PRESERVATION AND CONSERVATION OF THE CHUKKUNGA HOLY QUR’AN FOMBINA PALACE MUSEUM, YOLA ADAMAWA EMIRATE

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By

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ABSTRACT:

This paper explores the process of conservation and preservation of the Chukkunga Holy Qur’an found in the Fombina Palace Museum of Adamawa Emirate in Yola. The Qur’an (Chukkunga) is an ancient Manuscript said to have been used by Modibbo Adama, the founder of the Fombina (Adamawa) Emirate, (1771-1847); a major part of the eastern Emirates of the Sokoto Caliphate. The paper is essentially a report of the conservation and preservation works on the deteriorated Holy Qur’an called Chukkunga in Fulfulde language meaning huge papers. This is typical of most Arabic Manuscripts in Northern Nigeria explaining the technical process evolved at each stage of the work. The study demonstrates how the large collections of Holy Qur’an that are deteriorating in private and public repositories existing in Northern Nigeria can be conserved and preserved for posterity. The study therefore highlights the need for a proper planning to preserve and maintain these precious collections lying without attention throughout Northern Nigeria.
Introduction:

The Chukunga Qur'an is an ancient Manuscript, which was said to have been used by Modibbo Adama, the founder of the Adamawa Emirate, (1771-1847). The Writer was Abd al-Qadir Bin Faqih Abdul Karim bin Sheikh Mohammad Al-Mutawakkil Rahim Rahman alias Batumeh owned by Galadima Abdu, the son of Galadima Albah who was probably the Governor of Western Borno at Nguru, more than 250 years ago. This copy of the Qur’an is highly valued by the people of Adamawa and those of the present Northern Cameroon.
Unfortunately, the Qur’an is rapidly deteriorating and therefore, in need of professional intervention. In March 2009 however, a rescue exercise came under a programme of Conservation for the Modibbo Fufore manuscript collection in Yola. There, a member of the team Ms Michelle Biddle who is the head of Preservation Service at the Wesleyan University, Connecticut, USA was able to identify the problems associated with the Qur’an and immediately began taking measures to stabilize its condition. The proposed codicological assessment was therefore, timely and highly welcomed. She initiated to develop a proposal to...
The Islamic Manuscript Association (TIMA) for the conservation of the Chukkunga Qur’an in the Fombina Palace Museum, which was granted. The grant covered the supply of materials needed for the conservation work and small per diem to cater for the feeding and transportation expenses of the team involved in the conservation project. Musa Salih. Muhammad, Archivist at Arewa House, was the leading member of the team. While Malam Ahmadu Girei of the Trans Saharan Centre, University of Maiduguri, Alhasan Kasim of the National Museum, Yola and four Library staff of American University of Nigeria, Yola formed other members of the team.

The focus of the work was twofold. First to stabilize the Chukkunga and then secondly to provide further conservation training for the team members who were expected to improve the local capacity for conserving and preserving manuscripts in Nigeria. The work lasted about two weeks between 11th and 28th May, 2010 at the Lamido Zubairu Educational Centre, Yola Adamawa State. The Chukkunga Qur’an has in it massive ink corrosion. Treating ink corrosion calls for careful, attentive work that cannot be rushed.
Procedures of conservation and treatment

The following considerations are to be followed in the treatment and stabilization of any Manuscripts:

- The condition of the document
- Its future use
- Its aesthetic importance
- What the document will allow?
- How much money can be allotted for the conservation treatment?

Examination and Initial Report:

It is always advisable that before commencing on nature writing outlining the proposed treatment and estimates its cost should be provided. This is followed by a certified examination of each paper with its aid of magnifies***. The solubility of all media need to be tested prior to any proposed water of solvent treatment.

