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‘A Sublime Treasure of Pretious Manuscripts’:  
the Schultens’s legacy in the Leiden University

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Library and the elusive purchase of 1806<sup>1</sup>

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**Abstract**

*Using university archives and library catalogues as well as letters and diaries belonging to the Schultens, a Dutch family that produced three generations of outstanding Arabists in the 18th Century, this article looks at the circumstances surrounding the purchase of some annotated dictionaries and manuscripts by Leiden University Library.*

In the course of the eighteenth century, as wigs grew shorter and the fortunes of the Dutch Republic declined, three successive generations of Schultenses held the Chair of Oriental languages at Leiden University.<sup>2</sup> The first, Albert Schultens (1686–1750), is mainly known for his theory that Arabic is the twin sister of Hebrew but more perfectly preserved in the isolation of the desert, and that the exegesis of many obscure passages in the Bible may be helped by the study of Arabic. His son, Jan Jacob Schultens (1716–1778), was generally acknowledged to be the most learned Arabist of his time with the possible exception of J.J. Reiske, but his entanglement in theological disputations prevented him from publishing on any scale. Hendrik Albert Schultens (1749–1793), the last scion of the ‘dynasty’, was a typical product of the Enlightenment. A moderate in religious matters, he took a lively interest in Arabic as a literary language and keenly appreciated the beauty of classical Arabic poetry. Like his father and grandfather before him, he served as *rector magnificus* of Leiden University and chaired the Leiden-based Society of Netherlands Literature (Maatschappij der Nederlandsche Letterkunde). In 1772–1773 he travelled to England and visited Cambridge, where he updated the local manuscripts catalogue, and Oxford, where he copied an Arabic manuscript and met scholars such as William Jones and Benjamin Kennicott. Oxford University honoured him with a Master’s degree, a rare distinction for a foreigner.<sup>3</sup> Unusually

<sup>1</sup>This article is dedicated to Alastair Hamilton.

<sup>2</sup>For the history of the three generations of Schultens see J. Brugman and F. Schröder, *Arabic Studies in the Netherlands* (Leiden, 1979), pp. 25–30; J. Nat, *De studie van de Oostersche talen in Nederland in de 18<sup>e</sup> en de 19<sup>e</sup> eeuw* (Purmerend, 1929), pp. 37–59, 66–73, 88–99; A.J. van der Aa, *Biographisch woordenboek der Nederlanden*. Nieuwe uitgaaf (Haarlem, [1878]), vol. 17/I, pp. 526–535; P.C. Molhuysen, P.J. Blok et al., *Nieuw Nederlandsch biografisch woordenboek* (Leiden, 1911–1937), vol. 5, col. 707–714; J. Fück, *Die arabischen Studien in Europa bis in den Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts* (Leipzig, 1955), pp. 104–107.

<sup>3</sup>On H.A. Schultens’s voyage to England see J. van den Berg, “The Leiden Professors of the Schultens Family”, *Durham University Journal* 75; NS 44 (1982–1983), pp. 9–12. I would like to thank my colleague Hans van de Velde for drawing my attention to this article. Parts of H.A. Schultens’s travel diaries and letters to his father have been

for a man of his day, he read English literature and his private library contained works by Shakespeare, Alexander Pope, Samuel Johnson, Laurence Sterne and Jonathan Swift. A man of the world, affable, well-dressed and well-spoken, he served as a role model for his students. His favourite student, Johan Hendrik van der Palm (1763–1840), eventually succeeded him as Professor of Oriental languages. Although Van der Palm's contribution to Oriental studies is negligible, he is still remembered as 'agent' or minister of national education in the days of the Batavian Republic, as the author of a Bible translation and countless moral tracts, as a gifted orator whose resounding sermons were universally admired, and finally, as a model of deportment. Hendrik Albert Schultens made an indelible impression on Van der Palm, who entertained a lifelong veneration for his former professor.<sup>4</sup> No less a man of the world than Schultens, Van der Palm managed to weather the successive regimes of stadtholder William V, the Batavian Republic, the Kingdom of Holland under Napoleon's brother Louis, the French Empire and the independent Dutch monarchy under King William I.

The three Schultenses, like Van der Palm after them, combined their professorship with the post of Curator of Oriental collections at the Leiden University Library. In 1729 Albert Schultens was the first to be appointed as *Interpres Legati Warneriani* or 'Interpreter of the Warner Bequest', a reference to Levinus Warner (1619–1665), the seventeenth-century Orientalist and Dutch representative to the Sublime Porte who left a collection of 1,000 Oriental manuscripts to the Library.<sup>5</sup> They also acted as translators for the official correspondence between the Dutch Republic and foreign powers like the Barbary States and the Ottoman Empire.

The Schultenses were by no means as active in acquiring manuscripts for the University Library as Warner had been before them. In fact, hardly more than a dozen were registered during the first eight decades of the eighteenth century, all of them donations. However, all three Schultenses possessed rich Oriental collections in their private libraries, consisting of Oriental manuscripts, the printed works of European Orientalists, their personal research notes and the copies and drafts of their translation work for the Government. Indeed, the private collection of a man like Jan Jacob Schultens all but outnumbered the holdings of the University Library itself.<sup>6</sup>

It is therefore a relief to read Berkvens-Stevelinck's *Magna Commoditas*, the most recent history of the Leiden University Library, where she states that in the year 1806 the University Library, notwithstanding its perennial lack of funds, managed to acquire Oriental manuscripts and books from the estate of the three Schultenses for a considerable sum of money. According to her, it was the largest addition in the field of Oriental studies since Warner's

published in C. van Eekeren & E. Kwant (eds.), *Een alleraangenaamste reys: H.A. Schultens, 1772–1773* (Lugd. Bat., 1999). See p. 153 for Schultens's Oxford degree. The original diary is preserved in MS Leiden University Library, Western Manuscripts collection, BPL 245 VIII.

