

The Maghribi Mushaf as a Cultural Tradition of Moroccan People and its Relevance from Occasional Times

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ABSTRACT

The Maghreb manuscripts have great cultural significance and are a valuable component of the nation's heritage. They are considered to represent Morocco's rich cultural heritage and provide an in-depth perspective on the history and culture of the country.. As time goes by, many of these mushafs have been abandoned because with advanced technology, Moroccan people can easily read the Koran digitally without using traditional mushafs. This research is a qualitative descriptive study . The research design used is a library research design where the data sources for this research are national and international books and journals, as well as other library sources. Research techniques are carried out using documentation, namely looking for data about a thing or variable in the form of books, articles and journals. Activities in data analysis include data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. The results of this research show that the differences between the Maghreb Mushaf and other Al-Quran editions lie in the script and pronunciation, along with a few more words, graphic variations/basic letters, and vowel variants. To read the Mushaf of the Maghreb, one must know the script, understand how to pronounce it, enroll in a Koran school, hear recitation, and practice frequently. By using this strategy, a person can become a better reader and understand the Koran more deeply. Use of the Maghreb Script Evolved Over Time The Maghreb can be traced back to its creation during the Islamic invasion and its subsequent devolution and refinement under several sultans. Maghreb manuscripts are currently preserved and digitized in large numbers, and this provides an invaluable learning opportunity for academics and researchers. The implication of the results of this research is that reading the Koran using a traditional mushaf does not mean backwardness, but is part of preserving culture and following the guidance taught by the Prophet Muhammad.

Keywords: Maghribi Mushaf , Cultural Tradition of Moroccan People, Relevance

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INTRODUCTION

Over the past 50 years, since the 1970s until now, Islamic education in Morocco has seen substantial transformation. Traditional Islamic schools, also referred to as Qur'ānic kuttābs, have repositioned themselves in the educational market to appeal to parents who want to instill traditional values and culture in their children while also making sure they receive a cutting-edge education that will propel them to success and economic advancement as adults. The teaching of the Quran and other Islamic topics is a major function of traditional Islamic schools, which are an integral element of Morocco's educational system. The field has experienced tremendous modernization recently, and studies on the origins and growth of Islamic education in Morocco are still being conducted.

Islamic studies are offered in a number of Moroccan universities and madrasas in addition to these. There are bachelor's, master's, and doctorate degree programs available. Islamic law, Islamic culture, the Quran, and Islamic history are among the topics covered in the studies. Graduates of Moroccan degrees in Islamic studies have employment opportunities in academia, research, and religious organizations. Morocco is home to a number of universities, institutes, and madrasas that teach Islamic studies. The courses provided span a wide range of Islamic-related topics, and graduates have a variety of career options.

There are several Quran schools in Morocco that offer Islamic education. Here are some of the best Quran schools in Morocco based on the available search results like Ibn Ghazi Arabic Institute, Qarawiyyin University, Subus-Asalam Center and others.¹ It is essential to remember that the top Quran school in Morocco may differ based on personal requirements and interests. It's advised to investigate and contrast several Quranic schools before to choosing one.

The duration of Quranic courses in Morocco varies depending on the institution and program. The duration of Quranic courses in Morocco varies depending on the institution and program. Some institutions offer three-week courses, while others offer three-year programs. It is recommended to research the specific institution and program to find out the duration of the Quranic courses².

