

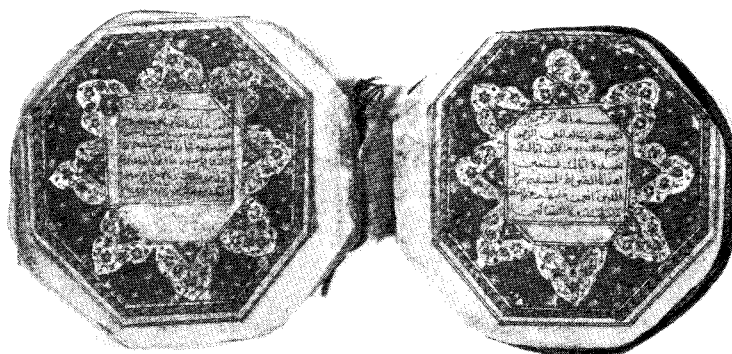
ARABIC MANUSCRIPTS

IN THE LIBRARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LEIDEN
AND OTHER COLLECTIONS IN THE NETHERLANDS

A General Introduction to the Catalogue

BY

J. J. WITKAM



E.J. BRILL / LEIDEN UNIVERSITY PRESS
LEIDEN 1982

BIBLIOTHECA UNIVERSITATIS LEIDENSIS

CODICES MANUSCRIPTI

XXI

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THE PRESENT STATE OF ARABIC BIBLIOGRAPHY

When I visited Aleppo in the spring of 1970 I had a conversation with a bookseller in his shop in a remote corner of the roofed labyrinth of markets in the old town. His was one of those small rooms packed from door to ceiling with books, both printed and manuscript, which is still a widespread phenomenon in the Middle East. Browsing in such shops is decidedly not done, the proprietor knowing the titles of his books by heart, and also with faultless precision where to find them in what at first sight seems to be an inaccessible chaos. This bookseller in Aleppo had, like many of his colleagues, a fair knowledge of bibliography and when we came to speak of the question of how many Arabic manuscripts there were in the world, he gave as his opinion that their number was three million. One million, he said, were printed by now, another million were of unimportant or common texts, and the third million still needed exploration and would yield innumerable treasures. This, typically Arab, approach to the problem of Arabic bibliography is no less valid than any other estimation of the scope of the subject, as no exact figures are available.

But, one may ask, is there not already a tremendous effort being made to catalogue Arabic manuscript collections all over the world? An effort to which the numerous catalogues listed in the bibliographies of Huisman and Sezgin bear eloquent witness? And is there not already established a fairly accurate and stable picture of Arabic literature? Yes and no. The surveys of Arabic literature by Brockelmann, Graf and Sezgin, which are mainly based on catalogues of manuscript collections, give a surprising wealth of texts. Brockelmann's *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur* alone contains, on a rough estimate, some 25,000 titles by some 18,000 authors. Approximately the same proportion is found in Ḥāǧǧī Kalīfa's *Kašf al-Zunūn*, albeit a

smaller volume: around 15,000 titles by around 9,500 authors. Of many titles hundreds and hundreds of manuscripts exist, e.g. of al-Būṣīrī's Ode in praise of the Prophet Muḥammad, the *Qaṣīdat al-Burda*, or al-Ġazūlī's prayer book *Dalā'il al-Ḳayrāt*, to mention but a few. The tradition of a great number of texts, however, is based on a single manuscript or a few manuscripts only.

The fact that in the course of some three centuries, i.e. the period between the lifetimes of Hāġġī Ḳalīfa and Brockelmann, the number of titles increased from about 15,000 up to about 25,000 is illustrative of the progress of Arabic bibliography. One would, therefore, expect the discovery of many new titles by known authors, and also of many authors who have not yet figured in any bibliography at all.

Now where are all these exciting discoveries to be made? The public collections in Europe which were formed in the 17th century, e.g. Paris, Oxford, Cambridge, the Escorial, Leiden, and those that were established later, like the British Museum, Berlin, Princeton (USA), are all reasonably well described and fairly accessible. One can still, however, be amazed by the wealth of additional data one finds when perusing even these well known collections. By the time the present catalogue deals with the older holdings of the Leiden library this will become clear. That thorough perusal and analysis of manuscripts can make an enormous amount of information available is illustrated in R. Sellheim's *Materialien zur arabischen Literaturgeschichte* (vol. I, Wiesbaden 1976), a real gold mine, based on the analysis of one hundred manuscripts, which are now preserved in Berlin.

