISTIC FEATURES OF THE MAGHREBI SCRIPT.....	106
5.6.1. Vertical Extension.....	106
5.6.2. Horizontal Extension.....	106
5.6.3. Reeling.....	108
5.6.4. Elasticity.....	109
5.6.5. Compressibility.....	109
5.6.6. Angulation.....	109
5.6.7. Interlacing & Intergrading.....	110

5.6.8. Motion	111
5.6.9. Vocalization	111
5.6.10. Dotting.....	112
5.6.11. Blanking.....	112
5.6.12. Space Occupancy	113
5.6.13. Space Occupancy	113

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

6.1. BIBLIOGRAPHY	115
6.2. APPENDIX	118
6.3. ÖZET	146
6.4. ABSTRACT	149
6.5. AUTOBIOGRAPHY.....	152

INTRODUCTION

Prologue

The Arabic calligraphy, as a whole, has always been beheld as an authentic, lively way of expression, a symbol resembling the aesthetic aspects of the Islamic culture's instrument of recording knowledge. Defined as the art & methodology of designing & modelling the way of writing within all of the languages, which use the Arabic alphabet as its own. The Arabic calligraphy is characterized with its cursive style, which grants its letters & orthographical compositions the ability to acquire various geometric profiles, by the techniques of extending, recurring, rotating, angulating, synapsing, & interlacing its orthographic units.

The Arabic calligraphy, as a concept, has always been associated with the arabesque art, as it were utilized to decorate mosques & mansions into the illumination of manuscripts & books, especially in the embellishment of Holy Quran copies. This new craft became the new hype & craze among the Islamic artists, which were forbade depicting zoomorphic objects by the Sharia¹, allowing them a safe haven to unleash their creativity along the horizon of this new hype.

There has been numerous theories & opinions about the Meta that has produced the Arabic script, focusing into two hypotheses, the 1st; adopted by Arab researchers, which indicates the source being the Proto-Sinaitic script, in which the latter divides into five branches: Qatabanic, Hadramautic, Minaean, Himyaritic, & the Sabaic. The second hypothesis, which is adopted by the European historians, implies that the Arabic script roots descend from an Afro-Asiatic alphabet, more specifically, the Aramaic script. Moreover, indicating the origin of the Aramaic is being the Phoenician, of which gave birth to Hindi sub-languages, the ancient Farsi, Hebrew, Palmyrene, Syriac, and the Nabataean Aramaic².

¹ (Alkhatt Alarabi [The Arabic Calligraphy])

² (Pellasi)

The Arabs discovered writing during their nomadic chronicled phase, in which they had not much of use for calligraphy, or an urging need to develop & innovate its methods due to the nature of their life. The importance of calligraphy had not reached its golden age until the peninsula turned into the hub of cultural hubs of the region after the Arabs turned from nomadic Bedouins, into one of the greatest forces of change by Islam's influence. Creating beacon points of culture & knowledge in the Levant, cities such as Kufa, Basra, and Cairo glowed, and with it, the need to develop, strengthen, and innovate the ways and theories of the Arabic language, orthography, and script.

The Muslim calligraphy artists devoted themselves to promote and evolve their calligraphy, innovating & creating several sub-types of scripts & styles. Back then, the Arabs tended to name the script styles by their regional names, for instance, during the Jahiliyyah era, the scripts imported by them were named following their regions' names "The Nabatean script of Negev, Himyaritic script of Zafar & etc". after so, when the script took its residence in Mecca & Medina with the beginning of Islam, the Arabic script styles of the two cities were named the Meccan & the Medinan, respectively. The Arabic script did not reach its share of creativeness & experimenting except for how it was in Iraq and the Levant, during the territory expanding conquests of the Abbasid & Omayyad states. These states witnessed a high-scale urbanization movement, whether it went architecturally, with buildings & establishments, or calligraphically, as copies of the Holy Quran, and other items of luxury were decorated and adorned with calligraphic embellishments.³

In the Islamic times, the Qalams "pens" and scripts were named either by their measurements, for example "Althulth", which stands for one-third measure, "Annesf" which means half a measure, and etc. or be named for its purposes, as "Khatt Altawqeea", meaning: Script of signings. Alternatively, be named after its innovators surnames. In that time, it was rare for a script to be named after a certain city or region.

³ (Ara' Wa Nathareyat Fe Asl Alkitab [Thoughts & Hypotheses about the Origin of Arabic writing], 2014)

The Arabs & Muslims created many great script varieties, most famously stands **The Kufic**, which is one of the most ancient scripts in the history of Arab calligraphy. Along with other scripts as **Alnaskh**, which is used to inscribe Quran copies. **Althuluth**, which is named after the thickness of the Qalam, 1\3 measure. **Ruq'ah**, being the most utilized in Arabic writings overall, and **Diwani**, which is mainly used in state registers and records.⁴

During the 7th century A.D., the Arabic calligraphy entered North Africa with the Islamic conquests, being brought along the other aspects of Islamic lifestyle to Kairouan and into the rest of the region. In that city, the Muslims began developing the styles and varieties of Arabic calligraphy, especially the **Kufic Script**, allowing it to gain the aesthetic characteristics & influences of the region. This process gave birth to **Kairouani Kufic** script, and adaptation to the original **Kufic**, which evolved to become the **Maghrebi Script** and its sub-sections.

The Kufic has evolved in Andalusia as well, where two new scripts evolved from it: one was quite angular in shape, **The Andalusian Kufic**, the other had an abundance of rotundities and arcuations, which was the **The Cordoban Script**, which was used mainly in copying Quran and important manuscripts. The contrast between the North African & Andalusian scripts remained until the massive Andalusian immigration took place, which was influenced by the loss of Islamic land in the Iberian Peninsula. Resulting consequently an exposure to the Andalusian ways in the region of North Africa. Of which Ibn Khaldun has spoken “The people of Andalusia spread throughout the Islamic lands, since the fall of the Arab & Berber governors of Andalusia, immigrating down to Morocco and around Africa, withheld into the remains of state lords. Their scripts took over the African and the Kairouani Kufic, and the whole lands adopted the Andalusian Kufic instead”⁵, which indicates how the Andalusian script took over the place of local scripts of Kairouan. However, the Andalusian later on evolved to turn into the Maghrebi Script.

Some Moroccan penmen began studying and compiling the basics of Arabic calligraphy, its foundations, sub-sections, and its artistic & geometric standards, to be

⁴ (Elsherif, 2015)

⁵ (Ibn Khaldun, Muqaddimah [The Introduction], 2004, pp. 507-508)

put as a reference to all whom studies the art of calligraphy. A mere example of this is are “Nuthum La’ali Alsamt fe Tahseen Bade’a Alkhatt” and “Helyat Alkatib Wa Munyat Altalib” by Ahmad Ibn Qasim Alrifai Alribati in 1841.⁶

The Maghrebi script had served as a critical instrument to achieve efficient communication, as well as to transfer knowledge effectively between the regions of North Africa & Andalusia, moreover, along the completely Islam-influenced regions. Treading through its evolution an aesthetic passage of chromatic & calligraphic symbolism, keeping the linguistic value intact while still enriching the phrasal units with pure artistic influences. By fusing the orthographic units with polymorphous expressions and indications for the eyes to savor to bring a visual value into these lingual symbols in a way that creates a profound meaningful connection in addition to its apparent meaning which is captured directly.

During the first chapter of this paper, I will be discussing the reasons behind why I chose this topic, along with the probable hypotheses resulting from this thesis, the objectives, importance of this study, along with a passage through the previous studies regarding this topic.

In the second chapter, I will go through the creation of the Arabic script as a whole and its evolution throughout time, beginning from Jahiliyyah era, towards the time of Islam, and along to the Islamic golden age. Moreover, I will be discussing the influence of the holy Quran on the evolution of the Arabic script and the calligraphy industry overall.

Within the third chapter, I will list down the sub-scripts of the Arabic calligraphy, its styles & varieties, including the ancient and modern of it, spreading its visual & aesthetic characteristics. Isolating the Maghrebi script in the fourth chapter, discussing its evolution & its emerging sub-scripts. Finally, in the fifth chapter, I will be mentioning the aesthetic, visual, and artistic characteristics of the Maghrebi script.

⁶ (Marahel Tatawor Alkhat Almaghrebi [The Maghrebi script phases of evolution], 2010)

CHAPTER ONE

PROLOGUE

1.1 STUDY QUERY

Does the Maghrebi Script hold a set of its own aesthetic values throughout the history, which had its profound fingerprint on the Islamic civilization arts & crafts?

1.2 STUDY HYPOTHESIS

This study will project & analyze the morphological aspects of the Maghrebi script, and through this analysis, it will define the aesthetic & artistic foundations of it, resulting a set of evidences that supports the effective role of this script within the artistic platform of the Islamic civilization. Moreover, to be a starting point for all the upcoming studies regarding this topic.

1.3 STUDY OBJECTIVES

The magnitude of the Maghrebi script's aesthetic value makes an absolute importance to shed light on its artistic role throughout all these years under the shadow of its own characteristics and manners of utilization, and upon the degree of accordance of which this script proves against the contemporary standards. Therefore, the importance of this study lies in providing a series of informative facts about the history of this script, defining the aspects of its contribution in the past, and the manners it can be integrated with to be a present factor in shaping the artistic vision of tomorrow.

1.4 STUDY EXTENT

1.4.1 Objective Limits

This study contemplates the artistic & aesthetic values of the Maghrebi script throughout history.

1.4.2 Limits of Place

The regions of Andalusia, and the states of North Africa, of which have been famous with this script and its varieties.

1.4.3 Limits of Time

The duration of which this script have been invented, that of during the Umayyad reign of Andalusia, and the eras succeeding it.



Chapter II

The Creation & Development of Arabic Calligraphy

2.1 DEFINING THE ARABIC CALLIGRAPHY & ITS CONNECTION TO WRITING

2.1.1 The linguistic & Terminological Definition of Calligraphy

Calligraphy:

It is an art that surpasses its role as an instrument of communication, to become a beacon that emits a para-conscious aesthetic concept. In which is emitted through the process of designing, drawing, and conceptualizing the shapes of orthographic units, be it characters, words, or entire sentences, in which way that produces a linguistic meaning, in addition to the artist's own visualization and vision regarding the shapes' aesthetic purpose & concept.⁷

Script:

The definition of the words “to write” and “to scribe” are quite similar when looked at generally, whether be it in meaning or in manners of utilization, but it takes a deeper glance to recognize that the action of scribing, transcribing, inscribing – and so over – are mere specks of specializations in the ocean of writing. However, the act of scribing takes a whole lot more care in the creation & sophistication of the orthographical units, attempting to maintain the linguistic, visual, and aesthetic characteristics of these units.⁸

2.1.2 The creation of Arabs' ancient scripts

It was referred to the various scripts, of which the Arabs wrote with after they have discovered writing with little, if not scarce details, indicating various script

⁷ (Ghaleb, 1988, p. 178)

⁸ (Hannash, 2006, p. 43)

names but none referred to the characteristics of these fonts, a mere example of such is mentioned in Ibn Alnadim's manuscript: **Alfehrist**. In which he had enlisted the types of scripts used back then but without mentioning the differences between them. Some researchers think that such differences were mere morphological differences, without the existence of semantic differences, and such thing is due – the lack of documentation towards calligraphy back then – to the Arabs' Bedouin nomadic nature, and not yet entering the sufficient level of prosperity for them to comprehend the importance of writing & calligraphy overall. Until the arising of the Islamic civilization's cultural hubs like Kufa, Basra, The Levant, Fustat, and others, where the Arabs began appreciating the importance of creating, defining, and developing calligraphy & innovating scripts, for we see many examples of the scripts' varieties in that time, such as the **Anbari, Meccan, Medinan, Kufic**, and the **Basran** scripts. Some of these scripts were created before Islam, and some after, but there is not much of information regarding the pre-Islamic scripts' characteristics whatsoever.⁹ Yet it is said that the most ancient Arabic calligraphy turns into two main morphological techniques, which are the rotation and quadrature of units.¹⁰

2.1.3 The creation and evolution of writing

To write is to utilize the most critical instrument of language, and writing is a socio-anthro-linguistic phenomenon that has been created by the human race to note down ideas, thoughts, sentiments, or certain messages to be remembered later on, or to be received and comprehended by a certain receiver. This tool had come handy and critical through time, as it is acknowledged as one of the main factors in the human civilizations' development and progress throughout time.

⁹ (Juma, 1968, p. 23)

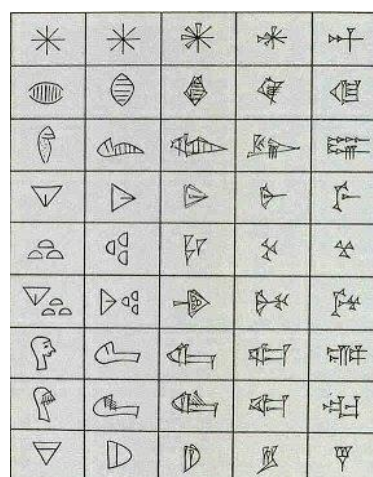
¹⁰ (Hussain, 2003, p. 19)

الاسم	الرمز	الاسم	الرمز	الاسم	الرمز	الاسم	الرمز	الاسم	الرمز
ألف (A)	Ⲁ	كاف (K)	Ⲁ	ألف (A)	Ⲁ	كاف (K)	Ⲁ	ألف (A)	Ⲁ
بيت (B)	Ⲁ	غيم (G)	Ⲁ	بيت (B)	Ⲁ	غيم (G)	Ⲁ	بيت (B)	Ⲁ
جول (C)	Ⲁ	دال (D)	Ⲁ	جول (C)	Ⲁ	دال (D)	Ⲁ	جول (C)	Ⲁ
دال (D)	Ⲁ	هـ (H)	Ⲁ	دال (D)	Ⲁ	هـ (H)	Ⲁ	دال (D)	Ⲁ
هـ (E)	Ⲁ	زاي (Z)	Ⲁ	هـ (E)	Ⲁ	زاي (Z)	Ⲁ	هـ (E)	Ⲁ
زاي (Z)	Ⲁ	حـ (H)	Ⲁ	زاي (Z)	Ⲁ	حـ (H)	Ⲁ	زاي (Z)	Ⲁ
حـ (H)	Ⲁ	ط (T)	Ⲁ	حـ (H)	Ⲁ	ط (T)	Ⲁ	حـ (H)	Ⲁ
ط (T)	Ⲁ	ي (Y)	Ⲁ	ط (T)	Ⲁ	ي (Y)	Ⲁ	ط (T)	Ⲁ
ي (Y)	Ⲁ	كاف (K)	Ⲁ	ي (Y)	Ⲁ	كاف (K)	Ⲁ	ي (Y)	Ⲁ
كاف (K)	Ⲁ	م (M)	Ⲁ	كاف (K)	Ⲁ	م (M)	Ⲁ	كاف (K)	Ⲁ
م (M)	Ⲁ	ن (N)	Ⲁ	م (M)	Ⲁ	ن (N)	Ⲁ	م (M)	Ⲁ
ن (N)	Ⲁ	ع (C)	Ⲁ	ن (N)	Ⲁ	ع (C)	Ⲁ	ن (N)	Ⲁ
ع (C)	Ⲁ	ف (F)	Ⲁ	ع (C)	Ⲁ	ف (F)	Ⲁ	ع (C)	Ⲁ
ف (F)	Ⲁ	ر (R)	Ⲁ	ف (F)	Ⲁ	ر (R)	Ⲁ	ف (F)	Ⲁ
ر (R)	Ⲁ	س (S)	Ⲁ	ر (R)	Ⲁ	س (S)	Ⲁ	ر (R)	Ⲁ
س (S)	Ⲁ	ت (T)	Ⲁ	س (S)	Ⲁ	ت (T)	Ⲁ	س (S)	Ⲁ
ت (T)	Ⲁ	خ (X)	Ⲁ	ت (T)	Ⲁ	خ (X)	Ⲁ	ت (T)	Ⲁ

The evolution of writing had went through a set of phases before reaching its current form; the researchers had summarized these phases in the following:¹¹

1. Phase of Pictography:

The ancient humans resorted in expressing their thoughts through redrawing shapes on surfaces, for example, if such a man during this time, needed to tell or express the fact of which he needs to leave the residence to hunt to his spouse or partner, he draws an image of a man with a spear in his hand. Writing through this phase lacked sophisticated semantics and did not have the ability to express abstract and absolute meanings and thoughts.



¹¹ (Noureddin, 2009, p. 19)

2. Phase of symbolic pictography:

Through the passage of time, pictography evolved into a phase where sentiments and thoughts went expressed with symbolic images, for instance, expressing peace with a pigeon, reigning with a crown, etc. In this phase, the human race gained the ability to compose a meaningful pictographic structure through the process of drawing consecutive images that can be understood and grasped.



3. Phase of Syllables:

This phase indicates the little foundations of alphabetic writing, with the creation of orthographic expression for objects, thoughts, ideas, sentiments; it was no longer effective to represent them with simple pictography. Therefore, some civilizations began to represent the syllables of these orthographic representations with pictography, where, for instance, if you wanted to write the word “armchair” you will need to draw a picture of a chair, in succession with a picture of a human arm. This phase is clearly demonstrated with the early examples of the Sumerian & Egyptian writing systems.

(An example of Sumerian writing systems)

original pictograph	later pictograph	early Babylonian cuneiform	Assyrian cuneiform	derived meaning
				bird
				fish
				ox
				grain
				to stand to go

(An example of Egyptian writing systems)

Hieroglyphic	Approximate name	Hieratic	Demotic
	eagle		
	leaf		
	owl		
	water		
	stand		

4. Phase of acrophony:

Acrophony is a Greek word that consists of two parts, Acro-: meaning the uppermost, and Phone- meaning the sound. Many researchers define this word as symbolizing letters through drawing other shapes, which start with the same vocal syllable, for instance, if I wanted to write the letter “A”, I will draw an image of an apple, “C” as an image of a car, etc.

 ا	 ب	 ج	 د	 هـ	 و	 ز	 ح
 ط	 ث	 ث	 ث	 ث	 ث	 ث	 ث
Alsaadawi Table For Arabic ABC - AT 23							
 ل	 م	 ن	 هـ	 و	 ز	 ح	 ط
 ع	 ف	 ق	 ك	 خ	 د	 ذ	 ر

5. Alphabets:

Which is a highly developed level of the previous phase, where the pictographs indicating letters have been replaced by symbols or glyphs that represent them. Some researchers claim that the acrophonic technique have been derived from the Egyptian hieroglyphs, yet the Phoenicians of the Levant, were the creators of what it seems the first concept of alphabets.

2.2 HISTORY OF ARABIC WRITING & CALLIGRAPHY

2.2.1 Arabic calligraphy during the Jahiliyyah

Through time, the Arab peninsula & Mesopotamia had been inhabited with many Semitic nations: Acadians, Arameans, Babylonians, Assyrians, and Chaldeans, in addition to Phoenicians, Canaanites, Hebrews, and Arabs. All of these civilizations acquired their own linguistic & orthographic units and overall writing methods, in a chain of evolution that continued over tens of centuries, during which, some fell and crumbled through invasions, epidemics, or the mere passage of time, and some prevailed and remained.

Some historic studies tend to claim that the Arabs took their writing from the Nabataeans, which have occupied the northern Arabia & southern Levant – Modern-day Palestine and Jordan - from the Arameans, and have expanded territory towards the northern Hejaz region, where they built prosperous cities such as Petra, Hegra, and Palmyra. The Nabataeans took their writing from the Arameans and developed it, the Nabataeans as well kept hold and dominated over the commercial routes connecting the Levant, India, and Southern Yemen, from Sana'a to Mecca, and from Medina to ancient Egypt and the Mediterranean regions. (The figure in the next page demonstrates the commercial rout between Yemen & the Levant). Moreover, their commercial relations extended far beyond ancient Greece, modern-day Italy, and North Africa, connecting the Nabataean civilization with economic & cultural input of which has kept it on its grounds until it went annexed by the Romans in 106 A.D.

The northern Arabs of the peninsula utilized the Nabataean writing system centuries before Islam, and they had not stopped developing it especially in Mecca – due to its high commercial influence in the region – which eventually made the Arabic writing system gain its independence from the Northern Arameans' & the Yemeni Himyaritic Musnad systems in the south. Therefore, it is evident that immense efforts had been paid to create such results.

However, even of its independence from the Nabataean script & writing system, the Arabic script stood crudely without any refining until the seventh century, during the Islamic era, as indicated the stone engravings found by

archaeologists North of Hejaz, and the ones found along the trade routes between Mecca & Medina.

These engravings contained Nabataean and Arabic inscriptions that assisted the archaeologists with tracing back the developments integrated in the Arabic script & writing system, of which I mention:

1. Um Aljammal Al'awwal, discovered east of Jordan, and it was written in 250 A.D.
2. Annamara Inscription, goes back to 328 A.D.
3. Harran Inscription, written in 568 A.D.
4. The prophet Muhammad's (PUBH) letter to Munzir ibn Sawa Al Tamimi.

A figure shows these inscriptions respectively in the next page.



Left: Nabataean trade route in the Peninsula

Right: from up to down, Um Aljammal Al'awwal, Annamara, and Harran Inscriptions
(Almunajjed, 1979)

Down: The Prophet Muhammad's (PUBH) letter to Munzir ibn Sawa Al Tamimi.

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم فقد رسول الله
 الصبر في سائر سبله قد في عفة الله
 الذي انزل لا اله الا الله لا اله الا الله
 الله وانهم في سبكه ورنه بما عفا في ارضي
 الله عز وجل ما ه من الله في سبكه ورنه بما عفا في ارضي
 لسره لنا مرعد فقد انزل في سبكه ورنه بما عفا في ارضي
 ان رسلي هذا ليعلم ان الله انزل في سبكه ورنه بما عفا في ارضي
 محمد ما نزل - للمسلمين ما استلموا الله وبعث
 الرسل - رسله في ارضه ما استلموا الله وبعث
 ما جرح على كونه في سبكه ورنه بما عفا في ارضي

صورة رسالة النبي سيدنا محمد ﷺ إلى النضر بن ساري بالخط الحجازي اللين

Through these models, we can examine that the first three inscriptions were written in **Nabataean Script**, which is characterized with its connected letters to create words. Where some of the letters reveal the primitive shape of Arabic letters – which have evolved later in the Islamic era under the Hijazi script, which is a soft script being used popularly in Mecca and Medina afterwards. –

More archaeologists had discovered through their expeditions various samples of Arabic scripted writings, which were engraved in Musnad script. Many historians tend to claim that the Himyaritic Musnad was the first pattern of Arabic *Qalam* – or script –, which is imported from the ancient Yemenis.

Some Yemenis kept on utilizing the Musnad script in Mecca, until the Meccans developed the *Qalam Mecca*, which had a style & an alphabet that stood in distinction with Musnad's.

Thus, when the revelations were revealed upon Muhammad (PUBH), the Meccan Qalam became the official script of the city, replacing the Musnad to turn it into a useless relic, until it went resurrected by the orientalist in Arabia. Along with Musnad, another script went into Arabia with the first Christian missionaries from the east, the Aramaic script, which became – later on – the official script of the eastern churches of the region.

There are more types and varieties of the incorporated scripts within the Arabian Peninsula: the **Thamudan** script, a writing system that belonged to the Nabataean tribe of Thamud. The **Lihyanite** script, which belonged to an ancient north Arabian kingdom of **Lihyan/Dadan**, and the **Sefayan** script, which was named after the region in which the first samples of it were found, **Ard Alsafa** – located within the Ha'il region of KSA –. The late Prof. Jawad Ali mentioned 20 probabilities of whom were first used the Arabic alphabet firsthand.¹²

Regardless of the scarcity of how much we know about the level of development that the Arabs have reached during the Jahiliyyah & ancient era, yet we are eager to what the future may hold to us of discoveries with what concerns the Arabian civilization in the peninsula. Because any demographical entity, cannot be

¹² (Ali, 1978, pp. 153-162)

productive in an aspect and infertile in another, a nation that has built dams – for example – could not have done such thing without the discovery of geometric instruments – the ruler, the protractor – to plan the dams’ drawings before the execution of it.

Late Nabataean		Ancient Arabic	
666677	ا	11111	ل ل ل ل
د د د د د د د د	د	ر ر	ر
ا ا ا ا ا ا ا ا	ا	ا ا	ا ا
77777	7	ك ك ك ك	ك ك ك ك
ت ت ت ت ت ت ت ت	ت	ع	ع ع ع ع ع ع ع ع
9999	9	9999	99
ا	ا		
ا ا ا ا ا ا ا ا	ا ا	ا	ا
ب ب ب ب ب ب ب ب	ب	ب	ب ب ب ب
ج ج ج ج ج ج ج ج	ج	ج	ج ج ج ج
د د د د د د د د	د	د	د د د د
ه ه ه ه ه ه ه ه	ه	ه	ه ه ه ه
و و و و و و و و	و	و	و و و و
ز ز ز ز ز ز ز ز	ز	ز	ز ز ز ز
ح ح ح ح ح ح ح ح	ح	ح	ح ح ح ح
ط ط ط ط ط ط ط ط	ط	ط	ط ط ط ط
ي ي ي ي ي ي ي ي	ي	ي	ي ي ي ي
ك ك ك ك ك ك ك ك	ك	ك	ك ك ك ك
خ خ خ خ خ خ خ خ	خ	خ	خ خ خ خ
د د د د د د د د	د	د	د د د د
ر ر ر ر ر ر ر ر	ر	ر	ر ر ر ر
ز ز ز ز ز ز ز ز	ز	ز	ز ز ز ز
ح ح ح ح ح ح ح ح	ح	ح	ح ح ح ح
ط ط ط ط ط ط ط ط	ط	ط	ط ط ط ط
ي ي ي ي ي ي ي ي	ي	ي	ي ي ي ي
ك ك ك ك ك ك ك ك	ك	ك	ك ك ك ك
خ خ خ خ خ خ خ خ	خ	خ	خ خ خ خ
د د د د د د د د	د	د	د د د د
ر ر ر ر ر ر ر ر	ر	ر	ر ر ر ر
ز ز ز ز ز ز ز ز	ز	ز	ز ز ز ز
ح ح ح ح ح ح ح ح	ح	ح	ح ح ح ح
ط ط ط ط ط ط ط ط	ط	ط	ط ط ط ط
ي ي ي ي ي ي ي ي	ي	ي	ي ي ي ي



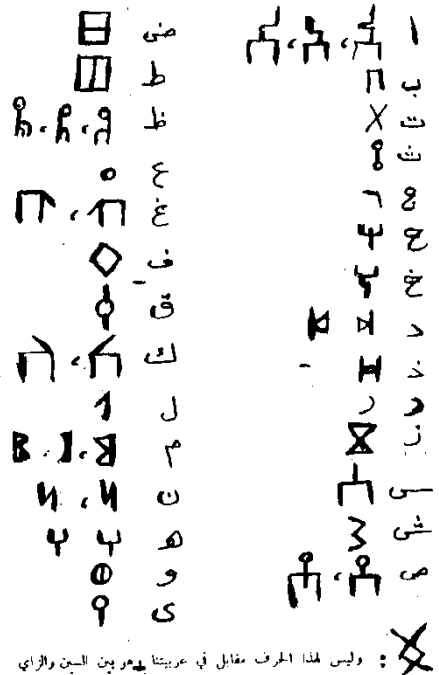
A decorated sample of the Yemeni Musnad script

Samples of the Late Nabataean & Ancient Arabic scripts.

Left: (Ali, 1978, p. 181/8) | Right: (Bahnasi, 1984, p. 18)



Ancient Lihyan Inscriptions



Left: (Ali, 1978, p. 234/8) | Right: Musnad compared to Arabic (Ali, 1978, p. 220/8)

2.2.2 Arabic calligraphy during the life of Muhammad (PUBH)

The arrival of Islam through the Arabian land was the starting point of civilization for the region, during the Jahiliyyah. The shape of civilized life was beginning to take shape within the societies, regardless of the Bedouin lifestyle, which was quite common in that era. Thus, fell in the revelations with a small, yet an all-meaningful word: {Eqra'a}¹³, leading the whole region into a completely new chronicle.

It is true that Allah has described Muhammad as his “Illiterate Prophet”, yet such a nickname did not mean to humiliate his prophet, but to indicate a miracle, which is the fact that this illiterate prophet has created a nation of luminaries, leading the world to from darkness to light.

Consequently, since that verse were revealed upon him, the prophet kept on encouraging his companions on seeking all sorts of knowledge. If you could count how many times the word “Ilm” – -to educate – in Holy Quran, it will be 779. Which indicates the importance of education in the religion of Islam, and what is the education’s main instrument? Writing.

From here, we could say that cornerstone in developing the Arabic calligraphy was when Gabriel descended upon him (PUBH) in **Cave of Hira**, reciting “Read! In the Name of your Lord, Who has created, has created man from a clot. Read! And your Lord is the Most Generous, Who has taught by the pen, has taught man that which he knew not.”¹⁴

The Arabs reached into the heavens of innovation and creation in every type of knowledge during the Islamic era. But, as an instrument of recording the Holy Quran, they have given special attention into developing and beautifying the Arabic calligraphy overall, turning from a mere instrument, into an exquisite form of art, where the words become an aesthetic composition, in addition to its main purpose, as a way to transmit ideas and thoughts.

¹³ Meaning: To recite\read – Holy Quran: 96:1

¹⁴ Holy Quran: 96:1-5

The result of such encouragement – provided by the prophet (PUBH) and the new religion, was discovering samples of Quran, inscribed on stone plates, papyrus, and palm branches. This new religion, began spreading its values – and along with it the encouragement to educate oneself – from its birthplace in Mecca, throughout the peninsula and off the far reaches of the modern-day Islamic world.

The samples found of that era include the letters sent by the prophet (PUBH) to the Negus¹⁵ of Ethiopia, the Muqawqis of Egypt, the monarch of Bahrain, and the Roman Emperor in Damascus.

2.2.3 Arabic calligraphy during the Caliphs Rashidun Era

The Islamic tangibly developed during the reign of the caliphs, the rule became not as it were – by the hand of the tribe chieftain –, it became by the sovereignty of the nation itself. The Muslims created laws, regulations, and doctrines, all derived from the Holy Quran. As the need for writing went immense, writing bureaus spread throughout the land, calligraphy & inscribing had its own stature and prestige. Such thing imposed the fourth Caliph, Ali Ibn Abu-Taleb to grant much more attention on strengthening the instrument of writing and the process of recording knowledge overall, which was crucial in that phase, due to the sovereignty requiring the strength of youth, and nothing demonstrates strength like proper education. Such action resulted the birth of Islamic arts, including the Islamic Arabic calligraphy, where the Arabic scripts developed and were improved, to hold an immense aesthetic beauty that has reached its uppermost limits – that has not been reached by any other script varieties in the history of humanity – along with the golden age of this civilization.¹⁶

The Arabic calligraphy and its varieties of scripts distinguished as a knowledge – and an art – that had its own set of rules and foundations, this art kept on expanding regionally through the Islamic conquest – during the reign of Umar Ibn Alkhattab, which was the last of the Rashidun –.

The beginning of the renaissance of the Arabic language began in with the rule of Ali Ibn Abi-Taleb, which has seen that the mixture of races within the nation

¹⁵ A royal title in the Ethiopian Semitic languages, denoting the monarch.

¹⁶ (Azami, 1977, p. 25)

has resulted a foreign influence upon the language itself, leading the caliph to order Abu al-Aswad al-Du'ali¹⁷ to create a set the foundations of the Arabic grammar.

2.2.4 Arabic Calligraphy during the Umayyad Era

The calligraphy craft has earned a significant share of progress during the Umayyad era – in comparison to the two previous periods –, this period was able to instate the actual importance of the penman's occupation and the wide aspects that it holds, even of the fact that the Arabian dots were not innovated yet. A number of penmen during that time, had their name rise in the books of history, among them was **Qutba AlMuharrer**, which created a script that had a mixture between the Hijazi and Kufic scripts: **Aljaleel Script**. Where it went popularly utilized in decorating mosques' niches and doors.

Qutba's creations were not limited to **Aljaleel** script only, as he was also responsible for the creation of the **Tumarian**¹⁸, as well as the **Thuluth & Thulthayn** scripts around 136 H.¹⁹

During the Umayyad era, penmen began – for the first time – to decorate the mansions, mosques, and Khans – hotels –, as well as utilizing these new scripts in the official papers of the states, which indulged the emirs to keep the best of them among their entourage. Such tendencies to decorate buildings and edifices with calligraphy we can see till this day, where domes, minarets, mansions, and whole mosques are decorated and embellished with engraved luxurious engraved wood & mosaic, within inlayed compositions of silver, noble metals and glass. Such marking are still intact in the Syrian capital of Damascus, a visible evidence of such prosperity lays within the Great Mosque of Damascus, Palaces of Al-Hayr, the ruins of Resafa, & the niche and dome of Al-Aqsa mosque.

¹⁷ He was a close companion of Ali ibn Abi Talib and an Arab grammarian. He was the first to place consonant pointing and vowel-pointing (markings) on Arabic letters to clearly identify them. He was the first to write on Arabic linguistics, and is said to be the first to write a book on Arabic grammar

¹⁸ It is a calligraphic variety of Arabic script. This term was applied to writings in **Thuluth** script when the point of the pen employed was at least one centimeter broad, it was used in large panels and for inscriptions carved in stone on buildings or tombstones, also called by **Jeli Thuluth**.

¹⁹ (Aljawaheri, 1992, p. 67)

During the Umayyad era, penmen used the **Thulthayn** script habitually in recording state registries, which have caught the name eventually to become **Sejellat** script. However, the descendants of the Umayyads utilized the **Tumarian** and the **Alshami** scripts.²⁰

The penmen during this era have managed to turn calligraphy into a hype that spread throughout the caliphate, as an authentic artistic movement, of which I mention:

1. Khaled Ibn Abi Alhayyaj: inscribed and copied a numerous amount of Quran copies.
2. Malik Ibn Dinar: which was a religiously devoted man, mentioned as a jurisprudent, dead in 131 H, 753 A.D.
3. Alrashid Albasri.
4. Mahdi Alkufi.

Some other penmen, which have been their popularity renowned outside the capital:

1. Sharasheer Almasri.
2. Abu-Muhammad Al-Asphahani.
3. Abulfaraj Al-Asphahani.
4. Ibn Abi Fatima.
5. Ibn Alhadrami
6. Ibn Hassan Almalih.

