

# **The current state of Arabic newspaper type and typography**

Titus Nemeth | Reading 2006

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## **The current state of Arabic newspaper type and typography**



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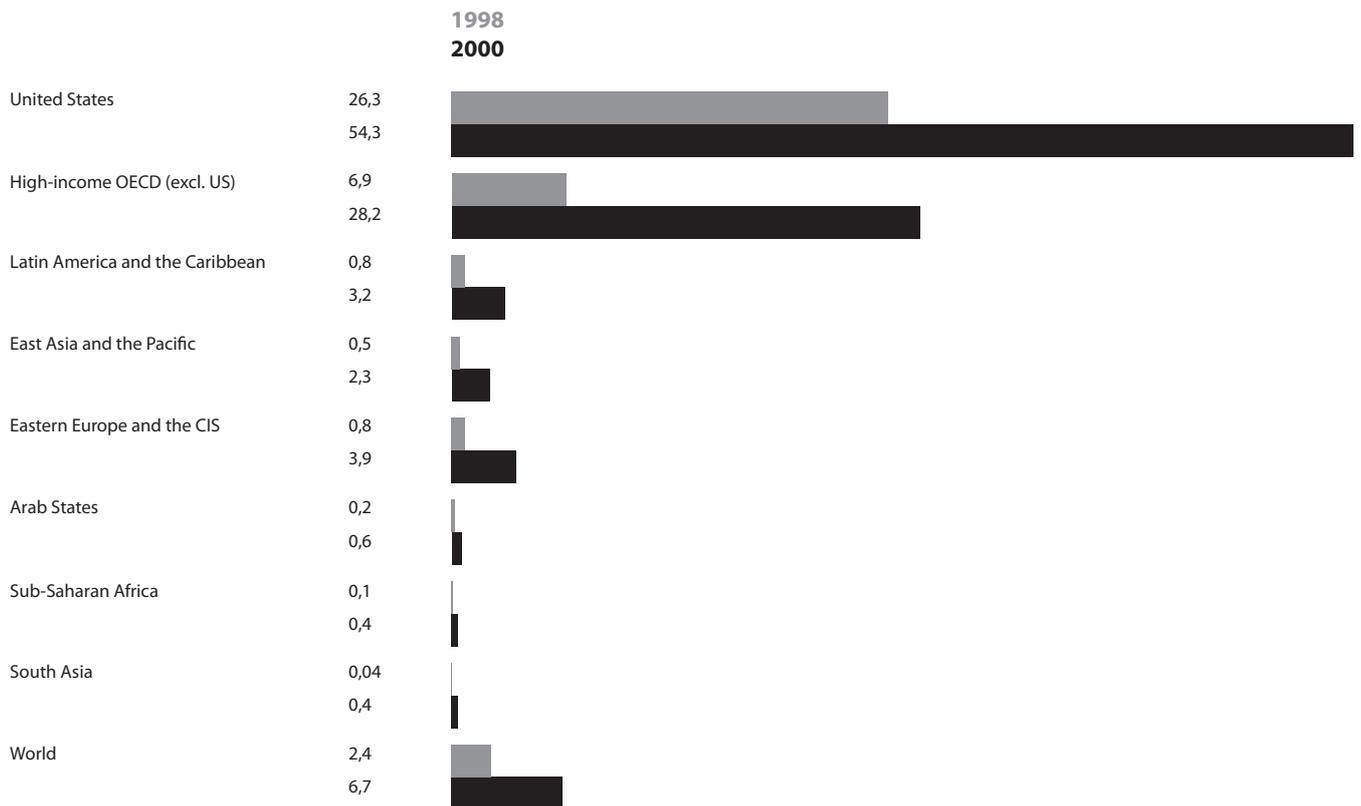


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**table 1** Worldwide Internet users as percentage of population



Nation	Population	Internet Users	Hosts
Afghanistan	31,06 million	25000	76
Algeria	32,93 million	845000	1175
Bahrain	698585	152700	1952
Egypt	78,89 million	5 million	1702
Iran	68,69 million	7,5 million	5246
Iraq	26,78 million	36000	4
Jordan	5,91 million	600000	2793
Kuwait	2,42 million	600000	2439
Lebanon	3,87 million	600000	3365
Libya	5,90 million	205000	47
Mauritania	3,18 million	14000	21
Morocco	33,24 million	3,5 million	2538
Oman	3,10 million	245000	3261
Qatar	885359	165000	204
Saudi Arabia	27,01 million	2,54 million	10335
Sudan	41,24 million	1,14 million	1
Syria	18,88 million	800000	64
Tunisia	10,18 million	835000	426
UAE	2,60 million	1,38 million	118495
Western Sahara	273,01	NA	NA
Yemen	21,46 million	220000	166
Argentina	39,32 million	10 million	1,23 million
Sweden	9,02 million	6,80 million	2,70 million
Thailand	64,63 million	8,42 million	786,23

**table 2** Internet users in the Arab world in comparison to examples from other regions

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# 1 Newspapers in the twenty-first century

Current discourse about newspapers, their present and future, is dominated by one overarching paradigm: the decline of circulation numbers. Editors, journalists, consultants and designers face shrinking sales and a new generation of readers which acquires information from the Internet, 24 hour satellite news and free newspapers in the public transport. The reactions to this trend over the last couple of years were manifold. Numerous newspapers changed from the broadsheet to the tabloid format, a step which usually includes a complete re-design. Influential newspaper design consultant Mario Garcia explains this trend as an emulation of the way young readers access information in other media: “With TV or the Internet, this generation can go backward and forward. They expect the newspaper to be the same. These are not even scanners. Scanners were 10 years ago. I call them supersonic readers” (Tasker 2003).<sup>1</sup> Other attempts to stabilize sales and gain new readers focus on electronic publishing. Newspapers increasingly offer on-line versions and also experiment with combinations of both media: on-line subscriptions of the digital version of the paper. The British *Guardian*, a leader in terms of on-line presence, pioneers a completely new way by offering free customized PDF downloads of selected articles – a service called G24 (Guardian Unlimited 2006). For the time being, however, all attempts seem to fail in stopping the loss of readers as circulation numbers in most Western newspapers continue to decline (The Project for Excellence in Journalism 2006). Nevertheless, it should be noted, that circulation alone does not define the fate of the newspaper. In contrast to reader-numbers, ad revenue is still growing in many instances. Furthermore, the medium newspaper simply has its own benefits. The depth of coverage, selected opinion sections and the pleasing design are still factors which favour newspapers. And indeed, certain values of the artefact like its haptics will never be matched by electronic media.

This, at least, is the picture of the newspaper world in Europe and the United States. From a worldwide perspective, the situation looks very different. In 2005 worldwide newspaper sales rose by 2.1 percent. This is due to the huge Asian markets – seventy-five percent of the world’s one hundred best selling daily papers are published in Asia, the region that witnessed a 4.1 percent increase in circulation in 2005 (AsiaMedia 2005). These opposing trends indicate different levels of economic development. In the Western hemisphere (i.e. the US and Europe) the Internet is wide spread – this causes, in combination with other media, fierce competition for newspapers. Shrinking circulation-numbers reflect this phenomenon. In the Asian countries, however, the relation between inhabitants and Internet connections is still small compared to Western standards. And therefore, as the growing newspaper sales prove, people still rely to a

1 It has to be questioned whether the emulation of other media of completely different nature serves as a good recipe for the revitalization of newspapers.

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much greater extent on printed news for their information. Table 1<sup>2</sup> illustrates the enormous high-tech gap between the Western hemisphere and the rest of the world. The much-lauded 'global village' does not yet stretch beyond the front garden – accordingly, conventional media will play a significant role in most of the world in the years to come.<sup>3</sup> This seems to be especially true of those regions which have the least advanced Internet diffusion – among them the Arab world.<sup>4</sup> Table 2 shows in more detail how population and the number of Internet users relate. Even relatively prosperous and economically advanced countries like Iran and Lebanon<sup>5</sup> trail significantly behind countries of similar size from other regions of the world. This situation, in turn, strengthens the position of conventional media – primarily TV and newspapers. Furthermore, the severe restrictions of web sites by many governments in the Arab world have a repressing effect on the establishment of the Internet as a major source of information.<sup>6</sup> It seems to be self-evident that censorship is not limited to the Internet. And it plays, as one reason among others, a crucial role in the backwardness of the publishing industry in the Arab world. Timothy Balding, director general of the World Association of Newspapers, describes the struggle for press freedom as “the first and most important challenge, and the biggest opportunity, for newspapers and magazines in developing markets” and admits that “few of us would pretend [it] is possible [to become free from control and censorship] today throughout the Middle East and the larger Arab world, which, overall, is the region of the globe where press freedom is still the most uniformly restricted” (Balding 2005). The examples of the problems that free journalism face are countless, and to illustrate the situation only a few recent developments are mentioned here.

On 12 December 2005 the prominent owner of the Lebanese *An-Nahar* newspaper, Gebran Tueni, was assassinated. In addition to his role as publisher he was an opposition politician and fierce critic of Syria's influential role in Lebanon.

Although the constitution in Tunisia guarantees freedom of speech and press “there remain no independent newspaper and no new ones have been granted the right to publish since Ben Ali came into power (in 1987)” (The Arab Press Network 2006a). The government uses economic as well as political instruments to control newspapers. In addition, editors prac-

2 Although these figures are slightly dated in relation to the fast changes of the Internet, they still give a good understanding of the degree of disparity worldwide. Table 2 uses more recent data and indicates the prevailing imbalance of Internet access.

3 Having said that, two scenarios seem plausible. Either all national newspaper industries are going to follow a similar way as those in the Western hemisphere, and will reach its current stage in a few years; or, perhaps more likely, these countries will skip some stages and jump directly into the era of new-media information dissemination.

4 I am using the term 'Arab world' here to describe all countries in which the majority of the population uses the Arabic script, and, except Iran, speaks Arabic.

5 That is before Israel's attack on the country in July 2006.

6 Nevertheless there are situations in which the Internet plays an unexpected and important role. In Iraq publishers use the web as a last resort to publish information because the devastating security in the aftermath of the US-invasion causes serious distribution problems (BBC News 2005a).

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tice self-censorship out of fear of reprisals. Ironically, in October 2005 the United Nations' *World Summit on the Information Society* took place in Tunisia. Even at this particular occasion, in the spotlight of international media coverage, the Tunisian authorities did not hesitate to ban human rights groups from participation, confiscate equipment of foreign journalists and even detain and mishandle individuals (Human Rights Watch 2005).

In Iran 120 newspapers have been banned from publishing since 1998 and numerous journalists jailed. At the same time new movements and voices start to emerge. From 2000 to 2004 the number of blogs rose from 830 to 18,000 (World Association of Newspapers 2004). Indeed, the Iranian blog-community is among the most active and fastest growing, and might very well prove to be of greater importance than the heavily controlled official media in a transforming Iran.<sup>7</sup>

The overall image of the news landscape in the Arab world is significantly marked by state-owned media, restrictions of press freedom and international conflicts.<sup>8</sup> But as the success of the satellite TV channel *Al-Jazeera* shows, the demand and the solutions for independent and professional news dissemination in the Arab world exist.<sup>9</sup> It will only be a matter of time for the emancipation of the Arab press towards an independent and powerful entity. Ibrahim Nafar of the Arab Press Freedom Watch points out that the traditional state-owned media in the Arab world cannot be financed anymore (Arab Press Freedom Watch 2004). The monopoly on information requires a serious investment from the state, but due to Internet and satellite TV, information cannot be completely controlled. Therefore the censorship exerted by so called 'information ministries' will soon prove pointless and hopefully cause their dismissal altogether. At the same time, new monopolies in the form of private companies endanger the actual formation of a diverse media landscape and independent publishers (Arab Press Freedom Watch 2004). The mentioned phenomena indicate a structural change in the realm of Arab news-providers in the years to come, and it is hoped, will contribute positively to the formation of real democracy and civil liberties.

7 See *We Are Iran: The Persian Blogs* (Alavi 2005)

8 During the course of the Israeli attack on Lebanon in July 2006 numerous newspapers were on the edge of closure (The Arab Press Network 2006b).

9 The BBC's move to install an Arabic television news channel also indicates increasing interest from Western media (BBC News 2005b)



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## 2 Review of available literature

This dissertation touches more than one field of research, but it should be a contribution to the discipline of Arabic typography. The number of publications on this subject is very small and the body of research is limited to a few articles and books over the last couple of years. In comparison to the work done on Arabic calligraphy, Arabic typography has not received significant coverage yet. With increasing interest in the Arab world from political, social and economical perspectives, also a discourse about Arabic typography is about to unfold.<sup>10</sup> Current publications about the topic pioneer and define the field – Arabic typography as a research subject is in its formative years. Hence, every publication has a strong impact. But since there are no or little references for the reader to compare, care has to be taken in evaluating the content. This review attempts to facilitate this process by sketching out the theoretical framework in which the current practice of Arabic typography is embedded. It gives an overview of the major themes of discourse, highlights a few of the most important and recurring issues, and confronts and assesses different viewpoints.

The first major publication on the subject in English, *Arabic typography, a comprehensive sourcebook* by Huda Smitshuijzen Abi Farès, is representative of one, at the moment particularly prominent, branch of thought. For the sake of clarity it is called the ‘reduced’ approach henceforth. The book attempts to give a broad overview and discusses historical background, the relation of calligraphy and typography, technological developments, and some peculiarities of Arabic typography and typeface design. In addition to this wide scope, it also discusses Latin typography and the differences between both scripts. As a result the topics are only covered very briefly and are sometimes, even for an introductory book, too superficial.

Nevertheless, the book was warmly welcomed by many reviewers in the Western world of typography<sup>11</sup>, which can be explained by the above described paucity of publications. Valid judgements by non-specialists are very difficult, if not impossible, in a field with few contesting opinions. This constitutes a serious problem in the developing discourse about Arabic typography. And although a book that aims at giving a quick overview and targets lay-men rather than professionals might have some merits, it needs to fulfil one basic requirement: accuracy. *Arabic typography*, however, fails in more than one respect to give correct information on the subject.

Thomas Milo and Mohamed Zakariya, two representatives of the other, ‘scholarly’, approach, have very clearly described its flaws in the description of Arabic calligraphy and use of terminology (Milo 2006, Zakariya

10 Examples are the ‘Kitabat’ conference in Dubai, April 2006, publications like *Visual Culture of Modern Iran* (Abedini & Wolbers 2006) or *Word into Art* (Porter 2006) and the increasing debate about the topic in on-line forums and e-mail lists.

11 One example is *Eye*, a leading graphic design magazine. In *Eye 45* Jason Smith recommends *Arabic typography* to anyone interested in type-forms and concludes that “this book really gives a welcome insight into the beautiful world of Arabic typography. It is an excellent reference book too” (Smith 2002).

