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An analytical study on the calligraphy of the ancient Qur'anic manuscripts and the Uthmani calligraphy

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Abstract

In this contemporary and sophisticated period, copies of the Quran are widely available and possessed, and the necessity for old Quranic manuscripts is decreasing. Nonetheless, the antique manuscripts are not only displayed at the library. Its significance is equal, and these manuscripts should be extensively researched because old Quranic manuscripts greatly value giving knowledge of Quranic Calligraphy as a fundamental source in the rasm Uthmani. Parts of Quranic manuscripts written in the first Islamic century will be discussed in this study. The author will attempt to review the copies written in the early history of Islam in this research. Its current situation will also be investigated, and the contrast between the historical manuscripts and the current mushaf will be explored in the final study. The findings of the manuscript analysis demonstrate the veracity of Allah's pledge to preserve the Quran and refute the disbelievers' erroneous views of the text's legitimacy. This research aims to gather and share information on Quranic manuscripts. According to the researcher, the Quranic manuscripts written during the time of Prophet Muhammad SAW and the Uthmani Mushaf written during Caliph Uthman RH were lost and could not be found. However, documents created throughout the first century of Hijrah are still intact and accessible now.

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Introduction

The Holy Quran is unique among divinely revealed books in that Allah The Almighty has vowed to protect it from distortion

and modification.

According to scholars, Allah The Almighty has shielded it against even the smallest additions or deletions of words. If Allah The Almighty had not vowed to keep it with Himself, it would have suffered the same fate as the other divinely revealed texts in terms of distortion and alteration. This is because Allah The Almighty promised to keep these books safe for those to whom they were revealed.

As a result, the problem of preserving the Noble Quran has been decided in the hearts of Muslims and is taken for granted by all believers. Scholars declared that anybody who asserts that even the slightest addition or deletion in the Noble Quran contradicts what Allah The Almighty stated. Anyone who does so is outside the scope of Islam.

QURANIC MANUSCRIPTS FROM THE TIME OF the PROPHET MUHAMMAD

The writings of al-Quran began with the revelation^[1] of the Quran and have continued till the current day^[2]. It was under the supervision of Prophet Muhammad S.A.W. throughout the early phases of Quranic authoring, which lasted about 23 years. Despite the fact that Prophet Muhammad SAW prioritised the drafting of fresh revelations, he did not direct the companions to collect the writings in one position^[3]. The companions keep these documents separate.

Historians claim that these texts were successfully gathered in their entirety twice^[4]. The first occurred during the time of Abu Bakr (May Allah be pleased with him) in 12H ^[5] during the first *shuhuf* writing project, while the second occurred during the reign of Uthman (May Allah be pleased with him) in 25H ^[6] during the Uthmani Mushaf writing project. There is no more mention of the texts' evolution after these two incidents. According to the author, these papers were most likely destroyed among the records torched during the reign of Uthman (May Allah be pleased with him), during the start of the Uthmani Mushaf ^[7].

UTHMANI MUSHAF MANUSCRIPT

The Mushaf Uthmani was the second most important Quranic manuscript composed during the reign of Uthman (May Allah be pleased with him) Scholars disagree on how many copies of the mushaf exist. According to the author's analysis, there are five points of view:

1. According to Imam al-Dani, most scholars believe that the Uthmani Mushaf consists of just four copies delivered to Kufah, Basrah, Sham, and the Caliph himself, with a fifth copy retained by the Caliph himself.^[8]
2. According to Imam al-Suyuti, the majority of scholars believe that the Uthmani Mushaf was created in five copies. However, he did not specify where the five copies were stored ^[9].
3. According to Ibn Abu Dawud, the Uthmani Mushaf was composed in seven copies and distributed to Mecca, Sham, Yemen, Bahrain, Basrah, and Kufah, with one copy maintained at Medina ^[10].
4. According to Ibn al-Jazari, Uthman (May Allah be pleased with him) delivered eight copies of the Mushaf to Basrah,

Kufah, Sham, Medina, Mecca, Yemen, and Bahrain, with one copy retained by himself and dubbed "al-Imam" [11].

