









Moroccan Book-making and Manuscript Production:

Approaches to Materials, Traditions and Functions



Introduction

From handwritten manuscripts to printed books and digital publishing, the book has continuously evolved, reshaping the mediums, traditions and functions in the documentation and preservation of intellectual heritage.

In the Islamic world, wiraqah' (manuscript production and copying), served as an equivalent to modern printing, playing a crucial role in knowledge transmission. The Islamic West and Morocco was no exception; even after the first printing press was introduced to Meknes in 1865, rather than replacing handwritten transcription, lithographic printing depended on it, allowing manuscript copying to retain its role in the transmission of traditional knowledge until the early 20th century.















As part of the **Qatar-Morocco 2024 Year of Culture** and in celebration of **Arabic Manuscript Day 2025**, under the patronage of The Institute of Arabic Manuscripts (ALECSO), Qatar National Library is organizing an academic symposium that will bring together a distinguished group of experts and scholars. This symposium will explore the history of book-making and wiraqah in Morocco and the Maghreb, delving into traditions of authorship and copying, the evolution of materials used in writing, and their impact on the circulation of knowledge.

The symposium will also examine the potential of modern technologies, such as artificial intelligence and digital humanities, in the study and analysis of manuscripts and Lithographed books, while maintaining their scholarly and historical integrity.





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Key Topics of the Symposium

- Authorship, copying, editing and textual verification traditions in Morocco, and the role of scribes and bookmakers (warragen) in the transmission of learning.
- The history of libraries and their role in manuscript preservation.
- Writing materials: parchment, paper and inks.
- Maghrebi and Andalusian scripts: types and historical development.
- The aesthetics of Moroccan manuscripts: illumination, decoration and bookbinding.
- Paratexts: marginalia, ownership and documentation notes.

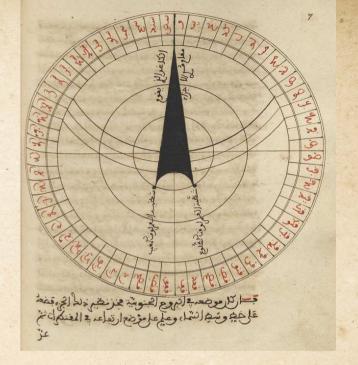




The symposium aims to provide a general framework for these topics alongside case studies that highlight the distinctive characteristics of Moroccan and Western Islamic manuscripts and trace parallels and distinctions with Fastern Islamic traditions.

Additionally, it will discuss the role of Moroccan bookmakers in transmitting ideas and scholarship across the Islamic world, the socio-economic impacts of that circulation, and the ownership of books in Morocco.

The symposium seeks to test the **continuity of the Moroccan book-making tradition** to the present day by exploring the contributions of Moroccan scholars in preserving and studing manuscript heritage. It will explore the transformations in manuscript care and the transmission of knowledge from early scribes, bookmakers and collectors to contemporary scholars, including the renowned figures Mohammed al-Manouni and Ahmed Chouqui Binebine and their academic school.









Organizing Committee - Qatar National Library:

- Symposium Organizer and Academic
 Coordinator: Dr. Mahmoud Zaki, Manuscripts
 Librarian and Curator, Heritage Library
- Co-Coordinator of Academic Organization: Dr.
 Moez Dridi, Senior Archivist, Heritage Library
- Executive Event Organizer: Ikhlas Ahmed, Public Programs and Engagement Specialist, Heritage Library
- Administrative and Logistical Support:
 Maimouna Al-Badi, Administrative Assistant,
 Heritage Library



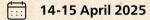


Other Details:

The symposium will be held in-person at Qatar National Library and conducted in Arabic. Simultaneous interpretation to English will be available on the first day.

The sessions of the first day will also be streamed live via Zoom and registered participants will receive a link prior to the event. In addition, the first day will be streamed in the original language via the <u>Library's YouTube channel</u>.





