

## Colored Tajwid Mushaf: Color Code Analysis of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Malaysia

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### Abstract

*Mushaf* al-Quran or Quranic manuscript is the core instrument used by Muslims to recite, read and reflect on Quranic contents. Alongside technological development, it is now available in both physical and digital forms. In addition, the existing physical *mushaf* al-Quran has also been innovated to increase comprehension for the reader. The most prevalent innovation among publishers and the Muslim community in Malaysia is a colored *tajwid mushaf*. However, publishing companies in Malaysia have different preferences for innovation, which has caused readers confusion due to the different colors used. Furthermore, the color selection does not cover the law of *Tajwid* holistically but only a few basic laws, in addition to disagreement regarding the practice of coloring Quranic fonts with colors other than black. Hence, this article discusses the history of colored Quranic fonts used by past scholars. It will also discuss the rationale for coloring the Quranic fonts by Islamic scholars. Therefore, the rulings have been refined by Al-Quran Text Control Department (*Lajnah Tashih Al-Quran*), Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) to resolve confusion through the Guidelines of Colored *Tajwid* Code which have been adjusted for general use. This article will also clarify the standard of rulings to avoid further misunderstandings and act as an explanation as well as exposure to the readers regarding the steps and efforts taken by the Ministry of Home Affairs to maintain the sanctity of Al-Quran.

**Keywords:** Mushaf, Tajwid, Colored

### Introduction

Al-Quran is the Islamic sacred text for Muslims that is safeguarded in all aspects by Allah SWT. It is in accordance with His words:

﴿إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ﴾

*It is certainly We Who have revealed the Reminder, and it is certainly We Who will preserve it (Al-Hijr, 15:9).*

Writing is one of the Quranic text's maintenances which later is recorded in the form of *mushaf*. The extensive history of written Quranic texts in a *mushaf* started from the early days of revelation and it ends with an official standard during the time of caliph Uthman bin Affan r.a. However, Quranic texts as a *mushaf* continue to improve and develop accordingly through various technological innovations such as font style, marking, calligraphic decoration, writing arrangement, motifs, etc. These elements have been integrated with reliable research by

Islamic scholars to produce a practical *mushaf* that fulfills the market demands and requirements.

Based on historical records, among prominent figures who have shown their exceptional contribution to Quranic publishing was IbnGhattus (d 542 H) who produced a high-quality *mushaf* and did the copying work amounting to 1000 *mushaf* (Syirsyal, 2002). Similarly, the immense contribution inherited from Abu Aswad al-Duali who pioneered *nuqtah al-'irab* to the markings in the *mushaf*, then moved to the time of Nasr Bin Asim and Yahya Bin Ya'mur as pioneers of *nuqtah al-'ijam* and al-Khalil Bin Ahmad al-Farahidiy as the legacy with the invention of *al-Syaki* as well as some other marks in the *mushaf* (Al-Jauziy et al., 1992).

It can be observed that the Qur'an *mushaf* has experienced innovations that have benefited Muslims worldwide since the first three centuries. In fact, every era after that has also shown various other latest innovations contributed by Islamic scholars to ensure that the Qur'anic *mushaf* are always practically relevant. This development has also happened in various parts of the world including Malaysia. In Malaysia, the preservation of Quranic sanctity has been controlled by an authoritative body which is the Board of Control and License of Al-Quran Printing (LPPQ) as one of the units under the Ministry of Home Affairs. The LPPQ has also delegated the revision of the materials of the Quranic text to the Members of the *Lajnah Tashih Al-Quran* which consists of Quranic experts.

Therefore, this paper aims to explain the innovation of the Qur'anic *mushaf* in Malaysia, which is a colored *tajwid* code whose use is coordinated in accordance with the enactment provided under the law related to the Qur'anic manuscripts.