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2006). Whereas Milo draws upon extensive linguistic research and script analysis, Zakariya is a master calligrapher and respected authority on the history of Arabic calligraphy. In their review of *Arabic typography* the two authors highlight mistakes in script identification and structural misconceptions. One example clearly indicates the current state of research on Arabic script in the Western world. Smitshuijzen confused the names of two calligraphic styles because she based her work on an already erroneous publication.<sup>12</sup>

A fundamental issue in the current discourse about Arabic typography is its relation to Latin typography. Exponents of the ‘reduced approach’ regularly discuss Arabic typography and typeface design in relation to, and dependence on Latin script culture. In the 30 page chapter on ‘Aspects of Arabic type’ in *Arabic typography*, the author feels the need to include a discussion of ‘emoticons’, Latin punctuation marks, symbols and general pictograms.<sup>13</sup> The dependence on Latin script and typography becomes even more obvious in the chapter on ‘Type design’. Smitshuijzen explains that she chose to discuss Arabic type in relation to Latin because “most type designers who design Arabic fonts are or should also be proficient in designing Latin fonts” (Smitshuijzen Abi-Farès 2001, p. 117). The author therefore supposes that type designers who work only in Arabic script are either not qualified or not required – a very surprising attitude for somebody who wants to speak for the world of Arabic typography. It would hardly be the case that Arabic type designers would propose that type designers who design Latin fonts should also be proficient in designing Arabic fonts, and possibly fonts for all other scripts as well.<sup>14</sup>

This discussion constitutes the most fundamental and unresolvable difference between the ‘reduced’ and the ‘scholarly’ approach. Whereas the exponents of the former see themselves as reformers who aim at modernizing Arabic typography (in relation to its Latin equivalent) by means of simplification, the latter argue that there is no reason and need for such an undertaking. From the scholarly point of view, nothing is wrong with the Arabic script, but its understanding and representation by means of contemporary technologies. Exponents of this approach often refer to the quality of manual typesetting in the Ottoman period as a reference against which to measure current achievements (Milo 2002).

However, the school of thought represented by Smitshuijzen argues that Arabic is more complex than Latin and therefore needs to be simplified and adjusted to be usable in contemporary applications. But since modern typesetting equipment enables users to handle more complex tasks with less effort than ever before, this argument seems very contradictory. Current typesetting methods make an accurate representation of complex scripts possible and eventually no compromises to shape and structure are

12 The confusion of Ruq‘ah and Riqā can be found in more than one example of Western literature. See for example Safadi 1978 or Schimmel 1970.

13 This discussion is not only off-topic, but also includes wrong statements: In one instance mathematical operators, geometric shapes and the Arabic glyph which carries the sentence ‘sallallahou alayhe wasallam’ (Unicode FDFA) are all categorized as ‘non-alphabetic symbols’.

14 A desirable but unrealistic scenario.

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required. Accordingly, representatives of the ‘scholarly’ approach advocate the study of manuscripts and generally the roots of the script. Their aim is to foster a fundamental understanding of the script’s structure that is independent from typesetting equipment and strives for the most accurate representation possible.

In her article ‘Translating non-Latin scripts into type’ Fiona Ross deals with this aspect of non-Latin typography – the relation between authentic representation and technical possibilities. She draws a brief history of selected issues arising in the development of typefaces for non-Latin scripts and highlights some examples of problematic approaches to design. Ross emphasises the strong link between technologies to represent non-Latin scripts and their lasting impact on design decisions: “The unfortunate, but not uncommon, practice of replicating font synopses of the past, which were constrained by previous technologies, is often inappropriate to current typographic possibilities. Past synopses are merely useful informants” (Ross 1998, p. 77). Her argument is not directed at one particular script, but rather touches issues which are recurring throughout non-Latin typography: character shapes which are distorted to fit the hot-metal machines, oversized elements to avoid breakage and limited character sets to fit the typesetter’s keyboard. Fiona Ross builds her argument based on experience which bridges all typesetting methods and acts as an advocate of technology-conscious design.

Thomas Milo, researcher and font developer of the Dutch firm Deco-Type chose a different way in the search for an appropriate way to typeset Arabic. In the article ‘Authentic Arabic: a case study’ Milo states that current typesetting technology is not an appropriate means to the intricate structures and rules of advanced Arabic text composition. He gives a short overview of the Arabic writing system and discusses conventional approaches to Arabic typesetting and how they fail to represent the nature of the script. In his overview of the historical developments, the author explains the origins of script and language specific features and how they have been altered through time. He describes how the relationship between semantic value and visual sign developed and in which ways conventional contemporary typesetting technology fails to reproduce certain structures. The main argument brought forward is that Arabic script cannot be understood in equal terms as the Latin script. Because of the fundamentally different structure, Milo suggests, new methods of typesetting have to be developed to render Arabic. His conclusion is an approach which builds on smaller units than characters – archigraphemes.<sup>15</sup>

The author provides a wealth of material that illustrates and supports his claims very convincingly. The juxtaposition of historical material with contemporary typography, both conventional and examples in accord with his suggestions, show the validity of his arguments. In addition his claims are substantiated by his practice: based on his research

15 “An archigrapheme occurs when the distinction between two or more letters is neutralized. The archigrapheme is a graphic unit that consists of the shared features of neutralized letters, minus the features that differentiate them. In the archigraphemic analysis of Arabic script, vowels and dots are different layers of additional, variable features” (Milo 2002, no page numbers).

Milo developed one of the most sophisticated Arabic typesetting systems available (DecoType 1995).<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, his research bridges typography and the discourse about Arabic text-processing methods. He does not only contribute to questions arising about the shape of Arabic type, but also lobbies for advances in the representation of the underlying semantic structure. In the article ‘Ali-Baba and the 4.0 Unicode characters’ Milo discusses a software jointly developed by Basis Technology and DecoType which enables the user to typeset any text (including Qur’anic Arabic) on a simplified keyboard through a transcription system (Milo 2003). Contrary to earlier input methods, this system does not compromise shapes in order to comply with a certain number of available keys. Instead, it allows users to input fully vocalized Arabic text with a Latin keyboard. It relies on transcription rules which are then interpreted and may, depending on calligraphic style, regional orthography or other criteria, output appropriate graphic representations. This concept splits semantic and visual components during input and reassembles them in output – a very flexible approach which considers the relationship between language and script peculiarities.

Smitshuijzen’s *Arabic typography* is at the other extreme in the spectrum of technological discourse and therefore heavily criticised by Milo. He describes the positions stated by Smitshuijzen as “uncritical faith in Digital Omnipotence [which] is characteristic of the uninitiated” (Milo 2006, p. 71). Though harsh this may sound, the description of figure 4.5.2 on page 175 [fig. 1] is proof of *Arabic typography*’s flaws on the level

16 Based on the version of 1995, DecoType currently develops an updated and more powerful version of its typesetting technology. Its is due to be published in the near future.

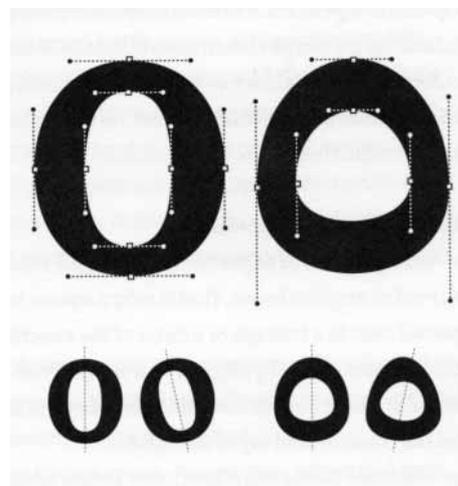


fig.1 Illustration taken from *Arabic typography*, 100%

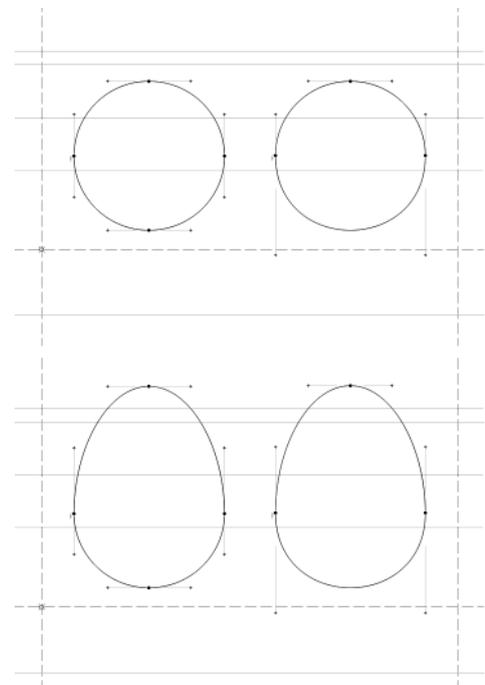


fig.2 These vector drawings show how similar shapes can be constructed with different point placements

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of technology awareness. From the comparison of two letters, the Latin letter ‘o’ (or figure 0) and the isolated version of the Arabic letter ‘Hah’, Smitshuijzen draws conclusions on the nature of both scripts. Although both shapes are the peculiar versions found in two distinct designs, she portrays their properties as fundamental features of the two scripts. In addition to this uninformed generalisation, the argument is based on wrong premises. The illustration shows vector-drawings of both characters. Whereas the Latin ‘o’ is built with eight points at the extremes of the curves, the Arabic ‘Hah’ only shows six points. This in turn is a bad example since the PostScript specification (Adobe Systems 1999) defines points at the extremes of curves as a necessity. However, the author is not aware of this technical mistake, but rather explains: “Latin type has 4 pivotal points (2 horizontal and 2 vertical) that explain its squarish proportions. Arabic has 3 pivotal points (2 horizontal and one vertical) which give it egg-shaped overall proportions” (Smitshuijzen *Abi-Farès* 2001, p. 175). Figure 2 shows, however, that round and egg-shaped forms can be created with both point-constructions and accordingly, no conclusions on the actual shapes can be drawn from the number of points.

As discussed above, discourse about contemporary Arabic typography develops around a set of core-issues. These are the relation of Arabic type to the structure of the script, its rendering with different technologies and the search for an appropriate terminology. A publication like *Arabic typography* attempts to cover all these aspects, and fails because of faulty research and crude simplifications. Nevertheless it initiated a discourse on a broader level – a merit which is not shared by exponents of the ‘scholarly approach’. Future research and publications have to find a balance of both. It is imperative to clarify and correct former mistakes and develop an approach which includes a wider audience and at the same time discusses the crucial issues in more depth and accuracy.

A different branch of research develops around the historical aspects of Arabic printing and typography. A major exponent of this field is *Middle Eastern languages and the print revolution: A cross cultural encounter: a catalogue and companion to the exhibition* at the Gutenberg museum in Mainz. It features articles from various authors on the history of printing in the Middle East.

Two articles are of immediate interest for this dissertation: ‘Arabic Newspapers and Periodicals in the Arab World (1828–1928)’ and ‘Book and Newspaper Printing in Turkish, 18th–20th centuries’. The former gives an overview of the first hundred years of newspaper production in the Middle East. This evolution is portrayed on a country-basis. From first attempts of serial publications by state-presses, to the advent of large scale private newspaper production, a concise image of the early stages of Arab newspaper-publication is drawn. The appendix, ‘Modern developments in Arabic typesetting – a boom and a boon’ by Hrant Gabeyan is a brief overview of some technical aspects of Arabic printing in the twentieth century. The author illustrates a few general problems in printing Arabic and develops a sketchy image of his personal involvement in technological developments in the second half of the twentieth century. Although this article provides a first impression, it is obviously a short

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and subjective report. As such it fails to cover all relevant aspects and is limited to obsolete technologies. In a publication of the twenty-first century it would also be desirable and more appropriate to discuss aspects of contemporary Arabic typesetting and printing.

The second relevant article, 'Book and Newspaper Printing in Turkish, 18th–20th centuries' mainly discusses book publication and the general history of Ottoman and Turkish printing. In addition, the author highlights important events and stages of newspaper publication. He draws crucial connections between socio-political developments and their impact on publishing houses and printers. Although focused on the formation years of Ottoman (and Turkish) publishing from the end of the eighteenth century to the beginning of the Turkish republic, the author also touches briefly the developments of the twentieth century. Overall, this article gives a detailed, yet compact history of publishing in Asia minor.

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## 3 Methodology

The research for this dissertation consisted of quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative part comprised the development of a database and the gathering of source material – Arabic newspapers from the last 30 years. These were obtained through purchase, donations and the viewing of existing collections.

The data, a range of attributes found in Arabic newspapers which were considered of highest significance, was accumulated in a searchable database. This approach was chosen partly to initiate and provide a sound basis for future research within the Department of Typography and Graphic Communication at the University of Reading, as well as outside.<sup>17</sup>

The database's main purpose is to depict developments and patterns through time and geographic areas in an objective way that can be ratified. As such it serves as the foundation of the argument developed within this dissertation.

In a second step the accumulated data was analysed and interpreted. Because questions of historical, technological and social significance define the context and relevance of the raw quantitative data, this combination of methods was chosen to facilitate the formation of a coherent and accessible narrative with a justifiable basis.

### 3.1 Scope

The scope of research was limited to mid-market and up-market newspapers in Arabic script and language. Because the main focus was on typography, popular newspapers which use less advanced typographic means were excluded. This restriction also increases comparability. The selection is not restrained to a specific geographic area, but rather tries to cover examples from a wide range of countries in which Arabic newspapers are published. These examples do not constitute a complete assessment of newspapers available; however, the choice is intended to be representative of the current state of Arabic newspaper publishing. The collected data was retrieved from a total of 43 newspapers from the following countries: Egypt (5), Israel (1 fragment), Jordan (3), Kuwait (5), Lebanon (4), Morocco (1), Qatar (1), Saudi Arabia (4), Syria (2), Tunisia (6), UAE (4), UK (4), US (3). Issues of the same newspaper from the same decade are omitted for the sake of variety.

The time scale under consideration covers approximately the last 30 years. This period was chosen because it covers all significant technological developments in newspaper production – from the last stage of hot-metal composition and letterpress printing in the 1970s to today's situation of declining newspaper circulations.

