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The anthropological dimension of the Arabic letter in the construction of the Qur'anic calligraphy

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Abstract

This research study addresses the anthropological dimension in understanding the philosophy of the linear painting according to the interactive study between visual culture in the concept of Islamic civilization and man as an artistic product, as we focus on the anthropological perspective as it deals with the construction of the painting in terms of the deep relationship with a sacred nature.In order to embody the symbolic and spiritual aspect of the text aesthetically and artistically, since the art of Arabic calligraphy was not merely a beautification of Quranic texts, but rather a reflection of a collective artistic, religious, and cultural consciousness, linked to abstract and decorative concepts, which demonstrate the development of aesthetic sense in Islamic society throughout the ages. How did the art of Arabic calligraphy become an art that expresses concepts such as sanctity, identity, and harmony? If it is clearly employed in artwork as an element of the artwork, it gives anthropological, functional and creative aesthetic dimensions.

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Introduction

Since ancient times, man sought ways of communication with his fellow man and environment; however, such means varied from one environment to another and from one epoch to another. At times the product of such means is a language in the form of gestures or signs; at other times, it is writing. Punic paintings are considered as the first phases of the stages of writing used by the primitive man; the history books informed us that writing was first pictorial (Old Hieroglyphic) in ancient Egypt and later turned into symbolic, e.g., cuneiform writing and late hieroglyphics (Demotic). In contrast, cuneiform script was spread all over the lands of Sham and Mesopotamia, from which evolved advanced acts of writing distanced by long stretches of time to reach the various letters and alphabets of the modern age, differing from one nation and people to another. From this alphabetic standpoint, those alphabets were imprints of the environment and culture and the totality of values and social organization that are predominant in such civilized governments.

.. Writing used to evolve day after day till wisdom from each generation was transmitted to the next generation. It used to travel with caravans bearing civilizations on its shoulders into immortalizing them; until this writing reached us in the present time all-grown, full of potential, and ready to interact with the modern era while comprehending its inventions and innovations.. The Arabic script had found its display and started to differentiate in numerous forms, each performing a particular function; it shall seize the cloak of aesthetics and submit itself to aesthetic laws of its own, from whence glints the culture of the Arab Islamic world. Unquestionably, the Quantification of Arabic emerged from Islam, since the Quran is an emphasis on reading and the pen, i.e., writing instrument. Its User is exalted several times throughout the book. Indeed, the first address from God Almighty to the means is instructing them: "read", as the most honored One said: "**Recite in the name of your Lord who created - Created man from a clinging substance.. Recite, and your Lord is the most Generous - Who taught by the pen - Taught man that which he knew not**"

حيث قال أعز من قائل:﴿ ٱقۡرَأۡ بِٱسۡمِ رَبِّكَ ٱلَّذِي خَلَقَ ١ خَلَقَ ٱلۡإِنسَٰنَ مِنۡ عَلَقٍ ٢ ٱقۡرَأۡ وَرَبُّكَ ٱلۡأَكۡرَمُ ٣ ٱلَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِٱلۡقَلَمِ ٤ عَلَّمَ ٱلۡإِنسَٰنَ مَا لَمۡ يَعۡلَمۡ ٥ ﴾ العلق: ١ - ٥

(Quran, Sura Al-Alaq, Verses: 1-5) These verses were the first of that divine awd that descended upon Prophet Muhammad), indicating the important nature of the pen. The Arabs placed great importance on beautiful calligraphy while writing the Quran, arising from the principle in fact, a saying of our Prophet, Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him): "Beautiful writing makes the truth more manifest." (al-Dailami's Musnad al-Firdaws from Umm Salamah). Thus, calligraphy was second only to the art of "Tajweed" for the Qur'an and was transported into all the land of Islam, where it reaches its aesthetic pinnacle as a high art for Arab culture and Islamic belief.

From what we have mentioned thus far, it is clear that this study, with its title: The Anthropological Dimension of the Arabic Letter in the Construction of the Calligraphic Qur'anic Panel (An Analytical Study of "Zakmout Muhammad Al-Shalali's" Manuscripts), will touch upon the dimensions of the Arabic letter in the construction of the artistic panel, because the letter carries certain semantic and aesthetic weights that allow it to function as one of the major elements of the pictorial art form; the problem is thus posed as to: What are the dimensions of Arabic calligraphic art in the construction of pictorial art?

The following questions fall under this problem:

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What is the extent of the contribution of Arabic Letter characters in the construction of the artwork?

-How can we investigate the aesthetic nature of the artistically built composition?

Here should be our answer to these queries, with some hypotheses:

-Knowledge of the appropriate aesthetic principles in writing in Arabic script, along with the knowledge of the calligrapher of the proportions of the letters, should serve in accentuating the beauty and the appearance of the letter, whereby this provides an aesthetic dimension to the artwork.

-The complementary relationship lies in the proportionality and harmony in determining the formation and configuration of letters and words that are going to build the artwork, hence leaving an excellent impression upon the recipient.

The study belongs to the field of fine arts. It is important in itself as it highlights Arabic calligraphy-the heritage that distinguishes us from other civilizations-and due to its anthropological and aesthetic dimensions. For our case, the historical research method was used concerning the historical aspects of writing and Arabic calligraphy, also applying analytical and descriptive methods in analyzing the artwork under study.

