

**Report on the project funded by the Islamic Manuscript Association's Annual Grant Scheme, 2009-10**

**Inventory and Production of an annotated catalogue of Islamic manuscripts at the University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria**

**Dr Ismaheel Akinade Jimoh**  
**Senior Research Fellow (Arabic Manuscripts/Documentation)**  
**Institute of African Studies**  
**University of Ibadan**  
**Ibadan, Nigeria**

**Historical Background**

University of Ibadan, with its two major repositories of Islamic manuscripts, the Kenneth Dike Library and the Centre for Arabic Documentation at the Institute of African Studies, is well known for its collection of Islamic manuscripts.

The first attempt to produce a catalogue of Arabic manuscripts solely available at the Kenneth Dike Library was made by W.E.N. Kensdale between 1955 and 1958 with 150 Arabic manuscripts. There is also a catalogue compiled by Omar Bello (n.d), which only describes each of the manuscripts that are on microfilm at the Centre for Arabic Documentation.

A similar attempt was earlier made by C.E.J. Whitting in 1943. In his work, he gave a list of 99 titles showing the name of work, author and the subject-matter. There is another work that lists Arabic manuscripts in the Jos Museum and Lugard Hall Library, Kaduna compiled by Drs Arif and Abu Hakima in 1965. A more general list of the Arabic manuscripts of Nigerian scholars is also contained in *Arabic Literature in Africa* edited by J.O. Hunwick and R.S. O'Fahey in 1995. As part of the efforts of Al-Furqan Islamic Heritage Foundation, London, to publish handlists of the World Islamic manuscripts, published a handlist of about 422 manuscripts of the University of Ibadan, which was compiled by Baba Yunus Muhammad.

The focus of the present project, however, covered all the available Islamic manuscripts at the University of Ibadan in its two major locations: the Kenneth Dike Library and the Centre for Arabic Documentation at the Institute of African Studies. The manuscripts are in three forms: originals, photocopies, and microfilms. The project's main objective was to take an inventory and produce an annotated catalogue of all the Islamic manuscripts that are in both microfilm and paper forms at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria.

**Funding**

I was awarded £5,000 in 2009 under the Grant Scheme of the Islamic Manuscript Association, out of which 80% was released to me in the first week of February, 2010. The 80% of the total grant is £4,000 and after deduction of the Transfer charges, I eventually collected £3,952.01

## Methodology

The inventory of the available Islamic manuscripts in the two repositories in the University was taken. An analytical study of the manuscripts was carried out and the production of an Annotated Catalogue of Islamic Manuscripts at the University of Ibadan (in Arabic) was embarked upon. The proof reading of the final draft of the book is now at an advanced stage and, any moment from now, the book will be sent to the press. Subsequently, copies of the book will be forwarded to the Islamic Manuscript Association in Cambridge.

## Inventory

The manuscripts at the Centre for Arabic Documentation were microfilmed in 1965, almost forty-seven years ago. The inventory reveals that owing to ageing of the manuscripts, about 158 out of 522 manuscripts on microfilm at the Centre are completely damaged. However, back-up copies of many of these manuscripts are available in paper form at the Kenneth Dike Library. On the whole, the manuscripts at the University of Ibadan, generally, are of varying degrees of legibility.

About 1,468 Islamic manuscripts were discovered in the two locations at the University of Ibadan. These include some series in *majmū'* category each containing multiple titles. These are 132 manuscripts of De Gironcourt collection, 30 titles from the collection of Nizamiyyah School, Sokoto, and 152 titles of the collection of Alhaji Khidr Binji.

