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AUCTIONS

# The Georges Antaki Collection of Manuscripts

28th October 2025

واسع النظر فيها لم يجد قولاً منها غير متصل بما قبله ابداً  
الساير مذاهب المعتزلة من وقتك نعم يعين الشريعة فقا



بالاخي الي الحسين التي في اسفل الشجرة والي الفروع والاعصان والثمار تجدها  
من عين الشريعة فالفروع الكبار مثال افعال ائمة للذهب والغنى  
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مقولا للمقلدين والنقط العسر التي في اعالي  
اقوال العلماء في ك...

# The Georges Antaki Collection of Manuscripts

Tuesday 28th October 2025, 12:00

Featuring over fifty lots of extremely rare texts from the 12th to the 19th century, the sale comprises a selection of manuscripts gathered by collector Georges Antaki over decades. Many were originally brought together in the library of the Syrian monk Paul Sbath (1887 - 1945), and cover a wide range of topics: religious texts of both Christian and Islamic interest, medicine, astrology, and popular fables.

## Viewing at Azca Auctions

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**1 AL-NUKAT 'ALA AL-MINHA: COMMENTARY ON ISLAMIC LAW-FIQH**  
 WALI AL-DIN IBN SHAHAB AL-DIN IBN AL-NAQIB AL-IRAQI, COPIED BY ABDUL-WAHAB IBN 'ABDULLAH IBN AHMAD Ottoman Lands, dated Friday 14th Dhu al-Qa'da 842 (1438-39 AD)

Arabic text on wove paper, composed of 233 leaves. 26 lines to the page written in *naskh* script in black ink and keywords picked out in red. Brown leather Ottoman binding with flap, impressed with a central lobed medallion and pendants containing interlaced flowers.

24cm x 16cm (folio).

**Condition:** Margins have been trimmed, torn and taped. Spine is completely detached. Pages are loose. Foxing and water damage on the lower border.

**£2,000-3,000**



**2 AL-MAHABA WA'L SHAUQ: THE BOOK OF LOVE, LONGING, INTIMACY, AND CONTENTMENT; KITAB IHYA 'ULUM AL-DIN: THE REVIVAL OF RELIGIOUS SCIENCES, XXXVI CHAPTER**  
 ABU HAMID MUHAMMAD IBN MUHAMMAD AL-GHAZALI (D. 505 AH / 1111 AD)  
 Near East or Anatolia, 14th century

Arabic text on wove paper, composed of 193 leaves, incomplete. 19 lines to the page written in *naskh* script in black ink, headings written in bolder script. Sporadic glosses and comments in the margins. Volume entitled *al-Mahaba wa'l Shauq* (The Book of Love, Longing, Intimacy, and Contentment) is the thirty-sixth chapter of Abu Hamid al-Ghazali's *Revival of the Religious Sciences*. It was the first treatise to establish not only the possibility but the necessity of love for God, pioneering an approach that influenced new trends in Sufi theory and practice and mystical poetry. Ten folios later replacements at beginning, middle and end. Where pages are missing throughout new pages with different hands have been added. The final two pages have been added in a different hand. Brown leather binding impressed with central dotted, diamond shaped medallion at the front and no matching leather cover at the back decorated in the Mamluk tradition with medallion containing geometric star motif.

Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, born in 1058 AD in the Khurasan region of Iran, rose to prominence as one of the leading jurist-theologians of the medieval Islamic world. A highly productive author on religious sciences, he earned the honorific title *hujjat al-Islam* (Proof of Islam). *The Revival of Religious Sciences* is a monumental Islamic work regarded as one of the masterpieces of Muslim spirituality and theology. The book focuses on renewing various Islamic sciences, combining legal, ethical, and mystical teachings into a complete guide for religious and spiritual life. The corpus is organised into ten books, grouped into four sections: *'ibadat* (religious duties), *'adat* (social duties), *al-muhlikat* (the paths to perdition), and *al-munjiat* (the paths to salvation).

26.5cm x 17 cm (folio)

**For a related example on the subject:** Another section of this work has been auctioned at Christie's, *Art of the Islamic and Indian Worlds Including Rugs and Carpets*, London 24 October 2024, lot 3.

**For further reference on the subject:** Brockelmann, GAL, I, 422, S, I, 748.

**Condition:** Incomplete. Detached spine but papers are not loose. First two pages have had their borders trimmed. Evidence of foxing and water damage. Tape around the borders to minimize the damage. Ink has faded on pages with the most water damage.

**£4,000-6,000**



### 3 A MISCELLANEOUS MANUSCRIPT

CONTAINING TWO WORKS BY JALAL AL-DIN AL-SUYUTI AND ONE BY AL-HASSAN 'ALI IBN NASR AL-BAGHDADI AL-NU'MANI  
Ottoman Empire, dated 973 AH (1565-66 AD)

Arabic manuscript on wove and lined paper (changes throughout the text), composed of 119 leaves and 2 flyleaves. 17 lines to the page written in *naskh* script in black ink, titles, keywords and markers picked out with red ink. The corpus comprises a collection of three texts:

- Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti (d. 911 AH / 1505 AD) *Nawadhir al-Ayk fi Nawadir al-Nayk*, which is a supplement to his best known treatise on sexual intercourse (*Kitab al-Idhah fi'Ilm al-Nikah*) whose one other specimen is included in this catalogue.
- By the same author: *al-Qashush fi Ahkam Qaraqush* (The Satirical Judgments on Qaraqush). A satirical text targeting Baha al-Din Qaraqush, a military commander under Saladin, known for his severity. The text is attributed to ibn Mammati (1149-1209 AD), a notable Egyptian official and writer, and was later expanded by other authors, including al-Suyuti.
- Al-Hassan 'Ali ibn Nasr al-Baghdadi al-Nu'mani: *Kitab al-Nafa'is fi 'Ilm al-Nikah wa' 'Ara'is* (The Book of Precious Knowledge on Marriage and Brides) addressing religious and social norms related to marriage.

Ottoman brown leather binding with flap impressed with central medallions decorated with Chinese inspired cloud-bands and flower heads, traces of gilt paint. Doublures covered with brown leather and marbled paper.

Stamp of the 'Paul Sbath collection 1924', manuscript no. 1322 and other ownership stamps in Persian after the first treatise.

22cm x 14cm (folio)

**For a related example on the subject:** The first volume can be related to Christie's London, *Arts of the Islamic and Indian Worlds*, 26 April 2012, lot 230.

**For further reference on the subject:** *Bibliothèque des Manuscrits Paul Sbath Prêtre Syrien d'Alep*, Cat. Vol III, Cairo, H. Friedrich and Co., 1934, pp. 110-111.

**Condition:** Severe worming on pages affecting the entirety of the page down to the spine. The first volume has the most damage. The second and third volumes are in better condition but still quite fragile when handling.

### 4 MULTAQQA AL-ABHAR: THE CONFLUENCE OF THE SEAS, A COMPENDIUM OF HANAFI LAW

BURHAN-AD-DIN MUHAMMAD IBN IBRAHIM AL-HALABI (D. 1549 AD)  
Ottoman Lands, probably Levant, dated 19 Dhu al-Hijja 1115 AH (13th April 1704 AD)

Arabic manuscript on lined paper. Composed of 215 leaves and 1 final flyleaf. 19 lines to the page written in *naskh* script in black ink with significant words picked out in red throughout, extensive Arabic commentaries written diagonally in the outer margins at the beginning and annotations written in German language in pencil. A Persian ownership stamp appears on the final page mentioning Abdallah al-Saada. The colophon states that the author, Ibrahim al-Halabi, completed the writing of the first copy of the text on the 13th of Rajab 923 (1517-18 AD). Brown leather binding with flap, impressed with a central medallion containing split palmettes and intertwining floral motifs.

*Multaqa al-Abhar* is a fundamental work of Hanafi *fiqh* written by al-Halabi in 1517. The work is organized into 57 books, each dedicated to a specific area of Islamic law, such as purification, prayer, fasting, pilgrimage, marriage, and contracts. The author compares the opinions of earlier jurists, highlighting differences and indicating the most authoritative positions, making the text clear and accessible. The *Multaqa* became the standard reference in the Ottoman Empire, with numerous commentaries and translations into Ottoman Turkish, profoundly influencing Islamic jurisprudence in subsequent centuries.

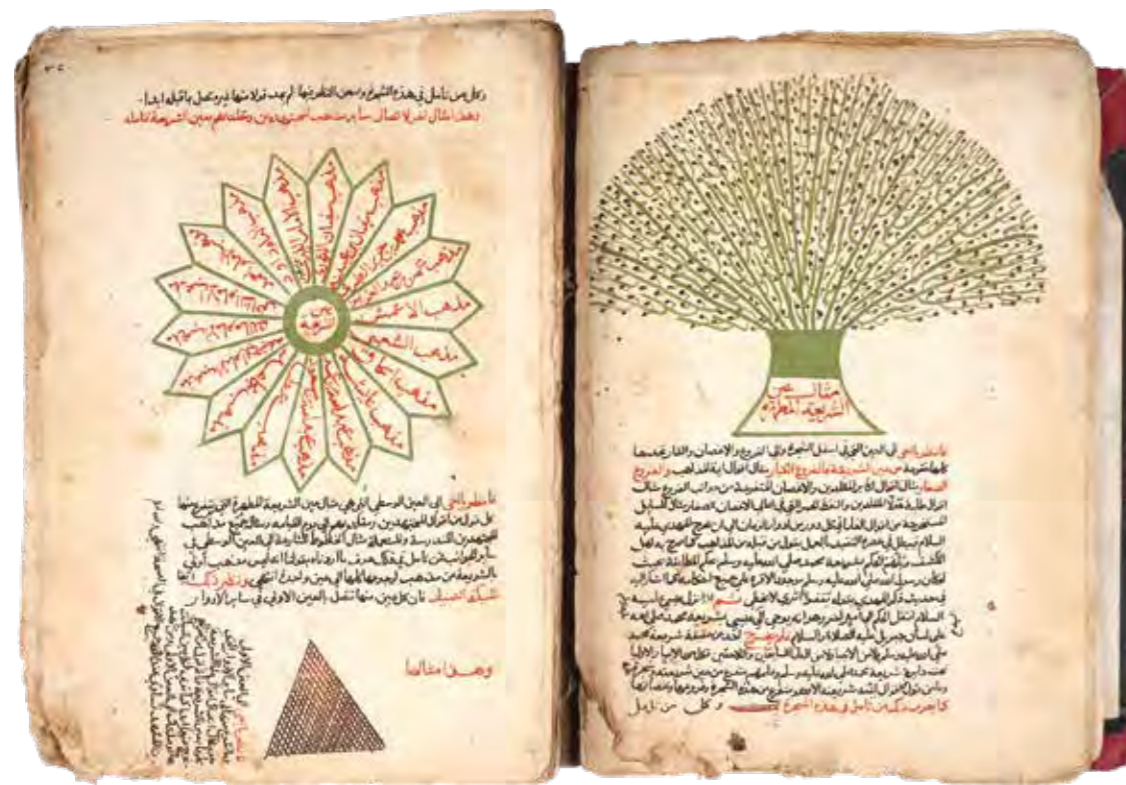
21cm x 15cm (folio)

**For related examples on the subject:** There are three copies dated AD 1117/AD 1705, AH 1052/AD 1643 and AH 1055/AD 1645 in the John Rylands Library, Manchester: see A. Mingana, *Catalogue of the Arabic Manuscripts*, Manchester, 1934, pp. 280-83; Other two 18th century copies are respectively at the University of Pennsylvania Library (CAJS Rar Ms 285); Cambridge University Library (Or. 203); Bonhams London, *Islamic and Indian Art*, 23 April 2013, lot. 246.

**For further reference on the subject:** Brockelmann, GAL, G II, 432; S II, 642.

**Condition:** Detached from the spine with loose folios. Tears and water stains.

£2,000-3,000



**5 AN ILLUSTRATED AL-MIZAN AL-KUBRA: THE GREAT BALANCE - A TREATISE ON THE SECTS OF ISLAM**

'ABD AL-WAHAB IBN AHMAD AL-SHA'RANI (D. 1571 AD)

Possibly Egypt, last quarter of the 16th century

Arabic manuscript on lined paper, composed of 120 leaves. Incomplete at the beginning and the end. 29 lines to the page written in *naskh* script with black ink with keywords and significant sentences picked out in red throughout. Glosses and notes in the margins. The text is illustrated with seven diagrams drawn with green, black and red ink and reading as follows:

- A geometric chain containing the words: Revelation, the Throne, the Chair, the Pen, the Tablet, Tablets, Gabriel, the Prophet Muhammad, the Companions, the Imams and the Followers.
- A tree with its long branches representing the founders of the *madhahib* (schools/sects), and the short branches representing the followers.
- A stylized flower head with the names of the eighteen sects which are shown stemming from 'Ayn al-Shari'a and a triangular fishing net at the bottom of the page.
- The position of the four *Imams* in relation to the balance on the Day of Judgement.
- The position of the four *Imams* in relation to their followers who had chosen the straight path to Paradise without falling into Hell.
- The paths of the eight *Imams* leading to the gates of Paradise.
- The domes of the Prophet Muhammad and the four *Imams* in Paradise.