The Umayyad caliphate had a crucial role in the progress of Arabic calligraphy, setting along with the previous eras the foundations of this art.²¹

2.2.5 Arabic Calligraphy during the Abbasid era

It was not long until the Umayyads began to tremble under the weight of their rivals: the Abbasids, which influenced the penmen to seek knowledge at Baghdad, which has been the center of knowledge, arts, and culture by that time.

If the Umayyad era was a time of building and establishing, the Abbasid era was a time of prosperity & lavishness, a time where the talented becomes a prodigy.

²⁰ (Zreiq, 1985, pp. 27-28)

²¹ (Zreiq, 1985, p. 49)

Many penmen had risen to fame in the Abbasid times, of which was Addahak Ibn Ajlan, and Isaac Ibn Hammad, which went famous during the reign of Abi Abbas, and Almansour respectively. This period was the golden age of calligraphy to the point that “more than 11 varieties of scripts were created by then”.²²

Many varieties and scripts were created, developed, and regulated in this era. We could mention few names that brightened during Almaamon & Alrashid reigns. Ibrahim Alshajari had developed and enhanced the **Thuluth & Thuluthayn** scripts more significantly, of what Qutba has done beforehand. Additionally, a new script was innovated by Yusuf Alshajari – Ibrahim’s brother – under the name of **Almudawwar Alkabeer**²³ script, The Grand Vizier Alfadl Ibn Sahl was quite astonished by this script that he ordered the universalization of its usage among all of the caliphate registries and Diwans. Then it went developed by penman Almuharrer Albarmaki as he created **Alnesf** script, which developed into a script category later on.²⁴

It was not so long until the arrival of a very distinct penman, **Abu Ali Muhammad Ibn Muqla** (328-372 H), which accomplished the task of setting the rules of Arabic scripts, and excelled in **Thuluth, Reqa’, Rayhan, Mutn**, as well as he created the modern-day **Naskh** script and incorporated it within the caliphate bureaus. In addition, he reached a fame to the degree where every penman in the region envied him.²⁵

In addition, of being a prodigious penman, he was also the Grand Vizier of three Abbasid Caliphs, Almuqtader, Alqaher, and Alradi, but it was not until the fifth century that Ibn Muqla’s fame fell under the shadow of Ali Ibn Hilal – dead in 413 H –, which had enhanced Ibn Muqla’s methods, and established a penmen school.

²² (Aljawaheri, 1992, p. 67)

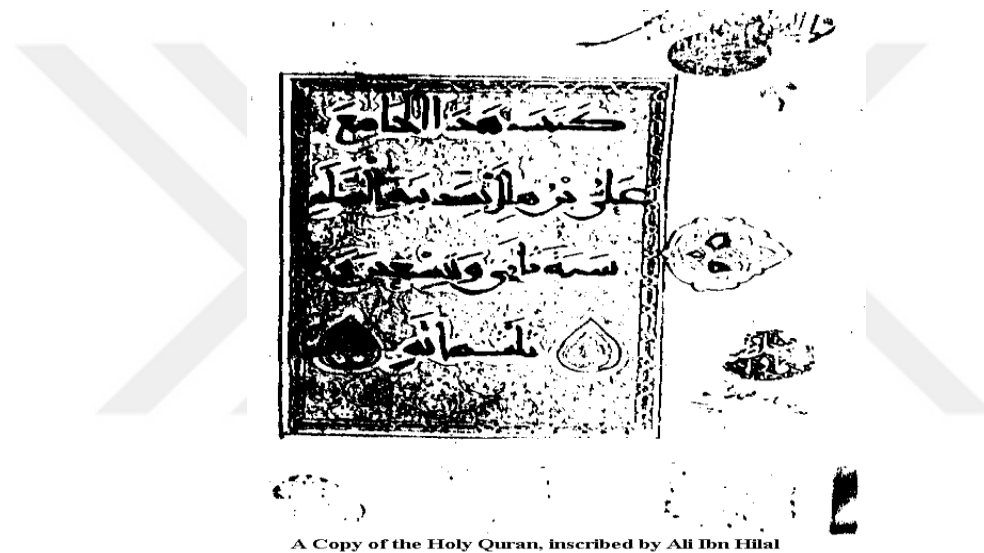
²³ Meaning: The bold circular script.

²⁴ (Zreiq, 1985, p. 29)

²⁵ (Aljawaheri, 1992, p. 67)

Most of the Holy Quran copies that were inscribed during that era were traced back to the ninth century, which were written on undyed papyrus, or blue, purple, red dyed papyrus, inscribed in black or gold ink with bold rounded tips.²⁶

By the end of the Abbasid reign, the amount of created scripts and varieties reached more than 80, along with the distinct types and varieties of calligraphy-related decorations. It was also noted the level of delicacy the penmen dedicated during the creation of their works, where some inscribed whole copies of Quran on tomes with papers that measured less than 8 x 6 cm, and some were able to sharpen their pens to portions of one millimeter.



2.2.6 Arabic Calligraphy during the Andalusian era

The Muslim penmen utilized the **Alshami** & **Kairouani** scripts in the process of inscribing their letters, tomes, and Quran copies. They also have developed and enhanced the Kairouani script, and incorporated a new sense of leniency on its writing, as well as they have created the **Andalusian** – or **Cordoban** –, regardless of that the first Muslims in Andalusia used to write and inscribe with the eastern scripts & its varieties. Therefore, with time, the Andalusian Muslims created their own scripts to distinguish themselves from the eastern Muslims. By the time of the

²⁶ (Kahala, 1972, p. 175)

Almoravids, the Andalusian and its varieties began to popularize its usage instead of the Kairouani's.

The Andalusian script in that time was characterized with its relatively geometric structure, distinct with its bent lines, supported by the vertical lines, its small & circulated letters agglomerate in a similar manner to that of the ancient Frank scripts. The Andalusian script reached morocco, moved to Fez to be the center of Andalusian penmen. The penmen of Fez variety of Andalusian script was characterized with circularities in the Arabic equivalent letters to N, B, O, L, S, G. yet with time, it acquired a sense of simplicity. The Moroccans & Andalusians turned to enhance the Kufic script, softened it for inscribing delicacies.²⁷

The Arabic writing system entered every aspect of the Andalusian people's lives, from bureaus to state Diwans, moreover, to mosques, synagogues, and cathedrals, authors, poets, historians, and artists of the three religions used it. The Andalusian Jews & Christians incorporated the Andalusian variety of the Kufic script into their writings.

The prosperous and luxurious life in Andalusia, led the north Europeans of that era to send their offspring to seek knowledge in its schools and colleges. The Arabic writing system remained in the Iberian Peninsula for over than nine centuries, in an indication of the level of sophistication and progress the state has led. Many engineering advances had been created during that age, including what is apparently the first versions of lithographic machines – which were blueprinted in the 19th century – “Abdulrahman used to go to a penman which created his official letters for him. Who sends them to a special bureau which prints them in several copies; each copy goes sent to a state worker”.²⁸

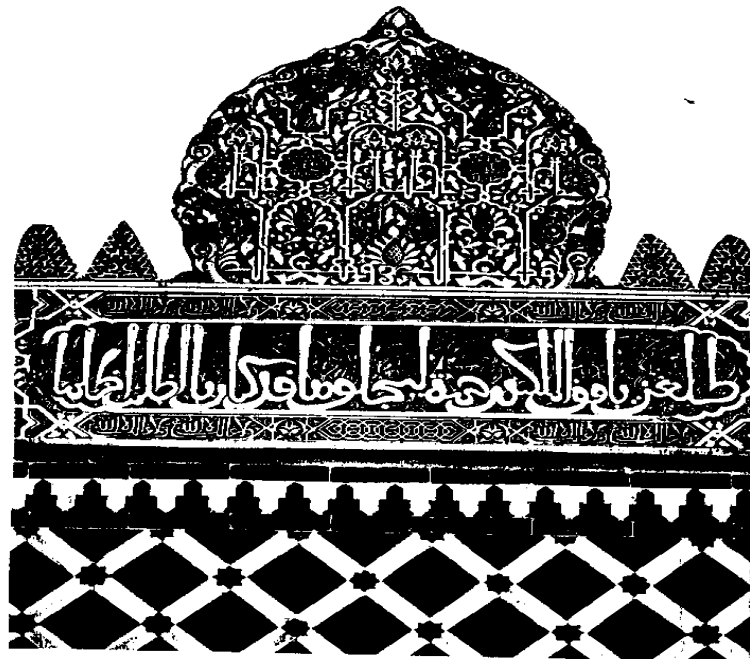
Another characteristic of that age was the abundance of bookstores and manuscripts' bidding bazaars, as exquisitely drawn manuscripts became put as masterpieces on the shelves of the rich. Moreover, public libraries spread, which were the perfect hangout of scientists, literature authors and poets.

²⁷ (Shohan, 2001, pp. 33-35)

²⁸ (Bahnasi, 1984, p. 96)

A small evidence of the sophistication concerning the Arabic calligraphy back then was a garment gifted from Henry VI to his son, Fredrick II. This garment was inlaid with magnificent Arabic calligraphy, which was crafted by a craftsman in Sicily in 528 H.²⁹

Moreover, until now, the Islamic civilization and its legacy, especially its calligraphic arts, still keep their imprints on the history and culture of modern-day Iberian Peninsula, a legacy of science, literature, and art.



Andalusian script sample, engulfed by Islamic geometric decoration

Figure: (Bahnasi, 1984, p. 42)

2.2.7 Arabic Calligraphy during the Fatimid era

The Arabic calligraphy was the center of attention during the Fatimids' rule in Egypt, where it has been inscribed on minarets, domes, hallways, the mansions of caliphs. They decorated the fronts of baths, public libraries, horse tracks, jails, and the rest of public utilities. The Fatimids have created the **Fatimid** and the **Fatimid Kufic** scripts, and each of them had its own independent identity and a following set of characteristics.

²⁹ (Hunke, 2001, p. 21)

It is told that a Fatimid inventor, which have bestowed it upon the Caliph, created the first prototype of reservoir pens; the caliph received the gift well, but ordered that such invention should not be publicized to the commons.

The Fatimid caliphate remained more than 2 centuries in reign (566-359 H), and it was the caliph, Al-Mu'izz li-Din Allah that had written its letters with reservoir pens.

Unfortunately, the fall of the Fatimid state was under the hands of the Ayyubids, the occupation of the Ayyubids had scattered the luxurious manuscripts within the libraries of the state, some were found, and some were ultimately lost. It was mentioned from AlMaqrizi³⁰ that: “books were piled outside the city, and the Ayyubids utilized the valuable covers as shoes”³¹

It is evident that the inheritors of the Fatimid legacy be it the Ayyubids (1169-1260 A.D.) or the Mamluks (1250-1517 A.D.) cannot deny the treasures they have found inside the Fatimids legacy. Those who occupied Egypt after then inherited all the progress this caliphate went through.

2.2.8 Arabic Calligraphy during the Ottoman era

The ottomans have inherited the art of calligraphy from the Tabriz school; this city has been a beacon in the book-related crafts, from manufacturing paper, cardboard, calligraphy stationery, decorating, gliding, and bookbinding manuscripts. Their Iranian masters were prodigies in those arts, of which they inherited their proficiencies. Many of famous Ottoman penmen had their own manuscripts copies of Quran reserved in Turkish museums, especially the Evkaf-ı Islamiye Müzesi in Istanbul.

The Turkish penmen excelled in writing those pocket-sized Quran copies in that era. In addition, since the Ottoman state was an Islamic caliphate, it kept on encouraging the spread of Arabic calligraphy – to the point that the Turks themselves incorporated the Arabic alphabet and vocabulary into their own.³²

³⁰ Taqi al-Din Abu al-Abbas Ahmad ibn 'Ali ibn 'Abd al-Qadir ibn Muhammad al-Maqrizi, a famous Egyptian historian.

³¹ (Pedersen, 1989, p. 133)

³² (Bahnasi, 1984, p. 93)

The craft of inscription was highly valued within the caliph court, as highly skilled penmen were rewarded generously, and brought further and nearer the royalties of that era, but it has not reached the level of indulgence the Arab caliphs had given them, as in rewarding those prestigious positions within the state, such as what happened with Ibn Muqla.

In the late periods of the Ottoman Caliphate, many penmen names were regarded and distinguished among the rest, of which I mention:

1. Sheikh Hamdullah Al-Amasy, who is considered the chieftain and Imam of Turkish penmen (1436–1520).
2. Hâfız Osman, (1642–1698) who had produced 25 Quran copies by his own hands, his copies were adopted around the Islamic world, especially by the infamous Mellah Press & Alhashemia Press in Damascus.
3. Seyyid Kasim Gubari, of Diyarbakır, (d. 1625) he is recorded as being responsible for much of the calligraphy of the Sultan Ahmed Mosque in Istanbul; he was commissioned to write verses from the Quran throughout the mosque.

We could call the Ottoman era as the golden age, the time of maturity for the art of Arabic calligraphy for the following reasons:

1. The Ottoman caliphate lays its reaches on a vast, multiracial, multicultural, and polytheistic terrain.
2. The rule of this caliphate remained for more than 4 centuries.
3. As the Islamic doctrine dictates the forbiddance of visual representation for humanoid & zoomorphic objects, the Muslim artists tried to fill this gap with concentrating more on botanic, geometric, and calligraphic decorations.
4. The caliphs supported scientists, litterateurs, and innovators, and won the prodigies of them over to their courts, many of those prodigious individuals were tutored on the hands of master penmen.
5. The caliph's personal penman used to receive 400 golden Ottoman Lira monthly.³³

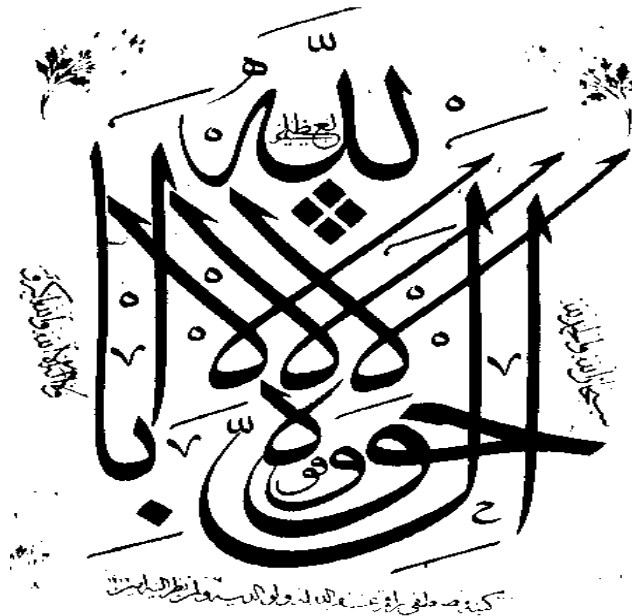
³³ (Zreiq, 1985, p. 38)

6. The Ottomans lived in opulent comfort, which has been a factor in increasing the demand for accommodation decorations, consequently increasing the price of artisanship.
7. In the shadow of the immense support laid down onto Turkish calligraphers, the latters were able to invent & create new varieties & scripts, such as **Ruqah, Tughra, Diwani**, among others.

Therefore, for such factors, it was no absurdity to see the Ottoman calligraphers to amass, protesting the establishment of the first national press in Istanbul. They paraded the city with a representation of their resentment in the shape of a coffin filled with inkwells and pens³⁴, foretelling the fall of creativity of handcrafted calligraphy over the modern press.

This era have held a numerous amount of proficient – if not prodigious – penmen, of which we mention:

1. Abdullah Alzuhdi [1296 H]
2. Ibrahim Alla'uddein [1305 H]
3. Mustapha Nazif [1331 H]
4. Hamed Al-Amadi [1980 H]



³⁴ (Zreiq, 1985, p. 38)

2.2.9 Arabic Calligraphy in Iran

The Iranians have managed throughout time to excel in the visual representation of calligraphic arts, in either Farsi or Arabic alike. They have invented the **Ta'liq** variety in the eighth Hijri century [fourteenth century], they have produced a hybrid variety that hailed from **Naskh** and **Ta'liq**, the **Nasta'liq** variety, which was invented by the famous Persian calligrapher **Mir Ali Tabrizi** (d. 850 H), who had set its rules and standards. It is also notable the Persian modification of the Kufic varieties, as they have had extended the vertical tips of characters more often.³⁵

We can observe that the climax of Persian calligraphers' excellence can be contemplated around the city of Mashhad, especially while visiting the **Imam Reza holy mosque**, and evaluating its magnificent, exquisite decorations.

Iran can be described as a land-wide museum of Arabic calligraphy; we can mention several landmarks containing amazing sets of calligraphic decorations in the following:

1. Jameh Mosque of Isfahan³⁶
2. Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque³⁷
3. Chehel Sotoun³⁸

We can also mention the many bridges that cross the Zayanderud River, such as **Khaju** Bridge, it was built by the Persian Safavid king, Shah Abbas II around 1650, on the foundations of an older bridge. The Khaju served as both a bridge, and a dam, this structure was originally decorated with artistic calligraphic tilework and

³⁵ (Bahnasi, 1984, p. 93)

³⁶ This mosque is the result of continual construction, reconstruction, additions and renovations on the site from around 771 to the end of the 20th century, its construction was commenced during the Umayyad reign. In addition, it has been a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 2012.

³⁷ It is one of the architectural masterpieces of Iranian architecture that was built during the Safavid reign. The construction of the mosque started in 1603 and was finished in 1619. It was built by the chief architect Shaykh Bahai, during the reign of Shah Abbas I of Persia.

³⁸ "The Forty Columns": it is a pavilion in the middle of a park at the far end of a long pool, in Isfahan, Iran, built by Shah Abbas II to be used for his entertainment and receptions.

paintings, and served as a teahouse. In the center of the structure, a pavilion exists inside, which Shah Abbas would have once sat, admiring the view.³⁹

The Persian Shahs have paid attention to the arts generally, and calligraphy especially. Rashid-al-Din Hamadani, a Persian diplomat, ordered the construction of **Rab' i-Rashidi**, a calligraphy school and workshop for producing books in the northeastern part of the city of Tabriz.⁴⁰

The art of calligraphy was not exclusive only on penmen, but even emirs, sultans, and shahs were interested in studying this fine art, as some were proficient in writing with **Naskh** mostly, and were finding bliss in copying Quran with their own handwriting, under the instruction of their calligraphy tutors. Of those monarchs, we can mention **Adud al-Dawla Buyid** (936-983), and **Tahmasp I** (1514-1576).⁴¹ In that time, masters of calligraphy had had their own prestige high to a level that made the young Tahmasp I kiss the shoe of his tutor once he arrived to his quarters.⁴²

2.2.10 Arabic Calligraphy in Europe

The Arabic art of calligraphy had been exposed on Europe by various termini, holding a different flavor with each time, because the circumstances of its exposure are distinct by time and location:

1. From central Asia, after conquering Constantinople on the hands of Ottomans.
2. By the Christian crusades throughout the Middle East, which exposed many European individuals, which hailed from different social & ethnic groups of Europe to the Arabic-Muslim culture.
3. After the Arabic conquests of Andalusia, and the spread of artisan schools throughout its terrain.
4. Through Sicily, when the Muslims entered the Italian terrain and besieged Rome.

³⁹ (Burke, 2010, p. 246)

⁴⁰ (Burke, 2010, p. 248)

⁴¹ (Bahnasi, 1984, p. 95)

⁴² (Bahnasi, 1984, p. 97)

With this, Europe was exposed to the Islamic arts, culture, and knowledge, including calligraphy, and the mathematical Zero.

Such influences and exposure is quite apparent in the doors & windows of churches & cathedrals, the mansions of noblemen and monarchs, as many of the Arabic calligraphic innovations were incorporated on, which is why now many museums in Rome, Paris, Vienna, and Amsterdam, hold many samples of Arabic scripts and varieties. Such thing is indicated by the words of Marseilles “the Islamic and Arabic arts had penetrated the European continent, to a degree that the its elements were present in cathedral and church decorations since the beginning of the 11th century, then we saw it mix up with gothic elements of France”⁴³.

The Ottoman conquest had evidently inflicted the most amount of exposure, as they penetrated Europe, reaching to modern-day Switzerland, leaving a heritage of Ottoman ruins, castles, garrisons, in addition to manuscripts, archaeological samples and relics.

The orientalist Sigrid Hunke had been a distinguished witness on the marvelousness of Islamic arts, especially what concerns Arabic calligraphic arts, of where she contemplated the decorative arts of this civilization, whether were it inscribed in mosques, baths, shrines, or the garments of monarchs.

⁴³ (Bahnasi, 1984, p. 115)

Chapter III

THE VARIETIES OF ARABIC SCRIPTS

INTRODUCTION

The art of Arabic calligraphy has been developing ceaselessly throughout all this time, commencing with a small beginning to become one of the most important portions in the Arab & Islamic culture combined. This process of enhancing, developing, and innovating calligraphy had consumed the relentless efforts of the brilliant penmen whom have depleted their spirits for the sake of delivering an abundance of aesthesia to the naked eye.

The Arab calligraphers have brought about many varieties of the Arabic scripts, such as Ibn Muqla as he created **Thuluth**, which has been derived from the **Tumarian & Aljaleel** scripts, he has titled it **Albadeea'** at first⁴⁴, furthermore, he managed to enhance it to an unequalled excellence. All of these contributions led him to be designated as the *Engineer of Arabic Calligraphy*, because he measured precisely the spaces between the features of the characters and its measurements.

Then came Ali Ibn Hilal, adding more grace & class to his master's innovations. In addition, Mumtaz Bek had set the standards of **Ruq'ah** script, deriving it from the **Diwani & Naskh** scripts. Mir Ali Tabrizi refined and developed the **Tawqi** script.

This is nothing but a discriminating reference to the beacons of which had contributed in the creation of this art, and its refinement until it reached its modern-day visual identity.

3.1 THE KUFIC VARIETY

Considered one of the most ancient varieties of the Arabic script, it has been derived from the Nabataean alphabet, which was employed in the northern side of the peninsula & Hauran region. This script was developed by the natives of **Hira & Anbar** region, to be spread eventually across the Arabian terrain.

⁴⁴ (Azami, 1977, pp. 64-65)

This script has been entitled after the city of Kufa, which had adopted it during its early stages, as its penmen kept copying Quran with it until the fifth Hijri century, when other varieties like **Naskh** and **Thuluth** began to rival it. The oldest sample of this script is an endowed copy of Holy Quran dated back to 785 A.D., this sample is reserved at the Egyptian National Library and Archives establishment in Cairo.⁴⁵

This script is characterized with its straight-lined letters, which is typically traced with a ruler, horizontally & vertically, this geometric accuracy results a rigidity that is resolved with coherent or incoherent decorations in the background.⁴⁶

Through the passage of time, the Kufic script has developed immensely, for it categorizes into more than seventy styles, all drawn with the ruler, of them we mention **Simple Kufic, Squared Kufic** – also called the **Geometric Kufic** –, **Interlaced, Adjoined, Whitewashed, Adorned, Garnished, Entwined, Andalusian, Fatimid, Ayyubid, and Mameluk Kufic.**

“The penmen of revelation used the Kufic to inscribe the verses of Quran on palm fronds, cattle hides, and delicate bone surfaces. Nonetheless, penmen inscribed Kufic in a primitive, simple manner during Jahiliyyah & Rashidun times, excluding the Hamza and diacritics”.⁴⁷

The Kufic has been recognized as one of the most exquisite varieties of the Arabic scripts, to a point where – back then – whomever mastered its inscription would be recognized as an artist, not a mere penman. Because this art was not exclusive to penmen, even marble chisellers and gypsum artisans had learned it.

However, the Kufic began to lose its popularity as an architectural decoration, substituted progressively by the **Naskh** script during the sixth Hijri century. “Hence, the western Islamic terrain began to use a new script, which is quite popular in Tarabulus, replacing the old Kufic. This script was known as **Naskh.**”⁴⁸

⁴⁵ (Kahala, 1972, p. 175)

⁴⁶ (Bahnasi, 1984, p. 120)

⁴⁷ (Zreiq, 1985, pp. 24-25)

⁴⁸ (Kahala, 1972, p. 177)

This script is utilized usually for decorating; Egyptian, Levantine, and Iraqi used it to inscribe Quran copies on papyrus during the ninth century to the end of the eleventh century, being replaced ultimately by **Naskh** all over again.⁴⁹



3.2 THE RUQA'H VARIETY

Which is the regular handwriting sort of Arabic script, it is known for its clipped letters composed of short, straight lines and simple curves, as well as its straight and even lines of text. It was probably derived from the **Thuluth** and **Naskh** styles. It is clear and legible, and is the easiest script for daily handwriting.

Some say that its title came from the ancient hide patches it was written with on. It was invented by the Turks circa 850 H, to be universalized through all state bureaus. The Ottoman penmen, Mumtaz Bek was the 1st to set its principles, during the reign of Abdulmejid I circa 1280 H.⁵⁰

This variety is purposed for writing newspaper titles, billboards and publication purposes; it is also worth mentioning that it had not been exposed to modifications as much as the other varieties.

Until this moment, the **Ruqa'h** variety remains as the most popular writing style in most of the Arabic-language lands.



⁴⁹ (Kahala, 1972, p. 175)

⁵⁰ (Aljawaheri, 1992, p. 65)

3.3 THE NASKH VARIETY

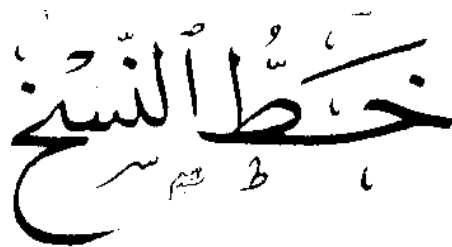
Regarded as the most similar script to **Thuluth**, perhaps we could say, “it is one of **Thuluth** derivatives; however it is less complex and more facile than it. Utilized mainly to inscribe Quran copies and it has developed to become the universal script for printing characters”.⁵¹

It is a beautiful script, and many ancient manuscripts were copied with it, it also can handle vocalization quite well, less than **Thuluth** nonetheless. It is also the most preferred script for inscribing Quran copies, due to its reading clarity.

The modern-day **Naskh** is the same one used by the Abbasids, and “enhanced by Ibn Muqla and the Atabegs, and refined by the Turks, until it reached us with its modern appearance”.⁵²

Newspapers & magazines now use it, and it is the most favorable script for printing publications of all sorts, the modernizers modified it to be applied unto presses and typewriter, as well as computed typesetters.

It is worth mentioning that one of the most distinguished modern-day artists in Naskh script is Hashim Muhammad Albaghdadi, his proficiency was quite clear in his book “Principles of Arabic Calligraphy”, which is recognized as a must-read to calligraphers of all levels.



3.4 THE THULUTH VARIETY

Considered to be one of the most exquisite, the most difficult scripts to inscribe, the king of all varieties, and the trial that defines the calligrapher’s mastery. Most of calligraphers might go lenient on following-up the conceptual principles of other varieties; however, they would never go easy through the execution of this variety, due to the intricacy of its principles.

⁵¹ (Bahnasi, 1984, p. 53)

⁵² (Zreiq, 1985, p. 80)

The Naskh script's evolution chain starts with the **Tumarian** during the Umayyad era, which produced two derivatives: **Muhaqqaq & Reyhan**, by the hands of Ali Ibn Hilal, to the **Tawqi & Reqa** consequently, to the **Musalsal** that was developed by Ibrahim Alshajari, leading finally to the regular **Thuluth**, and its derivatives: **Jeli Thuluth, Interlaced Thuluth, Geometric Thuluth, & Symmetric Thuluth.**⁵³

Penmen had used this variety to decorate mosques, niches, domes, manuscripts & Quran copies' initials. It was used by authors to inscribe books', newspapers' & magazines' titles, as well as it is used to inscribe & decorate invitation cards to all occasions. Many modern calligraphers are quite into this variety, but one of the most distinctive calligraphers in this time is Hisham Albaghdadi. It is also mentioned that the Iranians were solely proficient in inscribing **Nastaliq**, but many artisans in Tehran hold exquisite Iranian-made **Thuluth** portraits.

Ibn Muqla is considered the godfather of this variety, as he was the one who set and standardized its principles. Consequently, Ali Ibn Hilal enhanced it & added its own imprint without modifying Ibn Muqla's standards. Thus, it remained untouched up until today.⁵⁴



⁵³ (Zreiq, 1985, pp. 60-77)

⁵⁴ (Bahnasi, 1984, p. 53)

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ الْمَلِكِ الْقَيُّْمِ

اللَّهُ الْوَاحِدُ الْعَظِيمُ تَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ الْخَالِقِينَ
اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْكُفْرِ بَعْدَ الْإِيمَانِ وَمِنَ الضَّلَالَةِ
بَعْدَ الْهُدَى وَمِنَ الْهَوَانِ بَعْدَ الْكِرَامَةِ وَمِنَ الذُّلِّ بَعْدَ الْعِزِّ

الْعِزِّ وَالْخِزْيَانِ بَعْدَ الْقَبُولِ اللَّهُمَّ

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْهَمِّ وَالْحَمِّ
وَمِنَ الْخَمِّ وَالْحَمِّ وَتَمِّ
وَمِنَ الْهَمِّ وَالْحَمِّ وَتَمِّ
وَمِنَ الْهَمِّ وَالْحَمِّ وَتَمِّ

بَعْدَ فَنَاءِ خَلْقِكَ وَإِنَّ الْعِزَّ لِلْحَكِيمِ

Quran verses inscribed w/ Thuluth & Naskh scripts by Ahmed Karahisari
16th Century - Istanbul

3.5 THE PERSIAN VARIETY

Also known as **Taliq**, it has appeared in Persia circa 13th century, his letter are characterized with precision and its distinctive extensions, considered easy & complexity-free, and it does not handle vocalization quite well.

Pre-Islam Persians used the **Pahlavi** scripts, yet they abandoned it when Islam reached Persia, it is recognized that “the Persians derived the **Taliq** script from a local variety which was used to copy Quran; titled **Qairamuz** script, it is also told that **Taliq**’s principles were derived from **Tahreer, Reqa, and Thuluth** scripts...”⁵⁵

This script had its principles set by Mir Ali Tabrizi, which have relocated to Bukhara to teach the calligraphy traditions of Tabriz⁵⁶, he is also suspected to be **Zainuddein Mahmoud**’s disciple.⁵⁷

Due to the amount of attention the Persians gave to calligraphy, the Persian variety went through various phases, with each phase, this script had its roots dug deep into the Islamic calligraphy platform, such producing different variations of this script, as:

- **Shikasta script:** a derivative of **Taliq** & **Diwani** scripts. Has a degree of difficulty regarding reading it, due to its exclusiveness in the Persian terrain, and Arab calligraphers rarely used it.
- **Symmetric Taliq:** utilized for the purpose of inscribing poetic, proverbial, and Quran verses, in a way that the first & last letter of the sentence become congruent. It is also nicknamed **The Mirror Taliq**.
- **Omissive Taliq:** used to inscribe tableaus that contained phrases that had similarity in the morphological aspect of its characters, where one letter is adjoined to several phrases. This variety is difficult for both the calligrapher and the observer.⁵⁸

“I have observed the creativity of Iranian calligraphers during my visit to Iran in 1996, such creativity is apparent in the ruins, mosques, minarets, domes, and other architectural compositions which held calligraphic elements, whether was it in

⁵⁵ (Zreiq, 1985, p. 82)

⁵⁶ (Kahala, 1972, p. 184)

⁵⁷ (Azami, 1977, p. 83)

⁵⁸ (Kahala, 1972, p. 180)

Tehran of Isfahan. During this visit, I noticed two things that are scarce to reveal around the world: 1, cleanliness & the organized structuring of its streets, 2, the calligraphic decorations that filled the streets...the **Taliq** script is used abundantly in creating informative & advertisement publication titles, business cards, and to decorate copper plates, it is quite characterized with its right-to-left obliqueness”⁵⁹

The **Taliq** script was merged with **Naskh** to bring out the **Nastaliq** variety, which is attributed as well to **Mir Ali Tabrizi**, also **Mir Emad Hassani** whom is considered responsible for bringing out the most elegant aspects of this script with its famous “Qa’edat Emad” – Rule of Emad – which is still recognized and followed until this day.

The **Nastaliq** script is most famed in the city of Mashhad, where this script is a distinctive feature of it. “The **Nastaliq** is also featured with the width variation of its lines and the lack of interference between its letters”.⁶⁰

It was Hashim Muhammad Albaghdadi (1921-1973) & Muhammad Badawi Aldirani (d. 1967) that were famed for the proficiency in the **Taliq** scripts and its varieties. However, that the Iranians are unrivaled with this art.⁶¹

3.6 THE TAWQI VARIETY

It is a mixture of **Thuluth & Naskh** scripts, the probabilities tend between it being their origin or vice versa, it is also titled the **Ijaza** script, due to its primary purpose, inscribing certificates of graduation.⁶² It was invented by Yusuf Alshajari (d. 200 H) during the Abbasid era, the name’s origin is due to it being utilized mainly for caliphs’ signatures on official papers & letters.⁶³

It was enhanced by **Mir Ali Tabrizi** and it is still used by calligraphers to inscribe their disciples’ graduation certificates as an inherited tradition. It is also used to the purposes intended for **Thuluth**, as it handles vocalization as it does, “his letters are

⁵⁹ (Bahnasi, 1984, p. 53)

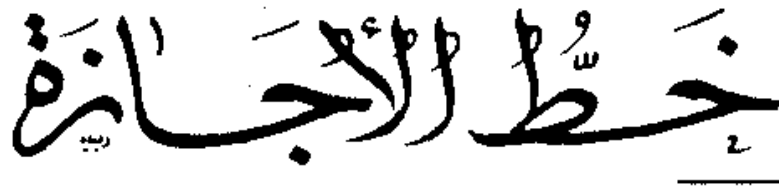
⁶⁰ (Azami, 1977, p. 77)

⁶¹ (Bahnasi, 1984, p. 53)

⁶² (Zreiq, 1985, p. 100) & (Azami, 1977, p. 77)

⁶³ (Azami, 1977, p. 77)

featured with some inclination in its tips, similar to the curves of basil leaves. Thus it is also common by the name of **Reyhan**”⁶⁴



3.7 THE DIWANI VARIETY

This script is also called **Hamayun** and **Ghezlani**, after the surname of the famous calligrapher **Mustapha Ghezlan**. Its distinct and harmonized style made it to be inscribed on the issues of Caliphs & Sultans, as it is used for all sorts of decorative purposes due to its elegance.

