



**The Middle East Librarians Association presents the 2020 David H. Partington Award
to three librarians of Middle East Studies
at its annual meeting, 9 October 2020**

In 2004, the [Middle East Librarians Association \(MELA\)](#) established the annual [David H. Partington Award](#) to grant public and tangible recognition to MELA members who have displayed a high standard of excellence and accomplishments in and contributions to the field of Middle East librarianship, librarianship in general, and the world of scholarship.

The 2020 David H. Partington Award Committee is pleased to bestow the award on three worthy nominees: Joyce Bell, Ed Jajko, and Mary St. Germain.

Each of them meets high standards of excellence and professional accomplishments with proven contributions and service to the field of Middle East librarianship, librarianship in general, and the world of scholarship.



**Joyce Bell (retired Director of Cataloging & Metadata Services,
Princeton U.)**

Joyce has made strong and longstanding professional contributions to the field of Middle Eastern librarianship, focusing on cataloging and metadata aspects of Middle Eastern languages, and specifically Arabic materials.

Her work on improving the discoverability of material in Arabic (and by extension other languages as well) is extremely important to our field. The fact that she created the [Arabic NACO](#) and [SACO](#) funnels as early as 1997 makes her a pioneer.

Joyce's contributions to Arabic cataloging have been a game-changer in the field. She has forged the way for a move from Anglo-American subject headings to Arabic-centric subject headings and her work with Arabic script in records as well as moving into linked data for Arabic are major worldwide contributions to the library profession.



Her contributions to MELA are significant. She served as chair of the [MELA Committee on Cataloging](#) and as the MELA representative to [American Library Association](#) committees. She also conducted many workshops and training sessions during annual MELA meetings.

As an expert in the field, she has been invited to present in international venues, including Qatar and the UAE, where she promoted the value and role of MELA as a library organization.

Testimonials:

"I observed her work particularly in projects like the [Arabic Cataloging Manual](#), one of the achievements for which she will forever be remembered." –J. Biella, retired senior descriptive cataloger, Library of Congress

"Joyce was the best cataloger I ever trained." –Don Thornbury, Head, Technical Services for Special Collections, Princeton

"As a US-based scholar who finished a dissertation on literature from the Francophone Maghreb in 2005, I can attest to the value of standardized subject headings!" –Michael A. Toler, Ph.D., Interim Program Head, Aga Khan Documentation Center, MIT Libraries

For her remarkable accomplishments and steadfast commitment as a leader in the field of librarianship, MELA is proud to honor Joyce Bell, and thanks her for her service to the profession.



Dr. Edward A. Jajko (retired Curator of the Middle East Collection, Hoover Institute, Stanford U.)

Ed, a MELA founder with many years of service in a variety of roles within the association, has outstanding professional achievements and has made substantial contributions to the field of Middle Eastern librarianship.

Ed started at Yale as Near East Bibliographer-Cataloger in July 1970. In 1983 he took a position at the Hoover



Institution on War and Peace, where he worked as Middle East Bibliographer-Cataloger, Assistant Curator, Deputy Curator, and then Curator of the Middle East Collection, until his retirement in August 2002. During his service at Hoover, he was largely responsible for building the Middle East collections.

Ed was among the founding members of MELA, participating in the preliminary meeting held during the MESA conference of 2 November 1972 in Binghamton, New York, that finalized the creation of the association.

He has served many years as an officer of MELA's [Executive Board](#), serving as its president (1988-1989), vice-president/program chair (1977-1978, 1987-1988, 1997-1998), and member-at-large (1995-1997). He also served on the early MELA publications committee (mid-1970s) and on the Task Force for Microforms/Preservation in the "Cooperation Among Middle East Libraries of North America" workshop held in Ann Arbor, 1975. He also served on the Executive Committee of the [Middle East Microforms Project](#) of the [Center for Research Libraries](#) (1988-1989, chair 1990-1991).

Ed was a great advocate for Middle East librarianship and for cooperation and coordination among the major research libraries collecting in Middle Eastern languages, with MELA as the means to express these professional challenges. He twice led a formal call to the Library of Congress to ask questions concerning the need for improved cataloging and automation by the *de facto* national library of the U.S. Two such encounters took place. Once he led a delegation comprised of five MELA members, to visit in-person and meet with several LC officials, including Frank McGowan, then chief of the overseas operations division. Another led-by-Ed encounter with LC was in 1989, when he wrote to the Librarian of Congress James Billington, to "express the distress of the members of the Middle East Librarians Association over LC's low cataloging output in Middle Eastern languages, and to suggest cooperative efforts to improve the situation."