### **Research Issues and Problems**

The diverse colors in many *mushaf* versions are gaining the attention of Islamic scholars throughout the ages. The disagreements consist of two main stances. The first stance discourages any use of color in the Quranic *mushaf* regardless of any purpose. It has been presented by many scholars such as al-Daniy, Malik bin Anas, al-Hasan Bin Abi al-Hasan, Abu Zaid al-Qairawaniy and others (Al-Farmawiy, 2004). The prohibition has also been confirmed by a member of the Islamic Studies Association in Egypt, Dr. Muhammad al-Sahhat al-Jundi. Dr. Mukhtar Marzuq, Dean of the Usuluddin department at al-Azhar University, Asyut, Egypt has also mentioned a colorful *mushaf* as a nonsensical deviation that could affect the significance of al-Quran and contradicts Islamic teaching for its frivolous attitude towards the sanctity of the Quran (*Al-Islami*, 2016). The second stance encourages the use of colors in *mushaf* such as Imam Al-Ghazali, Ibnu Taimiah, Abu al-Hassan al-Munadiy and others (Al-Tahiriy, 2009). It was also emphasized by Dr. 'Abd al-Mahdi 'Abd al-Qadir, professor of hadith at al-Azhar: "the use of colors in the *mushaf* and also in writing has nothing to do with our respect for the Qur'an" (*Al-Islami*, 2016).

It can be examined that these two stances aim to protect the sanctity of the Quran as well as the Muslim community from any disparagements. However, the current market demands a form of innovation to help the Muslim community to ease the Quranic recitation process. Hence, the second stance is used within a limited scope. Even so, the general ruling brings confusion to the community because it provides space for publishers to have their preferences which caused inconsistency from one version to others. For this reason, the Al-

Quran Regulatory Unit, Ministry of Home Affairs has made a ruling on the use of color in the *mushaf*, especially concerning the *tajwid* law. Despite this effort, it still raises disputes on the color selection, coloring methods and some of the *tajwid* laws involved.

In addition, the development of the use of colored Qur'anic *mushaf* has not been given due attention in scientific studies. Therefore, it is not clear how this color innovation started and continued to develop until today (Al-Tahiri, 2009). So, this article aims to explain the use of color, especially in the Qur'anic *mushaf* in Malaysia. Although the *mushaf* al-Quran in Malaysia follows the rules and standards from the *Mushaf* al-Madinah, printed by Mujamma' al-Malik fahd, Saudi Arabia, the coloring of *Tajwid* law has not been adhered to.

### History of *Mushaf* Coloring

The writing of the Qur'anic text in the time of the Prophet SAW only used one tone of color, which is black or a color similar to it due to the widespread black ink usage as well as the underdeveloped technology on colored inks other than black. The phenomenon of colored Qur'anic text, including its marking, began in the middle of the first century of Hijra. According to al-Tahiriyy (2009), the use of color in the *masahif* covers two situations. First, it involves *mushaf* decorations such as filigree, motifs and patterns of *mushaf* decoration inserts. Second, it involves coloring the markings of the Qur'an such as lines and more. The use of colors was pioneered by Abu Aswad al-Duali when he was asked to make a specific method to ensure the recitation of the Qur'an is well protected and he started using different colors from the color of writing the text of the Qur'an (Al-Dani, 1986).

According to Islamic scholars, the Qur'anic text before and after the era of printing the Quran usually used three colors

- i. Red color: used for lines/*harakat* and other things. This is the most used color.
- ii. Yellow color: used for *hamzah muhaqqaqah* letters.
- iii. Green color: used for the *ibtida'* sign, which is a long line sign that accompanies the *hamzah wasl* and at the same time shows the line at the time of *ibtida'* (Al-Tahiri, 2009).

The three colors above are widely used by the people of Medina. Some Iraqis use red for *harakah* and *hamzah* only. In addition, the color blue is also used in some old *masahif*. Some *masahif* writers replace the color green with blue and some of them also use blue to show signs of *sukun* and *syaddah* (Al-Tahiri, 2009). After the advancement of printing technology of the Quran, color innovation in the *mushaf* has widely developed. However, since the use of printing machines at the initial stage was not yet able to mix various colors, the text of the Quran and its signs were colored with only one tone. After improvements have been made to the use of more advanced printing machines, they can produce a variety of colors and some printing companies have pioneered the way of printing *mushaf* with various colors either on the writing or the marks as can be seen on the *mushaf* Dar al-Ma'rifah print, Damshiq, 10th print, 1429H (Shukri, 2017).

