



Early Manuscripts of Quran Through Data of Hijazi Calligraphy and Archaeological Evidence

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Abstract

This research tackled the manuscripts of the early Quran (through the data of Hijazi calligraphy and archaeological evidence), reviewing the spelling phenomena that characterized Quran writing in close relation to the reality of Arabic writing. It also attempted to enlist the characteristics of calligraphy in early Quran copies as influenced by Nabataean script or what might be called early Arabic calligraphy (Hijazi calligraphy), comparing it with early Arabic inscriptions. Moreover, the study identified the relationship between the spelling system used in writing early Quran copies and the one used in early Arabic inscriptions, and attempted to conceive ways of identifying and dating the early Quran manuscripts preserved in regional and international libraries.

The study is mainly based on five copies of the Quran manuscripts preserved in international libraries and book houses; namely:

The Quran manuscript preserved in Berlin National Library (Berlin Quran), the Quran preserved in Birmingham University Library (Birmingham Quran), Tübingen University Library Quran (Tübingen Quran), the Quran preserved in the National Library in Paris (Paris Quran), and the Quran preserved in the British Library in London (London Quran).

This is in addition to a collection of stone inscriptions and early dated papyrus received.

The identification of the origin of Arabic calligraphy is significant for researchers of ancient Arabic inscriptions and of the Quran, whether in terms of the manuscripts or the drawings and other related sciences. Such identifications also enables identifying the characteristics of this calligraphy, especially the early ones with which the first Quran was written to explain those sciences and others, and to resolve the debate on the origin of the calligraphy with which the Quran in the era of the Prophet peace be upon him was written and copied in the era of the Caliphs, may Allah be pleased with them all.

There are many trends and theories in determining the origin of the Hijazi Arabic calligraphy with which the Quran was written. A researcher of early dated Arabic inscriptions can easily identify a well-established writing system that writers followed, no matter how well that system resulted in conformity between what is written and what is pronounced.

The study concluded with a set of findings and recommendations, the most important of which are:

- The study proved that the early Quran copies received (samples of study) were copied and written in soft Hijazi calligraphy.
- The study and the models of Quran manuscripts used proved the authenticity of the Holy Quran, despite the claims of Orientalists and skeptics.
- The study revealed that most of the tithing marks were later on added in the early Quran manuscripts after their copying.
- The study proved that among the main criteria that assist in dating the Quran manuscripts, especially the early ones, are their technical standards, as well as the linguistic standards in comparison with the cultural heritage, and then the radioactive carbon (C14) examination.

keywords: Manuscripts, Quran, Hijazi, Calligraphy, early Quran copies, Inscriptions.

Quran is the oldest book written in Arabic. Muslims believe that it has not been distorted or modified and that it is preserved by an oath from Allah Almighty, basing their assumption on the verse from Quran: (Indeed, it is We who sent down the Quran and indeed, We will be its guardian)⁽¹⁾. The Quran is one of the most copied or printed books by modern means, upon which many studies have been conducted. It has been translated into various languages of the world and may be the most widely used book, at least in Muslim countries where it is continually read.

Interest in studying the early Quran books or papers is not anew. Besides the efforts of Muslim scholars, Orientalists conducted several significant studies on Quranic text during the 19th and 20th centuries in particular, and their work continues to date. In fact, it was the Western Orientalists who first found remains of the early Quran and attempted to examine it⁽²⁾.

This study aims to identify the spelling phenomena that characterized the inscription of Quran in relation to the reality of Arabic writing⁽³⁾.

The study also attempts to identify the calligraphy attributes of early Quran that are affected by Nabataean writing or what can be called the early Arabic calligraphy (Hijazi calligraphy) as compared with early Arabic inscriptions. This will be done to answer the question: Is there a relationship between the spelling system used in the early Quran and

the spelling system used in early Arabic inscriptions?

Accordingly, it would be possible to conceive ways of identifying and dating early Quran manuscripts preserved in regional and international libraries.

Data and sources: The study is mainly based on five copies of the Quran manuscripts preserved in international libraries and book houses; namely:

The Quran manuscript preserved in Berlin National Library (Berlin Quran)⁽⁴⁾ (Fig.1), the Quran preserved in Birmingham University Library (Birmingham Quran) (Fig.2)⁽⁵⁾, Tübingen University Library Quran (Tübingen Quran)⁽⁶⁾ (Fig.3), the Quran

⁽⁴⁾ Includes 423 pages, the number of lines is around 24-25 lines per page, and the number of words per line is around 7-10 words. The words of Quran are written in black, and formalized in red. There is a clear intervention in the Quran with writings on some of its pages to clarify what was obliterated by temporal factors. It tends to be copied from the Quran sent by Uthman to the Levant, or from another copy of it. It likely dates back to at least the first century AH / 7 AD.

⁽⁵⁾ Copied in italic soft Hijazi and it seems that this Quran belongs to the Levant people, specifically from the reading of Abdullah bin Amer Al-Yahsbi Al-Shami (642-736 AD), for matching its reading and stops, as for example, Ibn Amer considers (Surah Al-Hajj 22: 42-44) only one verse. For more on this copy, check, for example, Alaa Eddin Badawi Mahmoud Muhammad Al-Khudari, Artistic Archaeological Study of the Quran of Birmingham University Library, Journal of the General Union of Arab Archaeologists, No. 18, Cairo, Safar 1438 AH / January 2017, pp. 494: 532.

http://vmr.bham.ac.uk/Collections/Mingana/Islamic_Arabic_1572b/table 1-4-2017.

⁽⁶⁾ It is an incomplete Quran (19.5 x 15.3 cm). It contains 77 papers (154 pages) with an average of 18-21 lines per page, representing approximately 25% of the text of Quran. According to the news of the University of Tübingen on November 10, 2014 the results of the analysis of that manuscript using carbon 14 (C14) showed that it dates back to the years (29-56 AH / 649-675 AD). In our view, we assume that this Quran was written in the Levant and may be copied from or related to the Quran sent by Uthman bin Affan may Allah be pleased with him to the Levant, for having closely checked its papers, it is noticed that the writing is far from the spelling of Mecca, Kufa and

⁽¹⁾ Surah Al Hijr, Verse 9.

⁽²⁾ For example but not limited to: The project Corpus Coranicum of the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities (2007-2024) is exploring the Qur'an from three different angles (<http://www.corpuscoranicum.de>); Powers, David S., Muhammad Is Not the Father of Any of Your Men, PENN-University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia. 2009.

⁽³⁾ The researchers thank Dr. Hamza Mohammed Asiri and Dr. Ahmed Helmy Ziada for their efforts in completing this study as described.

preserved in the National Library in Paris (Paris Quran)⁽⁷⁾ (Fig.5), and the Quran preserved in the British Library in London (London Quran)⁽⁸⁾ (Fig.4).

This is in addition to a collection of stone inscriptions and early dated papyrus received.

Study Literature Review:

The research topic intersects with all the studies that tackled Arabic calligraphy and its origin, types, development, theories, inscriptions, implementation methods, methodologies, materials implemented upon, manuscripts, manuscripts of early Quran, tombstones, and other previous related

Basra Quran. For more on this copy, check, for example, Max Weisweiler, *Verzeichnis der Arabischen Handschriften*, Leipzig, 1930, II, p.125. <https://uni-tuebingen.de/universitaet/aktuelles-und-publikationen/pressemitteilungen/newsfullview-pressemitteilungen/article/raritaet-entdeckt-koranhandschrift-stammt-aus-der-fruehzeit-des-islam.html> Qulaj, *The First Quran - A Study and Review of the Oldest Quran Received*, pp. 364-382.

⁽⁷⁾ This Quranic manuscript contains seventy pieces, in sizes of 24 x 33 cm, with approximately 21 to 28 lines, written with a thin, flat pen. It is likely that this manuscript was copied from the Quran that Uthman sent to the Levant, or from another copy of it, and was written by two writers in the late Umayyad period. For more information on this manuscript, check: De'roche, François, *La transmission écrite du Coran dans les débuts de l'islam*, p.26-27. Qulaj, *The First Quran - A Study and Review of the Oldest Quran Received*, pp. 329-343.

