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TEACH YOURSELF ARABIC—IN YIDDISH!

RACHEL SIMON
PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

The study and teaching of Arabic has a long tradition in the Islamic world and in the West, yet for a long time the emphasis was on classical Arabic. With the growing involvement of the West in the Arab world, as a result of trade, travel, missionary activities, and occupation, the need to know colloquial Arabic grew. As a result, one finds numerous popular books in European languages teaching the spoken Arabic of specific regions—the scholarly study of these dialects came later. Similarly, the scholarly treatment of the subject in the Arab world is relatively new, usually as an outcome of the development of regional nationalism, of which the local dialect became an important component. Thus, it is of no surprise that the rise of Zionism and the increased Jewish settlement in Palestine since the late nineteenth century had contributed to the study of colloquial Palestinian Arabic and to the relevant literature of textbooks, readers, and scholarly studies. The first attempt to publish a Palestinian Arabic textbook for a Jewish audience was apparently made in Yiddish by Getzl Zelikovitz at the end of World War I.

Getzl (George) Zelikovitz¹ was born on 23 May 1863 in Riteva (Ritova, Rietevas) northwest of Kovno, Lithuania (then in Poland). The family's livelihood was based on the only leather shop in town, which was operated by the mother, Rahel, while the father himself,

An earlier version of this paper was presented at the 30th Annual Convention of the Association of Jewish Libraries (Chicago, IL, 1995).

¹ For biographical information, see: "Selikovitch, George (Getzel)," *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, c1972, vol. 14, col. 1135; "Zelikovits', Getsel," *ha-Entsiklopedyah ha-Ivrit*, vol. 16, cols. 856–857; G. Zelikovitsh, *Geklibene shriften: mit zayn biografye* [Collected works: with his biography] [in Yiddish], New York, 1913, pp. iii–xiv; *ibid.*, *Tsiyure Masa'* [Travel descriptions] [in Hebrew], Varshah, 1910; Mosheh Dor, "ha-Katav ha-Tseva'i-ha-Yehudi ha-Rishon" [The first Jewish military reporter] [in Hebrew], *Keshe*, no. 3 (May 1988): 122–125.

R. David, spent his time studying traditional religious Jewish studies. The young Zelikovitz was renowned for his scholarship, and when he was ten years old was referred to in Yiddish as: “Getzilke, der Ritever ‘ilui” [Getzilke, the prodigy of Riteva]—by then he already knew 500 pages of the Gemara [part of the Talmud]. He studied in big *yeshivot* [Jewish religious academies] until he was sixteen years old and was found to be ready to be ordained as a rabbi upon reaching eighteen. Together with his Jewish studies, his mother, who died in 1895, taught him to write Hebrew, German, and Russian.

Contrary to the expectations of the traditional part of the community, in 1879, when he was sixteen years old, Zelikovitz decided to go and study in Paris, taking advantage of an inheritance that he got from his maternal grandfather. At first he was employed as a Hebrew teacher by the Jewish philanthropist Michael Erlanger. Eventually he started studying Oriental languages at the Sorbonne, specializing in ancient Egyptian, Ethiopian, Arabic, and Sanskrit. For a while he worked at the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. At that time he started to write for the Hebrew periodical *ha-Magid*, which appeared in Lik, as well as for the weekly *Univers Israelite*, which appeared in Yiddish and French.

In 1885 Zelikovitz made use of his linguistic knowledge. He went to Egypt and became an Arabic-English translator with the honorary rank of lieutenant with the British expeditionary force headed by Lord Kitchener to rescue General Charles Gordon, who was captured by the Mahdi rebels in the Sudan. Following two defeats in the Sudan, Kitchener presented Zelikovitz with the accusation that the defeats had resulted from the excessive sympathy that he had shown to the interrogated African captives. As a result, Zelikovitz had to leave, and returned to Paris through Ethiopia.

In addition to his studies at the Sorbonne, Zelikovitz went on study tours to Istanbul, Izmir, Athens, Rome, Naples, Tunis, Algiers, and Morocco. He graduated from the Department of Philology at the Sorbonne, where he studied under Ernest Renan, Joseph Dinaburg, Joseph Halevy, Julius Epiri, and Difromiri, specializing in ancient Egyptian. He wrote a lot about this subject in Hebrew, French, and later in English. While in Paris, Zelikovitz wrote for numerous periodicals, including the Arabic language Egyptian daily *al-Ahram*, as well as Hebrew ones like *ha-Melits* (St. Petersburg), *ha-Magid*, and *Keneset Yisra'el* (Warsaw), where he published reports, poems, and feuilletons. Due to his claim that the British had instigated the

murder of a French journalist, he was expelled from France in 1887 and immigrated to the USA.

Zelikovitz' first stop in the USA was in Philadelphia. He was recommended to Admiral John Maccaughly, the author of an ancient Egyptian-English dictionary, and to Professor John Lesly, an Orientalist. They recommended him as a professor of ancient Egyptian to the University of Pennsylvania, after he had served as a lecturer at the Franklin Institute, Philadelphia, where he taught about the civilization of Egypt during the time of Joseph. But he did not stay in Philadelphia for a long time: he had to leave—*durkh a nit-gelungenem shidukh* [following an unsuccessful match], and according to other sources due to the intrigues of some Jesuits. His Hebrew memoirs hint vaguely: *bi-shevil mikreh lo-tahor be-mishpahti ha-hadashah uvi-shevil ha-ruh ha-metsuyah be-hayai* [due to an impure event in my new family and the prevailing spirit of my life]. He was apparently caught in intimate relations with a fifteen-year-old girl and possibly had relations with boys as well.

Zelikovitz spent the last period of his life in New York, where he started to write in Yiddish under various pen names (e.g., *Baron Yekum Purkan*, *Halaklakot*, *Litvishe hokhmaniyos*, *Estetikum*, *Sambatyon*). In 1888 he founded the first Yiddish weekly, *Folks Advokat*, and in 1890 joined the editorial staff of the Yiddish daily *Tageblat*, where he remained with short interruptions until his death. He also joined the *Yiddishe Gazeten*. He wrote scholarly and fiction serials. His weekly column "Literatur un Lomdes" reviewed the important works of Jewish scholarship. Later he was involved with several other Yiddish periodicals as well as in the *Jewish Encyclopaedia* and the Hebrew encyclopedia *Otsar Yisra'el*. He wrote numerous scholarly works in French, English, Yiddish, and Hebrew, as well as poetry, fiction, and reports. His writings showed deep knowledge, and were well liked by his readers for their scholarship and style. His Hebrew autobiography, *Tsiyure Masa'*, appeared first in New York in 1908, and then in Warsaw by *Tushiyah* in 1910, as part of the series *Bibliyotekah Gedolah*, and includes memoirs of his activities in the Sudan. His works had been assembled and classified by the New York Public Library librarian Sh. Freidus. In 1896 he was appointed by the National Republican Committee (ha-Va'ad ha-Le'umi ha-Republikani) as foreign language speaker (*matif*) during the election campaign of President William McKinley. He traveled a lot in the Western USA and gave

speeches in French, German, Italian, Arabic, and Syriac (no mention of Spanish!). He died in New York on 28 November 1926.

In 1918, while in New York, Zelikovitz published a Yiddish self-teaching book for Arabic. It was previously serialized in the Yiddish daily *Tageblat*, and following readers' requests, it was reissued with new material and more explanations in a 32-page book. It was referred to by its author as: a *kleyb bikhel, ober a mu'at ha-mahazik et ha-merubeh* [a small book, but a little holding a lot]. It appeared in at least three editions which are slightly different in structure, but include the same material. The following examination is based on the third edition.²

The cover and title page are the same in contents and design. They include titles in Arabic and Yiddish respectively: *Turjuman 'Arabi wa-Yahudi* [Arabic and Yiddish dragoman; the title is partially vocalized] and *Arabish-Idisher lehrer* [Arabic-Yiddish teacher]. Only the Yiddish title has a subtitle: *Veg veyzer far di Idisher legyoneren in Tsiyen* [Guide for the Jewish Legionaries³ in Zion]. This is followed by the author's name and a short biographical note: Prof. G. Zelikovitz, former chief dragoman for Arabic with Field Marshal Lord Kitchener in Egypt. Also included are edition statement: Drite oyflage; imprint information: S. Druckerman, 50 Canal Street, New York, 1918;⁴ and price: 30 cents. The page is decorated by a black and white illustration by Delman with two palm trees and two camels on the left, stars and crescent on the upper portion, and an Arab smoking a narghile below a tree on the right: a typical contemporary Western view of the characteristics of the Orient. The book includes a table of the Arabic alphabet, a poem in Hebrew glorifying the future of Palestine under British rule, an introduction about the author's aims, and twelve lessons.

The introduction explains the purpose and method of the book. Its goal is to teach colloquial Palestinian Arabic—namely, not literary Arabic—to Jewish Legionaries, settlers [*kolonisten*], merchants, tourists, learned people [*maskilim*], laborers in Palestine,

² This edition is kept at the Rare Books Collection of Princeton University Library.

³ The Jewish Legion was a military formation of Jewish volunteers in World War I who fought with the British army against the Ottomans. See *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, vol. 10, cols. 69–76.

⁴ From an advertisement at the end of the book it seems that the publisher specialized in language textbooks.

and maybe even Hebrew teachers abroad. This aim and the target population dictated the method, structure, and style of the book: a practical teaching aid in Yiddish, so that following a short study period the student would be able to talk with Arabs.

Zelikovitz, who studied Semitic languages, was quick to point out the relationship between Arabic and Hebrew, which can facilitate the study of the former for those acquainted with the latter. He referred to Arabic as a daughter of Hebrew, stating that one can easily see the resemblance between Arabic and Hebrew roots, and providing a few examples (e.g., *nasamah* [Arabic]=*neshamah* [Hebrew]; *nifs* [Arabic]=*nefesh* [Hebrew]). Since his aim was to teach the colloquial language to Yiddish speakers, Zelikovitz made extensive use of Yiddish orthography. Thus, he did not use the Arabic alphabet when presenting Arabic words, nor did he give their transliteration in the equivalent Hebrew, even when there is close resemblance between Arabic and Hebrew words. His transliteration was based on the unique spelling and pronunciation of the Yiddish, including the use of letters as vowels (especially *alef* for the “a” sound [as in Jerusalem] and ‘*ayin* for the “e” sound [as in “letter”]). He also used some punctuation, mainly *kamats* under the *alef* to indicate the “o” sound [as in “word”]. Similarly, he used the letter *tet* even when it should be *tav*, and *khaf* for *het*. In addition to his alphabet table,⁵ which gives the names of the Arabic letters and partial transliteration, he provided some rules about his transliteration method. Thus, *alef* followed by an apostrophe represented ‘*ayin*, while ‘*ayin* served mainly to indicate the “e” sound. This transliteration system would make the transition to the study of literary Arabic difficult for those who became accustomed to words in a certain spelling.

Zelikovitz believed that a student with a good memory could complete the course within a month and be able to converse in Arabic, but that even for others the study should not take too long. He suggested that two or more students should study together and try to converse in Arabic, and thus memorize and utilize the exercises with greater ease. In this he tried to imitate the “*havruta*” [in company] method of yeshivah study in which two students discuss a portion of the Talmud.

⁵ While the *ha* appears in the table, it is given the name of *dhal*, which is missing. The Arabic alphabet is organized here based on the Hebrew alphabet.



דריטע אויפלאגע

ארויסגעגעבן פון דער בוכהאַנדלונג:

ש. דרוקערמאן

50 קאנעל סטריט, ניו יארק.

דער אראבישער אליף בית

ווען די אותיות זיינען אפגעוונדערט

אליף בא גימל דאל זאל וואו זין חא כח טא טזא

א ב ג ד ה ו ז ח ט י

יא קאף לאם מין נן שין ען קאן פא

י כ ל מ נ ס ע ג פ

סאד דאד כאף קאן שין תא מא

צ ח ט ק ר ש ע ת

אראבישע נקודות

— פאטחא (פפח) — קסרא (חיריק) — ו — דגש

רמי רחמא قتی פאטחא פאטחא פאטחא

طاغیلات زلیکویتس

זאליקאוו

טאגאדא

The first nine lessons provide mainly words and short sentences; grammatical explanations and rules are given only from the tenth lesson on (p. 19). In this way the student focuses at first on memorizing words and phrases, without having to stop and try to formulate them. But even later on, grammatical explanations are kept to the minimal. Although the book contains questions and answers, many sentences are not connected to each other, and quite a few sound like statements. Moreover, many of them do not resemble natural parts of daily conversation, especially not among Palestinian Arabs.

The first lesson gives the inflections of the personal pronoun and “to have,” as well as some other words (e.g., “word,” “language,” “what,” “in,” “with,” “not”), followed by phrases in this order: “I am a Jew,” “We are Jews,” “You are Russian,” “He is a physician,” “You (pl.) are English,” “Are you American?” “Yes, sir,” “No, ma’am,” “What does he have?” “We have everything,” and “Good day.” Although some nationalities are mentioned, none of them is Arab. Moreover, the word “Arab” is mentioned only in the third lesson, but not as part of a sentence. One can play a little with the questions and answers of the first lesson, but the vocabulary does not yet allow much variety, except for changing nationalities, since only one profession is given. The colloquial pronunciation is already marked here, with the vocalization of “what” as “sho,” mentioning synonyms used in Algeria, Tunisia, and Egypt.

The second lesson, focusing on war-related expressions, includes: “war,” “soldier,” “army,” “spy,” various weapons, etc. In some cases, in addition to the Yiddish translation, the Hebrew equivalent is provided, when it resembles the Arabic, as is the plural form. The only sentence given is: “The English brought a big defeat on the Turkish army.” No other words are put into use, although the student could use the verbs taught in the first lesson in order to construct questions and answers, but the possibilities are not that great.

The third lesson includes national and geographical terms (e.g., “homeland,” “Jerusalem”) and religious ones (e.g., “God,” “Bible”). It contains the phrase: “What do you have to eat?” followed by some foodstuffs and utensils (“bread,” “meat,” “butter,” “arrack,” and “tea,” as well as “knife” and “spoon”). The only full sentence is basically a statement: “Jerusalem is the fatherland of the Jews”—and although it serves to explain the fact that the word “is” is not used in

Arabic, it is anyone's guess whether this is the best starter for a conversation with Palestinian Arabs—at least, no follow-up was provided. Again, although useful words are given, it is difficult to use them in a sophisticated way due to the lack of verbs.

