

# MELA NOTES

Middle East Librarians Association

Number 92 (2019)

**MELA NOTES**  
**Journal of Middle Eastern Librarianship**  
**Number 92 (2019)**

ISSN 0364-2410

PUBLISHED BY THE MIDDLE EAST LIBRARIANS ASSOCIATION

EDITOR

Marlis J. Saleh  
University of Chicago

REVIEW EDITOR

Rachel Simon  
Princeton University

OFFICERS OF THE MIDDLE EAST LIBRARIANS ASSOCIATION

Laila Hussein Moustafa, UI Urbana	President, 2019-2020
Dale Correa, University of Texas	Past-President, 2018-2019
Akram Habibulla, Indiana Univ.	Past-President, 2017-2018
Roberta Dougherty, Yale Univ.	Vice-Pres./Program Chair, 2019-2020
William Kopycki, Lib. of Congress, Cairo	Sec.-Treasurer, 2019-2022
Marlis J. Saleh, University of Chicago	Editor, 2019-2022
Justin Parrott, NYU in Abu Dhabi	Webmaster, 2018-2021
Evyn Kropf, U. Michigan	MELANET-L List Manager, 2019-2022
Anaïs Salamon, McGill University	Member-at-large, 2017-2020
Heather Hughes, UC Santa Barbara	Member-at-large, 2018-2021
Iman Dagher, UCLA	Member-at-large, 2019-2022

*MELA Notes* is published once a year. It is distributed to members of the Association and subscribers. Membership dues of US \$30.00 bring the *Notes* and other mailings. Subscriptions are US \$30.00 per calendar year, or US \$16.00 per issue for most back numbers.

Address correspondence regarding subscriptions, dues, or membership information to:

William Kopycki, Secretary-Treasurer MELA  
Unit 7700 Box 216  
DPO, AE 09290-0216  
United States of America

Address articles and other notices to:

Marlis J. Saleh  
Editor, *MELA Notes*  
University of Chicago Library  
1100 East 57<sup>th</sup> Street  
Chicago, IL 60637  
E-mail: [melanoteseditor@mela.us](mailto:melanoteseditor@mela.us)

Address books for review to:

Rachel Simon  
Review Editor, *MELA Notes*  
Catalog Division  
Princeton Univ. Library  
1 Washington Road  
Princeton, NJ 08544  
E-mail: [rsimon@Princeton.EDU](mailto:rsimon@Princeton.EDU)

<https://www.mela.us/publications/mela-notes/>

Articles and reviews must be submitted in electronic format by email attachment.



# MELA NOTES

Number 92

2019

## CONTENTS

### ARTICLES

NAWAL A. KAWAR

Muhammad Ali Eltaher Collection at the Library of Congress....1

### REVIEWS

ATIYA: *Shahaama: Five Egyptian men tell their stories*

(Shahrazad Khosrowpour) .....4

BEARMAN: *A History of the Encyclopaedia of Islam*

(Guy Burak).....6

BOLLING: *The Red Hijab*

(Shahrazad Khosrowpour) .....8

BUSTANI: *The Perception of Meaning*

(Shahrazad Khosrowpour) .....12

FAMILIAR AND ASSAF: *Saud al-Sanousi's Saaq al-Bambuu:*

*The authorized abridged edition for students of Arabic*

(Justin Parrott) .....16

SHUKAIR: *Jerusalem stands alone*

(Shahrazad Khosrowpour) .....18

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

Open Access Book Announcement .....20

Atiyeh Award.....21

Atiyeh Award Essay .....22

Atiyeh Award Essay .....25

Partington Award.....28

Wilkins Award.....	30
Wilkins Award Essay.....	32

ANNUAL MEETING 2018

Minutes and Reports .....	34
---------------------------	----

## **Muhammad Ali Eltaher Collection At the Library of Congress**

NAWAL A. KAWAR  
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

One of the prominent collections related to Middle Eastern studies that the Library of Congress has acquired in recent years is the Muhammad Ali Eltaher Collection. It is comprised of more than 2,000 items, including books, pamphlets, pictures, newspaper clippings, and personal correspondence, among others. This collection documents the history of the Arab world from 1912 to 1974, with a focus on a well-known Palestinian journalist and newspaper editor, Muhammad Ali Eltaher (1896–1974). The collection was acquired from Eltaher's son, Hassan, an author and researcher who also wrote about the events that took place during his father's lifetime and now manages the [eltaher.org](http://eltaher.org) website.

Born in Nablus, Palestine, Eltaher immigrated to Cairo at the age of sixteen. During his formative years in Egypt, he became an early Arab nationalist and critic of the Sykes-Picot Agreement, and published extensively on these subjects. His writings and advocacy for nationalism and anti-colonialism led to the young Eltaher's imprisonment several times before he reached the age of twenty-one. The newspapers that he later either established or was affiliated with—*al-Shoura*, *al-Shabab*, and *al-Alam al-Masri*—were not only banned but resulted in his further imprisonment and even caused him to become a political fugitive. Nonetheless, Eltaher's activities won the support of many in the Arab countries as well as Muslims from around the world.

Eltaher was described by the journalist Nabil Khaled Al-Agha, in *Al-Doha* magazine (Qatar, April 1981), as “a man infatuated with Freedom” (<http://eltaher.org/>). Eltaher's unique political experience is documented in this collection. He struggled with oppressive governments with the same fierceness with which he fought against foreign colonialists such as the British, the French, the Italians, and the Dutch. He was described as not belonging to any political party but he “was an initiator, facilitator, enabler, catalyst as well as mover

and shaker” (<http://eltaher.org/>). These qualities are reflected through the correspondence of the heads of states which may be found in the Eltaher collection. In 1960 King Mohamed V of Morocco decorated Eltaher at the royal palace in Rabat among other heads of Arab governments.

Eltaher’s first weekly newspaper in Cairo was called *al-Shoura*, published on October 22, 1924. It dealt with issues concerning the Arab world and other oppressed countries. He was described as being one who “used his pen and his ethics to get what money cannot buy: respect,” “a brilliant name in the pantheon of those who lived and died for principle.” One of his obituaries stated that “he wrote, published, and died as an activist. For him, the pen was his mighty weapon in the struggle for the people’s freedom.” He paid a heavy price for his unselfish dedication through prison, banishment, poverty, and self-imposed exile. In 1974, the date of his death, the Lebanese newspaper *al-Hayat*, among others, wrote condolences, and his family received cables from Arab leaders such as Habib Bourguiba of Tunis, Sharif Hussein Bin Ali, the king of Hejaz, and King Abdelaziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia (<http://eltaher.org/>).

An important part of this collection are Palestinian pamphlets pertaining to the Arab-Israeli conflict. They have been digitized and can be accessed through the URL:

<https://www.loc.gov/collections/eltaher-collection/about-this-collection/>

Because of its historical significance and relevance to world issues today, the Eltaher collection has received many requests from researchers and scholars and has proven to be of high research value for those who study the history, politics, and culture of the Middle East, North Africa, the Islamic world, and colonialism. Therefore, the Library’s African and Middle Eastern Division (AMED) continues to process the collection with the assistance of staff and volunteers.

Special thanks to Dr. Mary-Jane Deeb, Chief, AMED (retired), and to Assistant Acting Chief of AMED, Dr. Anchi Hoh, who is at the present time supervising and coordinating the work of this digital project. Additional special thank-yous to the four volunteers: Samira Magdacion, Nadia Othman, Reem Murad, and Arab Elghalyani, for their dedication in working with us on this project. My gratitude and appreciation goes to the Librarian-Cataloger, Michael Chyet; Metadata Librarian, Dave Reser; Digital Project Coordinator, Christa Maher; Head of the Near East Section, Joan Weeks; and Digital File Migration Specialists, Camilla Salas and Mark Cooper.

The following URLs provide a couple of samples of this project:

<https://lccn.loc.gov/2018655097>

<https://lccn.loc.gov/2018655096>

You can read more about Eltaher's life in this post on the "4  
Corners of the World Blog":

[blogs.loc.gov/international-collections/2017/06/an-arab-nationalist-survival-against-all-odds-muhammad-ali-eltaher/](https://blogs.loc.gov/international-collections/2017/06/an-arab-nationalist-survival-against-all-odds-muhammad-ali-eltaher/)



## REVIEWS

*Shahaama: Five Egyptian men tell their stories.* By Nayra Atiya.  
Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2016. Pp. xxxv, 154.  
ISBN: 9780815610618 (paperback).

Nayra Atiya, the author of this book, is an American oral historian, writer, and translator who was born in Egypt. She is currently living on the Canaveral Coast of Florida, but she had visited her homeland, Egypt, in 1976 with her seven- and nine-year-old son and daughter. They stayed in Cairo for twelve years before they moved back to the States in 1987. This book includes a preface by Atiya describing her experiences when she moved back to Cairo as an adult and how during her stay she started to observe the lives of people around her, spoke with women, recorded, and transcribed the conversations which then turned into her first book, *Khul Khaal*, with stories from five Egyptian women. That book won a UNICEF prize in 1990. Her interviews with men presented in this book took place in Egypt, Europe, and the United States. Atiya has chosen three Muslims, one Jew, and one Copt who were all born in Egypt; some never left their home country and some chose to live in other countries for different reasons. The author has not used the real names of the storytellers and the places mentioned in the stories in order to protect their identities, as requested.

