

## Moroccan Mus'haf at Abi Mohamed Al-Morjani Mosque in Tunisia - first published

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### Abstract:

Muslims in general, Moroccans and Andalusians in particular, took care of the Mus'haf. In terms of the material on which it was written, the people of the Islamic West began writing the Mus'haf on parchment, which was used in the Mus'haf until recently. Then they started writing on paper since (AH 5th / AD 11th) century. As for the type of calligraphy, the Kufic script was used to write the Mus'haf until the (AH 5th / AD 11th) century, until it was replaced by the Moroccan script.

As for the ink colors, it was used black in writing, red in tashkil (signs), and yellow in the titles of the Surahs. In terms of binding, it began simple by using wooden panels that were covered in leather or fabric, and then studded with gemstones, gold and silver flakes, then the wood panels were replaced with paper covers that were covered in leather and decorated with ornaments and gilding. The Mus'haf under study is a model of the Moroccan Mus'haf, in which the features of the manuscripts and Mus'hafs in the Islamic West are clear, through the study of this Mus'haf, the Moroccan manuscript industry will be shed light on since its inception, following the stages of its development and monitoring its most important features.

The Mus'haf under study is kept at the Abi Mohamed El Marjani Mosque in Tunis. This mosque was established during the reign of Sultan Abi Hafs Omar (683--694 AH / 1284-1294 AD) by Sheikh Abi Muhammad al-Marjani. Today, the Mus'haf is in an acceptable state of memorization - except that some of its papers were partially damaged - as it keeps all of its original pages and books, and it belongs to the pattern of the Mus'haf. The pages of the Mus'haf were written in extended Moroccan calligraphy, as well as the conclusion page, which contains the name of the calligrapher and the commander of writing the Mus'haf, and the history of the void of his writing in the Maghribic script (Fassi script). The pages of the Mus'haf were written in black ink, except for the titles of the fence and their data, and they were written in golden ink. The conclusion page also wrote a dark red supply.

### Key words:

Mus'haf, paper, gilding, binding, manuscripts.

### Research problematic:

The problematic of the research is the study of a Moroccan Mus'haf written in Fassi script that has not been published before.

### Research objective:

The research aims to monitor the most important features of manuscript industry in the Islamic West, especially the Mus'haf s, in application to the Mus'haf under study.

### **The research importance:**

A Moroccan Mus'haf is being published for the first time.

- Shedding light on the manuscript industry in the Islamic West, by studying paper, type of calligraphy, textures, gilding, and binding.

### **Research Methodology:**

The historical method was used to trace the stages of manuscript manufacturing in the Islamic West from the conquest until the century (12 AH / 18 AD). The descriptive method was also used in an accurate scientific description of the Mus'haf. He followed the analytical method in analyzing all the elements and components of the Mus'haf under study.

### **Research framework:**

Time frame: the century (12th AH / 18AD), spatial frame: the countries of the Islamic West.

The place where the Mus'haf is kept:

The Mus'haf in question is preserved in the Abu Muhammad al-Marjani mosque in Tunis. This mosque was established during the reign of Sultan Abu Hafs Umar (683–694 AH / 1284–1294 AD) by Sheikh Abu Muhammad al-Marjani. The Mus'haf is preserved in a wooden box, and at the top of the box is a place for the Mus'haf to be placed on during reading, and it becomes like a reciter's chair.

### **General description of the Mus'haf:**

The Mus'haf today is in an acceptable condition of preservation - except that some of its papers were partially damaged - as all of its original pages are kept. It measures 41 cm in length and 29 cm in width. That is a type of Mus'haf in which the page's height exceeds its width, as the Noble Mus'haf has taken three forms in its external appearance: a shape close to the square. It is a form that tends to extend crosswise, meaning that the height of its page is less than its width. It has been known by historians of Islamic art as "the Mus'haf of horizontal form," or "the Mus'haf in the form of a ship," or "Italian form", and the third form in which the height is longer than the width, hence it is known as the "vertical Quran" or "the French form." This last form is the familiar form in all books before and after Islam, and it is still common until the present time. The Islamic West is almost unique in taking the book in size close to the square in the 6 century AH / 12AD CE, but soon the book returned to its natural form in Andalusia, and in Morocco, the square size of the book remained in circulation, but within a narrow scope until the century (13 AH / 19 AD). The measurement of the pages of this Mus'haf reveals that the superior ratio is followed in the beauty of the rectangle, in which the width is two-thirds of the length.

