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# STUDY OF *RASM UTHMĀNI*: SEMIOTIC, AESTHETIC AND HERMENEUTIC PERSPECTIVES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF QUR'ANIC INTERPRETATION METHODOLOGY

**Abdur Rokhim Hasan[1*], Sahlul Fuad[2], Masrur Ikhwan[3]**
[1,2,3]Universitas PTIQ Jakarta, Indonesia

E-mail: abdurrokhim@ptiq.ac.id[1], sahfuad@ptiq.ac.id[2], masrurikhwan@ptiq.ac.id[3]

## Abstract

*Rasm Uthmāni* has commonly been examined as a system of Qur'anic orthography and textual preservation, while its distinctive written forms also invite interpretive analysis. This study examines the semiotic, aesthetic, and hermeneutic significance of selected orthographic features and their contribution to approaches to Qur'anic interpretation. Employing a qualitative descriptive-analytical method, the study draws on works by al-Dānī, al-Zarkashī, al-Marrākushī, and Muhammad Syamlūl, supported by scholarship on Qur'anic manuscripts and printed editions. Selected instances of letter addition, omission, and orthographic variation are examined through Saussure's signifier–signified distinction, Peirce's representamen–object–interpretant model, and Schleiermacher's grammatical and psychological hermeneutics. The analysis relates the additional *yā'* in *bi'aydī* (Q.S. al-Dhāriyāt: 47) to classical interpretations of divine power, examines the omitted *alif* in *al-qawā'id* (Q.S. al-Nūr: 60) within its linguistic and exegetical context, and discusses *tā' maftūḥah* in selected references to women in relation to marital and spiritual circumstances. The discussion also situates the *tawqīfī* view within debates over orthographic preservation and draws on studies documenting the coexistence of *Uthmāni* and *Imlā'ī* conventions in Nusantara manuscripts. These findings demonstrate how the relationship between visual form, textual context, and classical interpretation enriches approaches to Qur'anic exegesis. The study thus highlights *Rasm Uthmāni* as an intersection of textual preservation, visual aesthetics, and interpretation, offering an integrated perspective on Qur'anic interpretation methodology.

**Keywords:** Rasm Uthmāni; Semiotics; Qur'anic Manuscripts; Tawqīfī; Visual Hermeneutics.

## Abstrak

*Rasm Uthmāni selama ini banyak dikaji sebagai sistem ortografi Al-Qur'an dan sarana pelestarian teks, sementara kekhasan bentuk tulisannya juga membuka ruang bagi analisis interpretatif. Penelitian ini mengkaji signifikansi semiotik, estetis, dan hermeneutik dari sejumlah bentuk ortografis terpilih serta kontribusinya terhadap pendekatan penafsiran Al-Qur'an. Dengan menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif-analitis, penelitian ini bertumpu pada karya al-Dānī, al-Zarkashī, al-Marrākushī, dan Muhammad Syamlūl, serta didukung oleh kajian mengenai manuskrip dan mushaf Al-Qur'an cetak. Contoh-contoh penambahan, penghilangan, dan variasi penulisan huruf*

* Corresponding author: abdurrokhim@ptiq.ac.id

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*dianalisis melalui pembedaan penanda–petanda Saussure, model representamen–objek–interpretan Peirce, serta hermeneutika gramatikal dan psikologis Schleiermacher. Analisis ini mengaitkan tambahan huruf yā' pada bi'aydī (Q.S. al-Dhāriyāt: 47) dengan penafsiran klasik mengenai kekuasaan ilahi, menelaah penghilangan alif pada al-qawā'id (Q.S. al-Nūr: 60) berdasarkan konteks linguistik dan penafsiran ayat, serta membahas penggunaan tā' maftūḥah dalam sejumlah penyebutan perempuan dalam kaitannya dengan keadaan perkawinan dan spiritual. Pembahasan juga menempatkan pandangan tawqīfī dalam perdebatan mengenai pelestarian ortografi Al-Qur'an dan memanfaatkan penelitian yang mendokumentasikan penggunaan konvensi Uthmāni dan Imlā'ī secara berdampingan dalam manuskrip Nusantara. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa hubungan antara bentuk visual, konteks tekstual, dan penafsiran klasik memperkaya pendekatan tafsir Al-Qur'an. Dengan demikian, penelitian ini menegaskan kedudukan Rasm Uthmāni sebagai titik temu antara pelestarian teks, estetika visual, dan penafsiran, sekaligus menawarkan perspektif terintegrasi bagi metodologi penafsiran Al-Qur'an.*

***Kata Kunci:*** *Rasm Uthmāni; Semiotika; Manuskrip Qur'an; Tawqīfī; Hermeneutika Visual*

## مستخلص

دُرس الرسم العثماني غالبًا بوصفه نظامًا لكتابة المصحف وحفظ النص القرآني، غير أن خصائصه الكتابية المميزة تتيح أيضًا مجالًا للتحليل التأويلي. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى بحث الدلالات السيميائية والجمالية والتأويلية لخصائص رسمية مختارة، وبيان إسهامها في مناهج تفسير القرآن الكريم. وتعتمد الدراسة المنهج النوعي الوصفي التحليلي، مستندةً إلى مؤلفات الداني والزركشي وابن البناء المراكشي ومحمد شملول، مع الإفادة من الدراسات المتعلقة بالمخطوطات القرآنية والمصاحف المطبوعة. وتُحلَّل أمثلة مختارة من زيادة الحروف وحذفها واختلاف صور كتابتها في ضوء ثنائية الدال والمدلول عند سوسير، والنموذج الثلاثي للعلامة عند بيرس (الماثول والموضوع والمؤول)، والتأويل النحوي والنفسي عند شلايرماخر. ويربط التحليل زيادة الياء في لفظ «بِأَيْيْدٍ» (الذاريات: 47) بالتفسيرات التراثية المتعلقة بالقدرة الإلهية، ويتناول حذف الألف في رسم لفظ «القواعد» (النور: 60) في سياقه اللغوي والتفسيري، ويناقش كتابة التاء المفتوحة في بعض المواضع التي تذكر النساء في ضوء الأحوال الزوجية والروحية. وتضع الدراسة أيضًا القول بتوقيفية الرسم العثماني في سياق الجدل حول المحافظة على رسم المصحف، وتستفيد من البحوث التي توثق اجتماع الرسم العثماني والرسم الإملائي في مخطوطات نوسانتارا. وتبين النتائج أن العلاقة بين الصورة الكتابية والسياق النصي والتأويل التراثي تُثري مناهج تفسير القرآن الكريم. وتبرز الدراسة بذلك الرسم العثماني بوصفه ملتقىً بين حفظ النص والجماليات البصرية والتفسير، وتقدم منظورًا تكامليًا في منهجية التفسير القرآني.