The fourth lesson opens with a statement that can safely be used in conversation between Jews and Arabs: "Moses was a great prophet;" to what it can lead depends on both parties, but no suggestion was provided. In addition, more religious terms (e.g., "belief," "prayer," "temple") are given, as well as the numbers from one to a thousand and ordinal numbers. Some phrases are also included: "The human mind," "God willing," "Lord of the world," and "God knows." The following statements are included, although it is not clear if they are in sequential order: "The Jews have faith and patience [*sabr*]," "Patience is the key of all good," and little later: "We want to buy land in Zion," followed by [the answer?]: "I want to sell a book." While some of the phrases are indeed often used in daily conversation, the first statement sounds more like ones uttered by Jews among and about themselves, while the third is indeed a typical one of settlers, who were among those for whom the book was designed; the reaction to such a declaration might not be that friendly.

The fifth lesson focuses on sickness (being sick, having pain, being weak), time ("today," "hour," "week"), days of the week, metals ("gold," "silver," "iron," "copper"), and directions ("east," etc.). The sentences themselves are few: "Can you write in Islamic? [translated as 'Islamic Arabic']," "Can you speak Arabic?" "I speak a little," and "Friend, do you have a needle?": what starts like a conversation ends with a surprising twist.

The sixth lesson contains words for animals ("donkey," "horse," "elephant"), more foods ("soup," "salt," "milk," various meats), and dwelling ("yard," "lane," "bath," "kitchen," "gate," "chair"). Names of the Muslim (*hijri*) lunar months are also provided here with the corresponding Hebrew months of that year, but due to the fact that the Muslim year is shorter than the Jewish year, there cannot be a real equivalent, and these correspond only during this specific time period. Several sentences are included: "How do you call this in Arabic?" "What is its name in your town?" "I forgot, sir," "Pork is forbidden to Jews," "What is your work?" with the answer "Hebrew teacher in a Jewish college [the Arabic word used is *madrasah*, in colloquial form: *midrasa*]," "My father is a musician," "My brother is an author," "My daughter is among the literature people," "My son

is a famous poet, poetry is his occupation,” “My son-in-law is a great speaker, the greatest,” and “Where does one find a fine and eloquent speech?” These sentences can be quite useful in conversation, but Zelikovitz did not make much use of the vocabulary provided earlier in this lesson.

Vocabulary provided in the seventh lesson includes words relating to the other world (“paradise,” “hell,” “devil”), writing and printing (“printing house,” “ink,” “pen,” “letter”), and family (“widow,” “bride,” “bridegroom,” “marriage,” “divorce”) but only very few sentences: “Do me a favor,” “I speak French,” “He speaks Russian.”

The eighth lesson includes agricultural terms (“farmer,” “farm”), relational directions (“above,” “between,” “under”), possibility (“necessary,” “possible,” “never”), and eating, as well as the only sentence: “I go to Jerusalem.”

The ninth lesson teaches words for foods and drinks, clothing (“silk,” “shoes”), professions (“physician,” “rabbi,” “money changer”), time (“year,” “month”), and some phrases that can be used sequentially: “Welcome—How are you?—Good, thank God—How is your health?” but here the conversation ends, adding the phrases: “God’s messenger” and “By my head!”

Only in the tenth lesson does Zelikovitz provide some grammatical explanations. He explains that the **definite article** is always *al* but the sound of the “l” might be swallowed by the following consonant—but he does not indicate which these consonants are. He emphasizes, though, that even if one were to pronounce the “l” where it should be swallowed, native speakers will understand what is being said. He then goes on to explain that the **genders** are quite easy to distinguish, especially for those who know Hebrew; Zelikovitz provides some examples, but does not really explain the difference. Regarding the **dual**, he emphasizes that one should not put the number two before the word, but always form the dual, which, he reminds the users, does exist also in Hebrew (e.g., *shenatayim* [two years], *matayim* [two hundred], *Mitsrayim* [Egypt]). He regards the **plural** as the most difficult part of the Arabic language due to the existence of numerous rules, and at times there is more than one form of plural to a word. Although some examples are provided, Zelikovitz emphasizes that the goal of this book is not to make the students experts in grammar, but to enable them to talk and understand the colloquial language, and for that purpose, the basic

forms should suffice. As for the **adjective**, he explains that it always comes after the noun, and he shows how to form the comparative and superlative forms. He then explains how the **pronoun** can be added to the noun and verb, similar to the Hebrew.

All these grammatical explanations, including a few examples, are provided in three pages! This is followed by further vocabulary and short phrases, not necessarily demonstrating the new grammatical information: “Who is in my house?—Nobody is, sir—Everyone is in his own house,” “Which daughter of yours is engaged?” followed by “Mount Sinai was small when Moses ascended it.”

The eleventh lesson talks about **verbs** and **tenses**, focusing on “to be” and “to have.” Later, more verbs in the past tense are provided, several with the future form as well.

The twelfth lesson provides additional phrases. Thus, only a relatively small part of the book deals with grammar, and most of it focuses on words and phrases, many of which are not leading to a specific subject. The last five pages of the book are a mixture of everyday phrases and more specific sentences. Some are consecutive, but these groups of phrases and sentences are short and usually the connecting subject changes after a short while. Thus we have phrases like: “Good morning,” “Peace be upon you,” “Upon you be peace,” [the Hebrew translation is very similar to the Arabic original], “God be with you,” “Good evening,” “God will give you health,” “How is your business?” “What do you do?” “Thank God, good,” “So so,” “What do you want?” “Who told you?” “For whom is this soap?” “From which town are you?” “Can you read, write?” “Do you understand?” “Go away,” “Come here,” “Enter,” “Enough,” “Listen,” “Blessed holiday for us and you,” “Let every year be like this,” “At night it was very dark,” “Whose house is it?” “What do you say?” “What is the meaning of this word?” “What is your name?” “From what did he die?” “What is the question?” “Who wrote this story?” “Where is the toilet?” “Can you speak French?” and “How old are you?” Though in this order, the phrases do not come in one group, and as can be seen, do not always relate to one another; still, they can be quite useful in daily conversation.

The fuller sentences relate to several topics, mostly to war, politics, and Jewish life, as well as to general issues. Many sentences seem to suggest topics for conversation, but quite a few, nonetheless, sound more like statements, and often do not have a follow-up in the form of an answer or more sentences on the same subject.

Some sentences deal directly with Zionist aspirations and internal Jewish issues, and seem out of place in conversation with Arabs: “God will give us a republic in Zion,” “One has to make an administration and a great administrator,” “The Jews who are called ‘Reformers’ make fun of the Jewish republic—Why shouldn’t they laugh? their mind is poisoned with a false philosophy—But who heard about their authority over the Jewish people nowadays?” This exchange, following on previous expressions (“Jerusalem is the fatherland of the Jews” and “We want to buy land in Zion”) apparently express Zelikovitz’ political views in the booklet which he prepared for, among others, Jewish settlers in Palestine: he calls for the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine, believes that this state should be a republic, and has a negative view of Reform Judaism regarding its political views and philosophy. Zelikovitz also shows respect to the Jewish soldiers who participated in the war: “The Jewish soldiers in the Holy Land have great glory”—no mention is made, though, of the fact that Jews in Palestine and other fronts served on both sides during the war, and numerous Ottoman Jews were drafted into the Ottoman army while others served in the German army. Later, some information is provided on the Zionist leadership: “The birthplace of our chief Herzl was in Vienna and he was a famous author”—that much on the founder of modern political Zionism. The role of Jews in politics and world affairs is also hinted at: “Lord Reading, the British ambassador to Washington, is a good speaker and a fine Jew” and “It is said that Trotsky had escaped and has arrived abroad—But the news on his escape is not official”—in this case his Jewish origin is not mentioned. Some advertisement for a Yiddish daily is also included: “What are you reading for two hours?—This is the Jewish daily called *Tageblat*.”

Some conversations relate to the war: “Is your eldest son a soldier?—Yes, ma’am, he is now in France—Yes, my younger brother is in the British army.” While these relate to the more personal level, and both parties seem to be on the same side, other sentences deal with the war in general: “I want to talk about the war—No, my friend, let’s talk about your work—Why do you fear?—It would be better for you to recite Psalms—I want to talk about the thwarted German offensive.” While it is not clear who wanted to discuss the war, the other party seemed quite reluctant to do so, maybe in order not to get into a political argument regarding the previous rulers of Palestine—the Turks— and their partners—the Germans. Another example is: “I am very satisfied with the medal

that you received from an English general”—once again showing a favorable attitude towards the winning party in the war.

Some attention is given to American-related issues: “Do you know each state of the United States?”—no answer is provided, neither a list nor the number of the states. “We have great prosperity in the US”—emphasizing the good economic conditions in the US. “Did you see President Wilson?—No, my friend, never—But I have already been to the White House”—indicating that although the speaker was no acquaintance of the American president, he was able to visit his residence, though it is not clear if as an official visitor or a tourist. Still, this is more than most Palestinian Arabs could expect at the time with regards to viewing their ruler or visiting his residence.

Some sentences deal with inter-personal relations: “Hey, boy! look who knocks on the door? ask who it is?—I want to have a word with the boss—Bring a chair to the doctor—Please sit, my friend—God bless you—Will you smoke a cigar or a cigarette?—I don’t smoke—I don’t drink arrack—Why did you get up?—We still didn’t offer you coffee.” This exchange, although not completely consecutive, is on two levels: on the one hand, a person orders a servant, and on the other entertains a visitor with smoking and coffee—long before their health hazards were emphasized. Zelikovitz does not explain either that alcoholic drinks are forbidden to Muslims.

Some sentences deal with everyday issues: “I want to buy an ass for myself and a donkey for my friend,” “See the big elm tree there in the field,” “This road is not good for traveling: stones and mud,” “I saw there how they stoned a mad dog who strangled a poor chick,” “Who gave the child a small candle?—It is without flame.”

Food and eating habits are also dealt with: “Sorghum is cheap but rice is very expensive in Syria,” “Onion and garlic are good with beans (*lubya*) but not with lima beans (*ful*),” “One makes sugar from beets and butter and cheese from milk,” “The Egyptian eats celery with vinegar and plums in soup” [he uses *birqiq* for the literary *barquq* [plums], and *shorba* for soup, from the Turkish].

Sentences are at times somewhat philosophical: “What you have in your hand is a small book and not a great work,” “A person lacking love of music has a naked soul,” “The inhabited world is like a dream and the earth like a prison—all of us are prisoners,” “A real hero is the one who has a great soul [*nasamah*] and supreme spirit [*nifs*, in the colloquial].”

The textbook provides the student with a large number of words, numerous phrases, and many sentences, as well as some basic grammatical information. This pioneering work was well received as can be attested from the fact that after being serialized in the daily Yiddish paper *Tageblat*, it appeared in book form in at least three editions (though it is not known how big each run was). To what an extent did the book achieve its purpose and enable students to converse with Arabs in Arabic after studying it for a few weeks? Though no hard evidence was found, the method of the book poses some difficulties for achieving this aim.

- Most of the book contains words and phrases which are only loosely connected to each other. The lessons are not built around a central topic, segments of conversation are not consecutive, and the connecting subject changes after a short while.

- Although use is made of Yiddish orthography to express consonants and vowels, the pronunciation of many words is still not clear.

- The very basic grammatical sections might leave students unable to construct sentences on their own.

- Numerous sentences seem more appropriate for internal Jewish use than for conversation with Arabs, at least in the early stages of acquaintance.

- While in some instances the difference between Palestinian and Egyptian Arabic is shown, it is not clear to what a degree Zelikovitz had first-hand experience with colloquial Palestinian Arabic: in the 1880s he was in Egypt and the Sudan for a few months, as well as in Tunisia and Morocco, but the biographical information about him does not mention that he visited Palestine; it is possible, though, that he did visit the country or that during his studies in Paris he studied the Palestinian dialect or got hold of a relevant textbook.

The initiative to publish a textbook in Yiddish for the study of colloquial Palestinian Arabic is nonetheless remarkable. It shows that Zelikovitz believed that Jews and Arabs should interact and for that purpose should know each other's spoken language. The publicity that this initiative had received must have been great, through its initial appearance in the *Tageblat*, and possibly through advertisements after the book was published. The book does make the student somewhat aware of Arab customs, but it reflects more Jewish and Western views and issues. Although it was intended to

serve as a guide for Jews as to how to reach out to Arabs, it is more reflective of Western Jews, their beliefs, customs, and modes of expression.

Collaboration in Cataloguing: Islamic Manuscripts at Michigan

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Introduction

In December 2008, the University of Michigan Library was awarded a Mellon Foundation-funded, Council on Library and Information Resources-sponsored, "Cataloguing Hidden Special Collections and Archives" grant¹ to support its "Collaboration in Cataloguing: Islamic Manuscripts at Michigan" project. The 3-year project involves the creation of catalogue records in two sequential stages—brief, preliminary and then full MARC records—for some 1,100 manuscripts in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish dating from the 8th to the 20th century. Additionally, the Library with its own funds will produce digital images of all the manuscripts. Together, the catalogue and the manuscript images, presented on an interactive website (<http://www.lib.umich.edu/islamic>), in the online Library catalogue, MIRLYN, and in the HathiTrust Digital Library catalogue, will provide access to the collection and invite comments, corrections, and cataloguing data from scholars and other experts world-wide to assist Library cataloguing staff in producing complete records for the entire collection and provide for an evolving interactive manuscript catalogue with image repository.

The innovative aspect of the project is in its technical and social computing component, a strategy for creating, exposing, and enriching the catalogue records. By making digital surrogates and preliminary metadata for our collection of Islamic manuscripts

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¹ More on the grant program may be found at "Cataloging Hidden Special Collections and Archives" <http://www.clir.org/hiddencollections/index.html>

available online to the widest possible community, inviting scholarly commentary, and incorporating those contributions into the cataloguing work and subsequent iterative refinement, we can exploit a community of expertise that is uniquely prepared to help us overcome the challenges inherent—and familiar to us all—in traditional manuscript cataloguing.

Collection Description

The Islamic Manuscripts Collection at the University of Michigan contains approximately 1,100 manuscript volumes² mainly in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish. The collection is comprised of the Abdul Hamid, Tiflis, Yahuda, McGregor, and several other smaller collections (192 manuscripts in the Walter Koelz, Nuttall, Stephen Spaulding, Horace Miner, Heyworth-Dunne, Suleiman, Frank Schulte Collections). The size of the collection places it among the largest such collections in North America (others include Princeton, University of California Los Angeles, Yale, Library of Congress, and Harvard).