### **Mus'haf Pages:**

After the Muslims first tried writing on various subjects, they inclined to slavery, and the early companions had an opinion on that, emanating from a religious perspective, as they unanimously agreed to write the Qur'an on parchment due to its longevity and availability at that time. parchment was produced from animal skinn, especially the skins of small animals. In the Islamic West, parchment was first used as a writing material, as rare manuscripts dated

back to the first centuries of the Hijra were written on goat parchment or deer, especially Mus'hafs, and the royal bureaus in Andalusia dominated the writing on parchment horses, for the sake of pens. In Ifriqiya, parchment remained for a long time the only way to restrict writing. And the parchment industry in Africa and Morocco in general continued to grow and flourish for a long time, and although paper replaced parchment since the 5th century AH / 11AD CE, it nevertheless remained used in writing in the Islamic West, while we find that it ceased to be used in the East. Al-Qalqashandi (d.: 821 AH / 1418 AD) noticed that the Moroccans of his era were still writing the noble Mus'haf s on parchment in order to stay preserved for a long time. As for the instruments and contracts, they continued to write on flogging until the thirteenth century AH.

In view of the defects of parchment, they began to use other materials such as Egyptian papyrus, which took the place of expensive parchment. The manufacture of paper in the Islamic state remained a purely Egyptian industry (papyrus or paper) throughout the first century and early of the second century of migration, until the Chinese (opaque) paper took a place next to it, but it was not considered a competitor to papyrus until the middle of the century (5 AH / 11AD), then the Maghreb countries imported from Egypt Egyptian paper or papyrus paper. In most cases, papyrus was not used in Andalusia and the like, where you do not know - until now - a reference to that by decoumented sources.

Since the Muslims learned to manufacture paper from the Chinese in (134 AH / 746AD), paper slowly began to replace parchment, and the manufacture of parchment and papyrus had stopped. Since then, the emergence of paper has effectively contributed to the flourishing of the authoring and writing movement due to the ease of circulation of the paper manuscript among people, the ease of its manufacture locally, the abundance of raw materials from which it was made, and its low cost. The Muslims developed the paper industry, and Islamic factories produced excellent types of it. This facilitated the production of books in a way that did not exist before the Islamic era.

In the Islamic West, the shift to the use of paper was late, as parchment remained the material used for writing until the 5th century AH / 11AD CE. Indeed, Moroccan Mus'haf s continued to be written on parchment - as previously mentioned - but this did not prevent the use of paper in the West. Islam has been alongside parchment since the 3rd century AH / 9th AD. It is likely that the first appearance of the kaghad in the lower Maghreb was during the era of the Aghlabids, i.e. the middle of the century (3 AH / 9 AD). It is noticeable that the kaghad industry reached in Kairouan and in the city of Tunis a faraway in sophistication and perfection. By the second half of the century (AH 4th / AD 10th), papermaking had spread to North Africa. In Tunisia, Tlemcen, Ceuta and Fez.

After the paper is made, it is underlined, ready to be written on. There is no doubt that lining is a very important part of producing the page, as it contributes to the realization of the "aesthetic vision" of the text, which the manuscript maker tends to create through an aesthetic arrangement. Underline is the sum of the lines drawn on the page; To define and direct the space allocated for writing. The lines on the paper are organized by the ruler, which is a board on which threads are affixed to the number of lines required, and they coordinated between them so that they are of equal dimensions, then put on top of the paper in question, and press it - by hand - until the lines affixed to the ruler are drawn on it.

**Opening page:**

The first page of the Mus'haf began with the Basmalah and the prayer on the Prophet in two lines with the wording "In the Name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful, and may God bless our Master and Mawlana Muhammad," then Surat Al-Fatiha, and the title of Surat Al-Baqarah. Al-Muzouq took care of the titles of the surahs al-Fatihah and al-Baqara mentioned on that page, as he placed each of them inside a rectangular frame in golden color surrounded by a second golden frame as well. Four frame. The corners of the outer frame are adorned with three small circles in each corner (two circles topped by a circle), two of them in green and the third in red. As for the left side of the outer frame, it is connected by a circular bowl. On the inside, it is decorated with Arabic pattern motifs executed in golden, red and green colors.

**The last two pages of the Mus'haf:**

The recto of the last two pages contained surahs al-Falaq and al-Nas, and in it al-Mazuq added some vegetal motifs at the end of each surah. As for the left page, which is the last in the Mus'haf, it contained the name of the scribe who wrote the Mus'haf and the supplication for it in ten lines.