5. According to al-Yaqubi's narrative, Uthman rh. delivered nine copies of mushaf to Kufah, Basrah, Medina, Mecca, Egypt, Sham, Bahrain, Yemen, and the Arabian Peninsula [12].

6. Researchers' Popular Opinion

Many scholars believe that Uthman rh. delivered six copies of the Mushaf: one to Basra, one to Kufa, one to Sham, one to Mecca, one to Medina, and one to himself. This mushaf is known as "al-Imm"[13]. It should be mentioned that there are two Mushaf in Medina, the first of which is "Mushaf al-Imam," which was under the control of Uthman (May Allah be pleased with him) He was reading this specific mushaf at the time of his murder, and his blood spots were left unnoticed on the mushaf. The second mushaf is for reference purposes only.

Based on the preceding debate, historians have agreed on four copies: Basra Mushaf, Kufah, Sham, and Medina. Scholars differ on the other texts. However, when it came to the execution of the Mushaf copies, Uthman (May Allah be pleased with him) designated a teacher from the companions for each Mushaf. Madinah Mushaf was taught by Zayd bin Thabit (May Allah be pleased with him) Al-Mughira b. Shihab (May Allah be pleased with him) for Sham Mushaf, Abd Allah bin al-Sa'ib (May Allah be pleased with him) for Mecca, Mushaf 'Amir bin' Abd al-Qays (May Allah be pleased with him) for Kufa Mushaf, and Abu Abd al-Rahman al-Sulami (May Allah be pleased with him) for Basrah Mushaf [14].

Many scholars believe that Uthman (May Allah be pleased with him) also sent a copy of the Mushaf to Mecca. The truth is further reinforced by Ibn Kathir al-Makki's observation of the chains of qira'at (the manner of reciting the Quran).[15], stating that he learned the Quran from a companion, Abdullah ibn al-Sa'ib (May Allah be pleased with him), a Quran instructor designated by Uthman (May Allah be pleased with him), as recounted above.

While in Yemen, Bahrain, Egypt, and the Arabian Peninsula, no names of companions dispatched by Uthman (May Allah be pleased with him) to become Quran teachers were found in history books or Quranic reading chains, as in the case of the other copies described before. As a result, historians who claim six copies of Uthmani Mushaf have the most sway.

Onwards with the development of the Utmani MUSHAF Manuscripts

As previously noted, Uthman rh. dispatched Mushaf as a primary reference to numerous states. Following this occurrence, not much information about the development of the duplicates could be acquired. Among the details gathered were:

1. Mushaf of Mecca

According to Ibn Jubayr's travel book from 579H, a Mecca Mushaf of one of the four caliphs was discovered in a box under the dome of the Abbasid al-Haram mosque. This mushaf was reproduced in the year 18 following the Prophet's death and was written in Zayd bin Thabit's (May Allah be pleased with him) handwriting[16]. Ibn Batuta later saw this mushaf[17]. Because the Prophet S.A.W died in the 11th year of Hijrah, the 18th year following his death is comparable to

29H ^[18]. In the year 24H, Uthman (May Allah be pleased with him) was named Caliph, and in the year 35H, he was martyred ^[19]. So 29H was under Uthman (May Allah be pleased with him)'s reign. As a result, this mushaf is a replica of the Uthmani Mushaf.

2. Mushaf of Medina

One of the Uthmani Mushaf, according to Ibn Jubayr, was imprisoned in a large chest in the Prophet's mosque. This chest was discovered near Rawdah ^[20].

3. Mushaf of Kufa

So far, no history has been discovered of the Uthmani Mushaf in Kufa following its transmission by Uthman (May Allah be pleased with him) According to Sahr al-Sayyid Abd al-Aziz, it was most likely destroyed during a civil war following the battle of Kufa between Ali (May Allah be pleased with him) and Mu'awiyah (May Allah be pleased with him) ^[21].

4. Mushaf of Basra

According to Ibn Batuta, he saw a Mushaf being hoarded at the 'Ali's (May Allah be pleased with him) mosque in Basra, and there were blood stains on the page where the verse *فسيكفيكم الله وهو السميع العليم* was written. The Mushaf viewed by Ibn Batuta, according to Sahr al-Sayyid Abd al- Aziz, was the Mushaf of Basrah ^[22].