**الكلمات الرئيسية:** الرسم العثماني، السيميائيات، المخطوطات القرآنية، التوقيفية، التأويل البصري.

## A. Introduction

The Qur'an is the word of Allah, guaranteed to be pure for all time, both in terms of its pronunciation (*lafaz*) and its written form (*rasm*). The codification history records that standardizing the written text during Caliph Uthman ibn Affan's reign was crucial for maintaining communal unity, giving rise to *Rasm Uthmāni*, an orthographic system that became the universal standard for mushafs across the Islamic world.

The urgency of studying *Rasm Uthmāni* extends beyond the historical realm to theological and practical realms. In the discourse of 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān, scholars differ on the legal status of *Rasm Uthmāni*; some view it as *tawqīfī* (direct guidance from the Prophet Muhammad), while others consider it a terminology or agreement among the companions to accommodate various *qirā'āt (Qur'anic reading traditions)*. Current phenomena demonstrate the challenges facing public literacy regarding this principle. In the modern era, confusion often arises between the principles of *Rasm Uthmāni* and *Rasm Imlā'ī*. Studies of Nusantara manuscripts and contemporary mushaf printing show that writing inconsistencies still frequently occur due to a lack of in-depth understanding of the details of rasm rules. For example, words that should have been omitted (*ḥadhf*) are written in full, or vice versa.

*Rasm Uthmāni* provides the established orthographic framework for widely used printed Qur'anic editions, while historical manuscripts also document other writing practices. *Rasm Uthmāni* is a standard writing method agreed upon by the companions during the reign of Caliph Uthman ibn Affan. It remains an authoritative reference for Qur'anic orthography, distinct from *Rasm Imlā'ī*.

Research on *Rasm Uthmāni*, covering its orthographic rules and its connections with *qirā'āt*, has been extensively conducted, as illustrated in the following studies. Abdul Hakim observes that although Qur'anic manuscripts have been widely copied, their examination through the disciplines of Qur'anic sciences, particularly rasm, qirāʾāt, waqf, and ḍabṭ, has received comparatively limited scholarly attention.[1] Findings affirm that *Rasm Uthmāni* emerged from historical evolution grounded in the *tawqīfī* principle and scholarly consensus, securing its relevance as an authentic standard.[2]

While writing the Qur'an with *Rasm Imlā'ī* offers easier readability and is often perceived as more accessible to modern readers, preserving *Rasm Uthmāni* remains a priority.

[1] Abdul Hakim, "Metode Kajian Rasm, Qiraat, Wakaf Dan Dabt Pada Mushaf Kuno (Sebuah Pengantar)," *SUHUF* 11, no. 1 (August 24, 2018): 77–92, https://doi.org/10.22548/shf.v11i1.322.

[2] Ali Mastur, "Analisis Kritis Terhadap Metodologi Penulisan Rasm Ustmani Dalam Konteks Sejarah Penulisan Al-Qur'an," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 4, no. 2 (2025): 113, https://journal-ikadi.com/ojs/index.php/alwasathiyah/article/view/509.

Contemporary mushaf editions can facilitate reading through vocalization and presentation conventions while retaining the established framework of *Rasm Uthmāni*.[3] The question remains, why is *Rasm Uthmāni* maintained as the ultimate standard, and what wisdom underpins its preservation?

The data reveals that several Nusantara manuscripts demonstrate a mixed application of *Rasm Uthmāni* and *Rasm Imlā'ī conventions*. Research has discovered a 19th-century manuscript in Drajat village, Paciran district, Lamongan city which uses a mixed script (*Uthmāni* and *Imlā'ī*).[4] In other research, it was found that manuscripts fall into the category of mushafs with mixed rasm, namely the use of *rasm imlā`i* and *rasm 'utsmāni* simultaneously.[5] Research on the mushaf of Nagari Tuo Pariangan likewise identifies the combined use of *Rasm Uthmāni* and *Rasm Imlā'ī* conventions in the manuscript.[6] Syatri's study digitally documented 18 complete Qur'anic manuscripts: three from the Sri Baduga Museum in Bandung, four from Agus Permana's private collection in Bandung, seven from the Prabu Geusan Ulun Museum in Sumedang, three from the Ministry of Religious Affairs Office in Garut, and one from the Cangkuang Temple Museum in Garut. The manuscripts examined demonstrate the coexistence of *Rasm Uthmāni* and *Rasm Imlā'ī* conventions within the documented collections.[7] The comparison of the *Muṣḥāf al-Qur'ān* of Sheikh Surau Tanjuang with the *Muṣḥāf al-Qur'ān* of *Uthmāni* can be seen from several aspects, including the rasm aspect, punctuation (*syakl*), tajwid signs, waqf signs which in general have clear differences.[8] The characteristics of the H. Abdul Ghaffar Qur'an manuscript are that it is written using the *Rasm Imlā'ī* rules, although

[3] Achmad Yafik Mursyid, Aizan Ali Mat Zin, and Faisal Ahmad Faisal Abdul Hamid, "Codicology, Islamization, and Qur'an Manuscripts in Southeast Asia: A Structural Mapping of Scholarship," *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Hadis* 27, no. 1 (January 31, 2026): 181–216, https://doi.org/10.14421/qh.v27i1.7013; Abdul Wahid, "Mushaf Uthmani: Kajian Sejarah Dan Perkembangannya Dalam Menjaga Keotentikan Al-Qur'an," *CENDEKIA: Jurnal Studi Keislaman* 8, no. 1 (June 11, 2022): 81–98, https://doi.org/10.37348/cendekia.v8i1.213.

[4] Mamlu'il Zaidatul Awwaliyah et al., "Historical Interpretation of Raden KH Sholeh Drajat's Al-Qur'an Mushaf Manuscript Through the Codicological Approach," *Jurnal Lektur Keagamaan* 21, no. 1 (June 30, 2023): 23–58, https://doi.org/10.31291/jlka.v21i1.1112.

[5] Wendy Hermawan, Afriadi Putra, and Wilaela, "Manuskrip Mushaf Al-Qur'an Kerajaan Lingga Di Pulau Penyengat Kepulauan Riau: Analisis Sejarah, Rasm, Dan Qira''āt," *QOF* 7, no. 1 (June 30, 2023): 81–102, https://doi.org/10.30762/qof.v7i1.994.

[6] Elfira Rosa, Novizal Wendry, and Muhammad Hanif, "Kaidah Rasm Dalam Manuskrip Mushaf Al-Qur'an Nagari Tuo Pariangan," *Al-Qudwah* 1, no. 2 (December 31, 2023): 108, https://doi.org/10.24014/alqudwah.v1i2.25446.

[7] Jonni Syatri, "Mushaf Al-Qur'an Kuno Di Priangan Kajian Rasm, Tanda Ayat, Dan Tanda Waqaf," *SUHUF* 6, no. 2 (November 8, 2015): 295–320, https://doi.org/10.22548/shf.v6i2.31.

