Iraq, pp. 44–46.
Iraq, p. 207, nos. 128–129.

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

by

Jan Knappert & David James

1990
INDIVIDUAL COLLECTIONS

CORK

University College

There are now no Islamic manuscripts in the Library of University College Cork. The two which the Library owns are on permanent loan to the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin (q.v.).

The Honner Collection of Indo-Persian Manuscripts

In 1871 a former officer of the British army in India, Colonel Augustus Honner, presented a collection of some 286 Persian and Indo-Persian manuscripts to the Royal Institution, Cork, founded in 1812. These were catalogued by Dr Richard Caulfield "for the library of the British Museum" from Honner's original notes. This catalogue, still in manuscript, can be consulted at the British Library, MS. Or. 1,077. The Royal Institution was closed in the 1920s and most of its contents placed in the Library of University College, Cork. These did not apparently include Col. Honner's collection, whose current whereabouts are unknown. In the 1980s Dr D. James, Islamic Curator of the Chester Beatty Library, made several attempts to find out what had become of the manuscripts. The special collections librarian of University College, Cork told him that they had never been in the Library. The late W.E.D. Allen of Whitechurch, Co. Waterford, a well-known scholar of Middle Eastern affairs, told Dr James that he thought that the MSS had been sold by the trustees of the Honner collection. The deed of trust is appended to the British Library catalogue of the collection, mentioned above.

DUBLIN

The Chester Beatty Library and Gallery of Oriental Art

20, Shrewsbury Road, Dublin 4, Ireland.
Tel.: 333-1-692386, 695187.
Date of establishment: Sir Alfred Chester Beatty was a lifelong col-
lector of Oriental art and manuscripts. His library at Baroda House, London was already recognised in the 1930s as a famous collection. It was more formally established when it was brought to Dublin in 1950, when building commenced at the present site at the above address.

Status: The Chester Beatty Library was originally a private collection. Today it is administered by a board of trustees, and supported by an annual grant-in-aid given by the Irish Department of Finance. But like all major museums and art galleries in Ireland it comes under the jurisdiction of the Department of the Taoiseach (Prime Minister). Enquiries, however, should be directed to the Librarian / Director of the Chester Beatty Library at the address given above.

Total number of Islamic MSS: ca. 3,510 (2,896 Arabic; 1 Chaghatai; 1 Kurdish; 454 Persian; 158 Turkish).

Description of collection: The Chester Beatty collection is housed in three buildings. The largest of these is the gallery which contains the art treasures; it is open to the public, Tuesday - Friday 10.00 - 17.00, Saturday 14.30 - 17.00; on Sundays and Mondays the buildings are closed. There is a second building which is the original Library building. This now contains display and storage areas. The Arabic manuscripts are kept in a third, single storey building. At the time of writing the fourth building on the complex, originally the Librarian’s house, is in the process of being turned into an administration block where all the staff will ultimately have their offices. It is proposed that all manuscripts will ultimately be stored in one atmospherically controlled location in the complex.

There are three curators. The Islamic curator is responsible for all Islamic manuscripts and paintings, regardless of their origin.

Almost all the manuscripts are in excellent condition. Indeed, Sir Alfred Chester Beatty chose the finest and best illuminated manuscripts he could find in the Near and Middle East. The collection is well kept and in no immediate danger, but a full conservation survey is still required.

The collection, which is almost entirely catalogued, contains works on all subjects including poetry, history, law, fiqh, theology, logic, philosophy, medicine and exegesis of the Qur’an. Some manuscripts date from the late Kufic period. There are 27 pieces of Arabic papyri from Egypt containing letters, documents and some fragments of the Ma’allaqat, the oldest known poetry in Arabic.

These are uncatalogued, though Dr Yousif Raghib of the CNRS, Paris, examined them several years ago with the object of including them in a forthcoming corpus of papyrus documents.

There are in the Chester Beatty Library 2,500 catalogued Arabic manuscripts as well as a total of 244 manuscripts of the Holy Qur’an originating from all Islamic countries, from West Africa to China. An additional 152 Arabic MSS (see Unpublished catalogues below) include notably:


MS. 5570: Kunuz al-Asrâr, a collection of prayers by ʿAbd Allâh al-Khayyât al-Fâsî, one of the finest manuscripts from Islamic West Africa.

MS. 5571: An untitled eulogy of Qayt Bây (1468-96), by Muḥammad al-Qâiqashândî.

MS. 5596: An untitled military treatise written for Al-Nâṣir Muḥammad (d. 1340).