The treatise discusses the four Sunni schools, emphasizing their common source of authority. Its author, al-Sha'rani (1492–1571 AD) was one of the most influential and prolific Egyptian scholars of the Ottoman period, who was born in Egypt and received a traditional education in Islamic sciences, including *fiqh*, *hadith*, *tafsir*, and Sufism. Known for his moderation, in his works he sought to reconcile religious and social differences, promoted a form of Sufism compatible with Sharia, criticized overly technical legalistic debates, and provided guidance for scholars and Sufis on engaging effectively with the military elite.

30cm x 22cm (folio)

**For a related example on the subject:** Sotheby's London, *Arts of the Islamic World*, 1 April 2009, lot 15.

**Condition:** Mould, water damage and foxing. Losses to the ink. Some pages are stuck together. Burn marks halfway through the book. Incomplete. The binding is missing and has been replaced with cardboard, detached.

**£4,000-6,000**



**6**

**KITAB AL MINHAJ: THE BOOK OF THE METHOD**

AL-IMA MUHYI-AL-DIN ZAKARIA AL-NAWAWI (D. 676 AH / 1278 AD), COPIED BY MUHAMMAD IBN SELIM AL-HASBANI AL-SHAFI'I

Mamluk Syria, dated Jumada al-Awwal 871 (1466-67 AD)

Arabic manuscript on wove paper, composed of 222 leaves and 1 flyleaf. 15 lines to the page written in *naskh* script with black ink, titles written with gold in *thuluth* script, punctuation and significant words picked out in red or blue. Catchwords and glosses in the margins. Some of the pages (mostly at the beginning) are ruled with a gilded outlined frame (*jadwal*). Single opening page with illuminated *unwan* bearing the title written in *thuluth* script with gold over blue background decorated with interlaced flowers in reserve and set within gilded arabesque decoration. *Shamsa* lobed medallion containing three lines of chrysography in *thuluth* script within a geometric and floral decoration with blue and gilded edges. The text is composed of two works separated by an empty page containing comments about earthquakes that hit Syria in 1822 and 1872 AD. Brown leather binding with flap, impressed with central medallion with pendants outlined with gold and containing stenciled interlaced motifs.

The author, al-Ima Muhyi-al-Din Zakaria al-Nawawi, was a Syrian scholar of the Shafi'i school. He is renowned for his extensive contributions to Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) and *hadith* studies. His most important works are *al-Minhaj bi Sharh Sahih Muslim and Minhaj al-Talibin* on Islamic law according to the Shafi'i school.

16cm x 10cm (folio)

**For a related example on the subject:** Christie's London, *Islamic Manuscripts Featuring the Mohamed Makika Collection*, 18 April 2016, Lot 204.

**For further reference on the subject:** Brockelmann GAL, I. 397; S.I., 684.

**Condition:** Opening folio torn and crinkled, the edges surrounded with tape, with smudges and losses to the gold leaf and pigment, evidence of water stains and foxing, some of the folios borders appear trimmed and others uneven.

**£6,000-8,000**



**7 KITAB KANZ AL-DAQA'IQ: TREASURES OF SUBTILITIES**

IMAM ABU BARAKAT AL-NASAFI (D. 710 AH / 1310 AD), COPIED FOR SULTAN JAMAN AL-DIN YUSUF IBN BARSBAY  
Mamluk Egypt or Syria, dated Jumada al-Akhira 850 AH (1446-47 AD)

Arabic manuscript on paper composed of 164 leaves. 13 to 15 lines to the page written in black *naskh* script, diacritics with red and titles written in *thuluth* script with gold, red and green ink. Glosses and catchwords in the margins. Two illuminated lobed medallions (*shamsas*) incorporating the title and the distinguished patron of the book: Sultan Jamal al-Din Yusuf ibn Barsbay who ruled over Mamluk Egypt and Syria from June to September 1438 AD. *Unwan* containing the inscription written in white *thuluth* script reserved over blue background within a gilded cartouche at the beginning and an almond shaped medallion surrounded by four rosettes towards the end. The colophon at the end of the text records the date, and the last three fly-leaves include commentaries written with a handwriting different from that of the main text. Later Ottoman binding in brown leather, impressed with a central lobed flowery medallion, showing extensive traces of gilt decoration.

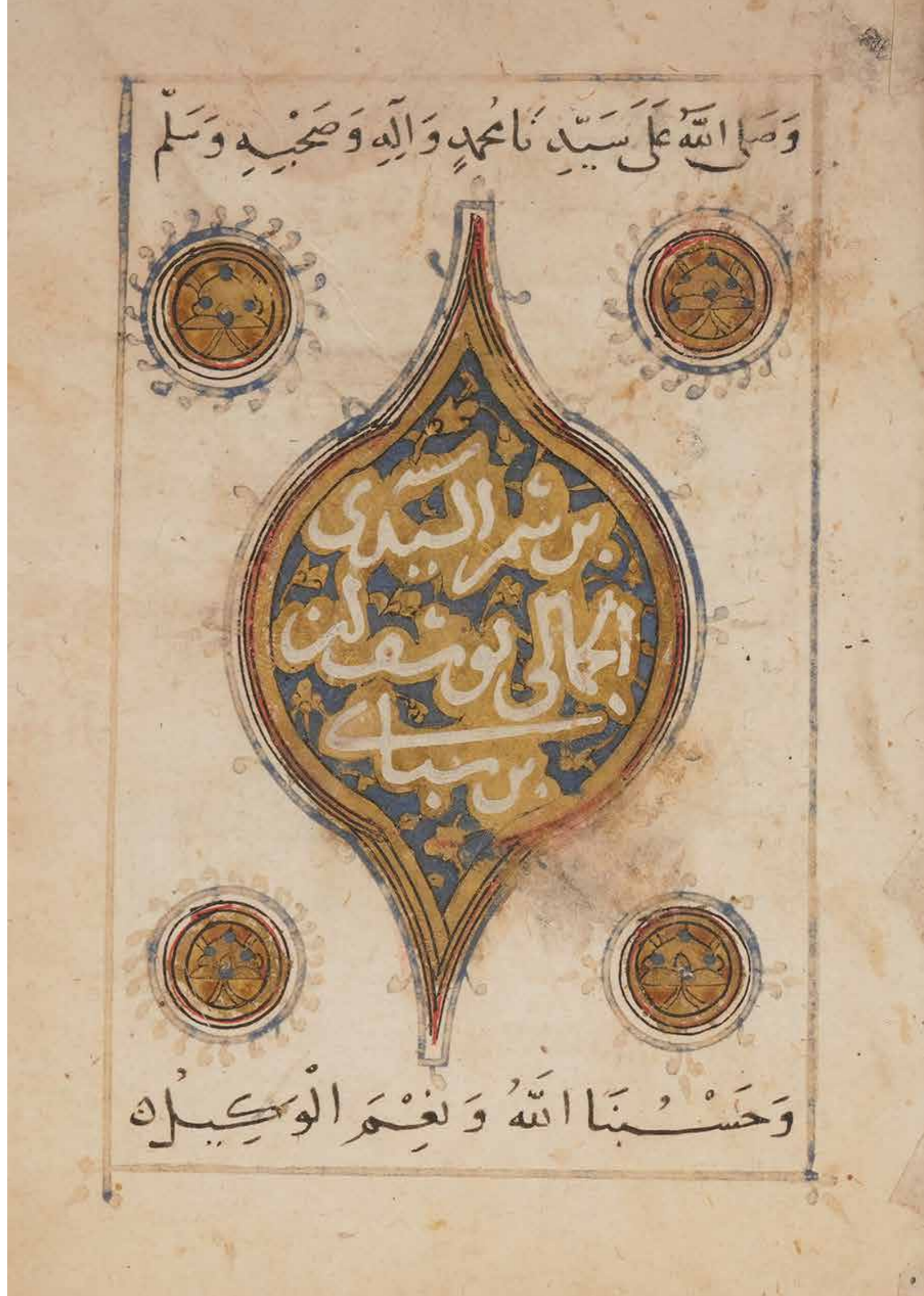
The *Kitab Kanz al-Daqa'iq* is one of the best-known jurisprudence treatises (*fiqh*) of the Sunni Hanafi School. It was written by the eminent scholar Imam Abu Barakat al-Nasafi (d. 710 AH / 1310 AD), and it is an abridgement of his larger work *al-Wafi*. The text is structured into different chapters and books, the first being the *Kitab al-Talaq* (Book of Divorce) and the last the *Kitab al-Faraz* (Book of Obligatory Shares, concerning rules of inheritance - *mirath*).

17cm x 13cm (folio)

**For further reference on the subject:** Brockelmann, GAL, II, 196.

**Condition:** The first third of the book is detached from the spine. The edges are trimmed (marginal notes incomplete). Water marks and rubbing with occasional smudges.

**£8,000-12,000**





### 8 MANUSCRIPT ON RELIGIOUS POETRY (DIWAN)

SIGNED ILYAS IBN FAKHR AL-TRABULSI  
Ottoman Lands, probably Levant, dated July 1701 AD

Arabic manuscript on European lined paper, composed of 14 leaves. Incomplete at the beginning. 16 lines to the page written in two columns of free-flowing *naskh* script in black ink. The first four pages are crossed out with red ink. The colophon states that the *Diwan* was completed by the scribe Ilyas ibn Fakhr al-Trabulsi who might also be the author. The text features religious poetry on the life of Maryam (the Virgin Mary) and two short supplementary poems. Ownership inscription in Italian on the paper attached to the front doublure reading: *questo al signor Constantino fachir [facit?] – 30 Marzo anno 1791*. Brown leather binding impressed at the corners and with central diamond shaped medallion containing interlaced split palmettes.

17.5cm x 12cm (folio)

**Condition:** Text is detached from the spine. The edges are crinkled. Some water damage and foxing. Incomplete. Text panels crossed out in red.

£400-600

### 9 TWO ILLUMINATED QUR'AN SECTIONS: JUZ IV AND JUZ XXI

Mamluk Syria or Egypt, 15th Century



Juz IV, complete, on wove paper, composed of 27 leaves featuring 7 lines to the page written in *muhaqqaq* script with black ink, diacritics in red, verse (*ayat*) separators in the form of gilded rosettes punctuated with red and blue dots, section markers and titles written in gold (*chrysography*) in elegant *thuluth* calligraphy. Single opening page with illuminated cartouche containing the title in *thuluth* script reserved against a blue background with gilded foliage and a round *shamsa* medallion with text arranged in three lines surrounded by cloud interlinear motif on a red hatched ground. The frontispiece also bears a later inscription dated 1232 AH. Brown leather Mamluk binding with flap impressed with a central lobed medallion with central geometric interlaced decoration highlighted with gilded dots. Doublure also decorated with stenciled interlaced split palmettes.



Juz XXI, complete, on wove paper, composed of 20 leaves and 2 flyleaves (one with commentary). 9 lines to the page written in *muhaqqaq* script with black ink. Verse separators in the form of gilded rosettes punctuated with red and blue dots, *hizb* separators and prostration markers with illuminated almond shaped medallion with white inscriptions against a red, blue and gilded background. *Surah* headings written in elegant *thuluth* script in gold. Single opening page with illuminated cartouche containing the title in *thuluth* script reserved against a blue background with gilded foliage and a round decorative *shamsa* medallion containing three lines of text in *thuluth* script surrounded by cloud interlinear motif on a red hatched ground and foliate gilded decoration over blue and red ground on the edges.

A second round medallion extolling the Prophet is at the end, including two lines of *thuluth* script over gilded and red background. Brown leather binding (spine detached) tooled with central lobed almond shaped medallion with pendants outlined with gold. Doublure also decorated with stenciled interlaced split palmettes.

Both manuscripts bear a deed of endowment (*waqf*) at the top of most pages, according to a practice attested as early as the 9th century AD and subsequently spread widely to such an extent that *waqf* sometimes applied to entire libraries (Deroche F. et al, *Islamic Codicology*, Al-Furqan Islamic Heritage Foundation, London 2005, p.330-331).

27cm x 18cm (folio)

**Condition:** Evidence of water damage, mould and foxing. The volumes are fragmentary and in fragile condition. Several tears to the edges and spine. Losses and rubbing to the ink and gold leaf.

£4,000-6,000



**10** **AL-JAMI' AL-SAHIH: A SECTION OF AL-BUKHARI'S HADITH COLLECTION, VOL. III**  
 ABU 'ABDULLAH MUHAMMAD IBN ISMA'IL AL-BUKHARI AL-JU'FI (D. 256 AH / 870 AD), COPIED BY 'UMAR IBN MOHAMMAD IBN 'ISA AL-SHAHID AL-QARI  
 Near East, 4th Jumada al-Akhira 858 (1st June 1454 AD)

Arabic manuscript on North African wove paper. Composed of 202 leaves and 1 flyleaf. Incomplete. 15 lines to the page written in *naskh* script in black ink with significant words picked out in red throughout, catchwords, occasional commentaries in outer margins. Later brown leather binding with flap covered with beige paper. Doublures with blue paper.

Born in Bukhara, Abu 'Abdullah Muhammad ibn Isma'il al-Bukhari al-Ju'fi (810-870 AD) was a prominent Islamic scholar of *hadith*. He memorized and transmitted *hadith* from a young age, travelling extensively throughout the Islamic world and studying under renowned teachers such as Ahmad ibn Hanbal and Yahya ibn Ma'in. His most famous work, al-Jami' al-Sahih, is a collection of authentic *hadith* distinguished by its rigorous methodology of evaluating narrators and chains of transmission.

22cm x 16cm (folio)

For a related example on the subject: Khalili Collection (MSS 311).

Condition: Extensive water damage and foxing. Areas of mold. Paper is brittle and frail.