Therefore, the basic themes making up the study can be addressed as follows:

1. *Calling it first: the appearance of writing and calligraphy*

Writing passed through many stages and centuries before arriving at its present forms. With the calligraphic style being the last stage in the developments in the written arts of the Islamic lands, the periods of the evolution into which we have not been able to trace with any kind of certainty can be briefly summated as follows:

1.1 *1) The evolution of the writing and the origination of Arabic calligraphy pre-Islam:*

The numerous Semitic peoples inhabiting the Arabian Peninsula and Mesopotamia are the Akkadians, Aramaeans, Babylonians, Assyrians, and Chaldeans, apart from the Phoenicians, Canaanites, Hebrews, and Arabs[1] all of them had cultures differing essentially with different types of writings that took some tens of centuries to be instrumental in the evolution of the Arabic script. Some studies went on to support the hypothesis that Arabs borrowed their way of writing from the Nabataeans who inhabited the Aramean-land in the Hellenistic period and the Nabataeans developed it; their settlements were mainly northern parts of the Arabian Peninsula in Palestine and southern parts of the Levant and eastern parts of Jordan, having spread towards north Hijaz. The Nabataeans, as it were, dominated the trade routes wherein from India to Lycia via south Yemen, from Sana'a up to Mecca, from “Yathrib” to Egypt, and Mediterranean Trade, their commercial relations stretched also up to Greece, Italy, and North Africa, including the movement of the scripts and the script itself.

Although the Arabs of “North Hijaz” had borrowed from “Nabatean” script for a few centuries prior to the advent of Islam, they kept developing it (especially in Mecca) since it was an important commercial center and enjoyed a very powerful economic clout; therefore, the Arabic script gradually separated from Aramaic... From the South Arabian “Musnad” and of course, “Hamiric” script in southern Yemen, great efforts had been put to distinguishing the Arabic script from the “Nabatean” and with this, its letters took their known forms.

The appearance of the more sophisticated script witnessed, in the early seventh century[2] an expansion of Arabic use and its generalization. This coincides with the rise of Islam. Excavations in Northern “Hijaz”

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have revealed rock inscriptions, which indicate such an evolution. This phenomenon could be traced also along the trade routes extending from South Yemen to the Levant passing by the "Hijaz" coast through the cities of "Makkah" and "Yathrib".

Whereas other historians go even further and opine that writing was very little practiced, especially in "Mecca" and much less so in other towns or among the men of the tribes[3] it was reported that there were seventeen men in "Quraysh" who knew how to read and write, amongst them: "Umar ibn al-Khattab", "Ali ibn Abi Talib", "Uthman ibn Affan", "Zayd ibn Abi Sufyan"... Also amongst those who knew how to write were the women: "Al-Shifa bint Abdullah al-Adawiyya", and "Aisha bint Saad"... and the script in use was the "Maki script". [4]

From amongst historians, some assume this number could be higher because Arabs of pre-Islamic times used to record the daily important happenings like recording contracts, writing stipulations for alliances, baking studious attestations to payments in commercial transactions, and rights... In the study of pathways followed by Arabic script in its transmission to "Hijaz", many Arab historians think it was through "Hira", while another group accepts that it was not transmitted through "Hira" alone but followed another route: the route of "Hajar".[5] "Grohmann" thinks the Arabic writing was transmitted around the year 560 A.D. to Makkah.[6]

1.2 Destination of development in writing and Arabic calligraphy:

During the process of history, the Arab writing was established firmly enough at the descent of the Qur'an to express the last Divine message and to transmit the contents of the Revelation with all required accuracy and clarity. The "Surahs" of the Qur'an were first written on skins, bones, and thin white stones called "Lakhaf" and palm leaves before they were transferred to the books during the reign of Caliph "Othman Ibn Affan" (RA). The first "holy Quran" were chosen to be written in "Kufic script" due to the dignity and clarity of its characters, which then developed alongside the "Meccan" and "Medinian" scripts. [7]

So much had been accomplished in line development during the short period of the caliphate that when that period ended, the "Kufic obdurate" and "Meccan supple" characters were fairly well set in form. Some reforms began to be introduced, such as the introduction of dotting from the period of "Caliph Ali Ibn Abi Talib (RA)", which later developed into a complete dotting system for the letters and marking system for the vowels to resolve all ambiguity in pronunciation.

The development of Arabic writing continued during the Umayyad period, and "during this era, urbanization stood in high place, and writings appeared on buildings and artifacts, who act as decorative for a time. There was a concern for writing of the Qur'ans, adornment, and decoration. With the spread of the Arabs, especially the conquerors, Arabic appeared in the opened territories and the Arabic script" ti litnu[8] finally reached every corner of the Islamic lands. The "Umayyads" had a great attachment to the Arabic script and used it in their correspondence, administrative measures, and the writing of the Holy Qur'an. During the "Abbasid" period, the Arabic script came to great prominence and became more open to being experimented with and reformed. This, in turn, gave rise to many masters well known in this field, among them the arguably most famous "Ibn Muqla" and "Ibn al-Bawwab", who greatly contributed to the establishment of Arabic calligraphic rules. "Ibn Khaldun" says:"The script reached a very high stage of perfection and refinement in between and was not highly developed in the utmost for the Arabs on account of their Bedouin condition and remoteness from the crafts;