5. Sham Mushaf

According to Ibn Jubayr, a copy of Mushaf that was delivered by Uthman (May Allah be pleased with him) to Sham was discovered in a large box in the east corner of the Great Mosque of Damascus' mihrab (semicircular niche in the wall). Every jumu'ah prayer was followed by the opening of the chest. People will gather after the prayer to osculate it. ^[23] Ibn Batuta saw this mushaf as well. ^[24]

6. Personal Mushaf of Uthman

As previously indicated, the majority of Uthmani mushaf experts believe there are six Uthmani mushaf copies, including Uthman's (May Allah be pleased with him) personal copy. This fact is verified by al-Sijistani's narrative from Iyas bin Sakhr, who stated that he personally studied the Mushaf of Uthman (May Allah be pleased with him) and discovered 12 words that differed from the copies of the Medina Mushaf ^[25].

According to history, on the day of Uthman's assassination, he was reading the Quran with his own Mushaf. Blood streamed from his body onto the Mushaf's sheet, which carried Allah SWT's message ^[26]: *فسيكفيكم الله وهو السميع العليم* ^[27]. Following this occurrence, the impact of the blood on this Mushaf has become a distinct symbol in comparison to the other Uthmani mushaf.

It was stated that the Mushaf remained in Medina for some time after the killing of Uthman (May Allah be pleased with him) The Mushaf afterwards vanished, and its whereabouts were unknown. Following that, various reports surfaced

saying that the Mushaf was kept in several mosques [28].

Among the claims were:

a. Report of Al-Maqrizi

During al-'Aziz bi Allah al-Fatimi's reign [29] On the 5th of Muharram 378 H, Iraqis came to Egypt to bring a mushaf, allegedly the personal mushaf of Uthman (May Allah be pleased with him), where traces of blood were discovered. The Mushaf was then kept in Amr bin al-'As's Great Mosque, then it was relocated to the al-Husayn Mosque in Cairo, Egypt, in 1305 H and remains there to this day [30].

Al-Maqrz himself has denied the idea that the Mushaf in Egypt was Uthman's personal Mushaf [31]. Su'ad Mahir ruled against the idea that the Mushaf was authored by Uthman (May Allah be pleased with him), She further disputed that this Mushaf was one of the Uthmani mushaf duplicates. She was more likely to believe that the Mushaf was composed under the reign of Abd al-Aziz bin Marwan [32].

b. The Report of Ibn Batuta

Ibn Batuta saw this Mushaf at the Ali (May Allah be pleased with him) Mosque, and there were still blood spots on the page where the verse (فسيكفيكم الله وهو السميع العليم) was written [33]. This assertion was also denied by the research of Sahr al-Sayyid Abd al-'Aziz on the grounds that the Uthman's personal Mushaf during the reign of Ibn Batuta was in Marrakech, Morocco, imported from Andalusia [34].

Uthman's (May Allah be pleased with him) personal Mushaf remained in Medina after his assassination until 169H, according to research by Sahr al-Sayyid Abd al-'Aziz. During the reign of al-Amir Abd al-Rahman al-Awsat, the Mushaf was then relocated to Andalusia. According to the most recent information regarding the Mushaf, it was retrieved from the Republic of Portugal and transported to Fas, Morocco. There has been no news regarding Mushaf since the event [35].

THE QURANIC MANUSCRIPTS

At the moment, many manuscripts of the Quran are being found. Some of them date back over a thousand years. The majority of the manuscripts are now housed in Paris, Oslo, London, Berlin, Leningrad, and the Vatican [36]. However, the majority of the Mushaf manuscripts discovered thus far are housed at Yemen's Manuscripts' Library, which is located opposite the Great Mosque. The library's manuscripts connected to the Holy Quran are believed to number roughly 12,000 copies.

QURAN MANUSCRIPTS SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

The text of the Quran was penned and copied from generation to generation after 14 centuries. It has been demonstrated that the text of the Qur'an has always remained authentic, with no alterations to the text. Hassan al-Bashir's *Dirasah Lawhah Makhtutāh li al-Quran fi al-Qarn al Awwal al-Hijri* and Ghassan Hamdun's *al-Makhtutāt al Qur'aniyyah fi San'a' min al-Qarn al-Awwal wa al-Thani al-Hijriyayn*

They picked some of the earliest manuscripts from the first century of Hijrah for their study.

