

“Islam of the Market,” illustrated by the success of ‘Amr Khālid. The Danish cartoon crisis brought together the new-style preachers and old-style ulama in a clear illustration of the transnational public arena in operation. In the context of the new technologies, Skovgaard-Petersen concludes that “even if the ‘ulama’ have staged an impressive comeback to the scene, . . . scholarship is no longer the only way of achieving Islamic religious authority” (p. 309).

The essays in this volume provide solid confirmation that the ulama remain an important part of Muslim life. The broad framework provided by the editor gives the volume a sense of cohesion, despite the diversity of topics and conclusions of the contributing scholars. However, even though the volume is persuasive in arguing that the ulama dynamically interact with changing conditions and new challenges (rather than being stagnant and marginal), the underlying portrait and operational definition of the ulama is remarkably static. They are defined as “the scholars of Islam,” with training in particular educational institutions, becoming experts in specific disciplines, with the primary discipline being *fiqh*, “the systematic study of the *shari‘a*” (pp. 21–22). Little attention is given to the possibility that the content of the training and studies may have changed. The training of the Grand Mufti of Egypt in 2010, Ali Gomaa (‘Alī Jum‘a), is quite different from that received by the ulama establishment described by al-Jabartī or by the Grand Mufti in 1910.

The scholarly positions of the ulama in this volume are frequently contrasted to the positions of “modernists” and “liberals,” often in ways that seem to exclude the possibility that some of the ulama are “modernists” (like Muḥammad ‘Abduh) or “liberal” (like the Bosnian Grand Mufti, Mustafa Cerić). In addition, there is a tendency for the authors to assume an unchanging nature in the subject matter of the disciplines in which the ulama are expert, especially *fiqh*. In this volume, the reader gets little sense of the vivid and dynamic nature of Islamic legal studies in the past century. Calls for new study of *uṣūl al-fiqh* coming from important ulama scholars get little attention. The debates about the importance of distinguishing the differences between *fiqh* as the human study of the foundations of the faith and Shari‘a as the manifestation of divine revelation are an important part of the religious and intellectual arenas in the contemporary Muslim world, but *fiqh* and Shari‘a tend to appear as uncontested terms in the analyses of this volume.

Despite these minor reservations, this book represents an important and wide-ranging analysis of the continuing significance of the ulama in modern Muslim life. It should become one of the standard sources on this subject, providing a crucial updating of old classics such as Gabriel Baer’s edited volume, *The ‘Ulama’ in Modern History* (1971), and a valuable companion to recent monographs such as Muhammad Qasim Zaman’s *The Ulama in Contemporary Islam* (2002).

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From Codicology to Technology: Islamic Manuscripts and Their Place in Scholarship. Edited by STEFANIE BRINKMANN and BEATE WIESMÜLLER. Berlin: FRANK & TIMME, 2009. Pp. 215. €29.80.

Who would have thought a few years ago that manuscripts would once more play a role of importance in the study of Islamic literatures? Certainly in Europe, working with Islamic manuscripts—and the pursuit of philology in a wider sense for that matter—has for quite a while been seen as somewhat of an atavistic activity, a romantic emulation of those nineteenth-century scholarly giants, such as Wilhelm Ahlwardt (1828–1909) or Michael Jan de Goeje (1836–1909), whose achievements are in any case inimitable. Cataloguing manuscripts, textual criticism, and the editing of Islamic texts have become rare activities in European universities. It was thought that since we had passed the elementary stage of inventorizing collections and exploiting these with reliable editions of classical works, as took place in the first half of the twentieth century, the remaining work could be entrusted to scholars in Muslim countries.

