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Abstracts

(in alphabetical order of the speaker's last name)

Abu Bakr, Muneer Zayed University, Dubai

United Arab Emirates National Archives: Prospects and Challenges and the Role of Zayed University in Filling the Gap

The purpose of the study is to give background information about the UAE National Archives, its objectives, duties, types and services. It discusses and examines the current state,
prospects and challenges in digitizing archival collections at the UAE National Archives. It shows how Zayed University can fill the gap between the growing demand for specialized archivists and information specialists and the skills currently available on the job market.

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Adam, Volker University and State Library Saxony-Anhalt, Halle, Germany

The library of the Deutsche Morgenländische Gesellschaft (DMG) – emergence, growth and future challenges

The Deutsche Morgenländische Gesellschaft ("German Orientalist Society"), founded in 1845, is the oldest association of German Orientalists. Its library, which has grown since its origins through donations, the estates of its members, and through exchange with foreign Oriental institutes, is maintained by the University and State Library of Saxony-Anhalt in Halle (Germany). It holds not only an impressive collection of rare and old books and journals (in particular from the 18th and 19th centuries), but also private estates of more than 50 renowned scholars in the fields of Semitic, Arabic, Islamic studies as well of Indology. The holdings are complemented by a collection of Oriental coins, manuscripts and artifacts. This paper will give a short insight into the historical development, the present state of the art, ongoing digitization projects and future challenges in recording and making its content available to the outside world.

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Alifuoco, Gennaro National Library "V. E. III", Naples, Italy
&
Cortese, Claudio DSpace and Dataverse Repositories, 4Science, Milan, Italy

Middle East manuscripts of the National Library of Naples: new models of fruition and interoperability using DSpace-GLAM

The National Library of Naples is the third largest library in Italy and in 2007 it created its own digital library system to enhance the immense cultural heritage preserved in its warehouses. Last year, the Library decided to change its management system for the Digital Library, and it is now part of DSpace-GLAM community.

DSpace-GLAM extends the DSpace data model, providing the possibility to collect, manage and display data related to each important entity in the domain of cultural heritage, such as people, events, places, concepts, etc., and connect it to digital objects, in order to describe the cultural context in which these objects fit.Dspace-GLAM uses the framework IIIF (International Image Interoperability Framework) to allow the use of high quality images, essential for the study and enhancement of cultural heritage. This new platform will host a new collection of Middle East manuscripts. Of great interest is the collection of Turkish and Islamic manuscripts preserved in the National Library of Naples, which includes, among other documents, liturgical texts and prayer collections from the collections of the convents of San Giovanni a Carbonara and the Collegio della Società di Gesù. The pieces bear witness to the vitality of Islamic studies in Naples in the Counter-Reformation environment, an interest that developed mainly for missionary purposes and religious proselytism. The three Islamic languages, Arabic,

Turkish and Persian, and Mohammed's doctrine were studied and observed, in the collection also the first Turkish grammars made in Italy. There are also several editions of the Koran, including the "Maghreb Koran" (1524). The interest in Islamic and Ottoman power was not only of a religious nature, as shown by the numerous works of various types, from medical treatises to nautical charts. Of particular value is the "Ottoman Atlas", beautifully decorated, and a portolano (manual for coastal and port navigation) made in Constantinople in 1527.

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Andriyanova, Olga **IMA, Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris, France**
&
Ghafourian, Asye **BULAC, Bibliothèque universitaire des langues et civilisations, Paris, France**

Multilingual person names in Arabic script as Open Linked Data : the Mistara Project

Starting in 2019, BULAC and 6 other libraries or research centers launch an 18 month project to deal with the issue of managing person names expressed in urdu, persian and arabic as OLD. The project will train tools developed for processing and refining bibliographic data on informations in arabic scripts. Our final goal is to generate automated links between bibliographic repositories and onomastic tools, such as the Onomasticon Arabicum.