The Maghribi Mushaf is a style of writing the Koran that has been used in the Maghrib region (which includes Morocco) throughout history. The Maghribi Mushaf hold great cultural significance and are an integral component of the country's legacy. Historical relevance is the first justification. Manuscripts from the Maghreb offer important insights into Moroccan history and culture. They provide details about Moroccan politics, religion, and social mores, among other facets of Moroccan society. Knowledge preservation is the second justification. For ages, information has been preserved and transmitted via the usage of Maghreb manuscripts, which are a valuable source of knowledge. They include knowledge on a variety of topics, including as science, literature, and Islamic law. There's also another explanation, which is restoration work. In Morocco, considerable efforts have been made to save and repair Maghreb manuscripts. In order to make the manuscripts more accessible, the restoration process has entailed scanning the manuscripts and replacing any damaged pages with replicas. Research possibilities might also serve as a justification in this case. Scholars and researchers have a plethora of study options with Maghreb manuscripts. They may be used to study a broad range of disciplines, including Islamic law, literature, and science, and they provide insights into the history and culture of Morocco. Cultural heritage is the final justification. Because of their historical and cultural importance, Maghreb manuscripts are prized as a significant component of Morocco's cultural legacy. They are highly valued by Moroccans and serve as a

¹ Ahmed Waleed S. 2014. A Guide for Studying Arabic and Quran in Morocco. MuslimMatters.org : Morocco
<https://muslimmatters.org/2014/01/31/guide-studying-arabic-quran-morocco/>

² <https://www.moroccodemia.com/en/islamic-studies-in-morocco/>

significant emblem of their rich cultural history³⁴⁵.

In summary, Moroccan manuscripts hold great cultural significance and constitute a valuable component of the nation's legacy. They are valued as a representation of Morocco's rich cultural legacy and give insightful perspectives into the country's history and culture. They also help to conserve information and provide chances for study.

As time went by, these mushafs slowly began to be abandoned due to advances in technology. Moroccan people can easily read the Al-Quran digitally using the gadgets they own without using a traditional mushaf. The reason is because it is more flexible, easy to read anywhere and anytime.

Several previous studies have studied Maghreb manuscripts, such as the results of Rohmah's research, the study was more about comparing Maghreb manuscripts with manuscripts in Indonesia⁶, as well as research conducted by Bongianino which also examined several thoughts about Maghreb script and manuscripts in Mashriq⁷. As for this research, it does not examine differences but rather emphasizes the relevance of this mushaf so that it remains relevant to developments in an increasingly sophisticated era with technology. This research is important because maintaining the relevance of this mushaf means preserving traditional culture in Morocco. If the culture in an area is lost, this will also be followed by the loss of the region's identity. The aim of this research is to find out the Maghribi Mushaf as a cultural tradition of Moroccan people and its relevance from occasional times.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is descriptive qualitative research. This research method is to explain the content of certain material, information or readings in detail and also in depth⁸. The discussion in this article uses a library research design where the data sources of this research are books and national and international journals, and other library sources. And in this study, data collection was obtained from books and online journals.

The steps in library research are as follows: topic selection / choosing a topic, information exploration / searching for research documents, determining research focus, collecting data sources, preparing data presentation and preparing reports.

The research technique is done with documentation, which is looking for data about things or variables in the form of books, articles and journals, as well as other library sources.

³ Mohamed Bencherifa, 'The Conservation of Manuscripts in Morocco', in *The Conservation and Preservation of Islamic Manuscripts: Proceedings of the Third Conference of Al-Furqan Islamic Heritage Foundation, 18th-19th November 1995*, 1996, pp. 21–27.

⁴ Jocelyn Hendrickson, 'A Guide to Arabic Manuscript Libraries in Morocco, with Notes on Tunisia, Algeria, Egypt, and Spain', *MELA Notes*, 81, 2008, 15–88.

⁵ LPHM Buskens, 'Paper Worlds. A Nesrani Ethnographer Entering the Manuscript Trade in Morocco', *Pratiquer Les Sciences Sociales Au Maghreb. Textes Pour Driss Mansouri*, 2014, 239–65.

⁶ Hajar Nur Rohmah, 'KAJIAN RASM AL-QUR'AN (Perbandingan Antara Mushaf Standar Indonesia Dan Mushaf Maroko)', 2020 <<http://e-repository.perpus.uinsalatiga.ac.id/8200/>> [accessed 1 November 2023].

⁷ Umberto Bongianino, 'Vehicles of Cultural Identity: Some Thoughts on Maghribi Scripts and Manuscripts in the Mashriq', *Studies in the History and Culture of the Middle East*, 2021, 455.

