

The Making Of The Noble Mus'haf In The Islamic West(From The Conquest To The Ziyani Era)

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Abstract:

The Qur'an was intermittently revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), and Muslims memorised it and wrote it down on various materials such as leaves, bones and skins. After the Prophet's time, there was a need to compile the Qur'an, and the first compilation took place during the time of Abu Bakr As-Siddiq. The second compilation took place during the reign of Othman Ibn Affan, who ordered the Qur'an to be transcribed into unified manuscripts with a standardised script. These manuscripts served as a constant reference for people to recite, copy and distribute in different regions. Since then, the word "Mus'haf" has been used to refer to the Book of Allah, characterised by its bound pages between covers. The Othmani Mus'haf spread throughout the Muslim lands and reached the Islamic West through conquerors during the Umayyad period. Muslims there also copied it and developed their skills in calligraphy, illumination, binding and other related crafts. The making of the Noble Mus'haf thus became an independent industry with its own arts, techniques and practitioners.

The making of the Noble Mus'haf is of great importance due to the scarcity of studies dealing with it.

It belongs to the field of codicology, which treats ancient books as artistic and historical artefacts. There is no greater and more sublime book than the Qur'an, meticulously crafted by Muslims using the finest and purest materials and embellished with their greatest mastery of calligraphy, ornamentation and illumination. Particularly noteworthy is the Maghribi version of the Noble Mus'haf, which has unique characteristics compared to the Mus'haf of the Islamic East.

The making of the Noble Mus'haf in the Islamic West must have characteristics that distinguish it from the making of the Noble Mus'haf in the Islamic East in terms of its methods, techniques of care, and development throughout the medieval period from the conquest to the Zayani era, which is considered the golden age of art and civilisation in the Islamic West. The following questions arise from this problem: What were the methods of making Mus'haf in the lands of the Islamic West, and how did these methods evolve from the Islamic conquest to the Zayani era, the period of flourishing arts and civilisation in the Islamic West? Who was involved in the writing and maintenance of the Mus'haf? What are the artistic characteristics that distinguish the people of the Islamic West in their making of the Noble Mus'haf?.

In order to study this topic, we used the historical method, which is suitable for narrating events in their chronological framework, in addition to the descriptive method, which was used to describe the Qur'ans mentioned in the research and their artistic and aesthetic techniques. We came to the following conclusions: The people of the Islamic West preserved the traditions embodied in the Othmani Mus'haf as they received it from the conquerors. They preserved its script and copied it as they found it, remaining faithful to these traditions and to the Kufi script used. They derived and developed their own scripts, whether it was the Kairouani script or the Andalusian script. They also maintained the use of parchment as a material for writing the Mus'haf, although the paper industry had been transferred to them from the Islamic East. They used both materials together. In addition, the people of the Islamic West excelled in ornamenting and gilding the Qur'an. They made wooden cases (Beit El'oud) for them, using the finest and purest materials, even the most precious ones.

Furthermore, both men and women in the Islamic West actively participated in the process of copying the Qur'an. This endeavour was not limited to professional scribes, but extended to kings and rulers who personally copied the Qur'an with their own hands. These hand-copied Mus'hafs were then sent to the Noble Sanctuaries (Mecca and Medina) and the Al-Aqsa Mosque, where they were safely preserved and used by the faithful. This act of copying and donating Mus'hafs served as an ongoing act of charity that sought divine reward from Allah.

Moreover, the people of the Islamic West went beyond the mere copying of the Qur'an. They showed great devotion in honouring and protecting the precious original Mus'hafs that came into their possession. Notable examples of such Mus'hafs include the Othmani–Mus'haf, the 'Oqbani Mus'haf, and the Mus'haf of Al-Mahdi ibn Tumart. These Mus'hafs were decorated with remarkable protective covers and embellishments such as gold, gems and precious stones. Meticulous care was taken to preserve them, and they were often paraded in royal processions as a symbol of reverence and blessing.

Keywords: Holy Qur'an; the art of making manuscript Mus'haf; codicology, gilding and ornamentation; Islamic West; medieval period.

Introduction:

The Qur'an was gradually revealed to the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him. Muslims memorised it and wrote it on various materials such as leaves, bones and skins. After the Prophethood ended, there was a need to compile the Qur'an. The first compilation took place in the time of Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq, may Allah be pleased with him, and the second compilation took place in the time of Othman Ibn Affan, may Allah be pleased with him. This was necessary due to the expansion of Islamic lands as a result of the Islamic conquests and the emergence of dialectical variations in the recitation of the Qur'an. Othman Ibn Affan, may Allah be pleased with him, ordered the writing of standardised copies of the Qur'an to serve as a fixed reference for people in their recitation and copying. These copies were then sent to different regions. Since then, the term "Mus'haf" has come to refer to the written form of the Qur'an, which consists of its compiled and preserved pages between covers. The Othmani- Mus'haf spread to various regions and reached the Islamic West through the conquering forces of the Umayyad period. Muslims in the Islamic West began

to copy it and gradually developed expertise in calligraphy, gilding, binding and various other techniques. The making of Mus'haf thus became an independent industry with its own artistic forms, methods and practitioners.

The making of the Noble Mus'haf in the Islamic West must have characteristics that distinguished it from the of the Noble Mus'haf in the Islamic East, both in terms of its techniques, its methods of care, and its evolution throughout the medieval period from the Islamic conquest to the Ziyamid period, considered the golden age of art and civilisation in those lands. From this point of view, the following questions arise:

1. What were the techniques of making Mus'haf in the Islamic West? How did these techniques evolve from the Islamic conquest to the Ziyamid period, which witnessed the flourishing of art and civilisation in these lands?
2. Who were the people involved in the writing and maintenance of the Mus'haf in the Islamic West?
3. What are the artistic characteristics that distinguished the people of the Islamic West in their making of the Noble Mus'haf?

The subject of the making of Noble Mus'haf is of utmost importance due to the scarcity of studies that have dealt with it. It belongs to the field of codicology, which studies ancient books as artistic and archaeological works. There is no higher and more noble book than the Holy Qu'ran, which the Muslims have made with great skill, using the finest and purest materials and demonstrating their mastery of calligraphy, ornamentation and gilding. This is especially true of the Western Mus'haf, which has unique characteristics compared to the Mus'haf of the Islamic East.

One of the most important studies dealing with the Western Mus'haf in terms of its making, enumeration of copies and detailed analysis is the work of Mohammed Mennouni. His works include "Qabas Min Ata'a Al-Makhtut Al-Maghribi" (Insights into the Contribution of the Western Manuscript), (The History of Western Papermaking), and (Etiquette and Arts during the Almohad Era). In these works, he deals extensively with various aspects of the manuscript of the Noble Mus'haf. It should be noted, however, that he focuses mainly on the Noble Mus'haf in the remotest regions of Islamic west, and there is some repetition of information in his and other works.

Therefore, this research aims to extend the discussion on the Making of the Mus'haf beyond the boundaries of the remotest regions of Maghreb to the entire region of the Islamic West, including the Greater Maghreb (Lower, Middle and Far) as well as Al-Andalus.

The aim of this study is to examine the techniques used in the making of the Noble Mus'haf in the regions of the Islamic West (the Maghreb and Al-Andalus). It will examine the choice of materials used in this making, such as paper or parchment, leather and wood used in bookbinding, ink, calligraphy, and other aspects. The study will trace the development of these techniques from the Islamic conquest to the Ziyamid period, considered the golden age of art and civilisation in the Islamic West. It will also examine the individuals involved in the writing and maintenance of the Noble Mus'haf, including scribes, papermakers, kings and court officials. Furthermore, the study will explore the artistic characteristics that distinguish

the people of the Islamic West in their making of the Noble Mus'haf through the analysis of well-known manuscript Mus'hafs as examples. It will also touch upon the revered Mus'hafs and the attention paid to them by the rulers of the Islamic West in different periods.

In the study of this subject, we have relied on the historical method, which is suitable for narrating events within their chronological framework. In addition, we have used the descriptive approach to describe the manuscripts mentioned in the research, including their artistic and aesthetic techniques.