### MoHA Color Code

In order to resolve the polemic among the publishers and printers of al-Qur'an which consists of local and foreign industries as well as the confusion among the general public, the Ministry of Home Affairs has successfully constructed the Guidelines for Al-Quran *Tajwid* in Color with

*Waqf* and *Ibtida'* (<https://www.moha.gov.my>). It is provided as a guide for the Quranic publication to coordinate the coloring of the Quranic *mushaf* and avoid confusion among the community. These guidelines are a reference to the parties as follows

- i. Publishers, printers and importers as well as parties involved in the publication, printing, sale, distribution and importation of al-Quran *tajwid* in color; and
- ii. The enforcement agencies at the Federal and State levels are responsible for enforcing the law based on the Al-Quran Text Printing Act (APTQ) 1986.

The publication of the Qur'an in Malaysia and globally has grown rapidly due to the demand of the Muslim community to deepen their knowledge of the Qur'an and understand its recitation laws. In order to facilitate and attract the interest of the Muslim community in learning the Qur'an, various new methods of learning the Qur'an were introduced by publishers in Malaysia including the use of color in the text of the Qur'an for the law of *tajwid*, *waqaf ibtida'*, certain topics and others. In addition, there is also the publication of the al-Quran in color for decorative purposes only and not to help in the process of learning the al-Quran. A non-systematic coloring method without a clear guide causes significant differences in the method of using coloring in the Qur'an. This situation creates confusion among readers. For example, the same *tajwid* law is colored differently by different publishers. Therefore, the Board of Control and License of Al-Quran Printing (LPPQ) Bill. 85.1/2016 has decided to create guidelines to standardize colored Al-Quran.

Although colored al-Quran is allowed as an additional method in learning al-Quran, students should learn and understand the actual *tajwid* law as stipulated. Therefore, to better learn the Qur'an, students should learn through the teacher directly or *talaqqi musyafahah* for direct recitation or reading correction. Each colored Quran must comply with the color rules as in the table below.

- i. For every Mad that is recited with two *harakat*, it should be colored in black. Among the mad laws included in this category are *Mad Asli*, *Mad Badal*, *Mad Syibhilil Badal*, *Mad Silah Qasirah*, *Mad Tamkin* and *Mad Iwadh*.
- ii. For every *mad* law that is recited with four or five *harakat*, it should be colored in red. Among the *mad* laws included in this category are *Mad Wajib Muttasil*, *Mad Jaiz Munfasil* and *Mad Silah Towilah*.
- iii. For every *mad* law that is recited with six *harakat*, it should be colored dark brown. *Mad* laws that fall into this category are *Mad Lazim* and *Mad Faraq*.
- iv. For every *mad* law that is recited with two, four or six *harakat*, it should be colored orange. *Mad* laws that fall into this category are *Mad 'Arid Lissukun* and *Mad Lin*.
- v. For every *tajwid* law that is recited with emphasis, it should be colored green. The rules of *tajwid* that are included in this category are *Idgham Ma'al Ghunnah*, *Idgham Mislain*, *Wajibul Ghunnah*, *Ikhfa' Haqiqi*, *Ikhfa' Syafawi* and *Iqlab*.
- vi. For each *Qalqalah* law should be colored in light blue.
- vii. For the letter *Ra'* that is recited distinctly, should be colored purple.

The table below shows a summary of the color tajwid al-Quran method.

**METHOD OF COLORED TAJWID LAWS**  
 MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (MOHA)

BLACK COLORED LETTERS : 2 HARAKAT		
NO	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLE
1	MAD ASLI	الرَّحْمٰنُ
2	MAD BADAL	لَا يَلْفِ
3	MAD SYIBH BIL BADAL	وَبَاءٌ و
4	MAD SILAH QOSIRAH	وَلَهُ دُرِّيَّةٌ
5	MAD TAMKIN	النَّبِيِّنَ
6	MAD IWADH	رَجِيْمًا

COLOR CODE SUGGESTION

CODE CMYK 0 0 0 100

CODE RGB 35 31 32

MoHA has determined that the following six items of *tajwid* law are kept in black because they are all of original mad as well as their fractions and recited in two harakat. Therefore, MoHA believes that there is no need for this type of mad to be colored specifically.