[8] Mhd. Idris and Inda Marlina, "Characteristics of The Qur'anic Manuscript of Syeikh Surau Tanjuang," *Jurnal At-Tibyan: Jurnal Ilmu Alqur'an Dan Tafsir* 6, no. 1 (June 28, 2021): 128–44, https://doi.org/10.32505/at-tibyan.v6i1.2703.

there are certain words that use *Rasm Uthmāni*.[9] The copying of this Mushaf still adheres to the basic principles of a mixture of *Rasm Usmani* and *Rasm Imlā'ī*.[10]

The history of the codicology of Qur'anic manuscripts in the Indonesian archipelago illustrates the journey of Islam and the cultural diversity of the region. A thorough understanding of various aspects of Qur'anic manuscripts has been gained, including writing techniques, stylistic variations, and their role in religious and cultural life.[11] In research on Qur'an manuscripts, the manuscripts' history can be revealed based on the script used.[12] In research on other mushafs, it was found that there were several prominent characteristics of the mushaf, such as illumination, the use of rasm, punctuation, tajwid marks, and waqf marks, which also characterized the character of mushaf writing in the 19th century during the Java War era, which was different from the mushafs that are developing now.[13] These findings indicate that the mushaf employs both *Rasm Uthmāni* and *Rasm Imlā'ī*, whereas contemporary Indonesian practice predominantly uses *Rasm Uthmāni*.[14]

The large number of these studies indicates developments that demand reconstructive ideas about Qur'anic studies in Indonesia that accommodate the development of Qur'anic manuscripts widely in the society.[15] The results of the study show that the ancient Nusantara Mushaf has several similarities with the Indonesian Standard Mushaf in various aspects, such as the addition of the *hamzah washal* and *hamzah qatha'* punctuation marks, while there are also differences in other punctuation marks.[16] The research conducted by Zainal Arifin Madzkur concluded that the difference in the writing of rasm '*Uthmānī* in Indonesian muṣḥafs and Medina muṣḥafs in general only lies in the difference in their affiliation in the two main

[9] Tati Rahmayani, "Karakteristik Manuskrip Mushaf H. Abdul Ghaffar Di Madura," *Nun: Jurnal Studi Alquran Dan Tafsir Di Nusantara* 3, no. 2 (June 13, 2019): 59–80, https://doi.org/10.32495/nun.v3i2.45.

[10] Adrika Fithrotul Aini, Rif'atul Khanin Mahfudzoh, and Salamah Noorhidayati, "Karakteristik Rasm Dalam Manuskrip Mushḥaf Al-Qur'an KH. Abdul Hamid Chasbullah," *Studia Quranika* 8, no. 2 (February 7, 2024): 183–213, https://doi.org/10.21111/studiquran.v8i2.9217.

[11] Dedi Kuswandi, Abdul Rohman, and Ghazi Abdullah Muttaqien, "The Quran Manuscripts in Indonesia: A Historical Review," *Suhuf* 36, no. 2 (November 19, 2024): 227–35, https://doi.org/10.23917/suhuf.v36i2.6513.

[12] Abdul Hakim Syukrie, "Perkembangan Kaligrafi Dan Urgensinya Bagi Khazanah Mushaf," *Jurnal Lektur Keagamaan* 19, no. 1 (July 2, 2021): 69–102, https://doi.org/10.31291/jlka.v19i1.911.

[13] Hanifatul Hasna, "Karakteristik Manuskrip Al-Qur'an Pangeran Diponegoro: Telaah Atas Khazanah Islam Era Perang Jawa," *HERMENEUTIK* 13, no. 1 (November 30, 2019): 104, https://doi.org/10.21043/hermeneutik.v13i2.6374.

[14] Muhamad Khabib Imdad, "Heterogenitas Ulumul Qur'an Dalam Manuskrip Mushaf Al-Qur'an," *SUHUF* 18, no. 1 (June 30, 2025): 77–106, https://doi.org/10.22548/shf.v18i1.1174.

[15] Muhammad Endy Saputro, "Mushaf 2.0 Dan Studi Al-Qur'an Di Era 'Muslim Tanpa Masjid,'" *MIQOT: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman* 42, no. 2 (February 4, 2019): 249, https://doi.org/10.30821/miqot.v42i2.502.

[16] Isyroqotun Nashoiha and Romlah Widayati, "Form, Consistency and Relevance of Dhabt in Qur'an Manuscript at Museum of Sunan Drajat Lamongan East Java," *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Hadis* 23, no. 2 (July 30, 2022): 285–310, https://doi.org/10.14421/qh.v23i2.3571.

schools of thought in this discipline written in the 5th century *Hijriah* by al-Dānī and Abū Dāwud.[17]

Previous scholarship has examined the rules of *Rasm Uthmāni*, its relationship with qirā'āt, and the interpretive significance of orthographic forms, including an analysis of i'jāz al-rasm through Muhammad Syamlūl's writings by Almas, Chandra, and Rojak.[18] Building on these studies, the present research examines selected orthographic features of *Rasm Uthmāni* through an integrated semiotic and hermeneutic reading. Its contribution lies in bringing classical explanations of letter additions *(al-ziyādah),* omissions *(al-ḥadhf),* and other orthographic variations into dialogue with theories of signs and interpretation, thereby clarifying how written forms may contribute to the interpretation of Qur'anic expressions.

The continued use of *Rasm Uthmāni* in authoritative printed mushafs, including the Indonesian Standard Mushaf (MSI) and Madinah editions, underscores the significance of its established orthographic conventions. Beyond questions of preservation, classical discussions of these conventions provide a basis for examining the interpretive significance of distinctive written forms. Accordingly, this study investigates how selected orthographic features of *Rasm Uthmāni* have been interpreted in classical scholarship and how their meanings can be examined through semiotic, aesthetic, and hermeneutic perspectives.

This qualitative study employs a descriptive-analytical approach to examine selected orthographic features of *Rasm Uthmāni* and their interpretive significance. The analysis draws primarily on classical and modern works on Qur'anic orthography, including al-Zarkashī's *al-Burhān fī ʿUlūm al-Qurʾān, al-Dānī's al-Muqniʿ, al-Marrākushī's ʿUnwān al-Dalīl*, and Muhammad Syamlūl's *Iʿjāz Rasm al-Qurʾān wa Iʿjāz al-Tilāwah*. Selected Qur'anic examples involving letter additions, omissions, and distinctive written forms are examined in relation to their textual contexts and the explanations presented in these works. The discussion also draws on contemporary scholarship concerning the Indonesian Standard Mushaf (MSI), the Madinah Mushaf, and related traditions of Qur'anic orthography. Analytically, the study brings these materials into dialogue with Saussure's distinction between signifier and signified, Peirce's representamen–object–interpretant model, and Schleiermacher's grammatical and

[17] Zainal Arifin Madzkur, "Al-Rasm Al-'Uthmānī Fī Al-Muṣḥaf Al-Mi'yārī Al-Indūnīsī 'inda Al-Dānī Wa Abī Dāwud," *Studia Islamika* 27, no. 1 (April 7, 2020): 103–43, https://doi.org/10.36712/sdi.v27i1.10217.