**The rest of the pages of the Mus'haf:**

The rest of the pages of the Mus'haf are empty of decoration except for the breaks of the verses. As for the ruler of the Mus'haf, each page contained thirteen lines. This number of lines per page does not agree with the preferred ratio of the number of lines in the page of the Noble Mus'haf, which is fifteen lines, although the pages contain large white margins surrounding the lines of writing, the breadth of about 9 cm from the bottom, and 3 cm from the top.

The goal of underlining, as known, is to regulate handwriting to prevent overlapping and warping. In the beginning, there was no fixed rate for the number of lines per page, so the number of lines varies from page to page in a single manuscript, and this is likely due to the fact that the scribes did not first line the writing papers before the transcription or the writing papers themselves were of different size, or that the lining was not in large manuscripts containing several volumes, or in large-sized Mus'haf s. It is up to the scribe and according to his writing style. If he sets himself a specific plan and adheres to it in writing from beginning to end, the number of lines in each page of the manuscript will be one, and if he does not start with a fixed plan, he will write lines on one page other than the lines of the next page. The lines are written on the front and back of the paper, without page numbering or "comments". The copyist of the Mus'haf followed the approach of calligraphers and copyists

The first four centuries of the Hijra, as the manuscripts were not subjected to any kind of numbering in that period, and in order not to disturb their order or to mix up the reader, they began since the fifth century AH to write the first word of each paper in the foot of the paper that precedes it under the last word of the last line, which is known as feedback. After that the foliation and pagination began.

**Surah titles:**

The titles of the surahs and their place of descent (Meccan or Medinan) were written in one line, and they were not distinguished from the Qur'an text except that they were executed with golden ink, while the Qur'an text was executed with black ink, with the exception of the titles of the surahs al-Fatiha and al-Baqara, as the name of the surah, the number of its verses, and the place of its descent were recorded with golden ink on a mulch of black, spiral branches, to which are attached small obliterated circles executed in red and green, the titles of the two suras are surrounded by frames previously described when talking about the opening page.

**Font type:**

Since the Islamic conquest of the Maghreb and Andalusia and the spread of the Arabic language in that quarter, the Kufic script was the one used in writing, especially the writing of the Mus'haf. The use of Kufic script in writing the Mus'haf remained in the countries of the Maghreb and Andalusia until the century (5 AH / 11 AD). From the Kufic script began to derive the Moroccan calligraphy, which may have appeared in the 4th century AH / 10 AD. Then the Moroccan calligraphy began to develop, and it was derived from more than one line. There were many methods of Moroccan calligraphy in engraving on architecture and writing the surahs of the Qur'an, such as: Al-Maghribi and the Moroccan third, and the "simplified" script replaced the Kufic script in copying the Mus'haf. A large-scale codification appeared in important and dahir compositions, later known as "al-Majawhar" or "Fassi" script, and a modest script was used in the traditions known as the "Musnad".

The pages of the Mus'haf under study are written in simple Moroccan script. I also wrote the page of the conclusion, which contains the name of the calligrapher who commanded to write the Mus'haf and the date of the completion of his writing in the original Moroccan script (Fassi calligraphy).

**Ink colors:**

The pages of the Mus'haf are written in black ink, except for the chapter headings and their details, so they are written with golden ink. The conclusion page was also written with a dark red ink. As for the signs of the figure, they were drawn with red ink, to distinguish them from the black text of the Qur'anic text, in order to facilitate the reading process. As for the hamza, it was executed with yellow ink.

The extension is what is written with it in any color, as well as ink, but the latter is distinguished by the fact that it is the color of blackness, and through what was found from the Moroccan Mus'haf s it was found that they were usually written in black ink that was dark or slightly faded, or with a solution of walnut peel, and the ink may be made from a fragrant substance, such as musk crumbs, rose perfume, saffron, amber and others. Ink has many types, and different colors, according to the materials from which they are made, or to which they are added. The Muslims in Morocco and Andalusia knew many types of ink, in terms of the materials used in its manufacture, use or name, and the diversity of ink used by Muslim scribes and writers, including scholars, papers and others, is due to multiple reasons, including: the diversity of materials used in its manufacture, and the quality of the manufacturer in placing the appropriate quantities for his industry and his mastery of that, and the method of preparation,

and the gradient in mixing the materials used in its manufacture, and the method of cooking on fire or exposure to the sun or soaking and squeezing. The Muslims distinguished between ink that is suitable for writing on leather, and ink that is suitable for writing on paper, as each had its own way of manufacturing and its components. Al-Qalouisi referred to the types of durations that are suitable for writing materials.