With the political, cultural, and scholarly emancipation of the Middle East, especially after World War II, scholars there embarked upon a great number of text editions of the classics of Islam—unfortunately, few are of scholarly caliber, and most are commercial projects. In addition, a vast number of catalogues of manuscript collections in the Middle East has appeared in print. At the same time, a decline in the numbers of such publications in Europe could be observed. In Western academia one could hear the opinion that our Arab, Persian, or Turkish colleagues were much better equipped than we to edit texts, having the advantage of a much more intimate and immensely vaster knowledge of classical Oriental languages and literatures. This increase of interest in the East and its decrease in the West are, of course, two sides of the same coin. The decrease and subsequent end of political and colonial involvement of Europe in the Middle East necessarily led to a process of rethinking academic research subjects in European universities. Editions of texts became unfashionable as Ph.D. theses in many European universities (“just copying a book written by someone else”) and the same went for cataloguing manuscripts (with a few honorable exceptions such as the *Verzeichnis* of the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, the German Research Foundation), which was considered by university authorities to be a purely administrative task consisting of little more than copying titles and names of authors and arranging these alphabetically. If the word “catalogue” was found in project proposals of the 1970s and 1980s, these were sure not to be funded. Less transparent terminology, such as “collecting building stones for national literatures” had to be invented if proposals were to be approved.

For a few years this dichotomy between Eastern and Western scholarship has been undergoing dramatic changes. The neat division of labor, which had unpleasant overtones anyway (“let them do the copying, let us do the thinking”), became less evident than before. The quality of the majority of text editions coming from the Arab world proved to be rather disappointing, and few of these editions could be called critical. Although the Islamic heritage is admired and revered by all, in terms of funding it is treated as a stepchild. Added to that is the fact that consulting libraries and looking at original manuscripts have in most places of the Middle East become a researcher’s nightmare. This particular circumstance, which is characteristic of the overall social stagnation in countries in the Middle East and North Africa, has had its lasting effects on the quality of scholarly output.

The renewed interest in Islamic manuscripts in Europe, and to a certain extent in the U.S. as well, which is impelled by a new generation of scholars who often have a library background or related training, is apparent in the surge of conferences, publications, and cataloguing and digitizing projects, the establishment of new and rekindling of old associations, the founding of specialized journals and monograph serial publications, and the many other initiatives that are materializing at present. Another new feature is the increased interest in codicology. If manuscripts were at first studied as a means to learn more about the content of a text, that is, as an ancillary science to philology, nowadays codicology, which rather irreverently could be defined as everything about the manuscript except its text, has particularly proved to be rewarding for the study of Islamic booklore and a better understanding of Muslim scholarship.

A growing awareness of the uniqueness and the vulnerability of manuscript collections is no doubt behind this surge in interest, but that is only part of the story. It is tempting to identify the Internet as the prime cause of these new developments. What we see happening in the research into Islamic manuscripts could not have developed without the Internet and the technological revolution that is everywhere around us. The combined ingredients of electronic text, electronic images, free access to these on a global basis, plus unlimited and fast communication, and all this at relatively little expense, have been instrumental in giving back to scholars in Europe and the U.S. the ground that they seemed to have lost to their Middle Eastern colleagues. The latter can only follow suit or try to emulate progress elsewhere if they make a concentrated effort to achieve at least the same as in the West. However, the political stagnation and relative poverty in the Middle East in combination with a stifling academic climate of gerontocracy and patronage, and the appalling lack of library and technical facilities for most scholars, will at best realize these pious hopes and expectations in a distant point in the future, if at all.

Against this background the proceedings of the conference “Islamic Manuscripts: Projects and Perspectives,” which was held in Freiburg im Breisgau (Germany) in September 2007, are of particular relevance. The two editors of the volume under review come from Leipzig University, where the inter-

esting (and fortunately not too large) collection of Islamic manuscripts with its excellent catalogue by Karl Vollers (published in 1906) forms the point of departure for several important initiatives: new cataloguing, digitization, and other more general activities, of which the Freiburg conference is one and a well-organized website yet another. The book was produced in that most modern means of distribution: publishing on demand, which is an inexpensive method of production for books with small print runs, and which presents little risk to the publisher. Unfortunately, as is sometimes the case when new technologies become available to the layman, the layout of the work is at times slightly amateurish and bizarre, to say the least.