[18] Ummy Almas, Tri Ulva Chandra, and Wandi Abdul Rojak, "PERBEDAAN PENULISAN RASM; TELAAH I'JAZ RASM AL-QUR'AN PERSPEKTIF M. SYAMLUL," *At-Tahfidz: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Tafsir* 4, no. 2 (June 30, 2023): 1–16, https://doi.org/10.53649/at-tahfidz.v4i2.248.

psychological hermeneutics. This framework connects the written form of each example with its Qur'anic context and the interpretations documented in the relevant scholarship.

The study of the *Uthmāni* rasm (the standard method of writing the Qur'an) from a semiotic perspective (the study of signs) opens the door to understanding the Qur'an not only as a sacred text but also as a system of signs rich in meaning. This approach integrates the visual aspects of the writing with the depth of its message, demonstrating that the way a word is written in the Qur'an can have both aesthetic and spiritual implications.

## B. Result and Discussion

### 1. Understanding *Rasm Uthmāni* Mushaf al-Qur'an

The Arabic term rasm (الرسم), derived from *rasama–yarsumu–rasman* (رسم–يرسم–رسمًا), originally denotes a trace or mark (*athar*) and, by extension, a written form.[19] In discussions of Arabic writing, it is closely associated with terms such as *khaṭṭ* (الخط), *kitābah* (الكتابة), and *saṭr* (السطر), which refer to different aspects of writing and written representation.[20] This relationship reflects the basic meaning of rasm as a visible mark produced through writing. In technical usage, *khaṭṭ* refers to the representation of words through written Arabic letters.[21]

*Al-Khaththh* ( الخَطُّ ) is a word that describes the *hijaiyah* letters, which in Persian is expressed as "nushtan".[22] According to Nūr al-Dīn Muḥammad ʿItr al-Ḥalabī, *Rasm Uthmāni* refers to the method of writing Qur'anic letters and words in accordance with the orthographic conventions established in the copies prepared under the authority of Caliph ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān and distributed to different regions.[23] This term denotes the orthographic system rather than the physical manuscript itself. Mushaf means a collection of pages on which the Qur'an is written, with its verses and surahs arranged sequentially. Al-Azhari explains this name by saying: "It is called Mushaf because it has been compiled, meaning gathered into a collection of written pages between two covers".[24] During the reign of Caliph ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān, a committee prepared standardized copies of the Qur'anic text for distribution to different

[19] Ibnu Manzur, *Lisan Al- Arab*, 1994.
[20] ʿAlī ibn Muḥammad Al-Jurjānī, *Kitāb Al-Taʿrīfāt* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, 1983), 99, https://usul.ai/ar/t/tacrifat/111.
[21] Ibrahim Anis, *Al-Mu'jam Al-Wasith* (Kairo: Dar al-arif, 2002).
[22] Muhammad Ali At-Tahanawi, *Mausu'ah Kasysyaf Ishthilahat Al-Funun Wa Al-Ulum* (Beirut: Maktabah Lubnan Nasyirun, 2006), 746.
[23] Nūr al-Dīn Muḥammad ʿItr al-Ḥalabī, *ʿUlūm Al-Qurʾān Al-Karīm* (Damascus: Maṭbaʿat al-Ṣabāḥ, 1993), 187, https://quranpedia.net/book/2302.
[24] Ibrāhīm Muḥammad Al-Jirmī, *Muʿjam ʿUlūm Al-Qurʾān* (Damascus: Dār al-Qalam, 2001), https://quranpedia.app/books/b38068/index.html.

regions. The orthographic conventions preserved through these copies subsequently became associated with the tradition known as *Rasm Uthmāni*.

## 2. *Rasm Uthmāni Tawqīfī* or *iṣṭilāḥī*

The debate over the legal status of the *Uthmāni* rasm constitutes one of the most fundamental areas of study in the science of Qur'anic Rasm. This debate is not merely technical and orthographic, but also touches on a profound theological dimension: Is the written form of the Qur'an that we inherit today part of the revelation determined by the Prophet (peace be upon him) (*tawqīfī*), or simply a convention agreed upon by the Companions (*iṣṭilāḥī*)?

The answer to this question has significant legal implications. If the *Uthmāni* rasm is *tawqīfī*, then it has a sacred status that must be maintained unchanged. However, if it is understood as *iṣṭilāḥī*, then there is room for adapting the Qur'anic writing to the development of modern Arabic orthographic rules.

This debate, which has engaged leading scholars from diverse theological and legal schools since the formative centuries of Islam, is well documented in classical works such as al-Zarkashī's *al-Burhān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān, al-Suyūṭī's al-Itqān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, and *al-Dānī's al-Muqni' fī Rasm Maṣāḥif al-Amshār*.[25] One influential position, frequently described in traditional scholarship as that of the *jumhūr*, holds that Rasm Uthmānī is tawqīfī and grounded in prophetic instruction. On the other side, a minority contends that Qur'anic orthography evolved alongside Arabic script development and is therefore not bound to a single fixed form.

These differing understandings of *Rasm Uthmāni* reflect the relationship between the historical formation of Qur'anic orthography and its preservation as an authoritative written tradition. The *tawqīfī* position is particularly significant in classical discussions because it emphasizes adherence to the orthographic forms transmitted through the early muṣḥafs. Examining this position also provides a basis for understanding why distinctive written forms have attracted theological and interpretive attention.

The *tawqīfī* position, identified by its proponents with the jumhūr, regards the writing system of the *Uthmāni*c codices as rooted in prophetic instruction rather than arbitrary human discretion. According to this view, Muslims bear a collective obligation to adhere strictly to this sacred tradition. Among the prominent scholars holding this position are Imam Ibn al-Mubārak,

[25] Abū ʿAmr ʿUthmān ibn Saʿīd Al-Dānī, *Al-Muqniʿ Fī Rasm Maṣāḥif Al-Amṣār*, ed. Muḥammad al-Ṣādiq Qamḥāwī (Cairo: Maktabat al-Kulliyyāt al-Azhariyyah, 1978), https://www.bibliotheque.nat.tn/BNTK/doc/SYRACUSE/5789131/المقنع-في-النقط-رسم-مصاحف-الامصار-مع-كتاب?_lg=ar-TN; Badr al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allāh Al-Zarkashī, *Al-Burhân Fî 'Ulûm Al-Qur`ân*, 3rd ed. (Cairo: Dâr at Turats, n.d.); Jalaluddin Al-Suyuti, *Al-Itqan Fi Ulum Al-Quran* (Dar Al Fikr, 2008).

