



# Arabic Script: Styles, Variants, and Calligraphic Adaptations

*Gabriel Mandel Khan*

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One of the world's major forms of writing, Arabic script is the language of the Koran and became widespread as a result of Islamic conquests of much of the world. The Koran places great importance on writing, and in the first verse of the holy book, reading and writing with the calamus, or reed pen, are praised as the source of all knowledge and all spiritual or scientific paths of change. For this reason the Islamic world is known for its reverence for books, as well as its love of writing. Eventually Arabic script gave rise to calligraphic art, which became an art form of astonishing beauty. More highly regarded than painting, Arabic calligraphy is approached aesthetically, like music, with its own rules of composition, rhythm, and harmony. This enlightening book helps us discover an alphabet that throughout the centuries has been linked to the secular and religious worlds of Islam. The text explains the history and meaning of each letter, as well as its philosophical, theological, and cultural significance, and 300 two-color and black-and-white pictures illustrate the letters, their variants, and calligraphic adaptations. An ideal book for linguists, graphic designers, and collectors of Islamic art, *Arabic Script* will also prove handy for travelers who wish to become familiar with the rudiments of the alphabet.

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