<sup>4</sup>N. Beets, *Life and Character of J.H. Van der Palm*, transl. J.P. Westervelt (New York, 1865), pp. 10–12. Beets (1814–1903), a well-known Dutch novelist and clergyman, was married to Van der Palm's granddaughter; A. de Groot, *Leven en arbeid van J.H. van der Palm* (Wageningen, 1960), pp. 16–17.

<sup>5</sup>Codd. Or. 269–1199, 4739–4814. On Warner see G.W.J. Drewes, "The Legatum Warnerianum of Leiden University Library", in *Levinus Warner and his Legacy. Three Centuries Legatum Warnerianum in the Leiden University Library* (Leiden, 1970), pp. 1–31.

<sup>6</sup>According to Dr André Bouwman, curator of western manuscripts, the holdings of the Leiden University Library amounted to 15,700 volumes in 1810 (personal communication). In 1780, J.J. Schultens's private library contained more than 12,000 titles (see below).

legacy.<sup>7</sup> Berkvens based herself on two previous histories of the University Library by Matthijs Siegenbeek and P.C. Molhuysen, published in 1829–1832 and 1905 respectively, in which one finds similar statements about a wholesale acquisition of Oriental materials in that year and the unusually large expenditure made on their account.<sup>8</sup> However, neither the handwritten inventory of the Leiden Oriental manuscripts, nor the accessions list of printed books, reveal anything about such a purchase in 1806. This information raises a number of questions. Did the University Library buy any Schultens materials in 1806 at all? If so, why were they not registered as such? And what is the source of the reports in the successive histories of the Leiden University Library?

### The J.J. Schultens's Auction (1780)

To begin with, Berkvens omits mention of an earlier purchase made in 1780. In September–October of that year, an auction took place at the Leiden bookseller Henricus Mostert's of the private library of Jan Jacob Schultens, who had died two years previously. A 605-page catalogue was prepared and almost four weeks were needed to sell the 1,130 folios, 3,859 quartos and 7,022 octavos on subjects like philosophy and theology, classics and Oriental languages.<sup>9</sup> His son and successor Hendrik Albert Schultens represented the University Library at this auction, although he also bought books and manuscripts on his own account. Apparently there are no records of the printed books acquired by the University Library on this occasion, but 81 Oriental manuscripts are mentioned in the inventory, the *Codices Or.* 1222–1302. Ironically, by this single purchase from the private library of his father, Hendrik Albert showed himself more active as curator of Oriental collections than his father and grandfather together had been.

The University Library, however, was not the only buyer at the auction. Joannes Willmet (1750–1835), Professor of Oriental languages at Harderwijk from 1794 and at Amsterdam from 1804,<sup>10</sup> also attended and acquired 26 Oriental manuscripts for his own private collection. Before he died in October 1835 he expressed the wish that his collection of manuscripts be purchased by the library of the Royal Netherlands Institute, later the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences in Amsterdam. His wish was fulfilled by King William I of the Netherlands, an active sponsor of scholarship and industry, who bought Willmet's Oriental manuscripts in 1837 and donated them to the Royal Institute. In 1856

<sup>7</sup>C. Berkvens-Stevelinck, *Magna Commoditas. A History of Leiden University Library, 1575–2000* (Leiden, 2004), p. 56.

<sup>8</sup>P.C. Molhuysen, *Geschiedenis der Universiteitsbibliotheek te Leiden* (Leiden, 1905), pp. 43–44; M. Siegenbeek, *Geschiedenis der Leidsche Hoogeschool van hare oprigting in den jare 1575, tot het jaar 1825* (Leiden, 1829–1832), ii, p. 59.

<sup>9</sup>*Bibliotheca Schultensiana, sive catalogus librorum, quos collegit [...] Johannes Jacobus Schultensius, [...], qui publica auctione vendentur per Henricum Mostert, Die Lunae 18. Septembri & seqq. 1780*. Lugduni Batavorum, apud Henricum Mostert. 605, [3] p.; Molhuysen, *Geschiedenis*, p. 43: 'Maar in 1780 werden 81 hss. uit de bibliotheek van J.J. Schultens aangekocht'; Siegenbeek, ii, p. 53: 'Desgelijks stelden Curatoren, in de jaren 1779, 1782 en 1784, den bibliothecaris op eene onbekrompene wijze in staat, om, bij de openbare veiling der rijke boekverzamelingen van de Heeren J.J. schultens [...], van welke de meeste zich in de geleerde wereld een' grooten naam verwierven, de openbare Boekerij met een aantal merkwaardige Handschriften en voortreffelijke boeken te verrijken.'