The title of this work, "*Shahaama*," means the sense of honor in Egyptians' culture which represents the cultural values they were raised in. It is a symbol of helping hands and an evidence of loyalty and generosity to one another.

The chapters of the book includes the life stories of five men with their own descriptions; some focused on their childhood, some on their adulthood, their family, and the home they grew up in. What they all have in common is the social changes they witnessed as they grew up as a result of globalization, industrialization, capitalism, and the political turbulences. They also have an unforgettable recollection of their happy childhood.

Nader Ali, a Muslim attorney, has the first and longest chapter of the book, in which he describes his childhood among his seven sisters and brothers in a peaceful and modest family. In his stories, he gives a few examples of bribery and how some people were able to manipulate others and give bribes or misspeak about others to destroy their reputation for the benefit of themselves. Nader Ali grew up in Egypt and never left his country.

The second story is about Nader Bestawros, who was born to a traditional Egyptian Coptic family. He shares stories of his childhood, as well as some traditions in Egyptian families such as the bond of marriage among cousins. He was among those fortunate children whose families could afford to provide education to their children. He graduated from Cairo University but experienced religious discrimination when pursuing his master's degree. Later on, he found his way to the United States and eventually was able to receive his master's degree in education and Arabic studies.

Yusuf Salman was born in Alexandria to an Algerian father and a Moroccan mother. Their parents went to a Jewish school in Alexandria around 1910. At a very young age he started some Zionist activities. He kept this secret from his parents until a few years after the end of the Second World War, when he was arrested and taken to a detention camp in Egypt. The detention camp, he acknowledges, was nothing like the German concentration camps. He has fond memories of the Egyptian keepers and guards at the camp and he shares stories about camp life such as an incident of *shahaama* he experienced with one of the guards at the camp. After a year in camp, he was forced by the government to leave Egypt and has been living in France since then. Even with a life at the heart of the Jewish community, he remembers the welcoming years he had with the kind-hearted Egyptians.

Ali Kamal, who was born in Cairo into a traditional but open-minded Muslim family, mostly shares stories about his home and family, and the middle-class neighborhood he grew up in. Looking back, he remembers the 1952 coup in Egypt as well as the war with Israel years later. As a young boy, he attended a Catholic school with some Italian nuns. Later on, he found his way into the film industry and worked as an Egyptian production manager on foreign films in Egypt. When he was thirty-five years old he went to a film school where he met his future wife. He briefly talks about his wife's

decision to wear the hijab quite a short time after their marriage. Although he was against her decision he accepted it, and they have been able to live peacefully together.

Mohammad Maghrabi, the first man who was actually interviewed by the author, appears to be the last storyteller in this book, a fisherman in the Nile. Maghrabi mainly talks about the techniques and the tools he uses for fishing. He also speaks about his family, his parents, and how a typical day looked in the small village he grew up in. He shares the struggles he and his family have gone through in their lives, including his daughter and her first marriage.

In general, this is a unique work that captures the lives of five men with different social statuses in Egypt. These male storytellers share the challenges along with the political and cultural changes in their rural or urban lives. Although male figures seem to be in power, yet they had their own complexities and hardships to reach a desirable economic status.

This work is a perfect fit for any type of library setting. It can be considered a modern literary fiction and an appropriate source for any academic or literary reading with a focus on oral history and Egypt.

SHAHRAZAD KHOSROWPOUR

CHAPMAN UNIVERSITY

---

*A History of the Encyclopaedia of Islam.* By Peri Bearman. Atlanta: Lockwood Press, 2018. Pp. xvi, 299, 26 unnumbered pages of plates, illustrations. \$49.95 (paperback). ISBN: 9781948488044.

Few projects in Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies deserve the adjective “monumental” more than the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*. Currently in its third edition, the *Encyclopaedia* has become one of the core reference works for generations of scholars. Despite its centrality to the field, the project’s (or rather projects’) long history has received very little attention. In her richly detailed *A History of the Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Peri Bearman, who served on the editorial board of the *Encyclopaedia*’s second edition (from 1999 to 2006), sets out to the fill in the gap. The book focuses on the first

two editions, as they were, unlike the third edition, initiated by scholars (the *Encyclopaedia*'s third edition was initiated by the publisher).

Although the title refers to the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* as a single project, given the *Encyclopaedia*'s multiple editions in numerous languages and its long history, Bearman's study raises questions about the ability to talk about a single, coherent *Encyclopaedia of Islam*. The coherence of the *Encyclopaedia* project, as the book clearly demonstrates, stems from the ongoing commitment of a scholarly community to this project in its different manifestations.

Over 4 chapters and 3 appendices, Bearman tells the history of the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* from its early beginnings in the late nineteenth century to the completion of the second edition in 2006. Indeed, through the history of the *Encyclopaedia*, she explores key issues in the history of Oriental and, later, Islamic Studies and, importantly, draws attention to actors who rarely receive the attention they deserve in traditional histories of the discipline, such as editors and publishers. Moreover, by looking at the history of the first two editions of the *Encyclopaedia*, Bearman succeeds in shedding light on the complex and nuanced history of Orientalism as a field of knowledge in the long twentieth century.

The first two chapters of Bearman's account tell the history of the first (Chapter 1) and second (Chapter 2) editions of the *Encyclopaedia*. Readers who are interested in the history of the Orientalism, primarily but not exclusively in Europe, will find numerous gems in those chapters: each of these chapters is inhabited by dozens of better- and less-known scholars and dwells in great detail on debates among members of the editorial boards and between the boards and other scholars concerning the nature of the *Encyclopaedia* and the selection of entries. The chapters pay an equal amount of attention to the scholarly content and to the logistical hurdles the editorial boards and the publisher had to overcome.

The third and fourth chapters are more thematic. Chapter 3 deals with the history of E.J. Brill, one of the leading publishers in Islamic Studies and the publisher of the *Encyclopaedia*, and its contribution to the success of the *Encyclopaedia* (the contribution evidently paid off, as the *Encyclopaedia*, according to Bearman, is responsible for

large percentage of Brill's income). Of particular interest is Bearman's discussion of the transition to new formats and media since the late 1990s, when the digital editions of the *Encyclopaedia* appeared, and the impact of this transition on the editorial workflows. The fourth and last chapter turns to political and intellectual developments that shaped the history and the contents of the *Encyclopaedia* project over the century, from the political and military conflicts that tormented Europe in the first half of the twentieth century to Edward Said and his critique of Orientalism.

Bearman's book fills in a major gap in the history of the discipline of Islamic Studies in general and the history of the reference works and scholarly practices that contributed to its emergence as an increasingly coherent discipline. While it is quite obvious that reference works, like any other text, have their own agendas and blind spots, Bearman's detailed study demonstrate how these agendas have been at play over a century in the production of the *Encyclopaedia*.

Finally, as the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* is an ongoing project (currently in its third edition), Bearman's *History* will be of interest to new and seasoned editors, contributors, and readers of the *Encyclopaedia*. Moreover, since the *Encyclopaedia* is a multigenerational project and a product of multiple editorial boards, Bearman's insightful study can inform a better, more careful use of the *Encyclopaedia*. It is hoped that Bearman's study will inspire others to cast new light on other reference works and monumental projects that shaped the disciplines of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies.

GUY BURAK

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

---

*The Red Hijab*. By Bonnie Bolling. Kansas City, MO: BkMk Press, 2016. Pp. 69. ISBN: 9781943491063.

Bonnie Bolling, who won the John Ciardi Poetry Prize for this book, also won the Liam Rector First Book Prize in 2011 for her first poetry collection, "In the Kingdom of the Sons." She was awarded

fellowships by Bread Loaf Writers Conferences, Prague Summer Writers, and by the University of California, Riverside (UCR), where she received her MFA. Her play *The Red Hijab* was produced at UCR by Playworks in 2010. Bolling is currently the editor-in-chief of *Verdad* magazine and divides her time between Southern California and the Persian Gulf.

The author has been living part of each year for the past few years in a village in Bahrain, as the author of the foreword notes. That has helped her to poetically write her observations from the point of view of a “white American” who is also familiar with the lives of people in that region as an insider, rather than based on negative reports from media on the Middle East.

This poetry collection consists of three parts. Part I (pp. 13–32) is focused on different parts of Bahrain and its streets or homes and on the significance of daily life in the Middle East. The author beautifully merges the small pieces of a daily life such as cooking, doing laundry, loving, or the calling of the muezzin to prayer with the reality of life in that region, polluted with protests, war, rubble, bullets, and violence. In the first poem in part I, from which the title of the book is derived, she watches people on a rainy day in the street:

... I am watching the trash-picking man,  
His head wrapped in a potato sack  
... dragging his bin down the cobbles,  
... and then a housemaid passing by,  
basket of laundry in one hand  
opened umbrella in the other,  
her brown face turned down  
but her red hijab a damp smudge  
of brightness, moving in relief,  
against the bruising sky. (p. 13)

In another poem, “Broken,” she shows how life and expectations could be different among people of different countries:

... I go out for lunch and listen  
to one of the Americans complain  
how her neighbor

has a bigger and better something.  
 we discuss the heat  
 and the film  
 playing at the cinema.  
 I don't mention  
 the tear gas late into the night  
 or my despair over  
 a son, back home, who has lost  
 his way again.  
 Isn't it important to stay empty,  
 to remain unfulfilled,  
 to be a kind of negative force,  
 or to become something broken  
 that cannot break further? ... (pp. 20–21)

In part II, Bolling provides a deeper glance at individuals' lives by letting herself into their homes, coffee shops, communities, and so forth (pp. 35–58). In "Shamaal," she describes young boys:

... Like the young boys wearing black,  
 gathering beneath the village arch.  
 They're restless again.  
 You can tell by their eyes...  
 ...they go after the old Pakistani.  
 They cast their stones.  
 And then, because a mother's love  
 isn't enough, they take him  
 down in the burning street.  
 All of this makes a great  
 and terrible debacle but,  
 even so, the boys look away.  
 Bored of this game, they trace  
 bare toes through wet dust.... (pp. 38–39)

And in "Noon" (*Al Dhuhur*), she describes the emotions of a suicide-bomber by portraying what he sees in his surroundings just in the few hours before he pulls the bomb's button:

He'll put on the vest at noon.

