Manuscript@CSIC

http://manuscripta.bibliotecas.csic.es/inicio

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The Manuscript@CSIC portal presents the collections of manuscripts in Hebrew, Arabic and Aljamiado stored in the CSIC libraries, including both, their cataloging and digitalization. This is a joint project between the Institute of Mediterranean and Near Eastern Languages and Cultures (ILC), the School of Arabic Studies in Granada (EEA) and the CSIC Library Coordination Unit. This portal is conceived as an open project, since in later stages it intends to incorporate other important collections of manuscripts written in other languages and kept in CSIC libraries.

Under the management of Mª Teresa Ortega Monasterio and Agnès Ponsati Obiols, research staff has been appointed from the institutes and technical staff from both libraries and also from the Library Coordination Unit for the tasks of developing the catalogue, the portal and monitoring the digitalization processes

The Manuscript@CSIC portal provides access to codicological and catalographic descriptions of these manuscripts, and the complete text of each document. It also has advanced visualization functions, making it a valuable working tool for both national and international scientific communities.

The main goal of the project is, therefore, to provide researchers with access to the collections of manuscripts in Arabic and Hebrew in CSIC libraries by means of a gateway, which incorporates their codicological data and digitized texts. It has been possible to put into practice the ever present idea in ILC and EEA libraries of accomplishing a complete and comprehensive treatment of their Hebrew and Arabic manuscripts. It entails their cataloging, digitalization and dissemination and it results in the creation of a specialized portal that will provide experts with a new research tool. The cataloging for this manuscripts' portal has followed these guidelines: each file includes a descriptive record for each document, its origin, type of writing, binding, materials, contents, colophons, annotations, etc. In other words, it is a very detailed description, which aims to provide researchers and librarians with all relevant information. The following activities have been carried out:

- Cleaning, restoring and correct filing of the manuscripts.
- Codicological description of all manuscripts.

- Insertion of manuscripts into the CSIC Union Catalogue, generating their MARC21 record and making them visible by implementing OAI protocol.
- Colour digitalization and generation of METS-PREMIS metadata for the manuscripts, which correspond to more than 50,000 images.
- Design of a gateway and consultation interface, a navigation system and visualizing functions for the manuscripts.
- The resulting manuscripts' portal is now part of the websites of the CSIC libraries and those of participating CSIC institutes. Moreover, since it complies with current documentary standards, it can be integrated with both national and international supra-institutional projects.

Restoration: the collaboration agreement between the CSIC and the Institute of Spanish Cultural Heritage (IPCE) specialists from the Department for the Conservation and Restoration of Bibliographic and Documentary Heritage and Graphic Works has allowed to carried out the restoration of seventeen manuscripts on paper and parchment, dating from the 14th to the 19th centuries.

Digitalization: Technically, it was decided to make the masters in Tiff format in color, with a resolution of 600 ppp, in a Zeutschel scanner. The files are one-sided for their preservation and bear the name of the image embedded in the Tiff header tags. Subsequently, low resolution jpg images, but with verified legibility, were generated to be put on the Website and PDFs in color for downloading.

A METS metadata file was also created for each bibliographic record. In addition to the standard MIX for the technical part of the image, this profile also includes a selection of PREMIS standard fields and a structural map on the page. For the generation of metadata files, the digitalizing company was provided with the bibliographic records in Marcxml format, which were added in the descriptive section of the file.