

Preparation of the on-line catalogue of Arabic and Ottoman manuscripts in the collection of the Royal Asiatic Society. London.

TIMA Final Grant Report

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The Royal Asiatic Society was delighted and very grateful to be awarded a grant for the cataloguing of the Arabic (101) and Ottoman (65) manuscripts to be made available to researchers on-line. Since its foundation in 1823 only two incomplete and out-dated catalogues of these manuscripts were available for consultation namely:

Codrington, O. Catalogue of the Arabic, Persian, Hindustani and Turkish manuscripts. *Journal of the RAS*, July 1892 pp. 501-569

Morley, W. H. *A descriptive catalogue of the historical manuscripts in Arabic and Persian languages, preserved in the library of the Royal Asiatic Society*. London, 1854.

Work was scheduled to commence in 2011 after the first payment was received from TIMA in April 2011. Having successfully catalogued the Persian manuscripts in the Society, Mr. Alexander Morton offered to continue the cataloguing of the Ottoman and Arabic manuscripts in collaboration with Dr. Evrim Binbas, Royal Holloway. However, Mr. Morton became seriously ill and died in November 2011. I informed TIMA of the predicament that we faced and it was agreed that Mr. Peter Colvin (retired Middle East librarian from SOAS) would undertake the cataloguing with input from Dr. Evrim Binbas.

Following the same template as set out for the cataloguing of the Persian manuscripts, the manuscripts were catalogued into the *Fihrist* on-line catalogue (this provides a searchable interface of the major manuscript collections in the UK) and these records are now being reviewed by 2 language specialists.

Once these records have been thoroughly checked they will be imported into the RAS on-line catalogue available through Liberty. The records are now searchable and available on-line and include the incipit and explicit of the manuscript in Arabic. Furthermore, this detailed cataloguing project revealed that several manuscripts contained multiple works (between 2 and 4) which had not been recorded previously.

The impact of having these manuscripts available on-line has been immediate as the library has received 15 enquiries over the past 2 months. The RAS is eager to celebrate the completion of this project and anticipates that a special evening will be arranged in the forthcoming months to publicise the on-line catalogue, with contributions from those involved highlighting the importance of the collections. Once a date has been suggested, TIMA will, of course, be invited to participate. In addition the RAS intends to redesign its web site with a dedicated section for the various projects that have been undertaken over the past 5 years and details of the grants it has received including TIMA's contribution.

The RAS is very grateful to TIMA for the support it has offered the Society and its contribution to the cataloguing of its manuscript collections facilitating their access world-wide.

Summary of Expenditure

EXPENSES		
Services of cataloguers For Arabic and Ottoman manuscripts	Preparation and in-put of entries	£4,000
Review	Checking of entries and correction of mistakes	£1,000
Total Cost		£5,000
Received from TIMA		£4,000
Amount remaining from TIMA		£1,000