£2,000-3,000



**11** **A TREATISE ON THE CELESTIAL VAULT**  
 Near East, 18th-19th Century

Arabic manuscript on lined paper. Composed of 108 leaves. Incomplete at the beginning and end. 15 lines to the page written in a cursive script in black ink in multiple hands, especially towards the end. Significant sentences and words picked out in red throughout, inner margins at the beginning ruled in red, catchwords. Brown leather binding, detached.

16cm x 11cm (folio)

Condition: The first page is almost detached from the bulk and the text is detached from the spine. Evidence of water damage around the edges.

£400-500



**12** AL-KITAB AL-JAMI LI-MUFRADAT FI AL-ADWIYAH WA'L AGHDIYAH: THE COMPENDIUM ON SIMPLE DRUGS AND FOODSTUFFS VOL. I  
 DIYA' AL-DIN ABU MUAHAMMAD 'ABDULLAH IBN AHMAD AL-ANDALUSI AL-MALAQI, KNOWN AS IBN AL-BAYTAR (D. 646 AH / 1248 AD)  
 Near East, 15th century, dated 841? AH (1437-38 AD)

Arabic manuscript on North African wove paper, composed of 85 leaves. 21 lines to the page written in *naskh* script and keywords picked out in red throughout the manuscript. Glosses, commentaries and catchwords in the margins. Binding missing.  
 Two later property inscriptions on the first page, dated 1122 AH (1710 AD) and 1176 AH (1762 AD), respectively.

Ibn al-Baytar was probably the most influential medieval writer on botany and pharmaceuticals. Born in Málaga in the Kingdom of Granada, he studied in Seville and in 617 AH (1220 AD), he began traveling east across North Africa to Egypt, Syria, and Asia Minor.

He is most famous for this encyclopedic work in which he catalogues over 1400 medicinal substances, including plants, minerals, and foods, detailing their properties, therapeutic uses, and methods of preparation in 2324 entries, based both on his own observations and on over 260 written sources he cited. Ibn al-Baytar travelled extensively throughout the Mediterranean and the Middle East, gathering knowledge from local and classical sources, including Greek, Roman, Indian, and earlier Arabic texts. His compendium became a foundational reference in pharmacology and herbal medicine, influencing scholars both in the Islamic world and later in Europe. Manuscripts of his work survive in numerous libraries, reflecting its wide circulation and enduring impact.

31cm x 21cm (folio)

**For further examples on the subject:** Sotheby's London, *Arts of the Islamic World*, 25 April 2018, lot 34 and 23 October 2019, lot 113. Other two 15th century copies are at the Bodleian Library in Oxford (MS. Huntington 86 and 137).

**For further reference on the subject:** Manfred Ullmann, *Die Medizin im Islam, Handbuch der Orientalistik, Abteilung I, Ergänzungsband VI, Abschnitt 1*, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1970, p. 280-283; Brockelmann, GAL, I, 492.

**Condition:** Detached from the cardboard folder. First page is loose. The edges are trimmed, worn and torn. Occasionally fixed with tape. Extensive water damage and foxing. All folios are loose.

**£3,000-4,000**



**13** KITAB BADIL 'ILM AL-RAQM MIN DHAHAB WA FUDHAH WA QISMA WA MAZHUR: A MANUAL ON ACCOUNT AND MONEY EXCHANGE RELATING TO GOLD, SILVER AND LOCAL CURRENCIES  
 Ottoman Lands, Syria or Lebanon, dated 1246 AH (1830-31 AD)

Arabic manuscript on European lined and watermarked paper. Composed of 61 leaves and 11 flyleaves. 20 to 21 lines to the page written in *naskh* script with black ink and interspersed with numerous tables, charts and maths throughout. Written area (*jadwal*) ruled in red. Numbers and significant sentences and words picked out in red. Ownership seals mentioning the name of Daud al-Zi'nni - probably the author himself- and the date 1246 AH. Original light brown leather binding decorated with stamped florets.

22cm x 16cm (folio)

**Condition:** First page is pasted in the cover. Some smudges and staining. Overall in fair condition.

**£4,000-6,000**



**14** AL-JAMI' LI-JUMAL AL-TIBB MIN 'ILM WA 'AMAL: COMPENDIUM OF THE PRINCIPLES OF MEDICINE, THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL  
Ottoman Near East, 16th century

Arabic manuscript on wove paper. Composed of 110 leaves. Incomplete at the beginning (text begins with chapter II) and at the end. Approximately 20 lines to the page written in *naskh* script in black ink in multiple hands, headings in bolder script in the first half of the manuscript; diacritics, markers and keywords picked out in red in the second part of the manuscript. An inscription at the end of the manuscript mentions that the work was composed during the reign of Sultan Selim in 972 AH (1565 AD). Ottoman *diwani* script on the reverse of the final flyleaf. Leather binding with flap, covered with marbled paper. Several stamps of the 'Paul Sbath collection 1924' manuscript no. 1175.

20cm x 15cm (folio)

**For futher reference on the subject:** *Bibliothèque des Manuscrits Paul Sbath Prêtre Syrien d'Alep*, Cat. Vol. III, Cairo, H. Friedrich and Co., 1934, p.39.

**Condition:** Spine is detached. Some smudges. Pages have been trimmed with commentaries cut out. Foxing and water damage throughout.

**£4,000-6,000**



**15** TADKHIRAT ULI AL-ALBAB WA JAMI' AL-'AJAB AL-'UJAB (COMPENDIUM OF MEDICINE) VOL. I  
DAWUD BIN 'UMAR AL-ANTAKI AL-DARIR (D. 1008 AH / 1599 AD), COPIED BY ABDUL-KARIM AL-MALAWI  
Ottoman Lands, Levant, 17th-18th century

Arabic manuscript on lined paper, composed of 309 leaves. Incomplete (vol. II missing). 27 lines to the page written in a cursive script in black ink with significant words picked out in red ink throughout, inner margins ruled in red (*jadwal*), catchwords and names written in outer margins. Double binding composed of a dark brown leather binding with flap, impressed with a central medallion, covered with a black modern binding.

Daud bin 'Umar al-Antaki, born in Antioch in the mid-16th century, was a Christian and the son of a local leader of Karyat Sidi Habib al-Nadjar. Born blind, he nonetheless travelled widely across Asia Minor and died in Mecca in 1599. His most important work is *Tadhkira uli al-Albab wa'l-Jami' li al-Ajab al-Ujab*, a medical compendium covering diseases and remedies through three chapters, modelled on ibn al-Baytar's medical writings. He also wrote shorter treatises on topics such as the philosopher's stone and astrology.

21cm x 14cm (folio)

**For related examples on the subject:** Museum of Islamic Art, Doha (Add MS 12187); Other 17th century copies are at the Cambridge University Library (Add. 3510); Cadbury Research Library, Birmingham (Islamic Arabic 242 and 848); Bodleian Library, Oxford (MS.Hyde 37); See Brockelmann, G, II, 364.

**Condition:** Some tears and worming. Date in the final page has been rubbed off and is now illegible. The margins are brittle and worn.

**£4,000-6,000**

# 16 A MEDICAL TREATISE

Syria, dated 10 August 1719 AD (1132 AH)

Arabic and Syriac manuscript on lined paper. Composed of 126 leaves. 19 lines to the page written in free-flowing *naskh* script, catchwords in outer margins. Syriac text at the end, before the index. A colophon, opposite to the Syriac inscription, dates 1132 AH (1719 AD). The preface states that this is an abridged translation of a medical work composed by Master Fioraviti from the city of Bologna (Italy) which was printed in Latin and Italian in Venice in 1647 AD and was most probably translated in Aleppo by the monk Rizkallah. Scattered little drawings of medical instruments throughout the text. Property inscription of *al-Shammas* (deacon) Zakariya al-Siryani and later Antoine Yusuf Hakim from the Maronite sect. Brown leather binding decorated with stamped florets produced in the monasteries of Mount Lebanon and Northern Syria, missing the back cover. This text is particularly noteworthy for its syncretic nature being a scientific subject rooted in the Italian tradition, rendered in both Arabic and Syriac, thereby demonstrating its Syrian production. Its provenance is further attested by the ownership inscription mentioning of *al-Shammas* (deacon) Zakariya al-Siryani and, subsequently, Antoine Yusuf Hakim of the Maronite community.

The Maronite community in Syria, historically centered in the regions surrounding Aleppo and the Orontes Valley, has preserved its distinct religious and cultural identity through monastic traditions, liturgy in Syriac and Arabic, and close ties with the Maronite Church in Lebanon. At the beginning of the 18th century, the various Maronite monasteries in Lebanon attempted to unify into a single order following the Western model and adopted the rule of Saint Anthony, who was highly venerated in Lebanon. The new congregation was initially called the Aleppine and later the Lebanese, but many monasteries remained independent until Pope Clement XIV approved their division in 1770.

21.5cm x 15.5cm (folio)

**For further reference on the subject:** Sanchez D.R., *Arabic Manuscripts in the Maronite Library of Aleppo (Syria)*, Universitat de Barcelona Edicions, 2017.

**Condition:** Severe foxing and water damage, especially to the lower border. Some smudges. Parts of text erased.

£4,000-6,000





**17 KITAB AL-BAYTARA: TREATISE ON HORSE MEDICINE**

AHMAD IBN AL-HUSSAIN IBN AL-AHNAF

Near East, Syria 12th-13th century

Arabic text on wove paper, composed of 80 leaves, incomplete at the beginning and at the end. 13 lines to the page written in *naskh* script with black ink and extensive comments in the margins. The first folios are missing thus it is difficult to establish with certainty the title and the author, but this is most probably a copy of the *Kitab al Baytara* (Treatise on Horse Medicine) by Ahmad Ibn al-Hussain ibn al-Ahnaf (or Abu Bakr al-Baytar, d. 1341 AD or Wahb ibn Munabbih d. 738 AD), a book that has been copied since the beginning of the 13th century. The antecedents of this treatise on the care of horses appear to be some illustrated classical texts, known as *Hippiatrica*, which in turn derive from the Byzantine cultural context. They usually included illustrations, although this specimen is only textual.

The earliest Arabic work devoted exclusively to general veterinary medicine appears to be the translation—probably made by Ishaq ibn Hunayn—of a hippiatric treatise by the 4th-century Greek author Theomnestus of Magnesia.

19.5cm x 14cm (folio)

**For related examples on the subject:** Two illustrated *Kitab Al Baytara* manuscripts by the same artist are respectively at the Egyptian National Library and Archives in Cairo (Khalil Agha F8) and at the Topkapi Library in Istanbul (TKS, Ahmet III 2115); Bibliothèque Nationale de France in Paris (Arabic MS 2810); See Christie's London, *Art of the Islamic and Indian Worlds Including Oriental Rugs and Carpets*, 27 April 2017, lot 41.

**For further references on the subject:** Ernst J. Grube, *The Hippiatrica Arabica Illustrata: Three 13th-century Manuscripts and Related Material*, in *A Survey of Persian Art*, ed. by A.U. Pope and P. Ackermann [Proceedings, the IV th International Congress of Iranian Art and Archaeology, Part A, Vol. XIV], Oxford: University Press, 1967, pp. 3188-55 and Plates 1523-5.

**Exhibited:** Riyadh, 1989, Islamic Science and Learning, Number 102.

**Condition:** Incomplete at the beginning and the end. Missing title. The binding is torn. Held together by a ribbon going through the pages. The borders are rubbed and torn but no major inward tear. Few smudges. Binding missing and half torn, still held together with cotton ribbon going through the pages.

**£40,000-60,000**



للمعدة الملائمة قد يكون الرهضة من حصاه وما اشبهها تطا  
 الدابة عليها ينسحقوا فزها او سده فيصير في الحافوا فيستخرج  
 الحافوا وعلاوة الرهضة انه لا يطبق الحافوا على الارض  
 وكذا ان الوقع علاج ذلك الحافوا من اسفل حتى يخرج منه دم  
 اربعة ايام اذ اخرج كل ما فيه من ذلك فيفضل بما يطبخ ويخل  
 ويؤخذ بصل وتوم ينسحق مع شحم ويحلى عليه ويكون النوم اكثر نافع  
 اغرا اذا انفجرت من الاسراع او غيره فوري الحافوا في علاج  
 وهو ان يغمر الحافوا البقر حتى يبرى من زوايا الشرج الى الشرج  
 ويخلط مع خل ثخين ويحلى بفضله الموضع ويخلط معه من الزبيب  
 بعد الحافوا فانه الاشيا على تلك الطريقة اذ كان من غلب  
 فيزاد شحم وداخن ويصير الحافوا على ذلك العبقا في الصلح  
 فاشدت الالوة الملبس الذي يماح به فان عرضت الرهضة في اكثر  
 قوام الدابة فالحا لا يخلط في زوايا الشرج ويؤخذ ذلك الحافوا ليس

وعصاه عصى الراعي تطير في انفه نافع وان القير الدم من مخري  
 الدابة او احدها فوصب على راسه ما بارد وصر فيه شي من ملح نافع  
 اخر للدم في علاج الدواب الرعافه مثل الدم توجر الدابة بلسان شاه ورتة  
 اخر مؤخره فيصير حصر اسود وشحم ابار شرا بلسان غلط الجع ووجره  
 الدابة ثلثة ايام نافع والدم اذا انفجر من حاشيتها وهو ظاهر العيان  
 بين علاجها مؤخره ضفادع فتقوى ويؤخذ ما هو ابرقت رطب ويطلق  
 به الموضع نافع والنج يسيل من مخري الدابة هو نظام مؤخر علاج  
 من الروية مؤخره نشاذر ورو عفران اجواسوا بسحق لها رسته منه  
 يوزن درهم موال في ذلك اربعة ايام نافع والاربية السابله من مخريها  
 وذلك ظاهر مؤخر علاجها باخذ نشاذر ورو عفران من كل واحد درهمان  
 ويخلط وينعظ منه الدابة كل يوم برهم ذلك بوزان عفران ورو عفران  
 يوال في ذلك اربعة ايام نافع صفة اخرى اذا سال من انفها والاشيا  
 يخرج لها الدم من صدرها وقبل ذلك تكوم بزيت مسخن معطو بمك القسط



'Ali ibn 'Isa al-Kahhal lived in Baghdad, practiced medicine and taught at the 'Adudi Bimaristan hospital. In the Latin-speaking world, he became known as Jesu Oculist. In this fundamental treatise, he provided detailed descriptions of over 130 eye diseases, organizing them according to their anatomical location. The manuscript is arranged into three main sections, each subdivided into numerous parts offering clear and concise explanations. It concludes with an alphabetical glossary of remedies for eye conditions. This work had a significant impact on both Arab and European oculists, was translated into Latin in the 15th century, and continued to be studied and translated well into the 20th century.

