
Al-Fatiqan, pp. 45–46.


Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, pp. 258–260.


A historical discussion of the printed manuscript catalogues of the Vatican Library since the 17th century.


ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The survey incorporates information on five private libraries in Ṣanʿā' and one in Ḥurayya supplied by al-Shaykh ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad al-Ḥabashi.

UNION CATALOGUES & SURVEYS


Summarises report by Ibiš & Al-Ghul for UNESCO (above) on collections of MSS in San‘ā’, Ta‘izz & Zabīd.


Notes collections of MSS in Aden National Library, and numerous private & small public collections in southern Yemen.


Survey of collections.


Includes a survey of collections. Al-Yaman, pp. 703–706.

1983. Mathematical astronomy in medieval Yemen: a biobibliographical


Edited versions of a number of existing unpublished handlists of private collections.

INDIVIDUAL COLLECTIONS

ADEN
Al-Maktaba al-Qawmiya (National Library)

War Museum
Aden

Holds some Arabic MSS; see

1974. Article by Aḥmad under Union catalogues above.

But it is possible that the MSS have been transferred to the Maktabat al-Abqāf in Ṭarīm (q.e.).

Al-Markaz al-Yamanī li-l-ʿAbhāth al-Thaqāfiyya wa-ʿl-ʾĀthār wa-ʿl-Maṭāhib

The MSS belonging to this collection have been transferred to the Maktabat al-Abqāf in Ṭarīm (q.e.).

DAHYĀN
Āl al-Ghālibī

Al-Qāḍī ʿAbd Allāh ʿAlī al-Ghālibī
Dahāyān
District of Ṣaʿda

Date of establishment: Early 14th century AH
Status: Private

Conditions of access: MSS may be consulted with the consent of the custodian. Trustworthy individuals may borrow one volume at a time.

Total number of Islamic MSS: 150.

Description of collection: The library was established by al-Qāḍī al-ʿAllāma Muḥammad ʿAbd Allāh al-Ghālibī. It is among the famous libraries in the district of Ṣaʿda, and is now owned by his grandsons. The prime custodian of the library is al-Qāḍī ʿAbd Allāh ʿAlī al-Ghālibī. The MSS were copied between the 7th and the 14th centuries AH, but mostly after the 10th century AH. Subjects covered include jurisprudence, Arabic language, ʿusūl al-fiqh, Ḥadīth and tafsīr. There are also works on biography, history, and botany. More than twenty volumes in the collection are in a bad state. The custodian of the library is carrying out restoration work but some loose leaves and unbound booklets may be lost. The following are examples from the collection: (i) al-Bāhr al-zakkhūr al-jāmīʿ li-madhāhib ʿulamāʾ al-amṣār, a work on jurisprudence by al-Ḥāfīz al-Maḥmūd ibn Yaḥyā ʿl-Murtadā, copied in 1075 AH by the famous jurist al-Qāḍī al-ʿAllāma Ṣaʿdib ibn al-Maḥdī al-Muḥīṭ; (ii) Tariqāt asāḥib al-Qurʾān ʿalā asāḥib al-Yūnān, a concise work on theology by Muḥammad ibn ʿIbn Rāhīm al-Wāṣrī, copied in 1052 AH by Nāṣir ʿAbd al-Ḥafīz ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Muḥallā.

Āl Ḥūriyya

AL-SAYYID ZAYD AL-MUʿAYYAD
Dahāyān
District of Ṣaʿda
Tel.: (051) 3115

Date of establishment: Early 20th century

Status: Private

Conditions of access: MSS may be consulted with the consent of the custodian.

Total number of Islamic MSS: ca. 150.

Description of collection: The library is known by the name of its founder al-Sayyid al-ʿAllāma Muḥammad ibn ʿIbn Rāhīm al-Muʿayyadī (d. 1961), a grandson of al-Ḥāfīz al-ʿĀli ibn al-Muʿayyadī ibn Jibrīl, a descendant of al-Ḥasan ibn ʿĀli ibn Ṭālib. He was among the outstanding scholars of the region and the MSS were acquired through purchase and copying. They date from the last five centuries of the Hijra and cover the following subjects: ʿusūl al-din, ʿusūl
al-fiqh, Qur'anic sciences, Hadith, fiqh, sciences of the Arabic language, literature, poetry, history and biography. Among the MSS is a copy of the Qur'an transcribed by the founder of the library while he was in prison in the castle of Ghamdian in San'a' from 1928 to 1960. He was interred by al-Imám Yahyá Hamíd al-Din for having opposed him. There is also a MS of Kitáb al-Azhár, by al-Imám al-Mahdî Ahmad ibn Yahyá 'l-Murtada (9th century AH), a concise work on jurisprudence in 200 small-format pages with marginal notes, copied in 1208 AH. The family looks after the collection well and it is properly stored.

Al-Ša'di

Residence of al-Sayyid 'Abd Alláh al-Ša'di
Dahyán
Sa'da
Tel.: (051) 3212
Date of establishment: Within the last forty years
Status: Private
Conditions of access: MSS may be consulted on site.
Total number of Islamic MSS: ca. 60
Description of collection: The library is owned by al-Sayyid 'Abd Alláh ibn Yahyá al-Ša'di who entered the government in the 1970s as Minister for Labour and then Minister for Endowments. A large part of the collection was formed through purchase some thirty years ago. The MSS were copied in the last five centuries of the Hijrá, and include some rarities. Subjects covered include usul al-din, Zaydi fiqh and Arabic language. Among the collection is a rare MS of Ibn Hishám's Sirát al-Nabi, which is about five hundred years old. The library is the best that one can find in the region of Sa'da in terms of preservation.

