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HERITAGE THE DIWAN OF LITERARY FRAGRANCES FROM  
HAMWI FLOWERS AS A MODEL**

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## **THE IMPACT OF MANUSCRIPT EDITING ON REVIVING HERITAGE THE DIWAN OF LITERARY FRAGRANCES FROM HAMWI FLOWERS AS A MODEL**

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### **Abstract:**

The research focuses on the Arab and Islamic heritage and shows its importance in our reality, which is suffering from the trauma of the West and Westernization, by getting to know our ancient heritage and benefiting from it in our contemporary life by building bridges between the past and the present, while benefiting from all other cultures without allowing them to uproot us from our roots or our alienation from our identity. Manuscripts are the most representative of that intellectual heritage in the various fields of human knowledge and cultural and civilizational wealth.

Therefore, I purposely went into this field and explored its depths, out of my love for the heritage, appreciation and reverence for it, so that my book was issued in the investigation after four years of suffering, during which I embarked on investigation and scrutiny following the scientific steps, armed with their tools and with the help of people of experience and owners of the field.

**Key words:** Heritage, investigation, manuscripts, libraries, Mamluk era, transcript.

### **Introduction**

Our heritage indeed deserves a moment of reverence and magnification, as it is replete with intellectual, literary, scientific, and architectural artifacts that embody values, standards, and elements of creativity and innovation that our ancestors followed in producing this vast heritage. The importance of our heritage, rich both in quantity and quality, lies in solidifying our identity and linking our present to our past. Authenticity, in its true sense, is not about self-isolation and rejecting others, but about seeking our roots and returning to them as a starting point for a renewed present that is capable of evolving within the parameters and developments of our era. Thus, the research aims to build bridges between heritage and modernity, drawing from the glorious past the spirit of science and knowledge to revive contemporary elements, tools, and materiality. By combining the material and the spiritual, we strive to achieve the development and prosperity we aspire to, advancing firmly and steadily in the face of the currents of openness and globalization, adopting what suits us and rejecting what targets us.

My passion for our ancient heritage, on one hand, and my desire to serve it, on the other hand, have driven me to choose this research. I benefited from the books and studies that advocated for the return to heritage and its revival through manuscript editing, such as "Editing and Publishing Texts" by Abdul Salam Haroun, "Rules of Manuscript Editing" by Salah Al-Din Al-Munajjid, "The Ultimate Pursuit of Arab Heritage" by Gamal Al-Ghitani, and "Guide to Manuscript Libraries" by Muhammad Aref, among others. The descriptive, analytical, and experimental methodology was my approach to solving a fundamental issue: What is the impact of editing on serving heritage? This issue led to further questions: What is the concept of heritage? What is editing, its methodology, and its mechanisms? Where are manuscripts located, and how can they be obtained and handled? How does a dedicated researcher participate in the editing movement, and what is their role in it?

## **Translation of Selected Sections of the Article**

I have divided the research into two sections. The first section begins with defining heritage both linguistically and terminologically. I then explain the importance and value of heritage and the perspective of Orientalists on it. Following this, I delve into the editing of manuscripts, defining it and highlighting the early Arabs' attention to this field. I trace the transition of this science to systematic regulation in the modern era, led by serious and enlightened researchers who benefited from the previous efforts of Orientalists. Furthermore, I discuss some locations where Arabic manuscripts can be found both in the Arab world and in foreign countries.

In the second section, I present my personal experience with manuscript editing, ensuring that the results are derived from a practical and applied intellectual perspective. I acknowledge the enjoyment I found in this work, which outweighed the difficulties associated with precision, patience, thoroughness, and frequent reference to sources. These challenges extended the work over four years. I aspire to continue on this path, serving our heritage and enriching the distinguished Arabic library.

**Keywords:** Heritage, Editing, Manuscripts, Libraries, Mamluk, Copy.

## **Section One: The Importance of Manuscripts in Reviving Heritage**

### **The Concept of Heritage**

Linguistically, the Arabic word for heritage (تراث) has its root in the word "ورث" (to inherit). The terms "ورث", "ارث" or "ميراث" refer to what is inherited. It is said that "ورث" and "ميراث" pertain to material wealth, while "ارث" pertains to noble lineage. The term is mentioned in the Quran in the context of Zakariya's prayer: "So grant me from Yourself an heir who will inherit from me and inherit from the family of Jacob" (Quran 19:5-6). It is also referenced in the Hadith: "O Allah, benefit me with my hearing and my sight and make them my inheritors." (Ibn Manzur, 1414 AH)

Conventionally, heritage encompasses the totality of intellectual, literary, scientific, architectural, and intangible legacies left by our ancestors. It includes the values derived from these legacies, the elements of creativity and innovation within them, the methods and approaches used in their production, their perspective on life, humanity, and the world, and everything encompassed by the concept of culture. Heritage influences the formation of successive generations, shapes national identity, and constitutes the essence of history throughout the ages and the succession of civilizations (Al-Haib, 2005, p. 43).