2- The collection of the Qur'an and the Othmani Mus'haf:

The Qur'an was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, who memorised it and transmitted it to the people. The command to write it down was given in the scriptural revelations. Due to the scarcity of paper at that time, they wrote it on various materials such as palm leaves (asab), thin stones (likhaf), pieces of leather (riqa'), shoulder bones and ribs. Among the most famous Qur'an scribes of the Prophet's time were Abu Bakr al-Siddiq, Omar ibn al-Khattab, Muawiyah ibn Abi Sufyan, Zaid ibn Thabit, and others.

The Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, did not command the immediate collection of the Qur'an, because the emphasis was on memorisation and recitation. After the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, passed away, the entire Qur'an was written down and preserved in the hearts of his companions. However, it was not compiled into a single Mus'haf (codex) or arranged in the order of the surahs (chapters)¹.

After the death of the Prophet Muhammad 'alaihi-salâm', Allah inspired the Rashidun caliphs (the righteous caliphs) with the idea of collecting the Qur'ân al-kerîm in one place to ensure its preservation. The first compilation took place under the leadership of Abu Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him, in consultation with Omar ibn al-Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him. This happened during the wars of apostasy, especially in the battle of "Yamama", where a considerable number of the reciters of the Qur'an were martyred².

Zaid ibn Thabit, may Allah be pleased with him, was given the task of collecting the Qur'an. Abu Bakr said to him, "You used to write down the revelations for the Messenger of Allah, may Allah be pleased with him. So search for the Qur'an and collect it. Zaid ibn Thabit said, "I began to search for the Qur'an and collected it from palm leaves, thin stones and people's chests..."³. The Qur'an was transcribed into manuscripts that were placed between two covers.

The physical form of the Qur'an changed from its previous state of disjointed pieces of bone, wood, stone and other materials to a more aesthetically pleasing form. It became manuscripts made of parchment, similar in size and arranged between covers⁴.

The second compilation came in the time of Othman Ibn Affan, may Allah be pleased with him. It is narrated that the companion (Sahabi) Hudhayfa Ibn al-Yaman visited Othman ibn Affan while he was engaged in military campaigns on the borders of Armenia and

¹ - Abdul Fattah Al-Qadi, History of the Noble Mus'haf, p. 10.

² - Abu al-Fida Imad al-Din Ibn Kathir, Fada'il al-Quran, P55

³ - Ibid, p55

⁴ - Mohammed Abdelaziz Marzouq, Al-Mushaf Al-Sharif Historical and Artistic study, p29

Azerbaijan, alongside the people of Iraq, against the people of Sham (Greater Syria). Hudhaifa noticed differences in the recitation of the Qur'an among the Muslim soldiers. He expressed his concern to Othman, saying, "O Amir al-Mu'minin (Commander of the Faithful), take action to unite this Ummah (Muslim community) before they become divided over the Qur'an, as the Jews and Christians have become.

Othman then sent a message to Hafsa, the daughter of Omar ibn al-Khattab and one of the wives of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), asking her to send the manuscripts in her possession. The intention was to make copies of them and then return the originals. Othman appointed Zaid ibn Thabit, Sa'id Ibn al-As, Abdu Rahman ibn Harith ibn Hisham and Abdullah ibn Azzubayr, may Allah be pleased with them all, to copy the manuscripts. Othman instructed them that if they differed on any point, they should write it in the dialect of the Quraysh, since the Qur'an was revealed in their dialect.

When the manuscripts were transcribed, Othman, may Allah be pleased with him, sent a copy to each region and ordered the burning of any other written material or manuscripts that did not conform to the standard version.

Ibn Kathir says of the scribes of the Othmani- Mus'haf: "As for Othman, it is not known that he wrote these manuscripts personally. Rather, they were written by Zaid ibn Thabit in his time and in the time of others. They are attributed to Othman because they were written under his command and supervision. They were recited to the Companions in the presence of Othman and then distributed to different regions, may Allah be pleased with them¹.

In another narration it is said that Othman ibn Affan, may Allah be pleased with him, asked, "Who are the most skilled scholars among the people?" They replied, "Zaid ibn Thabit, the scribe of the Messenger of Allah, and Sa'id ibn al-As." Othman said, "Let Sa'id write in plain Arabic, and let Zaid write. So Zaid wrote the manuscripts and Othman distributed them to different regions².

There are different reports about the number of manuscripts that Othman ibn Affan, may Allah be pleased with him, sent to different regions. One narration says that there were six: Basri, Kufi, Shammi, Maki, Madani 'Aam (for the people of Medina), and Madani Khass (the one Othman kept for himself, known as the Imam's Mus'haf). It is possible that it was given this name because it was the first to be copied and other manuscripts were copied from it³. It is also acceptable to use this name for any Qur'an copied after it as a model. Thus, the Othman manuscripts were sent to important regions in the Muslim lands. People copied their own Qur'ans from them, and the "Othmani-Mus'haf" spread widely and consistently in time and place. Copies of it later reached the western Islamic lands when those lands were conquered by the Umayyads.

¹ - Abu Bakribn al-Ash'ath al-Sijistani al-Hanbali (d. 316 AH), Kitab al-Masahif (The Book of Manuscripts), p. 70.

² -Ibn Kathir, Op.Cit, p. 89.

³ - Abu Bakr al-Sijistani, Op.Cit, p. 87.

3- The basics of making the Noble Mus'haf in the Islamic west:

Muslims followed certain guidelines in the making and presentation of the Mus'haf, which can be as follows

Type of script: The best script was chosen for writing the Qur'an.

Style of writing: The style of writing used was simple, clear and comprehensive to convey the message.

Book design: Emphasis was placed on creating a visually appealing design and overall aesthetic of the Mus'haf.

Decoration of the Mus'haf : The Mus'haf was decorated with shapes and colours, using artistic techniques associated with calligraphy, such as ornamentation and gilding.

Writing materials and tools: Acceptable and recommended materials and tools were used to write the pages of the Noble Mus'haf and to bind it¹.

3.1. Parchments and their types (parchment and paper):

The early Mus'hafs were primarily written on parchment throughout the Islamic world, both East and West. There are reports that early manuscripts were written on the skins of gazelles. The parchment produced in Kufawas considered superior for writing the Qur'an because it was tanned with dates and had a supple texture².

In western Islamic lands, small deer skins were commonly used. In the city of Fes, for example, there were workshops of parchment makers who specialised in the production of parchment. They used the skins of small deer and turned them into parchment. The process involved soaking the skins in lime water for three days in order to dissolve the fatty substances, such as fat and the remains of the flesh. The hair was then scraped off with a scraper. The skins were then left to dry completely. Finally, they were polished on both sides with a piece of pumice stone to achieve a thin and smooth texture. They were then coated with gum arabic to make them white and cut into sheets³.

In eastern Islamic lands, the use of parchment for writing the Qur'an and other texts continued until the advent of paper, an invention of China. Paper-making technology reached Muslim lands during the Abbasid era. It first spread to Central Asia when the Muslims conquered Samarkand in 134 AH. The Arabs learned the secrets of the industry from some Chinese captives. The papermaking industry then moved to Baghdad, where the first paper mill was established during the reign of Harun al-Rashid in 178 AH.

In the fourth century of the Islamic calendar, the industry spread to the Levant and then to Egypt around 287 AH. It reached Morocco during the reign of Yusuf ibn Tashfin, the Amir of the Almoravids, who had 104 paper mills in Fez alone. This continued under the Almohads, and the number of mills in Fes rose to 400 during the reign of Ya'qub al-Mansur

¹ - Abdul Fattah Al-Qadi, Op.Cit, p. 28.

² - Idham Mohammed Hanash, Aesthetics of the Quranic Manuscript and Its Artistic Traditions, Vol. 55, Vol. 1, p. 214.

³ - Ibid, p. 210.

and his son Muhammad al-Nasir¹. Moroccan paper was known as "al-Kaghad al-Fasi"² (Fes paper). During the Almohad period, Moroccan paper was exported abroad because of its excellent quality³.