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Aydın, Selçuk **Istanbul University Central Library, Turkey**
&
Kalın, Cihan **Istanbul University Central Library, Turkey**

Written and Printed Cultural Heritage Items and Digitization Works in Libraries in Turkey

Turkey with a rich history, hold printed and written historical items that is served at different libraries among country. Due to the diversity and content of the items in these libraries, it attracts great interest from domestic

and foreign researchers. This intense interest causes losses and various damages in the items that cannot be prevented in time. In order to prevent these losses and to provide better service to researchers in the light of technological developments, digitization studies in libraries have started to come forward in Turkey. Since beginning of 2000s, many libraries in the country have prepared projects to digitize their collections as long as their technical equipment allows.

In this study, we have emphasized the ongoing digitization works in the libraries of the country, especially IBB Atatürk Library, and its contribution to the level of cultural, educational and science in both national and international arenas.

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Baarda, Tijmen Christiaan Leiden University Libraries, The Netherlands

The automatic addition of Arabic script to old records of Arabic books

In this presentation, I will present a project in which Leiden University Libraries is adding Arabic script to all records automatically from the existing transcriptions. Before 2015, Leiden University Libraries used a national transcription system, which used one glyph to represent any Arabic consonant or vowel (for example, šarqiyya). In 2015, we moved to the ALA-LC system (e.g. sharqīyah) and started to include Arabic script in our records. Old records had not been changed, which causes the necessity to search twice for any Arabic book that might have been added to the collection before 2015. Moreover, it causes great confusion with both students and researchers, who more often than not think that the work they are looking for is not available. Adding Arabic script to all records, which is expected to be completed by the summer of 2019, will give the user at least one search method that works for all books. In this presentation, I will explain the challenges this project brings and how they are overcome thanks to the precision of generations of cataloguers.

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Cathelineau, Anne Bibliothèque Orient-Monde arabe, Université Sorbonne Nouvelle, Paris, France

La recotation en Dewey des fonds de la Bibliothèque Orient-Monde arabe

La Bibliothèque Orient-Monde arabe rejoindra en 2020 le Campus Nation pour être intégrée à un vaste ensemble documentaire rassemblant les collections d'une dizaine de bibliothèques. Nous aborderons dans cette présentation les choix et les difficultés que nous avons rencontrées dans le cadre de la recotation en classification décimale DEWEY de nos fonds.

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Cortese, Claudio > see > Alifuoco, Gennaro & Cortese, Claudio

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Croom, W.M. Philip Rare Books and Special Collections Library and Archives, AUC, Cairo, Egypt

The Moftah Coptic Collection at the American University of Cairo

This distinguished and ancient Coptic family has produced several members of great cultural note, most especially Aryan Moftah for Coptic grammar and language study and Ragheb Moftah, founder of the study of

Coptic music/chants. The story of these collections and their current relevance as part of the ongoing Coptic Renaissance as well as Diaspora is a fascinating cultural record.

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Declich, Lorenzo ISMEO -Associazione Internazionale di Studi sul Mediterraneo e l'Oriente, Rome, Italy

A short history of the IsIAO library and its Middle East and North Africa collections

The IsIAO (Istituto Italiano per l'Africa e l'Oriente) library is one of the main libraries in Italy for the african, middle eastern and asian studies. It was born in the nineties of the 20th century as a fusion of two important libraries: the IsMEO (Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, founded by Giuseppe Tucci) and the IIA (Istituto Italo Africano, ex-library of the Italian Ministry of the Colonies) ones. Later, due to the lack of funds, the IsIAO library closed.
The IsIAO library holds, among the others, a relevant amount of documents on and from the Middle East and North Africa (books, manuscripts, photographs, maps). Yet, part of these documents is not catalogued or even inventoried. Over the last two years a project of the Italian Ministry of University and Research has provided funds for the reset and the re-opening of the IsIAO library.