MS. 5642: An illustrated treatise on magic and alchemy, the Kitâb al-Aqâlîm al-Sulâ, 17th-century.


The Persian MSS are notable especially for their miniatures, and they include, as well the important schools of Iran and neighbouring areas, well-known products of the Mughul court painters of the emperors Akbar, Jahângîr and Shâh Jahan, with the texts in Persian. There are an additional 23 Persian manuscripts which are included at the end of the catalogue of additional Arabic manuscripts by David James (see below), MSS pp. 419-32. They are almost all poetic in content, including selected quatrains from ʿUmar Khayyâm, the second volume of a two-volume Shâhnâmâh, three copies of the Dîvân of Aḥmad and two copies of the Dîvân of Muḥammad; a Persian translation of, and commentary on, the Burda of Al-Bûṣûfî and, in the same manuscript (p. 442), a work by ʿAli Shir Navaṭî on the art of poetics, followed by his Dîvân; these works by Navaṭî are all composed in the Chaghatai language.
The important Turkish collection is particularly rich in illustrated manuscripts, including the History of Sultan Süleyman, MS. 413, the Zâmit-i-Tawârîk, MS. 414 and the Siyâs-i Nebî, MS. 419.

The Ottoman texts cover poetry, belles-lettres, moral tales and natural history, as well as religious books, e.g. commentaries on the Qur‘an and on the Burda of Al-Bûshîr, and works on history, architecture, medicine, chess and the Arabic language. A few are fûtuûs. Most manuscripts date from ca. 1500–1900; one manuscript dates from before 1500.

There is one manuscript in Chaghatay Turkic, MS. T281, a Dîvân of the poet Mîr ‘Alî Shîr Nava’i, dated 906/1500–1, with three fine miniatures, one damaged. Manuscript T63 contains eight specimens of Turkish calligraphy. There is also a firman of condolence dated 1207–1801 sent by the Ottoman Grand Vizir to Sir Ralph Abercrombie, who was mortally wounded at the Battle of Alexandria in that year. The firman has been translated into English by N. Hacopjan, and this is appended to the document.

There is one manuscript in Kurdish, MS. K413 entitled Tuhfat al-Qâdirîyâ, by Abu ‘l-Ma‘âlî Mûsîlî, a biography of ‘Abd al-Qâdir Gilanî, 18th-century, 362 folios.

Two manuscripts are deposited in the Chester Beatty from University College, Cork. One is a copy of the Akhlaq-i Nâşîrî in Persian, dated 1030/1621. The other is the Dîvân of the poet ‘Alî in Turkish.

The library has a large archive of correspondence between Sir Alfred Chester Beatty and dealers, suppliers, and academics. This valuable material not only includes full details of Beatty’s collecting activities from ca. 1914 onwards, but provides exact provenance for many of the manuscripts in the collection, together with information on material examined but not purchased, some of which has certainly disappeared. This material was provisionally sorted some years ago and is accessible by files, in alphabetical order, which contain the correspondence between Beatty and people whose surnames begin with the letter of the file. There is unfortunately no index to this material, which is currently stored in the Library boiler room. But it is available by file on request.

Published catalogues:


There are 19 plates in colour and 84 in monochrome in volumes II and III, providing excellent illustrations of the miniatures in the same 18 manuscripts listed above.

8. 1966. vii + 141 pp. This eighth volume, compiled by Ursula Lyons, contains a list of errata, with emendations, in the preceding volumes. It further contains four indexes: authors, titles, plates, a chronological index of the manuscripts.

This Handbook gives sufficient bibliographical details to meet most practical requirements; the manuscripts are arranged in numerical order as numbered in the library, not by subject. Each of the first four volumes has an index.

Recently, the Al Ward Foundation, Amman, has prepared an Arabic translation of Arberry’s Handbook which incorporates much of the information collected by Kaile (see below). The translation is the work of Dr Mahmûd Shâkir Sâ‘îd and should be in print shortly.
1958. The Chester Beatty Library: a Catalogue of the Turkish manuscripts and Miniatures. By V. MINORSKY. With an Introduction by the late J.V.S. WILKINSON. Dublin: Hodges Figgis. Large folio, cloth-bound. 145 pp. 42 plates, one, the frontispiece, in colour; the others are in monochrome. There is an index of personal names. This catalogue contains descriptions of MSS 401–493. These manuscripts are written in Ottoman Turkish, except one, the Dâlîdî al-Khayrã, which is in Arabic.