<sup>10</sup>Nat, *De studie van de Oostersche talen*, pp. 102–103.

they were given on permanent loan to the Leiden University Library, and in this way Willmet's 26 Schultens manuscripts returned to Leiden after an absence of 76 years.<sup>11</sup>

### The failed auction of H.A. Schultens's books (1794) and its aftermath

When Hendrik Albert Schultens died on 12 August 1793 at the age of 44, his widow Catharina Elisabeth de Sitter (c. 1743–1809) arranged for his books and manuscripts to be sold by the Leiden publisher and bookseller A. & J. Honkoop. The auction catalogue was prepared by Schultens's successor Everard Scheidius (1742–1794).<sup>12</sup> On 30 September 1794 an advertisement appeared in the French-language Leiden newspaper *Nouvelles extraordinaires de divers endroits*, commonly known as the *Gazette de Leyde*, announcing the auction at Rapenburg 49, the home of the deceased, on 27 October and the following seven days. However, when leafing through the pages of the *Gazette de Leyde*, it becomes clear that the times were inauspicious for an auction that was supposed to attract potential customers from abroad. The Dutch Republic, in a state of war with Revolutionary France since 1793, was on the verge of collapse. In late October–early November 1794 the French started their invasion by crossing the river Meuse. King George III's son Frederick, Duke of York (1763–1827), marched a British and Allied army into the Netherlands, but it was only temporarily able to check the French advance. The Netherlands were overrun, stadtholder William V fled to England in January 1795, and just before the capitulation the Batavian Republic was proclaimed, based on the principles of *Liberté, Egalité & Fraternité*. Under such circumstances an auction was out of the question and on 28 October 1794 it was reported in the *Gazette de Leyde* that

La vente de la Bibliothèque du feu Professeur H.A. Schultens, fixée au 27. Octobre 1794, par les Libraires A. & J. Honkoop, à Leyde, n'aura pas lieu, mais se trouve différée de quelques semaines jusqu'à nouvel Avis, à cause du retard continuel de l'arrivée des Postes Etrangères.

In spite of the reassuring tone of the advertisement, the auction never took place and more than a year later the books were still unsold. At that moment Van der Palm, H.A. Schultens's favourite student, intervened. On 1 December 1795 he had accepted a nomination as Professor of Oriental languages at Leiden and he resolved to add more lustre to his new appointment by taking the entire collection off the hands of the widow.<sup>13</sup> It was an excellent opportunity for him to acquire the private collection of a scholar whom he had always tried to emulate, and his contemporaries confirm that he took great pride in it.<sup>14</sup> He may also have been moved by a genuine desire to help Schultens's widow, who, with the death of

<sup>11</sup>After Willmet's death his collection was put up for sale, see *Bibliotheca Willmetiana. Catalogus bibliothecae instructissimae quam in suos usus comparavit Joannes Willmet* (Amstelodami, 1837); P. de Jong, *Catalogus codicum orientalium Bibliothecae Academiae Regiae Scientiarum* (Lugd. Bat., 1862), pp. x, xiii, xvi. According to J.J. Witkam's inventory at [www.islamicmanuscripts.info](http://www.islamicmanuscripts.info), accessed 11 August 2008, the following Mss. formerly belonged to J.J. Schultens: Acad. 26, 31, 48, 52, 55–58, 60, 64, 74, 76, 80, 86, 88, 96, 138, 140, 142, 144, 150–151, 178, 183, 207–208.

<sup>12</sup>*Catalogus Bibliothecae quam reliquit Henricus Albertus Schultens [...] cujus publica fiet distractio, in aedibus defuncti, ad diem 27. Mensi Octobris & seqq. Anni 1794* (Lugd. Bat., apud A. et J. Honkoop, 1794). On the authorship of this catalogue see the preface to the *Catalogus librorum ac manusciporum bibliothecae Schultensianae, qua, dum in vivis erat, usus est Joh. Henr. van der Palm [...]* (Lugd. Bat., S. et J. Luchtman et D. du Mortier et fil., 1841), p. vi. On Scheidius see Nat, *De studie van de Oostersche talen*, pp. 83–87.

<sup>13</sup>De Groot, *Leven en arbeid*, pp. 52–53.

<sup>14</sup>Beets, *Life and Character*, p. 104.

her husband, found herself left behind with three sons and two daughters.<sup>15</sup> The archives of the Society of Netherlands Literature, of which Van der Palm was a member, hold a letter from Schultens's widow to Van der Palm dated 3 April 1796, in which she expresses her satisfaction that her late husband's collection had passed into the hands of someone for whom he had always felt the greatest esteem and friendship and, finding herself reluctant to do business with a bookseller like Honkoop, a man "commonly known for his greedy disposition", she asked him to act as her intermediary.<sup>16</sup>

After Van der Palm's death in 1840, his book collection was sold at auction by the Leiden firms of S. & J. Luchtmans and D. du Mortier in April 1841. The title of the catalogue, referring to 'the Schultens library, which was used by J.H. van der Palm during his lifetime', leaves no doubt about how the collection was still known at the time.<sup>17</sup> The auction, occurring almost 50 years after Hendrik Albert's death, gave Leiden University Library yet another opportunity to acquire Schultens books and manuscripts. It is well documented in the records of the Library. There is a 22-page list, containing detailed references to the page and item number in the printed catalogue, the title of the book, its format, subject and shelfmark.<sup>18</sup> The account books of the Library contain a second, detailed, list with the price of each item, adding up to a total of 1,705 guilders and 1½ cents.<sup>19</sup> In this way, 479 printed books and 27 Oriental manuscripts from the Schultens collections found their way into the Library, together with 89 printed books and 7 Oriental manuscripts from Van der Palm's own collection. The manuscripts are registered in the inventory of Oriental manuscripts as Codd. Or. 1571–1599.