The subjects covered by these manuscripts include: Koran (texts, commentaries [Tafsir], commentaries on commentaries, and other works of criticism), biography (Sirah), Islamic traditions (Hadith), theology (Kalam), and Jurisprudence (Fiqh); philology, belles lettres, poetry, philosophy, geography, history, mathematics, astronomy, and astrology. The chronological span is 8th century AD (some Koranic fragments dating from just a century after the life of the Prophet and the beginnings of Islam) to the 20th. Among the notable authors whose works are represented in the collection are: ‘Abd Allah ibn ‘Umar al-Baydawi, d. 1286?; Muhammad ibn Isma‘il al-Bukhari, 810–870; Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj al-Qushayri, ca. 821–875; Sharaf al-Din Muhammad ibn Sa‘id al-Busiri, 1213?–1296?; Farid al-Din ‘Attar, ca. 1230; Jami, 1414–1492; Hariri, 1054–1122; Abu Hamid Muhammad al-Ghazali, 1058–1111; Badr al-Din Muhammad ibn Muhammad Sibt al-Maridini; Sa‘di; Ibn al-‘Arabi, 1165–1240; Suyuti, 1445–1505, Kâtip Çelebi, 1609–1657, Sipahizade Mehmet bin Ali, d. 1588 or 9.

² A great number of the manuscripts are multiwork codices; thus, the number of manuscript titles far exceeds the number of volumes and will be difficult to accurately estimate until the cataloguing is complete.

Although the collection contains few unique items, its value to research in Islamic and Arabic studies is notable for its splendidly illuminated manuscripts (including many ornately written Korans of impressive artistic quality) and calligraphic specimens in the Abdul Hamid collection, the works on Islamic law in the Tiflis collection, and the scientific treatises with illustrations on mathematics and astronomy in the McGregor collection, many of which should be considered valuable contributions to text editions of important mediæval works in the “Arabic” sciences (the indigenous, Muslim sciences, comprising the traditional, religious sciences and the linguistic and literary ones—Koran, exegesis, tradition, law, scholastic theology, grammar and lexicography, poetry and prosody, and rhetoric and style) and “foreign” sciences (philosophy, mathematics, astronomy and astrology, music, medicine, alchemy and magic). The collection offers a vast range of raw material for both the editor of texts and specimens for the student of Islamic manuscript production and ownership, as well as Arabic calligraphy. Most items in the collection are cited in the standard bio-bibliographic sources (Brockelmann, Sezgin, King, etc.) and/or have been edited and published on the basis of other exemplars of the texts from other manuscript repositories. As such, the texts in this collection can furthermore offer confirmation, amplification, or correction to published texts.

Digitization of the Islamic Manuscripts Collection

The Library Digital Conversion Unit (DCU) staff use a combination of in-house and out-sourced digitization to digitize the Islamic Manuscripts in their entirety. It is only recently that the unit began outsourcing Special Collections materials for digitization, and staff undertook pre- and post-process evaluations of a representative sample in order to assess damage and measure risk. Results are used to determine which manuscripts will be processed by the Library and which outsourced. Conversion of the Islamic Manuscripts will span the duration of the 3-year project, and work proceeds in a way coordinated with the cataloguing work.

Each manuscript is given an acid-free bookmark with a barcode. The barcodes allow DCU to track the progress of each manuscript in-house or at the vendor. Because the manuscripts are (mostly) unpaginated, DCU staff adds page numbers in pencil to the upper

outer corners of each page, for the ease of verifying that all pages have been digitized and for scholars to cite particular pages in their research and in submitting commentary. The pages are numbered back-to-front (i.e., right-to-left), in a manner consistent with the reading of the text and its display on the website.

Approximately 70% of the volumes are being digitized in-house because they deserve special handling. Staff use an overhead color scanner with relatively gentle lights to capture color page images as 400 ppi 24-bit color TIFFs. A scanning operator turns the pages by hand, with the utmost concern being to digitize the pages without harming the manuscript. When concern arises over the condition of the manuscript, the manuscript is taken to the Conservation department for consultation, and there staff recommend adjustments to be made to the digitization process. A significant number of codices are tightly bound or have fragile page gutters, and as such present special challenges for the operator and Conservation staff. Each manuscript is captured from cover to cover to ensure that every part of the item is represented. Each page is cropped to just outside the page edge, both to prevent cropping away the page numbers, and to give scholars the opportunity to see the condition of the page edges. We have a Zeutschel OS10000 overhead color scanner currently, and have purchased a CopiBook HD Book Scanner to increase production capacity. The remaining 20+% are outsourced to Trigonix Inc. in Montreal, Canada. The Library has a long working relationship with Trigonix, and they do excellent work. The vended cost per page, for color scanning of bound volumes on their overhead color scanners manually, is about \$0.30USD. For comparison, the per page cost of black and white scanning of unbound volumes is \$0.09USD. DCU is very satisfied with the quality of the vended scans created by Trigonix for this project.

At the end of the project's first year, DCU received 219 manuscripts for in-house digitization and completed all but 61 of these. We sent 354 manuscript volumes to Trigonix Inc. in Montreal; all of these have been digitized and returned. The turn-around time for digitization by Trigonix is two months; the turn-around time for digitization by DCU has varied but averages around four months.

Cataloguing Approach

Our project leverages a web-based “crowdsourcing” approach to facilitate the cataloguing of our Islamic Manuscripts Collection. In the initial stages, preliminary records containing inventory cataloguing data are created and entered to the library’s online catalogue. For each manuscript, descriptive elements are harvested from these preliminary records and combined to form a representative description displayed on the project website. A link to each manuscript’s digital surrogate in the HathiTrust Digital Library³ is provided alongside its description. In this way, scholars worldwide may join project staff in the examination and description of the manuscripts, submitting the results of their analysis as comments via the project website. Their contributions are reviewed by the project cataloguer and refashioned for incorporation into the cataloguing records for those manuscripts. By involving the widest possible scholarly community in a process of iterative enrichment for the manuscript descriptions, our project makes the best possible use of an aggregate of expertise that is uniquely positioned to help us overcome the challenges inherent in traditional manuscript cataloguing.

The cataloguing approach⁴ adopted for this project relies heavily on the AMREMM standard⁵ and involves assembling as rich and

³ <http://catalog.hathitrust.org>

⁴ A number of models were consulted for best practices, among them: Princeton Digital Library of Islamic Manuscripts <http://library.princeton.edu/projects/islamic/index.html> Digital Scriptorium <http://www.scriptorium.columbia.edu/> MALVINE <http://www.malvine.org/> Digital Special Collections Leiden University Library <https://socrates.leidenuniv.nl/R?RN=968126978>

⁵ *Descriptive cataloging of ancient, medieval, Renaissance, and early modern manuscripts*, prepared by Gregory A. Pass and first published by ACRL in 2002. These guidelines were developed as part of the Electronic Access to Medieval Manuscripts (EAMMS) project, funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Compatible with Anglo-American cataloguing practice and intended as a supplement to AACR2R (chapter 4, specifically), the rules adapt the existing MARC record structure and outline a cataloguing approach suited to manuscript codices. This approach facilitates creation of bibliographic records within a library catalog, providing item-level, bibliographic control over manuscripts that, due to their particular

analytical a description as possible for each manuscript. In this sense, the cataloguing is considered research,⁶ with each description treating such elements as contents, type of writing material, layout, collation, hand, decoration, binding, condition, transmission of text, accompanying materials, former shelfmarks, and history of the manuscript in great detail. Subject analysis and provision of sufficient access points for the various titles and their sources as well as authors, copyists, former owners, etc., round out the description. Further information on references, acquisition, and current collection is also included.

Staff and Training

The project cataloguer brings to the project highly proficient cataloguing and linguistic skills (particularly in Arabic), experience with Near Eastern studies and Islamic manuscript studies, and a knowledge of metadata, digital collections management, and usability in the digital environment. She is joined by a cadre of four Near Eastern Studies graduate students skilled in the major languages and subject matter of the collection and sharing an interest in Islamic manuscript studies.

Supplementing training sessions and ongoing guidance in the project cataloguing approach conducted by the project cataloguer, two workshops have been held. In May 2009, a week-long workshop, "Of Making Many Books There Was No End in Medieval Islam: an Introduction to Manuscript Studies," was conducted at the University of Michigan Library by Adam Gacek, McGill University. The workshop surveyed various aspects of Arabic manuscript studies (palaeography and codicology) for faculty, graduate students (several of whom now work as project staff), and Library staff. The topics discussed included: an overview of the manuscript age; writing surfaces and materials; the make-up of the codex, the text, and its organization; dates and dating; Arabic scripts and their development;

historical, artistic, or literary value, require more precise and detailed identification and access than is generally afforded such materials by AACR2R or DACS (which replaced APPM). See G. Pass *Descriptive cataloging of ancient, medieval, Renaissance, and early modern manuscripts* (Chicago, 2003).

⁶ See Rudolf Sellheim, "The cataloguing of Arabic manuscripts as a literary problem," *Oriens* 23 (1974): 306–311.

transmission of knowledge; and the history of manuscripts. In February 2010, another multi-session workshop organized by the project cataloguer, "Islamic Bindings and Bookmaking," was conducted by Julia Miller for the benefit of manuscript cataloguing staff and Library Preservation & Conservation staff. Planning for future enrichment workshops is underway.

Workflow

While most of the sought-after descriptive elements can be determined via examination of the digital surrogate, a number require examination of the physical manuscript. Thus it is expected that the descriptive enhancements supplied by scholarly collaborators through the project site will be supplemented by the analysis provided via the physical examination carried out by project staff. Not only that, but creation of digital surrogates is not possible for some manuscripts at this time (due to their fragility, size, age, construction, etc.). These manuscripts require detailed physical examination to be fully catalogued and will be dealt with exclusively by project staff.

Phase 1: Record Creation

In the first phase of cataloguing, record creation, preliminary bibliographic records in MARC format were entered for each of the 871 manuscript volumes represented only by hand-list (card-format and electronic document) at project start. With the aid of three student assistants, the project cataloguer was able to successfully accomplish this work in approximately four months time (late March–early July 2009), ahead of project schedule. Conforming as closely as possible to the AMREMM standard, a preliminary bibliographic record was created for each manuscript codex (or roll or fragment), regardless of the number of works that volume contains.⁷ Holdings and items records containing key location and

⁷ For composite codices or even codices containing multiple works of homogeneous origin, the single preliminary record is enhanced with appropriate contents notes, name-title added entries, etc., to reflect the works contained within. Where descriptive information for multiple works is contained in a single note, the work to which the description pertains is clearly indicated. In the final phase of the project, additional records

identifier information were also entered, with the barcode essential to the ongoing digitization and cataloguing enhancements workflow, particularly ingest to the HathiTrust Digital Library.

Creation of the preliminary bibliographic records involved transcribing existing descriptive information (Romanized) from the hand-list and supplying the corresponding vernacular, enhancing this content with additional notes and access points in authorized form, performing limited subject analysis by consulting reference works and databases of published and unpublished works, and entering the record to the Library's online catalogue accompanied by the required holdings and item records. Efforts to enhance existing content were limited to what could be accomplished most quickly and efficiently, usually involving online searching. Since the manuscript was not examined during this stage, a number of data elements could not yet be confirmed for accuracy. These elements were either omitted or flagged to ensure proper attention would be drawn to them in subsequent stages of cataloguing enhancements.

The project cataloguer developed a template or digital workform in MARC format which the student assistants could use to transcribe the existing Romanized descriptive information from the hand-list as well as to supply the vernacular. Often the students searched the authority files, consulted reference works, and searched OCLC WorldCat to clarify the work of transcription and to seek out authorized form headings for names and titles. Because the workforms could be manipulated using an easily accessible text editor rather than the ALEPH cataloguing module, the student assistants were able to work off-site at their leisure, and to submit their work to the project cataloguer over email. The project cataloguer was then able to use the cataloguing module to edit and enhance their completed workforms with additional notes, access points, subject analysis, etc., and to enter them as new records to the system. Arranging the workflow in this manner capitalized on the existing skills of the student assistants and allowed them to develop their cataloguing skills gradually (following limited initial training) while still accomplishing a great deal very quickly.

representing the component works will be created to enhance the data presentation.

Phase 2: Record Enhancement

The second phase of cataloguing, record enhancement, relies on data gathered through examination of the manuscripts in the physical and digital environments. This descriptive data is funneled to the project cataloguer who reviews and incorporates it into the existing preliminary bibliographic records. For project staff, working mainly from physical examination of the manuscripts, a digital workflow was created by the project cataloguer for use in Google Docs. Project staff fill this digital workflow as they conduct their examination of the manuscript, and the project cataloguer is able to follow their progress and offer any assistance or recommendations needed. Project staff consult a variety of references during this “cataloguing as research” stage of the work and are encouraged to collaborate when faced with challenging hands that make transcription difficult, unusual paper types, unusual bindings, undated manuscripts, etc.

Challenges preventing the exposure of manuscript images in the HathiTrust Digital Library have delayed the examination of manuscripts in the digital environment and likewise the contribution of enhanced description via the project site. We are relieved that these challenges have very recently been resolved and look forward to drawing fully on the project site’s capabilities. In addition to facilitating the contributions of the widest possible scholarly community, the digital images will allow project staff to enhance their examination workflow—augmenting physical examination with examination in the digital environment. Still, we most look forward to incorporating the contributions of scholars around the world into the enhanced descriptions of these manuscripts.

In the interim, since August 2009, the project cataloguer and four student assistants have focused their work on physical examination of the manuscripts—particularly that portion of the manuscripts which were deemed unsuitable for digitization at present (due to their fragility, size, age, construction, etc.) and require detailed physical examination to be fully catalogued. An ongoing effort, excellent progress has been made and 67 of the previously uncatalogued manuscripts have been fully catalogued as of early February 2010.

Website Development

The success of our “crowdsourcing” approach relies heavily on the creation and deployment of a complex, database-driven website

which displays existing descriptive information for each manuscript, along with a link to the digitized version of the manuscript in the HathiTrust Digital Library.

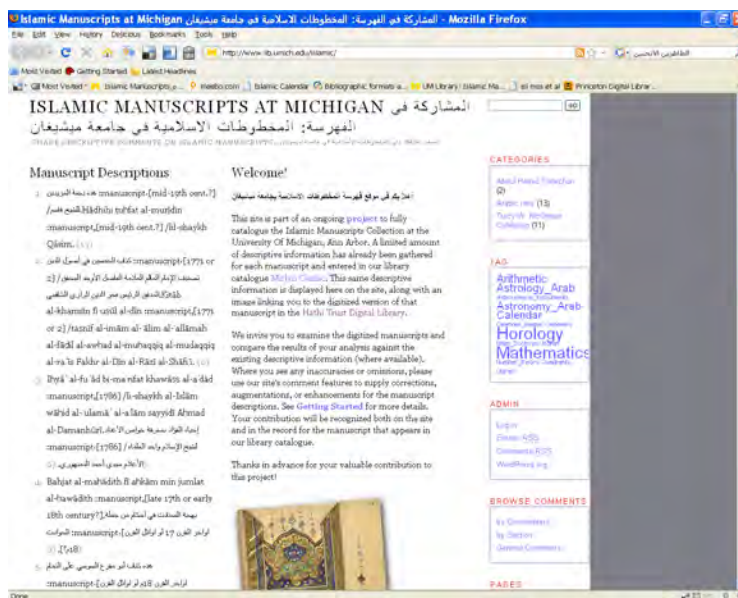


Figure 1. Project site main page, <http://www.lib.umich.edu/islamic>.

