Unpublished catalogue:
A pilot scheme is in hand to catalogue the Arabic MSS on computer. Descriptions will be to the same standards as in Verzeichnis der Orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland (see Vol. I, pp. 317–318). This will eventually replace the existing printed catalogues.

Trinity College Library

(see Vol. II, pp. 62–65)

Conditions of access: The manuscripts room is open Monday – Friday, 10.00 – 17.00 and Saturday, 10.00 – 13.00. The issue of MSS three at a time is not an invariable rule.

Description of collection: The present manuscripts areas in the 18th-century Library building were specially adapted for the storage and consultation of MSS in the early 1970s. They are constructed to the highest standards, and are fully air-conditioned. The Keeper of Manuscripts does not believe any of the MSS to be crumbling, nor in need of urgent treatment.

LIBYA

by

F.M. Shambesh

1992
PREFACE

In addition to the collections listed in the survey there are scores of zuwiyas in Libya containing collections which vary in size and value. Many may have been lost or damaged, but there remain collections which need to be recorded and catalogued. It is sad to note that the library of Zuwayay al-ʿĀlim in Al-Jabal al-Gharbi was destroyed in a fire. Many families who number among their ancestors a scholar or a scribe may have collections of MSS, even in small villages. Among these families may be mentioned the following: AHMAD DĪYĀʾ AL-DĪN AL-MUNTAṢIR; AL-FAQĪH AL-HASAN, AL-ḤUDAYRĪ (in Fezzan), AL-NAṢĪS, AL-BISHĪ, AL-ḠIMĀRĪ and AL-TUṢJĀMĀN.

In the region of Al-Jabal al-Gharbī, there are ca. 3,000 MSS, most of them on Ibāḍī fiqh.

UNION CATALOGUES & SURVEYS


On p. 19, are listed 5 MSS in Maktabat ʿAlī Muṣṭafā al-Miṣrāfī and one in the Maktabat al-Awqāf in Tripoli.


Describes some private collections, and gives catalogue descriptions of some MSS. Mentions private collections in Jādū, Kābāw, and Ruḥaybat in the Jabal Nafusa region of Libya.


Includes lists of MSS in three collections in Libya.


Briefly notes three important repositories of MSS in Libya.

Limited copies of this catalogue were produced on the occasion of the Second Seminar on the History of Arab Sciences, Aleppo, Syria, 1979. The catalogue is based on the card catalogues of science MSS at the following institutions: Maktatbat al-ʿAwqāf in Tripoli; Maktatbat Kulliyat al-Tarbiya in Sebha; some libraries in Ghadames, ʿUbarq, and al-Maktatbat al-Markaziyya in Gār Yūnis (only 25 per cent of the science MSS at this library are mentioned here because the other 75 per cent were not catalogued at that time).

The catalogue has no indexes, and the compiler did not follow academic standards of cataloguing.


[Source, Dalīl (see Appendix).]

INDIVIDUAL COLLECTIONS

BANI WALĪD

Approximately 1,000 MSS exist in collections in Bani Walid.

BENGHAZI

Dār al-Kutub al-Wataniya (National Library)

PO Box 9127, Benghazi
Tel.: 90704, 90509. Telex: 90704
Date of establishment: 1970
Status: National library
Total number of Islamic MSS: 125 (105 Arabic; 20 Persian and Turkish).

Description of collection: Although the building was completed in 1978, it has not yet been officially opened—the academic research degrees section is unfinished and technical equipment is still needed for the readers' services section, the information centre and the national bibliographical centre.

The manuscripts have been temporarily placed in the depository of Garyounis Central University Library (p. v. below for a description).

Garyounis Central University Library (Al-Maktaba al-Markaziyya)

PO Box 1308, Benghazi
Tel.: 29713. Telex: 40175 unigar ly
Date of establishment: 1955
Status: Public
Total number of Islamic MSS: ca. 4,520 (4,500 Arabic; 3,500 original manuscripts in 2,700 volumes & 1,000 microfilm/paper copies; 20 Turkish/Persian).