**Surface Cleaning of paper**

Surface cleaning sometimes improves the appearance of a paper. It can also remove substances that might eventually damage paper, although brittle papers might be harmed by inexpert attempts to surface-clean them (Biddle 2010). Moldy materials are obvious candidates for surface cleaning, which may be all that is possible or necessary. Mold activity should first be stabilized by providing the affected materials with a prolonged environment of low relative humidity, generally below 50 percent, so that the mold goes dormant. Mold removal is a delicate procedure and thus require careful work hygiene to avoid spreading contamination as much as possible. Mold can also affect our health,
so protective equipment such as gloves and masks should be used when removing it. If fume holds are not available the removal should be done outside (Biddle 2010).

**Equipment for Surface Cleaning**

Conservators prefer to use granules produced by grinding up vinyl block erasers, which are available commercially from conservation supplies. This cleaning agent is less abrasive and breaks down less during use, so it has less of a tendency to leave residues behind. The erasers used to make these compounds are also sold as blocks, such as the non-colored Eberhard Faber Magic Rub Eraser and the Steadier Mars Plastic Eraser. The blocks are sometimes useful for surface cleaning and for removing pencil marks. They also will lighten biro or ball point pen marks. For all dry-cleaning procedures a clean, soft brush is needed. Brushes intended for surface cleaning should not be used for wet work, and any brush used on moldy materials should be labeled and kept separately to avoid spreading mold to other papers.

**Cleaning Procedures**
To start work, clear a large, clean, smooth work surface. On it place a large sheet of inexpensive, clean paper that can be changed frequently. Begin cleaning by gently brushing the surface of the object with a soft brush to remove loose dirt and dust. If this raises dust particles, wear a dust mask.

**Mending Procedures:**

Tearing mending strips: it is desirable for mends to have a soft, fibrous edge to avoid deforming or even breaking a fragile paper along a sharp edge. To tear mending strips, the use of a bone folder or similar tool is suggested to incise a crease in the mending papers along a metal ruler or other straight edge as well as draw a line of water along the crease with the smallest brush from the cleaner’s kit. It is also expedient to pull the strip away from the sheet while grasping it near the crease. One also makes strips of varying widths to conform to different tears—one, two, and three centimeters for their usefulness.

Preparing to Mend: Prepare a work surface by converting a sheet of clean blotting paper with a sheet of non-woven polyester such as Reemay to prevent
the documents being repaired from sticking to the paper because of stray or extruded methylcellulose. Begin by mending the largest tears in a document first. Align the tear with the correct under and overlaps (shelf tears). As tears typically occur not with the sharp edge that a cut produces, but rather with beveled surfaces that may alternate between the front and the back of a sheet of sheet of paper. If any of the overlaps are sizeable, they should be posted, adhered, and dried as described below before applying the mending strip.

Applying the Mending strip: when using Tenjucho: place the paper over the tear and apply the adhesive through the paper brushing from the center of the Tenjucho outwards, just past the feathered fibers, when using Kizukishi: using pieces of an absorbent paper such as blotting paper as a substrate for pasting the mending strip,, apply menthl cellulose to a strip of Japanese paper with a flat brush similar in with to the mending strip, the blotting paper will draw out excess moisture that could cockle or stain the documents. Then lift the strip with a tool such as tweezers or a spatula and place it over the reverse of the tear with the pasted side against the document.
Drying the Mended Sheet: Weight the repair while it dries. Weighting ensures good adhesion and prevent cockling of the paper. Repairs may be weighted as follows. First place small pieces of Reemay over the area to be dried. Then place a squire of blotting paper, followed by a piece of Plexiglas on top of the blotter,

Filling Area of Paper Loss- Holes or paper losses may be filled individually with Japanese paper, with paper pulp or with a paper carefully chosen to match the original in weight, texture, color and contour. The latter is the most time-consuming (and consequently the most expensive) option, usually reserved for the most valuable and aesthetically important documents. This technique using a pattern draw on Mylar will be demonstrated in class.

