

The oldest surviving and rare wooden box for keeping Kaaba's keys, dated 1142 AH / 1729 AD, preserved in a private collection in Riyadh (publish and study)

Wael Hemimy¹

¹Associate professor of Archeology Faculty of Archaeology, Luxor, University, Egypt.

Correspondence

Wael Hemimy, Associate professor of Archaeology Faculty of Archaeology, Luxor University, 1369919 Egypt
Email: Wael_hemimy83@farch.luxor.edu.eg
Wael_hemimy83@yahoo.com

Abstract

This research aims to study and publish the oldest rare wooden box for keeping the keys of the Kaaba, which dated 1142 A.H /1729 AD. It is preserved in a private collection of HRH Princess Moudy in Riyadh in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. This Research publish and study this box in terms of its scientific description, and analysis of its decorative elements which are floral, geometric and inscriptions ones. As well as explained how it works and the purpose for its make. According to its inscriptions, it was made in Holy Makkah in 1142 A.H/1729 AD. It was an indication about the technical level of wooden work in Makkah at that time. This wooden box is contemporary to the second ruling period of Sharif Abdullah bin Saed for Holy Makkah in (1136-1143 A.H/ 1724-1731 A.D). During the reign of the Ottoman Sultan Ahmed III (1115-1143 A.H/ 1703-1730 A.D). This box, as the oldest boxes for keeping the keys of the Kaaba, despite its rarity, is considered a masterpiece. Hence the importance of this box, given that it belongs to the honorable Kaaba, and its study is also a new addition to wooden artifacts in general and the boxes for keeping the keys of the Kaaba in particular.

KEYWORDS

Wooden Box- Keys of the Kaaba- Islamic Wooden Artifacts- Ottoman Wooden Artifacts- HRH Princess Moudy Collection.

1 | INTRODUCTION

There is in HRH Princess Moody private collection in Riyadh¹ a rare wooden box for keeping the keys of the Kaaba, dated 1142 AH /1729 AD. This box is similar to the other one which I had published before in previous research entitled: "Two Rare Wooden Boxes from the Ottoman Era for keeping the Keys of the Kaaba, dated 1146 AH, 1197 AH, preserved in a private collection in Riyadh" (publish and study) (Hemimy, 2021). In terms of its general shape and method of work, the box - subject of the study - can be described in an accurate scientific way through its descriptive and analytical study as follows:

Box Description: (Figure 1)

Material: Walnut wood.

Masterpiece number: 925.

¹HRH Princess Moudy Collection of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Princess Moudy: She is the mother of HRH Prince Muhammad bin Fahd bin Muhammad bin Abdul Rahman Al Saud, and HRH the Princess was famous for her strong love for the acquisition of antiques, and this group includes many artifacts representing different periods, and she is in the process of establishing Museum in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Date: 1142 /1729AH.

Conservation place: Preserved in the collection of HRH Princess Moudy, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Condition: good.

Dimensions: Its height is approximately 43 cm, the length of its base is approximately 77 cm, and the width of the base is approximately 39 cm.



FIGURE 1 A box of wood bearing No.925 Preserving in A private Collection in Ryaad (by Researcher)

Description and study: Walnut box, rectangular in shape, laminated with copper, some parts of which are covered with metal. It starts with a base of a small wooden board in the four corners that rises by 5 cm that supports the body of the box its main facade is a brass plate decorated with small grates from a small circle protruding from the level of the copper sheet bottom, surrounding this circle are vicious small circles that occupy the entire shape of the copper sheet. Its outer frame is defined by a small hollow-out decorated strip made of small circles, at the top of this copper sheet there is a cylindrical copper handle on its sides there are the two locks, one on the right and the other on the left. This cylindrical handle is occupied by inscriptions on one of its sides in the thuluth script, the text of which is: مكة المكرمة "The Holy Makah" (Figure 2) They are separated by three broad circular lines, on the other side of the cylindrical handle there are inscriptions in thuluth script which read: "الحجاز" "Al-Hijaz"², The date of the year 1142", (Figure 3, 4) while at top where the box was opened, there was writing on both sides and in the middle also inscriptions in thuluth script which read: "صندوق مفتاح الكعبة" (Kaaba key box) (Figure 5). Attached to this metal handle is another handle connected with a third handle that fixed to the body of box. On the right and left of the metal handle at the place of placing the keys that are used to open and close it. It is certain that it was for keeping the key of the Kaaba. The length of the lock is approximately 11.5 cm, and its width is approximately 8 cm. The length of the front handle is approximately 31 cm, and the length of the side handle is approximately 13 cm. The lock is occupied by inscriptions in clumsy thuluth inscription that read: "بالعلم تحل اللاتي ... ؟؟؟" (With knowledge, the pearls are revealed. ???) (Figure 2).