Description of collection: Garyounis Central University Library is one of the largest and most important libraries in Libya. A special department has been established for manuscripts, equipped with photocopying facilities, microfilm printers, projectors, viewing rooms and an early warning system to prevent theft.

The manuscripts are generally in good condition (each one is kept in its own box inside the binding workshop of the library), although many will have to be repaired and fumigated. The collection has a variety of sources: (i) Maktatbat al-Jaghbūb (see Mūhammad b. ʿŪthmān al-Ḥaṣaʾīṣī, Rihla al-Jaghbūbīti li-Libīyā, 1993, Beirut: Dār Lubnān, 1965, pp. 151–186), the collections of which are preserved at Garyounis University. Only 900 MSS exist today out of the original 12,000. After the Italian occupation, the manuscripts that remained did not exceed 3,500 (see Philip Ward, A survey of Libyan bibliographical resources / Maqādir al-kutub fī Libīyā, 2nd edition, Tripoli: Dār al-Nāshir al-Libīyā, 1965, p. 6); (ii) 734 manuscripts of the Maktatbat al-ʿAwqāf of Benghazī entered into the collection after the library was combined with Maktatbat al-Jaghbūb (see ‘School and Public Libraries in Libya’, a paper presented at the Conference of the Arab Ministers of Education and Economic Planning in the Arab Countries, Tripoli, 9–14 April 1966, pp. 5–7) and transferred to Garyounis Central University Library; (iii) The MSS from the Libyan Red Crescent Society (which purchased the private collection of one of its employees) are on deposit at the Garyounis University Library to which they have been offered for sale (ca. 7 MSS); (iv) A number of original manuscripts and large numbers of
photocopies of manuscripts owned by private individuals, were acquired after a successful campaign inside Libya (especially in al-Jabal al-Gharbi) to photocopy manuscripts in the early 1970s; (v) A large number of manuscripts on microfilm have been obtained from the following sources: Gazi Husrev-Beg library in Sarajevo, the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, the Escorial in Spain, the USA, and the Institute of Arabic Manuscripts.

Most of the manuscripts were copied between the 6th and 7th centuries, and the 9th and 13th centuries AH. Manuscripts dealing with Hadith, Sufism, sermons, the biography of the Prophet, sciences of the Arabic language and literature were, with a few exceptions, copied in the lifetime of their authors.

Many manuscripts in this library are rare and precious, such as: (i) Al-Jahara fi nasab al-Nabi wa-asbabihi al-‘ashara, by Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr al-Tilimsānī, also known as al-Barrī, d. 676 AH/1277 AD. Draft by the author in his own handwriting. Copied in Minorca, Spain, in 645 AH. Written for the private library of Sa’īd b. al-Hakam b. ʿUmar b. al-Hakam al-Qurashi; (ii) Tūnīk Dimashq (History of Damascus) by Ibn ʿAsākir, eight parts in one volume: a unique khūzāʾi copy, the text of which was checked by the author, dated 514 AH, Damascus Mosque (Jāmiʿ Dimashq); (iii) Amāli Thulūb, by ʿAbd al-Rahmān al-Shaybānī, also known as Thulūb, d. 292 AH/904 AD, copied by Abū ʿl-Ḥasan ʿAlī b. Muḥammad b. ʿAbī Saʿīd al-Shaybānī in 583 AH, read to Muḥammad b. Mūsā al-Ḥāzimī in the same year and corrected and checked on the basis of the original MS.

The sizes of the manuscripts vary from small tracts to large books. They have much decoration in gold and other embellishments, especially the copies of the Qurʾān.