This script is characterized with its leniency, intolerability to vocalization, and the straight-line feature from the bottom. “This variety was created during the reign of Mehmed the conqueror (1432-1481), **Jeli Diwani** & **Sunbuli** are some of its styles.”⁶⁵

We could summarize the types & style of this variety into the following:⁶⁶

- **Coherent Diwani:** featured by its letters’ & phrases’ interlacing characteristic, **Mustapha Ghezlan** had added, throughout his life a sense of brilliance to this variation, naming the enhanced version after his name, **Ghezlani**.
- **Jeli Diwani:** This kind of handwriting is distinguished by the intertwining of its letters and its straight lines from top to bottom. It is punctuated and decorated to appear as one piece. The **Diwani** handwriting is known for the intertwining of its letters, which makes it very difficult to read or write by novices, and difficult to forge, it is enhanced and developed by **Mustapha Ghezlan**. “it was created by the brilliant ottoman calligrapher **Ibrahim Maneef** and gave it its known name...and of whom who got exquisite taste in executing its tableaus are the prodigious **Hashim Muhammad Albaghdadi**,

⁶⁴ (Azami, 1977, p. 77)

⁶⁵ (Bahnasi, 1984, p. 57)

⁶⁶ (Zreiq, 1985, pp. 93-99)

the **Sheikh Aziz Arrefai** in Egypt, and **Sheikh Naseeb Makarem** in Lebanon⁶⁷

- **Interlaced Jeli Diwani:** characterized by the pen-width spaces between each letter.
- **Hamayun Jeli Diwani:** was an exclusive specialization of Ottoman calligraphers, utilized in creating unique tableaux.
- **Scaphoid Jeli Diwani:** which is used to create ship-kin tableaux.



3.8 THE TUGHRA VARIETY

Also known as, the **Turra**⁶⁸, created by the end of the Abbasid era, it was inscribed exclusively for Caliphs and Sultans, from then the Mameluks & Ottomans adopted it.⁶⁹ It has mostly gone distinct after the fall of the Ottoman caliphate, but some calligraphers still utilize it in *Basmalah* as a tradition.

It is featured with two teapot-resembled loops, and three extended vertical lines of a *Lam*⁷⁰ or *Alef*⁷¹ through its middle, the loops extend circulating the whole body of the “teapot” to form the nozzle. “it is used to inscribe Sultans’ names, Quran verses, Hadiths, proverbs & idioms, and it all should be shaped on the same form”⁷²

⁶⁷ (Azami, 1977, p. 91)

⁶⁸ Means *The Forelock* in Arabic.

⁶⁹ (Bahnasi, 1984, p. 57)

⁷⁰ Arabic consonant for L

⁷¹ Arabic Vowel, which can be equivalent to A, U, E, according to its diacritics.

⁷² (Azami, 1977, p. 94)



3.9 THE TAJ VARIETY

It is an improvised image of Naskh script, yet it was given a more decorative sense by an issue from **Fuad I of Egypt** (1868-1936) to the Egyptian calligrapher **Muhammad Mahfouz**. The distinctive shape of the paragraph's first letter characterizes this style. As well as proper nouns' initials. However, the calligraphers who came after Mahfouz were not strict toward this rule, as they crowned letters when desired.

The Taj script is considered one of the scripts that did not have its share of popularity in artistic, commercial, and decorative works, as it remained utilized during the period of its creation only.⁷³

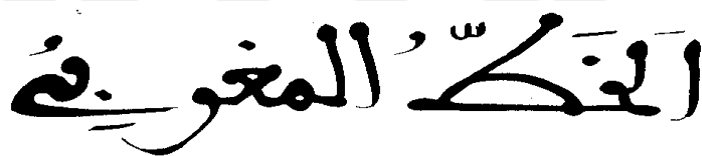


⁷³ (Azami, 1977, p. 97)

3.10 THE MAGHREBI VARIETY

Considered as one or the regional variation of the Arabic script, as it was not admired by the Iraqi, Levantine, and Egyptian calligraphers, this script had substituted the Kufic – which was dominant in Baghdad until the fifth Hijri century –. It was called with many names, such as the **Andalusian, & Cordoban**.⁷⁴ It is characterized by its letters' wide circularity. This script has kept on developing since the Andalusian golden age – circa eighth-ninth Hijri century – to become the dominating script in calligraphy – it & its types – where it prospered in Kairouan & Andalusia, after then it spread to the rest of the Tunisian region in the middle of the ninth Hijri century. With time, the calligraphers began losing their interest in this variety, so their inscription began to lose its brilliance and sense of details in all manuscripts – including Quran copied – between the fourteenth & fifteenth centuries.⁷⁵

Thus, this variety became an abandoned tradition.



3.11 TRANSCRIPTION OF QURAN⁷⁶

The transcription of Quran is defined as the principles set by Othman Ibn A'ffan concerning the writing of the letters & phrases of Quran verses, which its abidance lies in composing the letters & phrases to be completely in agreement with the be-spoken of Quran, sans additions, abatements, substitutions, or alterations.

Yet the Ottoman copies neglected these principles, as many were in conflict by good intentions, which grabbed the attention of Muslim scholars, where they worked to compile the phrases in conflict within the Ottoman copies, to result a six-staged categorization of the phrase count.

Considering these events, the scholars were divided into many hypotheses concerning the principles of Ottoman, being estoppels or mere idiomatic expressions. Of which mentioned **Zurqani**⁷⁷ three:

⁷⁴ (Azami, 1977, p. 97)

⁷⁵ (Bahnasi, 1984, p. 57)

⁷⁶ Quran Copies.

INTRODUCTION:

Those principles were direct laws, of which is intolerable to contradict or modify. The scholars whom are adopting this opinion are inferring to the prophet's old methods of instructing his revelation inscribers, precisely his command to Muawiyah: "Discard the inkwell, tilt the quill, erect the *Ba*⁷⁸, separate the *Sen*⁷⁹, do not suppress the *Meem*⁸⁰, Adorn the *Allah*, and extend the *Rahman*⁸¹, and enhance the *Raheem*⁸²".

During the reign of Abubaker, he commanded that Qurans were to be copied with the prophet's instructions & commands, where Othman inherited these commands and approved them along with the rest of the prophet's comrades. Thus, none of the mentioned or their descendants have conflicted these commands during the process of transcribing Quran, or thought about replacing the original scripts used with the new innovated scripts that had been invented with time.

We can summarize this hypothesis that the Ottoman method of transcribing Quran has become to be the sacred tradition that is forbidden to neglect, due to be commanded by the prophet himself, the consensus of his comrades, & eventually, the consensus of the nation scholars. It is an obligation to follow the prophet commands for all Muslims: "O, Muhammad, if you should love Allah, then follow me, so Allah will love you and forgive you your sins. And Allah is Forgiving and Merciful."⁸³

Thus, all these evidences indicate the absolute obedience to these principles and commands.

1. **Idiomatic Expressions:** such hypothesis is adopted by Ibn Khaldun, of which he had wrote in his *Muqaddimah*, where he questioned the authenticity of transcribing's inheriting process, & I quote "...then, the *Tabiun*⁸⁴ began to

⁷⁷ (Zurqani, 1996, p. 1\255)

⁷⁸ "B" in Arabic.

⁷⁹ "S" in Arabic.

⁸⁰ "M" in Arabic.

⁸¹ A name of Allah: The All Merciful.

⁸² A name of Allah: The Most Merciful.

⁸³ The Holy Quran 3:31

⁸⁴ They are the generation of Muslims who were born after the passing of the Prophet Muhammad but who were contemporaries of the prophet's comrades.

follow the transcriptions of the prophet comrades when they copied Quran, to be blessed by this honor. Others had traced the inscriptions of holy scholars, whether be it right or wrong. Yet, never do follow those imbeciles in their claims to be in accord with the prophet commands, as they were deluded that transcribing Quran is a form of perfection. Thus, they imprinted their flaws as rightful procedures to transcribe. That is not even close to correct.” “And know that the craft of transcribing is no form of perfection, where it is mainly an urban occupation, and a craft of the living. Thus, the prophet was blessed with perfection due to his illiteracy, abstained from all crafts and occupations.”⁸⁵

The famous judge & Islamic scholar Albaqillani⁸⁶ also supported this hypothesis in his book *Al-Intiṣār lil-Qur’ān*, where I quote “as for writing and transcribing the holy Quran, our merciful Allah had not instructed us with a certain or precise method or process to transcribe his book. There is nothing mentioned in Quran that imposes an exact script for it to be written with, and neither in his prophet’s Sunna. On the contrary, the Sunna had commanded it to be transcribed with any facile method. In addition, it had not prohibited none to not. Thus, the copies were differentiated in a morphological aspect. Some transcribed its letters by hearing recitations; some added & abated according to his commons’ writing ways, knowing that it understandable & comprehensible. For such reason, it was allowed to inscribe the *Lam*⁸⁷ as a *Kaf*⁸⁸, to bend the *Alef*, to transcribe it with the Kufic & the ancient letters⁸⁹, to be transcribed with those new developed letter shapes. The transcribing of Quran was not held with a strict set of laws regarding the shapes of the letters and phrases; it was only bent to suit each Muslim region’s letters and ways of writings.”

⁸⁵ (Ibn Khaldun, Muqaddimah [The Introduction], 2004, p. 419).

⁸⁶ Abu Bakr Muḥammad ibn al-Ṭayyib al-Bāqillānī, a famous Islamic scholar, theologian and logician (950-1013).

⁸⁷ Arabic equivalent to “L”.

⁸⁸ Arabic equivalent to “K”.

⁸⁹ The Nabataean script.

2. The third hypothesis is adopted by the author of *Altibyan*⁹⁰, and the author of *Alburhan*⁹¹. This hypothesis indicates writing & transcribing the Quran with the common scripts and letters of our time, and it is prohibited to transcribe it in the ancient Ottoman way, to prevent misunderstandings by the Quran readers. While keeping it transcribed with the Ottoman way to conserve it as a heritage of the Islamic nation.

Alnawawi mentioned in *Altibyan*: “Concerning the transcription – of Quran – on the common ways, the easterners had adopted it. However, the westerners had avoided it, in accordance to the words of Imam Malek, when he was asked about this subject; he answered “no, it has to be only written with the old ways””. **Azzarkashi** also mentioned in his *Alburhan*: “During this time, it is prohibited to transcribe our holy book in with the old Ottoman ways, to prevent its modification from the naïve. Yet it should be kept in Ottoman for the scholars and the understanding of its writings, for them to keep delving and understanding it as a reference for the common copies.”

The Quran used to be inscribed with the **Masahef** script, which is a variety of the **Thuluth**'s, while heeding the width of the pen, the superscription of the *Alefs* and *Lams*, the exact bending of *Hamza* and the diacritics, and finally measuring the letter-spacing effectively and accurately. Then the **Masahef** script was developed and replaced by **Muhaqqaq** eventually, then came after it the smaller version of **Muhaqqaq**, which is the **Reyhan** script.

Thus, the Quran copies began to be transcribed with either **Muhaqqaq** or **Reyhan**, which are the same script, as they only differentiate in size. However, if the diacritic dots were drawn wide, they were named **Jaleel Muhaqqaq** and **Muhaqqaq** respectively. But those two scripts were replaced by **Thuluth** and **Naskh**. Where one was used to transcribe normal-sized Quran copies, and the other for the smaller ones.

And if we present copies of Quran, transcribed in **Muhaqqaq**, **Reyhan**, **Naskh**, and **Thuluth** to a commoner, he'll think they're the same scripts.

⁹⁰ Abu Zakaria Yahya Ibn Sharaf al-Nawawī (1233–1277).

⁹¹ Abū Abdullāh Badr ad-Dīn Mohammed bin Abdullah bin Bahādir az-Zarkashī (1344-1392/ 745-794 H).

Chapter IV

THE CREATION & EVOLUTION OF THE MAGHREBI SCRIPT

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The Maghrebi script is a vast culture that had spread through the Maghreb & Andalusian terrains, from the Cyrenaica deserts of Libya, reaching to the borders of the Ebro River in the Iberian Peninsula. This terrain had been an overwhelming mixture of cultural & ethnographic elements; each of these elements contained its own unique set of characteristics. Arabs, Berber, Africans, and Europeans, Muslims, Jews, Christians, all citizens within this terrain, bustling with scientific, artistic, commercial, and cultural production, which consequently had spread throughout the three major continents.

The expression of *Maghrebi Script* is also called upon the varieties that has been created and innovated in the distant west, these varieties are the result of the frequent influence-waves from the east arriving through Kairouan, and the ones coming with the Andalusian migrations. Thus, the Moroccans adopted these influence-products and developed during the centuries that passed.

The Arabic writing system began to spread through the Maghreb hand-in-hand with the geographic broadening of Islam, the Berber accepted the language and religion wholeheartedly, studying, memorizing the Holy Quran, adopting the Arabic language & practicing the ways & methods of its writing, and retaining & developing their skills in its calligraphy one step at a time. Eventually, the Berber began utilizing the Arabic scripts & varieties of the east in their own manuscripts & writings, and with the consequence of centuries, they began to develop these calligraphic imports and modifying them according to the regional & cultural elements that they are exposed to. This continuous process of modification led to the creation of their own distinguished and unique script varieties.

Many factors have been incorporated to focus the attention given to the craft of Arabic calligraphy within the Maghreb region. Of which was the religious enthusiasm and having the Arabic language holding a sacred position due to it being

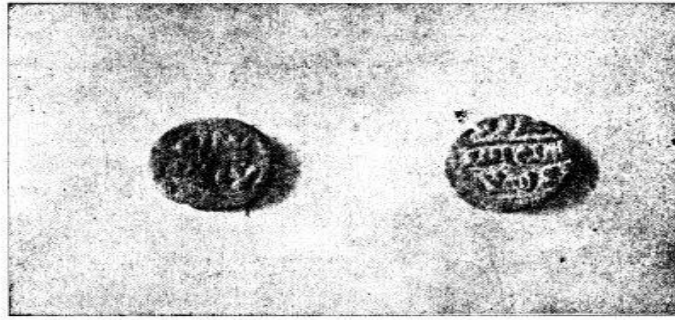
and the instrument that the Quran was transmitted through, then, the cultural factor, represented by the Berber's auto-incorporation under the cover of the Arab-Islamic civilization. In addition to the continuous utilization of Arabic within the bureaus of the state, academic studies and research, and in interpersonal communication eventually. We can also put in consideration the utmost need of this demographic group to its own writing system, since the alphabet of *Tifinagh*⁹² was extinct long before the Islamic conquests in North Africa, and the usage of Latin was only limited to the Roman or Byzantine ruled regions. Thus, the Berbers adopted the Arabic writing system wholeheartedly, & with which they have wrote their heritage in both Arabic and Tamazight.⁹³

There is quite a scarcity of inscribed materials that is dated back to the beginnings of Islam in North Africa. Yet, during the first waves of archaeological expeditions in morocco, researchers had found a copper-minted coin dating back to the reign of **Mussa Ibn Nusair** 711\92, holding an inscription that states "There is no god but Allah" on one side, & "Minted during the twenty-seventh year". The inscriptions of this coin were done in Kufic, which was the same script used to inscribe the famous Idrisid coins, following the traditions of minting in the east. Regardless of the scarce materials that had reached us from this era, it is quite confirmed the spread of Arabic writing system and calligraphy throughout the Maghreb terrain during the Idrisid caliphate reign. More specifically, during the reign of Yahya IV, which have commanded the establishment of the Al-Karaouine Library in Fez that contains some of the most famous manuscripts in the region.⁹⁴

⁹² Ancient writing system of Berbers.

⁹³ (Umar & Maghrawi, 2007, p. 29)

⁹⁴ (Afa & Maghrawi, 2007, p. 30)



Left: There is no god but Allah.
Right: Minted during the twenty-seventh year.

A copper coin minted during the reign of Musa Ibn Nusair, dated back to 92 H.

4.2 THE ESSENTIAL EVOIUTION STAGES OF THE MAGHREBI SCRIPT

The Arabic calligraphy has went through various stages throughout that period, which is indicated through the various inspected manuscripts & engravings. The Moroccan historian **Muhammad Almannuni** had documented these stages from the medieval until the modern era in his book *Tarikh Alweraqa Almaghrebeya wa Sena'at Almakhtut Almaghrebi*⁹⁵. Where he translated the works of many transcribers & papermakers during the Almoravids, Almohads, Marinid, Wattasid, Saadi, and Alaouite reigns of the region. Many of the researchers had traced his literature regarding the history of Maghrebi scripts, yet it yielded scarcely⁹⁶

The **Kufic** & **Hijazi** were the actual origins of calligraphic evolution in the west, as was the first's derivative: **The Iraqi Kufic** a major influence on the African scripts, developing to become the **Kufic Kairouani** that had evolved consequently to the **African** variety. However, the main influence on the Andalusian calligraphy was the **Levantine "Shami" Kufic** script; this influence indicated the domination of the Damascus-Umayyad cultural influence over the Iberian Peninsula, during the rise of the second Umayyad caliphate in Andalusia, emerged the **Andalusian** script with its curved letters, replacing the rigid characteristics of the regular Kufic.

During this period, three main schools pioneered in the craft of calligraphy, **The African, Andalusian, & Maghrebi schools**. It is undoubted that the mixture of these three schools' products will shape the visual character of the western Islamic

⁹⁵ The history of Moroccan papermaking and manuscripts.

⁹⁶ See: (Afa & Maghrawi, 2007, p. 50) & (Maghrawi, 2006).

regions' scripts and varieties, be it in Morocco⁹⁷, the central west, Africa⁹⁸, or the western regions of Sudan⁹⁹. We can summarize this evolution through the figure on the next page.

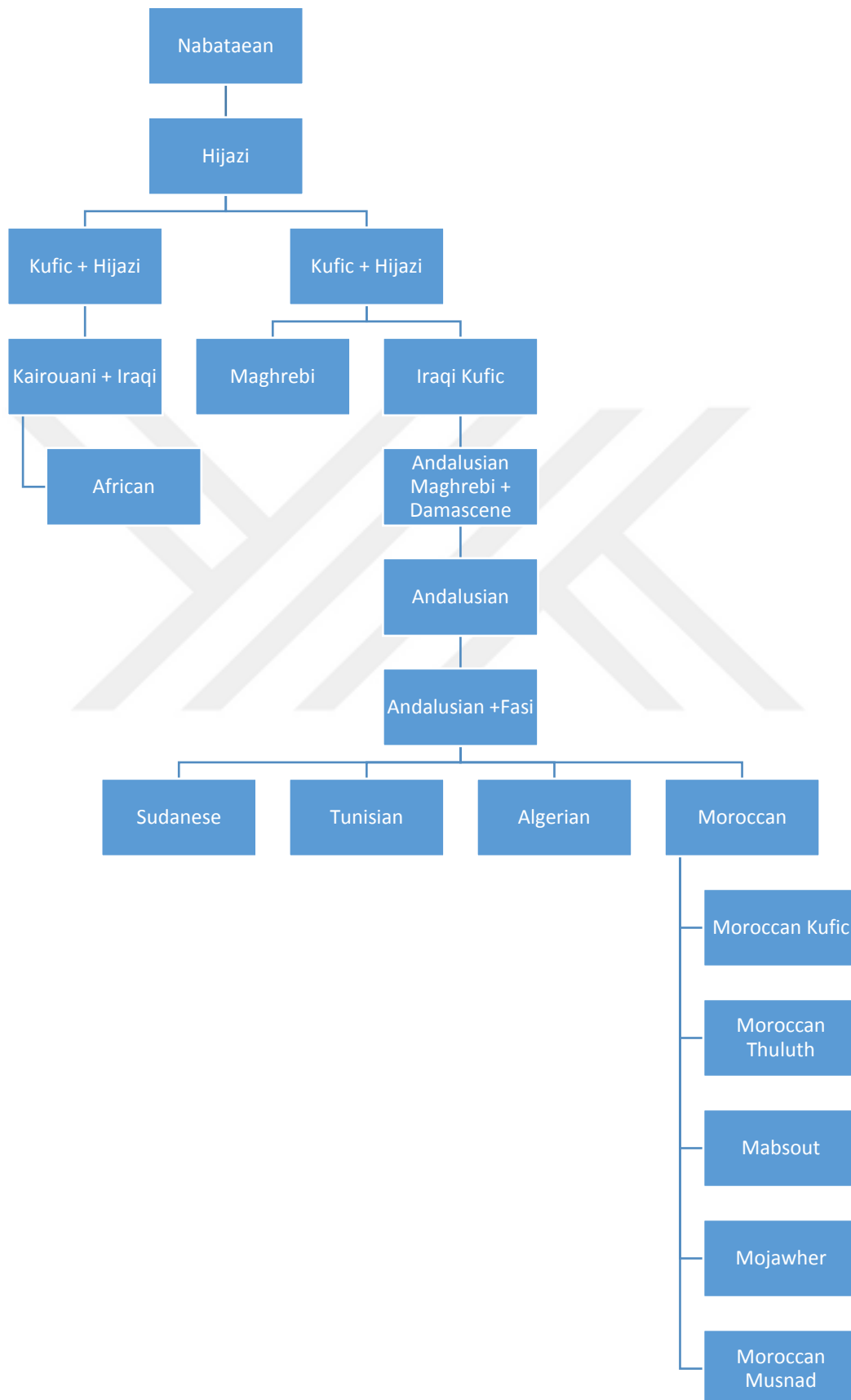
Through the figure below, we can realize that the first features of the Maghrebi script began to shape by the aforementioned schools in Kairouan, Morocco, and Andalusia respectively, and then the Arabic calligraphy began to set its roots within the occident, where the crafts of transcribing, calligraphic decoration, and inscribing began to prosper within the halls of Al-Karaouine mosque. This beacon has led its influence throughout the rest of the Islamic occident, and south to the Islamic-reigned regions in Africa, sub-consequently affecting the evolution of calligraphy with the interlacing of all these regions and its own cultural & calligraphic elements all together.

This continuous evolution and ceaseless mixture led to shape the features of the Islamic occident scripts ad varieties according to the regional characteristics of each terrain. Thus, it is best to state that the evolution of the Maghrebi scripts has gone through three main stages:

⁹⁷ (Ibn Khaldun, Muqaddimah [The Introduction], 2004, p. 258)

⁹⁸ See: (Abdullatif, Alkhatt Alarabi Fel Maghreb Alarabi Alkabeer [The Arabic Calligraphy in Maghreb region], 1984) & (Abdullatif, Men Tajalleyat Alkhatt Alarabi fe Tunis [The exquisiteness of arabic calligraphy in Tunisia], 2003)

⁹⁹ (Houdas, 1966)



1. **The Kairouani Stage:** during this stage, the evolution touched the Kufic script elements to develop it into the infamous **Kairouani Kufic**, where it lands a distinguished visual identity that separates it from the oriental ordinary **Kufic**.
2. **The Andalusian Stage:** characterized by the evolution of the **Kufic** as well, by adding softness & leniency to its letters, and utilizing the results in ordinary writing purposes. This continuous modification has led to the creation of the **Cordoban Mabsout** during the fourth Hijri century/10 A.D., adding the rotation characteristic into it. In this, we can refer to Al-Muqaddasi's book: *Ah'san Altaqaseem*¹⁰⁰, it is worth mentioning that the Andalusian school has affected the Maghrebi scripts directly.
3. **The Maghrebi Stage:** upon its early arrival from Andalusia to Morocco – circa the Almohads reign – the Andalusian scripts & variety ceaselessly developed by the local craftsmen & calligraphers, along with this, it began to lose its ordinary features & differentiate to what is known by the **Maghareba** or **Maghrebi script**.

This stage was characterized with the development of each, the Andalusian, and Kufic, which led to the emergence of several innovated samples of both varieties, and then the other scripts were developed in specific manner, leading to distinguish the Moroccan – or Maghrebi – calligraphy as an independent branch of calligraphic arts.

The aforementioned evolution stages and areas created the main Moroccan scripts, which we can summarize in the following:

1. **The Maghrebi Kufic**
2. **The Maghrebi Thuluth**
3. **The Mabsout**
4. **The Musnad/Zammami**¹⁰¹
5. **The Mojawher**

You can find samples of the five main divisions in the following pages.

¹⁰⁰ (Almuqaddasi, 1994, p. 239)

¹⁰¹ Not to be mixed with the *Nabataean Musnad*.

Samples of the five main Moroccan scripts

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
الحمد لله الذي هدانا لهذا
ما كنا لنهتدي لولا أن هدانا الله
والله ذو الفضل العظيم

Moroccan Kufic

ثم صرح أكتب في الكاغيد حتى استفام خضي وجاد،
وترونق أوكاد، بلا زمت ابن عمنا الشيخ مولاي أحمد
رحمة الله. وكان ذا أخك حسن، مرونق مستحسن، وكان
يعلمني انتظام الحروف واتسافها، ويفر لي النسبة من
الكتابة وتعرفها.

Mabsout

ثم صرح أكتب في الكاغيد حتى استفام خكي وجاد،
وترونق أوكاد، بلا زمت ابن عمنا الشيخ مولاي أحمد
رحمة الله. وكان ذا أخك حسن، مرونق مستحسن، وكان
يعلمني انتظام الحروف واتسافها، ويفر لي النسبة
من الكتابة وتعرفها ..

Mojawher

تُصِرُّ الْكُتُبُ فِي الْكَائِنَاتِ حَتَّى اسْتَفَاءَ خَطِيئِي وَجَاءَ
 قَرُونِي أَوْ كَانَتْ، فَلَا نَزِيهَةَ لِي مِنْهُ الشَّيْخُ دَوْلَى أَحْمَدَ
 بِرَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ. وَكَانَ مِنْ أَحْضَرِ أَحْمَدِينَ، دَوْلَى اسْتَفَاءَ
 وَكَانَ يُعَايِنِي أَنْظَارَ الْحُرُوفِ وَالْقِيَامَ فِيهَا، وَيُقَرِّرُ لِي
 النَّسَبَ مِنْ الْكِتَابَةِ وَيُعَرِّفُنِي فِيهَا...

Maghrebi Thuluth

نَحْنُ كُنَّا كُتُبًا فِي الْكَائِنَاتِ حَتَّى اسْتَفَاءَ خَطِيئِي وَجَاءَ
 قَرُونِي أَوْ كَانَتْ، فَلَا نَزِيهَةَ لِي مِنْهُ الشَّيْخُ دَوْلَى أَحْمَدَ
 بِرَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ. وَكَانَ مِنْ أَحْضَرِ أَحْمَدِينَ، دَوْلَى اسْتَفَاءَ
 وَكَانَ يُعَايِنِي أَنْظَارَ الْحُرُوفِ وَالْقِيَامَ فِيهَا، وَيُقَرِّرُ لِي
 النَّسَبَ مِنْ الْكِتَابَةِ وَيُعَرِّفُنِي فِيهَا...

Musnad/Zammami

4.3 THE EVOIUTION OF MAGHREBI VARIETIES THROUGHTIME

4.3.1 Earlier Islamic eras – until the end of Mughrawa & Ifranids reign

It was during the Islamic conquests that the Arabic scripts had spread through the Maghreb terrain, where its popularity began to increase among the local artisans during the second Hijri century. It was mentioned that the first penman to adopt the arabic calligraphy in that region was **Saleh Ibn Tarif Albarbari**¹⁰², where his talent began to emerge circa 127 H \ 744-745 A.D.¹⁰³. The prosperity of papermaking business had begun to appear in Fez since the end of the third Hijri century, during the reign of the Idrisid **Imam Yahya IV** (292-305H \ 904-917A.D.), as **Albakri**¹⁰⁴ proved that among his court, there were a number of papermakers to conduct his transcriptions. During this time, the papermaking craft in Morocco was way in no way a competent rival to this industry in Andalusia. According to Almuqaddasi¹⁰⁵, the people of Andalusia were unrivaled in the craft of papermaking, and their scripts featured curved letters.

The majority of researchers tend to believe that the Maghrebi scripts were completely submerged in utter eastern style, falling under the influence of the Muslim conquistadors, including the Imam Idris I and his oriental court, eventually, the rulers of this region began to tend into the Kairouani **Kufic & Naskh**.

It is consented upon that before the Almoravid reign were no signs or samples for the **Naskh** script. However, two main samples were discovered of the **Kufic**: the first, being a minted coin during the emirates reign in morocco, and the second was an inscription found on one of the Al Quaraouiyine mosque arcs in Fez, this inscription was due under the command of Idris II at 263 H \ 877 A.D.¹⁰⁶. In addition, an inscription of the aforementioned initials on a bronze mirror, which is now conserved within the walls of *Musée Cernuschi* in Paris¹⁰⁷.

¹⁰² (Ibn Hawqal, 1992, p. 82)

¹⁰³ (Ibn Khaldun, Al'ebar [The Lessons], 2009, p. 207)

¹⁰⁴ (Ibn Arabi, 1984, p. 132)

¹⁰⁵ (Almuqaddasi, 1994, p. 247)

¹⁰⁶ See: (Tazi, 1959)

¹⁰⁷ (Combe, Sauvaget, & Wiet, 1991, p. 143)

The craft of transcribing on papyrus was quite popular within the occidental region, according to Almuqaddasi¹⁰⁸, the Moroccans were still transcribing Quran & manuscripts on papyrus, and that was when he was in the midst of writing his book *Ah'san Altaqaseem* (370 H\980 A.D.).

Luckily, researchers had managed to recover the name of the first well-known Moroccan transcriber, which had lived through the last days of the **Zenata** tribe, the famous philologist **Saeed Ibn Suleiman Albasri**. He was mentioned in **Almadarek** tome as “this craftsman has seized and transcribed a vast amount of jurisprudence references; he hadn't kept a Quran interpretation manuscript without transcribing it”¹⁰⁹. However, this reference did not mention the birthdate or year of death, yet the death date of some of his tutor indicates that he lived during the first half of the fifth Hijri century.

4.3.2 The Almoravids Era

According to Ibn Khaldun¹¹⁰, the Andalusian script began to dominate and replace the Kairouani's during the reign of Almoravids. During this era, many Andalusian-styled penmen emerged, be them Moroccans, or Andalusian immigrants. Due to the competition between the Kairouani & Andalusian scripts, this appears on a satiric piece of poetry of seven verses that defames the Andalusian script by Yusuf Ibn Alqalai (d. 513 H \ 1119-1120 A.D.), as it was sent to Ibn Albara Altajibi, a litterateur of Algeciras.¹¹¹

The Islamic occident had known the industry of papermaking by this time, by the arrival of Yusuf Ibn Tashfeen, there were over than 104 Paper manufactories in Fez,¹¹² which indicated the spread of writing on paper – along with papyrus – in the Almoravid Morocco. Moreover, during that age existed a papermaking compound, of which have many Moroccan transcribers & papermakers have emerged from, alas, the only ones we know about today is no more than:

¹⁰⁸ (Almuqaddasi, 1994, p. 239)

¹⁰⁹ (Sabti, 1965, pp. 783-784)

¹¹⁰ (Ibn Khaldun, Muqaddimah [The Introduction], 2004, p. 367)

¹¹¹ (Ibn Alabar, Almuqtadab men Kitab Tuhfat Alqadem [The Summary of The Forthcoming Masterpiece], 2000, p. 8)

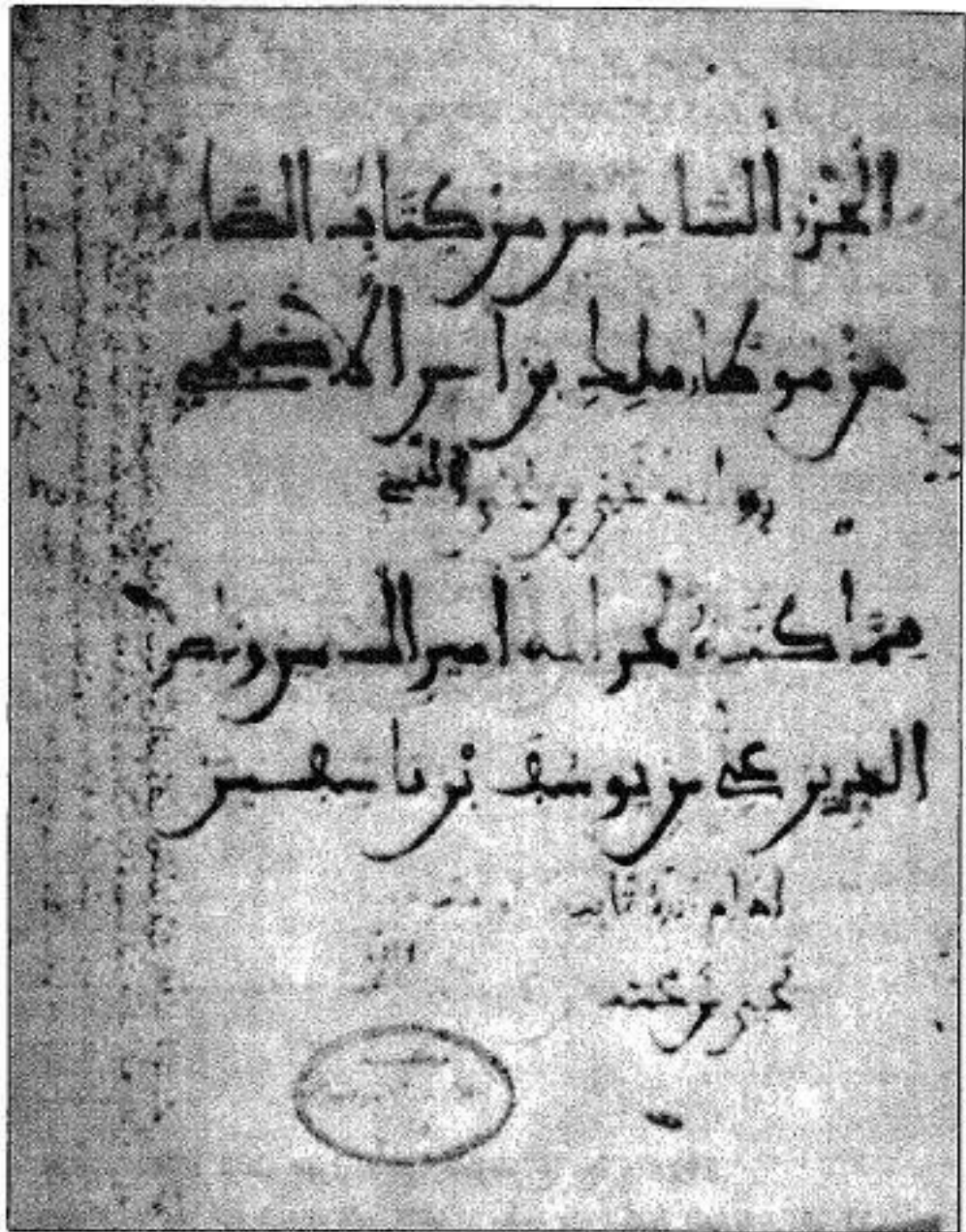
¹¹² (Zeiani, 1815, p. 277)

1. **Abdulmalik Ibn Abdulaziz Alshatibi:** a proficient papermaker & transcriber, and has transcribed the *Istedkar* [The Memorization], a book written by **Yusuf Ibn Abd Albarr**. He finished transcribing it by 498 H – 1105 A.D.¹¹³
2. **Yahya Ibn Abbad Allakhmi:** a papermaker of **Ali Ibn Yusuf Almoravidie**, transcribed a papyrus copy of *Almaot'a* [the footprint] by Imam Malek, in a precise Andalusian calligraphy, the remains of this transcription is currently reserved in the National Library of Fez, this copy was transcribed by him in Marrakesh by 503 H \ 1110 A.D.
3. **Abubaker Ibn Tuqsoot:** deceased in 539 H \ 1149 A.D., “wrote with his pen, a colossal amount of knowledge”¹¹⁴
4. **Ayyad Ibn Musa Alyahsebi Alsabti:** deceased by 539 H \ 1145 A.D.
5. **Ahmad Ibn Abdullah Ibn Hisham Allakhmi:** a Moroccan papermaker that had immigrated to Egypt since 533 H until his death in 560 H \ 1164. He taught his wife and daughter his craft so they can share the workload, to a point where their handwriting cannot be differentiated.¹¹⁵

¹¹³ (Ansari, 2012, p. 79)

¹¹⁴ (Ibn Alabar, *Altakmila Le Kitab Alsila* [The Continuation of the "Connection" book], 1994, p. 257)

¹¹⁵ (Alqafati, 1982, pp. 67-68)



The 1st page of the Almoravid papyrus copy of Almaot'a, transcribed in Mabsout script by Yahya Ibn Abbad Allakhmi

4.3.3 Almohads Era

It is considered as the golden age of Moroccan papermaking, where many local transcribers had excelled, be those professional Quran transcribers, or manuscript transcribers. Those prodigious calligraphers had diversified the scripts' derivatives into western & eastern styles. Moreover, this era was distinguished with book-decorators & binders, the industry of paper had prospered.