As for Al-Andalus (Islamic Spain), the papermaking industry was introduced there in the 12th century AD, and the first paper mill⁴ was established in 1276 AD (675 AH). And Shatiba, a city in Al-Andalus, became famous for its paper production, as described by Ya'qut al-Hamawi: "Paper of good quality is produced there and exported to other regions of Al-Andalus"⁵. However, writing on parchment continued for a long time in the western Islamic countries, while in the eastern Islamic countries the use of parchment was banned by order of Harun al-Rashid. He ordered that only paper should be used for writing, because parchment could be erased and reused, allowing for forgery. On the other hand, erasing something on paper spoils it, even if its surface is scratched. As a result, the use of paper became widespread among the people and parchment was abandoned⁶.

The traveller Al Makdissi al-Bashari, author of the book "Ahsan al-Taqasim", visited the western Islamic lands in the fourth century of the Islamic calendar and witnessed firsthand the use of parchment in writing the Qur'an. He said, "All their Mus'haf are written on parchment"⁷.

The reason for the Islamic Western people's insistence on writing on parchment was their desire for longevity, as parchment is stronger and more durable than paper⁸. However, in addition to using parchment to write the Qur'an, people in western Islamic regions also used paper. Mohammed al-Mununi presented examples of this in his book "Qabas min 'Ata' al-Makhtut al-Maghribi" (A Glimpse of the Gift of Western Manuscripts). Among these examples are Rib'a (Mus'haf presented as parts) written on paper in the city of Málaga in Al-Andalus in twenty parts, dating back to 620 AH. They are kept in the Ben Youssef library in Marrakech under the number 430⁹.

3.2 Qur'an calligraphy and calligraphers:

A. Calligraphy, styles and orthography in the early Mus'haf:

The earliest scripts believed to have been used in copying the Qur'an are the Makki script and the Madani script, which is considered to be a development of the inclined Hijazi script. These were followed by the Basra script and the Kufi script. Subsequently, other scripts (styles) were invented for the purpose of improvement and embellishment. The Hijazi and Kufi scripts, used at the end of the first and beginning of the second centuries of the

¹ - Al-Sa'id ibn Musa, History of the Art of Embossing Qur'ans and Manuscripts in Morocco, p. 22.

² - Iyad Khalid Al-Taba, The Arabic Manuscript, p. 96.

³ - Ayman Fouad Sayyid, The Arabic Manuscript and the Science of Manuscripts, Vol. 1, p. 99.

⁴ - Al-Sa'id ibn Musa, Op.Cit, p. 25.

⁵ - Ayman Fouad Sayyid, Op.Cit, Vol. 1, p. 97.

⁶ - Shihab al-Din Abdullah Yaqut al-Hamawi, Mu'jam al-Buldan (Dictionary of Countries), Vol. 3, p. 309.

⁷ - Ayman Fouad Sayyid, Op.Cit, Vol. 1, p. 97.

⁸ - Shams al-Din Abu Bakr al-Maqqisi, Ahsan al-Taqasim fi Ma'rifat al-Aqalim (The Best Divisions in Knowledge of Regions), p. 192.

⁹ - Ayman Fouad Sayyid, Op.Cit, Vol. 1, p. 19.

Islamic calendar, did not include dots and diacritical marks¹. The Kufi script in general became popular for writing the Qur'an, especially the Muhaqqaq script, which originated in Iraq. It combines dryness with smoothness, closer to square shapes and angles. It was used for writing large Qur'ans during the first three centuries of the Islamic calendar until it was replaced by the Naskh scrip² invented by Ibn Muqla and developed by Ibn al-Bawwab³.

The Ottoman Qur'an remained without dots until orthography was introduced after non-Arab nations adopted Islam following the Islamic conquests. Muslims needed to regulate the letters to ensure proper reading. Scholars disagree on who first introduced orthography to the Qur'an, and many believe that Abu al-Aswad al-Du'ali was the first to do so. It is said that he heard a reciter recite the verse: "Verily, Allah is free from the unbelievers, and so is His Messenger" (Quran, Surah At-Tawbah, verse 3), and he recited it with a "jarr" (genitive) on the word "Rasuluhu" (His Messenger). This intonation startled Abu al-Aswad al-Du'ali (d. 69 AH) and he went to Ziyad ibn Abih, the governor of Basra, and said to him, "I have answered your question". Ziyad had asked him to give signs by which people could recognise the Book of Allah, and Abu al-Aswad al-Du'ali hesitated to answer. After this incident, he made an effort to shape the Qur'an and placed a dot above the letter to indicate fathah (short "a" sound), a dot below to indicate kasrah (short "i" sound), and a dot between parts of the letter to indicate damma (short "u" sound). He also placed two dots on the letter "Mim"⁴.

This was the form introduced into Arabic calligraphy. As for "I'jam", it refers to distinguishing similar letters by placing dots to avoid confusion or ambiguity. This marked the second stage in the development of Arabic calligraphy and took place during the reign of the Umayyad caliph Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan. As more and more people embraced Islam and errors in reciting the Qur'an increased, the caliph ordered his governor in Iraq, Al-Hajjaj ibn Yusuf al-Thaqafi, to find a way to eliminate errors in reciting the Qur'an. For this task, he appointed Nasr ibn Asim and Yahya ibn Ya'mur, who were experts in the Arabic language. They placed dots on similar letters to differentiate them in reading and used the colour of the ink in the Mus'haf to distinguish them from the dots introduced by Abu al-Aswad al-Du'ali, which were written in red ink. During the Abbasid period, Khalil ibn Ahmad al-Farahidi, the leading figure in Arabic grammar, further developed the diacritical marks and orthography as we know them today⁵.

B- The Qur'an scripts of the Islamic West:

It is likely that the Maghrebi script was first influenced by the writing style of the Arab conquerors⁶. Then it began to learn towards the Kufi script used in the early period in

¹ - Mohammed Al-Manouni, *Qabas Min Ataa Al-Makhtut Al-Maghribi*, Vol. 1, p. 30.

² - Ayman Fouad Sayyid, *Op.cit*, Vol. 1, p. 50.

³ - *Ibid*, Vol. 1, p. 51.

⁴ - The first to introduce major reforms to the Kufi script (or Kufi calligraphy) was Ibn Muqla (d. 328 AH), who was a minister. He derived six types of scripts (or pens): Thuluth, Naskh, Tawqi', Riqa', Muhaqqaq, and Rayhani. After him came Ibn al-Bawwab (d. 413 AH), who completed what Ibn Muqla had started and reached a higher level of perfection. Then came Jamal al-Din Yaqut al-Musta'simi (d. 698 AH) who lived in the late Abbasid era. George Atiyeh et al., *The Arabic Manuscript and the Science of Manuscripts*, p. 47.

⁵ - Muna Al-Qattan, *Studies in the Sciences of the Qur'an*, p. 135.

⁶ - Abdul Fattah Al-Qadi, *Op.Cit*, pp. 46, 47.

Kairouan (known as the Kairouani script). Abd al-Rahman ibn Khaldun says: "The known ancient Maghreb script of this period was similar to the conditions of the Mashriqi script"¹.

In Al-Andalus, after the establishment of the Umayyad state, a new script appeared called the Andalusian Qurtubi script². Al-Maqdisi describes the Andalusian script as follows: "The people of Al-Andalus were the most skilled in calligraphy, and their scripts had rounded forms"³.

Subsequently, the Andalusian script began to dominate over the Kairouan script during the reign of the Almoravids. Abd al-Rahman ibn Khaldun attributes this to "the dispersion of the people of Al-Andalus throughout the Maghreb and Ifriqiya during the Almoravid period, as they shared their skills with the people of these regions. Their script prevailed over the African script, causing the Kairouan script to fall into oblivion, and the scripts of the people of Ifriqiya became entirely based on the Andalusian style in Tunisia and beyond"⁴.