The manuscripts of Dār al-Kutub al-Wataniyya are temporarily housed in the Gargour Central University Library where they are carefully looked after—however, most of them need repair and fumigation. Subjects covered include: literature, history, jurisprudence, logic, and sciences of the Arabic language. The manuscripts were copied between the 10th and 13th centuries AH (except for one 8th-century AH manuscript dealing with the laws of descent and distribution—ʿilm al-Faraḍḍ), and are in three styles of script: the Persian, the cursive and the Mashrīqī. They come in a variety of shapes and sizes, from small treatises to bound volumes. Rare and precious manuscripts include: 1) Farāḥ al-mā'yī, in three large

volumes, decorated with gold, written in Persian; 2) Bātān Saʿīdi, in Persian; 3) Al-Munir fi hujj al-tadbīr in Arabic, in the author’s handwriting; 4) Durar al-mukhtar fi sharḥ Tawāris al-ahdār by Al-ʿAĪsī, a copy in good condition, written in Damascus.

Published catalogues:

1974. The Union survey by Kūtī briefly describes the holdings of the Libyan University Library.

1976. The Union survey mentions among important MSS collections the Central University Library.


Part one contains 671 titles on the following topics: The Qurʾān and its sciences; copies of the Qurʾān (Māṣāḥif), recitation, Qurʾānic sciences, Qurʾānic exegesis; The Traditions (Hadith) and their sciences; Monotheism (Tawḥīd) and scholastic theology (ʿIlm al-Kalām). The second part of the catalogue covers 795 titles dealing with the following: Jurisprudence and its principles; Laws of descent and distribution; Sufism and sermons; Prayer and invocation; Biography or life of the Prophet.

The third part of the catalogue was ready for press in 1986 but has not yet been published. It will be 338 pages long and will cover 700 titles of manuscripts dealing with the following: General knowledge; logic; Arabic language; alchemy and craftsmanship; astronomy and astrology; arithmetic and algebra; literature; medicine, pharmacology and veterinary medicine; biography and māṣāḥif; history, geography and travel.

The catalogue, which contains indexes of titles, subjects and authors, features a bibliography of the most important reference works. Details given are: name of author and the date of his death, AH or AD; source of biography; incept and explicit; name of copyist, date of copy and place where copied; length and width of MS; in centimetres; the number of folios and lines; general observations (decorative features, drawings, etc.).
Unpublished catalogue:
For the Dār al-Kutub al-Waṭaniya collection, the depository of Garyounis Central University Library has provided a temporary list of the manuscripts, which mentions the title of each MS., the name of the author and the serial number.

Uncatalogued MSS:
The third part of the catalogue mentions 20 manuscripts (10 Arabic; 6 Turkish; 4 Persian) which, along with 50 recently acquired manuscripts and the Turkish collection, have not yet been catalogued. The library also possesses approximately 1,000 titles on microfilm and in photocopies; only 42 of these titles have been catalogued.
The MS. collection of the Dār al-Kutub al-Waṭaniya has yet to be catalogued.

Markaz Dirāsāt al-Ṭibb al-ʿArabi (Centre for Arabic Medicine Studies—CAMS)
PO Box 4147-18251, Benghazi
Tel.: 22191/5, 87217, Telex: 40240
Date of establishment: 1987. On 17th April 1988, the Centre was attached to the Arab Development Institute. On 1st January 1989, its headquarters were moved to the building of the Arabic Medicine University, Benghazi.
Status: Medical research centre
Description of collection: The Centre is interested in preserving and promoting the Arabic medical heritage by, among other aims, compiling a general and comprehensive survey of the scientific and medical manuscripts in universities and libraries all over the world; and acquiring and photocopying the manuscripts themselves. No further information about its MSS holdings is available.

GARZA
Maktabat Muḥammad al-Naṣīḥ
In the city of Garza in Nismi, south east of Mazda in the area of Wādī Zamzam, this library has a collection of ca. 150 MSS, most of them on Islamic knowledge and language.

GHADAMES
General
The cultural movement in Ghadames produced great libraries which contained large collections of MSS. Unfortunately most of them have been lost as a result of ignorance, irresponsibility and foreign domination. In addition, the American air raid in December 1942 destroyed many buildings and houses causing the loss of many MSS and documents. In Ghadames there is a regional office of the Markaz Buḥūr wa-Dirāsāt Jihād al-Libiyin (see under Tripoli below), managed by Mr. Bāshīr Qāsim Yūsuf, which has produced photographic copies of some of the MSS in private libraries.