21cm x 15cm (folio)

For related examples on the subject: Bodleian Library, Oxford (MS. Bodl. Or. 584; and MS. Ouseley Add. 83); Library of Congress, Washington D.C. (2021667380).

For further reference on the subject: Brockelmann, GAL I 483.

Condition: First page is loose. Tears and water damage at the top. Detached from the spine.

**18** TADHKIRAT AL-KAHHALIN: MEMORANDUM FOR OCULISTS

ALI BIN ISSA AL-KAHHAL (D. 1038-39 AD)

Ottoman Empire, 16th-17th century

Arabic manuscript on lined paper. Composed of 142 leaves and 1 flyleaf. 19 lines to the page written in *naskh* script in black ink with significant sentences and words picked out in red ink throughout the manuscript, inner margins ruled in red (*jadwal*), catchwords, occasional commentaries in outer margins. Several stamps of a previous owner: 'Paul Sbath collection 1924', manuscript n. 1077. On the catalogue of the Sbath Collection the manuscript is described as follows:

"Book of Ophthalmology by Ali ibn Isa, a renowned Christian physician of the 11th century. It is the first Arabic book written on this subject. The work is divided into three parts: the first deals with the structure of the eye and its anatomy, in 21 chapters. The second including the visible diseases affecting the eyes, in 73 chapters. The third, with their hidden diseases, in 27 chapters. These parts are subdivided into chapters, and in each chapter the author sets out the causes of the disease and its remedies." In *Bibliothèque des Manuscrits Paul Sbath Prêtre Syrien d'Alep*, Cat. Vol. I, II, Cairo, H. Friedrich and Co., 1928, p.162.

Brown leather binding with flap impressed with central lobed medallion decorated with interlaced palmettes.

£10,000-15,000





**19** AQRABADHIN FI 'ILM TIBB AL-KHAYL: A TREATISE ON HORSE MEDICINE (183 CHAPTERS)  
 AL-HAKIM MUHAMMAD IBN KHALIFA YA'QUB WITH THE COLLABORATION OF SA'ID AL-DIN IBN AL-ZAHIR AL-AJAMI, COPIED  
 BY MUHAMMAD AL-HAQQI AL-JUNAIDI AL-MISRI  
 Ottoman Lands, possibly Egypt, 18th century

Arabic manuscript on lined paper. Composed of 53 leaves and 5 flyleaves. 23-25 lines to the page written in a cursive script in black ink in multiple hands, chapter headings and significant words picked out in red throughout. Divided into 183 chapters (babs). Modern binding with beige boards. Stamps of the 'Paul Sbath Collection 1924', manuscript no. 1201, listed in Sbath's catalogue as follows:

"...*Hippiatric pharmacopoeia* of the treatments of diseases, of the signs, and of the distinction between horses of good and poor quality, by the physician Mohammad ibn al-Khalifa Yacoub, of Arab origin, with the collaboration of the Persian philosopher Saad al-Zahir ibn al-Din, translated by an Armenian, and made accessible by Mahbou Aboul Farag, who had a profound knowledge of Arabic and was versed in all languages..." (*Bibliothèque des Manuscrits Paul Sbath Prêtre Syrien d'Alep*, Cat. Vol III, Cairo, H. Friedrich and Co., 1934, pp. 62-64).

This is the second *hippiatric pharmacopoeia* in this catalogue, the other dating of an earlier period. The antecedents of this treatise on the care of horses appear to be some illustrated classical texts, known as *Hippiatrica*, which in turn derive from the Byzantine cultural context. They usually included illustrations, although this specimen is only textual. The earliest Arabic work devoted exclusively to general veterinary medicine appears to be the translation—probably made by Ishaq ibn Hunayn—of a hippiatric treatise by the 4th-century Greek author Theonnestus of Magnesia.

22cm x 16cm (folio)

**For related examples on the subject:** Two 18th century *Kitab al Baytara* manuscripts are at the Bodleian Library in Oxford (MS. Bruce 26) and at the Cambridge University Library (Or. 1018).

**For further references on the subject:** Ernst J. Grube, *The Hippiatrica Arabica Illustrata: Three 13th-century Manuscripts and Related Material*, in *A Survey of Persian Art*, ed. by A.U. Pope and P. Ackermann [Proceedings, the IV th International Congress of Iranian Art and Archaeology, Part A, Vol. XIV], Oxford: University Press, 1967, pp. 3188-55 and Plates 1523-5;

**Condition:** Paper has been reconstituted where excessive worming has occurred.

**£8,000-12,000**





**20** SABA' TA'AMULAT 'ALA'L 'SALAT A-RABANNIYAH MURATABA 'ALA SABA AYAM AL-JUMA'A WADHA'TAHA AL-QIDDISAH TIRAZYA UMM AL-RIHBAN AL-KARAMALIYIN: SEVEN MEDITATIONS ON DIVINE PRAYERS ACCORDING TO THE SEVEN DAYS OF THE WEEK BY SAINT THERESA OF AVILA, MOTHER OF THE CARMELITES  
 Syria or Lebanon, probably 18th century

Arabic text on lined paper composed of 34 leaves. 12 lines to the page written in *naskh* script in black ink, markers and title written in red ink. Brown leather Ottoman binding decorated with central medallion with cloud ribs. Part of a group of Arabic manuscripts on Christian subjects included in this catalogue, demonstrating the cross-cultural milieu that has characterized Syria and Near East since Late Antiquity (3rd-6th centuries AD). With the spread of Islam, many Christian communities began to produce and translate Christian texts into Arabic. Among the most widespread texts, besides the translation of the Bible, were commentaries and exegetical works, canonical and apocryphal texts.

Saint Teresa of Avila (1515-1582 AD) was a Spanish mystic and reformer who founded the Discalced Carmelite religious order, dedicated to a rigorous life of prayer, poverty, and cloistered living. Inspired by her reform, Carmelite nuns and missionaries established convents in Lebanon, Syria, and Palestine as early as the 17th century, fostering contemplative life, religious education, and a European cultural presence among local Christian communities.

15.5cm x 10.5cm (folio)

**Condition:** No major damage. Some rubbing.

£800-1,200



**21** AN ARABIC CHRISTIAN THEOLOGICAL MANUSCRIPT  
 GERASSIMUS: THEOLOGICAL MANUSCRIPT COPIED BY MIKHA'IL IBN AL-KHURI (PRIEST) MANSUR  
 Probably Northern Syria, dated (Byzantine Era) 7130-5509 AM (1621 AD)

Arabic manuscript on lined paper, composed of 322 leaves. Incomplete at the beginning. 13 lines to the page written in a cursive script in black ink in multiple hands. Markers and significant sentences and words picked out in red ink throughout the text. Original binding with wooden boards covered with dark leather. Traces of holes for clasps. The text includes: an Apology (formal defense); refutation between Muslims, Jews, and Pagans – addressing the beliefs of other religious communities, countering objections and defending Christian teachings; a report about what Yuhanna (John) of Damascus said about the Virgin Mary; the testimony of Saints Peter and Paul. Part of a group of Arabic manuscripts on Christian subjects included in this catalogue, demonstrating the cross-cultural milieu that has characterized Syria and the Near East since Late Antiquity (3rd-6th centuries AD). With the spread of Islam, many Christian communities began to produce and translate Christian texts into Arabic. Among the most widespread texts, besides the translation of the Bible, were commentaries and exegetical, apologetic, canonical and apocryphal texts.

21cm x 15cm (folio)

**For further references on the subject:** *The History of Syriac Literature and Sciences*, by Patriarch Ignatius Aphram I Barsoum, Pueblo, CO, 2000, English translation; Desreumaux A., Briquel-Chatonnet F., *Répertoire des Bbliothèques et des Catalogues de Manuscrits Syriaques*, Paris 1991; Graf G., *Geschichte der Christlichen Arabischen Literatur*, Vol. I-II-III-IV-V, Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1944.

**Condition:** First page is torn and is missing six lines. Evidence of crinkling and tearing on the outer borders. Worming, especially at the top, bottom and center.

£1,000-1,500



**22** KITAB TALAMITH YUSU' AL-MASIH WA KARRAZIHIM WA NIYAHIHIM: THE BOOK OF THE DISCIPLES OF JESUS CHRIST, THEIR PREACHING, AND THEIR INTENTIONS  
Northern Syria or Mount Lebanon, dated 18th October 2023 'Christian Calendar' (probably SE) corresponding to the early 18th Century AD

Arabic manuscript on lined paper, composed of 187 leaves. Incomplete at the beginning. 17 lines to the page written in *naskh* script in black ink, significant sentences and words picked out in red ink throughout and sometimes decorated with red and black stylized flowers. Catchwords in the margins. Original leather binding impressed with central cross, faces of angels and florets according to the tradition diffused in the monastic scriptoria of Northern Syria or Mount Lebanon.

22cm x 15cm (folio)

**For further references on the subject:** *The History of Syriac Literature and Sciences*, by Patriarch Ignatius Aphram I Barsoum, Pueblo, CO., 2000, English translation; Desreumaux A., Briquel-Chatonnet F., *Répertoire des Bibliothèques et des Catalogues de Manuscrits Syriaques*, Paris 1991; Graf G., *Geschichte der Christlichen Arabischen Literatur*, Vol. I, II, III, IV, V, Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1944.

**Condition:** Some worming and rubbing. No evidence of major tears or water damage. Occasional smudges.

£1,500-3,000



**23** AN ARABIC MANUSCRIPT ABOUT THE GREEK LITURGY  
COPIED BY ANTUN BIN AL-KHURI (THE PRIEST) BULUS FROM THE RUM SECT  
Aleppo, Northern Syria, dated 18th July 1776 AD

Arabic manuscript on watermarked European lined paper. Composed of 86 leaves and 3 flyleaves. 22 lines to the page written in *naskh* script in black ink, markers in red ink. Catchwords throughout the text. Ownership inscription after the colophon mentioning the library of *al-Qis* (the priest) Jibra'il Homsī al-Suryani dated 1818. The text presents a discussion between Jesuits and monks of the Eastern Church in the 16th century. Light brown leather binding decorated with florets in the shape of the Cross according to the tradition of the monastery scriptoria of Mount Lebanon and Northern Syria.

22cm x 15.5cm (folio)

**Condition:** No major damage to the pages. Paper is clean and crisp. No foxing or worming. The final page has some smudges and the ink is a bit runny on the last page.

£2,000-3,000



**24** KITAB A'AMAL AL-RUSUL AL-QIDDISIN: BOOK OF APOSTLES  
Northern Syria, probably Aleppo, dated (Byzantine Era) 7184-5509 AM (1675 AD)

Arabic text on European lined paper composed of 99 leaves. 19 lines to the page arranged on a single column written in *naskh* script with black ink, verse separators and titles in red ink. The text features a Christian subject attributed to Luke the Evangelist to be read during the Fifty Days (corresponding to the Easter period, or the fifty days between the Resurrection and Pentecost) with commentaries following the Greek Liturgy. Double stamps from the Aleppo Library (Rosgalla Assiuon, Alep) on the first page. Brown leather binding, decorated with impressed florets arranged in the form of a cross, terminating in two angelic faces, following the tradition widespread in the monasteries of the Levant.

Syriac Christian Arabic manuscripts constitute a significant part of the Christian literary tradition in the Middle East. Among the main themes are Arabic translations of the Bible, liturgical texts, and commentaries, including the Gospels, the Book of Apostles and other writings attributed to the Church Fathers. They are often written in Arabic or in Karshuni script. The most important historic collections of such manuscripts are located in London (British Library), Rome (Vatican Libraries), Birmingham (Mingana Collection), Manchester (John Rylands Library), Massachusetts (Harvard University), Oxford (Bodleian Library), Cambridge (Cambridge University Library) and Sinai (Monastery of Saint Catherine).

25.5cm x 16.5cm (folio)

**For further references on the subject:** *The History of Syriac Literature and Sciences*, by Patriarch Ignatius Aphram I Barsoum, Pueblo, CO., 2000, English translation; Desreumaux A., Briquel-Chatonnet F., *Répertoire des Bibliothèques et des Catalogues de Manuscrits Syriaques*, Paris 1991; Graf G., *Geschichte der Christlichen Arabischen Literatur*, Vol. I, II, III, IV, V, Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1944.