Arabic heritage includes all writings in the Arabic language, regardless of the writer's ethnicity, religion, or sect. Islam has transcended these divisions across the ancient civilizations it reached, promoting Arabic as the language of religion. This integration infused various cultures with a unified intellectual spirit characterized by Islamic thought and, inherently, Arabic thought (Haroun, 1978, p. 22).

Therefore, everything originally written or translated into Arabic from Syriac, Persian, Indian, Greek, and other languages is considered Arab heritage. This heritage is also Islamic because it reflects Islamic thought, originates from Islamic principles, serves Islamic culture, and developed within Muslim communities. However, not all Islamic heritage is Arabic in language; there are significant contributions in other languages within Islamic heritage. It is essential to distinguish the Quran and the Hadith from heritage, as they are perfect with the perfection of religion itself, whereas the application of their teachings may vary (Al-Namla, 1996, p. 309).

### **The Importance and Value of Heritage**

The value of our rich and diverse heritage lies in its prolific production and intellectual diversity across various branches of knowledge, sciences, literature, and arts. Its importance also stems from its role in solidifying our identity and linking our present to our past. True authenticity does not mean isolating oneself and rejecting others as intruders but involves seeking our roots and returning to them as a foundation for a renewed present that can evolve within the contemporary context. Any change without a solid foundation is a reckless event in history, unsustainable and unstable.

"There is an inevitability imposed by existence, the inevitability of laws and regulations, the inevitability of outcomes connected to their premises, and ends linked to beginnings... Therefore, we cannot juxtapose the present  
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and the past, making the achievement of one at the expense of the other... We argue that the absence of a clear and sound theoretical compass in the relationship between the present and the past leads to a duality in all aspects of an individual's and society's life." (Mahfouz, 2017)

Therefore, we must embrace modernity, provided it is not understood as a form of Westernization, severing ties with our roots, getting lost in the present, and dissolving into the contemporary moment. It is erroneous to perceive modernity as alienation and the adoption of new cultures through integration with other civilizations. Instead, it signifies continuous interaction and active, dynamic engagement with contemporary developments and advancements.

However, the path to modernity is not through mimicking other civilizations or adopting their cultural, intellectual, and technological frameworks, which leads to ideological distortion, cultural and social erosion, and loss of balance due to forced modernization. This process would transform the nation into a stagnant, lifeless, and imitative entity (Mahfouz, 2017).

True and effective modernity comes through historical and civilizational authenticity, drawing from it the spirit of science and knowledge, and revitalizing contemporary materiality with its tools, resources, and advancements. This can be achieved by building a system of intellectual, social, and cultural values where language serves as a means of communication among members of the same society. Consequently, the civilization becomes a unified entity, combining material and spiritual elements. Otherwise, the era loses its essence, embodied in authenticity and heritage.

The return to heritage does not mean merely glorifying its past glories and escaping from the present and its responsibilities. Rather, it is a return for the purpose of "building bridges between heritage and modernity, or between the past and the present. For he who has no past has no present, and he who has no present will not benefit from his past. We must open our windows to let in the winds of all civilizations and cultures without allowing them to uproot us from our origins and make us forget or distance ourselves from our identity." (Al-Haib, Lectures on Manuscript Editing, 2016, p. 4) Indeed, opening windows to other ideas, cultures, and literatures has become an imperative reality, whether we like it or not. However, we must filter all these ideas and cultures through the sieve of our Arab-Islamic identity—in thought, taste, art, and language—to adopt what is suitable and discard what is incompatible.

Moreover, we need to engage in a serious dialogue with our past to feel it alive once again, to sense through it our vitality in life, and to draw from it what can safeguard the essential elements of the unity of the Arab-Muslim society against what is known as the "shock of the West." This term, coined by ShawqiJallal in his book "Heritage and History," refers to the danger threatening the Arab self from external invasion associated with scientific and technological strength and colonial ambitions (Jalal, p. 5), which were the primary cause of creating a deep gap between us and our heritage. This began in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, starting with the arrival of the French campaign to Egypt led by General Bonaparte. The general trend shifted towards European civilization, affecting all fields, from architecture to writing styles, accompanied by a general feeling that European civilization was the source and reference for comparison, leading at some stages to a sense of cultural inferiority.