⁸ Michelle Newhart and Mildred L. Patten, 'Understanding Research Methods: An Overview of the Essentials', 2023

<https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=EaS_EAAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PT9&dq=This+research+method+is+to+explain+the+content+of+certain+material,+information+or+readings+in+detail+and+also+in+depth&ots=zov3v_i7J-&sig=ovHmOSWub9FkF73YxPSCG3sMSWw> [accessed 23 October 2023].

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

History of the Maghribi Mushaf

A collection of Arabic characters known as the Maghrebi script, which originated in North Africa, is used to write the Quran in Mushaf Maghribi. The Maghrebi script can be traced back directly to the ancient Kufic script, which existed before Ibn Muqla's modifications to the al-khat al-mansub (proportioned line) standards that had an impact on the Mashreqi scripts. Arabic manuscripts and records of Andalusí and Moroccan literature, whether in Classical Arabic, Maghrebi Arabic, or Amazigh languages, were written in Maghrebi script for centuries. The Mushaf Maghribi is distinguished from other Quranic translations, such the Masyariqah, by its unique calligraphy⁹.

The history of the Quran's composition is intimately tied to that of Mushaf Maghribi. While the Prophet Muhammad did identify specific Quranic verses and sura titles, historical records indicate that he never assembled the entire Quran in a single copy. The arrangement of the suras in the Quran and its compilation with individual suras were completed by the Prophet's companions following his death. Following the Prophet's passing, each of the companions started to assemble their own Quranic manuscript, leading to the creation of numerous mushafs, or manuscripts. The prevalence of conflicting Quranic manuscripts among Muslims was the impetus for the compilation of the Mushaf Maghribi. Following the assembly of the Mushaf Maghribi, other mushafs or manuscripts were destroyed at the command of Uthman¹⁰.

The text of the Quran has not changed much throughout the centuries, even in spite of the creation of several mushafs. It is believed that 'Uthman, the third of the four Rightly Guided Caliphs, developed the final codified consonantal form of the Quran during his rule. One of the rare copies of the Quran that has survived and is still in use today is the Mushaf Maghribi¹¹.

The Difference Between Mushaf Maghribi and Other Quran Editions

The Maghrebi script, a family of Arabic scripts that originated in North Africa, is used to write the Quran in the distinctive Mushaf Maghribi variant. The writing and pronunciation are where Mushaf Maghribi and other Quran versions diverge most. The following are some of the variations between different Quran editions and Mushaf Maghribi.:

1. Script

Unlike other scripts like the Kufic script, Mushaf Maghribi is written in the Maghrebi script. The entire curves of the thin, spidery lines of the Maghrebi script fall significantly below the text line¹².

2. Pronunciation

The way the Quran is spoken differs according to the qira'at, or recitation. Mushaf Maghribi is mostly utilized in North Africa, based on the version delivered by Imam Warsh. There are minor pronunciation distinctions between Mushaf Maghribi and the Hafs version of the Quran, which is the one that is most widely used.

3. Extra words

There are some extra words in the Hafs version that are not present in Mushaf Maghribi. For example, the Hafs version has the extra word "waw" in some verses.

4. Graphical/Basic Letter Differences

The letters utilized in Mushaf Maghribi and other Quranic versions differ in a few ways. For instance, in certain Quranic editions, the letter "faa" is represented by a circle with a dot above,

⁹ Anouk Cohen, 'Exporter «l'islam Marocain»', *AFRIQUE (S)*, 16.

¹⁰ Amer Aglan, 'Moroccan Mus' Haf at Abi Mohamed Al-Morjani Mosque in Tunisia-First' <<https://aaciaegypt.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Moroccan-Mushaf-at-Abi-Mohamed-Al-Morjani-Mosque-in-Tunisia-first-published.pdf>> [accessed 23 October 2023].

