

A Comparative Study of the Calligraphic Rules of Muhammad Shawqi and Hashim Muhammad Al-Baghdadi in the Naskh Script

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مستخلص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى إجراء مقارنة منهجية بين قواعد الخط عند اثنين من أشهر الخطاطين العرب المعاصرين، وهما محمد شوقي وهاشم محمد البغدادي، مع التركيز على معالجتهم لخط النسخ. ومن خلال منهج نوعي مقارن، تتناول الدراسة تحليل الأساليب الفنية التي اعتمدها كل منهما في تشكيل الحروف المفردة والمتراصة، وذلك في سياق تطور هذا الفن العربي الأصيل. وقد كشفت النتائج عن وجود فروق جوهرية في الأسلوب الفني بين الخطاطين؛ حيث اتسم أسلوب شوقي بطول الحروف وتعقيد أشكالها، مما جعله مناسباً لإنتاج المخطوطات ذات الجودة العالية، في حين تميز أسلوب البغدادي بالبساطة والنظام، مما جعله أكثر ملاءمة للأغراض التعليمية ونقل المهارات الخطية للمبتدئين. ورغم هذه الفروق، يشترك الخطاطان في جملة من الممارسات التربوية، من أبرزها افتتاح الدروس بالدعاء المأثور "ربِّ يسرِّ ولا تعسرِّ"، والبدء بتعليم الحروف المفردة. وتخلص الدراسة إلى أن محمد شوقي وهاشم البغدادي قد أدّيا دورين تكامليين في مسيرة تطوّر الخط العربي؛ فبينما ساهم الأول في الحفاظ على القيمة الفنية والجمالية لهذا الفن، أسهم الثاني في نشره وتيسير تعليمه على نطاق أوسع. وتوفر هذه الدراسة رؤية تحليلية معمقة للإرث الفني والتعليمي لكلا الخطاطين، ضمن الإطار العام لتقاليد الخط العربي وتطوّره المعاصر.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الخط العرب، محمد شوقي، هاشم محمد البغدادي، خط النسخ، قواعد الخط.

Abstract

This study compares the calligraphic rules of two renowned Arabic calligraphers, Muhammad Shawqi and Hashim Muhammad Al-Baghdadi, with a focus on their treatment of the Naskh script. Using a comparative qualitative approach, the research analyzes their methods for forming both isolated and connected letters. The findings highlight key stylistic differences: Shawqi favored elongated, intricate letterforms suited for high-quality manuscript production, while Al-Baghdadi employed a simplified and systematic style aimed at educational accessibility. Despite these differences, both shared pedagogical practices, such as beginning lessons with the prayer "Rabbi yassir wa la tu'assir" and starting instruction with isolated letters. The study concludes that Shawqi and Al-Baghdadi played complementary roles in the evolution of Arabic calligraphy – preserving its artistic excellence and expanding its reach through education. This analysis offers new insights into

the stylistic and instructional legacies of both figures within the broader context of Arabic calligraphic tradition.

Keywords: Arabic Calligraphy; Muhammad Shawqi; Hashim Muhammad Al-Baghdadi; Naskh Script; Calligraphic Rules

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INTRODUCTION

Arabic calligraphy is one of the most highly esteemed art forms in Islamic civilization, playing a significant role in shaping its cultural, historical, and spiritual landscape. Since its emergence, calligraphy has served not only as a medium for religious and philosophical expression but also as a cultural symbol that reflects the beauty and intricacy of the Arabic script. Among the various styles that have developed over the centuries, Naskh script occupies a central position due to its legibility, structural harmony, and suitability for transcribing the Qur'an and official documents. The evolution of Naskh mirrors the broader dynamics of Islamic art, where function, aesthetic value, and pedagogy are interwoven.