What indicated the rise of calligraphy during that era was the caliphs' special attention towards this craft, where they began to hire penmen to teach their offspring the foundations of calligraphy. It was mentioned by Ibn Alabar in *Althayl wal Takmila*, that **Abdulwali Ibn Muhammad Albalnaci** (d. 570 H \ 1223 A.D.) had tutored the sons of the Almohad sultan, **Abdullah Ibn Suleiman Alansari** (d. 612 H \ 1215 A.D.), which had been hired to teach the sons of **Almansour**, as well as **Muhammad Ibn Ibrahim Almursi**, (d. 641 H \ 1244 A.D. Marrakesh) which was a prodigy in the eastern Andalusian ways. The sons of Almohads caliphate, **Abdulmo'men** had thirteen distinguished sons in the art of calligraphy, one of them being admired by the Andalusian poet **Ibn Mujber**¹¹⁶. It is worthy to say that most of the Almohad caliphs were proficient in inscription with various scripts; they as well used to sign their documents and letters with the eastern **Thuluth** script¹¹⁷. The Caliph **Almurtada** was able to inscribe with three different scripts.

The first public center of transcription was established during the reign of the aforementioned caliph, which was named on his name, endowed with the purpose of transcribing or reading transcriptions of various manuscripts. The document of endowment was issued and registered by 658 H.

Bookbinding was also a distinguished and a prosperous industry during this era, so does mentions **Ibn Tufail**¹¹⁸, describing the dedication of **Abdulmo'men**, the caliph, with finalizing the process of binding of the new Ottoman Quran transcription, after delivering it from Cordoba to Marrakesh "...Thus the distinguished craftsmen &

¹¹⁶ (Mannoni, *Aluloom wa Aladab wa Alfunoon ala ahd Almowahedeen* [The Arts, crafts, & science during Almohads reign], 1977, p. 271)

¹¹⁷ (Mannoni, *Aluloom wa Aladab wa Alfunoon ala ahd Almowahedeen* [The Arts, crafts, & science during Almohads reign], 1977, p. 270)

¹¹⁸ (Telemsani, 1968, p. 268)

artisans gathered of all crafts and art: Engineers, jewelers, composers, decorators, engravers, layers, carpenters, painters, bookbinders, and chief builders...”

Luckily, Ibn Tufail managed to record a name of one of these craftsmen, **Umar Ibn Marji Al-Eshbili**, who was a participating jeweler in the process of creating this copy.





Almohad-esque decorations of an exquisite transcription of Almaot'a, crossed by kufic inscriptions.

Thus, the industry of papers & ink had prospered, where Fez, itself held over than 400 paper manufactories during the **Almansour** and his son reigns – along with Ceuta, which had its paper named after it –, these units were stationed & centered near Zeitoun valley, but they all went to ruins due to the starvations and turmoils in the end of this era.¹¹⁹

The industry of papermaking spread from Morocco & Andalusia to the rest of Europe, as in the ends of the thirteenth century, the first paper manufactory was established in Italy, in 1390, another paper manufactory was established in Nuremberg, Germany. In addition, a primitive manufactory in France, which was built in the mid fourteenth century, and in England, the first paper manufactory goes back to 1588.¹²⁰

Of the many landmarks in the city of Fez, remained **Bab Alwarraqueen “The Papermakers door”** which was one of the Al Quaraouiyine mosque doors. We can summarize the main transcribers of this era in the following list:

1. Muhammad Ibn Alsaqr Almarrakshi (d. 590 H \ 1193 A.D.): was famed for his speed and quality of his transcriptions as Ibn Abdulmalik mentioned.¹²¹
2. Ateeq Ibn Ali Alsanhaji (d. 595 H \ 1198 A.D.): transcribed and inscribed a vast amount of knowledge.¹²²
3. Muhammad Ibn Ahmad Ibn Marzouq Alsabti (d. 596 H \ 1199 A.D.): who had transcribed a numerous amount of writings with a high sense of quality.¹²³
4. Muhammad Ibn Ali Alansari (d. 662 H \ 1263 A.D.): a proficient & dedicated transcriber, distinguished with transcribing enormous books & tomes.¹²⁴
5. Yusuf Ibn Yahya Ibn Alhaj Almahri: he was mentioned by Ibn Abdulmalik¹²⁵ with his dedication to the craft of transcription, while there was no mention of

¹¹⁹ (Mannoni, *Aluloom wa Aladab wa Alfunoon ala ahd Almowahedeen* [The Arts, crafts, & science during Almohads reign], 1977, pp. 29, 34)

¹²⁰ (Mannoni, *Aluloom wa Aladab wa Alfunoon ala ahd Almowahedeen* [The Arts, crafts, & science during Almohads reign], 1977, p. 256)

¹²¹ (Ibn Alabar, *Altakmila Le Kitab Alsila* [The Continuation of the "Connection" book], 1994, p. 2433)

¹²² (Ibn Alabar, *Altakmila Le Kitab Alsila* [The Continuation of the "Connection" book], 1994, p. 1061)

¹²³ (Ibn Alabar, *Altakmila Le Kitab Alsila* [The Continuation of the "Connection" book], 1994, p. 2133)

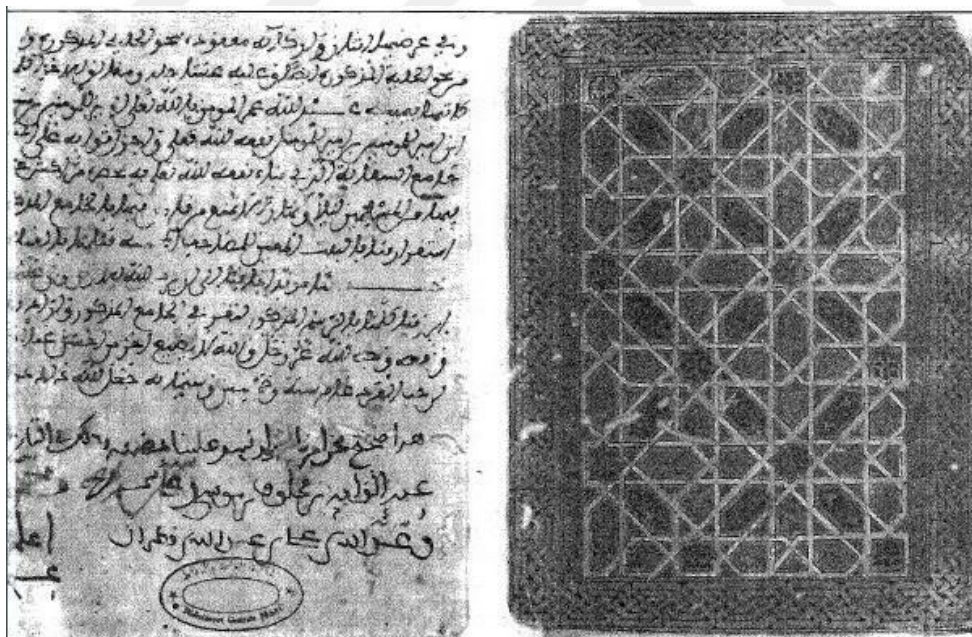
¹²⁴ (Siotti & Abubaker, 1980, p. 77), (Ibn Alqadi, *Jathwat Al'eqtibas* [The Climax of Quotations], 1973, p. 144)

other vital information such as his death date. Nevertheless, all that is left about him was “He was always transcribing for governors, and jurisdictional conflicts, however, he hadn’t left a famous book without transcribing it. I saw his works and you wouldn’t believe that he had transcribed more than one hundred volumes in a period that is not long”.

6. Abu Hafs Umar Almutada Ibn Yusuf Ibn Abdulmo'men (d. 665 H \ 1267 A.D.): an Almohads caliph, famed in transcribing Quran, to this day, remained two works by his hands:

A. A Quranic *Raba'a*, transcribed within ten volumes, he wrote in (654 H \ 1256 A.D.) with Moroccan Mabsout, and signed the ends of sections with eastern Thuluth, and finally signing its endowment document with eastern Naskh, which indicates that he was proficient in both the western and eastern ways¹²⁶.

B. A transcription of Imam Malik's *Almaot'a* in two volumes, transcribed this manuscript from an approved copy by the region sheikhs.¹²⁷



Almohadesque decoration on a page of the Quranic *Raba'a* which has been inscribed by Umar Almutada the caliph, along with an endowment document G.L. Rabat 1278

¹²⁵ (Ansari, 2012, p. 1705)

¹²⁶ (Mannoni, *Aluloom wa Aladab wa Alfunoon ala ahd Almowahedeen [The Arts, crafts, & science during Almohads reign]*, 1977, p. 41)

¹²⁷ (Mannoni, *Aluloom wa Aladab wa Alfunoon ala ahd Almowahedeen [The Arts, crafts, & science during Almohads reign]*, 1977, p. 42)

During this period, two women settled in Morocco, whom are Andalusian transcribers & papermakers:

1. Saeeda Ben Muhammad Alumawi.
2. Warqa'a Ben Hajja Tulaytelia (d. 540 H \ 1146 A.D.): a famous transcriber whom lived in Fez.¹²⁸

Of the other Andalusian papermakers whom settled in Morocco:

1. Ahmad Ibn Abdurrahman Ibn Alsaqr (d. 569 H \ 1173 A.D.): settled in Fez, mentioned by Ibn Abdulmalik that he had a massive amount of transcribed tomes, and he was famous by the accuracy and quality of his transcriptions.¹²⁹

One of the main characteristics of this era, that the Almohad calligraphers had the ability to inscribe and transcribe in different scripts, as we mentioned with the Caliph Umar Almutada, of these distinctive calligraphers we mention:

1. Ubaidullah Ibn Ali Alumawi (d. 581 H \ 1185 A.D.): settled in Marrakesh, where he knew the ways of two Andalusian scripts¹³⁰.
2. Ali Ibn Yahya Alansari Altelemsani: had lived in Seville, Marrakesh, and several other cities, his death date is not mentioned, but he was proficient in both eastern & western scripts.¹³¹
3. Muhammad Ibn Isa Al'azdi Alqurtubi (d. 620 H \ 1223 A.D.): whom had settled in Marrakesh and died in it, mentioned by Ibn Abdulmalik that he was proficient in all the transcription ways, and he wrote in different 13 ways gloriously.¹³²

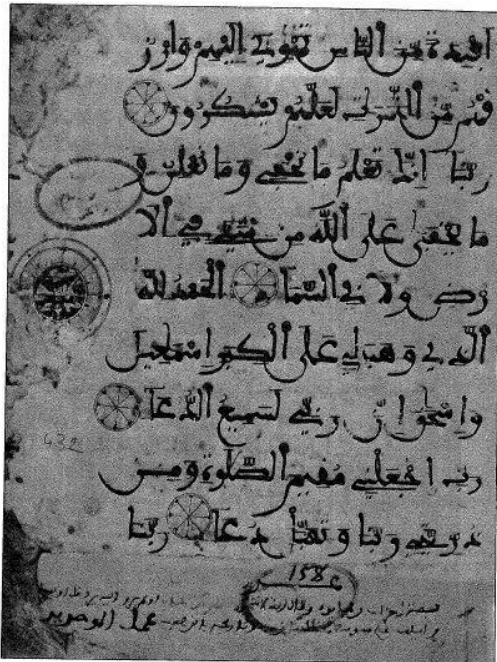
¹²⁸ (Ibn Alqadi, *Jathwat Al'eqtibas [The Climax of Quotations]*, 1973, p. 335), (Ansari, 2012, p. 253)

¹²⁹ (Ansari, 2012, p. 114)

¹³⁰ (Ibn Alabar, *Altakmila Le Kitab Alsila [The Continuation of the "Connection" book]*, 1994, p. 1516)

¹³¹ (Ansari, 2012, p. 1705)

¹³² (Ansari, 2012, p. 1705)



A page of the Quranic Raba'a, written with Umar Almutada in Mabsout script by 654 H \ 1256 A.D.



Sample of The Kairouani Kufic script

4.3.4 Marinids & Wattasids Era

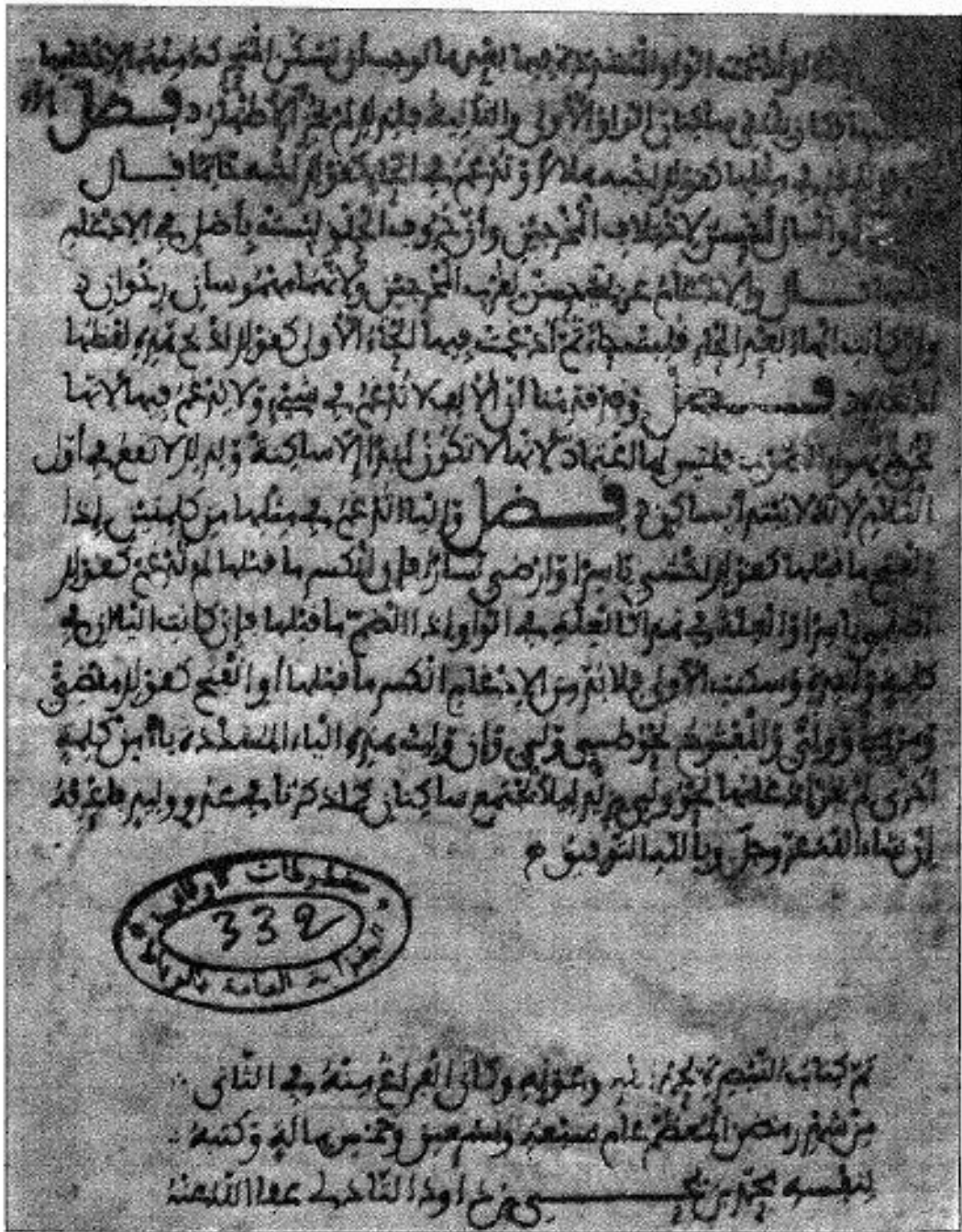
Ibn Khaldun has spoken about the Marinid reign, mentioning “a new variety of the Andalusian script had been created during the Marinids reign, due to their vicinity to Andalusia. Thus, it has been used in all governmental issues and paperwork”¹³³ “where in the suburbs the books and manuscripts began to be transcribed in Bedouin scripts, the Berbers copying them in arrant scripts”¹³⁴

The researchers have recognized that this “new Andalusian variety” is the almost-finalized type of Maghrebi script, as it is quite differentiated from the Andalusian varieties, one of its characteristics that it does not put the dots on the last letter of the phrase if it was a *Noon*, *Fa'*, *Qaf*, or *Ya*¹³⁵. Thus, the scripts of this era were distinguished into Urban Maghrebi, Bedouin Maghrebi, & Andalusia, as the latest was specialized by a few.

¹³³ (Ibn Khaldun, Muqaddimah [The Introduction], 2004, p. 367)

¹³⁴ (Ibn Khaldun, Muqaddimah [The Introduction], 2004, p. 369)

¹³⁵ Arabic equivalents of N, F, Q, and I.



an early sample of Maghrebi Andalusian scripts: G.L. Rabat 332.

During this age, the Maghrebi script has been categorized in five varieties:

1. Mabsout: Found in old Quran transcriptions, and it was used in the lithography of Moroccan Quran copies.

2. Mojawher: The most popular variety, utilized in inscribing Sultanate paperwork and letters, with which in addition had been inscribed the scientific tomes during the reign of the Alaouite sultan Muhammad IV.
3. Musnad or Zammami: used for sultanate registries and Diwans.
4. The Eastern: derived from the oriental varieties, yet it has been occidented in style by the Moroccan calligraphers, used to inscribe book titles and prologues, it is usually inscribed with *aqua regia* and exposure to heavy decoration.
5. Kufic: which is what we find on most papyrus manuscripts, stone-engraved on the gates of some cities, and gypsum-engraved on the walls of schools, mosques, and the tombstones of caliphs and emirs.

During the Marinid era, the industry of papermaking was grasped more by the Moroccans, the prodigious of Quran transcribers, scientific transcribers, and some were specialized in transcribing a certain type of manuscripts, as well emerged numerous grammar & calligraphy editors.

Thus, the public Marinid libraries became centers to check and transcribe manuscripts, which is indicated by two endowment documents:

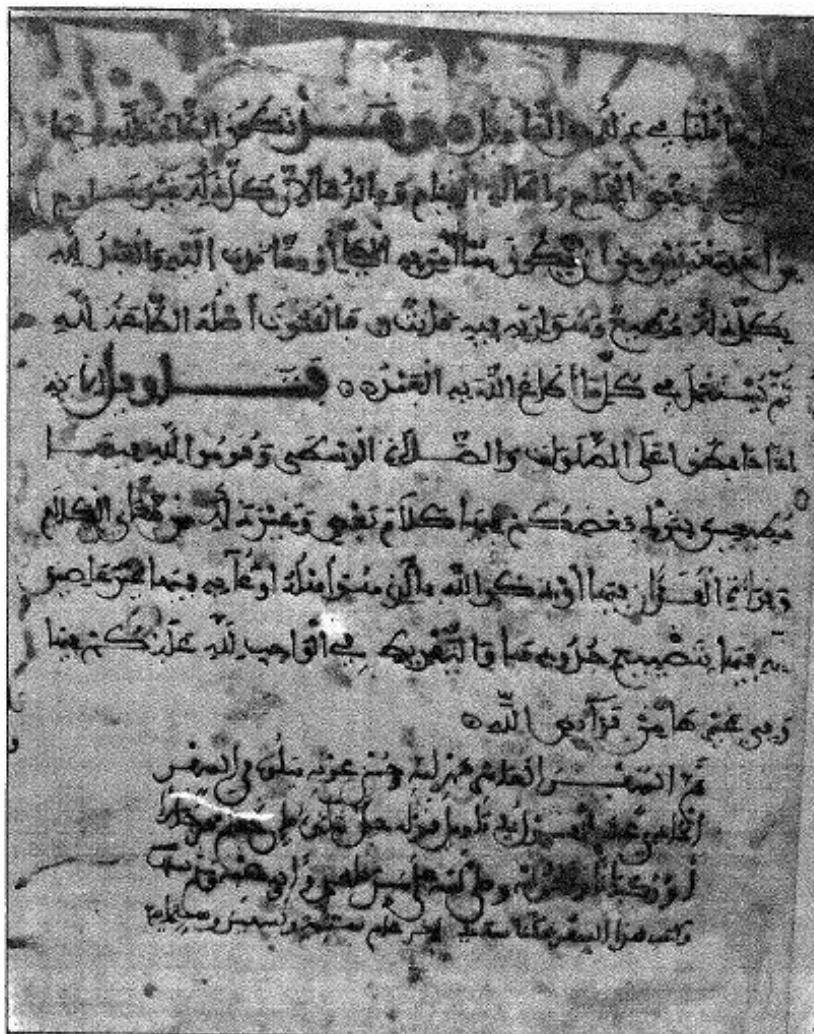
1. An endowment letter of the Andalusia school in Fez, which was issued by the Sultan Abulhasan Almarini in 728 H. "...to be used for transcribing, studying, reading without waiving the copies..."
2. The second letter is still reserved in the Anania library of the Al Quaraouiyine mosque, signed by 750 H. "all are permitted to read, transcript, and study the manuscripts. It is forbidden to take the manuscripts off the storage of this library."

It was also one of the main characteristics of this era, the increasing attention given to the bookbinding craft, where Ibn Khaldun speaks of the Quranic Raba'a that was written by the sultan, "he summoned upon all crafty papermakers for the purpose of gilding and decorating it"¹³⁶. The glory of bookbindery is quite comprehended through the description of the Quran transcriptions of Yusuf Almarini and of

¹³⁶ (Ibn Khaldun, Al'ebar [The Lessons], 2009, pp. 226, 265)

Abulhasan Alamrini¹³⁷. One of the famed bookbinders of that era was Yusuf Ibn Ali Ibn Abdulwahed Almiknasi (d. 770 H \ 1369 A.D.); he was nicknamed as the chieftain of bookbinders.

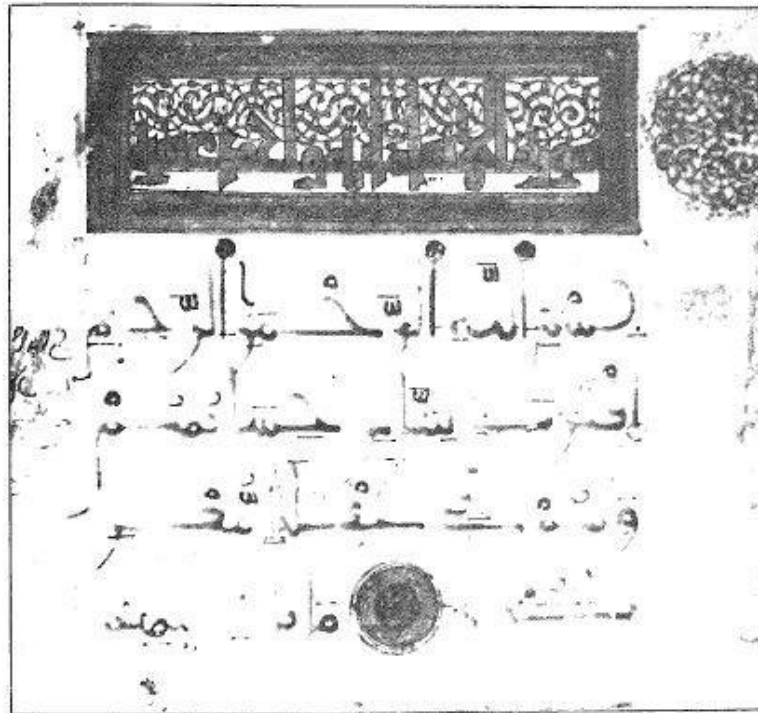
I have no information regarding its activities during this period. However, according to Sakhawi¹³⁸, during the ninth Hijri century, the city of Fez was still producing paper, and in this period, a resident Moroccan papermaker arrived in Egypt by the name of Abdullah Ibn Muhammad Alsusi (d. 803 H \ 1401 A.D.), and he was quite precise and quality-oriented in his craft.



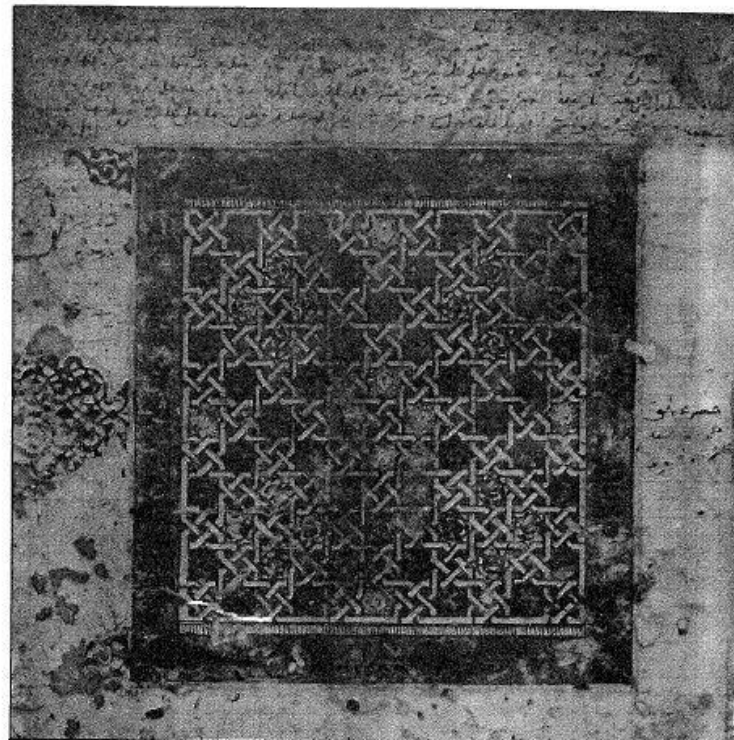
Sample of Mojawher script: a page of Jami' Albayan [The Collector of information] by Ibn Jubair Altabari - Ibn Yusuf Library - Marrakesh No. 559.

¹³⁷ (Ibn Khaldun, Al'ebar [The Lessons], 2009, p. 265)

¹³⁸ (Sakhawi, 1992, p. 57)



Sample of the Mabsout script, titled with Kufic in a rectangular frame [Quranic Raba'a] - Karaouine Library



Marinid decoration, in the 1st portion of a Quranic Raba'a, on top of it inlaid an inscription with Musnad - Karaouine Library.



a sample of Moroccan eastern scripts, inscribed into a decorated border - G.L. Rabat 46.



Sample of Moroccan Musnad: Last page of Manahej Althahseel [Book of Comprehension] by Alrajaji - G.L. Rabat 88

Here is a list of renowned papermakers during the Wattasid & Marinid era, some of them are also considered as bookbinders:

1. Sara Ben Ahmad Ben Othman Alhalabia: deceased in Fez, during the reign of Abu Yusuf Almarini, she was a proficient papermaker, and a precise book gilder.¹³⁹
2. Muhammad Ibn Ibrahim Abu Altayeb Alsabti (d. 695 H \ 1296 A.D.): he transcribed the book of Sibawayh, and the book of his tutor *Sharh Aleydah* [The Explanation of Clarification], among others.¹⁴⁰
3. Abu Yahya Ibn Fakher Alsallawi (d. 712 H \ 1313 A.D.): in his late days resided in Ait Atta Mountains where he took transcription as a job.
4. Abu Abdullah Alzari Alsabti: outshined in papermaking, he and his transcriber\brother.¹⁴¹
5. Ahmad Ibn Ali Ibn Ahmad Alsanhaji: the transcriber of the famous *Albayan Wa Altahseel* of Ibn Rushd, of which he completed by 720 H \ 1320 A.D.

¹³⁹ (Abdulwahab, 1965, pp. 114-116), (Ibn Alqadi, Jathwat Al'eqtibas [The Climax of Quotations], 1973, pp. 324-331)

¹⁴⁰ (Aladfawi, 1961, p. 263)

¹⁴¹ (Ibn Mansur, 1948, p. 176)

with a delightful accurate lines, along with decorative portraits on the covers, containing 78' 380\320 638 pages. Where it was written in this book's end "With the strength of Allah, I have finished the transcription of the 9th volume of this book. And it was done by the 26th of Rajab, 720 H. by the hands of the humble servant Ahmad Ibn Ali Ibn Ahmad Alsanhaji"

This transcription also holds an endowment document issued by Abulhasan Almarini, which is dated by 720 H/1328 A.D.; this document is available at the Karouine Library under Ref. K2.

6. Muhammad Ibn Ibrahim Alghafiqi Alsabti (d. 712 H \ 1313 A.D.): a brilliant papermaker.¹⁴²

To here, I have mentioned a number of distinguished Maghrebi script transcribers and papermakers in this period, yet the papermakers who were solely concentrated on inscribing with the eastern ways are two, one of Ceuta, and the other is from Morocco without finding a reference that indicates his hometown, whom they are:

1. Othman Ibn Umar Ibn Abdullah Alsabti: he inscribed the interpretation of Allah's holy names for Abulghasem Alqushairi, and mentioned in its closure that he transcribed a copy for himself by 712 H.
2. Hassan Ibn Yahya Almaghrebi: which was the name he inscribed in his transcription of *Sharh Alalfia* of Badruddein Ibn Malik. This manuscript was written in an exquisite eastern script, and had finished it by 733 H; this copy is currently reserved in the Moroccan Royal Library under Ref. 6142.

As I had mentioned earlier, here is a list of the distinguish grammar & calligraphy editors of that era:

1. Muhammad Ibn Rashied Alfehri.
2. Abulghasem Altajibi.
3. Abu Abdullah Alruaini.
4. Abdulmuhaymen Alhadrami.
5. Abu Zakaria Yahya Assarraaj.

The first four are of Ceuta, and the fifth is from Fez.

¹⁴² (Ibn Mansur, 1948, p. 177)

4.3.5 The Saadi era

The reign of this dynasty had been considered as an era of modernization, which has reached several aspects of Moroccan life – including the industry of papermaking – where it has gained a suitable improvement. This included the construction of the first school to teach the art of calligraphy in Marrakesh, headed by the prodigious calligrapher Abdulaziz Ibn Abdullah Alsaktani (Born 956 H \ 1549 A.D.), which have been mentioned by Ibn Alqadi¹⁴³ along with the eastern calligraphy ways he brought along. Ibn Khaldun also states regarding this school “and he had several teachers that instruct the drawing of letters with certain rules. Thus making the learner retain and comprehend the way of these letters, he – Abdulaziz Alsaktani – had taught them well, in a scientific crafty way”¹⁴⁴

This is a small glimpse about the calligraphy school that was constructed within the walls of Alashraf mosque. A deed that is mostly instructed by Ahmad Almansur Aldahabi, as a part of an expandable experiment, yet the turmoil had killed it before it was born, yet it was done again in upcoming times.

Besides the aforementioned school, this era had encouraged the calligraphic activities throughout the land. Hence emerged several prodigious penmen in this era, of which we mention:

1. Abdulaziz Ibn Abdullah Alsaktani [Previously mentioned]: as he had the ability to inscribe with different styles and varieties.¹⁴⁵
2. Muhammad Ibn Ahmad Ibn Isa Alsanhaji (d. 990 H \ 1582 A.D.): he held several exquisite handwriting styles.¹⁴⁶
3. Muhammad Ibn Ali Ibn Ibrahim Alfashtali (d. 1021 H \ 1612 A.D.): he was mentioned by Ibn Alqadi “He writes with distinct styles, all of which are a beauty to the eyes”¹⁴⁷.
4. Ibrahim Ibn Yahya Ibn Ibrahim Alaqawi: he had inscribed with his eastern script a complete transcription of *Alrawd Alme'tar fe Khabar Alaqtar* [The

¹⁴³ (Ibn Alqadi, Durrat Alhajjal [The Pearl of Partridges], 1970, p. 1058)

¹⁴⁴ (Ibn Khaldun, Muqaddimah [The Introduction], 2004, p. 367)

¹⁴⁵ (Ibn Alqadi, Durrat Alhajjal [The Pearl of Partridges], 1970, p. 1058),

¹⁴⁶ (Ibn Alqadi, Jathwat Al'eqtibas [The Climax of Quotations], 1973, p. 207), (Ibn Alqadi, Durrat Alhajjal [The Pearl of Partridges], 1970, p. 656)

¹⁴⁷ (Ibn Alqadi, Durrat Alhajjal [The Pearl of Partridges], 1970, p. 630)

Aromatic Garden of Regions' news] by Muhammad Ibn Abdullah Alhumairi, which he had been done with transcribing by 1049 H \ 1639 A.D.¹⁴⁸

5. The Sultan Ahmad Almansur Ibn Muhammad Alsaadi (d. 1012 H \ 1603 A.D.): he was proficient in the eastern scripts, where he wrote letters to the scientists of the orient in a better manner than they did¹⁴⁹, as well as he innovated a number of calligraphic creations, utilizing it with the state letters, the Feshtali also spoke of his works comprehensively¹⁵⁰

The craft of transcribing had been regulated in this era, headed by a group of veteran calligraphers; of them was Abdulaziz Ibn Abdullah Alsaktani [aforementioned] as indicated by Ibn Alqadi, adding the abundance of transcribers at that time.¹⁵¹

Here is a list of the most famous transcriptions of this era:

1. Diwan Nuzhat Alquloob [The Stroll of Hearts]: written by Abu Hatem Alsajistani and transcribed by Saeed Ibn Muhammad Altunisi at 969 H, it is now reserved.¹⁵²
2. Kitab Alfusoos [The book of Bezels]: written by Sa'ed Albaghdadi, and transcribed by Abdullah Ibn Umar Ibn Othman Altagdi, for Muhammed Ibn Sultan Abdullah Alghaleb, it was finished by 969 H¹⁵³
3. Alwusool Lehftth Asssehha fel Fusoul [Reaching the Health throughout the seasons]: written by Lesanuddien Ibn Alkhatib, & transcribed by the Moroccan doctor Alqasem Ibn Muhammad Alghassani, for Sultan Abdullah Alghaleb, and this copy was finished in 978 H.¹⁵⁴

During this period, a number of rare books were transcribed, and the only copies that remains are the ones transcribed during the Saadi era, it is worth mentioning as well that some copies were about the art of calligraphy and bookbinding, of which we mention:

¹⁴⁸ Prof. Martino Pirez holds this manuscript.

