

“WE CALL ON CITIZENS TO BE AWARE OF THE VALUE OF WHAT IS IN THEIR
HOMES:” A CASE STUDY OF THE HASSAN II PRIZE FOR MANUSCRIPTS AND
ARCHIVAL DOCUMENTS

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ABSTRACT

Sumayya Ahmed: “WE CALL ON CITIZENS TO BE AWARE OF THE VALUE OF WHAT IS IN THEIR HOMES:” A CASE STUDY OF THE HASSAN II PRIZE FOR MANUSCRIPTS AND ARCHIVAL DOCUMENTS
(Under the Direction of Christopher A. Lee)

Archival documents were seen to be important tools for restoring the historical character and geographic integrity of the nation in post-colonial Morocco. In a country where the number of historic manuscripts in private collections are believed to outnumber what is currently held by public libraries and archives, where there is a tendency towards nondisclosure and even the hiding of historic manuscripts in Morocco, the Hassan II Prize for Manuscripts and Archival Documents was began in 1968/9 as a way to gain access to records in private collections.

This dissertation sets out understand how the Hassan II Prize elicited approximately 35,000 submissions in the almost fifty years since its inception. Specifically, how did the Hassan II Prize overcome resistance to archival disclosure and negotiated access to private collections with or without the perceived loss of possession by owners; and what motivating factors contributed to manuscript holders submitting their records to the Prize?

The Hassan II Prize was studied as an explanatory, qualitative case study using multiple sources of data including 14 semi-structured interviews with submitters to and administrators of the Prize, participant observation of the 2015 Hassan II Prize process, analysis of local periodicals, government and historic documents, as well as of microfilm and digital copies of submitted manuscripts that are stored at the Moroccan National Library (BNRM).

Interviews identified four main themes related to participation in the Hassan II Prize: national identity and heritage, loss (material and intellectual), religious charity, and prize money. This research seeks to introduce participant narratives, which have been absent from the official documentation of the Prize in favor of the texts of their historic manuscripts and documents, into the archival record.

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1. INTRODUCTION

He also reproached himself for not having taken care to preserve his grandfather's books – a great store of books that, immediately after the death of their owner, had been stacked in wooden boxes and shut up in a room off the courtyard, piled up together with sacks of wheat and jars of oil, honey, and butter. They were large books, each containing in its margins another book, which commented on the first or was related to it in some fashion. Books with dense type, without paragraphs, indentations, or punctuation. Labyrinthine books you entered at the beginning and didn't exit until the end, panting and short of breath, having fought past millions of letters. (Kilito, 2010, p. 115)

There is a need for research on the Arabic and Islamic manuscript that goes beyond the study of a single text, and looks at a plurality of texts as historic records and archival documents grounded in a particular national, religious, and intellectual context. Attempts at understanding the dynamics of manuscript or book culture within the Arab or Islamic context have tended to focus exclusively on scholars and communities residing in Eastern Islamic lands (Hirschler, 2012; Toorawa, 2005) to the neglect of the Maghrib region.

This research studies the Hassan II Prize for Manuscripts and Archival Documents in order to better understand the role of manuscripts and archival documents within the nation-building scheme of post-colonial Morocco. The Hassan II Prize for Manuscripts and Archival Documents presents the opportunity to understand the social life of Arabic, Amazigh (Berber) and Islamic manuscripts longitudinally, at both the societal and social group level. The cultural tendency toward non-disclosure of archival collections, renders the study of this program all the more critical.

If we can isolate the factors that contribute to participation, even reluctant participation, it might be possible to enhance this program and others in order to address critical heritage safeguarding issues.

Begun in 1969 by the first post-colonial Moroccan Ministry of Culture, the Hassan II Prize has as its goal the location and preservation of important caches of manuscripts and archival records found only within private collections in Morocco. The current Minister of Culture iterated this objective as the discovery of “new, rare, and valuable pieces that form a part of the national manuscript heritage” in order to “stress the intellectual, material and symbolic importance of the manuscripts to those families and individuals who are in possession of them while also encouraging a sense of responsibility for their preservation” (Sbihi, 2011).

Binbine (2004), the director of the Royal Library in Rabat, contended that the number of manuscripts in private hands in Morocco may far outnumber the number that are currently held by public libraries and archives.

This research studies the Hassan II Prize for Manuscripts and Archival documents as an explanatory, qualitative, single case study with an embedded unit of analysis (the participants of the Prize). Through triangulated data collection methods including, semi-structured interviews with administrators and functionaries of the Prize as well as submitters to the Prize, collection of government and historic documents, and the microfilm of submitted manuscripts stored at the Moroccan National Library (BNRM) in Rabat, it seeks to answer why, given the tendency towards nondisclosure and even the hiding of historic manuscripts in Morocco, the Hassan II Prize for Manuscripts and Archival documents has been able to elicit 35,000 manuscript submissions from Moroccans in the almost fifty years since its inception. The research is designed to shed empirical light on a heretofore understudied group of people (Moroccan

manuscript holders) and their historical records within the context of their specific national, political and religious culture.

Research Problem

How has the Hassan II Prize for Manuscripts and Archival documents been able to elicit 35,000 manuscript submissions in a cultural environment where a fear of confiscation or theft of documentary heritage co-exists with a consciousness about the market, intellectual, and religious value of the records? Allal al-Fāssī (1970), the nationalist and first Minister of Religious Affairs in post-colonial Morocco, noted in the context of a discussion on the origins of anti-colonial movements in North Africa, that “no other country has suffered so much loss of historical records as Morocco has experienced throughout the ages” (1970, p.87). The sentiment of this leading anti-colonial nationalist is a testament to the importance some Moroccans have placed on documentary heritage. His statement at once connects documents to the (imagined) nation while alluding at an anxiety about safeguarding archival heritage from loss.

In speaking with participants of the Hassan II Prize, this study offers a unique opportunity to understand their present day motivations and understandings of the Prize and the extent to which the nation figures into their participation decisions. It explores the extent to which the sentiments of loss and nationalism have been capitalized upon by the Moroccan authorities in order to create a public archive of copies of privately held documents. Moreover, it examines the scholarly use of the H-II Prize archives and investigates the condition of the cache of microfilmed and digitized documents now housed in the manuscript repository of the National Library in Rabat, specifically image quality and ease of location and access.

Research Questions

The purpose of this research is to understand the variables that have motivated holders of historic manuscripts and archival documents to disclose their collection holdings to the Hassan II Prize. In studying the Hassan II Prize program systematically using case study design, this research addresses the following two research questions:

RQ1: How has the Hassan II Prize for Manuscripts and Archival Documents, as a consciously post-colonial initiative by the Moroccan government successfully motivated records holders to disclose their holdings and negotiated access to private collections without the perceived loss of possession by owners.

Sub-question: What are the factors that motivate manuscript holders to submit their manuscripts to the Prize?

Sub-question: What role does digitization (with possible posting on the Internet) play in the submission process?

RQ2: What is the condition of the stored images of Hassan II manuscripts and archival records and what is the preservation plan for their up-keep?

RQ3: What are the local narratives of the owners and what do their stories add to the archival record of the Hassan II Prize collection?

This dissertation studied the Hassan II Prize as a single case using a case study research design. Data was collected from multiple sources including semi-structured interviews with Prize participants and administrators, official documents, local periodicals and social media, as well as the cache of submitted manuscripts and archival documents that have been microfilmed at the manuscript repository of the National Library in Rabat.

Chapter 2 reviews the literature on the history and use of Arabic and Islamic manuscripts as primary sources; manuscript culture in the general Islamicate and specific Moroccan experience; the role of French colonial archival practices in sensitizing Moroccan publics; the establishment of the H-II Prize, and the place of the digitized Arabic manuscripts as cultural heritage objects. Chapter 3 details the research methods used in this dissertation. Chapter 4 uses documentary evidence to construct a history of the H-II Prize, its regulations and participation. Chapter 5 presents the results of semi-structured interviews with H-II participants and administrators and analyzes the narratives for major themes. Chapter 6 details the 2015 round of the H-II Prize from the lens of participant observation. Chapter 7 engages the discussion of rarities amongst the submissions to the Prize and details research use of Prize documents. Chapter 8 discusses the implications of this study, offers suggestions and discusses future research trajectories.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

A study of the Hassan II Prize has to be preceded by a thorough understanding of the place of manuscripts and archival documents in Arab-Islamic culture and in Morocco specifically. The following literature review provides the necessary context to situate this study. It provides an overview of the subject matters relevant to the history of the Arabic manuscript and Islamic manuscript culture; the specificities of manuscript collections in the Moroccan context; French colonial documentation practices and document appropriation in Morocco, archival theory as it relates to custody, community archives, and expansion of the archival record as done in the H-II Prize; and digital preservation of manuscripts as cultural heritage materials in the Moroccan context.

The History of the Arabic Manuscript

The manuscript is always more than just its textual information – it is a living historical entity and its study a complex web of interrelated factors: the origins, production (that is, materials, formats, script, typography, and illustration), content, use and role of books in culture, educated and society in general (Minicka, 2008).

In the lands where Islam took hold as a religion (and culture), an expanse stretching from Morocco and Southern Spain throughout Africa, the Middle East and Asia, there existed the practice of producing books by hand for thirteen centuries (Gacek, 2006). These handmade books, or manuscripts, were primarily codices that were written on sheepskin parchment or paper, although some were also produced on papyri (Gacek, 2006). The codex form is believed to have been adopted by Arabs through contact with ancient Ethiopia, Byzantium, Egypt, and

North Africa (Szirmai 1999, p. 51). The process of paper-making was later learned from the Chinese by Arabs in the eastern Islamic lands. It was the North Africa region however “that was ultimately responsible for the transfer of the technology to Europe” (Bloom, 2001, p.89).

The number of surviving manuscripts in Islamicate languages is estimated to be several million. According to Gacek (2006), “a few hundred manuscripts” date from the ninth to eleventh century, while the majority of extant Islamic manuscripts date from the twelfth to the nineteenth century (p. 474). The oldest known dated codex on paper is a work entitled *Gharib Al-Hadith* penned by Abu Ubayd al-Qasim in 866 C.E., which is currently in the library of the University of Leiden.

Although many of the manuscripts produced were of a religious nature or were used in religious teaching, Bloom (2001) was clear to point out that “not all learning was religious... There exists amongst extant manuscripts government administrative texts as well as a proliferation of works on ‘poetry, philosophy, geography, navigation, mathematics and applied science, astronomy, astrology, medicine and alchemy.’” He also noted a “veritable explosion in the compiling of collections of stories and other works of fiction in Arabic,” citing a ninth-century manuscript fragment of the *Thousand Nights* as an example (p. 111). Yet, despite this variety in subject matter, it has become common to refer to these manuscripts interchangeably as either Arabic or Islamic manuscripts.

Although the term Islamic manuscripts “is not very precise,” Brinkemann and Weismüller (2009, p.15) employ it because “it is a term commonly used in scholarship,” that attempts to “define those manuscripts that have been produced in a cultural or political Islamic context.” Waley (1997) said that when he uses the term “Islamic manuscripts,” he means

“codices or leaves produced by, or for, Muslims” (p.89).

Codicology: Study of the Manuscript’s Physical Form

As archival documents, Arabic manuscripts are like other ancient documents discussed by O’Toole (1990) “more than mere curiosities, they are direct evidence of the world in which they originated” (p. 28). Codicology, or the study of the manuscript as a physical object (Binebine, 2004) is a vibrant field. Burrows (2010) said that the most obvious research-use of historic manuscripts has been research which focuses on the manuscripts as physical objects and examines their inherent characteristics such as material composition. The literature points to a myriad of areas that have been under scholarly scrutiny with regard to the (Islamic) manuscript as a material object. One can find, for example, extensive research on the inks (Levey, 1962), illumination (Waley, 1997), colophons (the “basic text added at the end of the manuscript by the scribe with information about the copying”) (Déroche, 2005, p.318), (Quiring-Zoche, 2013), and watermarks (Lewincamp, 2012) of manuscripts.

Savage-Smith, Neate and Ovenden (2011) found that the physical object of the manuscript “provides historical information related to dating, provenance (ownership as well as additions to the text), and usage,” with illumination and decoration providing “additional sources of information on the history of the manuscript” (p.3). Waley (1997) said that obviously illumination was “intended to add beauty,” but in the context of Islamic manuscripts it also functioned “to clarify technical details in specialized treatises on the natural and human arts and sciences, from astronomy to toxophily” (p.89).

Déroche (2005) pointed out that another function of codicology is “to establish the history of libraries and collections” and “gather data on their circulation and provenance” (p.

345). As such, “reliably dated manuscripts are crucial landmarks in the field of codicological scholarship” (p.318). In essence, codicology attempts to reconstruct the Islamic manuscript tradition that Messick (2002) described as manifesting itself in Yemen (the subject of his study), and “elsewhere in the Muslim world” as a “flourishing culture of the book, expressed in such activities as library keeping, the calligraphic arts, bookbinding and selling, and manuscript copying”(p.29).

Manuscripts and Islamic Education

Lydon (2011) said that Muslims turned the Qur’anic imperative to “Read!” (96:1) “into a vocation,” thereby generating “a considerable written body of scientific, literary, and practical knowledge” (p.37). The written bodies of Islamic knowledge, manuscripts, were often the products of the medieval education system. Makdisi (1981) explained that “writing books was a function of teaching, connected with an oral process of teaching, including dictation and note-taking. Books were meant for students; they were the direct result of the teaching process (p.74)”.

The subjects commonly taught by medieval Muslims, known as the Islamic sciences were: Qur’anic exegesis (*ilm al-tafsir*); the sciences of Prophetic traditions (*‘ulum al-hadith*), the principles and sources of legal theory and methodology (*usul al-fiqh*); jurisprudence (*fiqh*); and foundational theology, (*usul ad-din*). In addition to these, there were other, ancillary sciences of the Arabic language which included grammar, lexicology, morphology, rhyme, and prosody (Makdisi, 1981, p.79). It makes sense then that these subjects are those most covered in extant Islamic manuscript collections. Abdulrazak (1990), commenting on manuscripts produced as late as the nineteenth century Morocco, noted that the “dominating topics are Hadith literature, Sufism, jurisprudence, and poetry with a few “scientific works on geometry and arithmetic”

(p.37).

Manuscript copies of the Qur'an, Islam's sacred text, are abundant due to the place it had within daily and ritual life. Messick (1992) wrote that "a genealogy of authoritative texts in Islam must begin with a consideration of the Qur'an as the authoritative original" (p.16). Jones (1987) noted that "the single most likely book to be found among manuscripts acquired in combat" between sixteenth century Europeans and Muslims was the Qur'an (due to it having been carried by Muslim soldiers for devotional purposes). He added that it was "coveted" by European Arabists as a fully vocalized text, and was seen as an "invaluable language primer" that they, as religious Christians, aspired to translate and refute (p. 104).

After the Qur'an, other "authoritative" texts were fundamental to Islamic, especially legal, scholarship (Messick, 1992). In the Islamic manuscript tradition, texts were transmitted and disseminated through a formalized system which worked to ensure the authoritative validity of the text. Leder (2011) explained that in pre-modern Islamic scholarship, "the dissemination of texts...was effected through regulated modes of transmission, which also determined the production and use of manuscript copies" (p.59). The notes in manuscripts then served as "repositories" that testified "to the transmission of the text" and to a great extent determined its value (p. 60).

Bloom (2001) explained that the dissemination of a book was traditionally done orally. "A work was first recited and then written down to dictation, usually in a mosque" (p. 113). The written copy then had to be read back to the author, or qualified authority, in order for the copyist to obtain authorization attesting to its soundness (p.115). At times recitation of manuscripts was done with "very large audiences" (Gacek, 2006, p. 475). If there were multiple copyists recording the text, an author could "generate a dozen paper copies from a single reading." Bloom

(2001) calls this an “ingenious and efficient system” that was effective in increasing the circulation of texts and that explains “how, in a society without printing, medieval Islamic libraries could have had so many books” (p. 116).

Other ways that the veracity of a copy could be attested to in manuscript society was through collation and association. Binebine (2004) explained that “a manuscript that was not collated with its original, or found in the library of a notable scholar, or was in some way connected in its lineage to a religious scholar, was said by the people of old to not be dependable for [further] transmission and copying” (p. 19). Such a system also highly prized versions of texts written in the hands of the original authors (Déroche, 2005; Messick, 1992; Rosenthal, 1947).

The Manuscript as a Documentary Source

Modern scholarship’s present understanding of the ancient world tends to be overwhelmingly dependent on historical texts (Bowman & Woolf, 1994). Islamic manuscripts are important primary sources for present-day historical research and can also be studied as “primary sources of Islamic book culture” (Witkam, 2014). Brinkmann and Weismüller (2009) said that studying manuscripts is of “fundamental importance,” due to the new insights the texts provide (p.16). Specifically, they noted that Islamic manuscripts can be used to reconstruct “scholarly discourses and networks,” and provide a source of knowledge of daily life and local social and economic structures” (p.18). Déroche (2005) echoed this sentiment when he wrote that manuscripts were the “keys to the history of ideas and their dissemination” (p.345). Krätli (2004) contended that for historians of the western portion of the Sahara Desert, manuscripts represent the only reliable written materials available for the pre-colonial period. In addition, Diaber (1987) suggested that manuscripts could be used to correct books already in print.

Rosenthal (1947) pointed out that manuscripts offer scholars “much indirect information.” He noted that throughout Muslim history, extra-textual additions to manuscripts such as marginal notes, which “often expressed critical opinions,” introductory remarks, colophons, and authorizations to transmit the texts (*ijazāt*) “were carefully searched for such light as they could shed upon dubious data of literary history” (p. 20). For example, Diaber (1987) noted a “remarkably executed *ijaza*” with a “biographic retrospect” along with a list of the manuscript author’s teachers in a nineteenth century Turkish manuscript (p. 20).

Schmidt (2004) attributed the abundance of notes in manuscripts to the high price of paper in pre-modern times. This economic reality led to texts serving multiple purposes. He noted that owners of manuscripts “used them to document important events, adding notes on, in particular, the birth and death of siblings, sometimes also about political developments and natural disasters” (p.355). Among natural disasters earthquakes were most often documented in manuscript notes. For example, Diaber found an anonymous description of an earthquake that took place in 1759 in Damascus, while Schmidt (2004) mentioned a note in a manuscript about an earthquake that took place in Istanbul in 1754.

Rezvan (2002) focused on notes found specifically in manuscript copies of the Qur’an in the Muslim-majority areas of Eastern Europe. He found most of them to be “family notes” (p.17), such as birth records and concluded that, as an integral part of people’s life “manuscripts of the Qur’an, handed down from generation to generation served to record what we today call ‘items of public record’” (p. 24). This understanding differs from that of O’Toole (1990) who said that in the context of family Bibles in the West, “the real significance of recording names and dates” was merely symbolic (p.12). Whatever their significance, Déroche (2005) noted that such notes can be used to date undated manuscripts.

Waqfs, endowments for books

Waqf documents are also used by researchers to confirm the age of manuscripts. In Islamic law, a *waqf*, or charitable trust could be established for the endowment of books, and sometimes included entire libraries. Through the use of this Islamic legal instrument, a person declared “part of his or her property to be henceforth unalienable” and then designated “persons or public utilities as beneficiaries of its yields” (Encyclopedia of Islam, 2014). In general *waqfs* were intended for immobile property, but an exception was made for books. Once property was declared to be part of a *waqf* by the owner of the property, the designation was considered to be irrevocable and sacrosanct (Makdisi, 1981).

The practice of endowing books took place across the Muslim world where manuscripts in the possession of scholars were often willed, or endowed, to specific people or to students, schools and libraries. The famous Muslim historian Ibn Khaldun (d. 1406 C.E.) sent a copy of one his works, *Kitab al- Ibar* from Egypt to Fez “as a *waqf* to be deposited in the library of the Qaraqiyyin mosque” which was itself a *waqf* instituted by the Sultan Abū ‘Inān (r. 1348-58) (Encyclopedia of Islam, 2014). A copy of Ibn Khaldun’s *waqf* decree remains at the Qarawiyyin library. In it we find that he allowed for the book to be taken out of the library for a period not to exceed two months which was considered ample time for the borrower to make his or her own copy (Binebine, 2004, p.116). Binebine (2004) commented that this decree is one of the oldest in Morocco and one of the best in terms of its honoring the legalistic conditions of a *waqf*.

During a later period, Gilson (2005) reported that the library of the Great Mosque in Tetouan, Morocco benefited from a *waqf* endowed by Sultan Muhammad b. Abd Allah in the late eighteenth century that the Sultan Hassan I added to at the end of the nineteenth century. The library had a “large collection of manuscripts and books...including Qur'ans, books on Hadith,

Islamic commentaries, law, grammar, rhetoric, poetry, and belles-lettres, travel accounts and chronicles, and lives of saints”(p.273).

Manuscripts in the Moroccan Context

Messick (1992) wrote that investigating the role of texts in a specific locale requires “a view of writing that stresses its cultural and historical variability rather than its universal characteristics” (p.2). And while Witkam (2014) said with regard to late adoption of printing in the Muslim world in general that there are “no easy answers as to why Muslims kept writing their books” (Witkam, 2014), Abdulrazak (1990) believed that Moroccans, while aware of printing and its benefits, did not see the need to change their traditional method of book production, that of hand-writing manuscripts. Therefore, manuscript making and manuscript culture persisted in Morocco longer than in other parts of the Muslim World. It is believed that the first book printed in Morocco was *al-Shama'il* by al-Tirmidhi in 1865 C.E. while printing and printed books were available in Ottoman Turkey in the 1720s (Abdulrazak, 1990).

Abdulrazak (1990), whose thesis was an attempt to examine the "social, religious, [and] intellectual significance of book production in Morocco before the advent of printing” (p.4), identified the following characteristics of later Moroccan manuscript culture:

- Books were written for the elite and the upper echelons of Moroccan society.
- Manuscript production was dominated by noble and sharifian [people who claim descent from the Prophet Muhammad] families (p.214).
- There existed a three-tiered classification of scribes: members of the royal family and high government officials; members of notable families from main cultural centers such as Fez, Tetouan, and Wazzan; and members from less privileged sectors of Moroccan society (p.25).

Royal patronage was also a significant sustainer of manuscript production in Morocco. The

Marīnid dynasty of Morocco endowed books and created public libraries, located in mosques and

madrasas. Abū Yūsuf (r. 656-85/1258-86) acquired books from Islamic Spain which were placed in the Madrasa al- Saffārīn (a dormitory for students of the Qarawiyyin University) in Fez in 1285 C.E. (Encyclopedia of Islam, 2014).

Sultan Muhammad III (1757-1790) commissioned more than 17,000 manuscripts on a variety of subjects, while Sultan Sulayman (1798-1822) established a scriptorium in Fez which employed eight scribes, an illuminator, and a binder. James (2006) said that they must have been employed not just for paperwork, but also for building the *fonds* of the Sultan's library. Later, Sultan Hassan I (r. 1873-1894) sent scribes to Istanbul and Cairo to make copies of manuscripts for his library (James, 2006, 4-5).

Public and private libraries

“There were private and public libraries all over the Islamic lands” (Bloom, 2001, p. 117). Imamuddin (1961) explained that in practice, it was mosque libraries that served as the public libraries in traditional Muslim societies. By public, I mean that manuscripts were available to the general public for reading and copying. The Encyclopedia of Islam (2015) in discussing the existence of libraries in the Islamic world in general explained:

Libraries were open to everyone free of charge. Paper, ink and reed-pens were supplied by the authorities. Some private libraries even provided for the maintenance of scholars who had come from a long distance. A deposit had usually to be made if books were taken outside the library buildings.

Krek (1986) noted that the collections of private libraries, which were the “preponderant type of library in early Islam” often “found their way into” mosque libraries, most likely through *waqf* endowments. Pedersen (1984) explained that it was common for private collections to be bequeathed to mosques. As a result, “every major mosque acquired in the course of time a large library that was a public institution” (p.126). It would not be until the seventeenth century that

independent libraries, meaning those not attached to a mosque, school, or other educational institution came into being (Hirschler, 2012, p.125).

The fact that lending was a common practice is evidenced by the blame placed on patrons' infrequent return of borrowed books as leading to the depletion of library's collection (Gilson, 2005). However, even those who did not physically possess manuscripts, including the illiterate, were still able to access the contents of books at this time. Hirschler (2012) asked us to complicate the modern idea of reading as a single solitary, primarily visual interaction with a written text. In noting that the Arabic verb *qara'a* (to read) had multiple meanings from vocalized recitation to silent one person reading, he said that by defining reading as both the visual and aural reception of a written text, we account for the "historicity and plurality of reading practices in order to avoid an exclusive focus on the visual, solitary and silent modes of reading that have emerged as predominant in recent centuries" (p.15).

Pedersen (1984) said that libraries were "a necessity to scholars and an adornment" for the powerful and wealthy, cited al-Qalqashandi's declaration that there were "three great libraries in Islam": the Abbasid library in Baghdad, the Fatimid library in Cairo, and that of the Spanish Umayyads in Cordoba established by al-Hakam II in the tenth century (p.113). It is well established that Arabic manuscripts from the Spanish library were given refuge in Morocco after the expulsion of Muslims and Jews from the Iberian Peninsula. Levy Provençal found a copy of a manuscript from al-Hakam II's library in the library of the Qarawiyyin mosque in Fez. Other manuscripts of Andalusian descent have been found in Moroccan private collections (Benjelloun-Laroui, 1990).

In Morocco there were central ruler libraries - for example the Marīnid dynasty of Morocco endowed books and created public libraries in mosques and madrasas – but manuscript

collections were also often found in spiritual hostel (*zawiya*) libraries or the private libraries of scholars. Many religious scholars and pious lay people were members of mystic “brotherhoods” (but women could be members also) who gathered in a central location called a *zawiya*. The word *zawiya* (pl. *zawayya*) literally means “corner or nook [of a building]...In late mediaeval times, particularly in North Africa, the term came to designate a building designed to house and feed travelers and members of a local Ṣūfī brotherhood” (Encyclopedia of Islam, 2014).

Makdisi (1981, p.11) called *zawiyas*, “monasteries” that were “cognates of the *madrasa*” that appeared “early as institutions of learning” where Sufism was taught through the study of prophetic traditions (*hadith*). Abdulrazak (1990) wrote that *zawiyas* in the larger cities of Morocco had good access to books, “and thus had their own small collections which were used by the leaders and their followers in their spiritual or educational activities” (p.54). Benjelloun-Laroui (1990) considered only three major Moroccan *zawiyas*: those of the Nasiriyya brotherhood in Tamgrut, of the Sharqawa Shadhiliyya Jazuliyya brotherhood in Boujad, and that of the Hamzawiyya to have “not suffered too much of the vicissitudes of time and pillaging” (p.285). The Nasiriyya *zawiya* library, founded in the seventeenth century, had for example, a collection of approximately 4,000 manuscripts that were hidden behind a fake wall during the French colonial period. James (2006) mentioned a letter sent from the Moroccan Sultan in 1796 to the Nasiriyya *zawiya* library asking for two copies of a work on Qur’anic exegesis to be sent for copying (p.4). Post-independence (after 1956), just under two thousand of the library’s manuscripts, those considered rare and important, were taken to the National Library in Rabat (Benjelloun-Laroui 1990).

The private manuscript library (*al-khizanāt al-khāssa*) emerged as a cultural institution early in Muslim societies across diverse geographic regions. Manuscripts were collected by

scholars who often established private libraries to support their own teaching and study. Often, manuscripts were passed from one generation to another according to a patrilineal system (Krätli, 2004). The content of the private library tended to reflect the intellectual interests of the collecting scholar. Some private libraries could be open to students and scholars while others were intended only for the use of the owner and his friends and family (Mackensen, 1932).

Rosenthal (1947) wrote that:

Neither the existence of a lively book trade nor that of large and splendidly endowed public and semi-public libraries could entirely satisfy the Muslim scholar's need for books in his particular field of study. His most indispensable possession was his private library. (p.18)

Abdulrazak contended that during the era of manuscripts, a person “needed to be very wealthy “in order to be capable of building a private collection” (p. 158). Minicki (2008), referenced the example of Mali, Morocco’s neighbor, and said that the collection of manuscripts served as an outlet for the spending of wealth in a society that frowned upon public displays of ostentation. Therefore, she asked us to look beyond the scholarly value of manuscripts to see that they also came to symbolize wealth, power and spiritual blessing (*baraka*).

Roper (2010) wrote that in addition to the more than three million Arabic and Islamic manuscripts in public libraries, there exists “an unknown but substantial number still in private hands” (p. 323). In 1967 Ibrahim Kittanī, a manuscript scholar and former head of the Moroccan national library, said that he believed “with certainty” in the existence of unknown private libraries, throughout Morocco’s vast territory where there must exist “large quantities of unidentified manuscripts whose contents had yet to be read” (Benjelloun-Laroui, 1990, p. 301).

Binebine (2004) concluded that the importance given to the care of private manuscript libraries by Moroccan royalty was the reason why “the Moroccan library [in general] is at

present one of the most important in the world, rich in manuscripts and protective of its authenticity and riches” (p.45). In her comprehensive work on the history of libraries in Morocco Benjelloun-Laroui (1990) described six types of private manuscript libraries in the country:

- 1) those in which the proprietor is deceased and the collection has been sold
- 2) those in which the collections were sequestered by the Moroccan government during the life of the proprietor for political reasons,
- 3) those in which the proprietor is deceased but the collection remains intact [although in the possession of several descendants] and has not been sold,
- 4) those in which the proprietor is still alive and still in possession of the collection,
- 5) those in which the proprietor is deceased, but the collection was donated or sold intact to another party or institution, and
- 6) those in which the collection has been made open to the public [during the lifetime of or after the proprietor’s death] (p.301-20).

It is this plethora of private libraries that led Binebine (2004) to state that the number of manuscripts in private hands in Morocco “without a doubt” comes close to exceeding those that are catalogued and that are in circulation in public libraries in the country (p.46).

The French Colonial Venture and Archival Practices in Morocco

The French colonial venture, or “Protectorate” in Morocco, officially began in 1912 after years of French “interest” in the country and its vying against other European powers for political influence in the North African Kingdom. From the Moroccan point of view, French colonization was a looming threat years before it actually became a reality (Burke, 1972). This very potent threat, especially considering what France had already carried out in other parts of Africa including its brutal colonization of Algeria (1830-1962), Morocco’s closest neighboring

country, influenced pre-colonial reforms in politics, the military, and even literary and print culture (Abdulrazak, 1990).

According to Bazzaz (2010), the period from 1860-1912 is considered by scholars to have been one of “defensive action and reform in the part of the Moroccan state as a means of preventing French encroachment” (p.7). French colonial occupation of Morocco also had a profound effect on the status of Moroccan private libraries, official documents, and manuscripts. It would change the nature of the country’s relationship with its own history and historical texts.

Implicit in colonial theory was the idea that colonization was in the best interest of both parties, the colonized and the colonizer. In constructing policy, the goal was to find the best way to execute this system. Initially French colonial policy was known for its promotion of assimilation, which although open to multiple interpretations, was in general meant to create “Frenchmen” out of colonized people whether they resided in North Africa, or Indo-China (Lewis, 1962). However, Lewis (1962) noted a shift in the language of French colonization after the publication of *Domination et Colonisation* by Jules Harmand in 1910. *Domination et Colonisation* formalized views on “association” as colonial policy that Harmand had been preaching since the late 1880s. For Harmand “association” meant “scrupulous respect for the manners, customs, and religion of the natives.” Such a policy, as Lewis explains replaced outright exploitation, reduced the need for force, and ostensibly inculcated a sense that European domination of native peoples was a form of assistance.

Louis-Hubert Lyautey, the Secretary General of French controlled Morocco was considered to be an associationist, who according to Burke (1973) “foresaw the day when France would leave the country and new native elites would take over.” Lyautey had served in Algeria and did not want to repeat the mistakes in rule nor replicate the style of French colonial

domination that had been put in place there (Leveau, 2003) that used brutal methods to assimilate Algerians.

Lyautey's system of administering Morocco, kept up the "fiction of Moroccan sovereignty" by allowing the Sultan to remain in his role as "leader of the faithful" (Leveau, 2003). Burke (1973) believed that Lyautey's system was "predicated upon a romantic view of traditional native authority, customs and religion, and [of] the moral superiority of the countryside over the city" (p.178).

The Ethnographic Colonial State

One crucial way in which Lyautey-administered Morocco differed from the Algerian experience was in the role and use of libraries, archives and ethnographic research. Although Hannoum (2001, p. 343) documented the use of ethnography and translation in the work of the French administered Arab Bureau, "a military institution in Algeria that laid down, formulated and shaped French views of Algeria through their extensive fieldwork," Clancy-Smith (1990) explained that in the case of Algeria, French officials only felt the need to understand native culture during times of political and social strife, when they believed their control was under threat.

In Morocco however, where colonial policy preferred to position the colonialism as a vehicle for cultural preservation, "a wide infrastructure of problem-oriented team research...began more than a decade before France colonized the country and produced "rich storehouses of information." In Morocco, the French became "information hungry" and operated under a common colonial assumption that "power accrued from the massive accumulation of ever-more knowledge rather than from the quality of it" (Stoler, 2002). For example, native

affairs officers in Lyautey's Morocco were required to have some knowledge of the language(s), religion, and local customs of the country, and "the more ambitious were encouraged to prepare ethnographic studies of the tribes to whom they were posted" (Burke, 1973).

Indeed, some have termed French controlled Morocco an ethnographic state (Wyrzen, 2011; Burke, 2015). For example, the French Protectorate in Morocco spent "incredible energies attempting to catalogue and encode" differences in the society with an ethnographic survey cataloguing Arabic and Berber differences having been commissioned as early as 1913 (Wyrzen, 2011, p.28).

The official and unofficial writings in French about Morocco and Moroccans that were penned between 1880 and 1930 constitute what Burke (2007) has termed the Moroccan colonial archive. According to Burke (2007), the archive was a "formidable intellectual achievement" that was "marked by the deforming lens of Orientalism" and that provided "the chief justification for the French protectorate (1912-1956) as well as the template for the colonial state." Indeed, the French archives on Morocco when seen from this vantage point, constitute sites of knowledge production and state ethnography as explained by Stoler (2002).