Abū ‘Amr al-Dānī, Imam Mālik ibn Anas, and Ahmad ibn Hanbal (d. 855 CE). Ibn al-Mubārak maintained that *Rasm Uthmānī* contains hidden wisdoms and secrets embedded within its letter forms. Supporting this view, Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī cited the writing of the extra *yā’* in the word *bi’aydin* (بِأَيْيْدٍ) in Q.S. al-Dhāriyāt: 47, explaining that it distinguishes divine power from human power and thus serves as a form of linguistic veneration. When asked about writing the Qur’an with *isṭilāḥī* script (scriptio plena), Imam Mālik firmly emphasized that it must adhere to the original writing. This position is further reinforced by Ahmad ibn Hanbal, who explicitly stated that violating the *Uthmāni*c writing, whether in the case of *wāw*, *yā’*, *alif*, or other letters, is prohibited (*ḥarām*).[26]

## 3. Semiotics of the *Uthmāni* rasm

In Ferdinand de Saussure’s semiotics, viewing language as a system of signs emphasizes the interpretive functions of linguistic forms. One may draw an analogy between linguistic and nonlinguistic types of signs, in the sense that all of them serve the communicative purpose of conveying information about something or somebody.[27] The project of semiology is not only present in this early work – it is central and may be summed up in four points: (1) signs are complex objects; (2) as such, signs are composed of relations; (3) signs are composed of relations that have the formal structure of an analogy (a–b equals c–d); (4) every sign relation implies the mediation of the whole signifying system at every single point of semiotic production.[28]

Ferdinand de Saussure conceptualised language as a system of signs. The linguistic sign is a tool for making meaning (or encoding concepts) that unites a sound-image and a concept. For example, the sound image [*kæt*] forms an integral part of the concept ‘cat’ (a mental representation of an animal of certain characteristics). The sound image is referred to as the “signifier” and the concept as the “signified”. The relationship between the signifier and signified is conventional rather than intrinsic. In other words, it is arbitrary, based on social conventions. In addition, being arbitrary, the relationship between the signifier and signified is dynamic and can change or develop over time.[29]

[26] Sopyan Hadi and Rifanto Bin Ridwan, “Controversy and Arguments for The Application of Rasm ’Utsmānī On The Mushaf of The Qur’an,” *AL QUDS : Jurnal Studi Alquran Dan Hadis* 9, no. 1 (April 29, 2025): 102–15, https://doi.org/10.29240/alquds.v9i1.13254.

[27] Simon Susen, “Ferdinand de Saussure,” in *The Wiley Blackwell Encyclopedia of Social Theory* (Wiley, 2017), 1–6, https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118430873.est0744.

[28] Bogdana Paskaleva, “Pre-Structuralist Semiology: Materiality of Language in Ferdinand de Saussure,” *Semiotica* 2024, no. 259 (September 25, 2024): 149–83, https://doi.org/10.1515/sem-2023-0114.

[29] Ghsoon Reda, “Ferdinand de Saussure in the Era of Cognitive Linguistics,” *Language and Semiotic Studies* 2, no. 2 (June 1, 2016): 89–100, https://doi.org/10.1515/lass-2016-020203.

Saussure describes the linguistic sign through two related components: the signifier (sound-image) and the signified (concept). Signification refers to the process through which meaning is produced. Though it has been modified by linguists such as Louis Hjelmslev and Roland Barthes, this theory forms the backbone of modern semiotics.[30]

Hermeneutics, as understood by Schleiermacher, is intended to fulfill the task of 'preventing difficulties in reconstructing utterances and trains of thought'. If this 'reconstruction' is successful, then it is a true understanding, and it can be a better understanding than the author has of himself, and thus it is possible that 'some thoughtful and collaborative reader may sometimes discover individual connections which the author did not know about himself'.[31]

Semiotics is the study of signs and everything related to them, from sign systems, the signifying process, to their function. In linguistics, linguistic signs (*lisoniy belgi*) are the primary focus, consisting of two inseparable aspects: form (*shakl*) and meaning (*mazmun*). A key figure in modern semiotics, Charles Sanders Peirce, introduced the concept of a trichotomy of meaning, consisting of three main elements: a. Representamen: The form of the sign itself (e.g., a letter, word, or symbol); b. Object: Something referred to by the sign. c. Interpretant: The meaning or understanding formed in the mind of the user of the sign.

When we read the Qur'an, we interact with a series of signs. However, in the Mushaf *Rasm Uthmāni*, these signs are not limited to the verses, but also include the writing of letters and other supporting symbols. One of the semiotic theories developed by scholars is Roland Barthes' semiotics, which he used in textual criticism, focusing on structural analysis. In his theory, Barthes offers two theoretical stages. The first is referred to as the linguistic system, commonly known as denotative meaning. The second is referred to as the mythological system, commonly known as connotative meaning.[32]

Peirce's semiotic framework has been employed in Qur'anic interpretation to examine the relationship between linguistic signs and their meanings. Siti Mursida, for example, applies Peirce's approach to the interpretation of jihad in selected Qur'anic passages.[33] More broadly, semiotic analysis provides a means of examining how religious texts communicate meaning

[30] Guerino Mazzola et al., "De Saussure and Peirce: The Semiotic Architecture," in *Computational Music Science*, 2016, 63–66, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-47334-5_7.
[31] Lutz Danneberg, "Schleiermacher Und Die Hermeneutik," in *Die Modernen Väter Der Antike*, vol. 2020 (Walter de Gruyter, 2009), 209–76, https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110210422.209.
[32] Azka Noor, "Konsep Makna Uff Dalam Al-Quran," *Journal Al Irfani: Ilmu Al Qur'an Dan Tafsir* 2, no. 01 (July 28, 2021): 26–39, https://doi.org/10.51700/irfani.v2i01.217.
[33] Siti Mursida, "Konsep Jihad Dalam Al-Quran Perspektif Semiotika Pierce," *Journal Al Irfani: Ilmu Al Qur'an Dan Tafsir* 2, no. 01 (July 28, 2021): 50–61, https://doi.org/10.51700/irfani.v2i01.240.

through linguistic and cultural signs.[34] Such approaches are particularly relevant to Qur'anic expressions whose interpretation depends on the relationship between textual form, context, and meaning.[35]

Muhammad Habib Izzuddin Amin examines the symbolism of bees in Q.S. al-Naḥl: 68–69 through Roland Barthes's semiotics, highlighting how Qur'anic imagery can be interpreted in relation to spiritual reflection and the relationship between humans and nature. This study illustrates the application of semiotic analysis to Qur'anic symbols.[36]