¹⁴⁹ (Ifrani, 1998, p. 101)

¹⁵⁰ (Alfashtali, 1999, pp. 206-207)

¹⁵¹ (Ibn Alqadi, Durrat Alhajjal [The Pearl of Partridges], 1970, p. 1058)

¹⁵² Reserved In the Karaouine Library, Ref. 65

¹⁵³ Reserved In the Karaouine Library, Ref. 587

¹⁵⁴ Reserved In the Royal Library, Ref. 590

1. Tuhfat Alkhawas fe Taraf Alkhawas [The Masterpiece of Characteristics in the letters' features]: by Abubaker Ibn Muhammad Alqalalusi, this copy was finalized in 993 H, it is now reserved in the royal library under Ref. 8998.
2. Resalat Altayseer fe Sena'at Altasfeer [The Ease Letter of Bookbinding Industry]: by Sheikh Bakr Ibn Ibrahim Alishbili, it was finalized by 1044 H, and it is now reserved in the Library of Tétouan.

Calligraphic decoration had also prospered during this era; the Saadi Quran Transcriptions reflected this prosperity, where I will list them according to their chronological order:

1. Mus'haf of Princess Mariam, in-law of Sultan Muhammad Sheikh.
2. Mus'haf of Princess Muhammad Ibn Abdulghader Ibn Sultan Muhammad Sheikh.
3. Mus'haf Sultan Abdullah Alghaleb Ibn Sultan Muhammad Sheikh.
4. Mus'haf Ahmad Almansour Aldahabi Ibn Sultan Muhammad Sheikh.

Moreover, there was a number of proficient book decorators, whom we were only able to find during this era:

1. Ahmad Ibn Ibrahim: famed by the decoration of *Kitab Alshefa* [The Book of Healing] transcription, written by Ayyad Ibn Musa Alqadi, this transcription was finalized by 1065 H, and it is now reserved in the Royal Library under Ref. 657.
2. Abu Othman Al'usri Alsusi (d. 1089 H \ 1678 A.D.): a distinguished left-handed decorator, using a distinct style of gilding and bookbinding.

Another characteristic of this era is that the calligraphers gave special attention to the ink, where they used the dried out the written ink with gold dust, such decoration was more common in Sultanate issues and letters than in scientific book.

This study had projected the main activities of the craft in this era so far, whether it was in penmanship, transcription, calligraphic decoration, or inking. Yet we have to mention a number of distinguished transcribers whom have not been linked to certain specialization, of whom we mention:

1. Muhammad Ibn Aladi Alandalusi (d. 975 H \ 1567 A.D.): he was mentioned by Almanjour that he had a clear handwriting & that he had transcribed an immense amount of Quran copies, many people had been bidding their life's worth of coins over his works, including sultans and royalty.¹⁵⁵
2. Abu Abdullah Muhammad Ibn Muhber Almasari (d. 938 H \ 1575 A.D.): this penman was also a grammatical & calligrapher editor, where it is mentioned that he inspected and correct the *Sharh Almakbodi le Alfeyat Ibn Malik* [The Almakbodi Explanation over Ibn Malik's Millennium].
3. Abunnaeem Radwan Ibn Abdullah Aljanawi (d. 991 H \ 1538 A.D.)¹⁵⁶: he was mentioned In *Tuhfat Alekhwan*¹⁵⁷ that he had a brilliant handwriting, and had transcribed many manuscripts, and that he had lived off this craft. He also was pointed out in *Tuhfat Alakaber*¹⁵⁸ by "sheikh Radwan was transcribing to fulfill his daily needs, using his fine handwriting in an elegant Mabsout script".

We can also point out the famous papermakers of that era, divided by their quicksilvers and emirates of work:

A. The Sawma'a quicksilver of Bani Mallal:

1. Abdulmo'men Ibn Yazza Aljazwali, he had completed transcribing the seventh volume of *Almukhtasar Alfeqhi* [The doctrinal summary] by Ibn Arafa in 974 H. this transcription is currently reserved in the Royal Library, Ref. 8918.
2. Suleiman Ibn Umar Ibn Yaburek Alwelti, the transcriber of the first volume of *Alkawkab Almunir* [The Shining Planet] by Ala'lqami, which was in 986 H, this transcription is currently reserved in the Karaouine Library, Ref. 191

B. The Tafilalt quicksilver, located north west of Tarudant:

1. Ahmad Ibn Ali Ibn Muhammad Allamati, he had transcribed the twelfth volume of *Fath Albari* [The Creator's Triumph] of Ibn Hajar Ala'sqalani,

¹⁵⁵ (Kattani, 2004, p. 275)

¹⁵⁶ (Kattani, 2004, p. 262)

¹⁵⁷ (Almurabi, 2008, p. 126)

¹⁵⁸ (Alfasi, 2002, p. 643)

the transcription was done by 1012 H, & it is now reserved in the Royal Library, ref. 8221.

2. Abulabbas Ahmad Ibn Ali Alhashtoki (d. 1046 H \ 1636 A.D.)¹⁵⁹, he transcribed the introduction of the aforementioned *Fath Albari* and done with it by 1014 H, and it is now reserved in the Royal Library under the Ref. 8351.
3. Abulhasan Ali Ibn Zubair Alfasi (d. 1035 H \ 1625 A.D.)¹⁶⁰, he transcribed the *Alkamel* [The Perfect] by Aljazri, and was done of it by 1023 H; it is now reserved in the Royal Library, Ref. 236.

C. The quicksilver of *Aduville Mansion* in Laqtawa:

1. Abdullah Ibn Yusuf Ibn Ahmad Ibn Abdulhalim Aldari’.

D. The Fezian quicksilver of Fez:

1. Muhammad Ibn Ali Alsherif Alhasani Alfasi (d. 1018 H \ 1609 A.D.)¹⁶¹

E. The Elegiac emirate of Sousse:

1. Abdullah Ibn Abubaker Ibn Ibrahim Aljarsifi, he had transcribed the third volume of *Aliktifa’* [The Satisfaction] by Alqalai’, and he had done with his transcription by 1058 H, this work is now reserved in the Royal Library Ref. 9787.

F. The Delayan emirate¹⁶²:

1. Abulhasan Ali Ibn Abdulwahed Ibn Muhammad Alasjelmasi (d. 1054 H \ 1644 A.D.).
2. Ahmad Ibn Abdullah Almanjoor, which has transcribed the *Sharh Alkafiya* [The Sufficient Explanation] by Ibn Malik at 1051 H, which is now reserved in the Royal Library, Ref. 6764.

G. The Nasria quicksilver of Tamikrut:

1. Imam Muhammad Ibn Naser Aldarai (d. 1085 H \ 1674 A.D.), and he had transcribed a numerous amount of philology and literature manuscripts, including *Alqamoos Almuhit* [The Comprehensive dictionary], *Sharh Altasheel* [The explanation of ease] by Almuradi, *Alamali* [The Hopes] by

¹⁵⁹ (Kattani, 2004, pp. 85-87)

¹⁶⁰ (Ibn Altayb, 1986, p. 150)

¹⁶¹ (Ifrani, 1998, p. 240)

¹⁶² (Ifrani, 1998, p. 135)

Alqali, and some of the volumes of *Al'eqd Alfareed* [The Brilliant Necklace].

H. The Hamzia quicksilver of Tafilalt region: and in this region included some Ayyashid papermakers and some of their friends.¹⁶³



The 1st Page of *Sahih Muslim*, inscribed by Abdulghader Alfasi, the heading is inscribed with eastern maghrebi script & the content with Mabsout script.

¹⁶³ (Ifrani, 1998, p. 130)

4.3.6 The Alaouite Era

4.3.6.1 The first & second Alaouite reign

This first Alaouite reign begins from the reign of Alsultan Alrashid by 1075 H \ 1664 A.D., to the death of Maula Abdullah by 1171 H \ 1757 A.D., the second commences from the reign of Sultan Muhammad III Ibn Abdullah Ibn Ismail by 1171 H \ 1757 A.D. to his death in 1204 H \ 1790 A.D.

With the rise of the new state, the region began to enjoy a little taste of prosperity & the erudite movement enlivened once again. And this – consequently – augmented the need for scientific literature, yet the innovation of modern presses did not reach the Islamic world yet, and there where the craft of transcribing was needed to deliver fulfillment into the scholars', tutors' and authors' needs.¹⁶⁴

Moreover, the need to construct new libraries has lifted up the need for this craft immensely, which encouraged the rise of papermakers, editors, decorators, penmen, and transcribers by-hire.

The penmanship kept its diversity during this age, where the usage of scripts had remained varied, from the Maghrebi, Andalusian, to Eastern & Kufic, while adding a regional flavor to the last three.

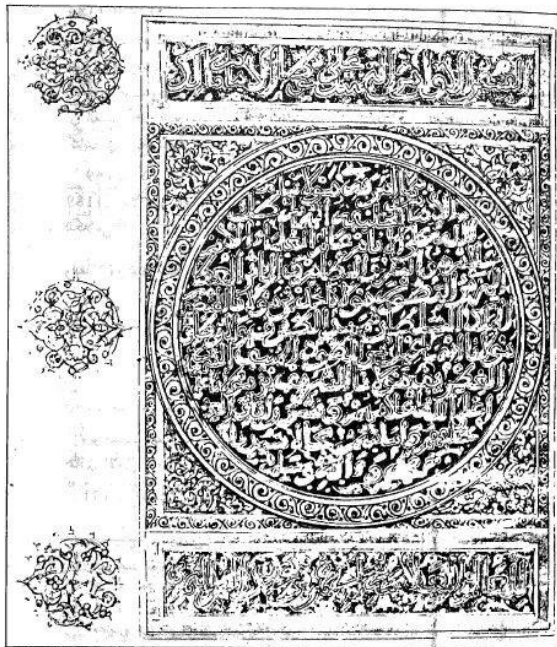
Regarding the transcriptions checking, the appointed craftsmen had dedicated themselves to maintain the traditions of the craft. As had mentioned Abu Ali Alyusi, referring to the extent of chaos in the region had already reached the penmanship, where he advises to establish an entity that monitors the quality of the transcribers and penmen works. "...yet today, the corruption has been spilled into the books, the people had focused on justice in food, water, and money, and had neglected the books, for it founds the life. It is immensely needed the establishment of a control over the work of transcribers, to keep the books clean and the readers sane..."¹⁶⁵

During the Alaouite ages, papermakers will be distinguished on the following categories:

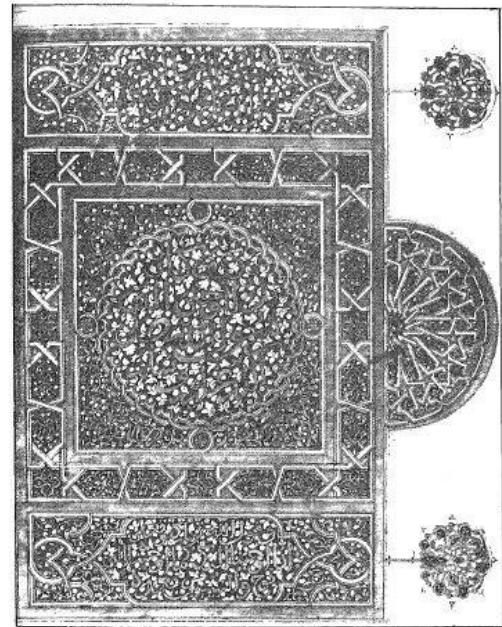
¹⁶⁴ See: (Mannoni, Mazaher Yaqzat Almaghreb Alhadeeth [The features of the contemporary Morocco's rise], 1985, pp. 202-203)

¹⁶⁵ (Albalghithi, 1901, p. 257)

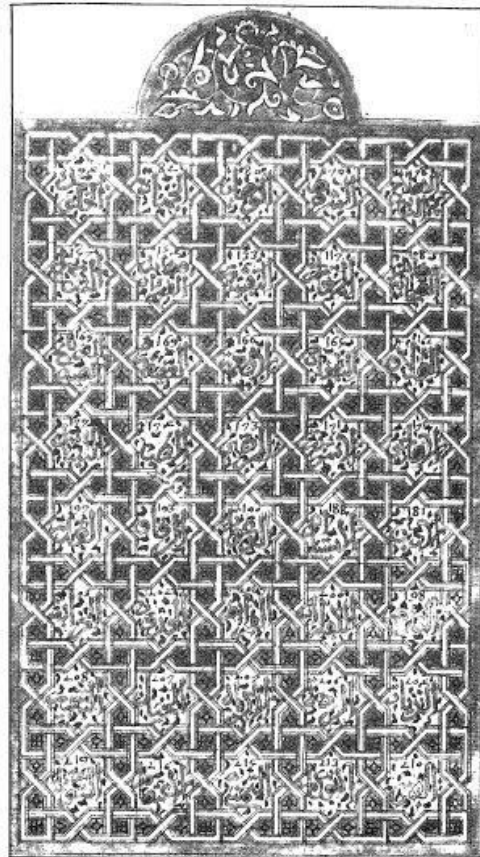
1. Papermakers of translations.
2. Papermakers of transcriptions.
3. Women papermakers.
4. Poly-script papermakers \ Decorators.
5. Transcriptions editors.
6. Literature editors.
7. Private papermakers.
8. Special papermakers.



a sample of the eastern Maghrebi script: 1st vol. of *Altamheed* by Ibn Abdulbarr within a decorated border, G.L. Rabat 13.



An introductory decoration on the 1st page of *Sahih Albukhari*, inscribed by Abdulaziz Ibn Muhammad Alhelew. G.L. Rabat 1587.



The decorated index of *Sahih al-Bukhari*, contents distributed within geometric stars, inscribed by Abdulaziz Ibn Muhammad Alhelew. G.L. Rabat 1587.

4.3.6.2 The third Alaouite reign

This era contains the Moroccan calligraphy industry throughout the thirteenth Hijri century: from 1204 H \ 1790 A.D. to 1276 H \ 1860 A.D., which is the period that held the proclamation of reign to the three following Sultans:

1. Alyazid Ibn Muhammad III.
2. Aburrabea Sulaiman Ibn Muhammad III.
3. Abuzaid Abdurrahman Ibn Hisham Ibn Muhammad III.

The Moroccan papermaking industry has kept its pace throughout this period, filling up for automated presses before it has reached the region. The papermakers began assuming the occupation of transcribing literature, including ones of several tomes or

volumes; we can also notice that some of them had transcribed 200 copies of newly published work.¹⁶⁶

One of the main factors that had encouraged the activities of papermakers was the cooperation of public entities and noblemen and authors, yet the most noticeable act of those is an initiative to resurrect the foundations and principles of Maghrebi calligraphy, which was from a scholar from the town of Tadla, whom is Umar Ibn Almakki Ibn Almaati Alumri¹⁶⁷. Where he suggested composing a manual that contains the principles of Maghrebi scripts, and the morphological states of the letters, to Ahmad Ibn Muhammad Alqustasi Alhasani, a famous penman.

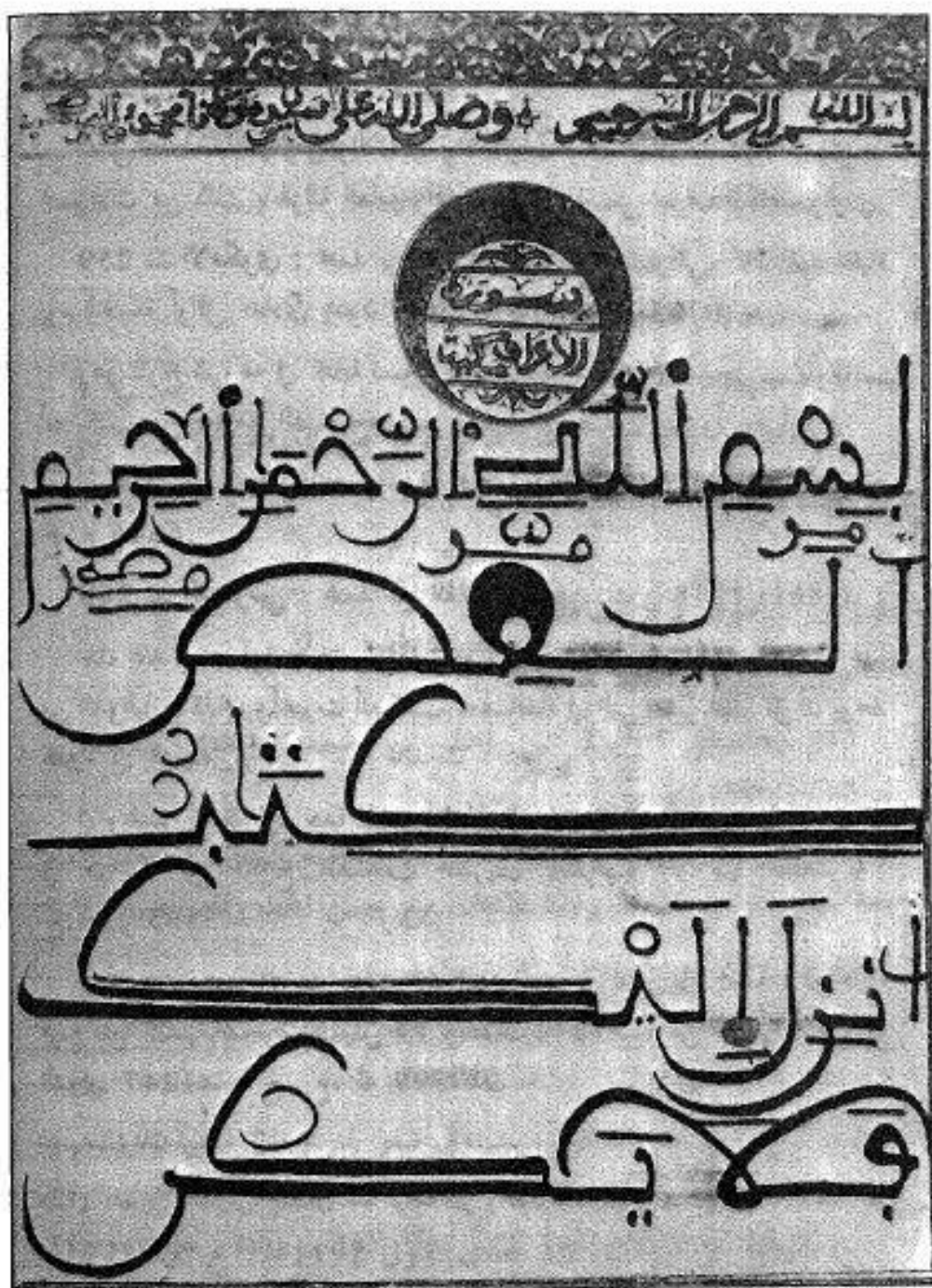
This resulted the composing of a poem of 143 verses, called *Nuzum Lali Alsammt fe Husn Taqweem Badea Alkhatt* [The astonishing pearls of creating the glorious of scripts] [G.L. Rabat 254]. This poem also provides various examples regarding the orthography of the letters.

Another event that had lit the flames of competition was that the sultan Aburrabea initiated a contest among the region's calligraphers, where he requested samples of *Aladwatayn* script from each contestant, choosing finally Muhammad Ibn Ali Alsussi Alsalwi as a winner.

We cannot forget to mention some of the brilliant prodigious calligraphers of that era, from Muhammad Ibn Alfaqih Aljariri, to Abdulsalam Sbata in Rabat, and the infamous Refai.

¹⁶⁶ (Kattani, 2004, p. 460)

¹⁶⁷ (Kattani, 2004, pp. 95-104)



A sample of Mabsout script, in a Quran transcription, written by the famous Muhammad Ibn Alqasim Alfasi. G.L. Rabat 3595.

4.3.6.3 The fourth Alaouite reign

This period refers to the reign duration of four Alaouite sultans, which had lasted more than five decades, from 1276-1330 H / 1859-1912 A.D., which are:

1. Sultan Muhammad IV from 1276-1290 H / 1859-1873 A.D.
2. Sultan Alhasan I from 1290-1311 H / 1873-1894 A.D.
3. Sultan Abdulaziz from 1311-1325 H / 1894-1908 A.D.
4. Sultan Abdulhafiz from 1325-1330 H / 1908-1912 A.D.

Yet the prosperity of the papermaking industry did not pass its limits, except during the reign of Muhammad IV.

One of the main characteristics of this reign, the increase of transcription wages, where the Haj Ibn Idris Amrawi was able to purchase a house from this craft¹⁶⁸, and Muhammad Ibn Abdulsalam had bought his residence in Marrakesh from the earnings of his transcriptions¹⁶⁹. On the other hand, Alabbas Ibn Muhammad Alsajelsami used to transcribe a whole manuscript and then sells it with 100 coins.

During this period had lived several special penman, of them we can recall Muhammad Ibn Alqasem Alqundosi, as he used to augment the letters' width and length, to a point where he inscribed the *Basmallah* in an enormous paper, with its letters extending vertically to approximately one meter in length. Spending more than 10 coins for the ink, then he bordered this portrait with an exquisite wood frame, and hanged it on the wall of the Idrisi Mosque in Fez.¹⁷⁰

In addition, Abdurrahman Ibn Alarabi Ibn Almahdi Alandalusi (d. 1304 H \ 1887 A.D.)¹⁷¹, which used to inscribe with a script that is quite similar to the Andalusian back in its days of glory, yet it is one of a kind and it hasn't been seen used by other transcribers. He used this unique script to transcript a copy of *Arrawd Alhatun* [The Breezy Gardens] by Ibn Ghazi.¹⁷²

¹⁶⁸ (Ghreit, 1927, p. 142)

¹⁶⁹ (Dunya, 1986, p. 779)

¹⁷⁰ (Ghreit, 1927, pp. 200-201)

¹⁷¹ (Ghreit, 1927, p. 208)

¹⁷² (Ghreit, 1927, p. 216)

We can also mention Muhammad Alkabir Ibn Muhammad Algharnati (d. 1317 H \ 1899 A.D. Marrakesh) as he had been known as the most accurate penman during this period, and with his handwriting, the first lithographic publications in Fez were printed.

Regarding the papermaking instruments, there were scarce number of artifacts that were discovered concerning this aspect, of them was a copper-pen that goes back to 1284 H, which is now reserved the Bathaa Museum in Fez, Ref. 45-705, and a ceramic made inkwell, engraved and decorated magnificently, it is also reserved in the aforementioned museum under Ref. 45-713.

We can summarize that the emergence of wired-press did not affect the craft of transcription in a whole, where the public had been preferring the handwritten versions on the sake of the printed ones. Such phenomenon is indicated with the re-transcription of several Egyptian publications that had been printed and published in Morocco, and we can find many examples of such inside the Hasan Library of manuscripts.

4.3.6.4 The fifth Alaouite reign

During this period, the region was under the French protectorate, which extended from 1912-1956 A.D., where the country was under the reign of:

1. Sultan Mulay Yusuf Alhasan I, from 1330-1346 H / 1912-1927 A.D.
2. King Muhammad V Ibn Mulay Yusuf, from 1346-1376 H / 1927-1956 A.D.

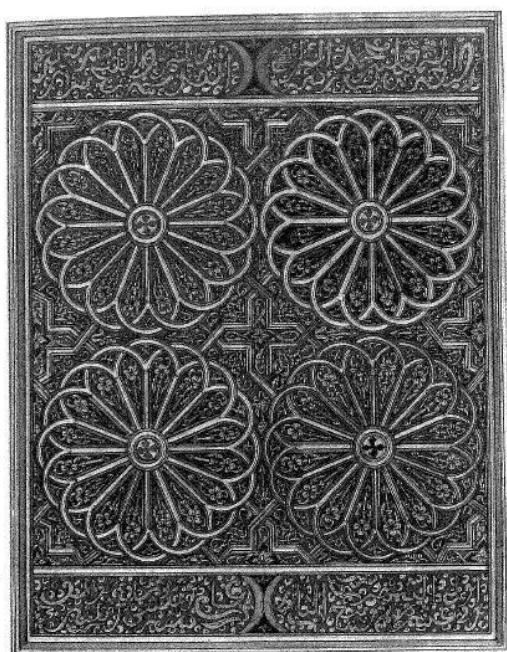
The first thing we could notice about this era that the papermaking industry and its branches had been afflicted by the arrival of printed publications from its Arab rivals, as well as the continuous innovation in the profession of printing, let alone the protectorate policy, which indicated the use of Latin letters instead of the Arabic, especially within state departments and schools.

Those factors have mixed enough to decrease the usage of the Arabic letters, which led it to render it useless, in exception of publicizing the new manuscripts and literature. Regardless, most of the craftsmen whom have gotten famous in this period had grown during the protectorate rule, keeping their original traditions without falling to the new trends; utilizing the traditional paper, their rulers with the wooden

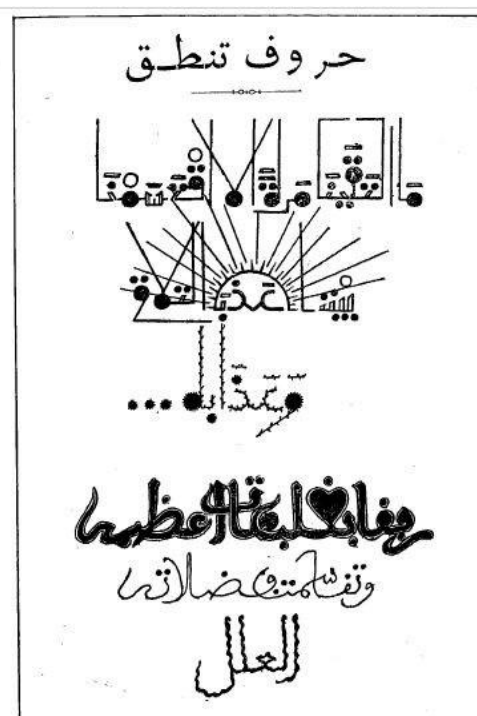
tips, and the local colorful inks, the bamboo quills and pens that varied in width and size, and finally their tools of gilding and bookbinding. All for the sake of keeping this profession as a traditional heritage, such as the Sudia, Marria, Fasia, and Fehria families.

The Maghrebi script kept of flourishing in Fez, Meknas, Sala, Rabat, and Marrakesh, with a variation in quality between the products of these regions. And regardless of the protectorate's policies, many prodigious calligraphers had grown famous of this era, including Asma' Muhammad Almezghrani, Taye Ibn Idris Alqaderi, Muhammad Ibn Alfadl Ghreit, Ahmad Ibn Alhasan Zweiten, and Ahmad Ibn Ahmad Altazi, among others. Let alone those whom were proficient in eastern calligraphy like Abubaker Ibn Abdulwahab, Muhammad Ibn Abbas Alqabaj, Muhammad Ibn Idris Abu Eshreen, and Ahmad Alhasnawi.

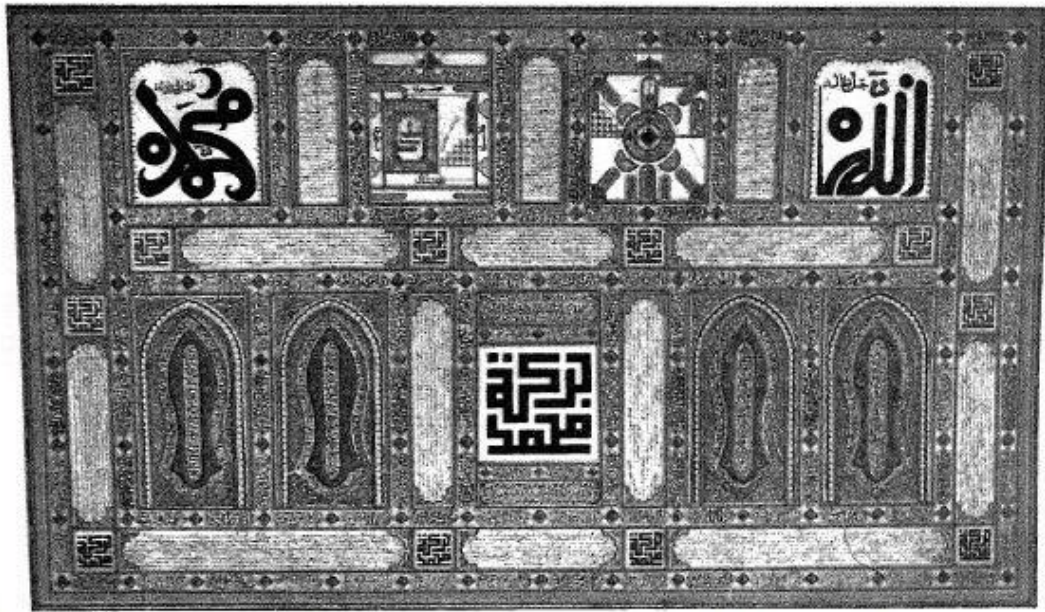
In the sultanate part of Morocco, the ministry of arts had promoted decorative calligraphy, adopting distinguished decorators such as Muhammad Alzaki Alrabati. Let alone the independent decorators whom are specialized in sacred works of arts, dedicating their works with Andalusian decorations through visualizations of Mecca, hadith & Quran quotations, among other symbols of Islamic culture.



Decorative portrait, by Muhammad Alzaki Alrabati 1336/1918



Two samples of the expressionistic Maghrebi script, innovated by Abdulkarim Skeirej - *Althaqafa Almaghreb* magazine, 2nd of September 1941



Decorative portrait called *Alrawd [The Garden]*, by Ahmad Ibn Muhammad Altadli Arabati, reserved in the Scientific Subhid Library in Sala.



lithographic Quran transcription of Ahmad Ibn Hassan Zweiten's handwriting, 1st page 1347 H



Mojawher & Mabsout sample by the inscription of Abdulkabir Ibn Alsharif Almeknasi.

Chapter V

THE ARTISTIC & AESTHETIC FEATURES OF MAGHREBI SCRIPTS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

After the arrival of Islam's Monotheistic principles, the Arabian Peninsula had witnessed a universal cultural and behavioral turn, which has taken the region out of its vortex of darkness that it had suffered during the Pre-Islamic era. The Islamic system of principle came as a complete and universal beacon that guided the political, social, and economic lifestyle of Muslims, and of it emerged the heritage of Islamic arts, composing visual identities of all shapes and sizes, hailing its principles from the religion itself, yet it does not propagandize the religion itself and without being an obligation to fulfil.

The Islamic arts came as a symbolic harmonized element with the religion itself, reflected through the works of its makers and creators through a set of methodologies that takes away the inspector away from reality. The Islamic arts were able to root in two main principles, one being the ability to create a soul-evolving product, and intriguing the artist to maintain its continuous thinking cycle and stream of ideas running about the glorious god that had created everything we can sense and not from scratch. The Islamic arts had a materialistic degree where it can provide for the artist, as it was a deeply incorporated aspect of the Muslims' lives. For each activity or occupation within the shadow of the Islamic civilization had a purpose and a spiritual aspect, we can represent this in the Quran verse: *"But seek, through that which Allah has given you, the home of the Hereafter; and [yet], do not forget your share of the world. And do good as Allah has done good to you. And desire not corruption in the land. Indeed, Allah does not like corrupters."*¹⁷³ Thus, the spiritual side of each activity is the foundation of the materialistic side, where they both walk hand-in-hand to shine over the world.

It is an undoubted fact that the Islamic arts, which have spread & evolved throughout the Islamic world, are none but various re-compositions or interpretations of the pre-Islamic arts, this process of recomposing had reshaped and enhanced these arts according to the directions of this religion, and to the regional traditions, culture, and

¹⁷³ Quran 28:77

environment. However, regardless of the variation in the regional factors & influences, you can always observe the similarity due to the religion's strong influence over the artistic products overall. Therefore, however it may differ; we can always recognize a piece of art that had been produced within the Islamic civilization, from botanic, geometric and zoomorphic, until the calligraphic features, which supports the hypothesis claiming of which the aesthetic element of the Islamic arts is due to its universal knowledge building.

The Islamic arts has always held an international spot among the rest of the arts, where it was recognized as a de facto new perspective when it is concerned about aesthetic composing. Unleashing a multidirectional creativity potentials as the history passes by, let alone the Arabic calligraphic art, which embodies an abundance of orthographic, calligraphic, geometric compositions & forms, executed and finalized on a variety of materials, from papyrus, paper, wood, metal, and the list goes on.

The art of Arabic calligraphy is an indicator of elegance as much as the All-mighty Allah reveals it as an instrument of communication, which is connected tightly into the Islamic culture and religion altogether. Such elegance is apparent when he revealed upon his prophet the first verse of Quran *“Read! In the name of your lord who has created – has created man from a clot – Read! And your lord is the most generous – who has taught by the pen – has taught man that which he knew not”*¹⁷⁴

These holy words were the indicator of the importance and holiness of writing, being it more than just an instrument of interpersonal communication. It is why the Arab race has given so much into developing, enhancing, recreating, and beautifying the Arabic calligraphy, not leaving the letters and words' philosophic aspects. You can observe the varieties of this art, which were produced throughout time, which leads you to comprehend the accumulation of experiences, tendencies, innovative factors, regional factors that shaped the universal portrait of this art to this day.

