



**ARABIC WRITING IN II-VII CENTURIES AND ITS REFLECTION IN THE QUR'AN
BOOK**

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Abstract

Scholars argue that the Arabic script originated from the Nabataean script, based on several ancient inscriptions now known. Through these writings, it is possible to study the way in which the Nabatean script changed to the Arabic script and the script used to write the Holy Qur'an at the beginning of Islam. In this regard, it is necessary to get acquainted with the three most important scriptures. Two of them belong to the pre-Islamic centuries, and the third one was written in the first Hijri century. In the article, they are studied on the basis of historical tradition, and it is shown how their spelling features were reflected Uthman manuscripts.

Keywords: Holy Qur'an, Uthman Mushafi, Rasmi Khat, ancient Arabic inscriptions, Nammora inscription, Mount Usays inscription, Cairo inscription, Tashkent Mushafi.

In recent years, special attention has been paid to studying the rich scientific heritage of our ancestors and conducting scientific research in this regard. A number of decisions taken by the President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev are a clear proof of our words.

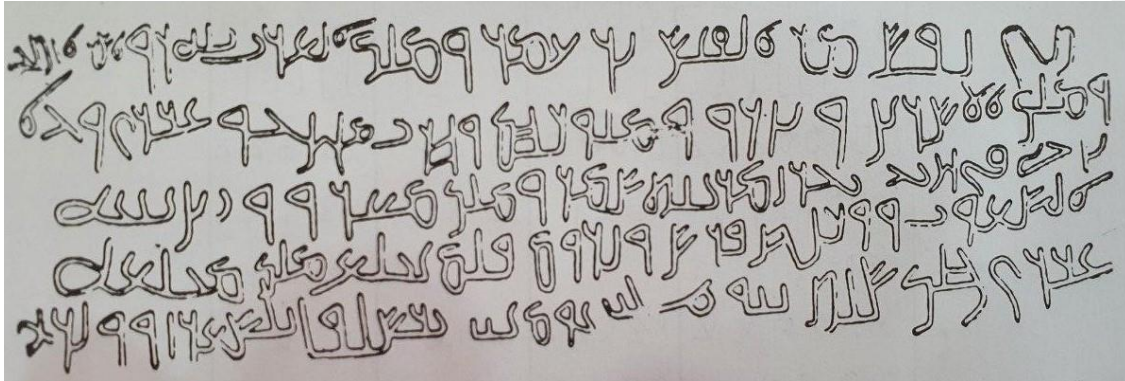
The most unique manuscript preserved in our country is the Tashkent Osman Mushafi. The universal importance of this monument, its role in studying the text of the Holy Quran is incomparable. This is because his writings are considered one of the primary sources for the study of mushaf painting letters. There are different opinions about the nature and origin of this writing, and its interpretation according to the rules of ancient Arabic spelling is recognized as the most correct interpretation by experts. This is supported by later scientific research. We aim to reveal exactly this meaning in this article.

Our discussion of the characteristics of ancient Arabic writing includes two aspects:

1. Type of letter;
2. To what extent letters represent speech sounds.

There are only a few manuscript finds known to scholars that show how the Arabic script changed from the Nabataean script to the Arabic script and the script used to write the Holy Qur'an at the beginning of Islam. In this regard, it is necessary to get acquainted with the three most important scriptures. Two of them belong to the pre-Islamic centuries, and the third one was written in the first Hijri century.

1. The inscription of Nammora. It is an inscription on the tombstone of one of the Arab kings, Imri ul-Qays, and it was named so because it was found near the place called Nammora, which belongs to Havran region in the south of Syria. It was written in 328 AD and was discovered in 1901 by French orientalist Rene Dussault and Frederic Macler.



This inscription is written in the ancient form of the Arabic script that we know today, and there is a slight difference between the words of the researchers in reading and determining the meaning of some of its words. We study it based on the interpretation presented by Ghonim Qadduri.

1. تي نفس مر القيس بر عمرو ملك العرب كله ذو أسر التج
2. وملك الأسديين ونزرو وملوكهم وهرّب محجو عكدي وجأ
3. ويزجي في حبيج نجرن مدينت شمر وملك معدو ونزل بنيه
4. الشعوب ووكلهن فرسو لروم فلم يبلغ ملك مبلغه
5. عكدي هلك سنت ٢٢٣ يوم ٧ بكسلول بلسعد ذو ولده.¹

Interpretation:

تي (هذه) نفس (ضريح) امرؤ القيس بن عمرو ملك العرب كلها الذي أسر التاج وملك (هزم) الأسديين ونزارا (قبائل عربية) وملوكهم، وهرّب مُذخج بقوته، وجاء (أي امرؤ القيس) يزجي (يقاثلها بضراوة) في حبيج نجران، مدينة شمر، وملك معد (بنو معد في اليمن) ونزل بنيه الشعوب (أي جعل أبناءه أمراء علي الشعوب) ووكلهن (أي عين أبناءه شيوخا للقبائل) فارس وروم فلم يبلغ ملك مبلغه. هلك سنة 223، يوم 7 بكسلول (كانون الأول)، فليستعد الذي ولده.