⁽⁸⁾ It is an incomplete Quran, which contains (121 papers), which represents about 60% of the Quranic text, with an average of 22-27 lines per page. It was published in 2001, and it seems to be a copy of the Quran sent to the Levant, or a copy of the Levant Quran itself, dating back to at least the 1st century AH/ the 7th century AD, precisely the end of it. For more information on this manuscript, check: De'roche, F.-Nosedá, S.N. (nşr.), *Sources de la transmission manuscrite du texte Coranique: les manuscrite de style Hiğazi*, volume1, Lesa, 1998; volume2, tome1, Lesa-Londres, 2009.

Dutton, Yasin, *some Notes on the British Library's Oldest Qur'an Manuscript'(Or.2165)"*, *Journal of Qur'anic Studies*, vol.6, issue1, Centre for Islamic Studies, SOAS, London, 2004. Tayyar Altı Qulaj, *The Holy Quran (The British Library in London), Study and Analysis*, Organization of Islamic Cooperation, Research Center for Islamic History, Arts and Culture (IRCICA), Istanbul, 1439 AH / 2017 AD.

studies that are part and parcel for the beginning of this study⁽⁹⁾.

The issue of the origin of Arabic calligraphy has attracted the attention of a number of scholars, historians and researchers, whether linguists or archaeologists, along with the Arabs and Orientalists interested in the sciences of Quran.

The study of Arabic calligraphy should be based on the direct observation and measurement of calligraphic models and data, in order to then deduce the rules of calligraphy, the characteristics of different methods, and its ways of development, since the reliance on theoretical and historical books alone does not lead to reliable results, for involving the researcher in the vagueness of theories, hypotheses and discussions⁽¹⁰⁾.

The identification of the origin of Arabic calligraphy is significant for researchers of ancient Arabic inscriptions and of the Quran, whether in terms of the manuscripts or the

⁽⁹⁾ These studies include, but are not limited to: Ghanim Qaddouri Hamad, *A Comparison between the Drawing of the Quran and Ancient Arabic Inscriptions*, *Al-Mawred Journal*, Iraqi Ministry of Culture and Information, Baghdad, Vol. 15, No. 4, 1986; Mushallah bin Kumikh Al-Muraikhi, *A New Presentation on the Origin of Arabic Letters in Light of New Archaeological Findings*, studies in archeology, Book II, among refereed academic research, Faculty of Tourism and Archeology, King Saud University, Riyadh, 1430 AH / 2009; Tayyar Altı Qulaj, *The First Quran - A Study and Review of the Oldest Quran Received*, Translation by Saleh Saadawi, Organization of Islamic Cooperation, Research Center for Islamic History, Arts and Culture, Istanbul, 1437 AH / 2016 AD. Ghabban, Ali ibn Ibrahim, *The inscription of Zuhayr, the oldest Islamic inscription (24 AH/AD 644-645), the rise of the Arabic script and the nature of the early Islamic state1*, Arab. arch. Printed in Singapore. All rights reserved, epig. 2008: 19: 209-236 (2008), De'roche, F.-Nosedá, S.N. (nşr.), *Sources de la transmission manuscrite du texte Coranique: les manuscrite de style Hiğazi*, volume1, Lesa, 1998; volume2, tome1, Lesa-Londres, 2009.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Al-Monjed, *Studies in the history of Arabic calligraphy*, p. 10.

drawings and other related sciences⁽¹¹⁾. Such identifications also enables identifying the characteristics of this calligraphy, especially the early ones with which the first Quran was written to explain those sciences and others, and to resolve the debate on the origin of the calligraphy with which the Quran in the era of the Prophet peace be upon him was written and copied in the era of the Caliphs, may Allah be pleased with them all.

There are many trends and theories⁽¹²⁾ in determining the origin of the Hijazi Arabic⁽¹³⁾ calligraphy with which the Quran was written. A researcher of early dated Arabic inscriptions can easily identify a well-established writing system that writers followed, no matter how well that system resulted in conformity between what is written and what is pronounced⁽¹⁴⁾.

⁽¹¹⁾ Adel Al-Alusi, *Arabic Calligraphy - its origins and development*, Ed. 1, Dar Al-Arabiya for Books, Cairo, 2008, p. 30; Ghanim Kaddouri Al-Hamad, *Review of a number of theories relating to the drawing of the Quran in light of ancient calligraphy*, a paper presented to the International Conference for the Development of Quranic Studies 6/4/1434 AH – 16/2/2013 AD, Chair of the Holy Quran and its Sciences, King Saud University, p. 9.

⁽¹²⁾ For more on information these theories check for example: Beatrice Grandler, *The History of Arabic calligraphy and writing from the Nabataeans to the beginnings of Islam*, translated by Sultan Maani and Ferdous Ajlouni, Petra, House of the Nabataeans, Amman, 2004.

⁽¹³⁾ It is a line in which the Qur'an was recorded, and its origin dates back to the Mecca and Medina lines derived from the previous lines of the Islamic era. When the caliphate headquarters moved from Medina to Kufa, he moved with them the Meccan and Medina lines to Basra and Kufa, where they knew there with the same name, and then called them a combined name, the line Al-Hijazi due to their move from Al-Hijaz. Ghabban, *Naqsh Zuhir*, pp. 11, 104.

⁽¹⁴⁾ For more information about it, check for example: Yahya Wahib al-Jubouri, *Calligraphy and writing in the Arab civilization*, p. 25; Saleh bin Ibrahim Hassan, *Arabic writing from inscriptions to manuscripts*, pp. 27-29.

Arabs before Islam were experts in writing⁽¹⁵⁾, and took the symbols of Arabic calligraphy from Nabataeans⁽¹⁶⁾. According to recent studies and findings, it is assumed that the real birth of Arabic letters was in the period between the first two centuries AD and perhaps a little earlier. Arabic writing developed in successive stages during the third to fifth centuries AD, and the stability of Arabic letters and their characteristics came with the sixth century AD.

However, the emergence of Quran during that period with such intellectual depth and eloquence means that there was a nation of excelling ability to record, understand, interpret and transfer its message, especially since Islam aimed to link Muslims with science through writing and recording⁽¹⁷⁾.

Arabic writings of Quran in its first phase were characterized by being free of form, points and diacritics, as well by deletion of some letters and increase in others, reversing letters, and a space between and merging of words.

In addition to the importance of this in the writing and copying of early Quran, it has important information on the type of calligraphy with which Osman Quran was written. It is the Hijazi calligraphy that prevailed in Mecca and dominated since pre-Islam. Recent findings and early Arab inscriptions have proved that it is unlikely that the letters, despite their assimilation, were bare of pointing until the Quran was pointed, and it was even stated that the

⁽¹⁵⁾ Mohsen Ftouni, *Encyclopedia of Arabic Calligraphy and Islamic Engraving*, Publications Company for Distribution and Publishing, p. 15

⁽¹⁶⁾ Abu al-Fath Othman ibn Jana (392 AH / 1002 AD), *The Secret of the Arab Industry*, Academic Books House, Cairo, 2000, Vol. 1, p. 46; Ramzi Baalbaki, *Arabic and Semitic writing*, House of science for millions, Beirut, 1981, p. 185; Saleh bin Ibrahim al-Hassan, *Arabic writing from inscriptions to the manuscripts*, p. 73.

⁽¹⁷⁾ Holy Quran: Al-Alaq, Verses 1-5.

Prophet's companions omitted the pointing from Quran, so if there was no pointing, omission would be untrue.