Similarly, Muliadi and Pendi Nurul Azmi examine the symbolic meaning of ulul albab through Barthes's semiotic approach, emphasizing the relationship between intellectual and spiritual dimensions in Qur'anic interpretation.[37] Other scholarship approaches the Qur'an's oral expression through the aesthetics of textual experience, drawing attention to the relationship between language, reception, and meaning. [38]

Semiotic studies of Qur'anic expressions have examined the relation between linguistic form and interpretation; Unzila and Balqis, for example, apply Barthes's approach to the expression *sīrū fī al-arḍ* in Q.S. al-An'ām: 11.[39] Reda's discussion situates Saussure's theory of linguistic signs within debates about meaning and cognitive linguistics.[40] Research comparing *Rasm Uthmāni* and *Rasm Imlā'ī* has also examined orthographic differences in relation to Qur'anic meaning, aesthetic features, and *iʿjāz*. This line of inquiry provides a relevant point of comparison for the present study, which focuses on the interpretive relationship between written forms and their Qur'anic contexts.[41]

## 4. Hermeneutics in *Uthmāni* rasm

Schleiermacher's hermeneutics distinguishes between grammatical and psychological interpretation. Grammatical interpretation focuses on language, textual structure, and the

[34] Alifia Rizqa Unzila and Putroe Balqis, "Makna Sīrū Fī Al-Arḍ Dalam Qs. Al-An'am [ [6]: 11 (Analisis Semiotika Roland Barthes)," *Jurnal Studi Islam Dan Sosial* 8, no. 1 (April 23, 2025), https://doi.org/10.61941/iklila.v8i1.366.

[35] Shafwatul Bary and Zakirman Zakirman, "Hermeneutika Friedrich D.E. Schleiermacher Sebagai Metode Tafsir Al-Qur'an (Kajian Ayat Ikhlāṣ; Jilbāb; Sayyārah; Dan Al-Hudā)," *JOURNAL OF QUR'AN AND HADITH STUDIES* 9, no. 1 (June 30, 2020): 51–70, https://doi.org/10.15408/quhas.v9i1.15209.

[36] Muhammad Habib Izzuddin Amin, "Nahl Sebagai Simbol: Analisis Semiotika Roland Barthes Terhadap QS. An-Nahl Ayat 68-69," *Ta'wiluna: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an, Tafsir Dan Pemikiran Islam* 5, no. 3 (2024): 574–90, https://doi.org/10.58401/takwiluna.v5i3.1776.

[37] Pendi Nurul Azmi and Muliadi Muliadi, "Makna Simbolik Ulul Albab Dalam Al-Qur'an: Kajian Semiotika Roland Barthes," *Senarai: Journal of Islamic Heritage and Civilization* 1, no. 3 (June 27, 2025): 154–59, https://doi.org/10.66236/senarai.2025.1.3.154-159.

[38] Okta Firmansyah and Indira Kartini, "Pelisanan Al-Qur'an: Tinjauan Estetika Kenikmatan Tekstual," *Studia Quranika* 7, no. 2 (February 24, 2023): 233–56, https://doi.org/10.21111/studiquran.v7i2.8659.

[39] Unzila and Balqis, "Makna Sīrū Fī Al-Arḍ Dalam Qs. Al-An'am [ [6]: 11 (Analisis Semiotika Roland Barthes)."

[40] Reda, "Ferdinand de Saussure in the Era of Cognitive Linguistics."

[41] Ahmad Mualim Umam and Nurusshobah Nurusshobah, "Comparison Between Rasm Utsmani and Rasm Imla'i in Relation to the I'jazul Al-Qur'an," *Al Muhafidz: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Tafsir* 5, no. 2 (August 26, 2025): 180–99, https://doi.org/10.57163/almuhafidz.v5i2.153.

relationships among expressions, while psychological interpretation considers the intellectual and historical context in which meaning is articulated.[42] In the present study, these two dimensions are brought into dialogue with classical explanations of Qur'anic orthography. The grammatical dimension concerns the relationship between written forms, lexical expressions, and their Qur'anic contexts.[43] The psychological dimension is considered through the interpretive perspectives articulated by scholars in the classical rasm tradition. Thus, the additional *yā' in bi'aydī* (Q.S. al-Dhāriyāt: 47) is examined in relation to the verse's expression of divine power, while the omitted alif in *al-qawā'id* (Q.S. al-Nūr: 60) is considered alongside its lexical and exegetical context.

## 5. Integration of Aesthetics, Meaning, and Orthography

The relationship between orthography and interpretation can be examined through Peirce's triadic model of the sign. In the case of *bi'aydī* (Q.S. al-Dhāriyāt: 47), the additional *yā'* constitutes a distinctive visual form (representamen), the verse's expression of divine power provides its textual reference (object), and the distinction drawn in classical rasm scholarship between divine power and the lexical expression for hands constitutes an interpretant. In al-*qawā'id* (Q.S. al-Nūr: 60), the omission of alif forms the visual feature examined in relation to the verse's reference to older women. The relevant interpretive question concerns how that written form is understood alongside its lexical and contextual meaning. Similarly, the use of *tā' maftūḥah* in expressions referring to women in different marital circumstances may be read through the relationship between orthographic form, Qur'anic narrative, and classical symbolic interpretation. These examples illustrate how written forms become objects of scholarly interpretation through their relationship with language and context.

Umam and Nurusshobah discuss differences between *Rasm Uthmāni* and *Rasm Imlā'ī* in relation to Qur'anic meaning, visual features, and *i'jāz*.[44] Building on this discussion, the present study reads selected letter forms in their Qur'anic contexts and alongside the explanations offered in classical works.

## 6. The Beauty of *Rasm Uthmāni* Semiotics

The Qur'an was revealed not only as a collection of divine revelations, but also as the greatest and eternal miracle of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). One aspect of its

[42] Bary and Zakirman, "Hermeneutika Friedrich D.E. Schleiermacher Sebagai Metode Tafsir Al-Qur'an (Kajian Ayat Ikhlāṣ; Jilbāb; Sayyārah; Dan Al-Hudā)."
[43] Amelia Damayanti and Masruhan Masruhan, "Implementasi Hermeneutika Romantik F.D.E. Schleiermacher Dalam Diskursus Ilmu Hadis," *Zawiyah: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 9, no. 1 (August 22, 2023): 35, https://doi.org/10.31332/zjpi.v9i1.4548.
[44] Umam and Nurusshobah, "Comparison Between Rasm Utsmani and Rasm Imla'i in Relation to the I'jazul Al-Qur'an."

miracle lies not only in the meaningful content and beauty of its language (literary aspect), but also in its writing system, known as *Rasm Uthmāni*. Far from merely technical writing, *Rasm Uthmāni* is a discipline that holds profound secrets concerning the integration of visual aesthetics, profound meaning, and the originality of the sacred text.