Moreover, the Moroccan colonial archive created by the French (as opposed to Moroccan archives of their own indigenous documents) capitalized on the power of assertion that in "documenting" Moroccan life, customs, laws, religious practices, etc., the French were creating an objective record. As Millar (2010) explained, "a fundamental quality of records is that they carry documentary value," and "to be documentary, a record purports to be objective." It is precisely at this point that understanding the context and reason within which the archives were created is important because, as Wagoneer (2003) explains, colonial archives called "reality into

being in ways that served the interests of the colonial state.”

Within this archive of French writings were publications that Burke contended provided a “systematic survey of Morocco” such as *Archives Marocaines* (1904-1934), *Archives Berbères* (1915-1920) and *Villes et Tribus du Maroc* (1914). In general, the writings on Morocco had four main research themes: the organization and administration of the Moroccan government, the Berber population, rural society and elites, and the specificity of “Moroccan Islam.”

Burke’s understanding of the creation and use of the Moroccan colonial archive resembles that of Stoler (2002), for whom the archive represents, “the supreme technology of the late nineteenth-century imperial state.” A technology that in fact, “bolstered the production of those states themselves” (p.98). Indeed, Dirks (2011) said that “colonial conquest was about the production of an archive of (and for) rule... designed to reap the rewards and to tell tales of imperial interest” (p.107).

The post-colonial understanding of archives differs from earlier theoretical conceptions of the archive as articulated by leading (Western) theorists. In general Western archival theory has characterized the production of archives as being motivated primarily for utilitarian reasons (O’Toole, 1993). For example, for Schellenberg, records constitute evidence of an institution’s “functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, or other activities” (as cited in O’Toole, 1990, p. 235). While colonial archives were sometimes themselves utilitarian, the colonial motive (to dominate, rule, and “otherize” the colonized) eschews the seemingly forthright documentary nature of archives as described by Schellenberg.

Nesmith (2003) noted a turn in archival thinking within the past three decades that seeks to understand archives through the context of culture and society. He stated that “[c]onventional

archival concepts and practices are undergoing a profound reassessment, due mainly to deepening awareness of the importance and complexity of the history of human recording and archiving and to the postmodern shift” (p.261). Cook and Schwartz (2002) are part of a group of archivists who have openly addressed power issues in the archive. They explained that “in their creation and use by their makers” archives “will always reflect power relationships.”

When O’Toole (1993) argued for archivists to look beyond the practical reasons for archival creation unto the symbolic meanings of archives, (which he thought should be taken into account during appraisal), he was advocating for a critical look at archive creation in post-colonial societies. In seeking to understand the circumstances that produced the archives in such societies, we are called upon to understand the symbolism as understood by the creators and by the native subjects of those same records because “a record derives its meaning from its content, structure and context” (Millar, 2010).

French colonial knowledge of Morocco was based, as most early colonial histories were, on the knowledge of native informants (Stoler, 2002; Hannoum, 2003). Often, the appropriation of knowledge was directly linked to the appropriation of native documents, including manuscripts. Clancy-Smith (1990) showed that this was done by French social scientists in Algeria. For example, she pointed out that Louis Rinn, an ethnographer who wrote on Islamic spiritual practices (Sufism) in Algeria, had his writing facilitated by the assistance of several Sufi religious leaders who furnished him with “manuscripts and other materials.”

Similar appropriations (confiscation, theft or purchase) provided sources for French intellectual writings on Morocco while also aiding the growth of French collections of native documents. Yet, Wagoneer (2003) asked that we question the position which he termed “post-

colonial” and saw the colonized as passive providers of raw information to the colonial powers. Instead, he understood indigenous intellectuals as having had a more active and collaborative role in the production of colonial knowledge.

While Wagoneer (2003) derived the supporting examples for this position from the Indian experience with British colonial rule, we can see an example of this in the French appropriation of the writings of the fourteenth-century North African historian Ibn Khaldoun in their early attempts to categorize Arabs and Berber “races” in Algeria which fed into a “divide and conquer” colonial policy (Hannoum, 2003).

In appropriating some portion of local knowledge and creating a working archive to be used for the sake of the colonial project, the French were melding what Cook and Schwartz (2002) refer to as the dichotomous parts of archives, one part being “heritage places with documentary records that embody historical memory and humanist culture” with the other part concurrently being “bureaucratic by-products that encompass administrative evidence and public accountabilities” (p.181).

If we consider that armed resistance against French colonialism continued in some parts of Morocco until 1934 (Burke,1972), some twenty-two years after France officially took control of the country we should assume that lesser forms of passive resistance were also prevalent throughout the country. For example, resistance could include the withholding of information, misinformation and the hiding of important documents and manuscripts.

In his attempt to understand some of the things that befell Moroccan private libraries and private manuscript collections during the nineteenth century, Binbine (2004) attributed the “miserable” condition which many came to be in to purposeful hiding and concealment during

the colonial period. He explained:

When they perceived the readiness of foreigners from Europe to take control of the country, Moroccans sought refuge in the concealment of [their] books. And this phenomenon of concealing books can especially be noted during the reign of Sultan ‘Abd al ‘Aziz [1894-1908]. And so that valuable manuscripts and religious books would not fall into the hands of disbelievers or atheists, as it was expressed in the language of that era, Moroccans built walls around collections or buried books deep within the Earth... And even the royal library in the Sultan’s palace in Fez actively practiced concealment and built a wall around its many manuscripts during the year in which the French Protectorate came to pass. (p.202) [Translation my own]

Jones (1987, p. 96) noted that “during the colonial period, the appropriation of oriental manuscripts, including Arabic texts ... contributed to the growth of European libraries and Orientalism.” Moreover, he noted that European colonial appropriation of Arabic texts had major precedents in the acquisition practices of Renaissance Europe. He explained that during the sixteenth century:

There were those among the Arabists who combined physical courage with their intellectual curiosity and undertook dangerous journeys to North Africa, the Ottoman World, Persia, and India with the express purpose of learning Arabic and other eastern languages and of recovering Arabic manuscripts. (p.97)

Clearly, some Moroccans were aware of the collection objectives of European colonial researchers.

In the introduction to an article detailing the contents of a private library in the northern Moroccan city of Tangier published in 1905, seven years before the Protectorate was finalized, Georges Salmon, a French sociologist who co-directed *the Mission Scientifique au Maroc* (Scientific Mission in Morocco) considered having gained access to the library “good fortune.” Salmon attributed the increasing rarity of Moroccan private libraries, which he termed “indigenous libraries” (*les bibliothèques indigènes*) to among other things, “the penetration of

European civilization” and Moroccan “detachment from intellectual pursuits” (Salmon, 1905). He did not seem to consider the possible concealment of such libraries from foreign eyes.

Salmon wrote that regrettably many libraries had been lost without any benefit for Christian Orientalists who did not have the opportunity to consult them. In explaining his reason for publishing a bibliography of the contents of the library to which he gained access, he wrote that he thought it would be “useful,” and that while the list did not reveal the existence of any original unknown works in Moroccan Arabic, the contents of the library were interesting and illustrative of the reading habits of a lettered Moroccan in Tangier in 1905.

Begun in 1903 by the head of the Muslim Sociology at the College de France in 1912, the Scientific Mission that Salmon co-directed merged with native policy planning and its charge became “ the production of policy relevant social research” (Burke, 2007). This is in keeping with how Wright (1997) described French colonial administrators hiring professional advisors to interpret cultural meanings in their colonies. Colonial officials then used these cultural interpretations to further French political goals in the colony.

Their systematic surveying of Moroccan culture produced cultural content and ideas that continue to affected the ways in which Moroccans understand their history and society (Burke, 2007). This is because the Moroccan colonial archive, originally intended to facilitate rule over Moroccans has come to be seen by many as a reliable source of information on Moroccan history and society. As Trundle and Kaplonski (2011, p. 408) explained, over time documents stored within archives become “imbued with new, unintended meanings and uses over time, they can become testimonies, symbols of memory or legal evidence.” Consider, for example the new life extended to *Archives Marocaines*, as it has been digitized and incorporated

into the Moroccan National Library's online digital collection.

The Moroccan National Library, *Le Bibliothèque Nationale du Royaume du Maroc* (BNRM), as it is now known, was originally *La Bibliothèque Générale de Rabat* (BGR). It was the brainchild of the aforementioned General Lyautey who decided in 1919 upon the construction of a “modern public library.” The BGR was built upon the *fonds* of publications and manuscripts of the Institute of Advanced Moroccan Studies (*L'Institut des Etudes Marocaines* (IHEM)), another colonial research initiative begun in 1912 as the School for the Study of Arabic Language and Berber Dialects.

As an institute IHEM was tasked with “encouraging research on Morocco and coordinating the centralization of the results” of said research. Most of the research produced by IHEM was published in *Archives Berbères* or *Hesperis* (Benjelloun-Laroui, 1990). Other important collections that were incorporated into the BGR were that of the Scientific Mission of Morocco in addition to indigenous collections confiscated or bought by the French.

According to Benjelloun-Laroui (1990), Lyautey conceived of the new library as a place where all of the documentation relevant to Morocco could be assembled in a centralized location. In addition to the library, Lyautey also conceived of a project called the Archives of the Protectorate, of which he put Henri de Castries in charge. The goal of the project was to gather together the papers of the new colonial government as well as pre-Protectorate papers, i.e., native documents held by Moroccans before the French colonized.

Apparently the “ambitious” project met “numerous obstacles,” primarily because the Moroccan Sultan and elite Moroccan families from whom de Castries sought documents were not at all willing to share such documents with the foreign colonizers (Benjelloun-Laroui, 1990).

A reportedly discouraged de Castries left Morocco for Paris where he participated in the publication of the eight volume series, *Unedited Sources on the History of Morocco (Les sources inédites de l'histoire du Maroc)*.

The strong colonial past of the Moroccan National Library has today seemingly been erased from institutional memory. The National Library is now a source of post-colonial, nationalist pride. The Arabic language pamphlet produced by the current library administration makes no mention of the library's founding and states that its main goal is "familiarizing [patrons] with national heritage" (Krouz: n.d.)

As Buckley (2005) explains "achieving recognized standards of archiving and records management is a benchmark of the development of the postcolonial state out of its colonial history." Yet in forgetting the colonial past, Burke (2000, p. 29) believes that we become "ill-placed to understand the institutions of modern states...or the complex political compromised and bargains with which modernity has been organized."

The Hassan II Prize for Manuscripts and Archival Documents

The post-colonial moment, just following independence, was a time when many formerly colonized "nations" sought to establish or reorganize their national archives, libraries, and museums. A formal national archive, or at least the initiative to create one, signaled "the transformation of the former colony into a modern nation and the national attainment of a specific sign of being modern" (Buckley, 2005, p.250).

For Western academic researchers, "the end of colonialism and the advent of independence in Africa promised the opening of new national archives and the offer of access to previously unavailable material" (Buckley, 2005, p.254). Curtin (1960) noted that "newly-

independent states” had “begun to put their government documents in order and to open them for historical research,” (p.129) often with “bigger appropriations for the care and collection of archives” than their former colonial masters (p.131).

In Morocco, Pieprzak (2010) described there having been, a “post-independence energy and excitement to reassert and redefine what it meant to be Moroccan” (p.4) in which museums and libraries in the country took part as locations for retelling of Moroccan history and identity. It would be several decades after independence, however, before Morocco let down its guard and began to open its archives to the general public as a part of the nation-building and heritage-preservation enterprise. As late as 1983, Park noted, “a gradual transformation...in Morocco in the ease with which it is possible to have access to archives” (p.395).

Establishing the Hassan II Prize for Manuscript and Archival Documents

There was one archival project, however, that thrived in the Moroccan post-independence enthusiasm to build up and take stock of the national manuscript collection, and that was the Hassan II Prize for Manuscript and Archival Documents. The Prize was instituted by what was known at the time as the Ministry of State in Charge of Cultural Affairs and Traditional Teaching (*Ministère d’Etat Charge des Affaires Culturelles et de L’Enseignement Originel*) in 1969. Touzani (2003) said that in Morocco, “culture as a domain is less clearly defined than other areas,” therefore “its conception and objectives depend enormously on the personality of the minister in charge” who is invested with a certain amount of cultural and financial power to implement programs of his or her choosing (p. 15).

As the initiative of the first minister of culture, Allal al-Fāssī (1968-1971) a man who “favored literary arts and the Arabization of institutions”(Pieprzak, 2010, p.30), the Prize was intended to locate and preserve, originally through microfilm, but now through digitization,

important caches of manuscripts and archival documents found within private collections. Consequently, the H-II Prize creates a public archive of copies of privately held manuscripts, valorizing them as part of national heritage.

Specifically, the kinds of documents desired by H-II Prize officials are “official” papers: royal documents and declarations, records related to Islamic jurisprudence, or non-binding religious legal opinions (fatwas); and private documents: correspondences, memoirs, chronological histories, poetry, songs, studies, essays, etc. Manuscript owners who are awarded the Prize receive monetary compensation, but they are free to do with the original manuscripts what they want after a digital copy is made that rests with the National Library (Benjelloun-Laroui, 1990; Moroccan Ministry of Culture, 2009). Submitting to the Prize is agreeing to have one’s records digitized.

Al-Mannūnī (1975) declared that there was a serious need to gain access to the contents of private collections and said that the H-II Prize was intended to discover the huge yield of manuscripts, documents and legal papers owned and inherited by private families and individuals in the country. Binbine (2004), the current director of the Royal Library in Rabat, contended that the number of manuscripts in private hands in Morocco far outnumbers the quantity that is currently held by public libraries and archives. Scheele (2011) described an analogous phenomena in neighboring Algeria where, “in the majority of cases” manuscripts “are kept hidden in private houses, and their existence is known to only a few”(p.294).

The current Moroccan Minister of Culture, Mohammed Sbihi, himself from a family with a substantial manuscript collection, introduced the H-II Prize in a published handbook documenting the results of its thirty-sixth cycle in 2011 by reiterating its goals. According to Sbihi (2012) the H-II Prize has five main goals:

- discover new, rare, and valuable pieces that form a part of the national manuscript heritage;
 - stress the intellectual, material and symbolic importance of the manuscripts to those families and individuals who are in possession of them while also encouraging a sense of responsibility for their preservation;
 - take the necessary measures to photograph and digitize those manuscripts and historical documents that are happened upon [this wording is ostensibly intended to allay fears of confiscation or forced participation], with a copy being placed at the National Library in Rabat, taking into account the possible loss of the original and in order to contribute to research; [It is here that the Minister encourages families not to “hold back” in participating].
 - work to produce a complete catalogue for all of the manuscripts that have been a part of the Prize since its inception in 1969 until the present confirming them by identification, and including the names of the persons who submitted them to the Prize; and
 - produce a commemorative book entitled the *Precious Treasures of the Hassan II Prize for Manuscripts and Historical Documents* and in conjunction with its publication to hold a day of learning on the Prize collection.
- (Moroccan Ministry of Culture, 2012, p.7-8).

In carrying out its evaluation and documentation of records submitted for the H-II Prize, the national committee adds symbolic and monetary value to the manuscripts and historical documents they judge. Bearman (1992) explained that "the fact of processing, exhibiting, citing, publishing and otherwise managing records become significant to their meaning as records" (p.37). Benjelloun-Laroui (1990) reminded us that for the holders of manuscripts, the manuscripts themselves are sources of capital, “sometimes all that has been left by the original owners for their descendants” (p.327). The awarding of prize money acknowledges the value of the documents and contributes towards their valorization. Compare this to neighboring Algeria, where public funds have been made available for the National Library to simply purchase manuscripts directly from their owners (Scheele, 2011, p.294). The direct purchase of manuscripts from owners in Morocco has not been successful during previous attempts by the government (A. Binebine, personal communication, June 2015). Concepts of value and levels of

trust seem to determine whether a program like the H-II Prize or a direct purchase program will be successful in a given locale.

Discovering Manuscripts

The “discovery” of manuscripts in a country which Minister Sbihi described as “replete with an important abundance of manuscripts and historical documents” (Moroccan Ministry of Culture, 2012, p.7) can only happen once owner fears have been assuaged. Otherwise, private manuscript owners will retreat into “archival silence” or for those families with enough resources, they might establish their own family-based foundation archives which we will discuss in detail later in this chapter.

Carter (2006), in his discussion of archival silence says that silence “forces active participation by readers/listeners. The audience cannot be passive in the face of an active silence: they must investigate, interrogate, and attempt to understand the contexts that gave rise to the silences” (p.230). In one such investigation during his research in Morocco, Park (1983) noted manuscript owner silence during his fieldwork in the coastal town of Essaouira and ascribed it to fears that, should the national government decide to appropriate their collection, their claims of ownership would not be duly recognized.

Confiscation could be legitimated by the way in which the authoritarian Moroccan state, a self-described “democratic monarchy” frames itself as the keeper of Moroccan culture and tradition. A former Minister of Culture, Mohammed Benaïssa went so far as to call Hassan II, the reigning monarch at that time, “the Protector of Culture and Arts” (Pieprazak 2010, p. 45). Holders of manuscripts who chose not to disclose their manuscripts to the public for fear of possible confiscation by the state are conscious of what Harris (2011) described as the elite use of the archive. He explained, “those who have power — the elites — use ‘the archive’ as an

instrument of power, whether they be elites in repressive states, emerging democracies, or established democracies...” (p. 352).

For many manuscript owners in Morocco archival silence “is a forceful strategy of resistance” (Carter 2006, p.227) albeit one that compromises “societal memory” (p.223). Caswell (2013), noted that “disempowered groups bring significant legacies of distrust to the conversation,” and that archival pluralism which “takes into account a multiplicity of past, current, and future uses of records and allows for divergent definitions of records to coexist” (p.4) also has to make an allowance “for varying degrees of disagreement, discord, and nonparticipation” (p.12).

Carter (2006) held out the possibility, however, that for those who chose silence “there remains the possibility for groups to work outside the mainstream and to establish their own archives or other memory institutions” (p. 231). This is exactly what some notable and well-off Moroccan families have done in lieu of donating their collections to the national library. In 1990, Benjelloun-Laroui described the creation of family foundations as a “new phenomenon” in Morocco influenced by trends in Western countries, offering the Sbihi Library Foundation as an example. Founded in 1967 by Mohamed Sbihi (d.1969) and Abdullah Sbihi (d. 1995), the Sbihi collection reflects the original owner’s intellectual interest in astronomy. The foundation’s stated mission is to offer students and researchers access to the diverse *fonds* of manuscripts and archival papers in Arabic and French while contributing to Moroccan national patrimony (Fondation Bibliotheque Sbihi, n.d.).

The private library of the late Moroccan historian Muhammad b. Ahmad Daoud is another example of a family’s private collection “going public.” Opened to the public by Daoud’s family in 1986, two years after his death, the library holds approximately 436

manuscripts, 10,000 books in Arabic, Spanish, English and French, 3,400 archival documents, and 15,000 photographs (Henderson, 2008; Mohammed Daoud Library, n.d.).

Discussions in the literature on community archives, while often referring to newly established collections of marginalized groups in the Americas or Europe, do seem relevant to private libraries in Morocco. Among the commonalities are the emphasis on community control, whether by an extended family or a religious brotherhood, the often strict rules relating to access and the strong inclination to remain independent of larger archival institutions “by retaining direct ownership and physical custodianship of their collections” (Flinn et al., 2009).

Flinn et al. (2009, p.83) explained that “a community’s custody over its archives and cultural heritage means power over what is to be preserved and what is to be destroyed, how it is to be described and on what terms it is to be accessed.” Also and importantly, community archives offer an assertion of resistance to dominant narratives. In Morocco, this might entail narratives concerning the role of the monarchy in intellectual and religious life. However, it is not clear whether or not the existence of private libraries in Morocco “challenge and subvert the authority of mainstream histories and archives” as claimed by Flinn (2007).

Access to documents once they are in the possession of the state is another issue that Flinn (2007) has addressed that is relevant to the situation in Morocco. He wrote,

Even if the community archive groups are not distrustful of the mainstream sector, many groups are often worried that the deposit of their collections with a formal record office may result in reduced access for themselves, their families and their communities, especially if the record office is a considerable distance from the community. (p.168)

Lack of access has to do with the policies and knowledge-hoarding attitudes of library and archival professionals in Morocco, as well as with the relative lack of freedom of information in the country. Although the late king Hassan II spoke of freedom of information as a human right

(Canavaggio and Balafrej 2011, p.89), the first decades of his rule are known as the “years of lead,” due to the violent repression practiced by the monarch against its people.

Recent protests, associated with the changes that have been termed the “Arab Spring” forced the hand of the current king, Mohammed VI, to write a new constitution which slightly reduced the unquestionable autonomy the monarch enjoys. Article 27 of the new (2011) Moroccan constitution gives Moroccan citizens “the right to access information held by public authorities, elected institutions and bodies invested with a public service” (Kingdom of Morocco, 2011). How this new right will be implemented in the context of libraries and archives in light of traditional gatekeeping policies is unknown.

In spite of the tension between manuscript holders and the authoritarian state, the Hassan II Prize has been successful in expanding, as Jeanette Bastian (2004) described, “the definition of custody in which access, in addition to control, plays a central role in fulfilling the custodial obligation” (p. 81). While Bastian was arguing for access by post-colonial communities to government created and controlled colonial-era documents, the H-II Prize represents a case in which the Moroccan government could be seen as promoting an expanded definition of custody which it applies not to itself, but to private manuscript holders. This is what Bastian (2004) refers to as a “step in the evolution of post-custodial theory” in which access is seen as the primary responsibility of the custodian of the documents. In the case of the H-II Prize, this relates to the initial access given by owners when they submit to the Prize and not to the access provided at the National Library to surrogate images of documents and manuscripts. Benjelloun-Laroui (1990) hoped for such a step and proposed the development of a campaign to overcome the distrust and suspicion held by private manuscript holders to encourage greater divulgence and sharing of the

contents of private library collections that directly linked facility of access by manuscript holders with civic duty.

The judges for the H-II prize play a post-custodial role through their proactive appraising of submitted manuscripts although they lack legal rights to the documents themselves. Post-custodialism, a term coined by F. Gerald Ham (1981) is employed in archival theory to describe the present era wherein records professionals pursue a variety of responsibilities beyond taking direct custody of physical records. Cook (1992) said that the custodial idea that records could only be stored and described in one place is “simply wrong” in a post-custodial time when the *fonds* should be viewed not as a physical entity but as an abstract concept (p.32). In another article, Cook (1994) explained that archivists must move from a focus on the physical object to focus on the “functional context in which records-creating activities take place” (p. 308). Cook was clearly concerned with the move towards electronic records and digitization. Bastian (2002) encouraged however, the extension of “post-custodial thinking to a global context in which control and access to records *in any format* (emphasis added) are the keys to community memory” (p. 91). Moreover, she explained:

[T]he control of records has been a basic consideration for societies since ancient times and that it continues to evolve. Whether the control is physical, legal, or intellectual it is a fundamental attribute of an archive and therefore must be considered in any archival construct. Rather than being fixed and immutable, custody is a developing principle that reacts to the record-keeping practices of its time (p. 93).

As a government-sponsored initiative, the H-II prize is a “top-down custodial” attempt to respond to the guardedness of custodians of private manuscript collections in Morocco. While not a typical example of a community archive, it does serve to remind mainstream heritage institutions “of their obligation to diversify and transform collections and narratives” (Flinn et al. 2009).

The regional collection sites of the prize, while fostering a sense of regional diversity in what is submitted for consideration, eventually channel the winning manuscripts to a central repository at the Moroccan National Library in Rabat. While the analog documents may remain in their original locale, the digitized (or micro-filmed) copies which make up the H-II collection are essentially kept under the guard of a centralized government body, removed from the points of their local regional contexts.

Describing Manuscripts

The standard H-II Prize record for manuscripts includes: title of the manuscript, name of author and scribe, the opening and ending lines of the manuscript, information on the size, ink and paper, the form of script/calligraphy used and “observations” where the cataloger makes remarks about anything unusual or special about the manuscript content or form. There is also a space for the name of the person who submitted the piece to the H-II Prize. Duff and Harris (2002) concluded, “With standardization... archivists are clearly in a realm where power is exercised, and where the dangerous processes of valorization and silencing are unavoidable” (p.281). Furthermore, such standardization leads to the replication of normative, but not necessarily just or equal power dynamics (p.283). They (Duff and Harris, 2002) go on to explain: [T]he power to describe is the power to make and remake records and to determine how they will be used and remade in the future. Each story we tell about our records, each description we compile, changes the meaning of the records and re-creates them (p. 272).

What is striking about the record created by the H-II Prize committees and in the discussions about the H-II Prize by Moroccan officials is the narrowness of the archival record with its focus primarily on textual information without regard for the family or individual owner “story.” This is in spite of the fact that the manuscripts often contain valuable information related

to local history because “most of the manuscripts submitted to the Hassan II Prize are the works of Moroccan authors” (Benjelloun-Laroui, 1990, p. 307), and often contain a wealth of information beyond what is conveyed in the body of the text.

As Gacek (1987) explained, unused space, especially at the back of a manuscript, was a place for “all kinds of notes” (p.88) including ownership statements, study and reading records, which may tell us about the history of a manuscript, vouching for its authenticity, or tracing it to the collection of a famous scholar for example. M’kadem and Nieuwenhuysen (2010) noted in the manuscripts involved in their study that “charts, diagrams, commentaries, and marginalia [were] abundant” with some describing “complex genealogies of local prestigious families and scientific theories” and others recording “intellectual disagreements among scholars, teachers, and commentators” (p.137).

In addition, M’kadem and Nieuwenhuysen (2010) noted the importance of private collections in Morocco in providing alternative and local versions of history. In reference to the collections of privately owned manuscripts in northern Morocco with whom they worked, they noted that some “collections contain priceless official documents about the colonial period; others contain epistolary correspondence in Spanish between local authority representatives of the Sultan and the Spanish protectorate administration” (p.140). Schroeter (1982) pointed out that the opening of nineteenth-century royal archives “after many years in storage” meant access to useful indigenous Moroccan archives for researchers, and he noted that “works on pre-colonial Morocco are often lacking in quantitative sources, or lack Moroccan sources altogether” (p. 44). This was an idea promoted devotedly by the late historian Germain Ayache (d.1990), a Maghrebi Jew with French citizenship, who committed himself to the use and valorization of Moroccan historical documents as sources for Moroccan history. He returned to Morocco after

the Nazi conquest of France and as a professor at Mohammed V University, started the respected journal *Hesperis-Tamuda* and trained and influenced a generation of respected Moroccan historians.

Limiting the H-II Prize historical record to information solely concerning the text preserves the role of the Moroccan state as “savior” of intellectual and cultural history without acknowledging the role the families have had as the true preservers of said history. Yet, as Bastian (2006, p.280) noted, there is a growing tendency among archivists to reinterpret a record’s provenance as a way of accommodating a more complete and complex view of societal memory. For example, in the archival series system, there is an acknowledgement that each “new layer or generation of use adds to the provenance and changes the context of the record” (Duff and Harris, 2002, p.271). Working in the context of North American indigenous tribes, Christen (2011) sought “to establish a set of standards that allows for multiple voices, layered context, diverse forms of metadata and the expansion of the archival record” to such an extent that native peoples’ descriptions and understandings of archival material are given space in the record next to those of scholars.

Duff and Harris have even called for allowing researchers “to embed their own stories of use within the descriptive meanings” (p.285), which is significant in light of Minister Sbihi’s comment that the digitization of H-II manuscripts and documents is meant to “expand the field of intellectual research” (Moroccan Ministry of Culture 2012, p.8). M’kadem and Nieuwenhuysen (2010) argued that there is a lack of input on actual researcher use of historical manuscripts. In studying the users of manuscripts in northern Morocco, they pointed out that although digitization was appreciated, researchers preferred to access manuscripts directly from private owners so “that they can benefit from rich commentaries and the point of view of the

owners of the manuscripts” (p.139). Ideally, the “rich commentaries” of manuscript owners who submit their materials to the H-II Prize would be a part of an expanded archival record.

As a collection of the national patrimony of manuscripts and documents, the H-II Prize is offered candid access, not only to rare historical records, but also to the powerful stories of family and individual owners that could greatly expand, complicate, and enrich the historical record.

The Preservation and Digitization of (Arabic) Manuscripts

There is general consensus that Arabic and Islamic manuscripts in North Africa are generally in fragile, deteriorating states (Charfi et al., 2007). In 1996, Bencherifa wrote (p.22) that “their condition is cause for alarm,” and in 2011 Ennahid continued to stress the need for preservation and valorization of Arabic manuscripts in Morocco. He expressed concern that several private manuscript libraries in Morocco were “in the process of literally disintegrating” (p.287).

The presence of large caches of historic Arabic manuscripts, some of significant historic, religious, scientific or artistic importance has created what Bencherifa (1996, p.21), the former head of the Qarawiyyin library in Fez, called a “great legacy...in terms of value, and a heavy burden in terms of responsibility.” This “burden,” in his opinion, had to be shouldered through restoration, conservation and preservation.

Bencherifa (1996) advocated microfilming, the prevalent method at the time, as “the most effective means of saving manuscripts whose condition is deteriorating day by day” (p.26).

Stewart (1991) a scholar of West African manuscripts noted multiple projects to microfilm Arabic manuscripts and himself was active in microfilming and cataloging the multigenerational private library of a scholarly family in Mauritania. Shortly after independence from France in

1956, some Moroccan manuscripts were microfilmed through initiatives carried out in the 1950s and 60s by the Moroccan Ministry of Education in cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Arab League (Bencherifa, 1996 p.26).

Today, digitization, “the conversion of an analog signal or code into a digital signal or code” (Lee, 2002, 3) has generally replaced microfilming as the standard mode of preserving manuscripts and especially Arabic manuscripts. Mallan and Park (2006, p.205) say that digitization has been “refined as a method of creating a surrogate of the original item.” According to Sinn (2012, p. 1522) documents chosen for digitization projects are “typically, rare and unique materials” with “highly intellectual content but of low artefactual value.” In some cases, Arabic manuscripts may meet such criteria, but the physical artifact of the manuscript can also be of historic importance.

Digitization has been promoted by important world bodies such as UNESCO, which in its 2012 Vancouver Declaration, linked digital technology to the promotion of national and sustainable development and to the human right of information. The convention declared that “digital preservation should be a development priority.” Furthermore, it stated that while digitization is “not in itself a major means of preservation, [it] can protect invaluable documents from handling and further deterioration” and that “for some types of material, it is the only means of ensuring their survival” (p.1).

The digital age has seen considerable initiatives by university and national libraries as well as museums to digitize their Islamic manuscript collections for reasons of both preservation and access. Swanick (2011) noted “a blossoming of the digitization of [Islamic] manuscripts.” In the United States, Harvard University carried out a large-scale digitization of its Islamic

manuscripts, digitizing more than 156,000 pages of manuscripts as a part of its Islamic Heritage Project (IHP). The IHP is a “project focused on Islamic manuscripts and rare books to make unique or difficult to obtain works freely available and easily accessible worldwide” (Chapman, 2010, p.18 -19).

IHP staff chose manuscripts based on their “research-value.” Chosen manuscripts were either rare or inaccessible, autograph copies, early copies from around the author’s lifetime, “annotated with interesting notes,” or of “artistic value” containing either miniatures, illuminations or calligraphy (p.21). According to Chapman (2010), preservation was “never used as a single criterion for selection” for digitization (p.25). Overall the manuscripts “constitute a record of the diverse artistic traditions, literary cultures, learning traditions, and religious interpretations in the pre-modern Islamic world” (p.22).

Bakelli (2002), having taken into consideration the situation in Algeria, Morocco’s neighbor, which has a high number of manuscripts dispersed among public and private repositories, some in rural and inaccessible areas, considered digitization to be an “investment” on the part of libraries carrying out the projects (p.115-116). He also saw digitization as a good way of dealing with the private owners of manuscripts who are not generally inclined to allow extended physical access to their collections.

The common discourse on the digitization of Arabic manuscripts tends to idealize digital technology as the savior for the aging documents. For example, Driss Krouz, the director of the Moroccan National Library (BNRM) is a “zealous proponent” (Guessous, 2012) of digitization. The Arabic manuscripts held at the BNRM are part of a large-scale digitizing initiative, costing six million dirhams (700,500 USD), that has been underway for several years. More than

150,000 manuscript pages have already been digitized towards the eventual goal of two million pages.

According to Krouz, the goal of the digitization project is to increase access to Moroccan history so that “heritage is no longer the preserve of a small elite.” However, he acknowledged that major obstacles to providing access to these records once digitized are both technological and cultural. Morocco is “a country where people have computers and iPhones, but do not have the cultural inclination to consult [web] sites” and where “many still confuse web addresses and email addresses” (Guessous, 2012).

Krouz’s discussion of digitization was remarkably optimistic. For him, digitization allows for the “exhumation” of old documents that are now incapable of being handled in their original formats. It has “endless potential” with regard to “mobility, storage, and transmission of knowledge.” Moreover, according to Krouz, digitization means that the manuscripts will be available “eternally” (Guessous, 2012).

Yet Britz and Lor (2004) question the idea of digitization as a savior for historic documents, especially in Africa. They note that while “digitization is sometimes presented as a panacea for problems of preservation and access,” in the long term it may actually turn out to be more problematic than currently understood. For them “the problems are not only technological, but also economic, and political” (p.216), and they especially question the assumed altruism of international digitization projects. Citing Pickover and Peters (2002, 18), they regard such projects as a “new form of imperialism reinforcing the digital divide, as countries in the North loot the intellectual property of an African heritage in the name of preservation.”

Newell (2012) too worried that in some instances the “creation and use of digital assets” could come to be seen as “a further extension of Western institutional appropriative power.” She said that the possibility that digitization allows for sharing historical objects “does not mean that they should necessarily be widely shared” (p. 300). In fact, Gumbula (2007) saw digitization as a way for communities to exercise control over the viewing and access of digitized objects within communities based on their own internal norms. Rose (2011) said that more deliberation was needed to determine the manners in which digitization should be carried out on the continent of Africa. Inquiry should be made into the “conditions within and among African nations that would make the deployment of digitization maleficent or beneficent” (p. 184).

Continuing upon this theme, Britz and Lor (2004), presented what they call serious ethical concerns regarding digitized African heritage materials. They were especially concerned about access to digitized information. They asked, for example, if African scholars will be able to access this information free of charge, and, “what control, if any, the originating community will have over their information once others have digitized it” (p.218). Noting that “individual intellectual property rights have not succeeded in protecting the cultural heritage of Africa,” they suggested that “information-based human rights thus form the basis for a universal moral reasoning pertaining to the digitization of Africa’s documented heritage” (p.220). They also caution that ownership of digitized heritage must not pass by default into the hands of those digitizing the heritage or funding the digitization program (p.221).