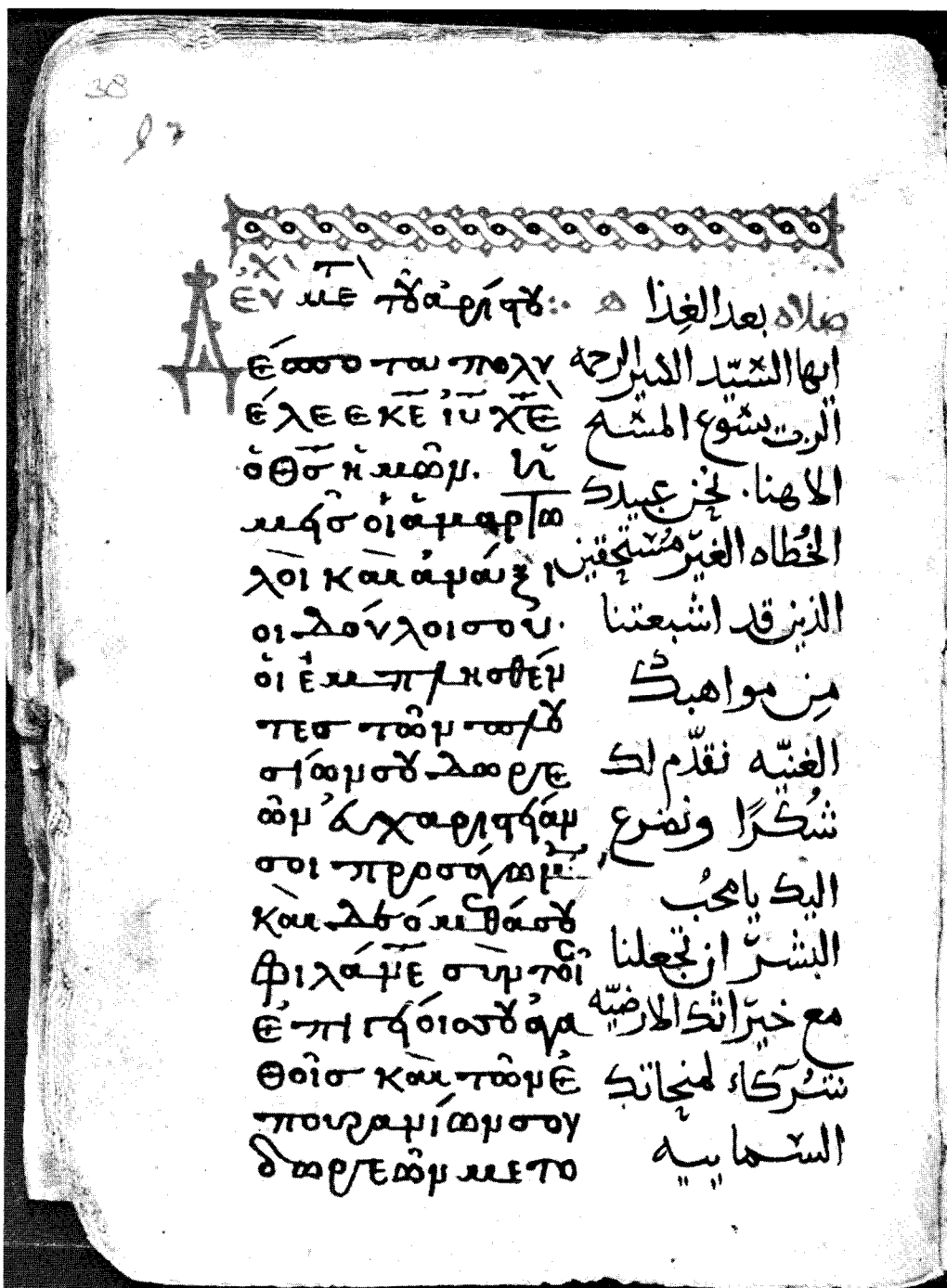
By far the greatest and most important collections of Arabic manuscripts are, of course, preserved in the Middle East, in the abundant and well guarded libraries of Istanbul, in Cairo, Damascus, Baghdad, Tehran and number of smaller towns. From these libraries the greater discoveries are to be expected, and it would be a delusion to think that this will not, in the long run, seriously affect the present image of Arabic literature. This applies especially to periods or areas which usually are conveniently styled as 'dark' or as 'affected by stagnation', but of which in reality hardly anything is known.