FIGURE 2 Details for Box Lock Inscription and Ornament (by Researcher)

²Al- Hijaz region became under the administration and supervision of the Ottoman Empire, after the Emirate of Makkah was in the hands of the sons of Bani Hashem, and the ruler of Makkah and its nobles did not enjoy complete independence, and the Othman family, especially after Sultan Selim I in the year (923 AH / 1517 AD), was keen to be called the Caliph in order to They combine the religious and worldly authorities, and when he annexed Egypt to the Ottoman Empire after he defeated the Mamluks in the Battle of Raydaniyah in the year (923 AH / 1517 AD), the Prince of Makkah at that time, Sharif Barakat bin Muhammad bin Muhammad al-Hasani, rushed to send his son Abu Nami, accompanied by an ambassador carrying gifts and the keys of the Kaaba, to present them to the Sultan The Ottoman in Egypt combined with sincere prayers and veneration, so the Sultan welcomed the Sharif and sent with him two hundred thousand gold dinars to be distributed to the people of the Two Holy Mosques. Judges were sent and the speech in mosques was said in the name of the Sultan. For more information see: Çelebi, (N. Date), p. 38-40).



FIGURE 3 Details for a box lock and cover ornament. (by Researcher)

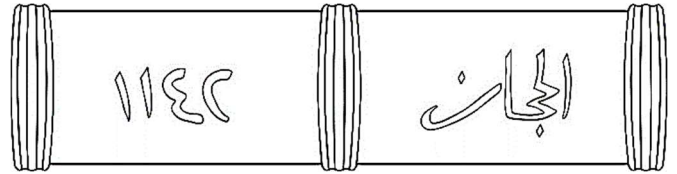


Figure 4 a box Handle Inscription (by Researcher)



Figure 5 A Details for a box cover and lock Ornament. (by Researcher)



Figure 6 General view for box cover (by Researcher).

On the cover of the box from the front side there are ribbons of floral and geometric decorations, and inscriptions in the clumsy thuluth script between the two handles "ودعى بشناعة... (؟)... الله من شناعة القال": (And he prayed with audacity...(?)...God is from the heinousness of the saying.) (Figure 6, 7).



Figure 7 The second box lock Inscription from Figure.6 (by Researcher)

This inscribed rectangle is followed by geometric decorations consisting of ovals and small squares sandwiched between floral motifs which consists of half-palm tree and five-lobed plant leaves in a decorative shape, from which emerge what looks like pine stems.

This handle and the two uprights attached to the lid of the box are used to close the box. There are two copper handles in the middle of the left and right sides of the box. The handles are Semi-circular ribbed in shape of copper to carry the box each one of them is fixed in the body of box from the two sides through four metal screws, the sides are occupied by a copper metal sheet surrounding the handle.

The plates pear the decoration of the box façade. A copper sheet surrounds the handle, forming a hollow rose shape, while it is located in the middle of the back of the box in the middle is a ribbed oval of copper, which is also occupied by the shape of a hollow rose. The sides of the back of the box are surrounded in the corners by a copper sheets to support the sides of the box. The box's cover with the rectangular shape also occupies sheets of metallic copper, like the rest of the box's outer sides. These sheets are decorated in the four corners by stars, with a star in each corner. This star has eight large polygonal heads with a circular disk in the middle. Between the two upper stars is a metal sheet fixed at both ends with small circular nails in the middle of what looks like a polygonal dome. From the bottom of the box cover there are two metal arms fixed to the box's body that are used to close the box. They are bearing floral motifs. At the end of these arms there are two hinges connected them the box and are used to open and close it, as well as a tape on the top decorated with floral motifs that are half palm-tree.