The digitized manuscript, creating a new thing

“It is clear,” wrote Newell (2012), that “digital objects... have their own distinctive qualities, whether they were created as ‘surrogates’ or ‘born digital’ material” (p.288).

Furthermore, the digitization of historical objects and the creation of digital research

environments “are rapidly changing the ways in which those who pursue history and culture uncover, connect with, interpret and represent the past” (p.287).

Terras (2010) asked that we see digitization as “an alternative form or representation,” (p.45) one in which many things from the original object are lost in order to create the digital representation. For example, “it can be difficult to ascertain size, physical characteristics, texture, and the accuracy of colour” (p. 52). She also encouraged us to “build up our theoretical understanding of notions of digitization and representation” in order for us to be able to “articulate our dependencies and be sure about our methodologies when relying on digital surrogates” (p.57-58).

It is generally accepted that “a digital photo will convey the intellectual content of a manuscript” therefore making “digitization ... a useful means of providing access to those researchers who require access only to intellectual content” (Nikolova-Houston and Houston, 2011 p.232). However, according to Newell (2012) the materiality of the historical manuscript still offers information content not available in the digital image. She explained that “annotations on the underside or faint marginalia... are more likely to be discovered by a researcher handling the original than its digital surrogate” (p. 298). While it may sometimes be the case that digitization could actually facilitate the discovery of such elements, according to Cameron (2007), in the world of digital cultural heritage, the “original object preserves all its authority over the digital” (p. 69).

Rudy (2010) believed that “what we have to gain by digitization...may be negated by what we have to lose... The convenience of digital facsimiles might be heralding the end of codicological approaches to manuscript studies.” The loss of physical contact with the original

she contended is “lamentable, as there is much subtle information stored in the physical object” (p.20).

Digitization may also be creating a hyper reliance on the visual that is not without consequences. In the Algerian context, (Scheele, 2011), already noted a tendency for the most visually appealing manuscripts to be digitized, ensuring their longevity and dispersal over other texts. Digitization may also be changing the way we understand the information content of the manuscript itself. As Camille (1997) explained:

The iconic page of the medieval book was not solely a visual cue or logo but included all the five senses... Before they were detached from one another in modernity, the senses functioned together on the manuscript page to produce meaning” (p.38).

Yet in our interactions with the modern day digitized manuscript, other senses are muted as the visual becomes our sole mode of understanding. This is further heightened in the digital era.

The Digital Library

Given the rise and presence of the Internet which Edmonson (2002, p.15) predicted would become “an increasingly powerful tool for access to documentary heritage,” digital libraries have become the primary vehicle of dissemination for many collections of digitized manuscripts. A definition of the digital library that was proffered by the Digital Library Federation in 1998 explained:

Digital libraries are organizations that provide the resources, including the specialized staff, to select, structure, offer intellectual access to, interpret, distribute, preserve the integrity of, and ensure the persistence over time of collections of digital works so that they are readily and economically available for use by a defined community or set of communities (Digital Library Federation, 1998).

Sinn (2012) noted the evolution of the digital library, which she said has gone from “static content management (information containers) to context management—domain- or community-specific— to provide novel and personalized experiences to users” (p.1523).

Crane and Wolfman (2003) were enthusiastic about digitization in the Humanities in the long-term, calling digital collections, “capital resources that not only retain their value, but [also] can improve over time” with additional metadata and related annotation (p.76). They also allotted to “cultural heritage digital libraries...a particularly important role,” labeling them “the humanist’s laboratory” (p.84).

AlShuhri (2011) believed that, with respect to digitized Arabic manuscripts, digital libraries “can play a significant role” in easing the delivery of the manuscripts to users (p.391), if the specific technical characteristics of such manuscripts are taken into account during the digitization and indexing phases. For example, the proliferation of commentaries that are commonly found within the margins of Arabic manuscripts need to be digitized and indexed in their own right. He suggests digitizing bibliographic tools and making them available in a database structure linked with the manuscript’s metadata in order to “facilitate the editing and reading process” (p.391).

Theorizing the Digital Library

Scholars have theorized the digital library as a tool for the delivery of heritage documents and artifacts that has come to be known as digital cultural heritage (Cameron, 2007; Newell, 2012). They ask that the digital library and digital technology not be accepted unquestionably or be assumed to be value-neutral.

As Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1995) explained, archives are “instruments for adding value to the cultural forms they...exhibit, [and] circulate.” Furthermore, she went on to say that interfaces, offering the example of museum exhibits, historic villages or even postcards, are “cultural forms in their own right and powerful engines of meaning” and noted that a “defining feature” of heritage productions (in our case, the digital library) is precisely “the foreignness of the ‘tradition’ to its context of presentation” (p. 374-375). It is the (modern) interface that connects the heritage piece to the present while invoking the past.

Digital Cultural Heritage

It should be noted that heritage in general and its recent manifestation as digital heritage or digital cultural heritage is understood within the literature in multiple ways, carrying a myriad of definitions and interpretations. For example, while heritage was understood by Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1995) to be “a mode of cultural production in the present that has recourse to the past”(p.369), Silberman (2008) defined it as “ an ever-changing array of objects and symbols, a complex mosaic of artefacts....that demand our attention and demand that we give some meaning to them” (p.82). It has also been called a value-laden abstraction that is subject to interpretation and that “alludes to preservation and celebration of past elements of a reified culture that is intended to manifest ethnicity, locality and history” (Kuutma, 2009, p.5). Kuutma (2009) sees within heritage the entanglement of academia (through heritage selection and identification) and government interests (through intervention, enforcement and regulation) (p.8).

Alsayyad (2008) said that during the era of post-colonial nationalism, heritage was “a form of resistance against the homogenizing forces of modernity” (p. 157) which in the age of globalization has become something that countries exploit as a way to attract international investors. This is related to Kirshenblatt-Gimblett’s (1995) notion that the heritage industry does

not reverse the colonial process of culture-loss although “its discourse of reclamation and preservation makes such claims” (p.370).

As for digital heritage, it has been understood to be a “selected pool of materials in a digital format deemed worthy of preservation for posterity” (Cameron, 2008, p.172). Silberman (2008) encouraged us not to look towards digital heritage for objective reconstructions of the past, but to instead consider it to be a “tool of historical reflection within contemporary society” (p. 83).

Heritage gets its potency from its discourse of loss which is “reliant on the concept of historical materiality” (Cameron, 2008, p.178). Harrison (2013) noted in his discussion of heritage practices a “globalization of the public anxiety around memory” and “a feverish obsession with not forgetting”(p. 581). UNESCO, in detailing the guidelines for its documentary heritage preservation initiative, Memory of the World, capitalized on this kind of language when in explaining the need for the initiative, it declared that “much of the Memory of the World resides in libraries, archives, museums and keeping places across the globe and much of it is now at risk” (Edmonson, 2002, p.2). According to Cameron (2008),

[I]nstitutions such as UNESCO...play a pivotal role in the heritagization process as technologies of domination: that is by producing, transforming, manipulating and using signification to create a digital cultural heritage...UNESCO exercises cultural authority and leadership over the processes of meaning making given to selected digital media by producing and maintaining an ascendant and authoritative set of values. (p. 179)

UNESCO and the Interrogation of World (Digital) Heritage

UNESCO is a standard setter in the field of heritage whose attention and support is often sought for projects related to the digitization of Arabic manuscripts (Bakelli, 2002). As Scholze (2008) pointed out, many countries covet the “world heritage” brand that UNESCO disseminates

because “the label can be used to attract tourists and investors” (p.218). UNESCO however, may be unaware of the “cultural, political or economic implications of their interventions” (p.227).

Meskill (2013) wrote that while world heritage has come to be considered “a near universal instrument for preservation and cultural memory,” it “may be deeply imperfect and in serious need of revision” (p.492). Scholze (2008) detected “cultural hierarchy” in the “striking asymmetry found in the global distribution of UNESCO listed heritage items.” He discovered that most of them were located in Europe and North America, and that the small proportion found in Africa, were “predominantly in Morocco, Algeria and Egypt,” (i.e. there is a privileging of North over Sub-Saharan Africa) (p. 216).

UNESCO maintains however that its mission is to “assure the protection of the world’s documentary heritage... making it accessible to as many people as possible” (AbdelAziz 1995, p. 169). It defines documentary heritage as items which are:

- moveable
- made up of signs/codes, sounds and/or images
- preservable (the carriers are non-living)
- reproducible and migratable
- the product of a deliberate documenting process

(Edmonson, 2002, p.8)

Within the heritage-saving framework created by UNESCO, mediaeval manuscripts are considered to be significant manifestations of documentary heritage because of their format. They are “typical or key exemplar[s] of a type of presentation, custom or medium, or of a disappeared or disappearing carrier or format” (Edmonson, 2002, p.22). It is noteworthy that UNESCO (and others doing such work) revere manuscripts for what Rayward (1998) described

as their “artefactual importance,” with the intellectual content of the manuscripts seemingly being of “secondary or of no interest” (p. 209).

UNESCO, which is primarily concerned with “the preservation of documents, holdings and collections and the democratization of access to them,” (AbdelAziz, 1995 p.172) promotes archival pluralisation, “the movement of records into larger systems through which they will be accessible across space and time by the greater society” (Caswell 2013, p. 5). It sees the world’s documentary heritage as “a whole,” created over time by communities and cultures “which do not necessarily correspond to the nation states of today.” It “proceeds on the assumption that some items, collections, holdings or fonds of documentary heritage are part of the inheritance of the world” (Edmonson, 2002, p.5).

Christen (2011) and others take issue with the “world inheritance” discourse. Such discourses, she said, “often make the violent or dubious histories of collections invisible by suggesting that some materials belong to the ‘heritage of mankind’ (and are thus not protected by international intellectual property rights)” (p.198). Bowery and Anderson (2009) have argued that “the ideals of global sharing mask historical, political and cultural tensions,” and that in current universalizing heritage practices, “‘culture’ is dissociated from questions of ownership, control and autonomy” while “localized contexts remain marginal to the greater humanitarian and commercial purposes of enabling ‘public’ access” (p. 496).

Heritage Manuscripts in Context

If digital cultural heritage is putting manuscripts on a worldwide stage, then context has never been more important. According to Dalbello (2004), “in the context of the globally accessible collection, the objects need to be firmly defined by their traditional uses and off-line world.” Otherwise they run the risk of “not meeting the information needs” of those accessing

them (p.290). Lee (2011) stated that “no digital object can carry all of its context along with itself.” He therefore suggested that we employ archival theory because “archival theory and practice are valuable sources of guidance for applying a contextual information framework,... they suggest that digital objects should be managed, preserved and presented in ways that reflect the social and documentary context in which they were embedded” (p.116).

Sternfield (2011) agreed with Lee (2011) when he wrote that “contextualization contributes to a representation’s trustworthiness and consequently its effectiveness.” He went on to suggest that archival theory be used to “apply a similar set of guidelines to the construction, use, and evaluation of digital historical representations” (p.548).

While digitization is not “the” solution for the conservation and preservation of historic manuscripts, it does however offer some benefits of accessibility that scholars both applaud and question. If the future of the manuscript is in digital form, then owners and scholars alike will have to understand (and document) what is being lost in the digitization process. In the realm of digital cultural heritage, the politics of digitization must also be considered.

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

The purpose of this research is to understand the factors that have motivated holders of historic manuscripts and archival documents to disclose their collection holdings to the Moroccan government through participation in the Hassan II Prize for Manuscripts and Archival Documents. In studying the Hassan II Prize program systematically using case study design, this research sought to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: How has the Hassan II Prize for Manuscripts and Archival Documents, as a consciously post-colonial initiative by the Moroccan government successfully motivated records holders to disclose their holdings and negotiated access to private collections without the perceived loss of possession by owners.

Sub-question: What are the factors that motivate manuscript holders to submit their manuscripts to the Prize?

Sub-question: What role does digitization (with possible posting on the Internet) play in the submission process?

RQ2: What is the condition of the stored images of Hassan II manuscripts and archival records and what is the preservation plan for their up-keep?

RQ3: What are the local narratives of the owners and what do their stories add to the archival record of the Hassan II Prize collection?

Question One and Sub-questions One and Two pertain to the operationalization of the Prize as a government program and to the perceptions and attitudes of Prize submitters and was addressed through analysis of government documents and media (social and traditional) coverage of the Prize, as well as through semi-structured interviews with Prize administrators and manuscript holders who have submitted to the Prize. Question Two pertains to the preservation of the collection of surrogate from the Prize submissions and their accessibility to researchers. It was addressed through examination and inspection of surrogates at the National Library (BNRM) and discussion with library officials about the state of the collection. Question Three pertains to the relationship between the manuscripts and archival documents and the narratives of the families who have come to own or inherit them. It was addressed through the aforementioned semi-structured interviews with holders in addition to analysis of the manuscript copies held at the National Library (see Appendix B and C for semi-structured interview instruments).

Stake (2000) stated that a case study is “not a methodological choice, but a choice of what is to be studied” (p.413). For Yin, (1981) case studies become the appropriate form of investigation when “an empirical inquiry must examine a contemporary phenomenon in its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (p.98). Moreover, he contended that the case study is preferred “when a ‘how’ or ‘why’ question is being asked about a contemporary set of events, over which the investigator has little or no control” (Yin, 2003, p.9). A benefit of the case study is that it provides “insight into human motivations” (Orum et al.,1991, p.11) that permit “the researcher to examine not only the complex web of life in which people are implicated, but also the impact on beliefs and decisions of the complex web of social interaction” (p. 9).

Stake (2005, p.453) said that data triangulation is “a process of using multiple perceptions to clarify meaning,” and to verify “the repeatability of all observations or interpretations.” The observations are the result of researchers spending extended time at their research site, “personally in contact with activities and operations of the case,” which according to Stake (2005, p. 450) is a characteristic of the qualitative case study.

Case study data analysis entails the detailed description of the case under study (Creswell, 2007). In addition to providing a thick description of the case, the researcher is simultaneously categorizing and coding the data in an attempt to look for patterns that could support what Stake (2005) called “naturalistic generalizations,” those generalizations that could apply to the case or to other populations beyond the case. “In the explanatory function,” Yin (1981) explained, the case study can “be used to make causal inferences” (p.98). “For explanatory case studies, the construction and testing of an explanation must be seen as the primary objective” (Yin, 1981, p.107).

Yin (2014) warned however, that “a case study of a specific program may reveal variations in program definition, depending upon the perspective of different actors,” while also being conscious of the fact that some program components may have preexisted the formal establishment of the program (p.31). We understand a program in this instance to be a set of activities undertaken by an organization (Berk and Rossi, 1999) that is original (in its implementation) and intends to answer a societal need through new methods of organizational action (Kushner, 2005). It is the intent of this research to be able to articulate these varying definitions and meanings of the Prize for participants and administrators within its cultural and socio-political context since its 1969 inception up until the present day.

Study population and case selection

The Hassan II Prize for Manuscripts and Archival Documents has been selected as a “critical case” for this research. This case study of the Hassan II Prize for Manuscripts and Archival Documents was bounded by the year in which it was formally created, 1968 until October 2015 when the last formal round of prizes was awarded. (According to literature issued by the Minister of Culture (2012), the Prize is to be held annually (*sanwīyān*) (p.23), however, there have been only 37 rounds in the 46 years since its inception.) According to a Ministry official, the years when the Prize was not held were either due to a sense of a lack of a pool of willing participants, financial difficulties at the Ministry, or an intentional hiatus in order to formally reorganize the Prize which entails the issuance of a new governmental decree.

The study population for my study included manuscript and archival document holders, who were also simultaneously units of observation, “object[s] about which information is collected” (Boyd, 2008), and embedded units of analysis, the “persons...being studied” (Vogt, 2005). The study population also included principle actors: functionaries at the Ministry of Culture that manages the Prize records and awards ceremony; functionaries at the collection centers (local branches of the Ministry of Culture) where manuscripts are initially submitted; scholars who have had some consultative role with the Prize; and local historians who have used Prize documents in their research. Non-human units of analysis included microfilmed copies of H2 Prize submissions kept in the manuscript repository of the National Library in Rabat.

Sources of Data

The triangulation of data sources was integral to this explanatory case study. The sources included:

Semi-structured Interviews

I conducted one semi-structured interview with each consenting participant. My goal was to interview as many people as possible who had submitted a manuscript or archival document to the Hassan II Prize at least once since the official inception of the Prize in 1968/9. I had hoped to reach a saturation point during these interviews whereby no new significant information or insight was being gained from speaking with additional participants. Although I had hoped for geographic variation, physical location within Morocco did partially limit access to participants. I was able to solicit the narratives of eleven (11) people who had previously submitted to the Hassan II Prize. The ten males and one female from nine separate localities (Agadir, Rabat, Boujdour, Tetouan, Nador, al-Jadida, Meknes, Fez, and a rural village near Fez) represented a good amount of regional diversity. I traveled to four of these locations to garner interviews. For the others, I either met the participants in Rabat or gathered the answers through a written questionnaire. There were two “false positives,” in my attempt to locate participants. I met two people with identical (but not common) names to winners who were not participants. Interestingly, in one case the person did have many family members in possession of historic manuscripts. Two former participant-winners (a university professor and a retired sports journalist) refused my request for an interview. One cited the length of time that had passed since his participation (in the 1990s) and said that that moment was no longer a part of his life. The other, an older gentleman said that he had “just done” an interview about his winning the H-II Prize with a local paper and passively resisted my attempts to meet with him.

It became clear to me while interning at the Ministry of Culture (discussed later under Participant Observation) that it would be difficult, for multiple reasons, to procure the contact information of former participants from the Ministry itself. Administrators seemed protective of

many aspects of information relating to the Prize. Also, it seemed as if it was being conveyed to me there would be little benefit in speaking with most participants as they were not educated experts on manuscripts. Instead, I located former participants/informants by making use of published lists of past winners (for an example, see Appendix A). This included extensive internet searches as well as asking acquaintances if they might recognize the name of anyone on the list. A limitation to this method was that the access to the published lists is really only consistent starting in 2001 (the handbooks of the Prize will be discussed later in this dissertation). I found information on informants who had participated prior to that year sometimes only serendipitously while researching the Prize in general. I was able to track down two participants due to their involvement in cultural organizations. (After I realized they were members, I contacted the head of the organization for their contact information.)

I made a point to ask informants if they knew of others who had submitted to the Prize and if they thought it would be possible for me to speak with them (i.e. snowballing). This approach did not prove fruitful. While some informants acknowledged knowing “many others” who had participated (although these may have just been other family members) and others said that they did not know anyone else, in general no one offered to put me in touch with other participants except for one participant who offered a person who turned out to be knowledgeable about manuscripts, but had never actually participated in the Prize.

Interviews were intended to be in-depth and semi-structured. I used a formal interview protocol in order to insure that the same information was solicited from all informants. In the context of the case study, interviews are meant to resemble “guided conversations” more than queries (Yin, 2014, p.110). Interviews were conducted in Moroccan Arabic when done orally and in Modern Standard Arabic when done (twice) in the form of a written questionnaire. The

comfort level of informants (and my own) played a role in the length and depth of interviews. While I was always able to cover the points in the interview protocol, some people spoke with me for an hour or more and others showed at the twenty-minute mark that they were no longer interested in continuing our conversation. Four participants who I interviewed in their homes or work places showed me manuscripts and archival documents from their personal collections. Although it may have been beneficial to audio record interviews, in keeping with general sensitivities around recordings in Morocco, I did not attempt this. In fact, based on my previous experiences doing research in Morocco, in order to prevent disturbing a potential informant, I did not even ask for permission to record interviews. Only one participant mentioned recording as a possibility (after the interview). Others at times even told me to put down my pen because something they were saying was not meant to go beyond our conversation. Therefore, I was conscious to take diligent notes before, during and immediately after the interviews.

Participant Observation

Participant observation allows a researcher to gain a deep understanding of a particular topic “through the meanings ascribed to it by the individuals who live and experience it.” It is considered to be an especially appropriate research method in situations when studying a “phenomena about which little is known and where the behavior of interest is not readily available to public view” (McKechnie, 2008, p. 599). My use of participant observation was unplanned but facilitated by the opening of the Hassan II Prize’s 37th round in late Spring 2015.

In May 2015, I visited the Office of the Manuscripts and Heritage Libraries at the Ministry of Culture to explain the nature of my research to the director and to inquire about the possibility of working as an intern on the Prize. I was told that an internship on the H-II Prize was possible, but that I would not have access to the final judging session in which winners were

chosen. In order to apply for the internship, I was instructed to write a formal request to be submitted at the Ministry headquarters introducing myself and detailing the requested length of the internship. Later that same day I submitted a handwritten letter in Arabic (after being flash-tutored by local informants as to the standard phrasing and organization of government correspondences) along with an English language letter from my advisor on university stationary. Within a few days I received a call that my request was accepted and I began an internship at the Ministry on June 1, 2015.

My daily duties as an intern working on the Prize included, helping to count and label submitted manuscripts and archival documents; helping to complete the catalog entries for submitted manuscripts which often entailed accessing digital libraries or digitized catalogs on the Internet once print catalog resources were exhausted and photocopying forms needed for the office. As the process moved along I assisted in the checking of catalog entry information for the compiling of the handbook. My contribution was considered enough to warrant a mention in the 2015 guidebook as a member of the coordinating team of the Prize (although I objected).

As a “fly on the wall” I listened attentively to how the people working on the Prize (at the Ministry it was referred to as “The Prize”) discussed it, its organization, participants and organizers. Some discussions were obviously for my benefit, while others were more spontaneous. I also answered questions — generally about how I became interested in, or came to know of the Prize. A benefit to being in the office on a regular basis was that I got a chance to encounter people associated with the Prize such as workers from Branch offices submission centers who came to drop off submissions, to participants from past years who dropped by looking to pick up their documents as well as manuscript scholars and people in the book industry who stopped by the office on other business. I used a mini-iPad for many searches,

screenshots, and photos and to write down quick notes while in the office. Sometimes I used trigger words to remember conversations, titles, or concepts on which I wanted to elaborate further at a later time. During lunch breaks, I would write up all the morning's memos and in the evening, I would complete the memos at home. All memos were kept in an Evernote account which allowed me to keep them organized by date created. I detail my experiences as a participant observer later in this dissertation.

Documents

“Documents play an explicit role in any data collection in doing case study research” (Yin, 2014, p.107). The documents collected for examination in this study included: government issued decrees and addenda (*dhawahir*) concerning the Prize (which were re-printed in handbooks), Minister of Culture H-II Prize related publications, specifically the handbooks of the Prize from 2001 to 2015 and handbooks from 1969/1970 and the early 1980s which were either shown or lent to me by H-II Prize administrators; articles from the nationalist newspaper *al-Alam* for years 1969 through 1973 (accessed in person at the National Library annex), as well as the Moroccan journals *Daouat al-Ḥaq* (published by the Ministry of Religious Affairs) and *Hespéris Tamuda*. I also made prolific use of articles from other newspapers and websites that were found through internet searches using the search term “Hassan II Prize for Manuscripts” in Arabic, French and English (the Arabic website aggregator Maghress.com was especially helpful); books in Arabic and English that used or were based on records found through the Prize; and the microfilm copies of Prize manuscripts and archival documents that are kept at the National Library.

Memos

Throughout the data collection process I took daily memos (for example, before, during,

and post interviews and when analyzing archival data at the National Library). According to Corbin (2004), “memos should ask questions of the data” (p.635). In keeping with Yin’s (2014) suggestions raw data was made clearly distinguishable from my own observations. My memos were intentionally analytical and not merely descriptive. I used separate notebooks (two analog and one digital) to separate memos related to participants and interviews, general data on the Prize, memos related to participant observation as an intern, and memos documenting the processes of accessing information related to participants and the records themselves. Memos were dated and organized topically for easy retrieval and processing and future storage.

Data Analysis

Coding and Content analysis were used in other to look for patterns and identify salient themes throughout the data.

Coding

Case study data analysis entails the detailed description of the case under study (Creswell 2007). In addition to providing a thick description of the case, the researcher is simultaneously categorizing and coding the data in an attempt to look for patterns that could support what Stake (2005) calls “naturalistic generalizations,” those generalizations that could apply to the case or to other populations beyond the case. I analyzed the collected data using coding and content analysis to assist in explanation building. I examined data sources in light of their relevance to answering the study’s research questions. Coding, the development of researcher-generated constructs (codes) that assign succinct, summative meanings to qualitative data (Saldaña, 2013), was conducted with the goal of pattern matching. Through coding of interviews, documents, and observations guided by pre-determined topic themes, I was be able to identify relevant variables that contributed to document holder submission to the H-II Prize. In

addition, I interpreted the data in ways that facilitated the identification of patterns in logic, motivation, and understanding of H2 Prize participants. While specific coding themes were pre-designated (and pre-defined) based on research propositions, I augmented them as necessary during the data collection and analysis process.

Interview responses underwent several iterations of coding. After being written out in a notebook, codes were applied in the margins, while key supporting words or phrases were highlighted. This first cycle coding used affective coding methods (values, emotion).. During second cycle coding, as notes were transcribed into a computer and re-analyzed, elemental methods (descriptive, in vivo, process) and pattern coding were employed with the goal of organizing the data thematically, conceptually, and/or theoretically (Saldana, 2013, p.207) and identifying emergent themes. Tentative categories and related codes that were developed prior to data collection were used during first cycle coding as applicable. During the transcribing of interview notes, second cycle coding took place in which I eliminated, added to, redefined and rearranged codes into families with major and sub themes based on what developed organically from the data. These in turn fed the development of themes that lead to the conclusions drawn in this research.

Content Analysis

Content analysis of the documents was focused on manifest content, and entailed deductive reading of the documents listed above with an eye to how they discussed the H-II Prize, especially where it concerned purpose, pros and cons, use of documents, challenges to participation and importance to Moroccan society and identity. I carried out both conceptual analysis (the frequency of concepts as evidenced by word usage) and relational analysis (how the iterated concepts relate to each other to produce meaning) in order to apply coding themes as

appropriate. Because the majority of the documents accessed were in Arabic, my use of them entailed translation which allowed me to focus on word meaning and usage at a detailed level.

The advantage of this analysis was that in most cases I was able to analyze the ways in which the Prize was discussed in public national discourse and to especially focus on the uses of rhetoric by state officials to encourage participation.

4. THE HASSAN II PRIZE FOR MANUSCRIPTS AND ARCHIVAL DOCUMENTS: HISTORY AND FIGURES

Thus it is now abundantly clear that in the modern period national elites have invented rituals that claim continuity with an appropriated historic past, organizing ceremonies, parades and mass gatherings, and constructing new ritual spaces. This is as true of Europe as of the Middle East (Connerton, 1989, p.51).

As I discussed in Chapter 2, the post-colonial moment, just following independence, was a time when many formerly colonized “nations” sought to establish or reorganize their national archives, libraries, and museums. A formal national archive, or at least the initiative to create one, signaled “the transformation of the former colony into a modern nation and the national attainment of a specific sign of being modern” (Buckley 2005, p.250).

For Western academic researchers, “the end of colonialism and the advent of independence in Africa promised the opening of new national archives and the offer of access to previously unavailable material” (Buckley 2005, p.254). Curtin (1960) noted that “newly-independent states” had “begun to put their government documents in order and to open them for historical research,” (p.129) often with “bigger appropriations for the care and collection of archives” than their former colonial masters (p.131). As discussed earlier in this dissertation, the French colonial rulers *did* exert great amounts of effort in documenting and organizing the archival documents related to life in Morocco; in addition to research centers and journals, they established the first National Library in 1932.

The H-II Prize was begun during a particular historical moment when Morocco as a young independent nation was working to redefine what it meant to be Moroccan. Moroccan historians and intellectuals were opening “a new nationalist historiographical school,” one that eschewed colonial European histories of Morocco and sought to decolonize history “at the level of the source” with indigenous documents being the fodder for new re-readings of Moroccan history (Boum, 2013, p.32).

Although the Prize was initiated by the Ministry of Culture during the administration of Mohamed al-Fāssī, it is possible that the idea of the Prize was not his alone. In his discussion of the origins of the Prize, the late Moroccan scholar Mohammed al-Targhī and repeat member of the H-II Prize national committee commended the founders of the Prize, using the plural, he said, “those who established [*aladhīna āssasū*] this Prize, they were right, because this Prize will bring forth much good for Moroccan culture” (al-Mimouni, 2008) A Moroccan historian with whom I spoke said that the Prize was in fact the idea of Abdelwehab Benmansour, the royal historian for King Hassan II.

Abdelwehab Benmansour (1920-2008), hailed from an elite religious family of Fez with Algerian origins. He took a break from his studies at the Qarawiyyin mosque-university that included taking part in the nationalist educational and political activities and working in Algeria for a period of time. He did not return to finish his degree until after the return of Mohammed V from exile, which seemed to signal the victory of the nationalist movement and the inevitable demise of French colonial rule. In 1957 Mohammed V gave him a position in the royal cabinet, as head of the political division, and in 1958 added to his responsibilities, the management of the multiple palace libraries kept throughout the country, some of which had been essentially sealed during French colonization. It was while working in the royal

palace libraries that Benmansour realized the importance of documents to the nation. A part of his work included gathering and organizing documents from all of the royal palaces as well as acquiring orphaned documents and replevin through purchase or “legal repossession” from the homes of former administrative employees (Tilānī, 2000).

In 1963, Benmansour was made the Director of political affairs at the Ministry of the Interior and in 1965 he became the head of state radio and television before returning to work in the royal cabinet in 1967. Benmansour was also an award-winning writer of books on Moroccan history, the most noteworthy of which was his 1968 publication, *Tribes of Morocco (Tribus du Maroc)*. In light of Benmansour’s passionate work in recovering Moroccan records, archival documents and manuscripts from families of former government employees in Morocco and his having acquired copies of documents relating to Moroccan history from foreign governments including 198,000 documents from the French foreign ministry, the H-II Prize seems like a natural extension of his all-consuming, ceaseless goal to recover Moroccan history through its documentary heritage.

In his 1976 article, “Moroccan Archival Documents during the time of His Majesty King Hassan II,” Benmansour discussed the H-II Prize as another component of the nation’s search for its documents and praised the Ministry of Culture for its work in “making copies (*taṣwīr*) of the records that were exhibited each year” in the Prize. In that same article, Benmansour discussed two problems that had contributed to a scarcity of Moroccan documents in the time immediately after independence: the large-scale seizure of Moroccan administrative documents by French and Spanish colonial forces on the eve of Morocco gaining its independence, and the culture of local government employees erroneously believing that because their names were mentioned in records, those records were then their personal property. This led to employees taking home

documents when they left their positions. In his article Benmansour ties the life of records and archival documents to the post-colonial difficulties Morocco experienced in recuperating lands in the Western Sahara, and showed his understanding of the role of archival documents in offering clarity in disputes. He wrote that public records and archival documents are in themselves capable of “clarifying opinions and discovering the truth whether it is for us or against us.” Without documents, he explained, history “becomes only conjecture (*takhmīnāt*), suppositions (*taqdirāt*) and individual judgements (*ijtihādāt*)” and it becomes impossible to then express firm points of view (Benmansour, 1976). Written just after the infamous Green March of 1975 in which Hassan II led everyday Moroccans into the Western Sahara to claim it for Morocco after the withdrawal of Spanish colonial forces, the idea that the Western Saharan conflict could be settled through documentary proofs seems to be a plausible one from the reasoning presented in Benmansour’s article. It is easy to see then, how some of my informants could believe that initial concern for Morocco’s claim to the Sahara could have been one of the initial motivators for the creation of the H-II Prize.¹

The H-II Prize was conceived of during a time when bibliophilic cultural activities were being carried out on multiple fronts by the intellectual politicians who held positions in the newly independent Moroccan government. The pages of the al-‘Alam newspaper, which served as the mouthpiece of the Istiqlāl political party, show that multi-faceted efforts were made by the intellectual politicians of the party to awaken an interest and reverence for historical documents,

¹ In 1969 Sidi Ifni was returned to Morocco and no doubt gave the government hope that other areas of the Sahara would also be returned. As early as 1956, Morocco made official claims for the Western Sahara in international courts.

their contents and care. The first mention of the H-II Prize in the al-‘Alam ² newspaper occurred in January 1969 in an article about the Minister of Culture honoring Moroccan literati and intellectuals with the Morocco Prize (*Jāi ’za al-Maghreb*). The article went on to say that the Minister of Culture had mentioned that the Ministry had just organized *another* Prize and Mohammed al Fāssī was quoted as saying that this new Prize “is a Prize for archival documents (*wathā’iq*) and manuscripts that will also have an exhibition that will open to coincide with the day of commemorating (‘*eid*) the Istiqlāl [political party] on the third of March.” The article then mentioned al-Fāssī’s declaration that “the nation (*dawla*) carries the responsibility for encouraging cultural activities and honoring those who are active in them.”

It is worth noting the initial connection of the Prize to the Istiqlāl political party, a potent symbol of the anti-colonial nationalist cause. The exhibition, in which submitted documents and manuscripts were put on public display was a part of the H-II Prize in its early days and is a practice which is sometimes revived in the form of winning manuscripts being put on display at the awards ceremony. Originally, submitted manuscripts and archival documents were exhibited at the Ministry of Culture headquarters for one month.

²“ وزارة الثقافة تكرم الأدب و العلم ” [The Ministry of Culture honors literature and knowledge]” al-‘Alam newspaper, January, 1969, p.1.



Figure 1 H-II Prize manuscripts on display at the first public exhibition, this photo appeared in *al-Alam* newspaper on March 13, 1969

The first official announcement about the new Prize would happen one month later on the morning of February 18, 1969 when Mohammed al-Fāssī held a press conference at the Ministry of Culture’s headquarters to introduce the “Hassan II Prize for Manuscripts.” According to the article which ran in the *al-‘Alam* newspaper the day following the press conference, the minister explained the purpose (*al-maqṣūd*) of organizing the annual Prize, saying that it was intended to:

expose (*ābrāza*) the archival documents and manuscripts that live ostensibly “underground” (*maṭmūra*) in private libraries, wooden chests, and the homes of people who consider them valuable in their own right and not because of their contents or in what is written in them. And these [documents and manuscripts] are royal decrees (*ḡahā’ir*), and exchanged letters, and notebooks of commercial traders (*kunānīsh al-tujār*), and tribal registers (*qawa’im al qabā’il*) as well as tax registers, registers of nobles descended from the Prophet Muhammad (*qawa’im al-ashraf*), registers of leaders (*qawaim al-hukām*), and beyond.