The Almohad period (515 AH - 674 AH) is considered the golden age of Maghreb calligraphy, when scribes and Qur'an copyists excelled in diversifying the scripts and branching them into different Maghribi and Mashriqi styles⁵. The caliphs were adept at writing in multiple scripts, and would sign with the Mashriqi Thuluth script and its familiar red ink⁶. The Maghreb people, however, adhered strictly to the rules of the Ottomani script and disapproved of writing the Mus'haf according to common spelling rules. Instead, they followed what was written in the Mus'haf of Othman Ibn Affan⁷.

During the Marinid period (592-869 AD), Muhammad al-Manuni mentions that the Maghrebi script became distinct from the Andalusian script. Al-Manuni explains what Abd al-Rahman Ibn Khaldun said in the introduction about the script during the Marinid period: "During the Marinid dynasty in Morocco, a special style of Andalusian script appeared"⁸. He goes on to explain that this particular style is none other than the Maghrebi script, which took its final form during this period and differed from the Andalusian script in its layout. In addition, it omitted the dots of the following letters: "n", "f", "q" and "y". Moreover, it did not divide the letters of a word between the end of one line and the beginning of the next. As for the Mus'haf, it was written in two types of script: the simplified script and the Kufi script⁹.

J – Mus'haf scribes:

Based on the information provided by the sources and the Mus'hafs that date back to the period under study, we can distinguish between two types of calligraphers. The first type are the professional scribes who specialised in copying the Qur'an, commonly known as "al-

¹ - Mohammed Al-Manouni, History of Moroccan Paper, Op.Cit, p. 17.

² - Abdul Rahman Ibn Khaldun, Al-Muqaddimah, Vol. 1, Part 2, p. 750.

³ - Iyad Khalid Al-Taba, Op.Cit, p. 25.

⁴ - Al-Maqdisi, Op.Cit, p. 192.

⁵ - Abdul Rahman Ibn Khaldun, Op.Cit, Vol. 1, Part 2, p. 751.

⁶ - Mohammed Al-Manouni, History of Moroccan Paper, Op.Cit, p. 27.

⁷ - Iyad Khalid Al-Taba, Op.Cit, p. 27.

⁸ - Mohammed Al-Manouni, Qabas Min Ataa Al-Makhtut Al-Maghribi, Op.Cit, Vol. 1, p. 37.

⁹ - Abdul Rahman Ibn Khaldun, Op.Cit, p. 751.

Mus'hafiyun" or "al-Waraqun". These scribes write manuscripts in general and also copy the Qur'an. The second type consists of the kings who serve as Mus'haf scribes.

Regarding the Mus'haf scribes, many of those who transcribed and embellished the Noble Mus'haf during the pre-Almohade era remain anonymous¹. Among them is Muhammad ibn Mufarrij ibn Sahl al-Ansari, known as Ibn Ghattous (d. 610 AH). Ibn al-Abar describes him: "He used to write and inscribe the Qur'an, and he excelled in this field with his skilful calligraphy and meticulous craftsmanship. It is said that he transcribed a thousand copies of the holy Qur'an, and to this day kings and others continue to compete in this field. He made a personal pledge not to transcribe a single letter from another person or to mix them with others, as an act of seeking closeness to Allah and honouring His revelation. In this profession, he deviated from his father and brother, who were also known for their expertise, and immersed himself in it and its creativity².

Al-Safadi, in *Al-Wafibi'l-Wafayat*, reports: "The venerable Sheikh, the Imam, the memoriser Abu al-Hasan Ali ibn al-Sayyad al-Fasi informed me in Safad in 726 AH that this person had a house where he kept his calligraphic tools, parchment and other things, and no one from his family was allowed to enter. He would go in alone and isolate himself. Perhaps he told me that he would put musk in the inkwell. His copy of the Qur'an was not sold for less than two hundred dinars. If someone came from a distant place, a journey of forty days or more, and bought a copy from him, and after some time he discovered that he had made a mistake in placing dots or in arranging some letters in improper positions, he would travel to that place and visit that person and demand the return of the Mus'haf. He would pretend to have reconsidered the sale and say, "You have received the payment and we have finalised our agreement. But he would insist on seeing it. When it was brought to him, he would correct the mistake, fix it and return it to its owner, and then return to his hometown³.

Al-Safadi saw his manuscripts in the Islamic East and admired their precision and the care with which they were executed. Each script had its own colour scheme, which was strictly adhered to: lapis lazuli (ultramarine) for the diacritical marks of Shadd'ah and Jazm (gemination), lac (red) for the diacritical marks of Dammah, Fathah and Kasrah, green for broken Hamzah and yellow for open Hamzah. Nothing deviated from this arrangement, and there was no use of the letters 'Waw' or 'Alif' or any other letters or words in the marginal notes or annotations. He meticulously avoided any mistakes and would redo his work whenever he made a mistake or accidentally omitted a letter or word⁴.

The copying of the Qur'an was not limited to men. Women were also involved in transcribing the Mus'haf. Al-Marrakeshi, in *Al-Mu'jab*, states: "In the eastern outskirts of

¹ - Mohammed Al-Manouni, *History of Moroccan Paper*, Op.Cit, p. 47.

² - Mohammed Al-Manouni, *Qabas Min Ataa Al-Makhtut Al-Maghribi*, Op.Cit, p. 30.

³ - Abu Abdullah Ibn al-Abar, *Al-Takmilah li Kitab al-Silah (The Completion of the Book of Connections)*, Vol. 2, p. 296, 297.

⁴ - Salah al-Din ibnAyyub al-Safadi, *Al-Wafi bi al-Wafayat (The Complete in the Accounts of the Deceased)*, Vol. 3, p. 280.

Cordoba there were 170 women, all of whom were transcribing Mus'hafs in Kufi script. This is only in one region, so you can imagine the situation in the whole region"¹.

Among the kings who were Mus'haf scribes, we can mention the Almohad caliph Abu Hafs Umar al-Murtada Ibn al-Sayyid Abi Ibrahim ibn Yusuf ibn Abd al-Mu'min (646 AH - 665 AH). He was a skilled calligrapher in Qur'anic and other scripts, as evidenced by the Rub' al-Hizb (a special Qur'anic division), which is the only surviving example of his work. He wrote it in an extended Maghrebi script, with good composition and precision. He wrote the section markers in a third of the Eastern script, and he signed and annotated it in a Naskh-style Eastern script, indicating his mastery of both Maghrebi and Eastern calligraphic styles².

As for Sultan Abu al-Hasan ibn Ya'qub al-Marini (731 AH - 749 AH), Ibn Marzuq said of him in *Al-Musnad al-Sahih*: "Our Imam, may Allah be pleased with him, was always engaged in copying the Book of Allah in his spare time, despite the responsibilities and affairs that surrounded him. This was his regular practice to ensure that no moment would pass without some righteous work that would bring him closer to Allah. He had indeed emphasised this practice, and Allah had blessed him with the skill of Mus'haf calligraphy"³.

In fact, Sultan Abu al-Hasan al-Marini personally wrote several Qur'ans by hand and dedicated them to the holy places in Mecca, Medina and the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem. All these Qur'ans were written in the Rub' script⁴. He also sent a Rib'a to the Mosque of Hebron in Palestine. The Medina Rub' was written in Tlemcen during the Marinid rule of the city. Ibn Marzuq stated that it was completed in the month of Rabi' al-Awwal of the year forty (740 AH). Scholars gathered to recite and examine it, making any necessary corrections. This took place on a Friday when the caravan accompanying the Rub' set out from the eastern bank of the Safsaf valley, east of the fortified city of Tlemcen. The aforementioned Rib'a was then sent with the caravan to the city of Medina⁵.

3.3 Al-Midad (ink): Description and Preparation Recipes:"

As for the preparation of the ink, just as the Mus'haf had its unique paper known as "Kaghad al-Masahif", it also had its special ink known as "Ink of the Masahif"⁶. This was a well-known practice among Muslims in both the East and the West. Al-Qalqashandi mentioned that there were two types of ink: one suitable for paper and another suitable for

¹- *ibid*, Vol. 3, p. 281.

