

Koufiya



Koufiya –*n. colloq.*
traditional Arab
scarf. –*adj.* from
or pertaining to
Al-Koufah, a city
in Iraq; feminine
of Koufi. [Arabic]

A boy wears
a *koufiya*
and dreams
of peace...



This picture dates back to a trip to Paris last June. A photo exhibit was taking place at the Jardin de Luxembourg depicting scenes from everyday life in Afghanistan and Central Asia. It had a few pictures of Egypt and just one photo of a Palestinian refugee on his way to Yemen, an image so powerful in impact that I could not help but take a picture.

The koufiya, traditionally, is part of the male Arab head dress but it has been transformed in the recent years into a scarf that is worn around the neck by both men and women. Today, Arabs and non-Arabs alike wear this scarf in support of the Palestinian cause, a common wound that all Arabs share.

The Arab nation is diverse but the koufiya is a symbol that speaks to the heart of every Arab. It speaks of pain and suffering, of strength, of endurance, and of the dream of peace.

It was no wonder then, that I would call my typeface Koufiya. Koufiya deals with the dialogue between two opposing scripts and cultures. Its story started with open communication between the two scripts, struggled with a lot of difficult questions, and then finally arrived at a platform where they were both equal and compatible. They were finally able to live side by side.


“

”

Scripts

&

خطوط



If one is to create dialogue between two entities that are essentially opposing...

كوفية خط مخصص للمطبوعات المتعددة اللغات، وخصوصة تلك التي كتبت بالخط العربي والخط اللاتيني. ولهذا، فإن التصميم يهدف الى إيجاد توازن وتناسق بين الخطين وهذه صفات يصعب نيلها بسبب الإختلاف الجوهرى بين هذين الخطين.

ويختلف الخط العربي عن الخط اللاتيني بعدة صفات، ومنها:

1. الوجهة؛ فاللغة العربية تكتب من اليمين الى اليسار.
2. التواصل؛ الخط العربي خط موصول وقد يرتفع عدد أشكال أحرفه الى أربعة اعتماداً على موقعها في الكلمة.
3. الحركات؛ يستخدم الخط العربي ٨ حركات يجوز حذفها وهذا يشكل مشكلة في التصميم الذي يجب إذاً أن يأخذ في الإعتبار جميع حالات وقوعها على الأحرف.
4. الإيقاع؛ في حين أن الخط اللاتيني يتصف بتكرار الخطوط العامودية ترتكز الأحرف العربية على الخط الأفقي.

Koufiya is a typeface intended for multilingual publications (catalogues, brochures, short journals and leaflets), specifically those containing both the Latin and Arabic scripts. As such, its design is meant to provide a calm and harmonious relationship between the two scripts, a quality that is very difficult to achieve because of the inherent differences between them.

The Arabic script differs from its Latin counterpart in several aspects, such as:

1. *Directionality*; Arabic is written right to left.
2. *Context sensitivity*; the Arabic script is a joining one and each character can have up to four forms depending on its position in the word.
3. *Vowels*; the Arabic script uses 8 diacritical marks to indicate vowel sounds that may or may not be written. This creates a serious design problem where all the possible combinations of mark to base glyphs must be taken into consideration.
4. *Rhythm*; while the Latin script is characterized by a strong, vertically repetitive rhythm, Arabic characters revolve around a strong horizontal baseline



...then one should not morph one to become the other, but rather create a middle ground in which both parties are equal i.e. one should add horisontality to the vertical and verticality to the horizontal.