Al-Fāssī then went on to explain the organization and details of the new Prize. He said, “we are trying to expose them [archival documents and manuscripts] with simple methods (*turūq*

basīta), and in order to do this, we call on the citizens to be aware of the value of what it is in their coffers and homes.” In the following section of al-Fāssī’s statement it is made clear that the Prize had been underway prior to the press conference, and the Ministry had already begun accepting submissions. (In a later article al-Fāssī (1974) explained that the H-II Prize was initially begun in November 1968). Let us return to his announcement speech. Al-Fāssī continued:

And since the announcement of this Prize, we have received some very important documents. For example, one citizen found amongst his belongings a document by which we know that one of his ancestors was an admiral, and this document is 150 years old. And another example is a medical document given by an adjunct jurist and a judge in Fez. And another document, centuries old (*‘arīqa*) deals with the system of customs in the Sous region of Morocco.

Al-Fāssī continued giving examples of important manuscripts that had been found in Morocco in the years prior to the Prize, for example, an unknown work of al-Jahiz and a copy of the book *Nisab al-Qurayshī* from the 9th century which he calls the “greatest manuscript in the Arab world” that was found in a Moroccan spiritual hostel (*zawiya*). Then he said that there were great treasures of manuscripts in the country, some of which were of known published titles, and others of which were of unknown titles. Therefore, he informed the “citizen” who might have avail to such heritage objects to “show them to us and don’t leave them hidden in chests, for the sake of the greater good and for the historical value as well as intellectual and literary value found within these documents.”

Al-Fāssī then explained that a committee had been appointed to study the documents and that 43 Prizes would be given. The first prize was 250,000 francs or roughly 2,500 dirhams and the smallest prize was 20,000 francs, or 200 dirhams. However, al-Fāssī stated clearly that the government “wanted to buy from whomever wanted to sell” their documents according to their

value. (al-‘Alam newspaper, February 19, 1969, p. 1). And with this the H-II Prize formally entered the world. The emotionality of al- Fāssī’s speech seems designed to stir within readers and hearers a sense that they could be personally connected with history and that Morocco is intimately connected with the history of the larger Arab and Muslim world with manuscripts and archival documents being the proof of this bond. The addressing of perspective participants as “citizens” is a modern break with the idea of a colonial or even royal subject. It assigns both agency and responsibility upon the addressee. As citizens of the new Morocco, al-Fāssī was asking potential participants to contribute to building the nation’s collection of manuscripts and archival documents and to engage with Morocco’s narrative as an important location in the world of Arabic and Islamic book culture.

In the days and weeks after the announcement of the Prize, there were multiple articles and editorials on the culture of historic manuscripts from intellectuals who later played important roles in the Prize, primarily by serving as members of the judging committee. The media, especially the Istiqlal party’s newspaper, was seen to be an important tool to reach everyday Moroccans who might have valuable materials in their possession. For example, on March 8, 1969, an anonymous editorial ran in al-Alam entitled, “The Misfortune of Manuscripts in our Country (*Miḥna al-Makhtutāt fī baladina*).” It began by discussing the well-known fact that many families in Morocco had inherited manuscripts. It lamented that in most cases these manuscripts were locked away and left to decay or be damaged by humidity. Then, in a strong sexist turn, it explained how eventually, due to the lack of a male heir, the manuscripts would fall into the hands of a woman and so would “begin the misfortune.” The author said that the woman would not go to ask “people of knowledge” (*Ahl al-dhikr*) and so she would not know the value of what was in her hands. If she happened to see the name of God and/or the Prophet

Muhammed in the manuscript, she might keep it as “decoration.” If not, then only one of two things will happen: either the manuscript will be burned [as a form of waste disposal] or it will be used to stoke the fire of a cooking oven or that of a public bath. The author finished by commenting on the resurrection of traditional Moroccan culture that was taking place in Morocco at the time. He asked why manuscripts could not also be a part of this cultural renaissance and called on owners of manuscripts to see them as intellectual and historic trusts (*amāna al-ilm wa tarikh*) and to protect and respect them (al-Alam 8 March 1969). This editorial was a provocative attempt to capture the attention of holders of private manuscripts during a time when the exhibition of H-II Prize manuscripts had already caught the public’s attention. The sexist association of the destruction of manuscript heritage with female “ignorance” as a matter-of-fact reality was unfortunate. The burning of manuscripts in ignorance is often mentioned in discussions of the loss of manuscript heritage in Morocco. However this is the first time that I have seen the blame laid at the feet of Moroccan women (as opposed to faulting an educational system that did not adequately promote quality female education).

On April 17, 1969 al-Alam again published an article on manuscripts, an interview with the Moroccan intellectual M. Ibrahim al-Kattani (d.1990) that had originally appeared in a Libyan newspaper, also named al-Alam. Al-Kittani had been invited to Libya by a university and while there attended a conference on the theme of books and authors in the Greater Maghreb (North Africa) region. According to the article al-Kattani gave some lectures and visited important libraries, noting that he spent four days at the library of Muhammad Ali al-Sanusi studying and looking through the manuscripts there. Al-Kattani was described by the reporter as a person who “took advantage of learning and research to become trained through toil in the study of Arabic manuscripts.” It compared his efforts with manuscripts, the study of which is

described by the reporter as the field of study that most strongly relates to Arab history and civilization, to the effort which al-Kattani put forth in opposing French colonization and for which he served several years in prison.

At the time of the publication of the article, al-Kattani was serving as the director of the manuscript department at the National Library of Morocco. He is quoted as saying that “the value of the Arabic manuscript cannot be limited or delineated either in relation to Arabs or to human civilization in general, because they played a [major] role for Muslims and non- Muslims. Many foreigners have benefitted greatly from Arabic manuscripts.” Al- Kattani referenced the transmission of scientific knowledge to Europe from Islamic Spain by way of Arabic manuscripts, and mentioned that some of the most important existent Arabic manuscripts are to be found in European libraries. He gave the example of Carl Brockelman (d.1956) as that of a European who spent several decades composing a catalog of Arabic manuscripts that al-Kattani called “well done.” Al-Kattani used the example of Brockelman, whom the article refers to as an Orientalist, to criticize Muslim sluggishness in terms of studying Arabic manuscripts. He did however cite the founding of an institute on Arabic manuscripts in Cairo, its work in microfilming important manuscripts, and its periodicals. The reporter asked al-Kattani about the connection between Orientalism and colonization, to which al-Kattani replied, “It is a very strong connection whether in the past or in the present and the Orientalists do not hide this...” In the end, the reporter lamented the incapacity (*taqsīr*) of the current generation of Muslims to work in the field of manuscripts, which he described as a “glorious past that resurrects (*yab`ath*) within us a spirit that aspires for a felicitous future.”

Clearly, proselytizing on behalf of manuscripts and archival documents was a priority for the Moroccan intellectual elite during this period. It may have been fitting to name the Prize after

Hassan II, not only because he was the reigning monarch at what could be seen as the peak of his popularity, but also because he was portrayed by those close to him as being passionate about Moroccan history. Benmansour, Hassan II's royal historian credited him with being a leader in recovering post-colonial Moroccan history through actions he took upon becoming king to open long closed royal libraries in Fez and Marrakech and having the documents and manuscript-books there taken to Rabat for inspection and treatment and with his establishment in January 1975, of the Office of Royal Archival Documents (*mudirīya al-wathāiq al-malakīa*) of which Benmansour was appointed director. Miller (2012) describes the period from 1961, when Hassan II took the throne after the sudden death of his father, until 1975 as the "first age of Hassan II" who ruled the country until his death in 1999. She characterizes his "first age" by an intention to build his image and create a "public persona consonant with his role as 'Commander of the Faithful'" while also "eliminating opponents and consolidating personal power" (p.163).

Indeed the early years of Hassan II's reign saw much political instability in the country and open protests against the monarchy. For example, there were major anti-government protests in 1965 that led to the king declaring a state of emergency that dissolved parliament and suspended the newly adopted constitution of 1962. By 1969, the year that the H-II Prize began, Hassan II was already relying heavily on military and intelligence to rule the country. Yet he was also concerned with his image as ruler. A prize for historic manuscripts and archival documents in his name supported the cultural politics of the social base with whom he cared to be aligned, generally older more conservative nationalists as opposed to young leftist Communists who openly called for the abolishment of the monarchy (Miller, 2012).

At a conference on archives in the Arab world convened in Paris in 1974, Mohammed al-Fāssī presented a paper on "Archives and primary source documents on the history of Morocco."

In it, he explained that he had tried to no avail since Morocco's independence (1956) in his position as director of Mohammed V University, until 1968, when he was appointed Minister of Culture, to use the news media (radio and television) to acquire manuscripts or to at least get enough access to manuscripts to be able to microfilm them. The situation changed however, when he became Minister of Culture and decided to ask King Hassan II "to found a Prize carrying his name with an endowment of 20,000 dirhams." Al-Fāssī said that the original name was "the Hassan II Prize for manuscripts and original unpublished documents (*inédits*)." (al-Fāssī (el Fasi), 1974).

The success of the initial year of the Prize is described by al-Fāssī as "brilliant" (*éclatant*). According to him, the Prize received 3,000 submissions which included a large number of "truly unknown works" and documents, including notarial records (*actes adoulaire*s), documents of legal advice (consultations *juridiques* (fr.)/ *nawāzil*, *fatāwa*, *ajwiba* (ar.)) that were of "great historic value." He reported that the H-II Prize revealed interesting *nawāzil* documents concerning social, economic and legal life in Moroccan rural areas; as well as *kunnāshāt*, the notebooks of learned people. Records were discovered through the Prize that revealed important aspects of Moroccan commercial relations abroad. As a specific example al-Fāssī mentioned a collection of official correspondences from the eleventh century Almoravid (*al-Murābitūn*) administration that had been sent from their capital city of Marrakech.

Only five years after the inception of the Prize, al-Fāssī was clearly excited about its initial results. So too was another important actor during the early years of the H-II Prize, Mohammed Abdelhadi Al-Mannūnī (1915-1999 c.e.), a premier scholar of Arabic manuscripts from the city of Meknes. An advertisement in the Istiqlal newspaper shows that he gave a public talk at the Ministry of Culture's headquarters on the history of paper in Morocco in March of

1969 just a few weeks after manuscripts from the Prize were placed on display at that same location. In 1975, a year after al-Fāssī discussed the Prize at the Paris conference, Al-Mannūnī wrote an article on the treasures discovered by the H-II Prize.

A prolific writer and scholar on Moroccan history and the use of indigenous archival sources, Al-Mannūnī is the name most associated with the administration of the Prize. He was an active participant in the appraisal and cataloging of submitted documents for many years of the Prize. In his own writings about the Prize, Al-Mannūnī (1975) described the intention behind the Prize as being to discover “the huge yield of manuscripts and documents Morocco has to offer, specifically those document and legal papers that families and individuals owned or inherited.” He declared that the discovery of the contents of private collections was a serious project to be carried out throughout the country. According to Al-Mannūnī’s own account, he was appointed head of the bureau of manuscripts at the Ministry of Culture on June 25, 1970, leaving a position at the royal library. Could it have been that a manuscript scholar of Al-Mannūnī’s caliber was crucial to the foundational organization of the Hassan II Prize that came under his management at the Ministry of Culture? Al-Mannūnī remained the head of the bureau at the Ministry until October of 1974 at which point Hassan II “deemed it necessary for him to return to his position at the Royal library” (al-Mannūnī ,2005, p.101). Yet Al-Mannūnī maintained a close relationship with the Prize and continued to serve as one of its judges. In addition to his 1975 article, one of the few written on the Prize, close readings of his books on Moroccan history reveal that he was able to make advantage of his privileged position to access documents and manuscripts submitted to the Prize for his own research.

It would be ten years before the H-II Prize was officially inscribed in Moroccan law. I have yet to find an explanation for what seems to have been an initial rush to implement the Prize without going through official bureaucratic channels (although royal patronage may be the explanation), or for the ten-year delay in registering the Prize, but by 1979, it was decided that the Prize should have official status. The initial decree stated that the Hassan II Prize would be given annually to “manuscripts that relate to Moroccan history and life or Islamic traditions” as well as to official and unofficial documents. In addition, the decree detailed the amount of the cash prizes and how submissions should be sent to the Ministry. The rules of the Prize continue to be modified with each passing administration, and decisions about collection centers, judging, and prize money are all made by official decrees. There have been four amendments to the first August 1979 decree (number 1234.79). The 1989 decree (number 264.89) doubled the prize amounts given in the 1979 decree for first, second, and third prize to 10,000, 8,000 and 6,000 dirhams respectively. A 1996 decree (number 15.96) introduced a new prize structure and prize amounts. The first, second, and third prize amounts were increased to 20,000, 15,000, and 10,000 dirhams and the three prizes of encouragement were added for values of 5,000, 3,000, and 1,500 respectively. The 2001 decree specified the seven branch offices that would serve as submission centers (Tetouan, Oujda, Fez, Rabat, Marrakech, Agadir, and Layyoune), increased the amounts for the prizes of encouragement to 6,000, 4,000, and 3,000 and introduced the grand prize of 20,000 dirhams. The latest decree (3246.14) of 2014 added a phrase clarifying that submitted manuscripts could be in Arabic, Tamazight (Berber) or Hassani, a dialect of Arabic

used in the Saharan region of Morocco. It specified sixteen branch offices³ for accepting submissions and increased the amounts of the Prizes to 10,000, 7,000, and 5,000 dirhams while increasing the grand prize to 30,000 dirhams. It added a provision for local branch offices to host parties for area winners and specified that digital copies of prize manuscripts would be sent to the nascent Archives of Morocco (*Archives du Maroc*) in addition to the national library. Figure 2 illustrates the successive changes in Prize amounts starting with those listed in the first 1969 ad for the Prize. In examining the successive H-II Prize related decrees there has been a conscious attempt to increase the prize money and to improve the prize through repeated restructurings. However, it is only through speaking with participants that the relative success of the changes can be gauged.

³ The centers are in Tetouan, Oujda, Fez, Rabat, Beni-Mellal, Casablanca, Marrakech, El-Jedida, Agadir, Guelmim, Layyoun, Dakhla, Taza, Kenitra, Meknes, and Settat.

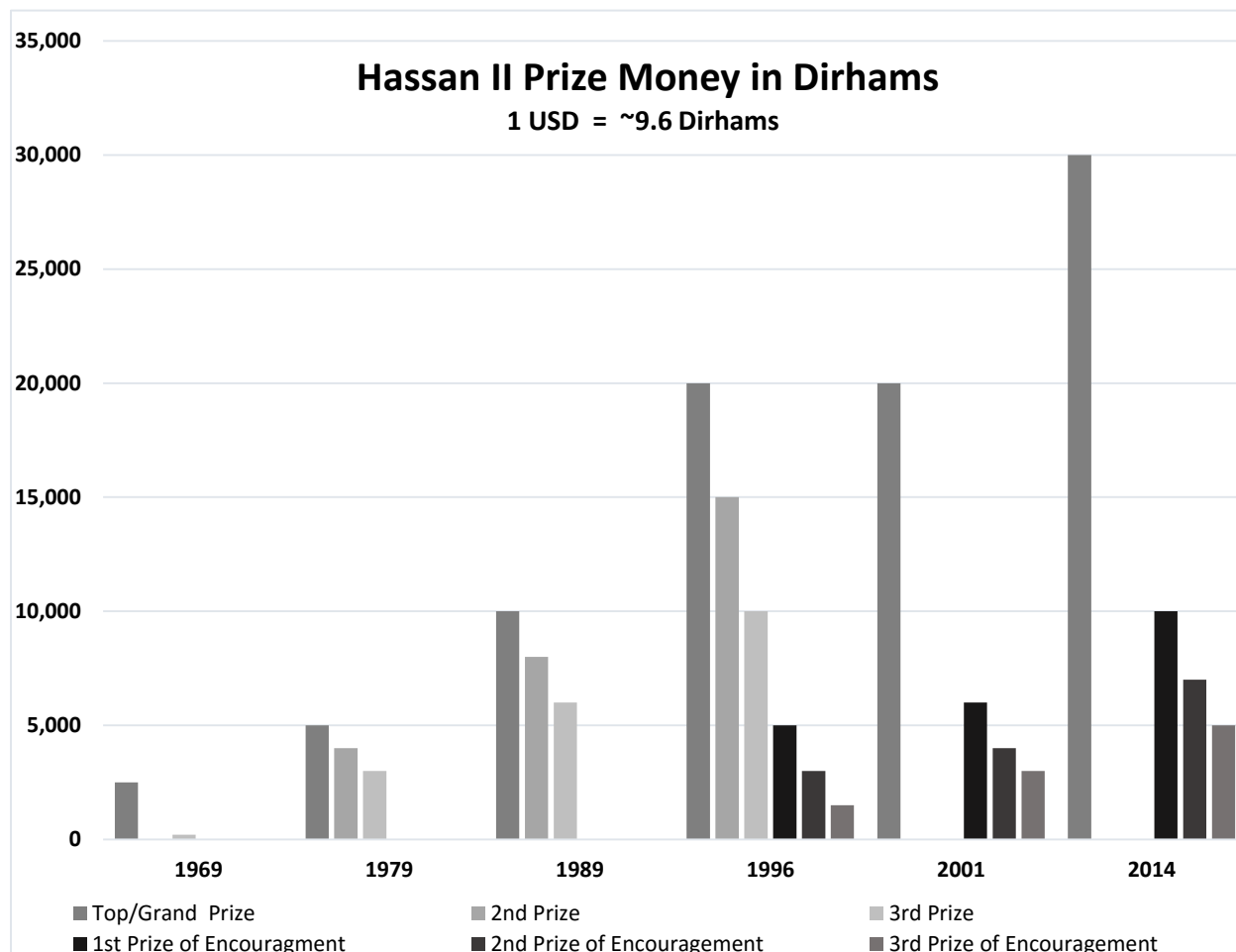


Figure 2 Changes in H-II Prize Amounts in Moroccan Dirhams 1969-2015

H-II Prize Handbooks: Describing Documents

The annual handbooks (*sing. dātīl*) of the H-II Prize are in themselves important records that document submissions to the Prize. The first handbooks for the H-II Prize used a method of cataloging with five basic fields. For manuscripts this entailed: name of author, title of manuscript, name and address of manuscript owner⁴, type of script/calligraphy and miscellaneous observations. In 2006 the format of the handbook was changed and codicological

⁴ In the early years of the Prize, addresses were to insure return of the manuscript to the owner.

descriptive elements were adopted to produce what an internal Ministry document termed “scholarly catalog” records (*al-fihrisa al-ilmī lilmaktuṭāt*). While some of the elements initially adopted in 2006 have since been augmented, the current H-II Prize record for the manuscripts includes the following: title of the manuscript; name of author and scribe; opening and ending lines of the manuscript; size of the paper, kind of ink used; kind of paper used; form of script/calligraphy used and a place for “observations” where the cataloger makes remarks about anything unusual or special about the manuscript content or form. All of this is in addition to the name of the person who submitted the piece to the H2 Prize.

As I mentioned earlier in Chapter 2, by limiting the H-II Prize historical record solely to information related to the text the role of the Moroccan state as “savior” of intellectual and cultural history is preserved without acknowledging the role the families have also played in preserving history’s primary sources generation after generation. As it stands, the H-II documentation preserves texts and the memory of authors, but does not provide space (literally) for record owners in the provenance of their own texts.

As a collection of the national patrimony of rare and historic manuscripts and documents, the H-II Prize is offered candid access, not only to rare historical records, but also to the powerful stories of family and individual owners that could greatly expand, complicate, and enrich the historical record. As of yet, these context-providing stories have not been accessed or as of yet acknowledged by Moroccan officials as important to the nation-building narrative of the H-II Prize.

Understanding Participants and Winners: A look at the numbers

A 2004 report estimated that 80 percent (24,781) of the total records submitted to the H-II Prize were submitted by 1978, within the first ten years of its inception. While the report only

accounted for those documents submitted between 1969 and 2000 which totaled 31,243, even if one adds the submissions to the Prize from 2001 to 2015, which total approximately 3,824, the percentage only drops to 70 percent of the overall total of 35,067 submissions having been submitted by 1978. The years with the highest participation in terms of manuscripts and documents were 1974 (4043 submissions) and 1976 (6866 submission), possibly due to social and political reasons. 1975 marked the time of the previously mentioned Green March. The last time participation reached into the thousands of submitted documents was in 1981, when there were 1682 submissions.

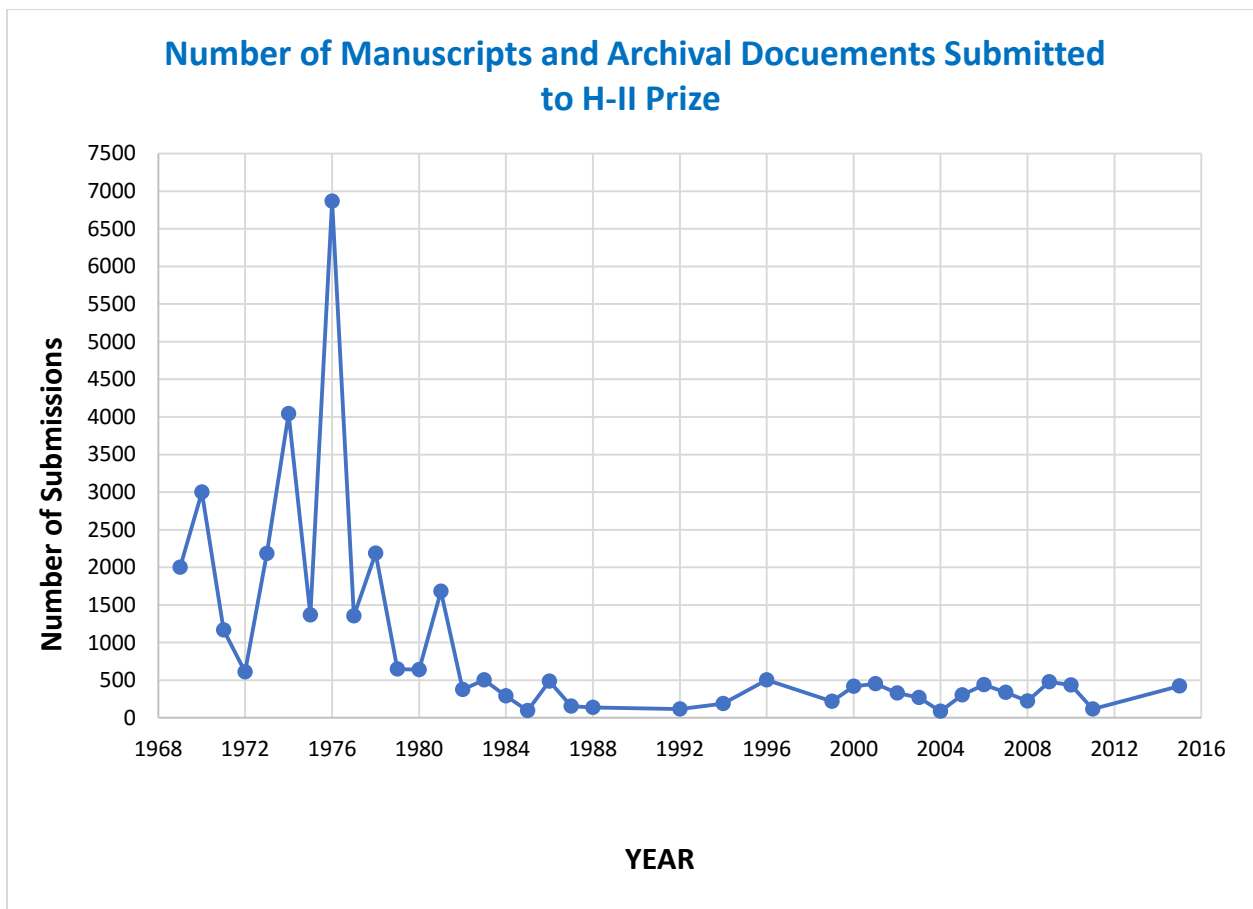


Figure 3 Submissions to H-II Prize by Year

A clear decline

In 2008, the late Moroccan scholar of manuscripts and former university professor Abd Allah al-Targhī said that while the earliest years of the Prize saw thousands of submissions per year, more recent times had seen a reduction in the number of submissions. “Maybe” he commented, “the number of the manuscripts that could possibly be submitted to the Prize has decreased in proportion to the earlier years.”

There has been a clear and significant decline in participation of the Prize since the late 1970s. This becomes even clearer when we look at Prize participation by individual participants instead of by number of submitted documents. For example, in the year 2001, 394 archival documents and 103 manuscripts were submitted to the Prize by participants from at least 18 different cities and towns. However, the actual number of individual participants was only 33. When listed by number of participants per year, the paucity of participation in relation to the overall population of approximately 33 million and the potential pool of participants becomes apparent. While there is no available data on the number of Moroccans who own manuscripts and archival documents, from casual observation it seems that it is common for families to have a few manuscripts from ancestors that are kept for sentimental reasons; and then there are the elites who have what could be considered collections.

Individual participants

How many people have actually participated in the Hassan II Prize over the years? At the moment, it is difficult to give an exact number because of the inconsistency of records kept by the Prize administrators. A few of the directories produced during the early years are “missing” from the records of the Ministry, according to a former manager of the Prize who has sought out the help of older scholars to possibly locate copies of the directory held by private individuals. I

was not given access to records from all of the years of the Prize, so the numbers given by the Ministry on submissions will have to be accepted uncritically.

In examining the Prize handbooks from 2001 to 2015⁵, there is a clear pattern of repeat participants, to the extent that most submitters from those years could be seen as clients of the Prize. For example, the average number of individual participants for these years was twenty-eight. The year with the lowest number of participants during this time was 2011, when only fourteen people came forth with submissions which may explain the decision to put the Prize on hiatus and restructure its management. The year with the highest number of participants during this time was 2015, with forty-six participants.

Submissions by city

Karouati's 2004 report looked at the cities with the most submissions to the H-II Prize and found that between 1969 to 2000, most participants in the Prize hailed from either the cities of Rabat, Morocco's capital (31 percent), Marrakech (16 percent), Fez (13 percent), and Tetouan (12 percent). How are these statistics to be understood in light of a comment by a former manager on the Prize that most manuscripts in the country are to be found in rural areas? . In 2000 the total population of Morocco was estimated to be 30,122,350. In that same year Tetouan's population was estimated to be 450,000; Fez's was 870,000; Marrakech's was 755,000 and Rabat's (the capital) was 1,507,000. The participation for these cities is disproportionately higher than their percentage of the Moroccan population (see figure 4).

⁵ There were at least nine, and possibly ten years when the Prize was not held: 1989, 1990, 1991, 1993, 1997, 1998, 2012, 2013, and 2014. For five of these years (1997, 1998, 2012, 2013, and 2014) the reason given was hiatus in order to make changes to the law governing the Prize. While most official list do not show Prize results for 1995, I found one mention of a 1995 round in which 135 manuscripts and 303 archival documents were submitted. Similarly, although it seems that a round was held in 2003, no copy of the handbook was available from the Ministry for that year.

The strong participation in urban centers may have to do with the proximity to actual branch offices of the Ministry or at least reliable, affordable transportation to those offices. Physical proximity to centers of government such as Rabat may also lead to increased familiarity and trust of the government to the extent that one would not fear confiscation or ascribe negative motives to government officials.

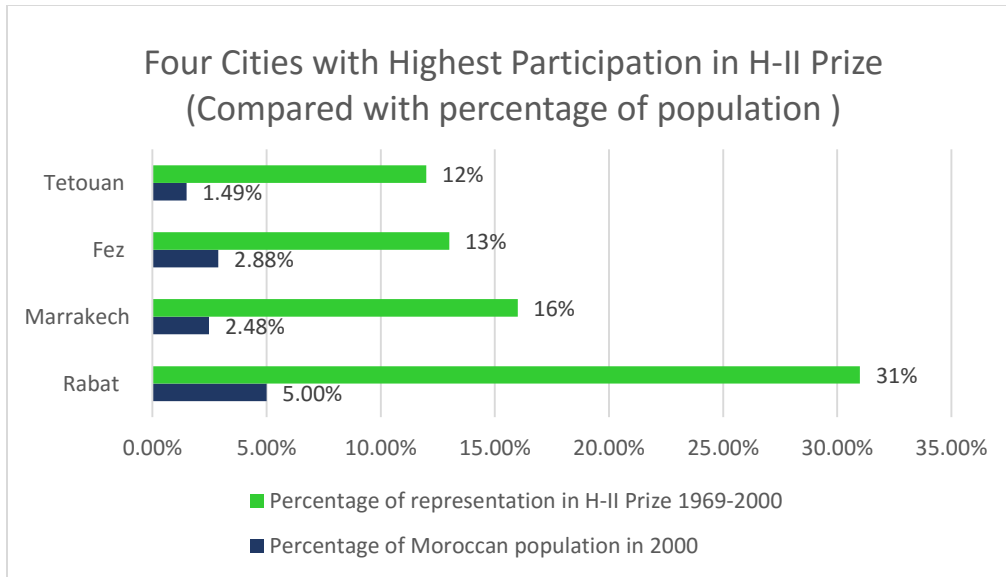


Figure 4 Comparing the four cities with the highest amount of participation in the H-II Prize

Karouati (2004) asked if the prevalence of Rabat, Marrakech, Fez and Tetouan might also be explained by the historical importance of these cities or the wealth of their manuscript inheritances. For example, Rabat, Fez, and Tetouan all had high settlement by Andalusian refugees from the Spanish Inquisition who brought with them their cultural and material wealth including manuscripts. Marrakech was once the capital of Morocco and home to various dynasties. Other possible explanations Karouati offered regarding the strength of participation in these cities over others were related to the characteristics or experiences of individuals living in those cities, including their exposure to information and advertisements for the Prize as well as their personally held opinions that informed ideas about the value of the Prize. It should also be

remembered that not all people who submit in a city are locals. It is sometimes the case that people are from other areas but travel in order to submit at the center closest to their home.

Elite family participation

For the past fifteen years of the Prize, elite names have been on each year's register. One local informant who had not participated in the Prize told me that only "Moulays and Sidis" (signifiers of elite status that could be added to a first or last name in Morocco) would feel comfortable submitting a manuscript to the Prize because it is acceptable (perhaps expected) that they would possess such valuable material objects, whereas an average person submitting to the Prize, even if they legitimately inherited the document or manuscript from an ancestor would generate suspicion (and might find it harder to keep possession of the object). This comment alludes to the interconnectedness between family names and material and social privilege that is perceived to still be present in Moroccan society. Another person who had participated in the Prize posited that the year when he was made to share the grand prize with another participant, it may have been because his co-winner "was an X [elite family name]." He considered it possible that in the appraisal of manuscript and document submissions to the Prize, social status as shown by family surname might be considered during judging.

In this section I look at a few of the elite names that appear on the submissions list most often and put them into social context. Two surnames that appear repeatedly over multiple years of the Prize are Iraki and Naciri sometimes expressed as al-Iraki or al-Naciri. Iraki (*'Irāqī*) alludes to an origin in the country now known as Iraq. It is the surname of an elite Moroccan family claiming descent from the Prophet Muhammad through his grandson Hussein (d.680). At the beginning of the fourteenth century the ascetic poet Abu AbdAllah Mohammed who carried the *nisba* al-Iraqi (the person from Iraq) migrated from Iraq to Fez where he was reportedly

treated with honor by the ruling Moroccan dynasty (Hachim, 2006, 193). There have since been many notable Irakīs in Moroccan history who have consolidated religious, social, scholarly, and political power into privilege.

Naciri (*Nāṣiri*) is another name that appears repeatedly throughout the years of the Prize and from submitters hailing from different regions of Morocco. The most immediate lineage for this name goes back to the founder of the Naciri zawiya in Southern Morocco, Muhammad ibn Nacir (d.1674), an Islamic religious scholar who also served as mundane leader of the oasis town of Tamgrut, Morocco and religious leader of a spiritual complex that included a hostel, mosque, school, library and warehouses for grain and goods. Hachim (2006) stated that the name Nacir is linked even farther back to the Arabian Peninsula even establishing a link with the descendants of Zaynab, the granddaughter of the Prophet Muhammad. Members of this family have become renown throughout Morocco over the centuries. A respected nineteenth century historian as well as a Minister of religious affairs in the 1990s both hailed from this extended family.

Other elite names common to the list are Saḥnūn, Sqallī, Fihri, Idrissī, Berrada and to a lesser extent Cherqāouī, Alamī, Rūnda, and Ouazzanī also make appearances. It would be interesting for future research, if given access to the entire corpus of data on H-II participants since 1969, to find out the percentage of participants with elite family surnames versus non-elite surnames. The relationship between the elite families and the Prize could be investigated more in-depth. Do elite families retain more manuscripts and archival documents than other families in Morocco, or is it that their status (even if it is only at present symbolic) allows them to feel more secure in disclosing their collections to the Prize?

5. RESULTS: HASSAN II PRIZE NARRATIVES

The Hassan II Prize represents a unique case of a program for the discovery of historic manuscripts by a national government in North Africa and the (Muslim) world at large. To my knowledge, only one other Arabic-speaking country, Libya, has endeavored to carry out a similar program, in what may have been an imitation of the H-II Prize. Libya's program, the Ibn al-Ajdābī⁶ Prize for Archival Documents and Manuscripts⁷, was begun in 1989. It awarded prizes for privately held manuscripts on at least four occasions (1989, 1999, 2005, and 2008) and carried out some form of image storage, most likely microfilming. Presumably, it has been halted due to recent political unrest.

The situation by which manuscripts are cared for and acquired in neighboring countries with similar textual heritages such as Algeria (Scheele, 2011) where private collectors are encouraged to sell their manuscripts to the national library, or Mali where international organizations have partnered with local manuscript collectors to digitize and provide access to private collections according to various schemes (including fee-based) (Dong, 2011), differs from the Moroccan example set forth in the Hassan II Prize.

⁶ Ibn Ishāq Ibrahim bin Ismail al-Ajdābī (d. 1077 c.e) a celebrated Libyan scholar.

