

Celeste Gianni

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WORK EXPERIENCE

Cataloger of Arabic Manuscripts

Hill Museum & Manuscript Library (HMML) [01/07/2020 – 30/04/2024]

City: Saint John University, Minnesota

Country: United States

Work done remotely (currently based in Italy).

Cataloguing and research on Islamic and Eastern Christian Arabic manuscripts in the platform <https://www.vhmml.org/readingRoom/>.

Catalogued collections:

Beirut: Université Saint-Joseph. Bibliothèque orientale (1681 manuscripts)

Gaza: al-Jāmi' al-'Umarī al-Kabīr (211 manuscripts)

Jerusalem: Issaf Nashashibi Library (751 manuscripts); al-Zāwiyah al-Uzbakiyah (181 manuscripts)

Publication on hmml.org of articles based on selected manuscripts from the digitized collections:

"Deadly snakes and remedies against their venomous bites in the handy charts of a copy of the "Kitāb al-diryāq" (Book on antidotes)"
26/10/2023 | <https://hmml.org/stories/series-death-deadly-snakes-and-remedies-against-their-venomous-bites/>

"Muḥammad Ṣādiq: A Scribe Between Manuscript and Print Cultures at the Beginning of the 20th Century"
27/04/2023 | <https://hmml.org/stories/series-scribes-muhammad-sadiq/>

"Poetic fragments at the Great 'Umarī Mosque in Gaza"
22/12/2022 | <https://hmml.org/stories/series-fragments-poetic-fragments-at-the-great-umari-mosque-in-gaza/>

"Khawājah'zādah's Treatise on the Rainbow"
07/07/2022 | <https://hmml.org/stories/series-celestial-rainbow>

"The Hard Work of a Market Inspector in Preventing Food Frauds at the Market of Tinnīs, Egypt"
03/03/2022 | <https://hmml.org/stories/series-food-the-hard-work-of-a-market-inspector/>

"Tracing Folktales in Magic Texts — The Story of Umm al-Ṣibyān"
28/10/2021 | <https://hmml.org/stories/series-story-tracing-folktales-in-magic-texts/>

"Accounts on Plague and Infectious Diseases from Three Arabic Manuscripts"
04/03/2021 | <https://hmml.org/stories/series-medicine-accounts-plague-infectious-diseases-from-arabic-manuscripts/>

Research Associate in Arabic Manuscripts (Post-doc)

Faculty of History, University of Oxford [01/10/2019 – 30/06/2020]

City: Oxford

Country: United Kingdom

Researcher in Arabic manuscripts for the ERC project entitled, "Stories of Survival: Eastern Christianity in the Early Modern World", with a focus on the manuscript collection of the Syrian Arabic priest Paul Sbath (1887-1945).

Coordinator of the series of workshops “Arabic Poetry & Stories in Translation”
Birkbeck & SOAS, University of London [2019 – 2020]

City: London

Country: United Kingdom

Website: <https://arabicstories.poetry.blog/>

Helping with the planning and coordinating a series of workshops focused on the study and translation of Arabic classical and contemporary literature in comparative perspective

Senior Teaching Fellow - Introduction to Arabic Literature
SOAS, University of London [01/10/2018 – 30/06/2019]

City: London

Country: United Kingdom

Library assistant

Al-Furqan Islamic Heritage Foundation [05/11/2012 – 30/09/2019]

City: London

Country: United Kingdom

- Management of the physical library and its collections
- Cataloguing
- Specialised cataloguing of the collection of catalogues of Islamic manuscripts
- Assistance to the researchers for locating copies of Arabic manuscripts and other sources
- Curated an exhibition on Arabic manuscripts
- Participated to the meetings of MELCOM UK (Middle East Libraries Committee)

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Ph.D.

SOAS, University of London [2013 – 2018]

City: London

Country: United Kingdom

Field(s) of study: Arabic literature | History of the Islamic world

Thesis: “Poetics of the catalogue: library catalogues in the Arab provinces of the late Ottoman period”

Training course: “Arabic codicology: the Islamic handwritten tradition and its reception”
El Escorial, Universidad Complutense, Spagna [20/07/2015 – 24/07/2015]

Librarianship (single course)

Università di Udine [15/09/2012 – 15/06/2013]

City: Udine

Country: Italy

Certificate of 6th level in Arabic language

II-TASOL – University of Jordan [10/01/2012 – 30/06/2012]

City: Amman

Country: Jordan

MA Arabic Literature

SOAS, University of London [09/2010 – 09/2011]

City: London

Country: United Kingdom

Final grade: Distinction (74/100)

Courses: Theories and techniques of comparative literature ; Arabic historiography ; Arabic popular literature.