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then, with the opening of the countries and the possession of the "Mamlukes", they entered "Basrah" and "Kufah" where the State required written documents, and they started to use the script and sought for its craftsmen and teachers, and it was cultivated so well that in "Basrah" and "Kufah" it reached a very high degree, although not to the utmost; then they became widespread in all the provinces of the "Mamluks", when they had opened Africa and Andalusia, and the Abbasids undertook in Baghdad the utmost improvement of the script because it was linked with architecture; whose house was Islam and was also the center of Arabic, from where the origins of (Badī script attributed) spreading east and west were contravened in Baghdad by their situation in "Kufah" in terms of skills in execution, brilliance of concept and beauty of expression, and this contradiction was strengthened along the ages till it rose in "Baghdad" under "Abu Ali Ibn Muqla" the minister, and followed in this regard "Ibn al-Hilal", the famous writer called "Ibn al-Bawwab" and after him, the hundred and few years after stood by as the bonds of its teaching, and thereafter the "Baghdad" script forms and positions became far from those of "Kufah" till they developed into an opposition".[9]

As the Muslim conquests progressed, the Arabic script transcended the confines of the Arabian Peninsula, traveling alongside carriers of the Quranic text and Islamic culture as it has throughout all those peoples, which embraced it, bore upon its standard, and enriched it in lifting their aesthetic palate. This gave rise to more types of script that number over a hundred, from the comparatively straightforward to the fully developed artistic forms endowed with superior-forming aesthetical merits. From the point of view of function, the Arabic script was considered by its nature to be art; therefore, its artistic and aesthetic qualities provided immense possibilities for the scribes to reach freedom in innovation and creation. This reinforced the philosophical foundation for the art of Arabic calligraphy. With regard to these, the situation of the Arabic script was thoroughly inverted during the colonialism adventure in modern times when the Latin script was forced upon it. The gradual abandonment of Arabic scripts in almost all non-Arab colonized countries was induced by the weighty Euro-centric cultural influence. Turkey was the first attempt in extinguishing the Arabic alphabet, an act that came as a huge shock beside the shock of the fall of "the Ottoman Caliphate" in 1924.

2. Important scripts known and their locations:

Texts and commemorative inscriptions have brought attention to a few aspects of the everyday and social life of many past civilizations.. And every civilization differed from another in its manner of writing and the form of the letters, so would have to try and touch on the major ones of such writings and their sites as follows:

2.1Writing in Sumer:

Writing in Sumer (Mesopotamia) signifies the pressing need to enter the increasing amount of income for the temple and economic transactions; many thousands of signs appeared during the early periods in the history of writing, but by about the end of the Early Dynastic II period, probably c. 2600 B.C., a drastic reduction to some 800 signs had been effected.[10] The people of Mesopotamia used clay as a primary medium for writing. They also wrote on stone and were busy writing upon broken pottery shards. The Sumerians wrote for various purposes, many of which included inscriptions about kings and princes recording their military expeditions and construction works. The cuneiform script spread beyond the limits of Mesopotamia to the east and west. We see traces of the cuneiform script in Susa, in the land of

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Elam, around 3200 B.C., and somewhat to the west of Mesopotamia, somewhat north, in the Syrian city of "Ebla" (Tell Mardikh), in 2400-2300 B.C. Most of the texts were economic and administrative. The "cuneiform script" was used as the medium of correspondence between the kings of Iraq, Egypt, and Syria.[11]

2.2The Akkadian Writing System:

Once the powerful city of Ur became snap by means of an attempt on it by rampaging hordes of "Amurru-were" actually tribes from the Arabian Peninsula with their original language being that of "Canaanite" the "Amurru" gave expression to "Akkadian" as the official language of their everyday writings while throughout the walls of ancient surroundings propped up in the "Canaanite" and the "Akkadian" spread a plethora of sciences, philosophy, art, and literature...The two languages contained borrowed vocabulary, so "Akkadian" retained over 250 words taken from Sumerian, and also, the very form of "Akkadian" writing shows some influence of Sumerian rules and syntactic order. Attested characteristics are the disappearance of the gutturals (ح،ع،غ) and the presence of a conditional particle (شا) occurring in other Semitic languages at the end of verbs; and the conditional in "Akkadian" is not similar in function to what is observed in other Semitic languages. [12]

2.3The Writing System of Aramaic:

The "Aramaeans" being Semites, appeared about 1300 B.C. in Northern Mesopotamia (Iraq), and on the "mid-Euphrates" some settled, while others set up independent kingdoms in Syria, the more important being "Hama" in the 11th century bc., and "Damascus" toward the early 10th century bc., all of which ceased after the fall of "Damascus" to the Assyrians in 734 bc., but Aramaic influence remained manifest in civilization, more so in language which spread over its lands between Mesopotamia and Iran.[13]

The Assyrian conquests affected largely the spread of the "Aramaic language" through which the Assyrians may in turn have attained administration and commercial dealings in the ancient East. The language of the people in Palestine remained Aramaic till the days of our Lord "Christ Jesus" (PBUH), and many chapters of the "Old Testament" were written in this language. The "Aramaic" language in the past has had many dialects, some of which continue in inclined form to modern "Syriac" and "Chaldean" and among them is the dialect spoken until today by some villages to the south of "Jabal al-Qalamoun" in Syria. The use of "Aramaic script" presumably spread in southern Cis-Levant too after the setting-up of four "Aramai"c principalities, from the "Beqaa" Valley to southern "Hauran", while its speakers made home on the upper side of the island on the opposite side of the "Euphrates" River, "along" the valleys of the "Balikh" and "Khabur" Rivers approximately around "Mount Sinjar".