⁷ جائزة ابن الأجدابي للوثائق و المخطوطات See: <http://www.libsc.org.ly/mrkaz/index.php/2015-10-29-06-55-55/2015-10-29-07-01-42/56-2013-08-19-09-10-07>

Who submits to the H-II Prize and why? According to Terry Cook (2011), earlier justifications for archives were “grounded in concepts of the nation-state and its scholarly elites (primarily historians)” (p.630). The H-II Prize archive of copies of privately held manuscripts and documents is such an archive. In a society where the government often controls the dominate narratives, the following interviews with H-II Prize participants offer us a rare opportunity to understand the Prize from points of view that may or may not mesh with official discourse. In this section, we listen to the narratives of administrators of the H-II Prize, including their understandings of the Prize and their ideas about who the participants of the Prize are and why they participate. We also allow participants to tell their own stories of their relationships with the H-II Prize, identifying the patterns and emergent themes found within their very narratives that can begin to answer the research questions.

Administrative views of the Hassan II Prize

The management of the H-II Prize is carried out by Minister of Culture employees in the Office of Manuscripts and Heritage Libraries at the Directorate of the Book branch office in Rabat, Morocco. In coordination with branch offices that serve as submission centers for the manuscripts and archival documents and a committee of scholars who make final decisions on winners, the members of this office carry out the H-II Prize on a nearly annual basis. In this section I relay the results of semi-structured interviews of administrators currently or formerly associated with the management or judging of the Prize and their candid commentary.

Fouad al-Mihdaoui

An employee of the Ministry of Culture who had managed the H-II Prize for six years in the early 2000s, Al-Mihdaoui described the Prize as having been started by “cultured people” specifically mentioning the first two Ministers of Culture, Mohamed al-Fāssī (1968-1974) and

M’Hammed Bahnini (1974-1981). The idea of the Prize was and is, in his opinion a “genius idea” (*abqaria*), because the people who started it realized that important historic documents and manuscripts were in the ownership of private individuals and invented a way to gain access to those records. Even today, Al-Mihdaoui believes that only 25 percent of existent manuscripts in Morocco are in public libraries or institutions.

For Al-Mihdaoui, the original goal and intent of the Prize can be described as personal (*shakhsī*) and nationalistic (*waṭanī*). By “personal” he means a desire on the part of the intellectual-politicians who founded the Prize to find rarities, so that they could produce a critical edition (*tahqīq*). And whereas most manuscripts from Eastern Islamic lands are known and have been critically edited and published, that is not the case for most Moroccan manuscripts.

For example, the current manager of the Prize explained that Mohammed al-Fāssī, the Minister of Culture who inaugurated the Prize was interested in *Malhun*, a musical genre developed in South-east Morocco that is said to be based on the rhythms of traditional Andalusian music.⁸ I was told by an official at the Ministry that al-Fāssī thought of the Prize as a way to find unknown texts about the musical form. He went on to produce several written works on the topic, and in a 1974 conference paper, wrote passionately about how *malhun* music was an “unsuspected source” that went underutilized by Moroccan historians. He cited an example of a poem found in *malhun* that had been written in 1798 by a Moroccan who participated in the battle for Cairo against the army of Napoleon Bonaparte (al-Fāssī, 1974).

By “nationalistic,” *waṭanī*, he meant that the Prize was meant to be a means of creating a narrative of protection for the Arab-Islamic heritage of the nation, the newly independent but

⁸ See Koshoff (2008) for more on the question of Malhun, its origins and its place in contemporary Morocco.

centuries-old Kingdom of Morocco. I explore the nationalist narrative of the Prize elsewhere in this dissertation. It is sufficient for us here to say that the H-II Prize was integral to a post-colonial nationalist agenda to valorize indigenous historical narratives whose primary sources the Prize was intended to locate.

What needs to happen in order for the Prize to reach its goals? On this matter al-Mihdaoui focused not on the logistical running of the Prize, but on personal relationships. He believes that instilling trust (*thiqa*) and a sense of reliable integrity (*amāna*) in the minds of the manuscript owners is necessary in order for the Prize to be successful. His suggestion is for a return to traditional Moroccan enactments of hospitality (*diyāfa*). For him, the cash amounts for the Prize, while important, were always just symbolic (*ramzī*). What could really ingratiate the Prize with owners is the manifestation of hospitality on the part of the Ministry. This entails inviting Prize winners to be guests of the Ministry and paying for their transportation and lodging to attend the Prize awards ceremony in Rabat; having government officials attend the ceremony; and having owners feel honored. This was actually done in 2009 and 2010, the last two years when al-Mihdaoui had a leading role in the administration of the Prize. He said that trust will also be improved when manuscripts are returned to their owners in the same or in better condition than when they submitted them and in a timely manner.

Al-Mihdaoui's observations and suggestions were predicated on his idea that the people who participate in the Prize are "simple" (*buṣaṭa*). He described them as a group of people who have inherited manuscripts, but are not scholars, who may not even be literate, and who, if given the opportunity to sell their manuscripts, would do so. This profile of the typical H-II participant may be the result of Al-Mihdaoui's experience of working on the Prize. However, it does not

match with the sample of owner-participants who took part in this research, or whom I learned of through supplemental documentary research.

Among his other suggestions, Al-Mihdaoui would like the Prize to live up to its goal of providing access to its manuscripts to a larger audience of Moroccans. For this to work, copies of Prize manuscripts would have to be available outside of Rabat. Currently, the available copies are kept at the National Library with plans to begin housing an addition set of digital copies at the newly founded (2013) Archives of Morocco. Both of these institutions are located in Rabat within one mile of each other. Al-Mihdaoui believes that making copies of Prize documents available in another region in the country (he suggested Marrakech for example) would improve access. Al-Mihdaoui who was against the centralization of the Prize in general (for instance the elimination of regional judging committees by order of a 2014 ministerial decree), said that the Ministry has to take another step beyond the digitization process, and thinks that creating a website would enliven the Prize.⁹

Ahmed Binebine

Ahmed Binebine, the director of the royal library, is one of the most powerful men in the library world in Morocco and is an internationally recognized figure in the editing and codicology of Arabic and Islamic manuscripts. He has been involved with the Prize for several decades, and has repeatedly served as the head of the national committee of the Prize.

According to Binebine, the Prize has not produced the results for which it was created. He explained with a tinge of emotion that “[over time] thousands of names [of manuscripts] have been lost and there was the hope [that the Prize] would find some of the titles that we had only

⁹ A website for the Prize was also mentioned in the suggestions for Prize issued by the 2011 national committee.

heard of but never actually seen.” This has not happened, although Binebine did say that during the first twenty years of the Prize some rare manuscripts were submitted. The last ten to fifteen years, however, have seen what he termed “weak submissions.”

During our conversation, Binebine mentioned the unlawful selling of Moroccan manuscripts sometimes in bulk to parties from the Persian Gulf States, seemingly as a factor in the weak submissions to the Prize. He stated clearly that he is vehemently opposed to such practices and described it as the peddling of Moroccan heritage for a cheap price.

AbdLatif Jilani

Jilani is one of the newest members of the national committee, a religious scholar and university professor who is part of The General League of Islamic Scholars (*al-Rabita al-Muhammidiya lil 'Ulema'*). He understands the importance of manuscripts in Morocco (and in the Muslim world in general) to be connected to the Islamic religion. Moreover, Jilani contended that the general importance that Moroccan culture places on tradition (*taqalīd*), and on things such as its retention of Andalusian culture shows the importance of history (and thus historical records) in Morocco. This, he said, makes manuscripts more important than archival documents (*wathā'iq*) in Morocco, however later in our conversation he mentioned that archival documents *are* important to the government and to the writing of accurate histories, even saying that this may have been the initial goal of the H-II Prize – the acquisition of archival documents for the (re)writing of history.

If viewed in this light, the H-II Prize was a way for Morocco to literally “find its own history” and to deal with the Saharan problem¹⁰ which drove the desire for documentary proof of

¹⁰ The area known as the Western Sahara is referred to in Morocco as the Moroccan Sahara. Formerly colonized by Spain, Morocco took administrative control of the land in the 1970s. However, there is a movement for autonomy

pledges of acknowledgement of sovereignty to the monarchy (*bay'a*) by people in what Morocco calls its Southern Provinces. Jilani pointed to the 1964 doctoral dissertation on the history of Morocco by Mohammed Bencherifa, a noted scholar who headed the Qarawiyyin library and served on the H-II Prize committee multiple times, and of the late king Hassan II sending a Moroccan historian to Istanbul to recover documents about Morocco present in Ottoman archives¹¹ as proof of the mood and historical inclinations operating in Morocco at that time.

How then to get access to manuscripts and to know their contents, when in the case of Morocco, they are primarily found in private collections? Jilani pointed out that the H-II Prize method is not the only possible way for the authorities to gain access to private collections. Among the other options he listed: purchase, done by both the Royal and National libraries; gifting or donation (*hiba*); the voluntary offering of manuscripts by private individuals or families to government libraries; pious endowments (*waqf/habs*), wherein manuscripts are given in perpetuity to a specific library with or without conditions; (this popular method of sharing books has already been discussed elsewhere in this dissertation), and confiscation (*muṣāḍara*), for which Jilani offered the example of the private library of Abdel Hayy Kittānī (d.1962) that is now an important part of the National Library collection.

However, Jilani did not believe that confiscation would be fruitful in present day Morocco and says that even if there were a law allowing for government confiscation of manuscripts, most people do not publicly acknowledge their ownership of manuscripts in the

by the inhabitants of this area who consider Morocco to be a colonizing force. Disagreements regarding to whom the land belongs has led to three decades of war, exile and heated politics. For more see: Boukhars, A. and Roussellier, J. (2014). *Perspectives on Western Sahara : myths, nationalisms, and geopolitics*. (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield).

¹¹¹¹ Moḥammed ben Tāwīt al-Ṭanjī (d.1974), a Moroccan historian.

first place. Previously, the Moroccan authorities confiscated collections without a law. For Jilani, government confiscation of private collections “is not a cultural act,” and not even about the manuscripts. For him it was a punishment (especially for heirs), and was a political act.

Jilani discussed the possible alternatives to the H-II Prize as a way to highlight what for him is the uniqueness of the H-II Prize. He believes that the H-II model is viable especially when compared with other Arabic manuscript Prizes in the Muslim world that only reward the productions of critical editions (*taḥqīq*). The importance of the H-II Prize, for him however is not in the discovery (*iktishāf*) of manuscripts and archival documents, but “in knowing (*taʿaruf*) what is actually existent in the country.” That is to say, he is not motivated by a quest to find treasure, so much as an intellectual curiosity to understand local book history. He gives the example of a manuscript that may have been copied from a lithograph book. It is not necessarily the value of the manuscript that is important for Jilani, but the knowledge of its existence for the sake of history.

He noted a “problem” however with the present day owners of private collections who do not know their own collections well. Even those who do participate in the Prize he said lack a certain intellectual sensitivity (*ḥiss ʿilmī*) and are not concerned with forwarding research. In some cases he feels that the manuscripts themselves come to be revered as an “edifice” (*ḥaykal*). This could happen when a family holds their manuscripts sacred not because of their information content or historical significance, but because they believe them to be sources of blessings (*baraka*) or magical powers (*shaʿwadha*). As for those who do not share archival documents, he stated that those documents are either replevin and rightfully belong to the government in the first place, or that at the very least that they belong to the society as a whole.

Jilani was optimistic about the future of the H-II Prize and suggested that it should have more autonomy, and have its own dedicated bureau (*maqār khāṣ*) because “the National Library has other priorities.” He pointed out that the importance of the Prize to the late king Hassan II is evidenced by the fact that he allowed it to carry his name¹², and that his son, the current monarch Mohammed VI continues to support the Prize.

Aomar Afa

Aomar Afa, is a respected Moroccan historian whose work has included extensive research on Arabic and Amazigh Islamic manuscripts in Morocco. He has worked with the H-II Prize for decades and is also involved with the newer national Amazigh manuscript Prize. I was able to speak with him one day at the Ministry in July 2015 after he had just finished up an initial round of judging for the H-II Prize. His comments about the Prize and manuscripts in Morocco were not made in response to my questions but were part of a spontaneous conversation he engaged in with an employee at the Ministry of Culture. Afa gave me permission to use his comments which he said summarize what he would have said to me in a formal interview.

When asked how he found the submissions for the year (2015), he responded “there is good there” (*kayn alkhayr*), but he also lamented the presence of what he called “the familiar names” and by this he meant the surnames of the families who submit to the Prize on a regular basis. He mentioned the last name of one of the participants who will be discussed later in this chapter and with whom I had the opportunity to speak

Afa then discussed the need for a center for manuscripts in general in Morocco which he described as the leading country when it comes to the number of existent Arabic manuscripts.

¹² There are several other Prizes that carry the late and current kings’ names and so ostensibly their (financial) support and blessing. For example, the Hassan II Prize for Golf, the Hassan II Prize for the Environment, and the Mohammed VI Prize for Arabic Calligraphy.

Many Moroccan manuscripts can now be found in other countries, and he gave the example of those now housed at Harvard University, the Escorial library in Madrid, and those that have been taken to Persian Gulf countries. And yet, Afa added, so many are “still here” in country.

Although he thought it unfortunate that it has not yet been possible to know with any exactness how many manuscripts *are* in Morocco.

At some point during the conversation the topic of possible government confiscation of manuscripts was discussed. Afa recalled the multitude of manuscript collections he had seen squandered, lost or otherwise neglected by, for example, being stored in chicken coups after the death of the original owner. He noted that often those who inherit the collections are not aware of their value and so he is not opposed to the government stepping in on those occasions. The Ministry employee in the room, challenged him by asking, “but what about personal property rights?”

When asked “What is the value (*qīma*) of the H-II Prize?” Afa answered that its value was in electronically preserving (*taṣwīr*) the manuscripts and then placing the electronic copies in the National Library where they are available for students and researchers.

In a later conversation, another Ministry employee asked him (seemingly on my behalf) if he knew of any early articles or books specifically on the topic of the H-II Prize besides those few well-known publications. “No,” Afa explained, “at that time we did not think of the Prize as a subject, but as a source (*muntij*).” Consider his comment in light of Terry Cook’s (2011) declaration that in the present era, archives are changed from unquestioned storehouses of history waiting to be found into contested sites for identity and memory formation. “*The archive is thus transformed from source to subject* [emphasis added].”

Participant Narratives

This dissertation research was carried out in order to ascertain how the Hassan II Prize for Manuscripts and Archival Documents has been able to negotiate access to private collections in a cultural environment where they tend to be jealously guarded from the public domain. This question can only fully be answered by, in addition to studying the administration of the Prize, speaking with participants in order to understand what motivations contribute to their voluntary submission of manuscripts and documents.

I set out with the goal of interviewing H-II Prize participants, persons with currently (or previous) physical custody of historic manuscripts or archival documents who submitted them for judging through the Ministry of Culture program. These people may or may not be considered collectors of manuscripts or archival documents. In many cases they have inherited the records of a former collector. However, the fact that many of the manuscripts and archival documents are no longer being used in their original capacities (primary use), and have left the public sphere, can make them appear to be “collected.” As Akin (1996) pointed out, “[t]here is no absolute book user/book collector dichotomy ...there is, rather, a range of behaviors” (p.103). Moreover, Akin (1996) discussed the value of studying collecting when she wrote:

Examining collecting behavior helps us understand how material culture circulates through time and space. Knowledge of what motivates collectors, and what other forces may shape a collection of objects, helps us understand the meaning of the material to the collector (p.104).

Although “serious” collectors possess both “knowledge and expertise” (Akin, 1996, p. 104), Buskens (2014) and others have been keen to point out, that many manuscript holders in Morocco lack intellectual custody of the documents in their possession and may even be unable to understand the significance of their documents without the help of more knowledgeable

people. In the retelling of his experiences accompanying a buyer of manuscripts (named Mostapha Naji) in Morocco in the late 1980s, Buskens (2014) wrote:

[e]xpertise was an important asset in this trade. The sellers could often hardly read the manuscripts they were selling and barely had an idea of their worth. Some trusted Mostapha completely with the prices he offered. He would add value to their discoveries through his extensive knowledge of paleography and bibliography (p.252).

Moreover, Buskens (2014) described the manuscript owners he encountered as “heirs of literati who lacked the sophisticated knowledge of their forebears to understand these learned texts.” He added that to owners who lacked the necessary specialization to read and understand the texts, the “books had become rather meaningless objects” (p.256).

Among the goals of this research was to understand what the manuscripts and archival documents represent to manuscript holders beyond the textual and intellectual content. As Akin (1996) explained, although materials in private collections may be valuable, often, the pieces in a collection “have meanings to the owner that result in the material being pulled from circulation, removed from the world of markets and circulating commodities, at least for the lifetime of the owner” (p.105).

In this section I relate the results of semi-structured interviews with eleven former and current participants of the H-II Prize. Their names have been changed to protect their confidentiality.

Murad Berrada

I met Murad Berrada, age 61, at the office of his medical practice in the city of Fez. Our meeting was arranged through the Internet after I found him on a professional website. He was

inviting and for the first few minutes of our meeting he spoke exclusively, sharing his thoughts about manuscripts and his family's relationship with them.

Berrada's grandfather and his father were scholars and adjunct jurists (*`udūl*) who had sizeable manuscript collections. He says that when his father took over the collection of his grandfather, people said they did not understand his interest in "old stuff... [that] just brings insects." His own delving into the works of manuscripts started after the death of his father in 2002. For family inheritance reasons, his father's library was sold off to a private library. Since then (and possibly to compensate for a sense of loss) he has been obsessed with collecting and purchasing manuscripts. Today, he estimates that he owns between 2,000 and 3,000 manuscripts and about 1,000 archival records. Most of the archival records were inherited, with some dating back to 500 years ago.

Berrada first heard about the H-II Prize on the radio and TV in the 1970s (although he is related through his maternal line to one of the original founders of the Prize). His brother in law (sister's husband) had participated in the Prize during that period; He participated in the Prize in 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, and 2015, each time winning either a prize of encouragement or the grand prize.

Although he would describe his manuscripts as not being in use, because he does not lend them out for fear of them never being returned, he himself does not have a problem with the digitization nor placement on the Internet of the manuscripts he submits to the Prize because they "belong to the people."

Mustapha and Layla Hamzaoui

It was through a personal contact that I was able to introduce myself to Mustapha Hamzaoui, who had been described as “someone who had participated in the H-II Prize.” Eventually, I traveled to the coastal town where he lives to visit him and his wife Layla in their home. He was reluctant to speak with me and asked me to give him some examples of my interview questions over the phone before I arrived.

Once in his home, Hamzaoui and his wife both had a lot to say about their family’s manuscript collection and their participation in the H-II Prize. To begin with, they stressed their family’s centuries-old history of bringing manuscripts from the Eastern Islamic lands through the Hajj pilgrimage route and through other trade routes. Mustapha and Layla are cousins (cross-cousin marriage is common in Morocco and elsewhere in the Muslim and Arab World), Layla is the daughter of Mustapha’s paternal uncle. Their family has been associated with religious knowledge, spiritual leadership and trade in Morocco since the 1600s. Today, the family name still carries a certain amount of prestige and the family’s ability to have held on to historic manuscripts and archival documents throughout the generations is a source of cultural capital that continues to prop up the reputation of their family.

At one point during our interview, Mustapha told me that he had “manuscripts in [his] blood.” His personal library of manuscripts and archival documents consists primarily of what he inherited upon the death of his father who was a scholar and avid collector of manuscripts. Upon his father’s death, the library was distributed among twelve siblings with the help and assessment of a manuscript scholar. Today, Mustapha says that his library consist of 100 manuscripts, some

lithographs, and some items from the famed Bulaq Press, begun in the 1820s in Egypt¹³. He would rate the condition of his collection as good and only has a few that are in need of any serious restorative intervention. He showed me a copy of the *Dala`il al-Khayrat* that he said was four-hundred years old whose pages have been warped by humidity for which he was trying to find the best way to treat himself.

Layla, who holds a degree in law, offered her insights about their manuscripts. She believed that it would have been best to have kept her father-in-law's large collection together as a whole. This is similar to a sentiment expressed by Berrada about his own father's library which he had wanted to keep together as a whole after his father's death. Yet the practicality of what this means in terms of inheritance laws and customs is that one heir would have to buy out all of the other siblings for their portions of the collection. Berrada said that financially he was capable of doing such a thing, but feared the social backlash of his less well-off siblings.

Mustpaha Hamzaoui explained that his family first learned about the H-II Prize from a friend of his late father, a well-known Moroccan historian who has published books on the family's ancestral town in the desert of South-Eastern Morocco. (The historian actually served as a judge for the H-II Prize for several years). For at least the last six years, Hamzaoui or members of his extended family repeatedly won either the grand Prize or the encouragement prizes and they are well known with the H-II Prize administration at the Ministry of Culture.

It is still important to Mustapha to show a sustained relationship with his manuscripts. He told me that he reads from his collections, preferring the history books and the *kutub rahalat*, books of travel narratives. He is also open to loaning out (he preferred the term *tabadul* –

¹³ See: <http://www.bibalex.org/bulaqpress/en/bulaq.htm> accessed 22 October 2015.

exchanging) or photocopying his manuscripts to trusted researchers and scholars. He also buys manuscripts, but only very occasionally and reluctantly sells from his personal collection.

When asked whether or not manuscripts are important in Morocco, Mustapha's initial response was "yes - but there is a lot of competition." Layla added that the market (*souq*) has dried up (*qallat*). They went on to talk about the competition in Morocco now for manuscripts, as people have begun to sell to outsiders, mostly Arabs from the Persian Gulf region. Mustapha thought that there needed to be a way for Moroccans who want to sell their manuscripts to find a good market-value price in country, but at the moment Moroccan cultural heritage institutions do not seem capable of matching what collectors from the Gulf are offering.

The Hamzaouis, having participated in the H-II Prize over several years, had some very interesting observations and comments about how it is run. Layla said that the advertising for the Prize is lacking, that there is "*taqsīr fī ishār*," inadequate publicity, and that the Prize is "not advertised like other prizes you see on TV." Her husband agreed, saying that most people who have manuscripts "do not know about the Internet" [i.e. how it works] and therefore are not going to see the announcements for the Prize that are (primarily) posted there. He takes it upon himself to tell other family members about the Prize when the submissions time is announced and encourages them to participate. He and his wife stay abreast of the Prize by keeping in good contact with the local office of the Ministry of Culture in their town.

And while it would be good if the names of the donating families were acknowledged once digital copies of the manuscripts were integrated into the catalog at the National Library, it only slightly bothers him that this is not done. Mustapha had no objection to a digitized version of the manuscripts he submitted to the H-II Prize and said that "all of the Muslims (*al-umma*

Islamia kullu)” can benefit from them. He conceded that one benefit of the Prize is that it encourages people to take care of their “material inheritances” (*mawruth*).

Hamid Tlemcani

Tlemcani is a professor in modern history, who also holds an administrative position at the university where he teaches. He is unique in that he has both participated in the Prize as a contestant and served as a judge for the national committee of the Prize. Due to inflexibilities in both of our schedules, I followed up an explanatory phone call with Tlemcani with an explanatory email. He agreed to answer my questions in the form of a questionnaire that I emailed to him. In addition to this, I was able to find an article on him in a local paper in which he discussed his participation in the Prize. This helped to confirm some things he wrote in his responses to my questionnaire and allowed me to see how he speaks about the Prize in a public setting.

Tlemcani said that he has had a long interest in manuscripts that began when he started conducting academic research. During that period, he began to come into contact with owners of private collections and he found that many owners did not know the value of their collections. It was from such owners that he himself acquired the manuscripts that he eventually submitted to the H-II Prize in 2007 and for which he won the grand prize. He described the previous owners as “private individuals who own manuscripts but do not know their value, nor how to care for and use them.” He was introduced to the Prize by a fellow intellectual who taught at his university and who had also served as a member of the national judging committee of the Prize.

His first reaction to the Prize was positive; he liked the premise of the initiative because “it deals with the realm of protection and care for national heritage.” He stated that his decision to participate in the Prize was motivated by his “concerned interest in manuscript heritage.”

The manuscripts that Tlemcani now owns are important to him because “their very existence harks back to a distant historical period, and ... the subject matters that they cover make them extremely valuable.” This value is not, however, financial, for Tlemcani. It is “absolutely not” about the money, but about “national and human [world] heritage¹⁴.” This may be why his future plans for the manuscripts is to donate them as a *waqf/habs* (pious endowment) to a library in Morocco.

Tlemcani thinks well of the Prize and consistently uses words of high praise to describe it. The Prize, in addition to the numerous manuscript libraries and institutes in the country, is proof of the importance manuscripts continue to have in Moroccan society. He said that the H-II Prize is “a huge project that has realized great results in the protection and care of written heritage. It illustratively asserts our history and identity and collective memory and must be supported to the fullest.” He did not oppose the digitization and posting to the Internet of his manuscripts “if it were going to be helpful for academic research.”

Tlemcani ascribed the low participation rates of the Prize to the fact that only a small percentage of Moroccans actually have manuscripts and to, as he explained, the preference of some owners to sell manuscripts on the black market. He said that he “wouldn’t change anything about the Prize,” [except] that he would “encourage and think up other ways and incentives for [promoting] the Prize.” Tlemcani said that winning the Prize spurred him on and gave him more

¹⁴ تراث وطني و إنساني

incentive to continue in the field of manuscripts. Later, as a member of the national committee, he said that he in turn tried to encourage professors, students and private owners to submit their manuscripts to the Prize or if not to donate them to a library.

Said al-Qurtubi

Said al-Qurtubi, age 85, is the grandson of a *makhzen* (government-administration) official who served as a minister under both Sultan Moulay Yousef (d.1927) and King Mohammed V (d.1961). In his estimation, the manuscript that he submitted to the H-II Prize in 2000 is “very rare” and worth millions (ملايين)¹⁵. The manuscript¹⁶ was written by the scholar, Ibrahim al-Tādli (d.1311) who was a teacher of his grandfather.

Al-Qurtubi said that he first heard about the H-II Prize in the media (*‘an tariqa ‘ilana*) and that when he heard about it, it immediately brought to mind the manuscript that he eventually submitted. He thought that the Prize would be a way to document the existence of his manuscript and to get it published. This is because, for al-Qurtubi, the significance of a manuscript is when it is read, although he is aware that even amongst literate people in Morocco, there are very few who can read and understand an historic Arabic manuscript.

Al-Qurtubi participated in the Prize two times, the second time with a collection of archival documents and manuscripts by the same author as his winning 2000 manuscript. Once again he won the grand prize, but once again was also made to share it with another participant. In 2008, he wrote a letter to the incoming Minister of Culture, perhaps inspired by the opening of a new building for the Moroccan National Library slated for later that same year. In his letter, al-

¹⁵ This should not be taken as a literal monetary value but an expression of its rarity.

¹⁶ تحفة ذوي الإستحقاق بشرح لأمية الزقاق

Qurtubi suggested ways for the National Library to accommodate manuscripts and manuscript owners. Among his suggestions, was that the National Library should have a gallery dedicated solely to manuscripts that would have a permanent exhibit open to visitors. This gallery would have three sections: the first would show manuscripts owned by the national library, a second section would highlight those persons who had endowed (*bitaḥbīs*) manuscripts to the library, and a third section would be for current owners of manuscripts to put some of their collection on display with the possibility of them endowing (*ḥabs*) the manuscript to the library after their deaths. It seems that Al-Qurtubi was making a case, not solely for valorizing the material manuscripts, but also for publicly honoring their owners.

The lack of response to any of Al-Qurtubi's proposals to the Ministry disillusioned him, and it is not insignificant nor coincidental that he has made alternate plans for the future of his manuscripts after his passing that do not include any Moroccan libraries.

Hamu Aït Mbarek

Hamu Aït Mbarek, a retired teacher age 65, learned of the H-II Prize through the representative at his local branch of the Ministry of Culture and in newspapers. Only later did he hear it mentioned on the Internet and television. Aït Mbarek takes pride in his collection of manuscripts, which he actively looks to expand through new acquisitions. He did inherit some manuscripts from his grandfather, but for the most part has built his collection through purchase. He is heavily involved in cultural activities in his city, has donated many antique pieces to his local museum of Amazigh culture, and sold some of his newly acquired manuscripts to a local university for a "symbolic price" in order for it to expand its collection of historic manuscripts.

Aït Mbarek is one of a handful of people who have participated in both the H-II Prize and the annual National Amazigh (Berber) Manuscript Prize that was started by the Royal Institute for Amazigh Culture (IRCAM), itself established in 2001 by royal decree. Because of this it was natural for him to make comparisons between his experiences with the two manuscript prize programs during our interview.

According to a senior administrator at IRCAM, Mr. Aït Hamza, the National Amazigh Manuscript Prize (NAMP) begun in 2006, is one of several cultural prizes¹⁷ given out by the Institute to encourage the advancement and revival (*nuḥūd*) of Amazigh culture. The NAMP is intended to bring together Amazigh manuscripts from around Morocco, preserving them so that “they will not be lost” and making them available to researchers. This includes those in which Arabic script has been used to vocalize a dialect of the Amazigh language, such as Tachelhit, as well as bi-lingual Arabic- Amazigh manuscripts where Arabic script is used to vocalize both languages. Although in recent years the Amazigh nationalist movement has promoted the use of the neo-*Tifinagh* script; for centuries in Morocco, Amazigh dialects were written with Arabic lettering.

Aït Hamza said that the committee for the NAMP looks for pedigree and originality (*aṣāla*) when they appraise the submissions for the Prize. Amongst their submissions they have found important manuscripts related to tribal relations dealing with subjects such as water and land rights. The subject matters of the submitted manuscripts span all fields however, including medicine and poetry. Like the H-II Prize, NAMP also makes digital copies of the manuscripts and returns the originals to the owners. While digitization has been carried out on past

¹⁷ Other prizes are given for literature, film, theatre, translation, etc. See: <http://www.ircam.ma/ar/index.php?soc=prix>

submissions, NAMP does not yet have the staff necessary to complete metadata tagging and other technical organizational tasks still need to be carried out on the collection.

As for the Hassan II Prize, Aït Mbarek participated in it three times, in 2002, 2003, and 2004. In 2002, he won the first prize of encouragement for a manuscript compilation that included within it the *Explanation of the foundations of the Sufi Path*¹⁸ by Shaykh Ahmed Zarruq (d.1493), and in 2003 for another compilation manuscript that contained within it a short treatise on the rules of stopping when reading the Qur`ān, and two Didactic Poems, one on correct Quranic pronunciation by al-Kharāz (d.718h./1318 c.e.)¹⁹, and the other on Qur`ānic recitation by ibn Barī (born in 660 h.)²⁰ for which he won the second prize. However, in 2004 none of his manuscripts or documents were chosen for a prize. That was the last time he submitted to the Prize although he is an active and avid collector, donor and exhibitor of manuscripts.

Aït Mbarek's hiatus from the H-II Prize is primarily due to the "difficulties" he said that he experienced as a participant and because, according to him, it is hard to find "something [a manuscript] that deserves a prize," amongst the generality of available manuscripts because many titles that are available have been highly circulated (*mutadāwila*). Amongst the "difficulties" he encountered with the H-II Prize, Aït Mbarek noted the expense of having to go to Rabat for the awards ceremony, although he does have fond memories of the 2002 party where government ministers attended and where there was an exhibition of some of the winning

¹⁸ شرح أصول الطريقة للشيخ أحمد زروق

¹⁹ منظومة في الرسم القرآني

²⁰ منظومة اللوامع لابن بري

manuscripts. Aït Mbarek lives in Southern Morocco and the bus trip one-way to Rabat from his town is currently about \$30 USD, which in Morocco is enough money to feed a family for a week. Add to this expenses for food and lodging once in Rabat if one does not have family or friends with whom to stay and the trip for a person of modest means could cause hardship.

Aït Mbarek said that another difficulty of the H-II Prize was that it took approximately one year for his manuscripts to be returned to him, and then when they were, they were not in as good of condition as when he had submitted them. He compared this with the Amazigh Prize in which there is only one Grand Prize awarded for the amount of 50,000 dirhams (~ \$5,133 USD). The Amazigh Prize is “hospitable” in his view in that it pays for the travel and board for the winner while in Rabat, and after winning this Prize in 2009 for his manuscript *Explanation of the Book of the Water Basin*²¹, an Amazigh (Berber) Maliki fiqh book by Mḥamed bin `Alī Āwzāl (d. 1162 h./1749 c.e.), Aït Mbarek returned from Rabat *with* his manuscripts. Because the Amazigh Prize has a five-year ban on participating after winning, he has not been able to submit again, but plans to do so as soon as his five years moratorium is complete.

Mohamed Aït Zarwal

Mohamed Aït Zarwal, an English teacher in his 40s, is involved in Amazigh cultural activities, and first learned about the H-II Prize from friends who worked at a local branch of the Ministry of Culture where he had once worked as a translator for some cultural programming. He submitted a portion of *Sahih Bukhari* a compilation of sayings and teachings attributed to the Prophet Muhammad, and a portion of a copy of Sibawayh’s *Al-Kitab* on Arabic grammar to the Prize in 2007. Aït Zarwal said that he had purchased the manuscripts from a seller of old books

²¹ شرح كتاب الحوض

in the old city of Fez just two years prior to submitting them to the Prize. When asked what his plans were for the future of his reportedly small collection of manuscripts, he said that it was for them to be “protected from loss.”

According to Aït Zarwal, the H-II Prize is an “important” program that he would describe as having the “goal of searching for and identifying the location of existing manuscripts.” He is okay with the digitization and sharing of H-II manuscripts on the Internet and sees it as supporting “the common good.”

Si Ali Hassani

Si Ali al-Hassani, a tenth-generation manuscript collection owner described Morocco as “the cemetery of manuscripts,” especially from al-Andalus (Muslim Spain). Specifically, he said that Southern Morocco, the (Western) Sahara area from where he hails is “filled with them.” The majority of al-Hassani’s manuscripts were inherited from his paternal line of grandfathers going back ten generations, all of whom were Islamic scholars and judges. In addition to about 1,000 manuscripts, al-Hassani also owns around 17,000 archival documents (*wathā`iq*) and claims that his collection is the best in the Sahara.

