

Rosario Arquero Avilés  
Gonzalo Marco Cuenca

## THE CALIPHAL *KUFIC* SCRIPT.



On the plain border that runs along the base of the lid of the Pyxis of Zamora we can find, in *Kufic* characters, the following inscription: "God's blessing to the Imam, the slave of God, Al Hakam Al Mustansir bi'llah, the Prince of the Believers. From what has been ordered to be done for the lady mother of Prince Abd el Rahman, under the direction of Durri As Saghir, in the year 353 AH". (Galán & Galindo, 2005; Puerta Vílchez, 2013; Martínez Martín, 2015).

Historically linked to the city of Kufa in present-day Iraq, the *Kufic* script, given the importance Islam assigns to the written word, is one of the most outstanding elements of the archaeological manifestations of al-Andalus (Martínez Enamorado, 2003). Along with *ataurique* work, *Kufic* characters are a reliable dating system for inscriptions where the date is missing or badly damaged (Martínez Enamorado, 2003).

Three types can be distinguished in the Umayyad period: archaic *Kufic* (8th and 9th Centuries), flowery *Kufic* (second half of the 9th Century and 10th Century) and simple *Kufic* (mid-10th Century to the end of the Caliphate period) (Martínez Enamorado, 2003).

Simple *Kufic* script developed during the period of al-Hakam II. This is a type of writing that stands out for its total elimination of floral decorations, characteristic of the flowery *Kufic*, and instead returns to a *Kufic* script that is reminiscent of the archaic *Kufic* in its simplicity and sobriety. The first examples of this new style can be found in the capitals of the Alcazar of Cordoba from 964 to 965 and in the Pyxis of Zamora (Martínez Enamorado, 2003). However, the consolidation of simple *Kufic* is best reflected in the inscriptions commemorating the extension work on the Great Mosque of Cordoba, carried out by order of al-Hakam II (Martínez Núñez, 1997).

It is worth noting that the inscription on the Pyxis of Zamora is an elegant, sober and well-executed design, as there are no anomalies between the lines. It clearly shows the new elegance acquired by the simple *Kufic* through the ideal proportion between the height and thickness of the graphemes (Martínez Núñez, 1997).

**Bibliography.**

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