Since the 07th century, the language of "Aramaics" competed with its cousin "Akkadian"; the choice has been made by kings to designate their language of ease and understanding among the peoples that were subjected to them. It then remained among the peoples of the Near East until the Arab conquest, with various peoples like those of "al-Tadmor", "al-Hadarin", and the "Nabataeans" speaking it. The earliest "Aramaic script" is dated 11th-10th century BCE and extended to the beginning of the 3rd century CE. The people of "Tadmor" wrote in "Aramaic"[14] and so did the inscriptions in "Hadar" State in what is now Iraq near "Mosul".

2.4 Yemeni Musnad type of script and that of southern Arabia:

This type of script was thus named "Musnad", due to the letters being written with support lines but no supporting

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columns. The "Ma'inite" State was perhaps the oldest-center-state that emerged south of Arab lands, that arose sometime between 1200-662 b.c. The "Ma'inite" state was followed by the "Sabaean" State, which in turn was succeeded by the "Himyarite".[15]

The "Musnad Script" was divided into two parts: the earlier one being (Ma'eenite Inscriptions) and the later one being (Sabaean Script). Mutually, these were classified into:

1) Lahyanic script: This script was used by the "Lihyanite" tribes in the northwest of the Arabian Peninsula; it evidently left numerous inscriptions at "Al-`Ula" (Dadan).

2) Thamudic script: It was the script of the 3rd and the 4th centuries AD and was called after the people of "Thamud" who are mentioned in the Quran. This script was in vogue in the following areas: Hail, Tabuk, Thayma, Madain Saleh, Al-Ula, Sinai, Ta'if, Al-Safa area in Syria, and Wadi Hammamat in Egypt.[16]

3) Safaitic script: So called after "Jabal al-Safa" in the Levant; this type of script was cultivated in the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th centuries AD;[17] "Ibn Duraid" who authored the "Jamhara al-Lugha," considered that Arabic script descended from the Himyaritic "Musnad" and the Arabic script was named (al-Jazm) because it "amnassed" or clipped' features from the Himyaritic "Musnad". As for the historian, "al-Qalqashandi" states, "When the people of Hira were asked, whence did you learn the Arabic script? They replied: from the people of Anbar. When asked, whence did the people of Anbar learn it? They said: from Yemen".[18]

2.5The Writing System of Nabataean:

The tribes of the "Annbadites" were driven away from the Arabian Peninsula, and they settled in the "Aramaic" regions in Palestine and south of Lebanon and Jordan. Some of their famous cities were "Sela" (Petra) in Jordan, "Al-Hijr" (Madain Saleh) in Saudi Arabia, and "Bosra" in the Levant.[19]

The closest civilized people to the "Nabataeans" were the "Aramaeans", as the "Nabataeans" were influenced by them, and some others say that the "Nabataeans" branched from one of the families of the sons of "Eber" and were influenced by their civilization and learned their writing; until the flourishing "Nabataean" state was attacked by the Romans in 106 A.D.[20]

The civilization and, especially, the "Aramaic script" with which it flourished survived, and the script was widely used in commercial transactions. From that "Aramaic script" grew the "Nabataean script" from the "Nabataean" developed the Arabic script. This is attested to in the "Nabataean" inscriptions found in "Wadi Hauran", including the "Um Al-Jimal I" inscription (250-270 A.D.) and the "Namara" inscription of 328 A.D.[21]

The "Nabataean script" is divided into two: the "Old Nabataean" and the "Late Nabataean"; the latter is closer to Arabic. Since the fifth century, the "Nabataean" writing declined, and in its place, the Arabic scripts started to flourish.

Note: The above translation is quite literal, which is necessary for maintaining the exact meaning of the original Arabic paragraph.

3. The microstructural formation of the character on a classical linear plane:

The observer who contemplates the flow of Arabic script letters feels relaxed and secure because the human eye finds comfort in the stability of the lines and their straightforwardness. We shall hence attempt to analyze the constitution of the line and its structural bases.

3.1 Structures of letters:

In general, the lines take the vertical and horizontal directions, and the geometrical ones circle, square, rectangle, and triangle; thus, for circles, some are arched to the

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right, some to the left. Horizontals either lie straight or gently curve, whereas circles, squares, rectangles, and triangles are left from completion, away from pure geometrical forms. Each calligrapher improves upon them and subtracts from them those elements that disunite from their supposed framework so as to settle down into a united nomenclature on an accepted frame of reference, for letters are initially meant to express meanings and words, and such improvements are complete bonds placed on their primary structure without destroying them or removing them from their original logic[22].

Commenting on the above, Professor "Abu Salah Al-Alfi" says..."Much awe has been granted to this Muslim artist for his ability to strike a balance between the limp line and the geometric line in exquisite consonance despite the very nature of each of these lines being different; this was the wonderment of all researchers and students of Islamic art"[23].

3.2 Width of letter:

The width of the pen generates a thickness for the letter. This thickness has two edges: the right edge and the left edge; these edges follow each other in the nature of rotation of the letters, walking upward with the leading edge while walking downward with the trailing edge or vice versa; and this very contrast makes the horizontal part of the letter more apparent in the contrast of both edges when the left edge runs beneath the right edge on the tails of letters such as: (the tails of "ن" and "ي" or the tail of "أ"), an action known as feathering. Through this variation in thickness and gradation, harmony in calligraphic strokes and grace in its drawings are produced, giving beauty and distinction to the panel.