Design of the project website has proceeded according to schedule and the project Web developer has built, tested, and enhanced the site with feedback from the project cataloguer. CommentPress,⁸ an open source suite of plugins for the WordPress blogging engine, was used to develop the main interface. CommentPress supports paragraph by paragraph commentary on a document, displayed as blog post.

For our project, the “document” is a manuscript description consisting of a series of descriptive elements or metadata. Each of these descriptive elements serves as a “paragraph” which may be commented upon through the site.

⁸ <http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/commentpress/>



Figure 2. A manuscript description with links for submitting comments on the various descriptive elements.

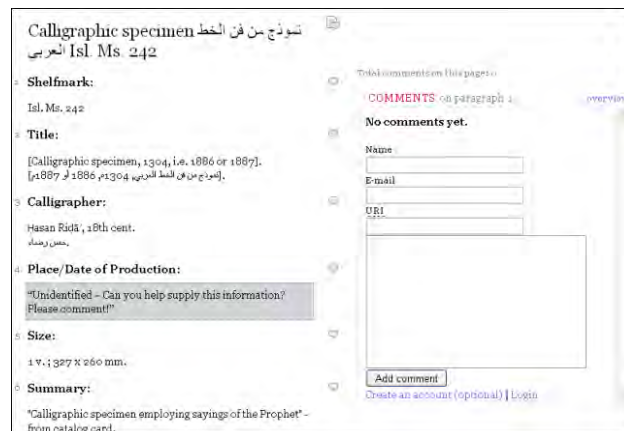


Figure 3. Submitting a comment on a descriptive element to supply information that is lacking.

The descriptive elements are followed by two images of the manuscript which serve as a link to the digital object in HathiTrust Digital Library. A reader can click on either image link to view the images for that manuscript in a new tab or window.

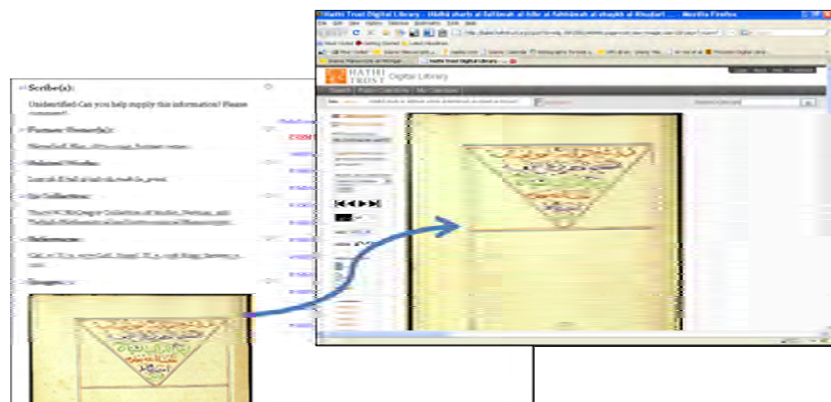


Figure 4. Following the image link to the digitized manuscript in HathiTrust Digital Library.

The project Web developer worked closely with the project cataloguer on the design of metadata mapping and display. A database was constructed to harvest descriptive information from the preliminary records entered in the Library catalogue. The harvested metadata elements are then displayed as a “manuscript description” post according to a template selected by the project cataloguer. The descriptive scheme adopted was more complex than anticipated at project start, but the project Web developer was able to accommodate these changes skillfully and efficiently.

The project Web developer has also provided enhancements to the standard CommentPress administrative interface that will allow the project cataloguer to more easily manage the posting and arrangement of manuscript descriptions via the project site. Further usability testing has been delayed due to the challenges with manuscript images, but will be conducted in an iterative manner as soon as possible. While formal deployment of the site awaits further manuscript images, an informal launch took place at the annual meeting of the Middle East Librarians Association in November 2009.

Conclusion

Currently, the already digitized manuscripts continue in an indescribably complicated and technologically mysterious process

involving the Google Books enterprise to be “ingested” into the HathiTrust repository and are thus becoming available for viewing through the project's interactive website. Our approach to adding value to the collection through “crowdsourcing” commentary and cataloguing data will expose the more innovative aspects of the project to a much wider audience. With our website fully functional, we are poised to continue our manuscript digitization program, as well as significantly increase the productivity of our cataloguing activities.

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REVIEWS

The Rise of the Taliban in Afghanistan, Mass Mobilization, Civil War, and the Future of the Region. By Neamatollah Nojumi. New York: Palgrave, 2002. Pp. 260, with bibliography and index. \$18.95 (paperback). ISBN: 0312295847.

In his introduction, Nojumi writes, "For my part, I hope this study becomes a useful source for those curious minds and passionate hearts who always desired to know what was really happening inside Afghanistan over the past three decades (1978–2000)." I believe the author met his goal.

Neamatollah Nojumi gives us a glimpse into the deep and complicated history of Afghanistan, helping the reader understand more clearly how the Taliban rose to power. Nojumi grew up in Afghanistan, participating in the Mujahideen fight against the Soviet invasion and contributing to the provision of medical care and other services to displaced Afghans, whether they were forced to relocate outside the boundaries of Afghanistan or within. He offers an inside perspective of the developments within his country over the last 30 years.

He explains that historically, Afghanistan was a "bridge between Southeast Asia, Central Asia, and the Middle East" (p. 63), resulting in many ethnic and linguistic groups living there. Included are eight major ethnic groups (Pushtons, Tajiks, Hazaras, Uzbeks, Baluchis, Turkmens, Aimaqs, and Kirghiz) resulting in even more dialects. However, even though there were differences between localities involving ethnicity, religion, and linguistics, there was a shared sense of tradition that allowed them to live together in peace for many years (p. 228).

Nojumi writes about the beginning of the modern upheaval in Afghanistan with the Soviet invasion in late 1979, and the creation of various Mujahideen groups (holy warriors). He states that the Mujahideen violence was a crucial response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the aggression of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (DRA). The "consensus of the general population" for

the uprising was that the revolt was necessary to protect citizens' rights (p. 26). He stresses that even though for centuries Afghanistan had not been ruled by religious leaders, the people were "influenced by the teachings of Sufi and Islamic mystic leaders. . . . These Sufi leaders encouraged peace, tolerance, and love" (p. 224).

During the 1980s (while the Soviets occupied Afghanistan) thousands of religious schools (madrasahs) opened across Pakistan, including in areas where many Afghan refugees lived. Here the ideological formation of the Taliban began, even though it did not become really powerful until the 1990s. As these students grew older, many of them went to Afghanistan to manage the religious affairs of the Mujahideen groups, and over time many received military training and formed local groups of full-time, armed activists. They took with them the religious call of the Taliban leaders to restore order in Afghanistan, and that was interpreted as the call to "enforce the rule of Islamic Law (Shari'ah)" (p. 126).

In the mid 1990s, the Taliban formed the General Department for the Preservation of Virtue and the Elimination of Vice. Young men would patrol the streets to make sure that the Taliban laws were followed (laws such as men not shaving their beards and women being covered from head to toe with a garment [bughrah]). Later, in January 1997, military battles erupted between the Taliban and opponents of this religious rule.

Nojumi describes the opium growth in Afghanistan and how the illegal sale of the plant helps finance the Taliban. Readers learn how this plant caused growing addictions among the people of not only Afghanistan but also neighboring countries. For this reason, there were also a growing number of conflicts regarding the illegal sales of this plant between various countries

Through this 30-year time period, we learn about the support of other countries (including the United States and Saudi Arabia) for various leaders in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Nojumi reports on involvement by China and Russia. He believes that most of the problems that have faced Afghanistan during this time have come about because of influences and interference from outsiders. However, he also states in his epilogue that, "To explain helps understanding, but is not to condone; accurate diagnosis is the first step in any treatment" (p. 222).

This book would be great for anyone truly interested in learning about the current and past history of Central Asia, the Taliban, and Afghanistan. However, it does not offer the only perspective on this

complex issue. To take from Nojumi's quote above, it will most likely also require reading other authors' perspectives to make a more "accurate diagnosis."

Included is a rather short chronological list of events covering the years 1784 through 2000 and a four-page list of definitions and abbreviations, which each would be more effective and helpful if expanded. There is also an excellent bibliography and index. A multi-paged List of Notes section is included that is very helpful for the reader who wants to research further into particular subjects and events about which Nojumi writes.

This book will be a tremendous help to anyone who has that "desire to know." However, unless the person reading this book has studied Afghanistan extensively in the past, the reader will struggle without the necessary maps. The fact that no maps were included was a great deficit. There were so many military conflicts in various towns and communities, border disagreements, opium fields, displacement of people from one area to another, and issues surrounding access to the Persian Gulf, that maps are a necessary visual to understand and picture in our minds what and where all these concerns, problems, and triumphs took place.

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Female Homosexuality in the Middle East: Histories and Representations. By Samar Habib. Routledge Research in Gender and Society. New York and London: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2007. Pp. 195, with bibliography, filmography, and index. ISBN: 0-415-95673.

This study aims minimally to present some evidence from medieval Arabic sources that describe homosexual desire, practice, and identity, challenging the notion that homosexuality, and in this case female homosexuality, is a western construct of the nineteenth century. The book will not be easy reading for Middle East specialists, although it is grounded in classical and modern Arabic and Islamic studies. It is more a contribution to theoretical debates

on the nature of homosexuality, a debate which may be foreign to the reader in Middle Eastern studies, and which is not always explained sufficiently in the book. Moreover, Habib has analyzed only a small portion of the vast primary material on sexuality in the history of the Middle East in order to prove her case. Scholars in the field of sexualities, on the other hand, may find it difficult to follow some of the arcane Middle Eastern and Islamic expertise.

The book is divided into four parts, dealing with the theoretical context, the history and representation of female homosexuality in the Middle Ages, in the contemporary Middle East, and conclusion. The author derives a new paradigm for “gay” historiography from an obscure ninth-century work of Ahmad Bin Mohamad Bin Ali al-Yemeni that contains descriptions of “grinding” (*suhaq*), which she argues warrants using the modern term female homosexuality. A poem quoted by Yemeni, written by a grinder, suggests that homosexual beauty, desire, and acts are among God’s creation. Yemeni also cites the first instance of female homosexual love ever recorded in history—a sort of Madam and Eve foundation myth. Another anecdote indicates that female homosexuality may be romantic and long-lasting. There are women who prefer grinding over pleasure with men, and there is a measure of societal acceptance for this phenomenon. In short, all the elements of female homosexuality.

The second part of the book is composed of an overview of some medieval Arabic literature on female homosexuality which contains some interesting and challenging insights. Although Habib tries to be as careful as possible in interpreting the sources, the ideas she raises are not always sufficiently grounded. The idea of homosexual relations between elite women and their female slaves is compelling, but deserves further study. Moreover, the close reading of Ahmad Ibn Yusuf Tifashi’s *Nuzhat al-Albab* is not always convincing.

The third part of the book, dealing with contemporary representations of female homosexuality, contains an analysis of “the first Arabic, lesbian-centered novel,” Elham Mansour’s *Ana Hiya Anti*, published in Beirut in 2000. Another chapter is devoted to a very few Arab films that have some male and female, homoerotic and homosexual, suggestions or explicit references. These are reviewed for some reason in non-chronological order, which further undermines unsubstantiated historical statements. Finally, some Israeli homosexual organizations, as well as Muslim and Middle Eastern gay websites, are mentioned as harbingers for the future.

The study of female homosexuality in the Middle East in the past and present is important and will undoubtedly contribute to a multicultural approach to female homosexuality in general, as the author argues. There are serious problems of sources and methodology for such endeavors. Nevertheless, this book will be quite disappointing for scholars of the Middle East. Perhaps it would have been preferable to open this field of inquiry with an anthology of discrete in-depth and more sophisticated studies.

RUTH RODED

THE HEBREW UNIVERSITY OF JERUSALEM

Distant relations: Iran and Lebanon in the last 500 years. By H. E. Chehabi, with contributions by Rula Jurdi Abisaab et al. Oxford: Centre for Lebanese Studies; London: I. B. Tauris; New York: St. Martin's Press, 2006. Pp. xiv, 322, with bibliographical references and index. ISBN: 1860645615.

H. E. Chehabi, Professor of International Relations and History at the University of Boston, is the editor of this book, and author or co-author of six of the twelve papers. Six other scholars also contributed papers, while a paper by the late scholar Albert Hourani is reprinted, a fact not noted in the pertinent chapter itself, and only incompletely cited in the preface.

The premise of the book is that while the media make much of the current relations between Iran and the Lebanese Hizballah, this relationship did not spring out of nowhere. The book therefore proceeds to study the history of religious, cultural, and political relations between Iranians and Lebanese.

The first paper, written by Chehabi and Hassan I. Mneimneh, is an introductory paper which lays the groundwork for the rest of the book and summarizes what is to be discussed. It is here that the full citation to the Hourani paper is finally found, buried in a footnote on p. 6. The remaining eleven papers are arranged essentially chronologically, and divided among three parts.

Part I, Iran and Pre-Independence Lebanon, discusses the early centuries, starting with Hourani's paper, "From Jabal 'Amil to

Persia.” This describes the emigration of Shi‘ite scholars from Jabal ‘Amil in southern Lebanon to what is now Iran. A paper by Rula Jurdi Abisaab continues the discussion about the ‘Amili *‘ulamā*’ in Syria and Iran. This is followed by a paper by Richard Hollinger on the Baha’i students at the American University of Beirut from 1906–1948, a paper which seems somewhat out of place in a book whose main goal is to trace the development of relations between Iranian and Lebanese Shi‘ites. The final paper in this part, written by Chehabi, discusses the memoirs of the prominent Iranian scholar and diplomat Qasem Ghani (1893–1952), covering the time he spent in Beirut during World War I. It includes lengthy quotes from Ghani’s memoirs, translated into English.