Details of the works

Cleaned each page, mended critical edge tears of tears that threatened text, as time permit will do instills of paper loses, most of pages of Zayyana, (decoration) have Major lacunae, each items Austen portfolios or file, large item text wrapped to prevent acid migration from leather wrappers and camel slain boards and bayed some kind of conservation/restoration treatment at some point in the course of their lives. This treatment has the adverse effect of limiting
flexibility of movement to the paper and, in addition, the ageing silk has become brittle and embedded into the paper fibres. The adhesive used with the silk lining has also in most cases proved inadequate causing yet more damage to the manuscripts.

Picture 3 Beginning of the work

Conservation treatments carried out on the Chukunga Holy Qurán involves:

- Surface cleaning
- Humidification
- Lining removal — when necessary
- Silk removal — when necessary
- Infill of losses
- Tear repairs/mending/ filling of lacunars
- Flattening
- Edge repairs
- Adhesive removal
- Addition of end panels with previously toned paper
- Providing acid free standard rollers to support the scrolls
- Acid free standard boxes for storage
- Some paper manuscripts have only survived as small fragments. These types of material generally only require the minimum of intervention. Re-housing is as crucial for their preservation as it is any other conservation treatments.
• Some of the tools used for conservation of Cukkunga Qur'an

Picture 4  Some of the tools used for conservation of

Picture 5 Using adhesive for conservation of
Picture 6 Encapsulation using tunjuckcho Japanese
Picture 7 Acid free box housing the Chukkunga

Picture 8 Re-housing of Cukkunga Qur’an

Picture 9 Acid free box housing Chukkunga
Materials used for conservation and preservation of manuscripts on paper include:

- Acid free used photo copy papers empty boxes
- Acid free rollers
- Cardboard free acid imported by Ms M Biddle
- Sheep wool brushes
- Rubber sponges
• Dust Bunny Cloths
• Reemay
• Blotting paper
• Swan bottle water

Conclusion:

This study has highlighted some of the current problems with the preservation and conservation of some of the large collections of Arabic Manuscripts spread all over Northern Nigeria, but which are yet to be fully accessed. The discovery of the Chukkunga Qur’an in the Fombina Palace Museum of Adamawa Emirate and the restoration of its lost quality with the help of International effort has therefore thrown challenges on the need for us to go further with local capacity to save these rich heritage. A forum of this nature on the Qur’an could serve to boost previous appeals and efforts by the private and public sectors of the country in this direction. Indeed the vast in accessed materials could serve as catalysts for our nation to explore documents of the past centuries in order to understand the root of our current problems as a people and thus find the way out.
References:


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Appendix

Introduction of chukkunga from the page found the quran

Introduction page of the Cukkunga Qur’an
Translation

This is the end of this Holy Qur’an

Praises be to Allah who created the heavens and the earth and put the darkness and light. All thanks and continuing praises is be unto Him and I bear witness/testified that there is no God but Allah alone. He has no partner or companion to him. Guidance are getting through his witnesses and testifying, the heart became acquainted with.

We bear witness that Muhammad His Servant and his Messenger, He has exclusive miracles of the Holy Quran which explained in the various versus and proved, Prayer for him is freed us from the hell of fire.

Peace and blessing of Allah be unto Him, his family and his great Companions those whom assist him in spreading Islam and faith to the unbelievers and tyrants.

The writer of this Holy Qurán is Abdulqadir son of Faqih Abdulkarim, son of Sheikh Muhammad al Mutawwakil known as Batumih. May his soul rest in peace Amin

The owner is Galadima Abduh son of Galadima Al Bah, who portion his name in three words as for (AIN) : as plant of Allah at his land to spend in
the way of Allah) and Bau is timing and indicative and unique era, and

Al Dal is wonders all the time and erased his hunger and thirst) who is taking care of orphans (a Guarantor of Orphans). May Allah take care for him in the Aljannat firdaus (Paradise) Amin.

This completed with will of Allah, without his help and grace, will and favour I cannot write even single one letter.