Abu Al-Abbas al-Marakisyī explained the secrets of letters and the secrets of *Rasm Uthmāni*. There are two kinds of existence: the outer (*zahir*) called al-mulk and the inner (al-malakūt). The existence of these letters corresponds to the state of existence, which is closely related to both:

a. In al-Marrākushī's symbolic interpretation, *hamzah* marks the emergence of articulated sound and the boundary between what is heard and what remains unarticulated. Its distinctive written representation is discussed in relation to pronunciation and the symbolic significance of Arabic letters.
b. The letter alif indicates the existence of actions and work in the realm of existence.
c. The letter Waw indicates the existence of nobility or height and ascension, because it is pronounced with a thick and rising voice.
d. The letter *ya'* indicates the inner self. It is a special letter because it is pronounced softly in the mouth.[45]

Since the written muṣḥaf serves as an authoritative reference for Qur'anic recitation, including places of pause (*waqf*) and completion (*tamām*), classical rasm scholarship emphasizes adherence to its established orthographic conventions. These conventions differ from ordinary Arabic writing practices in several letters and forms. Al-Marrākushī regards such differences as meaningful features of Qur'anic writing that deserve careful examination and interpretation.

During the standardization of the Qur'anic codices under Caliph ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān, a disagreement arose over the spelling of *al-tābūt* (التابوت), meaning "ark." According to the transmitted account, Zayd ibn Thābit favored the form *al-tābūh*, while the Quraysh members of the committee preferred *al-tābūt*. The matter was referred to ʿUthmān, who instructed that the word be written as *al-tābūt*, following the language of Quraysh.[46]

Classical discussions of Qur'anic orthography identify the addition, omission, and retention of letters as distinctive features of *Rasm Uthmāni*. Ibn al-Bannāʾ al-Marrākushī

[45] Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad Ibn al-Bannāʾ al-Marrākushī, *ʿUnwān Al-Dalīl Min Marsūm Khaṭṭ Al-Tanzīl*, ed. Hind Shalabī (Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1990), https://search.worldcat.org/title/25633399.
[46] Al-Tirmidhī, Jāmiʿ al-Tirmidhī, Kitāb al-Tafsīr, hadis no. 3104.

examines some of these variations through a symbolic interpretation of written forms and their meanings. His approach provides a basis for considering how orthographic differences can be understood in relation to the theological and interpretive dimensions of Qur'anic expressions.[47]

The verb *yaʿfū* ("to forgive") in Q.S. al-Baqarah: 237 is written in *Rasm Uthmāni* with an additional alif following the *wāw*. This orthographic feature is discussed in classical scholarship as part of the distinctive conventions of Qur'anic writing. Another example concerns *al-mīʿād* ("promise" or "appointed time"), whose written form differs between Q.S. Āl ʿImrān: 9 and Q.S. al-Anfāl: 42 in the treatment of alif. In the symbolic interpretation discussed by Muhammad Syamlūl, this variation is associated with the different contexts of divine promise and human appointment. The comparison illustrates how orthographic distinctions may be incorporated into the interpretation of Qur'anic expressions alongside their lexical and contextual meanings.[48]

**1) The meaning of adding and removing the letter Alif**

Classical discussions of *Rasm Uthmāni* also examine the addition of alif in particular Qur'anic expressions, including *la-adhbaḥannahu* (Q.S. al-Naml: 21) and *la-awḍaʿū* (Q.S. al-Tawbah: 47). In the symbolic interpretation presented in this tradition, the additional written form is associated with emphasis on the actions expressed in their respective contexts. These examples illustrate how distinctive orthographic features have been considered alongside the intensity and implications of Qur'anic expressions.[49]

Al-Marrākushī explains the retention and omission of alif through the relationship between outward existence (*al-mulk*) and inward or spiritual existence *(al-malakūt*). In his interpretation, the letter is retained in expressions such as *al-awwāb, al-khiṭāb*, and *al-ʿadhāb*, which are considered in relation to their outward manifestations. By contrast, forms such as *al-miḥrāb* are discussed in connection with meanings associated with the spiritual realm, where the alif is omitted in the relevant orthographic convention. These distinctions illustrate how al-Marrākushī connects visible written forms with different dimensions of meaning. [50]

**2) Meaning of Adding and Removing the Letter *Waw***

An example of the additional *wāw* occurs in the *Uthmāni* spelling of *sa-urīkum* (سَأُورِيكُمْ) in Q.S. al-Aʿrāf: 145, within the expression *sa-urīkum dār al-fāsiqīn* ("I will show you the

[47] Ibn al-Bannāʾ al-Marrākushī, *ʿUnwān Al-Dalīl Min Marsūm Khaṭṭ Al-Tanzīl*.
[48] Muḥammad Shamlūl, *Iʿjāz Rasm Al-Qurʾān Wa-Iʿjāz Al-Tilāwah* (Cairo: Dār al-Salām, 2006), https://quranpedia.net/book/16665.
[49] Badr al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allāh Al-Zarkashī, *Al-Burhān Fī ʿUlūm Al-Qurʾān*, ed. Muḥammad Abū al-Faḍl Ibrāhīm (Cairo: Dār Iḥyāʾ al-Kutub al-ʿArabiyyah, 1957), https://search.worldcat.org/title/1382261577.
[50] Ibn al-Bannāʾ al-Marrākushī, *ʿUnwān Al-Dalīl Min Marsūm Khaṭṭ Al-Tanzīl*.

abode of the transgressors"). In the symbolic approach discussed in classical rasm scholarship, such distinctive written forms are considered alongside the linguistic and interpretive contexts of the verses in which they occur.

The omission of wāw is discussed in classical rasm scholarship through several verbal forms, including *sanadʿu* (Q.S. al-ʿAlaq: 18), *yamḥu* (Q.S. al-Shūrā: 24), and *yadʿu* (Q.S. al-Isrāʾ: 11). In the symbolic interpretation presented in the cited literature, these orthographic forms are associated with the force or immediacy of the actions described in their respective verses.[51] Al-Marrākushī also discusses the variation in the written form of yamḥu between Q.S. al-Shūrā: 24 and Q.S. al-Raʿd: 39, relating its orthographic distinction to the grammatical and interpretive contexts of the passages.[52] The example of *yadʿu* in Q.S. al-Isrāʾ: 11 extends this discussion to the Qur'anic description of the human inclination to invoke harm.[53] Together, these cases illustrate the relationship between written conventions, linguistic expressions, and classical interpretive reflection.