5.2 SUB-VARIETIES OF THE MAGHREBI SCRIPT

By inspecting the Moroccan scripts and varieties over all from an artistic point of view, we can separate them into two main categories, quotidian scripts; which are the

¹⁷⁴ Quran 96:1-5

ordinary function-oriented scripts that lacks the aesthetic value of artistic materials such as Moroccan Musnad script. On the other hand, Artistic scripts are the ones which obeys a set of visual standards & aesthetic regulations which are acquired and comprehended by mimicking & studying its patterns, mere examples of these scripts are the Kufic, Moroccan Thuluth, Mabsout & Mojawher.

During the passage of consecutive reigns at the Moroccan region, the Maghrebi script – Which is derived from the Kufic – had been nourished with the creativity & development of the penmen, until it has become an independent variety of its own, be it with its geometric, style, variation, or decorative features. in this section, we will be discovering the general details of each sub-variety of the Maghrebi script.

5.2.1 The Moroccan Kufic

A beautiful geometric script, characterized with its straight lines and sharp angles, it is one of the preferred decorative scripts, which are rarely utilized for quotidian purposes. This script was the seed that began the process of derivation and evolution of the other Moroccan derivatives. Morphologically, the Kairouani Kufic has not influenced this script as much as it being a development of the oriental calligraphic stream to the occident during the post-Idrisid era through Andalusia, which led it to gain its own autonomous characteristics – which are clearly apparent in the Almoravid samples and forward, on coins, papyrus, stone engravings, and gypsum engravings –. Yet it rendered useless after the medieval era excluding titling the *Surahs* of Quran, or general traditional decorations.

5.2.2 The Mabsout

Recognized as the most readable and famous Moroccan script, characterized by its soft straight letters. It has been utilized mainly in the transcription of Quran copies and other theological literature, as well as it is used as a foundation to teach calligraphy in Quranic quicksilvers. Many of the lithographic Quran copies were imprinted using this script in Fez and Cairo, of which we mention the Mus'haf of Ahmad Ibn Alhusain Zweiten (printed in 1347 H / 1928 A.D.), the Hasani Mus'haf (printed in 1400 H / 1980 A.D.), and the Hasani Musabba' Mus'haf (printed in 1417 H / 1997 A.D.). Due to the aesthetic features of this script, it is still used until now to

print Quran copies, Royal letters, and in the titling of books, magazines, and newspapers.

5.2.3 The Moroccan Thuluth

The derivative of the eastern Thuluth, it was also known as the “Eastern Maghrebi script”. It is characterized with the exquisiteness of its letters and its softness, as well as its limitless capacity of diacritics. On the contrary of its eastern brother, the Maghrebi Thuluth is flexible enough to bend the standardized letter sizing of the eastern Thuluth, where the letter can take several forms in several sizes according to a number of aesthetic visual standards that are controlled by the writing space and distribution of the phrase intended, such freedom expresses the harmony between the orthographic compositions and its inner units, as this script can be visualized into a calligraphic portrait, decorated with botanic diacritics and gilded if needed.

Moreover, this script is mostly used for decorative purposes, such as the inscription of *Surah* titles, the covers of manuscripts, as it is utilized for architectural decoration, be it in decorating Mosques, shrines, and schools. And now it is used to print magazine article titles among other purposes.

In addition to the differences between this script and its oriental rival, the standards and models of the eastern Thuluth are much more difficult to modify or bend according to the artist’s intent, where the Moroccan Thuluth provides this leniency and flexibility due to the lack of principles regarding its writing, excluding the aesthetic visual standards that sweetens the portrait and adds more to its elegance.

Therefore, mastering this scripts’ principles are difficult to reach, and due to its somewhat difficulty to read, the Moroccan artists decided to utilize it only in non-informative purposes.

The Moroccan Thuluth can be written in two manners, the first being the simplest, where the phrase lines proceed linearly, and the complex compositional manner. Historically, the Thuluth has been engraved on coins – substituting the Kufic – since the Almohad era, then it went extended to be utilized in all the monetary inscriptions of the Islamic occident. It has been also utilized with decorating marble, gypsum, glass, and wood engravings alongside the Kufic during the Marinid era. As it had

been utilized in the Sultan stamps of Saadi & Alaouite eras, as well as in commemorative inscriptions on architectural landmarks.

Among the most astonishing and exquisite transcripts and manuscripts which had been written with this script are found in the transcripts of *Dalayel Alkhayrat* [The indicators of fortune] by Imam Muhammad Ibn Suleiman Aljazwali, and *Kitab Alshefa* [The Book of Healing] by Ayyad Alsabti. This script was the battlefield of penmen and decorators' rivalry to create the most captivating transcripts with it.



... وَيَعُدُّ فَمَا لَمْ أَنْ وَقَفَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى وَالَّذِي وَأُرْشِدَهُمْ إِلَيَّ
تَعْلِيمِي كِتَابَةَ الْمَبِينِ، وَأَخْذَ خَلْقِي لِلْمَكْتَبِ مَعَ أَوْلَادِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ
وَقَعَ بِنَحْوِ عَمَلِي فَيُحْفَظُ الْقُرْآنُ وَالْمِنَةُ لِلَّهِ الْمَلِكِ الْمَنَّانِ،
الْقَهْمِيِّ جَلَّ وَعَمَّا وَصَّيْتُ الشُّجَيْنَيْنِ الْكِتَابَةَ فِي كُلِّ مَوْضِعٍ
وَأَدْفَعُ حُرُوبَهَا مِنِّي كُلِّ مَوْضِعٍ، وَكَانَ يَأْتِي وَقْتُ كِتَابَةِ
الْأَلْوَابِ مَكْتَبَتَا الْبَعِيثِ فِي الْعَتَوِيِّ هُوَ تَرْتِيبًا الشَّيْخِ الرَّكَّعِي
الْمُهَيَّبِ الْوَفُوفِ الزَّاهِدِ الذَّاكِرِ عَلِيِّ الدَّقَائِمِ شَيْخِنَا مُبْدِي
عَبْدِ الْمَنَامِ سَبَّاطِطِ الْأَنْدَلُسِيِّ الرَّيَّاطِيِّ، وَكَانَ ضَاخِطًا
حَسَنًا بَدِيعَ الشُّكْلِ مَعْدِلِ الْمِثْلِ، فَكُنْتُ لِمُضَلِّهِ عِنْدَ
بَعْضِ الْأَلْوَابِ لِلْمَلِكِ وَأَتَمُّكَ لَوْجِي عَلَيْهِ، لِيَكْتَبَ
لِي فِي إِخْلَالِ الْمَنَامِ الْوَفُوفِ عَلَيْهِ، فَأَعِيدَ بِعَيْنِهِ
مَسْرَاتِي، وَاتَّبَعْتُ بِعَمِّي أَنْ نَفْطَفَ مِنْ رَفُوضَةٍ نَزَّهَاتٍ،
حَتَّى أَحْسَسْتُ مِنْ نَعْمِي لِي نَأْوَلْتُ مِنْ لِحْصَانِ الْعَالِيَةِ
بَعْضَ التَّمَارِينِ.
ثُمَّ صَرْتُ أَكْتُبُ فِي الْكَانِعِ حَتَّى اسْتَفَادَ خَطِّي وَجَاءَ
وَتَرَفَّقَ أَوْ كَاتِبًا، فَلَا نَزَمْتُ ابْنَ عَمِّ الشَّيْخِ دَوْلَى أَحْمَدَ
رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ، وَكَانَ ضَاخِطًا حَسَنًا، مُسَوِّفًا مُسْتَحْدَسًا،
وَكَانَ يُعَامِنِي أَنْظَارَ الْحُرُوفِ وَاتِّسَافَهَا، وَيُقَرِّرُ لِي
النَّسَبَ مِنَ الْكِتَابَةِ وَيُعَرِّفُهَا...

a sample of Moroccan Thuluth

... وبعده ، فلما أن وقف الله تعالى والذبي وأرشد لهم إلى
تعليمي كتابة المبين ، وأله خلوني للمكتب مع أولاد المؤمنين
وفتح سبحانه علي فحفظت القرآن والمنة لله الملك المنان ،
القميني جراً وعلا فصرت أستحسن الكتابة في كل موضع ،
وتفجع حروفيها مني كل موقع ، وكان يأتي وقت كتابة الألواح
مكتبنا لي عين في الفتوى مؤيد بنا الشيخ البركة المزر الوفور
الزاهد النذير على الدوام : شيخنا سيدي عبد السلام سبأه
الأنذلسي الربالهي ، وكان ذا أخوة حسن يدع الشك ،
عديم المثل ، وكنت أَرْضُهُ له عند عرض الألواح للسلك
فأسلك لوحه عليه ، ليكتب لي في آخره السائر الموفوف
عليه ، فأعيد له - بعينه - مرات ، وأتبعه عسى أن نفه من
روضة زهراء ، حتى أحسست من نفسي أنه ناولت من
أغصانه العالية بعض الثمرات .

ثم صرت أكتب في الكاغيد حتى استفهم خطي وجاء ،
وترونق أوكامه ، فلا زمت ابن عمنا الشيخ مولاي أحمد
- رحمه الله - وكان ذا أخوة حسن ، مروفق مستحسن ، وكان
يعلمني انتظام الحروف واتسافها ، ويفرر لي النسبة من
الكتابة وتعريفها .

A sample of Mabsout script

5.2.4 The Mojawher

An intricate script that its small letters are characterized with cohesion, harmonized linearly like strand of jewels. This script was derived from Mabsout circa the sixth Hijri century, and then it spread to become a generalized script around the occident region. It was also the official script of the lithographic presses, where it has been used to publicize most literature commencing from the reign of Sultan Seidi Muhammad Ibn Abdurrahman 1864 A.D., until the beginning of the protectorate era. Moreover, the lithographic press of Fez has produced over than 500 different books with this script, it is now mainly used in writing contracts and other legal documents, yet the titles of these documents are usually inscribed with Mabsout or Moroccan Thuluth.

This script is also characterized with its condensed form, and its distinctive visual personality, as well as the integration and curved nature of its letters. Due to its moderately difficulty to read, the penmen had developed its nature by decreasing the space between the letters & phrases, the Mojawher script has been derived into many other sub-scripts such as Fasi, Susi, Darai, and Sahrawi.

5.2.5 The Musnad [Zammami]

Characterized with its speed in writing, which makes it a suitable quotidian script for daily life, the naming came due to its similar-to-ancient-Musnad declination. It is mainly used in state registries, legal statements, and scientists drafts, and its difficult to read in comparison to the other Moroccan scripts.

5.2.6 The Mudmaj script

This is no sub-variety of the Maghrebi script, but it is more of a quotidian spontaneous manner of writing, which integrates the features of two or more scripts in one document, this script can be represented by the urban rapid transcripts where the script might turn from being Mojawher to Musnad, or by amateur transcriptions.

5.3 THE SPREAD OF MAGHREBI SCRIPT

The Moroccan scripts and varieties had an immense geographical extent that reached the north & central Africa, influencing the existing calligraphic systems and developing according to these regions' characteristics.

5.3.1 Maghrebi scripts in North Africa

The Moroccan scripts had an immense influence over the other calligraphic compositions and units in North Africa since the Almohads & Almoravids reign, and it increased with the adoption of the Andalusian calligraphic heritage in the occident. The prosperity and the luxury that had been lit in Fez, being one of the erudite hubs of the region had pressed the level of influence further and further. with the arrival and departure of scholar pilgrims whom have come for epistemic aspirations in the school of Karaouine had brought an immense influence upon them – especially those of the wester Algeria region –. While the eastern part of Algeria had been influenced mainly by the Tunisian schools. Yet the Moroccan calligraphy had extended its inspirations over to the Libyan terrain.

5.3.2 Maghrebi scripts in Western Africa

In the midst of the invigorated succession of events in Morocco, the Maghrebi scripts kept spreading towards the main African commercial hubs, be it through the Libyan routes through Fezzan, across Algeria to the terrain of Tuareg, or through Sejelsama & the valley of *Noon* in morocco.

What is historically proven however is the existing Moroccan relations that connects the region with Sudan and the kingdoms of western Africa, due to its strategic geographical location, being pioneered in matters of philology and culture, as well as the religious relations between the countries. The spread of Islam throughout Sudan had created a stronger bond than mere commerce and trade.

These relations grew even further during the reigns of Almoravids, Almohads, and Saadis gradually. Where in central and west Africe grew several strong Islamic kingdoms in Ghana, Mali and others, which had produced their own share of brilliant scholars, which have had contributed to the civilization as a whole.

The relations between Morocco and these kingdoms consisted of delivering the eastern influences to Africa, receiving the European and post-Mediterranean influences. Through its commercial routes and cultural beacons like Sejelsama, Azki, Tawat, Teinduf, Wuddan, Shenqeet, and Wullata, which through passed the masses of Moroccan merchants, scholars, sophists, and sheikhs into the depths of Africa, leaving their fingerprints in Timbuktu, Kaw, Jeini in Mali, among others. On the other hand, many scholars and knowledge's seekers arrived to Marrakesh, Fez, Sousse to increase fulfill their aspirations to learn and trade knowledge. Many of Morocco's ways and habits had been transmitted to the African continent, including Sufism, the Maliki doctrine, the Islamic arts, and the Maghrebi scripts, which can be clearly apparent within the African manuscripts.

The Maghrebi scripts and Arabic writing system had been incorporated within Africa with time, where the inhabitants of these regions began gradually using the new language to communicate & inscribe their thoughts into paper, as well as they had transliterated their own regional languages with Arabic alphabet like *Bornu*, *Fulani*, *Hausa*, *Senegai*, and others. Thus became the Arabic language and Maghrebi script a main portion of their own daily lives, resulting eventually the creation of Sudani script.

The Sudani script is characterized with bold, rigid, and simple letters; reflecting the environment of the region and the ways of life in the African desert, yet it holds some resemblance with Darai & Sahrawi Moroccan scripts.

5.4 THE AESTHETIC CHARACTERISTICS OF MAGHREBI SCRIPTS

Being identified as a form of socio-humanistic activity, the Islamic Moroccan arts focus its importance in shaping the human being's urban & behavioral frame, whereas the Moroccan Islamic arts are augmented in importance as it does deal with the main instrument of communication for this creature, which engulfs this section of knowledge with an epistemic aura that rivals the other sciences.

It is because the Islamic civilization overall have given a never-done attention to the calligraphic arts and into the letters: its creation, geometric, symbolic, orthographic, and phono-linguistic evolution. Consequently that is due to the sanctity that this civilization & this religion has given to writing as we mentioned previously, and to

the art of calligraphy especially, and this is where I quote the words of the prophet (PBUH) when he said “*The better of you is whom have been taught and is teaching Quran*” which makes it obvious that the art of calligraphy was intimately connected with Islam’s main instrument, which is the Holy Quran.

كَالْمَعْلَمَةِ وَإِن تَسْلِمُوا وَسَفَّوْا فَبِئْسَ اللَّهُ
 كَانَا غَبُورًا حَيْمًا ۖ وَإِن تَبْعُرُوا فَيَغْرِبِ اللَّهُ
 كَلِمًا صَا سَلَعْتِهِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ وَاسِعًا حَكِيمًا
 وَاللَّهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَعَنَهُ
 وَصَيْنَا الذِّيَا وَتَوَالِحْتِ مَا فَبِئْسَ كَلِمًا
 وَإِيَّاكُمْ أِن تَسْفُوا اللَّهَ وَإِن تَسْفُرُوا فَبِئْسَ اللَّهُ
 مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ
 رَحِيمًا حَكِيمًا وَاللَّهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ
 وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ وَكِيلًا أَلَيْسَ أَيْدِي طَبِئِكُمْ أَيْهَا
 النَّاسُ وَيَكْتَبُ بِأَضْرِبٍ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ
 قَدِيرٌ مَرَّكَانَ يُرِيدُ تَوَاتِبَ الذِّيَا قَدِيرٌ اللَّهُ
 تَوَاتِب

A sample of Mabsout-esque Sudani script - Holy Quran 4:130.

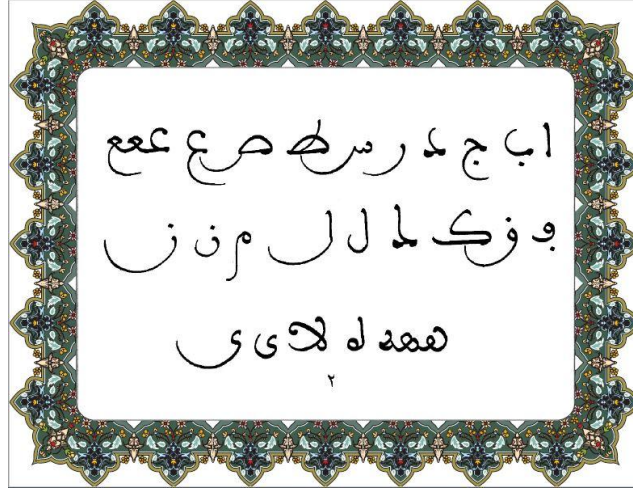
Our glorious prophet (PBUH) had realized the importance of writing in spreading the religion, and his passion to reserve what it has been revealed upon him to be kept out of modifying, which gives the holy Quran two main sanctities:

The first is Vocal, which is memorized within the hearts and the souls of Muslims; the other is Orthographical, written on all mediums of inscription. And that is why he chose the better of his comrades to document and write the revelations of Allah. Being as a holy tradition, the Muslim artist had taken interest in the art of calligraphy due to the honor that surrounds it, as taking care of the instrument of inscribing the Quran, and the Allah's reward in the afterlife for such an activity.

We can mention some of the scientists whom have taken the initiative into creating the aesthetic principles of the written language and the features that surrounds its orthographic units, such as Alkendi, Alfarabi, Aljaheth, & Abu Hayyan Altawhedi. Where the latest had defined the four main aesthetic features of letters, which are the profile, commensurability, measure, and the background quality of the letter.

The profile here is defined as the shape of letters, depending on its location within the phrase, being connected or separated, including the letter's extension, curvature, and the other artistic characteristics of it. Which was referred into by the famous arabic calligrapher Ali Ibn Hilal. The concept of geometrical calligraphic measurement is connected to Ibn Muqla, which had set the proportions of the letters under a list of principles called *Annesba Alfadila* [The Optimum proportions]. He is also the 1st to set the measure of lines, as well as he had created a complete catalogue describing the precise drawing of each letter in the arabic alphabet using the *Alef* letter as its source of drawing the rest of the letters. However, he did not lay the validity of calligraphy only on the measures and proportions of the letters, but on two main principles that contain the conditions of validity, which are:

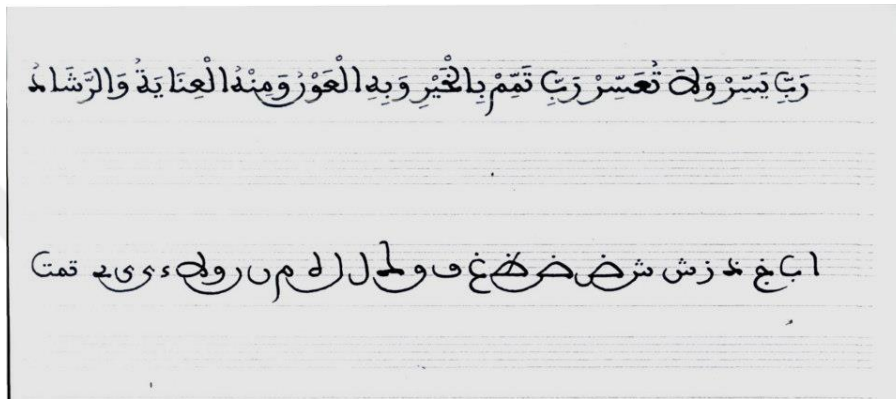
1. The validity of letter structure:
 - A. Fulfillment of the letter, which is the manner of drawing the letter in a way that follows the visual nature of it, from its curvature, to extension to stretching etc.



- B. Completion of the Letter, which is giving the letter its right proportions and size.
- C. Integration, which is proportioning the letters distance between each other.
- D. Perfection of the letter, which is giving the letter its accuracy and needed thickness.
- E. Elaboration, which is the ability of the calligrapher to maintain a streamline while inscribing the letter/phrase.



2. The validity of letters' profile:
 - A. Alignment of the connected letters within a line.
 - B. Harmonization, which is the meeting of two separated letters in an optimum manner.
 - C. Linearity of the phrase, which is following the paper lines.
 - D. Stripping, which is designating of needed diacritics on the letters.



5.5 THE AESTHETIC RELATIONS OF MAGHREBI COMPOSITIONS

As much as the Islamic civilization was able to have its own imprint over the various scientific fields, it was able to create its own artistic and aesthetic patterns and models. The Moroccan scripts had gained supremacy over the oriental scripts, developing to create a clear and distinguished identity of its own, its flexibility, softness, capacity to hold diacritics, and the ability to be shaped in different geometrical interlaced forms, evolving from a mere instrument of human communication to an artist's tool that emits creativity and expressive thought.

The Maghrebi calligraphy shares a various number of aesthetic & artistic characteristics, of which we mention:

1. Balance:

Balance is a regular physical and visual state; sought upon by the natural forces of the universe. The calligrapher seeks balance in his portraits to mimic the natural equilibrium within its work, the concept of balance is a universal law that has to be abided to keep it from falling into the depths of

chaos. The sense of balance emits peace upon the observer of the work, such transmission requires a proficient aesthetic sense by the calligrapher in a way that can weigh the elements intended to draw, be it letters, phrases, spaces, and diacritics, the curvature and shape. The ultimate portrait takes eventually can be weighed on a visual or virtual axis, and the artist will not value the portrait with his senses as much as he will have to weigh it with his conscience. And that is because the apparent sensible composition might be weigh differently if the its color was changed. Artistic forms can handle imbalance to a certain degree diversely, contradicting the calligraphic arts. Where it cannot handle imbalance excluding rare cases.

2. Dominance:

Defined by the distinction of a certain element that is surrounded by other marginal, dominance can be achieved by vectors or color variations, manipulating the size, touch, location or space, or by the motion-illusions of the elements. Dominance is the critical element of any portrait, whichever element holds it will be the first to have the observer attentively inspect. The importance of dominance in an artistic work is represented by the leadership of the dominant element over the others, creating a focal point that distributes the observer's vision and guides it around the portrait. It is preferred to solely handle dominance to certain element, to prevent a state of confusion by the observer, and if dominance was shared by several elements, it has to be distributed in a manner that guarantees a principle element or composition that dominates the rest of elements.

Dominance can be produced by several techniques, of which:

- A. Characteristic dominance: we can produce dominance by mixing Moroccan script with other varieties like Naskh, Ruqa'h, and Diwani for instance, to focus a sense of uniqueness and dominance upon one variety over the others.
- B. Through creating contrast: which can be executed through manipulating the size, length of exact phrases without others, or by the utilizing a

distinctive ink color, background color to use its ability to focus the observers' eyes upon it.



A Quran page inscribed with Maghrebi script - 14th century

3. Rhythm:

Rhythm is an aesthetic relation that reflects the repetitive processes of nature, such as the succession of day and night & the four seasons & circulation of the moon. The repetitive pattern in the Islamic culture might be a reflection the Muslims' daily religion related habits, like the five prayers. If we could define rhythm, we could say that it is the existence of habitual monotonous units or elements that are interposed by partitions or negative spaces. Where such rhythm can express the three dimensional aspects [Time, Space, Element Character]. To result a sense of continuous movement that is transmitted upon the observer.

4. Unity:

It is concerned as one of the principle requirements to build an aesthetic relation within the portrait, some calligraphers tend to claim that it is the most important relation within the artistic work, emitting a sense of organization among the visual units if these elements were arranged in the right way.

The definition of Unity was shaped predominantly by the *Gestalt* theory, which indicates that to comprehend a space of chaotic objects, the mind will align and sort each element on its own, connecting it to the other elements orderly to create a universal shape induced by self-organizing tendencies. Where every element is holding a certain space and is united to every other element through a series of bonds. Granting a sense of unity due to its state of connectedness.

5. Layout:

Which is the distribution of elements within a space, in which the elements follow a certain order that emits the linguistic aspect of the portrait. Which adds to its aesthetical aspects a sense of comprehension, where the vertical, horizontal, skewed, crossed, and opposed elements [lines] unify to create a whole unit of its own.



A verse of Surah AlMaida, Holy Quran, The American Congress Library.

6. Contradiction & Contrast:

Considered as an important relation in the artistic work, with which the artist could present the intended calligraphic units in a distinctive and unique form, enabling the observer to focus his attention towards it, because when elements contradict each other in a balanced manner, the observer can recognize and identify its content with ease. Contrast is a less conflicted relation, where the elements lack similarity in some aspects, and render similar in others, where the variety of contrasted units and elements can emit a sense of pluralism and diversity, or a sense of conflict in the case of contradiction.

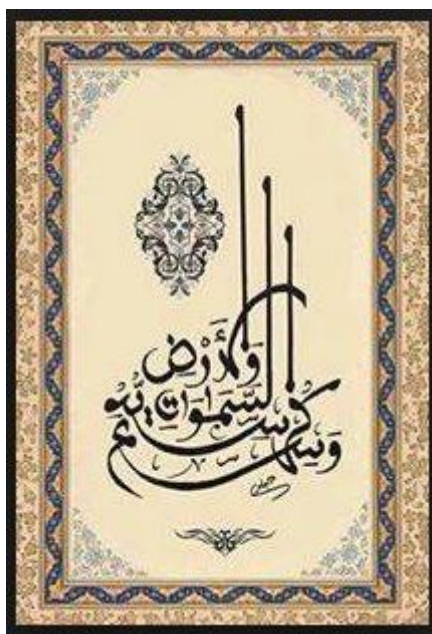
7. Proportion:

Is another aesthetic relation that provides the sense of comparison between the differentiated elements in space units, length, volume, size etc. this relation is not standardized. Thus, the artist can use contrast to create a certain proportional relation, or can use rhythm to provide a uniform proportional relation for all elements.

8. Harmony:

Which is a relation resulted by the similarity of the portrait elements in one of more characteristic, projecting a sense of intimacy between the unit and making it more easy to the eyes. Harmony has two main categories when it's concerning Maghrebi calligraphy, which are:

- A. Functional Harmony: which results by the agglomeration of several similar or different orthographic elements that are bound by the function of the whole unit.
- B. Symbolic Harmony: which results by the agglomeration of several different or indifferent elements to create an "icon" or a morphologic mental proceeding.



5.6 THE AESTHETIC AND ARTISTIC FEATURES OF THE MAGHREBI SCRIPT

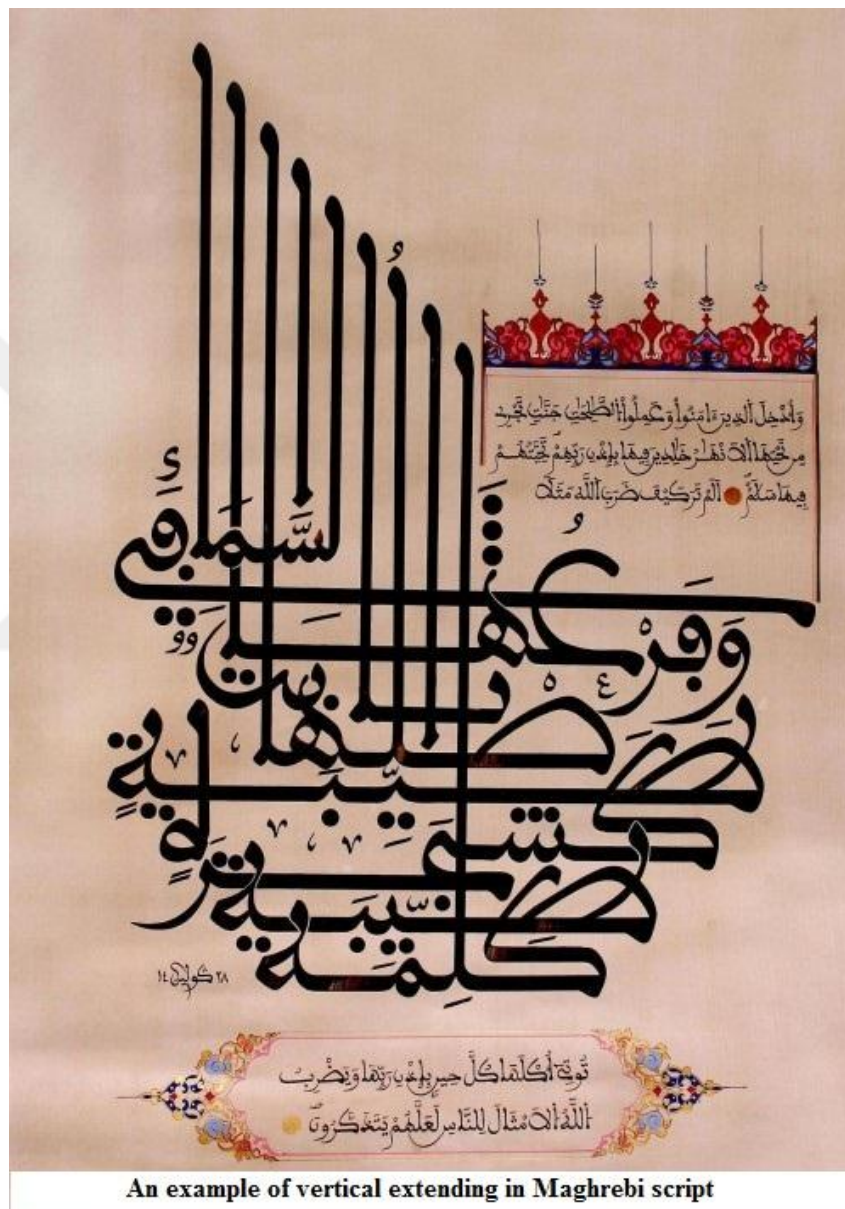
5.6.1 Vertical Extension

May also be called, the erection of letters, which is a main characteristic of the vertically drawn letters, such the *Alef*, *Lam*, the extensions of these letters are also called the “fingers” where this feature grants ability to the letter for it to extend vertically. The extension feature plays a critical role in the creation of harmony & rhythm relations within the portrait, where the long extensions in vocal communication mean silence. Therefore, the continuation of the letter’s vertical extension solely will let the eye follow it until its end, or the point of interlacing with other extensions. As well, the extension feature can add a sense of elegance connected to height, a vertical force.

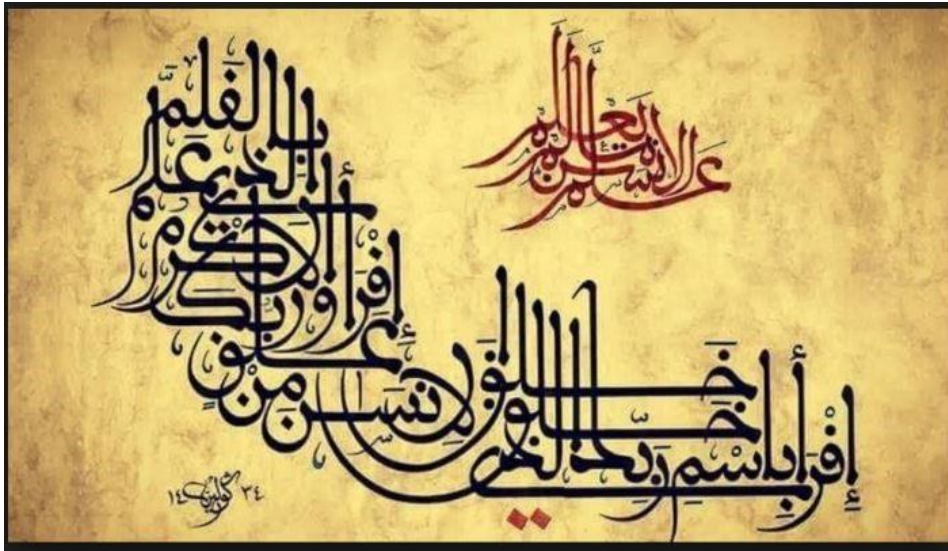
5.6.2 Horizontal Extension

Can also be called “expanding” the letter, which is the ability to stretch the horizontal sections of letters, these extensions can also be in the shape of curved lines and it does not solely be straight.

The nature of the Maghrebi script had managed the calligrapher to utilize the horizontal extension of words along with decorating the spaces with diacritics and a variety of decorations. In the sample provided, we can percept a sense of quietness, prosperity, and solidity within the portrait.



An example of vertical extending in Maghrebi script

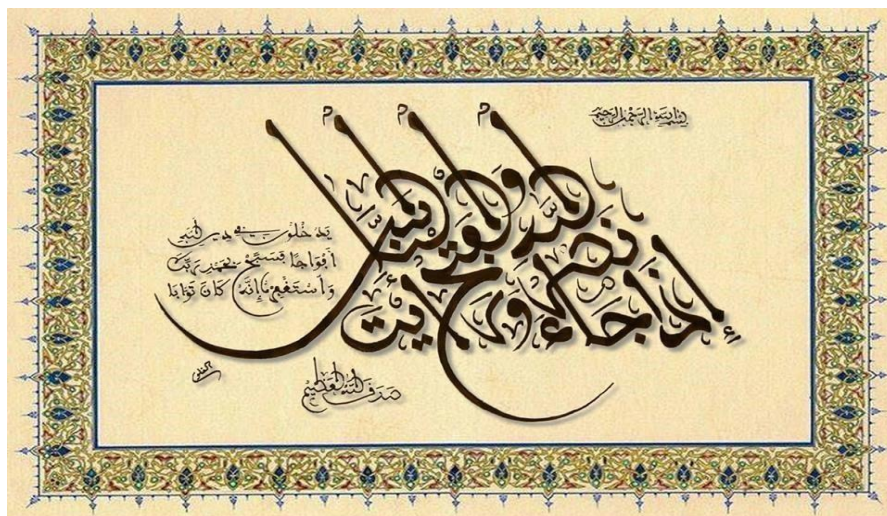


A sample of Mabsout script that demonstrates the Horizontal extending of its letters.

5.6.3 Reeling

Also recognized as rotating and curving the letters, be it in a concave or convex manner, this characteristic is abundantly found in Mabsout scripts, where the reeling of *Noon*, *Jeem*, *Seen*, *Qaf*, and the other letters of circular nature. The level of reeling can emit a sense of softness unto the observer's conscience, where the curved lines have always granted a multidirectional composition, adding more vitality to the whole portrait, the circular movement of breathing, circling of the earth, and the intensity of these feelings can be limited to the level of reeling dynamics.

However, the overuse of this characteristic can give a sense of similarity and monotony.



A sample of Mabsout script that reveals the reeling feature.