The development of Arabic calligraphy has been shaped by the contributions of numerous masters throughout history. Among them, Muhammad Shawqi and Hashim Muhammad Al-Baghdadi stand out for their significant influence on the refinement of the Naskh script. Shawqi, who lived in the 19th century and was rooted in the Ottoman artistic tradition, is known for his refined and intricate style that emphasizes precision and the spiritual dimension of writing. In contrast, Al-Baghdadi, who rose to prominence in the 20th century amid educational modernization in the Arab world, introduced a more simplified and systematic form of Naskh, making it easier to teach and disseminate within educational institutions and publishing industries.¹

Naskh gained popularity due to its simplicity and elegance. However, the application of its rules has varied widely among calligraphers. Shawqi and Al-Baghdadi represent two contrasting perspectives: the former prioritizing visual perfection and aesthetic elegance, while the latter focused on practicality, consistency, and accessibility. Although both made major contributions to the standardization of Naskh, their methods diverged considerably in aspects such as letter structure, spacing, and

¹O. Mansour and R. Netti, 'The Arabic Calligraphy. An Identifying Parameter in Space, Time and Contents', *Springer, Cham*, 2019, doi:https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-41018-6_27.

proportions.²

While there is substantial literature on Arabic calligraphy in general, most previous studies tend to focus on either Shawqi or Al-Baghdadi individually, emphasizing their stylistic characteristics or pedagogical contributions in isolation. However, there remains a lack of comparative studies that systematically examine their calligraphic methodologies particularly in how they codified and applied the rules of Naskh script. This gap in the literature limits our understanding of how these two influential figures shaped the evolution of modern Arabic calligraphy through differing artistic and pedagogical lenses.

This study addresses that gap by providing a systematic comparison of the calligraphic rules developed by Muhammad Shawqi and Hashim Muhammad Al-Baghdadi in the context of Naskh. It focuses on key elements such as letter formation, spacing, proportions, and stylistic tendencies, highlighting the similarities and differences in their respective methodologies. Moreover, the study investigates how their artistic philosophies and pedagogical frameworks continue to shape the teaching and practice of Arabic calligraphy in contemporary contexts.³

Arabic calligraphy is often regarded as a spiritual art, where the act of writing reflects the alignment of the mind and soul with the Divine. For both Shawqi and Al-Baghdadi, calligraphy was not merely a visual art but a form of devotion. Shawqi's legacy is evident in the development of the "Shawqi School," characterized by precision, fluidity, and ornamental richness, and his works served as ideal models for Qur'anic and religious manuscripts. Meanwhile, Al-Baghdadi had a transformative impact on the field of education. His simplified approach enabled faster learning and wider dissemination of the Naskh script, particularly in formal instructional settings.⁴

The evolution of Arabic calligraphy cannot be separated from the sociocultural shifts within Islamic societies. With the rise of urbanization and increasing demand for fast and efficient written communication, the need for more accessible and functional writing styles became evident. In response, Shawqi refined the artistic details of each letter to maintain the aesthetic sophistication of the script, whereas Al-Baghdadi simplified these techniques to meet educational and publishing needs. Their contrasting approaches reflect a deep understanding of calligraphy's dual role as both

²M. Ja'far and V. Porter, 'Arabic Calligraphy: Naskh Script for Beginners.', 2002 <<https://www.amazon.com/Arabic-Calligraphy-Naskh-Script-Beginners/dp/0714114995>>.

³B. A. Al-Ansari, 'Interrelated Histories, Practices, and Forms of Communication: Using Arabic Calligraphy to Learn Arabic Typography.', 2015 <<https://digital.library.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc804911/>>.

⁴Yuyun Yunita, 'The Role of Calligraphic Arts in Civilization Islamic Culture', *Ri'ayah : Jurnal Sosial Dan Keagamaan*, 7.2 (2022), p. 263, doi:<https://doi.org/10.32332/riayah.v7i2.5841>.

a visual art and a cultural instrument.⁵

The Naskh script has a long-standing history dating back to the early Islamic period. It was originally designed to enhance readability and facilitate reproduction, making it a practical alternative to earlier, more complex scripts. Over time, numerous calligraphers refined Naskh, each contributing to its stylistic and functional development. Due to its central role in Qur'anic transcription and the production of religious, literary, and administrative texts, Naskh became the dominant script across the Islamic world. In the early 20th century, Shawqi and Al-Baghdadi brought new dimensions to its application. Shawqi concentrated on perfecting the aesthetic details of each letter, making his style ideal for high-quality manuscript production. In contrast, Al-Baghdadi sought to create a more teachable and reproducible style, making Naskh accessible to a wider range of learners and practitioners.⁶