BROWN COLORED LETTERS : RECITED WITH 6 HARAKAT			
NO	LAW	EXAMPLE	DESCRIPTION
1	MAD LAZIM (KALIMI MUTHAQQAL)	دَابَّةٍ	COLORED ALIF LETTER AND MAD SIGN
2	MAD LAZIM KALIMI MUKHAFFAF	أَلْفَنَ	COLORED ALIF LETTER AND MAD SIGN
3	MAD LAZIM (HARFI MUTHAQQAL)	الْحَمِّ	COLORED LAM LETTER, MAD SIGN, MIM LETTER AND MAD SIGN
4	MAD LAZIM HARFI MUKHAFFAF	حَمِّ	COLORED MIM LETTER AND MAD SIGN

COLOR CODE SUGGESTION

CODE CMYK 20 90 100 20

CODE RGB 167 53 33

ORANGE COLORED LETTERS : RECITED WITH 2 / 4 / 6 HARAKAT			
NO	LAW	EXAMPLE	DESCRIPTION
1	MAD 'ARIDH LIS SUKUN	يَسْعُرُونَ	COLORED WAW LETTER CONSIDERING RA'S AYAH
2	MAD LIN	أَلْبَيْتِ	COLORED YA LETTER AND SUKUN SIGN CONSIDERING RA'S AYAH

COLOR CODE SUGGESTION

CODE CMYK 0 75 100 0

CODE RGB 242 101 34

As for Mad Lazim, MoHA has determined that the color used is brown. It includes all forms of *Mad Lazim*, *Kalimi* and *Harfi* as well as *Mukhaffaf* and *Muthaqqal*. The color involves the

letters that are recited with the law as well as the mad sign. This decision is made to ease the reader to understand the law on the words involved.

As for the orange color, it is set for *Mad Aridh* and *Mad Lin*. It only involves the letters *Mad* and *Lin* and does not involve the letters after it and the previous line. This considers that MoHA intends to minimize the colors on the letters of the Quran and look at the requirements that can be understood in general.

RED COLORED LETTERS : RECITED WITH 4 OR 5 HARAKAT			
NO	LAW	EXAMPLE	DESCRIPTION
1	MAD WAJIB MUTTASIL	أَبْنَاءُكُمْ	COLORED ALIF LETTER AND MAD SIGN
2	MAD JAIZ MUNFASIL	فَأَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفًا	COLORED WAW LETTER AND MAD SIGN
3	MAD SILAH KUBRA / TAWILAH	يَحْسَبُ أَنَّ مَالَهُ أَخْلَدُهُ	COLORED SMALL WAW LETTER AND MAD SIGN

COLOR CODE SUGGESTION

CODE CMYK 0 100 100 0

CODE RGB 237 28 36

BLUE COLORED LETTERS			
NO	LAW	EXAMPLE	DESCRIPTION
1	QALQALAH	عَبْدِنَا	COLORED BA' LETTER AND SUKUN SIGN
2		وَتَبَّ	COLORED BA' LETTER, SYADDH AND FATHAH CONSIDERING RA'S AYAH
3		يَلِدْ وَلَمْ	COLORED DAL LETTER AND SUKUN

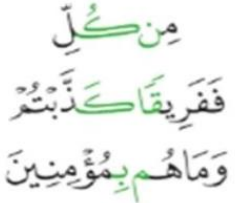





COLOR CODE SUGGESTION

CODE CMYK 90 20 20 0

CODE RGB 0 152 188

As for the color red, it involves the law of *Mad Muttasil*, *Munfasil* and *Silah Kubra*. It only involves the letter *mad* and its sign. It does not involve connecting letters between the letter *mad* and the letter *Hamzah* after it as defined for the *mad*. This considers that the color used is only a signal for the recitation construct and not for the definition.

As for the color blue, it involves the *Qalqalah* law. However, the ruling for this law only involves the original *sukun* letter either in the middle or at the end of the sentence. In addition, the letter that is *sukun aridh* (befall), it only involves the word at the end of the verse (*Ra'sul Ayah*) and not in the middle of the verse even though the *waqf* is on its recitation.