Part II, Pahlavi Iran and the First Republic, starts with a paper by Chehabi and Majid Tafreshi entitled “Musa Sadr and Iran.” While much has been written about Sadr’s leadership of Lebanese Shi‘ites in the 1970s and his disappearance in 1978, this paper covers his earlier years. After a brief discussion of Sadr’s ancestry and his family’s complex ties to both Iran and Lebanon, the paper describes how Sadr came to emigrate from Iran to Lebanon in 1959, and discusses his continuing political and religious relations with the Iranian Shi‘ites and the Shah’s government. The next paper, by A. W. Samii, describes Iran’s foreign policy towards Lebanon during the period from 1957 to 1976, its attempts to influence events in Lebanon, and the role of SAVAK. The final paper in this part, by Chehabi, describes the activities of Iranian anti-Shah opposition groups located in Lebanon, and their relations with Lebanese groups.

Part III, The Islamic Republic and Hizballah, starts with a paper by Chehabi, “Iran and Lebanon in the revolutionary decade,” which describes relations of the Islamic Republic in Iran with groups in Lebanon, which by then was in the throes of its civil war, as well as its backing of groups, including the nascent Hizballah, which opposed Israel and its occupation of Lebanese territory. The next paper, by Rula Jurdi Abisaab, discusses revolutionary Shi‘ism in Lebanese hawzas, a hawza being “a new type of religious seminary that differs from the traditional Lebanese madrasa in that it is more institutionalized and bureaucratized” (p. 231). She discusses the role of the clerics and the influence of the hawzas on the political and social lives of Lebanese Shi‘ites. In the next paper, Judith Harik describes Hizballah’s public and social services in Lebanon, the role of such services as an agent of political mobilization, and the support provided by Iran. The book concludes with a paper by Chehabi

which describes relations between Iran and Lebanon, including Hizballah, after 1989, the year which marked the death of Khomeini and the signing of the Ta'if agreement which eventually led to the end of the Lebanese civil war.

Each paper includes copious footnotes located at the bottom of the page where they are cited, a convenience which spares the reader from having to constantly flip back and forth to a notes section. Bibliographical references are included in the footnotes, but unfortunately there are no comprehensive bibliographies, neither at the end of each paper nor for the book as a whole. The book includes an adequate index.

All papers are scholarly and informative, and often shed new light on the events described. The book would be of interest to scholars in the areas mentioned above as well as to educated members of the public interested in Middle Eastern affairs. It would be an important addition to academic libraries which support Middle East studies programs.

CATHERINE ROCKWELL

UNIVERSITY OF UTAH MARRIOTT LIBRARY

Middle East Patterns: Places, Peoples and Politics. By Colbert C. Held. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 4th edition, 2005. Pp. 646, with glossary, bibliography, and index. \$49.00 (paperback). ISBN: 0-8133-4170-1.

The author begins with an overview of the region, with emphasis on the physical and cultural geography, environment, and resources, as well as ethnic and linguistic groups, settlement patterns, agriculture and husbandry, manufacturing and transportation, and regional conflicts. He then discusses patterns that are found in the Middle East: patterns of history, patterns of political evolution, and the patterns of peoples, cultures, and settlements.

Interspersed with this are discussions of region's resources, and the industry and transportation development of those resources, both from the surface land use and from the riches beneath the land. The maps and illustrations in the book are well done, with many graphic

facts such as soil types, precipitation, water resources and irrigation, and land development that are difficult to find elsewhere.

In the second section of the text, Prof. Held discusses the regional geography with in-depth descriptions of Syria; Lebanon and Cyprus; Jordan; Israel, Palestine and the Disputed Territories; Iraq; Saudi Arabia; the Gulf and Its Oil States; Oman and Yemen; Egypt; Turkey and Iran. Each chapter discusses the historical development of the people and the state; ethnography and social relations; patterns of living and commerce; political affiliations; economic development; and transportation.

Although the book is already more than three years old, and there have been many changes in the Middle East since 2005, the basic data presented in this book is still contemporary. The politics and economics of these countries have evolved drastically, but the physical and human geography remains current. And no book can keep up with the rapid changes this region of the world is undergoing, with challenges to the Middle East region from technology, economics, society, and politics.

Middle East Patterns: Places, Peoples and Politics fulfills two different library needs: it is an excellent reference book of the Middle East, with many of the immediate facts, maps, and graphs needed in one handy resource. As an introduction to the geography of the region and to the individual states, this book also fulfills the need as a textbook for students and library patrons.

Actually, this is one of the few books that I would recommend for most libraries. Usable in a high school library setting for advanced placement students as a reference and as an introduction to the region, *Middle East Patterns: Places, Peoples and Politics* can be used not only as an encyclopedia about the peoples and places of the Middle East, but also as an in-depth introduction to each nation. The helpful glossary is a benefit to those students not familiar with common Middle Eastern geographic and historical terms, as well as specialized words from the disciplines of geology, hydrology, and climatology.

In college libraries, this is an excellent book for an introduction to the geography of the Middle East. Authoritative and comprehensive, it gives a background study of each country, as well as an overview of the region. Many of the 70 maps, 127 figures, and 3 graphs printed in this book are by the author and are unique to this publication. They summarize much individual data into usable maps

of the region, which are excellent for a quick two-dimensional display of information or for an orientation to the region.

In a public library, this book would be useful for answering many questions about the region, as well as giving the patrons a brief overview of the region and resources, and why this area is so important to our country's interests.

This is a well presented, and fairly easy-to-read college level text. The author clearly knows his subject areas well, and was for many years a US Foreign Service officer in Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, and Iran. He also completed temporary assignments in all the other Middle Eastern countries. He is also a professor and "Retired-Diplomat-in-Residence" at Baylor University.

For those people who are not familiar with the region, the book explains as an overview the physical geography of the region and of each country. This book discusses as well the human impact on the land, and the cultural and political divisions. For those already familiar with the countries in the region, this book also explains the history and causes for the modern conflicts and recent developments.

R. LEE HADDEN

TOPOGRAPHIC ENGINEERING CENTER
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Between Revolution and State: the Path to Fatimid Statehood: Qadi al-Nu'man and the Construction of Fatimid Legitimacy. Ismaili Heritage Series, 11. By Sumaiya A. Hamdani. London; New York: I. B. Tauris Publishers in association with the Institute of Ismaili Studies, 2006. Pp. xxvi, 210, including bibliographical references and index. \$45.00 (hardback). ISBN: 9781850438823.

The dust jacket states that this work examines the most important works of al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, an influential Islamic theologian and jurist under the Fatimids. The introduction states that the author will examine the significance of the Fatimid revolution and state during its own time, based on already known sources. The work goes on to describe how the Fatimids separated from other Shi'ite sects and expanded into North Africa. It also summarizes descriptions of the

Fatimids from a variety of works written in the tenth century C.E., discusses the Fatimid religious policy, sessions, and public ceremonies intended to garner support from the variety of Islamic sects under their rule, and discusses the place of the Fatimid imams within Fatimid society.

The material discussed in *Between Revolution and State* is weighted more towards the general than towards an analysis of al-Qāḍī al-Nu‘mān’s works. Each chapter provides a general summary to set some aspect of the Fatimid state in relation to the rest of the Islamic world. The rest of each chapter summarizes some content from one of al-Qāḍī al-Nu‘mān’s works. The general summaries do not fully identify all the individuals mentioned in them, nor do they spell out background information in detail. This information is considerably more specialized than what is taught in introductory courses on the Middle East. Many undergraduates will not be prepared to fill in the background for themselves. Each chapter also has some discussion of al-Nu‘mān’s works. However, the works are not quoted and their overall structure is not described. Only some important points are presented. This method does not provide enough information about the works for graduate level work. On the positive side, *Between Revolution and State* is carefully footnoted and has an index. The bibliography includes the full range of well-known scholars on the Fatimids and Shi‘ism. Unfortunately, the only diacritics used are alif and ‘ayn.

This book should not be a high priority purchase. Although it does present some new material, it is a little too complex for many undergraduates and at the same time too general for advanced work.

MARY ST. GERMAIN

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON LIBRARIES

Iraq, Its History, People and Politics. Edited by Shams C. Inati. Amherst, NY: Humanity Books, 2003. Pp. 322, with index. \$26 (hardcover). ISBN 1-59102-096-4.

This is a compilation of personal essays published in April 2003. The work grew out of a conference held at Villanova University in

1999. Many of the reflections and conclusions contained in it have been overtaken by events. The editor's intent is to help readers understand the complexities of Iraqi history and society, ancient and modern.

The compiler has allowed her contributors freedom to express themselves. Some do so with scholarly detachment, some with poetic commitment to a particular group or cause. Contents are organized under five main headings: History and Civilization, Cultural Dimensions (music, studio arts, and literature), Unity in Diversity (non-Muslims, Shi'as, Kurds), Effects of War and Sanctions, and Regional and International Politics. In commenting on these contributions the reviewer draws a veil of forbearance over several of the more polemical essays, which read like outdated op-ed pieces with footnotes.

Coverage of contemporary art deserves special recognition. It reminds us of the esteem in which Iraqi artists and writers are held in the Arab world and beyond. To this reviewer the essay on the contemporary studio arts by May Muzaffar is the finest in the entire volume. The author succinctly covers a half-century of Iraqi painting in an informative essay illustrated by eight black-and-white photos of paintings from the Darat al Funun-Khalid Shoman Foundation in Amman, Jordan. Muzaffar makes a heartfelt and well-informed contribution to the small library on contemporary art in Iraq.

In sum, this work does not break new ground in the study of Iraq or Iraqi society. Because of political bias and often undocumented scholarship it is doubtful if the work attains its aim of informing non-specialists about the country. The unifying thread seems to be that the compiler thought that the papers of the Villanova conference were worth publishing. This reviewer respectfully disagrees.

Each article bears endnotes. The work is equipped with an index and author biographies.

MICHAEL W. ALBIN

INDEPENDENT SCHOLAR

The Camp David Summit—What Went Wrong? Edited by Shimon Shamir and Bruce Maddy-Weitzman. Portland, CO: Sussex Academic Press, 2005. Pp. 267, with index. \$29.50 (paperback). ISBN: 1845191005.

This book is composed of papers presented at the international conference, “The Camp David Summit, 2000: What Went Wrong—Lessons for the Future.” Shamir writes in the preface that this symposium was initiated by Tel Aviv University’s Institute for Diplomacy and Regional Cooperation, and the university itself hosted the conference in June 2003. Even though several books and articles have previously been written about the Camp David Summit (July 2000), this book is different. It is the product of the first attempt made to bring together American, Israeli, and Palestinian proponents and place together their diverse versions of this particular Camp David meeting.

These proponents discuss many issues of this summit, including the idea that Yasser Arafat came into the summit already suspicious of much of the proceedings because Prime Minister Ehud Barak and American President Bill Clinton were such close allies. As Mohammed S. Dajani, Ph.D. (Professor of Political Science and Director of the Issam Sartawi Center for the Advancement of Peace and Democracy, Al-Quds University), stated, “The warm American-Israeli partnership alienated Arafat and made him feel that the cards were stacked against him” (p. 84).

Another major problem at Camp David occurred when Barak brought forth a model involving the division of the city of Jerusalem. According to several speakers, Arafat believed he could not negotiate on this issue, because the status of Jerusalem is considered by much of the Arab world to be an Arab issue and an Islamic issue, not a Palestinian one. For them Arafat had no authority to even converse on the subject. Yuval Steinitz, Ph.D. (chairman of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee; Senior Lecturer at Haifa University), wrote that on the day that Barak proposed a model for Jerusalem, President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt stated on television that Arafat did not have the authority to divide Jerusalem and the Old City. He said that it was an “all-Arab and all-Muslim matter,” and whoever agreed to such an arrangement “would be considered a traitor to Arab and Muslim history.” Several other Arab leaders spoke in agreement with Mubarak (p. 225).

The problem of Arafat speaking only for the Palestinians and not believing he could speak to issues that closely involved the greater Arab world is addressed several times by various participants. These contributors also discussed the issues of “right of return” for the Palestinians, the idea of a Palestinian state, the settlement of Jews in areas such as Judea and Samaria, and the Western Wall and Western Wall tunnels.

This book is an important one and should be a part of the collection of any academic or public library. The reader does not need a strong knowledge of Middle East issues to understand what is written here. A genuine curiosity about the history of the Arab/Israeli conflict will suffice. The book begins with a table of contents and a list of the eight maps that are included. (These maps are placed together in the book, making them easier to locate.) In the back there is a useful list of contributors with a short biography of each, and it ends with a comprehensive index.

The reader without a strong background in this conflict would have found advantageous a biography of people mentioned by the participants. As stated earlier, this book is a compilation of papers from a conference, and those at the conference were surely aware of the significance of the people mentioned here. However, once these papers were put together in a book, they were made available to millions of other people. These readers would have greatly benefited from a biography of the notable people discussed.

There is a little history here as the presenters emphasize the reasons for their points of view, but mostly the focus is on the present and the future. The subject of the struggles between the Israelis and Palestinians is truly a complicated issue, and it is almost impossible to view it totally without considering one’s own background and personal opinions. However, the book meets that challenge well by having so many authorities, some with Israeli connections, others with Palestinian backgrounds, and some associated with the United States.

ANTOINETTE W. SATTERFIELD

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY

The Poems of Hafez. By Reza Ordoubadian. Bethesda, MD: IBEX Publishers, 2006. Pp. 278, with notes and bibliography. \$22.00 (softcover). ISBN: 1-58814-019-9.

Many literary scholars prefer word-for-word translation; however, some translators of poetry choose to abandon this style for a liberal one. Highlighting several points in favor of a more liberal form of translation for poetry, Willis Barnstone, in his chapter "An ABC of Translating Poetry" in *The Poetics of Translation: History, Theory, Practice* (1993), asserts that "perfect mimesis is impossible. As in ordinary religious mysticism, the problem of ineffability exists: how do you find words to say the unsayable?" (p. 266). Problems with perfect representation is the reason why the translator of *The Poems of Hafez*, Reza Ordoubadian, provides the reader with a poetic and not a literal translation of the ghazals of Hafez, arguing that translation "is a marker because matching of words in itself is an impossible task" (p. 16).

A native of Iran, Ordoubadian has studied Persian poetry and prose, has a Ph.D. in English and linguistics, and teaches English literature in the United States. Relying mainly on *Hafez Nameh*, 2 volumes, 9th edition, edited by Baha-al-Din Khorramshahi, Ordoubadian has translated 202 of the 250 poems in total, though there are over 600 poems in existence. He has also used *Divaane Hafez: Khajeh Shams-Al-Din Mohammad*, edited by Parveez Khanlari. Ordoubadian provides an index to both books for comparison of his ghazal numbers with the Persian versions.

