

2. Encouraging Arab and Muslim communities residing in Western countries to begin pursuing recognized legal channels through available civil society institutions to return manuscripts to their places of origin, no matter how long it takes. Emphasis should be placed on avoiding provocation and ensuring that this noble cause is not turned into a media spectacle subject to exploitation or one-upmanship.
3. Continuing existing Arab and Islamic efforts to survey Arabic and Islamic manuscripts preserved in Western libraries and museums. This approach appears to be more feasible in terms of acceptance compared to the previous two recommendations, as it aligns with the principle that “if the whole cannot be achieved, the majority should not be abandoned.”

Final Commentary on the Study:

The discussion surrounding the fate of manuscripts that fell into the hands of occupiers, travelers, consuls, missionaries, Orientalists, and intelligence agents from Western nations—who traversed Arab and Muslim lands in addition to their other missions—is a lengthy one. Their primary goal was to seek out manuscripts and cultural heritage items to acquire. Most of the manuscripts displaced from their homelands have ended up in Western libraries and museums, where they have been preserved and cataloged for reference.

9. The researcher found no evidence that any Orientalist, library, or museum in the West has returned its collection of manuscripts to their original sources in the Arab and Islamic countries from which they were taken. Nor is there any expectation that these manuscripts will be returned, recovered, or restored to their places of origin. Similarly, the researcher found no indication that any Orientalist has advocated for a campaign among their peers to return the manuscripts to their original sources. Furthermore, the researcher observed no organized grassroots institutional efforts, particularly among Muslim communities now stepping into decision-making roles, calling for the return of manuscripts and cultural heritage to their places of origin.
10. The research revealed that some Orientalists resorted to ensuring the fate of the manuscripts in their possession before their deaths, or even during their lifetimes if they faced financial difficulties. This was often done by selling them to libraries or wealthy collectors with a passion for acquiring manuscripts. These outcomes were typically distributed across several scenarios, which have been detailed within the study.

Key Recommendations and Findings:

1. Urging official Arab and Islamic channels to utilize international legal avenues in a long-term campaign to reclaim Arabic and Islamic manuscripts and restore them to their places of origin, from which they were looted and displaced. This should be pursued after thorough mental, technical, and technological preparation for the reclamation efforts.

manuscripts, can be identified and documented, though it remains challenging for individuals to comprehensively catalog all such institutions.

6. The Al-Furqan Islamic Heritage Foundation, based in London, England, has made significant efforts in documenting Islamic manuscripts worldwide, including those housed in Western countries. Similar efforts have been undertaken by other organizations, as well as by individual researchers who have examined the state of manuscripts in numerous Western libraries.
7. The languages of Islamic manuscripts acquired in the West are concentrated in three main languages: Arabic, Persian, and Turkish. These are followed by other languages used by Muslims, such as Urdu, Malay (Malaysian), and other Muslim languages. Among these, Arabic has been the dominant language in the acquired manuscripts.
8. The Arab and Islamic campaigns that turned their attention to Arabic and Islamic manuscripts highlighted the significance of these scholarly manuscripts and the wealth of knowledge they contain—knowledge that served as the foundation for modern European Renaissance. This renewed focus on their importance emerged after a period of marginalization, as they were often dismissed as “yellow books” by some Arabs who lacked enthusiasm for Arab-Islamic heritage. The attention to these manuscripts grew after Orientalists began collecting, cataloging, studying, editing, publishing, and even translating them.

2. A significant number of Arabic and Islamic manuscripts have been subjected to various forms of destruction—burning, drowning, and burial—due to wars driven by a vengeful impulse against Islam and Muslims. This necessitates tracking and documenting these acts of destruction, possibly even estimating the approximate number of manuscripts that have been lost.
3. The methods employed by the West to acquire manuscripts varied between legitimate and illegitimate means. Among the legitimate methods were purchasing and gifting, while the illegitimate methods included looting, seizure, unreturned “borrowing,” and treating manuscripts as spoils of war, fines, or plunder from raids on Arab and Muslim lands, as well as other regions of the East.
4. Illegitimate methods were not limited to the era of European colonization of the East; they continue to be practiced to this day. This was evident in Bosnia and Herzegovina between the years 1412 and 1415 AH (corresponding to 1992 and 1995 CE), as well as in Iraq twenty years ago in 1423 AH (2003 CE). Such practices persist today in Palestine and other sovereign Arab and Islamic nations, where libraries and book repositories are breached. However, these incidents are neither publicly disclosed nor officially acknowledged by the parties involved.
5. Several national libraries, Western university libraries, and museums have gained renown for acquiring significant numbers of manuscripts, including those obtained through endowments, gifts, or purchases from certain Orientalists. These prominent libraries, which have spearheaded campaigns to collect

who were primarily involved in the cataloging or custodianship of manuscripts in Western libraries without personally acquiring or disposing of them, as they were numerous.