²- Abdul Wahid Al-Marrakshi, *Al-Mu'ajib Fi Takhrij Akhbar al-Maghrib* (The Marvelous in Summarizing the History of Morocco), p. 372.

³- Mohammed Al-Manouni, *Al-Warqah al-Maghribiyyah* (The Moroccan Paper), *Op.Cit*, p. 36.

⁴- Mohammed ibn Marzouk al-Tlemsani, *Al-Musnad al-Sahih* (The Authentic Compilation), p. 474.

⁵- The Rib'a is a square-shaped wooden box, covered with leather, with sheets and rings, divided inside into compartments according to the number of parts of the Qur'an. Each compartment contains a part of the Qur'an. It is referred to as the segmented Mus'haf, which is not a complete book. Mohammed Al-Manouni, *Qabas Min Ataa Al-Makhtut Al-Maghribi*, *Op.Cit*, Vol. 1, Margin p. 12.

⁶- Mohammed ibn Marzouk al-Tlemsani, *Op.Cit*, p. 475.

Ibn Rasul, *Al-Mukhtara Fi Funun al-Sana* (The Inventor in the Arts of Making), (manuscript), p. 7, [Online] <https://down.ketabpedia.com/files/bnr/bnr19820-1.pdf>, Accessed: 18/06/2023, Time: 16:30.

parchment, which was called "ink of the head". The latter was made from shiny walnuts and could easily spoil the paper¹.

Abu Bakr al-Qalalusi, the Andalusian scholar (d. 707 AH), described the process of making the black ink used to write the Qur'an in Al-Andalus as follows: "It is made from the water found in the Nafaratia plant, which is knotted and liquid. When it is in a liquid state, some extract from green walnut shells, pomegranate water and gum water are added to it. It is then heated until it is fragrant, filtered and ready for use. This ink was used to copy the Qur'an in Al-Andalus, and it came out "beautifully glossy". There are different types of ink, including boiled, pressed and soaked. Each type is suitable for a particular type of paper. Boiled ink is for paper only, squeezed ink is for paper and vellum, and soaked ink is for vellum only².

As for coloured ink, it is mentioned in the book "Al-Umdah"³ attributed to Prince al-Sanhaji al-Mu'izz ibn Badis (398 AH - 454 AH). It contains various recipes for making coloured inks used to colour and embellish the calligraphy in holy Mus'haf. One of the colours mentioned is "Khalinji", which is similar to the colour of safflower, ranging from yellow to red. The recipe is to take safflower, grind it finely and then knead it with gum water to extract the colour, which is suitable for use in writing Qur'an⁴.

As for the golden ink used to gild and embellish the Qur'an, the book mentions that there are many recipes for it. Some are made from a mixture of plants and substances to achieve a gold-like appearance, while others are made from pure gold or other metals. Of the latter, various methods are mentioned, such as taking pure gold and beating it into a thin sheet, then cutting it into small pieces. Mercury is poured over it and rubbed, then heated over a fire and blown on until it melts. It is then poured onto a slab and rubbed with a stone until it becomes frothy like foam. It is collected and squeezed to remove the mercury, leaving the gold. It is then returned to the slab and rubbed with a solution of wool ash, andalusite salt (a dense mineral salt of uniform colour), table salt and Roman alum. Gum is added and it is used for writing, similar to normal ink⁵.

3.4 Gilding, embellishing and decorating Mus'haf:

The practice of embellishing and gilding Mus'haf became widespread during the early Abbasid period. Calligraphers began to decorate the beginnings of suras, the first and second pages of the Mus'haf, and the chapter headings. Eventually, before the end of the second century, some Mus'hafs were written entirely in gold ink. It is said that the Abbasid caliph al-

¹- Abu al-Abbas Ahmed al-Qalqashandi, *Subh al-A'shi*, Vol. 2, p. 465.

²- Abu Bakr al-Qalqashi al-Andalusi, *Tuhfat al-Khawwas fi Tarif al-Khawwas* (Treasures of the Elite in Describing the Elites), pp. 27, 23.

³- It is likely that the book was authored by one of the Sanhaji princes, Al-Mu'izz ibn Badi's or his son Tamim ibn Al-Mu'izz, between 445 AH and 454 AH, the year Al-Mu'izz passed away. Tamim had assumed control of Mahdia before Al-Mu'izz's death. This assumption is supported by one of the manuscript copies of the book housed in the Egyptian National Library, which states that the book was authored by "the people of benefits and unique knowledge." Other copies do not attribute authorship. Thus, the book was likely written by one of the princes and not authored by either of them. (Introduction to the book), Anonymous author, *Umdat al-KutubwaUddatDhawi al-Albab* (Attributed to Al-Mu'izz ibn Badi's, d. 454 AH), *Journal of the Institute of Arabic Manuscripts*, Volume 17, p. 45.

⁴- Anonymous author, *Umdat al-KutubwaUddatDhawi al-Albab*, Op.Cit, p. 127.

⁵- *Ibid*, p. 130.

Ma'mun (198 AH - 218 AH) presented a Mus'haf written in gold ink on dark blue parchment to the Masjid Mashhad. The process of gilding manuscripts went through several stages. First, an artist would be commissioned to draw and decorate the margins. Then the manuscript would be passed on to another artist who would gild the margins, the first and last pages, and the beginnings of chapters and their titles¹.

In the Islamic West, the decoration and embellishment of the Mus'haf took on a distinctive character. The writing was mainly done in intense black or slightly faded ink, or sometimes even with the extract of walnut shells, which gave a brownish colour. For some Mus'haf, such as the one sent to Jerusalem by Sultan Abu al-Hasan al-Marrakushi (731 AH - 749 AH), inks made from fragrant substances such as musk and rose were used. As for the script, colours were used mainly for diacritical marks, vowel marks, elongations, shaddah, tanwin, sukun, waṣl and madd. The hamza in particular was indicated by a yellow colour. Occasionally two additional colours were used, such as blue for shaddah and sukun, or green for sukun. This was the characteristic style of ancient Moroccan Qur'ans, including the spelling patterns according to the Ottoman Qur'an manuscript².

Maghreb Mus'hafs also contained dividers indicating verses, prostrations, chapters and sections. Some Mus'hafs had additional dividers for fifths and tenths, marking every five or ten verses. There were also dividers corresponding to the seven sections³.

3.5 Bookbinding:

Bookbinding is the complementary industry that focuses on preserving and protecting paper from damage, as well as enhancing the appearance of the book to match its value and content. The artistic effects of this craft are evident in the surviving Qur'an and holy texts. This industry relies on the use of various materials such as leather, silk, decorated paper, wood, thread and glue, as well as the craftsmanship of the bookbinder in weaving, cutting, embossing and ornamentation⁴.

The art of bookbinding went through several stages among Muslim artists, initially influenced by pre-Islamic Ethiopian and Coptic traditions. Initially, bookbinders used wooden boards to hold parts or sections of the Qur'an, and it is believed that Muslim artists did not leave these boards plain, but decorated them and possibly covered them with cloth or leather⁵.

Later, bookbinding evolved and the use of cardboard became prominent, especially in the sixth and seventh centuries of the Hijri calendar⁶. Al-Ishbili (d. 629 AH) referred to these two types as "Mulawaha" (wooden binding) and "Safriya" (cardboard binding). He described

¹ - Iyad Khalid Al-Taba, Op.Cit, p. 173.

² - Mohammed Al-Manouni, Qabas Min Ataa Al-Makhtut Al-Maghribi, Op.Cit, p. 37.

³ - Ibid, p. 39.

⁴ - AymanFuad Al-Sayed, Op.Cit, Vol. 1, p. 37.

⁵ - Iyad Khalid Al-Taba, Op.Cit, p. 88, 89, 90.

⁶ - Ibid, p. 89.

the latter as follows "Three layers of new paper are used because of its strength. If the paper is not thick enough, a fourth layer can be added and they are glued together"¹.