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Drechsler, Andreas Bamberg University Library, Germany

Buying books in Teheran today

In April 2019 I had the opportunity to travel to Teheran, Iran. Since it is an enormous challenge for all professionals dealing with book acquisitions from Iran I would like to give a short 10 minute report on my experiences.

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Faghihi, Yasmin Near and Middle Eastern Department, Cambridge University Library, United Kingdom

The new FIHRIST

This paper is about the latest development of FIHRIST, the on-line catalogue for manuscripts from the Islamicate world, since its first launch in 2011. From an experimental TEI catalogue fed with legacy data, FIHRIST has become subject to a major data consolidation project, embedded in a larger corpus of manuscript catalogues. In this presentation I will elaborate on the life cycle of these developments, allow a glance into its back end, architecture and standards and discuss how the construction of this tool reflects the Zeitgeist of manuscript descriptions.

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Farooq, Waseem Aga Khan Library, London, United Kingdom

Changing Management structures, the impact on subject specialists, and how to remain relevant

Over the years, changes in library management structures have had various impacts on subject librarians.

However, there is a recent trend in the UK and US university libraries of removing the subject librarians entirely and replacing them with 'functional' librarians. This has had a drastic impact on the position of Middle East librarians, the acquisition and collection development of research material from the Middle East in the UK. I will be looking at the drivers behind these changes and the various models of library management structures: traditional, functional and hybrid. I will endeavour to illustrate the reasoning for these changes at national [university] research libraries and the potential impact on the national/international university league tables. Moreover, I will cite the impact on universities that are functioning without the Middle East Librarian post and to what extent this restructuring was successful. Finally, this has certainly had some effect on the MELCom UK membership, which has dwindled over the years, and calls into question the future role of the committee.

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Ghafourian, Asye > see > **Andriyanova, Olga & Ghafourian, Asye**

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Gridyushko, Olga MIPP International Services

MIPP International is one of the leading publication supplier with wide range of outstanding services: subscriptions, standing orders, special offers, approval plans, free MARC records, e-resources, etc.

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Guérin du Grandlaunay, René-Vincent Bibliothèque de l'Institut dominicain d'études orientales, Le Caire, Égypte

Le catalogue AlKindi et la description des manuscrits en RDA

L'Institut dominicain d'études orientales au Caire a signé avec la Délégation européenne en Égypte un projet de quatre années (2018–2022). Ce projet donne, entre autre, la possibilité à l'Institut des manuscrits arabes du Caire de signaler des ressources manuscrites au sein de la base de données AlKindi. Le signalement du fonds Bibliothèque Suleymaniye Manuscrit.Reisülküttâb Mustafa Efendi a été l'occasion de mettre en œuvre le modèle IFLA LRM pour les manuscrits arabes. Mon exposé se concentrera sur le jeux des relations RDA entre agent et l'exemplaire du manuscrit qu'il a fallu développer dans le contexte arabo-musulman.

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Guesdon, Marie-Geneviève Arabic manuscripts, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris

Des histoires en langues diverses, en caractères arabes, collectées par Jean-Louis Asselin de Cherville et conservées à la Bibliothèque nationale de France

Jean Louis Asselin de Cherville, agent consulaire au Caire au début du XIXe s., a réuni une collection de 1500 manuscrits, plus des feuillets coraniques sur parchemin en grand nombre qui ont fait et font toujours l'objet d'études. Mais un petit ensemble est moins connu : il a demandé à des étudiants d'al-Azhar non égyptiens de copier des textes dans leurs langues, écrites en caractères arabes. Quelques uns dont les langues ont été identifiées sont conservés dans les fonds Persan et Malayo-polynésien de la BNF, d'autres attendent une identification et constituent un fonds "Asselin". On y reconnaît des histoires des 1001 nuits, de Kalila et Dimna, et autres. Ils pourraient intéresser les linguistes comme ceux qui s'intéressent aux contes. La BnF a entrepris de les numériser et les rendre publics sur le site Gallica.

