

Arabic calligraphy and its place among contemporary illustration

Prof. Saleh Abdel Moaty

Former Vice President of Luxor University - Emeritus Professor of Graphic, Faculty of Fine Arts, Luxor University

Lect. Gehad Ahmed Mohamed Abdou

**Teaching assistant,graphic department-F of fin arts,Luxor university
Meroggb19@gmail.com**

Summary

Research Problem:

- What is the status of Calligraphy in design and submission of contemporary illustration?
- Does calligraphy have the suitable status between various illustrations?

Research Objectives:

This research aims at highlighting the aesthetics of calligraphy and employing it in contemporary illustrations to cope with the contemporary spirit.

Research Importance:

- Highlighting the Arab Line esthetics, which has artistic and creative artistic energies and esthetics formational potentials; and employing these in contemporary illustration.
- Highlighting some artistic works for graphics artists especially illustration in which calligraphy plays the main role in it.

Research Assumptions:

The research assumes implementing calligraphy in the design of contemporary illustration (such as covers, internal pages etc.) to contribute in producing a book with a contemporary style which is characterized by modernity and originality simultaneously, which preserves the distinct identity and characteristics for Arabic illustration.

Research Limitations:

The research covers the esthetics of the artistic formation in designing and production of the Book Arts starting from getting into the print to Islamic countries until our current era.

Research Methodology:

The researcher used the analytical, descriptive and historical methodology where the research covered a number of historical facts concerning calligraphy in illustration, in addition to description and analysis of some artistic works implemented in the scope of illustration. Modern means of communications, including “the Book Arts” is considered among the main branches of modern Graphics Arts which have a great influence in spreading science and culture, and an important role in directing the awareness and promoting the intellect and beliefs. The writing lines are considered as the most important elements of the optical formation on this scope where it gathers all of reading functional, artistic and aesthetical sides.

Calligraphy was and still an inspirational art, which carries secrets of the artistic beauty in addition to the literature value because of what it owns in terms of special aesthetical artistic features, which makes it distinct from other languages lines. These features create an

aesthetical value, which enriches any calligraphic work, which has special features such as flexibility and formation.

The Printing of the modern book in Europe passed through many developments, which arrived late to the Arab and Islamic Worlds where caliphate country had a reservation in this due to either religious reasons or artistic reasons which occurred due to the fear from the spread of secularism, which Europe attempted to spread for political colonization purposes. Regardless the reasons, what is happening now is the delay of arrival of modern printing to the Arab and Islamic countries, where the first printed book in the Arabic Language which was printed with moveable metallic letters, was in Europe in Year 1489 for preaching the Christianity between Muslims especially the Arabs. Officially, the Printing entered (Al-Astana) during the middle of the 8th century i.e. during the era of Sultan Ahmed the Third in Year 1726. Its first issue was (Wan Koly 1) dictionary. Then, Printing establishment entered the Arab countries successively where the first Egyptian printing establishment was (Bolak Press) in Cairo by the end of Year 1819 during the era of "Mohamed Ali Bash" where its first printing was Arabic-Italian Dictionary. This was followed by many prints with diversified prints as time went by, after it was limited to subjects which serve modern country organizations, which were established by Mohamed Ali Bash. In addition, national printing establishments were setup successively and the printed books became widespread.

The production of a book depends on a number of artistic, technical, material and societal factors which all influence the quality of the production of the book where book industry in an educated society certainly differs in its production from a society which doesn't care much about reading, where production of books is a trade which aims at making profits. This is in addition to the importance of providing raw materials and technology required for the production of the book in a form, which conforms to the international development. No doubt that the modern technology made the process of designing and printing books more easier, quicker, better & cheaper.

The following are the most important issues that must be considered when starting production of a certain book; and they are considered among the important factors needed for the production of a book:

- **The Value**: This means the value of the text and what it aims at where the publisher is, in addition to the money gains, it also has to care about ethics and moral when selecting contents of a book, which the publisher wants to support and produces.
- **The Shape**: The presentation of the book is what gives the first impression for the public, this greatly influences even if the content was good but the shape was bad; as a bad shape is sufficient to make the audience keep away from the book.
- **Marketing**: This is done by making the necessary labels for the book and presenting them at a large number of locations, especially if the competition was severe.
- **The Designer**: The publisher or author must select an efficient designer who studied the basis and rules of design. The designer must be educated and has a high extent of awareness and realization, as general knowledge and education is useful for the designer when starting his work, especially that he creates designs for various types of books. He also has to read the whole book before starting to place the ideas and create designs, so that he makes designs for various types of books. He also has to read the whole book before starting to place ideas so

that the design expresses the subject which the author wants to deliver to the reader. He also must enjoy an opening innovative mentality so that his thoughts must raise the admiration of the reader to such an extent that he will be convinced to buy the book. During the publication, the designer will represent the book's engineer.

A book must have an optical identity which guarantees the unity and beauty of the designed work for the book with the integration and coordination among components of the one page on the one hand and among the remaining book's pages on the other hand.