It is evident that the French campaign, which undoubtedly caused a civilizational shock, had purely colonial objectives. When Napoleon brought the printing press, it was not to print Arabic books but to print leaflets directed at the Egyptian people. When he brought French scholars, it was not to transfer modern science to the locals but to study the country in preparation for making it a margin of European civilization and a subordinate. This is confirmed by the diaries of some campaign leaders and the two newspapers published by Napoleon in Egypt: "Courrier de l'Égypte" and "La DécadeÉgyptienne," which contained numerous expressions such as "barbaric people," "ignorant," "backward," etc. Thus, the French campaign marked a decisive break and a severance from the natural historical development that could have continued and progressed. (Al-Ghaytani, 1997, pp. 9-10)

Some Orientalists attempted to obscure the Arabs' civilizational history by suggesting that Arabs were merely transmitters and translators of Greek, Indian, and Persian knowledge without any creative effort, serving only as intermediaries without a spirit of new production and authorship. This is a baseless claim refuted by the manuscripts of scholars such as Avicenna, Al-Razi, Al-Zahrawi, and Ibn Al-Haytham, among others. Europe still refers to certain chemical compounds by their Arabic names, such as alcohol and syrup, and various terms in different fields, such as zenith, azimuth, algebra, algorithm, and zero. It is true that Arabs benefited from the

cultures of previous nations and were well-versed in many of their sciences. However, they also significantly enriched and expanded upon this knowledge, developing their own methods and rigorous scientific approaches. They conducted scientific research with intellectual honesty, always crediting the sources of the knowledge they translated or adopted. In doing so, they enriched Greek, Persian, and Indian heritage and disseminated their sciences and culture, which became the strong foundation for Europe's scientific renaissance. (Al-Sayyid, 2009, p. 15)

However, some Western scholars did not uphold this intellectual honesty and denied the contributions of the Arabs, attempting to obscure the Arab-Islamic civilization after benefiting from its heritage. Nonetheless, fair-minded and truthful European writers acknowledged the significant and illuminating impact of the Arabs. For example, the historian of science, George Sarton, named each era after its prominent figures. He referred to the period from 450 to 400 BCE as the Age of Plato, followed by Aristotle, Euclid, and Archimedes. He identified the period between 600 and 700 CE as the Age of the Chinese, and the period from 750 to 1100 CE as the Age of Arab Scientists. After this 350-year period, names of Europeans began to emerge, sharing scientific, intellectual, and literary leadership with the Arabs (Saber, 1983, p. 173).

Understanding the achievements of our ancestors and the European world's view of them provides us with strength, knowledge, and the ability to achieve the civilizational aspirations of the Arab and Islamic worlds. It reinforces authenticity in the contemporary generation, linking it to its heritage and civilization to build upon it in the present. This connection motivates the pursuit of further glory, prosperity, and progress. Instead of merely glorifying the achievements of forefathers, it enriches the present by drawing inspiration from the spirit, foundations, and values of that illustrious history. Thus, one's relationship with other civilizations is clarified without losing one's identity and civilizational character, leveraging authenticity to benefit from contemporary advancements and diverse cultures.

Gibran Khalil Gibran addressed this issue when discussing the future of the Arabic language, saying: "In the past, Westerners consumed what we produced, digesting and integrating the valuable parts into their Western identity. However, present-day Easterners consume what Westerners produce without integrating it into their identity, instead transforming themselves into quasi-Westerners. This is a situation I fear and disdain because it portrays the East as either an old man who has lost his teeth or a child without teeth! The spirit of the West is both a friend and an enemy to us; a friend if we master it, and an enemy if we give it our hearts; a friend if we take from it what suits us, and an enemy if we place ourselves in a state that suits it." (Gibran, 2012, p. 56)

### **Manuscript Editing (Authentification)**

Our heritage is most vividly represented in the manuscript works scattered across the globe. Written heritage (manuscripts) serves as the cornerstone for the renaissance of any nation, as it is the genuine expression of its civilization, history, and achievements. It is no wonder that the people of this nation strive to revive their heritage by authenticating its manuscripts, thus honoring their ancestors and scholars, compensating for past neglect of their great legacy, and paving the way for a better future.

Linguistically, editing or authentication refers to the process of confirming, verifying, and ensuring the accuracy and reliability of something. According to "Taj al-Arus" by Al-Zabidi: "The matter is made true, confirmed, and established." It involves establishing something as true and without doubt, verifying, and confirming its accuracy. In "Maqayis al-Lugha" by Ahmad IbnFaris, it is stated: "A garment is called 'muhaqqaq' if it is tightly woven." (Al-Zubaidi, 1888)

Conventionally, authentication is the science of principles used to present a manuscript text as its author intended, in terms of both wording and meaning. Here, the text includes the original heritage content and any comments, corrections, and notes made by the author in the margins and footnotes (Qabawa, 2005, p. 41).