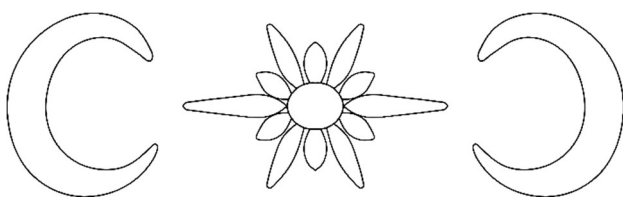


Figure 8 The second box lock Inscription from Figure.6 (by Researcher)

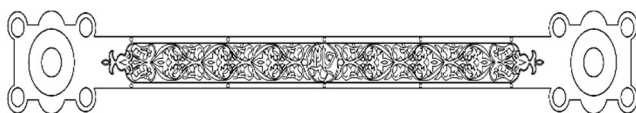


Figure 9 The second box lock Inscription from Figure.6 (by Researcher)

The center of the box cover is occupied by a star with six large heads and another six small ones (Figure 6, 8), and on its right and left there is a crescent shape that opens towards the star, these crescents are secured with small circular screws. On the sides of each crescent, one to the right and the other to the left, a metal extension fixed with small circular screws, each one of these extensions ends in a small hollow circular shape from the top and another from the bottom, which is similar to the tops of the minarets, inspired by the emblem of the Ottoman Empire (Negm, 2000, p. 159, 161). It is similar to the minarets of the Sacred Mosque, and perhaps the manufacturer wanted to show the purpose used from this box, which is keeping the keys of the Kaaba.

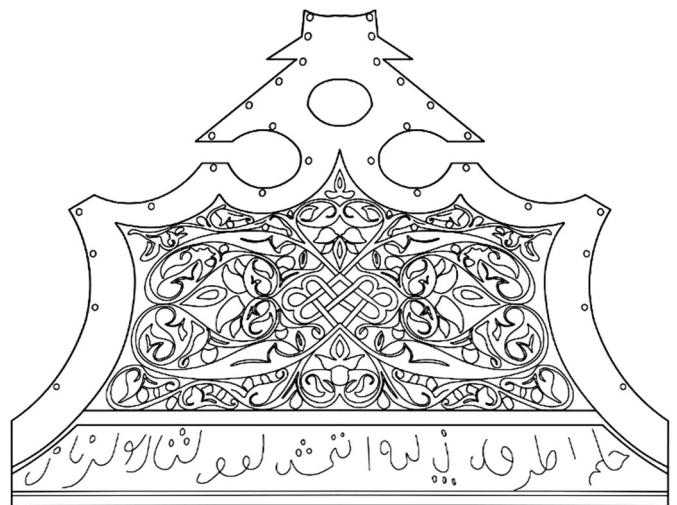


Figure 10 the first box cover ornament from Figure.6 (by Researcher)

Both the right and left side of the box cover contain floral motifs similar to its front part and the upper tape. The right side bears a hard-to-read tape that reads: "ايجادا بلباس ستاره يحسبه الظمان (Finding a man in his curtain, he reckons thirst for it.) While the left tape contains a scripture that reads: "حلم اطرقه زينة التمسه لفقرا...؟...الرنان" (A dream that I knock on is an ornament that seeks it because of poverty...(?)...The resonant one) (Figure 10).

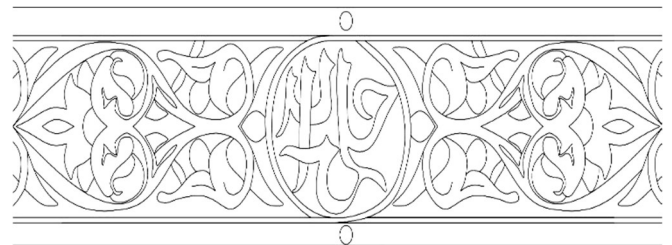


Figure 11 The second box Inscription from Pl. (by Researcher)

Above the cover there is a decorative tape consisting of floral motifs of half-palm tree and coiled rosettes, inside it are inscribed circles in thuluth inscription that read: "خلد الله" (God is immortal) (Figure 11). These floral and inscription motifs were executed on beds of small incisions in a simple grooving style, and this copper sheet is fixed by means of anchor bolts. The box is lined from the inside with red velvet with places to put the keys of the Kaaba.



Figure 12 General View for Box Back.
(by Researcher)



Figure 13 A General View for box Sides.
(by Researcher)

Through this previous description, we analyze the technical data contained in this box, while comparing it with other artifacts:

1 First: In terms of the box's type of wood, function, and shape:

The box - subject of the study - is made of Walnut, which is a natural wood which is found in Turkey, Minor Asia and the Levant. It is a beautiful solid wood, is characterized by its durability, beautiful bright red color, and its cohesive fibers are unaffected by heat and humidity, Therefore, it is one of the most expensive and most useful kinds of wood. It is used in the manufacture of precious antiques because it accepts polishing and is not subject to decay (Jundi, 2003, p. 24).