There are several types of plans and optical designed methods which are followed in the design of pages on which the shape of the book is based upon, in order to create a correct optical relationship which serves precisely the functional aspect; and at the same time achieves the aesthetical aspect among text, drawings, pictures and the associated shapes. The most of these methods are: geometrical shapes such as Pyramid, Square, Rectangle and the shape of the letter (L). This implies that the formation and distribution of the elements and drawings are done in an imaginary shape from these shapes so that it becomes the general shape for the design Figure (9). These methods are considered among the well-known traditional methods; but we must point out that the professional commitment with these patterns as these are guiding and organizational patterns to assist the designer in reaching the balanced design.

Sometimes, a designer in particular the non-traditional creative ones follow (Non Formal), and non-traditional methods which creates distinct designs that attract the audience and receives its acceptance.

Looking at the modern book's production and its development since the start of the modern printing, we have reached the following number of remarks:

- 1) The "Address Page" did not exist with the familiarized method and information. Even if it existed, we find a deficiency in information and we find random methods and styles, which doesn't follow a certain order. As for the aspect of shape and design, the title was written using large fonts; and the author's name using average fonts. There are also designs, which are considered as very simple which have diversified forms despite their simplicity among geometrical shapes: (Circle, triangle with head at top or vice versa, oval, half-circle & rectangle) this is because of the existence of a frame for the page.
- 2) At the beginning, among the priorities were giving attention to writing the address and the contents in a decorative and a beautiful line despite the difficulty faced by the books' producers towards the modern printing technologies. However, this was done by utilizing the most skillful calligraphers especially in writing the titles. Mohamed Ali Bash paid great importance to this by himself when setting up the printing establishment in Egypt. He used a number of Iranians and Turkish calligraphers to work in them; such as the Iranian calligrapher (Sinclagh), whose first work was writing (Mohey Al-Deon Ibn Araby Divan).
- 3) With the beginning of the twenties century, the cover became among the essentials which became indispensable. Its contents in addition to the book name, the issue date and house of publications. The drawings and ornaments started to develop which is linked to the type of printing where the drawings and photos were done in the stony printing establishment. As for the content, it was done using the acceptable metallic letters. The designed and organizational shape for the book got nearer to its currently familiar shape in terms of dividing it into

sections, chapters, margins, pictures, appendixes and other esthetical and organizational matters.

4) The publications and production works diversified for many tasks and specialties where the calligrapher alone is no longer capable to perform all the work by himself. Therefore, for each part was allocated a function done by the person who perfects it, for example designer for lines and letters; a digger made them and a painter had to perform drawings and designs accompanying the text; and others performed the process of supplying the papers which is followed by binding, packaging and distributing books to the selling locations. This specialization is to confirm the perfectness and accuracy of the work together with the speed of performance.

The book arts cover everything related to the publication whether books or press or advertisements. This paper publication has included Electronic Publication, which is accompanied by competitive requirements, which showed the need for advertising. This advertising has spread in all means of the diversified means of publications whether the printed or the electronic such as posters, cards and various types of brochures. All these are functional features, which aim at promotion and advertising for a product to attract the attention where the optical effects for the design is among the most important factors, which assist in persuading the audience. Among the most important elements of the successful design is being strange, creative and original, therefore the designer's task needs potential and ability to use his tools and creativity to create the distinct, especially in the light of the large amount of competition and the infinite incentives in the era which depends essentially on picture and optical elements.

In the past, the folders of books and magazines with their creative titles, were excellent by the most famous calligraphers of those times and even after the end of their era of copying it by hand, and using the printer since the eighteenth century and until the beginning of the twentieth century where the calligrapher was the one who wrote the titles. Then, the digger converts it to a printing form so that it can be printed. This was the case until the middle of the twentieth century and the start of the colonization of the Arab and Islamic countries by the Western countries.

Since the middle of the twentieth century, started the deterioration and the reliance on the fixed computer lines molds, which are empty from artistic creative aspects, which was the characteristics of the Arab Line in the past. The deterioration in the Arab Line Art became clear on the printouts especially books and magazines. But holding on to the religion, heritage and the Islamic civilization to push some calligraphers and artists as an attempt to save this great art by the production of some computerized lines according to the original rules and basis which carry the contemporary nature to match the accelerating technological development. Also appeared are the calls to return to the study of the heritage especially the Arab Line arts to preserve the Islamic cultural artistic identity with all its features such as literature, poetry, manual letters etc. in the hope of creating a good civilization which complements our great Islamic civilization which headed the world one day in the past.

The idea of calligraphy with words and letters which was the greatest Islamic civilization arts and inspired many of the international plastic artists in the modern era, had the greatest influence in the development of the intellect and philosophy of these artists. This also led to the appearance of important artistic schools, which have changed the path of the modern

plastic art, such as the (Baw House) school. Among those internal artists who were influenced by the Arab lines and its arts are (Paul Clay) and (Fazarely). Sadly, this great art had to no longer exist in the plastic arts with the Arab and Muslim artists since the beginning of the modern era i.e. since the rise of the modern printing where the appearance of the artistic moves calling for supporting the national identities, which came at the same time as the political movements at the beginning of the twentieth century which called for independence and liberation from the colonization. This resulted in some plastic letters movements, which started to inspire the Arabic letters in their work especially the book's arts. During that period, appeared some books folders with designs which have shared the letters to the word with drawings and pictures as it is an artistic optical element which has an influence in the formation of the word.