The al-Hassani family has participated in the H-II Prize three times. Si Ali’s father submitted to the Prize twice and then he himself participated in 2000 winning the 1st Prize of encouragement in 2002. Their initial knowledge of the Prize came by way of the former royal historian of Morocco, Abdelwahab Benmansour (d. 2008) who Si Ali said had encouraged his father to participate in the Prize. According to al-Hassani, Benmansour had also previously contacted his father in the 1950s to inquire about the possibility of him possessing any documents that could be used as evidence in international courts to support the case for Morocco’s longstanding ownership of the Sahara.

Al-Hassani is so passionate about manuscripts that he traveled to Mali during the civil strife of 2012 to “rescue” some manuscripts related to Sufism, Islam’s mystical tradition, that he believed were in danger of being destroyed by radicalized hardliners. However, he does not think that manuscripts are important to Moroccans in general. He said that in general “society doesn’t care” about manuscripts or is ignorant of their value. Still, he is very active in promoting manuscripts, especially their use as historical evidence regarding the issue of the Western Sahara.

When asked why he has not participated in the Prize in more than a decade, he replied that the conditions of the Prize “do not allow you to participate,” then he went on to explain that his manuscripts are rare (*nādira*) and that if he submitted them to the Prize, they would be photographed, but would not receive any restoration work, all for a very small Prize amount. Then, he explained, other people would have access to the manuscripts to do research, while the owner would receive no further compensation.

Abd al-Razaq Mahbūb

In the old city of Meknes, Mahbūb works as an *ʿudul* (*ʿadal* in modern standard Arabic) a jurist adjunct, a functional justice of the peace preparing notarial documents for the public which range from marriage contracts to inheritance documents. On the wall across from his desk hangs his certificate from the H-II Prize. He is also the son of a notable scholar who left a considerable collection of manuscripts upon his death that has been split up between a private research library in Casablanca, the local Meknes Ministry of Culture, and his descendants. It was with these inherited manuscripts that Mahbūb participated in the H-II Prize in 2000 and won the Grand Prize (which he shared with another participant, Ait Mbarek whom I discussed earlier in this chapter). Mahbūb says that he first heard about the Prize through ads in the media (*al-idhaʿa*)

that said everyone who had manuscripts should participate in the Prize. He said that it made him think of the manuscripts he had inherited and that he should participate.

Mahbūb is not the kind of person to openly question the government, even just to make suggestions for the improvement of the Prize. He assumes that the people at the Ministry who run the Prize know best.

Mahbūb has not participated in the Prize again since 2000 because, although he owns other manuscripts, those that he showed in 2000 were “the most important ones” that he had. He assumes that the Ministry (H-II Prize administration) is looking for “rarities and new things [meaning newly discovered old materials]” which he presumably does not have in his collection.

Abdel-Kabir Ben Mansour

Ben Mansour, a man who appeared to be in his late twenties or early thirties, hailed from the northern area of Morocco (*al-Rif*). He visited the administrative office of the H-II Prize in late June 2015 to inquire about some archival documents he had submitted to the 2011 H-II Prize. A Ministry official provided him with a receipt which showed that his documents had already been returned to his local Ministry branch office in the North.

Ben Mansour told me that he came to know of the Prize from advertisements posted at his local branch of the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Youth and Sports in addition to the website of the Ministry of Culture. When asked why he had participated in the Prize, Ben Mansour’s face contorted as if he thought the question itself a little absurd, and he replied, “in order to learn the value of our papers.” The “our” was his family. The papers were family documents, primarily related to land purchases. The Ministry official explained to me after Ben Mansour left the office that the papers belonged to his grandfather “who was still living” (this

was meant to underscore the relative “youth” of the papers) and that they, in the opinion of the Ministry official, had little historic value.

Abdellah Alami

Alami, a retired journalist, participated in the Prize in 2001. He submitted two documents dating from 1931 c.e. that had been given by the late king Mohammed V to Alami’s paternal uncle and another male relative for fighting in the defense forces against French invasion. One of the documents is in Arabic and the other is its French translation.

Alami had come to the Rabat office of the Ministry from Fez in order to pick up his documents that had been missing for fourteen years. He was very emotional about finally getting the documents back (they had been found amongst the belongings of a recently deceased Ministry official) and also about what they represented. He told me passionately that he had submitted the documents to the Prize in order to honor and bring attention to the people who had “literally defended Morocco with their own selves.” These people, who had mobilized militarily against initial French occupation, are very seldom spoken of during present times. For Alami, the Prize had been a platform on which he could honor and invoke the remembrance of a particular Moroccan historical era and experience, one that had been overshadowed by later nationalist narratives born out of the independence movement.

ANALYZING THEMATIC PATTERNS IN PARTICIPANT NARRATIVES:
UNDERSTANDING MOTIVATIONS FOR SUBMITTING TO THE H-II PRIZE

Coding and narrative analysis of interviews with participants in and administrators of the Prize reveal thematic patterns that will be explored further in the following section of this dissertation. Among the major salient themes gleaned from the participants are: *loss (ḍayā‘), charity (sadaqa jariya), national heritage/collective memory, and prize money.*

Loss

Loss (*ḍayā‘* or *talaf*) was a frequently occurring word in discussions about the H-II Prize. It was used to discuss what was already materially absent in terms of Moroccan manuscripts. For example, one participant even mentioned the confiscation of Sultan Moulay Zidan’s manuscripts by the Spanish in the 1600s, the burning of manuscripts by Moroccans unaware of their value, and the current “black market” for Moroccan manuscripts that is feeding thirst for documentary heritage materials by wealthy patrons in Gulf countries.

The pressure put on the Moroccan manuscript “market” by Gulf-Arab interest seems to be producing an anxiety for some. For example, a participant from Southern Morocco disclosed that although he does enjoy participating in the market for manuscripts in Morocco, he will not sell to anyone who wants to take them out of the country. He said that he had repeatedly refused to sell to middlemen who approach him on behalf of primarily buyers from Saudi Arabia who want to buy Moroccan manuscripts. Although he mentioned a comment by the Minister of Culture during his 2002 H-II party regarding the prohibition on manuscripts being taken out of

the country, it is the idea that indigenous manuscripts leaving Morocco is also a loss that primarily restrains him from selling to foreigners.

One H-II Prize repeat participant linked the aim of the Prize directly to safeguarding from loss. He explained that the goal (*ghaya*) of the Prize was to have Moroccans reveal their rare (*qalīl*) originals. If they do not reveal them, they [the manuscripts] will be wasted, he explained. He emphasized this for me by saying in Moroccan Arabic, “they will be lost.”²² Ironically, this participant’s late father was against the idea of participating in the H-II Prize because he was afraid of losing his possessions to the government. However, today the son says that he trusts the Ministry, although he is aware that a lot of Moroccans do not have a similar trust for government officials.

Loss is also mentioned in relationship to fear of confiscation by the Moroccan authorities. An administrator at the Moroccan National Library noted that many of the collections of manuscripts at the library were acquired through confiscation. This person believes that Moroccan manuscript holders are reluctant to participate in the H-II Prize, or that even if they do participate they do not submit their best manuscripts, because if something was “too good,” i.e. very rare or old or beautiful, etc., the authorities would have provocation to confiscate it. This understanding is corroborated by participant comments. A participant from Southern Morocco said that people do not submit to the H-II Prize a lot because they are jealously attached to their manuscripts. Another repeat participant from a coastal town said that the H-II Prize was not a worthy topic for study because people only “submit their weakest things,” i.e. their lowest quality and least valuable manuscripts and archival documents to the Prize.

²² غادي نمشو/غي ضيو

Another repeat participant from northern Morocco admitted that he does not submit the best manuscripts in his collection to the Prize because he is afraid of theft. One solution that he proposed was the issuing of insurance policies to those who participate. This, he felt would allow people to be more open about what is in their collections.

However, loss is also attached to a palpable fear about the future of existent manuscripts, and so for some participants, participating in the H-II Prize is a protection against loss of the information content of the documents. This was reflected in the concerns of one participant whose main motivation for participating in the Prize was that the scholarship of his grandfather's teacher not remain in anonymity. The prospect of having their manuscript cataloged (i.e. acknowledged and documented and then digitized and saved at the National Library) is one way to protect against physical and/or intellection loss of the texts.

This same participant suggested to the Ministry, at least in the context of his own winning manuscript, that in order to truly ensure protection from loss, the ministry should look beyond image storage through microfilming (the prevalent method at that time). He suggested that the sole method to protect against loss and ensure the longevity of a text, was for his manuscript to be "printed as a book [by the Ministry] and distributed until contents of the book are no longer unknown and the author is no longer obscure." This participant, who offered to return the Prize money to support such printing, petitioned the Ministry several times with this request, and he recommended that the microfilm held at the library be printed directly. This should be done to avoid, according to him, all of the inevitable mistakes that would be introduced into the text if it were transcribed while at the same time highlighting the clear and beautiful script of the copyist.

Loss can take on another meaning for families with respect to archival documents when those document contain personal or financial information related to taxes or trade.²³ There could be a fear that information contained therein might bring the person or his/her family unwanted attention from the authorities.

Loss has been a part of the H-II Prize narrative since its inception. The very first advertisement for the Prize in 1969, after discussing the Prize amounts, noted that the value of manuscripts and archival documents was apparent for “the distinctive (*ābrāz*) history of the country and the rich ancient heritage of the Moroccan nation.” It implored the readers to “take part (*sāhamū*) [in the Prize] with your manuscripts and archival documents and do not leave them to be befallen by dust and *loss* [emphasis added].”²⁴

One former member of the H-II national committee described manuscripts in private libraries as being in a general state of concealment and ruinous loss (*talaf*) which could be understood to be in a general state of deterioration, of losing quality, and growing worse. Loss can relate both to a condition of decay and to the inability to keep something within one’s possession.²⁵

A former administrator for the Prize spoke with me candidly about the obstacles in administrating the H-II Prize in its first iterations that themselves contributed to participant manuscript loss. He said that until 1985 the Ministry of Culture was relatively small and its offices were located primarily in large cities while most manuscripts are found in rural areas (*al-bawadī*). So in the early years, there were clearly logistical problems. If there was not a local

²³ Thank you to Prof. Abdessalaam Maghraoui of Duke University for pointing this out to me.

²⁴ Ad in *al-Alam* newspaper, February 19, 1969.

²⁵ "loss, n.1." *OED Online*. Oxford University Press, September 2015. Web. 7 December 2015.

office of the Ministry near them, people were told to submit their documents for the Prize to any government administrative office in their vicinity. Al-Mihdaoui said that “for sure” manuscripts were lost in this method, and this then made some people unwilling to further participate in the Prize. Such obstacles were then compounded by the fact that in the early years of the Prize, most people did not have telephones, nor any other way to be contacted; as a result many manuscripts could not be returned. For example, some manuscripts kept in the collection at the Ben Yousef library in Marrakech were originally submissions from that area to the H-II Prize that could not be returned. The current administrator of the Prize keeps a list of manuscripts that were never claimed and that are currently kept at the national library. According to Al-Mihdaoui, such manuscripts were accumulated from 1969 until 2005 and in 2008 were formally turned over to the national library.

Fear (of loss)

A sub-theme of loss is fear (*khawf*), because in general what is feared is the loss of physical possession, or the forfeiture of access to manuscripts and archival documents. This fear may stem from former confiscations of private collections by the Moroccan authorities as well as the lack of transparency involved in the operations of public libraries and archives. One former participant said that his initial reaction, upon learning of the H-II Prize was fear until it was explained to him that the manuscripts that submitted to the Prize are eventually returned back to their rightful owners. This same participant proposed improving the method of advertising for the H-II Prize so that it was explicitly clear that manuscripts would be returned to their owners after the Prize process.²⁶ This might assuage the fearful apprehensions and beliefs that in his opinion deter many people from participating in the Prize.

²⁶ This is already done. All advertisements that I encountered said that the records would be returned. How much the statement is trusted may be the issue.

Obviously, H-II administration officials are aware of the fear of loss. However, the way in which they interpret and understand it is not always sympathetic. One senior official ultimately attributed the resistance to participation in the Prize to “a kind of ignorance that doesn’t allow people to participate.” According to him, this “ignorance” is also coupled with fear of loss of their possessions, but he did not elaborate any further.

A significant number of the National library’s 13,000 manuscript volumes containing some 34,000 titles come from collections seized by the government from private individuals. Manuscript volumes are separate works bound together either by the author, scribe, or owner. Hendrickson (2008) identified four major confiscated collections kept there: that of Abd al Hayy al-Kattānī listed in the library’s catalog under the Arabic letter *kāf*, and consisting of approximately 3,371 volumes, the collection of 1,311 volumes from the library of Tuhāmī al-Glāwī, the former Pasha of Marrakech who was an open enemy of Morocco’s nationalist independence movement against French colonial rule; 265 volumes formerly belonging to Muhammad al-Hajawī, a politically outspoken religious scholar, as well as 60 to 65 confiscated from the private library of Mohammed al-Muqrī (d.1957). Access to certain materials contained within these collections (as well as others) is also monitored and limited by library staff, presumably due to the presence of materials deemed politically sensitive.

Moroccans do not feel empowered to change the bureaucratic systems that operate inside of government and it could be their fear that contributes to a withholding, a drawing back, a passive resistance that could be termed archival silence. A former H-II participant from central Morocco attributed the low relative participation in the H-II Prize by Moroccans to fear for the loss of their manuscripts, specifically that they will be taken by the Ministry of Culture. More research would have to be done to substantiate this. This same participant added that the proof of

the continued importance of manuscripts in Morocco is the existence of ostensibly hidden private collections from which manuscripts do not come out (are not publicly known) because of a lack of trust (*thiqa*).

Preservation

Loss is also related to the sub-theme, *preservation*, which several participants mentioned as a serious need. Preservation in terms of the H-II Prize manuscripts is often discussed in terms of the (digital) surrogates created and kept at the national library. For example, when asked if the Prize has reached its goals, one former administrator replied no and immediately brought up the situation of the image storage of H-II Prize manuscripts. He explained that in 2005, a decision was made that everything submitted to the Prize would be preserved. It is not clear who made this decision. Prior to this time (1969-2004), image storage of a manuscript or document (done by way of microfilm) was only carried out if the members of the committee specifically chose a piece to be microfilmed. According to the former administrator, in the earlier period of the Prize microfilming decisions were made based upon the scholarly interests of the committee members. The members chose those things that were seen to be important to their research interests for microfilming. Also and unfortunately, a good portion of the microfilming that was done at that time was of poor quality. The former administrator described the quality of existing microfilm as “spoiled, bad” (*radī`a*). In my own attempts to follow the narrative of the Prize to its logical conclusion at the National library, which I discuss later in this dissertation, there were several instances when microfilm of H-II Prize manuscripts were unreadable. Because originals have been returned to the owners, the ability to produce a new, readable digital copy of such manuscripts is for the most part lost.

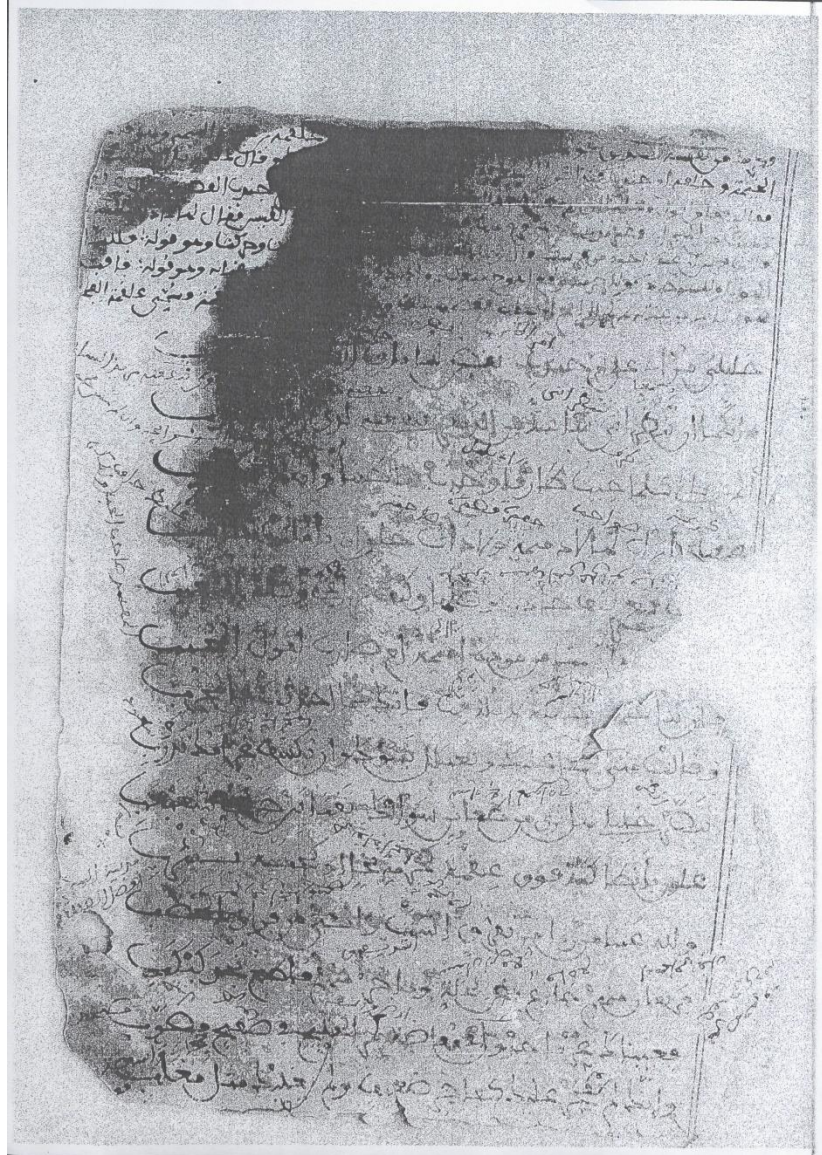


Figure 5 Print of Microfilm manuscript submitted to H-II in 2001 from Dakhla

The lack of a strong plan for the storage of submitted H-II documents in the early years may be due to the fact that personal documentation and preservation was sometimes carried out by committee members during the earlier period of the Prize. I was told by an administrator on the Prize that sometimes if one of the committee members came across something that piqued their interest or was related to their research, they might take it out to be photocopied in order to have a copy for themselves. Today, this is technically against the rules of the Prize, which state

that members of the committee or employees of the Ministry cannot take photos or make copies of materials submitted to the Prize, but it still happens in what could be argued to be benign ways. For example in 2015, a scholar on the committee wanted to closely examine a submitted manuscript in order to compare it to a similar text already in his possession on the same topic. Instead of waiting for the process of appraisal, prize-awarding, digitization and public access to be completed, he had a digital copy made for himself on location at the Ministry.

The focus on image storage of H-II record surrogate copies was not the most pressing preservation issue for participants of the Prize. Participants were more concerned about the conservation of their analog records and expressed hope and frustration that the Prize would expand the scope of its preservation program to help them care for their materials. Although one former participant from central Morocco said that the only value to the Prize was the fact that an owner could have his or her documents digitized and catalogued (as opposed to the prize money amounts). Most other participants expressed concern about physical preservation of their collections.

Among the things that one repeat participant from Northern Morocco would like to change about the Prize, is its focus. He did not believe that the Prize should “just encourage,” but that it would be preferable that some care of the manuscripts (i.e. restoration and preservation work) was done while they were in the possession of the Ministry. Ironically, he said that often once his manuscripts are returned to him after the Prize they are not in as good condition as when he submitted them. Another participant suggested that anyone submitting to the Prize make a copy of his or her manuscript or archival document before submitting because, he found that a page was missing from his manuscript once it was returned to him.

A repeat participant from a coastal town mentioned conservation as a change she would make to the Prize. She said that “it would be good if they [the Prize administration] could help with some conservation.” Yet another participant from Southern Morocco mentioned preservation amongst his suggestions for improvement of the Prize which he said would entail an increase in the amount of prize monies, a public exhibition of participant manuscripts, and the restoration and preservation (*tarmīm/‘ilaj*) of submitted manuscripts while they are in the possession of the Ministry.

I questioned a senior Prize official about the lack of a conservation component to the Prize. I told him that the topic of manuscript restoration (*tarmīm*) as a feature of the H-II Prize had been mentioned to me repeatedly by participants as a hoped for addition to the Prize. His response was that Morocco was “weak” in manuscript restoration, meaning it is not something for which there are a lot of trained individuals or facilities, and that it was not possible for the Prize to offer that service.

Among the participants at least four were actively working to apply some conservation techniques to their collections themselves. These consisted primarily of insect removal/repellant and reparation of torn pages.

National Heritage/Collective Memory

Bazzaz (2010) wrote that Morocco is a country where “history is closely bound together with the politics of nationalism.” In its post-colonial formation, it conforms to the model described by Anderson (2006) of a nation “conceived as a solid community moving steadily down (or up) history” (p.25). Anderson (2006) posited that nationalism and the idea of the nation was able to take hold during the modern period once other cultural concepts, such as a religious

script-language or belief in monarch with divine dispensations (p.36), lost a hold on societies. In Morocco, however, nation-building did not dispense with these concepts but incorporated them into the idea of the Moroccan nation with Islam (and the Alawid monarchy) being seen as a basic parts of the decolonization toolkit (Ellis-House, 2012). Moroccan nationalists were concerned both with the nation's "progress" and with valorizing certain traditions of their choosing. They stressed Morocco's Arab identity, as opposed to its Amazigh (Berber) identity.

Anderson (2006) identified print as the technology of communications that made new modern communities, i.e. nations, "imaginable" (p.44). He was dismissive of "manuscript knowledge" as "scarce and arcane lore" which he juxtaposed with a print knowledge, that is described as reproducible and disseminating (p.39). This generalization does not hold for the Moroccan example where newspapers and journals did play an important role in the success of the nationalist movement (Ellis-House, 2012), but where in addition, a centuries old tradition of scholarly manuscript production still held palpable sway over the imaginations of certain elites during the post-colonial nation-building period. The H-II Prize is evidence of nationalist use of the country's manuscript heritage as a potent symbol for the heritage of a post-colonial Morocco and a prop for social memory.

The nationalist sentiment was most strongly disclosed during interviews when participants discuss their manuscripts and archival documents as constituting part of the Moroccan national heritage. One participant described the Prize as an event for the good of the nation and citizens. And although he found some aspects of the Prize lacking, he said that he encouraged other people to participate because he "is a nationalist" (*waṭanī*). All but one of the participants discussed the Prize in terms of national heritage or collective memory. One former participant said that there are many important parts to his manuscripts, their history, decoration,

calligraphy, and binding, but that their importance in Morocco is sustained because they are “parts of [collective] memory, history, and heritage that must be protected.”

Another former repeat participant from central Morocco at one point commended the Ministry of Culture for its role in the H-II Prize and its commitment to the goal of “salvaging what is possible to be salvaged of Moroccan intellectual heritage” while also protecting “Moroccan intellectual treasures” which he said are clamored after by the “hands of foreigners,” preyed upon by humidity and insects, or gathered to feed the flames of the fires of public ovens.

Ernest Gellner (1983) described nationalism as a political principle that can be expressed as sentiment. When it manifests as a sentiment, a “feeling of satisfaction [is] aroused by its fulfillment” (p.1). Gellner (1983) also described nationalism as a theory of political legitimacy, so when Moroccans submit their manuscripts and archival documents to the H-II Prize as a conscious attempt to “protect national heritage,” in addition to their concern for the text or document, they are simultaneously satisfying a personal nationalist sentiment while accepting and inherently signifying an acceptance of the legitimacy of the ruling Moroccan monarchy and parliamentary government. In fact, it could be argued that in some cases, participants are simply repeating the established language of national heritage used by the Ministry of Culture.

Sadaqa Jāriya (Perpetual Charity)

When Fouad Al-Mihdaoui, a former administrator of the H-II Prize said that working with manuscripts is *sadaqa jāriya*, a perpetual, voluntary form of alms-giving, he was referring to the work that he and others at the Ministry have done to locate, catalog and critically edit manuscripts. He was placing those actions, which could be classified as state-employment in the cultural sector, within a context of Islamic piety and religious observance. Singer (2013) wrote

that “beneficent giving has been a core aspect of Muslim belief and practice (p.341),” and Al-Mihdaoui placed work with manuscripts inside the frame of beneficent giving. In this context, manuscript valorization and preservation becomes a means of both “paying forward,” i.e. helping future generations who will use the manuscripts, and accruing benefit for the person carrying out the actions during and after his or her worldly life (Weir and Zysow, 2015).

Several H-II Prize participants also described their participation in the Prize as *sadaqa jāriya*, an act of perpetual charity. For some, the merit, or benefit that they were seeking was for themselves or a deceased family member who originally owned the books. As Weir and Zysow (2015) explained in their Encyclopedia of Islam article, “The merit of giving *charity* does not stop with the giver... [and] the benefit of charity is not “limited to the living...[It] may be given in the name of deceased Muslims, especially by a child on behalf of a parent.”

One repeat participant from a coastal town said that her motivation in participating in the H-II Prize was “knowledge from which other people derive benefit.”²⁷ This is a partial quotation of a Prophetic Hadith, a saying attributed to the Prophet Muhammad in which it is explained that after a person’s death his or her deeds cease except, continuous charity (*sadaqah jāriyyah*) that was given, knowledge of theirs from which others continue to benefit, and a righteous child who continues to pray for them. So, in uttering the Prophet’s words she is connecting her participation in the Prize with a desire to live up to a religious ideal.²⁸

²⁷ علم ينتفع به

²⁸ It should be noted however that her husband responded to her pronunciation by saying “yes, people can benefit from our knowledge [i.e. that is contained in the manuscripts] and we benefit from both the knowledge *and the money* [emphasis added].”

Another participant from central Morocco said that he did not withhold his collection from local researchers who asked to look at manuscripts, nor from the H-II Prize. For him, “knowledge (*ilm*) is not supposed to be just sitting [unused] on shelves.” He also had no problem with digitization or even with the posting of images of his winning manuscript on the Internet. This, he said was “*sadaqa jāriya*”. It was in this pietistic vein that he initially submitted to the Prize. He said that he had initially done so in order for his deceased father to partake in the blessings that were to be reaped if his books were still in use.

In the context of modern secular paradigms, it might be tempting to think of *sadaqa jāriya* as a combination of two separate things, philanthropy and religious missionary inclination (especially when manuscripts are specific to Islamic faith and practices). However, the internalization of *sadaqa jāriya* as a religious virtue is not divisible for those who engage in it, and the religious charity intent would not be different if the content of the manuscripts were astronomy or cooking. Just as a piece of farm land that has been given in *sadaqa jāriya* is producing a variety of foods and feeding the needy all without the donor ever having the intent of or engaging in any missionary efforts. The concept of *sadaqa jāriya* while often highly public, is in its essence, an intensely personal philanthropic transaction done for Divine pleasure.

Prize Money

The subject of financial compensation for participating in the H-II Prize is one of the more complex issues that emerged with almost everyone with whom I spoke to during this research. A majority of administrators of the Prize assumed that the prize money was the *only* reason people participated in the Prize (not that they necessarily had a problem with this). For example, a senior Prize official told me emphatically that the sole motivation for participation on the part of private owners was “the money.” This same person, however, mentioned a failed

initiative of the Ministry in the 1980s to purchase manuscripts directly from owners that did not find any willing participants.

Another H-II Prize official said that he believed material (*mādī*) concerns were more important to families that own manuscripts than intellectual concerns and this was “a disgraceful shame” (*‘ayb*). He was referring to the present-day selling of manuscripts primarily to foreign buyers. If people want to sell their collections, he believes that they should be forthright and make this desire publicly known [as opposed to conducting the transaction secretly on the black market]. He was especially critical of families with large collections who submit only a few manuscripts every year to the H-II Prize. “Why not just give a copy of everything [they own] to the National Library and be done with it?” he asked regarding such families. He believed that it is incumbent upon (*wājib*) those who own manuscripts to share copies with the Prize or elsewhere (a library), especially if they themselves do not have the capacity to care for the manuscripts.

Another H-II Prize official also commented about submissions from families with large collections. He said that in the case of such families, it is obvious that they have a large collection from which they pick and set aside a few manuscripts each year for the Prize. He proposed that a better way for a family like this to handle their collection would be to have it professionally cataloged. Then they could publish the catalog and establish a family foundation, opening the collection up to the public.²⁹

Although there was the tendency amongst administrators to see H-II participants as materialistic people primarily motivated by financial gain, in my meetings with actual

²⁹ There are multiple examples of this being done in Morocco. For example the Sbihi Foundation library in Sale, and the Daoud foundation in Tangier. See Hendrickson, J. (2008)

participants in their homes and workplaces, the image of a participant *only out to make money* seemed less and less plausible. While I was unable to learn of the financial health of the participants with whom I met, no one seemed to be in dire financial straits. Most seemed to be solidly middle class and a few could be considered wealthy. Yet, even these participants brought up the subject of the Prize money during our discussions, almost exclusively to complain about its paltry amount. I do not doubt that for some of them, the amounts offered by the Prize seemed insignificant in comparison with their own personal wealth.

The need to increase the amount of the H-II prize amount was a constant and strongly repeated theme throughout my interviews. One repeat participant said that in order for the Prize to be viable, “the cash amount of the Prize has to be raised.” He believed that it should be at least 100,000 dirhams, (the rough equivalent of 10,000 USD which is more than 3 times the amount of the current Grand Prize of 30,000 dirhams (3,000 USD)). This particular participant attributed the weakness of the Prize money amount to the limited resources of Morocco in general and to the small budget of the Ministry specifically.

When questioned as to what should be done to get more people to participate, another repeat participant from a coastal town said, “take care of the money” and added that increasing the amount of the Prize money would lead to an increase in participation. He was pleased with the new (2015) amount of 10,000 Moroccan Dirhams for the first prize of encouragement, saying it was an improvement.

Indeed, some participants said that they found the prize money amounts offensive. One former participant from Southern Morocco spoke disappointedly about having to split the prize money between himself and his co-winner that year. Another former participant from central Morocco said regarding the prize money, “They think that they gave me a lot, first of all, I do not

need the money...” The Prize amounts are in his opinion, “trivial” (*tafi*) and “loathsome” and not appropriate for a Prize that is seeking out rare manuscripts and that carries the name of a very powerful king. This same participant also mentioned that the amount of the H-II Prize money is low in comparison to other prizes given the realm of culture (sports, music, etc.) in Morocco. Another former participant disclosed that in his opinion the H-II Prize money amount is “trivial” (*basīṭa*) monetarily speaking, as it “doesn’t amount to much.” He rationalized this paucity in the context of the Ministry of Culture being the “weakest” ministry in Moroccan government.

Not all participants mentioned the Prize money in order to complain. One participant from northern Morocco said that part of supporting the Prize means participating in it in order to protect manuscripts “irrespective of the amount of the actual cash awards.” Another person from Southern Morocco said that he did not believe that people should “be stingy” and only think about prize money when considering participation in the Prize, but that they should also consider the opportunity to “spread (*nashara*) culture.”

It could be argued that manuscripts were always and continue to be social commodities, objects endowed with value based on the demand for them. While in the past they were intended to be shared, lent, or purchased primarily for intellectual, religious or documentary pursuits, their present significance is based on historic, artefactual and research value. Appadurai (1988) wrote, “the commodity situation in the social life of any ‘thing’ can be defined as the situation in which its exchangeability (past, present, or future) for some other thing is its socially relevant feature” (p.13).

Appadurai (1988) conceived of this commodity situation operating in specific cultural frameworks and also noted that “things can move in and out of the commodity state.” Interestingly, in terms of our discussion of the H-II Prize money, he speaks about the existence

of a “regime of value” in which there is a consistent sharing of assumptions and standards “by the parties to a particular commodity exchange. (p.15)” In terms of the H-II Prize, it could be argued that the regime of value is dysfunctional. While it is true that the mere existence of the Prize contributes to further embodying manuscripts and archival documents with value, the proportional amount of that value is not agreed upon. Manuscript and document owners believe that the cash amounts offered by the Prize are inadequate because they do not reflect the subjective value assigned them by the owners who are also well aware of what they could garnish for their manuscripts if they outright sold them on the black market which according to one informant has blossomed since the 1980s.

H-II Prize participants are not alone in their call for an increase to the prize amount. Karouti (2004), listed “an increase in the prize amount for the Hassan II Prize for Manuscripts and Archival Documents” as one of several necessary steps that needed to be taken by the Ministry of culture in order to collect all of the manuscripts relevant to Moroccan history dispersed throughout the country and abroad. Moreover, he wrote that the Prize money (as of 2004) whether for the prizes of encouragement or the grand prize, “do not reflect the importance of manuscript heritage nor do they encourage private owners to let others become acquainted with their manuscripts” (p.35). Another former member of the H-II national committee who unfortunately died of cancer in the summer of 2014 before I could meet with him told a journalist in a 2008 interview that amongst his hopes for the future of the Prize was “an improvement in its prize amounts and in its stature...” (Mimouni, 2008).

How can this inability to agree on a regime of value be reconciled? The current cash amounts awarded by the Ministry of Culture are seen to be highly inadequate by people who still consistently participate. Several participants appear to have adjusted in turn by submitting their

“weak” manuscripts and archival documents because the exchange of value initiated by the Prize is insufficient. Of course, the Ministry administers the Prize on a tight budget and increases to the 2015 prize amounts were done by reducing costs in other areas of the Prize. Still, it is important to understand participants as seeking an equitable exchange of value for their possessions, and not as “money hungry.”

It should not be surprising that economics plays a part in manuscript holders decision making. If the manuscripts are valuable, then intuitively they could materialize into eventual financial profit for the holders. Such profit might be lost if access to the manuscripts became available to the general public – either at a physical archive or online in a digital library. Understandably, manuscript holders want reasonable compensation. Rajkumar, Srinivasan, Thirunarayanan, & Sangeetha (2012) identified similar sentiments among the holders of historic palm leaf manuscripts in Northern India. They explain:

Most of the healers store manuscripts in their homes mostly due to the sentiments they attach to the traditional heritage and have a reluctance to share their possession. They also believe that the knowledge or the unique formulation present in the manuscripts could bring them a huge royalty (p.69).

The authors overcame the reluctance of the manuscript holders by holding preservation awareness sessions in areas where manuscript holders were believed to be living. This led to a significant number of palm manuscript holders coming forth with their collections for preservation, restoration, and even digitization.