Authentication involves the diligent efforts of the scholar to present the manuscript faithfully and accurately, reflecting the original work of the author as closely as possible. It aims to reproduce the manuscript in a form that matches the original or the most reliable copy available if the author's version is lost. The goal is to make the text understandable and useful based on rigorous scientific authentication principles (Al-Haib, Lectures on Manuscript Editing, 2016, p. 16).

### **Historical Efforts in Manuscript Editing:**



Early Arab scholars were meticulous in authenticating and correcting texts from the first centuries of the Hijri calendar, using established standards to try to restore the original text as closely as possible. However, this effort remained obscured in history, overlooked by scholars who failed to recognize its importance, even though it had the potential to revolutionize many long-held concepts from the early modern renaissance to the present day. (Maribei, p. 240)

A prime example of this scholarly work is the editing of "Sahih al-Bukhari" by Al-Yunini, the renowned 7th-century Hijri (Al-Qastallani, 1323 AH, pp. 1-40) memorizer of Damascus. Similarly, Ibn Khallikan's "Wafayat al-A'yan" remains indispensable to any researcher in heritage due to the author's objectivity and integrity (Maribei, p. 241). Additionally, Arab scholars authored works that elucidate their scientific methodology in composition and authentication, aligning closely with modern methods. Some notable works in this regard include:

1. "Adab al-Imla' wa al-Istimla'" by Al-Sam'ani
2. "Al-Ilma' fi Ma'rifat Usul al-Riwayawa Taqyid al-Sama'" by Qadi 'Iyad
3. "Tadhkirat al-Sami' wa al-Mutakallim fi Adab al-'Alimwa al-Muta'allim" by Ibn Jama'ah
4. "Al-Ta'rif bi Adab al-Ta'lif" by Al-Suyuti
5. "Al-Durr al-Nadid fi Adab al-Mufidwa al-Mustafid" by Badr al-Din al-Ghazzi
6. "Al-Mu'id fi Adab al-Mufidwa al-Mustafid" by Al-Ilmuyi
7. "Muqaddimat Ibn al-Salah"

With the advent of modern manuscript editing efforts, there was initially no standardized methodology followed by Arab scholars. Each had their own approach, with some drawing on the methods of Muslim scholars in verifying texts, particularly Hadith, while others adopted methodologies from Orientalists who had pioneered the publication of Arab heritage from the previous century. These Orientalists, such as the German scholar H. Ritter, brought attention to our rare manuscripts and books. Consequently, some scholars who possessed scientific acumen and methodology succeeded, while others who lacked a proper methodology did not (Al-Munjid, 1987, pp. 7-8).

Over the years, as experience accumulated, the need to formalize and regulate the authentication process became urgent. This led to the publication of several foundational books on the subject, defining, systematizing, explaining, and exemplifying the principles of manuscript editing. It is fair to acknowledge that many of these works benefited from the contributions of Orientalists in this field. However, they also drew significantly from the works of our own scholars who had previously addressed this science and from the experiences of those who had ventured into the world of manuscript editing. Some of these important works include:

1. "Usul Tahqiq al-Nusus" by Dr. Mustafa Jawad: These are his lectures to master's students in Arabic at the University of Baghdad, published by Muhammad Ali al-Husseini in his book "Dirasat wa Tahqiqat".
2. "Usul Naqd al-Nusus wa al-Kutub" by the German Orientalist Bergsträsser: Published by Muhammad Hamdi al-Bakri.
3. "Tahqiq al-Turath al-Arabi" by Abdel Majeed Diab.
4. "Tahqiq al-Nusus wa Nashruha" by Abdel Salam Haroun.
5. "Tahqiq al-Nusus wa Nashruha" by Nuri Hammadi al-Qaisi and Sami Makki al-Ani.
6. "Ilm al-Tahqiq li Makhtutat al-Arabiya: Bahth Ta'sisi li-Ta'sil" by Fakhruddin Qabawah.
7. "Qawa'id Tahqiq al-Makhtutat" by Salahuddin al-Munjid.
8. "Muqaddima fi al-Manhaj" by Bint al-Shati'.

Additionally, many principles of authentication can be found in the introductions of various edited books. Scientific journals have also published numerous important studies on this subject. (Al-Haib, Lectures on Manuscript Editing, 2016, pp. 18-19)

Indeed, our extensive heritage is estimated to encompass more than five million manuscripts. The scholars of our nation have diligently worked to revive this heritage, especially following the introduction of the printing press into Arab and Muslim lands. This effort began more than two hundred years after the printing of Arabic books in Europe using Arabic script, due to the influx of Arabic Islamic manuscripts into European libraries and museums through various means. (Ali, 2008, p. 125)

The publication of books commenced sequentially after the printing press arrived in Constantinople, followed by Lebanon, Syria, and Egypt. Egypt, in particular, saw the introduction of the printing press in 1798 with the French campaign, which brought the press along as previously mentioned. However, this did not last long, and it was succeeded by the Bulaq Press, established by Muhammad Ali Pasha in 1821. The Bulaq Press played a significant role in the publication of books in general, and of Arabic Islamic heritage in particular. (Haroun, 1978, pp. 44-47)

