

Zug: Inter Documentation Company. 1971. (*Bibliotheca Asiatica*, 7). 515pp.

This is a reference work listing known collections and catalogues published and unpublished. Belgium, pp. 195–197; 400–401.

Sezgin, Fuat. *Geschichte des arabischen Schrifttums*. Band VI. Leiden: E.J. Brill. 1978.

Bibliotheken und Sammlungen arabischer Handschriften, pp. 311–466; Belgien, p. 333.

Simon, Jean. Répertoire des bibliothèques publiques et privés d'Europe contenant des manuscrits arabes chrétiens. *Orientalia*, NS 7, 1938, pp. 239–264.

A list of published catalogues of collections of Christian Arabic MSS, arranged by town. Bruxelles, p. 243; Louvain, pp. 252–253.

BENIN

by

Amidu Sanni

1991

INDIVIDUAL COLLECTIONS

COTONOU

Ahmadou Idrees

Status: Private

Conditions of access: By appointment with the collector.

Total number of Islamic MSS: 13 (Arabic).

Description of collection: Collected between 1972 and 1982, these MSS are written in good *naskhī* script on ruled and unruled paper. They are mostly related to the "pure" Islamic sciences: *kalām*, philosophy, hagiography, jurisprudence, hermeneutics and Sufism. Except for those by AL-SUYŪṬĪ and IBN RUSHD, these texts are the products of West African minds. It is not surprising, therefore, that the works generally bear the Mālikī imprint: this is the dominant school of thought in sub-Saharan Africa. The MSS are unique in the sense that they reveal the level and quality of scholarship identifiable with the West African 'ulamā'. The collection indicates strong Nigerian intellectual connections with scholarly pursuits in the Benin Republic, for Islam was introduced there from Nigeria, and this is further confirmed by the Nigerian provenance of the majority of this collection.

PORTO NOVO

Mohidou A. Gafar

Status: Private

Conditions of access: By arrangement with the collector.

Total number of Islamic MSS: 17 (Arabic).

Description of collection: Some of these MSS are written in fine *maghribī* hands, with a few grammatical errors, such as misspellings, wrong desinential vowels and inflections; others are written in well vocalised *naskhī* script. The texts include some mnemotechnic verses, for example on astrology, *fiqh*, and *tawhīd*. The collection also contains works on grammar, homilies and history written by West African authors, who are certainly not from Benin, however, as confirmed by the collector, who acquired the MSS between 1980 and 1985.

The MSS are in leather bindings.