<sup>17</sup> The design of the database permits it being made accessible through the Internet, an option that could facilitate international collaboration on research.

arabic newspaper database, v.1.0

<b>newspaper id</b>			
name	<input type="text" value="Al-Akhbar"/>	language	<input type="text" value="Arabic"/>
country	<input type="text" value="Egypt"/>	date of publication	<input type="text" value="14. 07. 1976"/>

<b>artefact description</b>		
<b>format</b>		
page height in cm	<input type="text" value="57"/>	
page width in cm	<input type="text" value="43, 4"/>	
<b>paper</b>		
surface 1st sheet	<input type="text" value="matt"/>	
coloured paper 1st sheet	<input type="radio"/> yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> no	
surface core	<input type="text" value="matt"/>	
coloured paper core	<input type="radio"/> yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> no	
<b>use of colour</b>		
first sheet printed in	<input type="text" value="more than one spot colour"/>	
core printed in	<input type="text" value="single colour"/>	
<b>printing process</b>	<input type="text" value="letterpress"/>	

<b>page layout</b>		<b>structure</b>
<b>navigation features</b>		number of columns
page numbers	<input type="radio"/> yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> no	<input type="text" value="8"/>
running heads	<input type="radio"/> yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> no	column width in mm
graphic devices	<input checked="" type="radio"/> yes <input type="radio"/> no	<input type="text" value="45"/>
pull quotes	<input type="radio"/> yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> no	

<b>typography</b>		<b>primary headings</b>
<b>main text</b>		letterforms
typeface	<input type="text" value="traditional"/>	<input type="radio"/> hand lettered <input checked="" type="radio"/> typographic
body alignment	<input type="text" value="justified"/>	in colour
		<input checked="" type="radio"/> yes <input type="radio"/> no
		alignment
		<input type="text" value="centered"/>
<b>treatment of 1st paragraph</b>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> indented <input type="radio"/> full out	<b>secondary headings</b>
slanted arabic type	<input type="radio"/> yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> no	letterforms
matching latin typeface	<input type="radio"/> yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> no	in colour
latin figures	<input type="radio"/> yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> no	<input type="radio"/> yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> no
		alignment
		<input type="text" value="flush right"/>
<b>masthead</b>		<b>other</b>
letterforms	<input checked="" type="radio"/> hand lettered <input type="radio"/> typographic	digital type-manipulation
coloured elements	<input checked="" type="radio"/> yes <input type="radio"/> no	<input type="radio"/> yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> no

Example of a database entry

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## 3.2 Database definition

The selection of attributes which define the database structure was very consciously limited to a set of crucial elements. No questions of editorial design, photography, illustration or content were taken into account.

In some cases the sources did not provide sufficient information to enable each category in the database definition to be filled. For example for sources only available on microfilm, questions related to the paper or the printing process could not be answered. This is taken into account in the evaluation of the data.

The collected newspapers were observed in accord with the following list of categories (attributes that are self-explanatory are listed in the following definition without further comments):

### Identification

- Name
- Country
- Language
- Date of publication

### Artefact description

- Paper
- Page height in cm
- Page width in cm
- Surface first sheet  
*Texture of the paper of the first sheet; the options available are either matt or glossy.*
- Use of coloured paper for the first sheet
- Surface core  
*Core refers to all pages of the main section except the first sheet.*
- Use of coloured paper for the core
- First sheet printed in: full colour | more than one spot colour | single colour
- Core printed in: full colour | more than one spot colour | single colour
- Printing process: letterpress | offset litho | unknown  
*Although the printing process is usually either letterpress or offset lithography, there might be instances where a researcher cannot exactly identify the applied printing process (for example when the source material is only available as an image), therefore the attribute 'unknown' was included.*
- Image
- Image description  
*Space for provenance and copyright notices*

### Page layout

- Presence of page numbers
- Presence of running heads
- Presence of graphic devices
- Presence of pull quotes
- Number of columns

- 
- Width of columns in mm

## Typography

### Main text

- Typeface: simplified | traditional | other  
*The term ‘simplified’ refers to any typeface design that is based on, or closely related to the concept of ‘Simplified Arabic’<sup>18</sup> as developed by Linotype. ‘Traditional’ refers to typefaces which are based on the standard number of representation forms for each character (2–4) and are more akin to traditional proportions and shapes of the script. The term ‘other’ covers other designs, irrespective of the number of representation forms.*
- Body alignment: flush right | justified | centered | flush left  
*In ‘justified’ setting spaces, kashidas,<sup>19</sup> or a combination of both are inserted to expand each line to the full column width.*
  - Treatment of first paragraph: indented | full out  
*‘Indented’ means that in each paragraph the first line is indented by a certain amount of white space whereas ‘full out’ is defined by first lines which extend to the margins of the column.*
- Presence of slanted Arabic type
- Presence of a matching Latin typeface
- Use of Latin figures for the majority of numbers in body text

### Masthead

- Letterforms: hand lettered | typographic  
*‘Hand lettered’ refers to any shapes which are akin to shapes produced by a manually directed writing tool, ‘typographic’ refers to shapes which give no indication of a tool.*
- Presence of coloured elements

## Headlines

### Primary headings

- Letterforms: hand lettered | typographic
- Use of colour for headlines
- Alignment: flush right | justified | centered | flush left

### Secondary headings

- Letterforms: hand lettered | typographic
- Use of colour for headlines
- Alignment: flush right | justified | centered | flush left

### Other

- Use of digital type manipulation  
*Digital manipulation (except slanting) of typefaces such as embossing, shading, texture-effects etc..*

18 See the definition of terms in the appendix

19 See the definition of terms in the appendix

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## 4 Evaluation and analysis

In this section the data from the newspaper collection is presented, discussed and evaluated. This is done by means of statistics, supported by interpretations, and two case studies. The first part, a presentation of numbers gathered from the database, is conceived to sketch out general trends which Arabic newspapers followed over the last thirty years. It points out developments specific to time, region and technology and comments critically on the evolution Arabic newspapers have undergone. The case studies compare examples of the same newspaper from different decades to discuss certain developments in more detail and depth.

### 4.1 The layout

Although the main concern of this dissertation is the use of typography, a few observations about the layout structure need to be included. The basic grid, the number and width of columns are decisive for two of the newspaper's main attributes: its look and the readability of its content. These two properties define the most important design decisions, since they stand for the very basic requirements a newspaper has to fulfil: attract like a poster and carry the content of a book (Evans 1976). Whereas the former task is defined by masthead, headline size and placement, colour and images, the latter depends on the column-measure and the body type. These in turn are interdependent, for the width of the column defines the range of possible type-sizes and leading.

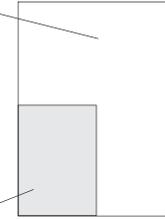
Of the forty-three newspapers under consideration thirty-eight have the dimensions of a real broadsheet. Of those, thirty-seven use an eight column grid, the remaining one a seven column grid as the basic layout scheme. Since the eight column grid is a standard for broadsheet papers, these numbers are not very surprising. They differ, however, from the (Western) standard of eleven picas (46.5666667 millimetres) column width (Evans 1976). Only thirteen of them have columns of this measure, the others use widths varying between thirty-five and forty millimetres. In newspapers using the Latin script this would generally be too narrow for the main text columns. However, the Arabic justification method allows narrower columns. The application of kashidas prevents the white holes which would occur in narrow justified columns of Latin text.<sup>20</sup>

Nevertheless it seems noteworthy that over a period of thirty years, no significant change of grids can be observed. Although some of the contemporary examples take freedom in varying the column numbers, the underlying structure is still the same as in the 1970s. This is contrary to developments of the Western press in the same period: "Most American newspapers used an eight-column makeup for their news pages until the 1960s when a trend set in toward wider column measures" (Hurlburt 1978, p. 30). Figure 3 illustrates the differences varying grids impose on the appearance of a newspaper. The London-based *Asharq Al-Awsat* employs eight columns on a thirty-six centimetre wide page, the Belgian

20 See the definition of terms in the appendix for a more detailed description of this method.



format of the newspaper



A4 – format of this dissertation

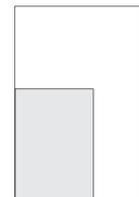
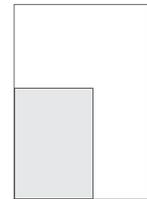


fig. 3 Grey areas indicate the column measures, ~10%

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*De Morgen* fits seven columns of varying width on thirty-four centimetres and the German *Süddeutsche* only uses six columns on the forty centimeters wide page. Also the recent and worldwide trend towards smaller formats (Garcia 2005) is not reflected by Arabic publications.

This lagging behind can be interpreted as an indication (or result) of the backwardness of the Arab press discussed in the introduction. Other elements on a general layout level support the claim of a relatively little advanced newspaper design craft in the Arab world. Six of the analysed newspapers do not use page numbers, the latest of those examples from 1995. Also running heads indicating particular sections are not a standard – thirteen out of forty-three newspapers do not apply this important navigation feature. This lack is by no means overcome as three contemporary publications without running heads show. Also multiple ‘entry points’ to texts are still a rarity in the Arabic newspaper landscape – only nine newspapers in this study have pull-quotes in their graphic vocabulary. In a recent publication John Berry claims that “full-color printing and sophisticated visual collage are common on the pages of most newspapers today” and delves in the achievements of newspaper design today: “Look at the front pages, the interior pages, the supplements and sections, and you’ll see a rich stew, a range of typography, photography, tables and charts, dramatic juxtaposition, ‘entry points’ to the news, headlines and subheads and decks and pull-quotes” (Berry 2004, p. xii) Although this enthusiasm is perfectly reasonable in regard of many great publications, unfortunately it cannot be extended to the majority of Arabic newspapers. Of the sixteen current newspapers reviewed, only two make extensive use of colour throughout the main section. One supposes that the three publications which use only two spot colours cannot afford to employ full colour printing. A situation hardly imaginable in most of the Western hemisphere.

# ك

fig. 4 On the left, the letter 'Alif Maksura' from four different newspapers which do not officially use Linotype 'Yakout' are overlaid. On the right the original design is shown.



fig. 5 Four newspapers from four different countries, 100%

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## 4.2 Typography

### Body text

Also with regard to the typographic means, Berry's comments can hardly be applied to Arabic newspapers. The small choice of typefaces available to Arabic typesetters and newspaper designers leads to an extraordinary homogeneous look of their publications. Thirty-three of forty-three newspapers under consideration use basically identical body typefaces. These fonts are possibly all called differently, nonetheless, they are all based on one single model: Linotype's 'Simplified Arabic' typeface 'Yakout' of 1956 [fig. 4].

Although good typefaces can easily last for decades,<sup>21</sup> if not centuries, the story of this typeface needs to be taken into account. It was developed for a particular typesetting technology and build to master the peculiar limitations and problems of Arabic newsprint in the middle of the twentieth century. The limited representation forms of the Arabic letters were invented because of the limited amount of keys available on the Linotype keyboard and because faster keying speeds were demanded by newspapers (Gabeyan 2002). The sturdy and often in their shape compromised letters were conceived to withstand the printing conditions of sixty years ago: "modern direct-pressure hot moulding, applying 300 tons or more than 200° F., takes a heavy toll of type. Solid slugs, though of inferior metal, stand these pressures better than the single-letter Monotype (unless specially hard metal is used). Kerned letters in movable type will rarely survive a single moulding [...]" (Hutt 1960, p. 27).

Given these considerations for the original design, it seems contradictory to digitize this typeface and use it for digital page layout with a virtually unlimited number of characters and high-quality web-offset print.<sup>22</sup> However, its main drawback is its ubiquitousness. Since even the standard Arabic font of the 'Windows' operating system is based on Linotype's design, these shapes have basically become the generic image of an Arabic typeface. But as John Berry notes "despite the importance of photography and various kinds of graphic images, the fundamental visual identity of a newspaper is set in its type. The text type is what we actually read, when we read a story; the display type is where we get the gist of what's there to peruse. The secret history of newspaper design [...] is in its typography" (Berry 2004, p. xii). Having this in mind, the problems of the homogeneous typographic language found in the Arabic newspaper landscape become clear. Many publications look very similar and fail to develop a strong visual voice of their own. The subtle variations of expression that different typefaces lend to text are lost. A newspaper's strong visual identity is proven, if one is able to recognize the publication by a little, torn out piece of paper featuring some text. In the overwhelming majority of Arabic newspapers this would hardly be achievable [fig. 5].

21 The Linotype 'Legibility Group' designs were used decades after their first publication in the 1930s. "A 1980 survey by the Newspaper Readership Council found 9 point Corona to be the most widely used Newspaper text typeface and size" (Rehe 1985, p. 27).

22 Fiona Ross points out that during the various conversions from one technology to the other, Linotype took great care to re-evaluate their design accordingly (Ross, 2002).

إِنَّ الْأَبْرَارَ يَشْرَبُونَ مِنْ كَأْسٍ كَانَ مِزَاجُهَا كَافُورًا .  
عَيْنًا يَشْرَبُ بِهَا عِبَادُ اللَّهِ يُفَجِّرُونَهَا تَفْجِيرًا .  
يُوفُونَ بِالنَّذْرِ وَيَخَافُونَ يَوْمًا كَانَ شَرُّهُ مُسْتَطِيرًا .  
وَيُطْعَمُونَ الْطَّعَامَ عَلَىٰ حُبِّهِ مِسْكِينًا وَيَتِيمًا وَأَسِيرًا .  
إِنَّمَا نُطْعِمُكُمْ لِوَجْهِ اللَّهِ لَا نُرِيدُ مِنْكُمْ جَزَاءً وَلَا شُكُورًا .

fig. 6 'Monotype Naskh Series 589', 200%

وأضافت الوكالة بأن الجانبين ،  
خلال محادثتهما التي جرت في جو  
ودي من الصداقة والتفاهم ، أعلننا  
عن عزمهما الراسخ على مواصلة  
بذل الجهود لتعميق عملية الانفراج  
الدولي وتوثيق التعاون بين الدول  
والعمل على أساس مبدأ عدم

fig. 7 'Arabic 90', from *Al-Muharir*, 200%

مهنة التعليم مرغوبة من الجميع .  
● عبدالله الشمري طالب بالقضاء  
على الفساد في الوزارة وان تكون له  
الاولوية وقال نحتاج الى وزير قادر  
على فرض افكاره على قيادات الوزارة

fig. 8 Typeface without known appellation, used in *Al-Hadaf*, 200%

والسعودية، والتي تحظى برعاية  
القيادتين في البلدين لما فيه خير  
ومصلحة الشعبين ودول وشعوب  
المنطقة. مشيراً إلى ان الزيارة تأتي  
في إطار اللقاءات والعلاقات المتميزة

fig. 9 Typeface without known appellation, used in *Al-Watan*, 200%

الرسمية السورية - السوفياتية ، لكن  
الرئيس حافظ الاسد سيمضي في  
الاتحاد السوفياتي ثلاثة او اربعة  
ايام اخرى يزور خلالها جمهوريتي  
جورجيا واوكرانيا .  
وذكرت وكالة "تاس" السوفياتية  
الرسمية في بيان عن ختام  
المحادثات:

"جرى تبادل الاراء حول طائفة  
كبيرة من القضايا المتعلقة بالوضع  
الراهن وأفاق التطور اللاحق للتعاون  
السوفياتي - السوري كذلك حول  
القضايا الدولية الراهنة .  
واعلن الجانبان عزمهما الراسخ  
على مواصلة بذل الجهود لتعميق  
عملية الانفراج الدولي وتنشيط  
التعاون بين الدول والعمل على  
تحقيق تسوية شاملة لازمة الشرق  
الايوسط على اساس مبدأ عدم  
السماح بالاستيلاء على الاراضي عن  
طريق الحرب وحق كل دول  
الشرق الاوسط في الوجود المستقل  
والامن . واكد الاتحاد السوفياتي  
والجمهورية العربية السورية في هذا  
المجال ضرورة تحرير كل الاراضي  
العربية المحتلة في العام ١٩٦٧  
واحقاق الحقوق الراسخة للشعب  
العربي الفلسطيني ومن ضمنها حقه  
في تقرير المصير وبما في ذلك  
تأسيس دولة فلسطينية مستقلة .  
وجرت المحادثات في جو ودي "

fig. 10 The custom typeface of the *An-Nahar* newspaper, 100%

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Besides various copies of ‘Yakout’ three other typefaces could be clearly identified. These are the – for newspaper printing very untypical – ‘Monotype Naskh’ [fig. 6], first introduced before the Second World War (Safadi 1980), a typeface to which the Linotype corporation referred to as ‘Arabic 90’<sup>23</sup> [fig. 7] and the custom design for the *An-Nahar* newspaper from 1973 [fig. 10].