The results of this research offer a fresh and rare window into the motivations and viewpoints of H-II Prize participants from the last fifteen years of the Prize. While not exhaustive, the findings show a highly educated and passionate group of individuals, some with inherited manuscripts and others who have built up collections through buying and selling. Most seem to have records of greater value than those that they have submitted to the Prize. And yet the persistence of some repeat participants, in spite of all of their criticisms, seems to show a desire to build a relationship of trust with the Ministry and to see the H-II Prize succeed in its intended goals.

6. PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION OF THE 37TH ROUND OF THE PRIZE IN 2015

In participant observation, the person of the researcher becomes a tool for research (Hume et al., 2005) in a more explicit way than with other research methods. Repeated interactions in semi-intimate spaces with informants requires both the development of relationships of trust and the establishment of clear boundaries (at least for the researcher). In the following section, I detail my experiences as an intern on the H-II Prize during the summer of 2015. I worked daily (4-5 days a week) assisting with the intake and cataloging of Prize manuscripts. Sometimes my contribution was clearly administrative (photocopying, looking up things on the Internet) while at other times I engaged in higher level discussions about how something should be organized or the value of documenting miscellanea in the submissions.

The 2015 Hassan II Prize

After a three-year hiatus, the 37th round of the H-II Prize was announced in March 2015. It was well announced on websites and social media, but its presence was less palpable in “offline” Morocco. There were not any signs or billboards in the street announcing the Prize. One Moroccan historian with whom I spoke about the Prize in May 2015 told me, “there isn’t any more Hassan II Prize (*mabqash jāiza al hassan al-thani*).” He understood the seemingly long hiatus to signify the end of the Prize. When I informed him of its return, he said, “but there isn’t any news of it on the radio or television.” Another informant, a repeat participant of the Prize knew that the Prize was on a scheduled hiatus while the new law was written and

implemented, but only learned of the 2015 opening for submissions when I contacted him for an interview.

I reported to the Ministry's Directorate of the Book office in the Agdal neighborhood of Rabat on the morning of June 1, 2015 and was greeted by the head of the Office of Manuscripts and Heritage Libraries, Mr. Abdelaziz, who has held a deep personal interest in the Prize since his days as a student and who managed the Prize for its 1993 and 1994 rounds before being assigned to another office at the Ministry. The 37th round of the Prize (2015) would be his first year back managing the Prize.

Mr. AbdelAziz waited for my arrival before beginning to process and catalog the first entries of the H-II Prize that had arrived from Fez. The deadline for submission to the Prize had ended the week before and now the branch offices located throughout the country would be expected to bring the documents and manuscripts submitted to the Rabat office in person. Submissions from Fez, Tetouan and Casablanca were already in the Rabat Office. Abdelaziz was especially looking forward to Marrakech's submissions which he had heard were plentiful this year.

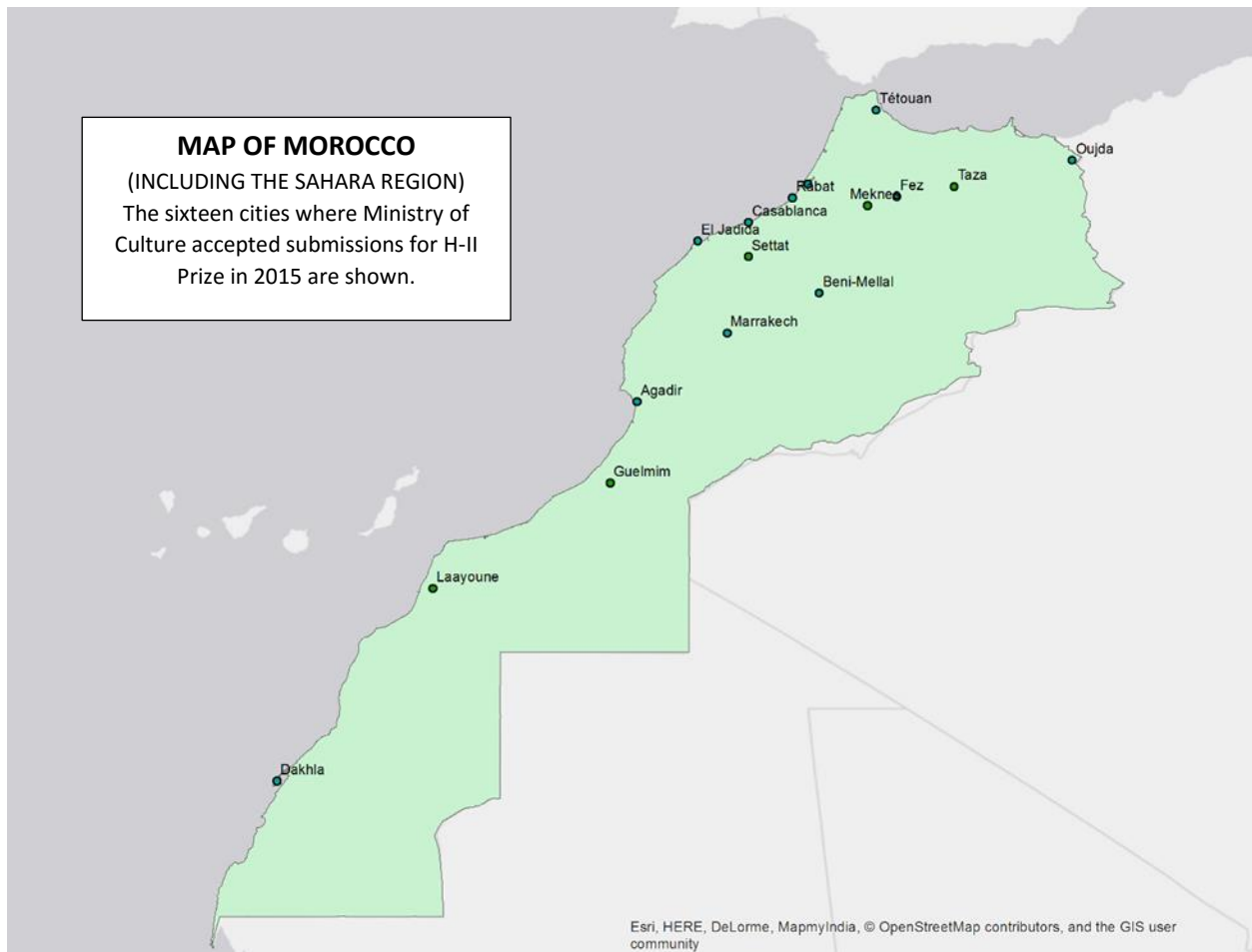


Figure 6: Map showing 16 Submission Centers for the 2015 H-II Prize (Round 37)

The intake, processing, and cataloging process for the 2015 H-II Prize was carried out in the following manner: Manuscripts that had been submitted to the 16 designated Ministry branch offices (see figure 6) were brought to the Office of Manuscripts and Heritage Libraries in Rabat where the office director and his assistant made a formal count and gave a stamped written receipt to the branch office ministry worker. The 2014 ministerial decree discussed in an earlier chapter, changed the number of branch office submission center from seven (Oujda, Tetouan, Fez, Rabat, Agadir, Marrakech and Layyoune) to sixteen. Generally the branch office had already produced its own documentation on the submitted manuscripts and archival documents

and had given its own version of a receipt to the person who submitted the documents. Some branch offices had tried to begin completing some basic catalog information on the submissions, such as name of text, author, and subject matter. This was appreciated but not really thought of as being correct information by the office director who spearheaded the cataloging. Most people who submitted their manuscripts did not provide a title or author's name. There were the rare exceptions when it was obvious that the person submitting or a previous owner of the manuscripts had scholarly knowledge and listed titles and authors in the inside covers of the manuscript. Once again, the office director saw this information as helpful, but not authoritative and did not rely upon it during cataloging. Only one branch office in Marrakech hired a person with manuscript experience to do an initial intake of submissions in their office. Several of the branch officials who brought the manuscript submissions to Rabat expressed their nervousness at "the responsibility" of having to care for the documents, and they were relieved once the official handoff was concluded.

Once officially in the care of the Office of Manuscripts and Heritage Libraries, the manuscripts were assigned numbers and labeled (on outer covers and inside cover in a space free of text) by the director's assistant. Labels included the name of the owner, city of submission and the number assigned the manuscript. I was told that this part in the process was in order to get the manuscripts ready for their subsequent digitization that would happen at the National Library (BNRM) after the awards ceremony.

During the next part of the process the manuscripts were painstakingly cataloged by the office director. Blank cataloging forms were spread out on a table while the head of the Office, a senior manuscript scholar, completed the forms with the help of the office assistant (a woman with an M.A. in related to Moroccan history and historic documents and myself. Obviously,

Arabic and Amazigh (Berber) manuscripts that are hundreds of years old do not have title pages. Sometimes the author of the text mentions the title he or she has given the text in its opening lines, or a scribe might mention the title in the closing lines (colophon) of the text. At other times an owner may have penciled in the name of the text in a margin or inside cover. There are times when neither the title nor author are apparent from a quick scan of the text (which is all that could be given considering the small staff and the stated goal of Prize officials that judging and announcement of H-II Prize winners had to happen by the end of July). The senior cataloger made use of his extensive decades-long knowledge of manuscripts as well as traditional published manuscript catalogs³⁰ and online catalogs, websites and digital manuscript libraries. All of these sources helped him to uncover important identifying information about submissions, to locate them and other related copies historically and geographically while also gauging the relative rareness of the text. Cataloging was primarily text-centered; little attention was given to outer bindings or to inner marginalia (with a few exceptions),³¹ and the senior cataloger said repeatedly “this has no relation to the text” when coming across some of the poems, or small treatises placed among a central text in a bound volume. According to the assignment of roles in the administration of the Prize, verification of initial cataloging is a task expected to be carried out by the national committee which is composed of manuscript experts and academics with specific linguistic and subject expertise.

³⁰ A sampling of the Moroccan catalogs used included: General Index of the Royal Library, The Catalog of the Grand Mosque of Wazzan, Catalog of the Library of Madrasa Ibn Yousuf in Marrakesh and Al-Masadir al-'Arabiyya li Tarikh al-Maghrib [The Arabic Sources of Moroccan History] by Muhammed A. al-Manuni .

³¹ One exception was when the manuscripts were clearly from al-Andalus, Islamic Spain. Then the marginalia were given a close reading. When I inquired about this different treatment, Abdelaziz told me that he “didn’t care about Moroccans,” what they would write in the margins, but that Andalusians were different.

On the second day of cataloging, a man from a distant eastern city arrived at the office wanting to submit some documents to the Prize. The fact that he had traveled more than eight hours by bus and that he seemed to be from humble means made it difficult to give him the news that the submission period had closed and that even if it were open, all submissions had to be made through a person's local branch of the Ministry. There was a pregnant silence in the room that was finally broken by the head of the office telling the man that submissions from the local branch closest to his city had not yet been brought to Rabat, therefore he could go back and submit the documents there, telling them that he had been "sent by Rabat." He was told to make copies of his documents and of his I.D card. The copies would be stamped by the local branch as a form of receipt and the copy of his I.D. would be kept with his papers to identify him if he won and so that his documents could be returned to him after the Prize ended. This last statement about the return of the documents elicited a palpable sense of elation in the man which caused him to say "May God have mercy on your parents," a phrase used by Moroccans to express intense appreciation or gratitude. From his response and the comments of another informant, it seems that even for people who intend to participate in the Prize there still exists some doubt or fear about the eventual return of their submissions.

At the beginning of the second week of cataloging, Tetouan called to say that they had more submissions to send, and submissions had arrived from Agadir and Marrakech. I spoke to the representative from the Marrakech branch office about his experience there. He said that yes, some people did come occasionally to ask about the H-II Prize, but they were few. During the intake process in the office, he had mentioned personally encouraging one of the participants to submit to the Prize. I asked him what exactly he had said to the man, because I was interested in understanding motivations. The representative told me that the man is a student, a "great

student.” He said that he did not have “to explain to him the subject,” by which I understood him to mean the importance of manuscripts. Instead, he told the man, “you are a student, maybe you could win some money that could help you out.” During this week, Abdelaziz made phone calls to the branch centers that had yet to contact his office. They were asked if they had received any submissions for the H-II Prize and told that if they had, it was their responsibility to bring them to the Rabat office as soon as possible so that cataloging could be done to prepare for the meeting of the national committee. Of the sixteen possible local branch offices that could accept submissions, only ten actually received submissions. The Dakhla branch office, located in the far South of Morocco in the contested Western Sahara region was the last to bring their submissions to Rabat.

At this point in the process, we were already discussing possible winners of the Prize. Abdelaziz was impressed by some manuscripts submitted from Tetouan. In the office we compared submissions from different cities and engaged in suppositions about which manuscript or document the national committee would choose and why. While cataloging the submissions, it was rare for Abdelaziz to take notice of a manuscript. However, sometimes a quality or age of the paper, a very old title, or an unknown work by a well-known author caused him to pause and make notes for further research. This research was both for the benefit of the national committee and for his own intellectual curiosity and perhaps future editing projects.

At this point in the Prize, multiple lines of activities surrounding the Prize were taking place. In addition to cataloging, an outside printer was readying digital proofs for the Prize handbook based on the handwritten catalog entries being produced in the office. Abdelaziz’s assistant, a woman named Layla, judiciously composed and sent letters notifying local branch offices of their responsibilities to hold a local awards ceremony for H-II Prize winners in their

area. This would be the first year that the H-II celebration in Rabat would be restricted to the grand prize winner only. Regional winners of prizes of encouragement, would receive their certificates and checks at a local celebrations.³²

As the cataloging of submissions continued, a group of submitted manuscripts in very bad condition containing mold and dust disrupted the office for several days. We also came across a few lithographs, one that was bound together with a manuscript, and although they are noted in the cataloging, they could not be considered for the Prize. The manuscripts from Dakhla arrived and were cataloged and with that planning for the meeting of the national committee went into full effect. The date of the first meeting was set by Abdelaziz in consultation with the overall director of the Directorate of the Book (which houses the Office of Manuscripts and Heritage Libraries); then Abdelaziz notified all the members of the committee by phone. I asked Abdelaziz about how the national committee was formed. He responded, “now that is a good question,” and proceeded to tell me of the three step nomination process that began in his office and ended with final decisions being made by the higher officials at the Minister of Culture. But he told me that there is a conscious decision to have new names on the committee each year, and to have a female presence also. The committee this year consisted of seven people, one female and six males. All hold teaching positions in higher education as well as being experts on manuscripts or specific aspects of Moroccan history. Both the directors of the national archives as well as the royal library were on the committee.

The handbook for the 2015 Prize announced that its round marked a 50 percent increase in participation over 2011 with 423 submissions (189 manuscripts and 234 archival documents).

³² This was the initial plan, however, footage from the awards ceremony I was able to watch on the internet showed some regional winners also in attendance.

The Winner

As I was not allowed to attend the closed sessions during which the national committee appraised manuscripts and made decisions about the Prize, I waited like everyone else for the official press release to appear on the Ministry of Culture's website. After four meetings, the Prize winners were decided. The grand prize was given to a woman named Rumla Mukhtar from the city of Dakhla in the Sahara region. I was very surprised by this choice because during the cataloging process, we discussed the weakness of submissions from Dakhla in comparison to other locations. The text owned by Ms. Mukhtar, is important but already readily available in print. Is it possible that her being from the Western Sahara region played some role in her win? One member of the national committee alluded to the fact that the winner being from a certain location might encourage more people from that area to participate in the Prize. In the video of the awards ceremony for the Prize, Rumla's husband accepted the award on her behalf, dressed in traditional Saharan garb. The 2015 grand prize winner could serve multiple purposes. She at once addresses issues of the relationship of Saharan culture and history to that of the Moroccan nation, proving that 1) Saharans are Moroccan citizens, 2) they share a common heritage and 3) they have an honored position at the national table. The 2015 round showed that the H-II Prize could continue to serve as a vehicle for nation-building, albeit in a form different from its original post-colonial origins.

7. ON RARITIES, ACCESS AND RESEARCH VALUE, OR WHAT HAS THE HASSAN II PRIZE FOUND?

This chapter seeks to address questions about the nature, value and accessibility of Hassan II Prize submissions. It begins with a discussion of rarities and then discusses practical access at the National Library and how scholars have made use of archival material found through the H-II Prize.

On Rarities

One of the main presumptions behind the establishment and the continued existence of the H-II Prize is that it is a tool to find unknown archival materials - documents and more often manuscripts that could be described as “rare.” In this section I examine the ways in which the actual submissions to the Prize both meet and complicate formal definitions of rarity used by book historians. The advent of printing, and with it the abundance of printed books and the relative scarcity of handwritten books in comparison underlie the concept of book rarity in the West where “rare books” has been established as a category since the seventeenth century (Franklin, 1974).

In the English language, the word “rare” as it is applied to books comes from the Latin word *rarus* and has several meanings according to the Oxford English Dictionary, among them, “unusual, of uncommon excellence; also a thing valued for its scarcity” (p.310). While Franklin (1974) grounds his discussion in the context of ancient Europe, his focus on the hypothesis of relative scarcity is relevant to the situation of manuscripts in Morocco.

He wrote in relation to rare books that “widespread abundance of books is needed to establish rarity as a category” (p.313). If we extend this idea to the situation in Morocco, we can say that the abundance of manuscripts (brought about in this case by the “late” adoption of printing in Morocco) is what gives the term rare in relation to Moroccan manuscripts significance when used with a certain cluster of manuscripts from the larger group. If manuscripts were scarce in general, then they would all be “rare” in our current understanding of the word.

Indeed, Robinson (2012) wrote that rarity is “more than mere paucity, nor can mere paucity make a book rare.” He pointed out that some books are few in quantity because they were and continue to be considered “inherently worthless” (p. 514) due to their quality. Franklin (1974) also, though once again within the context of Renaissance and early modern Europe, makes a connection between the concept of rare books, rarities and collection. For it was the rare books that were “avidly sought by collectors.” (p.319). Although he was noticeably unsatisfied with the term, he accepted it, deeming “rare” to be “vague and difficult” and yet “operative” (319).

In French, the language learned by Moroccan intellectuals through formal education in colonial schools, Mohamed al-Fāssī and other Moroccan scholars of manuscripts used the word, “rare,” whose root is also the Latin *rarus* and which is defined as “qui, n'existant qu'à peu d'exemplaires, est original,” or that for which there is only a few existing examples and is original (Larousse, 2016).” In 1961, seven years before taking the office of Minister of Culture and establishing the H-II Prize, al-Fāssī wrote an article for the Moroccan journal, *Hesperis Tamuda* entitled, *Les Bibliothèques au Maroc et Quelques-uns de leurs Manuscrits les Plus Rares* in which he sought to name some of the manuscripts he considered rare that were in Moroccan libraries at that time. He emphasized that the work of appraising and cataloging

manuscripts had begun “in the months just after independence” during which time manuscript scholars (he specifically mentions Ibrahim al-Kettanī) set out to inventory the manuscript collections of small libraries and zawiyas (Sufi lodges) throughout Morocco that had been “jealously guarded” during colonization (p.137).

Al-Fāssī wrote his article in order to cite examples of some of the most rare titles that could be found in Moroccan libraries considered to be of either “scientific or historic interest” that might not otherwise be obvious to researchers considering “the painstaking effort” it took for one to access the then available catalogs which still did not contain all of the available material. He listed thirty-three manuscripts found across several public or semi-public libraries, the first being *Hidhq al-Quraysh*, which he called “the oldest Arabic manuscript in the world” dating from 810 c.e. (195 h.); as well as a work of Jahiz (d. 869.c.e.) that had been considered lost, *Kitab al-Bursan wal- 'Urjan wal- 'Umyan wal-Hidan*.³³ The list also includes previously unknown works (*inconnu*) or those considered lost (*considéré comme perdu / considéré jusqu'ici totalement perdu*) by celebrated authors. On al-Fāssī's list there is a good balance of manuscripts from both the Islamic East and West with al-Fāssī noting the importance of some for the history of Morocco and Islamic Spain. In addition to those listed, which he said were mostly recent finds, he mentioned the presence, especially in the library of the Qarawiyyin of ancient Greek works translated into Arabic. All of them, he hypothesized could offer new perspectives in the field of Arab and Islamic history.

³³ This book is described as “discovered in Morocco fairly recently” (p.82) in the 1990 publication, *Abbasid Belle-Lettres* by Ashtiany et al., Cambridge University Press. Also see: van Gelder, G. (2009). “Kitab al Bursan: Al- Jahiz on Right and Lefthandedness” In *Al-Jahiz: A Muslim Humanist for our Time*, ed. Arnim Heinemann et al (Beirut: Orient-Institut) 239-252. And Richardson, K. (2012). *Difference and Disability in the Medieval Islamic World* (Edinburgh University Press).

In Morocco, the most common Arabic word used to describe book “rarities” is *nādir* (pl. *nawādir*) which has the meaning of being infrequently encountered as well as being extraordinary and valuable (Hans Wehr, 1961, p.1117). This is the word found most often in discussions of Moroccan manuscripts and has been used to describe some of the findings of the H-II Prize. Another word that is used almost synonymously for rare manuscripts is *naḥḥ(a)* (pl. *naḥḥāt*) which designates an object of value, something that is considered precious. According to Binebine (2004b) the first term, *nādir* comes from the word (*al-nadra*) which means a piece of gold or silver. Binbine (2004b) wrote that with regards to the field of manuscripts the term *nawādir* refers to a “library copy embellished with decoration, written with a fine pen, in a royal library or the likes thereof” as well as a single copy of a manuscript by a certain author.” The appendage “rare” might be added to a manuscript not only because of its textual content or author, but also due to the scribe or calligrapher who penned it, if they were especially famous or talented and also if the copy was an autograph, penned in the handwriting of the author. Other manuscript books that fall into the realm of rarities could be illuminated and decorated Qur’ān’s, or those manuscripts written in Kufic script on deer skin from early Islam, specifically the first through fourth century on the Islamic calendar (seventh through tenth century on the Gregorian calendar).

On an operational level, there exists a compendium of books that while not meeting the strict definitions of rarity have been and continue to be considered valuable and noteworthy often because of their subject matter. Such books tend to focus on Sufism (Islamic mysticism) at both and operational and theoretical levels, dynastic as well as local Moroccan history and the ways in which they elucidate Morocco’s cultural inheritance from Islamic Spain. Or they are a “classic” from the general canon of pan-Arab-Islamic culture from another region (for example, al-

Mutannabi, al-Jahiz, etc). All of the manuscripts discussed in Mrini's (2001) book *From Among the Rarities of the Moroccan Library*³⁴ although diverse in time period confirm to one of these categories. It should be noted that in Morocco, such texts could be written in Arabic or Berber dialects and multilingual manuscripts are not uncommon.

The oft-submitted books

A member of the national committee with whom I spoke argued that the Prize “really hadn't found any rarities” and estimated that only about one percent of the submissions to the H-II Prize could be considered rare according to his definition. For this Islamic scholar serving on the national committee, rare means being “reliably dated back to the third or fifth century [on the Islamic calendar]” (ninth or eleventh century on the Gregorian calendar). Furthermore, he commented that the best that can be found in the libraries of what he called “the learned families” (*usar 'ilmīya*³⁵) are manuscripts that are about three hundred years old. Personally, his definition of rare, meaning those manuscripts which pique his intellectual interest and assumedly his interest as an H-II judge are those written by famous Islamic scholars especially if they are complete and can be authentically dated. However he knows that for other members of the H-II national committee a rarity might be identified based on other factors, for example the rarity of a script used in a manuscript, or of its paper, or because a manuscript is the only known copy of a text to survive. Jilani's comments underscore the subjectivity of rarity, for as Robinson pointed out:

Aficionados of rare books are motivated by many and various interests, [s]ome are devotees of the art of bookbinding, some of the history of book illustrations or maps;

³⁴ من نواذر مخطوطات المكتبة المغربية

³⁵ He mentions for example the Geussous family and the Ben Souda family.

some are interested in the varying qualities of the paper used in printing books in various periods” (p.515).

Jilani’s comments attempt to put the manuscript submissions to the Prize into social context. He believes that the majority of submissions to the Prize are the fruit of the Moroccan Islamic education system. According to his synopsis, whereas in earlier centuries religious scholars never reached a point at which they felt satiated with knowledge (*‘ilm*), the last few centuries have witnessed a professionalization of Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) for (state) service that has led to a change in the nature of knowledge acquisition. Advanced religious knowledge is now primarily connected to the pursuit of gainful employment. This has also had an effect on the kind and quality of manuscripts found by the Prize. Jilani pointed to the presence of what could be called textbooks (*dirasī*) of traditional Islamic education, for example Arabic grammar books or profession-based (*mihani*) jurisprudence books, for example the *Explanation of the Mukhtasar of Khalīl*, a law book of Maliki school of thought in Islamic jurisprudence. Such manuscripts dominate submissions to the H-II Prize due to their high level of circulation.

Several sources confirm Jilani’s claim about the nature of H-II Prize submissions. A bibliographic study of the 2010 round of the Prize found that religious books had the largest presence amongst manuscripts submitted that year with one-hundred and five titles. Of these titles 26 percent dealt with Islamic jurisprudence, 24 percent with Arabic language, 13 percent with Qurānic sciences, and 11 percent with Islamic mysticism. The remaining 26 percent was split almost evenly between physical science, hadith science, history, literature, and religious creed with one percent of submissions coming from the *Kunnāshat* (registers, notebooks) genre (al-Mihdaoui, 2010, p.15).

Benjelloun-Laroui (1990) provides a list of works submitted during the first ten years of the H-II Prize (1969-1979) along with their frequency. After copies of the Qur’ān, other texts

that are frequently submitted to the Prize (either the texts alone or commentaries or explanations of them by other authors) that are found on her list include: the *Dalail al-Khayrat* by Muhammad bin Sulayman al-Jazūlī, *al-Murshid al-Muin* by Ibn Ashir (52), the *Aqida* (*al-Kubrā* and *al-Sugrā*) of Muhammad bin Yusuf al-Sanusī, the *Alfia* of Ibn Malik (49), the *Burda* of al-Busiri (22), and the *Muwatta* of Imam Malik (8). Benjelloun-Laroui said that her numbers should be considered to be approximate due to the illegibility of some early records of the Prize and that for those titles without numbers, there were still more than one copy submitted to the Prize during that first decade.

The criticism of the commonplace nature of these oft-recurring books, those that are repeatedly submitted to the H-II Prize should be considered in light of the fact that several participants and administrators told me that they do not or would not submit their “good stuff,” or as one participant explained, “people only submit their weak things” to the H-II Prize. If this is true, then the submission of the aforementioned books is partially strategic and should not lead to the assumption that these are the only books in the possession of participants or that the collection of books that could be considered rare has been exhausted in Morocco.

In her comprehensive assessment of Moroccan libraries, Benjelloun-Laroui (1990) contended that the H-II Prize had yet to yield any significant findings, i.e. previously unknown and important works. Yet, the late renowned Moroccan historian and manuscript scholar Mohammed Al-Mannūnī (1975) wrote, just seven years after the inception of the Prize, about the rare treasures (*thora min al-nawadir wa al-dhakha`ir*) that had been discovered as a result of it. Among the notable submissions to the prize he noted manuscripts produced not only on paper, but also on leather and wood. As a historian of Morocco’s Arab and Islamic past, al-Mannūnī

list of “treasures” found through the H-II Prize are primarily primary source documents that could be used to shed light on key aspects of those aspects of Moroccan history.

Al-Mannūnī listed sixty-four manuscripts or documents which he felt were exemplars of the best that had been submitted to the H-II Prize. Among them he made a distinction between those documents relevant to Moroccan history in general such as:

- A notarial document written on wood from southern Morocco dating from 1773 c.e. (1187 hijri)
- Letters written by the Almoravids, including Ibn Abi al-khasal
- A document from Nasrid Sultan Muhammed al-Ghalib (with his handwriting and signature) on deerskin from Granada, Spain from the year 1445 c.e. (849 hijri)
- An Alawi era decree regarding Abd Allah Yaqoub al-Slawi, the naval admiral during the reign of Sultan Muhammad III
- Documents from the last official head of Moroccan pilgrimage (to Mecca) delegation, al-Hajj al-Talib Ibn Jelloun al-Fāssī
- A document on the life of members of the immigrant community from Tlemcen (Algeria) in Fez.
- Several official documents from the reign of Sultan Hassan I related to some of his initiatives.
- Several official documents from the reign of Sultan (Abd?) Aziz

As well as those “rarities (*nawādir*) and treasures (*dhakhā'ir*)” that encompassed Islamic culture which for him also included religious education. Among the H-II documents fitting into this category he noted:

- *Ijāzāt*, diplomas issued upon the completion of scholarly milestones such as the complete memorization of the Qur'an and its proper rules of recitation or the mastery of another subject in the Islamic sciences. Al-Mannūnī said that often they were written on parchment (*'ala al-riqq*) in a beautiful script. The oldest submitted to the H-II Prize dated 1410 c.e. (813 hijri).
- A medical diploma issued by a Moroccan doctor, al-Hajj Muhammad bin al-Hajj Ahmed al-Kahak al-Fāssī in 1248 hijri (that will be discussed later in this chapter).
- A notebook (*kunnash*), the oldest in Morocco according to al-Mannūnī, that belonged to Muhammad bin Qasim al-Zjalii a well-known author from Fez during the third Saadian era. It contained within in some ballads (*qasā'id*) that were completely unknown.

- A large volume of Sahih Muslim (traditions of the Prophet Muhammad) written in 1397 c.e. (800 hijri) “in an old script that resembles that used in Islamic Spain.”

He also mentions works on medicine and science found by the H-II Prize such as:

- A medical encyclopedia by the Abbasid doctor, Ali bin Abbas al-Majūsī (d.1009 c.e.)³⁶
- A book on the medicinal uses of food by an unknown author from Islamic Spain from the Almohad period from which a portion of this same manuscript was published in a publication of a Spanish research institute in Madrid,³⁷ and
- A manual on how to make astrolabes by the Andalusian scholar Abu Qasim ibn al-Safar al-Qurtubi

Al-Mannūnī’s list also included manuscripts on music and travel writing, as well as a more recent text, a local history (*buldaniyāt*) submitted on the history of the town of Demnāt, by a contemporary author, al-Hajj Ahmed Najib al-Demāntī (d.1981). (A critical edition, done by Ahmed ‘Ammālak was published in 2011, who also affirmed the uniqueness of the manuscript when he wrote that it is an exemplar of the traditional writing of the Moroccan rural areas.).³⁸

³⁶ كامل الصناعة الطبية الضرورية

³⁷ الطبخ في الأندلس والمغرب . According to Dr. ‘Abd al-Ghani Abu al-‘Azam, there is an exact copy of this manuscript in the National Library of Paris (ms. 7009). In his article, he says that the name of the microfilm copy of the manuscript that is kept in the National Library of Morocco (BNRM) is أنواع الصيدلة في الوان الأظعمة and that it was submitted to the Hassan II Prize in 1970 by a man named ‘Abd al-Latif al-Shara’i from Marrakech. However, al-Mannuni gives the title as الطبخ في الأندلس والمغرب . The Moroccan National Library’s online catalog lists only printed books with the title given by Abu al-‘Azam, and does not show a record of any manuscript with either title. We know however that at some point a microfilm copy was available at the library because Abu al-‘Azam says that he saw it . Also Abu al-‘Azam noted that the Spanish Orientalist scholar Ambrosio Huici Miranda (d.1973 c.e.) wrote an article about this manuscript that was published in the Journal of the Egyptian Institute[on Manuscripts] , volume 5 , p 137-155 and translated the manuscript completely in volume 9 (1961-1962)of the same journal . see: http://www.andalusite.ma/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=94%3A-2&catid=29%3A2011-03-31-14-53-25&Itemid=17 (accessed February 2016)

³⁸ القول في تاريخ دمنات و ما وقع فيها من الوقائع . It is interesting to note that the scholar who produced the critical edition wrote that he was encouraged to do so by the son of the manuscript’s author who provided him with a copy of the manuscript and also afforded him the opportunity to look at the original when it was necessary (Amlak, 2011).

An important part of the narrative of saving Moroccan cultural heritage that defines the H-II Prize is the eventual storage of documents (whether microfilmed or digital) at the National Library. All of the advertisements for the H-II Prize have mentioned its preservation aspect which is generally summarized as the keeping of a copy at the national library. The text for this 2015 announcement (In Arabic) of the Prize is representative and has been used in previous years (since at least 2010). A portion of it stated:

the Ministry asserted that it would take it upon itself to ensure the safety of the participating manuscripts with the goal of returning them to the owners after the celebration party and *after a copy of the records deemed beneficial was made, either on microfilm or digitally, for the purpose of protecting them at the National Library and the Archives of Morocco* [emphasis mine]. (Ministry of Culture, 2015)

The datedness of the text may explain why microfilm is still mentioned and why the idea that only those records deemed “beneficial” would be copied. As figure 7 shows, in earlier rounds of the Prize a select few documents were chosen to be microfilmed. According to the former manager of the Prize, as of 2005, all submissions are copied and digitization of manuscripts began in 2011. Still, there are times when some submissions are simply not qualifying documents, for example, a page torn from a recently printed children’s book with calculations on the back. As one member of the national judging committee told me, “people don’t understand [what constitutes] archival documents,” and so sometimes the submissions even in light of the new policy to digitize all submissions might be flouted.

The preservation narrative present in all discussions of the H-II Prize is directly linked to the place of the National Library as a physical repository and a cultural and national memory

institution. A 2010 French language advertisement for the Prize that ran in the Moroccan newspaper, *Le Matin* (May 14, 2010) explained that participation in the Prize “contributes to the enrichment of sources for scholarly research and the collection of scattered manuscripts and documents.”

It seemed prudent to follow the H-II narrative to its logical conclusion and to look for copies of the manuscripts of some of our informants to the national library. Digitization of H-II manuscripts began in 2011. However, I was told by a library official in July 2015 that the library had not established a way for the public to view the digitized manuscripts and the manuscript reading room at the library was, as of August 2015 filled only with microfilm readers.

In order to view pre-2011 H-II documents, the researcher has to locate the library catalog record and then complete a request form. If the microfilm is found and deemed to be in good condition (by the library worker), it is loaded onto a reader. Print outs can be made at the cost of one dirham per page, a digital copy can also be requested for a more significant amount, because at the time of this writing, the digital copy was being made from paper copies of the microfilm. One of the first obstacles to attempting to access an H-II document stored at the National Library is knowing how to form the request. Several cataloging issues impede access to H-II records at the National library, the first being that the National Library has yet to produce a catalog of H-II documents or to make consistent note of H-II document in the general library catalog. Also, the library does not have in its collection, the handbooks on the Prize produced by the Ministry except for one 1981 handbook of archival documents.