Yahyá ibn 'Abd Alláh al-Dahyání

al-Sayyid 'Abd al-Malik ibn Yahyá 'l-Dahyání
Dahyán
District of Sa'da
Tel.: (051) 3202
Date of establishment: Early 20th century
Status: Private
Conditions of access: Researchers may consult MSS with the consent of the custodian.
Total number of Islamic MSS: ca. 50.
Description of collection: The library was founded by al-Sayyid 'Abd Alláh ibn 'Abd Alláh al-Dahyání and developed further by his son al-Sayyid Yahyá ibn 'Abd Alláh al-Dahyání. His sons became responsible for the library after him. The most eminent of them is 'Abd Alláh ibn Yahyá. The collection was gathered through inheritance, purchase and copying; mostly by copying, so most of the MSS date from the 14th century AH. Subjects include usul al-din, fiqh, and Arabic language. There are also a few MSS on usul al-din and other subjects. They are all properly bound and in good condition.

Dhámár

Ahmad al-'Ansí

Súq al-Rábú
Dhámár
Date of establishment: Early 14th century AH
Status: Private
Conditions of access: MSS may be consulted in situ at the residence of the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 32.
Description of collection: The owner is al-Qadi ibn 'Abd Alláh al-'Ansí. The collection was gathered through inheritance, purchase and copying. The MSS were copied from the 10th century AH onwards. Subjects include usul al-din, usul al-fiqh, hadith, fiqh, and sciences of the Arabic language. The collection is in good condition. However the MSS are dispersed in several storerooms and exposed to dust and damage. Among them is a work on history which appears to have been copied at the end of the 10th century AH. The
beginning is truncated, making it impossible to establish the title of the work, the name of its author, the copyst and the date of copying.

Ahmad al-Maghribi

Hayy al-Madrasa
Dhamar
Date of establishment: 14th century AH
Status: Private
Conditions of access: MSS may be consulted in situ with the consent of the owner.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 90.
Description of collection: The owner of the collection is al-Qadi Ahmad ibn Husayn ibn Ahmad ibn Husayn al-Maghribi. The MSS were acquired through inheritance, purchase and copying. They mostly date from between the 10th and the 14th centuries AH. Subjects include history, astronomy and medicine, as well as religious sciences. The collection appears to be in bad condition, but a member of the family has affirmed that he is in the process of re-organising and restoring it.

Al al-Akwa

al-Madina al-Sakaniya
Dhamar
Date of establishment: Early 14th century AH
Status: Private
Conditions of access: MSS may be consulted at the residence of the owner of the collection.
Total number of Islamic MSS: ca. 40.
Description of collection: The library is known by the name of its owner al-Qadi Zayd ibn Ali ibn Muhammad al-Akwa of the Al-Akwa family which is celebrated for its scholarship. The MSS were primarily accumulated through inheritance and also through purchase and copying. The collection has diminished through distribution of the MSS between different individuals of the family. It is in good condition and well looked after. The MSS were copied between the 9th and the 14th centuries AH. Subjects include usul al-din, usul al-fiqh, tasfiir, Hadith, fiqh, and sciences of the Arabic language. An example from the collection is Kitab Sharh al-Jami, a work on grammar by Abd al-Rahman al-Jami (10th century AH). The MS was copied in 1220 AH. The father of the owner of the library, al-Qadi al-Muslim ibn Yahiya ‘Ali ibn Muhammad al-Akwa himself copied several MSS during his lifetime. Among the works copied by him and still found in the collection are: (i) Kitab Sharh al-Azhari, original work on fiqh by al-Ismam al-Mahdi Ahmad ibn Yahiya ‘Ali Murtaqad and commentary by al-Muslim ibn Yahiya ‘Ali Qasim ibn Mir threats (d. 877 AH); (ii) Kitab al-Manahij al-Sufiyya: Sharh al-Shafi’i, a commentary by al-Muslim rai al-Din al-Azharadhi (d. 686 AH) on a work on Arabic language sciences by the famous grammarian Ibn al-Hajir.

Al-Ansi family collection

Dhamar
Tel.: 502786
Date of establishment: 11th century AH
Status: Private
Conditions of access: No access.
Total number of Islamic MSS: ca. 30.
Description of collection: The library belongs to al-Qadi Yahiya ibn Muslim ibn Said ibn Hasan ibn Said ibn Abd Allah al-Ansi of the tribe of Ans, one of the famous tribes of Yemen whose capital is the city of Dhamar. The family is well known for knowledge of jurisprudence and books dealing with the subject. The collection of MSS was acquired through inheritance. Several works in the collection were authored and copied by members of the family. Most of the MSS were copied between the 11th and the 14th centuries AH. Apart from the usual subjects of usul al-din, usul al-fiqh, tasfiir, Hadith, fiqh, and sciences of the Arabic language, the collection is characterized by its MSS of works on history and geography. The collection is in good condition and well looked after. The following are examples: (i) Tuhkim al-arif, a work on geography and terrain, by Said ibn Hasan ibn Said al-Ansi (11th century AH), copied in 1100 AH by an unknown copyist; (ii) Gharar at-tahsir fi Sirat al-bashir al-naudhir, by Yahiya ibn Muslim ibn Said al-Ansi, copied in 1330 AH by Abd al-Rahman ibn Yahiya ibn Muslim al-Ansi.
Al-Yusufi

Süq al-Rabî‘
Dhamâr

Date of establishment: Early 11th century AH
Status: Private
Conditions of access: MSS may be consulted in situ only.
Total number of Islamic MSS: ca. 30.
Description of collection: The collection belongs to two brothers, Hâmid and Hasan, sons of Muhammad ibn ’Abd Allah al-Yusufi of the family of scholars whose lineage goes back to al-Imâm al-Mahdi Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn al-Hasan ibn al-Qâsim ibn Muhammad, designated al-Mansûr bi-Illah (995–1029 AH), one of the most eminent Imams of Yemen. The MSS were acquired through inheritance, purchase and copying. They were copied from the 11th century AH onwards. Subjects include usûl al-dîn, usûl al-fiqh, tafsîr, Hadîth, fiqh, and sciences of the Arabic language. The MSS are in good condition and well looked after by their owners. The following are examples from the collection: (i) Tâhâbîh al-imâma bi-l-imâm al-

dâ’im, on the conditions for leadership, by al-Imâm al-Hâdî Ilâ l-’Haqq Yaârî l-Husayn ibn al-Qâsim ibn Ibrahim (d. 294 AH). The MS was copied in 1355 AH by Maqâmî ibn Muhammad al-

Yusufî; (ii) Mi‘âsh al-fâlîf ‘ilm al-fârîf, a work on inheritance in one volume by al-Fâdî ibn Åhr l-Sâîd al-Ustâfî. This is highly regarded in the Yemeni school of jurisprudence and there are several MSS in the libraries of San‘â. The MS was copied in 1180 AH. Its calligraphy and ornamentation is of rare quality.