Indeed, the characteristics of writing generally tend to preserve the words forms that people are accustomed to, even if those words were modified. That is, the pronunciation of some letters changes, but the forms remain the same. The diversity of the phenomena of Quranic formation is clear and undeniable, reflecting the sole writing system in Hijaz that has been used in writing the Quran and other types of texts.

The study of the ancient Arabic inscriptions, both the pre-Islamic and what dates back to the first century AH, asserts that these inscriptions had the same writing characteristics with which the Quran was written and distinguished, including the deletion, addition, replacement and others. In other words, the Quran writers, may Allah bless them, used in writing the Quran what people used in their writings in Hijaz (Mecca and Medina), and that the Ottoman inscription adhered to the same writing features and characteristics of the age, and might even precede the emergence of those rules set by Arabic scholars in the second century AH⁽¹⁸⁾. This can be confirmed by reviewing the forms and drawings of the letters and words in the early Arabic inscriptions and the like in the early Quranic manuscripts, which conclusively prove that they were written in the Hijazi calligraphy⁽¹⁹⁾.

⁽¹⁸⁾ Kaddouri, Review of some theories relating to the form of the Quran, p. 28.

⁽¹⁹⁾ For more information on the characteristics of this calligraphy, see, for example, Ibn al-Nadim, the Index, p. 9; Ibrahim Gomaa, A Study of the Development of Kufic Writings on Stones in Egypt in the First Five Centuries with a Comparative Study of these Writings in the Islamic World, Dar Al-Fikr Al-Arabi, Cairo, 1969, p. 18; Muhammad Fahd Abdullah Alfa'r, The evolution of writings and inscriptions in the Hijaz, p. 99; Fawzi Salem Afifi, The Origin and Development of Arabic Calligraphy and its Cultural and Social

This is what François Diroush, the specialist in the manuscript of the Quran, attempted to refer to as the "Hijazi style"⁽²⁰⁾.

The spelling system in writing the early Quran and its equivalent in early Arabic inscriptions:

The Arabic writing found in early Arabic inscriptions provided a comprehensive model of Arabic spelling in its initial form before writing Quran. In fact, the subsequent development in Arabic writing did not fundamentally change that form, which clearly appeared in the writing of Quran since the age of Uthman bin Affan (may Allah bless him) to date.

Having compared the Arabic inscriptions, papyri and other early dated calligraphic data in terms of their form and content with the manuscripts of Quran upon which the study is based, the existence of common spelling phenomena between the writing of these Quran manuscripts and ancient Arabic inscriptions has been found (Fig.6-9); the most important of which: the omission of the 'a' in the middle of the word, while the feminine 't' was sometimes written 't' and at other times 'h'. Another feature found is the division of the final word in a sentence between the end of the line and the beginning of the following, and other features to be mentioned.

Thus, it can be acknowledged that the writing of Quran represents a major stage in the history of the Arabic writing that was used in its formation, bearing specific characteristics.

Role, Dar Al Ghareeb for Printing, Publishing and Distribution, Cairo, 1980, p. 81.

⁽²⁰⁾ François De'roche, & Sergio Nnoja Nosedá, Sources de La transmission Manuscrite du Texte coranique, 11/1, xiV_xix, Lesa, 2001.

The forms of alphabetical letters in the early Quran manuscripts as represented in the samples of study:

The types of fonts used in the writing of Quran varied through the ages, as well as the shapes of the letters at the beginning, middle, and end of the word. The following is a review of the shapes of each letter in the verses of the early Quran based on copying the study samples of Quran manuscripts. They are shown in and are compared with the collection of early dated stone inscriptions received (Fig.7-9), as well as with samples of early papyri (Fig.6).

The Letter ‘A’ (ا): The form of the letter ‘A’ in its separate case appeared straight in the Berlin Library Quran copy and its tail was pointed to the right⁽²¹⁾(Fig.1), while in the National Library in Paris and Birmingham Quran copies (Fig.5), it appeared straight with its vertex leaning to the right and its tail pointed to the right. In the British Library Quran copy (Fig.4), the separate ‘A’ appeared straight as well but was characterized by being thicker than that of the Berlin, the National Library and Birmingham copies (Fig.2, 5), with a slight tail leaning to the right, (Table No.1).

Having compared the shape of the ‘A’ in its separate form and the manner and method of its implementation in the copies of the manuscripts of Quran (samples of study) with the collection of early dated stone inscriptions received (Fig.7-9), it was noticed that the letter ‘A’ in the inscriptions dated before Hijra took a straight form leaning to the right with no tail. The inscriptions dated back to the first third of the first century AH / seventeenth century AD appeared in a straight upright form with a spear end on the

bottom. In fact, change in the form of the letter was observed since the second third of the first century AH / seventeenth century AD, in which it took a straight vertical form with a pointed tail to the right.

The connected letter ‘A’ in the Berlin State Library and the British Library copies appeared in a straight form connected through its tail to what precedes it (Fig.1,4). In the National Library of Paris Quran copy, the connected letter ‘A’ appeared straight with its vertex leaning to the right, while in the Quran manuscript of Birmingham, the vertex leniency towards the right was less than the former and with even less leniency in the Tübingen Quran copy (Fig.2).

Having compared the manner and method of writing the letter ‘a’ in its connected form in the copies of Quran (samples of study) with many stone inscriptions and early dated papyri (Fig.6-9), clear similarity was noticed in its manner and form being straight with a vertex leaning to the right (Table No.1).

The Letters ‘B’ (ب) and its counterparts ‘T and Th’ (ت-ث):

The letters ‘B’ and its counterparts were written separately in the copies of Quran (samples of study) in the form of a short straight vertical line extended above the surface level, which is the same form found on many of the early dated stone inscriptions received.

The initial connected letter ‘B’ and its counterparts were written in the manuscripts of Quran (samples of study) in the form of a straight vertical line, sometimes leaning towards the right or left connecting to what follows which is the same form of the stone inscriptions and early dated papyri (Fig.6-9), (Table No.1).

The middle connected letter ‘B’ and its counterparts were written both in the manuscripts of Quran (samples of study) and in many stone inscriptions and early dated

⁽²¹⁾ Head of the letter A: its head and the tail of the letter A, i.e. its lower end, and the tail in the round lines may be connected to others. Goma. A study of the development of Kufi inscriptions, p. 106.

papyri in the form of a straight vertical line connected to what precedes and follows and sometimes pointed. This was also the shape of the final connected 'B' written in the form of a rectangle with the bottom horizontally extending to the left with a pointed end, (Table No.1).

The Letters 'G' (ج) and its counterparts 'H and Kh' (ح-خ): The connected letter 'G' and its counterparts were written in initial position in the manuscripts of Quran (samples of study) in the form of a curved line from left to right cutting through the surface level with a sharp angle (Fig.1-5), which is the same form found on stone inscriptions and early dated papyri (Fig.6-9), (Table No.1).

The middle connected letter 'G' and its counterparts were written both in the manuscripts of Quran (samples of study) and in many stone inscriptions and early dated papyri in the form of a curved line from left to right cutting through the surface level with a sharp angle, extending below the surface level, (Table No.1).

The final connected letter 'G' and its counterparts were written in the manuscripts of Quran (samples of study) in two forms; the first with a curved line from left to right cutting through the surface level with a sharp angle, and the second with a straight line leaning to the top and rooted resembling the letter 'Y' appearing in some models, which is the form that was found in some early dates stone inscriptions, (Table No.1)..

The Letters 'D' (د) and its counterpart 'The' (ذ): The separate and connected letter 'D' and its counterpart were written in the copies of Quran (samples of study) in the same form of the extended 'K' but in a smaller size and without going below the surface, which is the same form found on stone inscriptions and early dated papyri, (Fig.1-9), (Table No.1).

The Letters 'R' (ر) and its counterpart 'Z' (ز): The separate and connected letter 'R' and its counterpart were written in the copies of Quran (samples of study) in the form of a line leaning to the right ending with a curve on the surface level, which is the same form found on many stone inscriptions and early dated papyri (Fig.1-9), (Table No.1).