**Condition:** The manuscript is detached from the spine. Severe foxing. Rubbing and a few smudges. Borders crinkled and damaged with occasional tears. Final page is loose.

**£3,000-5,000**



**25** SHARH AL-ABUKALIBSIS LI-YUHANNA ISTIFANUS MINUKIYUS: A COMMENTARY BY STEPHAN MINUKIUS ON THE APOCALYPSE OF JOHN  
Syria or Lebanon, 1124 AH (1712 AD)

Arabic text on European lined paper with watermark, composed of 88 leaves and 2 flyleaves. 17 lines to the page written in elegant *naskh* script in black ink, significant sentences picked out in red ink throughout, titles in a bolder script, catchwords in outer margins. Armenian notes in the last flyleaf. The title mentions that it was translated from Latin by *al-Qis* (the priest) Butrus Bin Hanna al-Suryani al-Halabi, in Rome in 1712. The last line mentions Qustantin (Constantine), possibly identifying the scribe. Brown leather decorated with stamped florets in the shape of the cross, produced in the monasteries of Mount Lebanon and Northern Syria.

A text with a Christian subject but often included among the apocryphal writings, the Apocalypse of John is one of the most vivid and striking accounts of the end times and the Day of Judgment. Syria, since Late Antiquity (3rd-6th century AD), has been a crossroads of cultures and religions, including Christianity. With the spread of Islam, many Christian communities began to produce and translate Christian texts into Arabic. Among the most widespread texts, besides the translation of the Bible, were commentaries and exegetical works, canonical and apocryphal texts. These texts were pivotal in the challenging mission the Church faced in the 16th century, as it sought to curb Islamic expansion following the fall of Constantinople in 1453 and to find ways to ensure the survival of Christian communities in the Middle East and North Africa.

21 cm x 15cm (folio)

**For a related example on the subject:** Another copy of this work, dated 1824 AD, is in the British Library, London (OR 3707) and published in Rieu C., *Supplement to the Catalogue of the Arabic Manuscripts in the British Museum*, London 1894, cat. 17, p. 13.

**Condition:** Spine detached, first and last page are loose. The borders do not seem to have been trimmed. Some pages are loose but there is consistency in hand and ink. Very gentle smudges and foxing around the edges.

**£4,000-6,000**

26 THE MIRACLES OF THE VIRGIN MARY, VOL. II

Syria or Mount Lebanon, dated 1776 AD

Arabic manuscript on European watermarked lined paper, composed of 167 leaves. 30 lines to the page written with the Syriac alphabet in disciplined and elegant karshuni in black ink, headings, significant sentences and words picked out in red ink throughout. Naif ink illustration of a Church and the Virgin Mary. The author is not stated but it might be the work of the 17th century Jesuit missionary René Ignace Clisson who was active in Aleppo. Original contemporary dark brown leather binding impressed with central cross in accordance with the tradition of monastery scriptoria in Northern Syria and Mount Lebanon.

31cm x 19.5cm (folio)

For a related example on the subject: An earlier copy of this text is at the Cambridge University Library (Add. 2886).

For further references on the subject: *The History of Syriac Literature and Sciences*, by Patriarch Ignatius Aphram I Barsoum, Pueblo, CO., 2000, English translation; Desreumaux A., Briquel-Chatonnet F., *Répertoire des Bibliothèques et des Catalogues de Manuscrits Syriaques*, Paris 1991; Graf G., *Geschichte der Christlichen Arabischen Literatur*, Vol. I, II, III, I, V, Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1944.

Condition: Clear evidence of tears, rubbing and damage to the edges and some central to the page. Some smudges. The final page once detached is now pasted back on to the spine with a lot of rubbing.

£5,000-8,000





**27** THE FOUR GOSPELS FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT  
Syria or Mount Lebanon, 18th-early 19th century

Arabic manuscript on European watermarked lined paper with the three crescents. Composed of 112 leaves and 2 flyleaves. 20 lines to the page written in neat *naskh* script in black ink, inner margins ruled in red (*jadwal*) with double fillet, catchwords, red dots between sentences, title, significant sentences and words picked out in red ink throughout. Each gospel begins with an illuminated colorful *unwan* illustrated with naif motifs. Pencil inscription added at a later stage in Italian and Latin dated to Saturday 18 December 1852 on the last flyleaf. Brown leather binding impressed with central cross and floral scrolls at the edges in accordance with the tradition of monastery scriptoria in Northern Syria and Mount Lebanon.

The most important historic collections of Christian Arabic manuscripts are located in London (British Library), Rome (Vatican Libraries), Birmingham (Mingana Collection), Manchester (John Rylands Library), Oxford (Bodleian Library), Cambridge (Cambridge University Library), Massachusetts (Harvard University) and Sinai (Monastery of Saint Catherine).

28cm x 19.5cm (folio)

**For a related example on the topic:** A copy of the Gospel is at the Cambridge University Library (Add. 3216).

**For further references on the subject:** *The History of Syriac Literature and Sciences*, by Patriarch Ignatius Aphram I Barsoum, Pueblo, CO., 2000, English translation; Desreumaux A., Briquel-Chatonnet F., *Répertoire des Bibliothèques et des Catalogues de Manuscrits Syriaques*, Paris 1991; Graf G., *Geschichte der Christlichen Arabischen Literatur*, Vol. I, II, III, IV, V, Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1944.

**Condition:** Some foxing and rubbing. No tears. Very few smudges. Final flyleaf is torn.

**£5,000-8,000**



**28** A COLLECTION OF 15 THEOLOGICAL TREATISES ACCORDING TO THE CAPUCHIN RITE  
Ottoman Syria, dated Monday 18th November 1672 AD

Arabic manuscript on European watermarked lined paper (most likely French, with the fleur-de-lis watermark). Composed of 321 leaves and 3 final flyleaves. 25 lines to the page written in *naskh* script in black ink with highlights, significant sentences and words picked out in red ink throughout, catchwords in wide margins. Multiple handwritings. Several plain pages in-between. Several colophons in between the treatises, a couple of them dated 1670 AD, but completed in 1672 AD in the *Deir* (monastery) of the Capuchin Monks, Aleppo, as stated in the last colophon.

The text was translated from French to Arabic in Aleppo, including:

- *Al-Mu'alim al-Adib lil-Masihi* (The Erudite Teacher for the Christian), a Book of Christian catechesis;
- biographies of the following Saints: Francis, Clara, Hanna, Helena, Martha, Catherine, Barbara, Maryam the Egyptian and Alexius.
- *Kitab al-Rumuz wa al-Alghaz* (The Book of Symbols and Enigmas), a treatise on the Christian Way of Life.

All of them included in a detailed index at the beginning. Original reddish leather binding, impressed with stamped central medallions incorporating the Cross, probably produced in the monasteries of Northern Syria. Raised bands on the spine.

28.5cm x 19.5cm (folio)

**For further reference on the subject:** Ghobrial J.P., *The Earliest Capuchin Missions to the Ottoman Empire in Studies in Church History*, Vol. 61, Margins and Peripheries in Christian History, June 2025 , pp. 325 - 359.

**Condition:** Minor foxing, staining and smudges. The first three section pages are completely detached from the spine.

**£4,000-6,000**



**29** KITAB AL-DURR LIL-QIDIS AL-TAHIR ABATRIARK YUHANNA FAMM AL-DHAHAB WA 'ADAD MAQALATUHU 34: THE BOOK OF PEARLS OF THE HOLY PURE PATRIARCH JOHN CHRYSOSTOM AND HIS 34 HOMELIES  
Possibly Syria, 18th century

Arabic text on European watermarked paper. Composed of 407 leaves and 2 flyleaves. 25 lines to the page written in *naskh* script in black ink, red dots between sentences, titles, main index and glosses picked out in red ink throughout, catchwords in outer margins. Translated from Greek into Arabic by al-Batriark Kir Athanasius al-Batriark al-Antaki. Two birth inscriptions reading Ni'matallah and Fathallah, one of them dated 1812 AD. Light brown leather binding decorated with impressed florets in the shape of the Cross, according to the tradition of the scriptoria in Northern Syria and Mount Lebanon. Part of a group of Arabic manuscripts on Christian subjects included in this catalogue, demonstrating the cross-cultural milieu that has characterized Syria since Late Antiquity (3rd-6th centuries AD). With the spread of Islam, many Christian communities began to produce and translate Christian texts into Arabic. Among the most widespread texts, besides the translation of the Bible, were commentaries and exegetical works, canonical and apocryphal texts.

The most important historic collections of such manuscripts are located in London (British Library), Rome (Vatican Libraries), Birmingham (Mingana Collection), Manchester (John Rylands Library), Oxford (Bodleian Library), Cambridge (Cambridge University Library), Massachusetts (Harvard University) and Sinai (Monastery of Saint Catherine).

30cm x 20cm (folio)

**For a related example on the subject:** Another Arabic manuscript containing the 34 homilies of John Chrysostom is at the Bodleian Library, Oxford (MS. Huntington 246).

**For further reference on the subject:** Graf G., *Geschichte der Christlichen Arabischen Literatur*, Vol. I-II-III-IV-V, Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1944.

**Condition:** Some borders trimmed, some rubbing. Some paper crinkling. Final section is almost detached from the spine from 33 to 34. No major tears or water damage.

**£6,000-8,000**



**30** A COLLECTION OF TWENTY CHRISTIAN THEOLOGICAL TREATISES  
SIGNED IBN SALEH BIN AL-MAHASIN AL-ISKANDARANI  
Possibly Egypt, one of the treatise is dated 628 AH (1230-31 AD) and later

Arabic manuscript on both European lined paper and North African wove paper. Composed of 125 leaves and 7 flyleaves. 21 lines to the page written in *naskh* script with black ink. Unusual upwards slanting of the text. Flyleaves scattered throughout the manuscript (from leaf 21 to 30; 40 to 42). Later notes written with pencil in the margins. From leaf 42b the manuscript shows a very sober decoration with red dots and cross-like patterns also with red dots. The final commentary is written in two different hands. Leather brown binding impressed with a stylized, flowery Coptic cross on both sides. Raised bands on the spine. The text includes a letter from the Fatimid vizier al-Husain 'Ali al-Maghribi (981-1027 AD) to Bishop Elijah Mitran of Nisibus (d. 1049 AD), requesting him to explain and defend Christian doctrines and answer scientific questions. The bishop's formal defense (*apologia*) is included, written with the vizier's official approval.

The correspondence between these two prominent historical figures is documented. Among other sources cfr: Bumazhnov D.F., *The Book of Sessions by Elia, the Metropolitan of Nisibis with the vizier Abu l-Qasim al-usayn ibn Ali al-Magribi and the Letter of the Metropolitan Elia to the vizier Abu l-Qasim*, edited by N.N. Seleznyov, 2017/2018.

Several stamps of the 'Paul Sbath collection 1924' Manuscript no. 1130 and listed in detail in the Sbath's catalogue:

...This valuable collection includes:

- An Epistle by the Moroccan Muslim vizier 'Ali ibn al-Husayn addressed to Elia, Archbishop of Nisibis (+1049), in which he asks him to explain and defend the dogmas of the Christian religion and also poses several scientific questions.
- The apologetic Response of the Archbishop.
- With the approbatory Response of the said vizier.

*Paul Sbath, Bibliothèque des Manuscrits Paul Sbath Prêtre Syrien d'Alep*, Cat. Vol III, Cairo, H. Friedrich and Co., 1934. pp. 10-22.

25cm x 17cm (folio)

**Condition:** Partial spine detachment. Pages are still attached. Some rubbing, foxing and water damage. Visible smudges to the ink.

**£6,000-8,000**



**31** A BIBLICAL MANUSCRIPT COPIED BY AL-QIS SULEYMAN IBN BISHARAH FROM THE VILLAGE OF 'AISHA, NEAR ALEPPO Syria, dated (Byzantine Era) 7067-5509 AM, 965 AH / 1558 AD

Arabic manuscript on lined paper. Composed of 310 leaves. Incomplete at the beginning. 17 lines to the page written in naskh script in black ink, verse markers, headings and significant sentences and words picked out in red throughout, 18 scattered heading decorations, sober, with crosses, rosettes, knots and foliage outlined with black and coloured with red and yellow. Original contemporary binding composed of two wooden boards covered with brown leather. One of the earliest known Arabic translations of the Bible is a manuscript dating to 867 AD, discovered at Saint Catherine's Monastery. This codex, known as Mt. Sinai Arabic Codex 151, contains the Book of Acts and the Epistles, translated from Aramaic (Syriac). It includes biblical texts, marginal comments, lectionary notes, and glosses. The translation was made by Bishr ibn al-Sirri, a Nestorian Christian from Damascus.

28cm x 25.5cm (folio)

**For related examples on the subject:** A related antecedent example (dated 1469 AD) in the rendering of the decoration is Sinai Ar. 80 (Sinai Digital Archive). Two 16th century copies of gospels are at the Bodleian Library, Oxford (MS. Bodl. Or. 299 and MS. Huntington 262).

**For further reference on the subject:** Graf G., *Geschichte der Christlichen Arabischen Literatur*, Vol. I, II, III, IV, V, Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1944.

**Condition:** Evidence of extensive water damage, page crinkling, smudges and foxing. Last few pages are very stiff, stained and mouldy, final page missing two lines at the top.