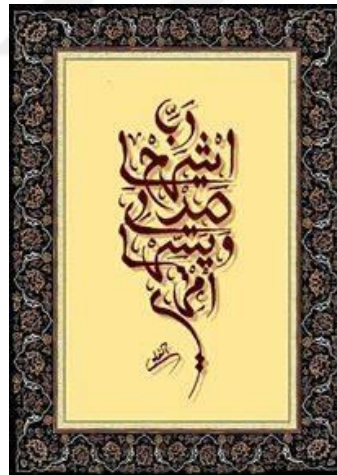
5.6.4 Elasticity

This is a common feature within the letters of curved nature, elasticity here means the ability of stretching these letters' extensions, such is the case with the *Ra*, *Dal*, *Ha'* letters. Usually, the stretching feature may come on the shape of a curved extension in the letter's lines, exaggerating the size of it, and adding a sense of flexibility into the composition overall.

This characteristic has enabled the calligrapher of drafting several perspectives of the intended portrait, for these extensions can be the foundation where the rest of the composition would be put on.

5.6.5 Compressibility

Which is the ability to compress and cram the size of letters, we can also define this concept as the agglomeration of letters and phrases in a way that diminishes its normal size, and it is the opposite of extending in both forms. Where the calligraphic lines have to adapt according to the space given and be exposed to stenography and letter integration, which if overused can lead to reading difficulties.



A sample of Maghrebi script that presents the features of Elasticity & compressability

5.6.6 Angulation

This is a main characteristic of the Kufic script, which can be utilized to create geometric angular shapes through the usage of calligraphic units. Thus, drawing the

letters lacking of flexibility. In addition, through this feature, and the modification of the letter shapes, the calligrapher could turn the negative space to produce a second calligraphic element that compliments the composition itself.



A sample of Maghrebi Kufic that represents the feature of Angulation

5.6.7 Interlacing & Intergrading

An exclusive feature of the Arabic letters, where the extensions of vertically extended letters can be interlaced in manner that composes decorative agents & elements out of the same calligraphic units.

The interlacing and intergrading in Moroccan scripts can be on the shape of decorated braid, this braid can go more complex as the extensions of more than two letters can bind and intertwine to create a beautiful braided frame. However, this feature depends on the existence of similarly-natured letters, for it to be able to intertwine smoothly and at ease, however, this feature can make the portrait vary from easy to read, until being almost unreadable to the common observer.



A sample of Jeli Mojawher that represents the feature of interlacing.

5.6.8 Motion

The calligraphic line is usually described with beauty and exquisiteness if it gave you the illusion of motion, and the Arabic letters are geometrically intricate and flexible, able to create complex compositions that can emit that sense of motion. Where curved lines appear more motioned than straight lines, and with the modification of linear relations, the calligrapher can be able to manipulate this feature effectively, while adding Unidirectional or multidirectional illusion of motion.

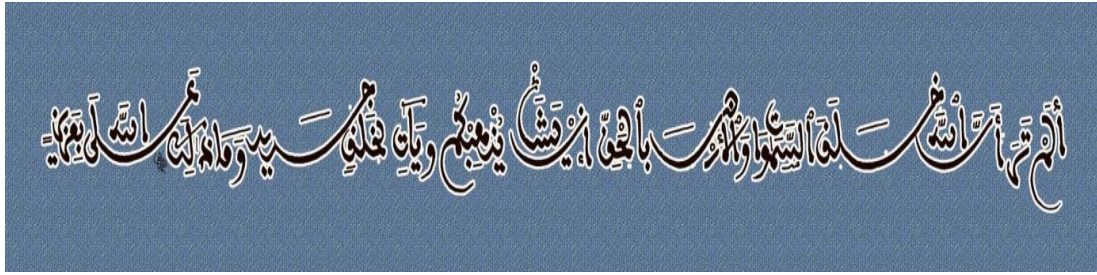
The feature of motion can be inspected through the eye movement while following the lines of the calligraphic composition, varying in speed & intermittence, this feature can guide the eyes into discovering the whole portrait with the calligrapher's intended speed.



A sample of Moroccan Jeli Mojawher that represents the feature of motion.

5.6.9 Vocalization

Which is the attachment of diacritics into the letters for correct reading. These diacritics contribute into the aesthetic aspect of calligraphy, where it is added also as complementing decorations, resulting a perfect shape of the whole portrait while having a connection between the orthographic units and these diacritics. Those elements of vocalization can emit the sense of softness and roughness, depending on the needs of the calligrapher.



A sample of Moroccan Jeli Mojawher that represents the feature of vocalization

5.6.10 Dotting

Which is the attachment of dots to distinguish different letters, the dots can add an aesthetic aspect as the linguistic. Where it influences its beautiful composition. The point can take several shapes; it can be circular, triangular, or squared, as multiple dots can be aligned linearly or on the shape of a pyramid. Thus, the calligrapher can utilize the dots into adding a distinct flavor to the portrait and help the observer comprehend its linguistic message all together.



A sample of Moroccan Jeli Mojawher that represents the feature of Dotting

5.6.11 Blanking

Which is the opening and closing of the circularly composed letters such as the *Meem*, *Fa'*, *Qaf* etc. this feature can be used to add a sense of variety into the intended portrait, as it can enrich it with rhythmic elements altogether, this feature is quite apparent while using the rigid Kufic and Ruqa'h varieties.

5.6.12 Space Occupancy

Since the Arabic alphabet is characterized with all these features, then it has to be featured with its flexibility to occupy unused spaces with extensions, curved lines, elastics, vocalization and dotting the letters.

In the Maghrebi scripts, the calligrapher begins to use all these features and elements to make use of the blank spaces in his portrait, where he can even reach to a point of relocating certain elements to add balance into the composition, depending on his own interest, as well as adding diacritics to the small spaces.



A sample of Moroccan Jeli Mojawher that represents the features of Space Occupancy & Transformation.

5.6.13 Transformation

Due to the flexibility of the Arabic alphabet, it has enabled the calligrapher to shape its compositions into a multitude of organic and geometric figures, assisted by his imagination. This feature leads the calligrapher to depend on the artistic principles and morphologic and aesthetic features of the Maghrebi script to produce diverse calligraphic figurations, and adds more exquisiteness with the integration of other aspects and elements, for instance. Creating symmetrical styled portraits, by inscribing the certain composition on one half of the space, and the copying it

symmetrically on the other. This style and using this feature will create a sense of balance due to the symmetric effect, and a sense of rhythm with the repetition of letters within the portrait.



Chapter VII

CONCLUSION

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6.2. APPENDIX

A. Ancient Mus'haf inscriptions

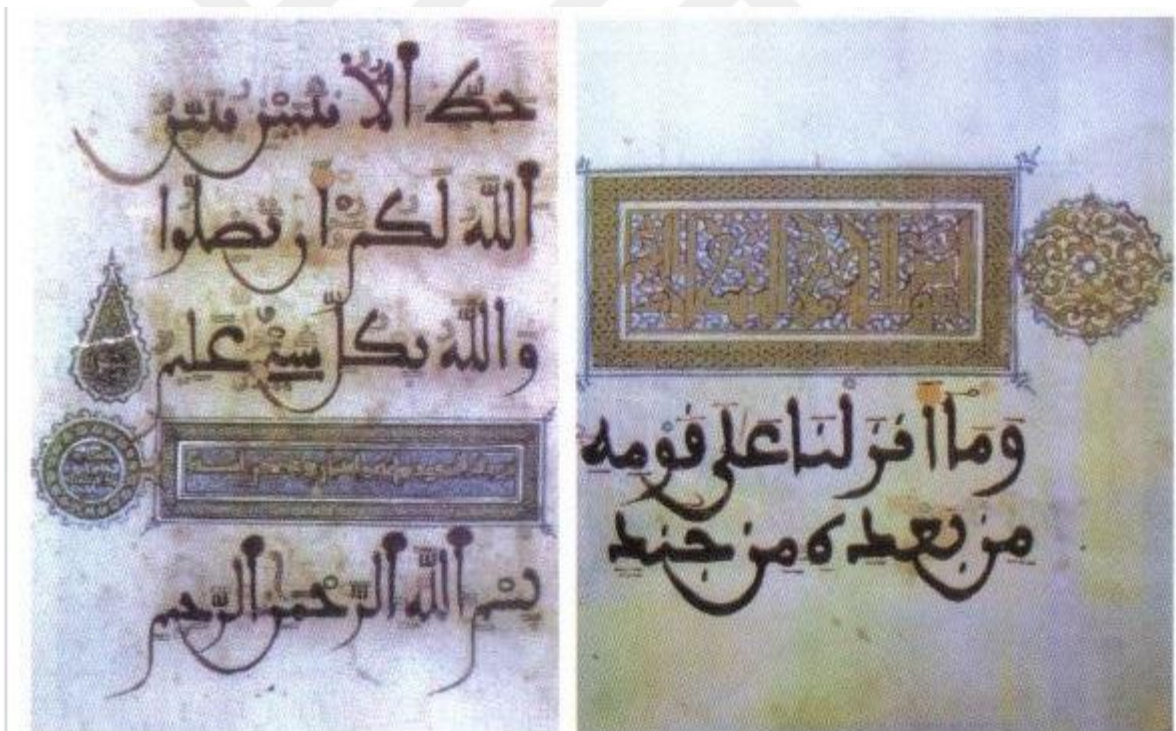


Left: Kufic Kairouanic sample, by Ali Alwarraq 410 H \ 1019 A.D. - National Library - Tunis.

Right: Maghrebi Kufic sample - 5th H \ 11 A.D. century, of a papyrus Quran copy - G1

إلى نادى بالهمم اختلا سلفهم بعد جليل شتات رة الله جلهم
 فدومين في قول الله فكل نبيكم على نبيير في
 الوردية فما الدين فيقولوا يا نبيي قد دونه على
 ما فلتنبت بالهمة فتمه فيه شوقه: أقسمه بالله
 علكم وزيقوا الله عز لكم من تاهينكم جادوا
 تأق عز لكم من يادوا جيبه سر في خففة
 فد ذكركم من الصليب: أقبالنا بطلو منوز
 في بسهمين بالله فتمه نضهر وزيق: في نبيد وزيق
 في رة الله ما لا يهبط لله قد وقا من السملوا ج
 في لا دبير شتاق لا تستبطسوا في ولا تصبو روا
 لله إلا عيال رة الله نعلم. في أنته لا تأنفون من كثراف

Ancient Kufic Sample, dated back to the 3rd H \ 9th A.D. century - G613

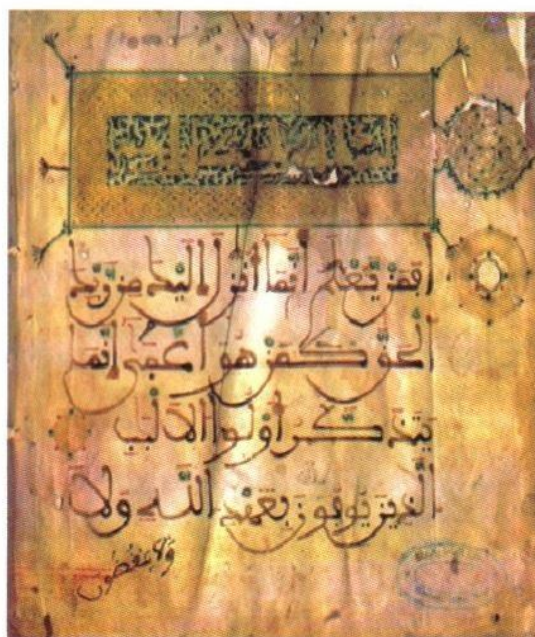


Left: Mabsout script sample - 8th H \ 14th A.D. century

Right: Mabsout script sample - Mus'haf Alsultan Abulhasan Almarini - The Alquds Alsharif Library - Rabat, 2006.

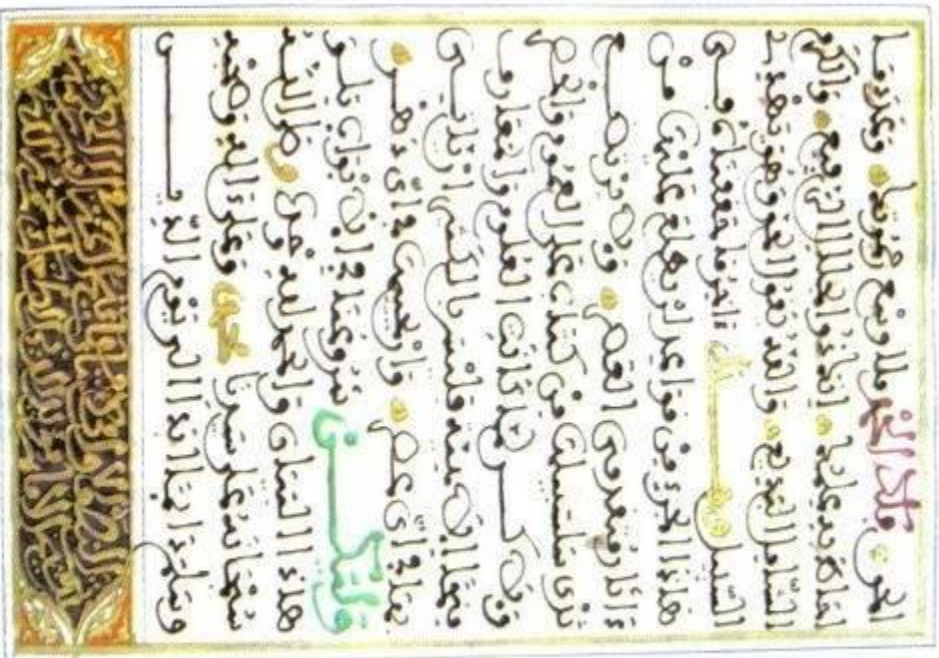


Tattered Mabsout sample, Quran transcription by Caliph Umar Almutada of Almohads - G 1278



Mabsout script sample - Papyrus Mus'haf - 6th H \ 12th A.D. century - G608

Mojawher script sample - *Kitab Majaih Abraham* by Altaghrani
D.643



Mabsout script sample, *Quran transcription* - Royal
Library, Rabat.

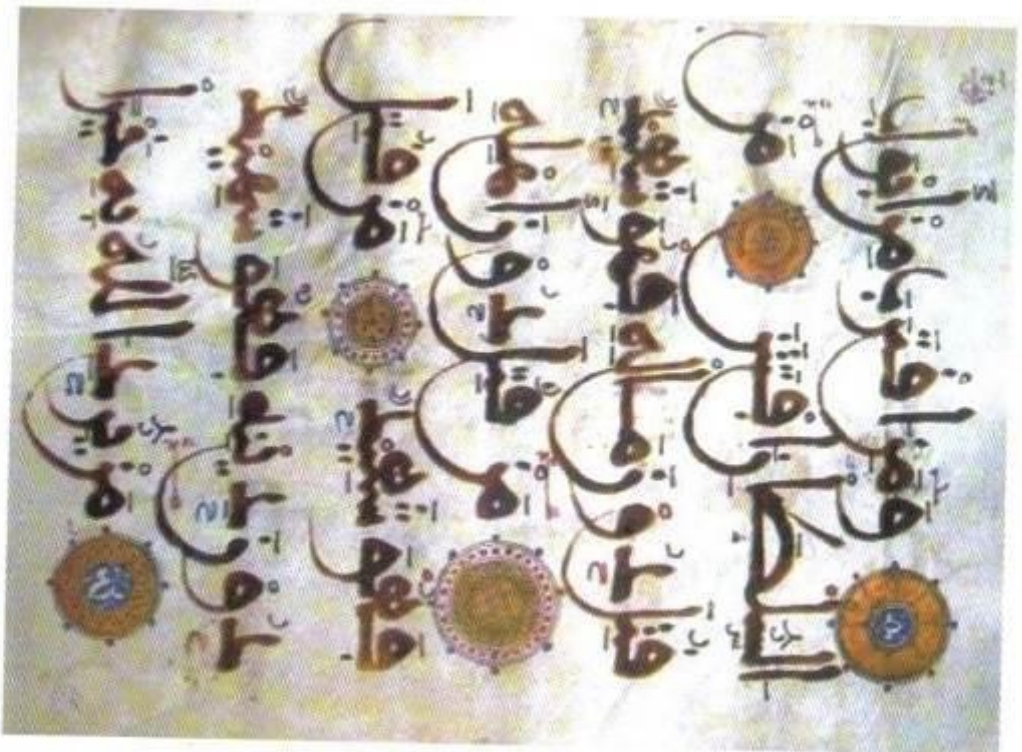
B. Various Manuscripts samples:



Moroccan Thuluth
sample - *Althakira* by
Alsharqawi - G513



Moroccan Thuluth
sample - 6th Vol. of
Sahih Albukhari

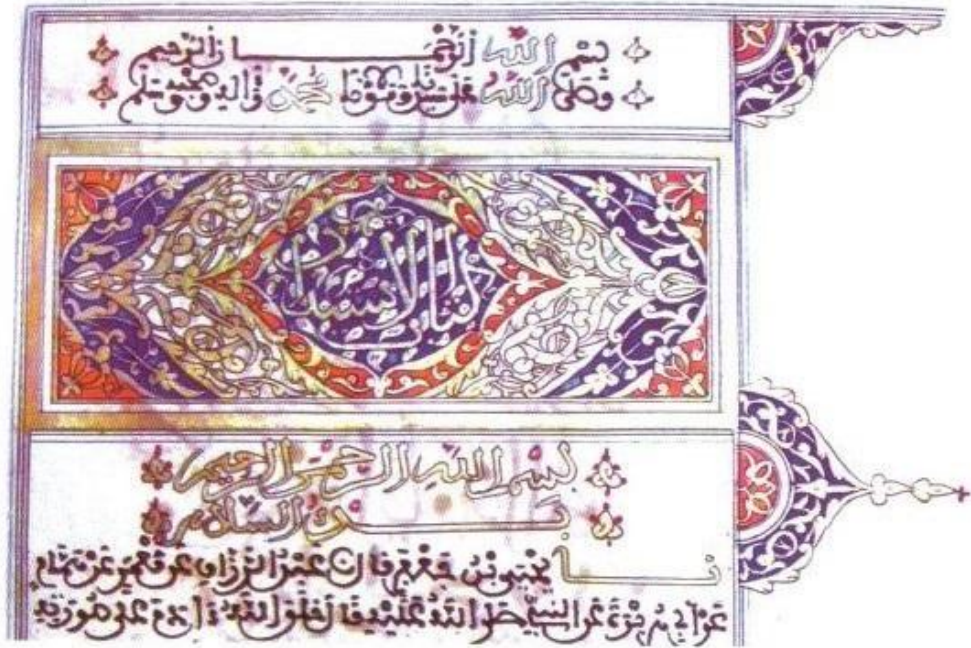


Mabsout script sample - *Alladith Ahnabawi* - G 1810

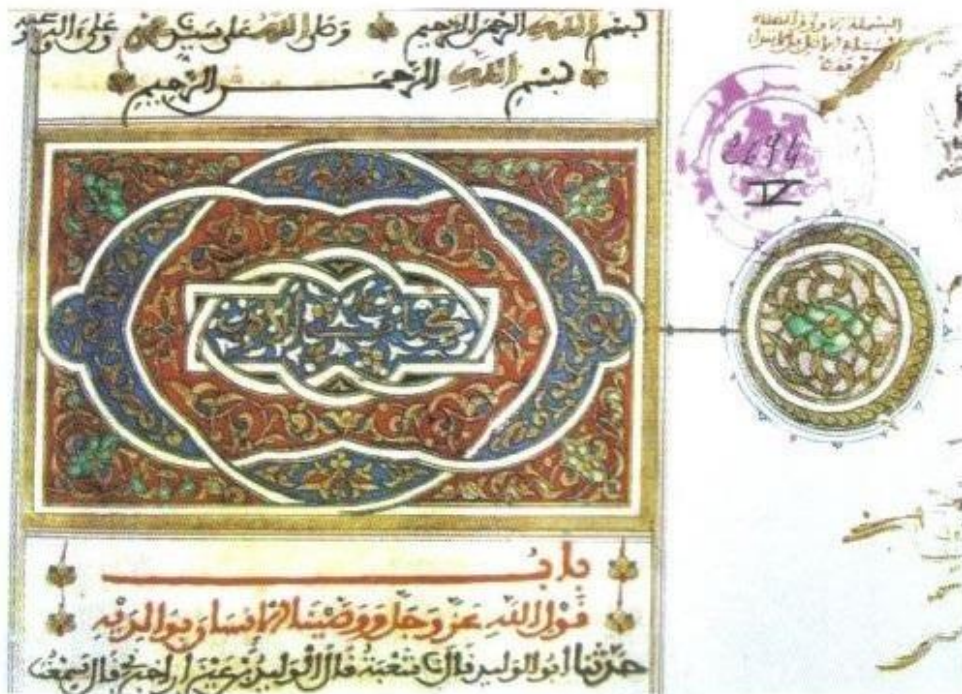
حَسْبُكَ الْإِسْلَامُ وَالْمَرْجُوكَا ۞ **مِرْأُو تَمْرٍ حَيْجِ الْجَارِ مِنْهُ غَيْرُ مَمْرٍ**
 وَمِنْ لَدُنْ قَتْلِ أَفْكَا ۞ **وَجَرْتَهُ لِمَلَا حَقِيمٍ تَلْمِزٍ**
 وَأَبْرِيغُونَ مَا لَعْنَتُهُ مِنْهُ يَدُلُّ تَلْمِزًا ۞ **أَبْرِيغُونَ تَلْمِزًا لَعْنَتُهُ فِي الْمَلِكِ**
 وَأَبْرِيغُونَ تَلْمِزًا لَعْنَتُهُ فِي الْمَلِكِ ۞ **تِلْمِزُهُ تَلْمِزُهُ تَلْمِزُهُ تَلْمِزُهُ**
بِأَلْتَمِزِ الْخَلْقِ مَا لَيْسَ فِي الرُّؤْيِ ۞ **بِأَلْتَمِزِ الْخَلْقِ مَا لَيْسَ فِي الرُّؤْيِ**
وَلِي تَلْمِزِي لِمَوْلَى الْجَارِ مَا لَيْسَ ۞ **وَلِي تَلْمِزِي لِمَوْلَى الْجَارِ مَا لَيْسَ**
 فِي رُؤْيِ جُورِي لِمَوْلَى الْجَارِ مَا لَيْسَ ۞ **وَلِي تَلْمِزِي لِمَوْلَى الْجَارِ مَا لَيْسَ**
 فِي رُؤْيِ جُورِي لِمَوْلَى الْجَارِ مَا لَيْسَ ۞ **وَلِي تَلْمِزِي لِمَوْلَى الْجَارِ مَا لَيْسَ**
تَعْلُ جَمْعًا مِنْ جَمْعِي فِي جَمْعِي ۞ **تَعْلُ جَمْعًا مِنْ جَمْعِي فِي جَمْعِي**
بِأَلْتَمِزِ الْخَلْقِ مَا لَيْسَ فِي الرُّؤْيِ ۞ **بِأَلْتَمِزِ الْخَلْقِ مَا لَيْسَ فِي الرُّؤْيِ**
وَأَلْتَمِزِي جَمْعِي فِي جَمْعِي ۞ **وَأَلْتَمِزِي جَمْعِي فِي جَمْعِي**
وَأَلْتَمِزِي جَمْعِي فِي جَمْعِي ۞ **وَأَلْتَمِزِي جَمْعِي فِي جَمْعِي**
فَأَلْتَمِزِي جَمْعِي فِي جَمْعِي ۞ **فَأَلْتَمِزِي جَمْعِي فِي جَمْعِي**
أَلْتَمِزِي جَمْعِي فِي جَمْعِي ۞ **أَلْتَمِزِي جَمْعِي فِي جَمْعِي**

Thuluth & Mojawher samples - Final page of *Alburda* by Albuseiri, inscribed by Bader Almiknasi at 1219 H.

C. Magherbi scripts & Decorations:



Decorated page of *Sahih Albukhari*



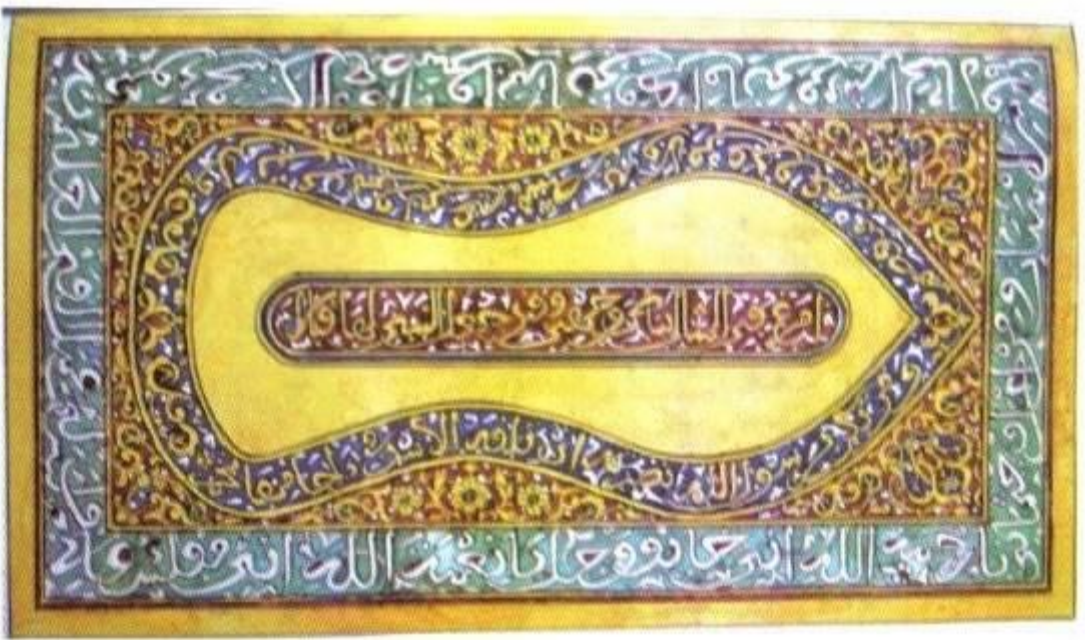
Decorated page of *Sahih Albukhari - G5/2694*



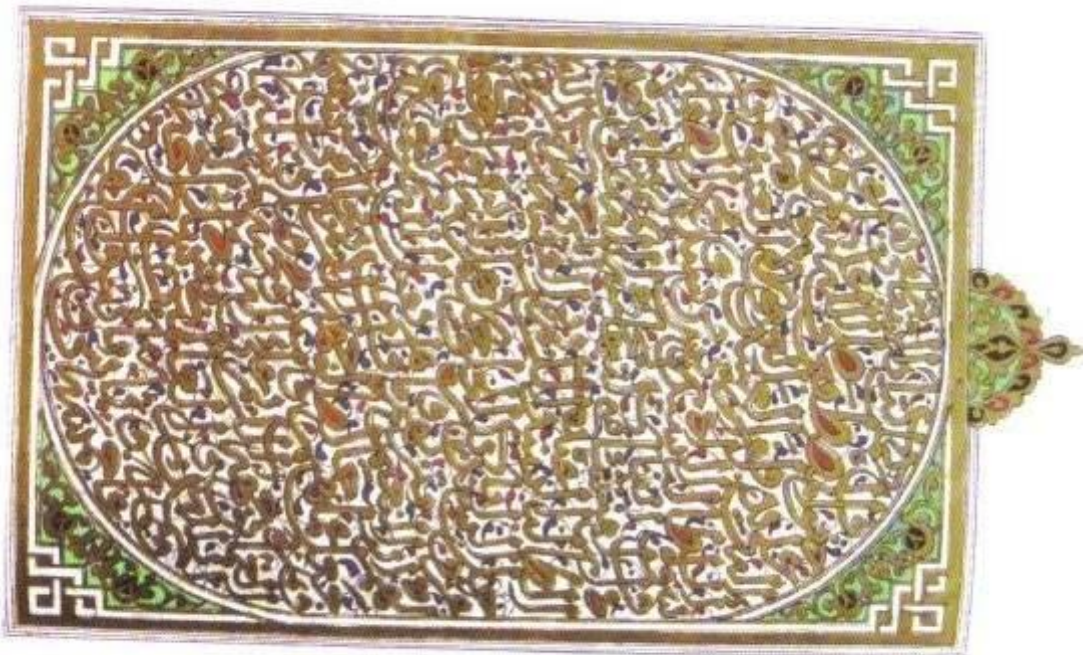
Decorated Thuluth - *Kitab Alshefa*
by Ayyad Alsabti - P1 - 986



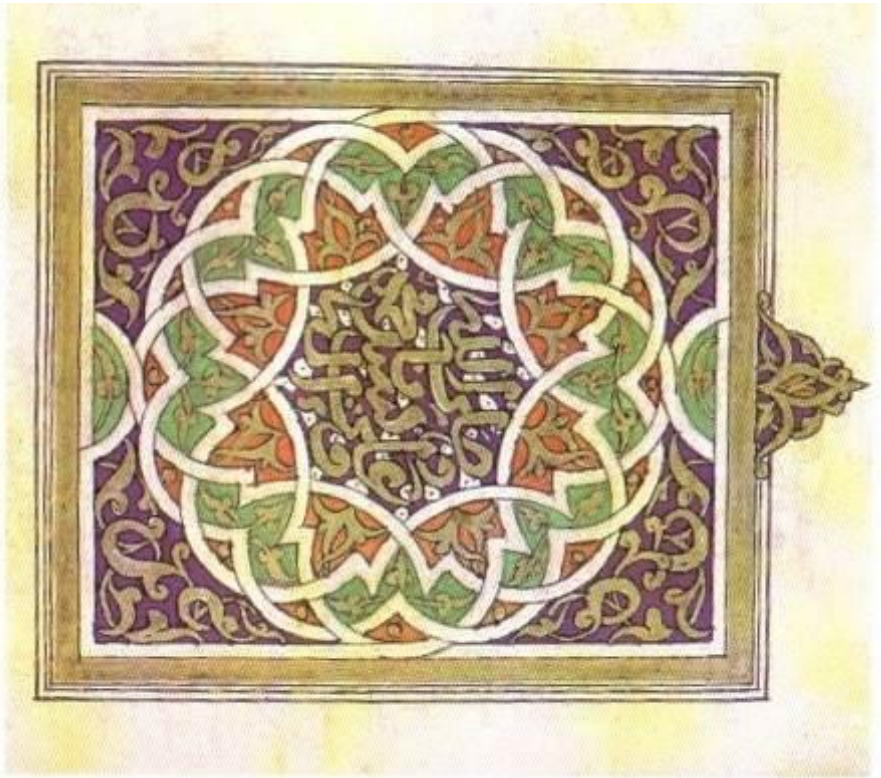
Decorated Thuluth sample - *Kitab Alshefa*
by Ayyad Alsabti - P2-986



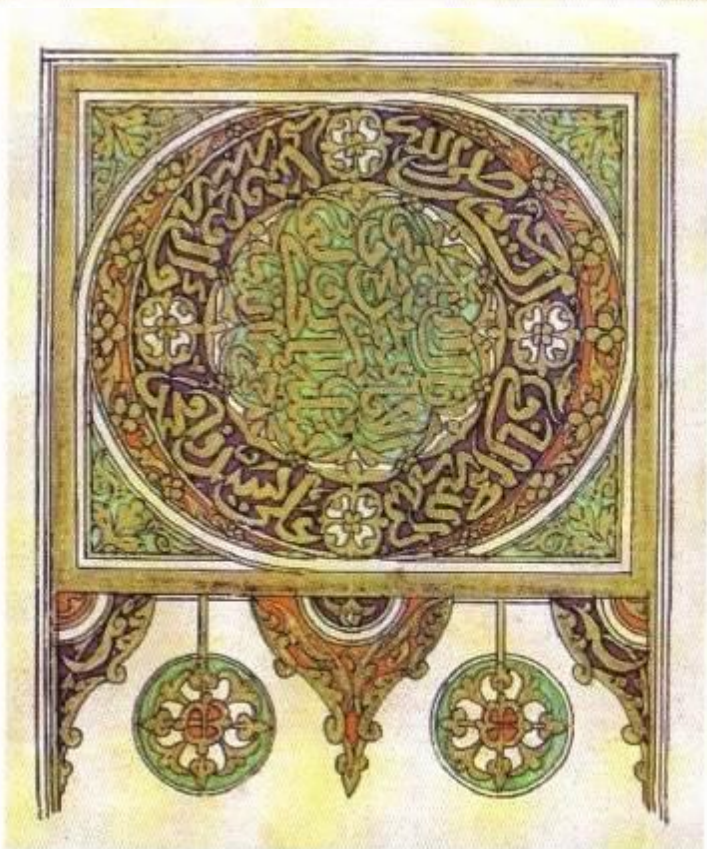
Decorative Thuluth sample - Prophet shoe -
Kitab Althakwira



Decorated Thuluth sample - *Kitab Alshefa* by Ayyad
 Alsabit - P-986 - final page



Decorated Thuluth Sample - *Kitab Dalayel Akhirat* -
- Aljazwani - Awqaf ministry, Rabat



Decorated Thuluth sample - *Kitab Dalayel Akhirat* -
Aljazwani - Ministry of Awqaf, Rabat

D. Sultanate & private documents:

4 - الوثائق السلطانية والخاصة



Thuluth & Mojawher sample - a letter from Caliph Almutada'li of the Almohad to Pope Innocent IV - 1251 A.D. \ 648 H - Vatican reserves

الغنى والهدى

وكل الله على سيدنا محمد وآله وصحبه وسلم



بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
الحمد لله الذي جعلنا من آل محمد وآله وصحبه وسلم
الذين هم أئمة الدين وأركان الملك والنفوس
الطاهرة والنفوس المطهرة والنفوس
الطاهرة والنفوس المطهرة والنفوس
الطاهرة والنفوس المطهرة
على (28)

Mojawher script sample - a letter to Sultan Seidi Muhammad Ibn Abdurrahman - 1281 H



Mabsout sample - King Muhammad VI speech - Inbeyath Umma, vol 50.