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Hughes, Heather University of California, Santa Barbara, United States of America

Middle East Librarians and Digital Scholarship

The paper will discuss an updated version of a presentation given by Evyn Kropf and myself at the previous MELA meeting, based on data we collected last fall. We conducted a survey on Middle East Librarian work and training in the area of digital humanities and digital scholarship. Through an electronic survey, we received responses from a number of librarians involved in MELA and MELCom. I'll discuss our findings, subsequent activities within MELA, and further issues impacting the field. We would welcome further input and engagement with MELCom on our data.

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Ibarra, Maria Begoña Qatar National Library, Doha
&
Sekulova, Wassilena Manuscripts and Archives, Qatar National Library, Doha

The Heritage Collection of Qatar National Library: The Future of the Past

Qatar National Library (QNL) opened its doors for the public in April 2018. Being a new library it quickly gained an outstanding reputation in the country and abroad, and is now home of around 1 million items, taken care by 192 members of staff, and counting more than 128 000 registered readers, tendency growing. Fulfilling the role of a typical National Library with a legal deposit function, QNL also acts as a public library with ca. 80 events per month, serves the needs of the academic community of 21 higher education institutions in Doha and is home to an extremely popular Children's library. Though among all this, the undisputed star of QNL is its Heritage Library (HL). Comprising of ca 40.000 rare books, 3 000 modern reference books, 4 000 manuscripts, 1 500 maps, 21 globes, 80 000 photographs and more than 20 000 archival materials, among which 6 000 posters and a textiles collection, HL has its own exhibition space within the library's building and acts as a special collection, archive and museum in one. In our presentation we aim: 1. to present the collection of the Heritage Library, which up to date is largely unknown to the wide librarian and scholarly community, and 2. to discuss the various challenges and opportunities HL faces due to its unique structure. Among the latter will be matters concerning the cataloguing of its hybrid collection, practices in the field of digitization and digital humanities, as well as current and future initiatives related to public outreach and engagement.

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Langella, MariaLuisa Middle East Centre Library, St. Antony's College, Oxford, United Kingdom
&
Wright, Lydia Middle East and Islamic Collections, Bodleian Libraries, Oxford, United Kingdom

Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies Librarianship at Oxford

Since the foundation of the Bodleian Library in the 17th century, Oxford has held important collections of manuscripts and books in Middle Eastern and Islamic languages. These collections have been curated and enhanced over the centuries to cater to the needs of scholars and researchers from all over the world. In this presentation we will give an overview of the history and content of these collections, where the material is found, and what services are available to users within and outside Oxford. We will also discuss the cooperation between the different Oxford libraries and librarians specialised in this field. Finally, we will touch on current issues and concerns, and challenges for the future.

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Lowe, Daniel Arabic collections, The British Library, London, United Kingdom

Collecting Arab comics at the British Library

Since 2015, the British Library has been working to develop its contemporary collecting of Arab comics, graphic novels and political cartoons in response to a relative boom in this area in recent times. The past 10 years have seen the success of dynamic and multilingual comics collectives like Samandal in Beirut, Tok Tok in Cairo, Makbar619 in Tunis, and Skefkef in Casablanca, as well as the publication of graphic novels such as Magdy El Shafee's Metro (2008) and Lena Merhej's Jam and Yoghurt (2011). Algeria and Gulf the Gulf also have a vibrant scene with strong influences from Japanese manga. These developments have occurred against the background of an ever-popular political cartooning scene and long-running children's magazines, such as Samir in Egypt, Basim in Saudi Arabia and Majid in the United Arab Emirates.

This constellation of publications in various styles and formats and for different audiences has also attracted academic attention since the 1990s with publications such as Arab comic strips : politics of an emerging mass culture by Allen Douglas and Fedwa Malti-Douglas (Bloomington : Indiana University Press, 1994) and lately Jacob Høigilt's Comics in Contemporary Arab Culture (London : I.B.Tauris, 2018). At the American University of Beirut The Mu'taz and Rada Sawwaf Arabic Comics promotes the interdisciplinary research of Arab comics.