### **Locations of Arabic Manuscripts and Their Catalogs**

As scholars spread throughout the Arab and Islamic countries, it became necessary to unify efforts, devise plans, establish methodologies, and designate places and centers to gather manuscripts. This would facilitate access for scholars and enable them to work on authenticating these manuscripts. Here, we briefly highlight some of the key locations of Arabic manuscripts in both the Arab world and foreign countries:

#### **Firstly: Arabic Manuscripts in the Arab World**

Naturally, the Arab countries were expected to harbor the majority of Arabic manuscripts dispersed across the world. However, what has reached them of the millions of Islamic and Arabic manuscripts is exceedingly scarce. Several factors have contributed to this tragic situation, among the most significant being:

- Calamities during Wars and Conflicts: Islamic manuscripts suffered greatly during wars and recurrent conflicts in the Islamic world, such as the Mongol invasions and the subsequent destruction of cities like Baghdad and other venerable Arab and Islamic cities. Events like the fall of Sicily and Andalusia were characterized by unprecedented brutality in human history.
- Ottoman Rule: Ottoman rule over many Arab countries for four centuries led to the transfer of numerous manuscripts and scholars to their capital, Istanbul.
- Crusades and Colonialism: Western powers seized many manuscripts through various means during the Crusades and colonial era, transporting them to their libraries and often destroying a significant number of manuscripts.
- Ignorance of Proper Storage and Preservation: Lack of knowledge about proper storage methods led to the deterioration and disintegration of manuscripts, causing the loss of some of their content.
- Lack of Awareness of Cultural and Scientific Value: The cultural and scientific value of manuscripts was not fully appreciated, contributing to their neglect and loss.
- Limited Financial and Technical Resources: Some Arab countries lacked the financial and technical resources necessary for the preservation and restoration of manuscripts.
- Persistent Conspiracies against the Arab World: Continuous conspiracies by historical adversaries against Arab countries have further threatened their cultural heritage. (Al-Haib, Lectures on Manuscript Editing, 2016, p. 10)

Despite these challenges, significant numbers of Arabic manuscripts, spanning from the Arabian Gulf to the Atlantic Ocean, remain in need of urgent preservation, care, and restoration. Many Arab countries have recognized the importance of these manuscripts and have established libraries, scientific centers, and specialized conferences to address these needs. Among the most notable efforts are:

## **Algeria**

Algeria is considered one of the richest Arab countries in manuscripts encompassing various sciences. The estimated number of these manuscripts in the National Library and other official libraries, *Zawiyas* (religious schools), and private collections reaches tens of thousands. The negative impacts of French colonization prevented the widespread dissemination and care of these manuscripts, although a few French orientalists managed to collect and catalog some Arabic manuscripts, laying the foundation for Algeria's first library nucleus. (MohamedAref, 2001, p. 68)

Scientific centers proliferated in mosques, *zawiyas*, *ribats* (fortified monasteries), and schools, playing an active role in disseminating Arab and Islamic culture and housing a large number of valuable manuscripts. Among the most renowned *zawiyas* are Sidi Abdel Rahman El-Yilouli in Djurdjura and *ZawiyaChellata* in Greater Kabylie, as well as *ZawiyaTolga* in Biskra, *ZawiyasBethioua El Mehdi El Bouabdalli* in Oran, and others. (MohamedAref, 2001, p. 63)

Noteworthy libraries include the National Library in Algiers, housing over three thousand manuscripts cataloged and published by the French orientalist Fagnan in Paris in 1893 (Mahoubi, 2011, p. 6).

Additionally, the Islamic EmirAbdelkader University in Constantine holds approximately one hundred and forty-three (143) manuscripts. Other notable repositories include the Historical and Archaeological Society Library in Adrar and various Algerian *zawiyas* brimming with manuscripts (MohamedAref, 2001, pp. 62-68).