### The Van Eerde auction (1836) and other acquisitions

Apart from these above-mentioned acquisitions or loans, none of which is mentioned in Berkvens's history of the Leiden University Library, there are other examples of large-scale accessions of Schultens manuscripts long after the death of the last Schultens. For instance, when the Groningen professor and university librarian Jan Rudolf van Eerde<sup>20</sup> died in 1835, he turned out to be in the possession of dozens of manuscripts, almost exclusively consisting of unpublished papers and scholarly notes in the hand of all three generations of Schultens. When this mass of papers was offered for auction in Groningen in 1836, they were purchased

<sup>15</sup>For basic data on H.A. Schultens's family relations see L. van Poelgeest, *De Leidse hoogleraren en lectoren 1575–1815*. 5: *De Letterenfaculteit* (Leiden: s.n., 1985), pp. 101–102.

<sup>16</sup>MS Leiden University Library, Western manuscripts, Collection Maatschappij der Nederlandsche Letterkunde, LTK 1567: C.E. de Sitter to J.H. van der Palm, 3 April 1796. Van der Palm left his correspondence to his granddaughter's husband Nicolaas Beets (See above, n. 3). Beets's heirs donated the Van der Palm correspondence to the Society of Netherlands Literature in 1906. Since 1876 the library of the Society constitutes a permanent loan collection of the Leiden University Library.

<sup>17</sup>*Catalogus librorum ac manuscriptorum Bibliothecae Schultensianae, qua, dum in vivis erat, usus est Joh. Henr. van der Palm [...] accedit ejusdem viri clarissimi Appendix librorum ac manuscriptorum similis argumenti* (Lugd. Bat.: S. et J. Luchtmans, et D. du Mortier, 1841). According to the preface, p. vi, the catalogue was prepared by H.E. Weyers or Weijers (1805–1844), Professor of Oriental languages at Leiden and Interpres Legati Warneriani, with the help of his adjutor M. Hoogvliet.

<sup>18</sup>Bibliotheeks Archief No. A 4, Libri emti in auctionibus publicis 1837–1855: Emi ex Biblioth. Schultensio-Palmiana, Lugd. Bat. per Luchtmans et Du Mortier, m. Aprili 1841.

<sup>19</sup>Bibliotheeks Archief No. F 6, Finanties 1841: 'Lijst der boeken gekocht op de Auctie Schultens-van der Palm April 1841 (Catal. 751 D 43) met den prijs voor elk boek besteed, van de hand van den heer Bergman'.

<sup>20</sup>Molhuysen & Blok, *Nieuw Nederlandsch biografisch woordenboek*, iv, p. 555.

by, again, King William I for the less than princely sum of 47 guilders and 25 cents. He, in turn, donated them to the Leiden University Library, where they were registered in the course of 1837 as Codd. Or. 1455–1502. Although no documentary evidence exists, it is likely that the papers in question had been sold to Van Eerde by Catharina Elisabeth de Sitter, Hendrik Albert Schultens's widow, who had returned to her relatives in Groningen toward the end of her life, or by her heirs. In any case, the auction catalogue mentions the manuscripts as “originating from the library of Hendrik Albert Schultens”.<sup>21</sup>

In addition to this, the University Library holds a large number of copies and drafts of diplomatic translations by the three Schultenses and their predecessor Johannes Heyman (1667–1737).<sup>22</sup> The registration numbers seem to indicate that they were added to the Library collections during the curatorship of Hendrik Arent Hamaker, who held office from 1817 to 1835, but the inventory remains silent on the date or method of acquisition. In the absence of any reliable information one may assume that they were also acquired from Hendrik Albert Schultens's heirs. In his *Catalogue of Turkish manuscripts in the Library of Leiden University*, Jan Schmidt suggests that these manuscripts may very well have belonged to Hamaker's private library. However, neither the auction catalogue of 1836, nor the financial records of the university library refer to these items.<sup>23</sup>

### The Elusive Purchase of 1806

Thus far, it has become clear that Schultens books and manuscripts entered the library at various instances, either directly or indirectly, through auctions, donations and loans. However, this knowledge does not bring us any closer to the presumed acquisition of 1806. Yet, it is unlikely that three historians of the Leiden University Library should be completely mistaken about this. As it turns out they are not, or not quite. The earliest documentary evidence that such a sale did indeed take place in 1806 can be found in the above-mentioned letter of 3 April 1796, which is extant in the collections of the Society of Netherlands Literature. Just after Van der Palm's takeover of Hendrik Albert Schultens's private library, the widow informed Van der Palm that a number of items had been deliberately excluded from the purchase:

I have left out *the Goliuses and all that is not mentioned in the catalogue* [emphasis added] at the express desire of my deceased husband. If my youngest son should not incline to the studies of his father, it would be my pleasure to see Yr. Exc. in the possession of the remainder, and should gladly give Yr. Exc. preference, which should not prove difficult, since my husband has almost exactly determined their price for me, if I should judge it necessary to sell them before that time in order to improve my circumstances.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>21</sup>The auction took place in Groningen on 24 October 1836 and the following days. See *Bibliotheca Eerdiana, sive Catalogus librorum, qui studiis inservierunt viri clarissimi Jani Rudolphi van Eerde* [...] (Groningae: apud J. Oomkens Jr., 1836). The Leiden copy, shelfmark 752 E 21, contains the price of each item in handwriting. For the list of Schultens manuscripts see p. 327.