¹¹ Ekhtiar, Maryam & Cohen, Julia. 2014. Early Qur'ans (8th–Early 13th Century). The Met Fifth Avenue : New York

¹² Ekhtiar, Maryam & Cohen, Julia. 2014. Early Qur'ans (8th–Early 13th Century). The Met Fifth Avenue : New York

whereas in Mushaf Maghribi, it is represented by a circle with a dot below.

5. Vowel Differences

The vowels utilized in Mushaf Maghribi and other Quranic versions differ in a few ways. For instance, the term "maliki" is pronounced as "Owner of the Day" in the Hafs version, while in Mushaf Maghribi, it is pronounced as "King of the Day"¹³.

In conclusion, the script and pronunciation, together with a few more words, graphical/basic letter variations, and vowel variances, are the primary distinctions between Mushaf Maghribi and other Quran versions.

There are two distinct versions of the Quran: the Abu Bakr mushaf and the Maghribi mushaf. The Abu Bakr mushaf was written on a variety of surfaces, including paper, fabric, leather, and broken bones. It was assembled during the reign of Caliph Abu Bakr. Umar ibn al-Khattab felt worried when 70 Quran memorizers were slain during the Battle of Yamama and urged Abu Bakr to gather the Quran into a book. Zaid ibn Thabit, a prominent scribe, led a group that Abu Bakr assembled. The twelve members of this delegation, which included well-known individuals like Saleem, Hudhaifah, Ali ibn Abi Talib, Talha ibn Ubaydullah, Abdullah ibn Masood, Ubayy ibn Kab, Khalid ibn al-Walid, and Uthman ibn Affan, assembled in Umar's home and gathered all the materials used to write verses from the Quran on. They also heard the passages that the companions had committed to memory, and for each verse they recited, they were required to provide two witnesses¹⁴¹⁵.

The Maghribi mushaf, on the other hand, is mostly utilized in North Africa and is based on Imam Warsh's qira'a. There are five major categories of discrepancies between these two Qur'anic texts. Extra words, graphical/basic letter variances, vowel differences, diacritical differences, and Basmalah distinctions are some examples of these variations. The first line of each sura, with the exception of sura 9, in both the Hafs and Warsh Qur'ans is the phrase "In the Name of Allah, the Ever-Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy," or the Basmalah. Though the Basmalah is included in each of these Qur'ans, its interpretations are significantly diverse. Arabic indicates part of a word's vowels with tiny symbols (tashkil) above and below the letters; the vowels in these two Qur'ans are not used in the same order¹⁶.

Moroccan Maghrebi Mushaf Reading Techniques



Figure 1. Maghribi Mushaf

¹³ Samuel Green, 'The Different Arabic Versions of the Qur'an', *Answering Islam. Last Modified March, 7 (2016)* <https://religion.antropo.es/estudios/seminario/materiales/Green.Samuel_The-different-arabic-versions-of-the-Quran.pdf> [accessed 23 October 2023].

¹⁴ Gilchrist, John. 2018. *The Quran: The Scripture of Islam*, Chapter 5: The Compilation of the Text of the Quran. <https://truthnet.org/islam/Qurangil5.html>

¹⁵ Ekinci, Ekrem Buğra. 2017. *History of the compilation of Quran*.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/feature/2017/06/02/history-of-the-compilation-of-quran>

¹⁶ Green.

Mushaf Maghribi is a special form of the Quran written in the Maghrebi alphabet. There are several ways to read it. These methods will help you read Mushaf Maghribi. **First**, get familiar with the script. Unlike other scripts, like the Kufic script, the Maghrebi script is unique. Consequently, before reading Mushaf Maghribi, it is crucial to become familiar with the script. There are a number of print and web resources that can assist in learning the script. **The second**, specifically, be aware of the pronunciation. The way the Quran is spoken differs according to the qira'at, or recitation. Mushaf Maghribi is mostly utilized in North Africa, based on the version delivered by Imam Warsh. Thus, before reading Mushaf Maghribi, it's crucial to grasp how to pronounce it. **The third** is attend a Quran school. Enrolling in a Quranic school is an excellent way to develop your reading abilities. A pen and tablet are typically used in Moroccan madrassahs to assist pupils in memorization of the Quran. Attending one of these institutions is the best choice if memorization is the desired outcome. Then **the fourth** is listen to recitations. Reading comprehension can be improved by listening to Quranic recitations. Quranic recitations are available on a number of websites and applications. And **the last** is practice regularly, Reading Mushaf Maghribi demands consistent practice, just like any other ability. It's critical to dedicate time each day for reading practice ¹⁷.