While providing brief details on some of the previously mentioned Orientalists, the study also delves deeper into the lives of certain scholars renowned for their dedication to collecting and later distributing manuscripts. The researcher successfully identified (one hundred and fifty-six) Orientalists, including diplomats and individuals with political and missionary interests—though not all necessarily fall under the category of Orientalists in the strictest sense. These figures were arranged chronologically according to their dates of death. The study acknowledges that there are many more Orientalists beyond those documented here, who played significant roles in the collection of Arabic and Islamic manuscripts. However, due to the vast scope of the subject, further research is required to fully explore their contributions.

The researcher presented a series of findings and recommendations, among the most notable being:

1. There has been a systematic campaign to transfer Arabic and Islamic manuscripts to the West, involving a number of Orientalists and politicians. Among these Orientalists are politicians, and among these politicians are Orientalists. This intertwining of roles supports the claim that this was a deliberate and meticulously planned campaign, true to the very meaning of the words “campaign” and “planning.” or reinforcing the argument that this was a well-orchestrated campaign in the full sense of the terms “campaign” and “planning.”

to be as pleasurable to them as others found in walking upon the skulls of their enemies.

The study delves into the history and significance of several prestigious manuscript-holding libraries, including but not limited to:

- The National Library of Prague (Czechoslovakia, formerly)
- The Austrian National Library in Vienna
- The Austrian State Archives («Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv»)
- The Cambridge University Library (England)
- The Laurentian Medici Library in Florence (Italy)
- The Vatican Library (established in 1450 CE)
- The University of Glasgow Library (Scotland)
- The University of Basel Library (Switzerland)

Through meticulous research, the author was able to document (eighty-three) Western academic libraries, research centers, and institutes, arranging them chronologically based on their establishment, to the extent permitted by available resources.

The fifth chapter, titled (Orientalists and Their Manuscripts), follows up on the researcher's previous discussions by revisiting some of the Orientalists who endowed, donated, or sold their Arabic and Eastern manuscript collections—many of whom were previously mentioned in relation to Western libraries and museums. The study highlights these individuals once again, along with others, as some of the most prominent figures who contributed their collections to various institutions. However, it deliberately excludes Orientalists

examines some of the Orientalists who, through various means, obtained Arabic and Islamic manuscripts—many of whom later chose to preserve them through endowments, donations, or sales to libraries before their passing.

The researcher clarifies that the libraries mentioned in this study serve merely as examples of well-known Western institutions that have acquired portions of Orientalists' collections, including manuscripts, books, and historical artifacts. Priority was given to libraries with substantial manuscript holdings, while those with smaller collections—though numerous—were intentionally omitted.

Furthermore, the study emphasizes that manuscript statistics and cataloging figures cited for these libraries correspond to the time period in which they were recorded. Some of these records date back to the early 13th century AH (19th century CE) or even earlier, meaning that the numbers are not always precise due to subsequent increases or losses. The researcher, citing academic sources, states that the most accurate estimates suggest that the total number of Arabic manuscripts dispersed across the world reaches approximately (three million). The majority of these manuscripts are housed in major academic institutions, including university libraries, national libraries, public libraries, and private collections.

Additionally, the study references a staggering statistic regarding the mass burning of manuscripts in Al-Andalus, where book burnings became not only a method of destruction but a form of entertainment, driven by a vengeful spirit among political and religious authorities. The scent of burning manuscripts was said

private libraries, where they might not receive adequate care from the Orientalist's heirs or family, ultimately facing the risk of loss or deterioration.

