CULTURAL HERITAGE PROTECTION HANDBOOK

CARE AND HANDLING OF MANUSCRIPTS

العناية بالملخطوطات وطريقة مناولتها
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Division of Cultural Heritage, African and Arab museum unit
Textes par : Antonio Mirabile
Dessins par : Beatrice Beccaro Migliorati

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INTRODUCTION

This booklet is intended for all who collect and are fond of manuscripts, as well as those in charge of public or private collections of manuscripts and rare books.

The principles given here concerning the preservation of manuscripts can also be applied to printed books and bound documents.

Certain measures concern institutions with equipment and personnel not within the means of private individuals. However, these recommendations constitute a sort of ideal which one should endeavour to reach as far as possible.
### OCCIDENTAL MANUSCRIT

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### ARABIC MANUSCRIT

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Stabilize air-conditioning parameters in the library and reserve collection rooms (relative humidity between 50 and 60% and temperature between 16 and 20°C).

Check air-conditioning parameters at regular intervals.
Check that doors and windows are tightly closed.

Use blinds, screens and shutters to protect documents against sunlight.
Fit all openings with a grid. Use a grid with sufficiently fine mesh to keep insects out while not restricting airflow.

Pipes and ducts should not pass through library and reserve rooms. Provide an emergency evacuation plan to be applied in the event of flooding.
Insulate electrical systems, avoiding loose wires.

Provide fire detection and fighting equipment; define measures to be taken at outbreak of fire.
Clean library and reserve rooms at regular intervals. Remove dust with vacuum cleaners fitted with total filtration, then wipe with damp floorcloth (once a week).

Inspect reserve rooms and manuscripts at regular intervals. Train personnel to inspect reserve rooms and manuscripts regularly for mould, dust, insects and rodents.
Store waste far from library.

Store manuscripts in the dark (or turn off the lights when you leave the library).
New acquisitions\textsuperscript{1} should be examined by a specialist before being added to the collection. Isolate\textsuperscript{2} affected books to reduce risk of general contamination.

Stock the library with painted\textsuperscript{2,3} shelves (if possible in metal)\textsuperscript{1}, free of cutting edges and bulges.
Spacing of shelves should be sufficient to allow proper circulation of air.

The lower shelf should be at least 15 cm above floor level in order to protect books against damp and rodents.
Keep a gap of at least 5 cm between shelves and wall.

Shelves should be closed by a panel at the top to protect documents against dust.
Avoid shelves that are too high, as manuscripts should be within easy reach.

Never store books or manuscripts on floor.
Do not store books on their fore edge or spine. As this may place undue pressure on spine and binding.

Do not let books protrude beyond shelf edges. Books might be damaged by passing trolleys or persons.
Store manuscripts, rare and/or deteriorated books in suitable boxes, laying them flat.

Store books with metal parts in tailor-made boxes specially designed for these volumes. If stored on shelves, the metal parts are likely to damage books stored on either side.
Lay large volumes flat; stack no more than three or four books of the same format.

Only small books in good condition may be stood upright with book ends. Book ends should be smooth and have large angles.
Do not stand small format books next to large format. This might leave large format books without sufficient support.

Do not tighten or space books excessively on shelves.
Leaning books are inclined to bend.

Keep of at least 5 cm space between books and the rear panel.
Store leather bindings separately from paper/cardboard and cloth bindings. Tanned and acid leather might soil paper and fabric bindings.

Wash and dry hands prior to handling. Cotton gloves are highly recommended.
HANDLING

Provide space where to lay down the books moved.

Do not pull the books out by the head cap. This could loosen the spine.
Grasp the book at centre of spine while moving aside the volumes next to it and slightly lifting it.

If there is sufficient space above, slide the book towards you on its fore edge.
Never force a book into its shelf position.

Open the manuscript carefully. Lay the manuscript down on a table...
...first open the centre pages...

...أولاً، افتح المخططة عند الصفحات الوسطى...

...then go back to the beginning.

...ثم ارجع إلى بدايتها.
Perform dust removal”1” in a room at some distance from library or reserve”2”.

Use a vacuum cleaner fitted with a total filtration system, a power adjustor”**” and a soft brush.
Do not use a vacuum cleaner on manuscripts in poor condition or having fragile parts.

Begin dust removal on outside of volume without letting it lodge in corners.
Remove dust from flyleaves and first and last section of the book block using a large, soft brush. Hold manuscript at an angle and make dust slide down to lower edge.

Before returning manuscript to shelf, clean the latter with a vacuum cleaner and a damp cloth.
Transport manuscripts lying horizontally in a box.

Transport manuscripts lying horizontally in a box.

Carry only a limited number of manuscripts at a time (three or four).
Heavy manuscripts should be moved by trolley.

Use a trolley fitted with large rubber wheels. Such wheels keep the manuscripts in a stable position and absorb vibrations.
Make sure that manuscripts do not protrude over side of trolley.

Never place a large volume on a smaller one. Non-observance of this recommendation may cause the large book to fall on the floor during transport.
For any extramural transport (into another building), use hermetically sealing boxes.

Do not leave manuscripts in poor condition available for consultation "*".
Display the basic rules for handling. Provide for surveillance of consultation room.

Wash and dry hands before handling manuscripts.
Do not drink, eat or smoke in library or reading room.

To consult a manuscript, lay it on a clean table free of any object, or use a book-rest suited to size of volume.
Open the manuscript gradually. Lay it on a table...

... first open the centre pages...

افتح المخطوطة تدريجاً. ضعها على منضدة...

افتح المخطوطة عند الصفحات الوسطى...
...then go back to the beginning.

Do not place manuscripts facing a window and do not expose to direct sunlight.
Do not stack open manuscripts.

لا ينبغي تكويم المخطوطات المفتوحة.

Do not tear or cut pages.

لا ينبغي انتزاع أو قطع صفحات من المخطوطة.
Do not mark manuscripts in any way whatever (paper clip, needle, post-it®, ink, ball-point pen, correction fluid, marker) or turn down the corner of a page, etc...

To write down notes, only pencils are authorized.
Do not lean on manuscripts while reading them or taking notes.

Do not touch illuminations/illustrations, or manuscript and printed areas.
Do not photocopy manuscripts or take pictures without the consent of the owner or person responsible.

Close the manuscript after consultation.
Check state of preservation of manuscripts before displaying them.

If they are in good condition, you may expose them for a maximum of one month each year.
Set the display room air conditioning parameters (relative humidity between 50 and 60% and temperature between 16 and 20°C).

Display manuscripts in safe showcases.
Fit showcase panes with anticaloric and UV filters.

Place light source outside showcase.
The intensity of the light shall be limited to 50 Lux.

Display manuscripts on book-rests made of or lined with neutral cardboard.
The manuscript should be held open by polyester ribbons adapted to the profile of the manuscript.

The opening angle shall not exceed 120° and the tilting angle, with respect to the horizontal plane, shall not exceed 20°.