<sup>22</sup>Codd. Or. 1353, 1365, 1367, 1376–1387.

<sup>23</sup>J. Schmidt, *Catalogue of Turkish Manuscripts in the Library of Leiden University and other Collections in the Netherlands*, ii (Leiden, 2002), p. 2; *Bibliothecae Hamakerianae pars, sive Catalogus librorum* [...] viri celeb. H.A. Hamaker (Lugd. Bat., 1836); MS Leiden University Library, Bibliotheeks Archief, No. F7, Finanties.

<sup>24</sup>MS Leiden University Library, Western manuscripts, collection Maatschappij der Nederlandsche Letterkunde, LTK 1567: C.E. de Sitter to J.H. van der Palm, 3 April 1796: ‘de Goliussen en wat verder niet op de Catalogus staat, heb ik op expresse begeerte van mijn overledene man, er uit gehouden, indien mijn jongste zoon niet inclineert voor de studie van zijn vader, zal het mij plaisir doen, Ued in het bezit van het reesteerende te zien, en wil Ued

As a matter of fact, her youngest son Albert Willem (b. Leiden 17 April 1783) felt no such inclination. He became a clerk at a naval base in Amsterdam and died on 5 December 1804, only 21 years old. At that moment, Hendrik Albert Schultens's widow Catharina Elisabeth de Sitter, who had already suffered the loss of two other sons and a daughter after the death of her husband, was left with only one surviving child, her daughter Johanna Elisabeth (1779–1820). She then proceeded to dispose of the materials that had been kept apart for the benefit of her sons. One must assume that she first went to Van der Palm, to whom she had given the right of first refusal. Van der Palm however, who was in the service of the Government between 1799 and 1806, was not in a position to buy. The widow subsequently approached the trustees ('*curatoren*') of Leiden University, who convened on 29 March 1805 to discuss her offer. The trustees, perceiving that any document left behind by the Schultenses might be important for the study of Oriental languages, felt favourably disposed towards the offer, but before making a final decision they appointed a committee consisting of the Leiden Orientalist Sebald F.J. Rau (1765–1807)<sup>25</sup> and, unsurprisingly, Van der Palm, in order to ascertain the value of the offer.<sup>26</sup>

Almost one and a half years later, on 19 September 1806, Rau and Van der Palm reported back with a succinct and also slightly incorrect survey of the books and manuscripts. As already indicated in the widow's letter to Van der Palm, the collection consisted mainly of annotated copies of Jacobus Golius' *Lexicon Arabico-Latinum* (Leiden, 1653), filled with the handwritten notes of all three generations of Schultens. In addition there were copies of Basilius Faber's *Thesaurus eruditionis scolasticae* (Leipzig, 1696), Johannes Scapula's *Lexicon Graeco-Latinum* and some contemporary copies of Arabic manuscripts, most notably a copy of Edward Pococke's translation of the *Majma' al-anthāl*, a collection of Arabic proverbs by the twelfth-century Iranian scholar Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Maydānī, transcribed by Hendrik Albert Schultens during his stay in Oxford (see the Appendix below for a more detailed bibliographical description of all items).<sup>27</sup> The estimated value of this small collection was, according to Rau and Van der Palm, one thousand gold ducats or 5,250 guilders. On the same day, 19 September 1806, the trustees agreed to the suggested price and asked Van der Palm to offer this sum to Schultens's widow, who accepted by letter to Van der Palm on 27 September 1806.<sup>28</sup> The acquisition was important enough to catch the eye of the general public, for instance in the pages of the popular literary magazine *Algemeene Konst- en Letterbode* ('General messenger of Arts and Letters'), where it was announced in glowing terms as "a sublime treasure of pretious Manuscripts".<sup>29</sup>

gaaren de voorkeur geven, dat niet zo moeilijk zal weezen dewijl mijn man mij ten naasten bij de prijs bepaalt heeft, indien ik het tot verbetering van mijn omstandigheeden nootzaaklijk mogt oordelen om ze voor die tijd te verkopen".

<sup>25</sup> On S.F.J. Rau see Nat, *De studie van de Oostersche talen*, pp. 120–121.

<sup>26</sup> MS Leiden University Library, Archief van Curatoren der Leidsche Universiteit No. 36, Resolutiën 1804–1811, f. 24r–v; also in P.C. Mollhuysen, *Bronnen tot de geschiedenis der Leidsche Universiteit* ('s Gravenhage, 1913–1924), vii, p. 278.

<sup>27</sup> MS Leiden University Library, Archief van Curatoren No. 78, Bijdragen tot de Resolutiën: S.F.J. Rau and J.H. Van der Palm to the Trustees of the University of Leiden, 19 September 1806. See also Nat, *De studie van de Oostersche talen*, pp. 94, 98–99.

<sup>28</sup> MS Leiden University Library, Archief van Curatoren No. 36, Resolutiën 1804–1811, f. 46v–47v.; See also Mollhuysen, *Bronnen*, vii, pp. 311–12; MS Leiden University Library, Western manuscripts, collection Maatschappij der Nederlandsche Letterkunde, LTK 1567: C.E. de Sitter to Van der Palm, 27 September 1806.