This approach of endowing and gifting manuscripts and heritage books has significantly contributed to the accumulation of Arabic heritage collections in Western libraries, museums, and Orientalist study centers—not only in renowned institutions known for their Arabic collections, such as the Vatican Library, the Berlin Library, the British Library (formerly the British Museum), the National Library of Paris, Leiden University Library, and Princeton University Library, but also in libraries of small towns and villages. The number of such libraries is estimated to be at least (350), possibly far exceeding this figure, across (21) European countries and around (50) countries worldwide—an extent that may not even cross the minds of researchers seeking Islamic manuscript heritage in the West.

Hardly any small-town or village library is devoid of Arabic and Islamic heritage, some of which exist in manuscript form, endowed by scholars and Orientalists from these towns and villages to their public libraries, or even to university and institute libraries. The researcher has provided some level of detail on this matter in the study.

The fourth chapter, titled (Renowned Western Libraries), explores the researcher's attempt to document some of the most notable Western libraries known for their collections of Arabic and Islamic manuscripts. These collections were significantly influenced by the efforts of certain Orientalists and other individuals who played a key role in acquiring these manuscripts. The chapter also

apparent desire to register them internationally, even if they are registered locally. This is despite the numerous resolutions and recommendations issued by conferences and seminars related to this matter.

The researcher sought to document—without being able to comprehensively enumerate—several individuals who endeavored to transfer Arabic manuscripts to their private libraries or to Western public libraries and museums under commissions from their governments. Later, they would either donate their private libraries to public and university libraries, endow them, or sell them.

The third section of the study is titled: (The Endowment of Manuscripts by Orientalists). In this section, the researcher discusses a well-established practice among many Orientalists, across their various schools of thought, of endowing their libraries—which contain invaluable Arabic and Islamic heritage books, both in manuscript and printed form—to Western libraries and museums, or to Orientalist departments and research centers in their own countries and beyond. Some of them also donate these works to colleagues, exchanging them among themselves. They may even gift these manuscripts to one another, given their immense scholarly, historical, and musicological value.

At times, these manuscripts become scattered due to non-returnable loans and circulation, making their retrieval difficult. According to the researcher, there is no recorded instance of an Orientalist independently taking the initiative to return such manuscripts to their original homelands. However, he points out that, generally speaking, this fate is preferable to leaving them in

Some of them traveled to the East to gain several benefits during their journeys, including learning Arabic, Persian, and Turkish languages, among other languages of Muslims, exploring Arab and Islamic societies, and writing reports about them that were submitted to official intelligence, military, and political entities, which used them to shape their decisions in dealing with Eastern lands. They also frequented Arab and Islamic libraries, which housed manuscripts and rare printed books, then sought to acquire manuscripts from places where they were sold or smuggled.

The researcher commented that this study delves into the reality of migrating or displaced Arabic and Islamic manuscripts specifically associated with Orientalists, given that they exist outside their homelands. It is a modest contribution from the researcher to enable Arabs and Muslims to learn about their fates and locations, with the hope of working towards reclaiming them or recovering their scientific and literary content. However, the desire to retrieve the existing manuscripts themselves, which is widely called for in Arab scientific and cultural circles, does not appear to be within close reach—even with the assistance of human rights organizations and international intellectual and cultural property laws, such as UNESCO and similar regional organizations.

This remains the case despite the efforts of the Institute of Arabic Manuscripts under the League of Arab States, affiliated with the Arab Organization for Education, Culture, and Science, and the efforts of the Islamic Organization for Education, Culture, and Science. This is due to the fact that these “historical artifacts” are, for the most part, not registered internationally, nor is there an

The researcher estimated that the number of Western countries invested in Islamic manuscripts exceeded (fifty), based on the findings of some scholars, and stated that this figure is likely accurate. It was also mentioned that these manuscripts are now housed in approximately (five thousand) libraries across one hundred countries in both the East and the West.

The second section of the study came under the title: (The Orientalists' Manuscripts), in which the researcher focused on discussing the Orientalists in the early stages of their deep interest in the Arab Islamic East and their research in it, prior to the superficiality of Orientalism and its later focus on the political and imperial dimension in the late 14th century AH – 20th century CE. Considering that their initial starting point was from churches and monasteries, they were at the forefront of those keen on acquiring Arabic and Islamic manuscripts, among others. It is well known among scholars and thinkers studying Orientalism that some Orientalists were keen on collecting manuscripts, rare books of Arab-Islamic heritage, and other historical artifacts, adding them to their private personal libraries in their own countries, in addition to acquiring pieces of antiquities and displaced heritage. This was sometimes done through financially supported commissions, assigning them to travel and collect these items, which might later be handed over to Western libraries or museums.