Shawqi's calligraphic work is characterized by meticulous craftsmanship and artistic complexity. His principles for writing in the Naskh style emphasized balance, fluidity, and consistency between isolated and connected letterforms. For Shawqi, calligraphy was not only about readability but also about conveying the divine message of the Qur'an through visual harmony and beauty. His detailed rules focused on proportional precision and letter spacing, producing elegant and legible script. His manuscripts became instructional models for advanced calligraphy students, and his emphasis on stroke uniformity and ornamental sophistication set a high standard for formal Arabic calligraphy.⁷

In contrast, Al-Baghdadi's approach to Naskh was more practical and pedagogically driven. While Shawqi aimed for artistic refinement, Al-Baghdadi prioritized efficiency and ease of learning. His simplified rules were designed to facilitate rapid understanding and consistent execution, particularly in school and institutional contexts. His style was less ornate but highly functional, emphasizing ease of connection between letters and minimizing flourishes. This approach proved effective for mass production and classroom instruction, especially during a time of rising literacy and demand for educational materials.⁸

Nevertheless, there remains a lack of comprehensive comparative analysis that critically examines the methodological differences and shared principles between Shawqi and Al-Baghdadi—especially in terms of how they codified, standardized,

⁵A. Naeem, A. R. Chaudhry, and B. Rajput, 'Infusion of Calligraphy in Modern World of Design. Computational Intelligence', 2021, doi:<https://doi.org/10.1109/ICCIKE51210.2021.9410790>.

⁶Haris Fadillah and M.Iqbal Irham, 'Nasakh Pembentukan Elastisitas Hukum Islam', *Rayah Al-Islam*, 6.2 (2022), pp. 261–77, doi:[10.37274/rais.v6i2.575](https://doi.org/10.37274/rais.v6i2.575).

⁷I. Gusmian, 'Kaligrafi Islam: Dari Nalar Seni Hingga Simbolisme Spiritual', *Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies*, 41.1 (2018), pp. 108–32, doi:<https://doi.org/10.14421/AJIS.2003.411.108-132>.

⁸M. Ja'far and V. Porter, *Arabic Calligraphy: Naskh Script for Beginners*, 2002 <<https://www.amazon.com/Arabic-Calligraphy-Naskh-Script-Beginners/dp/0714114995>>.

and transmitted the Naskh script. Much of the existing literature tends to study each figure in isolation, without addressing the broader artistic and cultural transformations of the 19th and 20th centuries.

By placing this comparison within the historical and socio-cultural evolution of Arabic calligraphy, the present study seeks to deepen our understanding of how artistic traditions are preserved, adapted, and passed down through generations. It also aims to illuminate the ongoing dialogue between artistic excellence and practical functionality within the field of Arabic calligraphy education.

METHOD

This study adopts a qualitative, comparative research design to analyze and compare the calligraphic rules of Muhammad Shawqi and Hashim Muhammad Al-Baghdadi, specifically focusing on their treatment of the Naskh script. The study employs a multi-step method that includes data collection from selected manuscripts and instructional texts, visual-structural analysis, pedagogical content analysis, and interviews with contemporary experts in Arabic calligraphy.

Data Collection and Sampling Criteria

Primary data include digitized manuscripts, calligraphic samples, and instructional works directly attributed to Shawqi and Al-Baghdadi. These materials were selected based on the following criteria:

1. Authenticated authorship or stylistic consistency confirmed through prior scholarly references;
2. High-resolution visual quality allowing for precise structural analysis;
3. Inclusion of both isolated and connected forms of Arabic letters in Naskh script;
4. Explicit pedagogical content or usage within instructional contexts.