In Ghadames and its suburbs, there exist ca. 2,000 MSS on all fields of knowledge.

Published catalogues:
1979. Juhaydar (Union catalogues, 1979) describes some MSS from libraries in Ghadames.


The catalogue includes descriptions of 400 photographed MSS, collected from 28 private libraries in Ghadames. The compiler does not follow any particular system of classification, and there are many mistakes in the work. Rare MSS mentioned in the catalogue are: (i) Kifrayat al-Muhājij il-mawṣil min layla fī ʿl-Dibaj, by Aḥmad ibn Aḥmad al-Tinbukti, on Ṭūlki figh, 209 ff., copied in 1094 AH; (ii) Taḥāsh al-ʿalābīh fi sharh Taḥāsh dīn al-aṣābīh by Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿUṣṭān al-Azārī, 83 ff., copied in Tiemcen (Algeria) in 1063; (iii) Imāma waḥdiq ʿādī jumāl min al-fiqh wa-nusush, by Muḥammad ibn ʿAbī Shuqayyib ibn ʿAbd al-Malik al-Qṣīfī, 87 ff., copied in 1043 AH; (iv) Muḥālim al-Tansīl, by ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn ibn Maḥmūd al-Baghawī, 199 ff., copied in 721 AH.

Maktabat Muḥammad al-Ḥabīb ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn ʿIzz al-Dīn al-Ghadāmīsī
Status: Private
Description of collection: Endowed to his family in 1342/1923. The library at present is in the possession of the family in Ghadames.

JADU

Several private collections of MSS in Jadu are mentioned by Ennami (Union catalogues, 1970), among them those of Shaykh Muhammad al-Barouni, Shaykh ‘Umar Mallaw (Qadi of Jadu), Shaykh Ayyub ibn Muhammad al-Ayyubi of Jannah village, and Salih al-Maqsi.

KABAW

Ennami (Union catalogues, 1970) mentions a collection of MSS in the hands of Shaykh Yusuf Ahmad al-Barouni in Kabaw.

MISALLATI

Approximately 500 MSS exist in local collections.

MISRATA

Approximately 1,500 MSS exist in private collections.

AL-RAYAYINA

Maktabat al-Shaykh A-Muhammad Ahmad Manfi al-Rayayini

The owner died in 1280/1864. He left a valuable collection of ca. 800 MSS, but only about 200 have survived. It is kept now in the house of his grandson ‘Abd al-Rahman ibn A-Muhammad Manfi. The library contains works on Malikite fiqh and books on Hadith, fai’id, tafsir, etiquette, ma’arif, Sufism, Arabic language and the life of the Prophet.

RUHAYBAT


SEBHA

Maktabat Kulliyat al-Tarbiya (Education College Library)

Juhaydar (Union catalogues, 1979) includes MSS from this collection.

TRIPOLI

Dar al-Ma’qafat

The survey by Al-Khutri (1974) describes a collection of ca. 400 MSS and documents in the Dar al-Ma’qafat (pp. 182–183). No further information is available.

Jam’iyyat al-Daw’a al-Islamiya

PO Box 2549, Tripoli
Tel.: 315231.

Total number of Islamic MSS: ca. 50.

Description of collection: In 1990 during an academic conference the Society arranged an exhibition of MSS in collaboration with Markaz Dirasat al-Libiyin djiang ‘al-Ghazawa al-Ittihi. Both Mali and Mauritania participated in this exhibition in which ca. 300 MSS on the Islamic West were displayed, in addition to some historical documents. The Society was able, with the help of the Centre, to photograph all the MSS and the photographic copies are now in the possession of the Centre. In addition the Society possesses a small collection of photographed MSS which it has obtained from several countries: they have not been classified and their number does not exceed 30 MSS.