According to the researcher, there is scarcely an Orientalist who did not establish a private library, with Arabic and Islamic manuscripts forming a prominent part of it.

have well-printed catalogs guiding people to the treasures they contain, along with the historical, literary, and scientific insights embedded within them.

Islamic manuscripts were often part of the spoils taken by Western invaders and colonizers—whether Crusaders or those who followed them into the East before, during, and after the colonial era—eventually being transported to Europe and gifted to libraries in the invaders’ homelands. Among these were copies of the Mus-haf al-Sharif (the Holy Quran), which now fill the shelves of libraries in Germany, Italy, and other Western libraries and monasteries.

The researcher also mentioned that one method of manuscript displacement involved the assassination of scholars, who were ambushed and robbed of the manuscripts hidden within their outer garments. The killers mistakenly believed these manuscripts to be valuables worth killing for. As a result, some manuscripts still bear the bloodstains of the martyred scholars.

Additionally, manuscripts were sometimes included in the reparations imposed on occupied countries, with these reparations being paid in manuscripts based on their estimated value. The researcher clarified that the displaced manuscripts found in Europe alone span twenty European countries, while the United States represents the twenty one, as its interest in Islamic manuscripts developed later in the 19th century CE (13th century AH) following its independence from European colonial rule. However, its interest in Arabic-Islamic manuscripts may have started earlier, around the 20th century CE (14th century AH).

some of the libraries mentioned in this survey, as well as Islamic manuscripts in Turkish, Persian, Urdu, and other languages of Muslim communities. This granted these manuscripts an Islamic character, rather than just an Arabic one.

Additionally, the study was keen on using the Hijri calendar in instances where the researcher deemed it necessary and adhered to the descriptive cataloging methodology when recording publication details in the references cited in this research, ensuring consistency in data arrangement—even if some primary details, such as the author’s name and the title of the work, were repeated.

The first section was titled: (Orientalism and the Migration of Manuscripts), where the researcher discussed scholars’ views on the impact of Orientalism on the displacement of Islamic manuscripts. As Europe transformed into a major military and political power in the 19th century CE and occupied many Arab and Islamic countries, Orientalists’ interest in Arabic manuscripts grew—whether through purchase, seizure by force, or political influence. The transportation of manuscripts to their countries became highly active, with massive quantities transferred at minimal costs.

The researcher indicated that certain European countries were at the forefront of acquiring and stockpiling large collections of Arabic manuscripts. Based on the sources and references cited, the most significant of these countries, whose libraries housed collections of such manuscripts, included England, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Russia, Spain, Italy, Austria, Sweden, and Denmark. Most of the handwritten collections in these countries

the contributions of the Al-Furqan Islamic Heritage Foundation. Alongside this, previous Arab documentary efforts regarding Arabic and Islamic manuscripts worldwide were also examined. Among the most significant of these are the studies and critical editions produced by leading Arab scholars, as listed by the researcher, along with other experts in Arabic and Islamic manuscripts. Additionally, the study includes a list of catalogers and classifiers and their research.

The researcher also clarified that the reason for mentioning prominent libraries in this study was initially due to the role of orientalists in enabling these libraries to acquire manuscripts. It became evident that these libraries are, in most cases, the “final” destination of manuscripts obtained by orientalists. Consequently, the study expanded on examples of the most well-known libraries without overlooking the existence of many lesser-known libraries that also hold Arabic and Islamic manuscripts, even if only in small numbers, sometimes as few as a single manuscript. The researcher further explained that the study relied heavily on modern references concerning the locations and ultimate destinations of manuscripts, which resulted in an extensive number of documented sources.

Among the points mentioned by the researcher in the introduction is the reason for preferring the masculine form “manuscript” over the feminine form “manuscripta”, except in quoted texts—not for any preferential reason, but rather to maintain consistency in using a single term throughout the study. The researcher also insisted on using the term “Islamic” when referring to manuscripts, given the existence of non-Islamic manuscripts in Latin languages in

repositories worldwide, categorized by country, with each country's section typically edited by a scholar from that country.

The researcher greatly benefited from the foundation's catalogs in identifying manuscripts in Western countries specifically, by focusing on locating Western libraries that house Islamic manuscripts. According to the researcher, this study may be dependent on that noble endeavor, followed by other references that are no less significant than this valuable source.