But first, he'll walk his sister to school  
 and buy bread for the house at the market.  
 ...His sister kisses his cheek, turns away, goes inside.  
 Her eyes are blue.  
 ...Eleven fifty eight. Almost time.  
 He lets go of the bread and puts on the vest,  
 zips it up, puts his hands in the pockets.  
 The vest feels comfortable, soft like old skin.  
 It smells of sewing machine oil. Gingerly,  
 He fingers the smooth face of the button.  
 No, not yet. Still too soon.  
 ...Finally it is noon, he is not unhappy or unloved.  
 He does not live in squalor, or out on the streets  
 but these days, it seems not even a king has any hope to  
 spare.  
 A pity that bus pulls over, stopping at the curb,  
 letting those people get off—(pp. 40–42)

Part III of the collection (pp. 61–69) is a mix of hope for bright days and sorrow of the lost ones. The author closes the collection with the poem "On a Balcony with the Lunch Poems," connecting the life in Bahrain with her life and family in Southern California:

The sun kneels on the landscape.  
 The sky is chalked.  
 Helicopters.  
 ...The azan pierces the afternoon,  
 a lost nuthatch panics on the railing.  
 An apron of tear gas  
 (made in America) snowing,  
 a man face-down, praying.  
 In southern California, my sons enduring  
 the accident that is their mother.  
 I remember loving  
 the way their faces  
 looked when I pushed  
 the red plastic swings  
 ...always the going,  
 always the returning,



the four of them wearing  
 Superman underwear. (pp. 68–69)

Throughout this collection Bolling, with an unbiased journalistic and poetic point of view, delivers a well-observed vision of the lives of people in the Middle East, their ordinary lives along with their political and religious beliefs and the consequences they embrace. She brings voice to their unspoken representation or misinterpreted conditions by sometimes shifting as a listener to someone who is one in action on the scene, and sometimes as a third person to observe and interpret.

In general, this poetry book is an appropriate source in any literary collection focused on poetry and Middle East Studies.

SHAHRZAD KHOSROWPOUR

CHAPMAN UNIVERSITY

---

*The Perception of Meaning.* By Hisham Bustani; translated from the Arabic by Thoraya el-Rayyes. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2015. Pp. ix, 235. ISBN: 978081560595.

Hisham Bustani, the author of these seventy-eight fiction pieces, is a Jordanian writer who is famous in Arabic literature for his contemporary style and the surreal view he gives to his works.

This book is a bilingual edition with parallel Arabic and English translation on pages facing each other. It is translated by Thoraya el-Rayyes, a Palestinian-Canadian translator and writer who has also translated Bustani's story "Skybar."

This work of fiction was the co-winner of the 2014 King Fahd Center for Middle East Studies Translation of Arabic Literature Award at the University of Arkansas. Bustani has used names, places, and incidents throughout this book which are either fictitious or, if real, have been used to give a certain meaning to the stories. These includes famous figures or characters such as Mark Zuckerberg (founder of FaceBook), Nazim Hekmat (Turkish writer and poet), Muhammad Nasrallah (Jordanian plastic artist), Skybar (an open-air bar and night-club in Lebanon), and the Canary (an old hotel in Amman).

Bustani's literary work is a reflection of his creative imagination that mixes the realities of today's life with the dramatic changes resulting from technologies invented and controlled by humankind, such as televisions, phones, computers, and the internet. The author's tone in this collection is sarcastic and sharp yet supportive and sympathetic. The book consists of twelve parts and each of these consists of different forms and genres, including but not limited to fairy tales, legends, myths, news, poetry, Facebook posts, and images from YouTube. Following are some pieces from different parts of the work.

The first part of the book is called "Apocalypse Now"; it covers almost half of the book's content with topics such as destroying nature, suffering and pain caused by violence and injustice, current news, social networks, the internet, people, world political and social issues, etc.

Destroying nature:

...When man climbed the tree to meet his ancestors, all the leaves fell and species vanished. No color but washed-out grey, and no sound but the breaking of branches in his clumsy hands. Before a full white moon, he sat on one of the branches and began to cry. (p. 9)

... Behold the flowers sprawled out over the fields:  
White, red, yellow, lavender.  
How naive,  
They do not know the concrete is coming. (p. 21)

Or, in another part:

"The sea is a mirage filled with water," said Taher Riyadh.  
And so  
Man dried out the sea  
to search  
for  
the mirage. (p. 131)

Suffering and pain:

The peasant, whose petrol-soaked clothes caught a spark, dissolved immediately into the soil in a flare of celebration.

Part of him became flowers, part of him became migrating birds. Only his heart went on pulsing within the earth, leaving behind seisms and volcanoes. (p. 13)

On the bed of the poor hospital, he crumbled without a single person to his side and disappeared into forgetting. (p. 41)

In the part entitled “Leila and the Wolf,” Bustani has used the “Little Red Riding Hood” tale to show that in today’s life, there is nothing left from those innocent tales and fables but only sex and violence. He also captures the same story as porn images on YouTube:

“The Grandmother and the Wolf /Warning: you must be over 18 to watch this video.” (p. 57)

...Leila hadn’t been going to visit the grandmother that day, she’d had a date with a client.

The wolf hadn’t been hungry that day.

The grandmother hadn’t been ill.

The hunter hadn’t been.

All there is to it is that a child threw his storybook in the trash, and walked out of the library into the street. (p. 61)

In the part entitled “This Deluge of Emotion Is Going to Make Me Vomit,” the author is questioning the truthfulness of emotions in relationships compared to communications using emoji in texts messages, emails, or via social networks, showing how much communication styles have changed:

Love, hugs, kisses, then ... Enter.

Everything dissolves into digital language: 0 1, 0 1, and bodies evaporate to become shapes on a screen.

... How will I know if the flood of kisses that my darling engulfs me in every day is different from the kisses at the end of every sentence she sends to whomever leaves a line of nonsense on her wall?

How will I know if the kisses at the end of every sentence she sends to whomever leaves a line of nonsense on her wall are different from the kisses she gives me? How do I know that they aren't a prelude to kisses like the ones she gives me? How will I know if my kisses are really kisses and not a long line of the letter x? (p. 171)

And last, in the final section called "Salvation," Bustani writes about real life kneaded with imagination and wryly shows the effect of media and news on our lives:

Whenever he fell ill with optimism,  
He swallowed the news broadcast twice a day,  
And wrapped himself up in newspapers before going to sleep.  
He dreams of the end, and is cured. (p. 225)

This bilingual edition is professionally translated in collaboration with the author and with his approval with a few minor edits from the original language in order to preserve the musicality of some of the pieces (p. vii).

To sum up, this work has a mix of prose and modern poetry unique in Arabic fiction. It is an appropriate source for any academic or literary reading with a focus on the Arabic language and its literature.

SHAHRAZAD KHOSROWPOUR

CHAPMAN UNIVERSITY

---

*Saud al-Sanousi's Saaq al-Bambuu: the authorized abridged edition for students of Arabic.* By Laila Familiar and Tanit Assaf. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2017. Pp. 366. \$27.95 (paperback). ISBN: 9781626163850.

“Teaching Arabic as a Foreign Language” (TAFL) to students by means of fiction, specifically abridged novels, is an innovative method of instruction advocated by the editors of *Saaq al-Bambuu*, Laila Familiar and Tanit Assaf. Familiar and Assaf are distinguished instructors of Arabic at New York University Abu Dhabi and University of Barcelona, respectively. They have contributed a significant work to TAFL in their abridged edition of the novel *Saaq al-Bambuu* by award-winning Kuwaiti novelist Saud al-Sanousi. This work also complements Familiar’s previously published abridgment of Hoda Barakat’s *Sayyidi wa Habibi*.

There are some important advantages to TAFL by means of the abridged novels of contemporary authors. The abridgement by a qualified Arabic instructor allows for a simpler text that students can more easily read without being discouraged or frustrated by challenging passages. At the same time, college-aged students can relate to the themes in contemporary novels, such as love, friendship, and identity. They are also exposed to real-life Arabic culture from the situations depicted in the novels. Engagement with the story, at a more accessible linguistic level students can handle, provides for a much richer and more meaningful learning experience than merely practicing drills or learning by rote. A meaningful experience helps to solidify memories related to words, phrases, and culture, and abridged novels such as *Saaq al-Bambuu* are an excellent way to bring about such retainable learning.