In *The Poems of Hafez*, Ordoubadian begins with a clear explanation of the difficulty of translating Persian poetry into English poetry. He says: "In Persian, it does not make any difference to say 'be oo goftam' or 'goftam be oo' (I told him/her and only rarely, him, I told) because that element (enclitic) '- am' specifies the subject, and there is no need to worry about the position of subject, verb, or object in the sentence, unlike in English where position is a large part of marking case" (p.17).

This is a significant statement because had the author used a literal translation, the poetry would not make any sense to the English reader! He also discusses the fact that there is no exact word when translating word-for-word from Persian into English most of the time. For example, he says, "there is no word for 'mohtaseb' in English, and I had to make up a word, for which, variously, I have

used 'judge,' 'sheriff,' 'bailiff,' or 'jailor,' none very satisfactory" (p. 21).

Among the many valid rationales that Reza Ordoubadian uses to convey the reasons he has chosen to do a poetic translation, one that stood out as the most fascinating is his comment that music is linked to language and that Persian music has twelve musical modes, while Western music has three and that humans use these musical modalities when they utter sentences. Using this reasoning, he explains that poets tend to use repetition typical of the music composer to create their own music and they achieve this by using "the same sound or the same phrases . . . , the most obvious being refrains." But as he explains, poetry is not exactly created the same way as music is and instead uses alliterative structuring where the same sound in the same line is repeated at the beginning, middle, or end of the words of a poem. Using Khorramshahi's Persian version to make his point, Ordoubadian says: "I will quote line 1 in transliteration: '*jaan be jamaaleh jaanaan meyleh jahaan nadaarad.*' The sounds /j/ and /n/ have been repeated four times each, not to mention the repetition of /aa/. It is impossible to find four English words with the same sound that will provide the appropriate meaning for this half line of Hafez's poetry. This is just one example of hundreds of instances of alliteration in the ghazals" (pp.19-20).

Ghazals are short Persian lyrical poems. Having read Jorg Waltje's article in *Other Voices* ("Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's Theory of Translation in the West-Eastern Divan," March 2002) stating that literal translation is better than poetic, I remain unconvinced because Ordoubadian has successfully presented evidence in his introduction as well as in his "Notes To The Poems" section that in certain instances, Persian cannot be translated literally into English.

As he explains, since there is the matter of alliteration, he did not use Hafez's rhyming scheme and instead structured the poems in a non-traditional style. He has also arranged and numbered the poems according to his own scheme, which begin at numeral "One," although other translators of Hafez, such as Peter Avery and Walter Leaf, used the Roman numeral system to number the poems. Moreover, Ordoubadian provides a short list of pronunciation symbols with the International Phonetic Alphabet and sample words in Persian and English. Those words or concepts that Hafez used repeatedly in his ghazals have been listed in Appendix I. Also, the notes section provides an insight into Middle Eastern culture.

Furthermore, he gives an annotated and a general bibliography, both of which I found to be of practical use.

Different translators have chosen different editions of Hafez's collection of ghazals, also known as the *Divan*. One well known translator of Hafez is Gertrude Bell, whose writings were originally published in 1897 and have a rhyming scheme to them. In the preface to Bell's *Hafiz: The Mystic Poets* (2004), Ibrahim Gamard claims that Bell's "translations are much truer to the original than contemporary 'versions' of Hafiz" (p. 3). Having read Bell's translations of Hafez, I find her style makes Hafez sound almost Shakespearean in nature. Furthermore, after reading Ordoubadian's explanation on the difficulty of translating from Persian to English, I do not see how Bell could be as close to the original as it is claimed! Hence, I prefer Reza Ordoubadian's translations, whose poems appear much more accurate than previous English versions and yet still make sense to the reader. So, I highly recommend *The Poems of Hafez* to academic and public libraries.

NANCY BEYGJANIAN

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES

Water Resources in the Middle East: Israel-Palestinian Water Issues—from Conflict to Cooperation. Edited by Hillel Shuval and Hassan Dweik. Volume 2 of the Hexagon Series on Human and Environmental Security and Peace. New York: Springer, 2007. Pp. 454, with index. \$169.00 (hardback). ISBN: 978-3-540-69508-0.

"Water is the stuff of life," as someone once said, and this book discusses the role of water in the Middle East—always an area of contention. Part of a multi-discipline series on the environment, this stand-alone book is a series of papers presented at the 2nd Israeli-Palestinian International Conference on Water for Life. About two hundred government officials, university professors, researchers from non-government organizations, and other interested parties attended the conference. This is a rare example of Israeli-Palestinian cooperation and working in harmony on mutual problems.

The contributions are by representatives from Israel, Palestine, Jordan, Turkey, and experts from Europe and North America. Areas of research and discussion are: the geopolitical water problems of the Israel-Palestinian region; the Jordan River and the Dead Sea; water trade and water markets; water importation; conflict resolution and co-operation; international water law; water resources management; the impact of climate change on the region; and waste and wastewater technology in the Middle East.

A number of different topics are addressed in this compendium. One is the contamination of the Mountain Aquifer by sewage. Another is the economics and engineering of the Manavgat River water supply project which brings water from Turkey via pipelines to Cyprus and eventually to Israel and other parts of the Middle East as an alternative water resource for their domestic needs. Another paper explores the "water culture" of the Israelis, Palestinians, and Jordanians, while another presentation explores the "perceptions of water," using the role of religion, politics, and technology in concealing the growing water scarcity.

Several of these papers discuss "virtual water," which is the water imbedded in the production or retained in water-containing staples such as grains, beans, fodder, and frozen meat and fish, which can be imported and stored for long periods. These items can be grown in countries with abundant water resources, and imported into countries with water scarcity, allowing them to concentrate their agriculture on low-water products and horticulture. Israel has imported about 80% of their calorie intake, and the Palestinians about 65% in order to address the dual problems of food security and water security.

This book has a number of graphs, charts, and maps that show the data on water extraction, resources, and usage. Because of competition, politics, and hostility, this kind of quantitative scientific data is often difficult to find or to document for this region, and is a welcome addition to this book. As water resources in the Middle East become scarce in the future, it is encouraging to see the amount of cooperation between these diverse populations to handle their common need.

This book is recommended for those libraries interested in the water issues of the Middle East, or the Israel-Palestinian conflicts. This book is especially recommended for those libraries with a large geology or hydrology collection, those collections dealing in the economics and trade in the Middle East, or those research libraries

that deal with geographical and regional issues in Middle Eastern affairs.

R. LEE HADDEN

TOPOGRAPHIC ENGINEERING CENTER
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Rembetika: Aşk, Gurbet, Hapis ve Tekke Şarkıları (Songs of love, exile, prison and hash dens). Istanbul/Athens/New York 78 rpm recordings (1926–1954). By Kollektif. £11.99/€17.63 (audio CD and booklet).

Having launched *Rembetika* 1 and 2, produced by Muammer Ketencioğlu, Kalan Music collected, with the production of Stelyo Berber and Pelin Suer, 78 rpm disks which were recorded under the name of “Rembetika” between 1926 and 1954 in Istanbul, Athens, and New York. The album includes love, exile, prison, and lodge songs. The album’s name, “Rembetika,” means rembetika songs which is the plural form of a musical style called rembetiko. From an etymological view, “rembetiko” music is supposed to have been derived from “rebenoc” in the Slav language: young person; “rembelos,” in Italian: reformist; “rembome” (verb) in Greek: to roam. This musical style was predominantly common between 1850 and 1950, especially where the Greek diaspora lived, mainly in Izmir, Istanbul, Thessaloniki, and Athens.

In 1922 during the Turkish Independence War, about 1 million Anatolian Greeks moved to Greece as a result of the Turkish victory over Greece, many of them taking refuge in bad neighborhoods in the port of Piraeus. Rembetika can be described as the songs in which the Greeks who had to leave Turkey in consequence of this war, called the Asia Minor Disaster, blended Aegean and Istanbul songs with Greek music. Mentioning the feeling of homesickness, longing for homeland, and memories, these songs have a lyrical atmosphere. These victims of compulsory immigration were looked down on, insulted by being called “Greek non-Muslim” on the Turkish side and “Turkish seed” on the Greek side, had to suffer poverty, and were in the position of “the other.”

Rembetiko basically comes from two traditions. The first is the Izmir style (smyrneika), a more joyful rembetiko; the second is the Piraeus type, which is lodge style. These two styles came together in Piraeus after the war. The origins of rembetiko are claimed to be related to prison songs. Known as the music of bullies, drug addicts, and prison aghas, rembetiko was able to enter into the entertainment places of the middle class and gain popularity thanks to artists like Vassilis Tsitsanis and Theodorakis. In the 1920s Greek musicians who had had to immigrate to Greece as a result of the war brought the Izmir style in rembetiko (smyrneika) to Athens, Thessaloniki, and Piraeus, together with such instruments as the violin, kemence, ud, kanun, and satur; and in 1932 the Piraeus style, which is composed of bouzouki, bağlama, and guitar, began to develop. Immigrants opened their own Cafe Amans and thus rembetiko got past the limits of prisons and lodges and started to voice the feelings of larger social environments.

Sold together with a comprehensive booklet, the album under review mostly includes songs which are still sung in Turkey even though they have different lyrics today. The songs are played with the various combinations of such instruments as kanun, kemence, ud, violin, clarinet, bouzouki, bağlama, mandolin, zil, kaşık, piano, and guitar. They are mostly in 9/4 or 9/8 rhythm, which is the basis of Aegean zeybek, a folk dance named after Aegean zeybeks and improvised by one person,.

The detailed CD cover prepared by Stelyo Berber and Pelin Suer includes the following important information: The first song bears the name of "Dervish and Rita," attributed to Iakovos Mondanaris. This song is performed by two significant singers of the Izmir style, Rita Abacı and Dimitris Atraidis, with the accompaniment of Dimitris Semsis on violin and Kostas Karipis on guitar and ud. It is in zeybek style and it was recorded in Athens in 1934. In the duet, one dervish's flirtation with a woman is described in the form of dialogue. The second song, named "Gazel Nihavent," was recorded in Athens in 1934; Roza Eskenazi (vocal) was companied by Dimitris Curos with the popular orchestra and clarinet. "Gazel" is a work improvised by the singer on certain lyrics and does not have a specific form. Generally it has a lyrical and mournful atmosphere. The lyrics of this gazel also depict a hopeless and suffering soul. In the song named "If You Leave For Foreign Lands" (Eğer Gurbete Gidersen/San Pas Ta Ksena) recorded in Athens, 1930, Kostas Karipis is accompanied by ud, violin, and popular orchestra. This

song has the theme of being away from home. On the sticker of the disk, “rembetiko” is written, which is a rare situation. The song is sung with the same melody under the title of “Ada Sahillerinde Bekliyorum” in Turkish. There is also its Arabic version. The song, whose melody and lyrics seem to have been produced by Panayis Tundas, was recorded in Athens, 1932. In Turkey, it is known as anonymous and sung under the title of “Darıldın mı Cicim Bana.” The piece named “Harilaki,” sung by Roza Eskenazi, mentions a beautiful girl’s deceiving men in different places. This melody, known as an anonymous folk song named “Üsküdar’a Gider İken” and known throughout the Balkans, was recorded by Virginia Manidu in America. The sorrowful part of “Ahh İstanbul ahh” at the end of the song shows the saddening effect of immigration on the people. The song “Arapi gazel Uşak” is a gazel sung by Roza Eskenazi accompanied by kemence and ud. It was recorded in Athens in 1934 and expresses the pains felt in a foreign land. “Ta Hanumakya” (Ladies) is typical rembetiko song which has the atmosphere of an opium den. Sung by Kostas Karipis and Sotiris Gavalas with the accompaniment of guitar and violin, the song is an example of the zeybek type. In this song, a dervish goes to a waterpipe lodge at the Piraeus port and there he plays bağlama and smokes a waterpipe upon two women’s request. “To Kanari” (Canary) is a kind of çiftetelli performed by Roza Eskenazi with the accompaniment of ud and violin. It was recorded in Athens in three versions, Turkish, Greek, and Ladino, in 1934. Galata Manes’ “Adam Aman” voices the woes of a heartsick man. It is stated that the song may have come from Istanbul “cafe commemoration” to Greece during the immigration. Melodies that go within a certain makam and are improvised in a slow rhythm with instruments like violin, ud, kemence, or kanun are called “amane/manes” and are similar to gazel. Songs in this style mostly include tragic themes such as homesickness, pain, poverty, and death. The word “aman” in the title comes from the Turkish word for “mercy.” “Kadife” (Kadifes/velvet) is performed by Roza Eskenazi accompanied by kemence, kanun, and ud. It is in the çiftetelli style and anonymous. It became famous thanks to Greek, Turkish, and Jewish women singers. “Nargilenin Sesi,” recorded in Athens, 1935 (Yedikule/I Foni Tu Argile/The Voice of the Nargile), is a classical rembetiko which takes a humorous look at the prisons of the period and opium smoking. It is sung by Stelakis Perpiniadis with Yani Sevdikyali on violin, Manolis Margaronis on kanun, and Kostas Skarvelis on guitar.

and also waterpipe. The song became famous under the name of Yedikule in Turkey. “Frangosiriani” (Siros Adalı Katolik Kız/Catholic Girl From Syros) is sung by Markos Vamvakaris, who was one of the significant representatives of the Piraeus style, known as the classical period of rembetiko (1930–1940). It was recorded in Athens, 1935, with bouzouki played by Vamvakaris and guitar by Kostas Skarvelis. It is slower than “Sirtaki” and is a hasapikos, which is a kind of 2/4 arm dance. “Kalogria” (Rahibe/The nun) is a classical piece of rembetika sung by Rita Abaci from Izmir with the accompaniment of one guitar and one bağlama. It tells of a woman who is tired of injustice in the world and wants to be a nun. “Çakıcı” (Çakicis/Tsakitzis) is based on a zeybek dance and sung by Roza Eskenazi with Sukru Tunar on clarinet. “Bir Tekne Tutacağım” (Mia Varkula Tha Navloso/I’ll set out in a boat) is performed by Yoros Kavuras, who is one of the most important figures in the Piraeus style. It mentions a young man who rents a boat and sets out for his lover from Siros. “Uçakla Geleceğim” (Aeroplano Tha Paro/I’ll take a plane) is sung by Rita Abaci and Zaharias Kasimatis. This anonymous song has also a Turkish version. “Yemin Etme Yalancı Kadın” (Min Orkizese Vre Psefta/Don’t make promises, you lying woman) is sung by Roza Eskenazi with the accompaniment of violin, kanun, ud, and zil. It is one of the most important examples of Izmir style. “Neden Geldim Amerika’ya” (Why did I come to America?) is a Turkish song that describes Ahilleas Pulos’ disappointment and longing for Anatolia after he left Anatolia and emigrated to America. Among the representatives of the Piraeus style, Stratos Payumcis (vocal) from Ayvalık is accompanied by Minore Manes with bouzouki, kaşık, guitar, and bağlama. “Çal Benim Sadık Buzikim” (Pekse Buzuki Mu Pisto/Play my trusty bouzouki) is a zeybek sung by Stella Haskil, who has Jewish ancestors, accompanied by Spiros Peristeris on bouzouki. “Beikos” is a song in the hasaposerviko/kasap havası style performed by an orchestra composed of Western instruments and a group of mandolins called ta Politakia (İstanbulullar), mandola, and piano.