We can also see the use of gold plates, some decorated with precious stones, in the binding of manuscripts, especially those belonging to kings and princes. These gold plates were applied to the leather with a hot tool, and it seems that this technique originated in Marrakech and later spread to Al-Andalus, Egypt and Iran. Leather covers were also known for their decorative motifs in the centre and at the four corners, in addition to a surrounding frame that made the frame stand out, creating designs specific to its four corners. This phenomenon was more associated with the countries of Morocco than with other regions of the Islamic world. Another notable practice was the application of thin sheets of gold and silver to two corners of the leather using a hot tool².

As for the decorative motifs on the leather, Andalusian bookbinding often involved extensive tooling of the entire leather, using rich decoration and avoiding blank spaces. Moroccan bookbinding, on the other hand, used metal stamps on the entire leather cover, with interwoven decorative motifs. Undoubtedly, bookbinding in Morocco during the Almoravid and Almohad periods initially followed the Andalusian style, but the Moroccans gradually advanced and excelled in their creativity. Subsequently, bookbinders specialised in the Moroccan style emerged, influenced by both Moroccans and Andalusians who settled in Morocco³. As for the use of precious stones, the Moroccans and Andalusians used gold, rubies, precious stones and Byzantine glass to decorate the covers of manuscripts. These manuscripts were often bound in green silk⁴.

The manuscripts were often accompanied by containers or cases, whether complete or divided into quarters. Al-Ishbili gave a detailed description of their production process as follows: "A complete piece of leather is cut to cover the entire length and width of the manuscript from all sides, whether it is a single part or several parts. Its cover should be built like a box or a wooden chest. Two further pieces of leather are cut, the first to be placed under the container and its sides, and the second to be placed on the sides of the container. The compartments between the sections are lined with three or more layers of paper, then the sections are made and covered with leather. Finally, the container is covered and engraved"⁵.

This method you mentioned is the construction method for making the "Qurab" or case by assembly. However, there is another method called the mould method. In this case, the mould should be slightly larger than the manuscript so that the sections can be easily removed. The mould is fixed with lining and two layers of paper are added. It is then left to dry and beaten. Once dry, it is beaten and rubbed and then covered with leather⁶.

4- The production and care of important Mus'hafs in the Western Islamic world:

¹ - Abu Bakribn Ibrahim al-Ishbili (d. 629), *Kitab al-Taysir fi Sun'at al-Tasfir* (The Facilitation in the Art of Embossing), *Journal of the Institute of Islamic Studies*, Vol. 7, 8, p. 17.

² - Iyad Khalid Al-Taba, *Op.Cit*, p. 88.

³ - Abu al-Abbas, IbnHamidah al-Mutrafy, *Tadbeer al-Safir fi Sun'at al-Tasfir* (Management of the Embosser in the Art of Embossing), p. 88.

⁴ - *Ibid*, p. 89.

⁵ - Al-Ishbili, *Op.Cit*, p. 35.

⁶ - *Ibid*, p. 36.

4.1 Valued Mus'haf and their care:

The efforts of people in the Western Islamic world were not limited to the making of Mus'haf; they also took great care of the valuable Mus'haf that came into their possession. There were remarkable examples, such as an Othmani Mus'haf that Othman ibn Affan sent to various regions, including Andalusia, where it found its place. There was also the "Al-Uqbani" Mus'haf, meticulously copied by Uqba ibn Nafi Al-Fihri, the conqueror of the Maghreb. The manuscript of Al-Mahdi ibn Tumart, the leader of the Almohads, was also highly revered. People went to great lengths to enlarge these Mus'hafs, to make special cases and boxes for them, to adorn them with jewels and precious stones, and to decorate them with gold.

A- The Othmani Mus'haf:

The Othmani Mus'haf gained prominence during the reign of the Almohads and the middle period of the Marinid dynasty. It is one of the original Othmani Mus'hafs that Othman Ibn Affan sent to different regions. It was first kept in the Great Mosque of Cordoba in Al-Andalus. Later, during the reign of the Almohad caliph Abdul-Mu'min ibn Ali (487 AH - 558 AH), it was transferred to his capital, Marrakech, in 552 AH. It remained in the hands of the Almohads until the end of their reign, when it was taken over by Banu Abd al-Wad of Tlemcen. Finally, it was acquired by Abu Al-Hasan Al-Marrini¹ of the Banu Zayyan dynasty after their victory over the Almohads in one of the battles. The historian Ibn Khaldun mentions how the Othmani Mus'haf came to the Zayyanids, stating that after their victory over the Almohads, the Zayyanid prince Abu Yahya Yaghmurasan seized the treasures of the Almohad state, including the aforementioned Qur'an². Al-Maqari also states: "The Mus'haf remained in the treasury (of the Zayyanids) until our Imam Abu Al-Hasan Al-Marrini opened it in the late Ramadan of 737 AH and received it"³.

The Almohads took great care of the Othmani Mus'haf and carried it in their processions as a blessed object. Abd al-Wahid Al-Marrakeshi describes this care: "...they carried it in front of them wherever they went, on a red camel decorated with precious ornaments and luxurious garments worth a huge sum of money. Beneath it they placed a green cover of fine cloth, and on its right and left were two green banners with golden apples-shaped⁴ ornaments on their tops".

The Almohads spared no effort to decorate and embellish the aforementioned Qur'an with jewels and precious stones. Ibn Sahib al-Salat mentions that the ornamentation took place in two stages. It began with Abdul-Mu'min ibn Ali, the first caliph of the Almohads, and was continued by his son. Ibn Sahib al-Salat describes the appearance of the Qur'an and the jewels and gold that adorned it: "...the venerable Qur'an, its custodians (referring to the

¹ - Mohammed Al-Manouni, *Qabas Min Ataa Al-Makhtut Al-Maghrabi (Glimpses of the Treasures of the Moroccan Manuscript)*, Op.Cit, Vol. 1, p. 10.

² - Abu Zakariya Yahya ibn Khaldun, *Baghiyat al-Ruwad fi Dhikr al-Muluk min Bani Abd al-Wad (The Elite's Pride in Remembering the Kings of the Abd al-Wad Dynasty)*, Vol. 1, p. 114.

³ - Ahmed Al-Maqri Al-Tilimsani, *Nafh al-Tayyib min Ghosn al-Andalus al-Ratib (The Sweet Breeze from the Branch of Moist Andalusia)*, Vol. 1, p. 606.

⁴ - Ibn Sahib al-Salah, *Al-Mun bi al-Imamah (The One Who Assisted in Leadership)*, p. 351.

container, chest and other objects in which the Qur'an was kept) were adorned with precious jewels such as red, yellow and unique green rubies, amazing and precious green emeralds. The rubies, emeralds and jewels were brought to the first Caliph, Abdul-Mu'min Ibn Ali, the Caliph of the Mahdi, and later to his son, and they were used to decorate and embellish this venerable Qur'an, adorning all its pages and making it a companion and a beloved one to be blessed by. Omar ibn Marji al-Ishbili, one of its poets, told me that there was a jewel resembling a horse's hoof, and it was the jewel that belonged to Khimarawayh IbnTulun, the ruler of Egypt, Damascus, Africa and Al-Zab. The passage of time and the changes in its fortunes brought it into the possession of the "Amir el mu'minin (Ruler of the Faithful), the son of Amir el mu'minin (the Ruler of the Faithful)"¹.

They brought the most skilled craftsmen to decorate it with jewels and to make its container with the finest craftsmanship. Al-Maqari quotes what the minister IbnTufayl described in his long letter: "...when they wanted to exaggerate the glory of the said Qur'an, they began by choosing its cover and carefully selecting its ornaments. They sought the expertise of the most skilled craftsmen and artisans. Thus, the best craftsmen of all professions, including engineers, jewellers, decorators, engravers, inlayers, carpenters, goldsmiths, painters, bookbinders, and renowned builders, were gathered for this purpose"².