Translation: "This is the tomb of Imri ul-Qays ibn Amr, the king of all Arabs." He was crowned. He defeated the tribes of Banu Asad, Banu Nizor and their kings. He defeated Muzhaj by force. He struck them with a hammer at the threshold of Najran, the city of Shammar (or Shamir). Banu Madga also ruled. He distributed the rule of nations to his sons and was loyal to the rulers of Persia and Rome. No one in the kingdom has reached his level. He died in the year 223 on the 7th of the month of Kaslul (according to the Busra calendar, it corresponds to the 7th of October 328 AD). We wish happiness to his children."

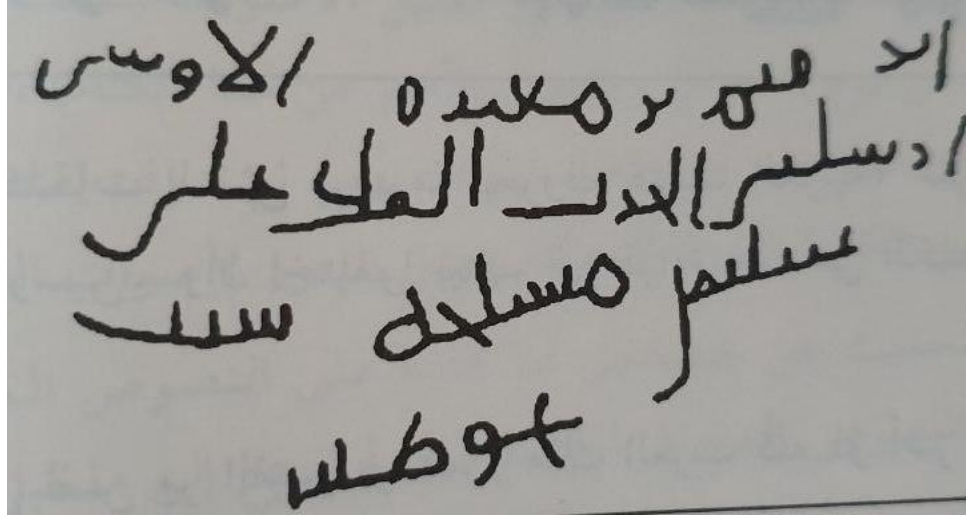
The Nammora document is an Arabic-Nabataic inscription, and its historical and lexical importance is very great. In general, it is considered the most authoritative of all the ancient Arabic writings. It reflects the point at which the Nabataean letter in the form of an Aramaic letter moved away from its essence

¹ Here, the Nammora pattern and other inscriptions were given based on Ghonim Qadduri Hamadni's work entitled "Al-Muyassar fi ilmi rosmil-mushafi va dobtih". The explanation is based on Dr. Fahd Utaybi's interpretation: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OGNWvHiKKQ0> and Modi Ibrahim's article: https://ahl-alquran.com/arabic/printpage.php?doc_type=0&doc_id=9818 done. There are also researchers who read these scriptures a little differently. For example, Saduddin Abulhab interprets the scripture in a completely different way: https://www.asharqalarabi.org.uk/markaz/m_abhath-23-10-12.htm.



and became a new Arabic letter by reflecting new properties. When it became a full-fledged Arabic script, it became a participant in a great universal event: the Holy Qur'an was written in this script for the first time.

2. Usais mountain plant. This inscription was found in 1965 by German scientists from Mount Usays, 105 kilometers from the city, on the eastern side of Damascus. The date of its writing is 528 AD. That is, it was written 200 years after the inscription of Nammora.