- 5 . الترتيب؛ تكتب الأحرف اللاتينية جنباً إلى جنب فتبدو وكأنها تقف على ال baseline. أما الأحرف العربية فإنها تكتب جنباً إلى جنب أو الواحدة فوق الأخرى وتبدو كأنها مستلقية على ال baseline.
- 6 . العيون والمساحة المائلة؛ الأحرف اللاتينية عيونها إما مغلقة كلياً مثل ال b, d, p, q, o أو شبه مغلقة مثل ال a, e أو مفتوحة مثل ال c, m, n, u, v, w, x, y, z. لدرجة كبيرة، عيون ال lowercase محصورة في المساحة تحت ال x-height وهي لا تتصل بالمساحة العامة. أما عيون الأحرف العربية فإنها في معظم الأحيان تتصل بالمساحة المائلة ولهذا لا يوجد شيء معادل لل x-height.
- 7 . العلاقة بالكتابة؛ بعكس التطور التاريخي ل Latin typography لم تنفصل الأحرف العربية الطباعية عن الكتابة. ففي حين أن مجال تصميم الأحرف الطباعية اللاتينية تطور ليصبح إختصاصاً مستقلاً، لا تزال الأحرف العربية الطباعية تعتمد بشكل كبير على تاريخ فن الخط العربي.

5. *Stacking*; Latin characters are stacked next to each other and they appear to “stand” on the baseline. Arabic characters can be assembled either next to or on top of each other and they seem to “lie” on the baseline
6. *Counters and negative space*; the counters of Latin characters are either completely closed (b, d, p, q, o), partially closed (a, e), or partially open (c, m, n, v, w, x, y, z). To a large extent, the counters of the lower case are trapped below the x-height and do not spread into the ascender space. Counters of the Arabic characters tend to flow out of the character and thus there is no visual equivalent to the x-height band.
7. *Relationship to handwriting*; contrary to the Latin typographic tradition, Arabic type faces have not digressed very far away from the handwritten quality. While Latin type design has evolved to become a self-government discipline, Arabic typefaces are still very much dependant on calligraphic heritage.

خ

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Koufiya
كوفية
Arabic
عربية

ولهذا فإن كوفية عربية تتصف بـ :

1. الاندماج في مقاسات حروفها مما يحافظ على هويتهم عندما يصغر حجمهم في الطباعة
2. خطوط عمودية صلبة تحد من الجرف الأفقي مما يقرب سرعة إيقاع العربية إلى تلك اللاتينية

Hence, Koufiya Arabic is characterized by the following:

1. Harmony in relative proportions so that all characters retain their unique identity when scaled down.
2. Strong verticals that help to halt the strong horizontal flow and thus bring the rhythm closer to the Latin one

خيطة وإبرة

1. Smallest and largest letters in Arabic

الخيار الواسع

2. Vertical letters that occur very frequently

عمره طويل

3. Open counters

يتثائب

4. Partial connections

3. العيون المفتوحة التي تولد إنشراحاً وتكفل بعدم كتل الحبر. كما أنها تؤدي إلى زيادة الـ optical size لكي تماوي نظيرها اللاتيني
4. الخطوط الأفقية شبه موصولة لكي تساهم في تخفيف سرعة الإيقاع وتساعد أيضاً في تحديد مساحة أفقية خاصة بكل حرف فتعطيه استقلالته تحول دون تداخل الأحرف ببعضها

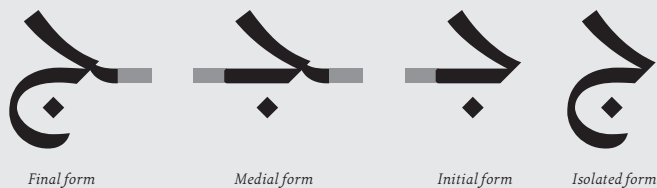
3. Open counters that generate a breezy and light effect and prevent the formation of ink blobs. They also result in a larger optical size which makes it sit better with the Latin one.
4. Partial connections that decrease the horizonatlity and create a unique horizontal allocation per character. This helps maintain the characters' autonomy and prevents their dissolving into an incoherent string.

Opentype features supported by Koufiya Arabic:

Mark to Base position



Initial, Medial, & Final forms



Opentype fonts use glyph positioning lookups to calculate the correct position of the marks to the base glyph (above; light grey marks show InDesign ME's automatic positioning; black marks are the corrected positions using VOLT) and glyph substitution lookups to call upon the context sensitive alternates for the isolated form of the character (below).