<sup>29</sup> *Algemeene Konst- en Letterbode* 1806/II (5 December 1806), pp. 356–358: 'Een uitmuntende schat van pretieuze Handschriften.'; Nat, *De studie van de Oostersche talen*, p. 99.

In those days, 5,250 guilders was an extravagant sum according to any standard. The regular Library budget for 1806 was only 300 guilders and the annual income of the average Leiden professor ranged between 2,000 and 3,000 guilders.<sup>30</sup> Since the regular budget was evidently inadequate, the trustees of the university turned to the trust fund of Lodewijk Chastelain (17??–1785). Chastelain, a lawyer from The Hague, had appointed the university as his universal heir in 1779 on the condition that the revenues from his estate be used for books for the faculties of Law, Medicine and Philosophy alternately, with the conspicuous exception of the faculty of Divinity.<sup>31</sup> However, even the affluent Chastelain fund proved incapable of covering the whole sum, and the trustees could do nothing but pay half the amount and promise to settle the remaining debt “as soon as the state of finances allow”. Even this proved difficult, and when the university paid a second instalment of 1,625 guilders in 1809 Schultens’s widow had already died.<sup>32</sup> The fate of the last instalment of 1,000 guilders is unknown.

It is evident that all those concerned felt perfectly justified in spending more than 5,000 guilders on a few annotated dictionaries and contemporary manuscripts. As we have seen, the price had originally been fixed by Hendrik Albert Schultens himself. It is possible that Van der Palm followed his professor’s opinion as he had always done, and he may also have acted to serve the interests of the widow, but on the other hand the trustees of the university were perfectly free to reject the offer. The fact that they did accept it, even when they could not really afford to do so, implies that they, too, were eager to secure possession of this little collection.

In this respect, it is interesting to take a closer look at the arguments brought forward by Rau and Van der Palm in their report to the trustees. According to them, the scholarly notes in the dictionaries were valuable because of the “stupendous learning” of the Schultens, which had to be preserved for the Leiden academic community. Hendrik Albert Schultens’s copy of al-Maydānī’s proverbs was regarded as valuable because he himself had declared that this manuscript alone had been worth his entire journey to England. Lastly, Rau and Van der Palm stressed the value that “foreign scholars and universities” would attach to these unique specimens of scholarship and the high prices they would be willing to offer. Many times, they warned, similar “invaluable products of the national mind” had been allowed to disappear abroad, invariably leading to regrets afterwards.

Strictly speaking, these ‘arguments’ constitute an assertion rather than an explanation of the facts: the annotated dictionaries were valuable because Rau and Van der Palm considered the authors of the notes as fine scholars; obviously, H.A. Schultens had thought so too during his lifetime, and everybody’s opinion was confirmed by unspecified foreigners who were apparently introduced into the argument for extra leverage. Who were the trustees of the university to challenge all this?

In fact, the value attributed to this collection cannot fairly be understood without reference to the state of Arabic lexicography in the early nineteenth century. In those days Jacobus

<sup>30</sup>MS Leiden University Library, Archief van Curatoren No. 99, Ordonnantien van betaling, f. 84v.

<sup>31</sup>Molhuysen, *Bronnen*, vi, pp. 35\*, 271.

<sup>32</sup>MS Leiden University Library, Archief van Curatoren No 36, Resolutiën 1804–1811, ff. 50r–v, 107v; *Ibid.*, No. 207, Accounts of the Chastelain Fund 1805/[1806]: payment of the first instalment of 2,625 guilders; No. 210 (1809): payment of the second instalment of 1,625 guilders; No. 220 (1809): receipt for the amount of 1,625 guilders, signed by Johanna Elisabeth Schultens, daughter of Catharina Elisabeth de Sitter, and her husband P. Durleu, dated 12 Herfstmaand (September) 1809.



Golius's *Lexicon Arabico-Latinum*, published in 1653, was not yet superseded by a more recent work, and western scholars of Arabic used to update their Golius with marginal annotations based on their own study of Arabic texts. It may, therefore, be assumed with good reason that the scholarly notes of the three generations of Schultens were regarded as an important contribution to Arabic lexicography, and the annotated dictionaries themselves as priceless items. It was only from 1830 that Golius's work came to be replaced by Georg Wilhelm Freytag's Arabic-Latin dictionary, published under the same title as its predecessor, *Lexicon Arabico-Latinum* (4 vols., Halis Saxonum [Halle a/d Saale], 1830–1837). For those who wonder if Leiden University spent its money wisely on the annotated dictionaries, it is to some degree reassuring to read Freytag's preface, wherein he stated that he had derived much profit from Jan Jacob Schultens's notes to his own Golius, a copy that had been put at his disposal by the Leiden University Library.<sup>33</sup>

After the publication of Freytag's *Lexicon*, annotated Goliuses lost much of their added value. For instance, when H.A. Hamaker's private library was auctioned in 1836, Leiden University Library paid 600 guilders for his annotated copy of J. Willmet's *Lexicon linguae Arabicae in Coranum, Haririum et vitam Timuri* (Lugd. Bat. 1784, current shelfmark UBL 854 B 2–3), against a mere 100 guilders for his annotated Golius (shelfmark UBL 843 A 11–12).<sup>34</sup>