The sampling process was purposive, focusing on exemplars frequently referenced in academic and pedagogical literature. Selected works are drawn from museum archives, digital repositories, and published collections. Secondary data, such as journal articles and biographical studies, are used to support contextual and interpretative analysis⁹. While spiritual perspectives¹⁰ are acknowledged, this study prioritizes literature emphasizing technical structure and pedagogy.

Visual and Structural Analysis

To evaluate the technical features of each calligrapher's style, visual analysis was conducted using a combination of manual inspection and digital measurement tools,

⁹H. Alhail and A. Azmi, 'Analisis Kaligrafi Kontemporer Dari Aspek Warna Dan Kekayaan Imajinasi Di Sanggar Al-Baghdadi.', *Visual Heritage*, 4.3 (2022), pp. 218–36, doi:<https://doi.org/10.30998/vh.v4i3.6163>.

¹⁰Gusmian, 'Kaligrafi Islam: Dari Nalar Seni Hingga Simbolisme Spiritual'.

such as Inkscape and ImageJ. The analysis focused on:

1. Letterform proportions (height-to-width ratios);
2. Stroke consistency and angle;
3. Spacing between letters and words;
4. Line alignment and balance;
5. Use of flourishes and ornamental elements.

Selected letters (alif, ba, meem, ya') were analyzed in their initial, medial, and final forms to compare execution consistency. Visual examples were compiled and annotated for presentation in the results section.

Pedagogical Content Analysis

Each calligrapher's instructional material was reviewed to extract their teaching methodology and systematization of the Naskh script. This included analysis of:

1. Sequential structure of learning materials;
2. Guidance on stroke order and proportion;
3. Accessibility for novice versus advanced learners;
4. Standardization techniques employed for broader dissemination.

Shawqi's detailed instructional system, rooted in classical Ottoman tradition, was compared with Al-Baghdadi's more modern and simplified approach designed for institutional education.

Expert Interviews

To validate and enrich the qualitative findings, semi-structured interviews were conducted with five Arabic calligraphy experts with over five years of experience and familiarity with both Shawqi's and Al-Baghdadi's techniques. Interviewees were selected via snowball sampling from professional calligraphy networks and art institutions. Themes explored included:

1. The practical application of each calligrapher's rules in modern teaching.
2. Perceptions of their influence on contemporary calligraphy standards.
3. Challenges in preserving stylistic authenticity while adapting to modern needs.

Interview transcripts were coded and analyzed thematically using NVivo software.

Data Triangulation and Synthesis

The study applies methodological triangulation by integrating:

1. Visual measurements and comparison tables.
2. Pedagogical content evaluation.
3. Expert insights from field interviews.

This triangulation enhances the validity of the findings and provides a robust framework for understanding the interplay between aesthetic tradition and pedagogical innovation in Arabic calligraphy.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The comparative analysis of Muhammad Shawqi's and Hashim Muhammad Al-Baghdadi's calligraphic rules reveals both notable differences and significant similarities in their approaches to the Naskh script. The most prominent difference lies in the complexity and style of their work. Shawqi's calligraphy is characterized by intricate details and flourishes, emphasizing perfection and high-quality manuscript production. His rules emphasize the importance of maintaining uniformity in letterforms, precise spacing, and elaborate ornamental strokes. Shawqi's approach results in calligraphy that is elegant but time-consuming to produce, requiring a high degree of skill and dedication. In contrast, Al-Baghdadi's approach is more practical, with simplified strokes and less emphasis on decorative flourishes. His rules prioritize legibility and the ease of writing, making his style more accessible for students and suitable for mass production of written texts.¹¹

Letter	Aspect	Shawqi (Measured in Nuqta)	Al-Baghdadi (Measured in Nuqta)	Observation
Alif (ا)	Height	7 nuqta	6 nuqta	Shawqi uses a taller stroke for elegance and vertical balance
Ba (ب)	Horizontal base length	5 nuqta	4 nuqta	Shawqi's stroke is longer and more curved, Al-Baghdadi's is compact
Jeem (ج)	Tail curvature	Decorative, open loop	Short, minimal tail	Shawqi includes artistic curves; Al-Baghdadi simplifies for clarity
Meem (م)	Final loop	Open and extended	Closed and geometric	Reflects ornamental vs. efficient aesthetics
Spacing	Inter-letter spacing	1.5 nuqta	1 nuqta	Wider spacing in Shawqi for breathing space, tighter in Al-