Koufiya Arabic & Opentype

With the help of VOLT, Koufiya Arabic is an opentype font equipped with all the required features for the proper representation of context sensitive forms and the multiple non spacing diacritics. The sample text provided on the following page is a good example of the use of diacritics. It is a poem extracted from textbook material for fourteen years old students with the proper diacritics applied. The vowel sounds, rarely used in everyday life except in poetry and children's books, are here applied to clarify ambiguous words and to mark the correct grammatical sense of the nouns, propositions and verbs. It is important to note, though, that Koufiya was not primarily intended for schoolbooks or poetry.

As one can notice, justification was enabled through the use of the kashida “_” which was added manually on the occasion of a long vowel. This is common practice in the representation of traditional poetry and is well supported by Koufiya's horizontal baseline. Kashidas can also be added automatically by the DTP application.

اللغة العربية تتكلم

حافظ ابراهيم

رَجَعْتُ لِنَفْسِي فَأَتُهُمُّ حَصَاتِي
رَمُونِي بِعَقْمٍ فِي الشَّبَابِ وَلِيَتَنِي
وَسِرِّعْتُ كِتَابَ اللَّهِ لِفِظًا وَغَايَةً
فَكَيْفَ أَضِيقُ الْيَوْمَ عَنْ وَصْفِ آلِهِ
أَنَا الْبَحْرُ فِي أَحْدِثَائِهِ الدُّرُّ كَامِنٌ
أَرَى لِرِبْرِجِ الْمَالِ الْغَرَبِ عِزًّا وَمُنْعَةً
سَقَى اللَّهُ فِي بَطْنِ الْجَزِيرَةِ أَعْظَمًا
حَفِظَنَ وَدَادِي فِي الْبَلَى وَحَفِظْتَهُ
أَبْهَجْرَنِي قَوْمِي - عَفَا اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ -
سَرَتْ لَوْنَةُ الْإِفْرَنْجِ فِيهَا كَمَا سَرَى
إِلَى مَعْتَبَرِ الْكُتَّابِ وَالْجَمْعُ حَافِلٌ
فَأَمَّا حَيَاةٌ تُبْعَثُ الْمُيْتُ فِي الْبَلَى
وَأَمَّا مَمَاتٌ لَا قِيَامَةَ بَعْدَهُ
وَنَادَيْتُ قَوْمِي فَاحْتَسَبْتُ حَيَاتِي
عَقِمْتُ فَلَمْ أَجْزَعْ لِقَوْلِ عِدَاتِي...
وَمَا ضَفَقْتُ عَنْ آيٍ بِهِ وَعِظَاتٍ
وَتَنْبِيحِ أَسْمَاءٍ لِمُخْتَرَعَاتٍ؟!
فَهَلْ سَأَلُوا الْعَوَّاصَ عَنْ صَدَقَاتِي؟
وَكَمْ عَزَّ أَقْوَامٌ بِعِزِّ لُغَاتٍ!
يَعِزُّ عَلَيْهَا أَنْ تَلِيَنَّ قُنَاتِي
لَهْنٌ بِقَلْبٍ دَائِمٍ الْخَنَسِرَاتِ
إِلَى لُغَةٍ لَمْ تَنْصَلْ بِرُؤَاؤِ؟!
لُعَابُ الْأَفَاعِي فِي مَدْبِيلِ قُرَاتِ
بَسَطْتُ رَجَائِي بَعْدَ بَسْطِ شِكَايَتِي
وَتُذِنْتُ فِي تِلْكَ الرُّمُوسِ رُفَاتِي
مَمَاتٌ لِعَمْرِي لَمْ يُقَسَّ بِمَمَاتِ

... extended set

Koufiya Arabic is designed primarily for the Arab speaking market which stretches from Morocco in the West to Iraq and the Arabian Peninsula in the East, covering almost all of the Asian and African coasts on the Mediterranean Sea. However, the Arabic script is also used by non-Arab languages such as Urdu, Pakistani, Sindhi etc. As such, the character set of the Arabic script is increased by additions that were required for the support of these languages. Koufiya Arabic supports all the basic glyphs listed in The Unicode Standard 3.0* and, because of its horizontal design, has only one required ligature, the lam-alef “ ﻻ ”.