My presentation will reflect on work done in recent years at the British Library to scope existing holdings in this area, as well as the challenges and difficulties that have arisen in gap-filling, contemporary acquisitions, storage and conservation, cataloguing and curation. I will also speak about cultural programming activities undertaken in this are at the British Library, as well as the exhibition Comic and Cartoon Art from the Arabic World held between June and October 2017 in the British Library's Treasures Gallery.

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Menz, Astrid Orient-Institut Istanbul Library, Turkey

Music resources at the library of the Orient-Institut Istanbul

In 2011 the Orient-Institut Istanbul established a special research field "Music in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey" employing for the first time in its history a musicologist. The research field covers two branches: historical musicology and ethnomusicology. The establishment of this research field and the expertise of the

researchers connected to it naturally led to a change in the acquisition strategy of the library. The originally very small collection of books regarding music in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey grew significantly and at the same time examples for the music itself were collected. Thus, non-book material, mostly CDs or DVDs but also some vinyl disks, found its way into the library. Furthermore, a collection of fieldwork material of Anatolian folk music on tape was acquired and digitized. The integration of this material in our cataloging system and the accessibility for researchers are challenges for our comparatively small library. In my talk I am going to present you with the collection itself, the challenges we are facing with the non-book material, and the possible solutions for it.

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Murphy, Tim Qur'an Gateway, Virginia, United States of America

Qur'an Gateway

Qur'an Gateway is a new resource for scholars studying the Qur'an and its early manuscripts.

The system includes a powerful search engine that accepts either English or Arabic inputs. Each search displays a page with portions of the Qur'an in three side-by-side columns: Arabic script, English transliteration of the Arabic script, and a choice of four English translations. Other translations will be available in the future.

Qur'an Gateway's search engine allows searches by root, lemma or exact inflection and can filter a search by use, case, gender, number, person or form. It also enables searches of multiple words or phrases, ranges of the Qur'an, and whether a search is found in Meccan or Medinan Suras. Scholars can prepare search results in charts or graphs and export them from the site into academic studies or papers.

The resource also includes approximately 6,700 three, four, and five-word formulae that represent an extensive network of formulaic diction in the text. Each of these is searchable with the same graphing and charting options as word searches.

Finally, the site includes a record of over 300 existing copies of early Qur'anic manuscripts, their current location, what portions of the Qur'an are included in each manuscript, the primary script style used in each, and scribal changes in evidence as the manuscript developed over time.

Qur'an Gateway's founders, during their own PhD work, developed the early versions of the tool because of the lack of a similar tool anywhere in use today. It is a ground-breaking capability, built by scholars of the Qur'an to enhance the work of other scholars.

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Mora, Luisa Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo, Madrid, Spain

Ibn Arabi – Hikma award (2019): new perspectives

The Islamic library of the Spanish Agency of international cooperation for development (AECID), which celebrates 65 years of existence, awarded the last 11th of May the "Ibn Arabi-Hikma 2019". This prize is given to reward both the significance of this institution in the field of research and the relevance and uniqueness of the collection specialized in Arab world and Islam, highly relevant for scholars of Ibn Arabi. It is shown in a video.

Ibn Arabi MIAS-LATINA award is granted from 2015 by the Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi Society (MIAS) Latin. It collaborates with the Centre Puertas de Castilla, the Three cultures Festival and the University of Murcia, dedicated the award to Ibn Arabi - Hikma initiatives, centers and institutions that contribute to promote studies of Arab culture, Islam and Sufism by fostering the exchange of knowledge and creative dialogue in this field.