This Handlist deals with the MSS 1401–1631 in the library. There is an index of dates and an index of calligraphers. The book is divided into nine chapters, each containing descriptions of a well-defined category of manuscripts: 1. 22 Qur’âns in Kufic script; 2. 17 Qur’âns in “Persian Kufic”; 3. 9 Qur’âns in early nastkh script (the oldest dated manuscript is from 391/1001); 4. 70 Qur’âns of the Mamlûk period (the oldest dated manuscript is from 720/1320); 5. 13 Qur’âns in Maghribi script; 6. 46 Qur’âns from Turkey (the oldest dated manuscript is from 740/1340); 7. 9 Qur’âns from India and Pakistan; 8. 4 West African Qur’âns; 9. 2 Chinese Qur’âns.

In the Introduction, Professor ARBERRY describes the art of cal-}

ligraphy in Arabic script, and how different styles, periods and centres of the art can be recognized.


Details of Arabic MSS 3905 & 3890.


Particulars of 1,400 Arabic MSS, extracted from ARBERRY’S Handlist of 1955–66 (see above).


This describes all the alchemical manuscripts given in ARBERRY’S Handlist.


A large selection of the Qur’ãns in facsimile, together with a catalogue, in which ARBERRY’S entries were completely revised and brought up to date in the light of new knowledge.


Includes some items from the unpublished catalogue of additional Arabic material (see below).


This revised version of ARNOLD’s 1936 catalogue was begun by ROBERT SKELTON in the 1960s and has been completed thanks largely to the sponsorship of the World of Islam Festival Trust, London. It includes all the Indian Islamic material acquired by the Library during the years 1937–1968. The latter consists of an additional one hundred manuscripts and boxes of miniatures. Apart from many fine paintings dating from the 16th-19th centuries, there are outstanding illustrated copies of the Še’il-Nāmah and Rāj-Kutūr made for Askār of Jamāngir, MSS 22, 37, and a copy of the Gūšāstān of Sa’ādī made for Shāh-Jahān, MS. 22. The new catalogue includes full bibliographic references to all material published by individual scholars between 1937 and 1990.

Unpublished catalogues:
Dr PAUL ROLLE, who worked at the Chester Beatty for several years during the 1930s and 1940s, compiled elaborate descriptions of Arabic MSS 4251–5280, giving complete bibliographical details. Dr Rolle typed his results on to sheets which have been bound into five substantial volumes. Only one copy of this big catalogue exists, though a microfilm is available. Obviously Dr Rolle’s catalogue is of indispensable value for Arabists. Unfortunately it describes only half of the collection of Arabic manuscripts in the Chester Beatty.

In the 1950s Chester Beatty commissioned the late Professor DAVID STORM RICE to produce a catalogue of the Qurān. Rice began the work and had completed a handwritten survey of the collection by the time of his death. This is lodged with his papers in the Mayer Memorial Institute, Jerusalem. A photocopy is available in the Chester Beatty Library.

There are 152 additional Arabic manuscripts, MSS 5501–5652. A complete list of these manuscripts was prepared some years ago by Dr D. JAMES, Islamic Curator of the Chester Beatty. Although this is only available at the Library in manuscript form, it gives the title, author, copyist, date, and reference in Brockelman’s Geschichte der arabischen Literatur, for each manuscript. The most important of these manuscripts is probably a copy of the Niṣādat al-Su‘l wa-l-Ūmāya, the well-known military encyclopedia of Al-‘Aṣwarī, dated 1365. This was published by DAVID JAMES in 1974: ‘Mamluk painting at the time of the Lusignan Crusade, 1366–70’, Humanistica Islamica, 2, 1974, pp. 73–87.

This list of additional Arabic manuscripts also includes details of 23 Persian manuscripts, MSS 419–442.

There are 64 additional Turkish manuscripts which are listed in a typed, unpublished Supplementary Handlist compiled by Dr G. MEREDITH-OWENS, numbered Tl–64. This also contains descriptions of fourteen Persian manuscripts including the numbers P400–412.

The Royal Irish Academy
Dawson St, Dublin 2
Tel.: 23-1762570

Conditions of access: Through the Librarian of the Academy. Open Monday to Friday 09.30–17.30.

Description of collection: The Academy dates back to the 18th century, when it was established as a scientific society. Towards the end of the 19th century the famous scholar STANLEY LANE-POOLE, who was lecturer in Arabic at Trinity College, Dublin, became Secretary of the Academy.