During the Ottoman era, the craftsmen used many types of wood in to make applied artifacts. Whether from local timber that was growing in Anatolia or imported. The kinds of wood in the world of carpentry and industry have been divided into two types: soft wood and hard wood (Hend, 2012, p. 185; Niamat, 1973, p. 317). Therefore, we find that the key box of the Kaaba, and the Qur'an boxes were made of this type of solid wood (al-Harithi, 1986, p. 121; Khalifa, 2007, pp. 214-226; Arseven, 1952, P.11). In terms of its function, it is used to keep the keys of the Kaaba, as it is a wooden masterpiece of the type and adjective that is attributed to the Ottoman era, in which the key was placed inside a bag of green embroidered brocade (Pasha, 1951, p. 78, footnote 1).

The box subject of the study is characterized by rectangular shape, which is the most common shape in the manufacture of the wooden boxes) Figures 1, 12, 13).

2 Second: In terms of the box's industry technique, decoration, and the way it works

It is noted that the box was made by a group of rectangular wooden boards fixed together by screws. The chisel with an iron blade was used, it is used in the sweeping and cleaning process beside the lathe to polish the wood and make it smooth. the hammer was also used; it is an indispensable carpentry work. All of these tools were used in the Ottoman era (Shadia, 2003, pp. 81, 87, 88). Since the dawn of Islam, the various carpentry arts in Hijaz have reached a great level (Al-Saif, 1982, p. 246; Demand, 1982, p. 115). The craftsmen's specializations varied between paint, turner, engraver, and driller (al-Harithi, 1986, p. 27). In its decoration, different methods were used, drilling of all kinds, grooving, unloading, perforating, assembling and interlocking, Paneling assembling wooden boards and Wooden Sudaub, fasten them with glue and nails to hold them together, it is one of the methods that have been known since the Fatimid era (Marzouk, 1965, footnote3, p. 148) and reached its most brilliant level in the Ayyubid, Mamluk and Ottoman eras (Jundi, 2003, p. 54). It was used in the box - subject of the study - in its simple way, which depends on the assembly of large plates (Figure 14).

As for the methods of decorating the box - subject of the study - Engravingmethod of all kinds was used. Between the sunken and high one, this method is considered one of the ancient ways of decorating wooden artifacts inherited by the Muslim artist. It is one of the legacies of ancient Egyptian art and was used in various Islamic eras (Al-Basha,1996, p. 276; Al-Basha, 1999p. 270).

The method of engraving on wood and metal enjoyed great care and development at the time of the Ottomans, they began implementing this method in large fillings (Aba, 1987, pp. 247-316; Azza, 2017, p. 12). The woodwork in the Hijaz in the Ottoman era also shows different methods of engraving, including the sunken one, that were used in the implementation of the inscription decorations on the laminated panels on the cover of the box. Where the engraving is carried out on the surface to implement the letters of the text words without the writing floor, and thus the inscription floor has emerged from the required surface level (Shnaishin, 2000, p. 33). As some inscriptions carried out relief engraving, which helped in the implementation of this inscription's decorations and its aesthetics. Which is highlighted by shadow and light, that helps the viewer to read the inscription easily, it is called the visual dimension. This is what the calligrapher took into account when implementing the epigraphic decorations (Othman, 2013, p. 199, 212). The engraving method is used to create a decorative object as desired by the engraver (Briggs, 1984, p. 78). The decoration of the copper sheets that browse the two boxes, as well as the handles and locks in these two ways, especially in the implementation of floral and geometric decorations. The inscription decorations in the two boxes - the subject of the study - were also executed in this way, as the writings of the two words of مكة المكرمة (Holy Makkah) (Figure 2), and the words:

"بالعلم تحل الآلي" (With knowledge come the pearls..), and the poetic verses (Figure 2) in relief engraving, as well as in the implementation of the decorations of the facade and cover of the box, While the sunk Reliefs method was used to implement the words of Hijaz 1142 (Figure 6, 14).

As for the grooving method: It is one of the methods used in the implementation of decorations in most eras and in the box - subject of the study- it has been used in the implementation of the epigraphic texts and on the lock with the simple grooving that determines the positions of the decoration (al-Harithi, 1986, p. 33). It is a method that is carried out by making simple incisions that are not recessed in the areas to be decorated by hammering on drill pens to decrease the surface of the metal to be decorated without removing it (Al-Obaidi, 1965, p. 187; Aliwa, 1970, p. 371; Razek, 2001, p. 108; al-Shamry, 1975, p. 114.; Khalifa, 2007, footnote 34 p. 136). This method was used in Ottoman metal decoration from an early age (Khalifa, 2007, p. 136). Among the floral and leafy motifs are arabesques (Salem, 1998, p. 35). Which is known as the "Rumi" decoration (Abdel Hafez, 2007, p. 72). It was used in the implementation of metal decorations consisting of frills and grooves, as we see in (Figure 2, 6,15).