The Arabic Line has imposed its existence and proved its success, suitability, and potential for continuous development all through the eras despite the invalid acquisitions for its unsuitability for the modern technological development. The lovers of this genius art were excellent in many types of the modern graphical processors which have high flexibility and suitability, which is suitable for all applied uses and all artistic methods which can be either Free (Calligraphic) or the Acceptable (Typographic) in the applications of computers which is in addition to the manual free works match the spirit of the era and have proved that this art will not stop or end its development or be limited to its ancient classic shapes.

For example, we find the works of the artist (Naja Al-Mahdawi) as if they are musical melodies, which we can hear and they dance with their flexible lines which have various harmonies and are characterized by their originality and modernity with an intelligent variation that have been implemented in several applications such as the Book's arts. When you see the printed computerized (Mamoun Sakal) lines, they create feelings of magnificence and sweetness simultaneously which are suitable for all fields as if they were made specifically to the work on which it was printed. As for the works of the Iranian artists such as (Reza Abdeny, Mahdy Saeidy, Sherine Nashaat and others), they were all characterized by technological potential and creative, individual thoughts with high artistic talent together with the originality simultaneously.

The design represents an optical identity for the book as a complete unit where it is not limited to the design of the cover alone. It must be characterized with an identity in which integrates the design of the cover with the design of its remaining internal pages so that it becomes an integrated completed unit which serves the functional and aesthetical role; design and planning a book or a magazine into sections, chapters and paragraphs and the distribution of the line elements (Typographic) and the lines measures and its relations with each other and its relationship with the drawings, pictures, motives and other design elements and coordinating, all this in an imagination which is characterized by unity with diversification which is the more important role for the designer.

Reference:

1. Alabar Mohamad Yaser Ezaat-Roeya faniia moasera le khat Al naskh men khilal siagha tashkelia hrafia jadeda-Koliat al fnon al Jamila-jameaat helwan-doktora-2000
2. Ahmad Ali Tahseen.al twzef al jamali le al harf al arabi fe al tabeaa al fania al eraqia al moasera.kliat al fnon al Jamila.jameat al eskandaria.majester.2015
3. Taha Hasan Hasan-kabliar al tahwer ka khasia fania fe al khat al arabi w aka madkhal le esraa al tasmemat al zokhrofia-koliat al tarbia al fania-jameaat tanta-majester-2002.
4. calligraphy skills. n.d. <https://www.calligraphy-skills.com/what-is-calligraphy.html> (accessed 10 6, 2019).
5. Ebrahim, Nabil wa Osama Hamada.Mehan al nashr.Al kahera:Al haiaa almesria alamma lelketab.2007.
6. Estebetshfetsh, Aleksandar.tarjamat Mohamad ALarnaoot.Tarekh Alketab.Alkwait.Almjles alwatane le althkafa wa alfnon wa alaadab.1990
7. Hasan, Azab wa Khaled Mahamad-Dewan Alkhatt Alarabi fe Mesr "Derasa Wathaekia le alketabat wa Aham Akhattaten fe Mesr Fe Osrat Mohamad Ali Pasha".aleskandaria:Maktabat Aleskandaria.2010.
8. Hasan,Wasef Ahmad. "Altaqniat Alrakamia wa athraha ala Altaipografia fe Alaamal algrafikia almoasera". Almootamar Aldawle altase .Almnia.koliat alfnon aljamila. jameaat almnia.2010.
9. Dagher,sharbal.Alhorofia alarabia fan wa haweia.Bairot: sharekat almatboaat wa alnashr wa altawzee.1990
10. Ramze, Alarabi .Mawsoat Altasmem Algrafike. Alordon:Dar Alyosef le altebaa wa alnashr,2005
11. Sohil, Sabat. Ebrahim Motafareka wa johodaho fe Enshaa almatbaa alarabia. Almamlaka Alarabia Alsaodia: Maktabat Almalk Fahd alwatania. 1416h
12. Sabre, Abdl ghani. Alfaragh fe alfnon altashkelia "Alhadatha wa ma baad Alhadatha" .Alkahera: Almjles Alaala Lwalthakafa .2008
13. Azab khaled,Ahmad Mansor. Alketab Alarabi Almatboo. Alkahera: Aldar Almasria Al lobnania.2009
14. Ali,Shalash.Almajalat Aladabia fe Mesr.Alkahera: ALhaiaa Almesria Alammah le alketab.1988
15. Enad,ghazawan Motaz.Motaghairat alzaman wa almakan fe boniat almolsak almoaaser.Demashk: dar alla.2009
16. Mohamad,Mohamad Said.Senaat alketab wa nashraho. Alkahera: Dar almaaref.1983
17. n.d.<https://specialinc.blogspot.com/2016/12/ebook-vs-paperbook-hagar-nagh.html> (accessed 10 2, 2019).
18. ويكيبيديا. calligraphy. n.d. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Calligraphy> (accessed 10 6, 2019).