

The Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures (CSMC)
cordially invites you to the workshop

**Legal Texts and Scholarly Communities
as Reflected in the Raqqada Collection**

Thursday, 16 June 2022, 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm CEST

Friday, 17 June 2022, 9:00 am – 5:30 pm CEST

Saturday, 18 June 2022, 9:00 am – 12:30 pm CEST

Warburgstraße 26, 20354 Hamburg

Registration:

<https://www.csmc.uni-hamburg.de/en/register-workshop21>

The National Laboratory for the Preservation and Conservation of Parchment and Manuscripts in Raqqada, Kairouan, Tunisia houses an exceptionally valuable collection of early Islamic manuscripts. These manuscripts are the legacy of a prestigious scholarly centre that was an intellectual and cultural magnet for students from North Africa and Andalusia from the eighth to the eleventh centuries and beyond. They were especially crucial to the formation of a school of jurisprudence followed by almost all Muslims in North and West Africa today. Due to its position in the centre of the Mediterranean, the collection contains manuscripts from the entire Muslim world, some written on paper centuries before its use in Europe. Already, scholars have used these manuscripts to rewrite the early history of Muslim scholarly communities.

This two-part workshop will focus on new research into the texts preserved in these manuscripts and the scholarly communities that produced and preserved them. The first part, to be held in Hamburg, will be conducted in English and will be titled 'Legal texts and scholarly communities as reflected in the Raqqada collection'. The second part will be convened by Professor Asma Hilali at the Université de Lille and titled 'Les manuscrits religieux dans la collection de Raqqada et le problème du Genre'.

Programme

Thursday, 16 June, 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm

6:00 – 8:00 Jonathan Brockopp (Pennsylvania State University)
*Archive and Historical Memory: The Arabic Manuscripts from Kairouan
in Historical Context*

Friday, 17 June, 9:00 am – 5:30 pm

Session 1: 9:00 am – 12:30 pm

Chair: Jonathan Brockopp (Pennsylvania State University)

9:00 – 9:15 Opening Remarks by Michael Friedrich (Hamburg)

9:15 – 10:00 Nejmeddine Hentati (Zaytuna University)
*On the Relationship Among the Asadiyya, the Mukhtaliṭa, and the
Mudawwana*

10:00 – 10:30 Response by Beatrice Gründler (Freie Universität Berlin) and Discussion

10:30 – 10:45 Coffee Break

10:45 – 11:45 Miklos Muranyi (Private scholar, Siegburg)
Private Collections and Pious Donations of Books in Qayrawān

11:45 – 12:30 Response by Beatrice Gründler (Freie Universität Berlin) and Discussion

12:30 – 2:30 Lunch Break

Session 2: 2:30 pm – 5:30 pm

Chair: Asma Hilali (Lille)

2:30 – 3:15 Moez Dridi (Qatar National Library)
*Islamic Documents in the Collection of the National Museum of Islamic
Art, Raqqâda, Kairouan*

3:15 – 3:45 Response by Konrad Hirschler (Hamburg) and Discussion

3:45 – 4:00 Coffee Break

- 4:00 – 4:45 Saleh al-Mahdi ben Hammouda (Director, National Laboratory for the Conservation and Preservation of Parchment and Manuscripts, Raqqada, Tunisia)
The Kairouan Manuscripts: Developing a New Inventory
- 4:45 – 5:30 Response by Konrad Hirschler (Hamburg) and Discussion

Saturday, 18 June 2022, 9:00 am – 12:30 pm

Session 3: 9:00 am – 12:30 pm

Chair: Davidson MacLaren (Hamburg)

- 9:00 – 10:00 Alexandra Gillespie (University of Toronto) and Jessica Lockhart (University of Toronto)
Two Connected Wooden Boards: Kairouan's Book Bindings and Some Possibilities of Non-invasive Imaging
- 10:00 – 11:00 Kristine Rose-Beers (Chester Beatty, Dublin)
Evidence of the Animal: Parchment Preparation in the Islamic World pre-1000 AD
- 11:00 – 11:15 Coffee Break
- 11:15 – 12:00 Responses by Claudia Colini (Hamburg) and Discussion
- 12:00 – 12:30 Final Workshop Discussion

Abstracts

Jonathan Brockopp (Pennsylvania State University)

Archive and Historical Memory:

The Arabic Manuscripts from Kairouan in Historical Context

Thursday, 16 June, 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm

Some of the world's oldest Islamic manuscripts are found in a single, intact collection in Kairouan, Tunisia, allowing for unparalleled analysis of the community of scholars that produced them. In this lecture, I will present a broad survey of these manuscripts and inquire into the selection process that resulted in the archive we find today.