Hâmûd al-Dawla

al-Åhâṣa
Dhamâr

Date of establishment: Mid-14th century AH
Status: Private
Conditions of access: MSS may be consulted in situ.
Total number of Islamic MSS: ca. 50.
Description of collection: The owner of the collection is al-Sayyid Hâmûd ibn Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Dawla. The collection was gathered through inheritance, purchase and copying. The MSS were copied between the 10th and 14th centuries AH. The collection is in good condition but lacks cleanliness and order. Apart from the subjects of usûl al-dîn, usûl al-fiqh, tafsîr, Hadîth, fiqh, and sciences of the Arabic language, the collection features works on literature, history and poetry. Among the MSS is a work in beautiful calligraphy on astronomy which appears to be very old. The beginning is truncated, making it impossible to establish the title of the work, the name of its author, the copyist and the date of copying.

Al-Madrassa al-‘Ilimiya bi-Dhamâr

Hâsy al-Madrassa
Dhamâr

Status: Special library
Conditions of access: Open to teachers and students.
Total number of Islamic MSS: ca. 50.
Description of collection: The collection was built up through bequests and copying. The MSS were copied between the 12th and the 14th centuries AH. Subjects include Qur’ân MSS, usûl al-dîn, usûl al-fiqh, tafsîr, Hadîth, fiqh, kalâm and sciences of the Arabic language. There is a copy of the Qur’ân in four volumes with tafsîr transcribed in large, beautiful script on reinforced paper. According to the librarians it dates from the 5th century AH. The collection is in a bad state. MSS are stored in old cupboards and difficult to locate. Most edges of the volumes have become torn.

Published catalogues:
The Institute of Arab Manuscripts filmed some MSS belonging to “al-Madrassa al-Shamîya (Al-Awqaf)” in Dhamâr, but it is not known if this is the same institution. The filmed MSS are listed in Al-Makhtûthat al-allaf ‘awwaraath . . . 1976 (see under Union catalogues above).

Al-Sayyid Ahmad ibn Ahmad al-Nâṣîfi

al-Åhâṣa
Dhamâr

Tel.: 501732
Date of establishment: 13th century AH.
Al-Ta'īzī

Dhamār

Date of establishment: early 13th century AH
Status: Private

Conditions of access: Restricted.

Total number of Islamic MSS: ca. 40.

Description of collection: The owner of the collection is al-Qādī Yahyā ibn Ahmad ibn Shāh al-Ta'īzī. The MSS were acquired through inheritance and purchase. They were copied between the 13th and the 14th centuries AH. The collection is in good condition. Subjects covered include ṣiṣl al-dīn, ṣiṣl al-fiqh, taṣfīr, Ḥadīth, fiqh, and sciences of the Arabic language. The MSS are arranged in one volume by ʿIzz al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Ahmad ibn Ṭīb Qāsim al-Nāṣiri (d. 920 AH). The MSS, originally in a beautiful hand, were copied in 1270 AH by an unknown copyist; (ii) Shāfiʿī al-mālikī fi sharḥ al-khumusun wa ʿayn al-tanzil, otherwise called: Sharḥ ʿayn al-aḥkām fi ḍalāl al-Qurʾān, by ʿAbd Allāh ibn Muḥammad al-Nāṣirī (d. 877 AH), copied in 1290 AH by an unknown copyist.

Yaḥyā ʿl-Maghribī

Ḥayy al-Madrasa
Dhamār

Date of establishment: 14th century AH

Hurayda

Al-Sayyid Ahmad ibn Hasan al-ʿAffās

Hurayda
Hadramawt

Status: Private

Total number of Islamic MSS: 175.

Description of collection: The library was established by al-Sayyid Ahmad ibn Hasan al-ʿAffās (d. 1234 AH), a scholar and bibliophile of Hadramawt. After his death his large collection was divided between his two heirs. The fate of one half the collection is not known. The other half is kept in a wooden cupboard in a house in Hurayda. The MSS are separated from printed books. Subjects covered include Qurʾān and related sciences, Ḥadīth and related sciences, fiqh, taṣawwuf, adab and history.

Unpublished catalogue:
Al-Shaykh ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad al-Ḥabashi (Huṣnī) has compiled a subject catalogue. It gives title, author & date of author's death, date of copying, number of pages and dimensions.
**Al-JIRĀF**

**Al-Habashi (Hibshi)**

Al-Jirāf
Şanā‘a
Tel.: 231757

*Date of establishment:* 14th century AH

*Status:* Private

*Conditions of access:* MSS may be consulted on the spot with the consent of the owner.

*Total number of Islamic MSS:* 31.

*Description of collection:* The collection belongs to al-Sayyid ʿAli ʿAlī ʿAbd al-Dahūm (Hibshi) and was acquired through inheritance and purchase. The MSS were copied in the last two centuries of the Hijra. Subjects are mostly religious sciences and Arabic language, but there are also other MSS dealing with fiqh, hadith, and tafsir which were composed and gathered towards the end of the 14th century AH. The collection is in relatively good condition, but it is disorganized and includes MSS in need of repair and binding. The following is an example from the collection: *Tafsir al-Qurʾān al-karim,* autograph copy in eight volumes dated 1203 AH, by al-ʿAllāma Ḥusayn ibn ʿAlī ʿAlī ʿAlī al-Habashi (Hibshi).

**MUKALLA**

**Al-Maktaba al-Shaʿbiya**

This collection, which began as al-Maktaba al-Sultāniyya, has been transferred to the Maktabat al-Abqāf in Tarim (q.v.).

**AL-RAWDA**

**Al-Dhārī**

Al-Raydā
Şanā‘a

*Date of establishment:* ca. 1940s

*Status:* Private

*Conditions of access:* MSS may be consulted with the consent of the owner.