Our knowledge of some other aspects of Arabic cultural expression will, with the progress of the exploration of manuscripts, undergo significant changes: e.g. the history of the Arabic script, the history of the techniques of the manufacture of books. In spite of the certainty and complete lack of doubt which numerous scholars display on these subjects, their knowledge is based on hardly anything more than intuition. How could it be otherwise when not even the most elementary tools are available? Modern printing techniques make the reproduction of script specimens possible on a far

wider scale than formerly. The present catalogue will be lavishly illustrated, both in the text and through the separate portfolios with specimens of all dated manuscripts which will be published simultaneously with each volume of the catalogue. Only with such basic tools will it be possible — in a distant future — to reap what now is being sown. As to codicology, approximately the same can be said. In the field of Greek, Latin and Hebrew bibliography, techniques of codicological research have been developed, and some of these will be used in this catalogue. Only when a sufficient number of Arabic manuscripts has been described with codicological concepts taken into account will it become clear to what extent these are valid for the study of Arabic bookmaking, and how far they need amendment and supplementation. Especially in connection with the auxiliary sciences of palaeography and codicology Arabic manuscripts cannot be considered as an isolated phenomenon. Persian manuscripts, and to a lesser extent Turkish, Hebrew and Urdu manuscripts as well, may shed light on problems that have defied a solution in the case of Arabic manuscripts. Influences from bookmaking techniques and other handicrafts in regions on the periphery of Islam, e.g. West Africa, China and Indonesia, on the Arabic practice should be studied as well. This would surpass, however, the scope of a catalogue proper. The present catalogue aims at providing scholars with facts which may promote knowledge of these auxiliary sciences, and not at taking part in related discussions and controversies. However important such auxiliary sciences may be, it is intended above all that this catalogue should be a contribution to Arabic bibliography and literature, which is the cultural property of the whole of mankind.

ARABIC MANUSCRIPTS IN THE LIBRARY
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LEIDEN
AND OTHER COLLECTIONS IN THE NETHERLANDS

The Leiden collection of Arabic manuscripts is housed in the Oriental department of the University library, together with other Oriental collections of manuscripts and printed books. For readers of the manuscripts there is a reading room which is equipped with the necessary reference works; here they may consult the manuscripts after having ordered them by number from the vault where they are preserved. Private scholars who are not in the position to consult the manuscripts in person can order microfilms. The numbers by which the manuscripts are ordered are known from the catalogues, the most recent of which — in the case of the Arabic



Or. 14.239, f. 38a. Prayer after breakfast. Greek and Arabic text. Cursive Coptic page number in upper left corner. Egypt, 13th century(?).

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سورة القدر خمس ايات مكتوبة

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ لَيْلَةٌ

الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ مِنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ تَنْزِيلَ الْمَلَكَةِ وَالرُّوحِ فِيهَا يَأْتِي

رَبُّهُمْ مِنْ كُلِّ أَمْرٍ سَلَامٌ هِيَ حَتَّى مَطْلَعِ الْفَجْرِ

سورة البينة ثمان ايات مكتوبة

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

manuscripts — is P. Voorhoeve's *Handlist of Arabic Manuscripts* (Leiden 1957; 2nd enlarged edition The Hague 1980). This handlist is alphabetically arranged according to title, a method with evident advantages and frequently used by Arabic bibliographers; the untitled texts are arranged in a separate section according to their subject. Voorhoeve's *Handlist* refers to the manuscript numbers which are preceded by the abbreviation 'Or.' (for Oriental). These numbers indicate roughly the order in which the manuscripts entered the library and are not subject to change. In the course of time, however, other numbers have occasionally become attached to the manuscripts for reasons that need not now be expounded. The two catalogues preceding Voorhoeve's *Handlist*, *CCO* and *CCA*, which are arranged according to subject, each have their own system of numerical sequence; these have become immortalized since it is to those special, but meaningless, numbers that Brockelmann refers in his *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur*. Sezgin, on the other hand, refers to the Or. numbers in his *Geschichte des arabischen Schrifttums*. Both kinds of arrangement, alphabetically according to title or subject, have the clear disadvantage that composite manuscripts must, so to speak, be cut in pieces, and that the different texts are scattered through one or more volumes of the catalogue.