As for the colors of the ink used in the shape markers in the Mus'haf s of Morocco and Andalusia, they mostly corresponded to the colors used by the people of Medina. Abu Amr Al-Dani said: The people of Medina used it in ancient times and its modern color in the points of their Mus'hafs, they used red and yellow only; As for the redness of the movements, the stillness, the emphasis and the softening, and the yellowishness of the hamzat in particular. As for pointing the Mus'haf s in black from ink and other things, rather he forbade it and deny it, following the example of the one who started the points from the predecessor, and following him the use of that dye that contradicts the color of the ink, as there was no change in the shade nor confusion, and blackness would not happen in it. This is what was followed in the Mus'haf under study as previously mentioned.

### **Commas and tags:**

The Mus'haf in question contained only two types of separator decorations: the first is the verse separators, and consisted of three adjacent almond shapes (two on top of one), executed in golden yellow, with a white in the middle, meaning not blurred, and sometimes the almonds were surrounded by a black outer frame, sometimes surrounding the inner white. The frame is red in color, and sometimes it contains both of them together, and some of them are devoid of the both of them. Three small, blurred circles were executed in red except at the breaks of the verses of Surat Al-Fatihah, as their circles were executed in green to distinguish them, and a small straight line emerges from the upper amygdala, ending with a yellow-blurred circle except in Surat Al-Fatihah, which was executed in green. As for the separators specified for the parts, parties, halves, and quarters, they are composed of a small, almond-shaped, yellowish jar that contains a small white inside, and is identified on the outside with black ink.

### **Gilding:**

The art of gilding in particular has been associated with Arabs and Muslims since its inception with the Mus'haf s, and this connection remained present throughout the first centuries of Islam. As a result of the Mus'haf is being devoid of decorations and drawings, their gilding usually took the form of writing in gold water. The gilding did not extend to calligraphy except in a limited scope that did not go beyond writing titles. Then the decoration played its role in the Mus'haf in different places: in the breaks of the verses, in the breaks of the surahs, in the side margins, in the pages that precede the Qur'anic text and that come after its end, and in the beginning and the conclusion of the Mus'haf, as well as in engraving and gilding the leather of the Mus'haf. These decorations were initially met with strong opposition from some clerics, but this opposition did not prevent the use of the decoration in the Mus'haf, and it knew its way to it, and it began to develop in its shape through the ages, and the decoration of the entire pages of the Mus'haf did not appear until the 4th century AH / 10 AD) and that in the opening and conclusion of some Mus'haf s.

### **Lashes of the Mus'haf:**

In the Islamic West, the interest in binding the Noble Qur'an and books was great. Moroccans and Andalusians had a great interest in books and Mus'hafs, restoring, maintaining and preserving them in leather wallets and wooden boxes. So the binding industry has reached an advanced and sophisticated stage of improvement and perfection, and has become a special character that distinguishes it from others. The rulers' interest in books, their binding and their sweetening had a great impact on the prosperity of this industry, and one of the greatest evidences for this was the interest of the Almohad Caliph Abd al-Mu'min ibn Ali (527-558 AH / 1133-1163 CE) to binding and sweetening the Mus'haf "Othman bin Affan" which was given to him by the people of Cordoba, and he celebrated his acceptance. In Marrakesh, a great celebration was made for it, and a cupboard and membranes were decorated with gold and silver and studded with types of rubies and precious stones, which was incompetent in terms of goodness and value.

The first image of travel in Morocco was similar to its counterparts in the rest of the Islamic world, which is placing the book between two boards of wood perforated in two places far apart from the side of the base, and a thin thread passes through each hole, and then this simple method developed after the leather entered the packaging industry and began expanding its use, and then it became known as binding.

The skin of the Mus'haf under study is dark red, and has the same size as the pages, as it is 41 cm in length, 29 cm in width, and 10 cm in tongue. It is adorned with a navel or a lobed bowl inside it with branches, leaves and plant flowers, and the navel ends at each of its upper, lower and left end with an eight-petal rosette, hanging from each pendent rosette in the form of a goblet in the form of a sepals-shaped, decorated with vegetal motifs. From each rosette is a straight line up and down, with a rosette similar to the previous ones, and it ends with three rosettes that take a hierarchical shape (two veins surmounted by one).