Arabic language course

University of Damascus [11/2007 – 12/2007]

City: Damascus

Country: Syria

BA Languages and Cultures (Arabic & English)

Università degli Studi Carlo Bo [2006 – 2009]

City: Urbino

Country: Italy

Final grade: 110 cum laude

LANGUAGE SKILLS

Mother tongue(s): **Italian**

Other language(s):

English

LISTENING C2 READING C2 WRITING C2

SPOKEN PRODUCTION C2 SPOKEN INTERACTION C2

French

LISTENING A1 READING B1

SPOKEN INTERACTION A1

Spanish

LISTENING B1 READING B1 WRITING A1

SPOKEN PRODUCTION A2 SPOKEN INTERACTION A2

Arabic

LISTENING B2 READING C1 WRITING B2

SPOKEN PRODUCTION B2 SPOKEN INTERACTION B2

Ottoman Turkish

READING A1

Levels: A1 and A2: Basic user; B1 and B2: Independent user; C1 and C2: Proficient user

PUBLICATIONS

Gianni, C., "Louis Cheikho's drafts of critical editions held at the Bibliothèque Orientale at the Université Saint-Joseph in Beirut: The intertwining of manuscript and print cultures at the service of the Arab Christian heritage"

[2024]

La Bibliofilia (upcoming)

Gianni, C. "Paul Sbath's manuscript library: Conceptualizing the library of a Syrian Catholic priest between Europe and the Middle East in the early 20th century"

[2022]

Journal of Islamic Manuscripts, vol. 13/4

Gianni, C., G. Saliba, M. Tagliabracci, "Contextualising the Arabic Nomenclature of Coronelli's Celestial Globe at the Biblioteca Federiciana in Fano"

[2018]

Suhayl, v. 16-17

Gianni, C., M. Tagliabracci, "Schede catalografiche dei metalli islamici di Annibale degli Abbati Olivieri"

[2018]

Studia Oliveriana

Gianni, C., M. Tagliabracci, "Kitab salat al-sawa'i : protagonisti, vicende, ed ipotesi attorno al primo libro arabo stampato con caratteri mobili, in Culture del testo e del documento"

[2012]

Manziana: Vecchiarelli, Aprile 2012

Moaiyad A. Shana'h, "Giochi di società all'aperto e in casa", translated by C. Gianni

[2011]

Nuovi Quaderni di Area UISP

Translation from Arabic to Italian

CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS

C. Gianni, M. Tagliabracci, "Metalli islamici nel Ducato di Urbino: dai manufatti alla loro ricezione"

[Bologna, 12/12/2023]

Workshop "Arte islamica in Italia: dai manufatti alla loro ricezione"

A library lost in translation: Paul Sbath's correspondence with Eugène Tisserant

[Institute for Advanced Study, School for Historical Studies and Digital Scholarship (Princeton, US), 31/03/2023]

"Scholarly Correspondences Among Orientalists during the Early and Late Modern Period as a Historical Source: A Series of Lectures"

Paul Sbath's manuscript library: from guardian to seller of the Eastern Christian heritage

[Gotha, 08/03/2023]

Gotha Manuscript Talks: Local Manuscript Brokers: Between Preserving and Selling Literary Heritage

The Fihris of Paul Sbath, or: cataloguing as a mirror of identity in the early 20th-century Middle East

[Berlino, 12/09/2022 – 17/09/2022]

Deutsche Orientalistentag (DOT) 2022. Panel: The Place of Catalogs: Current State and Historical Perspectives

Looter or Lover of Learning? The Case of Paul Sbath's Collection and the Manuscript Trade in the Middle East at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century

[Yahuda Seminar, Princeton University, USA, 28/04/2022]

From Print to Digital Catalogues: Gains and Losses in the Study of Arabic Manuscripts

[Schedule-MIDA Training Gotha 2021, 18/05/2021 – 20/05/2021]

Manuscripts Meet Digital Humanities: Present Approaches from Digitisation and Cataloguing up to Online Presentation and Text-recognition

The imaginary library of Paul Sbath, priest of Aleppo (1887-1946)

[Weston Library, Oxford, Regno Unito, 31/01/2020]

Fantasia of the library: cataloguing and classifying in late Ottoman libraries

[OIB - Orient-Institut Beirut, Beirut, Libano, 31/05/2018]

Il calamo e l'almanacco: la nomenclatura scientifica araba nei documenti della Federiciana

[Biblioteca Federiciana, Fano, Italia, 07/04/2018]

'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Baghdādī and his catalogue

[Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Berlino, Germania, 07/10/2016]

Workshop: "All you can do with catalogues: accessing, organizing, disseminating local and global knowledge (15th-19th centuries)"

The Melkite Horologion: the curious editorial journeys of a book of hourly prayers

[SHARP Conference: Religions of the Book, Anversa, Belgio, 19/10/2014]

DIGITAL SKILLS

Google (Google Meet, Google Docs, Google Classroom, Google Forms, Google Drive, Google Slide); / Microsoft Office package: Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access / FileMaker Database