

CATALOGUING SUB-COMMITTEE

Report of the second Cataloguing Sub-committee meeting
held on 13 and 14 April 2007 in Istanbul.

Members present: Habibollah Azimi, Mehmet Boynukalın (13 April), Kinga Devenyi, Lesley Forbes (Secretary), David Hirsch (Head), Joseph Moukarzel.

Those present outlined the situation regarding cataloguing of Islamic manuscripts in their own institutions, and countries, and then discussed and identified a range of issues in furtherance of the aims of the sub-committee, including:

- a) a large number of **institutions that should be approached to join TIMA**, in order to expand membership to include all countries and institutions within those countries with significant collections of Islamic manuscripts – **the details would be passed to the TIMA office;**
- b) URLs of **on-line catalogues of Islamic manuscripts**, that could be mounted on the TIMA website – **details to be passed to the TIMA webmaster;**
- c) criteria for membership of the Cataloguing sub-committee – up to 12 members, to cover between them Arabic, Persian and Turkish/Ottoman Turkish, (and other relevant languages when possible), and all regions where there are major concentrations of Islamic manuscripts, and to be members actively involved with cataloguing Islamic manuscripts;
- d) the composition of and circulation to all TIMA institutions of a questionnaire to establish:
 - transliteration/romanization schemes currently used in member institutions for Arabic, Persian and Ottoman Turkish *[it was noted that there was a preference for the use of original script in cataloguing of Islamic manuscripts, and that not all TIMA libraries were currently, or anticipated being in the future able to use original script in their cataloguing, therefore standards of transliteration were still a major area of concern. Other relevant languages would be covered at a later date];*
 - the standards/sources/procedures currently in use in member institutions for establishing name authorities, subject headings and uniform titles in Arabic, Persian and Turkish;
 - whether TIMA institutions have on-line manuscript catalogues, and whether these have non-roman capability;
 - whether their systems are MARC21 and Unicode compliant, and name of the library system/cataloguing software;
 - whether TIMA institutions have manuscript cataloguing pro-formas *[and if so to send examples];*
 - if they follow guidelines for the cataloguing of Islamic manuscripts, if so which? Or whether they use an internal/individual system *[if so to provide a copy for information]*

The questionnaire would be drafted by the Secretary, circulated initially to members present at the Istanbul April 2007 meeting for comment, then to all members of the subcommittee and comments incorporated. It could then be circulated to TIMA institutions in the names of the whole sub-committee. A provisional timetable was agreed as: by 27 April or sooner LEF to circulate draft to Istanbul attendees, with comments by return, circulate to whole sub-committee by 7 May, comments by return, out to TIMA Secretariat by 23 May, for circulation by 31 May, with a completion date for respondents of 30 June. The aim was to tabulate the results and work on them in the sub-committee meeting in August 2007 and propose a way forward.

It was noted that this is the immediate and most important task for the sub-committee to carry out and that future strategic plans depend on the results obtained.

It was hoped that the TIMA office could assist with circulating the questionnaire, and with tabulating the results.

- e) content of TIMA cataloging subcommittee web pages including:
 - information about current work/projects
 - links to on-line catalogues of Islamic Mss, including scanned published works available online. <http://libweb2.princeton.edu/rbsc2/arabic/Hitti.pdf>
 - useful reference tools, and links to useful pages (i.e. Arabic NACO manual <http://library.princeton.edu/departments/tsd/katmandu/cp20/aranatoc.html>)
 - information on useful new books
 - links to transliteration/Romanization tables (i.e. ALA/Library of Congress <http://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpsol/roman.html>)
- f) the possibility of TIMA being prepared to fund, for example, a consultancy by a relevant specialist (eg. Isabelle Causse) to assist the Cataloging Subcommittee in moving forward as a major priority. This is to come up with common ground between TIMA institutions regarding transliteration and cataloging standards. This consultancy could cover, for example, negotiating with institutions in conjunction with the Subcommittee over moving to common standards, drawing up guidelines for catalogers, drawing up a suitable cataloging form, running training workshops, supporting institutions in deeper cataloging, etc
- g) other financial assistance to facilitate TIMA aims (such as funding to enable Unicode capabilities for libraries in countries with limited financial resources for non-Roman scripts activities, the purchase of reference books or obtaining copyright to digitize and upload out-of-print resources to the TIMA website.
- h) topics for 5 papers to be presented at the August 2007 conference in Cambridge, UK:
 - i. Habibollah Azimi on manuscripts cataloging at the National Library of Iran.
 - ii. David Hirsch on the new UCLA project to catalogue and digitize ca. 2000 Islamic mss.
 - iii. status of mss. cataloging in Turkey.
 - iv. status of mss. cataloging in Egypt.
 - v. towards a UK national union catalogue of Islamic Manuscripts.

David Hirsch and Lesley Forbes

14 April 2007