"They also made a cover (satchel) for it and a box to preserve it all. The number of these covers and cases was four, each one fitting into the other, operated by a key which separated the parts and joined them together in an ingenious mechanical way. The minister Abdul-Malik ibnTufayl al-Andalusi (d. 581 AH) described all this as follows: Among the wonderful ornaments created for the great Qur'an are the western covers and the amazing bags. It is entirely covered with a single stone of gold and silver, and its exterior and interior show extraordinary craftsmanship. No part resembles the other. It was decorated with Roman glass colours that had never been seen before. It had joints where its parts met and joined together. Its sides and sides were decorated with exquisite rubies, precious pearls and magnificent emeralds... The aforementioned stone was sometimes attached and sometimes detached (not permanently fixed). A beautiful support was made for it, the joints of which were covered with various types of inlays and exquisite engravings on pieces of ebony and fine wood, surrounded by gold sheets. A throne was made to carry it during transport, decorated similarly to its own ornamentation. And for all this, a cubic chest was made, designed in a wonderful geometric way. When the key is turned, all four parts separate and take their places. And when the key is turned back, everything enters and returns to its place, and the doors of the chest close"³.

"The Ottoman Koran remained with the Almohads, then the Zayyanids and the Marinids until it was lost at sea during the reign of Sultan Abu al-Hasan al-Marini in 750 AH. This happened when he was returning from Tunis with his fleet and a storm came up which sank his boats, resulting in the loss of many of his men and the disappearance of valuable

¹ - Abdul Wahid Al-Marrakshi, Op.Cit, p. 353.

² - Ahmed Al-Maqri Al-Tilimsani, Op.Cit, Vol. 1, p. 611.

³ - Ahmed Al-Maqri Al-Tilimsani, Op.Cit, Vol. 1, pp. 612-614.

treasures, including the Othmani Mus'haf. However, the Sultan himself survived on a piece of wreckage from one of the wrecked ships until the waves washed him ashore"¹.

B- The Al-'Uqbani Mus'haf:

The Al-'Uqbani Mus'haf is a Qur'an written during the time of 'Uqbah ibn al-Fahri, one of the conquerors of the Maghreb and its governor under the Umayyads, in two periods: 50 AH to 55 AH and 62 AH to 64 AH. The Al-'Uqbani Qur'an was circulated in Morocco until it came into the possession of the Saadians in the remotest regions of Morocco. Later, it was sent as a gift by Sultan Abdullah bin Ismail bin Ali al-Sharif al-Alawi (1171 AH - 1204 AH) as part of a collection of Qur'ans to the Noble Sanctuary of Medina in 1155 AH. The author of Al-Istiqsa says: "When the noble caravan travelled, Sultan Abdullah al-Alawi accompanied it, carrying twenty-three Qur'ans, both large and small, decorated with gold and studded with pearls and rubies. Among them was the large Al-'Uqbani Qur'an, which the kings inherited after the Othmani Mus'haf. It is attributed to 'Uqbah ibn Nafi al-Fahri, the conqueror of Maghreb. It is said that his copy of the Othmani Mus'haf was made in Kairouan"².

C- "Mahdi Ibn Tumart Mus'haf": there is a claim that it was written by Muhammad al-Mahdi Ibn Tumart (471 AH or 474 AH - 524 AH), the founder of the Almohad state, and is currently considered lost³. The Almohads used to carry the Mahdi ibn Tumart Qur'an along with the Ottoman Qur'an when they travelled. It was carried on a mule behind the camel that carried the Ottoman Qur'an. Abd al-Wahid al-Marrakushi mentions this by saying: "...and behind the camel there was also a decorated mule carrying another Qur'an, said to be written by Ibn Tumart, smaller in size than the Ottoman Qur'an, decorated with silver covered with gold. All this belonged to the caliph among them"⁴.

4.2 Mus'hafs of Kings and Court Officials:

A. Al-Hadhina Mus'haf in Kairouan:

The library of Jami' al-Qairawan, known as the "House of Books", was established in the early third century AH (9th century CE) by the Aghlabids as part of the expansion of the mosque in 221 AH under the leadership of Prince Ziyadat Allah Ibn Ibrahim (172 AH - 223 AH)⁵. The ancient library of Jami' al-Qairawan contains a rare collection of Qur'ans, especially those written on parchment. These Qur'ans are distinguished by their artistic features and different style from the Qur'ans found in other parts of the Islamic West. The age of these Qur'ans ranges from the third century AH to the seventh century AH⁶.

Among these Qur'ans is the one known as the "Al-Hadhina Qur'an". It is a large-sized Qur'an commissioned by a prominent lady of the Sanhaja court, Fatima Hadhina, who was of Christian origin. She was the guardian of Prince Sanhaji Abu Manad Badis ibn al-Mansur

¹ - Al-Saeed ibn Musa, Op.Cit, p. 37.

² - Abu al-Abbas Ahmed al-Nasiri, Istiqsa' li Akhbar Duwal al-Maghrib al-Aqsa, Vol. 7, p. 159.

³ - Mohammed Al-Manouni, Qabas Min Ataa Al-Makhtut Al-Maghribi, Op.Cit, p. 12.

⁴ - Abdul Wahid Al-Marrakshi, Op.Cit, p. 353.

⁵ - Maki ibn Nasib al-Saba'i, Mosque Libraries, p. 111.

⁶ - Murad Al-Rimah, The Ancient Library of Kairouan and Ways to Preserve It, Cultural Life Magazine, p. 122.

(374 AH - 406 AH). She oversaw the financing and supervision of the work, while the scribe was Durrat. The production of the Qur'an was carried out by Ahmad ibn Ali al-Warraaq al-Qayrawani. He completed his work in 410 AH¹.

In addition to the quarters, sections and damaged pages, some parts were written on parchment and others on paper. All of them are recorded in an ancient register found in the aforementioned library². All these pages of the Qur'an have been transferred to the National Museum of Islamic Art in Raqqada (Kairouan, Tunisia).

Fatima, mentioned earlier, kept the Al-Hadhina Qur'an in the Uqba Mosque in Kairouan in 410 AH and placed it in a wooden box for its protection. The box was engraved with an inscription indicating its confinement. The Qur'an was damaged during the Banu Hilal invasion and many of its pages were lost, although it remained in its box. Only about 1,300 pages of the Qur'an have survived³.

The Qur'an was written on parchment using reed pens and brown ink. Coloured inks were also used for embellishment and decoration, including the use of gold water and pigments for decorative elements on the pages of the Qur'an. The page size of the Qur'an is 45.5 cm by 31 cm. It is worth noting that the format of the Qur'an differs from other Qur'ans in Kairouan in that it is oriented horizontally rather than vertically. Care has been taken to ensure that the words are complete without any word breaks, unlike in earlier Qur'ans.

The script of the Qur'an varies from page to page, indicating that it was written by several calligraphers. Even the size of the pens used varied, resulting in variations in the average number of words per line. However, the number of lines remains consistent across all pages, with each page containing five lines⁴.

The Mus'haf was written in the Kufi script specific to Kairouan, which is characterised by several distinctive features. One of these characteristics is the combination of opposites, as it combines softness and sharpness, as well as thickness and delicacy. The script is thick and extremely precise. It also relies on angular forms, with its letters derived from triangles⁵.

In some illustrated pages of the Qur'an, the letters are not dotted but marked with diacritical signs. The colour red was used for the vowel signs (fatha, kasra and damma), while dark blue was used for 'shadda' and 'sukuun'. The colour green was used for the 'maddah' sign and the 'hamza'. Rectangular decorative shapes made with a mixture of gold water and blue paint were used as separators between surahs. Inside these shapes, the names of the surahs and the number of their verses were written, and unlike the verses of the Qur'an, the writing inside them was dotted⁶.

¹ - Ibid, p. 122

² - This manuscript was published by Ibrahim Shabouh in the Journal of the Institute of Arabic Manuscripts, Vol. 2, Part 2, pp. 339-372.

³ - Shaymaa Al-Faham, A Descriptive Analytical Study of the Scripts of Fatima Hadina's Qur'an 410 AH, Journal of Manuscript Sciences, Issue 3, pp. 268-269.

⁴ - Shaymaa Al-Faham, Op.Cit, pp. 279-281.

⁵ - Ibid, pp. 289-291.

⁶ - Appendix No. 1.