The Letters 'C' (س) and its counterpart 'Sh' (ش): The final 'C' and its counterpart were written in the Quran manuscripts (samples of study) in the form of a head with three teeth of equal length⁽²²⁾ and a root below the surface level, which is the same form found on stone inscriptions and early dated papyri (Fig.1-9), (Table No.1).

The initial and middle positions 'C' and its counterpart were written in the copies (samples of study) in the form of three teeth of equal length, which is the same form found on stone inscriptions and early dated papyri.

The Letters 'S' (ص) and its counterpart 'Dh' (ض): The final separate 'S' and its counterpart were written in the Quran manuscripts (samples of study) in the form of two parallel horizontal lines; the first below one on the surface level and the second above the former with a root as that of the 'C', which is the same form found on stone inscriptions and early dated papyri (Fig.1-9), (Table No.1).

The initial and middle positions connected 'S' and its counterpart were written in the copies (samples of study) in the form of two parallel horizontal lines, and in some models with a simple root, which is the same form found on stone inscriptions and early dated papyri, (Fig.1-9), (Table No.1).

The Letters 'Ta' (ط) and its counterpart 'Tha' (ظ): The initial, middle, and final positions connected 'Ta' and its counterpart

⁽²²⁾ It is the rounded part of the descending letter on the level of flatness. Gomaa. A study of the development of Kufi inscriptions, p. 105.

were written in the Quran manuscripts (samples of study) in the same form of ‘S’, with a heading represented in the letter ‘A’, while the heading in the Quran copies of the National Library in Paris and of Birmingham was represented by an ‘A’ leaning to the right instead of straight. The initial, middle, and final connected ‘Ta’ with the straight ‘A’ appeared in the same form found on stone inscriptions and early dated papyri (Fig.1-9), (Table No.1).

The Letters ‘E’ (ع) and its counterpart ‘Gh’ (غ): The connected letter ‘E’ and its counterpart in initial position were written in the Quran manuscripts (samples of study) in the form of a flat line that extends through the curved line, which is the same form found on stone inscriptions and early papyri dated pre-Islam, at its beginning and during the Umayyad Era.

The middle ‘E’ and its counterpart were written in the Quran manuscripts (samples of study) as well as in the early dated stone inscriptions with an open top, while in final connected position, it was written in the form of an open head with an extended root (Fig.1-9), (Table No.1).

The Letters ‘F’ (ف) and ‘Q’ (ق): The connected ‘F’ and ‘Q’ in initial position were written in the Quran manuscripts (samples of study) as well as in several stone inscriptions and early dated papyri in the form of a round head and a root resembling that of the ‘W’. These letters, connected, appeared in middle position in the same models in the form of a circle on the surface line, while in separate final position, they were written in the form of the ‘F’ head and the ‘Y’ root⁽²³⁾ (Fig.1-9), (Table No.1).

The Letter ‘K’ (ك): The letter ‘K’ was written in initial, middle, and final positions in the Quran manuscripts (samples of study) as well

⁽²³⁾ ‘Y’ root: The incomplete broken ‘Y’. Goma. A study of the development of Kufi inscriptions, p.110.

as in several stone inscriptions and early dated papyri in a form resembling the ‘D’ with an extended length format, that is, in the Quran copies it appeared in the form of a curve leaning above the letter (Table No.1).

The Letter ‘L’ (ل): The separate and connected letter ‘L’ in final position was written in the Quran manuscripts (samples of study) as well as in several stone inscriptions and early dated papyri in the form of the straight ‘A’ but with a tail leaning to the left in contrast to the right leaning ‘A’ tail, with a truncated root below the surface level. In initial and middle positions, it appeared in the same models in the form of a straight ‘A’ with a left-leaning tail (Fig.1-9), (Table No.1).

The Letter ‘M’ (م): The connected letter ‘M’ was written in initial, middle, and final positions in the Quran manuscripts (samples of study) in the form of a circle with a straight line on the surface level, and without a line on the surface level in some words in the Quran copies of the National Library in Paris, the British Library and Birmingham, which was the same form found on stone inscriptions and early dated papyri (Fig.1-9), (Table No.1).

The Letter ‘N’ (ن): The separate and connected ‘N’ in final position was written in the Quran manuscripts (samples of study) as well as in several stone inscriptions and early dated papyri in a form resembling the ‘R’ with a bending curve⁽²⁴⁾, from left to right extending down with a straight line below the surface level and a short extension to the left; while the connected ‘N’ in initial and middle positions resembled the ‘B’ (Fig.1-9), (Table No.1).

The Letter ‘H’ (هـ): The connected ‘H’ in initial and middle positions was written in the

⁽²⁴⁾ Bending: from bend, which is moving or extending the pen tip non-excessively. Ibrahim Goma. A study of the development of Kufi inscriptions, p. 104.

Quran manuscripts (samples of study) as well as in several stone inscriptions and early dated papyri in the form of an extended straight line and an arch that does not reach the line's top, split with the pen's tip. In final position, it appeared "tingled" that is defaced (Fig.1-9), (Table No.1).

The Letter 'W' (و): The separate and connected 'W' in final position was written in the Quran manuscripts (samples of study) as well as in several stone inscriptions and early dated papyri in the form of a defaced circle head with a bending truncated root resembling the 'R' below the surface level (Fig.1-9), (Table No.1).

The Letter 'L A' (لا): The connected 'L A' was written in the Quran manuscripts (samples of study) as well as in several stone inscriptions and early dated papyri in the form of a small equilateral triangle base on the surface level with its equal sides extending in straight lines or parallel arches (Fig.1-9), (Table No.1).

The Letter 'Y' (ي): The connected and separate 'Y' was written in a backward form in some words in the Quran manuscripts (samples of study), while in other words it was written in a leaning line and an arched one with a root resembling that of the 'Q', which were the same two forms found on the early dated stone inscriptions received. The connected 'Y' in initial and middle positions was written in the form of the 'B' (Fig.1-9), (Table No.1).

Through the previous review and artistic analysis of the method of writing letters in the copies of Quran (samples of study) as compared with the dated stone inscriptions received so far, as well as with models of dated papyri, it has been realized that these manuscripts of Quran are copied in simple Hijazi calligraphy, and that the differences observed in the way some letters are written in the verses of those manuscripts are minor

ones resulting from the fact that they were individually written in a rudimentary manual manner, and most probably in different geographical areas. Despite such minor differences, consistency is found in the overall style, form and implementation method of writing letters. This confirms that the Hijazi calligraphy was the official and approved one for writing the Quran at least until the end of the first century AH corresponding to the middle of the second century AH, not only within Hijaz or the Arabian Peninsula, but also in various Islamic regions.

There is also clear assimilation between the method of writing Arabic letters in the early Quran manuscripts (samples of study) and the method of implementing and writing Arabic letters on the early dated stone inscriptions received, most of which were found in Hijaz, with consideration to the differences between them that naturally resulted from the material on which these writings were implemented varying between parchment and stone and from the tool used in the implementation of both (Fig.1-9), (Table No.1).

It is also noticed that the Hamza did not appear in the first Quran copies and manuscripts under study, for its addition to some of the Quran words took place at a later stage of writing⁽²⁵⁾.

Strong assimilation is also found between some letters, especially at the end of words, for the writers of manuscripts (samples of study) distinguished some of these letters to facilitate reading, which include, but are not

⁽²⁵⁾ On Al-Hamza, its placements and provisions, see: Al-Dani (Abu Amr Othman bin Said died 444 AH), Al-Moqana' fi ma'refat marsoum al-Masahef ahl al-Amsar, study and review by Nora bint Hassan Fahd al-Humaid, educational messages series (16), ed. 1, House of Tadmriya, Riyadh, 1431 AH / 2010 AD , pp. 220-223.

limited to: the letters 'K' for 'D' and 'Q' for 'F'.