(L) 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM Qatar Time (6:00 AM - 1:00 PM Morocco Time)

Arabic with English Interpretation

Target Audience: Researchers and the general public

Registration and Symposium page: (click here)

SYMPOSIUM PROGRAM

Day One:

Symposium Sessions (Open to the Public)

Opening Session

8:30-9:00 AM: Registration

9:00-9:30 AM: Opening Remarks and Welcome Speeches:

- Introduction by the Symposium Organizing Committee
- Speech by Tan Huism, Executive Director of Qatar National Library
- Speech by Prof. Dr. Ali Abdullah Al-Naim, Director of the Institute of Arabic Manuscripts (ALECSO)

9:30-10:00 AM: Keynote Lecture: Verified Witness Manuscripts in Morocco and Al-Andalus: An Exemplar of an Early Copy of *Al-Shifa'* by al-Qadi 'Iyad (**Dr. Mohammed Tabarani**, Professor of Tafsir and Quranic Studies, University of Qadi 'Iyad, Marrakech)



Session One:

The History of the Moroccan Manuscript

Session Chair: Dr. Wajih Kawtharani, Professor of History, Doha Institute for Graduate Studies

10:00-10:30 AM: The History of Libraries in Morocco (**Dr. Rashid Affaki**, Researcher in the History of Morocco and Al-Andalus)

10:30-11:00 AM: The Zaydani Library from Morocco to El Escorial: The Journey of a Royal Moroccan Library (**Dr. Lbachir Tahali**, Professor of Arabic Language and Literature, Ibn Zohr University, Agadir)



11:00-11:30 AM: Professions, Trade and Circulation of Books in Historical Morocco (**Dr. Ahmed Sadiki**, Professor of History and Civilization, Hassan II University, Casablanca)

11:30 AM-12:00 PM: Paratexts in Manuscripts: Contextualizing Moroccan History (**Dr. Khalid Zahri**, Professor of Higher Education, Abdelmalek Essaâdi University, Tetouan)

12:00-12:30 PM: Discussion/Q&A Session

12:30-1:30 PM: Prayer and Lunch Break

Session Two:

The Moroccan Book-making

Session Chair: Dr. Moez Dridi, Senior Archivist, Qatar National Library

1:30-2:00 PM: Writing Surfaces and Inks in Western Islamic Manuscripts (**Dr. Mohammed Said Hinshi**, Researcher at the Royal Library in Rabat)

2:00-2:30 PM: Towards a classification of Maghrebi and Andalusian Scripts: Evolution, Types and Influence (Dr. Mohammed Abdelhafid Khabta, Researcher in the History of Maghrebi Scripts)

2:30-3:00 PM: Decorations, Illuminations and the Aesthetics of the Moroccan Manuscript (Dr. Tamer Mokhtar, Professor of Islamic Arts, Helwan University and the Institute of Arabic Manuscripts, Cairo)

3:00-3:30 PM: From *Warraqin* to Scholars: The Enduring Legacy of Moroccan Book-making (**Khalid Al-Sibai**, Director of Dar Al-Hadith Al-Kattaniyah)

3:30-4:00 PM: Discussion/Q&A Session



Day Two:

Practical Workshops (Closed)

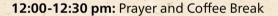
9:00 AM-12:00 PM: Workshop One (speakers and invited guests only)

Analytical and Practical Study of Selected Moroccan Manuscripts from QNL's Heritage Collection:

A hands-on Session

Convened and facilitated by:

- Dr. Mahmoud Zaki, Manuscripts Librarian and Curator, Qatar National Library
- Dr. Moez Dridi, Senior Archivist, Qatar National Library



12:30-1:30 PM: Workshop Two (limited on-site registration on Day 1)

From Scribes to Algorithms: Rethinking Manuscript Studies through AI and Digital Humanities Presented by: **Dr. Mahmoud Zaki**

1:30-2:30 PM: Symposium Closing Remarks

2:30-3:30 PM: Lunch

3:30-4:00 PM: Guided Tours

General tour of QNL | Moroccan Book-making Exhibition | Heritage Library's Permanent Exhibition

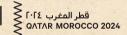












All photographs and manuscripts are from QNL Distinctive Collections, unless otherwise specified.