£6,000-10,000





**33** KITAB AL-IDHAH FI 'ILM AL-NIKAH: THE BOOK OF EXPOSITION  
 JALAL AL-DIN SUYUTI (D. 911 AH / 1505 AD), COPIED BY ABDUL-GHANI IBN DIYAB HASHIM AL-SAFADI  
 Ottoman Syria, dated Monday 9th Rabi' al-Awwal 1269 AH (1852-53 AD)

Arabic text on European wove and lined paper, composed of 90 leaves and 2 flyleaves with commentaries. 19 lines to the page written in *naskh* script in black ink with chapter headings and significant words picked out in red ink, catchwords, French commentaries in the margins. The book has been written by different hands (the *naskh* script changes its style throughout the text) and with different inks. Annotations on the front and last page dated 1273 AH (1856 AD). Brown leather binding with flap covered with diaper-patterned paper. *Kitab al-Idhah fi 'Ilm Aa-Nikah* (also known as *Kitab al-Hayk fi 'Ilm al-Nayk*) *The Book of Elucidation in the Knowledge of Marriage/Sexuality in its Perfection and Completeness* is a treatise on sexual hygiene, intercourse and marriage. Erotica represent a significant strand of Classical Arabic literature, yet they have attracted relatively little scholarly attention. Many works in this field remained unpublished for centuries, until their rediscovery in the 1990s, which also brought al-Suyuti into focus as a contributor to erotic literature. Within al-Suyuti's corpus, at least two texts can be clearly classified in this genre: *Al-Wishah fi Fawa'id al-Nikah* and *Nawadir al-Ayk fi Ma'rifat al-Nayk*. In addition, he produced several other writings that approach erotic themes from lexicographical, literary, legal, or medical perspectives, and these too may be regarded as erotica in a broader sense.

Imam Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti was a distinguished scholar of *Hadith*, jurisprudence, Sufism, philology, and history, who produced hundreds of writings across numerous branches of Islamic knowledge. He was born in 849 AH (1445 AD) in Cairo to a Turkish mother and a Persian father, and he passed away there in 911 AH (1505 AD). Throughout his life, al-Suyuti dedicated himself to the pursuit of learning under the guidance of many teachers. For a period, he served as the principal instructor at a school in Cairo before eventually withdrawing into seclusion to focus on his scholarship.

21cm x 15cm (folio)

**For further references on the subject:** Gherseti A., *Al-Suyuti, a Polymath of the Mamluk Period*, Brill, 2016; *The Book of Exposition*, translated by English Bohemian, Maison d'edition Scientifiques, 1900; Brockelmann, GAL, II, 153–154, GAL, S, II, 191–192.; Another 19th century copy of this manuscript is at the Cambridge University Library (no. 1019).

**Condition:** Overall good condition. Very gentle staining and foxing on the edges of the borders. No major smudges.

**£800-1,200**



**34** AN ARABIC MANUSCRIPT ABOUT POETRY (DIWAN)  
 JIBRA'IL FARHAT (D. 1732 AD), COPIED BY BUTRUS IBN MAQSI MIKHA'IL  
 Northern Syria, probably Aleppo, dated 1201 AH (1786-87 AD)

Arabic manuscript on lined paper. Composed of 142 leaves. Approximately 18-19 lines to the page written in *naskh* script in black ink. Headings picked out in red ink throughout the manuscript. The first page is detached and the last page has been inscribed. The colophon states that this manuscript was copied by the Roman Catholic Butrus ibn Maqsi Mikha'il. Ownership inscription of Khawaja Ni'amallah dated 20th May 1825 and an inscription in Karshuni dated 1795 underneath the colophon. The original text was composed in 1720 AD, and in several instances the titles of the poems provide useful information about when and where they were written. Brown leather binding with doublures of paper decorated with floral pink and green motifs.

Text authored by Farhat *al-Qis* (the priest) *al-Rahib* (the monk) *al-Halabi* (the Aleppan), *al-Maruni* (the Maronite), referring to *mitran* (bishop) Jibra'il Jirmanus of Aleppo. Another manuscript by the same author (a treatise on Arabic grammar) is included in this catalogue. Also known as Germanos (Jibra'il) Farhat, he was born in Aleppo in 1670 and became the first Maronite bishop from the city, serving there until his death in 1732. A gifted writer and scholar, he is best known for his Arabic grammar book (*Bahth al-Matalib wa Hathth al-Talib*), which influenced later generations and contributed to the Arab cultural revival. He also composed religious poetry in some of which he applied traditional Arabic poetic forms to Christian themes. His *diwan* was first published in Beirut in 1850.

21.5cm x 15cm (folio)

**For a related example on the subject:** Another *diwan* form the same period and author is at the Cambridge University Library (Qq. 146).

**For further reference on the subject:** Starkey P., *Farhat, Jarmanus lemma* in Meisami J.S. and Starkey P., *Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature*, Routledge London and New York, 1998, p. 221.

**Condition:** Loose pages. Crinkles and water damage around the edges. Some tears, mostly around the borders and occasionally deep into the page.

**36 MAQAMAT AL-HARIRI**

ABU MUHAMMAD AL-QASIM  
IBN'ALI IBN MUHAMMAD  
AL-HARIRI (D. 516 AH / 1122  
AD)

Ottoman Empire, Lebanon or  
Syria, early 18th century



Arabic manuscript on lined paper, composed of 197 leaves and 6 flyleaves. 15 lines to the page written one and two columns of elegant *naskh* script. Markers and significant words and sentences picked out in red throughout the manuscripts. Inner margins (*jadwal*) ruled in red with double fillet (with gold in the opening page), catchwords and comments in outer margins. Several seals with dates towards the end. The frontispiece illuminated with *unwan* incorporating *bismillah* and featuring a traditional lobed dome motif containing gilded split palmettes over blue background, surmounted by projecting flowery darts. A property inscription by a different hand after the final colophon mentions different dates (among which 1710 and 1709) and is fitted with two, illegible, property seals. Contemporary red leather binding with flap, impressed with central lobed medallion and florets.

*Al-Maqamat* (Assemblies) is one of the most celebrated masterpieces of classical Arabic literature. It is a collection of 50 tales in rhymed prose and poetry, recounting the adventures of Abu Zayd, a clever wanderer who exploits his eloquence for gain. The stories are narrated by al-Harith who serves as observer and witness. The text is notable for its wit and linguistic virtuosity with the inclusion of *saj'* (rhymed prose) and a model of rhetorical mastery (*balagha*).

... 'What the *Maqamat* did 'was to invest with the literary graces of *saj'* [rhymed prose] and the glamour of impromptu composition the old-time tale in alternate prose and verse... and, by a stroke of genius, to adopt as the mouthpiece of [its] art that familiar figure in popular story, the witty vagabond.' ... 'It is, in fact, difficult to imagine that the Arabic language has ever been handled with more consummate skill under such restrictions. There are sections composed exclusively of words with double meanings, series of sentences ending in rhyming syllables or with regular combinations of consonants throughout, and poems utilizing only certain letters of the alphabet.' (Kritzcek J., *Anthology of Islamic Literature from the rise of Islam to Modern Times*, 1964, p. 193).

The father of this literary genre (*maqama*) is considered the Persian Badi al-Zaman al-Hamadhani (c. 968–1008 AD), but al-hariri is definitely the one who made it famous. The first illustrated copies of this text were produced at the beginning of the 13th century (cfr. Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris Arabe 3929 - 6094 and 5847) as the text is often associated with the Baghdad school which flourished during the late 12th and the beginning of the 13th century, marking the emergence of one of the earliest figurative traditions in Islamic art.

Abu Muhammad al-Qasim ibn Ali Muhammad ibn Uthman al-Hariri was born in Basra, today in Iraq, in 1054-55 AD from a wealthy silk-trading family. He was a well known Arab philologist and grammarian of the Abbasid Caliphate who also served as government official. Al-Hariri is best known for this literary masterpiece but he also authored treatises on grammar and poetry.

**For a related example on the subject:** Another 18th century copy of this work is at the Bodleian Library, Oxford (MS. Ind. Inst. Arab. 8); See Christie's London, *Art of the Islamic and Indian World*, 8 April 2011, lot 36.

For further reference on the subject: See Brockelmann GAL I 276, 277.

19.5cm x 12.5cm (folio)

**Condition:** Bottom part is starting to detach from the spine. Some rubbing, wear and staining especially around the borders. Otherwise no major tear. Foxing and water damage.

**£3,000-5,000**



**35 A COLLECTION OF CHRONICLES**

Ottoman Lands, late 19th century

Arabic manuscript on pressed wove paper. Composed of 165 leaves. Incomplete with detached folios at the beginning and end. 14 lines to the page written in Ottoman *diwani* script in black ink, catchwords in outer margin. Original dark leather binding decorated with faded stamped florets.

19.5cm x 10.5cm (folio)

**Condition:** First page is fully detached and torn. Whole text is detached from the spine. Last two pages are fully detached. Some tears, water damage, especially at the beginning and end. Pages are crinkled.

**£300-500**

**38** MAQAMAT AL-HARIRI

ABU MUHAMMAD AL-QASIM  
IBN'ALI IBN MUHAMMAD  
AL-HARIRI (D. 516 AH / 1122 AD)  
An early copy from the Levant  
(probably Syria or Iraq), dated 675  
AH (1276 AD)



Arabic manuscript on wove paper. Composed of 162 leaves and 2 lined flyleaves. 15 lines to the page written in *naskh* script in black ink on a single column with extensive diagonal glosses and notes in the margins. The only decoration shown in this manuscript relies on the headings written with red ink in *thuluth* calligraphy. Catchwords between quires added at a later stage. The colophon reads that this manuscript was copied from another which belonged to 'Ali al-Saghani and dated 675 AH (1276 AD) and another inscription on the last page adds a later date 749 AH (1348 AD) probably corresponding to a later owner. Binding covered with brown leather impressed with squares and florets probably produced in the monasteries of the Levant.

*Al-Maqamat* (Assemblies) is one of the most celebrated masterpieces of classical Arabic literature. It is a collection of 50 tales in rhymed prose and poetry, recounting the adventures of Abu Zayd, a clever wanderer who exploits his eloquence for gain. The stories are narrated by al-Harith who serves as observer and witness. The text is notable for its wit and linguistic virtuosity with the inclusion of *saj'* (rhymed prose) and a model of rhetorical mastery (*balagha*). What the *Maqamat* did was to invest with the literary graces of *saj'* [rhymed prose] and the glamour of impromptu composition the old-time tale in alternate prose and verse... and, by a stroke of genius, to adopt as the mouthpiece of [its] art that familiar figure in popular story, the witty vagabond.' ... 'It is, in fact, difficult to imagine that the Arabic language has ever been handled with more consummate skill under such restrictions. There are sections composed exclusively of words with double meanings, series of sentences ending in rhyming syllables or with regular combinations of consonants throughout, and poems utilizing only certain letters of the alphabet.'

The father of this literary genre (*maqama*) is considered the Persian Badi al-Zaman al-Hamadhani (c. 968–1008 AD), but al-hariri is definitely the one who made it famous. The first illustrated copies of this text were produced at the beginning of the 13th century (cfr. Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris Arabe 3929 - 6094 and 5847) as the text is often associated with the Baghdad school which flourished during the late 12th and the beginning of the 13th century, marking the emergence of one of the earliest figurative traditions in Islamic art.

Abu Muhammad al-Qasim ibn Ali Muhammad ibn Uthman al-Hariri was born in Basra, today in Iraq, in 1054-55 AD from a wealthy silk-trading family. He was a well known Arab philologist and grammarian of the Abbasid Caliphate who also served as government official. Al-Hariri is best known for this literary masterpiece but he also authored treatises on grammar and poetry.

23cm x 17.5cm (folio)

**For a related example on the subject:** Sotheby's London, *Arts of the Islamic World & India including Fine Rugs and Carpets*, 30 March 2022, lot 9.

**For further references on the subject:** Grabar O., *The Illustrations of the Maqamat*, the University of Chicago Press, 1984; Drory R., in Meisami and Starkey, *Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature*, Routledge London and New York, 1998, p. 273; 1964, p. 193; Brockelmann, GAL, I, 276, 277;

**Condition:** Missing the first folio, which has been subsequently replaced. Poor condition; pages trimmed and are damaged and with several tears. The spine is detached.