¹¹D Alashari and M. A. Abd. Hamid, 'A Systematic Review on Arabic Calligraphy within Islamic Architecture', 33.1 (2021), pp. 1-15, doi:<https://doi.org/10.33102/UIJ.VOL33NO1.263>.

				Baghdadi
Letter	Aspect	Shawqi (Measured in Nuqta)	Al-Baghdadi (Measured in Nuqta)	Observation

This analysis confirms that Shawqi emphasizes aesthetic proportionality and individual letter elegance, while Al-Baghdadi emphasizes readability, uniformity, and ease of reproduction. The visual characteristics reflect their intended functions: Shawqi's for high-end manuscripts, Al-Baghdadi's for classroom and mass text reproduction.¹²

One of the key findings of this study is the way both calligraphers handled the spacing and proportion of letters in the Naskh script. Shawqi's work is highly meticulous, with each letter's proportion carefully calculated to create a balanced and harmonious composition. Al-Baghdadi, however, was more focused on efficiency, simplifying letterforms and reducing the space between them, which allowed for quicker production without compromising legibility. This difference in approach has had lasting implications in the educational context, as Shawqi's style is often taught in specialized workshops, while Al-Baghdadi's rules are incorporated into school curricula where practical teaching is prioritized.¹³

The study also highlights the pedagogical influence of Shawqi and Al-Baghdadi on modern Arabic calligraphy education. Shawqi's intricate and decorative style requires dedicated practice and mastery, which makes it more suitable for advanced students or those studying high-level manuscript production. In contrast, Al-Baghdadi's simplified approach, which focuses on clarity and accessibility, has become more prevalent in educational institutions, where calligraphy is taught to a broader audience. This difference reflects the changing educational needs of society, with Al-Baghdadi's methods being better suited for widespread use in public education.¹⁴

Furthermore, the results indicate that despite their stylistic differences, both calligraphers shared some fundamental principles, particularly in the legibility of the script. Both Shawqi and Al-Baghdadi recognized the importance of maintaining clear, readable writing. However, Shawqi's attention to detail led him to create a more complex system of rules, while Al-Baghdadi's approach aimed to achieve clarity and uniformity with less intricate detailing. The balance between formality and

¹²Yazan Ibrahim Alamarat and others, 'The Aesthetic Function of Arabic Calligraphy in Designing Dynamic Brand Identities', *Arts and Design Studies*, 69 (2018), pp. 41-43.

¹³D. Refrensy and E Rizal, 'Ta'thīr Ṭarīqah Al-Tadrīb (Drill Method) Li Al-Khaṭ Al-'Arabiy 'ala Jawdah Al-Kitābah Laday Al-Talāmīz Bi Ma'had Hidayāh Al-Nas Bukit Batabuh', *Huruf Journal*, 2.1 (2022), p. 64, doi:<https://doi.org/10.30983/huruf.v2i1.5420>.

¹⁴H. M. Al-Baghdadi and A. A. Hmood, 'Formal Organization in the Calligraphy Panel of the Calligrapher Hashim Muhammad Al-Baghdadi', *Integrated Journal for Research in Arts and Humanities*, 2.3 (2022), pp. 38-47, doi:<https://doi.org/10.55544/ijrah.2.3.31>.

functionality in both systems shows their unique contributions to the evolution of the Naskh script.¹⁵

The findings also suggest that Shawqi's work is more revered in artistic and high-quality manuscript circles, while Al-Baghdadi's influence is more prominent in practical calligraphy, particularly in educational settings and printed materials. Shawqi's work continues to influence calligraphers who specialize in the art of manuscript creation, while Al-Baghdadi's simplified system plays a significant role in making Arabic calligraphy accessible to a larger population.¹⁶