Furthermore two typefaces of different design than ‘Yakout’ were observed but could not be identified. Whereas *Al-Hadaf* [fig. 8] uses a text type which is closely related to the design employed by *An-Nahar* (note the differences in the ‘Hah’ group), the face used by *Al-Watan* has unique peculiarities. But although the shapes vary to some extent, in all these designs very analog methods of simplification can be found – a further indication of the lasting importance of Linotype’s invention.

The similarities in text-treatment are not only found in the choice of typefaces, but also in other design-decisions. All newspapers under consideration have justified body text. It is astonishing that in this study no occurrence of unjustified setting for considerable amounts of text could be found. Although justification is a valid decision in many situations of newspaper layout, it is equally advisable to break with this convention and use the option of ragged text to mark differences of content or importance – the editorial, often set in wider columns, immediately comes to mind. Unjustified text would be a welcome break to the uninviting rigidity and greyness of the example in figure 11 (apparently other measures would also benefit this page).

Another feature which is shared by forty-one of forty-three newspapers are indented first paragraph lines. Whereas European newspapers most commonly use the full column width for the first line of the first paragraph and indent the first line of each following paragraph [fig. 12], all first lines of the Arabic newspapers under consideration are treated similarly [fig. 13]. This corresponds to the way many North American newspapers deal with paragraph indentations [fig. 14]. It could, however, be argued that the idea of a paragraph indentation mainly is to emphasize a subdivision within a continuous piece of text, and an indentation of the starting line is superfluous.<sup>24</sup> Furthermore it creates in combination with a centered headline an unfavourable ‘step-effect’ and adds unused, arbitrary white space to the page. Indeed, the use of white space as a means of design is not very developed in Arabic newspaper design. Exaggerated gutters between columns and pages with a loose appearance are found in many of the newspapers under consideration. The frontpage of the Tunisian *As-Sabah* [fig. 15] shows very clearly how a page loses its coherence because of unused white space.

A recent trend observable in Arabic newspapers are Latin figures within Arabic text. Interestingly, the first examples of this study come from Northern Africa in the 1980s. It does not seem to be a coincidence

23 The appellation was found on specimens in the Linotype non-Latin collection at the Department for Typography and Graphic Communication, University of Reading. Neither manufacturer, nor date of production were indicated.

24 Especially since the measure of newspaper columns is already narrow, further reduction and fragmentation can cause unnecessary noise on the page.

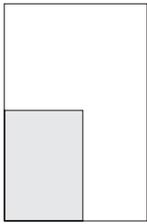


fig. 11 Page from Al-Quds Al-Arabi, 20%

**München** – Das in der Türkei aufgetretene Vogelgrippe-Virus ist der für den Menschen gefährliche Typus H5N1. Tests hätten ergeben, dass es sich um das Virus handelt, an dem seit Ende 2003 in Asien etwa 60 Menschen gestorben sind, sagte EU-Verbraucherschutzkommissar Markos Kyprianou am Donnerstag in Brüssel. Auch in Rumänien hat sich der Verdacht auf Vogelgrippe im Donau-Delta nun doch bestätigt. Bis mit weiteren Tests der genaue Erregerstamm festgestellt ist, geht die EU-Kommission davon aus, dass es sich auch dort um das Virus H5N1 handelt.

Das Virus, welches nun in der Türkei nachgewiesen wurde, stehe in direktem Zusammenhang mit den Vogelgrippe-Viren, die bisher in Russland, der Mongolei

Detail from the Süddeutsche Zeitung 100% fig. 12

### واشنطن - من هشام ملحم:

استحوذ خبر "انتحار" وزير الداخلية السوري غازي كنعان على اهتمام كبير من المسؤولين الأميركيين المعنيين بالشرق الاوسط، الذين لم يخفوا، نظرا الى الظروف والملابسات الغريبة التي احاطت بغياب مثل هذه الشخصية السياسية - المخارباتية وتوقيته - لم يخفوا شكوكهم العميقة في صدقية الرواية السورية الرسمية عن نهاية كنعان، وتساءلوا، بمزيج من الترقب والتهكم والجديّة، عن مصير شخصيات مخارباتية سورية اضطلعت بادوار مهمة في لبنان سنوات طويلة، منها رستم غزالي وحسن خليل. ولم يكن من المستغرب سماع تعليقات طريفة تعكس استغراب المسؤولين

Detail from An-Nahar, 100% fig. 13

By DAVID ROHDE

RAWALPINDI, Pakistan, Oct. 13 —Nadish Liaqat, 10, was pulled from the rubble of her collapsed school on Saturday. Since then, as the death toll in her mountain town has grown into the thousands, Nadish has stared at her mother, waved her left hand and cried.

"She would weep a lot, but there was no voice," said Naseem Akhtar, the girl's mother. "There were tears and tears and tears."

Nadish could whisper, a little, and

Detail from the New York Times, 100% fig. 14

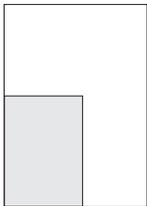


fig. 15 Frontpage of As-Sabah, 20%

that former colonies with a considerable number of people who use French (i.e. Latin script) on a daily basis are trend-setters for this practice. In recent years, however, Latin figures also appear in other regions of the Arab world. Ten out of sixteen contemporary newspapers in this study use Latin figures. This trend might be due to various causes, among them the Western influence from businesses and the increasing influence of the Internet on people's habits.<sup>25</sup> But this question is not the concern of this dissertation. Nevertheless, its implementation in newspapers needs to be mentioned. All the newspapers which opted for Latin figures did so with no apparent appreciation of formal harmony: not a single Latin typeface matched the Arabic typefaces in terms of colour, style, weight, or size. The Latin figures often constitute foreign elements within the Arabic text and stand out as alien characters [fig. 16]. Even the Lebanese *An-Nahar*, which employs a custom typeface design throughout the publication, appears to overlook the distracting contrast between Arabic and Latin characters [fig. 17].<sup>26</sup> Although much can be ascribed to a lack of choice for the Arabic typographer, this phenomenon cannot be explained by it.

## الدستور في 15 تشرين

Detail from *An-Nahar* fig. 16



A headline from the Kuwait daily *Al-Khaleej*, 2006, showing the incompatibility of the Arabic with the Latin typeface, 100% fig. 17

The observations about Latin figures apply equally to single Latin words within Arabic text. Regularly names, abbreviations or words which cannot be properly transliterated into Arabic without vocalization marks<sup>27</sup> are written in their original form. Commonly, these words are set in a generic Latin typeface (usually 'Times New Roman') and cause the same distractions as discussed above. Words, or parts of sentences in Latin script generate an additional obstacle for the typesetter: they are

25 Commonly, Latin figures are easier to access through contemporary keyboards.

26 In addition, one has to remark, that these Latin figures are also for themselves below the threshold for acceptable quality.

27 Vocalization marks which indicate vowels and pronunciation are rarely used in newspapers and general publishing because usually the meaning can be gathered from the context. Only in cases where ambiguities could occur or foreign words need to be represented vocalization marks are applied. Also the Qu'ran is usually vocalized to prevent misinterpretations.

مشيرا الى ان الخطوات موجودة  
 على الانترنت (www.con-  
 cept grammar.com) واكد  
 انه اتباع هذه الخطوات سيتمكن  
 من حفظ 1500 كلمة شهريا،  
 كما يوجد برنامج المفاهيم على  
 اقراص CD ثلاثة مقسمة على  
 32 فصلا، تغطي كل قواعد  
 اللغة، وهي لعمر فوق 12 عاما.  
 واصلن بهبهاني ان مشروعه  
 القادم هو تعليم اللغة الانجليزية  
 بطريقة الحساب لمن هم في  
 عمر اقل من 12 عاما.

### غرف مغلقة ومفتوحة

وتحدث بعد ذلك عن برنامج  
 التقوية في اللغة العربية من  
 خلال الغرف المغلقة والغرف  
 المفتوحة، والذي استغرق  
 انجازه 4 اعوام وانتهى فيه من  
 ايضاح 70% من قواعد اللغة  
 العربية، مشيرا الى انه يحتاج  
 الى عامين آخرين للانتهاء من  
 كل قواعد اللغة اي الـ 30%

fig. 18 Two columns of the Kuwait daily *Al-Watan* show an abundance of problems occurring with Latin type in Arabic text, 100%

written and read from left to right, opposing to the direction of the Arabic script. Therefore unfavourable line breaks which distort the meaning of the sentence may occur. Figure 18 depicts some of the issues discussed: the Latin typeface and figures stem from ‘Times New Roman’. They do not match the Arabic typeface and also look, in comparison to the Arabic letters, too big. The linebreak of the URL ‘www.conceptgrammar.com’ is a typical example of the problems occurring with varying writing directions. The incorrect placement of the percentage sign further proves the degree of complications which arise in multi-script typesetting.<sup>28</sup>

The use of Latin alongside Arabic type also highlights some of the fundamental differences between both scripts. The varying use of Cartesian space<sup>29</sup> is among the most important. The Arabic script is, for various reasons, very economical in x-direction. Its skeletal structure (or the shapes to which Milo refers as ‘archigraphemes’) is of consonantal nature and therefore employs fewer elements (or letters) than an alphabetic script. Furthermore calligraphic concepts like ligatures, vertical stacking of letters and nesting add to its space-saving nature. Nonetheless, the shapes of the script require considerable amounts of vertical space because the tallest and the deepest elements extend far from the main body.

However, in newspaper typesetting a basic requirement is to fit as much content as possible into minimal space: “the designers of typefaces for newspapers try to make faces that can fit a lot of letters on each line, without looking cramped, and that will look larger than they really are, while still appearing perfectly ordinary and unremarkable to the eye of the reader” (Berry 2004, p. xiii). The most common features designers apply to achieve these goals are a reduction of extenders, big counters, a tall x-height and sturdy shapes.

In Arabic typeface design, the question arises how these considerations translate to a different script. As mentioned above, the use of space is very different and the concept of an x-height is inexistent in the Arabic script. In fact it uses the y-coordinate with much greater variety of shapes and height-levels than the Latin script. Accordingly, any normalization or reduction of extending elements reduces important distinguishing features and hence, has a negative impact on readability: the closer the proportions of various letters are, the easier confusions for the reader occur. If, as in the case of newspaper typefaces, readability is crucial, the option to reduce extending elements is much more limited in Arabic than in roman type.

‘Yakout’ the first and, because of its ubiquity, meanwhile archetypical Arabic newspaper typeface was developed in accord with some of these considerations. Besides the above mentioned reduction of characters and its sturdy lettershapes, also the proportions of its tallest and deepest char-

28 The questions relating to multi-script typesetting merits further research and cannot be discussed in full within the scope of this dissertation. For further reading see for example *Harmonization of Arabic and Latin script, possibilities and obstacles* (Nemeth 2006).

29 ‘Cartesian space’ defines the area used by different script on x and y coordinates. The variations of use depend on writing direction (horizontal, vertical, left to right or right to left), writing system (for example alphabetic or syllabic) and the particular shapes a script employs to convey meaning.

acters are restrained to allow for more compressed typesetting. And in the original hot-metal version tall letters with accents were further shortened to accomodate the accent on the same slug as the letter [fig. 19]. This decision was based on the particular requirements of the Linotype slugcaster and, as such, of purely technical nature. Nevertheless it was preserved through all versions of the typeface for phototypesetting and digital page makeup.<sup>30</sup>

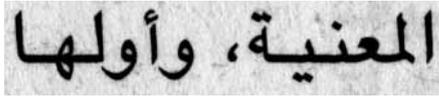
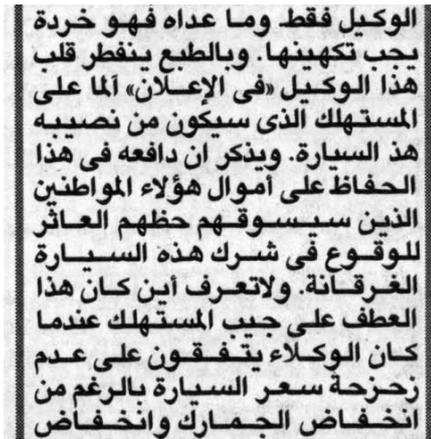


fig. 19 Note the decreased height of the 'Alif Hamza', taken from *Al-Rai Al-Aam*, 2006, 300%

The limitations in adapting the concepts of space saving from Latin typography can be illustrated on the basis of the archetypical Arabic newspaper: although 'Yakout' was specifically designed for unfavourable newspaper typesetting and has arguably compromised lettershapes, it does not work satisfactorily in solid setting. The example in figure 20 illustrates how the line-building is aggravated by the small amount of interlinear space. The line-ends are easily lost and in general the type does not have enough 'breathing space' to be easy on the eye – these observations also hint at the preferred narrow column widths in Arabic newspapers. A reduction of the vertical dimensions in both, type design and typesetting, is not the most appropriate means for the Arabic script. The nature of the script is antithetic to this method and, as discussed above, offers a range of other options to save space on the page.

Concluding, it can be argued that solid typesetting, as it is known in Latin typography, cannot be applied to Arabic without compromising the letterforms and the readability of the text. New typeface designs which allow to typeset Arabic economically without compromising the legibility and aesthetics of lettershapes should be devised and current typesetting methods re-evaluated on their merits and limitations.