In *Saaq al-Bambuu*, Familiar and Assaf have prepared a text that is aimed at both instructors and students for use in classroom instruction. The text of the novel has been edited, which means almost half of the original has been removed. While such removal is unfortunate from an artistic perspective, it is inevitable and necessary given the purpose of the text as a tool of instruction. Students further interested in the story, however, will be equipped upon completion of the abridged version to take on the original novel.

The authors have included two prefaces for instructors and students, respectively, which explain how the abridged novel can be used. A short biography of the novelist Saud al-Sanousi is the first in-class reading exercise, providing some context before students dive into the text. Each section of the main text, divided from the original novel's five chapters and epilogue, is only a few pages long, which allows for easier progression through the story. Important vocabulary and words of cultural significance are translated in helpful footnotes. Exercises are included after the main text, including pre-reading activities, discussion questions, notes on structure and narrative style, and creative writing and translation tasks. Augmenting the exercises are links to the book's Youtube page, where students can participate in listening exercises from real-life media clips of Arabic television. The videos touch upon thematic issues from the novel and are intended to further acclimate students to living phenomena in Arabic culture. Articles related to the novel's themes are included after the exercises, which can be used to spark classroom discussion (in Arabic) over issues raised in the novel. A list of Arabic literary terms and devices is included at the end, as a reference, to aid the student's awareness of the aesthetics of Arabic literature.

The book was designed with classroom instruction in mind, but it is organized such that it can also be used effectively for individual self-learning. The pedagogical rationale behind *Saaq al-Bambuu*'s structure and resources is to integrate primary linguistic skills with awareness of Arabic culture: reading, speaking, writing, listening, and comprehension with real-world culture, literature, and aesthetics. This holistic approach to foreign language learning is predicated upon the work of John P. Miller in *The Holistic Curriculum* (1996). The book's pre-reading, initial reading, and rereading exercises, along with their connections to lived human experience, facilitate students to be able to see each part of the language as it fits into the broader whole. The comprehensive experience offered by the book has the potential to not only help students learn Arabic successfully but, more importantly, to *retain* the language that they have learned.

Overall, the book is a welcome addition to the existing library of high-quality Arabic instruction materials and may be indicative of a new trend in university-level Arabic instruction. It is most appropriate as an assigned text for intermediate to advanced

university-level students of Arabic in a classroom setting. Instructors may find it to be an effective and engaging tool to incorporate into their syllabi's schedule. Individual learners may also benefit from the book by using it in their directed self-study or as a complement to another course.

JUSTIN PARROTT

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY ABU DHABI

---

*Jerusalem stands alone.* By Mahmoud Shukair; translated from the Arabic by Nicole Fares. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2018. Pp. ix, 180. ISBN: 9780815611035 (paperback).

Mahmoud Shukair was born in Jerusalem and is the author of more than forty-five works, including TV series, plays, short stories, and articles. His works have been translated into various languages, including English. In 2011, he was awarded the Mahmoud Darwish Prize for Freedom of Expression.

Nicole Fares, the translator of this work, is a native of Lebanon who is currently a Ph.D. candidate in comparative literature and cultural studies at the University of Arkansas. She is also teaching world literature and gender and sexuality theory at the same university.

This book consists of a series of short stories about occupied Jerusalem. Written by Shukair but narrated through different characters, it expresses each and every one's personal experiences in simple but elegant words. Each story stands alone while documenting the narrator's daily life, with a focus on the relationships and conversations among family, friends, visitors, and strangers of any age; old or young, child or adult. It captures the impacts of the political, social, and historical turbulences and hardships on Palestinians' daily lives, their attachments to their city, and the pressure and discontentment they feel in being "unstated." Shukair preserves the identity of their homeland through the stories by describing the scenes of the neighborhoods, the homes and apartments, and the surrounding nature and land. He brings to life the conversations that are going on behind the walls, at coffee shops, in

the market, at the mosques, or at the gate border. By opening the door to each home and family, to their past and present, standing alone but united, Shukair makes the reader feel the stream of emotions in those people's lives, sometimes full of joys and excitement, sometimes overflowing with sorrows, fears, and worries.

Shukair's literary work is an elegant reflection of Jerusalem as a place called "home" in the eyes of Palestinians who are living there. Fares' professional translation into English is an enhancement to this reflection, preserving the lyrical flow of the original work.

Following the stories, at the end of the book, there is an afterword which summarizes the moments captured in the short stories, with a background about the history of the occupation, the Israel/Palestine conflict, the territories, and the settlements. It includes the timeline of Jerusalem's conquerors, a note on relocation, and a glossary.

In general, this is a unique poetical prose work with Shukair's strong political and cultural observations of Jerusalem and its people. The content of this work makes it perfectly suited for any type of library collection. It can also be considered as modern literary fiction and an appropriate source for any academic or literary reading with a focus on the Arabic language in translation.

SHAHRZAD KHOSROWPOUR

CHAPMAN UNIVERSITY



## **Open Access Book Announcement**

ZAKI N. ABDEL-MALEK

A new, comprehensive book, authored by Zaki N. Abdel-Malek, is now available to all students and scholars of Arabic studies. Published under the title of *A New Theory of Arabic Prosody*, this 478-page book deals primarily with the prosodic system of Arabic poetry. The thesis which dominated the field for hundreds of years was developed in the eighth century A.D. by al-Khalīl ibn Aḥmad al-Farāhīdī. Regrettably, al-Khalīl fell short of producing a coherent, well-integrated theory which satisfies the requirements of generality, adequacy, and simplicity; instead, he simply listed and categorized the primary data, thus producing an elaborate, meticulously detailed but exceedingly complex formulation which, for many centuries, proved to be frustrating and almost unmanageable. Yet, even today, students as well as instructors are forced to struggle with that complex formulation in the secondary schools and the colleges of the entire Arab world. Abdel-Malek—a retired professor of linguistics, Arabic literature, and the Arabic language—sympathizes fully with their struggle.

Abdel-Malek explains al-Khalīl's thesis in detail, evaluates it, and undertakes a critical review of several alternative proposals; he then offers a new proposal of his own, developed in the light of modern linguistics theory, which satisfies the three basic requirements: generality, adequacy, and simplicity. The current complexity is thus replaced by a few simple rules. For good measure, the book doubles as a reference manual.

As a gift to students, instructors, and research scholars, the book is posted, without charge of any kind, on the internet at the following website: The Tajdid Online Forum for Facilitating Arabic Studies  
[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Sy0i-Nbd-y\\_jqXGJqzPzg3KouqJIZVlO/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Sy0i-Nbd-y_jqXGJqzPzg3KouqJIZVlO/view)

## **GEORGE N. ATIYEH PRIZE WINNERS 2018**

Every year we award the prestigious George N. Atiyeh award to recognize aspiring Middle East subject librarians. And every year, the committee receives many exemplary applicants. This year was exceptional: five applicants were outstanding and all worthy of this prestigious prize. This year's recipients are two delightful and charming MLIS candidates: Kristina and Aicha.

(1) Kristina A Bush is currently a first year MLIS candidate at the UNC, where she is, in addition to her studies, the Carolina Academic Library Associate at the Art Library and working to develop the Triangle Digital Humanities Network. She graduated from Mount Holyoke College, where she studied Syriac and worked extensively on Syriac paleography, including writing her thesis entitled: "A Challenge to Syriac Paleography: Using Digital Tools to Contest Popular Scholarship."

(2) Aicha Azzaoui is Moroccan and graduated from Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdellah University in Fez with a degree in English. She later worked at al-Akhawayn University in Ifrane. Fast forward a couple of years, and Aicha began her MLIS at the University of Illinois, Urbana Champaign. She has worked in the Math Library since 2012 and is fluent in Arabic, French (Fluent), English (Fluent), Spanish (Proficient), Amazigh (Fluent), Farsi (beginner), Tifinagh (Amazigh language script).

Many congratulations, Kristina and Aicha.

Sincerely,  
Sean E. Swanick (Chair)  
The George N. Atiyeh Prize Committee

## **George Atiyeh Award Essay:**

KRISTINA BUSH

I had the honor of winning the George Atiyeh prize and attending the November 2018 MELA conference. This was my first time attending a MELA conference, or any conference at all, and I did not know what to expect. I was pleased to find such a warm, welcoming group of librarians who were happy to tell me about their fascinating work. I am in the second year of my Master of Library Science program at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, focusing on academic libraries. As a Carolina Academic Library Associate placed in the Art Library, I have had limited opportunities at UNC to engage with Middle Eastern materials. However, I have continued my undergraduate research on Syriac Paleography in addition to my Library Science coursework. The MELA conference gave me the opportunity to see what Middle East librarianship can look like, ranging from subject librarianship to cataloguing. Furthermore, the conference provided me with a window into the profession that cannot be learned through coursework.

There were three themes at this year's conference: the state of the profession, metrics and collection development, and collecting the diaspora. From the state of the profession panel, I learned about what it means to be a Middle East librarian. Something that I found particularly interesting in this panel was the difference between United Kingdom and United States library models. Waseem Farooq from the Aga Khan library said that while in the UK, Middle East studies courses are a growing trend, the subject specialist model is declining in popularity. Because of this, librarians must take on many roles. As a student, the division of courses into different topics (cataloguing, collection development, resource services, etc.) implies that a librarian will only have one specific task, but I learned that this is not the case. In both the U.S. and the U.K., Middle East librarians are expected to take on many roles, and the duties of a librarian are not as clear cut as school suggests.