At the University of Ibadan, Islamic manuscripts are preserved in both microfilm and paper forms. Two types of paper were identified, namely *Alankuri* and *Alaparun*. The first type had as its trademark the saying in Hausa language: *Ankuri mangani dunya* (Patience is the antidote of the world). It was thick and the best, most expensive type. The second type, *Alaparun*, was somewhat flimsy and cheaper. While those manuscripts that are photocopies are bound, those that are in original form are not bound but only tied up. All the manuscripts covered in the Project are written in Arabic language and script, with the exception of only about 23 manuscripts that are in Hausa and Fulfulde languages but written in Arabic script, properly known as *'Ajami*. Such manuscripts are so stated wherever they occur in the Catalogue.

## The Catalogue

The present catalogue is arranged in alphabetical order of the authors and under each author, the list of his works are also presented alphabetically. This arrangement presents the works of individual authors in sequence. For each manuscript, we provide the following information (where applicable and possible):

- Serial number of the manuscript
- Archive accession number
- Title of the work
- The author and their year of death
- Date and place where the manuscript was written
- Name of the copyist
- Date and place of copying

- Subject
- Type of writing employed
- Number of folios
- Number of lines per page
- Size of the cover and of the written area
- Opening and closing lines
- Condition of preservation
- General notes and references to other sources

The provision of archive's accession number at the beginning of each manuscript in the catalogue indicates its location at the University. CAD/accession number shows that such manuscript is located at the Centre for Arabic Documentation, while 82/accession numbers are for the manuscripts at the Kenneth Dike Library. Comments and references are, at times, made to other relevant research works where applicable. Such pieces of information show the extent of work already carried out on each manuscript and equally signify the areas of further study for other researchers.

Although, the Project involved more spending than originally envisaged, 1000 copies of the Catalogue of Islamic manuscripts at the University of Ibadan will, by the grace of Allah, be produced, as already stated in the proposal for the Project. The Association's contribution in funding the Project will equally be duly acknowledged in the Catalogue.

With the publication of this book, the Islamic manuscripts at the University of Ibadan will become more accessible for researchers and academics. The Project really serves as a starting point towards the preservation and digitisation of this valuable Islamic heritage for posterity. It is believed that in near future, there will also be online provision for using the catalogue of Islamic manuscripts at the University of Ibadan.

The sample below illustrates the approach adopted in the book:

- 56
- رقم الحفظ: CAD/526
  - عنوان: هبة المولى في بيان معاني لا
  - اسم المؤلف: أحمد الرفاعي بن محمد بلّ بن عثمان بن عبد القادر بن موسى العاروي، الإبادوني، المتوفى سنة 1391هـ/1971م (راجع: مجلة البحوث لمركز تقييق المخطوطات العربية بمعهد الدراسات الإفريقية، جامعة إبادن، نيجيريا: المجلد 20، 1992-1994 ص 36-56).
  - الموضوع: اللغة: علم المعاني
  - نوع الخط: مغربي
  - عدد الأوراق: 5
  - عدد الأسطر: 13
  - مقياس الغلاف: 14 × 20 س ، مقياس النص: 10 × 14 س
  - أولها: بإسْمِكَ رَبِّي قَدْ بَدَأْتُ كُنِّيَّي لِيَنْتَفِعَ الْوَلَدَانِ مِنْ ذَاكَ مَقُولًا
  - آخرها: وَ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ لِلنَّبِيِّ مُحَمَّدٍ مَعَ الْأَلِّ وَالْأَصْحَابِ مَعَ كُلِّ مَنْ تَلَا
  - الحالة الوضعية: جيدة جدًا
  - ملاحظات: عدد أبياتها: 123. طبع الكتاب بمطبعة التهنئة، إيسالَى أوسى إبادن، غير مؤرخ. (راجع: Hameed, D. O., A critical study of Alhajj Ahmad al-Rufa'i's Hibat al-Mawlā fi Bayān Ma'ānī 'Lā', M. A. Dissertation, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, 1984)

**Appreciation:**

I seize this opportunity, once again, to express my profound gratitude to The Islamic Manuscript Association (TIMA) for funding the Project. The Project has, in no small way, widened my horizon in the study of Islamic manuscripts. May the Almighty Allah reward you abundantly (Amin).