Figure 14 General view for main box façade.
(by Researcher)

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3 Piercing or evacuation method:

It is a method that relies on perforating geometric, floral, and epigraphic motifs by means of metal machines, so that the ornaments are piercing (Rizk, 2007, p. 244), that resembles the executed decoration as a piece of lace (Abdel Hafez, 2007, p. 114). It is also made of perforations and holes, and it is executed on the surface of the metal for an aesthetic purpose (Soy, 2005, p. 137, 138). This decoration was used in the box -the subject of the study- the front of the box (Figure 14).

4 How this box works

The box (Figure 1) is divided from the inside into a rectangular area on top of which rises another rectangular area. The box is lined from the inside with red velvet, and the keys are placed inside a bag of green brocade inside this box. The box is closed by cylindrical lock in which the key is placed in a number of degrees, what is known as the tongue of the key. It turns right with the number of degrees of opening, these keys are relatively small in size, approximately 15 cm (Figure 1, 15), Thus, the box is opened and closed, and this lock is installed in the front part of the box and in the front part of the box cover, which opens upwards. This box is similar to two other boxes prepared for the same purpose, which is keeping the keys of the Kaaba(Hemimy, 2021).perhaps it is similar to what is found in the museums of Turkey, especially in the Topkapi Saray Museum in Istanbul, from boxes to keep the sacred trusts, as well as with wooden boxes of various uses attributed to the Ottoman era and the family of Muhammad Ali, which are preserved in the Gayer-Anderson Museum (Bayt al-Kiritliya) (Najah, 2014, pp. 225-233).



Figure 15 A details for a box lock Inscription and ornament from other Side. (by Researcher)

5 Decorations:

The decorative elements are among the most important elements that played an important role in the decoration of the Ottoman artifacts, including the decorations of the box - subject of the study - and these decorations are as follows:

Geometric Ornament:

The Muslim artist executed geometric motifs with epigraphic and floral motifs (Soraya, 2000, p. 51), Hence, we find that the Ottoman artist used these motifs in the decoration of his various arts (Mervat, 2004, p. 134), It is considered one of the decorations that were carried out on the box - subject of the study - as an essential element like pouch³ (Figures 1, 14, 15). The lines between the inscriptions on the cross lock (panel 6), as well as the small geometric circles (Figures 12, 13, 14), Polygonal semicircles. Geometric motifs were used consisting of oval shapes and small confined squares (Palette 3), so the oval and almond shapes are among the important decorations that were carried out on the Holy Quran in Ottoman art (Shadia, 2002, p. 325). Among the simple geometric shapes that were carried out on the box - subject of the study - the stars (Figures 6, 13), The star is one of the most important decoration elements that was used in the Ottomans arts. The stars occupied a prominent position in the Ottoman metal artifacts (al-Harithi, 1989, p. 308). The six-pointed star remained on the Ottoman flag until 1296 AH / 1878 AD (Zaki, 1944, p. 40, Negm, 2009, p. 986). The star decoration element was represented in the eight and six large heads.

³Al-sarr is the plural of the pouch, which means the bag of money. This word was borrowed to express a circular or oval, sunken or high decorative unit implemented on all materials and in various types of arts. For more information on the decoration of the surra, see: (Abdel Hafez, 2005, p. 122).

The crescent in one of the compound geometric shapes that were implemented on the box - subject of the study. (Figures 6, 13). The crescent is associated with Muslims with holidays and the beginning of the Hijri months, and it determines the beginning of Hijri years, the Islamic calendar. It was considered a good sign; therefore, the Ottoman Empire took it as its emblem (a symbol of the caliphate) (Abdel Dayem 1989, pp. 76, 77). Until the crescent and stars became characteristics of Ottoman art (Shadia, 2004, p. 53.).