In addition to researching the works, they examined a variety of important sources concerning the evolution of letter shapes and methods for recognising them. The references are^[37]:

- a. Calligraphy and illumination in the Quran.
- b. Masahif San'a'.
- c. Subh al-A'sha' fi Kitabat al-Insha' book^[38].
- d. Al-Fahrasat^[39].
- e. The book of Dirasat fi Tarikh al-Khat al-'Arabi^[40].

From these references, the authors were able to identify the age of a document that existed during the first, second, and third Hijrahs^[41].

2. Using Carbon 14 to Determine the Age of Manuscripts

The age of an organic item can be determined via the scientific usage of carbon known as Carbon 14. Because the manuscripts are organic materials, their age may be established using these components. However, it cannot match the precision of the first technique, which is based on the examination of letter shapes. This is because it can distinguish between letters used at the beginning and end of each century by detecting the forms of letters^[42].

ANALYSIS OF ANCIENT AND MODERN MANUSCRIPTS

Ghassan Hamdun's research on several manuscripts of the Quran revealed that he had taken a copy of the picture from Manuscript Central San'a on February 24, 2000, is among the comparative studies carried out on the manuscripts of the Quran written in the first century to the current Mushaf.

The manuscript has been authenticated by Gerd Rüdiger Puin, a manuscript specialist from Germany. He concluded that the document was composed during the first century of Hijrah.^[43] According to Ghassan hamdun, those interested in studying and comparing the text of the manuscripts of the vintage Quranic Mushaf with the current Mushaf should be aware that there are some significant technical differences between the current writing of Mushaf and the writing of the Quran in the first centuries of writing the Quran. The Quran was not written with points and lines at the beginning of the

first century of Hijrah. Furthermore, there is a variance in spelling. While before, hadhf was usually utilised in writing ^[44] for specific words, use the letter alif technique.

Technical variances have no bearing on the validity of the Quran's text and cannot be considered alterations or additions. Because the addition of a vowel or a dot from the point of hadhf a letter alif in specific words is not deemed to modify the expression of the text read. It is only a technical distinction.

Ghassan Hamdun examined the manuscript of al-A'raf from mid-verse 37 to mid-verse 44. According to the findings of this comparative investigation, there is no difference between the texts of the manuscript produced in the early first century of Hijrah and the current mushaf. Only one word differs in spelling. The phrase is ^[45] "كلما" the manuscript, It is written in two different words in "كلما" however it is spelled in one word in the current mushaf "كلما". This has no impact on the readings. As a result, no changes happened between the Quranic writings penned in the first century of Hijrah and the current mushaf. It is hereby proved that Allah SWT's commitment to preserve the Quran from modification is genuine.

CONCLUSION

The discoveries and comparisons between the manuscripts of mushaf penned in the first century of Hijrah and the mushafs that remain now have demonstrated that the text of the Quran is still intact, despite being subjected to over a thousand years of abuse. This demonstrates Allah's certainty in safeguarding the Quran, thus refuting any incorrect assumptions made by parties that questioned the authenticity of the Quran's wording.

Footnotes

[1] Fadil al-Qur'an, Abu Abdullah Muhammad Ibn Ayyub Ibn Yahya Ibn al-Drais Ibn Yasar al-Drais al-Bajali al-Razi (died: 294 AH) Investigation: Battle of Deir Publisher: Dar al-Fikr, Damascus - Syria Edition: First, 1408 AH – 1987, p. 33.

[2] Currently, mushaf is written by printing. Every year, millions of mushaf are produced. Muhammad Salim b. Shadid al-Awfi (1432 11), Tatawwur Kitabat al Mushaf al-Sharif wa Tiba'atih, Majma' al-Malik Fahd li Tiba'ah al-Mushaf al-Sharif. p. 87-90.