3.3 Direction of letters:

In general, letters are written from right to left. However, some like those represented by the knots, as in "ف" ,"ص", and "ع", break the rule, and the calligrapher, therefore, has to multiply the letterforms in connection with each other to preserve the forward motion so to speak-a feeling that relaxes the eyes in following the motion of the letters, a little similar to the eyes following the motion of the plant branches in Islamic ornamentation.

3.4 Anche gras-sizes and hush thicknesses:

Putting thickened pen strokes on horizontals seems as if the lines are resting on a solid, steady base. Even with verticals and horizontals drawn thicker to emphasize the alleged deception of the eye, the eye, paradoxically, actually perceives the vertical as longer than the horizontal, whereas in reality, the lengths are identical[24]; this Lebanese calligraphy style lends an element of beauty and balance to increase the thickness of the horizontals over the verticals.

3.5 Letter composition:

Arabic letters are formed of straight and curved parts. It is one of the important elements enhancing the beauty of the Arabic script. Possibly, on account of looseness and softness, the souls are attracted to the softer forms as they gratify the appearance, whereas rigidity almost pierces an eye with its harshness. Sharp angles obstruct the sight just as disturbed the touch. 'Al-Tawhidi' elaborates, "As for 'Ibn al-Bawwab', he observed that before him several were active in repairing Kufic; they turned toward softening the writing engaged by a nameless reason: the love of soul for moisture as substance of life; it is the softness of the script; a script should not be seen from outside its angles"[25].

Also, in his message "al-Bayyinah": "If such matter was duly effected without any normal proportions of the linear form of these letters and word arrangements on account of his derivative normal proportion placed as members of organisms, while

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balanced parts of plants, the soul is passionately attached to beauty, naturally disposed to the love of good, which is natural proportion either visible or audible." Thus, it follows that: "The beauty of writing is attached to the soul; its proper proportion is beloved by the heart, being something envisaged beyond the concept of the writing itself."

3.6Measures of lines:

In the olden days, lengths of letters, width, and thickness of the pen was partly gauged by the so-called measure of "Barudun/Mule" hair.' Thus Qalqashandi says: "And hence they estimated the width of the parchment by 24 hairs of "Barudun/Mule" laid crosswise," and again, he says, "And the length of the Alif in every considered pen is that its length should be the product of the pen's width doubled in itself; and so the length is the counterpart of it".[26]

Professor "Nihad Jatin" has very minutely set forth these measurements in millimeters, explaining that "The width of the type of the "jelali" pens used for the "tommar" was twenty-four hairs of "Barudun/mule", or about 16mm on guesswork, and the length of the "ا" written with it is 24X24=576 (approximately 656mm). Then he mentions other pens with others".[27] "Suhaila al-Jubouri" cited from a book (Robertson/the print of 1920): "Ibn Muqla invented a new measuring system based upon dots".[28]

Here, "Fa'daili" attributes the laying of line measurement by dots to "Ibn al-Bawwab", while "Dr. Jalal As'ad" supports "Hamid Allah ibn al-Shaikh" (died 926 H) as the person who established the dot system for line measurement. What is meant by a dot scale is the square set at the penbearer, by which the pen is used for writing line; it is also in the form of a rhombus, formed by pulling the pen downward.[29]

Greatly have dots contributed to granting an easy way to the writing of the letter and its preservation. These structures sit on the framework and get some elasticity to the way the lines move ahead, thus creating beauty and roguery that charm the eyes and calm the hearts; touching the souls. In order to protect such artistic gains, the calligraphers set certain measures for each script with the use of pen dots, so as to maintain their length and width.

4. Building (Structuring) a Classical Linear Panel:

Constructing and structuring the linear panel require the calligrapher to imagine and invent a new linear composition that combines word matching, filling of void areas, and utilization of space and dimensions; it also involves choosing the text of writing whose letters can be composed and is in harmony with this composition as a whole. The calligrapher must also treat letter forms, especially Arabic letters, with a sense of their being part of a very special artistic dimension-another name for aesthetics-meaning in forms and compositions: Apart from these lines, Arabic letters derive their artistic potential and beauty from their composition and morphological formations, their nature, and the personality of the Arabic line itself; this gives it identity and uniqueness in its morphological and aesthetic criteria that support its nature. In this spirit, Picasso stated that: "The farthest point I attempted to reach, the Islamic line had preceded me to"[30]; This point refers to the artistic motion and/or aesthetic harmony represented by:

4.1 Letters accuracy:

The writing of letters depends on the skill of the calligrapher who should be adept at writing the letters of the Arabic script and should know the gradaion to an extent, lest the letters lose their beauty and occur in their original natural form. If the overall construction of the composition is well done, the qualités fall from the hand of the calligrapher that never loses his capital in canvassing the letters into the works, and

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thus the compositions take a stunning look rendering the viewers with a great sense of relief.[31]

4.2 Balance:

It is the more important pillar of successful art-work, because the conformity of horizontal, vertical, inclined, and opposite lines is the basis of equilibrium of a painting and the success of the art-work. "If we go to the Arabic line, we will find some measurements to be passed into guidelines that will insure the artistic penalty"[32].