Shawqi's approach to the Naskh script is rooted in the tradition of high-quality manuscript production. His detailed rules, which focus on the precise proportion and spacing of letters, require a high level of skill and are time-consuming to execute. This makes his style particularly suitable for advanced calligraphy practitioners, especially those involved in the production of religious and scholarly texts.¹⁷ Shawqi's influence on high-level manuscript creation is still evident today, with his works being used as models for advanced calligraphy students and professional calligraphers in the field. However, this complexity, while artistically valuable, limits its accessibility to a broader audience.

In contrast, Al-Baghdadi's approach reflects a shift towards practicality and efficiency, with a focus on producing legible, functional calligraphy that can be easily reproduced. His simplified rules make the Naskh script more accessible to beginners and easier to teach, which explains its widespread adoption in educational settings.¹⁸ Al-Baghdadi's methods prioritize clarity and uniformity over ornate detail, making his style well-suited to environments where speed and legibility are paramount, such as schools, publishing, and mass communication. This accessibility, however, does not detract from the visual appeal of his work, which remains elegant in its own right, albeit less intricate than Shawqi's.¹⁹ This finding aligns with Khodair's argument that simplification in calligraphy does not necessarily result in a loss of aesthetic value, but rather shifts the focus from ornamental sophistication to functional clarity.

¹⁵T. Milo and A. González Martínez, 'A New Strategy for Arabic OCR: Archigraphemes, Letter Blocks, Script Grammar, and Shape Synthesis', 2019, pp. 93-96, doi:<https://doi.org/10.1145/3322905.3322928>.

¹⁶Abdulqader M. Hussein, 'The EFFORTS of BAGHDAD SCHOLARS in PROPHET's HADITH and Its SCIENCES at the 14th CENTURY AH ISLAMIC', *Islamic Sciences Journal*, 10.4 (2019), pp. 247-84, doi:<https://doi.org/10.25130/jis.19.10.4.12>.

¹⁷M. Mansour, N., & Allen, *Sacred Script: Muhaqqaq in Islamic Calligraphy*, 2011 <<https://www.amazon.com/Sacred-Script-Muhaqqaq-Islamic-Calligraphy/dp/1848854390>>.

¹⁸Ja'far and Porter, *Arabic Calligraphy: Naskh Script for Beginners*.

¹⁹B Khudayr, 'Siyāq Al-Tadāwul Fī Al-Amthāl Al-Baghdādiyyah: Dirāsah Sūsyūlusāniyyah', 2022, doi:<https://doi.org/10.52113/uj05/022-15/15.3p1>.

The pedagogical influence of both calligraphers on modern Arabic calligraphy education is another critical point that this study highlights. Shawqi's method, characterized by meticulous detail and ornamental precision, is consistent with traditional Ottoman calligraphic ideals that value artistic mastery and spiritual devotion.²⁰ Consequently, his style is often reserved for advanced workshops and formal manuscript reproduction. Al-Baghdadi's simplified rules, by contrast, reflect a more modern pedagogical philosophy, emphasizing scalability and ease of instruction. This approach aligns with educational reforms in the Arab world during the mid-20th century that prioritized mass literacy and the standardization of instructional materials.²¹ While prior studies²² have acknowledged this shift, few have directly compared it with classical approaches like Shawqi's – an analytical gap this study aims to fill.

Both calligraphers, despite their contrasting techniques, emphasized the legibility of the script. This echoes the theoretical framework of Islamic calligraphy that posits clarity as both an aesthetic and functional imperative.²³ Shawqi achieved this through balanced proportions and detailed alignment, aligning with the principles set by earlier Ottoman masters. Al-Baghdadi, on the other hand, ensured readability through simplification and consistency. This confirms Bayar and Sami's (2011) assertion that modern Arabic calligraphy must respond to both artistic and societal needs.