In fact, it has been noticed that the 'K' neck is written in initial or middle position short and small, in order to distinguish the letter 'K' at the end of words from the letters 'D' or 'The' because of the similarity of these letters. That is, it has been realized that the letter 'K' at the beginning or middle of the word is written connected to the letter that follows, while 'D' or 'The' are separate. This characteristic slowly disappeared with the emergence and use of letters' pointing and the evolution of writing letters. It is also noted that the letter 'Q' at the end of the word is distinguished from the 'F' with a tail similar to that of the 'Y'.

It is also noted that the manuscripts (samples of study) do not have full diacritics and pointing, and that they vary in the verses they include and diacritic and pointed letters, which may affect the method of reading the disputed words, for some words may be void of diacritics or with partial diacritics that does not facilitate determining the reading method. This may lead to several readings with the difference and overlap in some semantic tags, since some words include the diacritics invented by al-Kahlil al-Farahidi. For example, the word (Etham) (bones) in Surah al-Forqan in Tubingen Quran is written with kasrah under 'E' according to Nafei's reading, while it comes in Surah al-Mo'menin in the same Quran copy with fathah, in the singular reading (Athm) according to Abu Bakr bin Assem and ibn Amer. Also, the word (Tanbato) (grows) in Surah al-Forqan is written with fathah on 'B' according to Nafei's reading, while in Surah al-Mo'menin in the same Quran copy, it comes with a kasrah, according to ibn Kathir and abi Amr.

Thus, some Quran copies were formed or pointed in two readings or more. Although

al-Danny denies combining different readings in one copy of Quran, this has occurred in many old manuscripts⁽²⁶⁾ and bin al-Munadi said that this is possible, provided that the indication of the colors used in the references to those readings is identified⁽²⁷⁾.

Methods of Dating Quran Manuscripts:

It is difficult - today - to find a complete dated Quran copy written in the first or second century AH, with the name of its copier. Moreover, data on the first Quran is indecisive for it seems to have been lost in the midst of disasters and events such as wars and fires, or even faded in time for its visitors used to tear apart one or two of its pages for the sake of blessing⁽²⁸⁾.

It is evident that there were a set of fixed forms in these early Quran copies upon which the five holy companions who were assigned to copy the Quran agreed to depend, including standardized measurements of the parchment, type and color of sheets, as well as the margins or blanks left at the top, bottom and each side of the pages. It is also evident that the types of ink and pens and their tip width have been agreed upon, along with the signs to be put separating verses and at the end of each surah. This also applies to the number of lines in each page and the average number of words per line. All these and others were essential organizational

⁽²⁶⁾ In fact, it is difficult to determine the reading in these old copies of Quran as a result of the lack of regularity in the forming of all the disputed words in many of these Qur'an copies, in addition to the insufficient sources on the readings of those readers whose methods were followed in forming these copies of Quran.

⁽²⁷⁾ Ghanem Kaddouri Al-Hamad, Quranic readings in the pointed Quran - exploration and authentication, 8th Conference, Quran from inspiration to writing, Center for Islamic Manuscripts Studies, Al-Furqan Foundation, Istanbul, 26-27 / 11/2017, ed. 1, Al-Furqan Foundation for Islamic Heritage, Conference Series, 1440 AH / 2018 AD, p. 251.

⁽²⁸⁾ Qulaj, The First Quran Copies - A Study and Review of the Oldest Quran Received, p. 67.

matters to be agreed upon before starting copying the Holy Quran.

It is also important to perceive the expectation that some of the pages of these Quran copies have been changed for one reason or another, either for damage or loss, and then re-written and added the such copies, either in consecutive periods or even later, although the former possibility seems more logical for the consistency in the features and characteristics of all the papers of the Quran copies.

The Quran copies under study are characterized by being written in elegant letters reflecting clear development, which differs from the calligraphy used in the first stage when the Quran copies attributed to Uthman (may Allah bless him) (23-35 AH / 644-656 AD) were written⁽²⁹⁾, entitled the Ottoman Quran in reference to Uthman's order to copy it and to his caliphate. They were written on parchment, and were characterized by right angles, and by being free of distinction signs between similar letters, of declension and i'jam symbols, and of separating signs between the verses or those distinguishing between tithing and quintile sections and parts⁽³⁰⁾.

Dating these Quran copies may be perceived in one of two ways:

⁽²⁹⁾ Omar Hemdan, Ottoman Quran Project: A New Reading in Determining its Date and Number of Copies, Eighth Conference, Quran from Inspiration to Copying, Center for Islamic Manuscripts Studies, Al-Furqan Foundation, Istanbul, 26-27 / 11/2017, ed. 1, Al-Furqan Foundation for Islamic Heritage, Conference Series, 1440H / 2018AD, p. 24.

⁽³⁰⁾ Tayyar Altı Qulaj, the Quran attributed to Uthman ibn Affan, may Allah bless him (copy of the Qubi Saray Brick Museum), ed. 1, Organization of the Islamic Conference, Research Center for Islamic History, Arts and Culture, Istanbul, 1428 AH / 2007 AD, p. 9.

a- Through the forms of the letters written therein:

Distinct features characterized how letters were written in early Quran manuscripts⁽³¹⁾, which can be compared with the accurate description of the forms of Arabic letters in the content of the Arabic sources, as well as the forms in early inscriptions on various materials such as papyrus, stones, Islamic and non-Islamic numismatics, and others, to clearly identify the dates of those Quran copies.

b- Through the use of radioactive carbon (carbon 14):

It is one of the most common methods nowadays and considered by some the most accurate method used to date or determine the chronological age of those pieces containing residues of organic materials or carbon.

Here, it must emphasized that the use of carbon 14 does not provide an accurate date in identifying the samples under study when compared to the first method in dating, which depends on comparing the forms and methods of writing the letters in these samples with the like in the content of other sources or those dated and implemented on different materials, for radiocarbon testing is often given an error rate of 50 to 100 years⁽³²⁾.

The major and fundamental issue for scientists adopting the carbon test (C14) in dating the Quran parchments is quite evident in the different dates obtained by various laboratories in analyzing a single sample. Despite the accuracy of its results, reaching

⁽³¹⁾ For more on major features of Quran manuscripts, see for example: Martin Lings, The Quranic Art of Calligraphy and Illumination, first published, 1976, published and produced by the world of islam festival Trust, filmset and printed in England by wester ham press ltd, Westerham, kent.

⁽³²⁾ Déroche, La transmission écrite du Coran, p.134-135.

about 95.4%, which indicates a high probability of accurate dating of modern parchment, radiological dating remains an inaccurate science and of unreliable results for the inconsistent results obtained from different laboratories despite applying the same technique to the same sample.

Consequently, the recognition of the decisiveness of the C14 carbon test and the validity of its results is not based on an accurate scientific result, nor is it entirely certain, but on mere hypothesis and intuition, if not on ultimate speculation and probability⁽³³⁾.

In fact, the manuscripts (samples of study) do not include the Quran copy of Uthman (may Allah bless him), nor one of the copies sent to the lands, for it is known that Uthman's Quran copies are not pointed nor formed, and are void of quintile and tithing signs – without separators between verses, for these features were added in subsequent Quran copies. For instance, different variations were used to differentiate similar letters and light lines leaning to the left or right were written in a different color (red) from the ink color used in writing the Quran, which is Abi al-Usood al-Doa'ly's forming method. Also, colored signs were found for separation and stops repeated after each five verses, and bigger ones after each ten verses. After each hundred verses, the word (hundred) was written in geometric form and (two hundred) after each two hundred verses, while in some copies the writer separated between verses with a decorative space. All this evidence and other details demonstrate

that none of the samples of study are originally Ottoman Quran copies.

Dating Attempts of Quran Copies (samples of study):

Although it is difficult to attribute any of the Quran copies under study to Mecca or Medina, it is approved that they were copied in Hijazi calligraphy in spirit and form.