To sum up, in order to read Mushaf Maghribi, one must become familiar with the script, grasp how to pronounce it, enroll in a Quranic school, hear recitations, and practice frequently. By using these strategies, one can become a better reader and comprehend the Quran on a deeper level.

The Use of the Maghreb Script Evolved Over Time

The early Kufic angular scripts utilized by the Muslim Maghribi peoples are where the Maghribi script first began to take shape. The development of the use of the Maghreb script from time to time is one of **the first stages** is During the Islamic conquest, between 661 and 750 CE, the Maghreb (North Africa), Al-Andalus (modern-day Iberia), and Sudan evolved the Maghribi script. It was inspired by Kufic calligraphy and is often drawn with a pointed tip in brown ink, producing a uniformly thick line with flat vowels. **The next stage** is the devolution stage. Sultan Muhammad III's reign saw a switch in writing to the unclear and unreadable Badawi script, which is more common in rural regions. Enhancement: During Sultan Suleiman's reign, the script saw improvements in cities, especially Meknes, the capital. In the meanwhile, several rural places like Dukāla, Beni Zied, and al-Akhmas excelled in the Maghrebi alphabet, while Rabat and Salé kept certain aspects of the Andalusian script. **The third stage** is preservation in the form of In Morocco, considerable efforts have been made to save and repair Maghreb manuscripts. In addition to replacing damaged pages with duplicates and scanning the manuscripts to make them more accessible, the restoration process. And **the final stage** is Research. The manuscripts from Maghreb provide an abundance of research. Scholars and researchers have a plethora of study options with Maghreb manuscripts. They may be used to learn about Islamic law, literature, science, and other disciplines, and they provide insights into Morocco's history and culture¹⁸. As for the existence of technology that is eroding local culture, the results of research conducted by M'kadem and Nieuwenhuysen stated that this user study came to the conclusion that although the public appreciates the possibility of a digital library for manuscripts (on-or offline), they hesitate to use them simply because they fear losing valuable and rewarding human interaction with private owners manuscript collection.¹⁹

Finally, the evolution of the Maghribi script may be traced back to its creation during the Islamic invasion and its subsequent devolution and refinement under several sultans. Maghreb manuscripts are being preserved and digitalized in large quantities these days, and this offers academics and researchers invaluable study opportunities.

¹⁷ Ahmed Waleed S. 2014. A Guide for Studying Arabic and Quran in Morocco. MuslimMatters.org : Morocco <https://muslimmatters.org/2014/01/31/guide-studying-arabic-quran-morocco/>

¹⁸ Nico Van den Boogert, *Some Notes on Maghribi Script*, 1989.

¹⁹ Abdelhamid Boujdad M'kadem and Paul Nieuwenhuysen, 'Digital Access to Cultural Heritage Material: Case of the Moroccan Manuscripts', *Collection Building*, 29.4 (2010), 137–41.

CONCLUSION

The Maghreb manuscripts in Morocco still maintain this tradition and use this style of writing the Koran in their religious or cultural ceremonies. The use of a Maghribi Mushaf reflects respect and devotion to the Koran, which is Islam's holy book. For many Moroccans, the Maghreb manuscripts also demonstrate the importance of devotion to religion and Islamic values. In order for the Maghribi Mushaf to be relevant from time to time, it can be preserved by making sustainable efforts from various parties, including society, government, academics and cultural institutions. With coordinated and sustainable actions, this uniqueness can be maintained and preserved for future generations

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