Having participated in digital humanities work, I was most excited about the digital scholarship discussion. In this panel, the question of whether librarians should be collaborators or supporters was raised. Panelists expressed discomfort with their scope of involvement in faculty members' projects. They were expected to know everything, every tool, every standard, and every expert detail—an impossible task. The panelists suggested that librarians should participate in digital scholarship training sessions and try to learn about new tools. However, the realities of being actively involved with digital scholarship seemed overwhelming. I heard about a lot of interesting DH projects from other librarians at MELA and also in some of the panels I attended at MESA. Throughout both conferences the question of collaborator vs. supporter stuck in my mind. Although the realities of collaborating on DH projects as a librarian are difficult, this type of research is also gratifying, and in fact is what brought me to Middle East librarianship in the first place. This conference gave me the opportunity to explore what it means to be a digital humanist in the library and see its sometimes-harsh reality.

The collections and metrics and collecting the diaspora panels also caused me to reflect on the digital component of librarianship. I was intrigued by Robin Dougherty's talk on redacted images in Gale's database and Heather Hughes' work with *Sounds of Diaspora*. The range of materials collected by libraries leads to so many interesting issues and research questions. These issues are only compounded by the fact that MELA librarians work with foreign language, non-Latin script materials (as was further discussed in the cataloging session). The session that taught me the most about librarianship was MEMP. I am glad that I had the opportunity to sit in on the MEMP meeting and learn about librarian cooperation and consortiums. I previously knew that conferences were professionally important for librarians but seeing the MEMP meeting brought this into a new light. I realized that conferences were not just about sharing one's work, but also about collaborating and building partnerships between institutions.

I also enjoyed attending MESA. I attended several panels about public memory of Islamic Spain and the Alhambra. These panels brought to my attention history erasure in Spain and the importance of public history as a tool of historiography. Other talks that I

enjoyed involved inter-religious collaboration in Late Medieval medicine, Ottoman-era breastfeeding practices, and post-colonial museums in Tunisia. I was so inspired hearing about the amazing research happening in Middle East Studies, which in turn excited me about the possibility of helping rising scholars of the Middle East as a librarian. I thought about the resources that they would need and the scholars' unique and fascinating uses of these materials. The MESA conference was truly invigorating as an academic and librarian.

I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to meet and speak with the wonderful and dedicated librarians of MELA. I would like to extend a special thanks to the members of the Atiyeh Prize Committee, Sean Swanick, Robin Dougherty, Heather Hughes, and Jaleh Fazelian, for choosing me for this honor. I am so glad that my first conference was spent with this scholarly community. There's nowhere else that I can say I study Syriac Paleography and people will know what I mean! It is a pleasure to be a part of the MELA community and I look forward to many more MELA conferences.

## **George Atiyeh Award Essay:**

AICHA AZZAOU

As an M.L.I.S. student with a keen and growing interest in the MENA region, I had the privilege to attend the 2019 Middle East Librarians Association annual meeting in San Antonio thanks to the George N. Atiyeh Award. It was my first time attending a professional librarianship conference, which was organized concurrently with the Middle East Studies Association conference. The three-day conference was fulfilling and rewarding, especially in that the topic of this year's conference was framed around the state of Middle Eastern librarianship and the challenges facing the profession in the U.S. and abroad. I had the opportunity to meet with many professionals and practicing librarians with in-depth regional knowledge, different career trajectories, and areas of specialization. They all convened to discuss and offer various perspectives around this timely topic, share, collaborate, and disseminate scholarly work related to the Middle East.

This year's MELA conference featured two major panels: the overall state of the profession, and collections: history, challenges, and opportunities. Mariette Atallah from AUB and Anaïs Salamon from McGill University jointly kicked off the first panel by discussing new ways and developments to adapt Middle East and Islamic Studies librarianship to changing library users' needs. These needs could be addressed and enhanced by co-partnering in the field of Digital Humanities, developing and assessing collections from management to content strategy, supporting teaching and research, and preserving threatened and forsaken heritage. Justin Parrott discussed his experience as a Middle East Studies librarian in the Middle East (New York University, Abu Dhabi) and how his work opens up a number of opportunities that may not be available to the U.S.- or European-based librarians. Proximity to the Middle East allows for unique acquisitions for the library collection, particularly special collection items, as well as collaboration with local institutions (national archives, government ministries), participation

in local conferences (ALA Sharjah, ILN Gulf, and SLA), and contribution to local information needs such as high school information literacy programs and public events.

Despite some connection issues, Waseem Farooq from Aga Khan in the U.K. discussed the future of U.K. Middle East Studies librarianship in three U.K. universities (the Universities of Manchester, Leeds, and Exeter). He started by comparing old and new structures of the University of Manchester library by zeroing in on the reasons behind the restructuring of the ME collections. While the Manchester library decided to allocate additional funding for staff development, Leeds followed the trend set by Manchester and Exeter and opted for the abolition of subject librarian teams deemed of reduced importance. Consequently, collection development plummeted due to less involvement of subject librarians, less requests from academics for Arabic-script material, the absence of Arabic cataloguers and acquisitions, and reliance on academics for ME languages. In an attempt to resuscitate and raise the profile of the ME librarian, Waseem suggested that librarians should be more proactive in furthering their research, and actively demonstrate the value of their area and the use of impact surveys.

Mohamed Hamed's topic of library metrics and the impact of area materials in academic libraries is a reminder of the problems libraries are striving against in order to make their collections visible and to count for users to leverage their resources. Some of the reasons for the low use of these collections are due to access, discovery issues (cataloging, citation, etc.), and the actual number of users mastering specific languages in specific departments or programs of the university. On the other hand, Heather Hughes led us to discover beautiful excerpts of songs from the Ottoman Diaspora music collection from the UCSB research collections, which include over 250,000 recordings in a variety of formats. She also brought up major challenges during the curation workflow: standardization of names, inconsistency in transliteration, and lack of Arabic catalogers.

The workshop of the committee on cataloging, led by Tatyana Cubaryan and Joyce Bell on the second day of the conference, piqued my interest and gave me an impetus to explore further this field and the role of metadata librarians in the creation of coherent data for an easy and seamless search experience for library users. At

that time, I had no prior exposure to metadata and cataloging and the nitty-gritty of this discipline. The two presentations were loaded with new terminology, acronyms, and standards that were quite overwhelming and daunting. Nevertheless, the workshop provided me with a taste of what cataloging is all about with its complexity and granularity.

During the vendor showcase, representatives from national and international vendors successively offered some of their products to the audience and provided interesting data on publishing trends in their respective countries, as well as the challenges facing the book industry, particularly in the Arab world.

Despite a packed program for the MESA conference, I was thrilled to attend some of the sessions and the FilmFest screenings after the MELA conference drew to an end. Under the theme “Without Boundaries: the Global Middle East, Then and Now,” national and international researchers and academics convened to present on different topics regarding the Middle East. The rich program and conflicting times made it impossible to attend all the sessions. Nevertheless, I was able to browse through the publications in the bustling Book Bazaar, attend sessions specifically related to the Maghreb, meet new conference attendees, and reconnect with old friends and colleagues I have not seen for many years. I am sincerely grateful to the George N. Atiyeh Committee members—Heather Hughes, Sean Swanick, and Roberta Dougherty—for giving me this opportunity to join such a cultured and amicable group. I also would like to thank Marlis Saleh, my mentor for the ALA Spectrum program, for her valuable advice, insight, and encouragement. Her availability and promptness to answer school-related questions are priceless and highly appreciated. I am looking forward to the next MELA conference and to more learning and collaboration.



## **2018 DAVID H. PARTINGTON AWARD**

The David H. Partington Award Committee has bestowed the 2018 Partington Award on an exceptionally worthy nominee, András J. Riedlmayer. The committee (Jonathan Rodgers, University of Michigan, Chair; Evyn Kropf, University of Michigan; and Lior Sternfeld, Pennsylvania State University) considered several other deserving nominees as well but agreed in favor of András, our esteemed colleague and long-time friend. András is unquestionably deserving. His unequaled efforts for many years as librarian, scholar, editor, and in giving generously to the profession and to the much wider expanse of preservation, conservation, and in defense of and rescue of unique, critical, and irreplaceable information resources, and of course in behalf of the Middle East Librarians Association, have been devoted and are to be much admired.

András J. Riedlmayer has been the Bibliographer at the Documentation Center of the Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture, Fine Arts Library, Harvard University, since 1985. In his long and distinguished career, he has worked, previous to his career at the Harvard Library, as an instructor in Harvard's Slavic Languages and Literatures, as a Research Fellow at the Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, as an Instructor in History at Boston College, Tufts University, and Harvard University, and as Lecturer in Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at the University of Chicago. He is a member of the Board of Directors of The Islamic Manuscript Association and recently lectured at the Islamic Paleography and Codicology Workshop, organized by the Institute for Islamic Studies, McGill University. He completed his academic and professional training at the University of Chicago (B.A., History, 1969), University of Pennsylvania (Intensive summer language program in modern Turkish, 1969), University of Tehran (Intensive summer language program in Persian, 1970), Princeton University (M.A., Near Eastern Studies, 1972, Cand. Phil. ABD), and Simmons College (M.S., Library and Information Science, 1988).