الغنى والهدى



الحمد لله الذي جعلنا من آل محمد وآله وصحبه وسلم
الذين هم أئمة الدين وأركان الملك والنفوس
الطاهرة والنفوس المطهرة والنفوس
الطاهرة والنفوس المطهرة
على (28)

Mojawher script sample - a letter to Sultan Mulay Abdurrahman Ibn Hisham - 1261 H

E. Lithographic samples

الجمل ووزله للادوية المذكورة ان ثلثوا نغز من نغومله ولا يعولوا على
 بل يربح منها. اللانفوز ووزله قنوز وللصنوزات اكلع. وعلو نغمة
 قول السلام
التجارة
 التجملة الخد ملان التكتبية واللمنة عمية للزنج ابي بيع العمل
 نتيمة ولد حتمه وكاسب الل نعلم وغيره من النعمان نتيمة كسبه
 والعلان نتيمة عند عمه للاجل الزنج الذي يوزر وراه ذالك
 ولا يقبل شراء السع وخبثا ويبيع غدا لينة سواء بلا حنكارة الى الورق
 الذي يربح بيعه ثمنه او ينقله من صيدل نضجه الى صيدل اريد او يربح ثمنه للاجل
 الزنج المرجو ذالك وهو عمية جليلية اذا كانت بصروف اخلص
 يبيع الا نسلار يبيع نفسه اولاد ووكنه ذالك
 وفرا يقرب ثمنه الى الله عليه وسلم في ما خرجت بنت خويلد عسار في
 ذالك من مكة الى الشام في السنة 25 هجر مؤلفا عليه السلام جلا تها
 برنح جليله عند عرفت له ما كذا الشرك بهنم اولاد عليه فم تزوجت بعد
 ذالك بنحو ثلاثة اشهر
 وكذا زسيفه عند الرجب ثور عوف احد العشرة المبشرين بالجنة يدعون تل جسر
 الرجمه رشم يعلو لدار والة الربيع في مشر لا بعد وشر عراي عبا سر فرمو على
 خا لرب العوليد شيع الله وشيع وشولم وجمزة اسد الله واسر شولم
 وابو عبيدة براجر اح امير اليمن وشولم وخرينة برايل من اهل عبيدة
 الرجمه وعبد الرجمه رشم عوف من ثمل الرجمه عز قول
 واخرج القرون في السن والجملة في المشرك عنه عليه لفضل الام
 والسلام انه فلان
 التاجم لعدو والي ميرع الشيب والهد يغير والشرك . قال العزيز
 حسى . وسيف منزلة الزينة العجمية كذا اسلا والية الثمارة وغيره

تغليب

Mojawher sample - Lithography - *Asbab Alruqi Alhaqiqi* by Ahmad Alsubaihi - 1917-1336.

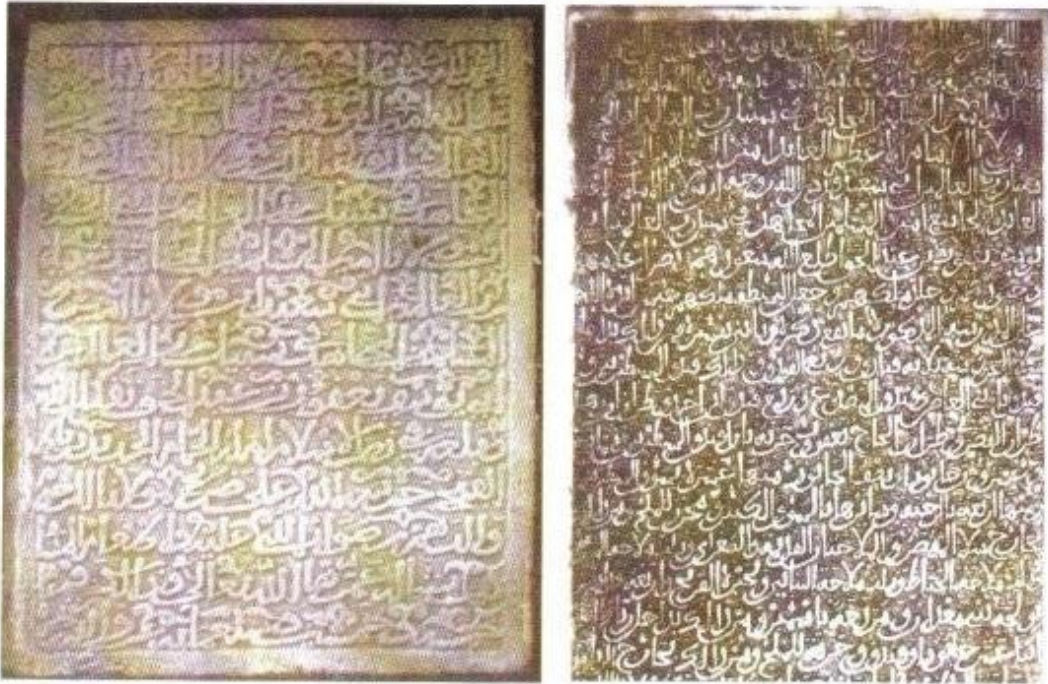
F. Moroccan script on architectural landmarks



Moroccan Thuluth sample - Gypsum inscription - Wall of Marinid School - Fez

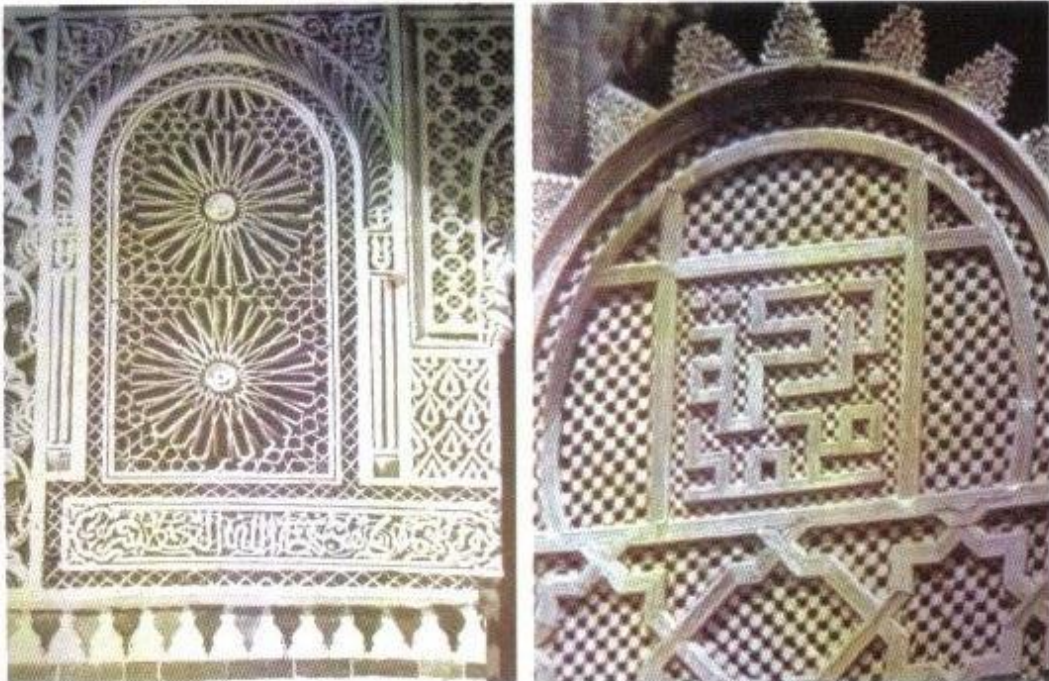


Moroccan Thuluth Sample - Pillar - Marinid School, Fez



Left: Moroccan Thuluth sample - Marble board - The Aljadid Bath - Sultan Abu Anan Almarini - 1345 A.D.

Right: Moroccan Thuluth sample - Marble board - Marinid school of Sala



Left: Decorated Thuluth sample - Gypsum decoration - Bahia Palace - Marrakesh.

Right: Geometric Kufic sample - Wood - Karaouine mosque - Fez

G. Moroccan scripts on coins and tools:



Moroccan Kufic Sample - Hafsid Dirham



**Moroccan Thuluth Sample - Almohad
Dirham - Abdulmomen Ibn Ali reign.**



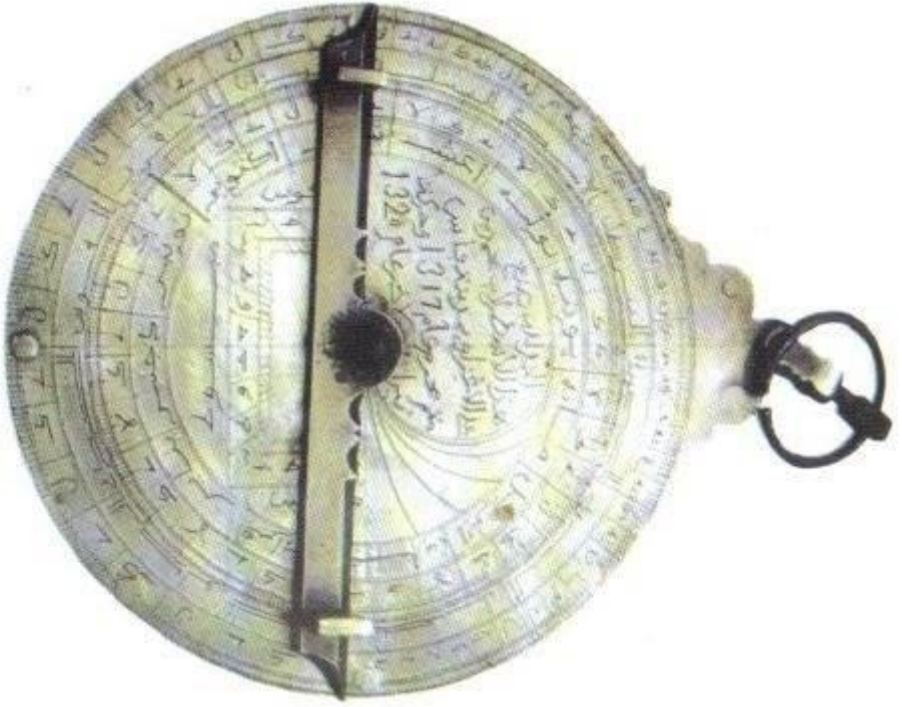
Moroccan Thuluth sample - Hassanid Real - 1881 A.D.



Moroccan Thuluth sample - Azizid Real - 1900 A.D.



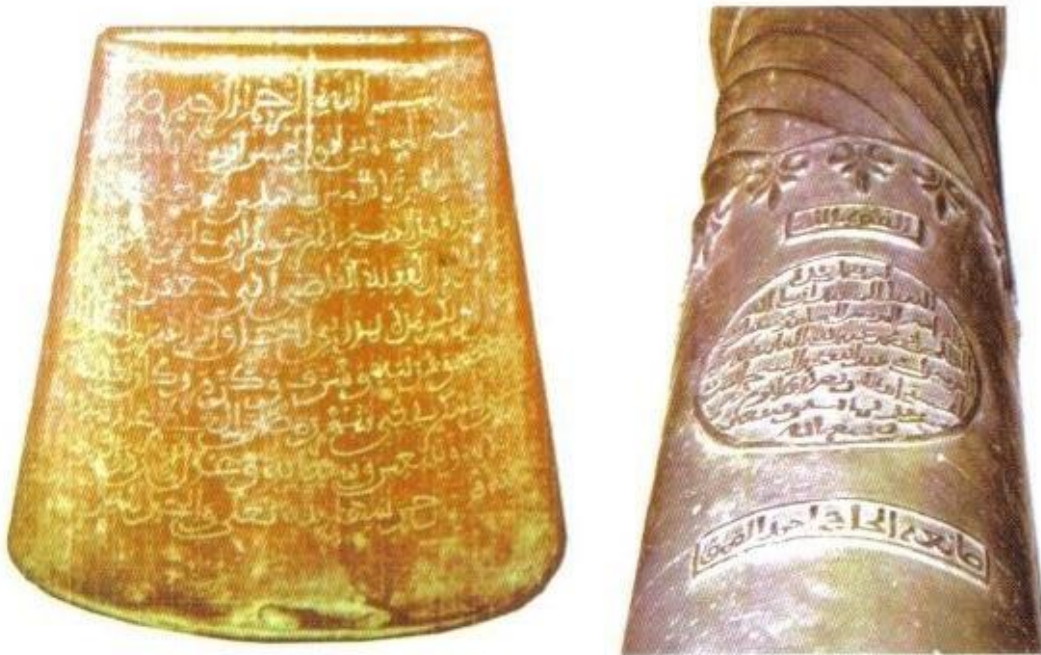
Moroccan Thuluth sample - Hafizid Real - 1911 A.D.



Mabsout script sample - Astrolabe - Fez - 1899



Moroccan Thuluth sample - Ornament



Left: Moroccan Thuluth sample - Muide - Marinid Reign.
 Right: Moroccan Thuluth sample - Cannon of Sultan Abdullah Alghaleb Alsaadi - 978 H.

H. Contemporary Mus'haf inscriptions:



Mabsout script sample - inscribed by seven calligraphers -
 Muhammad Almuallim model - 1996



Qandusi script sample - by Ibn Alqasem Alqandusi - Holy Quran



Qandusi script sample - by Ibn Alqasem Alqandusi - Holy Quran.



Sudani script sample - Holy Quran - Hausa-speaking region - Timbuktu manuscript - *Masalek Almarafa*

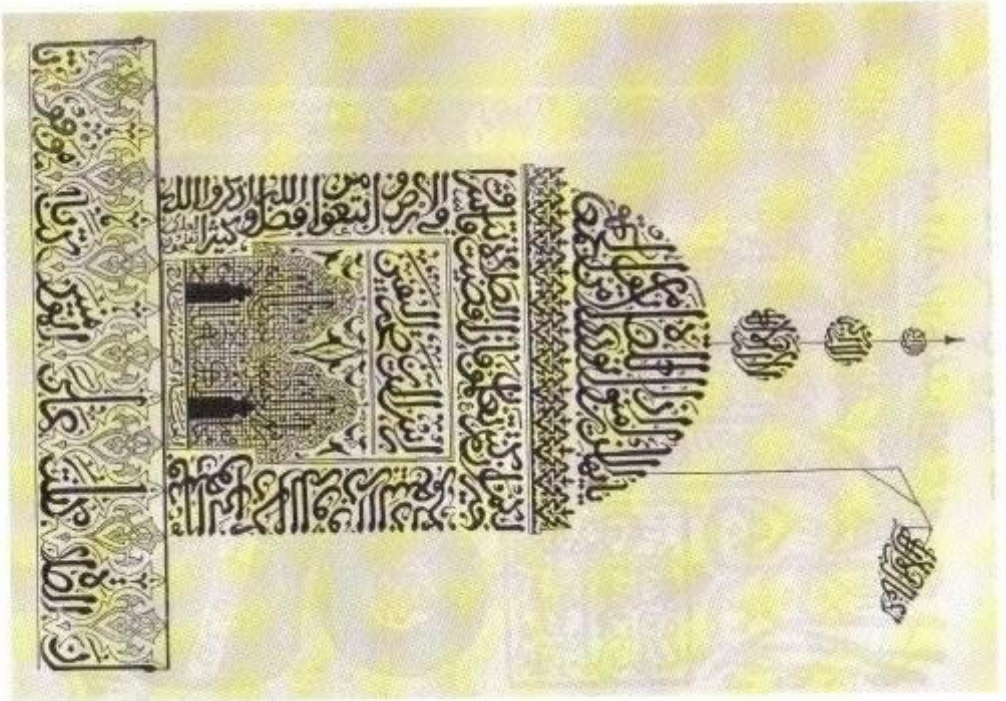
I. Calligraphic portraits:



Moroccan Thuluth sample - By Abdussalam Bennani
Down: Moroccan Thuluth sample - By Muhammad Almuatrinin



لوحة خط الثلث المغربي للخطاط محمد المصطفى

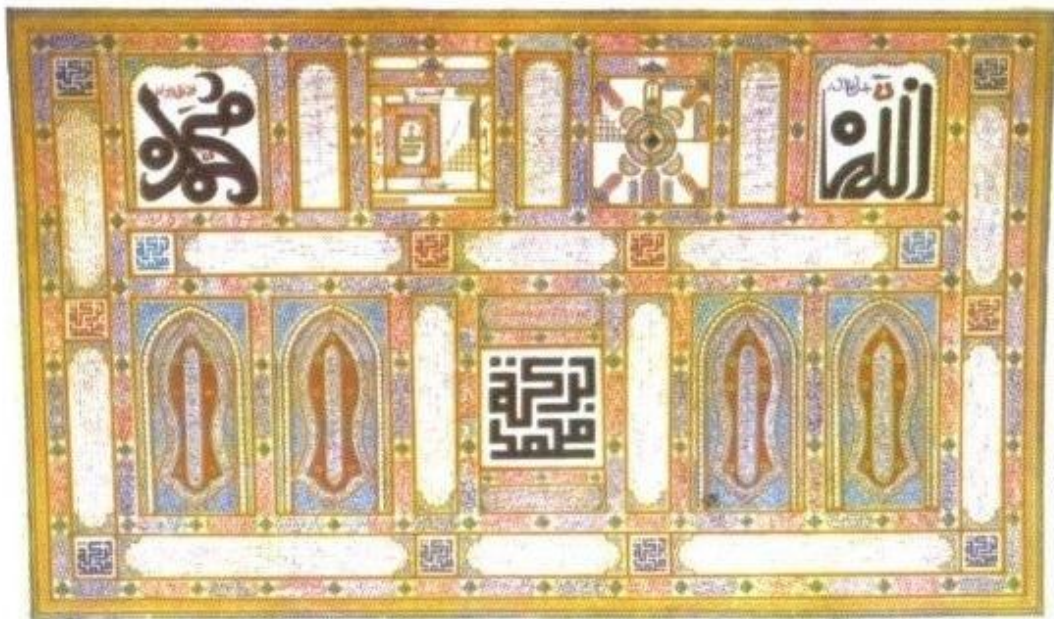
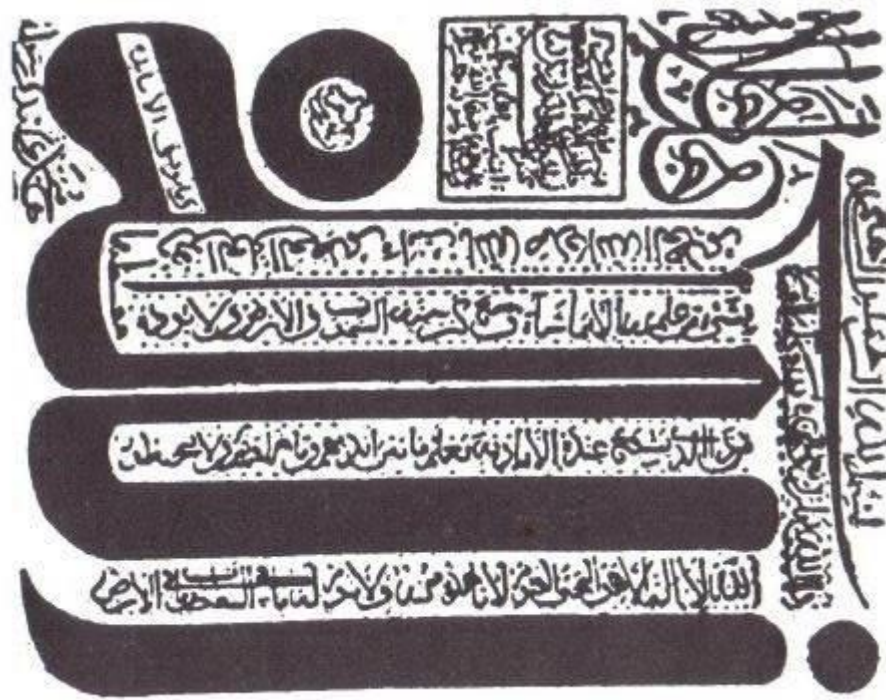


Decorative Thuluth sample - by Muhammad Albahawi Alsusri
- 1949.



Moroccan Thuluth sample - Ibn Alqasem Alqondusi
Basmallah

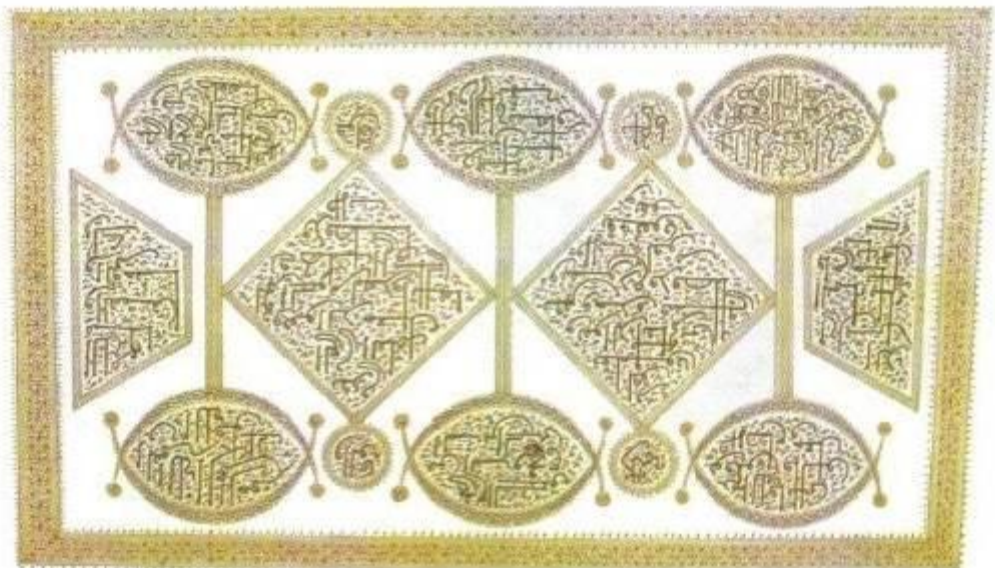
Qundosi script sample - Moroccan Thuluth



Decorative scripts mixture sample - Arrawd - by Muhammad Ibn Ahmad Alrabati



Decorated Portrait - by Abdulkarim Ibn Altayeb Alwazzani.



Decorated Portrait - by Abdulmaula Najmi.

Decorated Kufic portrait - by Abdullah Alwazzani

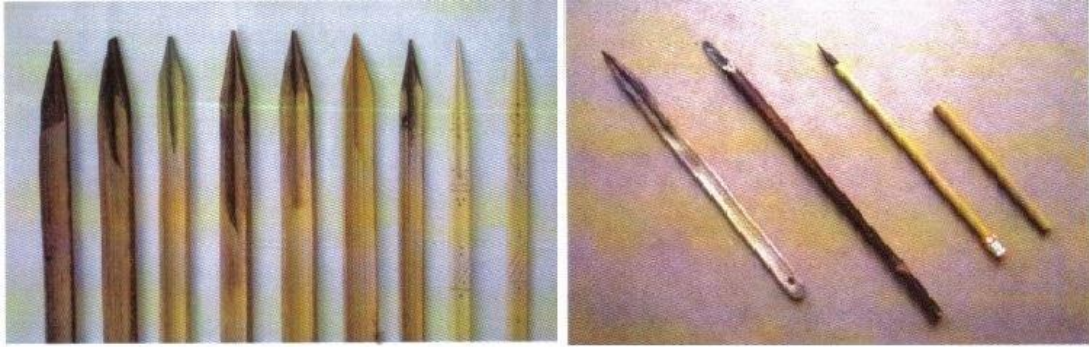


J. Moroccan Calligraphic Instruments:



Right: Wooden board used to memorize the Quran's verses - on it a Quranic verse written by Abdurrahman Alinzakani - 1957

Left: The other side of the board.



Right: Moroccan pen, Oriental pen, and Chinese pen w/ cap. [left to right].
 Left: several Moroccan bamboo pens, sorted by tip measure - can be used on woodboards and paper.

قلم الحظ



Traditional Inkwells



Lantern used by scholars of calligraphy

ÖZET

Arap hat sanatı İslam ve Arap medeniyetinde çok önemli bir konuma sahiptir. Bilim, yazmaya bağlı olan İslam kimliğini bu şekilde tanımıştır. Arapça hat, Arapça harflerini kullanan farklı dillerin tasarım ve yazma sanatıdır. Araplar yoğun bedevilik döneminde yazıyı bulmuşlardır. Ulaştıkları bu yeni hattı ellerinde tutabilecek önemli nedenleri yoktu. Hat sanatı onların nazarında, bir sanat şeklini almamıştır. Araplar, sayısız kültür merkezine sahip devlet haline gelene kadar. Arap alfabesi İslami fetihlerle birlikte ilk olarak birinci yy hicri7 Fas ülkesine girmiştir. Aralarında Kufi hattı dâhil olmak üzere ;Doğu da ki hat sanatı ilk önce bölgenin başkenti olan Kayravan şehrine daha sonra diğer ülkelere yayılmıştır. Endülüs ise Kufi hattı gelişerek birincisi; Çok köşeli olan Endülüs Kufisi ikincisi; Yuvarlak yani dairesel Kurtubi ya da Endülüs hattı şeklinde iki şekle ayrılmıştır.

Fas hattı, Fas ve Endülüs başta olmak üzere çeşitli Arap ve İslam ülkeleri arasında ki iletişim ve bilgi aktarımının sağlanmasında önemli bir araçtır. Harflerin yapısını koruyan, yüksek incelik, sembolik, doğrusal ve kromatik diyaloga veya diyalektiğe dayanan sanatsal tarzı ile estetik bir şekil almıştır. Değişik ifadeler ve çoklu tabirlere dayanan sembolik harfleri şekillendirmeye dayanmıştır.

Araştırmacı, bu araştırmayı beş bölüme ayırmıştır.

Birinci bölüm: Araştırmanın önemini ve problemi İslam fikrinde ki Fas hat sanatı ile ilgili güzel düşünceleri ortaya çıkarmayı hedeflemiştir. İlaveten araştırmacının konusu ile ilgili direkt kavramlar tanıtılmıştır.

İkinci Bölüm: Teorik çerçeveyi belirleyerek Cahiliye döneminden Osmanlı devleti dönemi dahil olmak üzere Arap hat tarihinin gelişim aşamalarına yer verilmiştir.

Üçüncü Bölüm: İslam dini ortaya çıktıktan sonra ve Osmanlı dönemine kadar Arap hat sanatı, türlerini ve gelişim aşamalarına yer vermiştir.

Dördüncü Bölüm: Fas hattının türleri, gelişim aşamaları ve sanatsal görseelliğe ulaşan en meşhur hattatlar açıklanmıştır.

Beşinci Bölüm: Araştırmacı, Fas hattının görsel bir hal alan desenleri ve sanatsal dayanaklara sahip beş ayrı kısımda açıklanmıştır.

Birinci kısım: İslam sanatında ki Arap hat görseelliği

İkinci Kısım: Fas hat türleri

Üçüncü Kısım: Fas hat sanatının özellikleri

Dördüncü kısım: Fas hat sanatının bileşenleri

Beşinci Kısım: Fas hat sanatının yapısı ve dayanakları

Yukarıda verilen bilgilere dayanarak Fas, Arap hat sanatının görünüm özelliklerinden yola çıkarak hattı pozitif düşüncelere dayandığı kanaatine varmıştır. Geleneksel yapıdan çıkarak yazı oluşum yöntemi ile harflerin özellikleri geliştirilmiştir. Alışılmışlığın dışında bir yapı çıkartılmıştır. Harfler, usul ve kaideler kullanılarak güzelliği ortaya çıkarma hedeflenmiştir. Bu konuda elde edilen sonuçları aşağıda şöyle özetleyebiliriz.

1. Fas hattı sanatında esnekliği kullanarak güzelliği ön plana çıkarmıştır. Yatay harfler ise uzatma kullanarak diğer harflere dayandırılmıştır.

2. Harflerin yerlerini estetik, geometrik şekil oluşturarak kullanılmıştır.

3. Harflerin, hacmi, ölçüleri, duruşları ve yönlerini değiştirerek alışılmışlığın dışında görseellik katılmıştır. Gerekli olan durumunda metnin kelimeleri düzensizleşmiş veya yerleri değiştirilmiştir.

4. Geometrik (daire, dikdörtgen ve üçgen) gibi şekilleri kullanarak görsellik katılmıştır. Düzensiz ve serbest şekiller ile birlikte genel oluşum ortaya çıkartılarak esnek bir hat yapısı ortaya çıkartılmıştır.

5. Hat sanatında kalemin hacim ve ölçüsünün değişimi sonucunda hattat metnin oluşumu sırasında farklılaştırma ortaya çıkarmada yardımcı olmuştur.

6. Estetik ilişkilere ulaşmada konfigürasyon içinde tekrarlanan harflerin bazı bölümleri tekrarını yansıtmaya yoluyla ritim, uyum ve çeşitlilik olmaktadır.

Bu araştırma sunumu ile araştırmacının elde ettiği sonuçlar, Fas hat tarihinin kısa bir özetini sunmuştur. Hattın taşıdığı sanatsal oluşum, estetik değerleri, hat tekniğinde hat araçlarının teknik yönleri bilgilerini taşımaktadır. Asırlar boyunca en büyük hattatların ortaya çıkardığı Fas hat sanatının işlerini ve problemlerini bulma gereksinimi ortaya çıkmıştır. Fas hattı, esnekliği ve görselliği bakımından Fas kimliklerinden biridir. Fas hatları sanatsal estetiği, medeniyeti ve değerleri ile ün kazanmış ve birçok Fas kütüphanelerinde yazıtlar mevcuttur.

Mağrib ülkelerinde birçok hattat, el sanatları ve tasarımcı Fas hat sanatının esnekliğini kullanmıştır. Bu özellikler sınırsız yaratıcılık imkânı açmıştır. Sanatkâr ve hattatlar tablo, çizim ve desenler de Fas hattı kullanılmıştır. Sanatlarını ahşap, taş, alçı; maden ve kâğıt gibi araçlarla uygulamışlardır. Elde edilen sanat eserleri ve Fas hat sanatının estetikliği ile ilgili tarih boyunca tanıklık edecek birçok belge vardır.

ARSIV Kayıt Bilgileri

Tezin Adi : Maghrebî Hattı Tarih

Tezin Yazari : Saeeda Abulgasem Azzabi

Tezin Danismani : Prof. Dr. Murat AĞARI

Tezin Konumu : Yüksek Lisans

Tezin Tarihi : 27.09.2017

Tezin Alani : KBÜ/SBE

Anahtar Kelimeler: Maghrebî Hattı Tarih

ABSTRACT

The Arabic calligraphic methods and varieties had always acknowledged as a symbol of the Arab-Islamic civilization. This is nothing out of the obvious due to the fact that writing systems artistically and linguistically do shape a culture and that the process of comprehending its characters, styles, its linguistic & aesthetic features you would end up with a traced chronological line of information about the populations, cultures, civilizations, which had invented, enhanced, and developed this certain writing system and the languages that had utilized it respectively.

Writing had reached the Arabs in the peninsula during their prolonged state of nomadism; during which they had not sophisticated and innovated their language's orthography aesthetically until after the Islamic conquests across Asian, North African, and Sub-European territories, that chronologic point where the civilization had reached its multicultural golden age. With the conquests, the Arabic writing system had been adopted within the new western territories "Maghreb" during the Seventh AD. \ First AH. Along with its arriving orthographic styles and calligraphic varieties, traditions, and methods. Considering that, it has become – by that time – the official system of writing within the state, and the sacred language of the Holy Quran. The city of Kairouan had adopted and spread many oriental calligraphic methods to the rest of the region, including the *Kufic*. In Andalusia, the Kufic began to develop where two new varieties emerged, one angled: *Andalusian Kufic*, and the cursive *Cordovan*.

The Maghrebi calligraphy had become a critical instrument of intercultural communication between the regions of the Arabic-speaking territories. In addition, its varieties had continued developing from an aesthetic aspect to enhance its chromatic, linear, and symbolic dialogical characteristics, to a degree that availed the orthographic essence of the characters flexible as the calligrapher needed.

The researcher had approached this study within five chapters, where in the first uncovered the study query and importance, its objectives concerning the aesthetic characteristics of the Maghrebi calligraphy and defining the aspects of this study. The second chapter covered the chronological timeline of the Arabic calligraphy development, beginning from the Jahiliyyah to the Ottoman era. The

third chapter had listed the types and varieties of the Arabic calligraphy fonts from the early Islamic era until the Ottoman reign. The fourth chapter studied the history of Moroccan “*Maghrebi*” calligraphy, its phases of development, and its varieties, along with a number of famed individuals – be them penmen, papermakers, scholars, etc. – whom have innovated, studied, and refined this art throughout time. The fifth chapter discussed the artistic & aesthetic characteristics and features of the Maghrebi calligraphy in detail, shedding light over the concept of aesthesia from the perspective of Arab & Muslim artists in the first section, while listing the specifications of each variety in the second, the researcher contemplated the aesthetic features the Maghrebi calligraphy contained in its models on the third section, and in the fourth it spoke of and discussed the aesthetic visual relations appearing in its creations. In addition, by the fifth it discussed the artistic feats of this art.

Throughout this study, the researcher had comprehended and resumed a list of visual characteristics that the Arabic Maghrebi letters had withheld, and with which, it had the Maghrebi calligraphic style shattering the walls of regularity and into the sky of artistic innovation and development. As this style invested the morphologic and orthographic flexibility of the Arabic letters to result in a numerous amount of creations that withheld its own unique physical and artistic characteristics. All to reach the limits of beautification and aesthesia potentials this writing system contained, we can summarize the results of this study in the following points:

1. The Jeli Maghrebi variety had employed the flexibility of letters to enable them to be extended horizontally as a “base-plate” that holds the rest of the letters from under.
2. The morphological and geometric distinction of each letter can be employed to create an aesthetic influence that can break the tediousness within the calligraphic composition itself.
3. The positional diversity of the letters within the composition can bring a sense of creativity in the ways these letters connect.
4. Exploiting the shapes of letters – geometrically – can add a presence of numerous aesthetic relations within the composition.
5. The diversity of pen sizes and standards can add a sense of diversity where numerous pens and quills can be employed within a single composition; this

diversity helps the calligrapher in adding contrast between the calligraphic units.

6. Employing the nature of entwined letters, by its visual rotational, harmonic, and repetitive feats can result compositions of infinite motion.

The researcher has attempted to visualize a glimpse of light over the history of Maghrebi calligraphy to emphasize the importance of its existence as a part of the international artistic heritage, as well as to emphasize the need to preserve and modernize it as an aspect of the North African identity. However, many libraries hold an enormous amount of manuscripts and portraits of Maghrebi calligraphy till now and many of Moroccan artists and calligraphers had attempted to revisualize and recreate the art of Maghrebi calligraphy in our modern time. Where they had managed eventually to create a number of unique masterpieces that will stand against the tides of time.

ARCHIVE Information:

Thesis Name : The History of the Maghrebi Script

Thesis Author : Saeeda Abulgasem Azzabi

Thesis Supervisor : Prof. Dr. Murat AĞARI

Thesis Type : Master Thesis

Date of Thesis : 27.09.2017

Class of Thesis : KBÜ/SBE

Key Words : Maghrebi Hattı Tarih

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