**£15,000-25,000**



**37** A TREATISE ON ISLAMIC LITERATURE

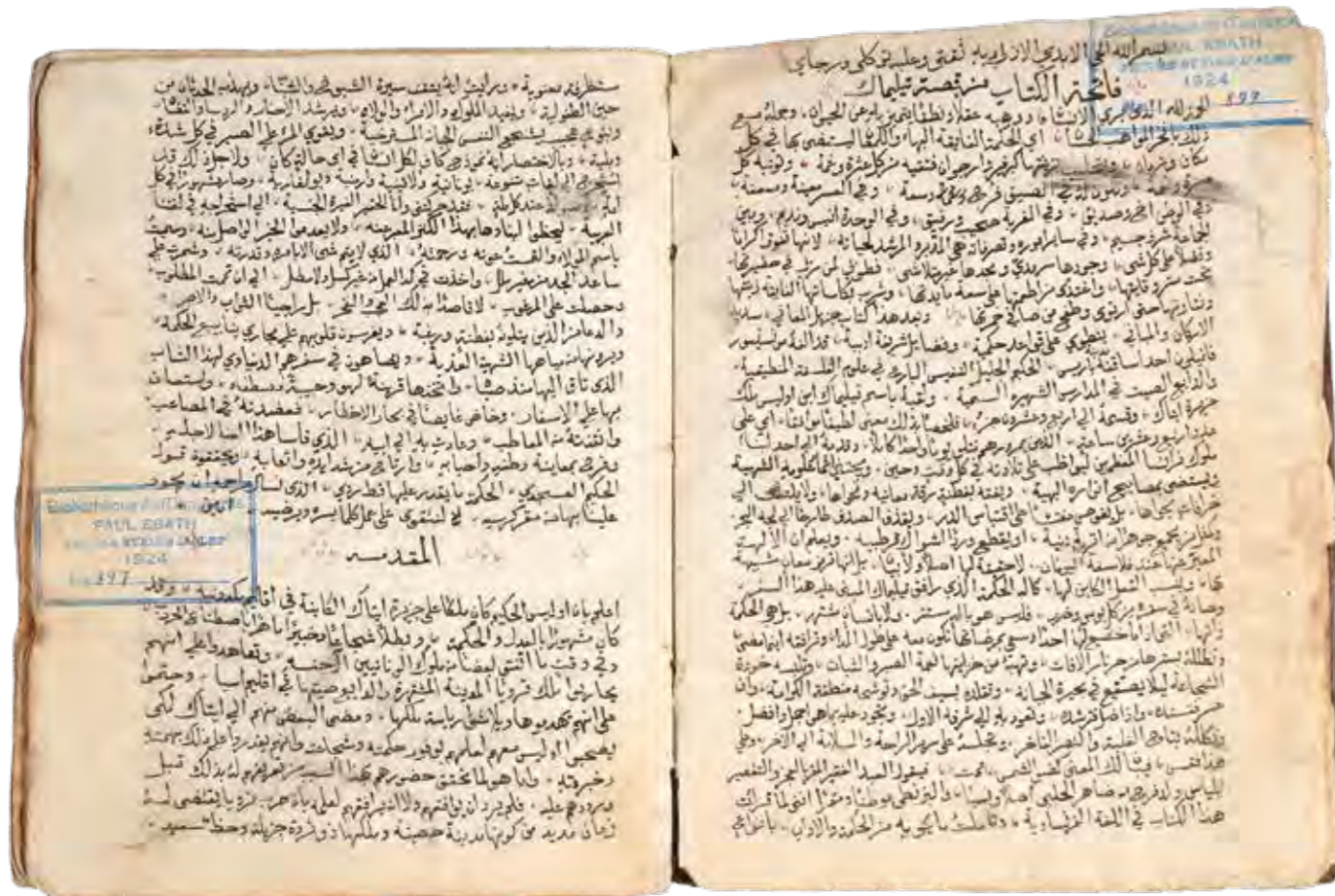
Probably Egypt, dated 438 AH (1046-47 AD), copied 200 years later

Arabic text on wove paper. Composed of 185 leaves. Incomplete. Text arranged on a single column containing 20 lines to the page written with black ink in cursive *naskh* script with markers and keywords picked out in red. Glosses and comments in the margins. The first 19 pages mention a selection of biographies of eminent Muslim characters written with red ink. The last 10 pages have been reconstituted with additions to the text. A later inscription at the end of the manuscript mentions the city of Cairo and a year beginning with number 6. Later Ottoman binding covered with beige paper, doublures of marbled paper.

22cm x 16cm (folio)

**Condition:** Half of the spine is detached, evidence of worming, rubbing, losses to the ink. Borders must have been trimmed given that the marginal notes are incomplete.

**£3,000-5,000**



**39 THE ADVENTURES OF TELEMACHUS**  
 WRITTEN BY FRANÇOIS FENELON (D. 1715 AD) AND TRANSLATED BY ILYAS FARAJALLAH DHAHER OF ALEPPO  
 Ottoman Syria, dated 23 March 1816

Arabic manuscript on European watermarked line paper. Composed of 112 leaves and 3 flyleaves. 27 to 30 lines to the page written in free-flowing *naskh* script in black ink, markers with red ink. The final flyleaves have posthumous notes. Several stamps from the 'Paul Sbath collection 1924', manuscript no. 897 as follows:

...'Télémaque by Fénelon (1715), translated into Arabic by Ilyas Farajallah Dhaher of Aleppo. Copied in 1816. Fine handwriting' (*Bibliothèque des Manuscrits Paul Sbath Prêtre Syrien d'Alep*, Vol. I, II, Cairo, H. Friedrich and Co., 1928, pp. 89-90).

Leather binding impressed with florets probably produced in monastery binderies in the region of Aleppo. The Adventures of Telemachus is a didactic novel by the French archbishop, theologian, poet and writer François Fénelon (1651-1715). It was first published in 1699 and tells the story of Telemachus, son of Ulysses, on his journey to find his father and discover himself and the world. The novel blends adventure, political philosophy, and moral lessons, exploring themes such as justice, virtue, moderation, and the education of rulers. The text reached the Near East mainly in the 18th century, thanks to translations into Italian, French, and Arabic that circulated in schools, religious missions, and intellectual circles.

22cm x 16cm (folio)

**Condition:** Smudges to the ink, crinkling and foxing to the edges of the paper. Loose leaves.

**£2,000-3,000**



**40 MUQADAMAT TAGHRID AL-HAMAM BI AKHBAR MULUK AL-ARAB QABL AL-ISLAM: A HISTORY OF THE ARABS BEFORE ISLAM**

'ALI IBN MUHAMMAD IBN 'ABDULLAH AL-RIFA'I AL-MUSAWI AL-HUSAINI ALSO KNOWN AS ALI IBN AL-SAYYID MUHAMMAD AL-RIFAT  
 India, Deccan, dated Thursday 3rd Rajab to Monday 22nd Dhu al-Qa'ada 1311 AH (1893-94 AD)

Arabic manuscript on wove paper divided into 2 volumes respectively composed of 319 leaves and 15 flyleaves; the other 324 leaves and 5 flyleaves. 23 lines of *naskh* script to the page in black ink with significant sentences and words picked out in red throughout, inner margins rules in red (*jadwal*) with double fillet, some of which are left blank throughout the manuscript. Catchwords and glosses in the margins. Some cartouches are left without text. Index also present. The colophon states that the author came from the Quraish tribe in Yemen and relocated to Deccan, India. Modern binding with corners and spine in red leather. Complete with the label of the binder: Chhatta Hyderabad, Deccan.

Several seals of the 'Sbath collection 1924' manuscripts nos. 1176 and 1177 and catalogued in the Sbath's catalogue as follows:

...'History of the Arabs before Islam, di Ali Ibn al-Sayyid Muhammad ar-Rifat, Yemeni settled in India...The value of this work lies in the fact that the author drew his documentation from two sources that were reputed to be lost: al-Jamhrat by al-Kalbi, who died in 819 AH, and at-Tijani by Ibn Hisham, who died in 833 AH. ...' *Paul Sbath, Bibliothèque des Manuscrits Paul Sbath Prêtre Syrien d'Alep*, Vol. III, Cairo, H. Friedrich and Co., 1934, pp. 36-48.

Our manuscript is in the author's own hand, written in 1311 AH (1893 AD), and consists of two volumes, the first of which, no. 1176, begins with a long introduction of 55 pages.

20cm x 16cm (2)

**Condition:** First volume's paper is aged. Some foxing, no water damage tear or worming. Second volume's first page and spine are detached. Same condition as the first volume.

**£4,000-6,000**



**41 AH KHABAR AL-SHAYKH BARLAM WA IBN AL-MALIK YUWASIF: THE STORY OF SHAYKH BARLAM AND THE SON OF KING JOSEPH - A COLLECTION OF FABLES**  
 YUHANNA IBN MANSUR IBN SARJUN (YUHANNA AL-DIMASHQI / JOHN OF DAMASCUS), SIGNED THALJEH (SNOWFLAKE)  
 Mount Lebanon or Northern Syria, dated 4th December (Byzantine Era) 7154 AM/ 1646 AD / Shawwal 1056 AH

Arabic manuscript on European lined paper. Composed of 179 leaves. 17 lines to the page written in elegant *naskh* script in black ink; titles and markers in red, catchwords in wide margins. The last page is written in a different hand compared to the rest of the manuscript. The content features fables popular amongst Christians, Muslims, Jews and Buddhists. Original contemporary leather binding impressed with a central cross on both sides and floral sprays at the edge. Raised bands on the spine. This literary genre, focused on moral instruction through fables, had long been widespread in the Middle East and reached its peak with *Kalila wa Dimna*, a famous collection of fables (originally from India, called *Panchatantra*) translated into Arabic in the 8th century.

28cm x 17.5cm (folio)

**Condition:** Some water damage and foxing, especially around the edges. Borders have been trimmed because marginal notes have been cut-out. Last two pages have extensive water damage.

**£4,000-6,000**



**42 SHARH AL-MISBAH: A COMMENTARY ON ARABIC GRAMMAR**  
 SIGNED YA'QUB IBN HASAN  
 Near East, dated 805 AH (1402-03 AD)

Arabic manuscript on wove paper, composed of 97 leaves. 13 lines to the page written in a cursive script in black ink, some titles in red. Extensive interlinear and marginal commentaries in a cursive hand. The text has been written in multiple hands. Profuse commentaries in the margins. Flyleaves with later added notes. Brown leather binding impressed with a central cross, probably produced in the monasteries of the Levant. The text is a commentary on Nasir al-Din Abu al-Makarim al-Mutarrizi's (d. 610 AH / 1213 AD) *al-Misbah fi al-Nahw* (The Lamp in Grammar) which is an important Arabic grammar treatise focusing on syntax and morphology.

27cm x 18cm (folio)

**Condition:** Severely damaged by water with foxing and mold. Some tears and smudges to the ink. Manuscript is very worn, crinkled and damaged binding.

**£800-1,200**



**43 A TREATISE ON ARABIC LANGUAGE AND GRAMMAR**

COPIED BY AL-SHAMMAS (DEACON) GIBRA'IL IBN 'ISA IBN MAQWA'I FROM THE CHALDEAN AFFILIATION  
Possibly Syria, dated 1st Dhu al-Hijja 1123 (1711-12 AD)

Arabic manuscript on European watermarked lined paper with three crescent moons. Composed of 109 leaves. Incomplete at the end and some detached folios mis-bound. Approximately 20 to 22 lines to the page written in a *naskh* cursive script in black ink in multiple hands. Chapter and section headings and significant sentences and words picked out in red ink throughout, catchwords. Final flyleaf features a date corresponding to 1760 AD. Original reddish-brown leather binding decorated with blind-tooled corner pieces and inner bands. The scribe is reported to be affiliated with the Chaldean Catholic Church which is an Eastern Catholic community that follows the East Syriac rite. It originated in the 16th century, when a group of bishops from the Church of the East came into union with Rome. The Chaldean Church uses Classical Syriac in its liturgy and maintains its own hierarchy while being united with Rome. Today, it is centered in Baghdad and has communities across Iraq, the Middle East, and the diaspora.

22cm x 16cm (folio)

**Condition:** Detached from the spine. First page is almost loose. Foxing and watermarks around the edges. Final four pages are also detached.

**£600-800**



**44 I'RAB AL-AJARRUMIYAH FI'L-NAHU: A GRAMMATICAL COMMENTARY ON IBN AJARRUM'S AJURRUMIYYA**

COPIED BY AL-KHURI (PRIEST) TOUMA NAJM AL-DIN MUHAMMAD IBN AHMAD IBN 'ALI AL-GHAYTI (D. 984 AH / 1576 AD)  
Ottoman Syria, dated 1119 AH (1707 AD)

Arabic manuscript on lined paper, composed of 83 leaves and 2 flyleaves (one in the middle). 13 lines to the page written in clear *naskh* script in black ink, with headings, verse markers and significant sentences and words picked out in red ink throughout, inner margins ruled in red (*jadwal*) with double fillet, catchwords in wide outer margins. Last page is dated 1119 AH (1707 AD). Final page at the back has later added note dated 1211 AH and 1780 AD. Original brown leather binding with impressed central medallions incorporating stylized cloud ribbons. Doublures of painted marbled paper. The *al-Ajarrumiyah*, a celebrated work on Arabic grammar was composed by Abu 'Abdallah Muhammad ibn Dawud al-Sinhaji better known as Ibn Ajarrum (d. 723 AH / 1323 AD) and considered the classical primer in Arabic grammar.

Ibn Ajarrum (d. 1323 AD) was a Moroccan Arab grammarian, best known for his work *al-Muqaddimah al-Ajurrumiyah*, a concise manual of Arabic grammar (syntax and morphology) considered one of the fundamental texts for learning classical Arabic grammar. The manual was used as a basic textbook for centuries in Qur'anic schools and madrasas throughout the Arab world. Copies and commentaries also spread extensively. It was introduced to the West in a Latin translation in 1592.

20.5cm x 14.5cm (folio)

**For further reference on the subject:** Carter, *Ibn Ajarrum lemma*, in Starkey and Meisani, *Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature*, Routledge London and New York, 1998, p. 308.

**Condition:** Foxing and smudges, evidence of water damage, especially at the beginning, the paper a little brittle around the borders.

**£1,000-1,500**



**45 A TREATISE ON ARABIC LANGUAGE AND GRAMMAR**

AUTHORED BY JAMAL AL-DIN ABU-MUHAMMAD 'ABDULLAH BIN-YUSUF BIN 'ABDULLAH BIN-HISHAM AL-NAHAWI (D. 761 AH / 1360 AD)

Ottoman Lands, possibly Syria, 17th century

Arabic manuscript on lined paper. Composed of 85 leaves. 21 lines to the page written in a cursive script in black ink with titles and significant words picked out in red throughout. Persian ownership stamp on the first and last page. Extensive annotations in the margins. Original brown leather binding impressed with central medallions decorated with Ottoman motifs and stamped triple florets in each corner piece. Doublure with yellow paper.