## **Egypt**

The Institute of Arabic Manuscripts was established in Egypt in 1947 with a mission to compile catalogs of manuscripts found in public and private libraries, as well as indexes of privately owned manuscripts, consolidating them into a unified general index. The institute also undertakes the photography of as many ancient Arabic manuscripts as possible, making these images available to researchers and scholars in a user-friendly manner, thus serving Arab heritage and facilitating its dissemination. (Abu Hiba, 1989, p. 264)

The Egyptian National Library, established in 1870, is one of the largest libraries in the contemporary era, housing a section with thousands of valuable manuscripts. Additionally, Al-Azhar Library and numerous other libraries in major Egyptian cities contribute significantly to preserving Arabic manuscripts. (Al-Khatib, 2001, p. 45)

## **Syria**

Syria boasts several prominent libraries, with the Assad Library in Damascus standing out, having collected manuscripts from various cultural centers and institutions across the country. Key repositories include the Zahiriyya Library in Damascus, the Waqf Library, and the Ahmadiyya Library in Aleppo, among others. Syria also houses a substantial number of digitized manuscripts acquired through exchanges with cultural and scientific institutions both within Arab countries and abroad. (MohamedAref, 2001, p. 117)

The Institute of Arab Scientific Heritage at Aleppo University hosts four hundred and sixty-three (463) manuscripts, while several other cultural and scientific centers in Syrian cities enrich the country's manuscript holdings (MohamedAref, 2001, p. 115).

## **Iraq**

The General Secretariat of the Central Library in Basra houses six hundred (600) manuscripts, Salahaddin University in Erbil possesses four hundred and seventy-two (472) manuscripts, and the University of Mustansiriya in Baghdad holds one hundred and sixty-eight (168) manuscripts, alongside other libraries enriched with manuscripts (MohamedAref, 2001, pp. 125-126).

## **Kuwait**

The Manuscripts, Heritage, and Documents Center is one of the largest repositories of manuscripts, housing over forty thousand (40,000) manuscripts, both originals and copies, acquired through direct purchase, exchange,



donations, and endowments from Gulf and other Arab and Islamic countries. The Department of Manuscripts and Islamic Libraries under the Ministry of Awqaf manages four thousand (4,000) manuscripts, with over forty thousand (40,000) manuscripts in photographic form (MohamedAref, 2001, p. 207).

### **Secondly: Arabic Manuscripts in Foreign Countries**

#### **Turkey**

Turkey holds a prominent position in this domain, having inherited most of the manuscripts during Ottoman rule. These manuscripts received significant care and attention, amounting to seventeen thousand (17,000) manuscripts. The Public Library in Istanbul alone houses five thousand two hundred (5,200) manuscripts, in addition to the Suleymaniye Library and many others, totaling over three hundred thousand (300,000) manuscripts. (Al-Khatib, 2001, pp. 47-48)

#### **India**

Indian libraries treasure a wealth of manuscripts, distributed across various centers such as the Asiatic Society Library and the University of Calcutta's book treasury in Kolkata, Bihar Library, the Maulana Azad Library in Mumbai, and others. However, the Asafiya Library in Hyderabad stands out as the foremost institution globally for its collection of manuscripts, confirmed by its printed catalog. Distinguished individuals and scholars in India established the Ottoman Encyclopedic Circle in Hyderabad nearly seventy years ago to revive ancient Arabic books, significantly contributing to the dissemination of foundational Islamic texts across various disciplines (Al-Khatib, 2001, p. 49).

#### **Iran**

Iran boasts diverse libraries, with Tehran's libraries being the most renowned. The Shahnameh and Nasiriya libraries are among the most famous (Al-Khatib, 2001, p. 47).

#### **European Countries**

European libraries have housed numerous, diverse, and valuable manuscripts. The Vatican Library in Rome, which has existed for over sixteen hundred years, stands as the pinnacle of manuscript collections worldwide with its ancient manuscripts (Tarazi, 1959, p. 580). The Escorial Library in Spain possesses a catalog spread across two volumes containing valuable manuscripts initially collected by King Philip II from the remnants of ancient Andalusian libraries, later supplemented by acquisitions from Marrakech, Madrid, and elsewhere (Tarazi, 1959, pp. 596-597).

Other notable libraries include the Ambrosian Library in Milan, the Guillaume Postel Cabinet in Paris, and the National Library in Berlin, one of Europe's largest repositories of manuscripts. Its Arabic manuscripts alone are cataloged in ten substantial volumes, not including the appendix (Tarazi, 1959, pp. 598-612-627).

#### **United States of America**

The United States hosts a significant number of Arabic manuscripts distributed across several libraries. Princeton University Library in New Jersey houses rare Arabic manuscripts, as does the New York Public Library, the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., among others (Tarazi, 1959, pp. 640-641).

Numerous libraries, institutes, and cultural centers across various countries and regions have also become repositories for manuscripts, making it difficult to enumerate all in this discussion.

The scholarly achievements and meticulous publications resulting from efforts to research and disseminate these manuscripts have been the fruit of substantial individual and institutional endeavors. This has notably reduced Western Orientalist interest in heritage, redirecting efforts towards its scholarly exploration and publication. Some researchers have observed an increase in Arabic publications concurrent with a decline in Orientalist publications. (Kazzarah, 2009, p. 7)

The Arab and Muslim world's renewed attention to their heritage, its care, and revival is an undeniable reality that inspires efforts to return heritage to its original seats in Arab and Islamic capitals, ensuring its preservation and oversight.