The prize was received by Luisa Mora, head of the Islamic library, at the 9th Symposium International Ibn Arabi held in Ávila. When she received the prize stated the importance of the human team working in the AECID library as well as the support of the network of users: excellent libraries are those that create community. There are also several milestones to

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Nawar, Essraa Chapman University/Leatherby Libraries, Orange, United States of America
&
Khosrowpour, Shahrzad Chapman University/Leatherby Libraries, Orange, United States of America

The Accidental Middle East Librarians

One of the most essential factors in acquiring a subject-focused collection for an academic institution is the close collaboration of the subject liaison librarian and the faculty. Not to mention that when the collection is in a Middle East language, it may have some restriction in access/locating materials desirable for that collection. It also involves challenges such as having the knowledge of the language, locating vendors/publishers, and communicating with them to easily find the materials in Western countries and/or outside resources in a timely manner. To create an effective collection that supports the curriculum, librarians may need to provide an individual level of informal collaboration and customized outreach services. Leatherby Libraries at Chapman University is committed to the mission of global education and embraces the call for diversity. It offers diverse programs and collections that entices conversations and creates a language of understanding and dialogue at the University's Community. In this session, the presenters will share case studies on how the library administration and librarians capitalized on their Middle Eastern connection, ethnicity and international experiences to bring awareness and programming to life and enhance the Middle Eastern collection and connections on campus.

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Negrini, Lucia ICCU, Istituto Centrale per il Catalogo Unico, Rome, Italy

Manus Online and the cataloguing of Arabic manuscripts

The paper aims at showing how the new implementations of the cataloguing form in Manus Online are going to help cataloguers to describe Arabic manuscripts.

Difficulties concerning the controlled access point of Arabic names in the Authority File of Manus Online, as well as problems related to the performing of queries concerning Arabic manuscripts in the OPAC of MOL will also be faced, trying to show valid solutions.

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Pehlivanian, Meliné Oriental department, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Germany

Manuscript acquisitions of the Oriental Department at the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin since 2015

Since 2015 the Oriental Department could acquire almost 500 manuscripts in Arabic, Hebrew, Ottoman-Turkish, Persian, Yiddish, Armenian, Birman or Sanskrit. My intervention will give an overview of the most interesting of them and then present in a more detailed manner a small collection of Armenian-Turkish medical manuscripts we bought at a Paris antiquarian bookseller. It is not only the content which is remarkable in reflecting popular medicine and esoteric beliefs of its time, but also the collector and patron of those manuscripts: Dr. Vahram Torkomian from Constantinople who was interested in oriental medical history, a renowned doctor and personal physician of prince Abdülmecid.

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Rebhan, Helga Oriental and Asian Department, Bavarian State Library, München, Germany

The Oriental Library of Johann Albrecht Widmanstetter (1506-1557): Orientalist, diplomat and book collector

The cornerstone of the Bavarian State Library's Oriental collection was laid as early as 1558 when shortly after the establishment of the Munich Court Library the personal library of Johann Albrecht Widmanstetter (1506-1557), noted diplomat and Orientalist, was acquired. Widmanstetter, one of the most erudite and versatile scholars of his time and one of the pioneers of Oriental studies, was a typical Renaissance humanist and passionate bibliophile. His collected treasures of Oriental writings, amounting in its surviving form to between 1,100 and 1,500 printed volumes and 200 Oriental manuscripts, formed an amazingly large private scholarly library, and as such it had already been highly admired by his contemporaries.

Widmanstetter purchased the greater part of his books in Italy where he sojourned from 1527 to 1539. It was there that his well-established connections to scholars, ecclesiastical and secular princes as well as to book merchants and printers (e.g. Daniel Bomberg in Venice) enabled him to gain first-rate access to the book market. His collection of 200 Oriental manuscripts includes 136 Hebrew items and approximately 50 specimens of Islamic origin, for the most part written in Arabic. My paper will discuss Widmanstetter's academic career and network, as well as the provenance and importance of his manuscripts and books.