There is also a set of evidence proving that none of the Quran copies under study is the Quran that was read by Caliph Uthman bin Affan (may Allah bless him) when he martyred, nor did he write it himself, nor is it one of those copies sent to the lands.

It is known that the Uthman's Quran copies did not include pointing and diacritics, nor did they include the quintile and tithing signs or other different forms that separate the verses. In fact, there is consensus on this in all sources, for these features were added when needed. They began to be written in the new Quran copies since the beginning forming done by Abu al-Aswad al-Do'ali (d. 69 AH / 688 AD), in which pointing was used as a declension indicator. Pointing continued to distinguish between similar letters, followed by placing the quintile and tithing signs after each five and ten verses⁽³⁴⁾.

In the Quran copies (samples of study), it is noted that there are signs in the form of circular breaks (stop signs) in colored ink between verses. Also, at the end of each five verses, a larger sign is observed, and an even larger one at the end of each ten verses (quintile and tithing signs). In the Berlin Quran copy, large circular points are used in the same ink color of the verses surrounded by a disconnected pointed circle in a different

color separating verses () , and sometimes this sign comes in the form of a hollow circle

⁽³³⁾ Qasim al-Samarrai, The accuracy of the carbon test (C14) in dating Quranic parchment and its relation to rituals, the eighth conference, the Quran from inspiration to copying, Center for Islamic Manuscripts Studies, Al-Furqan Foundation, Istanbul, 26-27 / 11/2017, ed. 1, Al-Furqan Heritage Foundation Islamic Conference Series, 1440 AH / 2018 AD, pp. 613-618.

⁽³⁴⁾ Al-Dani, al-Mohakem, p. 2-9.

or almond in different color in the middle of a square in another color ().

In Birmingham, more than one way of separating verses is realized. Sometimes a five-point irregular circle is found () , at times, six or four points are regularly distributed based on two adjacent points ()

(, and at other times a small hollow circle surrounded by another in a different color is used, in similarity with the Berlin Quran copy, but on a smaller scale ().The Birmingham Quran copy is distinguished by having three horizontal and vertical wavy lines with an ink color different from the one used in writing to separate between verses)

(, and a horizontal shape resembling a cypress tree is used as a branching line from which small lines extend. In the Tübingen Quran copy, there are stop signs at the end of verses. Such stops came in the form of three

lines generally set on top of each other () , and sometimes took a triangular form. There are also stop signs in the form of two lines instead of three. Circular signs of tithing were also drawn in red and black ink at the

end of each ten verses (). It decisively seems that these signs in particular were placed in the Quran copies later, for there are not enough spaces to put these signs at the end of the verses and they seem to have been crammed later⁽³⁵⁾.

While the separators between the verses in the Quran copy preserved in the National Library in Paris appear in six points, either organized in an irregular or in a regular circle

in the form of a pair of points followed by the other and so on () ,or three points put on top of each other vertically. Sometimes a small diagonal line surrounded by a pointed

circle is also used to separate verses () in the same writing ink color in the parchments. It is noticed that the writer of this Quran copy left a one line gap between each surah without writing their titles, leaving a space for the quintile and tithing signs, and put two or three rows of fathah or kasrah symbols on top of each other at the end of

each verse ().In the surahs with more than one hundred verses, the writer placed a different sign at the end of each hundred verses. These signs placed in the form of rows on top of each other may sometimes be found in the form of three holes and two rows⁽³⁶⁾, while circular shapes were also used ().

In the Quran copy of the British Library in London, the surahs' titles and the number of verses are written in red. The stop signs at the end of verses consisted of three short lines placed on top of each other in two rows () , along with tithing colored signs ()

(). Also, a sign similar to the letter 'H' is used to indicate the end of a hundred verses, especially in the surah that include more than a hundred verses, and sometimes the word (hundred) is written next to that sign. It should be noted that these tithing signs were later on added to the Quran copy, for the font is different and no spaces were left to write some of the beginnings of surahs and to put some tithing signs. It also noticed that the Quran copy does not contain diacritics, yet,

⁽³⁵⁾ Qulaj, The First Quran - A Study and Review of the Oldest Quran Received, p. 382.

⁽³⁶⁾ Qulaj, The First Quran - A Study and Review of the Oldest Quran Received, p. 335.

there is pointing in some places in the form of short lines to distinguish between similar letters, resembling the fathah and kasrah symbols used nowadays. The short light leaning lines used are indicators of the pointing distinguishing between similar letters, and which are obvious on some letters.

The use of pointing in the Quran manuscripts (samples of study) is found in red ink, which is different in color from that of writing, indicating the diacritics on some letters, in consistency with the method adopted by Abu al-Aswad al-Da'ali (d. 69 AH / 688 AD)⁽³⁷⁾.

It is also evident that the early Quran copies were devoid of decorative elements for the adoption of the Ottoman Quran model that was sent to the lands and became a reference for the writing of Quran, forming the basis for the first phase. At a later stage, the elements of geometric and floral decoration began to be introduced in the form of surahs and verses separators. The surahs separators began to be drawn in bars in between, while the verses were separated by small circles, each carrying certain decorative elements in various colors⁽³⁸⁾.

In addition, by closely observing the shapes and decorations of the separators between surahs and verses in the Quran copies under study, it is realized that these are early models that contain elements of Islamic decoration at its early development.

Also, these Quran copies include examples of evident effects of arts preceding the Islamic, which were found in sources of Islamic art, such as the Byzantine art as reflected in the use of intersecting lines and early decorative elements that then evolved.

These separators in shape varied between single or group circular defaced points, regular or irregular, hollow circle forms, solid circles, non-connected pointed circle forms, circles filled with and surrounded by points, in addition to drawing square or rectangular shapes, horizontal wavy lines, and a horizontal line form from which small lines resemble a cypress tree. These separators have reached an advanced stage in the Quran manuscripts under study in the Tübingen Quran copy, in which clear sophisticated floral decoration is found consisting of twisted plant branches with leaves and flowers, horizontally separating verses with almond shapes and vertical geometric lines at the beginning and end of the decoration.

⁽³⁷⁾ For more information, see for example: Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn al-Qasim al-Anbari, *Clarifying stops and beginnings*, edited by Mohiuddin Abdul Rahman, publications of the Arabic Language Academy in Damascus, Damascus, 1391 AH / 1971 AD, vol. 1, pp. 40-41.

⁽³⁸⁾ Tayyar Altı Qulaj, the Quran attributed to Uthman ibn Affan, may Allah bless him (copy of the Qubi Saray Brick Museum), ed. 1, Organization of the Islamic Conference, Research Center for Islamic History, Arts and Culture, Istanbul, 1428 AH / 2007 AD, p. 11.



Tübingen Quran copy - the separation between Surat Al-Kahf and Surat Maryam

In another position, this floral decoration comes in the form of a vase in horizontal position, from which the plant emerges through a geometric shape of a set of rectangles that contracts as it extends upward.

According to the above data and observations on the form, i'jam, shapes, and the method and form of calligraphy, these Quran copies were not written later than the era in which the form and pointing were added to the Quran. Putting into consideration that the process of adding pointed diacritics in Quran copies was initiated by Abu al-Aswad al-Du'ali, and that the process of pointing to distinguish between similar letters was done by Nasr bin Asim (d. 89AH/708 AD) and Yahya bin Ya'mor (d. 90AH/ 708 AD), it can be said that these Quran copies were written in the second half of the first century or the first half of the second century AH.

Here, it can be stated that all the Quran manuscripts received so far (samples of study) are from the earliest ages of Islam, regardless of the simple spelling differences and omissions done by its writers in comparison to the Quran copies read today, which have been copied in diverse geographic areas and by writers who have not seen each other. The content of such copies is the same even if they differ in their papers, parchments, sizes and physical

composition and despite the variation in the number of lines per page⁽³⁹⁾.