Even the use of Latin as a scholarly medium rapidly lost currency in the course of the nineteenth century. The new generation of Arabic lexicographers, such as Edward William Lane (1801–1876) or Albin de Biberstein Kazimirski (1808–1887), used their own vernacular rather than Latin. A Dutch Arabist like R.P.A. Dozy (1820–1883) made the effort of looking up Jan Jacob Schultens's notes to his Golius when preparing his *Supplément aux dictionnaires arabes* (Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1881), but he found them “in a veritable chaos”. “No doubt”, he declared dismissively, “they were clear to him who wrote them, but not to us”. Nevertheless, even Dozy had to admit that he had used Jan Jacob Schultens's notes for his citations from authors like Barhebraeus, Ibn Ṭufayl and al-Tanūkhī.<sup>35</sup>

The Arabic dictionaries were registered in the acquisitions journal of the university library only in 1816, after the conclusion of the Napoleonic wars.<sup>36</sup> The same seems to apply to the contemporary manuscripts. The dictionaries in classical languages were registered as late as 1845, where they go unnoticed among the other acquisitions of that year.<sup>37</sup>

With hindsight it is not difficult to see that the difference between notions such as quality and quantity and value and price became blurred with the passing of time. The actual content of this extraordinary purchase was forgotten, but the memory of the extravagant expenditure has lingered on in the successive histories of the Leiden University Library to this day, culminating in the idea that a very large amount of money must necessarily have involved a large number of books and manuscripts. *Quod non*.

<sup>33</sup>G.W. Freytagius, *Lexicon Arabico-Latinum*, 4 vols. (Halis Saxonum, 1830–1837), i, p. viii.

<sup>34</sup>*Bibliothecae Hamakerianae pars*, p. 116, Nos. 1–2; MS Leiden University Library, Bibliotheks Archief, Finanties F 7.

<sup>35</sup>R.P.A. Dozy, *Supplément aux dictionnaire arabes* (Leiden, 1881), i, p. vii. See also *ibid.*, n.2, where Dozy challenges Freytag's statement about his indebtedness to Schultens's Golius.

<sup>36</sup>Supplement to the university library acquisitions journal, c. 1816–1860, Bibliotheks Archief No. C 42bis, vol. x, ‘Hebraici & Orientales in Folio’.

<sup>37</sup>Supplement to the university library acquisitions journal, c. 1816–1860, Bibliotheks Archief No. C 42bis, vol. xi, ‘Litteratores & Historici in Folio’.

**Appendix I: Chronological survey of Schultens manuscripts in the Oriental collections of Leiden University Library**

Year	Shelfmarks	Acquisition
1780	Codd. Or. 1222–1302	J.J. Schultens auction
1817–1835	Codd. Or. 1353, 1365, 1367, 1376–1387	Probably acquired by H.A. Hamaker between 1817–1835
1836	Codd. Or. 1455–1502	Van Eerde auction
1841	Codd. Or. 1571–1599	Van der Palm auction, originally acquired from H.A. Schultens's widow in 1796
1856	Acad. 26, 31, 48, 52, 55–58, 60, 64, 74, 76, 80, 86, 88, 96, 138, 140, 142, 144, 150–151, 178, 183, 207–208	Permanent loan Royal Academy, originally acquired by Willmet in 1836

**Appendix II: Books and manuscripts bought from the estate of  
Hendrik Albert Schultens in 1806**

Survey by S.F.J. Rau and J.H. Van der Palm of annotated books and manuscripts, offered by Catharina Elisabeth de Sitter (1743–1809), widow of Hendrik Albert Schultens, to Leiden University Library in 1805 (MS Leiden University Library, Archief van Curatoren No. 78, Bijdragen tot de Resolutiën: S.F.J. Rau and J.H. Van der Palm to the Trustees of the University of Leiden, 19 September 1806):

- [1] “5 Golius copies plus 1 copy of the *Appendix* and *Auctarium*, with notes of the three Schultenses;
- [2] 1 copy of Fabri *Thesaurus*, in two volumes with interleaving, with many notes by A. Schultens;
- [3] 2 Scapulas, one annotated by A. Schultens, the other by J.J. Schultens;
- [4] a copy of the *Hamasa* of Tebrizi by A. Schultens, with a supplement to the *codex Merzoukii* in a different hand;
- [5] a copy of Pococke's Meidani by H.A. Schultens, with an alphabetical index to the *Proverbia*.”
  - Ad [1]: Jacobus Golius (1596–1667), *Jacobi Golii Lexicon Arabic-Latinum, contextum ex probationibus Orientis lexicographis. Accedit index Latinvs copiosissimus, qui lexicis Latino-Arabici vicem explere possit*. Lugduni Batavorum, Typis Bonaventurae & Abrahami Elseviriorum, 1653.
    - a) Shelfmark UBL 842 A 2, *olim* X F. 16 A. Copy with marginal notes by Albert Schultens;
    - b) *Idem*, shelfmark UBL 842 A 3, *olim* X F. 16 F. Copy with marginal notes by a) Hendrik Albert Schultens and b) notes by Jan Jacob Schultens on inserted leaves between the Appendix and the Index;
    - c) *Idem*, shelfmark UBL 842 A 7–8, *olim* X F. 16 D. Interleaved copy in two volumes with marginal notes by Jan Jacob Schultens and some annotations in the hand of Hendrik Albert Schultens;
    - d) *Idem*, shelfmark UBL 843 A 10, *olim* Orient. Fol. 16 a. Copy with notes by Jan Jacob Schultens.