Surah Al-Baqarah had a distinctive separator between it and Surah Al-Fatiha. The rectangular separator was larger and completely decorated with golden water¹. From these separators came decorative plant motifs in the form of a coloured crown, decorated with gold and blue, with a touch of green². The Qur'an also contained other decorative marks, including the "takhmis" mark, which appeared after every five verses. It had a specific shape consisting of eight semicircles surrounding it, with the phrase "five verses" in the centre. These marks were of the same type as the other decorative elements, made with gold water and interspersed with a little dark blue colour³.

B - The rib'a of the Almohad caliph Abu Hafs Umar al-Murtada Ibn Yusuf ibn Abd al-Mu'min (646 AH - 665 AH):

This rib'a was a Mus'haf copied in ten volumes by Umar al-Murtada himself, who was one of the later caliphs of the Almohad dynasty. It was kept in its entirety in the library of the Jameeibn Youssef Mosque in Marrakech until 1149 AH, when it was borrowed by the Muhtasib of Marrakech around 1352 AH⁴. The parts of the quarter were distributed among several libraries, and nine parts are known to date. It measures 290 mm by 220 mm. It is written on good quality paper with a thick pen in a Maghrebi script that is close to the Andalusian style. The handwriting is well formed and the ink is dark black⁵.

Mohammed al-Munawani examined some parts of the rib'a and gave their locations. He found that the words in these parts were cut off from the end of one line to the beginning of the next, which was a common practice in some old Andalusian manuscripts⁶.

As for the description of the first part of the ten parts of the quarter, it was included by As-Siddiq Ibn al-Arabi, the former curator of the Ibn Youssef Library in Marrakech, in his book "Fahras Mukhtarat Khizanat Ibn Youssef bi-Marrakesh". It was in the library when he worked as a curator. It was copied by Al-Murtada Almohad on Sunday, 6 Rajab, 654 AH, and kept in the Jamaa Al-Saqaya mosque he built in Marrakech on 2 Rajab, 656 AH⁷.

"After Al-Murtada Almohad finished writing the Qur'an, it was wrapped in a decorated gold leather cover and placed in a casket made of ebony wood with gilded brass ornaments. The casket was three arms long and had three handles: one on the top and two on the sides. Its corners were decorated and it was closed in the same decorative style. The casket had a silver cover"⁸.

Some illustrated pages of the Rib'a show the artistic elements of gilding and ornamentation. The designs are executed in different colours. The 'hamzah' (glottal stops) appear as red circles, while the separators between verses are depicted as segmented circles

¹ - Appendix No. 3.

² - Appendix No. 1, 3.

³ - Appendix No. 2.

⁴ - Mohammed Al-Manouni, AdabwaFununAlaAhdil-Muwahhidin, pp. 287-288.

⁵ - Mohammed Al-Manouni, Qabas Min Ataa Al-Makhtut Al-Maghribi, Op.Cit, Vol. 1, pp. 44-45.

⁶ - Siddiqibn al-Arabi, Index of Manuscripts in the Ibn Yusuf Library in Marrakech, p. 29.

⁷ - The text is taken from the remains of the endowment written on both the first and fourth parts of this Rib'a, which were studied by Professor Al-Manouni.

⁸ - See Mohammed Al-Manouni, Qabas Min Ataa Al-Makhtut Al-Maghribi, Op.Cit, Vol. 1, pp. 42-43.

made with gold water. The separators between surahs are depicted as rectangular frames with an inner border resembling a braid, within which another rectangle is inscribed with the names of the surahs, surrounded by intricate decorations, leaving no blank spaces¹. These decorations are also done in golden water. From the edge of the frame, there is a decorated circle surrounded by pointed shapes. The endings of the sections are surrounded by a victorious frame inscribed with golden water, in which the phrase "completed the seventh of the ten parts of the book, etc." is written. From this frame, three circular ornaments emerge, identical to those found in the dividers between the surahs².

J- The first part is the Rib'a of Abu Zayyan Muhammad ibn Abi Hammu Musa II (796 AH - 801 AH):

It was discovered during the French mandate in Morocco and Levy-Provençal provides a description of it. He states that it represents the first part of the Qu'ran up to Surah Al-An'am. It consists of 115 pages with a height of 203 mm and a width of 175 mm. The following statement appears at the end "Completed the blessed first part of the quarter, copied by the hand of the Prince of the Muslims, Abu Zayyan Muhammad, in his presence, in the city of Tlemcen, may Allah protect it, in the year 801". The prince mentioned is Abu Zayyan Muhammad ibn Abi Hamu Musa II, who ruled Tlemcen from 796 to 801 AH and died in 805 AH³.

This part is currently preserved in the General Library in Rabat under the number D 1330. It is written in Maghrebi script, decorated with gold at the beginning of each surah and at the beginning of each verse. All the names of Allah are written in gold⁴.

D - The Rib'a of Sultan Abu al-Hasan ibn Ya'qub al-Marini (731 AH - 749 AH):

It is in the Islamic Museum in Al-Quds Al-Sharif (Jerusalem). It was written by Sultan Abu al-Hasan al-Marini himself and originally consisted of thirty parts. However, five parts were lost and replaced by others written in Maghrebi script in 1221 AH. It was written on paper in a broad Maghribi script with five lines⁵ per page. Its date of writing is 745 AH⁵.

Conclusion:

The following conclusions can be drawn from this study:

The people of the Islamic West have preserved the traditions embodied in the Othmani Mus'hafand transmitted to them by the conquerors. They have preserved its calligraphy and copied it as they found it, remaining faithful to these traditions and to the Kufi script in which it was written. They derived their own scripts from it, such as the Qairawan and Andalusian scripts. They also maintained the use of parchment as a material for writing the Qur'an, even though the paper industry had migrated to their region from the Islamic East. They used both materials together for this purpose. Furthermore, the people of the Islamic West excelled in decorating and gilding the Qur'an, creating magnificent bindings and wooden covers (Bayt al-

¹ - Appendix No. 4

² - Appendix No. 5

³ - Levi – Provençal, Note sur un Quoran royal du 14e siècle, Hesperis, 1921, Vol. 1, pp. 83-84

⁴ - Mohammed Al-Manouni, Qabas Min Ataa Al-Makhtut Al-Maghribi, Previous Reference, p. 22.

⁵ - "The same reference, Volume 1, Page 50."

'ud). They used the finest and purest materials, including precious metals and gems, and these Mus'hafs were highly prized.

The people of Maghreb competed in copying the Qur'an, both men and women. This was not limited to specialised scribes, but extended to kings and rulers who copied the Qur'an in their own handwriting and sent it to the holy shrines (Mecca and Medina) and the Al-Aqsa Mosque. These copies were preserved and kept in these holy places and other mosques for the benefit of worshippers to read from them as a continuous act of charity in order to be rewarded by Allah.

The people of the Islamic West did not stop at merely copying the Qur'an, but went to great lengths to honour and preserve the precious Mus'hafs that reached them. Examples of such treasured Qur'ans include the Othmani Mus'haf, the 'Uqbani Mus'haf, and the Mahdi Ibn Tumart Mus'haf. They decorated these Mus'hafs with amazing bindings, decorated with gold, jewels and precious stones. They took great care of them and displayed them during royal processions as a sign of reverence and to seek blessings from them.

Finally, it is hoped that this work will contribute to the existing, albeit limited, body of studies in this field. It is also hoped that researchers will take an interest in this field, known as the science of manuscripts, which, to the best of my knowledge, lacks specialised experts in Algeria, unlike other Islamic countries, particularly in the far west, where several specialised researchers have emerged, such as Shauqi Binbin, Muhammad al-Mununi and Sa'id bin Musa.

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"Appendix No. 1: A Page from the Hadhinah's Qur'an Displaying decorated Surah headings With diacritical marks"



<https://ar.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/https://ar.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D9%85%>

"Appendix No. 2: A Qur'an with Diacritical Marks"



<https://ar.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/https://ar.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D9%85%>

Annex No. 3: Al-Hadina Mus'haf Opening Surah Al-Baqarah