*Total number of Islamic MSS:* 110.

*Description of collection:* The collection of al-ʿAllāma ʿAbd al-Muṣṭafah ibn Yāhūḏ ibn ʿĀli ʿAlī al-Dhārī, which is now housed at the residence of his son al-Uṣayf ʿAlī, is made up of MSS purchased, copied and inherited and covers the fields of Islamic jurisprudence, usūl al-dīn, Arabic language, tafsir, hadith, history, literature, poetry, philosophy, mathematics, and astronomy. The collection also includes some rare MSS of the Imams of Yemen and other scholars. Most MSS were copied in the 9th, 10th and 11th centuries AH. There are also MSS from the 12th and 13th centuries AH. The collection is well looked after by its present owner. The following are examples from the collection: (i) *Sharḥ al-azhar fi ʿl-ṣiqq,* in four volumes, by al-ʿImām al-Mahdī ʿAbd al-Muṣṭafah ibn Yāhūḏ ʿAlī al-Murtaḍā (d. 840 AH), commentary by al-ʿAllāma ʿAbd al-Muṣṭafah ibn ʿAlī ʿAlī al-Qāsim ibn Miftah (877 AH), copied in 1242 AH by the famous copyist of Yaman Muṣṭafah ibn Ḥāsan al-ʿIsmāʿīlī; (ii) *Sharḥ al-ʿUṣūl al-khaṣṣa fi usūl al-dīn,* in one volume by al-Ṣayyid ʿAbd al-Muṣṭafah ibn Ḥāsan ibn al-Ḥasan, copied in 832 AH by ʿAbd Allāh ibn Muṣṭafah ibn Yāhūḏ ibn ʿAlī al-Qāsim ibn Ibrāhīm; (iii) *Riḍāšt al-ʾaffām fi ʿl-ṣiqq al-kalām fi falṣafah usūl al-dīn,* by al-ʿImām al-Mahdī ʿAbd al-Muṣṭafah ibn Yāhūḏ ʿAlī al-Murtaḍā, copied in 917 AH by al-Murtaḍā ʿAbd al-Muṣṭafah ibn ʿAlī.

*Unpublished catalogue:* Al-Shaykh ʿAbd Allāh Muṣṭafah al-Mahdī al-Habashi (Hibshi) has compiled a handwritten catalogue.

**ṢA‘DA**

Āl al-ʿAnthari

al-Ṣayyid ʿAbd al-Muṣṭafah al-ʿAnthari
Qaryat al-Taḥl
Ṣa‘da

*Date of establishment:* early 14th century AH

*Status:* Private

*Conditions of access:* No access.

*Total number of Islamic MSS:* ca. 100.

*Description of collection:* The library was established by al-Ṣayyid ʿAbd Allāh al-ʿAnthari, an eminent scholar of the region. His heir ʿAbd al-Muṣṭafah al-ʿAnthari is now custodian of the library. The following
are examples from the collection: Nihāyat al-intisād fī bulūgh ghayrat al-murād, and in the same volume Thāmār al-muḥtār wa-l-aṣād al-muqtanā, a work on jurisprudence by al-Sayyid ʿAbd al-Karīm Aḥmad al-ʿAntihārī, copied in 1329 AH.

Al Suhayl

al-Ustādhi ʿHasan ibn Yāwy Suhayl
Hārāt Shajbān
Saʿda
Tel.: (051) 2737
Date of establishment: 1330s AH
Status: Private

Conditions of access: MSS may be consulted with the consent of the custodian and can be borrowed for a fixed period of time from one to six months on depositing a guarantee or on assurance of safe return from a reliable warrantor.

Total number of Islamic MSS: ca. 70.

Description of collection: The Hāshimī family is one of the ancient families well known in the region of Saʿda for learning and the collecting of MSS inherited through generations. Originally a single collection, it is now distributed among the three principal branches of the family. The first is the library of the family of Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Hāshimī which bears the general name of Maktabat Bayt al-Hāshimī. The chief of the family and custodian of the collection is al-Sayyid al-ʿAllāma Saḥāb al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Hāshimī. He is the present director of al-Muḥad al-ʿIlmī (established 1978) in Saʿda and one of its most prominent founders. The collection was acquired through purchase as well as copying. Its MSS originate from Yemen as well as from abroad. The MSS are in good condition and not exposed to anything which would lead to deterioration. Subjects include usūl al-dīn, kalām, tafsīr, Hadīth, fiqh, inheritance law, and Arabic language. Most MSS were copied in the centuries following the 5th century AH. They are characterized by their diversity, beautiful script, antiquity and rarity. Among the rare MSS in the collection are Saḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Jāmīʿ al-Tirmidhī, and Sunan Abī Dāwūd, all of which were transcribed more than eight hundred years ago. In the field of sciences of the Arabic language there is Sharḥ al-Talqīḥ of Saʿdī al-Dīn al-Taṣāzārī, which was transcribed during the time of the author in the 8th century AH.

Bayt al-Hāshimī

Būr al-Sharīfa
Rāḥbān

Şaʿda
Tel.: (052) 2711
Status: Private

Total number of Islamic MSS: 150.

Description of collection: The Hāshimī family is one of the ancient families well known in the region of Saʿda for learning and the collecting of MSS inherited through generations. Originally a single collection, it is now distributed among the three principal branches of the family. The first is the library of the family of Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Hāshimī which bears the general name of Maktabat Bayt al-Hāshimī. The chief of the family and custodian of the collection is al-Sayyid al-ʿAllāma Saḥāb al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Hāshimī. He is the present director of al-Muḥad al-ʿIlmī (established 1978) in Saʿda and one of its most prominent founders. The collection was acquired through purchase as well as copying. Its MSS originate from Yemen as well as from abroad. The MSS are in good condition and not exposed to anything which would lead to deterioration. Subjects include usūl al-dīn, kalām, tafsīr, Hadīth, fiqh, inheritance law, and Arabic language. Most MSS were copied in the centuries following the 5th century AH. They are characterized by their diversity, beautiful script, antiquity and rarity. Among the rare MSS in the collection are Saḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Jāmīʿ al-Tirmidhī, and Sunan Abī Dāwūd, all of which were transcribed more than eight hundred years ago. In the field of sciences of the Arabic language there is Sharḥ al-Talqīḥ of Saʿdī al-Dīn al-Taṣāzārī, which was transcribed during the time of the author in the 8th century AH.