Floral Ornament

The floral Ornament in the box - subject of the study - were represented in the implementation of the decorative rosettes carried out by the Muslim artist in the style of sunken and high relief, there were drawn in a style close to nature, where the branched rose was executed (Figures 3, 6, 12, 14, 15), The rosettes are among the essential floral ornaments in many Islamic artifacts with various petals, which artistic origins go back to different historical eras, whether ancient Egyptian, Hellenistic, Sassanian, Byzantine and Coptic. But the Muslim artist was able to give it his impact and produce purely Islamic floral ornament (Jundi, 2003, p. 533). This flower ornament is known in Turkey as (GUL), and the Hijaz became famous for cultivating the finest types of roses with perfume, so the Hijazi artist was affected by this environment and he painted it on his woodwork until it became one of the most prominent decorative elements in Islamic art in the Hijaz with geometric decorative elements transmitted from nature. This decoration occupied a prominent position in Mecca during the Ottoman era. These decorations varied in their implementation on hammers and box handles in a circular shape, an examples of their use in the ceiling of the house of Abbas Qattan 1320 AH in Holy Makkah (al-Harithi, 1986, p. 144, 145). This motif was executed on the back of the box - subject of the study - in the middle a polygonal copper oval shape which occupied by a hollow rose (Figures 3, 6), and at the copper sheet on the handle also there was a hollow rose shape (Figures. 6, 12, 14).

Abstract Ornament

The floral ornaments that were executed on the box - subject of the study - were represented in the Islamic securitization, which is known as arabesque and is known in Turkey as the Rumi ornament. It was named after Seljuk of Rum or the Ottoman Empire (Marzouk, 1974, p. 76; Khalifa, 2007, p. 75; Soad, 1977, p. 66; Arseven, 1952, P. 51, 56). The components of this decorative style is floral elements consisting of leaves, rosettes, and intertwined twisting branches, which are connected and end at their edges with Split-Palmettes. The Ottoman Turks used it as an independent model in the decoration of their various artifacts (Arseven, 1983, P. 1741; Adnan, 1975, P. 114).

According to the Ottomans, this decoration is one of the infinite units that are linked, according to Sufism, to the expansion and extension of the world (Abdel Dayem, 1989, p. 68). The Hijazi woodworkers used it in the decoration of their artifacts, and the Rumi decoration was used in the box - subject of the study - in the laminated panels of the box cover on the two sides and at the front of the box cover. Al-Rumi's decoration came from half-grass fans and five-lobed plant leaves, from which come out what looks like pine stems in a very beautiful and creative way. Pine nuts were among the common elements used in woodwork in the Hijaz (al-Harithi, 1986, p. 152, 153; Saleh, 2012, footnote 88, p. 1896). (Figures 6, 15) (Figures 7, 10, 11), which are modified ornaments and are far from its natural origin (Al-Buhairi, 2016, p. 16), an example of the implementation of this decoration is what was executed on the copper-plated cover with a wooden door in the Bastieh School in Cairo (823 AH / 1420 AD) (al-Harithi, 1986, p. 137).

Writing inscriptions:

The implementation of the writing inscription on the box - the subject of the study - was limited to the lamination panels installed on the lid of the box and on the lock, executed in the thuluth font. Where the cylindrical handle is occupied by: "مكة المكرمة" inscriptions on one of its sides that read: "مكة المكرمة (Makkah Al-Mukarramah) (Figure 2), and the other side is occupied by inscriptions that read: " (الحجاز) The Hijaz), and the date of the year 1142" (Figure 3,4).

It goes back to the year 1143 AH, this year was during the reign of the Ottoman Sultan Ahmed III⁴. (1115- 1143 AH/ 1703- 1730 AD), which is the year in which the Sharif Abdullah bin Saeed ruled Mecca during his second reign, in the period from (1136- 1143 AH/ 1724- 1731 AD). Sharif Abdullah bin Saeed, the oldest of the Sharif's sons, assumed Mecca in Muharram 1129 AH/ 1717AD, He was known for his justice, uprightness, and agreement with the nobles of Mecca at the beginning of his emirate, then soon the dispute ensued and relations with them worsened. He was known for his justice, uprightness, and agreement with the nobles of Mecca at the beginning of his reign, then soon the dispute ensued and relations with them worsened. Because of these disputes, he resigned and Sharif Abdul Mohsen bin Ahmed bin Zaid was appointed Emir of Holy Makkah, and Al-Sharif Abdullah bin Saeed took over the Emirate of Makkah again in the spring of (1136 AH/ 1724). After isolating Yahya bin Barakat from his second reign over Makkah, and he remained the ruler until his death (1143 AH/ 1731 AD), Sharif Muhammad bin Abdullah succeeded his father, Sharif Abdullah bin Saeed, in ruling Makkah in Muharram 1144 AH/ 1731 AD, by agreement of the notables and Amir Hajj Abdullah Pasha at the end of 1143 AH/ 1731 AD) (Jarishli, 2003, pp. 168, 169, 177).