Example of solid typesetting, from *Akhbar Al-Yom*, 2006, 300% fig. 19

30 Although Linotype supplied full-sized accented characters as alternates since the conversion of 'Yakout' for the Linotron 202 typesetter in the 1980s (Ross 2006), the contemporary newspaper in figure 19 still shows the shape devised for hot-metal composition.

**Headlines**

Headline typography faces similar hurdles as text typography, though a slightly bigger selection of typefaces is available and in use. The main, and most important observation is, however, not concerned with particular typefaces, but with the way a headline is produced. For the longest part of Arabic newspaper history, headlines were not typeset, but written by hand. Until the 1990s many Arabic typesetters relied on copyists to shape the headlines to go with the body text. Fifteen samples of this study show handwritten headlines – examples as late as 1990 prove their survival through all stages of Arabic newspaper production [fig. 20].<sup>31</sup>

The disappearance of this practice during the 1990s coincides with the beginning of digital page layout for Arabic, the most important development in Arabic typesetting since the first Linotype slugging machine for Arabic was introduced in 1911 (Safadi 1980). The new technology was embraced by publishers throughout the Middle East. A Linotype promotional brochure of 1990 describes the high demand for new type-

31 In India and Pakistan even much more manual labour was employed in the production of newspapers. Because of the intricacies of the 'Nastaliq' calligraphic style, and the limitations of typesetting equipment to depict it appropriately, until recently complete newspapers were written by copyists (Kitabat Dubai 2006). See also figure 58 in the appendix.



fig. 20 A good example of an expressive hand-lettered headline in *Al-Ittihad Weekly* from 1977, 50%

setting systems: “never, since the advent of phototypesetting in the Arab world, has a new Linotype system had such an immediate and remarkable impact on the newspaper industry as the Series 1000 Arabic system outputting to Linotronic imagesetters. The idea of being able to produce complete Arabic or Latin pages up to broadsheet size with both text and images put into place electronically, with automatic storage of wire service stories, has captured the imagination of newspaper publishers in a way never seen before” (Linotype 1990). In this context ‘imagination’ obviously means a will to invest, for the text continues to praise the orders of eight ‘Series 1000’ systems by newspaper publishers within twelve months. After the first steps in digital composition with equipment supplied by the former hot-metal machine manufacturers and the occurrence of new companies<sup>32</sup>, in 1992 the desktop publishing revolution reached the Arab world with the first ‘Arabic XT’ software (ArabicSoftware 2006). It was based on Quark’s ‘Xpress’, the then leading page layout software, and bundled with it came a range of fonts.<sup>33</sup> The economical benefits of digital page layout and the ease of having all production aspects covered in one single tool can be considered as the deciding factors which brought an end to the practice of hand-lettering in Arabic newspapers. Although certainly appreciated as modernity, eventually this development led to a decline

32 The Diwan Software company was among the first to offer electronic publishing systems for the Arabic market (Diwan 2001).

33 In the current version forty-six fonts ship with the application.

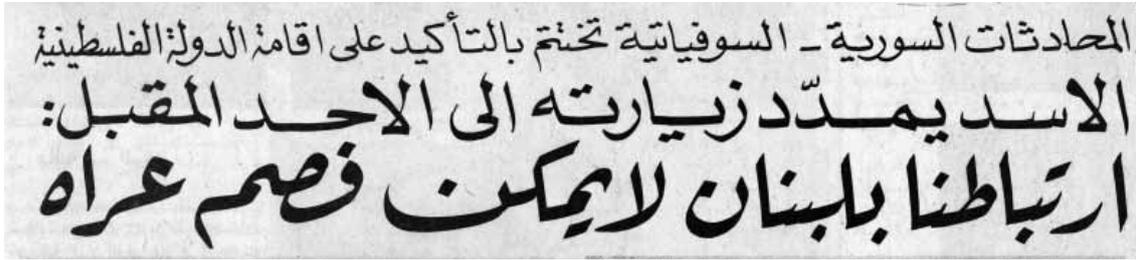


fig. 21 This headline from *As-Safir*, 1977, employs hand-lettering based on the ‘Ruq’ah’ (bottom line) and the ‘Naskh’ (2 top lines) calligraphic style, 75%



fig. 22 A typical contemporary headline block, taken from *Al-Ahram*, 2006, 75%

---

of visual vocabulary at hand for the designer. The wealth of shapes and strong graphic language of handwritten headlines, employing a range of calligraphic styles [fig. 21], is unmatched by current typographic practice.

Current headlines fail in another respect – the deliberate use of white space. All newspapers of this study have either centered or justified decks and headlines. While this in itself poses already an obstacle to active design with white space, it was mastered by most newspapers until the dismissal of hand-lettering. The additional flexibility needed to fill superfluous white space in horizontal and vertical dimensions was lost with the introduction of the new tool – digital page-layout. Whereas copyists dealt with their work intuitively, using every bit of space in its most appropriate way, the binary logic of digital design has to be forced to work outside the restrictions of grids, rectangles and lines. The default settings and methods of typesetting and designing found in contemporary layout tools often fail to produce satisfying results for Arabic text. Therefore designers often resort to distortions of the type – which does not remedy the problem [fig. 22]. On the contrary – because typefaces are designed as static objects, no bending, stretching and slanting can succeed in the way the copyist adapted the shapes according to his requirements. Eventually the distorted typefaces do not benefit the design, but rather signify a technology related compromise at the expense of readability and aesthetics (see also 4.2.4).

### Quality issues

The time span under consideration witnessed a tremendous increase in print quality. In Arabic newspapers of the 1970s worn type [fig. 23], uneven inking [fig. 24] and poor joining of letters were the norm [fig. 25]. Colour was a rarity and paper of low quality contributed negatively to the publications of this period. With the introduction of phototypesetting machines in the second half of the 1970s the situation began to change (Linotype 1990). The successive developments and the occurrence of digital workflows in combination with web-offset machines rendered technical limitations on the level of print quality obsolete. Newspapers in the twenty-first century have reached a technical quality unthinkable even 20 years ago [fig. 26].

Nevertheless, the quality of typefaces is a different issue. In fact, it only became an issue after the production of type and typesetting equipment was separated. As long as typesetting machine manufacturers had a monopoly on the typefaces that were used, they also controlled their quality. Numerous lasting achievements up to the present day prove the high level of craftsmanship during this period. This changed with the desktop publishing revolution. Anyone with a computer could start producing his own typefaces, and huge numbers of digital typefaces appeared.<sup>34</sup>

At the same time the major font manufacturers ceded to develop new non-Latin typefaces. Most early digital fonts were digitized versions of

<sup>34</sup> This democratization, though generally appreciated, also caused a drop in quality because laymen started to try their hand at typeface design.

ومن ناحية اخرى فقد اكد الدكتور  
اسامة الباز وكيل وزارة الخارجية  
المصرية بان الهدف من مؤتمر جنيف  
هو التوصل الى تسوية لازمة الشرق  
الاوسط ، تؤدي الى استرداد كل  
شبر من الاراضي العربية ، والحقوق  
الوطنية للشعب الفلسطيني ، واقامة  
دولة مستقلة فلسطينية ترتبط بجيرانها  
العرب بالروابط التي تراها والحدود

fig. 23 Worn, smudgy type, sample taken from *Al-Ittihad Weekly*, 1977, 200%

بغداد - وكالات الأنباء:  
ارتكب انتحاريون أمس مجزرة  
مروعة داخل مسجد الشيعة في  
بغداد أوقعت مئات القتلى  
والجرحى في سياق محاولات  
محمومة لإشعال حرب أهلية،  
وفي هجمات متفرقة أخرى قتل  
كثيرون بينهم 3 جنود أميركيين.  
وقتل 79 واصيب 164 آخرون  
بجروح عندما فجر 3 انتحاريين  
أنفسهم وسط جموع المصلين في

fig. 26 Typical contemporary print quality, sample taken from  
*Al-Ittihad*, 2006, 200%

جدة - واس : عاد الى جدة أمس  
سعادة الشيخ عبد العزيز الثنيان وكيل  
وزارة الخارجية بعد انتهاء زيارته الرسمية  
للنيجر والتي استمرت يومين .  
وقد مثل سعادته المملكة في احتفالات  
النيجر بإنشاء المساكن الشعبية التي  
مولتها المملكة وبلغت تكاليفها عشرة ملايين

fig. 24 Uneven inking, sample taken from *Al-Madina*, 1977, 200%

استقبال شعبي حافل لنميري في الاسكندرية  
السادات ونميري في سيارة مكشوفة وسط الجماهير  
توقع نتائج هامة للمباحثات  
حول تكامل العلاقات بين مصر والسودان

fig. 25 Note the white spots where letters are supposed to join in this headline from *Al-Akbar*, 1976, 100%

hot-metal, phototypesetting, or 'Letraset' designs and, although improved in the process of the conversion, few new quality designs were published. The present library of the biggest supplier of non-Latin typefaces Linotype, draws mainly upon the quality of designs which originated between 1950 and the 1980s (Linotype GmbH 2006).<sup>35</sup> The period in which Latin typography saw the steepest rise in new typefaces, trends and developments, passed with little positive developments for Arabic typography.

The reluctance of font manufacturers to invest significantly into non-Latin typefaces stems from another problem which was caused by the step to PostScript technology: font piracy. Since typefaces have lost their manifest form as pieces of metal and have become small digital files with a highly abstract value, they are very prone to theft. Typeface piracy is especially wide spread in the Arab world – dozens of websites offer 'free fonts' which are usually copied or sometimes even the actual typefaces sold by the manufacturer. This situation in combination with the significant investments necessary for quality Arabic typefaces causes the current paucity of Arabic designs. Arabic typographers, in turn, face the disadvantages of a limited choice of quality typefaces by professional distributors and a flood of badly copied clones.

Low quality fonts are not only a phenomenon of piracy. Copied designs and badly produced fonts can even be found at major software distributors such as "Diwan Software Limited [which] represents some of the longest experience and best knowledge of any company in the Arabic software market" (Diwan 2001). The similarities of Linotype's 'Al-Harf Al-Jadid One' and Diwan's 'Beirut' are more than obvious [fig. 27] and also the comparison of Linotype's 'Karim' and Diwan's 'Arab Taayms' (a transliteration of 'Arab Times') [fig. 28] show a strong affinity. Although Diwan claims to have "one of the largest libraries of original high quality Arabic typefaces" (Diwan 2006) their collection consists of familiar designs which are, in addition, of low technical quality as figure 29 illustrates. A puzzling aspect of this policy is that Diwan also sells the Linotype originals, similar designs with different names.

35 Linotype recently used the opportunity of the technology switch from True Type to Open Type to have their Arabic fonts re-evaluated and improved.

وكنْتُ - أطل اللهُ بقاءك - في مجلس ابن  
البربري وقد حفل بارباب الأتلام والخطوط  
وصار كل منهم يظهر مخبأته من النوادر.

تشجيع القطاع الخاص  
على إرساء مشاريع شراكة

The first three lines are from the 'Beirut' specimen, whereas the bottom two lines show 'Al-Harf Al-Jadid' fig. 27

عرب تايمس

عرب تايمس

Top line set in Diwan's 'Arab Taayms', bottom in Linotype's 'Karim' **fig. 28**

وقطم

Diwan's 'Khaleel' font is one example of sub-standard curve-quality **fig. 29**

دوحة -  
لتجارة،

This detail from the *Al-Watan* newspaper shows a typeface below any acceptable quality standards **fig. 30**

Sadly, even major newspapers seem to be reluctant to invest in quality typefaces and rather settle for aesthetically unacceptable fonts [fig. 30]. These, presumably economical, decisions are very short-sighted for a well designed newspaper certainly attracts more readers and increases sales.

This argument is not intended to blame individuals or companies for the current situation, but rather to highlight existing problems and advocate better solutions. On the side of manufacturers, basic quality standards must be achieved and maintained. It is their responsibility to offer decent products which enable the users to achieve excellence in their work.

On the user side an awareness for font-piracy needs to be fostered to make any investments from the manufacturers feasible. Only with considerable demand from the users, developers will be more inclined to invest in Arabic typeface development.

### Digital transformations

The limited choice of digital typefaces and their often unsatisfactory quality in combination with the new possibilities of type manipulation triggered a, from the typeface designer's perspective, unhappy development: digital transformation and distortion of existing typefaces. Of the twenty-two newspapers observed between 1990 and 2006, twelve use digital effects like condensing, shadows, embossing etc. This can be interpreted twofold: either as a search for additional ways of expression, or as an insensitivity to aesthetic qualities and the negative impact on readability. In most cases it will likely be a combination of these reasons. Especially condensing of headlines is common practice – which often compromises the integrity of shapes and makes them harder decipherable [fig. 31]. Although not part of this discussion, the design decisions for the headlines are tightly connected to editorial issues. Shorter texts allow the typographer to use bigger type without condensing it and gain graphic impact and readability.



fig. 31 The headlines in this example from *Al-Ahram* are condensed beyond legibility, 200%

With electronic publishing also the slanting of Arabic typefaces becomes an easily usable feature which can be applied to any typeface. This method is especially unsuitable for Arabic type and should be rejected by serious craftsmen. The slanting of roman type has – though it also is not recommendable – a reasonable and authentic background: the angle of cursive writing. However, this concept is out of place in regards of Arabic because most styles of the script already have, in contrast to roman type,

an inherent writing angle. The Arabic writing on which the type used for body-text is based, is in Latin terms a cursive. Accordingly, one could argue, that slanting Arabic equals slanting of a Latin italic or cursive typeface. Both scenarios amount to superfluous and unreasonable practice.

The phenomenon of slanting Arabic type is a typical example of an inappropriate use of technical options with unfavourable consequences for readability and in turn the carriage of news. The range of slant angles in both directions prove its arbitrariness in regards of Arabic [figs. 32, 33].