Al-Madrasa al-ʿIlmiya

Jāmīʿ al-Imām al-Hāfdi
Şaʿda

Date of establishment: late 3rd century AH / early 10th century CE
Status: Endowment for tutors and students of the college.

Total number of Islamic MSS: ca. 100.

Description of collection: The MSS were acquired mostly through endowments from owners of private libraries. The collection has halved over the last thirty years owing to several factors, including war. Subjects include usūl al-dīn, kalām, usūl al-fiqh, inheritance law, tafsīr, Hadīth, fiqh, Arabic grammar, morphology, poetry, rhetoric, logic and lexicography.
Al-Sayyid Majd al-Dīn al-Mu‘ayyadī

Sūdān Bānī Ma‘ādhdh
Sa‘dī da
Status: Private
Total number of Islamic MSS: ca. 100.

Description of collection: The library is one of the most famous private libraries in Sa‘dī da, not because of the number of MSS, but because of its priceless collection of old MSS and because of the fact that its owner is considered to be the most learned person of the region and some regard him as the most learned in Yemen. The MSS were mostly acquired through purchase and copying during the time of the owner, but some were inherited from his father in the middle of this century. Subjects include usūl al-dīn, usūl al-fiqh, Qur’anic sciences, Ḥadīth, fiqh and Arabic language. There are also some works on biographies of scholars, religious sects, and schools of jurisprudence. The MSS are in good condition and regularly used by the owner who teaches a group of advanced students in Islamic studies. The following are examples from the collection: (i) al-Muntakhab, a work on fiqh by al-Imām al-Hādī (3rd century AH), copied in 549 AH by Sulaymān ibn Muhammad Shāwīr; (ii) al-Taḥrīr, a work on jurisprudence by al-Imām Aḥū Tālib Ya‘qīb ibn al-Husayn al-Hārinī (d. 434 AH). The MS. is more than 700 years old.

Ṣan‘ā’

General


Ahmad al-Dawla

Hayy al-Zirās
Ṣan‘ā’
Tel.: 70246
Date of establishment: mid-14th century AH
Status: Private

Conditions of access: MSS may be consulted on site.
Total number of Islamic MSS: ca. 20.
Description of collection: The collection is owned by Aḥmad ibn Qāsim al-Dawla and his son Hasan. It was gathered primarily through inheritance and partly through purchase. The MSS were copied from the 10th century AH and thereafter. Apart from the subjects of usūl al-dīn, usūl al-fiqh, ṭafṣīr, Ḥadīth, fiqh, and Arabic language, the collection prominently features works on medicine, astronomy and mathematics. The collection is in good condition and receives every care from its owners. The following are examples: (i) al-Risāla al-Shikhūbiyya fi ‘l-ṭaḥh, by al-Shaykh Shihāb al-Dīn, copied in 1200 AH by an unknown copyist; (ii) Shahr ibn Qāẓī, ‘alḍ Alfiṣat ibn Malik fi ‘l-nahw, in one volume, copied in 1285 AH by al-Imām al-Mahdī Muhammad ibn al-Qāsim al-Ḫūṭī.

Āl al-Wazīr

Bi-‘l-Sūr min Bānī Hushaysh
Ṣan‘ā’

Date of establishment: 7th century AH
Status: Private
Total number of Islamic MSS: 02.
Description of collection: The library is one of the oldest in Yemen, developed over several generations by the scholars of the well-known family of Āl al-Wazīr. The MSS are vulnerable to damage and theft. Among the surviving MSS are some copied in the 6th century AH, as well as those copied by the scholars of the family. Subjects covered include tafsīr, Ḥadīth, theology, usūl al-fiqh, fiqh, inheritance law, taṣawwuf, Arabic grammar and literature, sīra and history.

Unpublished catalogue: Al-Shaykh ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad al-Harashī (Ḫibṣīh) has compiled a subject catalogue giving title, author’s name & date of death, date of copying, number of pages and dimensions.

Al-Wāli ‘Allāmā ‘Abd Allāh ibn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn Husayn ‘Amīdān

Ḥarāt Taḥba
Ṣan‘ā’
Status: Private
Total number of Islamic MSS: 145.
Description of collection: The founder of the library had inherited the collection from his ancestors, and bequeathed it to his heirs. The collection is packed in wooden chests and not readily available for consultation. It contains illuminated MSS which are transcribed in beautiful calligraphy. Subjects include Qur'anic sciences, Ḥadīth, usūl al-fiqh, fiqh, inheritance law, tasawwuf, linguistics, adab, sīra, history, logic, astronomy and medicine. Recent information is that the collection has been donated to the library of Ṣanʿā' University (q.v. below).

Unpublished catalogue:
Al-Shaykh ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad al-Ḥabarshī (Ḥibshī) has compiled a subject catalogue giving title, author's name & date of death, date of copying, number of pages and dimensions.

Al-ʿAllāma ʿAlī ibn Ibrāhīm

Ṣanʿā'

Status: Private
Total number of Islamic MSS: 187.
Description of collection: The collection was housed at the residence of al-ʿAllāma ʿAlī ibn Ibrāhīm (d. 1401 AH), founder of the library, and is now with the son of the founder. The MSS are quite old and some are autographs, and include some rare MSS only found in this collection. Subjects include: Qur'anic sciences, Ḥadīth, Islamic jurisprudence, doctrines, theology, tasawwuf, medicine, Arabic language, arithmetic, history, politics and literature.

Unpublished catalogue:
Al-Shaykh ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad al-Ḥabarshī (Ḥibshī) has compiled a handwritten catalogue.

Maktabat al-Jāmiʿ al-Kabīr (Maktabat al-Awqāf)

Al-Jāmiʿ al-Kabīr
Ṣanʿā'
exposed. About twenty percent of the MSS need restoration and binding, but there is no equipment to carry out the necessary work. In the wooden cabinets worms have begun to appear. There is no air-conditioning and nothing is being done to check dampness and worms. All these factors have caused damage to some MSS.