There is a small collection of Oriental material, including several Islamic manuscripts. This material was examined by J. D. PEARSON, Librarian of the London School of Oriental and African Studies, in 1965. The collection includes two Persian manuscripts (23.G.29, 24.D.27, the latter dated 994/1605) and two 19th-century Arabic manuscripts with English translations (23.O.58). Portfolio 3, Nos. 3,29 contains a coloured map of India with place-names in Persian. There are also some rubbings of Turkish tomb inscriptions.

Unpublished catalogue: There is a two-page typed list.
in English it was written by a Muslim “priest” (i.e. an imām), who was a freed slave in a British regiment in Jamaica in 1817, for the colonel of the regiment. It is thus one of the earliest examples of written Arabic in the New World.

The Persian manuscripts include much poetry, including 2 magnificent illuminated copies of the Shāhnāme of Firdawsi (nos. 1549 and 1551), and several copies of the Gulistan of Sa'di, Khamseh of Nezami, etc. There are also several important learned works in Persian, especially works on natural history (herbs and medicines, plants, fruit trees and animals, especially horses) and history. There are several volumes of fables (Ansār-i Suhaylī).

The Turkish manuscripts are mainly in verse, and one (1623) in prose on tashīd and fāshīd.

The Urdu manuscripts are mainly in verse; so is the one in Swahili, and so are the two in Pashto.

Published catalogues:


The Oriental manuscripts in the library are catalogued on pp. 402–436 of this book, of which pp. 402–412 contain brief descriptions of the Arabic manuscripts, i.e. nos. 1514–1547 (1540 is an Arabic and Persian Dictionnaire), 1621 and 1678. The Persian manuscripts are numbers 1549–1611 and 1679–1682; no. 1612 is in both Persian and Urdu, while nos. 1614–1616 are in Urdu. The numbers 1617–1620 and 1622–1623 are Turkish. The catalogue ends at MS. no. 1710. In general the descriptions are inadequate and unreliable.


A very detailed catalogue giving full title and author, subjects, date of composition, name of scribe, style of script, date and place of copying, indexes, colophons, incipits and explicitis. No. 37, p. 36 = TCD MS. F.3.24; no. 113, p. 92 = TCD MS. F.3.8.

Unpublished catalogues:

There is one drawer in the manuscript library catalogue room which contains cards with all the available data concerning the Oriental
manuscripts in Trinity College Library. (Many of these are not Islamic but Buddhist and Hindu.) Some of these cards date back to the beginning of the century; their value lies in the fact that over the years several visiting scholars have added notes in their own handwriting which are vital for the identification and description of the manuscripts, since they could read more languages than the librarians, none of whom was an Islamicist.

Since the 1900 publication (see above), two more volumes of the manuscript catalogue have been compiled by subsequent librarians and their assistants, vol. II covering the nos. 1711–3000 and vol. III covering the nos. 3001 to 6000 and further. This indicates that since 1900 Trinity College Library acquired more than 4,290 manuscripts. Of these, the following numbers are Islamic manuscripts: 1728; 1750; 1760; 1992–4; 2016; 2030; 2170; 2179; 2258; 2683; 2696; 2728; 2732–3; 2882; 2945; 3156; 3157; 3190; 3335; 3336; 3499; 3500; 5909. Of these manuscripts 18 are in Arabic, 6 are in Persian and one is in Arabic and Persian: a Qur’ān with interlinear translation (2030). One is in Swahili (2695) and two are in Pashto (1993 and 2018).

Volumes II and III of this catalogue have never been printed; these volumes are composed of separate sheets on which brief descriptions of the manuscripts are typed. On some sheets the additional data obtained from visiting scholars have been written in longhand. New sheets are added whenever a new manuscript is acquired. These descriptions are necessarily incomplete, since only some of the manuscripts have been seen by orientalists. Even orientalists will need time to identify the languages, etc. of some manuscripts. Much of this remains to be done.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL APPENDIX


Lists catalogues and publications about Arabic manuscripts all over the world. Īrânda, vol. 1, pp. 231–235.


Ireland, p. 307.


Irlande, p. 46.


Irlanda, p. 208.


Dublin, pp. 40–43.


This is a reference work listing known collections and catalogues published and unpublished. Arabic-Persian-Turkish: Ireland, pp. 246–248; Indic languages: Ireland, pp. 366–367.


Ireland, pp. 50–52.


Contains list of published catalogues. Ireland, p. 384.

A bibliography of known works, with locations of known MSS, including holdings in the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin.


A list of published catalogues of collections of Christian Arabic MSS arranged by town. Dublin, p. 245.

ITALY

by

Paola Orsatti
Bartolomeo Pirone
and
Aldo Gallotta

1991