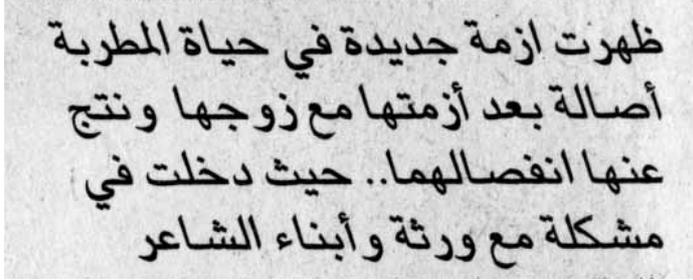


fig. 32 Type slanted in writing direction, *Al-Quds Al-Arabi*, 2006, 200%

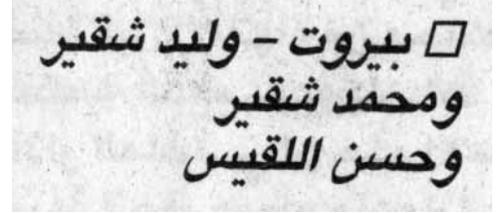


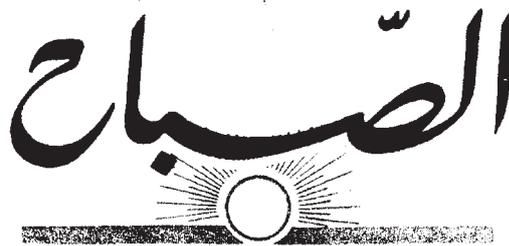
fig. 33 Type slanted against writing direction, *Al-Hayat*, 2006, 200%



### 4.3 Mastheads

The masthead of a newspaper is the most prominent typographic element, it “is the face of the institution and should demand as much care as the design of any other product name or company logo” (Parkinson 2002, p. 159). Nevertheless, Parkinson points out that they are often neglected and deteriorate over the years through adaptations to new printing and layout technologies. But since publishers are afraid to lose an established trademark, mastheads are not renovated regularly. The results are often mastheads which lose their crispness and the quality of the original design.

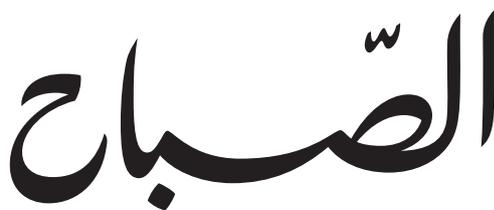
*As-Sabah* from Tunisia illustrates this development very clearly. Figure 32, the masthead from 1983, though of bad image quality, shows clean and expressive lettering. The pictorial element is subordinate and its rigidity amounts to an interesting counterpoint to the fluent calligraphic shapes. Twenty-two years later, little of these qualities are left [fig. 35]. The lettering has lost its calligraphic virtues. Lettershapes are malformed and inconsistent. The ‘Shadda’ above the ‘Sad’ is extraordinarily weak. Also the pictorial element is of poor quality. The sun’s shape shows obvious traces from the tool – graphic design software – which give it a generic impression. Also the colour gradient is a sign of unreflected application of digital effects. In a translation to grey or black and white, a common scenario for any logotype, the effect is lost and the remaining shades are likely to be reproduced unsatisfactorily.



Masthead from 1983, *As-Sabah*, 50% **fig. 34**



Masthead from 2005 – note the counter of ‘Sad’, 50% **fig. 35**



Draft for an improved masthead by the author, 2006, 50% **fig. 36**

Overall, Arabic newspaper mastheads show a rich variety of designs. Many employ calligraphic elements, but also highly abstracted typographic shapes and pictorial elements are commonly found. Also coloured elements are a standard: every newspaper of this study which uses at least one additional spot colour applies it for its masthead. A peculiarity of Arabic mastheads is their size: they are in general rather small. Not a single example uses the full width of the page for its masthead which is a common practice in the Western hemisphere. On the contrary, most measure only about a third of the page. In some instances the masthead is even subordinate to the main headline [fig. 37].

The range of quality is as wide as the range of styles. *Al-Hayat* [fig. 38] and *Ad-Dustour* [fig. 39] both use almost plain calligraphy – but achieve very different results. Whereas *Al-Hayat* has a strong and graphic image, *Ad-Dustour* looks, though nice it certainly is, slightly to timid for a newspaper masthead and does not have enough impact to dominate the page.

Designs which use pictorial elements are a greater challenge than plain lettering – more can get into the way of a strong message. Jim Parkinson notes that the image needs to harmonize with the letters in terms of colour, size and prominence and that “the illustration should read instantly, and it shouldn’t attract too much attention to itself and away



fig. 37 This fragment of *Al-Fajr* from 1977 employs a headline of much higher importance than the masthead, 50%



fig. 38 London-based *Al-Hayat* masthead, 2005, 50%



fig. 39 masthead of *Ad-Dustour*, Jordan, 1977, 50%

from the name of the paper” (Parkinson 2002, p. 166). The examples *As-Safir* [fig. 40] and *An-Nahar* [fig. 41] show a balanced and well executed marriage of letters and image. In both designs, though very different, the image amplifies the virtues of the lettering. Nevertheless the lettering of both would also benefit from some polishing. The medial ‘Hah’ of *An-Nahar* has some weak spots and uneven curves. In the case of *As-Safir* the irregular in-, and out-strokes are slightly awkward peculiarities which do not contribute positively to the clarity and impact of the lettering. Also the final ‘Rah’ looks restrained and could be improved with a more generous swash.

In the example of *Al-Quds Al-Arabi* [fig. 42] the background image achieves the opposite effect to the ideal application described by Parkinson. Although the lettering is strong enough to be still readable, the blue

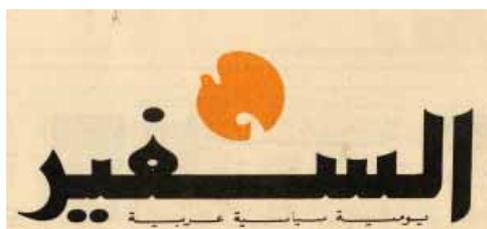


fig. 40 masthead of *As-Safir*, Syria, 1977, 50%

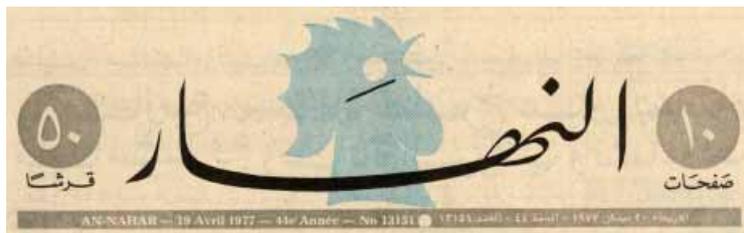


fig. 41 masthead of *An-Nahar*, Lebanon, 1977, 50%

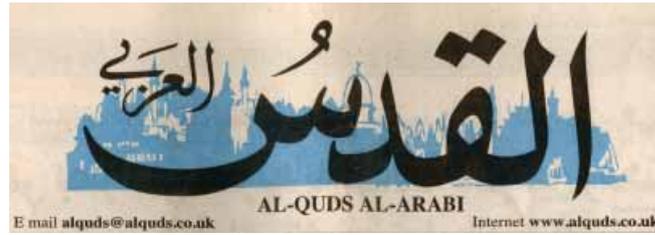


fig. 42 masthead of the London-based *Al-Quds Al-Arabi*, UK, 2005, 50%



fig. 43 masthead of the North American edition of the Egyptian *Al-Ahram*, USA, 2006, 50%

area can only after some time be deciphered as the silhouette of a city. Both elements hamper each other and obstruct the clarity of the masthead. Similar is the example of *Al-Ahram* [fig. 43], one of the oldest Arab newspapers. Its current masthead is an especially unfortunate combination of calligraphic- with pictorial-elements. The structured background interferes with the fine calligraphic marks and even the plain black letters are obstructed by the red parts. This is partly because black and red translate to a similar grey value and partly because of sub-optimal placement. For example the concurrence of the 'Alif' in the 'Lam-Alif' ligature with the right edge of the pyramid generates an unfortunate competition for attention between the two elements.

However, the issues of the main parts are marginal compared to the Latin subtitle. A curious combination of badly reproduced blackletter type with 'Times Roman' in varying sizes and colliding with Arabic lettering show an overt ignorance of design considerations.

The malformed 'Registered' mark is another detail of the masthead which could easily be remedied and adds currently to the bad overall impression.

# 5 Case studies

## Al-Ittihad

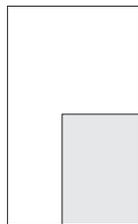
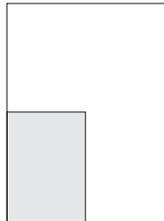
The *Al-Ittihad* newspaper is a daily from the United Arab Emirates. It was chosen because it features many significant developments which are representative for general trends in the Arab world. In this case study two examples are presented – one from the 23 April 1977 [figs. 44a, 44b] and one from the 8 April 2006 [fig. 45a, 45b].

This particular newspaper changed significantly over the last twenty-nine years. At first glance the front page would not easily be recognized as the same publication. Most obvious are the haptic changes – glossy paper for the first sheet and a width reduction from forty-three to thirty-five centimeters. Yet, the eight column grid was maintained. In addition to narrowing the basic column width, the 2006 version takes advantage of its technical freedom and varies the number of columns and their width throughout the paper. The paper from 77 already employs varying columns but they are restrained to multiples of the basic column.

Also the improvement of print quality is very notable [fig. 28]. The contemporary text has little in common with the smudgy and blurry type of the 1970s.



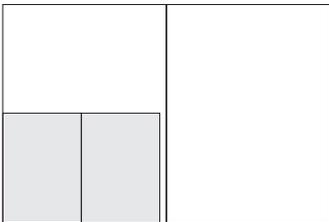
Al-Ittihad, 23.4.1977, 20% fig. 44a



Al-Ittihad, 8.4.2006, 20% fig. 45a



fig. 44b, 20%



On a second level the general colour of the complete page has changed dramatically. The 1977 version shows a dense patchwork of news items, entwined with each other and not very well structured, crowned by an unusually big, red headline deck. It dominates the loud page with ease and even gives the masthead a subordinate position. The centered halftone directs a lot of attention to it and adds to the indecision felt on the page. There is no directionality and dynamic and, apart from the main header, an unclear hierarchy. The small headlines compete with each other and create considerable visual 'noise'. Especially the white headlines on black background claim more prominence than one would expect from their relative size.

The contemporary example gives a different impression. It is clearly dominated by the big, re-designed masthead which is generously surrounded by white space. The masthead abandoned the underlying red area (which was hardly more than that), has sharper and more distinct letter shapes and therefore better fulfils its logo-function than the predecessor from the 1970s did. Nevertheless it is not a very expressive and unique design.

On top of the masthead a selected range of contents is featured to make them faster accessible. The space below the fold is almost entirely dedicated to full-colour advertisements which are bigger than the main news-photograph. In addition a small news picture is sandwiched in between the two bigger advertisements. Although the text layout is in general

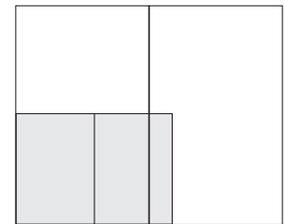


fig. 45b, 20%

calmer and better structured, the headlines clearly show the drawbacks described in section 4.2.2. They float passively in white space. Also the Latin figures in the headlines are good examples of the uncritical employment of this editorial decision – ‘Times Roman Bold’ is certainly not the best companion for the Arabic typeface. The body typeface also changed, nonetheless it still is one of many clones of ‘Yakout’.

The main differences observed on the front pages are reflected in the design of the interiors. Again the paper from 1977 is much louder and less structured. Content is depicted in higher density and white space as a means of design is barely used. Interestingly the only prominent example of active white space is around the ragged left headline on the left page. As soon as the centered headline is abandoned, more interesting design solutions develop. A look at the current design proves the point: the centered headlines, though generously surrounded by white, fail to create a dynamic page. Their centre-alignment makes the generally very clean page static. Nonetheless the new typographic design is a pleasing development. The content is well structured into coherent areas, divided by ample white gutters.

The direct comparison of the two spreads is a clear indication of a developed design. Since a newspaper is mainly a carrier of information it should be designed as accessible as possible – a goal which is certainly better met in *Al-Ittihad* of 2006. However, during the process of cleaning up the page, certain qualities found in the 1977 version were also

lost. Parts of the strong and lively graphic voice of its predecessor would benefit the contemporary publication to a great extent. Figure forty-four illustrates the strong appeal calligraphic headlines could add to the clear and modular structure of the contemporary design. It is the juxtaposition of shapes which stem from different sources that contributes to a lively and dynamic page.

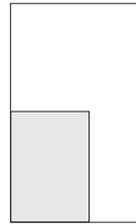


fig. 46 Collage to illustrate the impact different headlines could make in a contemporary layout, 20%

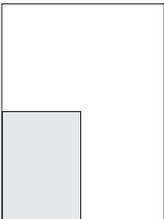
## Al-Arab

*Al-Arab* is a London-based pan-Arab daily which was founded in 1977. It was chosen as a representative of the Arabic emigrant press. The two issues under consideration are from 28 January 1985 [fig. 47a] and 11 November 2005 [fig. 48a]. Given the time span of 20 years, the changes to the design are surprisingly small. The reduction in width is similar to *Al-Ittihad* and also accompanied by a smaller column measure. Apart from this, the structure of both frontpages is almost entirely equal. The masthead, though of slightly different size, is placed in the top left corner and only shows minute differences between its 1985 and 2005 version. This seems unfortunate, for it has an old-fashioned design. The announcements right of the masthead are also maintained.

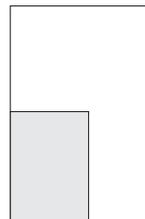
Nevertheless a much clearer hierarchy of importance is achieved in the contemporary issue. Due to more space, a dominant position on the page



*Al-Arab*, 28.1.1985, 20% **fig. 47a**



*Al-Arab*, 11.11.2005, 20% **fig. 48a**



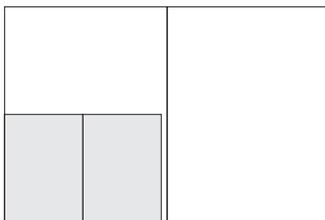
and a relatively bigger headline, the main article is clearly marked as the most important content.

On the text level, one can observe a reduction of news items and hence a clearer and better organized page. Headlines and text are easily attributable and have more 'breathing space'. However, also the organization of the columns shows obvious similarities – the text box on the very left kept almost the same appearance and the presentation of content in the most right column was also preserved over twenty years. Changes are happening on a different level. Most notable are colour-photographs, better print quality and again the shift from hand-lettered to typographic headlines. *Al-Arab* is also one of the newspapers which introduced Latin figures in the period of concern – however not very successfully, as the second headline tellingly indicates: size, weight and style do not match at all.