Maktabat al-Awqaf al-‘Amma

One of the oldest public libraries in the city of Tripoli, established at the command of the Ottoman governor Naim Pascha in 1898. In 1894, the Minister of Education (Secretary of Education Committee) decided to transfer the contents of Maktabat al-Awqaf al-‘Amma in Tripoli to the Markaz Bu’ait wa-Dirasat al-Libiyin djiang ‘al-Ghazawa al-Ittihi (p. s.).
Jami'at al-Fāṭih: Al-Maktaba al-Markaziya (Fatih University Library)

PO Box 13499, Tripoli
Telex number: 20629
Status: University library
Total number of Islamic MSS: 40.
Description of collection: The majority of the MSS are written in the Maghribi style. The collection covers the following: fiqh, logic, Arabic language and literature, religious poems. The most important MSS are: (i) Iṣḥād al-ʿaṣr al-sālim fi mazāṣī ʿl-Kiṭāb al-Karīm, by Abū ʿl-Sādī Muhammad al- Ḥimādī. Mashriqi style of handwriting; (ii) Ghayth al-ndaʿ fi ʿl-ṣaraṣṣ al-sāḥī, by Abū Nuğīr al-Shīrīṣi [sic], Maghribi style; (iii) Ṣawād al-adab, by Muhammad al-Ḥijāzī, Mashriqi style; (iv) Tālqīq Kiṭāb al-niḥaya wa-ʿl-tanāmī fi maṣawī al-wataḥaṣq wa-ʿl-Aḥkām, by Abū ʿl-Ḥasan ʾAlī ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn Ṣaḥnī ibn Muḥammad al-ʿAlī ʿAjmī, Maghribi style; (v) Al-Mustaṣara fi kull khabar mustaṣara, by Abū ʾIsḥāqī, Maghribi style.

No catalogues have been compiled for this collection.

Maktabat Maslahat al-Āthār

The union survey published in al-Mawrid (1976) describes this as one of the important libraries containing MSS in Libya. No further information is available.

Markaz Buhūth wa-Dirāsāt Jihād al-Lībiyyīn didda ʿl-Ghażw al-ʿItālī (Centre for Research and Study of the Holy Struggle of the Libyans against the Italian Aggression)

PO Box 5070, Tripoli
Tel.: 33996-46987, Telex: 20424
Date of establishment: 1978
Status: Public
Conditions of access: ID card required. Open daily 07:30–14:30, except on Fridays and public and religious holidays.
Total number of Islamic MSS: ca. 2,650, including photographic reproductions (mostly Arabic; a few Persian or Turkish).
Description of collection: A Department for MSS was established at the Centre where the collection of MSS has grown by means of purchase and photographic reproduction from sources in different parts of Libya (such as Tripoli, Ghadames, Daraj, Nisa, Tubq, and al-Rabbaniya in al-Jabal al-Gharbi) and Turkey.

According to the endowments and accessions, nearly all of these MSS belonged to Maktabat al-Awqāf, whose MSS were transferred in 1984 to the Centre. The Awqāf collection comprises the following sub-collections: (i) Maktabat ʿAbd Allāh Qaramānī and ʿUthmān Pasha, which formed the early nucleus of the collection; (ii) Maktabat Muṣṭafā ʿl-Khuja, 500 MSS; (iii) Maktabat ʿAbd Allāh al-Naʿīb al-Anṣarī al-Ṭarābulṣī from Al-ʿAssūsī family; (iv) MSS donated by ʿulamāʾ and others; (v) Books transferred from Al-Madrassa al-Islamiya al-Kubra and al-Nāfiʿ al-Adabi; (vi) Books which were purchased through Idarāt al-Awqāf. For a description of the Awqāf collection, see:


Tripoli, p. 53.