The work under review is divided into three main sections: (1) “Scholars and Manuscripts,” (2) “Codicology,” and (3) “Collections, Cataloguing and New Technologies.” The *status questionis* is admirably set forth in the introduction by the two editors of the volume, and I can hardly try to do better here than they have done already. A full table of contents is available on the publisher’s website or on my blog at <http://www.islamicmanuscripts.info/news/index.html> in the entry of February 10, 2009.

In the section “Scholars and Manuscripts” Rosemarie Quiring-Zoche provides valuable information on the textual criticism of al-Bayḍāwī’s exegesis of the Qur’an. She shows that the exact wording of texts that we think by now must have been published to satisfaction is not as certain as it seems. From the excellent taxonomic article by Oman Fathurahman, with text-critical excursions, on al-Kūrānī’s *Ithāf al-dhakī*, we see how little the rich heritage of Islamic manuscripts has, in fact, been researched and used, and how much can still be found beyond the usual bibliographies, such as Brockelmann’s *Geschichte*—a seventy-year-old work that should have become obsolete a long time ago. Last in this section, Arnoud Vrolijk gives a survey of the European endeavor, since the first half of the seventeenth century, to bring about an edition of al-Maydānī’s collection of proverbs, *Majma‘ al-amthāl*. He combines well-written glimpses from the history of European collections and textual criticism with clear views on the interest of the scholars of the European Enlightenment in Oriental literatures in general and Arabic proverbs in particular.

The section “Codicology” also contains three learned contributions. The first of these is by François Déroche, the grandmaster of Islamic palaeography and codicology and *the* specialist on early manuscripts of the Qur’an. He discusses inks and the page layout in early manuscripts of the Qur’an by presenting materials that show, and prove, a continuity in styles of bookmaking. That we can better understand the ways early Qur’an manuscripts were made by looking at contemporary manuscripts from other cultural and religious environments seems self-evident, but finding the right comparative material is an art in itself, as Déroche eloquently shows. Edwin Wieringa takes us with him on a guided tour through his own study, where we become acquainted in detail with the Javanese characteristics of the Qur’an manuscript that he once purchased in Surakarta. He shows unexpected details which illustrate the way of working of a Javanese copyist of the Qur’an. To his bibliography could be added some of the contributions in *Naskah klasik keagamaan Nusantara*, vol. 1: *Cerminan budaya bangsa*, by H. Fadhal AR Bafadal (Jakarta, 2005) and *Mushaf-mushaf kuno Indonesia*, ed. H. Fadhal AR Bafadal and H. Rosehan Anwar, vol. 1 (Jakarta, 2005), both of which can be downloaded from the Internet. The codicology section ends with an article by Nikolaj Serikoff, in which the author treats the dreambook by the fourteenth (or thirteenth?)-century scholar Ibn Ghannām al-Maqdisī. In this case, as well, as a yet unedited text, the oldest textual witness of which is preserved in the library of the Wellcome Trust in London, is treated in intriguing detail.

Four learned contributions grace the third and final section on “Collections, Cataloguing and New Technologies.” Aviha Shihviti gives a useful introduction to the Arabic manuscript collections in Cambridge University Library, with special focus on the Arabic materials in the Cairo Genizah collection in that library. It is a nice, though slightly superficial synthesis of information most of which is already available elsewhere. The exact opposite can be said of the article by Michaela Hoffmann-Ruf on the private archives of the ‘Abriyyīn family in al-Ḥamrā’, in Oman. She succeeds in conveying a vivid enthusiasm for the discovery of this important archive, and she gives both informative impressions and impressive statistics about its contents. In the third article, Marijana Kavčič treats the Arabic manuscripts in Macedonia, which, like all Balkan countries, has an impressive Islamic literary and scholarly heritage. The reader learns about methods of cataloguing in Skopje and about some of the