Published catalogues:


1955. Fu'ād Sāyyid (see Union catalogues and surveys above).

1967. Union catalogue of microfilmed MSS. Includes a large number filmed from these collections.


1976. Al-makhtūtāt allatī sawwaraṭah . . . under Union catalogues above.


Catalogue of an exhibition, with illustrations and drawings.


Muḥammad al-Dāhirī

Manzil 10
Near Maktub al-Muwāsālat
Shārī‘ Häyil Sā‘īd
‘San’ā’
Tel.: 208213
Date of establishment: 1333 AH
Status: Private
Conditions of access: It is possible to photocopy material or borrow it on short term loan by providing financial security.
Total number of Islamic MSS: ca. 75.
Description of collection: The library was established by al-Sāyyid Muḥammad ibn Yāṣīya ibn ‘Ale‘ al-Dāhirī (d. 1973). The present
example from the collection is: al-Kashshāf fi al-tafsīr, by al-Zamakhsharī, copied in beautiful, decorated handwriting in 1353 AH by Yahyā ibn Ḥasan ibn Yahyā ibn Zayd Sharaf al-Dīn.

Şan‘ā’ University

PO Box 1247, Şan‘ā’
Tel.: 200514. Telex: 2468
Date of establishment: 1970
Description of collection: It is reported that the University has received, as a donation, the collection of Al-‘Allāma ‘Abd Allāh ibn Muḥammad ‘Amdān of Şan‘ā’ (q.v. above).

Al-Sayyid Yahyā Muḥammad ‘Abbās al-Mutawakkil

Bāb al-Yaman
Şan‘ā’
Date of establishment: first half of the 14th century AH
Status: Private
Total number of Islamic MSS.: 92.
Description of collection: The proprietor and founder of the library al-Sayyid Yahyā Muḥammad ‘Abbās al-Mutawakkil died in 1962. The collection has passed on to his heirs but it is still intact. The MSS were copied between the 9th and the 14th centuries AH. They cover the fields of usūl, tafsīr, jurisprudence, inheritance law, Arabic language, history, biography and literature. The following are examples from the collection: (i) al-Tafrij ar-rūṣūb wa-tafsīr al-dhānīn, six parts in three volumes by Ṣimaq ibn Yusuf ibn al-Mutawakkil ʿAllāḥ ʿIsmā‘īlī (11th century AH), copied by ‘Abd Allāh ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allāh ʿAbbās al-Mutawakkil at the beginning of the 14th century AH; (ii) al-Ṣamā‘ al-kāfī fī ʿīqāl al-Sayyida ʿAllāḥ madḥhab al-ʿImām Ḥasan ibn Ṭūlūn, by Muḥammad ibn Ḥasan ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-ʿAlāwī al-Ḥusaynī, known as ʿAbū ʿAbd Allāh al-ʿAlawī. The first volume was copied in a beautiful hand by Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad al-Ṣamā‘ in 1347 AH. The second volume was copied in 1143 AH by ʿAbduh ʿAlī Ḥasan Abd Allāh al-ʿUnsī. The third volume was copied in 1163 AH by an unknown copyist.

Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Kībi

c/o al-Sayyid Yahyā ibn Ahmad ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Mutawakkil
Bīr al-Shiyāf
PO Box 559
Şan‘ā’
Tel.: 227762
Date of establishment: first half of the 14th century AH
Status: Private
Conditions of access: No access.
Total number of Islamic MSS.: ca. 150.
Description of collection: The collection belonged to Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Kībi (d. 1962). His heirs being outside Yemen, there is no way to have access to the collection which has not yet been divided among them. Most MSS were copied between the 10th and 14th centuries AH. They are in good condition. Subjects include tafsīr, Islamic jurisprudence, Arabic language, literature, rhetoric, logic, history, biography, and astronomy. An
Al-Shámi

Sha’rí al-9 Adlí
Saná’
Tel.: 74882
Date of establishment: 14th century AH
Status: Private
Conditions of access: No specific conditions
Total number of Islamic MSS: 20.
Description of collection: The collection belongs to al-Sayyíd ‘Alí ibn Qásim ibn Ahmad ibn Qásim al-Shámi of the prominent al-Shámi family of Yemen. The MSS were acquired through inheritance and purchase. They were generally copied between the 11th and the 13th centuries AH. Subjects include uṣūl al-din, uṣūl al-fiqh, tafsír, Ḥadíth, fiqh, and sciences of the Arabic language. The MSS are in very good condition. The following are examples from the collection: (i) ʻIkhám al-hámid fi ʻilm al-farāríd, a work on inheritance law by Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Khálidí, copied in 1160 AH by an unknown copyist; (ii) Kibá al-Bayán fi ʻl-fiqh, 2 vols., by Yaḥyá ibn Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Muṣaffar, copied in 1096 AH by ʻAlí ibn ʻAlá al-Náṣir; (iii) Kibá Shakr Nukta al-Tahdád, a work on jurisprudence by the famous Qádí of Yemen Yaḥyá ibn Ahmad ibn ʻAbd al-Salám (d. 622 AH) copied in 1095 AH by an unknown copyist.

Al-Ustádih ʻAbd Alláh ibn Ismá‘il Ghamdán
Saná’
Status: Private
Total number of Islamic MSS: 36.
Description of collection: The library is well looked after and properly shelved. The collection contains a good selection of MSS. Subjects include: Prophetic traditions, Islamic jurisprudence, tafsír, Arabic grammar, morphology, history and adab. Among the most important and valuable MSS is: al-Fán bi-nafs al-waháb al-tárîm al-mannáni fi ʻl-fish wa-ʻl-adr wa-ʻl-naháw wa-ʻl-taṣír wa-ʻl-manîṣq wa-ʻl-tashfírd al-Qur’án, by Ahmad ibn ʻAbd Alláh al-Sáthá al-Wáṣmí (d. 1116).