It became evident to the researcher, through the extensive writings of Arab and Muslim scholars on Arabic and Islamic manuscripts, that this attention stems from a deep spiritual connection to these great treasures scattered across the world. This, in turn, leads to seeking them out and tracing their locations. He asserts that this subject has been thoroughly studied, with extensive efforts dedicated to tracking the whereabouts, numbers, and conditions of these manuscripts and compiling their catalogs.

Key Topics of the Scientific Material

The study consists of an introduction, five sections, and a conclusion.

It should be noted that the fourth and fifth sections are significantly longer than the first three, as they rely on surveying the libraries that acquired and preserved Arabic and Islamic manuscripts, as well as on samples of orientalist who collected manuscripts and subsequently act on them, as will be detailed later.

In the introduction, the researcher surveyed the locations of manuscripts in the Arab and Islamic worlds, in addition to

as well as their direct connection to Orientalists or the direct relationship of Orientalists with them.

This topic—both in terms of Orientalism on one side and manuscripts and Arab-Islamic heritage on the other, along with the connection between them—is one that evokes sorrow for those who deeply belong to their Arab-Islamic manuscript heritage and witness what has become of it over the years. Numerous articles, research papers, and studies have lamented the fate of the nation's heritage, its migration or forced displacement, and its dispersion across Western museums and libraries, as well as among many Orientalists. This is regardless of the extent to which these manuscripts have been preserved, cataloged, and kept available for study and scholarly investigation—an aspect rarely considered when the discussion on Arab-Islamic manuscript heritage is limited to emotional advocacy rather than an objective scientific perspective that employs fairness in judgment.

The researcher mentioned in the introduction of the study the campaign to track Arabic and Islamic manuscripts in both the East and the West, whether individually or collectively, and the efforts to locate them in their places. Among the scientific institutions that undertook this task is the Al-Furqan Islamic Heritage Foundation, founded by Ahmad Zaki Yamani—may Allah have mercy on him—based in London. The foundation pursued the likely locations of manuscripts in the Arab and Islamic world and globally, documenting them, indexing their catalogs, and publishing them in several volumes available in print and electronically on its website. This is a comprehensive inductive effort that encompassed manuscript

Study on the Destinies of the Arabic Manuscript Heritage), published by Bisan Library – Beirut, 1444 AH / 2022 CE, p. 383.

According to the researcher, the purpose of discussing Orientalism and Orientalists lies in the fact that it is a discourse that begins but never ends, influenced by emotions and ideologies in Arabic publications. There is little objective evaluation that fairly presents both the merits and shortcomings of Orientalists. No matter how much is said in their favor, their shortcomings—according to objective academic studies—far outweigh their contributions.

As he describes it, this generalized perspective tends to dominate the writings of many Arab and Muslim thinkers on Orientalism, whether in broad or detailed discussions. However, some studies, overwhelmed by admiration for Orientalists' contributions, have overlooked the criticisms surrounding these contributions, which vary in significance.

This research does not delve into these frequently discussed aspects, as they have been extensively covered. Instead, it aims to directly explore the fate of displaced Arabic and Islamic manuscripts in Western countries and their direct connection to Orientalists, or the direct involvement of Orientalists with them.

Keywords:

Manuscripts - Orientalism - Orientalists - Arab heritage.

Significance of the Scientific Material:

The significance of this study stems from the importance of discussing Orientalism, Orientalists, and the fate of Arabic and Islamic manuscripts that have been relocated to Western countries,

Manuscripts of Orientalists Between Endowment, Gift, and Sale

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General Introduction to the Author/Researcher:

A researcher in Orientalism, Christian missionary activities, and intellectual and civilizational relations between the East and the West. He held the position of Minister of Labor and Social Affairs in Saudi Arabia (now the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development) and later served as Minister of Social Affairs after its separation. He has authored numerous works in the fields of Orientalism, Islamic studies, and social affairs, with over sixty books and fifty-seven articles and research papers.

General Objective of the Scientific Material:

This study serves as a continuation of a previous research by the author, published in the eighth issue of Waqf Journal under the title (Orientalism and Islamic Endowments), 1445 AH / 2023 CE, pp. 15-63. It also extends a prior study conducted by the author titled (The Fate of Arabic Manuscripts Between Western Libraries and Orientalists: A