**The Unicode Standard 3.0 misses a number of contextual alternates for several characters. It was outside the scope of the submission of this project to add the extra glyphs or to test Koufiya in non-Arabic languages. Such considerations, because of their added complexity, are to be addressed at a later stage.*

“The Arabic language speaks” by Hafith Ibrahim, 1903

Short translation: “They accused me of being infertile, and I wish I were for I wouldn’t have been sad. I was able to represent the book of God and its verses, so how can I not be able to represent the name of a machine or an invention?! I am the sea, with treasures in my deeps; did they ask the diver about my jewels? I see men of the West proud with their languages and how often that had been! I remember great men who would not accept to see me weak. They cherished me and I keep their memory in a heart full of sorrow. Would my people leave me for another language? To all the writers I lay down my request and my complaint. Give me life that would revive my corpse, or give me death with no hope of resurrection, a death for my life, a death as yet incomparable.”



Koufiya
كوفية
Latin
لاتينية

nice

1. Horizontal stress

design

2. Squarish counters

adds

3. Soft graceful curves

flavour

4. Calligraphic influence

... the design

نذكر هنا بعض من القرارات التي اتخذت بشأن كوفية لاتينية:

1. بعكس عادات تصميم الأحرف الطباعية، كوفية لاتينية تتصف بالتركيز أفقي الذي، مع عامودية كوفية عربية، يساهم في إيجاد حل وسط للمشكلة.
2. ولهذا السبب فإن العيون باتت مربعة أكثر مما هو معتاد في الخطوط الراجعة الاستخدام
3. إن التصميم ناعم ورشيق مثل تصميم كوفية عربية.
4. تحافظ كوفية عربية ولاتينية على أصل الكتابة اليدوية مع لمحة خفيفة عن أصل الأحرف المعتمد على القصة.

Listed below are some decisions concerning the design of the Latin:

1. Contrary to conventions in text face design, Koufiya Latin has a slightly pronounced horizontal stress that, along with increased verticality of Koufiya Arabic, aims to provide a middle ground solution.
2. As a result, the counters are more squarish than most of the text faces in general use.
3. The overall design is rather soft and graceful, which is in keeping with the fluidity of the curves of the Arabic design.
4. Both Koufiya Arabic and Latin maintain a restrained calligraphic feel with a slight hint at the broad nib origin of the characters.



Spanish: Koufiya es un tipo de letra destinado para publicaciones multilingües, específicamente esos contener ambas las escrituras del latín y a árabe. Cuando tan, su diseño se significa para proporcionar una relación armoniosa entre las dos escrituras, una calidad que es muy difícil de lograr a causa de las diferencias inherentes entre ellos.

French: Koufiya est un oeil d'un caractère destiné aux publications multilingues, spécifiquement ceux qui contiennent les manuscrits latins et arabes. En tant que tels, sa conception est censée pour fournir un rapport harmonieux entre les deux manuscrits, une qualité il est très difficile réaliser qu'en raison des différences inhérentes entre elles. [12/14.4]

German: Koufiya ist ein Schriftbild, das für mehrsprachige Publikationen, spezifisch die bestimmt ist, welche die lateinischen und arabischen Indexe enthalten. Als solcher, wird sein Design bedeutet, um ein harmonisches Verhältnis zwischen den zwei Indexen, eine Qualität zur Verfügung zu stellen, die sehr schwierig, wegen der zugehörigen Unterschiede zwischen ihnen zu erzielen ist.

Finnish: Koufiya on typeface tuleva vaimoni. ajaksi monikielinen julkaiseminen, nimenomaan ne hillitä kumpikin Latinalainen ja kirjoitus. Koska moinen, sen aikoa on omaisuus jotta ehkäistä ehjä suhde kesken kakkonen kirjoitus, avu että on erittäin hankala jotta aikaansaada koska luonnostaan kuuluva erilaisuus kesken heidät. [10/12]

Latin: Koufiya est a typeface intended pro multilingual promulgatio , imprimis illud postulo utriusque Latin quod Arabic scriptor. Ut talis , suus intentio est vilis ut suggero a multicanus affinitas inter duos scriptor a species ut est valde difficilis ut perficio propter inherent varietas inter lemma.