The interior of the contemporary paper [fig. 48b] shows even stronger affinity to its predecessor from the 1980s [fig. 47b]. In both issues page two features a variety of articles and short news items of similar length and prominence. The third page is almost entirely similar in structure and organization of content. From the position of the illustration and the headlines, to the framed text boxes on both sides of the page, nothing



20% fig. 47b



has changed. One hint at the contemporary publication is, however, to be found below the fold: the width variation of columns is new. Also the choice for the headline typeface is different in 2005 – the very bold ‘Al-Harf Al-Jadid’ was replaced by a design of less prominence. In general the page was visually toned down through a reduction of black and white contrast. For example, the running heads which were black bars in 1985 have become light grey and the big page numbers are now neatly fit-  
 ted into the box. In that respect a parallel to *Al-Ittihad* can be observed. Although the current designs of both newspapers are cleaner and more accessible, which makes them more successful as a news-carrier, they lack distinction and a unique graphic language. A strong visual voice and engaging design are as important in news presentation as a clear structure. Whereas clarity facilitates the reading process, outspoken design triggers interest and defines the visual identity of a publication. Both factors do not preclude each other but constitute, if balanced, a good design. Especially with increasingly fierce competition from other media, newspaper designers have to take full advantage of the merits a well designed paper embodies.



20% fig. 48b




## 6 Possibilities and suggestions

Arabic newspaper typography made significant developments over the last thirty years. Improved print quality and technical abilities enable designers to create clearer and more accessible layouts. An increased awareness of the need for hierarchies of importance causes better organized and structured content.

Other developments are less beneficial. The digital tools facilitate generic and repetitive design strategies, which in turn produce a range of similarly looking newspapers. The paucity of the Arabic type market further supports the homogeneity of appearance. Designers attempt to overcome these problems with the means the tools offer – digital transformations of typefaces and the application of embellishing effects can certainly be read as an effort to generate a wider range of shapes and graphic expression. In parallel, concepts from the world of Latin typography are introduced – with limited success as the example of slanted Arabic type shows. Also the bold and black designs, which, just like their slanted counterparts, lack historical justification in most Arabic scripts, are to be questioned.

However limited the range of quality Arabic typefaces is, more can be developed with the current arsenal of graphic vocabulary at hand. A break with conventions like center-aligned headlines, justified body text, similar column grids and a more deliberate use of white space would already change the face of the Arabic newspaper landscape to a great extent. Also the use of colour and tints is a basically unexplored field for Arabic newspapers. Furthermore experiments with different (already existing) typefaces for body text are certainly worthwhile and a self-evident step towards greater diversity and uniqueness. Typefaces such as 'Mitra'

وضعت لينوتيب - هل مقاييس رفيعة لتصميم وإنتاج خطوط  
عربية عالية الجودة. وتحتوي مكتبتها اليوم على خطوط  
«بوست سكريت» المعروفة باسم «النوع ١» والشاملة على

وضعت لينوتيب - هل مقاييس رفيعة لتصميم  
وإنتاج خطوط عربية عالية الجودة. وتحتوي  
مكتبتها اليوم على خطوط «بوست سكريت»

وضعت لينوتيب - هل مقاييس رفيعة لتصميم  
وإنتاج خطوط عربية عالية الجودة. وتحتوي

fig. 49 'Mitra' by Tim Holloway, 200%

by Tim Holloway [fig. 49] are rarely found in use and would enrich the graphic vocabulary at hand for the newspaper designer and give publications the benefit of an unconventional look. The issues occurring with the use of Latin type alongside Arabic are also partially solvable through a conscious and well informed choice of typefaces. All currently shipping Arabic Linotype fonts even facilitate this task by supplying more or less<sup>36</sup> matching basic Latin characters.

Also many mastheads in use today would benefit from a thorough re-evaluation and eventual re-design. Especially the use of colour and pictorial elements often lacks an appreciation of the masthead's role as a logotype and the main carrier of the newspaper's identity. Apparently any re-evaluation of the design would also include questions about the format and, on a different level, questions relating to content and editorial policies. The shift from broadsheet to smaller formats in other parts of the world might indicate a reasonable policy, although one should certainly not assume every development of Western newspapers as a requirement for their Arabic equivalents.

In some respects the opposite is advisable. Arabic typography incorporated a range of concepts from Latin typography which are not necessarily the best solutions for the peculiarities of the script. Obviously it is

36 These are combinations of Arabic and Latin typefaces which already existed. A much closer match can be achieved by a parallel development of both scripts in one typeface design.



fig. 50 An example of the combination of text written in 'Naskh' accompanied by the larger 'Thuluth' script, no scale indicated in the source

reasonable to inherit some design decisions across scripts. For example the structuring of a newspaper page in vertical columns makes also sense outside the world of Latin typography – as long as no better and more appropriate scheme can be found. Also the concept of a masthead as the main identity mark of a publication seems to be a reasonable choice across script differences.

However, on the typographic level, adaptations of Latin typographic concepts for the Arabic script are not a necessity. The Arabic writing culture formed a range of outstanding achievements which have yet to be embraced and appreciated by Arabic typography. One of the most interesting approaches for typographic problems which require a visual differentiation of text are the size and use-dependent scripts; an achievement from the formative period of classical Arabic calligraphy. In this era eight major calligraphic styles developed: ‘Tumar’, ‘Muḥaqqaq’, ‘Rayḥānī’, Thuluth’, ‘Tawqī’, Riqā, Naskh and ‘Gubari’.<sup>37</sup> As Mohamed Zakariya points out, they “had functions and satisfied the requirements of the special niches they were designed to fill” and “they all had their place in book design” (Zakariya 2006). These scripts follow specific shaping rules and they are conceived for clearly defined sizes. For example ‘Thuluth’, which means one

37 Over the years ‘Tumar’ and ‘Gubari’ became of lesser importance and the “six remaining scripts have been the media for Islamic calligraphy ever since” (Zakariya 1998, p. 5).

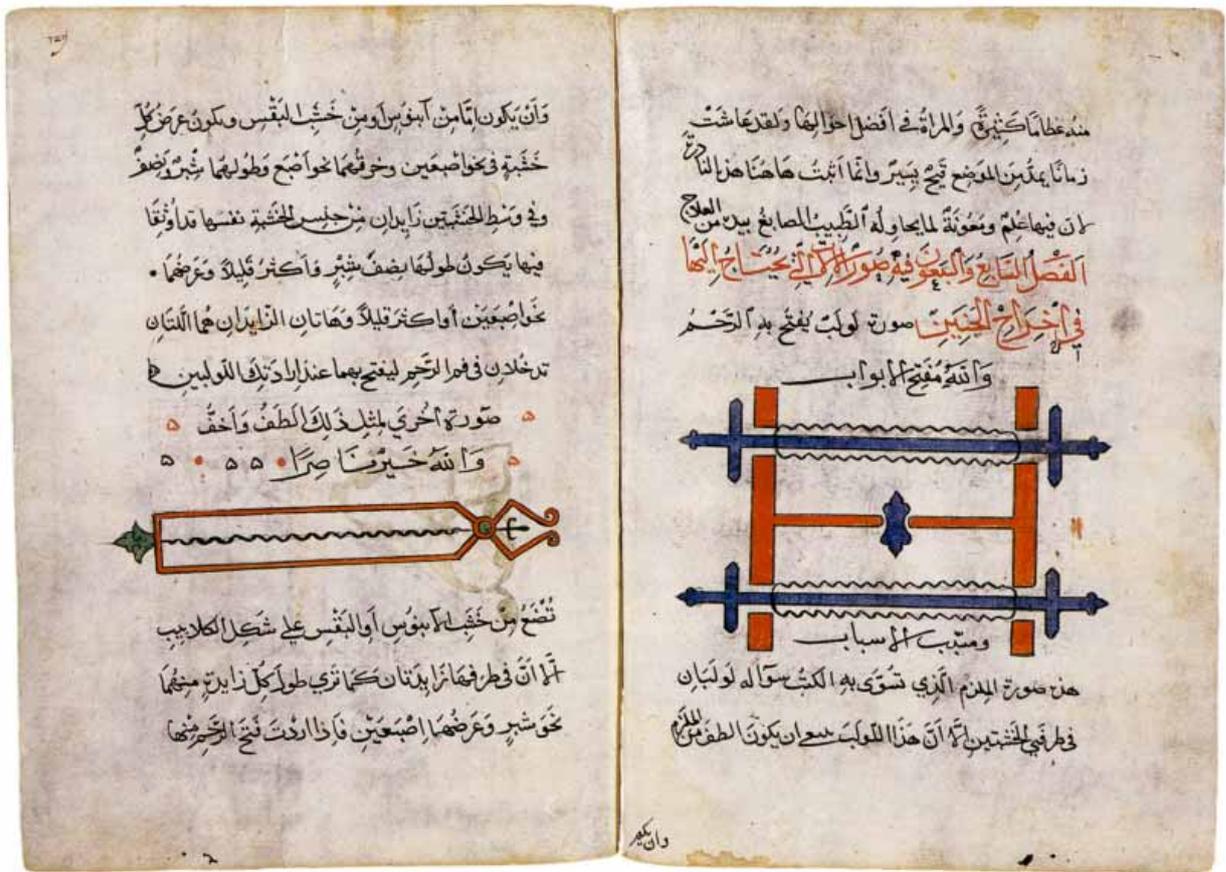


fig. 51 A medical science treatise, 1494 AD, no scale indicated in source

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third, is written with a pen one-third the size of the pen used for ‘Tumar’ script. Also the concept of ‘sister-scripts’ derives from an approach which changes characteristics and proportions dependent on size<sup>38</sup>: ‘Rayhānī’ is the small companion to ‘Muḥaqqaq’ and ‘Riqā’ the small version of ‘Tawqī’. The miniature script ‘Gubari’ was devised for use in carrier pigeon mail.

In fact, Arabic calligraphers developed in the 12th century principles of script relations and designs which serve most requirements text representation ever needs. Furthermore, they were used in combinations which show great affinity to contemporary typographic usage – levels of hierarchy in texts are marked by a change of size and style [fig. 50]. Another very common practice in Arabic manuscript production was the application of colour. Differences of importance and content within running text were often highlighted with colour variations [fig. 51] – a concept well suitable for newspapers as full coloured publications become more common. Also various scripts in addition to the six classic calligraphic styles were used in combination with long runs of text [fig. 52]. New regional and stylistic variations developed over the centuries. Among them a wide variety of North African styles, the so called ‘Maghribi’ scripts, and the Ottoman Ruq‘ah which was, before the advent of digital workflows, very effectively used in hand-lettered newspaper headlines [fig. 20].

These examples just scratch on the surface of the wealth and ingenuity of the Arabic calligraphic tradition, and it is neither purpose nor claim of this dissertation to deal with this topic in depth. Rather, it attempts to point out the rich heritage from which Arabic typography could draw. Given the range of unused options in the design and application of Arabic typefaces, one wonders if a slanted simplified Arabic has to be used. And also the need for boldened ‘Naskh’ typefaces can be questioned, since other methods of emphasis are available.<sup>39</sup> Everything is there, it just needs to be seen, interpreted and used in a contemporary context.

38 A similar approach, devised by Western punchcutters is just being re-discovered and labelled as ‘Optical Sizes’ by digital type manufacturers (Adobe Systems 2006)

39 For example the wide range of ‘Kufic’ styles could provide excellent samples for the design of type for big sizes.

حسبه مع الراجح الميل كمنسبه حبه مع الراجح كما المطلوب فهو معلوم ومن توسع كما بالجمع او المفاضل على حسب الوضع حصل ما العرض وهذا ما اردنا تامله من المسائل المتقدمه بحسب الماه الخامسة

# بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

## الكتاب الثاني في معرفة اوقات الصلاة

اما اذا تقدمت في التلاذد المذوع منها اوزار له والى الميز في سطح الارض ثابتة على حالها او فقير به بلو حركه الاولى في ان الحوض في ذكر ما يعرض في سماتها واصرف الاجتهاد الى حركات الكواكب وانتهى منها في هذه المقتله بالشمس ثم القمر واستعمل الله تعالى على اخراج ذلك من الفوما الى الفعل عنده وسعه جوده

### الباب الاول في تحويل التمام من بلد الى اخر

قد قدمت في الماه التي قبل هذه ما عرف به اختلاف الوقت الواحد في البلاد المختلفه الوضع بالاطوال والادوار العرض او بلكلها وترب هذا الاختلاف فيهما من الطول والعرض اذا اقيس في الافاق وتحدد عن العرض اذا اقيس الى ذلك نصف النهار فعلى فرض لنا في بلد معلوم الطول وقت ما بينه وبين ذلك نصف النهار فيه معلوم واريده كمنه هذا البلد في بلدنا معلوم الطول ايضا اخذنا اذما من فضل ما بين طوليهما وحولناهما الى الساعات او من دقائق الايام وغيرهما الرمثل ما اعطيناه منها في ذلك البلد المعروض فكون التعديل فان كان الوقت في البلد الاول قبل نصف النهار والبلد الثاني المحول اليه شرقا عن البلد الاول المحول عنه اخذنا فضل ما بين البلد المعروض وبين التعديل ونظرنا فان كان البلد المعروض اكثر من التعديل كان هذا الفضل هو البلد المحول الى البلد الثاني قبل نصف النهار فيه وهو المطلوب وان كان البلد المعروض اول من التعديل كان الفضل هو البلد المحول بعد نصف النهار في البلد الثاني وان ساء في البلد المعروض التعديل كان الوقت المعطى هو نصف النهار نفسه في البلد الثاني وان كان الوقت المعطى في البلد الاول بعد نصف النهار زدنا التعديل على البلد المعروض حتى جمع البلد المحول بعد نصف النهار في البلد الثاني فان كان البلد الثاني غربا عن البلد الاول والبلد المعروض قبل نصف النهار زدنا التعديل على البلد المعروض حتى جمع البلد المحول في البلد الثاني قبل نصف النهار وان كان البلد المعروض بعد نصف النهار اخذنا فضل ما بينه وبين التعديل ونظرنا فان كان البلد المعروض اكثر من التعديل كان هذا الفضل هو البلد المحول الى الثاني بعد نصف نهاره وان كان البلد المعروض اقل من التعديل فان الفصل يكون البلد المحول قبل نصف النهار فيه وان ساء وبما كان الوقت في الثاني نصف النهار مثاله انا اعطيناه وقتا يتعدا قبل نصف نهاره ملك ساعات مستويه وهو البلد الاول و اردنا ان نعرف بعد هذا الوقت عن نصف النهار بغربته وهو البلد الثاني شرقا عن الاول وباربعه وعشرون زمانا وثلاث ساعات بالرك وهو التعديل وفضل ما بينه وبين التعديل المعروض هو **الرك** فلان البلد اكثر من التعديل فان هذا الفصل هو بعد الوقت نصف نهاره عن زمانه فان كان هذا الوقت يتعدا قبل نصف النهار ساعه كان فضل ما بينه وبين التعديل **لرك** وذلك تاخر الوقت بعينه عن نصف النهار وان كان بعدا يتعدا ساءا بالتعديل كان بعينه عن نصف النهار وان كان الوقت يتعدا بعد نصف النهار وكانه على ساعتين زدنا التعديل عليها فاجتمع **ح لرك** وهو تاخر الوقت عن نصف نهاره عن زمانه فان كان الوقت من بعد اذ الى الاستكنديه وهو البلد الثاني شرقا عن الاول بثمانيه وعشرون زمانا وعشر ساعات من الساعات المستويه **ابك** وهو التعديل فان كان الوقت يتعدا بعد نصف النهار بساعه مثلا بعضها من التعديل فسبق **ك** وقد تقدم الوقت نصف نهار الاستكنديه وان كان الوقت يتعدا بعد نصف النهار باكثر من التعديل وكانه على ساعتين نقصنا التعديل منها فسبق **مر لو** وهو التاخر بالاستكنديه عن نصف نهاره فانها في وقتها بالاعمال الى نصف النهار او نصف الليل ثم ان كان الوقت المعطى محدودا بالاول والنهار والليل زدنا التعديل على الماضي اليه ان كان الليل الثاني شرقا عن الاول ونقصناه من الماضي اليه ان كان البلد الثاني غربا عنه وحفظنا للاصل ثم اخذنا فضل ما بين التعديل ذلك النهار في البلدين

طول صوره  
١٤

طول صوره  
١٥  
طول صوره  
١٦



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## Conclusion

The current state of Arabic newspapers should be evaluated and observed from various perspectives. Newspapers are, first and foremost an information carrier. And information needs to be presented well to trigger interest and to be read and understood. The most important article will have little impact if packaged badly – “the very first essential is to realise that design is part of journalism. Design is not decoration. It is communication” (Evans 1976, p. 1) But as was discussed in the introduction, journalism in the Arab world, irrespective of any design considerations, often faces political restraints and is hampered in its full development. The examples of a free and critical press are rare, and often conjoined with threats and intimidations.