The arrangement which we propose for this catalogue is according to the numerical sequence of the Or. numbers. All codicological information is then easily found and the catalogue will be a true reflection of the manuscripts as they are stored on the shelves. Elaborate indexes at the end of each volume, and a cumulative index at the end of the series, will give the reader sufficient access to the collection. Voorhoeve's *Handlist* remains a valuable index to a great and fundamental part of the collection and will only gradually be replaced by the present catalogue.

It is hoped that in the course of time all Arabic manuscripts in the library, and those in other collections in the Netherlands, will be described in this catalogue. A separate volume with several cumulative indexes will then be published in order to give the reader of the catalogue a comprehensive survey of the Arabic manuscript collections in the Netherlands. These other collections of Arabic manuscripts in the Netherlands are for the greater part in the University libraries other than the Leiden library and are usually listed in the fifth volume of *CCO*, and in Voorhoeve's *Handlist* as well. Some of these are even preserved in the Leiden library, like the permanent loan of, mostly Middle Eastern, manuscripts from the collection of the Royal Academy of Arts and Sciences in Amsterdam. Their total number, however, is no more than a few hundred. The Arabic manuscript collection belonging to Leiden University consists of some four thousand volumes, with a number of texts which amounts to a multiple of that. Some three-

quarters of these are described in Voorhoeve's *Handlist*. The remaining part consists of new acquisitions, and the collection is expanding, the only still to be doing so in the Netherlands. Manuscripts are bought from private collectors, antiquarian booksellers and at auctions, mainly in London, which, with its famous auction houses and liberal economic system, is nowadays a centre of global importance in this respect. In the catalogue the provenance of the manuscripts is given as far as it can be reconstructed. The catalogue will start with the description of part of the collection which was acquired after the publication of Voorhoeve's *Handlist* in 1957.

THE METHOD OF THE CATALOGUE

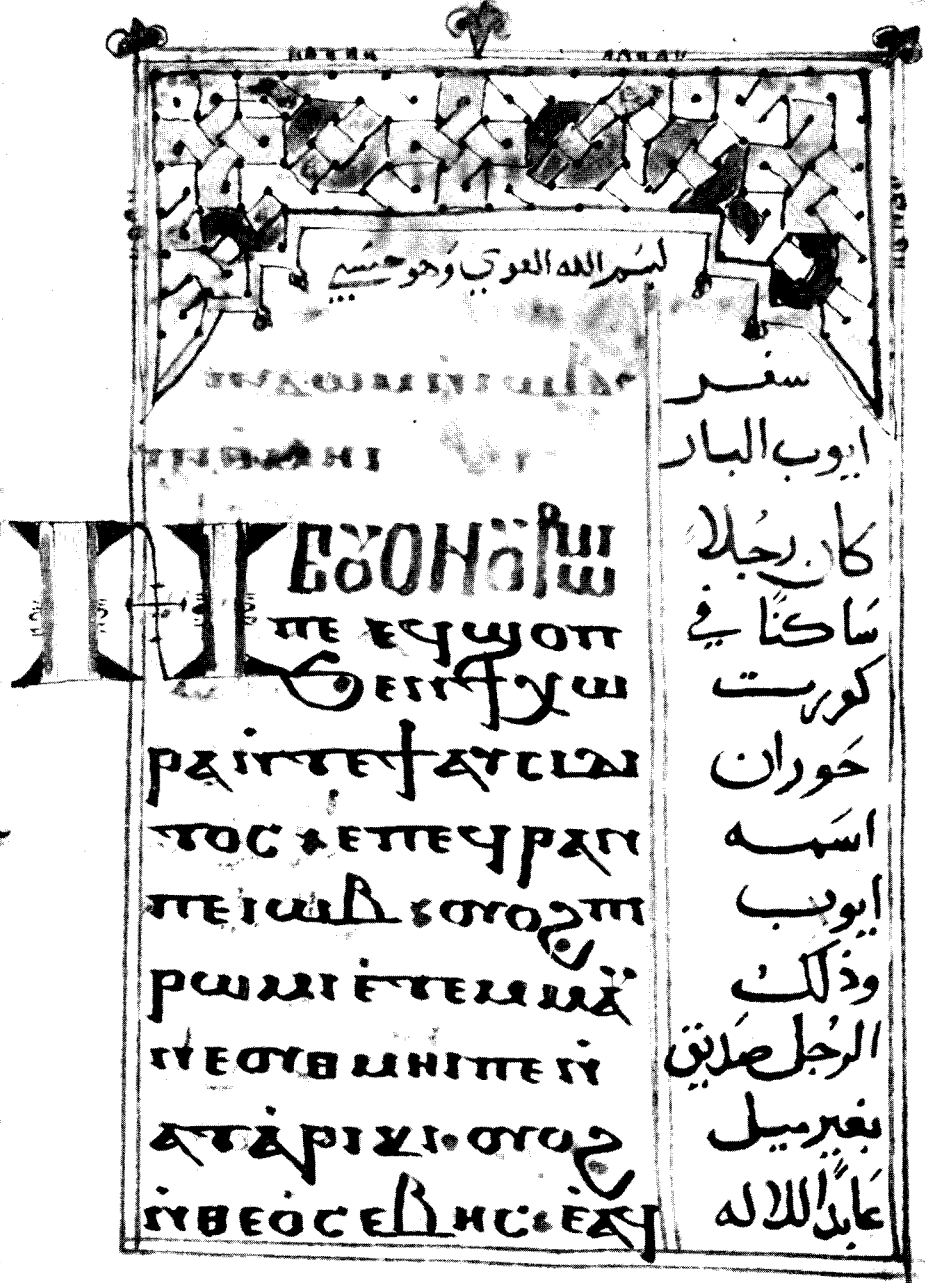
The descriptions of the manuscripts in this catalogue contain three basic elements. These are:

1. Identification. This part contains, if available, title, author, bibliographical reference and, if necessary, a justification or proof of the identification.

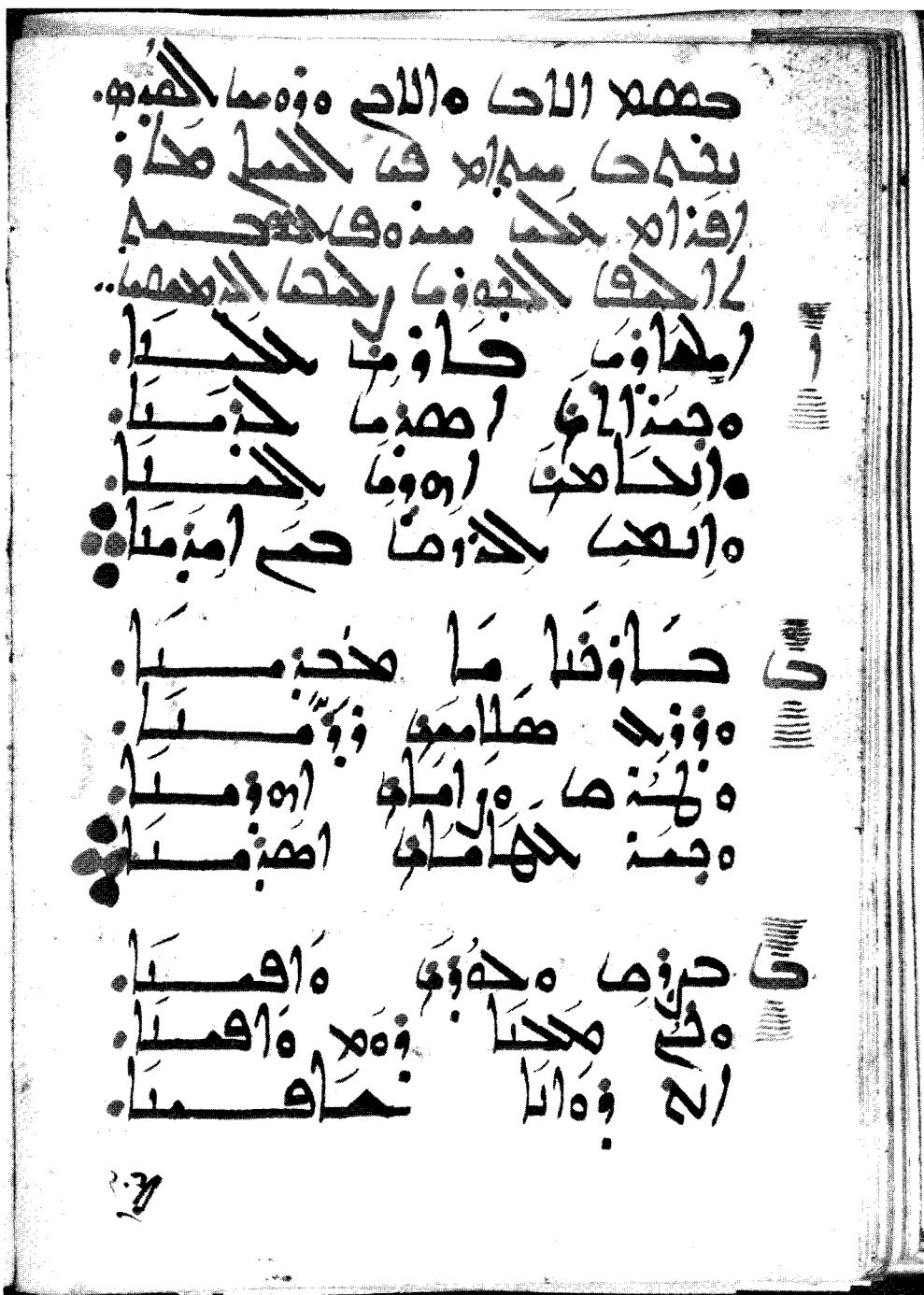
2. Physical description of the manuscripts. This part gives the number of pages, the number of lines to the page, the kind of pagination, the composition of the quires, the kind of writing materials, watermarks, a remark on the script, the number of copyists involved, the age of the manuscript, its provenance etc. To this may be added, if necessary or interesting, all owner's notes, other marginal notes, etc.