Unpublished catalogue:
Maktabat al-Ustádih ʻAbd Alláh ibn Ismá‘il Ghamdán. By ʻAbd Alláh Muhammad al-Ḥabashí (Hibshi).

Handwritten catalogue, arranged by subject, gives: title, author, date of copying and brief remarks about physical condition.

SHAHÁRA

Jámí Madinat Shahára
Hajjí
Date of establishment: ca. 11th century AH
Status: Mosque library
Conditions of access: The library is open to readers and researchers. Photocopies may be made after obtaining permission from the administrator of the library.
Total number of Islamic MSS: ca. 120.
Description of collection: The MSS of the collection are stored in a vault on the left side of the mosque in a disorganized manner, mingled with printed works. They are exposed to danger because of lack of care but have so far not been damaged because of favourable climatic conditions. Most MSS were copied in the 9th, 10th and 11th centuries AH. Subjects include Qur’anic sciences, uṣūl al-din, Ḥadíth, Islamic jurisprudence, history, Arabic language, literature and biography. The following are examples from the collection: (i) al-Tadhkíra al-Fikhrí(wa-ʻl-fish al-9 ibn al-9aháw, in one volume, by ʻAlí ibn Muhammad ibn Ḥasan al-Náṣir, a prominent Zaydí scholar, copied by Yaḥyá ibn Muhammad ibn Ḥasan al-Náṣir in 930 AH. The library has four other copies of the same work; (ii) Táriq al-quláb wa-ʻl-abár, attributed to al-ʻImám al-Náṣir Ibráhím ibn Muhammad al-Muṣawwár, copied in 1075 AH; (iii) al-Záhib al-muchárita wa-ʻl-nafshu al-9ibqá, a work on fiqh in three volumes by Yúsuf ibn Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Uthmán (d. 833 AH) a famous Zaydí scholar. The first and the third volumes were copied by ʻAlá al-Dín ibn Muḥammad ibn Ahmad ibn ʻAlá in 807 AH and 808 respectively. The copyist of the second volume is not known.

TARÍM

Maktabat al-9aqf
Tarím
Hādı̇ramawt
Date of establishment: 1976
Status: State control
Conditions of access: No access.
Total number of Islamic MSS: 5,343.
Description of collection: The library is located on the second floor of an annexe to the Great Mosque in the centre of Ta’ism. The library used to have both MSS and printed works. Now it exclusively contains MSS. It occupies one large room with an approximate area of 20 × 8 metres. The MSS are placed in about sixty aluminium cupboards with glass doors on two sides of the room. The librarian and four other employees sit in the same room. The collection is composed of fourteen private & public library collections of Ta’ism and the area. The unpublished catalogue of 1982 names as follows the collections which have been brought into the library: (i) Al Junayd; (ii) Al Husayni; (iii) Al-Kibat; (iv) Al bin Sahl; (v) Al-Harashi (Arû Bâr ibn Abd Allâh); (vi) Al al-Haddad; (vii) Hasan al-Kârî; (viii) Ayyinât; (ix) Al al-Kâ’î (of Ta’ism and Sayyûm); (x) Al-Markaz al-Yamanî lî-l-Abûbîr al-Taqâ’ifâ wa-l-âthâr wa-l-Matâbirî (previously in Aden); (xi) Al-ma’sâdir al-mukhtafla (donated by private individuals in 1980); (xii) Al-al-Tamthabat al-Sha‘biya bi-Mukallâ‘ (previously al-Maktaba al-Sulûmiya & transferred from Mukallâ‘); (xiii) Al-Abîs; (xiv) Al ‘Aydarûs.
The MSS cover various subjects. However, about half deal with four or five subjects (given here in order of numeric importance): ta’awwuf (more than 1,000 titles), fiqh, particularly Shafi‘î fiqh, with several works of Al-Allama al-Haythami, Al-Ghazali, Al-Mawardi, Al-Suyuti, Al-Nawawy and other scholars, Hadîth (about 350 titles), history and biographies, tafsîr, literature, Arabic language, medicine and philosophy. The library has a rich collection of authors from Hadramawt. The MSS were copied in three different periods: most of them in the 11th, 12th and particularly the 13th centuries AH. The oldest MSS in the collection date from the 5th, the 6th and the 7th centuries AH. Several MSS from the private collections of Ta’ism are copies transcribed in the 14th century AH. They are in good condition. However, means of preservation such as fumigation, damp proofing, and fire extinguishers are lacking. All these factors as well as the prevailing climatic conditions in the region expose the MSS to damage.

The following are examples from the collection: (i) Tahrîr Iṣâfîsî, a work on geometry by the famous Greek mathematician Euclid (d. 283 BCE), translated from the Greek into Arabic by Naṣîr al-Dîn al-Tûsî. The MS, containing 217 medium-sized pages of parchment, was copied in 837 AH in old Arabic script with very few pointed letters; (ii) Third volume of Al-Bukhârî’s al-Jâmî al-Sâhibî, in 250 large-sized pages, in beautiful, decorated, naskh with colours, particularly gold and red. It was transcribed for the treasury of ‘Alî ibn Da’ûn, ruler of Aden (during the reign of the Sultan ʿAmir ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhâb). This means that the MS, was copied at the end of the 9th or the beginning of the 10th century AH; (iii) Second volume of Ibn Sinâ’s work on medicine al-Qânûn, copied in 633 AH.

Published catalogues:

Unpublished catalogues:
1982. There is only one copy of a type-set catalogue of the library in three volumes of about 1,500 pages, which was completed in 1982. It was prepared for publication in Kuwait.
Card index arranged alphabetically according to titles of books of the various collections. The cards are not properly arranged and the index appears to be incomplete.