It is historically known that the keys and locks of the Kaaba have been renewed in different eras, and the keys of the Kaaba were preserved in the Topkapı Saray Palace in Istanbul through a solemn ceremonial procession called "The Key Processions." Where it is received by senior officials of the state, because the keys to the Kaaba were made in Makkah (Pasha, 1951, p. 80). The custom of sending the keys of the Kaaba to the sultans of the Ottoman Empire began by the Sharif of Mecca and the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques at the time Abi Al-Barakat with his son Abi Namma to Sultan Selim I after his conquest of Egypt. The keys were inlaid and gilded, and the names and dates of the sultans were written on them. The Ottoman sultans also used to take these keys in the campaigns and wars they fought, and the first one did this was Sultan Murad IV (1032-1049 AH / 1623-1640 AD) on his travels to Baghdad in boxes covered with green embroidered atlas that were sent by the Emir of Mecca, Zaid bin Mohsen, with an accompanying message in which he says that he saw the Prophet Mohammad in a dream sending the key of the Kaaba to the royal palace in Istanbul. And in implementation of the command of the Prophet Mohammad, the keys were sent with the Mufti, imam and preacher of Makkah who was Sheikh Muhammad bin Sheikh Ahmed bin Sheikh Abd al-Salam al-Munufi (Eden, 2006, pp. 154-163; Pasha, 1951, pp. 73, 80). The door of the Kaaba has received a great care from the sultans and rulers of different ages. In the Ottoman era, the sultans competed, including Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent, who installed a new door to the Kaaba in year 964 AH. which is an armored door with silver plated with gold, and this door remained in the Kaaba until the year 1045 AH during the reign of Sultan Murad Khan bin Sultan Ahmed Khan, until Sultan Ahmed III Khan, in the year 1119 AH, made a door of pure gold then he installed the new door in the year 1363 AH during the reign of His Majesty King Abdul Aziz bin Abdul Rahman Al Saud and this door lasted for thirty-three years, and the renovations and development of the door of the Kaaba continued until the present time, which is the utmost care of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques (Hafez, 1982, pp. 11-13).

There are also writings above the place where the two locks were opened on both sides, and in the middle that read: "صندوق / مفتاح / الكعبة" (The Box / Key / The Kaaba) ((Figure 5).

Through the previous presentation, we find that the calligrapher who executed the writings is not elaborate and is ignorant of the rules of the Thuluth script⁵. It is the font in which all the inscriptions were executed on the two boxes - subject of the study- using the composition style is in executing some of the words in this inscription on the box (Figures 3, 7). The words were also distributed equally over the area on which the inscription was executed. Two horizontal lines separate the writings and decorations, and we find that the calligrapher did not take into consideration the separation ratio in implementing his writings, in which he tried hard to imitate the thuluth inscription. He also failed to implement the writings in which he tried to imitate the thuluth inscription, so the inscription was clumsy. Despite his keenness to fill all the blanks in the box by diacritics figure and dots, so some words were with diacritics figure and dots. which can be suggested by the study that the one who executed the writings was an inscriber not a calligrapher, because if the writings were executed by a calligrapher, they would have been elaborate, taking into account the rules of the thuluth inscription.

In sum, these Arabic inscriptions are difficult to read, highly contorted, and were written, most likely, with the aim of filling the gaps without taking care of what they could indicate. The explanation for this is that in the eras of calligrapher weakness in remote cities and remote areas, some craftsmen resort to imitation of writing because they do not seek the assistance of a skilled and talented calligrapher.

Therefore, the inscriptions of this box were clumsy and difficult to read, some of which were written in an ungainly thuluth inscription on a well-known ground executed by grooving. Some of them are written in a cursive script written without rules, while some of the words are written clear and unambiguous and some are not legible. It is likely that these phrases were added after the box was made shortly or long time by unskilled people, and our evidence is the great accuracy of the floral ornament compared to the naivety and deterioration of the calligraphy.