The subjects covered by the MSS in the Centre include: Qurʾān, ʿulūm al-Qurʾān, tafsīr, fiqh, usul al-fiqh, ṣarīʿa, Sufism, maqārim, Arabic language and its sciences. The MSS are generally in good condition, but some of them need restoration and preservation, especially the Awqāf collection. Although the building is modern, it has no proper rooms for MSS storage. The majority of the MSS—and the ones collected from al-Jabal al-Gharbi and Daraj in particular—are mostly works of Libyan writers—belonging to the period from the 9th to the 14th century AH. Rare items include: (i) Writings on tafsīr and usul al-fiqh by Shaykh Muhammad ibn Muḥammad ibn Qasim Qajāfī, in the author’s handwriting; (ii) Taddīl al-Muṣār, by Abū ʾAbd Allāh al-Qaṣṣī ʿUthmān al-Ṭarābulṣī; the second volume, ending with Kiṭāb al-bayān, 267 ff., written during the author’s life in 1138 AH, MS. number 1502; (iii) Muḥammad ʿal-ʿabād al-ḥašīl ʿalī ʿabāb, by Muḥammad ibn Muṣṭafā ibn Muḥammad al-Anṣarī al-Ṭarābulṣī; the volume one starting with Sūrat Yā Sin and ending with Sūrat al-Zumar. Autographic copy in Maghrībi style, dated 1279 AH, 209 ff.; (iv) Tārīkh Fazzān, by Muṣṭafā ʿal-Khuja ibn Qasim, 30 ff. (not mentioned in the catalogue); (v) Sharḥ Maṣāʾ al-Brayayn,

Published catalogues:
1974. Juhaydar (Union surveys) includes MSS from the Maktabat al-Awqâf collection.


The catalogue provides the following information: (i) MS. title, number, author (with a brief biography); (ii) Name of the scribe, date of copying, number of folios, dimensions in cms, number of lines and the style of handwriting.


This library is now in the Centre. [Source, Barkâr, see Appendix.]


Catalogue of ca. 50 MSS in the library of the late Shaykh Dâvud al-Khâḍrâwî, donated to the Centre in 1984, together with approximately 40 other MSS.


Detailed catalogue of 148 MSS on microfilm.


Includes 536 titles on the following topics: Qur’ân, ʿulûm al-Qur’ân, taṣfîr, uṣûl al-fiqh, Muḥâkkaṭ fihm, Hanafi fiqh and fiṣâḥî. The catalogue has the following indexes: titles; authors; scribes; endowments and accessions; references.

MSS in this catalogue are arranged alphabetically under subject headings.

Unpublished catalogue:
There is a card catalogue for 1,286 MSS which were transferred from Maktabat al-Awqâf (out of a total of 1,610 MSS).

Uncatalogued MSS:
Some 230 MSS from the Maktabat al-Awqâf collection are not yet catalogued.

Al-Uṣâdî ʿAṣr Muṣṭafâ al-Mishrîṭî
A large collection of photographed MSS and documents from local and foreign libraries. The most important items are: (i) Taṣawwûf al-mawṣûla wa-tarîkh waš-ʿl-mawṣûla fihm; (ii) Sâfinat al-mawṣûla, by ʿAbd Allâh Jâmîl al-Din al-Maḥdî al-Tarîkhî, d. 1964, in the author’s handwriting; (iii) Rasâla fihm; (iv) Shîrûn; (v) Muṣṭafà Bâdî al-Mishrîṭî; (vi) Al-Qawâli al-mustâbâm fihm; (vii) Jâfîr ibn Muḥammar al-Bâkhîsh al-Zulayyînî, who completed it in 1294 AH.

Three of these MSS are on music.

Al-Uṣâdî Muktâr al-Hâdi Bin Yûnûs
A private collection of ca. 500 MSS, mostly by Libyan authors, belonging to one of the Centre’s researchers.

TUBQA
Juhaydar’s Union catalogue (1979) included some MSS from a private library in Tubaq.
AL-ZAWIYA

Approximately 1,000 privately owned MSS exist in Al-Zawiya.

ZLITEN

Many families in this city have private collections which include MSS copied by their forefathers, and some of them are rare works. Among these families are the following: Bin Ganun, Andisha, Juwan, al-Mahjub, Bin Mas'ud, Atfayish and al-Sawi.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL APPENDIX


See nos. 33, 95 & 132 for items relating to Libya.


Libiya, Muljaq, pp. 39–40, nos. 56–58.


Libiya/Libya, p. 186.


Bibliotheken und Sammlungen arabischer Handschriften: Libyen, p. 401.