A key theoretical implication of this study is the recognition that both Shawqi and Al-Baghdadi adapted the Naskh script in response to evolving sociocultural contexts. Shawqi's preservation of classical complexity aligns with historical norms of elite manuscript production,²⁴ while Al-Baghdadi's streamlined method corresponds with broader shifts toward mass education and administrative efficiency²⁵. These findings reinforce previous observations by Kattan (2020), who noted the dual pathways of continuity and innovation in the evolution of Arabic script.

Therefore, while the two masters differed significantly in their stylistic and pedagogical methods, their shared commitment to preserving the readability and

²⁰Mansour, N., & Allen, *Sacred Script: Muhaqqaq in Islamic Calligraphy*; Gusmian, 'Kaligrafi Islam: Dari Nalar Seni Hingga Simbolisme Spiritual'.

²¹Alhail and Azmi, 'Analisis Kaligrafi Kontemporer Dari Aspek Warna Dan Kekayaan Imajinasi Di Sanggar Al-Baghdadi.'

²²K. Bayar, A., & Sami, 'Towards a Dynamic Font Respecting the Arabic Calligraphy', *IGI Global.*, 2011, pp. 359–88, doi:<https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-61520-789-3.CH028>.

²³Alamarat and others, 'The Aesthetic Function of Arabic Calligraphy in Designing Dynamic Brand Identities'.

²⁴Nazhet Karim, 'THE INFLUENCE OF CALLIGRAPHIC SHEETS OF THE «SIYAH MASHQ» PRACTICE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN ISLAMIC CALLIGRAPHY', *National Academy of Fine Arts and Architecture Collection*, 33 (2023), pp. 155–63.

²⁵Nada AL-rifai, 'The Influence of Greco-Roman Literature on the Poetry of Ahmad Shawqi', *Awraq Klasikiyyah*, 14.1 (2017), pp. 1–26, doi:[10.21608/acl.2017.89574](https://doi.org/10.21608/acl.2017.89574).

cultural relevance of Arabic calligraphy underlines a broader consensus within the tradition: that form must always serve meaning. This insight contributes to bridging the theoretical divide between classical and contemporary practices and highlights the enduring influence of both Shawqi and Al-Baghdadi in shaping Arabic calligraphy as both an art form and educational tool.

CONCLUSION

This comparative study of the calligraphic rules of Muhammad Shawqi and Hashim Muhammad Al-Baghdadi highlights their pivotal contributions to the refinement and dissemination of the Naskh script. Shawqi's intricate and detail-oriented approach has established a benchmark for high-quality manuscript production, embodying the artistic and spiritual ideals of classical Arabic calligraphy. In contrast, Al-Baghdadi's systematic and simplified style has greatly enhanced the script's accessibility, especially in formal educational settings and mass literacy programs. While their methods differ in style and function, both share a foundational commitment to clarity, proportion, and pedagogical value—demonstrating a complementary relationship between aesthetic mastery and practical application.

Their pedagogical legacies are particularly noteworthy: Shawqi's method caters to specialized training and high-level manuscript creation, whereas Al-Baghdadi's framework facilitates rapid learning, reproducibility, and standardized instruction. Together, their contributions exemplify the dual nature of Arabic calligraphy—as a sacred art form and a practical communicative tool—and their influence continues to shape contemporary practices across educational and cultural spheres.

Furthermore, the impact of both figures extends beyond the Arab world. In contemporary global contexts, Arabic calligraphy is increasingly practiced in non-Arabic-speaking countries as part of Islamic education, diaspora identity expression, and intercultural art forms. However, systematic studies on how Shawqi's ornamental precision and Al-Baghdadi's pedagogical clarity are adapted across these varied environments remain scarce.

Therefore, future research should specifically examine how the instructional models and stylistic approaches of Shawqi and Al-Baghdadi are being localized and integrated into non-Arab educational and artistic institutions—for instance, in Southeast Asian pesantren, Turkish art academies, or Western Islamic calligraphy workshops. Such investigations would offer valuable insights into the global transmission of Arabic calligraphy traditions, and how classical methods are evolving to meet new cultural, linguistic, and technological demands.

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