ZEYNEP GÜLÇİN ÖZKİŞİ

YILDIZ TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

Notable Recent Middle Eastern Films

Turkey

A number of truly notable films have come from Turkey recently. There have been new films by several world class directors. The first is *Iklimlar* (Climates) by Nuri Bilge Ceylan, best known in the West for his 2002 film *Uzak*. *Iklimlar* continues the director's minimalist approach, with spare dialogue and long tight close-ups. Its story casts a chilly view on the possibilities of real communication in human relationships. Next is Zeki Demirkubuz's film *Kader* (Fate). Like Ceylan, Demirkubuz is on familiar ground. As in his 1997 film *Masumiyat* (Innocence), this movie is set among the criminal fringe, the down and outs of Turkish urban life, but explores the universal theme of the power of passion to destroy, rather than uplift, a life, when it becomes obsession. There is also a new film by Dervis Zaim, which I have not seen yet, called *Cenneti Beklerden* (Waiting for heaven). Zaim's fine earlier work, such as *Tabutta Rouasata* (Somersault in a coffin) (1996) and *Filler ve Cemen* (Elephants and grass) (2000), bodes well for this film.

Two sweet and gentle comedies have come out this year: *Hokkabaz* (Trickster), written and directed by and starring one of Turkey's top comics, Cem Yilmaz. The film traces the adventures in magic and love of a somewhat less than talented stage magician. The other is the award-winning *Dondurmam Gaymak* (Creamy ice cream), written and directed by Yuksel Aksu. In the film, a village ice cream man takes on both the challenge of the big ice cream companies, and the mischievous little boys of his town. There is also a sci-fi oddity out, a sequel to one of the worst films ever made, *Dunyayi Kurtaran Adam* (The man who saved the world) (1982). Prepare yourself for *Dunyayi Kurtaran Adam'nin Oglu* (Son of the man who saved the world), starring a quite aged Cuneyt Arkin, who played the title role in the first film. The first *Star Trek* films spring to mind. Get the original for kitsch value alone, and pass on the sequel. Also pass on *Sinav* (Exam) a slick Western MTV-inspired look at Turkish students preparing (in unorthodox ways) for their crucial college entrance exam. It is not worthy of the director, Omer Faruk Sorak, who also made *Vizontele* and *G.O.R.A.*

As people who choose to live a religiously conservative lifestyle become more numerous and conspicuous on Turkish streets, Islam and the role it might play in their heretofore strictly secular society have become subjects much in the minds of Turks today. Two fine

films that reflect this preoccupation are the award-winning *Takva* (Piety) by Ozer Kiziltan, and *Adem'in Trenleri* (Adam's trains) by Baris Pirhasan. In *Takva* a simple pious man is chosen to look after the considerable financial holdings of his Sufi lodge. The film charts his growing corruption and loss of faith. In *Adem'in Trenleri*, a new imam comes to a small rural village. At first, he seems a grim, unsympathetic figure who mistreats his young wife and daughter. Eventually, it is revealed that he married his wife when she was pregnant by another man to save her from mistreatment and ridicule. In the course of the film, the villagers learn of his compassionate nature, while he learns just how much he really loves his young wife. The realistic depiction of a village imam in this film is far beyond the offensive "imam as cool guy" caricature presented by last year's *Imam*.

The Turks have long enjoyed historical films, usually of the ghazi variety. A film that deals with modern political events like the 1980 coup is a rarity, but that is the subject of the new film *Zincirbozan* (The broken chain), directed by Atil Inac. This political thriller pulls no punches historically, and is a fine fictional examination of one of Turkey's dark periods. On the lighter side is *Son Osmanli Yandun Ali* (The last Ottoman, Yandun Ali), directed by Mustafa Sevi Dogan. The film is an adaptation of a series of graphic novels by Suat Yalaz about the fictional character involved in the Turkish War of Independence. The film casts the hero as a Turkish James Bond, but it is still a unique expression of contemporary Turkish culture and essential to any collection. Another fine costume epic of World War I that has recently been released is *Eve Giden Yol 1914*, written and directed by Semir Aslanyurek.

Lastly, there have been two reissues of classic Turkish films from the days of the Turkish Hollywood, known as Yesilcam. These films feature some the best known stars and directors, and most importantly, have English subtitles. Many of the classic Turkish films are available, but most do not have subtitles. The first is an atmospheric masterwork by auteur Metin Erksan, *Sevmek Zamani* (Time for love) (1965). The other is the award-winning *Selvi Boylum Al Yazmalim* (The girl with the red scarf) (1977) by Atif Yilmaz. Based on a novel by Cengiz Aytmatov, it stars Kadir Inanir, Turkan Soray, and Ahmet Mekin. These films will provide some historical perspective to any collection.

Egypt

As far as Egyptian films are concerned, the big news is *The Yacoubian Building*, directed Marwan Hamed, and simply one of the best Egyptian films in years. If you haven't added this to your collection yet, it is a must. Another fine new film is *Bahithat an al-Hurriyah* (Looking for freedom) by Inas al-Daghidi. It was criticized in Egypt for its depiction of immigration as the only viable option for an Arab woman looking for a fulfilling life. But this only adds to its importance. The film is a bit overlong though, as many Egyptian films are.

Certainly these two films are far above the usual frothy romantic comedies that the Egyptian film industry has been turning out. It is as if everyone involved had watched too many episodes of *Friends*. Here are some musts to avoid. Acquire them only if you'd like to document the decay of the Egyptian cinema:

Ouija

Dam al-Ghazal (Deer's blood)

Inti Umri (My soul mate)

Halat Hubb (State of love)

Ashab wa-la Biznis (Friendship or business)

Ahlam Umrina (Dreams of our lives)

Even when they try to tackle a serious subject as in *Laylat Suqut Baghdad* (The fall of Baghdad), it is turned into a frothy nothing. The political events are used simply as a backdrop for a shallow love story. Still, two films that are the best of the lot are *Harim Karim* starring the pop star Mustafa Qamar, and *Abu Ali* with Mona Zaki.

I have found recently re-issues of three films from the classic realism period of Egyptian cinema in the 1980s and 1990s. They all have English subtitles and would be an excellent addition to any collection. All star such greats as Adel Imam, Yusra, Nur al-Sharif, and Lablabah, and are directed by some of Egypt's finest.

Hata la Yutira al-Dukhan (That the smoke may not blow away) (1984) directed by Ahmed Yahya

Laylah sakhinah (A hot night) (1994) directed by Atif al-Tayyib

Tuyur al-Zalam (Birds of darkness) (1995) directed by Sharif Arafah

Iran

A number of excellent Iranian films have been released in the past year or so. The best of this very fine bunch is *Offside* by Jafar Panahi. It tells the story of a group of girls who in violation of the law try get into Tehran stadium to see Iran's soccer team compete in the World Cup. Next is *Men at Work*, a film by Mani Haqiqi. The subject of the film as it is described on the container is "The story of four ordinary guys and one big rock." The political allegory contained in the film's simple plot is striking, but does not overshadow the comedy and action of the plot. Director Tahmineh Milani is known for her didactic films about the status of women in Iran, such as *The Hidden Half*. In her latest film, *Ceasefire*, she decided to focus on the lighter side of the war between the sexes, and her message comes across all the more clearly in this light romantic and comedic guise.

The next film, called *Twilight*, is by Hasan Hedayat. It is a somber and wintry meditation on death and aging, starring the great Ezzatollah Entezami. This film is a small masterpiece. An odd but compelling film by Mohammad Rasoulaf is *Iron Island*. It chronicles the lives of the destitute inhabitants of a derelict freighter, and the sometimes tyrannical, sometime benign dictatorship of their leader, upon whom they depend for everything. Again, as in *Men at Work*, the political allegory is clear but not intrusive on the plot. Next is a work of popular cinema by Feridoun Jeyrani, called *Garden Salad*. It is not a great film, despite a fine acting job by Leila Khetami. But as an example of an Iranian attempt at film noir, it is worth seeing and adding to one's collection.

DAVID GIOVACCHINI

STANFORD UNIVERSITY

**Books Received for Review
in *MELA Notes*
December 2009***

- Alem, Raja, and Tom McDonough. *My thousand & one nights: a novel of Mecca*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2007.
- Basgöz, İlhan. *Hikâye: Turkish folk romance as preformance art*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2008.
- Boullata, Kamal. *Palestinian art 1850–2005*. London: Saqi, 2009.
- Jamal, Amaney, and Nadine Naber, eds. *Race and Arab Americans before and after 9/11: from invisible citizens to visible subjects*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2008.
- Luongo, Michael T., ed. *Gay travels in the Muslim world*. New York: Harrington Park Press, c2007.
- Osanloo, Arzoo. *The politics of women's rights in Iran*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, c2009.

* This list includes books not previously listed which have been received to date and are awaiting review.

Annual Meeting 2008 Washington, DC

MELA Business Meeting November 21, 2008

MELA MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Imadeldin Abuelgasim, Abdulahi Ahmed, Helen Alexander, Judy Alspach, Levon Avdoyan, Nora Avetyan, Johnny Bahbah, Rifat Bali, Joyce Bell, Brenda Bickett, Joan Biella, Abdelaali Boutaqmanti, Leonard Chiarelli, Krikor Chobanian, Paul Crego, Iman Dagher, Mohammed Dagman, Saeed Damadi, Jolene de Verges, Mary-Jane Deeb, Hiran Dinavari, Robin Dougherty, Christine Dykgraaf, Lamia Eid, John Eilts, Joed Elich, Shahira el-Sawy, Hikmat Faraj, George Fawzi, Jaleh Fazelian, Christof Galli, Meryle Gaston, James Gentner, David Giovaccini, Donald Goldman, Ramy Habeeb, Lee Hadden, Larissa Halishoff, Mohammed Hamed, Abdul Ahad Hannawi, Ali Hassan, David Hirsch, Anchi Hoh, Michael Hopper, Ali Houissa, Martha Jenks, Barbara Jones, Zbigniew Kantorosinski, Nawal Kavar, Kristen Kern, Akram Khabibullaev, Omar Khalidi, Shayee Khanaka, William Kopycki, Connie Lamb, Karen Liston, Peter Magierski, Yahya Melhem, Ahmed Moustafa, Mark Muehlhaeusler, Christopher Murphy, Behzad Noubar, Susan Nour, Sarah Ozturk, Elizabeth Plantz, Ibrahim Pourhadi, Michael Prohaska, Mehdi Rahimzadeh, Andras Riedlmayer, Jonathan Rodgers, Rebecca Routh, Juliet Sabouri, Marjan Sadeghi-Moaddel, Marlis Saleh, Simon Samoeil, Andrea Schuler, Rachel Simon, Jeff Spurr, Dona Straley, Sean Swanick, Shahram Taavoni, Farideh Tehrani, Sousan Teymouri, Patrick Visel, James Weinberger, Stephen Wiles, Gamil Youssef

MINUTES

President Joan Biella welcomed everyone to the meeting. The minutes from last year's meeting were approved.

EXECUTIVE BOARD REPORTS

PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

Joan Biella discussed the activities of the association over the past year. In February, MELA joined its MESA and other affiliates in signing a letter calling for the repatriation of materials taken from the Iraqi National Library and Archives to the US. She paid tribute to MELA founder George Atiyeh, who recently passed away, and

added that this year three winners of the Atiyeh Prize have been chosen. Electronic balloting was successfully used for the first time to hold MELA Executive Board elections.

Joan commented on the committee activities over the past year, noting that MEMP, although not part of MELA per se, exemplified itself through activity and communication among its members, while the Cataloging Committee played an important and active role in setting standards for practices in cataloging. She cited these as examples of how members can participate and make a difference.

SECRETARY-TREASURER'S REPORT:

William Kopycki gave the report [Text below.]

ELECTION RESULTS:

Joan presented the results of the MELA Executive Board elections. Anchi Hoh will be vice-president and program chair/president-elect for the next term, while Brenda Bickett will be member-at-large. Joan wished the new members good luck.

MELA NOTES EDITOR REPORT:

Marlis Saleh gave the report. The next issue will appear soon. She noted discussion had take place about book reviews being published online rather than in print, and possibly eliminating the print version of *MELA Notes* altogether. Many factors have to be taken into consideration before these things would happen. She added that article submissions are always welcome. [Text below.]

WEBMISTRESS' REPORT: Robin Dougherty gave her report, adding that she would be working on developing the website to make content "behave correctly." She called for membership to provide input on content, color scheme, artwork, etc., with the hope of making the website a useful resource. The web host (Dot5) offers blogging services, where book reviews, short notes about library news, etc., might be added to raise the profile of the association.

MELANET-L LIST MANAGER'S REPORT: Robin reported on behalf of Kristen Wilson. They are trying to find the best solution to migrate the listserv from Cornell to another service. Further information on this will be forthcoming. Ali Houissa, previous listserv manager, asked the group to consider a solution for the listserv archives.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

PARTINGTON AWARD COMMITTEE: John Eilts, chair, presented the Partington Award to this year's winner, Dona Straley, of Ohio State University Library. In her acceptance speech, Dona reflected on how she entered the field of Middle East librarianship, with three of her four classmates in an Arabic class all following similar career paths. She recalled her first MELA meeting and being introduced by George Atyieh, and how being a Middle East librarian gave her opportunities that other library staff did not have available.

ATIYEH AWARDS COMMITTEE: Christine Dykgraaf presented the award to this year's winners, who were three in number: Larissa Halishoff, a student in the School of Library, Archival and Information Studies at the University of British Columbia; Michael Prohaska, a student in the Master's of Library Science program at Southern Connecticut State University; and Sean E. Swanick, who is enrolled in the Master's in Library and Information Studies program at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

COMMITTEE ON CATALOGING: Joyce Bell, chair, summarized the events of the committee. Joyce thanked the previous chair, Meryle Gaston, and outgoing member Kristen Wilson for their contributions to the committee. One of the activities from the past year was to follow up on the recommendations of the Persian Cataloging Task Force. A recommendation to create a separate listserv for Persian cataloging issues was rejected on the basis that this need was already being served by MIDEASTCAT. Instead, the committee worked to promote MIDEASTCAT through other listservs such as AUTOCAT and NONENGLISHACCESS. The recommendation for establishing a Persian name funnel under NACO had the committee query potential participants in April. The response was slow, but by September, there was sufficient interest reported by catalogers to create one. The committee will follow-up with LC to determine the next steps. The third recommendation, establishing a Persian Cataloging Manual (PCM), led to the creation of an editorial board and webspace where content can be posted. The PCM editorial board focused their activities on creating a workshop, which was held the previous day and whose presentations will be posted at a later date.