András served as Secretary-Treasurer of MELA 1993–1996 and as Member-at-Large 2009–2010. With his unrivaled expertise as a Middle East historian, he has meticulously developed the library collection in Harvard's Fine Arts Library, which has become North

America's largest and most comprehensive collection of research materials on the art, architecture, urbanism, archeology, and visual cultures of the Islamic world.

András is a renowned scholar of Ottoman Studies, as well as a skilled writer and editor. He has been a trusted collaborator in the production of *Muqarnas: An Annual on the Visual Cultures of the Islamic World*, a journal of essays on art and architectural history published regularly by the Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture at Harvard University. Given his superb linguistic skills, including Turkish, Persian, and Arabic, he has played an instrumental role in the journal's editorial and proofreading processes as Consulting Editor. András was the director of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association 2006–2008 and has served on the boards of many prestigious associations and journals. He has distinguished himself as a leading cultural heritage historian on the Ottoman-era Balkans, most particularly concerning the destruction of cultural monuments and resources in Bosnia and Kosovo during wartime and the ethnic cleansing of the later part of the twentieth century. He led extensive on-site research studies and provided crucial testimony as an expert witness on cultural destruction for the prosecution in the war crimes trials of many leading figures from the 1992–1995 Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo conflicts. His research and testimony created a compelling and permanent record which will forever mark the cultural history of the region. On this topic, he published two important articles in *MELA Notes* on the destruction of libraries and archives in Bosnia and Herzegovina: "Killing Memory: The Targeting of Libraries and Archives in Bosnia-Herzegovina," No. 61 (Fall 1994); and "Libraries Are Not for Burning: International Librarianship and the Recovery of the Destroyed Heritage of Bosnia and Herzegovina," No. 63 (Spring 1996).

In addition to these accomplishments, András has served as an invaluable resource and magnanimous counsel to scores of colleagues, students, and visiting scholars at Harvard University over the years. His impact and capacity in this area cannot be accurately calculated.

We, the David H. Partington Award Committee, with the membership of the Middle East Librarians Association, hereby commend you, András J. Riedlmayer, and bestow on you an honor you well deserve, the 2018 Partington Award. Congratulations!

## **M. LESLEY WILKINS EDUCATION AWARD**

The Middle East Librarians Association (MELA) announces Heather Hughes as the 2018 recipient of the M. Lesley Wilkins Education Award, given in alternate years in Lesley Wilkins' memory to nurture and help young professionals to grow into those who will carry on as more of the original MELA membership retires, or passes away. The Award was established by MELA with generous donations from the friends and family of M. Lesley Wilkins, the first Bibliographer for Law of the Islamic World at the Harvard Law School Library. The award was presented at the 47th annual meeting of MELA, held at the Grand Hyatt San Antonio in San Antonio, Texas, on November 14, 2018.

Lesley Wilkins ardently supported bringing new librarians into the profession of Middle East librarianship, and wanted to nurture and help young professionals. This award will help Heather strengthen ties to her MELA mentor, Anaïs Salamon, Head Librarian of the Islamic Studies Library at McGill University. The award will also allow Heather to interact with her informal networks of other Middle East Studies Librarians gathered at MELA's annual meeting.

Heather is well known to MELA. She graduated in 2011 from the University of Washington with a masters degree in Middle Eastern Studies and graduated in 2015 from the University of Texas at Austin with a master of information studies degree. Heather was a 2014 winner of the George N. Atiyeh Prize. Heather has been actively involved in the work of MELA as a committee member for the social media committee, the Atiyeh Prize, and the conference planning committee for the 2018 conference. She presented at the 2018 MELA Conference on the "Sounds of Diaspora."

In addition to her MELA service, Heather works as an editor on Hazine, a website that describes Middle Eastern resources. She creates bibliographies and reading lists for the Ottoman History Podcast. Heather formerly edited articles for *Information & Culture: A Journal of History*.

Heather currently serves as the Middle Eastern Studies librarian at the University of California, Santa Barbara. She previously was the Ardeshir Zahedi Project Archivist at the Hoover Institution Library & Archives at Stanford University.

Heather is the first recipient of the Wilkins Award under its new auspices, focusing on early career librarians. In her application she stated, “As a librarian who will experience their first review for promotion in the near future, I believe the Wilkins award will be invaluable in preparing myself for this process and thinking strategically about my career.” The Wilkins Award Committee heartily agrees with this sentiment and looks forward to Heather’s essay in the upcoming *MELA Notes*.

I would like to thank the members of the M. Lesley Wilkins Award committee, Robin Dougherty, William Kopycki, and Dr. Sharon Smith. for their work and their counsel.

On behalf of the M. Lesley Wilkins Award Committee, please join me in congratulating the 2018 recipient of the award, Heather Hughes.

Jaleh Fazelian

Chair, M. Lesley Wilkins Award Committee, 2018

## **M. Lesley Wilkins Education Award Essay:**

HEATHER HUGHES

Winning the M. Lesley Wilkins Education award was a great honor and source of happiness for me. I want to thank the committee members, Robin Dougherty and Jaleh Fazelian. Applying and receiving this award have given me cause to reflect on all the mentorship I have already received, and how that has affected my trajectory in librarianship.

Libraries were important for me growing up in a small town, and then going to high school in a small town. The public libraries of Clinton and Harvard, Massachusetts, were nourishing spaces for me, and the librarians there were my lifelines. Working in the Harvard Public Library shelving books was my first job.

Fast forward to my graduate studies in Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Washington, where I wasn't sure about my next steps. Knowing Mary St. Germain and her work in the library was my main inspiration in considering academic librarianship, and she very generously provided guidance during the process of applying to information schools.

I decided to pursue information studies at the University of Texas at Austin. I was happy to find myself in a cohort with two other people from the Pacific Northwest who were also interested in Middle East librarianship, AJ Robinson and Gayle Fischer. What are the odds? I was, of course, happy to have comrades with similar interests, and looking back, I realize this constituted an important form of peer mentorship, which was especially valuable given the lack of attention in curricula to more "traditional" forms of librarianship. During my time at the University of Texas, I was also fortunate to benefit from working with Dale Correa, who supervised my final project and provided invaluable mentorship and guidance.

Attending MELA for the first time as an Atiyeh awardee in 2014 was an amazing experience; I felt very welcomed into the community and profession. The community that long-time MELA members speak of was apparent to me from the start. While everyone

was very friendly and welcoming, Christof Galli in particular made himself available for help as I navigated the job market.

Since graduating with my MLIS, I have worked as a preservation intern, library assistant, and project archivist, and started a professional librarian job in 2017. All of these experiences have afforded valuable experiences with Middle Eastern collections, good mentorship, and growth. They are also illustrative of the challenges of librarianship, including moving; precariousness; finding that full-time, stable job; and the privilege of my family supporting me as I moved from place to place.

While librarians rarely get a chance to get trained by or overlap with their predecessors, I was lucky to overlap with Meryle Gaston and get training from a very experienced MELA member, as well as from the other excellent area studies librarians at UCSB. Joining a union at the University of California has provided another layer of education for me in how to advocate and value my work, which is key to all forms of LIS work, but I think especially key to area studies work. I also started a formal MELA mentorship, even though I had already been a MELA member for a few years. I wanted to have extra support in starting a job with promotion and career status, and I was grateful that Anaïs Salamon offered to fill that role; I continue to be grateful for her mentorship work in MELA.

I applied for the Wilkins award to support my attendance at MELA 2018, partially because I knew I would not get institutional funding to travel to Texas, as the state of California will not fund travel to states with discriminatory policies towards LGBTQ people. While I fully support this policy, I did want to connect with the MELA community, meet with my MELA mentor, Anaïs, and visit Texas. I was grateful for the opportunity to attend MELA, as I gave a presentation, served on the programming committee headed by Dale, participated in a digital scholarship panel and presentation led by Evyn Kropf, and met with Anaïs. In short, it was a very full MELA!

In sum, I have received library mentorship from a lot of people, at different stages of their careers, formal and informal. Mentorship is vital to our profession, particularly in navigating the unique work of Middle East librarianship and its challenges, and in building community between workers who are spread apart. I hope to contribute in the future to these aspects of our unique professional organization and community.

## **Annual Meeting 2018**

**MELA Business Meeting  
November 14, 2018  
Grand Hyatt Hotel  
San Antonio, TX**

**MELA MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:** IMADELDIN ABUELGASIM, NEDIM BALI, JOYCE BELL, ALI BOUTAQMANTI, GUY BURAK, LINH CHANG, DALE CORREA, HIRAD DINAVARI, ROBIN DOUGHERTY, GEORGE FAWZY, JALEH FAZELIAN, GAYLE FISCHER, AKRAM HABIBULLA, PAUL MIN SOO HAHN, MOHAMED HAMED, AMANDA HANNOOSH-STEINBERG, MICHAEL HOPPER, MOZHGAN JALALZADEH, IMAN KHAMIS, WILLIAM KOPYCKI, EVYN KROPF, JESSICA LAGAN, PETER MAGIERSKI, AMAL MORSY, JUSTIN PARROT, ANDRÁS RIEDLMAYER, AJ ROBINSON, JONATHAN RODGERS, MATTHEW SABA, ANAÏS SALAMON, MARLIS SALEH, RACHEL SIMON, SEAN SWANICK, JOAN WEEKS

The meeting was called to order at approximately 9.00am. The minutes of the 2017 meeting were approved.