ZABID
Ahmad al-Ahdal
Al-Sayyid Ahmad ibn ʿAbd al-Qâdir al-Ahdal
Zabîd
District of al-Hudayda
Tel.: 340029
Status: Private
Conditions of access: No access.
Total number of Islamic MSS: ca. 70.
Description of collection: The owner of the collection is al-Sayyid...
Aḥmad ibn ʿAbd al-Qādir ibn Muhammad al-Aḥdāl. This family of Zabīd is well known for the transmission of learning and manuscripts. The present owner inherited the MSS from his father. This represents a part of the library of the al-Aḥdāl family whose lineage goes back to al-Sayyid ʿAlī ibn ʿUmar ibn Muhammad ibn Sulaymān (d. 607 AH), who was surnamed al-Aḥdāl. The collection is housed at the owner’s residence in two small wooden cupboards. The MSS were copied in general between the 11th and the 14th centuries AH. Most are not dated and some are truncated. Subjects include fiqh, Qur’ānic sciences, Ḥadīṣ, Arabic language, literature and history. The following are examples from the collection: (i) Ṭāṣīr al-bayān li-īḥākām al-Qurʾān, a work on tafsīr by ʿAbd Allāh ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Ahmad, copied by an unknown hand in 1090 AH; (ii) Al-Zīj al-mukhtasār fi ṭaqwīm al-khawāṣa wa-t-ṣams wa-t-qamar, a work on astronomy by al-Ḥāfiz bi-Ḥāfiẓ ʿAlī ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Sulaymān ibn Mūsā ibn Muḥammad ibn Sharaf al-Dīn al-Ḥasan ibn al-Ḥāfiz li-Dīn Allāh Abī ʿl-Fath al-Daylami. The beginning and end of the MS. is truncated.

Published catalogue:
1976. Some of these MSS were microfilmed. See Al-Makhtūṭāt al-laḥf sawwathā ... under Union catalogues above.

Muhammad al-Aḥdāl

Al-Sayyid Muḥammad ibn Sulaymān al-Aḥdāl
Zabīd
District of al-Ḥudayya
Tel.: 340671
Status: Private
Conditions of access: No access.
Total number of Islamic MSS: ca. 40.
Description of collection: The owner of the collection is Muḥammad ibn Sulaymān al-Aḥdāl, whose family is well known for the transmission of learning and manuscripts. The collection is housed at the owner’s residence. Most MSS were copied between the 11th and the 12th centuries AH. There are also undated MSS as well as damaged ones whose dates cannot be ascertained. They are not in a good state because of the heat and dampness of the region. The two main subjects covered are fiqh and literature. Other subjects include Ḥadīṣ and Arabic language. The following are examples from the collection: (i) Ṭāṣīr al-Raḥyā, an anonymous work of three hundred pages copied in 1186 AH by an unknown copyist; (ii) Risāla Qasvīn al-ṭairāy tā jamīʿ al-Ṣūfīn ft jamīʿ al-dāyan, a treatise of about 250 pages on Sunnite doctrines and practices by al-Ḥāfiz ibn ʿAṣī Allāh al-Shādhili, copied by an unknown copyist in 1253.

Al-Ṭaḥṣīb

Al-Shaykh ʿAlī ibn Daʿūd al-Ṭaḥṣīb
Zabīd
District of al-Ḥudayda
Tel.: 340244
Status: Private

Conditions of access: Open to the owner’s students. Other researchers can come to the hospice where the owner teaches to consult or photocopy documents with the consent of the owner.

Total number of Islamic MSS: ca. 50.

Description of collection: The owner of the collection is al-Shaykh Ahmad ibn Daʿūd al-Baṭṭāb who teaches in a hospice near his house. He has himself written several works which are still in manuscript. The family of al-Ṭaḥṣīb is a branch of the clan of al-Aḥdāl. The collection, placed in wooden chests, is housed partly at the owner’s residence and partly at the hospice. The MSS were copied mostly in the 11th, the 12th and the 13th centuries AH. They deal principally with jurisprudence, Ḥadīth, Arabic language and inheritance law. Other subjects include Qur’ānic sciences, literature and general works on taṣawwuf. The MSS are in relatively good condition. Among them are: (i) Fārat al-qārij al-majīb li-l-Qārij al-labīb bi-maʿrīf al-wajīya bi-l-ṣayābi aṣw bi-māshī al-naṣīb, a work on the law of inheritance by al-Shaykh al-Ṭaḥṣīb, an autograph copy completed on 10 Shawwāl 1399 AH; (ii) Ifṣād al-adīb bi-taṣārīf al-lajūl al-ṣawhī al-xabād, a work of about 250 pages on jurisprudence by Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn ʿAbd al-Bāq al-Aḥdāl, in beautiful naskh script, copied in 1256 AH by Ahmad ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd; (iii) al-Kaṣīf li-l-faṭiḥ, a work on the law of inheritance by Abū ʿAbd Allāh Iṣḥāq ibn Yūsuf ibn Yaʿqūb ibn ʿIrāhīm al-Ṣarabjī (d. 500 AH). The MS. was copied in 1146 AH by Bīrī ibn ʿAlī al-Ḥiḍāzī. The MSS were acquired through inheritance and purchase, and were copied mostly in the 13th and the 14th centuries AH, some in the 11th and the 12th centuries AH. They are in moderate condition. The collection is housed at the owner’s residence on wall-mounted shelves. It covers a wide variety of subjects including history, Arabic language sciences, jurisprudence, inheritance law, literature, dictionaries, biographies, topography, Qur’ānic sciences, Ḥadīth, astronomy, taṣawwuf, poetry and other subjects. The following are examples from the collection: (i) al-Taffāba fi l-misāba, a treatise on meteorology by Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Ibrahim al-Ḥalāfī, in one volume which contains other selections. It was copied by an unknown copyist in 1083 AH; (ii) Shahr al-Arbaʿīn al-Nawawīya, a work on Ḥadīth by Saʿd al-Dīn al-Taʾfẓalānī. The MS. was copied by an unknown copyist in 1252 AH.

Unpublished catalogue:
ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Ḥadrāmī, the owner of the collection, has compiled in his own hand a complete inventory of his collection. Entries are arranged alphabetically according to title followed by author and number.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL APPENDIX


Birnbaum, Eleazar. Turkish manuscripts: cataloguing since 1960 and manuscripts still uncatalogued. Part 3: USSR, Iran,

Yemen is mentioned under Arab lands (except Palestine) on p. 704.


*Arabie du Sud*, p.8. Yemen, p.84.


Al-Yaman, pp. 703–706.


Survey of collections & guide to catalogues & bibliographical sources.