Taking into account that the history of the copy of the Tübingen Koran, which was made using the radioactive isotope of carbon 14 (C14), concluded that it dates back to the date between the years (29-56 AH / 649-675 m), according to technical studies done on the manuscripts in question. The copy of the Tübingen, which ended in the existence of great convergence and similarity between them, the rest of the Koran can be dated a contemporary period of the Tübingen Koran, until a coupon test (C14)⁽⁴⁰⁾.

Considering the spelling differences in those Quran copies and the ones in Uthman's Quran or the Ottoman version, as well as the omissions made by the writers in particular, it will be sufficient to prove the invalidity of claiming the attribution of any of these Quran copies to Uthman (may Allah bless him). The truth is also that all these Quran copies contain a number of errors,

⁽³⁹⁾ Tayyar Alti Qulaj, *The First Quran - A Study and Review of the Oldest Quran Received*, Translation by Saleh Saadawi, Organization of Islamic Cooperation, Research Center for Islamic History, Arts and Culture, Istanbul, 1437 AH / 2016 AD, p. 28-29.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ <https://uni-tuebingen.de/universitaet/aktuelles-und-publikationen/pressemitteilungen/newsfullview-pressemitteilungen/article/raritaet-entdeckt-koranhandschrift-stammt-aus-der-fruehzeit-des-islam.html>

even if they are few, for it is natural for such long texts written by human hand to include such omissions. Yet, when the text is written by a responsible body and subjected to reviewing, it is obvious that such errors will not be evident, especially after the companions' approval. It is clear that the kind of minor mistakes found reflect that these Quran copies under study were the result of individual efforts, or that they were written upon the request of the ruler in the reigns following the reign of Uthman ibn Affan (may Allah bless him), and they might not have been reviewed or reviewed by a responsible body or experienced writers⁽⁴¹⁾.

Conclusion, Findings, and Recommendations:

This research tackled the manuscripts of the early Quran (through the data of Hijazi calligraphy and archaeological evidence), reviewing the spelling phenomena that characterized Quran writing in close relation to the reality of Arabic writing. It also attempted to enlist the characteristics of calligraphy in early Quran copies as influenced by Nabataean script or what might be called early Arabic calligraphy (Hijazi calligraphy), comparing it with early Arabic inscriptions. Moreover, the study identified the relationship between the spelling system used in writing early Quran copies and the one used in early Arabic inscriptions, and attempted to conceive ways of identifying and dating the early Quran manuscripts preserved in regional and international libraries. The study concluded with a set of findings and recommendations, the most important of which are:

- The northern Hijazi calligraphy in which the Qur'an was written is related to the group of calligraphies that prevailed in the northern Arabian Peninsula and the Levant,

evolving from the Nabataean calligraphy within the fourth century AD.

- The study proved that the early Quran copies received (samples of study) were copied and written in soft Hijazi calligraphy.

- The study and the models of Quran manuscripts used proved the authenticity of the Holy Quran, despite the claims of Orientalists and skeptics.

- The study identified that the main criteria that assist in dating Quran manuscripts, especially the early ones through the technical standards, as the calligraphy used, the presence or absence of i'jam, and the presence of decoration and verses' numbering, among other criteria.

- The study proved that despite the presence of some minor spelling errors or omissions in a number of manuscripts, this did not affect the meaning.

- The study proved that the incompleteness of some of the Quran manuscripts is not a reason for questioning the authenticity of the Quranic text in such manuscripts, especially that the contents of the surahs and verses are correct and consistent with today's Quran.

- The study revealed that most of the tithing marks were later on added in the early Quran manuscripts after their copying.

- The study proved that among the main criteria that assist in dating the Quran manuscripts, especially the early ones, are their technical standards, as well as the linguistic standards in comparison with the cultural heritage, and then the radioactive carbon (C14) examination.

- The study recommends reviewing the scientific method for the study and dating of Quran manuscripts in accordance with a set of technical standards in the first place.

⁽⁴¹⁾ Qulaj, *The First Quran - A Study and Review of the Oldest Quran Received*, p. 33.

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http://vmr.bham.ac.uk/Collections/Mingana/IsLAMic_Arabic_1572b/table 1-4-2017.



(Fig.4)

Mushaf of The British Library, Surah Al-A'raf, Verse 42: 53



(Fig.5)

Mushaf of The National Library of Paris, Surah Al-Imran, verse 13:24

سما الله ان حمر الى حقه لثما ما احد عبد الله
 ام حادوا حبه من الخبز من اهنرا خفا
 من خلفه ندى انرا نو عدا لا صعد من حليله / صفر ٢١ / نو قد الا كند حمسار شناه
 من الخبز و خمس عسده ساه اخذى انخذ لها اصبت سمنه و حشيه و سلاه منى
 نتهل حمدى الاولى من منه اسرو عسده و كند ام حادوا

(Fig.6)

Papyrus inscription Ahnasiya 22 AH / 643 AD

انا ذلهد كسد ذ من نو و
 و حنتو نر
 سماء الله
 عسده سمنه اد بلع

(Fig.7)

Inscription Zuhair 24 AH / 645 AD

هذا السك لستك الله معونه
يامع المومنين عبد الله بن محمد
ياخذ الله اسنة تم وخصنا
للمومنين وبنه وانكوه و منع
لومنين لمكاتب عمه و بن حنار



(Fig.8)

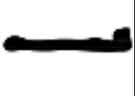
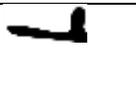
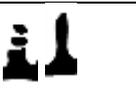
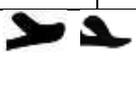
Inscription Taif 58 AH / 678 AD

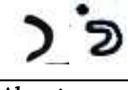
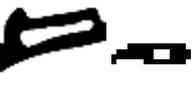
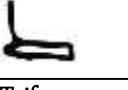
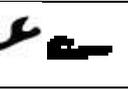
بسم الله اعمر
لمحمد بن ابراهيم
بن ابي موسى بن ابي
هذ بن ابي موسى
بن ابي موسى بن ابي
موسى بن ابي موسى
بن ابي موسى بن ابي
موسى بن ابي موسى



(Fig.9) The inscription of Muhammad Ibrahim 120 AH / 738 AD

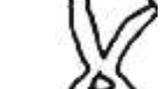
Early Manuscripts of Quran Through Data of Hijazi Calligraphy and Archaeological Evidence

Inscriptions dated to the 2nd century / AD 8th century			Mushaf of Tübingen	Mushaf of Birmingham	Mushaf of The British Library	Mushaf of The National Library of Paris	Mushaf of Berlin	The letters
Taif	Al - Hajri	Har ran						الألف في حالتها المفردة (A) in its individual case
								الألف بالحالة المتصلة (A) in its related state
Al Rayyan			Ahnasia					
Al - Hajri								الباء وأختها المفردة المتبينة (B) and her single sister ended
								
Al - Hajri	Zuhair	Ahnasia						متطرفة الباء مبتدأة متصلة مبسطة (B) Beginner extreme simplified connected
								
Taif	Al - Hajri							متصلة الباء متوسطة (B) Medium connected
								
Al - Hajri								متصلة الباء متبينة (B) ended connected
								
Taif	Al - Hajri	Ahnasia						الجيم وأختاه بالحالة مبتدأة متصلة (G) and his sister in the case beginner connected
								
Taif	Ahnasia							الجيم وأختاه بالحالة متوسطة متصلة (G) and his sister in an intermediate connected state
								
Sobeih								الجيم وأختاه بالحالة متبينة
								

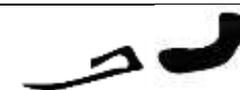
							(G) and his sister finished
Al - Hajri	Ahnasia						النال وأختها (D) and her sister
							
Al - Hajri	Zuhair						الراء وأختها (R) and her sister
							
Ahnasia							السين وأختها منتهية مفردة (S) and her sister finished single
							
Al - Hajri	Ahnasia						السين وأختها مبتدأة ومتوسطة متصلة (S) and her sister beginner and intermediate connected
							
aread	Aas						الصاد وأختها منتهية (S) and her sister finished
							
Taif	Ahnasia						الصاد وأختها مبتدأة ومتوسطة متصلة (S) and her sister beginner and intermediate connected
							