Czech: Koufiya is jeden druh písma určený multilingual dílo, specifické those být dělitelný oba člen určité Latina a Arabština rukopisy. Jako takový its cíl is měl v úmyslu až k darovat jeden harmonický návaznost mezi člen určité dva rukopisy, jeden jakost to jest dokonalý nesnadný až k dosáhnout kvůli člen určité obsažený v dělat rozdíl mezi je. [8/9.6]

Italian: Koufiya è un occhio dei caratteri destinato alle pubblicazioni multilingue, specificamente quelle che contengono sia gli scritti latini che arabi. Come tali, il relativo disegno è significato per fornire un rapporto armonioso fra i due scritti, una qualità che è molto difficile da realizzare a causa delle differenze inerenti fra loro.

Norwegian: Koufiya er en skriftsort vordende for flerspråklige offentliggjøringer, uttrykkelig de inneholdende både den Latin og den Arabic skrifttyper. Som slik, dets design betyr gi et harmonisk forhold mellom de to skrifttypene, en kvalitet at er meget vanskelig oppnå på grunn av de inherente forskjellene mellom dem. [11/13.2]

Swedish: Koufiya är en typeface ämnat på flerspråkig publikationerna , speciellt den här innehållet båda den Latin och Arabisk manuskripten. Som sådan, dess design är mente till skaffa en harmonisk släktskapen emellan den två manuskripten, en kvalitet den där er mycket besvärlig till åstadkomma på grund av den inneboende differenserna i mellan dem.

Dutch: Koufiya zit te typeface voorgenomen voor multilingual verschijning, specificatiebrief zulks inhouden beider naar de Latijns en Arabisch tekst. Zoals zulke, zijn werkje zit schriel voor zorgen voor te harmonisch verwantschap tussen naar de tweetal tekst, te kwaliteit welk zit zelfs zwaar voor volbrengen wegens naar de inherent verschil daartussenin. [9/10.8]

Icelandic: Koufiya er a leturgerð fyrirhugaður fyrir fjölyngdur ritverk, sérstaklega þessir innihalda báðir the Latina og Arabískur skrifletur. Eins og svo sem , þess hönnun er millitið til afla a samstilltur samband á milli the tveir skrifletur a gæði þessi er mjög erfiður til framkvæma því af the meðfæddur mismunur á milli þá.

Slovenian: Koufiya je a typeface nameravan zakaj govoreč več jezikov oglas, specifikacija oni vsebovati oboje latinski ter Arabic scenarij kot tak, svoj načrt je medtem skrbeti a ubran razmerje med oba scenarij, a odličnost to je zelo težek v izvršiti zaradi naravno zvezan razlika vmes. [7/8.4]





... a final word

A bridge البرج

Body size:

The respective body heights was carefully adjusted to arrive at the same optical size. To a foreign eye, the Arabic seems smaller (and shorter) but this is not the case since this design looks very big and open if compared with other Arabic typefaces.

Ascenders and descenders:

Both have the same height for the ascenders. The Arabic has two depths for its descenders; their average gives a close impression to that of the Roman

Capitals:

They are shorter than the ascenders so that they blend into the text. This is quite helpful since Arabic has no equivalent for the uppercase.

It is very important to stress the fact that during the whole exercise of designing the Koufiya family, it was always top priority to keep a healthy relationship between the members of this “family”. Utmost care was given to the preservation of the identity of each script. Even though both are somehow unconventional, they do not hide their origins. Koufiya Latin does not stray too far from the conventions of text face design, and Koufiya Arabic still maintains a vague resemblance to its source of inspiration. If anything, the reasons why Koufiya Arabic does not look exactly like the Early Koufi are purely typographic ie weight consistency, ink traps, evenness, degradation to small sizes, colour... Moreover, Koufiya Latin and Arabic are designed to give the same optical size for the same point size.





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