3. Description of the contents. In this section the evidence is adduced for the statements made in the two preceding sections. For the common or more current texts the reader is referred to other catalogues or to an earlier description of the same text in this catalogue. Texts which are in any way interesting, e.g. because of their rarity or their variant readings, receive a somewhat fuller treatment which may even include an enumeration of their chapters or any other analysis of their contents.

Simultaneously with the publication of each volume of this catalogue a collection of all dated specimens described in that volume will be published. On every reproduction will be indicated, apart from the date of copying, the number of the manuscript, which guarantees a ready reference to the bibliographical details in the catalogue volume as this is arranged according to the numerical sequence of the manuscript numbers. On the reproductions will also be given, if available, the title, author and original provenance of the manuscript. These plates will be published as loose sheets, thus enabling the student of Arabic bibliography to arrange them according to particular needs, e.g. by date, script, place of copying, size, subject-matter, etc. These



Or. 14.544, f. 4a. *Sifr Ayyūb al-Bārr*. Beginning of the Book Job, in Coptic and Arabic. Copied in 1508.1792. Slightly reduced.

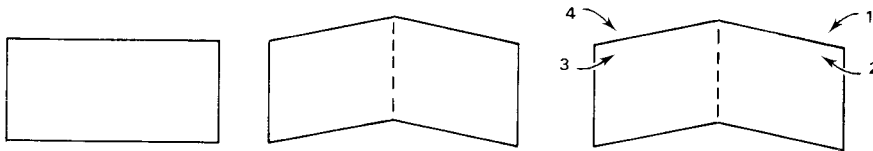


Or. 14.607, f. 139b. *Kitām fī Alhān Mār Afrām 'alā Hurūf Alfābīt*, by al-*kūrī* Salībī al-Dimašqī. Karšūnī text. Rome(?), 18th century. Slightly reduced.

collections of reproductions will be comparable with the projects of 'Manuscripts datés' which exist for Latin and Hebrew manuscripts in several countries.

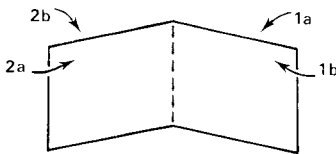
Whenever a number in the numerical sequence has been omitted in the catalogue this means that the omitted number refers to a manuscript which is not Arabic.

The terminology used in the catalogue is for the greater part self-evident. A few basic concepts and methods which I have used I will explain. To refer to paper (or vellum or other material) I have used the words 'sheet', 'leaf' and 'page'. Out of one sheet one may fold two leaves and these then contain four pages.