## **Part Two: My Experience in Manuscript Investigation (The Diwan of Ibn Malik Al-Hamawi as a Case Study)**

My journey in manuscript investigation stemmed from my realization of the aforementioned value of heritage and the importance of researching it to revive it. This was inspired by a return to the history of literature, where I encountered the Mamluk era, often termed as an era of decadence or decline. I pondered how one could reconcile the characterization of decline with the Mamluks' victories over the Crusaders, the recapture of Jerusalem, and their triumphs against the Mongols in pivotal battles like the Battle of Ain Jalut (under the leadership of Saif al-Din Qutuz). Moreover, I explored the literary and scientific output that followed this era, such as Ibn Khaldun's "Muqaddimah," Ibn Khallikan's "Wafayat al-A'yan," Al-Qalqashandi's "Subh al-A'sha," Ibn Ata' Allah al-Sakandari's "Al-Hikam al-Ata'iyyah," and other works that are indispensable for researchers in general. Additionally, I examined the military and civil effects that resulted from this era, including fortresses, citadels, mosques, schools, palaces, and markets that filled cities across Syria, Iraq, Egypt, the Hijaz, and beyond.

This problematic spurred me to delve into this era and research the reasons behind its nomenclature. It became evident to me, among other reasons, that many manuscripts from the Mamluk era remain lost in libraries across the Arab, Islamic, and Western worlds. Therefore, I decided to focus on the Mamluk era and undertake the investigation of one of its manuscripts, choosing the Diwan of Ibn Malik al-Hamawi.

The first step in my investigation was to search for manuscript copies of the Diwan and refer back to "History of Arabic Literature" by the German orientalist Carl Brockelmann and "History of Arabic Heritage" by the Turkish writer Fuad Sizkin. I managed to locate four copies of the manuscript:

1. **Istanbul Copy:** Obtained from the Manuscripts Institute Library affiliated with the Arab University in Cairo, documented as number 1283. This complete manuscript consists of 126 pages, each with two facing pages containing 19 lines each, along with marginal notes. The script is neatly copied, though the last six pages are damaged. Copied by the scribe Yahya bin Muhammad bin Hamed al-Safadi in 946 AH (1539 CE). Designated with the letter (س).

2. **Zahiriyya Library Copy:** Obtained from the Zahiriyya Library in Damascus, numbered 7382, comprising 97 pages, each with two facing pages containing 11 lines each. It is written in a readable regular script, though moisture has affected the edges of many pages, and it is incomplete in the middle. Copied in 986 AH (1578 CE) by the scribe Muhammad bin al-Faraj al-Dimashqi. Designated with the letter (ظ).

3. **Birmingham Library Copy in England:** Obtained a copy from the Zahiriyya Library in Damascus with the number (2013 مشم), consisting of 142 pages, each with two facing pages containing 17 lines each. The script is readable, though the beginning is darkened and there are some moisture and corrections. It includes additional poems compared to copy (س). Copied in 1038 AH (1628 CE) by the scribe Hasan bin al-Sheikh bin 'Utaif. Designated with the letter (ب).

4. **Old Printed Edition:** Printed in 1312 AH (1894 CE) at the Scientific Press in Beirut, this edition has not been critically verified. It spans 210 pages, each with 24 lines. I obtained a copy from the National Library in Aleppo, numbered 5382 SH, categorizing it as the fourth edition, treating it as a manuscript due to its age and lack of critical verification. Designated with the letter (م).

Afterward, I proceeded to investigate the title of the manuscript and then the author's name, followed by verifying the attribution of this Diwan to its author. This process involved consulting "Kashf al-Zunun" by Hajji Khalifa and "Izah al-Maknun" by Al-Baghdadi, both considered primary references for researchers of authors' works in Islamic heritage, containing names of thousands of authors and their works:

I noticed a slight discrepancy in the title of the Diwan, so I relied on the title of the original manuscript and what other copies confirmed, replacing it with "Al-Nafahat al-Adabiya min al-Zuhurat al-Hamawiya."

Regarding the **methodology** I adopted for editing the poetic text:

1. I chose the Istanbul manuscript (س) as the original version due to its quality, completeness, and relatively good condition. It was copied in 946 AH (1539 CE) by the scribe Yahya bin Muhammad bin Hamed al-Safadi, which is close to the author's era, as he passed away twenty-nine years prior. I transcribed it as the main text.

2. I compared between the manuscripts, confirming what I deemed correct in the text when discrepancies arose between them, and noted the variants in the footnotes.

3. I validated the poetry and prose shared by all four manuscripts, as well as what was unique to each or one of them, indicating these differences in the footnotes.