Joyce reported that the MELA SACO Funnel had nine proposals this year, from Iowa, Penn, AUC, and Bibliotheca Alexandria, with

AUC and Bibliotheca Alexandrina presenting seven of the nine proposals.

Documentation related to best practices in Arabic cataloging was distributed and discussed at the committee's meeting yesterday. The subcommittee looking at Syriac romanization is still working on their review of a proposed table.

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION: Joan Biella, interim chair, reported that the committee has been rather dormant over the past year. The mentorship program continues under Omar Khalidi, but there is a need for more mentors and mentees. Joan added that she hopes the committee will revitalize itself over the next year.

COMMITTEE ON IRAQI LIBRARIES: Jeff Spurr, chair, reported that the web pages for the committee are expected to be transferred from the American Oriental Society's website to MELA. As a resource, the pages are useful if starting to be a bit outdated. He reported on the activities of individuals on the committee and events concerning libraries in Iraq. Among the highlights: Simon Samoeil's efforts to digitize nine Iraqi journals as part of the Iraqi Journals digitization project at Yale; David Hirsch's training efforts as reported in the previous year; and the acceptance of two Iraqi library science professors at Simmons College for upgrading their knowledge of the profession. Jeff has also communicated with OCLC to have them supply bibliographic records for a book donation project, while Library of Congress supplied equipment to the Iraqi National Library and staff training to enable them to take part in the World Digital Library Project. Jeff himself gave talks at the College Art Association, the Metropolitan Museum, and SOAS regarding the National Library and Archives, all representing efforts to bring exposure of its situation to a wider audience.

COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AFFAIRS: Joan Biella reported that Peter Magierski, chair, resigned from the committee earlier in the week due to what he reported as the committee's lack of activity. Joan asked if there were was anyone willing to take up the committee's charge; there being no responses, the committee was formally dissolved.

RESEARCH AND REFERENCE COMMITTEE: Christof Galli, chair, reported that the committee met last night and felt that it had an important role to play within the association. The committee discussed ideas for developing the content of its web page, with links to useful resources, members' projects, and other resources. They also discussed requesting direct access to the committee web pages to be able to post and update content.

LESLEY WILKINS EDUCATION AWARD: John Eilts announced that the association is two-thirds of the way towards its goal of \$10,000 to establish the Wilkins Fund. He encouraged members to donate as the tax year ends.

BYLAWS REPORT: Connie Lamb reported that BallotBin seems to have been a success for this year's first electronic voting. The Executive Committee discussed the benefits of membership vs. non-membership, and decided that attendance at the business meeting and voting requires membership and payment of dues, while the program is considered open to anyone who pays meeting registration.

Connie reported that the Executive Committee discussed the existence of ad hoc committees, which are somewhat vague in the bylaws. There is a need for further structure. With the use of online voting throughout the year, it may be possible to review and take further action.

The meeting then paused for a break.

OTHER REPORTS:

MEMP: David Hirsch reported that significant runs of *Kayhan* (London), *Agos* (Turkey), and *al-Quds al-'Arabi* (London) (the latter done in cooperation with Exeter University and with significant holdings from Yale) have been completed, in addition to *al-Funun* (Montreal) and *al-Ufuq al-'Arabi* (Chicago). David mentioned that MEMP has a name for itself among Arab-American newspapers, with a new newspaper in Chicago (*al-Hadath al-Dawli*) offering to send a complete run. MEMP also stewards filming a collection of Arabic pamphlets from Library of Congress.

MEMP continues to explore web archiving, looking at archiving Middle East environmental websites. An Arabic translation of the MEMP statement of purpose has been posted on the website.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS/CATALOGING REPORT: Sarah Öztürk reported that LC has completed its re-organization of acquisitions and cataloging sections. The Middle East and North Africa Team is now the Middle East Section of the Asian and Middle Eastern Division. The scope of joint acquisitions and cataloging now includes Armenia, Georgia, and Central Asia in addition to Middle East and North Africa, in all formats.

Two senior acquisitions staff and one senior cataloging staff have retired; there are now eleven staff members and one part-time contractor. An announcement for a Turkish/Central Asian specialist will be posted in the next few weeks.

During the summer, Martha Jenks served as a summer fellow in an LC internship program. She worked to catalog fifty of LC's Arabic manuscripts on the sciences which have been digitized and will be contributed to the World Digital Library.

Information about new classification numbers, specifically expansion of the section on Iraq War, will be coming soon.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS/SELECTION AND REFERENCE REPORT: Chris Murphy reported that the entire division has performed a great number of outreach activities, including 52 lectures and symposia over the past year. Two all-day seminars were prominently attended, the first on the Druze, and the second on health education and economic development in post-war Iraq..

Dr. Muhannad Salhi from the University of Chicago has been hired as the new Arab World Specialist for the division. Interviews for a third library technician are underway as work begins to shift the collection, comprising over 400 thousand volumes in the vernacular. Statistically this breaks down to 230 thousand in Arabic, 60 thousand each for Turkish and Persian, 20 thousand for Central Asian, 15 thousand Armenian, and 15 thousand in other languages. Growth rate is about 20 thousand volumes per year. Staff members from the division have been active in supporting Congress and their requests for research assistance and expert testimony.

Regarding digitizing and microfilming, the Arabic and Central Asian portal pages have been updated, while work with the Egyptian National Library and Iraq National Library and Archives within the context of the World Digital Library continues. Especially important acquisitions over the past year include Armeno-Turkish, Karamanli books, and rare Armenian items. The division acquired significant

Iranian-American materials, including the archives of the Iranian-American Student Association, and hardcopy materials from the Iranian Oral History Project from Europe. The division also received a number of important gifts, including 153 old and rare Arabic books from the Philip Khouri collection.

OACIS/AMEEL REPORT: Simon Samoeil gave an update on the project. A workshop on digitization was held at Bibliotheca Alexandrina, bringing together representatives of MELA institutions with their counterparts from Middle East and European institutions. A pilot project for interlibrary loan within the framework of AMEEL began, and included the American University in Cairo, Bahrain University, and Yale, with Balamand University, the American University in Beirut, and the National Library of Tunisia to be added in the future.

Statistics for OACIS/AMEEL include: total journal titles at 67,273 with holdings records of 78,850. Harvard and Ohio State have expressed some problems in getting their holdings represented; this will be addressed in the next update. As of October 2008, AMEEL has 30,000 pages deposited in the full-text repository, representing selected volumes from *Sumer*, *al-Mawrid*, *al-Dirasat al-Tarikhiyah*, *al-Majallah al-Falsafiyah*, *al-Katib al-'Arabi*, and *al-Thaqafah al-Jadidah*. As for *al-Abhath* (Beirut), 94 issues have been scanned and OCRed. The quality assurance and deposit into the repository are pending due to some formatting problems with the journal. Other titles currently being scanned and deposited: *al-Mu'arrikh al-Misri* (27 issues) and *al-Majallat al-Tunisiyah lil-'Ulum al-Ijtima'iyah* (120 issues). Copyright permissions have been received for these journals and they will be accessible from the AMEEL web site free of charge. As for the Iraqi Journals project, copyright permission is still pending before the text of the journals can be made accessible.

COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS:

President Joan Biella asked if anyone had any questions or comments. Someone asked about the ArchiveIt project (of MEMP). David Hirsch responded that the results of web archiving for vernacular languages were not very successful, but they would be trying again.

Somebody asked if the journals included in AMEEL would be catalogued at the article level. Simon responded they are looking into this, taking into the consideration the number of articles, and other factors.

Joan then asked if there were reports regarding other meetings. Akram Khabibullaev reported enjoying his time at the eIFL conference entitled: "Central Asia 2008: Internet and Library and Information Resources in Science, Education, Culture and Business" which took place from October 21 to 25, 2008, in Fergana City, Uzbekistan. The next such meeting will take place in 2010.

Omar Khalidi gave a quick overview of The Islamic Manuscript Association (TIMA) which holds its conference each year in Cambridge, England, and includes MELA members David Hirsch on the executive board and Omar working in other capacities with the association. It is an important group for discussing the state of the art in Islamic manuscripts, and is of interest to all. There is also a grants program available. TIMA's website can be found at: www.islamicmanuscript.org.

Rachel Simon reported attending the 3rd Conference on the History of Publishing and Printing in the Languages of the Middle East in September in Leipzig, which included papers by Blair Kuntz and Karl Schaeffer. The next such conference will be held at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina.

NEW BUSINESS

Robin Dougherty (and Michael Hopper) asked if there were like-minded individuals who are willing to share statistics with each other. Three others expressed similar interest. More information will be forthcoming.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Joan announced that an experiment concerning book reviews will begin this year with reviews being published online as they come in. More information will be forthcoming.

James Weinberger announced that Princeton has acquired a substantial collection of 1,731 movie posters, 720 lobby cards, and 171 press books/pamphlets. It is hoped that these will be digitized; in the meantime, a finding aid is being created.

Christine Dykgraaf announced that she is completing her dissertation on policy and procedures of Middle East collections in the United States, and asked those present to complete an online survey to help her research.

Joan gave special thanks to Joyce Bell, outgoing member-at-large, for her contributions, ideas, and suggestions to the association, and formally passed the leadership baton to incoming President Omar Khalidi. Omar then called on members to suggest ideas and activities for moving the association ahead.

With that, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

William J. Kopycki
Secretary-Treasurer

**Secretary-Treasurer's Report
As of November 17, 2008**

INCOME

Atiyeh Award contribution	\$50.00
Dues, subscriptions, meeting registration(remainder of 07 + 08 to date)	10,465.49
Wilkins Fund contributions	5,486.25
Vendor contributions (remainder of 07 + 08 to date)	1,939.55
Bank interest	55.26
TOTAL INCOME	\$17,996.55

EXPENSES

MELA Meeting expenses 2007 (remainder)	\$4,408.35
MELA Meeting expenses 2008 (to date)	6,642.00
MELA Notes #80 printing	1,041.07
Atiyeh Award (3 winners)	1,215.00
American Cancer Society (not included in 2007 report)	500.00
Partington award cash + expenses	228.39
Postage and supplies	273.33
Bank charges (use of credit card in Canada)	234.77
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$14,542.91

PNC Bank Checking account balance as of November 17th, 2008	\$19,541.15
PNC Bank Savings account balance as of November 17th, 2008	\$5,407.57
TOTAL	\$24,948.72

Wilkins Fund to date (included in the above total) [\$6,662.70]

As of November 17, 2008, we have 82 members who are paid up through 2007, with 69 paid up through 2009. Twenty-three new members have been added since December 2007.

As of November 17, 2008, we have 29 library subscriptions to *MELA Notes*, with 17 subscriptions being handled through vendors.

ADDITIONAL NOTES FROM THE SECRETARY-TREASURER

The past year has been a very active one for the Secretary-Treasurer in regards to performing the duties of the office. For next year I intend to have the Minutes prepared shortly after our meeting here, so that memories will still be fresh as to what transpired.

Although last year's report mentioned that work would take place to create a true "MELA Registry" as desired by some, I must report that after investigation into the technical matters required to create such a registry that this is a task that must be put aside for the moment. Our current MELA Database (which is essentially a flat-file MS Access database developed nearly a decade ago) is simply not robust enough to support a structure to really do what a true Registry should do. There are some commercial products available that could handle a full membership registry and store biographical/occupational data as well as handle complex accounting and billing matters, but these packages are a few thousand dollars more than we need to spend at this time. If there are other suggestions on how to approach this issue, I would welcome all suggestions.

The cost of MELA meetings is going up—the total cost of the 2007 meeting in Montreal came to \$7,777.13, and this year's meeting is currently at a to-be-adjusted figure of \$6,642.00. It is asked: "Why not hold the conference in the MESA Hotel, where the room is free?" To which the answer is: because while the use of the room through MESA is almost-free, (\$300 for two days), all you get is a bare room with chairs and nothing more. Add the cost of coffee, computer, a/v equipment, food, etc. (all supplied from the conference hotel, of course!) and "free" suddenly totals up to a quote in excess of \$9,000.00! It is for this reason that we have to keep charging a registration fee. For future meetings, it will be important to find alternatives to keep our costs down, both for the organization and for our expenses as members. Having said that, I would like to thank our vendors and corporate sponsors for their generosity in pledging support for this year's meeting, and hope that they will continue to do so in the future.

Also of note this year is the growing Wilkins Fund, now over halfway towards its goal of \$10,000. Thanks to John Eilts for his work this past year in making this fund grow and getting people to contribute.

Finally, I would like to thank everyone who has paid their dues and registration in advance, and I will be sending out reminder notices by e-mail by December 2008 to those who have still not paid.

Your dues are what keeps our activities going, and will help us plan for the future.

As always, if there are questions/comments/suggestions as to anything involving this office, please feel free to let me know.

Respectfully submitted,

William J. Kopycki
Secretary-Treasurer

Editor's Report, November 2008

During the year 2007–08, one annual issue of MELA Notes, number 81 (2008), will be published in print and will be distributed to the membership and subscribers. The issue will appear electronically at <http://www.mela.us/MELANotes/MELANotesIntro.html>

The current issue consists of the following items:

- ❖ “Training Challenges: A Practical Report of an Arabic OCR Experience,” by Evyn Kropf, University of Michigan Library
- ❖ “A Guide to Arabic Manuscript Libraries in Morocco with Notes on Tunisia, Algeria, Egypt, and Spain,” by Jocelyn Hendrickson, Emory University
- ❖ 15 Reviews
- ❖ MELA Business Meeting 2007 Minutes and Reports
- ❖ Books Received for Review 2007–08

This is my first issue of MELA Notes and I am excited to meet the challenge of continuing the project carried on so ably for the past ten years by Jonathan Rodgers. I am extremely grateful for Jonathan's ongoing and future assistance in this endeavor, as well as that of my very helpful colleagues, our Book Review Editor, Rachel Simon, and our Secretary-Treasurer, William Kopycki.

As always, I urge the membership to submit articles and to encourage colleagues to do so.

Respectfully submitted,

Marlis J. Saleh, Editor