We can uncover this process by analyzing both the manuscripts themselves and also historical texts about the Kairouan community. Written on the manuscripts, we find numerous remarks from students and owners that tell us who wrote these texts, who put them into the archive, and why. We can also analyze the materials – paper and parchment – on which these manuscripts were written for further clues. Historical texts refer to the archive only tangentially, but they offer valuable context for the establishment of a Muslim scholarly community in Kairouan.

Beyond this material, important information can be gleaned from parallel collections of Arabic manuscripts in Egypt, Morocco, and Spain. The scholars of all three of these locations were in constant contact with Kairouan, and archives there contain copies of Kairouan texts and vice versa. In other words, manuscripts in Kairouan were once quite mobile, travelling all over the Mediterranean. Particularly intriguing are the lost texts of other scholarly communities in Kairouan. Some of these, such as the medical, philosophical, and scientific texts from the 'House of Wisdom' are known only through references in other texts; others, such as the Ibadi Kharijite texts, have survived in substantial manuscript fragments. Recently, even manuscript fragments from the Jewish community of Kairouan have been found, partially preserved in the famous Geniza of the Ben Ezra synagogue in Egypt.

A final context is the much larger collection currently housed in the National Laboratory for the Preservation and Conservation of Parchment and Manuscripts (NLPCPM) in Raqqada, Kairouan. Here, we find the remains of the ancient mosque collection alongside thousands of other fragments, originally stored elsewhere in Kairouan. The full scope of the NLPCPM manuscripts is unknown, and in this talk, I will discuss the opportunities and perils of working with these old archives, especially when they seem to challenge our presumptions of the past. I will also argue that a comprehensive history of the collection is essential to fully appreciate the importance of these manuscripts and the

contributions that they may make to the religious, political, and intellectual history of the Mediterranean world.

Nejmeddine Hentati (Zaytuna University)

On the Relationship Among the Asadiyya, the Mukhtaliṭa, and the Mudawwana

Friday, 17 June, 9:00 am – 10:15 am

The Kairouan collection contains important clues to the development of the *Mudawwana* by Saḥnūn b. Saʿīd (d. 240/854), perhaps the most influential book in the Mālikī school of Islamic law, after the *Muwaṭṭaʿ* by Mālik b. Anas (d. 179/795). Most researchers have simply followed what was written in the Mālikī biographical dictionaries (*ṭabaqāt*) on the genesis of the *Mudawwana*, specifically that it was based on an earlier text, the *Asadiyya*, composed by Asad b. al-Furāt (d. 213/828). Miklos Muranyi was one of the first seriously to question this approach, relying on the manuscripts in the Library of Kairouan that purport to contain the *Asadiyya* and another related text, the *Mukhtaliṭa*.

For my part, I revisited (établi les textes de) three manuscripts that are currently identified as being from the *Asadiyya* (the book of *sariqa*, the book of salat and the book of *ʿitq*), and studied them in terms of content. I noticed that the three are concerned with Ḥanafī jurisprudence, but they differ in style. The book of *ʿitq* has a narrative style, while the book of *sariqa* and the one of salat rely on the dialogue style, similar to that found in the *Mudawwana*.

These data allowed me to question the attribution of book of *ʿitq* to the *Asadiyya*. However, because the book of *sariqa* and the one of *salat* are also concerned solely with Ḥanafī jurisprudence, I began to question their attribution to the *Asadiyya* as well.

Later literature includes extracts from the *Asadiyya*, especially in *al-Tanbihāt* by al-Qāḍī ʿĪyāḍ (d. 544/1149). These extracts contain Mālikī authorities (*sanad*) and deal with Mālikī jurisprudence. Thus, it was possible to provide evidence for the relationship, asserted in the biographical dictionaries, between the *Asadiyya* and the *Mudawwana*.

On the other hand, when I compared manuscripts of *Mukhtaliṭa* with their counterparts in the *Mudawwana*, I noticed that both concern themselves with Mālikī jurisprudence. However, I also noticed some minor modifications introduced by Saḥnūn in the *Mudawwana*, notably fixing linguistic errors that existed in the *Mukhtaliṭa*, or adding a few *ḥadīth* or *athār*. This means that the *Mukhtaliṭa*, which Saḥnūn took from ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Ibn al-Qāsim (d. 191/806) hastily, was considered as a draft for the *Mudawwana*. Thereby, we could identify the type of the relationship between the *Mukhtaliṭa*, which can be attributed to Ibn al-Qāsim, the *Mudawwana*, which can be attributed to Saḥnūn, and the *Asadiyya*, which can be attributed to Asad b. al-Furāt (d. 213/828).