EL-abaid	Ahnasia						الطاء وأختها مبتدأة متصلة ومتوسطة (T) and her sister beginner and intermediate connected
							
Al Rayyan							متصلة الطاء وأختها منتهية (T) and her sister finished connected
							
Taif	Ahnasia						العين وأختها مبتدأة متصلة (E) and her sister beginner connected
							

Early Manuscripts of Quran Through Data of Hijazi Calligraphy and Archaeological Evidence

Taif	Al - Hajri						العين وأختها متوسطة متصلة (E) and her sister medium connected
Taif							العين وأختها منتهية (E) and her sister finished
Al - Hajri	Ahnasia						الفاء والقاف مبتدأة متصلة (F) and (K) beginner connected
Al - Hajri	Ahnasia						الفاء والقاف متوسطة متصلة (F) and (K) Connected medium
Sobeih							الفاء والقاف منتهية (F) and (K) Finished
Al - Hajri	Ahnasia						الكاف مبتدأة متصلة (K) beginner connected
EL-abaid							اللام مفردة منتهية (L) Single finished
Al - Hajri							اللام مبتدأة متصلة (L) Beginner connected
Al - Hajri							المتوسطة المتصلة اللام (L) Connected medium

Al - Hajri							منتبهة متصلة اللام (L) Finished connected
Taif	Al - Hajri						ومتوسطة الميم مبتدأة متصلة (M) beginner and medium connected
Taif	Al - Hajri						الميم منتبهة (M) Finished
Taif	Al - Hajri						النون منتبهة (N) Finished
Taif	Al - Hajri						النون مبتدأة ومتوسطة (N) Beginner and medium
Taif	Al - Hajri						الهاء المبتدأة والمتوسطة (H) Beginner and Intermediate
Al - Hajri							الهاء منتبهة (H) Finished
Taif	Al - Hajri						الواو (W)
Al - Hajri							اللام ألف (LA)
Al - Hajri	Al - Hajri						متصلة منتبهة الياء

Early Manuscripts of Quran Through Data of Hijazi Calligraphy and Archaeological Evidence

								(Y) Finished connected
Al - Hajri								الياء منتهية مفردة (Y) Single ended
								
Taif	Al - Hajri	Ahnasia						ومتوسطة الياء مبتدأة متصلة (Y) Beginner and intermediate connected
								

(Table No.1) Table of forms of letters in the Koran subject study and inscriptions and early papyrus.

مخطوطات المصاحف المبكرة

(من خلال معطيات الخط الحجازي والشواهد الأثرية)

(¹) أ.د. عدنان بن محمد بن فايز الحارثي الشريف؛ (²) أ.د. ياسر اسماعيل عبدالسلام صالح

(¹) أستاذ بجامعة أم القرى؛ (²) أستاذ بجامعة القاهرة والطائف

الملخص:

تتاول هذا البحث مخطوطات المصاحف المبكرة (من خلال معطيات الخط الحجازي والشواهد الأثرية)، واستعرضت الظواهر الإملائية التي تميز بها رسم المصحف على نحو أكثر صلة بواقع الكتابة العربية، كما حاولت حصر سمات خطوط المصاحف المبكرة المتأثرة بالكتابة النبطية أو ما يمكن أن نطلق عليه الخط العربي المبكر (الخط الحجازي)، ومقارنتها بمثيلاتها بالنقوش العربية المبكرة، وأوضحت تلك العلاقة بين النظام الإملائي المستعمل في رسم المصاحف المبكرة، والنظام الإملائي المستخدم في النقوش العربية المبكرة، وحاولت الدراسة وضع تصور لطرق تعيين وتأريخ المخطوطات المصحفية المبكرة المحفوظة في المكتبات الإقليمية والدولية.

وقد اعتمدت الدراسة على مجموعة من الأدوات والصادر، تعتمد في المقام الأول على خمسة نسخ لمصاحف مخطوطة محفوظة في المكتبات ودور الكتب العالمية وهي: المصحف المخطوط المحفوظ في مكتبة برلين الوطنية (مصحف برلين)، والمصحف المحفوظ في مكتبة جامعة برمنجهام (مصحف برمنجهام)، ومصحف مكتبة جامعة توبنجن (مصحف توبنجن)، والمصحف المحفوظ بالمكتبة الوطنية بباريس (مصحف باريس)، والمصحف المحفوظ في المكتبة البريطانية بلندن (مصحف لندن)، بالإضافة إلى مجموعة من النقوش الحجرية وأوراق البردي المبكرة المؤرخة التي وصلتنا. ويعد تحديد أصل الخط العربي مفيد لدارس النقوش العربية القديمة، ودارسي المصاحف سواء المخطوطة أو رسومها والعلوم الأخرى المرتبطة بها، والتعرف على خصائص هذا الخط لا سيما المبكر منه والذي حُط به المصحف الأول لتفسير تلك العلوم، وغيرها، وحسم الجدل حول أصل الخط الذي كُتب به المصحف في عهد النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم، ونسخ به في عهد الخلفاء الراشدين رضي الله عنهم أجمعين.

ولقد تعددت الاتجاهات والنظريات في تحديد أصل الخط العربي الحجازي الذي كُتبت به المصاحف، إن الدارس للنقوش العربية المبكرة المؤرخة يستطيع بسهولة أن يكشف عن نظام كتابي راسخ، كان الكتاب فيه يراعونه فيما يكتبون، بغض النظر عن مدى تحقيق ذلك النظام التطابق بين المنطوق والمكتوب على اننا يجب أن نقرر أن ظهور القرآن في تلك الفترة بالعمق الفكري والأسلوب البليغ يعني أن هناك أمة لديها القدرة على تدوينه وفهمه وتفسيره وحمل رسالته. خاصة وان الإسلام عمل على ربط المسلمين بالعلم وما يرتبط بذلك من كتابة وتدوين.

الكتابات العربية للمصاحف في مرحلتها الأولى تميزت بأنها خالية من الشكل والنقط والحركات، كذلك بحذف بعض الحروف، وزيادة أخرى، وقلب حرف إلى حرف، وقطع ووصل بين الكلمات. وقد خلصت الدراسة إلى مجموعة من النتائج والتوصيات، من أهمها:

- أثبتت الدراسة أن نسخ المصاحف المبكرة التي وصلتنا (عينات الدراسة) تم نسخها وكتابتها بالخط الحجازي اللين.
 - أثبتت الدراسة ونماذج المخطوطات المصحفية التي استعانت بها أصالة النص القرآني الكريم رغم ادعاءات المستشرقين والمشككين.
 - حددت الدراسة أن من المعايير الرئيسية التي تساعد في تأريخ المخطوطات المصحفية خاصة المبكرة، المعايير الفنية لها لاسيما الخط المستخدم، ووجود علامات الاعجام أو خلوها منها، ووجود زخرفة، وترقيم الآيات، الى جانب المعايير الاخرى.
 - بينت الدراسة أن معظم علامات التعشير تم إضافتها في المخطوطات المصحفية المبكرة في فترة لاحقة على نسخها.
 - أثبتت الدراسة أنه من المعايير الرئيسية التي تساعد في تأريخ المخطوطات المصحفية خاصة المبكرة، المعايير الفنية لها، وكذلك المعايير اللغوية، والمقارنة مع الموروث الثقافي، ثم الفحص بالكربون المشع (C14).
 - توصى الدراسة بضرورة اعادة النظر في الأسلوب العلمي لدراسة وتأريخ المخطوطات المصحفية وفقاً لمجموعة من المعايير الفنية في المقام الأول.
- الكلمات المفتاحية: المخطوطات؛ المصاحف؛ النقوش؛ الحجاز؛ الخط الحجازي.