Balance in the position of sizes and space is perceived upon placement from a view of the face of the original of the artwork all intact with translation from distortion; thus, one of the very fine exercises for the calligrapher is to master excellent letter drawing and select a finely disposed composition for it, with the inherent flexibility and flow of the Arabic letter helping him in that.. "Within that, Arabic script subject itself to the principle of joining and separating the letters and the words".[33]

Therefore, this very principle is one of the most difficult ones confronting the calligrapher in producing calligraphic compositions.

4.3 Fill in the blanks:

In filling the blanks in the art table that distort and weaken the work of art, the calligraphers had to devise a number of forms, namely: (thefica, damma, adzfara...), besides joining two or more dots into one place to fill the blank. The calligraphers showed great ingenuity in doing the artworks, as they coupled lines in perfect harmony to feel the intense ecstasy resulting from suceeding against the odds from fear.

4.4 Rhythm:

Rhythm is among the most important distinguishing characteristics in Islamic art. It has sincere effect on the general situation or scene in the painting. It increases the allotted balance between the objects, complimenting the aesthetics, feeling, and perception of the recipient. Rhythm in the art of Arabic calligraphy depends on symmetry, antisymmetry, and transformation, on a smooth and geometrical line, on diversity and distribution of spaces of units, and on the distribution of the script among all these elements). More or less, pieces of art are characterized by several rhythms making them diversified from another, fresh from another, and renovated in form from another.

4.5 Distribution of surfaces:

The distribution and balance of spaces in a harmonious manner has an essential effect on the final composition of the painting; such in stable embark of sight upon the calm and peaceful spirit of the sights, hence should consider the calligrapher the following main points in the distribution of spaces:[34]

- The number of spaces within the boundaries of the work or the linear composition.

- Relative sizes of areas to each other and the entire linear composition.

- Situations of areas with respect to each other - for instance, areas could be close or far away.

- Form of the area itself; it can either be geometric or confused.

From all these points, we may conclude to build an unblemished and complete design that gathers all the components to make a successful linear work.

4.6 Extension and expansion:

A.Reaching out (vertical expansion):

It is called or fingers, and it is meant to say that a letter can be simply extended vertically, with the possibility of controlling

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its length or shortness, thereby establishing pleasant artistic harmony and rhythm. These verticals are basically called, among others:" ل ,أ, and verticals of ط and ظ". We cannot call a hand good or complete unless its parts are upright and its "ل" long, which gives us the feeling of something forces ascending towards the skies, whereas it has a more dynamic vibe than the horizontal, which is always connected to static and silence.

B.Horizontal extension:

Is known by the term "al-inbassat". It is the horizontal extension of parts of letters such as "ك , ص,س ,ي "... It is also called "al-estiwaa" meaning drawing parts of letters on a baseline over which the letters neither project nor descend, thus increasing the perception of security attached to these letters. This causes horizontal balance or repetition of letters to develop relations that generate various rhythms, depending on the degree of difference among these letters concerning their thickness, length, and position as well as their closeness or distance.[35]

4.7 Rotation:

Also called "curvature," as the letters take the shape of a semi-circle, irrespective of whether they are concave for the letter or convex for the letter, defining that is one of the principal qualities of a soft script. We see it plainly in the letters:" ,ج, خ ,ح ,غ , ع ص ,ش ,س and ق ,ض and ن… Whenever the curved and arched lines follow each other, they stir feelings of periodic movements marked with vital dynamics. We should not place letters that resemble each other in dimensions, shapes, and directions of movement; it dries the formation and gives it an impression of boredom, while contrasting the letterforms and allowing some of their positions to vary will give richness to the formation and create a sense of diversity.

Orthographic style itself depends on the patterning of letterforms, including lines and dots; on shape and size; and ultimately on the basic copy from which the entire alphabet was realized. And, of course, within this concern, the letterform is considered to be the primary contributor to rhythm.

4.8 The Rubberization:

Here, we have the soft concave letters, and by theft, it implies that those letters are able to increase in their dimensions and length compared to the typical sizing of "ر, د, هـ, و" words. Usually, the lumbering involves large sweeping gestures, roundings, or curve actions being applied on the stems of letters. Some calligraphers sometimes elongate the end of letters of some words to symbolize the shape of the boat and then lay out and intertwine the rest of the letters of the text in continues complementary shapes of the boat.

4.9 Al-Tazweed (squared designs):

It is a feature of the "Kufi style" of font wherein the characters or words are drawn in the forms of geometries with angles: square, rectangle, rhombus, and hexagon. Each word is not bound to rise with all its letters from one straight horizontal line as in the normal positioning of words; instead, the horizontal lines of each word bend and change direction to conform to the geometric shape in which it is being written and fills it.

4.10 Interlocking and overlapping:

This is a property unique to the Arabic script. Usually, the vertical letters, like "أ" and "ل", interlock so their heads will engage in a visual, almost architectural dialogue, turning the letters into design components in their own right. The overlap property or interlocking property requires, for instance, words with similar endings so that several words will appear as one.

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4.11 The movement:

It is well-known that Arabic calligraphy is a moving entity, even when it appears to be still, due to curvature and flexibility. Arabic characters and their parts, as such, are abstract lines that are straight and flexible: horizontal, vertical, curved, arched, or inclined. That is to say, the combinations of those letters with different modes and degrees of joining, separating, contrasting, and harmonizing with them produce an illusion of movement; straight and curved lines of calligraphy provide dissimilar feelings of movement: Curved lines seem to move faster than straight lines. The varied directions of movement of the letters are also diversified as to the speed of their movement.