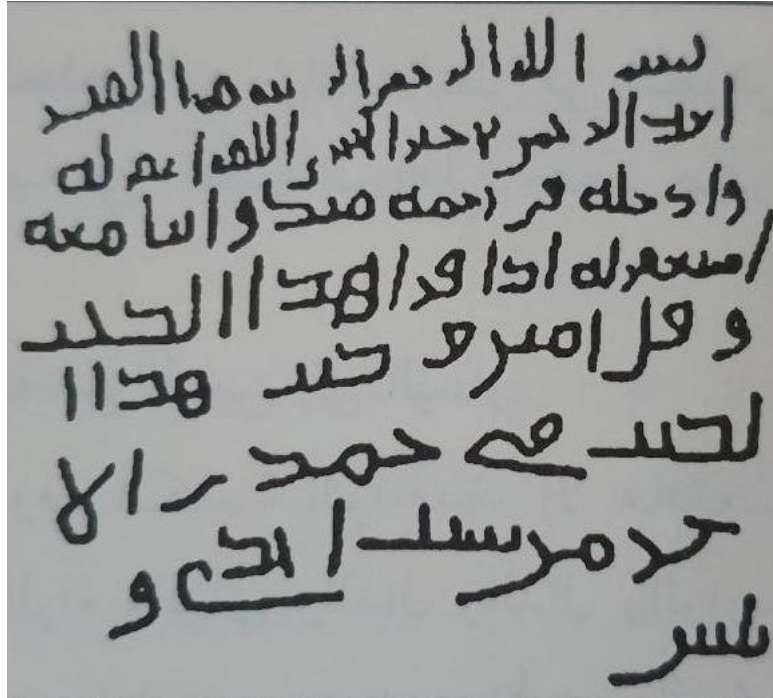
This text is written in today's letter as follows:

1. إبراهيم (إبراهيم) بن مغيرة الأوسي
2. أرسلني الحرث (الحرث) الملك علي
3. سليمان (سليمان) مسلحة سنت
4. ٤٢٣

Translation: "I am Ibrahim ibn Mughira al-Awsi". King Haris sent me armed against Solomon in 423 (according to the Nabataean calendar).

The words of this inscription are written in pure Arabic and read fluently, and tell of a war between Arab tribes. There are no fancy words in it. It contained a lot of information, despite the fact that it consisted of very short sentences. It contains an Arabic letter written a hundred years before the revelation of the Holy Qur'an.

3. Cairo document. This inscription was found on the tombstone of an Arab Muslim buried in Egypt in 1929 by Muhammad Hasan Hawari. This relic is now kept in the Museum of Islamic Sciences in Cairo. It was written on a stone measuring 38*71 cm on the date of 31 Hijri. Because it was found in the region of Aswan in the south of Egypt, it is also referred to as the "Aswan inscription" in some sources.



Here is how the inscription appears in modern Arabic script (words of uncertain reading are in parentheses):

1. بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم هذا القبر
2. لعبد الرحمن بن (خير) (الحجري) اللهم اغفر له
3. وأدخله في رحمة منك (واننا) معه
4. استغفر له إذا (قرأ) هذا الكتاب
5. وقل أمين وكتب هذا ا
6. الكتاب في جمادي الآ
7. خر من سنت إحدى و
8. ثلاثين.

Translation: "In the name of Allah, the Merciful." This grave belongs to Abdurrahman ibn Khair al-Hajri. O Allah, forgive him and enter him into Your mercy. We are with him. When this scripture is read, ask for forgiveness and say "Amen". This inscription was written in the month of Jumudilakhir in the year 31 (Hijri).

Although the meaning of this text is purely Islamic, it also expresses the characteristics of the Arabic script of the Jahiliyyah era. It was written during the caliphate of Uthman, when the Mushafs were completed.

By studying the above three texts, it is possible to identify the important features of the Arabic script during the Jahiliyyah period and the beginning of Islam. They are as follows:

1. The text is written from right to left.
2. Letters other than ا, ر, ز, د, ذ, و are added in the part of the word.



In the early stages of the Nabataean script, the letters were written separately from each other. Then gradually the letters in one word were joined together. This resulted in two situations:

a) A number of letters are written in more than one form depending on their place in the word.
b) A series of letters of different shapes started to mix with other letters. As a result, one character used to mean two speech sounds. For example, like the letters د, ر, and س. This, in turn, prompted the addition of dots to similar letters. In fact, the symbols that separate letters did not exist before Islam.

1. In the writing, vowels are not expressed, that is, actions are not put. The Holy Qur'an was written in this style of letter. Movements were invented by scholars in later times.

2. The alif is not written in the middle of the word. This can be clearly seen in some words from the Nammora inscription, three words from the Mount Usays inscription (البرهم, الحرث, سلمن) and five words from the Cairo inscription. But alifs at the end of words are always written in letters. For example, the words "حدا, واننا, دبا" in the Cairo inscription.