Miklos Muranyi (Private scholar, Siegburg)

Private Collections and Pious Donations of Books in Qayrawān

Friday, 17 June, 10:30 am – 12:30 pm

The present contribution focuses on two aspects of the early scholarship in Qayrawān which seem to be of different character at first sight: the writing and collecting of books on the one hand and the endowment of books – aside from the sometimes impressive written codices of the Coran – both in families and for the benefit of the Great Mosque of the city on the other. These informations cannot be derived directly from the relevant biographic works.

Abū ‘l-’Arab at-Tamīmī (d.333/944), local historian, author and active person in politics of his time, has left some important works of the Mālikīya behind. It can be proofed that the copyist of a considerable number of these “books” was Abū ‘l-’Arab himself. On the colophon of other Mālikī works it has been clearly documented that his copies has been used as the original script of the manuscripts in our possession.

The contribution will present also some original endowments (taḥbīs) of manuscripts for public use among the followers of the Mālikism in Qayrawān. Pious donations by the Zīrīd ruler himself show the turning point in his politics in favor of the Sunni majority of the city. As such, they are of historical importance in the last decades of the active scholarship (early 5th/11th century) in Qayrawān. Both aspects shed light on the everyday life of scholars and also on the treatment of the written materials in their time.

Moez Dridi (Qatar National Library)

Islamic Documents in the Collection of the National Museum of Islamic Art, Raqqâda, Kairouan

Friday, 17 June, 2:30 pm – 3:45 pm

The National Museum of Islamic Art in Raqqâda, Kairouan, holds a unique collection of Arabic documents, the majority of which dates to the Hafsīd and the Ottoman eras (XIII-XVI c. CE).

Typical of documents produced and conserved in Tunisia, the corpus consists mainly of paper documents and some rare examples on parchment (there are also 150 papyrus documents brought from Egypt by Hasan Husni Abd al-Wahhab [d. 1968] in the early twentieth century, but these are not my focus here). While there are some fragments, most are complete documents that give an interesting insight into medieval social and juridical history.

This collection is almost unknown to researchers and scholars working in this field, and many questions about the scope and origins of the documents remain unanswered. In

this paper, I will first present the results of my research trips to the collection in 2011 and 2020 in hopes of giving some sense of the number and dates of the documents.

Secondly, I will contextualize this collection by comparing it with the sequencing planned in the CALD database (Comparing Arabic Legal Documents, part of the Islamic Law Materialized project). Each sequence represents an independent legal and semantic unity that allows us to easily carry out an analytical and semantic comparison of the text - whether on the level of each individual document or on the level of the corpus as a whole – with similar documents from other geographic spheres.

As I will show, the Raqqâda Museum collection presents many interesting aspects either in paleography, codicology or history (especially the history of diplomacy), social sciences and law. It is this richness that I want to highlight here: it is a way of diversifying the scope of study and of multiplying the approaches, to contribute to filling the gap which exists between the contribution of narrative historiography and the richness of the archival documents related to urban history, social and tribal.

In this way, I hope to take part in reviving these documents and uncovering this nearly forgotten collection, of great scientific value for the history of Arabic documents and Islamic law.

Saleh al-Mahdi ben Hammouda (Director, National Laboratory for the Conservation and Preservation of Parchment and Manuscripts, Raqqada, Tunisia)

The Kairouan Manuscripts: Developing a New Inventory

Friday, 17 June, 4:00 pm – 5:00 pm

The collection of manuscripts located at the National Laboratory for the Preservation and Conservation of Parchment and Manuscripts (NLPCPM) in Raqqada, Kairouan, is the legacy of the ancient teaching mosque in Tunisia's holiest city. Originally stored in the *maqṣūra*, an enclosed space near the front of the mosque, these artefacts are of unparalleled importance for understanding early Islamic history. To the best of our knowledge the NLPCPM holds the oldest near-intact collection of Islamic manuscripts in the world, containing 23 of the 30 Islamic literary manuscripts that can be confidently dated to 900 CE or earlier.

In addition to the manuscripts from the Sīdī 'Uqba mosque, the NLPCPM also holds other collections, including manuscripts from the Zaouia Sīdī 'Abīd, the Zaouia Sīdī Saḥāb, and other private collections. These also include a few documents as well as material not originally from Kairouan, such as a small collection of papyri brought from Egypt in the 20th century by H. H. Abd al-Wahhab.