It seems to be more than coincidence that also newspaper design, the congenial partner of journalism, shows signs of limitations in the Arab world. State monopolies on news dissemination and controlled distribution channels are certainly not a stimulus for independent, daring and innovative designs. However, censorship and information-control can by no means be seen as the sole and primary reason for a relative underdevelopment. Economical and technological limitations are eventually the deciding factors for the look of a newspaper.

The Arab press underwent considerable change in all these respects over the last thirty years. On a political level, more freedom and diversity is steadily spreading. ‘Information ministries’ are being shut down and the establishment of new information channels already causes changes in the media landscape and will eventually trigger a profound alteration of the structures for information dissemination. It is beyond doubt that the Arab press will witness considerable change over the years to come.

The biggest advancements of Arabic newspapers, however, happened in terms of print-technology. Newspapers have more freedom of layout and news-representation than ever before. Also economical aspects seem to become more favourable as the increase of colour, advertisements and quality paper indicate. Given the differences in production conditions one would assume that the face of the Arabic newspaper changed fundamentally over the last thirty years. Yet, this is not the case. Most changes happened on a superficial level and were not always beneficial. Many publications lack distinction and uniqueness – very generic design approaches are not a rarity in the Arab press. Often concepts inherited from the hot-metal era were not re-evaluated and adapted to the current situation. This is partly because of a lack of design tools, but insufficient quality in design education must also play a role. Concluding, it can be argued, that the design of Arabic newspapers needs to step up with its technical abilities.

At the same time the appreciation of the rich heritage of the Arabic writing culture on a broad publishing level is overdue. The understanding and adaptation of historical concepts for the arrangement of text and the treatment of letters (i.e. type) is key to an independent and culturally authentic development of Arabic typography. Aesthetic brilliance must not be restricted to the holy Qur’an, but should apply for all printed matter. Newspapers, although of very different value and connotation in society,

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are no exception to this. News needs to be presented in a most accessible way and the Arabic writing tradition offers stunning evidence for ingenious and aesthetic solutions. It is up to Arabic typographers and designers to take advantage of it.

# Appendix 1

## Definition of terms

### Simplified Arabic

The term 'Simplified Arabic' was developed by Linotype UK as a name for their patented scheme of Arabic typesetting with a limited number of representation forms for each character. It refers to a general principle of rendering, rather than a specific design.

When Linotype introduced its first linecasting machine for Arabic in 1911 a total of 180 keys were used to key Arabic (Gabeyan 2002). Due to increasing demand for easier and faster methods to typeset Arabic, Linotype developed a simplification scheme – 'Simplified Arabic', first published in 1956. Instead of the traditional system that needed four contextually dependent shapes for each joining character, 'Simplified Arabic' reduced this to only two variants [figs. 53, 54, 55]. Therefore the keys necessary for Arabic could be reduced to ninety – this caused a significant improvement in keying – and therefore production-speed which is so crucial for newspapers: "a brochure at the time claimed that 'the output of work may be increased by as much as 30 per cent' (Ross 2002).

The impact of this invention was outstanding and facilitated Arabic printing and publishing to a great extent. Hence it comes as no surprise, that other manufacturers of typesetting equipment tried to imitate and copy this system. One of the main competitors of Linotype, the Intertype company issued a very similar system by the name of 'Abridged Arabic' in 1960. In a letter from July 5, 1960 to Mr. C. A. Ainsworth, the head of the Linotype drawing office Walter Tracy, discusses the competitor's design: "In the Linotype fount we supply two forms of the letter ya, initial/medial and final/isolated. In the Intertype fount they provide the initial/medial, and separate forms for final and isolated" and concludes: "In view of the fact that we have taken the trouble to apply for patents for our own

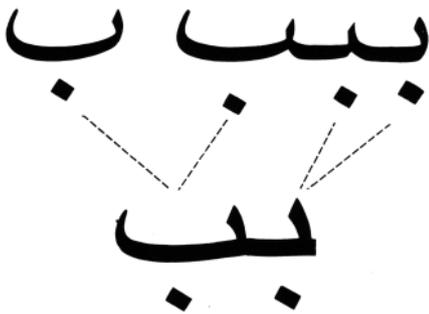


fig. 53 The scheme of character reduction of 'Simplified Arabic'

ويطيب لشركة لينوتيب أن تعلن عن صنع هذا التصميم الجديد للحروف العربية المختصرة ، الذي خطه خصيصا لشركة اللينوتيب الخطاط الخير السيد نبيه الجارودي .  
وهذه الحروف الجديدة ، التي تضم حروفا عادية وسوداء في أم واحدة ، يجري صنعها بأحجام ٧ و ٩ و ١٠ و ١١ و ١٢ و ١٨ بنط (ديدو) ، كما ان الشركة تدرس الآن امكانية صنعها بينط ١٦ أيضا .

fig. 54 The 'Simplified Arabic' design 'Yakout', 12 point Didot, 100%

ان منتجات شركة اللينوتيب الطباعية واسعة الانتشار في سائر أنحاء العالم ، وأصبح ممكنا صف اكثر من ثمانئة وخمسين لغة ولساناً بواسطة لوحات مفاتيحها . هذه الحقائق تعطي البرهان الساطع على نجاح مؤسسات شركة اللينوتيب البريطانية والاميركية في تنضيد السطور وعلى تفوقها على الاساليب الاخرى لخدمة الناس من مختلف الاجناس واللغات . وكنتيجة محتومة لهذه الجهود ، ولنصائح خبرائها في كل بلد

fig. 55 The conventional 'Linotype Arabic' in 12 point Didot, 100%





**fig. 57** Use of kešide in an Arabic translation of Dioscoride's *De materia medica* from 1224 AD, no scale indicated in source

## Appendix 2

### Basic Arabic alphabet

isolated	initial	medial	final	name	transcription	unicode
ا	اهلا	رجال	بدا	'alif	ʾ	0627
ب	باب	تبع	باب	bā'	b	0628
ت	تراب	كتب	ساكت	tā'	t	062A
ث	ثاني	يثبت	ثالث	ṯā'	ṯ	062B
ج	جا	اجي	حوليج	ǧīm	ǧ	062C
ح	حمر	محمد	مسح	ḥā'	ḥ	062D
خ	خوخ	نخرخ	مخ	ḫā'	ḫ	062E
د	ديما	ندي	شد	dāl	d	062F
ذ	ذاب	مذيع	لذيذ	ḏāl	ḏ	0630
ر	رسم	فرح	تمر	rā'	r	0631
ز	زيف	مزود	خبز	zāi	z	0632
س	سمع	غسل	كرافس	sīn	s	0633
ش	شوف	مشا	مش	šīn	š	0634
ص	صيد	يصبر	قصص	ṣād	ṣ	0635
ض	ضحك	ماضي	مريض	ḏād	ḏ	0636
ط	طبع	مطر	مشط	ṭāh	ṭ	0637
ظ	ظهر	يظهر	حظ	ẓā'	ẓ	0638
ع	عين	معمل	رائع	'ayn	ʿ	0639
غ	غادي	بغيت	بغ	ǧayn	ǧ	063A
ف	فهم	شفت	ريف	fā'	f	0641
ق	قرب	ثقبه	ينطق	qāf	q	0642
ك	كتاب	فكر	ضحك	kāf	k	0643
ل	ليمون	مليت	الكل	lām	l	0644
م	مالك	نمشي	رسم	mīm	m	0645
ن	نمر	كنز	سردين	nūn	n	0646
ه	هو	مهم	تنبيه	hā'	h	0647
و	ورد	كورا	شوو	wāw	w	0648
ي	يد	هيش	حي	yā'	y	064A



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## Sources of images

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**table 1** based on data from: *Human Development Report 2001, Making New Technologies Work for Human Development*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001

**table 2** based on data from: *Trends & Statistics: The Web's Richest Source*, retrieved June 17, 2006 from: [http://www.clickz.com/stats/web\\_worldwide/](http://www.clickz.com/stats/web_worldwide/)

**fig 1** Smitshuijzen Abi-Farès, H. (2001), *Arabic typography a comprehensive sourcebook*, Saqi Books, London (p.175)

**fig 2** Vector drawing by the author

**fig 3** Frontpages of *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, *Asharq Al-Awsat* and *De Morgen*, all retrieved October 14, 2005 from: <http://www.newseum.org/todaysfrontpages/>

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- fig 4** Collage based on PDFs of *Al-Gomhurya*, *Al-Bayan*, *Al-Hayat*, *Al-Quds and Essahafa*, all retrieved October 14, 2005 from: <http://www.newseum.org/todayfrontpages/>
- fig 5** from top to bottom: *Al-Quds Al-Arabi*, 29.10.2005, *Al-Khaleej* 8.4.2006, *Al-Rai Al-Aam* 7.04.2006, *Akhbar Al-Yom*, 5.11.2005
- fig 6** Monotype (n.d.), *Arabic Naskh Accented, Series No.589–24*
- fig 7** *Al-Muharir*, 20.4.1977
- fig 8** *Al-Hadaf*, 7.4.2006
- fig 9** *Al-Watan*, 6.7.1999
- fig. 10** *An-Nahar*, 19.4.1977
- fig. 11** *Al-Quds Al-Arabi*, 29.10.2005
- fig. 12** *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, [PDF] retrieved October 14, 2005 from: <http://www.newseum.org/todayfrontpages/>
- fig. 13** *An-Nahar*, [PDF] retrieved October 14, 2005 from: <http://www.newseum.org/todayfrontpages/>
- fig. 14** *New York Times*, [PDF] retrieved October 14, 2005 from: <http://www.newseum.org/todayfrontpages/>
- fig. 15** *As-Sabah*, 14.11.2005
- fig. 16** *An-Nahar*, [PDF] retrieved October 14, 2005 from: <http://www.newseum.org/todayfrontpages/>
- fig. 17** *Al-Khaleej*, 8.4.2006
- fig. 18** *Al-Watan*, 7.4.2006
- fig. 19** *Akhbar Al-Yom*, 5.11.2005
- fig. 20** *Al-Ittihad Weekly*, 21.04.1977
- fig. 21** *As-Safir*, 20.04.1977
- fig. 22** *Al-Ahram*, North America edition, 13.2.2006
- fig. 23** *Al-Ittihad Weekly*, 21.04.1977
- fig. 24** *Al-Madina*, 18.4.1977
- fig. 25** *Al-Akhbar*, 14.7.1976
- fig. 26** *Al-Ittihad*, 8.4.2006
- fig. 27** *Diwan Arabic Fonts*, (p.4), retrieved June 19, 2006 from: [http://www.diwan.com/english/images/Diwan\\_Fonts.pdf](http://www.diwan.com/english/images/Diwan_Fonts.pdf)
- fig. 28** As figure 25, (p. 1), complemented by the Linotype ‘Karim’ typeface
- fig. 29** As figure 25, (p. 6)
- fig. 30** *Al-Watan*, [PDF] retrieved June 19, 2006 from: <http://www.newseum.org/todayfrontpages/19.6.2006>
- fig. 31** *Al-Ahram*, 13.2.2006
- fig. 32** *Al-Quds Al-Arabi*, 29.10.2005
- fig. 33** *Al-Hayat*, 29.10.2005
- fig. 34** *As-Sabah*, 05.01.1983, image kindly supplied by the Internationales Zeitungsmuseum Aachen, Germany
- fig. 35** *As-Sabah*, 10.11.2005
- fig. 36** Vector drawing by the author
- fig. 37** *Al-Fajr*, 23.7.1980
- fig. 38** *Al-Hayat*, 29.10.2005
- fig. 39** *Ad-Dustour*, 20.4.1977
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- fig. 41** *An-Nahar*, 19.4.1977
- fig. 42** *Al-Quds Al-Arabi*, 29.10.2005

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- fig. 43** *Al-Ahram*, North America edition, 13.2.2006
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- fig. 44b** As figure 42a
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- fig. 47b** As figure 45a
- fig. 48b** As figure 46a
- fig. 49** Linotype Library (n.d.), *Mitra*
- fig. 50** Schimmel, A. (1970), *Islamic Calligraphy*, E.J.Brill, Leiden (plate XXXVIIIa)
- fig. 51** Djebbar, A. (2005), *L'Âge d'or des sciences arabes, Exposition présentée à l'Institut du monde arabe, Paris 25 octobre 2005–19 mars 2006, Actes Sud / Institut du monde arabe* (p.151)
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- fig. 55** Linotype and Machinery Limited (n.d.), *Linotype Arabic Light with Bold 14 point, (12 point Didot) (14⧫E24)*, London
- fig. 56** *Al-Hadaf*, 7.4.2006
- fig. 57** Djebbar, A. (2005), *L'Âge d'or des sciences arabes, Exposition présentée à l'Institut du monde arabe, Paris 25 octobre 2005–19 mars 2006, Actes Sud / Institut du monde arabe* (p.165)
- fig. 58** Fragment of an unknown newspaper from the collection at the Department of Typography and Graphic Communication, University of Reading