4.12 The whiteboard:

-In sowing of diacritical marks on On letters for correct reading, the eminent scholar "Al-Khalil Bin Ahmad Al-Farahidi" early in the "Abbasid period" having devised the things thereabove and therebelow so as to indicate fatha"َ", kasra "ِ", dhamma "ُ", and sukun "ْ". [36]

4.13 White dots:

- In Arabic letters, there are wells in their eyes such as in (ع and غ) and there are others in their fireplaces in the letters (و, م, ف, ق, ه, ص); these openings are called the openings of the white. They go along well with the magnitude of each letter, and the openings of the letters constitute a great contribution to their richness in line formation and imparting a certain rhythm and beautiful resonance to it.

5. Zakmout Mohammed Chellali, calligrapher:

Calligrapher "Zakmout Mohammed Chellali" was born on 26 February 1967 in the commune of "Ain Maabad", Wilaya of Djelfa, known by his artistic name "El Ainy". He was a self-taught artist, with a beginning that was first oriented toward the various forms of painting in 1987, and he has realized many paintings. Then influenced by the Turkish artist "Mohamed Sami Effendi", he began practicing Arabic calligraphy in the early 1990s and was also influenced by calligraphers "Muthanna Al-Abidi" and "Abbas Al-Baghdadi", whose works include the writing and decoration inside the "Si Ahmed Ben Cherif" mosque in the center of Djelfa. There is also an imitation piece by him of the master "Mohamed Sami Effendi". (Private interview with the calligrapher)

He participated in many national and international exhibitions and salons where he won the first encouragement prize in the 11th edition of the Arabic Calligraphy Festival held in "El Madia" (Algeria) from December 12 to 15, 2022.

6. Artwork analysis:



The panel of the Algerian calligrapher Zakmout Mohamed Chelali (Imitating the calligrapher: Sami Muhammad Effendi)

6.1 Description:

Work of art wherein the sixth (06) ayah of the disjointed letters Surah "As-Saff" (The Ranks) was inscribed from the Quran stating:

﴿ وَمُبَشِّرًۢا بِرَسُولٍ يَأْتِي مِنۢ بَعْدِى ٱسْمُهُۥٓ أَحْمَدُ ﴾ الصف: ٦

The length of the frame is 80 cm and its width 60 cm, so it is a vertical rectangle; the calligraphic inscription had to be read from the bottom to the top. It was executed in 2016 on a fret cut paper (brown color) with the letters written in gold ink in "Thuluth style"; the pen width was 12 mm.

6.2 Analysis:

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Such calligraphy works into art are among the utmost conditions for sacred beauty in Islamic aesthetics. The first impression gives the receiver some sort of visual rest as the letters are transformed into living beings imbued with this spiritual aesthetic breath to signify it visually. The Arabic calligraphy, specially the “Naskh” and “Thuluth” types of calligraphy, transformed this magical vision and spiritual-aesthetic dimension into its manifestation in the Qura'nic copies, especially in the clear writings, called “jalia” because they are clear and well readable from a distance. The first calligrapher to write in “Thuluth jail” was “Mustafa Haqqi” while living in Istanbul in between the years 1880-1945. He inherited the art of calligraphy from his ancestors and was the first to develop the “Thuluth jail” style because his time was a period when the “Thuluth” was written in a regular manner by the pen-working calligraphers.

Whenever one meditates on works rendered in “jali Thuluth”, there arises a kind of respect and love, and with this feeling, one is carried away by aesthetic sense. It is true that every letter occupies its position with mathematical precision, giving a feeling of balance and harmony; therefore, it will either be solid and inflexible or mixed and chaotic. Hence, inside the canvas of “jail”, the letter has a double meaning and an awe-inspiring effect: to express power and dignity and to convey meaning, especially since it is an artistic element in its own right. There are letters in some of these “jalis” whose severe curves and lines intertwine and interlace; sometimes they leave behind equal spacing and areas measured by the divine proportion, as if these spaces expand and contract, intertwining in a visual relation that resembles a silent dance on a vast platform where they seem to join the text in expressing its magnitude. We also saw this phenomenon in the works of the contemporary calligrapher, the Sheikh of Calligraphers...”Hamid-aitash-amdi” 1891-1982, known as “Hamid” Effendi, who is generally regarded as the last link in the chain of Turkish calligraphers descending from the family of “Hamd Allah al-Amasi”. The text of the rest of the ayah is as follows:

ومبشرا: This word extends from the right of the panel to the left, thus forming the base of the panel. The letter "و" was stretched with a horizontal stroke to fill the base's empty space. The ascender of letter "ب" was raised to meet the shoulder of the upright "ل", and its measure was taken from the height of the "س". The middle of the "ب" with the "س" is not circular but rather lifted and inclined toward the "س" ascender so as not to be confused with what follows: two circular ascenders of the "س", thereby suggesting a beautiful harmony. Then the merged letter "ر" was written with a flowing motion; underneath it, there was the signature of the calligrapher and the year of execution, while its tail landed on the left of the "أ", thus completing the linking of the word's letters and the formation of the base.

