



مكتبة قطر الوطنية
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QATAR NATIONAL LIBRARY CELEBRATES NATIONAL SPORT DAY

QDL Manuscripts Highlight Rich Arab Equine Legacy

Doha, Qatar, February 14, 2017 - Horsemanship has always been a cherished sport in Qatar, reflecting the region's pride in its Arab and Islamic equine traditions. Learning about the country's rich equine legacy is one of the many ways the people of Qatar can celebrate National Sport Day, and there is no better reference on the sport than the Qatar Digital Library (QDL), which houses thousands of digital manuscripts and books on horse-riding and equine medicine written in the golden age of Islamic civilization.

Included in the collection is *'The Ultimate Reference on Horsemanship Skills'*, written by Muḥammad ibn 'Isa ibn Ismail al-Ḥanafi, and one of the oldest Arabic manuscripts on horsemanship, military arts, and technology. A rare 14th century Mamluk masterpiece, the manuscript includes colorful illustrations and explanatory captions. The rare medieval 600-page manuscript is a comprehensive reference on a wide range of cavalry tactics and horseback combat techniques using archery, spears, swords, arms, and shields.

In the golden Islamic age, Arab veterinary physicians made important advances and breakthroughs in hippiatrics. Dating back to the 14th Century, *'The Book of Horsemanship and Horse Characteristics'* is one of the earliest Arabic texts on veterinary medicine. Written by Muḥammad ibn Yaḡub Akhi Ḥizām, the experienced horse trainer of the Abbasid Caliph, al-Mu'taḏid, the book is a complete reference on both horsemanship and equine medicine, and includes techniques on horse-riding, as well as information on equine diseases and how to treat them.

Additionally, with Al Shaqab preparing to celebrate its 25th anniversary this March, QNL's digital resources provide a timely opportunity to explore local equestrian heritage. Al Shaqab's anniversary celebrations will form part of CHI Al Shaqab 2017, where top-ranking local, regional, and international riders will compete in various equine sports.

Launched in October 2014, QDL is the result of an ongoing partnership between Qatar Foundation (QF), Qatar National Library (QNL), and the British Library. It provides free access to thousands of archival items from the India Office Records, along with Arab Islamic science manuscripts, historical maps, photographs, and sound recordings.

QDL's India Office Records archival items date from the early 17th Century to the mid-20th Century, while Arab Islamic science manuscripts date back to the 10th Century, during the golden Islamic civilization. By the end of 2018, QDL expects to include more than 1.6 million pages, compared to its current one million pages.

All QDL pages and archive items are freely accessible worldwide and include a description in Arabic and English, reflecting QNL's mission to spread knowledge, nurture imagination, cultivate creativity, and preserve the nation's heritage for the future. To access the manuscripts, which can be downloaded as a PDF, please visit www.qdl.com.



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QNL, a member of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF), supports QF's mission to unlock human potential by providing access to a wealth of resources through its outstanding selection of online databases, regular training programs, community events, and social engagement initiatives.

ENDS

Qatar National Library:

“To be one of the world's preeminent centers of learning, research, and culture; a guardian of the region's heritage; and an institution that promotes discovery and the nourishment of the human spirit.”

Qatar National Library (QNL) is a non-profit organization under the umbrella of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF). QNL is supporting Qatar on its journey from a carbon-based economy to knowledge-based economy by providing resources to students, researchers, and the community in Qatar. It was announced in November 2012 by Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, Chairperson of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development. QNL carries out its mission through three functions: National Library, University and Research Library, and a Metropolitan Public Library of the digital age. The National Library function collects and provides access to global knowledge relevant to Qatar and the region. It also collects, preserves, and provides access to heritage content and materials about Qatar and the region. The University and Research Library function supports education and research at all levels by providing printed and digital library materials for students and researchers. Metropolitan Public Library delivers library services and information for everyone to enjoy reading, meet people, and become information literate.

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