4. I generally followed the arrangement of the original manuscript (س).

5. I indicated the beginning of each page of the Istanbul manuscript (س) with a diagonal slash (/), distinguishing between its two sections (أ) and (ب), placing it on the right margin of the page after the page number.

6. I added poetic meters (abhar) for each poem or excerpt in the text, placing them within square brackets [ ].

7. I identified the Quranic verses that influenced the poet's verses and included them, citing the surah name and verse number, referenced in the footnotes.

8. I cited the prophetic traditions (hadith) included in the Diwan, referencing their locations in the Hadith books.

9. I cited the poetry included by Ibn Malik in his poems, referencing their locations in poetry collections and other relevant sources in the footnotes.

10. I identified the proverbs mentioned in the Diwan and noted their sources.

11. I provided concise biographies for the figures mentioned in the Diwan, referencing their locations in biographical and historical books.

12. I explained obscure and foreign terms, especially those from the era of the poet.

13. I corrected words that required correction.

14. I corrected spelling errors.

15. I completed missing words, enclosing them within brackets and indicating them in the footnotes.

16. If a word or more was missing from one of the manuscripts, I placed it within parentheses like this ( ), and noted it in the footnotes.

17. If there were additions in one of the manuscripts, I enclosed them within square brackets [], and noted them in the footnotes.

18. In the footnotes, I followed a consistent order of the manuscripts: (ظ), (ب), (م), (س), omitting mention of a manuscript in the footnotes indicates its agreement with the main text.

19. Finally, I appended necessary indexes to the Diwan for completeness:

- Index of names, tribes, and groups.
- Index of countries, places, and bodies of water.
- Index of poetic meters and rhymes.
- Index of modern poetic forms: such as muwashah, moshah, zajal, mawaliya, and doubait.
- List of sources and references.

At the outset, I did not neglect to mention the life of the poet and his era, recognizing their profound influence on his poetry, which reflects his essence, soul, thoughts, and perspective on his surroundings, era, and life in general. This creates a spiritual connection between the author and the researcher, as the latter represents the former

in a profound manner. The researcher was acutely aware of every word, structure, image, and imagination intentionally or unintentionally crafted by the poet. Reading between the lines, he unraveled the poet's innermost secrets, occasionally allowing him to fill in gaps or missing pieces that had fallen victim to factors such as humidity, storage conditions, or the passage of time. I encountered this firsthand towards the end of the manuscript, where two words were missing due to a hole in the manuscript's page 353 of the Diwan. I naturally completed them sequentially, as if I were reading what the poet truly intended (and Allah knows best). The meter and rhyme scheme in the poetic text assisted me in this, as indicated in the footnotes where I provided my preferred option.

Thus, I concluded the editing of the Diwan, which was printed by the Ministry of Culture, Syrian General Authority for Books, under the auspices of "Reviving Arab Heritage in Damascus," in its first edition in 2010. Additionally, the Babtain Foundation in Kuwait published a revised second edition in 2020, which, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, has yet to be widely distributed.

I hope that through this work, I have contributed a significant contribution to the edifice of Arabic libraries, serving the venerable heritage and shedding light on aspects of the Mamluk era.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Manuscripts hold a distinguished status and play a prominent role in the advancement and prosperity of nations. They represent cultural, scientific, and civilizational wealth, embodying intellectual heritage across various fields of human knowledge. Contemporary perspectives on heritage aim to build bridges between the past and present, bridging the deep gap between tradition and modernity. This approach not only fosters civilization but also facilitates cultural diversity, enriching scientific and literary studies through a civilized intellectual lens.

Efforts have converged in cataloging Arabic manuscripts found in numerous libraries across Arab and foreign lands, employing codicology, bibliography, and specialized techniques to ensure their preservation and accessibility.

The meticulous scholarly approach to manuscript editing enhances the diversity and prosperity of Arabic libraries, paving the way for researchers grappling with scarce sources in various subjects.

Research has elucidated the profound roots of investigating our Arabic heritage, acknowledging the vital role of meticulous academic methods in legitimizing this field. Esteemed scholars such as Abdul Salam Harun and Al-Munjid have authored indispensable works in this discipline, from which I have derived considerable benefit in my detailed experience.

While I acknowledge the gratification of engaging in manuscript research, I affirm the immense value researchers derive from meticulous scrutiny, textual service, source consultation, research, and comparison. These efforts enrich their cultural repository and enable them to explore diverse fields of knowledge and sciences.

Hence, it was imperative for academic institutions with a cultural mandate to engage graduate students in the field of manuscript investigation, integrating it as a practical aspect that charts the path to knowledge and success. By highlighting our inherited knowledge, new readings of our heritage emerge, fostering enlightened perspectives that resonate with the spirit of our times, provided that the reins of our heritage remain in trustworthy hands, guiding generations toward informed, promising, and serious studies.

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