برسول: In the second row of composition, the word "برسول" is written with a grade in the letter "ب" as it comes behind a set joined with the two following letters; the "و" was sent to cut the following "ل," and the "ل" standing on the base is characterized by the precision of its rotation, the elegance of its flow, and strict adherence to the golden rule, being lowered by two-thirds before going up and rotating by one-third, with its tip heading towards the top of its vertical leg, which is confirmed by the direction of the tip of the "ن" that is assimilated.

يأتي: The letter "ي" was written, whereas the one which was attached to it at the base of the composition came before a free "ت" which had its head bearing one tooth and then a "ي" joining that harm in "أ". The tooth slid in from its right side and slammed down on it with the palm of his hand which had joined in with the "ي", then the shoulder of the "ي" went back towards his right and reclined to rest on the first tooth of the "ي", cutting through one more "أ". It sisters this glue with an equal measure of grasping, as

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the "ل" had done before, and this composite binding expresses, in its aesthetic form, strength, unity, and balance.

من: Beginning of the third line in the building, where the letter "م" forms a triangular shape, with "ن" being caught flowing with much outrage into the depths of the "ع" of the group, and the tail rising cutting through the "ب" to stand calmly at the beginning of the doorway of the "ع".

بعدي: The blasted "ب" joined the tooth, and "ب" carried the letter "ع" in single form in an elegant heresy in drawing a clear eyebrow in the middle of the panel as though it was pointing at the heart of the panel as the sole letter in that form; its rotation ascends towards the connected "د" and directs its tail towards its head in confirmation of the direction of the preceding "ي" tail drawn underneath it, thus outlining the panel. The "ي" coordinates with the head of the "د" addressed to it and passes underneath the "ع" eyebrow without hiding its angle; angles are one of the most beautiful places in letter twisting and are considered stations for changing the direction of the letters, much like elbows with respect to arms. The "ي" then travels on to rest atop the crown of the "م", cutting through the left side of the panel to the right, while the rest of the lit words shadowed this line and linked the two.

اسمه: The ones, "أ" the way up to thirty of them, were cut through by the letter "س" because they belonged to it. Then it made a turn to join the inverted "م" with "tanṣīl", ending with "ه" "al-mudgham". In contrast, the tail of the latter settled in the bosom of "ي" stretched from left to right on the line preceding it.

أحمد: Atop the panel sat the name "Ahmed" (may peace and blessings be upon him), standing a thousand praises. The letter "أ" to form the vertical stood one-third of the whole structure, opposite another vertical, the stem for letter "د", occupying one third of its left half, while the dependent letter atop the "أ" is the head of the "خ". After it follows "م", then letter "د" joined, together forming an arcuate word at the top of the composition, then completing the shape with their power and strong cohesion.

6.3 Points :

Concerning the dotting of letters "ب" and "ش" in the word (مبشرا), the dots were issued circularly and not squarely, just so that space is left for the "م" of the sign, with a preference of equality in number and shape between the two right-side dots; and if the dots of the "ش"are stretched horizontally, they would not be attributable to any other letter but theirs. It is the same for the two dots behind the letter "ت" of the word (يأتي), while the rest of the dots stick to their letters with their four-square shapes.

6.4 Form :

Dealing with the balance of letters and the use of any kind of space gave the whole painting a certain balance in its construction; the smallest detail in the way eggs, dots, and movements were applied in the painting stands out as accurately executed, with each one leaning at the same inclination and with every placement agreed upon. Applying the letters within their rules and measures gave the painting its beauty and shine; the words display, through their precision, the beauty of their construction as if the calligrapher wrote them individually before composing them into their final form; horizontally and vertically, this resulted in straight lines represented by the letter Alif with all its lengths and thicknesses held in unison; to confirm the parallelism, one should place the painting at eye level and gaze at it from the four sides for inspection. Subsequently, the rule or line consisting of the word "مبشرا" (offering good news) would appear clearly as a base for the panel; then there are three "arakāt" in the "ر", the "ل", and the "ي" of "يأتي" (comes); in the center of the panel stands the "araka" of the "ع"; then comes the "araka" of the "ي", confirmed by the lengthening of "إسمه" (his name); and at the summit of the panel is "أحمد" (Ahmad).

7. *CONCLUSION*

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In this research work, we have considered a fine art Islamic art in line with caligraphy as an inert thought and beautified being holding the line forms and design into different variations. The Arabic line is a means of communication in Arab societies whose spirit is largely borne by the Islamic world from the concepts given to the world from teachings of the Holy Quran and from the sayings of the Holy Prophet. In Arabic writing and script, this exalted virtue beheld great importance; hence the Arab letters became sacred within the very hearts of the Muslim artists. Accordingly, the artists were given the name of "Artists of Line" in Arabic, lifting their art form to the highest ranks of recitation, invention, and beauty, especially in writing verses of the Quran. As far as its anthropological and philosophical dimensions are concerned, philosophers and thinkers have dealt with it from its aesthetic perspective : there appeared to be a diversity of decorative productions throughout all the Islamic periods which have undergone considerable artistic and aesthetic transformations, interspersed with the accumulation of artistic experiences and skills, which led to the establishment of basic features and peculiarities for the arts of Arabic calligraphy. With a keen look at what has been achieved through all the phases of human civilization up to this day, we can confirm beauty, for Arabic calligraphy is fertile, never barren, and generous, never stingy, for whosoever has had inspiration with native artistic power that reflects Arab-Islamic culture and history has greatly contributed to revealing incessant awareness along with bonding with the elements of nature.

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