[3] Al-Itqan fi 'Uloom al-Qur'an Jalal Al-Suyuti; Abdul Rahman bin Abi Bakr bin Muhammad bin Sabiq Al-Din Al-Khudairi Al-Suyuti, Jalal Al-Din, Investigator: Mustafa Sheikh Mustafa, Publisher: Al-Resala Foundation, p. 126.

[4] Zaid bin Thabit rh narrated that after Abu Bakr rh instructed him to gather al-Quran, he began to look for it and collect it from bones, animal skins, and friends who had memorised it. Finally, I discovered the concluding section of surah at-Tawbah from Abu Khuzaymah al-Ansar, which I had never seen before. Fath al-Bārī fī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Ibn Hajar Al-Asqalani; Ahmed bin Ali bin Muhammad Al-Kinani Al-Asqalani, Abu Al-Fadl, Shihab Al-Din, Investigator: Abdul Aziz bin Abdullah bin Baz - Muhammad Fouad Abdul Baqi - Moheb Al-Din Al-Khatib, Publisher: Salafi Press and Library – Cairo, Edition: 1, p. 14.

- [5] Hadath al-Qur'an al-'Azim, Abdul-Wahhab Abdul-Razzaq Al-Rawi, Dar Al Uloom for investigation, printing, publishing and distribution, (2007), p. 58
- [6] Fath al-Bari, p. 17.
- [7] Ghara'ib al Qur'an, Nizam al-Din al-Hassan ibn Muhammad ibn Husayn al-Qummi al-Nisaburi (died: 850 AH) Investigator: Sheikh Zakaria Omeirat Publisher: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyya - Beirut Edition: First - 1416 AH. p. 68.
- [8] Al- Muqni', Othman bin Saeed bin Othman bin Omar Abu Amr Al-Dani (died: 444 AH) Investigator: Muhammad Al-Sadiq Qamhawi Publisher: Al-Azhar Colleges Library, Cairo , Investigator: Muhammad Siddiq al-Qamhawi. al-Qahirah: Maktabah Kulliyat al-Azhar, p. 19.
- [9] Al-Itqan, p.393.
- [10] Almasahif, Abu Bakr bin Abi Dawood, Abdullah bin Suleiman bin Al-Ash'ath Al-Azdi Al-Sijistani (died: 316 AH) Investigator: Muhammad bin Abdo Publisher: Al-Farouq Al-Hadithah - Egypt / Cairo Edition: First, 1423 AH - 2002 AD, p. 133
- [11] al-Nashr fi al-Qiraat al-'Ashr, Shams al-Din Abu al-Khair Ibn al-Jazari, Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Yusuf, Investigator: Ali Muhammad al-Daba', Publisher: The Great Commercial Printing Press [Photograph by Dar al-Kitab al-Ilmiyya], p. 7.
- [12] Tarikh al-Ya'qubi; Ahmed bin Ishaq (Abu Yaqoub) bin Jaafar bin Wahb bin Wadh al-Yaqubi, Publisher: Dar Sader, Publication year: 1415 – 1995, p. 194.
- [13] Adwaa' 'Ala Mushaf Uthman bin 'Affan, Sahr al-Sayyid Abd al-Aziz , al-Iskandariyyah- Mu'assasah Syabab al-Jami'ah. p. 18.
- [14] Manahil al- Irfan, Muhammad Abdul Azim al-Zarqani (1995), Bayrūt: Dar al-Kitab al-'Arabi, p. 330.
- [15] Ibraz al-Ma'ani, Abu al-Qasim Shihab al-Din Abd al-Rahman ibn Ismail ibn Ibrahim al-Maqdisi al-Dimashqi, known as Abu Shama (died: 665 AH) Publisher: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyya, Bayrūt: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, p. 6.
- [16] Rihlat Ibn Jubayr, Ibn Jubayr, Muhammad bin Ahmed bin Jubayr Al-Kinani Al-Andalusi, Abu Al-Hussein (died: 614 AH) Publisher: Al-Hilal House and Library, Beirut, p. 72.
- [17] Rihlat Ibn Batutah, Muhammad bin Abdullah bin Muhammad bin Ibrahim Al-Lawati Al-Tanji, Abu Abdullah, Ibn Battuta (died: 779 AH) Publisher: Dar Al-Sharq Al-Arabi, p. 376.
- [18] Tarikh Khalifah bin Khayyat, Abu Amr Khalifa bin Khayat bin Khalifa Al-Shaibani Al-Asfri Al-Basri (died: 240 AH) Investigator: Dr. Akram Dia Al-Omari Publisher: Dar Al-Qalam, Al-Resala Foundation - Damascus, Beirut Edition: Second, 1397, p. 100.
- [19] al'iinba' fi tarikh alkhulafa, Muhammad bin Ali bin Muhammad, known as Ibn al-Amrani (died: 580 AH) Investigator: Qasim al-Samarrai Publisher: Dar al-Afaaq al-Arabiya, Cairo Edition: First, 1421 AH - 2001 AD, p. 48.
- [20] Rihlat Ibn Jubayr, p. 153.
- [21] Adwaa' 'Ala Mushaf Uthman bin 'Affan, p. 48.
- [22] For more information on this mushaf, see: Adwaa' 'Ala Mushaf Uthman bin 'Affan, p. 26 and p. 129.
- [23] Rihlat Ibn Jubayr, p. 217.
- [24] Rihlat Ibn Batutah, p. 309.
- [25] Almasahif, p. 139.