⁴Sultan Ahmed III, son of Sultan Muhammad IV. He held the position of crown prince during the reign of his brother and was in complete harmony with him for a period of eight and a half years, and his mother was Amatullah Rabia Kul Nish Sultan. He was born on December 31, 1084 AH / 1673 AD, and the Ottoman Empire ruled for 27 years. 1115-1143 AH / 1703-1730 AD), sat on the throne after his brother Mustafa II, the twenty-third sultan of the Ottoman sultans. Al-Zohour (Lah Douiri) from (1131-1143 AH / 1718-1730 AD), it is the stage of the reconstruction of Istanbul, and during his reign, the printing press entered Turkey and established the printing house in Istanbul, and Turkish archaeologists and art scholars call it the era of the flower of God. Istanbul in front of the port of Uskudar. As for the wars in his time, he entered into wars with Russia and tightened the siege on the Russian army. He began the war with the Republic of Venice and fought a war to seize the Algerian city of Oran from Spain, and entered into a conflict with Iran (1136-1143 AH / 1723-1730 AD) that led to his control of five important regions, then relinquished the seat of succession to his brother, Sultan Mahmud I, and died on July 1, 1736 AD. For more information on Sultan Ahmed III, see: (Oztuna, 1988, p. 593; 607; Al-Masry, 2004, pp. 173; 174; Mantrand, 1993, p. 411, 425; Asaf, 1995, p. 100; 102; Dedaoglu, 1998-1999, p. 71; Mustafa, 2003, p. 320; Abdel Hafez, 2006, footnote 118, pp. 203, 204; Sell, C. (1915). *The Ottoman Turks*, first published, London, P.78, 128).

⁵Thuluth script is one of the most famous and most important Arabic fonts that spread throughout the Islamic world. It was called by this name because its size is one third of the area of the Tumar font, the font by which the fonts were measured at the time. Because of the strength of this line and the diversity of drawing its letters, so calligrapher should be mastered the Thuluth font, and it is one of the difficult lines that has developed in terms of its excellence in flexibility, beauty and composition, as well as composing words. It was used in the decoration of buildings and artifacts since the middle of the fifth century AH. For more information about the Thuluth font See: (al-Jubouri, 1946, p. 130; Marzouk, 1975, pp. 72-78; Afifi, 1980, p. 95; Thanoun, 1983, p.1,2,113; Shiha, 1984, p. 22; Hamid, 1991, p. 4; Maysa, 1991, p. 62; Al-Bahnasy, 1993, p. 53; Al-Bahnasy, 1995, p. 96; Hanash, 1998, pp. 166, 182, 183; al-Nabarawi, 2000, p. 22 p. 22; Al-Jubouri 2000, p. 7; Al-Jubouri 2000, pp. 7, 8; Taha, 2003, pp. 32, 33; Abdel Hamid 2004, pp. 905, 906; Mahmoud 2007, p. 221; Mahmoud 2011, pp. 237, 239; Abdel Hamid 2020, p. 19; oglu 1999, pp. 742, 743).

6 | CONCLUSION, RESULTS, And RECOMMENDATIONS Of the RESEARCH:

-This research deals with the oldest rare wooden box for keeping the keys of the Kaaba, dated 1142 AH/1729 AD, preserved in a private collection in Riyadh (publishing and study), which dates back to the Ottoman era, and the extent to which the Muslim artist in Mecca in particular and in the Hijaz in general was influenced by Islamic thought and values in the selection of the decorative and artistic elements that he used in the box-subject of the study.

-The study published the first wooden box for keeping the keys of the Kaaba made in Holy Makkah in the Hijaz in the year 1142 AH, as no similar box was previously published earlier, and thus this research is a new and unique addition to Islamic arts in general and the Kaaba keys in particular.

-The box -subject of the study- contained writings recorded the main purpose of its manufacture, which is to preserve the keys of the Kaaba.

-The inscriptions on the box varied between commemorative and prayers texts, while there were no names of people being mentioned.

-In explaining the absence of the contemporary Sultan of Industry and the contemporary Sharif of Mecca, the study suggests that the box was gifted to the Kaaba by someone and was not made by the Ottoman Sultan or the Sharif of Mecca.

--The study showed that the floral, geometric, and epigraphic motifs were the elements that the Muslim artist used in his decoration of this box - subject of the study - while avoiding the use of other decorations.

-There is no doubt that studying this box by this method is considered a new and unprecedented study, it proves that this box is a rare Ottoman wooden artifact that was made in Mecca.

Recommendations:

-The study recommends preserving this box - the subject of the study - by protecting it from damage through a restoration process to remove rust and paint stuck to the surface of the copper panels on the writing tapes.

-Displaying it in an independent museum. The Princess Moudy Bint Assaf Mansour Al-Assaf in Riyadh also seeks to do so in order to spread archaeological awareness and introduce visitors and scholars to the importance of this collection acquired by HRH, which includes hundreds of artifacts.

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