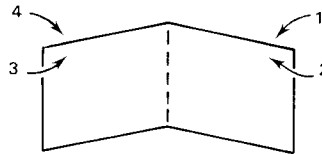


one sheet is folded into two leaves which contain 4 pages

Note that the manuscripts usually are numbered by the leaves with the abbreviation *f.* (for *folio*) with an indication for the recto and the verso page, either by 'a' and 'b', or by ^r and ^v.



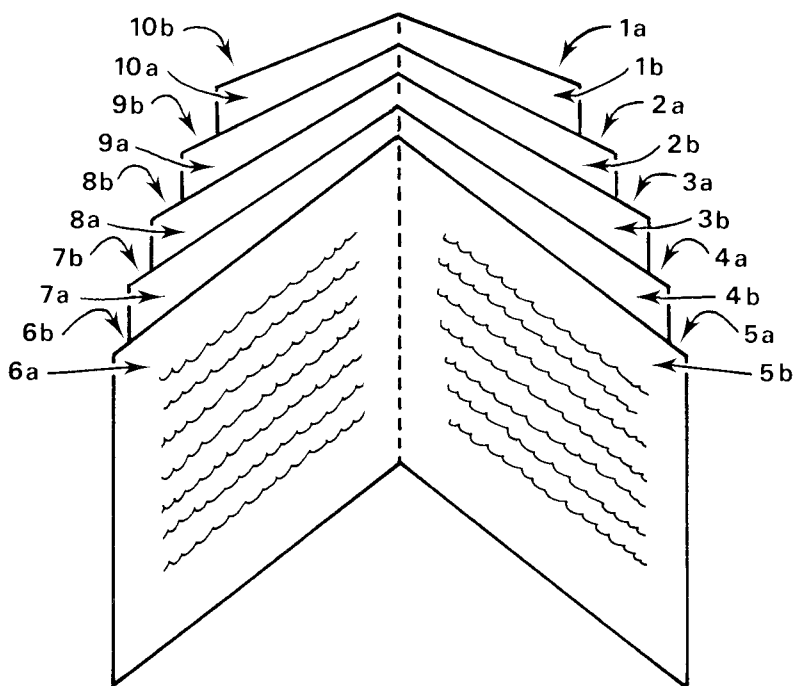
two leaves, numbered by the folios: *ff.* 1a-2b.



two leaves, numbered by the pages: pp. 1-4.

ff. 1a-2b means in fact the same as pp. 1-4. In the past, numerous different systems for numbering the pages of a manuscript have been in use. Most of these have been written in the manuscripts by the subsequent librarians, as Arabic manuscripts have rarely been paginated or foliated by the copyists. The latter used almost without exception a system of catchwords at the bottom of the verso page or a system of quire marks on the first recto page of the quire. Inconsistencies in the existing pagination or foliation have been described, but when there are no page numbers, or when the existing systems of numbers have become too confusing, the pages have been numbered anew for the purposes of this catalogue.

For the description of the composition of the quires the following method is used. Usually the quires consist of a certain number of sheets, folded into leaves, which, sewn through their hearts and then sewn together into a binding, constitute the book. Only the number of the sheets can vary, and sometimes not a sheet but a single leaf, in other words only half a sheet, has been used somewhere in the quire. The sheets in the quire are counted with Roman numerals, the number of quires with Arabic numerals, and in brackets is added the latest folio number.



The first quire of a book, opened at its heart. It consists of five (V) sheets, folded into ten (10) leaves, which are numbered *ff.* 1a-10b.

If a manuscript consisted of ten such quires the formula of the composition of the quires would run as follows: 10V(100). If the final quire consisted of only four sheets, the formula would run: 9V(90), IV(98). If in this final quire of four sheets one leaf were missing, the formula would run: 9V(90), IV-1(97), etc. One can imagine that for the more confusing and fantastic compositions of quires in a manuscript suitably complicated formulas may be constructed. Experience shows that irregularities in the composition of the quires often reveal other irregularities in the manuscript, such as the use of different paper, the work of a different copyist, or a lacuna in the text.

The dimensions of the page are always given in millimetres, but it should be borne in mind that no leaf of a manuscript has exactly the same dimensions as the other leaves, so the figures given are always approximate. Added to the dimensions of the page, i.e. of the paper (or the other writing material) itself, are the approximate dimensions of the text on the page, also given in millimetres, and written between brackets.