### **OFFICER REPORTS**

#### *PRESIDENT'S REPORT (AKRAM HABIBULLA):*

Akram gave thanks to this year's program committee (headed by VP Dale Correa, along with Heather Hughes and Guy Barak) for putting this year's meeting together in San Antonio for the first time in MELA's recent history. He also thanked this year's sponsors, which included Bloomsbury, Brill, Cambridge Archive Editions, East View, Ferdosi, IranFarhang, Leila Books, Libra Books, al-Manhal, al-Muthanna Library, and Sulaiman's Bookshop.

#### *VICE-PRESIDENT AND PROGRAM CHAIR'S REPORT (DALE CORREA):*

Dale reported that this year's meeting faced many logistical challenges, as the last time MELA was held in San Antonio was in

the 1990s. She thanked the members of the committee for their support, adding that she would like to hear feedback regarding this year's meeting from everyone as it will help in planning the 2019 meeting in New Orleans.

*SECRETARY-TREASURER'S REPORT (WILLIAM KOPYCKI):*

As a new cost-saving measure (and with Executive Board approval) William purchased a Tascam digital audio recorder to record the MELA business meeting. This will save several hundred dollars per year.

Anyone needing receipts for the 2018 meeting can contact William by email. He will also send out dues renewal reminders in December 2018. He asked that anyone who has changed their address, work or home, over the past year please inform him of the change so that *MELA Notes* can be delivered to the correct address. When the editor gets returns in the mail, it adds an extra layer of handling and work in order to correct.

William reported that the Executive Board approved an overall budget working group to look at MELA's finances. The main source of the association's income comes from dues/subscriptions to *MELA Notes*, meeting registrations, and certain things like JSTOR royalties. As for expenses, it is the annual meeting expense that costs the most of all, followed by *MELA Notes* printing, and awards. In previous years, MELA has sometimes been supported by local hosts and complimentary meeting space, reasonable food costs, and other accommodations. Other times, when the meeting site did not have a local host, MELA has been forced to use the MESA hotel or some other venue, at a high cost. The reality is that the Executive Board has tried to keep expenses down through sponsorship, and if excess funds are available, the association subsidizes the actual costs for the benefit of members. This usually happens when there is a change in meeting arrangements, such as food and beverages being more expensive than expected at the time the contract is signed, or other incidentals that come into play only after registration fees are finalized. However, the carryover that MELA has enjoyed in years past is starting to run down. With this working group, William hopes that the new Executive Board will be able to make some decisions that will help the association keep better control of its expenses.



*Discussion:* András Riedlmayer asked if MELA had any input as to where MESA holds its meetings. Akram said no. Jaleh Fazelian said that while in the past MELA has been able to rely on the generosity of university sponsors acting as local hosts, this is becoming less and less of an option as those same universities are less than willing to give their space for free. Akram reminded everyone that George Washington University was very generous with the 2017 meeting. Robin Dougherty and another member suggested that a MELA board member could get elected to the MESA board, and perhaps have influence on the location of future meetings? Robin added that other affiliate organizations do not have representation on the MESA board, noting that the MESA board does not seem to encourage librarian representation. Their preference seems to be for those potential board members who have Ph.D.s, have access to grants and funding, and perform other high-profile activities that are of benefit to MESA. However, as a MESA member, Robin does her best to lobby at a personal level with members of the MESA Board. In all cases, the MESA annual meetings are planned out years in advance.

**Action items:** Establish financial affairs working group; MELA member to consider running for future MESA board.

*MELA NOTES EDITOR'S REPORT (MARLIS SALEH):*

During the year 2017–18, one annual issue of *MELA Notes*, number 91 (2018), will be published in print and will be distributed to the membership and subscribers. The issue will appear electronically at <http://www.mela.us/publications/mela-notes/mela-notes-archive/>.

The upcoming issue will consist of the following items:

- Articles (still to be finalized)
- 7 Book Reviews
- Award Announcements and Essays
- MELA Business Meeting 2017 Minutes and Reports

All book reviews that will be published in the 2018 issue have already been posted online in our blog, the MELA Notepad. The backlog of more recently received reviews has arisen again but will

soon be liquidated; going forward, all reviews will be posted on the blog shortly after they are submitted, and then subsequently published in an issue of *MELA Notes*.

The latest issue of *MELA Notes* (number 90, 2017) was sent to JSTOR for digitization and inclusion in their database. The full run of *MELA Notes* is available as part of the Arts & Sciences IX Collection. Revenue sharing from JSTOR brought in \$3,933.04 this past year, including a supplement of \$2,000.00 for not imposing a moving wall.

*MELA Notes* is also available in EBSCO Host's Library & Information Science Source Publications database, beginning with issue 84 (2011) and going forward. It is possible that in the future a more extensive backfile will also be added. The electronic files for issue 90 (2017) have been transmitted to them. Increasing our journal's visibility, the full text is shared with non-EBSCO discovery services for indexing and searching (but not display), making the articles easier for researchers to find, regardless of what discovery service their library uses.

*BOOK REVIEW EDITOR'S REPORT (RACHEL SIMON):*

Rachel reported that she received fewer books for review this year; this is possibly due to the number of completed reviews being less than what was received in previous years, and also that publishers are likely under financial constraints so they are less inclined to send out books for free. She encouraged new members to participate in writing reviews. Book reviews should be turned in within six months of delivery time of the book.

**Action item:** Rachel will send the list of books for review on MELANET-L

*WEBMASTER'S REPORT (JUSTIN PARROTT):*

Justin included the activities of the Social Media Committee in his report. The MELA website has had 50,000 site views, 2,100 Facebook followers, and over 800 Twitter followers, double from last year. He thanked members of the committee for live-tweeting the meeting. He asked for contributions for the website and Facebook pages.

Justin reported that he plans to purchase the Google-suite of apps, roughly \$6.00/month. This will give the association extra

support for their regular work, and better security, especially since some executive members have been the target of phishing attacks. He reported that the board will have Google storage space which can help the association to consolidate files. Justin also added that he will be tweaking the website to optimize it. Another task he will do will be to make a one-stop/step form to improve meeting registration and payment.

Justin asked all committee members to send him any updates and changes to their committees so the site can be updated. He added that following this meeting he will send out a feedback form to assess this year's meeting.

*Discussion:* Someone asked if there was a way to highlight member research activities. Justin replied yes, this is possible within the context of the MELA Blog. If there is a project that someone is interested to highlight, it can be published on the blog or as a new web page.

**Action items:** Purchase Google Suite for website; improve meeting registration procedure/form.

*LISTSERV MANAGER'S REPORT (EVYN KROPF):*

All are reminded of the virtual community that is the MELANET-L listserv, which is intended for discussion of issues directly relevant to Middle East librarianship but notably excludes discussion of vendor relations and commercial advertisements. The list conditions/guidelines for posting are available online for review, on the MELA website under the About MELA >> Communications >> MELANET-L Email List tab.

All are welcome to subscribe and may contact the list manager via email (listowner@mela.us), via the form on the MELA website, or via Google Groups. There are currently 561 subscribed email addresses (some members are subscribed under multiple addresses). The list manager has added roughly 43 new subscribers since last year's MELA meeting. A few colleagues that have moved on to other fields, retired, etc. requested to be unsubscribed from the list.

As required, a periodic reminder of the list conditions/guidelines for posting was sent by the list manager this year. All are reminded that MELANET continues to be archived by both Gmane and Google Groups. The Gmane archive is public and searchable over the open web.

Colleagues are also reminded of the Google Group for the Middle East Book Vendors List, formerly hosted at Stanford by our now retired colleague John Eilts, but now managed by our List Manager. There are now 84 subscribed email addresses. Roughly 19 new subscribers have been added since last year's MELA meeting. This list is also mentioned under a note on the MELA website under the About MELA >> Communications >> MELANET-L Email List tab. Colleagues are reminded that this list is for the exchange of information about the vendors of library materials from the countries of the Middle East. Vendors are not permitted to subscribe to the list so that open discussion may take place. Members are also asked not to forward any list postings.

#### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

*ATIYEH PRIZE COMMITTEE (SEAN SWANICK):* There were five applicants this year; all were outstanding and all worthy of this prestigious prize, but the committee narrowed the prize down to this year's winners: Kristina A. Bush and Aicha Azzaoui. The prize announcement in this issue of *MELA Notes* gives more information about them.

*PARTINGTON AWARD COMMITTEE (JONATHAN RODGERS):* Jonathan announced András Riedlmayer as this year's recipient. The prize announcement in this issue of *MELA Notes* gives more information about him.

András thanked the members of the committee for their selection. He said that he felt particularly honored by the award, since David Partington was one of his mentors, and said that he has learned a lot and received great support from MELA colleagues over the years. MELA is a small organization, but it has been able to accomplish a lot. He noted that some years ago he and some colleagues were remarking on the "greying of MELA," but looking at all the new and younger faces in the audience reassures him that, despite all the alarming news about cutbacks and restructuring, there is indeed a future for Middle East librarianship. He hopes that MELA will continue and carry on its work. He said it has been a great time to be a librarian, and looking back it was a rewarding choice of a career for him, since it offers so much. He hopes to see everyone at future MELA conferences.