highlights of the collection of the National and University Library. Other subjects treated by Kavčič are provenances, illuminations, and the necessity of repair of collections. Finally, the editor, Stefanie Brinkmann, together with her Leipzig colleagues Thoralf Hanstein, Verena Klemm, and Jens Kupferschmidt, presents what can be considered as the showpiece of Leipzig manuscript studies, the trilingual (German, English, Arabic—what a work load!) Islamic manuscripts database, available at www.islamic-manuscript.net. The primary idea behind the database is to present a catalogue of the Islamic manuscripts in Leipzig. It is obvious that if this simple and effective database becomes a success it can be used by other libraries and in other projects as well. In the database Arabic script is used with scholarly transliteration fonts, and it is functional.

This little book is not a manual of codicology, as the selection of subjects is far from comprehensive. However, its little soundings here and there into the vast field of the study of Islamic manuscripts—each article is in its own special way—provide an idea of what contemporary research can bring, and thereby hold a firm promise for the future.

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Arabic Manuscripts: A Vademecum for Readers. By ADAM GACEK. *Handbuch der Orientalistik/Handbook of Oriental Studies*, section 1, vol. 98. Leiden: BRILL, 2009. Pp. xviii + 338, figs. \$179.

Adam Gacek's *Arabic Manuscripts: A Vademecum for Readers* (AMVR) is his third contribution to the venerable *Handbuch der Orientalistik/Handbook of Oriental Studies* (HdO) series. His first, *The Arabic Manuscript Tradition: A Glossary of Technical Terms and Bibliography* (AMT, HdO 58, 2001), comprised a list of Arabic terms concerning manuscripts in Arabic script and definitions, along with a bibliography of relevant books and articles. His second, a supplement to the first (AMTS, HdO 95, 2008), greatly expanded both the terms and the bibliography, reflecting greatly increased interest in and scholarship about handwritten books in Arabic script in the first decade of the twenty-first century. The present volume, designed for researchers and students who have been mystified or intimidated by the arcane aspects of studying handwritten books in Arabic scripts, is a compilation of the author's extensive knowledge and an enormous literature on the subject. The bulk of the book, comprising the first three hundred pages, contains the "major alphabetical sequence" of over two hundred essays, ranging in length from a single paragraph to several pages, dealing with subjects from "Abbasid bookhand" to "Zigzag paper." Longer essays deal with such subjects as "Calligraphy and penmanship," "Dates and dating," "Manuscript age," "Quire," and "Qurʾān (Koran)," and some of these have been adapted from the author's contributions to other reference works. The entries, generously illustrated with colored charts, diagrams, and photographs, are thoroughly cross-referenced with additional headings ("Abjad [abjadīyah] → Arabic alpha-numerical notation") and arrows (→) within the text that point to essays on related subjects. Brief bibliographical indications in the entries refer to a fourteen-page list of works cited, which is followed by five appendices (of, respectively, abbreviations found in Arabic manuscripts, Arabic letterforms, Qurʾanic suras, a bibliographic guide, and a guide to describing the manuscript), and three charts (Muslim-Christian calendar, major historical periods, and major Muslim dynasties).

Full of fascinating information, the book is a treasure-trove of obscure facts gained from the author's three decades of studying Arabic manuscripts at the Institute of Islamic Studies at McGill University. Although the author does not explain the etymology of the word *vademecum* (which comes from the Latin "go with me" and refers to a pocket handbook—as well as a brand of toothpaste), he does give the origin of the word "colophon," the "signing off note" at the end of a text. It comes from the ancient Ionian city of the same name, whose inhabitants are said to have always been on the winning side of a battle, thereby bringing it to an end. Readers will find in this book clear explanations of complicated issues, such as the identification of various scripts and marginal notes and marks, accompanied by well-chosen illustrations with the salient features marked in red. Collation notes and book-loan state-