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Rückebeil, Ariane East View *Information Services, Minneapolis, United States of America*

East View: New Developments

East View looks ahead with new developments in Middle East Studies. We are creating new e-resources, including digital newspaper and journal archives and more from Afghanistan, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, and Saudi Arabia. We are also building on our relationships with existing content partners, such as Cambridge Archive Editions and leaders in the academic library community such as the Center for Research Libraries, to benefit researchers around the world. Beyond content, we also understand and support client's needs for text and data mining, improved OCR capabilities, and Open Access solutions.

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Sagaria Rossi, Valentina Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei e Corsiniana, Rome, Italy
&
Schmidtke, Sabine Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, United States of America

The Zaydi Manuscript Tradition (ZMT) project: digitizing the collections of Yemeni manuscripts in Italian libraries

The literary tradition of the Zaydi community, a branch of Shiʿi Islam that originated in Kufa and later developed in Northern Iran and Yemen, is among the richest and most variegated strands within Islamic civilization and at the same time one of the least studied due to issues of preservation and access. The literary production by Zaydi scholars stretched over more than a millennium, starting in the 9th century, and covers a wide spectrum of disciplines. Moreover, Zaydis were at all times intimately familiar with the relevant intellectual strands beyond the confines of Zaydism and actively engaged in them, and the typical library of a Zaydi scholar comprised not only works belonging to his own religious tradition but also an array of titles of authors from other communities, Sunni as well as Shiʿi.

The Zaydi manuscript tradition is widely dispersed and for the most part poorly documented. During our talk, we will present the ZMT project, an attempt to create a digital library of the literary tradition of Zaydism. To date, our partner, Hill Museum and Manuscript Library, provides access in its virtual reading room to some 1,500 manuscripts. The largest collections of Zaydi manuscripts outside of Yemen are housed in Italian libraries, and at present we are surveying the Yemeni manuscripts in Italy, including many collections that have been completely ignored until today. These will be digitized and added to the virtual library, and we are also planning to prepare metadata for the material.

In addition to facilitating historical studies, the virtual library will also allow for a comprehensive study of this outstanding manuscript tradition.

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Schmidtke, Sabine > see > **Sagaria Rossi, Valentina & Schmidtke, Sabine**

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Sekulova, Wassilena > see > **Ibarra, Maria Begoña & Sekulova, Wassilena**

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Sidoti, Alessandro National Library of Florence, Opificio delle Pietre Dure, Italy
&
Vitalone, Mario University of Pisa Library, Italy

The Florence Shahnama conservation project

The National Central Library of Florence holds the earliest copy of the Shahnama (Book of Kings) of Ferdowsi hitherto known. Dated 30 Muharram 614 Hijri, corresponding to 9 May 1217, the manuscript was identified in 1978 by Angelo M. Piemontese during his research for a comprehensive catalogue of Persian manuscripts in Italian libraries. Before it was incorrectly classified as an anonymous comment of the Koran in Arabic. The volume is in large format (48 x 32 cm). It contains only the first volume of the Shahnama, for a total of 22,000 verses out of the approximately 50,000 total verses. The manuscript records the date, but not the place of copying nor the signature of the copyist and was brought to Italy in 1591 or 1594.

Due to chemical, physical and mechanical deterioration, caused by the acidity of inks and pigments of the cartouches, some areas of the paper were in real danger of losing fragments. It was deemed necessary to dismantle the binding and treat the manuscript. Previous repairs (paper and parchment), proved to be unsuitable from a mechanical point of view. Non invasive analysis were performed to characterize the pigments used for the decoration and to point out the cause of the degradation. The manuscript was consolidated in the most delicate areas, repairs and adhesive residue were removed. The areas affected by acidic hydrolysis were deacidified in alcohol based solutions. Repairs and mending of tears were performed changing technique if in copper affected areas. The finished pages were left unbound in acid free folders in to three Clamshell boxes held together into a Polycarbonate container with three compartments and a slot for a data logger for environmental monitoring.