Note: Although the original list mentions five copies, only four copies in five volumes can be attributed to the Schultens family. It is quite possible that Rau and Van der Palm mistook the two volumes in UBL 842 A 7–8 for two separate copies. Of the separate *Auctarium* and *Appendix* no trace can be found.

- Ad [2] Basilius Faber (1520–1575), Augustus Buchnerus (1591–1661) & Christophorus Cellarius (1638–1707), *Basilii Fabri Thesaurus eruditionis scolasticae, jam olim post aliorum operas per August. Buchnerum recensitus, emendatus et doctorum observationibus auctus, novam hanc editionem Christoph. Cellarius correxit et locupletavit, accedit index Germanicus vocum locutionumque* (Lipsiae : Th. Fritsch, 1696).
- a) Shelfmark UBL 755 A 16, *olim* XI A F 799. Copy with notes by Albert Schultens, not by J.J. Schultens as mentioned on the spine. Erroneously registered in Rau and Van der Palm's survey and in the university library accessions list as a copy of Scapula's *Lexicon Graecolatinum* (see below);
- b) Shelfmark UBL 763 B 6, *olim* XI A F 801. Copy with notes by J.J. Schultens.
  - Ad [3] Johannes Scapula (c.1540–1600), *Lexicon Graecolatinum* [...].
- a) Shelfmark UBL 764 B 9, *olim* XI A F 800. Incomplete copy, quarto edition of unknown origin or date, with folio interleaving and notes by A. Schultens.
  - Ad [4] 'Copy of the *Hamasa* of Tebrizi by A. Schultens, with a supplement to the *codex Merzoukii* in a different hand'.

Not extant in Leiden today. There is no doubt that these items are related to A. Schultens's partial edition of the *Ḥamāsa* by Abū Tammām (Brockelmann *GAL S I*, 40): *Excerpta ex anthologia veterum poetarum, quae inscribitur Hamasa Abi Temmam ex Ms. Biblioth. Academ. Lugd. Batav.*, which appeared as part of his re-edition of Thomas Erpenius' *Grammatica Arabica* (Lugd. Bat., 1738), ii, pp. 303–603. In the preface, i, pp. clxxi–ii, he refers explicitly to the Leiden manuscripts he used for this edition, one with commentary by Yaḥyā b. 'Alī al-Tibrīzī (d. 502/1108), probably Leiden Cod. Or. 396, and another one by Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Marzūqī (d. 421/1030), most probably Leiden Cod. Or. 569. If the copies offered by Hendrik Albert Schultens's widow were apographs made by Albert Schultens and another anonymous scholar on the basis of these Leiden manuscripts it makes sense to assume that they were either excluded from the purchase or discarded afterwards.

- Ad [5] a) UBL Cod. Or. 1368. *Majma' al-Amthāl*, by Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Maydānī (d. 518/1124), Brockelmann *GAL G I*, 289. Partial edition and Latin translation by Edward Pococke (1604–1691). Copied by H.A. Schultens (1749–1793) in Oxford in the autumn of 1772. Pococke's original translation, dated 1635, is MS Oxford, Bodleian, Pococke 392 (Cat. Uri, p. 90, No. 313). Cat. Dozy [et al.], *Catalogus codicum orientalium*, i, p. 197, No. 348; De Goeje & Houtsma, *Catalogus codicum arabicorum*, i, p. 217, No. 386; Voorhoeve, *Handlist of Arabic manuscripts*, p. 177; De Jong, *Catalogus codicum orientalium Bibliothecae Academiae Regiae Scientiarum*, p. 100, No. 49.
- b) UBL Or. 1369. Copy by H.A. Schultens (1749–1793) of J.C. Krüger's multiple indexes to a copy of the *Majma' al-amthāl* by J.J. Reiske (1716–1774) which was once in the possession of the Harderwijk scholar Everard Scheidius (1742–1794). Cat. Dozy [et al.],

*Catalogus codicum orientalium*, i, p. 197, No. 351; De Goeje & Houtsma, *Catalogus codicum arabicorum*, i, p. 217, No. 388; Voorhoeve, *Handlist of Arabic manuscripts*, p. 177.

Both Krüger's original indexes and Reiske's copy of the *Majma' al-amthāl* are now preserved in MS Deventer, Stadsarchief & Athenaeumbibliotheek, 10 O 11–12. Cat. M.J. de Goeje, 'Codices orientales bibliothecarum Groninganae, Daventriensis, Leovardensis [. . .],' in *idem*, *Catalogus codicum orientalium*, v (1873), pp. 294–295, Cod. Dav. 1824.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>38</sup>On H.A. Schultens's efforts to publish an edition of the *Majma' al-amthāl* of al-Maydānī and the copies of manuscripts made for that purpose see A. Vrolijk, "Entirely free from the urge to publish. H.A. Schultens, J.J. Reiske, E. Scheidius and the 18th-century attempts at an edition of the Arabic proverbs of al-Maydānī", in *From codicology to technology Islamic Manuscripts and their place in scholarship*, ed. S. Brinkmann & B. Wiesmüller (Berlin, 2009), pp. 59–80.