GREEN COLORED LETTERS : RECITED WITH EMPHASIS			
NO	LAW	EXAMPLE	DESCRIPTION
1	IKHFA'		<p>COLORED THE LETTER OF NUN, KAF AND DHAMMAH</p> <p>COLORED THE LETTER OF QAF, TANWIN, ALIF, KAF AND FATHAH</p> <p>COLORED THE LETTER OF MIM, BA' AND KASRAH</p>
2	NUN TASYDID		COLORED THE LETTER OF NUN, SYADDAAH AND FATHAH
3	MIM TASYDID		COLORED THE LETTER OF MIM, SYADDAAH AND FATHAH
4	IQLAB		<p>COLORED THE LETTER OF MIM, DHOMMAH, SMALL MIM, BA' AND KASRAH</p> <p>COLORED THE LETTER OF NUN, SMALL MIM, BA' AND FATHAH</p>
5	IDGHAM BI GHUNNAH		<p>COLORED THE LETTER OF NUN, YA ADN DHOMMAH</p> <p>COLORED SYADDAAH, TANWIN, WAW AND FATHAH</p> <p>COLORED THE LETTER OF NUN, SECOND NUN, SYADDAAH AND DHOMMAH</p>
6	IDGHAM MUTAMATHILAIN		COLORED THE LETTER OF MIM, SECOND MIM, SYADDAAH AND KASRAH

**COLOR CODE SUGGESTION**

**CODE CMYK** 80 0 100 0

**CODE RGB** 23 175 75

The green color involves the *ghunnah* rule for the topics of *Nun Sakinah & Tanwin*, *Mim Sakinah* and *Nun & Mim Tasydid*. It involves the letters *Nun Sakinah & Tanwin* or *Mim Sakinah* and the letters after it along with signs. Whereas the letters *Nun & Mim* with *tasydid* only involve letters and signs of *tasydid*. However, if there is a conflict between two laws such as item No. 5 then the coloring involves both laws.

PURPLE COLORED LETTERS : THICK (RA' & LAM)			
NO	LAW	EXAMPLE	DESCRIPTION
1	THICK RA'	ضَرْبَ	COLORED THE LETTER OF RA' AND FATHAH
2		خَيْرًا	COLORED THE LETTER OF RA' AND TANWIN
3		مُسْتَقْرًا وَمَتَعًا	COLORED ONLY THE LETTER OF RA'
4		خُسْرٍ	COLORED ONLY THE LETTER OF RA' CONSIDERING RA'S AYAH
5		بَصِيرًا	COLORED ONLY THE LETTER OF RA'
6		الْمُرْسَلُونَ	COLORED THE LETTER OF RA' AND SUKUN

## COLOR CODE SUGGESTION

CODE CMYK 40 50 0 0CODE RGB 156 133 190

The color purple involves the *tafkhim* law only. While the law of *tarqiq* is maintained in black even though the usual discussion of this law involves both forms of recitation. Nevertheless, the need for recitation is seen as more prominent for *tafkhim* law. It involves the letter *Ra* only and does not involve the letter Lam nor the letter Alif even though the topic of *tafkhim* & *tarqiq* involves three letters namely the letters *Ra*, *Lam* and *Alif*. The selection of the letter *Ra* is due to its dominance compared to the other two letters.



### Discussion and Conclusion

After looking at the decision taken by the MoHA through the guidelines, the following conclusions can be made

- i. The coloring of the *tajwid* law does not involve all laws. It only involves a few laws and is adapted to a very limited number of basic colors.
- ii. The determination of color is not based on scientific studies from the point of view of its appropriate use based on the law involved. However, it was determined randomly as a result of a brief study of the use of color by several al-Quran printing companies that pioneered the use of color.
- iii. Some of the colors on the marking of the Qur'an do not follow the basic purpose of *Dabt* al-Quran, but are adjusted based on their use in practical reading.

Although the ruling has some shortcomings, it has managed to avoid confusion among the community when reciting and reading the Quran. Readers are not concerned and confused about using *mushaf* from different printing companies because the color *tajwid* code has been adjusted for use. In addition, several studies have shown the effectiveness of teaching and learning by using color to explain the law of *tajwid* (Ella, 2012).

Hopefully, the efforts to maintain the sanctity and sacredness of the Quran will always be prioritized. Hence, the latest methods and innovations that are seen as necessary to help the community recite and read the Quran better should be developed more enthusiastically. However, the basis for an accurate recitation of the Quran is through the *Talaqqi & Musyafahah* method and any other methods are only used to help increase the reader's understanding.

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