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Tottoli, Roberto **Department of Asian, African and Mediterranean Studies, University of Naples "L'Orientale", Italy**

Oriental collections, history and projects at the Orientale

The Library of the University of Naples L'Orientale has over 300 manuscripts from Asia and Africa and a remarkable collection of ancient and rare books. Manuscripts and books testify to the centuries-old history of the University and its scientific interests, since its foundation in 1732. The paper will analyse the salient features of the collection and in particular will present and describe the work of cataloguing of the manuscripts that has just begun.

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Vliet-Leigh, Kathy Van **Brill Academic Publishers, Leiden, the Netherlands**

Persian E-Books Miras Maktoob

As part of its growing portfolio in Persianate Studies, Brill is offering (as of end 2018) a new product type, **licensed e-book collections**. In this short presentation I will talk about the *Miras Maktoob Persian e-book collection,* Brill's first endeavor in this regard.

The collection consists of 249 volumes (189 works) originally published by the *Written Heritage Research Institute (Miras Maktoob)*, a non-governmental organization in Tehran. These e-books, which are exclusively available from Brill, include works in both Persian and Arabic on Islamic history and culture in the broadest sense.

Based on the positive feedback we have had so far received from librarians, Brill is seeking other high quality collections of books in Arabic and other languages to distribute via its global network. Your ideas and feedback will be much appreciated.

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Wachter, Mirja Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, München, Germany

Persian incunabula and early lithographs: historical overview and holdings

Compared to the history of early printed Arabic and Turkish books, research on early Persian printing is limited, and its history is different from that of neighboring areas in respect to preferred technique and content. Although typography was introduced at the same time as e.g. in Egypt (from the 1820s onward), only a lesser number of books was 'printed in movable types in the formative period of printing' (so called Persian incunabula). These items were produced from 1817 on under the patronage of the Qajar court in Tabriz, Tehran and Esfahan and ranged thematically from religious subjects to Persian classics such as Sa'dīs Gulistān. Despite efforts to assess the exact number of Persian incunabula, one can only narrow it down to 50-60 items.

With the introduction of lithography in 1832/3 in Persia, preference shifted strongly towards this new technique – leading to the abandonment of typography from the 1850s to the 1870s. Approximately 300 lithographed titles available in 1865 proof its superiority and indicate a growing book market in Persia. Lithography allowed using the traditional methods applied in the production of manuscripts and thus printing books in the favored Nasta'līq script as well as intricate decorative designs. While producers left blank spaces for illustrations (later to be added) during the initial years of lithographic printing, printed illustrated books became a regular phenomenon since the mid-19th century. Only in 1873 typography was reintroduced for the publication of Nāṣer al-Din Shāh's travelogue of his journeys through Europe, and it slowly began to replace lithographic printing in the following decades.

Today we find substantial holdings of early Persian prints primarily inside but also outside Iran, still there is work left in respect to proper cataloguing and digitization to enable further research. Therefore this paper will outline the history of printing in 19th-century Persia, while presenting a short overview about important holdings of early printed Persian books.

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Russian e-library of Islamic Manuscripts - Manuscripta Islamica Rossica (MIR)

The paper presents a unique library resource and access point to information about Arabic, Persian and Turkic manuscripts and old printed books in Russian collections– Manuscripta Islamica Rossica (www.manuscriptaislamica.ru).The Library provides a free access to digitized copies of the Manuscripts from more than a dozen collections in the Russian Federation (in Moscow, St.Petersburg, Novosibirsk, Astrakhan, Rostov-on-Don, Daghestan). The official website of "Manuscripta Islamica Rossica" is the part of the Federal historical and documentary educational portal created with the support of the Russian Historical Society. The manuscripts are presented on the website in high resolution without the possibility to download them in whole or in parts. In addition, the watermark is used as an additional copy protection. This e-library is opening Islamic manuscript heritage for librarians, researchers and those who are interested in History of Islam in Russia.