*WILKINS AWARD COMMITTEE (JALEH FAZELIAN)*: Jaleh announced Heather Hughes as the 2018 recipient of the M. Lesley Wilkins Education Award, given in alternate years in Lesley Wilkins' memory to nurture and help young professionals to grow into those who will carry on as more of the original MELA membership retires, or passes away. The prize announcement in this issue of *MELA Notes* gives more information about Heather and about Lesley.

Heather thanked the committee for this award. She remembers the first time she came to a MELA meeting, thanks to the Atiyeh Prize, and she expressed her appreciation for all the mentorship and advice that she has received over the years.

[The meeting adjourned for a 15-minute break]

*COMMITTEE ON CATALOGING (NORA AVETIAN, CHAIR)*: Evyn Kropf read the report in the absence of Nora. Members of the 2018 committee include: Amal Morsy, Denise Soufi, Evyn Kropf, Asuman Tezcan, Joyce Bell (ALA/CC:AAM liaison).

The committee has met three times in 2018 via Zoom. The committee discussed organizing two workshops in the 2018 MELA Annual Meeting. The committee decided to revisit authority records; one of the workshops is on the ISNI pilot project by Dr. Tatyana Chubaryan, Clinical Associate Professor at University Libraries at Texas A&M University, and the second workshop is on OCLC's project passage by the Head of Cataloging and Metadata Services at Princeton University Library.

The committee continued adding new subject headings and classifications relevant to Middle East cataloging, every three months.

The committee posted guidelines for those interested in serving as an intern on the committee. In addition, the committee revitalized the Cataloging "Ask a Question" page, but this needs aggressive advertising as there were no responses to the call. The committee believes many people can benefit from this option.

Committee members worked to update the directory page, as some members have moved on with their careers or retired. There was also discussion on reorganizing the information on the website; in both cases more work needs to be done.

The committee discussed the “Statement in Support of the Internationalization of BIBFRAME” which CC:AAM has just endorsed. Joyce Bell kindly shared two sources on this topic:

- The MARC discussion paper from the German National Library was concerned with covering all scripts. <http://www.loc.gov/marc/marc/2018/2018-dp04.html>
- The really complex document that covers identifying languages, scripts, regional variants, etc., is an internet best practice document coming from IETF (Internet Engineering Task Force): <https://tools.ietf.org/html/bcp47>

The Committee on Cataloging has three openings, and they will choose a new chair for the committee this year.

*Discussion:* Magda Gad asked if the information on the Arabic Funnel could be updated with more examples. Evyn said this would be discussed more during the committee’s meeting.

*EDUCATION AND MENTORSHIP COMMITTEE (ANAÏS SALAMON):* While there were no updates to the education activities by the committee, they would like to teach the Simmons course next year. Anaïs reported that mentoring partnerships were on the rise, with 5 new ones this past year. There are currently 16 active mentorships in progress; more mentors are needed. The committee is developing an assessment procedure.

**Action items:** Teach the course on Middle East librarianship at Simmons; develop the assessment/feedback form for the mentorship program.

*ENDANGERED ARCHIVES COMMITTEE (LAILA MOUSTAFA AND DALE CORREA):* Dale gave the report. The committee has been recruiting new members and worked to create a new vision for itself. Laila secured a spot for the British Library’s Endangered Archives Program, which is useful to gain insight on how that program and its funding work.

Dale announced that she will be rotating off the committee as she will be MELA president next year, so a new co-chair will need to be appointed.

*NOMINATING COMMITTEE (GUY BURAK)*: Guy reported the results of this year's election: for webmaster, Justin Parrot; member-at-large, Heather Hughes; and vice-president, Laila Moustafa. Guy encouraged members to self-nominate, as this is very important in order to have a good working board.

*NEW BUSINESS*: Mohamed Hamed asked to create a new working group to be called MELA Metrics, which would focus on collection numbers and statistics that would be contributed at the institutional level and hosted on MELA's website. This would be similar to the Council on East Asian Studies' efforts which have been going on for many years. He is also interested in learning more about collection usage. He announced that an informal group will meet following the meeting. Akram approved the formation of the working group.

**Action item:** MELA Metrics working group, led by Mohamed Hamed, starts its work.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at approximately 11:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

William Kopycki  
Secretary-Treasurer

**Treasurer's Report for Fiscal Year 2018  
(November 11, 2017–November 9, 2018)**

**INCOME**

Dues, subscriptions	\$2,612.68
JSTOR royalties from <i>MELA Notes</i>	3,933.04
2017 (remainder) and 2018 meeting registration	4,640.24
2017 (remainder) and 2018 MELA dinner	609.84
2017 (remainder) and 2018 meeting sponsorships	3,403.52
Mailing list rental (1 list)	97.50
Bank interest	2.94
Wilkins Fund contribution	100.00
Partington Award contribution	200.00
Atiyeh Award contributions	146.10
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$15,745.86</b>

**EXPENSES**

MELA 2017 meeting expenses (remainder)	\$3,479.90
MELA 2018 meeting expenses	16,640.21
Vendor Showcase breakfast 2017	2,468.14
2017 Atiyeh Awards	920.00
2017 MELA Dinner	2,568.80
<i>MELA Notes</i> #90 printing and mailing	1,302.57
Recording supplies (Tascam DR-05)	135.93
Photocopying	19.02
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$27,534.57</b>

<b>PNC Bank Checking account as of November 9, 2018</b>	\$8,505.03
<b>PNC Bank Savings account balance as of November 9, 2018</b>	5,446.96
<b>PayPal Account Balance as of November 9, 2018</b>	23,612.46

**TOTAL      \$37,564.45**

**Wilkins Fund to date (included in account totals above)      \$14,045.44**

As of November 9, 2018, MELA has 88 members paid up through 2018. 48 members are paid through 2019. 20 new names have been added to the database since November 10, 2017. Total membership count at the time of the 2018 meeting is 102.



As of November 9, 2018, there are 8 library subscriptions to *MELA Notes*.

Respectfully submitted,

William J. Kopycki  
Secretary-Treasurer

# Afghanistan

Published on behalf of the American Institute of  
Afghanistan Studies:  
[www.afghan-institute.org](http://www.afghan-institute.org)

## PUBLISHED

Biannual | Print ISSN: 2399-357X  
Online ISSN: 2399-3588

## EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Warwick Ball

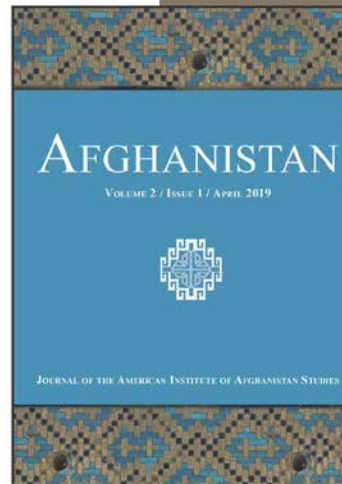
## MANAGING EDITOR

Shivan Mahendrarajah

This journal showcases Afghanistan's  
exceptional cultural diversity and give  
Afghanistan its own unique forum

Afghanistan studies is where Near Eastern  
Studies, Central Asian Studies, and South Asian  
Studies overlap. The journal, therefore, does  
not focus solely on geographic Afghanistan,  
but publishes articles that straddle these three  
subject areas where the modern and pre-modern  
histories and cultures of Afghanistan connect.

Interdisciplinary in scope, *Afghanistan* will  
focus on the region's rich heritage through  
scholarly articles from fields including history,  
art, archaeology, architecture, geography,  
numismatics, literature, religion, social sciences  
and contemporary issues from the pre-Islamic  
and Islamic periods.



## SUBSCRIPTION RATES 2020

	Tier	UK	Europe	Rest of World	North America
Institutional Print & Online	1	£118.00	£126.00	£130.00	\$216.00
	2	£148.00	£156.00	£160.00	\$265.00
	3	£185.00	£193.00	£197.00	\$326.00
	4	£222.00	£230.00	£234.00	\$388.00
	5	£252.00	£260.00	£264.00	\$437.00
Institutional Online	1	£101.00	£101.00	£101.00	\$167.00
	2	£126.00	£126.00	£126.00	\$207.00
	3	£158.00	£158.00	£158.00	\$260.00
	4	£190.00	£190.00	£190.00	\$313.00
	5	£214.00	£214.00	£214.00	\$354.00
Additional Print Volumes Single Issues		£104.00	£111.00	£116.00	\$192.00
		£81.00	£86.00	£88.00	\$146.00
Individual Print		£51.00	£58.50	£63.00	\$105.50
	Individual Online	£51.00	£51.00	£51.00	\$85.00
Individual Print & Online		£64.00	£71.50	£76.00	\$126.50
Back Issues/Single Copies		£28.00	£32.50	£41.50	\$52.50

[www.euppublishing.com/afg](http://www.euppublishing.com/afg)

EDINBURGH  
University Press

THE FIRST SERIES ENTIRELY DEVOTED TO  
THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO MADE THE  
MUSLIM WORLD WHAT IT IS TODAY

Series Editors: Professor Khaled El-Rouayheb  
(Harvard) and Professor Sabine Schmidtke  
(Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton)

**'A brilliant and compelling,  
accessible and scholarly series  
of great history books that  
bring to life the greatest  
Muslim leaders in history.'**  
Simon Sebag Montefiore, author  
of *Jerusalem: The Biography*



For information, email  
[sales@oneworld-publications.com](mailto:sales@oneworld-publications.com)