- [26] Surah al- Baqarah 2:137.
- [27] Aljamie li'ahkam alquran, Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Ahmed bin Abi Bakr bin Farah Al-Ansari Al-Khazraji Shams Al-Din Al-Qurtubi (died: 671 AH) investigation: Ahmed Al-Baradouni and Ibrahim Atfayesh Publisher: Egyptian Book House - Cairo Edition: Second, 1384 AH - 1964 AD, p. 1046.
- [28] Adwaa' 'Ala Mushaf Uthman bin 'Affan, p. 22.
- [29] He was the Fifth Fatimid Caliph during the years 344 H -386 H. See: Almawaeiz waliaietibar bidhikr alkhutat waluathar, Ahmed bin Ali bin Abdul Qadir, Abu Al-Abbas Al-Husseini Al-Obaidi, Taqi Al-Din Al-Maqrizi (deceased: 845 AH) Publisher: Dar Al-Kutub Al-Ilmiyya, Beirut Edition: First, 1418 AH, p. 190.
- [30] Alathar alnabawia, Ahmed Taymour Pasha; Ahmed bin Ismail bin Mohammed Taimur, Publisher: Dar Al-Kitab Al-Arabi, Publication year: 1370 - 1951 p. 43.
- [31] Almawaeiz waliaietibar, p. 190
- [32] Adwaa' 'Ala Mushaf Uthman bin 'Affan, p. 24
- [33] Rihlat Ibn Batutah, p. 12.
- [34] Adwaa' 'Ala Mushaf Uthman bin 'Affan, p. 26.
- [35] Adwaa' 'Ala Mushaf Uthman bin 'Affan, p. 135.
- [36] Almakhtutat alquraniah fi san'a' mundh alqarn al'awal alhijrii, Razan Ghassan Hamdoun, Editing by Abdo Muhammad Yusuf, publisher, Yemeni University, year of publication 2004 AD 1425 AH, p. 1.
- [37] For more information on the designs of letters, see: 'Asl alkhata al-Arabi wa tatawuruh hatta nihayat al-Asr al 'Umawii, Dr. Suhaila Yassin Al-Jubouri, publisher: Al-Adeeb Al-Baghdadi Press.
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- [41] Almakhtutat alquraniah fi san'a' mundh alqarn al'awal alhijrii.
- [42] Almakhtutat alquraniah fi san'a' mundh alqarn al'awal alhijrii, p. 4.
- [43] Almakhtutat alquraniah fi san'a' mundh alqarn al'awal alhijrii, p. 10.
- [44] Hadhf means deleting the letter alif from the text. See: Safir al 'alamin fi 'iidah wa tahrir wa tahbir samir altaalibin fi rasm wadabt alkitaab almubin, Ashraf Mohamed Fouad Talaat, Edition No.2, country of publication: Egypt, Publisher: Imam Bukhari Library, date of publication:2006 AD 1426 AH, p. 69.
- [45] Verse 38 surah al-A'raf

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