Therefore, a researcher who actually knew about the Prize and wanted to locate a text would have to have previous knowledge of a specific title or author. Next the researcher would

have to contend with the fact that prior to 2005, microfilming was done selectively, meaning that of the approximately 35,000 records submitted to the Prize, the internal documentation of the National Library that I was shown, indicates only approximately 2,400 microfilm or digitized records in the possession of the library. As was mentioned in an earlier chapter, prior to 2005 members of the H-II Prize national committee decided what was to be microfilmed, and these decisions were often made based upon their own research interests and agendas.

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الرقم المتسلسل	اسم المؤلف	اسم المخطوط	الرقم الخاص	اسم وهتوان صاحب المخطوط	نوع النص	ملاحظات
86	مجموعه : (1) بمشوق الدكالي (٢)	زهرة المنقول الذكية في شرح الاصول الفرضية	1	عمر الحريشي 13 درب الجباس		
87	(2) ابن ابي جمعة الهبلي	الوقف الهبلي		الدوح - فاس		
88	(3) محمد بن عمر بن ابراهيم الملاي التلمساني	شرح عقيدة السنوسي (السنوسية)		" "		
89	(4) عبد الله بن سعيد	عقيدته				
90	(5) محمد بن محمد بن احمد ابن عبد الله الرحمانسي	ارجوزة في تراءة الامام ابن كثير				
90	(6) ابو زيد عبد الرحمن ابن القاسي	ارجوزة في الرسم				
92	(7) ابو الوليد ابن رشد	متن فقه في المبادات				
93	(3) ابن عطاء الله	الحكم				
94	(٤) ابراهيم بن عبد الجبار التلمساني	عقيدة في التصحيح				
95	ديب الملاي بن ابراهيم التلمساني	خاصية آيات البردة للتوسيعين				
96	ابو عبد الله الكلاعي الهجاسي من اهل القرن الخامس ومن شعوب اندلس ابي بكر ابن العربي	قصيدة طويلة ينصح فيها ابنه ويمطه (فيها حكم واضح)	2			يتم تصوير ... / ...

Figure 7: A page from 1984 H-II Prize handbook in which no. 96 a lyrical poem by Abu AbdAllah al-Kilā'i is the only record that is designated to be microfilmed. The arrow points to the word "to be microfilmed."

I visited the National Library with the titles of the winning texts some of my informants had submitted to the Prize, hoping to locate them and request a print out. In the case where the informant's text was unique (meaning the library did not have other copies of a similarly named

manuscript) it was easier to locate the text. At other times, if the library's system showed multiple copies of a manuscript with the same title, the fact that one carried the microfilm icon alerted me to the possibility of the text being an H-II document. On two rare (and joyous) occasions, the BNRM catalog record that was retrieved during my search actually contained the symbols " ح ج ", the Arabic characters that represent the beginning of the Arabic words for Hassan II Prize. In theory, it is possible that these characters, or something similar to them could populate a field on each H-II Prize record in the catalog, because they are present in the backside of the MARC database used at the BNRM that I was shown. I was not given a clear answer as to why this identifying information was not made widely available on the user interface side of the catalog.

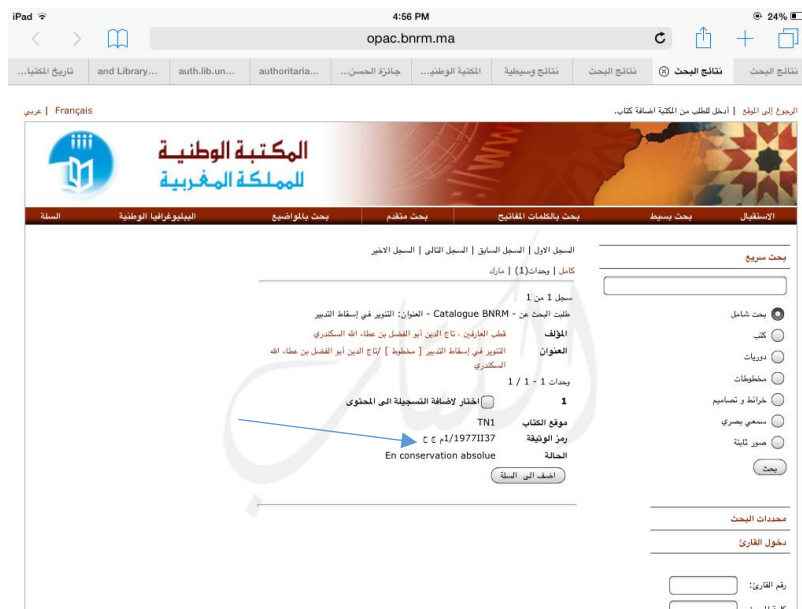


Figure 8: A rare BNRM catalog record that shows the Arabic letters and other numbers to indicate that this manuscript was submitted to the H-II Prize in 1977

Once I was able to locate the desired manuscript in the catalog and presented the identifying information to the person in charge of the manuscript room, there was still a chance that I would not actually see the microfilm. A common response to my request was that the

microfilm was not in good enough shape to be presented. An H-II administrator at the Ministry mentioned this issue an “obstacle” to full access to Prize documents. It appears that a significant portion of the manuscripts were poorly microfilmed. Next, there was the chance that I would be told that the microfilm I requested could not be located. Finally, some requests resulted in fulfillment and the microfilm was loaded on the reader for my viewing in the manuscript room. In such cases, if this microfilm did indeed prove to be from the H-II Prize, I requested a print out of at least its beginning and end pages.

The reality of the condition and size of the H-II repository at the National Library does not match the narrative used in advertisements for the Prize. Access is limited by the factors mentioned above as well as by general gatekeeper mentality. As someone who was given access to almost every part of the H-II Prize process, from participant home to Ministry office, the final resting place at the BNRM was anti-climactic. How are we to understand the reality of the state of the repository in light of the sacrosanct position of the National Library as the place of national memory and heritage?

On Research Value

The research value of the H-II Prize is often mentioned as one of the main reasons for its existence. The H-II Prize handbooks of the early 2000s often included a section entitled “The researcher will find this important” in which they explained the significance of and the reasoning behind that year’s winning manuscripts and documents. In this section we take a cursory look at how researchers have used the Prize. The use of H-II documents in scholarly research deserves detailed documentation, because while it seems intuitive that Moroccan scholars would make the greatest use of the documents, the fact that the Moroccan National Library is a hub for researchers from other African and Arab countries, Europe and North America means that the

true reach of H-II documents could be vast. Unfortunately, the poor labeling of H-II documents within the BNRM catalog means that someone could be using a document from the H-II Prize without being aware of its significance and origin. Usage can of course range from citing an H-II document once in a single footnote as was done by the Moroccan scholar Bin al-Şaghīr (2005) in his book on the history of Moroccan- British relations, to producing an entire monograph on an H-II manuscript as we will see in one of the following examples. In the following section I discuss some research projects that have either used documents from the H-II Prize either as evidence for a specific line of inquiry or have made a document or manuscript from the Prize the subject of their research.

On the old-city of Fez

In discussing his research on the urban history of the old-city of Fez, Mezzine (1997) wrote that in the late 1970s when he began his study of relations between Fez and its surrounding rural areas during the sixteenth century, he had at his disposal “but a limited amount of data” until “the coming forth of private archives on the occasion of the Hassan II Prize which rewarded the most original private documents.” Mezzine, who mistakenly wrote that the Prize was started in 1976, commented in 1997 that “the harvest is no longer as rich as it used to be” (p.113). However, for his own research in the 1970s, documents submitted to the Prize proved bountiful. He wrote that the Prize offered “a harvest of unparalleled documents that enabled him to understand the relations between Fez and its rural surroundings in another light. He wrote that “a whole set of documents,” specifically “deeds of sale and purchase, *waqf* deeds, *adul* [notarial] testimonials of all types, manuscripts long considered lost, and religious litigation writings allowed him to approach the history of Fez in a new way as he examined the “relations between political power and the city and rural socio-religious networks” (p.113).

Mezzine's published his research in 1986 as the book, *Fez and its countryside: [and their] participation in Moroccan history during the Saadian period 1549- 1637 c.e.* ³⁹ In it, he provided added detail about his use of H-II Prize documents. He prefaced his discussion by explaining that in general Moroccan researchers regardless of the time period they study will have to a difficult time trying to locate the documents relevant to their topic because they will be distributed between different families and some official archives. For his particular topic, he first reached out to the heads of rare book libraries (*al-maktabāt al-qadimah*) and then to families who at some point had owned land in the countryside outside of Fez, with the hope that even if they did not still have the land, there would have remained in their possession documentation of their previous ownership. And it was through their submission to the H-II Prize for the years of 1970, 1971, and 1972 that he Mezzine was able to identify families to contact. He contacted the al-Raghīwī (الرغوي) family that had submitted three documents to the H-II Prize in 1971; the al-Arusī (العروسي) family who submitted a document dating from 975 hijri written on deerskin (*waraq al-ghazelle*).

Murder in Marrakech

In his award winning book on the history of a French colonial doctor in Morocco, American academic Jonathan Katz (2006) mentions a letter sent by Sultan Abdelaziz to a subordinate in which he raised suspicions about the activities of French doctors in the country. The letter became known through its submission to the H-II Prize and subsequent publication in a book on manuscripts records from the colonial period.⁴⁰ Katz's discussion of the H-II Prize is

³⁹ فاس و باديتها مساهمة في المغرب السعدي 1549-1637م

⁴⁰ Hafizi, A. (1996). Manuscript documents preserved in the manuscript section of the bibliothèque générale [Arabic]. In *Les Archives du Protectorat : première évaluation* (Rabat: Université Mohammed V).

worth noting, although he cannot be faulted for not understanding exactly how the Prize submission process actually works. He wrote:

When the manuscript of this edict was donated to the archives in Rabat, it received the Moroccan Government's Hassan II Prize for the Best Manuscript or Archival Document, and one Moroccan historian has subsequently referred to the incident outlined in the letter as a "doctor's plot." But the reality is more complicated. The sultan's real concern seems not to have been the practice of European medicine per se but the fact that Muslim youths might be contaminated by frequent and recurring contact with Europeans. As the letter itself says, these youths lacked the ability to know "what is beneficial and what is harmful." (p.49).

The appearance of this letter is significant and has helped to shed light on a specific social situation in colonial Morocco. Interestingly, Katz explains the H-II Prize in a footnote (citing Benjelloun- Laroui, 1990) in the following manner, "[t]his cash award encourages private individuals to contribute documents in their family's possession to the Moroccan nation" (p.289). This explanation reflects the main assumption about participation in the Prize that is shared by many of its administrators, that the cash award is the motivation. It is also interesting to note that although the letter persists, it comes to us with a broken provenance. What family gave their possession "to the Moroccan nation" and how did they come upon it?

Medical Diploma of 1832

One of the diplomas (*ijaza*) mentioned by al-Mannūnī (1975) was also the subject of an earlier article published in 1970 in the *Revue de 'Occident Musulman et de la Méditerranée*. The medical diploma issued in 1832 to Mohammed ben Ahmed al Kahhak, was discussed by the article written by one of his descendants. In the article by Abdelkader Kahhak (1970), the medical diploma's uniqueness is discussed as doubly unique, both to its own time and to the present era which is why, according to the article, it received first place in the Hassan II Prize in 1969. Kahhak's (1970) article offers some basic context for the issuing of the diploma and then presents the Arabic text transcribed, a French translation, and an image of microfilmed diploma

at the Moroccan national library. The value of the diploma to social history is apparent , Kahhak (1970) wrote that it was issued during a time of “renaissance” in Morocco during the reign of Moulay Abdelrahman (ben Hicham) (1859-1882) and that in addition to the text explaining the importance of medicine in the Islamic tradition, and the necessary qualifications for a doctor, the diploma lists the names of sixty-two witnesses among them, twenty-four members of the *Shurafa* (descendants of the Prophet Muhammad), seventeen merchants and traders, and twenty people who are listed as “healers.” The “healers” were composed of people further describes as barbers, healers, learned persons (*maalemiya*) and seven doctors (with the Qadi, or judge who issued the diploma as the final witness).

It should be no surprise that those who have made, so far, the most use of the H-II manuscripts are people with some connection to the Prize. Some prominent Moroccan historians told me that the Prize was still not very well known among local Moroccan historians and that those who did know of it, might still have difficulties accessing documents relevant to their research topic because as of this writing there does not yet exist a separate catalog of the Prize collection at the national library.

A Treatise on the Madrasa of Salé

Some of the most interesting research uses of H-II documents and manuscripts so far have been by scholars who have had a working relationship with the Prize either in managing or judging for the Prize. Abdelaziz Essaouri, the head of the office that manages the H-II Prize at the time of this writing, is also a respected manuscript scholar who has published several critical editions of manuscripts. Among his writings are several articles on texts that have come to light due to the Prize. For example, in 1992, Essaouri wrote an article on a short treatise found in a

notebook (*kunnāsh*)⁴¹ that had been submitted to the H-II Prize in 1978. The small treatise written in 1914 took up only four pages and was written in response to a question its author received about the history of the Islamic college (madrasa) that had been built in the town of Salé (*Slā*) during the Merinid-era (13th to 15th century c.e). Essaouri (1992) presented an annotated critical edition of the detailed a four page treatise written by the author, celebrated Moroccan historian Muhammad ibn Ali al-Dukali (d.1945), so that “the reader might find its reading easier (than from the original text) and benefit from the information provided therein.”

The Notables of Mālaqa (Malaga)

The late Abdellah al-Targhi, a prominent member of the national committee of the Prize for decades and a university professor who made frequent use of the H-II collection in his teaching. His students often used texts from the H-II Prize to produce critical editions and al-Targhi himself produced several commentaries and critical editions on H-II manuscripts. Among them, his 1999 annotated critical edition, *A'lām Mālaqah*, a biographical dictionary written by Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī Ibn ‘Askar (d.1579), on the notable people of the southern Spanish town, Malaga believed to have been written after the Muslim loss of the town in 1487 c.e. Earlier articles and books written about the text by non-Moroccans (Jordanian and French scholars) had all used a single photocopy from a manuscript kept in a private library in Morocco. In 1988, Mr. Muhammad Boukhubza, an Islamic legal scholar (*fiqhi*) submitted to the H-II Prize , a new copy of the manuscript that he had literally written out in his own hand (Essaouri, 1999).

Perhaps the most prolific uses of H-II documents were by the renowned manuscript scholar and Moroccan historian Muhammad al-Mannūnī who managed the Prize and served on

⁴¹ Cataloged at the BNRM as: 38-842

its judging committee for several decades. Al-Mannūnī wrote prolifically on Moroccan social and intellectual history, and it is rare to not come upon a citation to an H-II document in his works. For example, his work on the history of manuscript production in Morocco⁴² cites multiple documents and manuscripts found through the H-II Prize including two Qur'an manuscripts submitted in 1970 and 1973 to the Prize that were penned by female calligraphers in the early 1800s. His classic work, *The Arabic sources for the History of Morocco*, which details archival materials chronologically by relevant dynasty, repeatedly lists documents from the H-II Prize relevant to Merinid, Wattasid, Saadian, and Alawid time periods. Interestingly, Al-Mannūnī (1983) wrote that it would be best if researchers returned to look at the original documentation (cataloging) of H-II manuscripts instead of relying solely on their viewing the micro-filmed manuscript for information.

The H-II Prize offers ample primary sources for scholars from a variety of disciplines and yet even within Morocco, scholarly use of its document collection is not as widespread as would

⁴² Al-Mannuni, M. (1991). *تاريخ الوراقة المغربية: صناعة المخطوط المغربي من العصر الوسيط إلى الفترة المعاصرة*. [The history of Paper-making in Morocco: the production of Moroccan manuscripts from the Middle Ages to the modern period]. Rabat: Khizana Hassania [Royal Library].

be expected. Ironically it is the lack of adequate organized documentation that reinforces the internal nature of the Prize and handicaps it from affording broader access to its wealth of materials.

8. CONCLUSION

In this dissertation, I have studied the Hassan II Prize for Manuscripts and Archival Documents as an individual case study. The H-II Prize is a unique and heretofore understudied documentary heritage safeguarding program that makes direct and overt connections between private archival collections and the cultural and political health of the nation.

As Verne Harris (2007) wrote, “‘The archive’ never speaks as a thing in and of itself. It always speaks through specificities, including those of particular societal dynamics and relations of power” (p.54). This study endeavored to understand the Hassan II Prize in its particular social context. It looked at the founding of the Prize, the multiple motivations for its creation, the cultural moment when it came into being and the rhetoric used by its founders to move Moroccans into participation. I found that citizenship was tied to custody and access of archival materials in sentimental and affective ways.

Speaking with participants and administrators of the Prize shed light on a heretofore unheard from group who are crucial to the continued viability of the program. Interviews with a select population of participants with whom I was able to gain access showed them to be well-educated people who were interested in local history and often civically engaged. These discussions showed that manuscript culture is not a part of a by-gone era, but a vibrant culture with continuity in the modern era (although it may not be palpable to outsiders).

They also proved that there is benefit in expanding the archival records of the H-II Prize to include family histories as they relate to the provenance of the documents and Moroccan history in general. Millar (2002) argued that archivists should describe records, but in addition they should explain “the history of the creator, their records and how they came to be in that institution,” in what she termed *respect de provenance* (p.2). Moreover, Millar (2002) said that descriptive information on the life of the object “should be prominent and searchable” if “we wish to surround our records with an enriched context and provide a better understanding for our users” (p. 12). My research showed that Millar’s three-part provenance, creator history, records history, and custodial history, is precisely what is needed to better impart the rich histories of the documents submitted to the H-II Prize because it would allow space for their social lives including inheritances and previous use by scholars.

Among the major themes that emerged from my analysis of participant narratives were: loss, religious charity (*sadaqa jāriya*), national heritage/collective memory, and prize money. Although none of the participants (except one) showed signs of financial strain, they were all displeased with the Prize money amount. The prominence of the prize money as an issue was surprising. I had assumed that the amounts were too insignificant to be motivating factors, without anticipating the strong opinions and emotions they stirred. And yet, for participants the amounts were considered inadequate and even offensive especially because they did not live up to the real and symbolic value of the manuscripts. It would behoove the administration to take note of the fact that participants declared that the low prize amounts leads them to submit low quality manuscripts and archival documents. Many also alluded to the fact that they owned records more valuable than what they have shown publicly. We must ask what will become of those still “hidden” documents. That buyers from Persian Gulf countries (primarily the Emirates

and Saudi Arabia) were mentioned by almost every person I interviewed shows that Gulf money is placing pressure on those manuscript holders who want their records to stay in Morocco.

The anxiety of “foreigners clamoring after”⁴³ Moroccan manuscripts shows a continuity with the anxieties that motivated the hiding of documents just before and throughout the period of French colonial rule in the country. This cultural angst is, as was discussed earlier in this dissertation, integral to most cultural heritage discourse and work worldwide. It is anxiety about future loss that is used by international bodies to raise awareness and funds for vulnerable artefacts. I believe that reluctance to digitize (or to provide public access to digitized materials) that I saw in library professionals in Morocco (but not from H-II participants) is related to this anxiety about foreign “possession” of Moroccan documents for people for whom the “world heritage” doctrine does not override national, local heritage concerns.

While the forthcoming publishing of a nearly complete directory of H-II records is promising⁴⁴, there are data management issues that need to be addressed in order to ensure the documentary health of the analog Prize records housed at the Ministry of Culture. It is also necessary to ask what will be the consequence of an archive of completely surrogate materials, especially in light of the fact that a significant portion of microfilmed documents seem to be in compromised conditions. It seems urgent to begin the digitization of the microfilm, to undertake an appraisal of those that are non-viable, and even to consider re-contacting former participants or their surviving family members to inquire about the possibility of digitizing their materials with today’s technology.

⁴³ A phrase used by Said al-Qurtubi, an H-II participant.

⁴⁴ A Minister of Culture official told me that he was near completion of such a directory.

It is not clear how or if the community archives model could be adapted to the Moroccan cultural landscape in what would be an attempt to build trusted local repositories of documents for (limited) public access. Trust, which assuages fear of loss, would be the key factor any grassroots archival initiative would have to embody. Logistic concerns regarding storage and access as well as the role of digitization in such an initiative would all have to be explored by a concerted group of experts with adequate cultural knowledge.

Limitations

Among the limitations of the study is the relatively small number of participants with whom I was able to speak with personally. I did uncover considerable information on former participants many of whom are now deceased. The three months spent doing field work in Morocco could obviously have been extended in order to see if other kinds of participants with differing experiences and motivations exist. There was also the fact that I was using lists of H-II Prize winners to initiate contact. As such, I was limited primarily to the narrative of winners. One of the “problems” with winners is that they presumably have higher quality manuscripts and archival documents which may be indicators of other less obvious privilege. Fortunately, the time I spent as an intern on the Prize at the Minister of Culture exposed me to (two) participants who had not won the Prize, both of whom had submitted archival documents with sentimental familial value. This research would have been better balanced had I spoken with unsuccessful submitters to the Prize as well as people who knew of the Prize but decided to not submit. There is still much to learn about the Prize, its participants and their records.

Importance of findings

This dissertation has endeavored to contribute to both the fields of archival studies and Middle East and North African Studies. Specifically, it has exposed both groups to the narratives

of a critical constituency, donors of archival documents. In presenting the narratives of this heretofore unheard from population, this research has sought to fill gaps in current knowledge in the fields about the nature and state of private archival collections in Morocco specifically (and the Muslim world generally) as well as about location, nature and subject matters of the primary sources vital for research on local histories. The uniqueness of this study is in its focus on the living individuals without whom important historical records would not make it into the public domain. For the archival field, this research presents viewpoints from a cultural context that is seldom heard from in the literature that can be used to develop more consciously viable cultural heritage safeguarding initiatives. It also opens a window in the fertile field of Moroccan manuscript heritage that has yet to be fully explored academically in the West.

For cultural heritage institutions, this research shows the added value donors can provide beyond their material objects. Open conversations with donors could contribute greatly to the context many in museums and libraries are hoping to add to their collections. Being open to the suggestion of (potential) donors may pay off in the long-run in terms of community building and collection building.

For the field of archives specifically, this research opens a new world on contemporary archival culture in a part of the world that is seldom discussed in the literature. It shows the ways in which concepts developed in Western contexts change or take different meanings and levels of importance in other cultural environments. It speaks to many current discussions being had in the archival world about the changing and evolving nature of provenance; the records continuum, and the role of community archives in preserving the collections of private individuals. Is the collection of H-II documents at the National Library an example of a community archive now being housed in a mainstream institution? If so, how exactly do we define the community? Can

the community archive model offer another viable option to reach those Moroccans who are unwilling to participate in the Hassan II Prize? The urgency of protecting cultural heritage has become shockingly apparent in the past few years as documentary heritage is often a casualty during times of civil strife. Even without the conscious destruction of material heritage, the gradual deterioration of documentary heritage makes the results of this study of crucial importance for international archival professionals.

For the field of North African and Middle Eastern Studies, this research makes important connections between scholars, scholarship and the material of the manuscript and archival document in the Maghrib. It provides a window onto a rich scholarly writerly culture that is on par with other parts of the Middle East and North Africa region, and that is equally deserving of serious academic attention. It also brings a fresh take on post-colonial nation-building in the region, connecting it with the simultaneous construction of national archives while also raising important theoretical questions about the ways in which documents in private collections “belong” to the nation.

Future research

This research was focused on the narratives of a small sample of H-II participants. Although limited in scope, it provides ample information to stimulate further research on a multitude of topics related to archives, documentary history, history of the book, codicology, and social history in Morocco. The handbooks of the Prize are ripe with “rare” documents awaiting study.

Obviously, this study could be extended to a larger pool of former H-II Prize participants. Ideally, this larger group would include non-winners. Also, it would be valuable to have an in-depth study of manuscript owners who chose to not participate in the Prize. This

would help to understand non-participation. Of critical importance is also the need to conduct a nation-wide survey of Moroccans, in order to get an idea of how many manuscripts are really in country. The lack of even a ballpark figure frustrates scholars.

Another fruitful line of inquiry would explore the angle of the Gulf buyers of Moroccan manuscripts and perhaps even follow the manuscripts back to the Emirates and Saudi Arabia (the two countries most mentioned as buyers of Moroccan manuscripts) in order to understand their changing identities. It is also necessary to reweave Jewish manuscripts and archival documents back into this narrative. Jewish documents have appeared in the H-II Prize (including in 2015) but their place in a narrative of Moroccan Arab-Islamic nation-building is awkward. The reality of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and the fact that many documents have been taken out of the country makes the topic even more sensitive. The director of the National Library said that he wished that the Jewish documents could be housed at the National Library as *Moroccan* documents. Understanding why this is or is not possible in light of the above mentioned complicating factors is worthy of study.

The H-II Prize could also be a feast for scholars interested in bibliometrics. A thorough study of how Prize documents have been cited and used by scholars around the world would be an important piece of work. It might start with the fact that use of H-II documents might not be known by researchers who would generically cite the National Library as the source of a document.

In terms of “housekeeping” it is important in the near future for someone to truly take stock and organize the stored images of the Prize, adding annotations and metadata. The application of what have come to be known as Digital Humanities tools (text and data-mining, data visualization) could also produce interesting insights on the nature of participants and their

records. I hope to pursue some of these lines of inquiry in my upcoming research and am excited to see how others will make use of them in the future.

**APPENDIX A: LIST OF WINNERS OF THE HASSAN II PRIZE FOR MANUSCRIPTS 1999-2002 ISSUED BY
THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE**

1999	1er prix de considération	Mohammed FASSI FIHRI Hammad BOUAYAD
	2ème prix de considération	Mohammed MONCEF KADIRI Rachid KHADALI
	3ème prix de considération	Mohammed Saïd AL KHAMMALI Mahjoub LAMRABET
	1er prix d'encouragement	Ahmed BERRADA
	2ème prix d'encouragement	Ahmed AL INANI Driss SASSI HASSANI
	3ème prix d'encouragement	Asmae AL BADISI
2000	1er prix de considération	Seddiq RONDA Mahjoub LAMRABET
	2ème prix de considération	Brahim DERKAOUI M'hammed AL KHATTABI
	3ème prix de considération	Abdessalam LAARBI
	1er prix d'encouragement	Lhoussine ADNANI
	2ème prix d'encouragement	Mokhtar AMRANI
	3ème prix d'encouragement	Mohammed Saïd KHAMMALI
2001	1er prix de considération	Sidi Mostapha CHERKAOUI
	2ème prix de considération	Hammad BOUAYAD Mohammed BARAKALLAH
	3ème prix de considération	Mohammed BOUKDIDI Mohammed AHNANA
	1er prix d'encouragement	Mustapha MARZOUK
	2ème prix d'encouragement	Ahmed HAYYOUN
	3ème prix d'encouragement	Mohammed SALHI
2002	1er prix de considération	Hammad BOUAYAD Kenza NACIRI
	1er prix d'encouragement	Hammad BOUAYAD Ahmed EL YOUNSI Lahsen AL ASSIKI Mohamed KANBAREK Abdelouahab SIBAOUIH Najat WAFIK Brahim DERKAOU

	<p>2ème prix d'encouragement</p>	<p>Hafida ZEKRI Aziza IDRISSE Mahjoub LAMRABET Boualem GADDA Fatima NACIRI Madani NACIRI Mohammed KADI Abdelkader ABADA Mohammed KADIRI HASSANI AL YAMANI</p>
	<p>3ème prix d'encouragement</p>	<p>Noureddine BIRICHA Mohcine EL HANI Mohammed LOUKILI IDRISSE Abderrahmane KADDOUSSSI Abdelhak MOULAY MOHAMMED Houcine AZDOU Mohammed LAMINE M'barek AMAHAL Mohammed AL JILANI Mohammed Fadel BARAKALLAH Abdellatif IRAKI</p>

NB: Les manuscrits primés dans le cadre du Prix Hassan II sont microfilmés et déposés à la Bibliothèque Générale et Archives de Rabat.

SOURCE: Moroccan Ministry of Culture
http://www.minculture.gov.ma/fr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=226:prix-hassan-ii-des-manuscrits-et-des-archives&catid=42&Itemid=141

APPENDIX B: MULTI-LINGUAL CONSENT FORM

Hello. My name is Sumayya Ahmed, I am a doctoral student at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in the United States.

I am conducting research about private manuscript collections in Morocco.

You can choose whether or not to speak with me about this subject. If you do speak with me, you are free to stop talking with me at any point during the interview. Also, you are free to skip or not answer a question if you so decide.

Any information you provide me, will be made anonymous and your name and private information will not be made public.

Salaam. Mon nom est Sumayya Ahmed, je suis une étudiante au doctorat de la bibliothéconomie à l'Université de Caroline du Nord à Chapel Hill aux Etats-Unis.

Je mène des recherches sur les collections de manuscrits privés au Maroc. Spécifiquement, le Prix Hassan II des manuscrits et des archives. Je voudrais comprendre comment le Prix fonctionne et pourquoi les gens lui soumettent.

Je voudrais savoir votre opinion sur le Prix Hassan II et faire une interview à propos de ce sujet.

Vous pouvez choisir de parler avec moi sur ce sujet ou non. Si vous le faites, vous êtes libre d'arrêter à tout moment au cours de l'entrevue. Aussi, si vous n'aimez pas une question, il n'est pas obligatoire d'y répondre, vous pouvez passer à une autre.

Les informations que vous me fournissez seront anonymes et votre nom et information privée ne seront pas rendus publiques.

السلام عليكم

اسمي سمية أحمد طالبة امريكية من جامعة نورث كارولاينا في تشابل هيل. انا في طور الحصول على دكتوراه في علم

المكتبات و المعلومات. جائزة الحسن الثاني للمخطوطات و الوثائق موضوع اطروحتي.

اود في بحثي هذا أن أفهم مكانة الجائزة في المجتمع المغربي ولماذا يشارك فيها مالكي المخطوطات

اريد أن أعرف رأيك في هذه الجائزة و في نفس الوقت اجري معكم حوارا حول هذا الموضوع.

فلكم كامل الاختيار لتناقش معي هذا الموضوع. أنت حرة في التوقف عن الحديث معي في أي لحظة خلال المقابلة.

لديك الحق ان تتجنب أي سؤال تريد.

و بالإضافة إلى ذلك لديكم حق الخصوصية (أي المعلومات التي تقدمها لي، سأستخدمها بدون الإفصاح عن هويتك.)

APPENDIX C: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW INSTRUMENT - PRIZE PARTICIPANTS

Re: Reason(s) for submitting to the Hassan II Prize and conception of the Prize

- How did you hear about the Prize?
كيف تعرفت عن الجائزة؟
- What did you think when you first heard about it?
كيف كان رأيك لأول مرة تعرفت عن الجائزة؟
- Did you discuss it with anyone?
هل ناقشتها مع اي شخص؟
- In what year(s) did you participate in the Prize?
في أي سنة شاركت في الجائزة؟
- At what center did you submit your manuscript for consideration?
و في أي مركز للإستقبال قدمت مخطوطاتك؟
- How did you decide to submit to the Prize?
كيف قررت أن تشارك في الجائزة؟
- How did you feel about submitting?
كيف كان شعورك حين شاركت؟
- Why do you think other people don't submit to the Prize?
لماذا في نظرك لا يشارك في الجائزة نسبة كثيرة من الناس؟
- Did your manuscript/archival document receive a Prize?
[PROMPT If yes, ask: "Which one?" Then ask, "How did you feel about that?"
If no, ask: "How did you feel about that?"
كيف كان شعورك حين فزت؟
- How would you describe the Hassan II Prize to someone who didn't know about it?
كيف تصف جائزة الحسن الثاني لشخص لم يكن يعرف عنها؟
- Would you recommend submitting to the Prize to someone else who has manuscripts or archival records?
هل تنصح شخص عنده مخطوطات أو وثائق بالمشاركة في الجائزة؟
- Do you know other who have submitted to the Prize?
هل تعرف أناس آخرين شاركوا في الجائزة؟
- What would you change about the Prize if you could?

لو كان في إستطاعتك أن تغير شيئاً في الجائزة ماذا تغير؟

- What is good about digitization? ما هو الجانب المفيد من رقمنة المخطوطات؟
- What is bad about digitization? ما هو الجانب غير المفيد من رقمنة المخطوطات ؟
- Would you agree to have a copy of your manuscript available on the internet?

هل من الممكن ان توافق على نسخة من مخطوطاتك ان تكون متاحة على شبكة الانترنت ؟

Re: Individuals' or families' history of document ownership

- Can you tell me about the manuscript(s) you submitted?

[Prompt: Be sure to collect title, author, age of text and of their individual copy]

ما هو المخطوط الذي قدمت للجائزة؟

- How did you/your family get this manuscript? كيف حصلت على هذا المخطوط؟
- How long has it been in your family? كم سنة هو عندكم؟
- What is the most important thing about your manuscript? ما هو الشيء الأكثر أهمية في مخطوطاتك؟
- How is the manuscript used today? كيف تستخدم المخطوط اليوم؟
- How many manuscripts do you/does your family own? ما هو عدد المخطوطات في ملكيتك؟

Re: Motivations for continual holding/ownership of documents

- What is the condition of your manuscript(s)? كيف هي حالة مخطوطاتك؟
- Does it need special care or attention? هل هي بحاجة إلى رعاية خاصة؟
- How do you feel about that? كيف تشعر من ناحيتها؟
- What is the future of your manuscript(s)? Why? ما هو مستقبل مخطوطاتك؟
- Do you think of your manuscript as a financial investment? هل تعتقد أن مخطوطاتك استثمار مالي؟
- Do you think that manuscripts are important in Morocco? هل تعتقد أن المخطوطات مهمة في المغرب؟ لماذا و كيف؟

APPENDIX D: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW INSTRUMENT – PRIZE ADMINISTRATORS

Nature of the Prize, goal, and trajectories questions:

1. How would you describe the Hassan II Prize?
2. What is the main goal of the Hassan II Prize?
3. What has been its biggest success?
4. What has been a challenge or obstacle for the Prize?
5. Has there been any change in the willingness of people to participate in the Prize over the years?
6. What do you see as the future of the Prize?
7. Are manuscripts important in Morocco? Why?

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