As for the two sides of the navel, which is in the middle of the skin of the Mus'haf, there emerges from each side a straight line that ends in three rosettes that also have a pyramidal shape. Those navels and bowls are drawn inside a rectangle consisting of two straight lines, and the corners of the rectangle are adorned from the inside with three rosettes in each corner of an inverted pyramid shape (a rosette topped by two veins). The two straight lines forming a rectangle intersect in the four corners of the Mus'haf skin and form four squares decorating each similar square and those above and below the navel. Such decorations are repeated, consisting of straight lines and rosettes in pyramidal formations, and in bakariah on the skin of the Mus'haf. The decorations are all pressure applied.

In addition to the above, the study deals with the method of drawing words as well as the style of drawing letters.

### **Conclusion:**

The study revealed that a Moroccan Mus'haf written in Simplified Moroccan script which is being published for the first time. The researcher also explained the extent of the care and attention given by the people of the Islamic West to copying Mus'hafs and caring for them.

Rulers, scholars, and common people, as well as women, were equal in that. She also explained that the first appearance of the Arabic book in the Islamic West was in the city of Kairouan.

The study showed that the Mus'haf s took three forms in their external appearance: a shape close to the square, a shape in which the width increases the height (the horizontal Mus'haf), and a form that increases the height over the width (the vertical Mus'haf). This last form is the most used and common one, and it is the form of the Mus'haf under study. The study also showed that the measurements of the Mus'haf followed the virtuous ratio in the beauty of the rectangle, in which the width is two-thirds of the length. It also showed that the first appearance of paper (kaghad) in the lower Maghreb was during the era of the Aghlabids, i.e. the middle of the century (3 AH / 9 CE), but it spread and became widespread in Morocco and Andalusia in the century (5 AH / 11 AD). It also showed that the Mus'haf s in the Islamic West were first written on parchment, and although paper replaced parchment since the 5th century (AH / 11th AD), it nevertheless remained used in writing Mus'hafs alongside paper until the century (9 AH / 15 AD). It also became clear that the Moroccans were using locally made paper, in addition to using varieties of paper imported from abroad. Especially in some periods of weakness and turmoil.

The study showed that the ruler of the Mus'haf consists of thirteen lines. This number of lines per page does not agree with the virtuous ratio of the number of lines in the page of the Noble Mus'haf, which is fifteen lines. It also became clear that the Mus'haf was not numbered or has comments to indicate the order of the pages. It also showed that the Kufic script was used in writing in the Islamic West, especially in writing the Mus'haf. The use of Kufic script in writing the Mus'haf remained in the countries of the Maghreb and Andalusia until the century (AH 5th / AD 11th). She also explained that the Moroccan script was derived from the Kufic script, and that it began to appear in the 4th century AH / 10th AD, and since the 5th AH / 11AD century (AD), the "Moroccan Simple" script replaced the Kufic script in copying the Mus'haf.

The study showed that the pages of the Mus'haf were written in black ink, except for the chapter headings and their data, so they were written in golden ink. They also wrote the conclusion page with a dark red ink. As for the signs of the figure, they were drawn with red ink to distinguish them from the text of the Qur'an's words to facilitate the reading process. As for the hamza, it was executed with yellow ink. She explained the colors of the ink used in the Mus'haf under study and in the Mus'haf s of Morocco and Andalusia generally corresponding to the colors used by the people of Medina. It also clarified that the margins of the pages of the Mus'haf are free of any annotations, comments, or decorations, and that is due to the hatred of some clerics to the sweetening and gilding of the Holy Qur'an, on top of that the prevailing royal doctrine in the countries of the Maghreb and Andalusia.

The study showed that the Mus'haf s in general specialized in the specificity of drawing some of their words in a way that sometimes contradicts the rules of orthography, then the Moroccan Mus'haf s were specialized in the specificity of Warsh and Qaloon on Nafe's narration, and it is a narration that differs many times in pronouncing some letters and words to a degree that differs with the way they are drawn, while it is consistent at other times with the rest of the Mus'hafs of the Islamic world. This was explained in detail. It also showed the style of drawing letters in line with the Moroccan simplified script and its characteristics that are unique to some of them and in some other cases, they agree with the rest of the lines. She also explained the extent of the distinctiveness of the binding or travel industry in the Islamic West, as well as the



influence on the leather of the Moroccan Mus'hafs. She also explained that the century (AH 7th / AD 13th) was the height of the brilliance of manuscript industry in the Maghreb countries.

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