Until now, there is no catalogue of the Kairouan manuscripts, and the old handlist is both incomplete and inaccurate. Since 2015, staff at the NLPCPM, split into two teams, have been engaged in creating a new inventory of the entire collection, based on the following principles:

- 1) Review by a committee of experts in the field of manuscripts.
- 2) Use of an official inventory form.
- 3) Comparison of every piece with both the old and the new inventory.
- 4) Finally, comparison of every piece with themicrofilm transcription.

In this presentation, I will describe preliminary results of this inventory, giving specific examples of improvements over previous attempts at describing the contents of this important collection.

Alexandra Gillespie (University of Toronto) and Jessica Lockhart (University of Toronto)

Two Connected Wooden Boards:

Kairouan's Book Bindings and Some Possibilities of Non-invasive Imaging

Saturday, 18 June, 9:00 am – 10:15 am

When the Moroccan traveller Mohammed al-'Abdarī al-Hihi recounted his visit to the library of the Great Mosque of Kairouan in 690/1289-90, in his marvelling at the beauty, ancient lineage, and craft of the library's books, he did not fail to add mention of their bindings. 'I saw a complete copy of the Qur'an, gathered between two connected wooden boards, with no signs of wear or damage ... 2½ spans in length and 1½ in width (~57 x 34cm...)'. The mosque's medieval inventory of 125 books, copied in 693/1293-4 from an earlier list, likewise turns attention to the containers of its most opulent manuscripts; for example, the Blue Qur'an is described as having seven volumes housed 'in a square wooden box adorned with gilded copper'. Book historians globally have looked to the library of the Mosque of Uqba for unique evidence of early Islamic binding technologies, and for insights into the ways those craft techniques moved across regions over time and illuminate Ifriqiya's relationships with the rest of the medieval world.

One of these techniques is the raised relief decoration found on the covers of a number of early Qur'ans, such as the Abbasid Cambridge University Library MS Add. 1138 (3rd/9th c.) – and also on St. Cuthbert's Gospel (early 2nd/8th c.), the oldest European book to survive intact with its binding. Covers from the Great Mosque of Kairouan's library offer some of the most elaborate surviving examples of raised relief decoration—but how were these effects achieved? In 2013, microCT scanning of St. Cuthbert's Gospel revealed cords as well as a 'clay-like substance' acting as filler to create its frames and plant motif. A non-invasive imaging study of the Kairouan covers and their wooden supports might significantly add to scholars' understanding of this technique and its transmission.

Since 2015, the Old Books New Science lab at the University of Toronto has been developing both digital tools and local collaborative models for manuscript study, ranging from collation tools and 3D binding models, to the use of microCT and dental x-ray machines to gain new information about book boards and spines. In this paper we explore what more it may be possible to learn about the boards and bindings from the mosque's library, on the basis of experiments we have undertaken with manuscript covers and boards situated in Ontario.

Kristine Rose-Beers (Chester Beatty, Dublin)

Evidence of the Animal: Parchment Preparation in the Islamic World pre-1000 AD

Saturday, 18 June, 10:30 am – 12:00 pm

Parchment preparation is a complex process, with regional and temporal variations. Whilst this subject has been studied quite extensively within the European context, the production of parchment in the Islamic world is less well understood. Material analysis of the unparalleled collection of parchment in Kairouan offers a window not just to the history of book craft techniques, but to the wider social context in which parchment manuscripts were produced.

Parchment production involves many societal elements: animal husbandry and shepherds, parchmenters who process and tension the skin, scribes and bookbinders. All these leave their mark on the physical object. For example, marks from a butchers' flaying knives and piercings from a binders' needle.

Non-destructive analysis techniques, known as Biocodicology, can reveal conclusive information about the species of animal from which a piece of parchment was made. The recently initiated ERC Beasts to Craft project uses Biocodicology as a new approach to the study of parchment manuscripts produced in Europe from 500-1900 AD.

Other non-destructive spectroscopic techniques have shed light on ancient skin preparation. In particular the Bundesanstalt für Materialforschung und -prüfung (BAM) and Dr Ira Rabin's work on the Dead Sea Scrolls (ca. 400 BCE- 300 CE), as well as my initial analysis of an early eighth century Umayyad Qur'an at the Chester Beatty, have identified materials used to prepare the skins. The most recent developments in non-invasive material analysis offer a unique opportunity to reveal considerable information on parchment production and preparation techniques in the first centuries of Islam.

After providing an overview of these and other techniques, I will suggest some of the key questions that material analysis of the Kairouan collection might answer. For example, how did North African parchment production differ from that in the Levant or Arabian Peninsula? Did North African parchment manufacture influence processes in Europe? And did parchment preparation inform later paper preparation techniques? As for the

collection itself, we should be able to analyse differences between parchment production for sacred and secular texts as well as differences between local and imported parchment.