**3) The meaning of adding and removing the letter *Ya'***

Classical rasm scholarship discusses the addition of yā' in selected Qur'anic expressions as a distinctive orthographic feature. Such variations have also attracted symbolic interpretations concerning the relationship between written form and spiritual meaning.[54] Abu al-Abbas al-Marakishi also explains that *bi aidi* (بِأَيْيِدٍ) in Q.S. al-Dhāriyāt: 47 is written with an additional *yā'* to distinguish the expression of power from *al-aydī* (الْأَيْدِي), the plural of *yad* (يَدٌ), "hand."[55]

Classical rasm scholars distinguish between cases in which yā' is omitted in writing but retained in recitation and cases in which it is omitted in both writing and recitation. One example concerns the expression *fa-kayfa kāna ʿadhābī wa-nudhur* ﴿ فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عَذَابِيْ وَنُذُرِ ﴾ (Q.S. al-Qamar: 18), where the written forms of *ʿadhābī* and *nudhur* differ in their representation of the first-person possessive ending.[56] These variations are discussed in relation to orthographic conventions and transmitted reading traditions. Al-Marrākushī further interprets such distinctions through the symbolic relationship between outward written form and inward meaning.[57]

[51] Al-Zarkashī, *Al-Burhān Fī ʿUlūm Al-Qurʾān*.
[52] Ibn al-Bannāʾ al-Marrākushī, *ʿUnwān Al-Dalīl Min Marsūm Khaṭṭ Al-Tanzīl*.
[53] Al-Zarkashī, *Al-Burhān Fī ʿUlūm Al-Qurʾān*.
[54] Al-Zarkashī.
[55] Ibn al-Bannāʾ al-Marrākushī, *ʿUnwān Al-Dalīl Min Marsūm Khaṭṭ Al-Tanzīl*.
[56] Al-Zarkashī, *Al-Burhān Fī ʿUlūm Al-Qurʾān*.
[57] Ibn al-Bannāʾ al-Marrākushī, *ʿUnwān Al-Dalīl Min Marsūm Khaṭṭ Al-Tanzīl*.

**4) The Meaning of Removing the Letter *Nun***

The omission of the final *nūn* in *yakūn* is illustrated by the form *yaku* in Q.S. al-Qiyāmah: 37: ﴿ أَلَمْ يَكُ نُطْفَةً ﴾("Was he not a drop of semen?"). Al-Marrākushī interprets this orthographic feature as drawing attention to the humble beginnings of human existence and the subsequent stages of its development. His explanation illustrates how a distinctive written form may become part of a broader reflection on the meaning of the verse.[58]

**5) The Meaning of *Ha' Ta'niṡ***

Classical rasm scholarship distinguishes between *tā' marbūṭah and tā' maftūḥah* in the written forms of Qur'anic expressions. In al-Marrākushī's symbolic interpretation, the open tā' may be associated with action and its outward manifestation, while the bound form is considered in relation to nominal or attributive meaning. This distinction is discussed through expressions such as *qālat* and *ḥaqqat* and provides an interpretive context for examining the distinctive writing of *imraʾat* in selected Qur'anic passages.[59]

A distinctive use of *tāʾ maftūḥah* occurs in the orthographic form *imraʾat* in Qur'anic passages referring to five women: the wife of al-ʿAzīz (Q.S. Yūsuf: 30, 51), the wife of ʿImrān (Q.S. Āl ʿImrān: 35), Pharaoh's wife (Q.S. al-Qaṣaṣ: 9; al-Taḥrīm: 11), and the wives of Nūḥ and Lūṭ (Q.S. al-Taḥrīm: 10). These references account for seven occurrences across the passages considered here. Al-Marrākushī discusses the significance of such orthographic forms in relation to outward relationships and inner spiritual conditions.[60] The variation is therefore examined through the relationship between written form, marital association, and the religious circumstances described in the respective Qur'anic narratives.

The accounts of the wives of Nūḥ and Lūṭ, whose marital relationships did not ensure their salvation, contrast with the example of Pharaoh's wife, whose faith is presented independently of her husband's conduct. These narratives distinguish outward marital association from individual religious commitment. Read alongside the classical discussion of *tāʾ maftūḥah*, the contrast provides an interpretive context for considering how written forms, narrative relationships, and spiritual meanings interact in Qur'anic discourse. [61]

[58] Ibn al-Bannāʾ al-Marrākushī.
[59] Ibn al-Bannāʾ al-Marrākushī.
[60] Ibn al-Bannāʾ al-Marrākushī.
[61] Al-Zarkashī, *Al-Burhān Fī ʿUlūm Al-Qurʾān*.

## C. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that *Rasm Uthmāni* constitutes not only an established orthographic tradition in the transmission of the Qur'an but also a significant dimension of theological, linguistic, and exegetical interpretation. The classical debate between the *tawqīfī* and *iṣṭilāḥī* perspectives highlights the relationship between the historical formation of Qur'anic orthography and its preservation as an authoritative written tradition. The *tawqīfī* position, particularly associated with scholars such as Imam Mālik, Ahmad ibn Hanbal, and Abū ʿAmr al-Dānī, emphasizes adherence to inherited orthographic conventions, while the *iṣṭilāḥī* perspective provides a different understanding of their historical development. These discussions establish the theological and historical context for examining the interpretive significance of distinctive Qur'anic written forms.

Through the integration of Saussure's sign theory, Peirce's triadic model, and Schleiermacher's hermeneutical approach, the study illustrates how selected orthographic features can be understood in relation to their linguistic contexts and classical interpretations. The additional *yā'* in *bi'aydī* (Q.S. al-Dhāriyāt: 47) is associated in classical scholarship with the expression of divine power, while the omission of *alif* in *al-qawā'id* (Q.S. al-Nūr: 60) is examined alongside the verse's reference to older women. Similarly, variations involving *tā' maftūḥah* are interpreted in relation to marital associations and spiritual circumstances in selected Qur'anic narratives. Classical symbolic explanations of *alif*, *wāw*, *yā'*, and *hamzah* further demonstrate the interpretive attention given to the visual characteristics of Qur'anic writing. Viewed semiotically, these examples reveal how the relationship between written form, textual context, and scholarly interpretation contributes to the understanding of Qur'anic expressions.

The historical diversity of Qur'anic manuscripts in Nusantara provides an additional context for understanding the transmission and preservation of *Rasm Uthmāni*. Previous manuscript studies document the coexistence of *Uthmāni* and Imlā'ī writing conventions, reflecting variations in local copying practices and orthographic traditions. These historical practices can be distinguished from the established conventions maintained in contemporary authoritative mushafs, including the Indonesian Standard Mushaf (MSI). From a hermeneutical perspective, attention to grammatical forms and the interpretive perspectives articulated in classical scholarship further connects the study of Qur'anic orthography with broader discussions of language, meaning, and textual interpretation.

These findings highlight the significance of *Rasm Uthmāni* as a meeting point between orthographic preservation, visual aesthetics, and Qur'anic interpretation. By bringing classical discussions of rasm into dialogue with semiotic and hermeneutical perspectives, this study contributes an integrated reading of selected orthographic features and their interpretive significance. This perspective extends the study of Qur'anic writing beyond its technical conventions and underscores the relevance of orthographic analysis to Qur'anic exegesis and manuscript scholarship.

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