The bifolio with colophon bears three ownership inscriptions:

1. 'Ubaidallah ibn Ramadhan al-Shafi' al-Qadiri who lives in 'Azaza and was born in Aleppo. 2. Ibrahim ibn Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Kayali, and dated 1099 AH (1687-88 AD). 3. Ahmad ibn Mahmud al-'Absi, Aleppo and dated 1104 AH (1692-93 AD).

Ibn Hisham al-Nahawi is little documented and is sometimes confused or associated with ibn Hisham al-Ansari, a well-known Egyptian Arab grammarian (d. 1360 AD).

21cm x 14cm (folio)

**Condition:** Completely detached from the spine and all folios are loose. The first page is torn, worn with missing phrases. Extensive evidence of rubbing and water damage. Sever smudges and foxing.

**£1,500-2,000**



**46 BAHT AL-MATALIB WA HATH AL-TALIB: STUDY OF THE REQUIREMENTS BY THE STUDENT**

FARHAT AL-QIS AL-RAHIB AL-HALABI AL-MARUNI / JIBRA'IL FARHAT (D. 1732 AD)

Mount Lebanon, dated 1 January 1708 AD

Arabic manuscript on lined and watermarked paper. Composed of 127 leaves and 2 flyleaves. 22 lines to the page written in elegant naskh script in black ink, headings, significant sentences and words picked out in red ink throughout, catchwords in the margins. Later ownership inscription by 'Ubaidallah Gurgi ibn Yusuf dated 1806. The colophon reads that this manuscript was copied at the *Deir* (monastery) of the great prophet Elijah built at the foot of the Holy Valley of Mount Lebanon from the other side of Syria and dated 1708. Light brown leather binding impressed with central lobed medallion containing interlaced sprays. This treatise on Arabic grammar is authored by Farhat *al-Qis* (the priest) *al-Rahib* (the monk) *al-Halabi* (the Aleppan), *al-Maruni* (the Maronite), referring to *mitran* (bishop) Jibra'il Jirmanus of Aleppo. Also known as Germanos (Jibra'il) Farhat, he was born in Aleppo in 1670 and became the first Maronite bishop from the city, serving there until his death in 1732. A gifted writer and scholar, he is best known for his Arabic grammar book (*Baht al-Matalib wa Hathth al-Talib*), which influenced later generations and contributed to the Arab cultural revival. He also composed religious poetry and apologetic works, combining his role as a church leader with that of a cultural reformer. Farhat founded the Maronite Library of Aleppo and left a legacy as both a bishop and a pioneer of Arabic literary and linguistic studies.

21cm x 15.5cm (folio)

**For further references on the subject:** Starkey P., *Farhat, Jarmanus lemma* in Meisami J.S. and Starkey P., *Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature*, Routledge London and New York, 1998, p. 221; Another 18th century treatise on Arabic grammar by the same author is at the Bodleian Library, Oxford (MS. Arab. d. 213).

**Condition:** No tears and damage to the borders. No foxing and worming. A few minor smudges. The spine is detached.

**£3,000-5,000**



**47** AL-QAMUS AL-MUHIT WA'L QABAS AL-WASIT: ARABIC DICTIONARY  
 MAJD AL-DIN ABU'L-TAHIR MUHAMMAD IBN YA'QUB IBN MUHAMMAD AL-SHIRAZI AL-FIRUZABADI (D. 817 AH / 1415 AD)  
 Possibly Iran, 16th century

Arabic manuscript on lined paper. Composed of 278 leaves. Incomplete at the end. 31 lines to the page written in *naskh* script. At the beginning of the text, the *fadl* (lemmas) are marked in red, later on in the manuscript, they turn darker and bolder. The script also becomes narrower and smaller as the book unfolds. Catchwords in the margins. Two dated inscriptions on the manuscript, 1068 AH (1657 AD) at the beginning and 951 AH (1544-45 AD) on the flyleaf, providing a *terminus ante quem* in the attribution of the manuscript. The first page is fitted with ownership inscriptions of ibn Muhammad Husain al-Tuni Sultan Muhammad and dated 1068 AH (1657 AD), and al-Shaykh Kazem ibn al-Shaykh Shams al-Din al-Karbala'i. Ottoman brown reddish leather binding at the front, not matching, with the cover of the back which is brown leather decorated in the Ottoman style with central medallion.

31cm x 21cm (folio)

**For related examples on the subject:** Christie's London, *Arts of the Islamic and Indian Worlds*, 23 October 2007, lot 113; Sotheby's London, *Arts of the Islamic Worlds*, 24 April 2013, lot 30.

**Condition:** First leaf is detached. The edges are crinkled and there is extensive water damage. The first three sections are detached from the spine. The last three sections from the back of the manuscript are detached. Several areas and rubbed off and stained.

**£3,000-5,000**



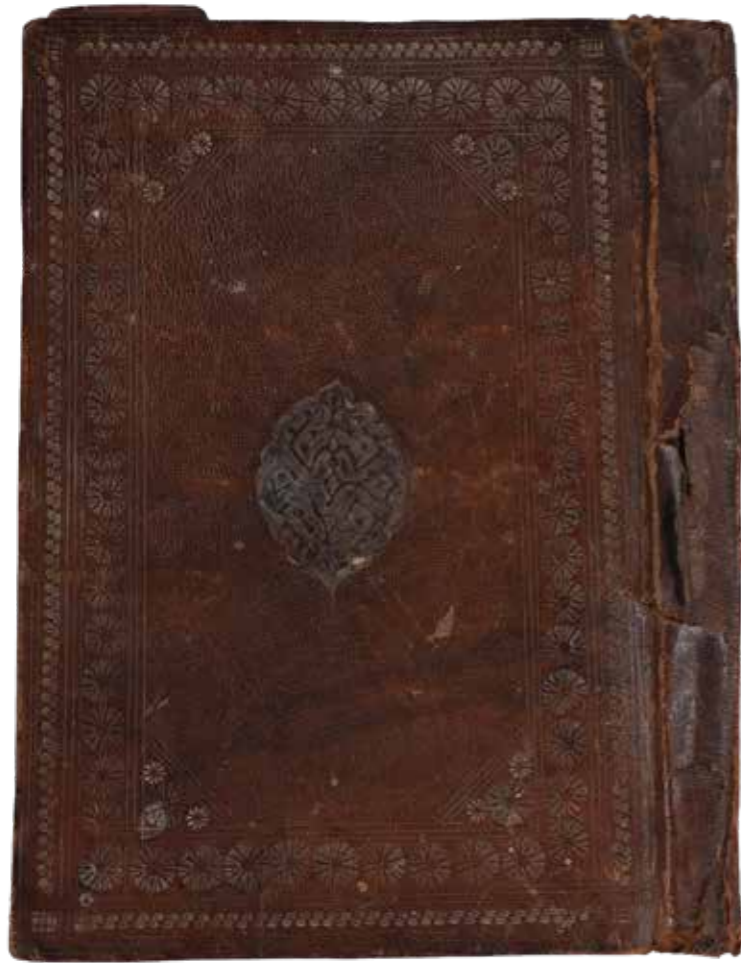
**48** AN ARABIC MANUSCRIPT CONTAINING A CONVERSATION BETWEEN TEACHER AND PUPIL  
 Northern Syria or Mount Lebanon, 13th century

Arabic manuscript on wove paper, composed of 208 leaves and 2 flyleaves attached to the doublure. Incomplete at the end. 16 lines to the page written in a cursive hand in black ink, red dots between sentences, significant words picked out in red throughout, catchwords. *Unwan* opening page with rectangular cartouches decorated with red-outlined crosses within roundels, the subsequent text alternating lines of red and black ink. Contemporary binding with wooden boards covered with leather, fitted with a braided clasp, of which one is missing.

20cm x 12.5cm (folio)

**Condition:** The first flyleaf is completely attached to the front cover and detached from the rest of the manuscript. The first page is worn and torn with tape to reinforce the edges. Severe worming throughout the manuscript. There is rubbing to the ink.

**£6,000-10,000**



**49 TWO SYRIAN MONASTIC BINDINGS**

Ottoman, Lebanon and Northern Syria, 17th to 18th century

The smaller in brown leather with flap, impressed with central lobed medallion with pendant containing Ottoman style *hatayi* flowers and entwined sprays. The other in light brown leather with flap impressed with central lobed medallion containing stylized interlaced motifs and multiple frames at the edges impressed with rosettes and repeated chain motif.

19cm x 12 cm (smallest); 22cm x 17cm (largest)

**£400-600**



**50 A LONG SCROLL CONTAINING 13 LEGAL DOCUMENTS**

Ottoman Lands, probably Levant, 16th century

Arabic text on paper comprising thirteen different legal documents from the period immediately following the Ottoman conquest of Syria (1516 AD). Each deed is separate, and is authenticated before a judge, then glued together to form a scroll. The *waqfs* (endowments) are written by different hands in the tight cursive script ranging from *diwani* to *naskh*, both scripts being used in Mamluk and post-Mamluk bureaucracy. Although they are difficult to read, it can be inferred that they concern transactions involving land ownership in various Syrian and Lebanese cities: Aleppo, Damascus, Safad and Sidon. Two dates appear: 929 AH (1523 AD) and (941 AH). This document could be useful for the study of the administration of Syria in the transitional period that followed the Ottoman conquest. The paper is all pasted together and is in frail condition.

288cm x 19cm

**£3,000-4,000**





## 51 A GROUP OF FIVE DOCUMENTS INCLUDING THREE WAQF AND A PETITION

Mamluk and Ottoman Levant, 14th to 17th century

### The group includes:

- A Mamluk *waqf* (endowment) document settling the endowment of properties in Aleppo, dated 721 AH (1321 AD), 738 AH (1337 AD), and 784 AH (1382 AD). This is a copy of an earlier family *waqf* (endowment) regarding Shaykh Muzaffar al-Din ibn al-Shaykh Shihab al-Din Ahmad ibn Mahmud al-Malati al-Awhadi al-Mutawassif established for the benefit of the founder and his descendants. The beginning of the document is missing and the upper part is damaged.
- Two small legal deeds concerning land property, family endowment, and *waqf*-related matters, both datable to the 16th century. Both rolls are damaged at the bottom.
- A Mamluk fragment of a legal document concerning a litigation over land ownership (perhaps a petition) addressed to al-Jamali 'Ali, dated 713 AH (1313 AD). Another date, 726 AH is mentioned, but it more likely refers to a deadline. A fragment. The lower part is missing. The main section is lost and has been reconstructed with paper.
- A 17th-century Ottoman family *waqf* (endowment) by Muhammad ibn Yunus ibn al-Jamali Yusuf, known as ibn al-Miqati (or Minqabi?). The founder endows half of a *qaysariyya* in Aleppo, within Bab al-Nasr, to himself for his lifetime and to his descendants thereafter. The document mentions the Ottoman Hanafi judge Qadi Muhammad al-Fanari. The end part of the roll is missing.

396.5cm x 31.5cm (largest), 28.7cm x 12cm (smallest)

**£2,000-3,000**



## 52 A GROUP OF FOUR DOCUMENTS INCLUDING THREE WAQFS AND A PETITION

Ottoman Levant and Syria, 15th to 19th century

### The group includes:

- A Mamluk deed of *waqf* (endowment) dated 803 AH (1400 AD) and concerning the charitable endowment of a property in Aleppo made by al-Jamali Yusuf ibn al-Maqarr al-Ahraf al-... al-Nasiri, ie. the son of an emir, before an Aleppine court, including a detailed description of how to manage with the revenue and a sum to be sent yearly to Mecca and Medina, divided equally between the two cities, and distributed among the poor and the residents (*mujawirin*) of the holy shrines. The date 836 AH, which appears on the back of the roll is the *ishhad* or authentication, also likely to be the date of the endowment. The scroll is heavily damaged and in several fragments.
- Another Mamluk *waqf* (endowment) on parchment, dated 803 AH (1401 AD). Mentioning Muhammad son of al-Zayni Mubarak al-Husami, emir of Thousand in Syria and describing the charitable endowment of two villages with agricultural land in the Aleppo district purchased from *Bayt al-Mal* (house of money) for his own use during his lifetime, to be inherited by his descendants. It includes a detailed description of how to manage the revenue, including a sum to be sent yearly to Mecca and Medina, divided equally between the two cities, and distributed among the poor and the *mujawirin* (residents) of the holy shrines, ensuring the same treatment for the two holy cities (al-Haramayn) as seen in the previous *waqf* thus suggesting the existence of a practice widespread in the Mamluk period. The document is highly interesting because the endowed estate was purchased from *Bayt al-Mal*, which was reserved only for the sultan and high-ranking officials. The upper side is damaged with a missing part.
- A fragment of a family *waqf* (endowment) dated 1093 AH (1682 AD) containing the usual formulas for the stipulations of a family endowment. Only a fragment remains.
- A 19th-century petition addressed to *Sahib al-Dawla* (lord of the state) regarding the occupation of the post of Chief of the Municipality of Aleppo, supporting a certain candidate whose name is not legible and signed by several notables. The paper damaged by spotting. Difficult to read; requires restoration. The end part of the scroll is missing.

184cm x 31cm (largest); 5.3cm x 10.7cm (smallest)

**£2,000-3,000**