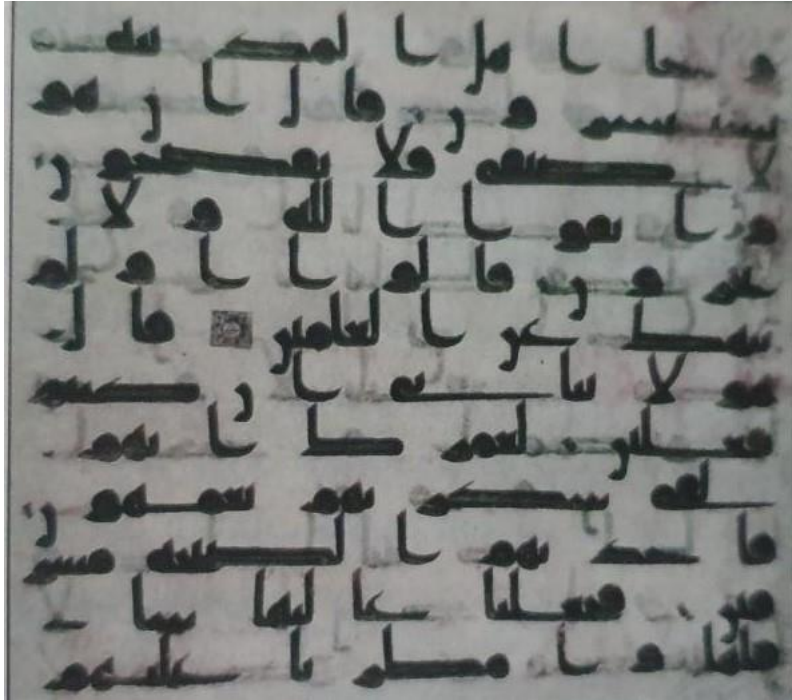
3. The letter y was sometimes used instead of alif. That is, the long ā vowel has been expressed. The word "Алы" in the inscription of Mount Usays, and the word "الحدي" in the inscription of Cairo are vivid examples of this.

4. In the inscription of Mount Usays, in the words mghira and mslha, in the words of rahmah in the inscription of Cairo, the feminine (feminine) tāsi is written with the circle tā (Ā) made from the letter hā, and in both texts the word snt is recorded with the long letter tā (t).

5. In the Cairo script, some words are written on two lines.

6. In the Nammora script, a number of nouns are written with the letter w at the end of the word, but not pronounced in speech. For example, 'mrw, nzw, m'dw. This image is widely used in Nabataean script. However, modern Arabic writing does not have this style, except for the noun عمرو, which is written with the letter w.

These characteristics of the Arabic script were also reflected in the writing of the Holy Qur'an, especially in the Mushaf khat written during the time of Uthman, may God be pleased with him. This fact can be clearly seen in the Osman Mushafi in Tashkent.



The page contains verses 67–74 of Surah Hijr:

«وَجَاءَ أَهْلَ الْمَدِينَةِ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ. قَالَ إِنَّ هَؤُلاءِ ضَيْفِي فَلَا تَفْضَحُون. وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تُخْزُون. قَالُوا أَوْلَمْ نُنْهَكْ عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ. قَالَ هَؤُلاءِ بَنَاتِي إِنْ كُنْتُمْ فَاعِلِينَ. لَعَمْرُكَ إِنَّهُمْ لَفِي سَكْرَتِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ. فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ الصَّيْحَةُ مُشْرِقِينَ. فَجَعَلْنَا عَالِيَهَا سَافِلَهَا وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ...»

On this page, the following can be seen from the writing methods of the above inscriptions:

1. The absence of dots and movements of letters;
2. Failure to write alphabets between words. This can be seen in the example of the words *العالمين* and *فاعلين*. They are written in the current spelling as *العالمين* and *فاعلين*;
3. Writing one word in two lines. For example, the words *مشروقين* and *سافلها*.
4. Other differences that are important for experts.

From this comparative analysis, it can be understood that in writing Uthman's Mushafs, the rules of *kitabāt* that were in circulation at that time were followed. From this, it should be noted that Ibn Qutayba's claim about the literacy of the Companions: "There were only a few of them who knew how to write, they could not write well, they could not express the sounds of speech correctly", was not scientifically based, but rather an assumption contrary to reality.

It is worth mentioning that the above inscriptions written by the Arabs from the period before the advent of Islam are examples of the monuments that have been found so far. Apart from these, there are Zabad, Harran, Umm Jamal and other scriptures which can be studied from the relevant sources. The discovery of such finds continues in earnest today.



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