SELECT ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

C. Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur*. Vols 1-2, Leiden² 1943-49. Suppl. vols 1-3, Leiden 1937-42. Treats Arabic literature from the beginning up to approximately the date of publication. Usually abbreviated as *GAL G* (vols 1-2) and *GAL S* (Suppl. vols 1-3).

G. Graf, *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur*. Vols 1-5. Vatican City 1944-53. Treats the whole of Christian Arabic literature up to the 19th century. Mainly a chronological arrangement. Usually abbreviated as *GCAL*.

F. Sezgin, *Geschichte des arabischen Schrifttums*. Vols 1-7, Leiden 1967-79. More volumes in preparation. Arranged like the preceding works and planned to be a successor to Brockelmann's *GAL*, but it treats Arabic literature only up to c. 430 AH/1038 AD. The volumes cover different genres of literature and are complete in themselves. Sezgin is the first to make use of the immense libraries in Turkey. Extensive lists of catalogues of manuscript collections used for the book are given in the bibliographies of the volumes. Usually abbreviated as *GAS*.

R. Sellheim, *Materialien zur arabischen Literaturgeschichte*. Vol. I, Wiesbaden 1976. One or more volumes are in preparation. By the same author is the article 'The cataloguing of Arabic manuscripts as a literary problem,' in *Oriens* 23-24 (1974), 306-311.

M. Beit-Arié, *Hebrew Codicology. Tentative Typology of Technical Practices Employed in Hebrew Dated Manuscripts*. Jerusalem² 1981. Very useful in giving a typology of codicological features, many of which are valid for Arabic codicology as well. The author's conclusions are partly based on classification of data by a computer.

A. Grohmann, *Arabische Paläographie*. 2 vols, Vienna 1967-71. Originally intended to be followed by more volumes, these two volumes are concerned with writing materials and writing tools, and the lapidary scripts.

P.S. van Koningsveld, *The Latin-Arabic Glossary of the Leiden University Library*. Leiden 1976. Shows the far-reaching results which can be obtained by codicological methods.

J. J. Witkam, *Seven Specimens of Arabic Manuscripts*. Leiden 1978. A first attempt towards the publication of an atlas of Arabic palaeography since W. Wright's *Facsimiles of Manuscripts and Inscriptions. Oriental Series*. London 1875-83. Both give a description of the manuscripts together with the transcription of part or the whole of the specimens.

A. J. W. Huisman, *Les manuscrits arabes dans le monde. Une bibliographie des catalogues*. Leiden 1967. English edition in preparation. Lists as many catalogues of Arabic manuscripts as possible, up to 1967.

A. F. L. Beeston, *Arabic Nomenclature. A Summary Guide for Beginners*. Oxford 1971. Solves many riddles in connection with the composition of Arabic personal names.

SOME ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE CATALOGUE

b.	bin
c.	circa
cat.	catalogue
CCA	<i>Catalogus Codicum Arabicorum Bibliothecae Academiae Lugduno-Batavae</i> . Vol. I (by M. J. de Goeje and M. T. Houtsma), Leiden 1888. Vol. II, pt. 1 (all that was published; by M. J. de Goeje and T. W. Juynboll), Leiden 1907.
CCO	<i>Catalogus Codicum Orientalium Bibliothecae Academiae Lugduno-Batavae</i> . Vols I-II (by R. P. A. Dozy), Leiden 1851. Vols III-IV (by P. de Jong and M. J. de Goeje), Leiden 1865-6. Vol. V (by M. J. de Goeje), Leiden 1873. Vol. VI, pt. 1 (all that was published; by M. T. Houtsma), Leiden 1877.
d.	died
f.	folio
GAL	C. Brockelmann, <i>Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur</i> . See the bibliography.
GAS	F. Sezgin, <i>Geschichte des arabischen Schrifttums</i> . See the bibliography.
GCAL	G. Graf, <i>Geschichte des christlichen arabischen Literatur</i> . See the bibliography.
K.	Kitāb
M.	Muḥammad
MS.	Manuscript
MSS.	Manuscripts

ISBN 90 04 06847 3
90 04 06848 1

Front cover: Or. 14.248, ff. 1b-2a. *Qur'ān* in octagonal form. 'Sūrat al-Fātiḥa' and beginning of 'Sūrat al-Baqara'. India, 18th century(?).