Testimonials:

"I submit this strong recommendation for Edward Jajko.... Our Hoover records ... show Ed's service to the profession to run wide and deep, from reference services, to scholarly presentations, to professional society memberships, to building relationships with international communities and individuals. I have known Ed for over seven years in my capacity as Director of Library & Archives at the Hoover Institution, but my



recommendation is based on my knowledge of Ed's almost twenty-year tenure at Hoover."—Eric Wakin, Director of Library & Archives, Hoover Institution, Stanford

"I believe as pioneer in Middle East Librarianship and co-founder of MELA, Ed Jajko deserves recognition by the organization, for example, through a lifetime service award."—Dr. Nada Mustafa Ali, U. of MA Boston.

"Ed's significant contributions to librarianship continue to benefit researchers today with his foresight in building the collections at the Hoover Institute and ensuring through cataloging that they were discoverable. His recognition is long overdue and would serve as a lifetime achievement award."—Joan S. Weeks, Head, Near East Section and Turkic Area Specialist, African and Middle Eastern Division, Library of Congress.

For his remarkable accomplishments and steadfast commitment as a scholar and a leader in the field of librarianship, MELA is proud to honor Dr. Ed Jajko, and thanks him for his service to the profession.



Dr. Mary St. Germain (Head, Near East Section, U. of WA Libraries)

Mary St. Germain is head of the Near East section of the University of Washington libraries. She has expertise in Near East Studies, Religion and the Humanities. She is a distinguished librarian whose career spans several decades.

Her service to MELA is impressive. She has been an active member since 1989 and along the way has assumed several leadership positions in the association. In addition to mentoring several MELA colleagues, she served as MELA Secretary/Treasurer, 1996-1999, as a member of the David H. Partington Award Committee (including as chair), and as an elected member of the MEMP Executive Board.

Mary's intellectual and scholarly contributions to the field of librarianship are equally impressive; her co-authored texts indicate her commitment to advancing the field. Mary is fluent or near-fluent in 12 languages, five of which are spoken in the Middle East



region. This has contributed to Mary's excellence as a librarian and to her intellectual contributions. Mary's 2006 Ph.D. dissertation (U. of WA) was on the topic [*al-Azdī's Hikāyat Abī al Qāsim al-Baghdādī*](#), and she co-authored [*Essays in Arabic literary biography, t. 1, 925-1350*](#) (Harrassowitz, 2009). Importantly, Mary has co-translated one of the most remarkable twentieth-century political novels, Sonalla Ibrahim's *Allajna* ([*The Committee*](#)) from Arabic to English (Syracuse U. Press, 2001). Mary has also submitted many articles (especially pertaining to her acquisition trips) and book reviews to [*MELA Notes*](#). Since 2000 she has been head of the Near East Section at the University of Washington, responsible for collection development, reference, and user instruction.

Mary's excellence and contributions have not gone without prior recognition. She has received the [*U. of Washington's 2017 distinguished librarian award*](#), which recognizes excellence in librarianship, especially as it benefits the academic community through innovative approaches to professional practice, research, teaching and learning.

Testimonials:

"In every position Mary has held, she has performed to the highest standards and achieved prodigious results visibly benefiting scholars at UW and nationwide ... For five decades Mary has been "the essential librarian." –Dr. Michael Biggins, Affiliate Professor; Slavic, Baltic, & E. European Studies Librarian, U. of WA

"Throughout Mary's career, learning and curiosity have been the driving force to acquire new skills, tackle new (and old) projects and to excel at her job." —Sean E. Swanick, Librarian for Middle East & Islamic Studies, Duke University.

For her remarkable accomplishments and steadfast commitment as a scholar and a leader in the field of librarianship, MELA is proud to honor Dr. Mary St Germain, and thanks her for her service to the profession.

The committee extends its hearty congratulations to all awardees!

The members of the 2020 David H. Partington Award Committee were:

- Dr. Nada Mustafa Ali, MESA member (Lecturer of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies; U. of MA Boston)
- Dr. Ali Houissa, chair (ME & Islamic Studies Librarian; Cornell U.)



- AJ Robinson (Librarian for Islamic Studies, S. Asian Studies, & Women, Gender, & Sexuality Studies; Washington U. in St. Louis)
- Dr. Michael A. Toler (Interim Program Head, Aga Khan Documentation Center; MIT)
- Joan Weeks (Head, NE Section & Area Specialist, Turkic World; Library of Congress)

The next David H. Partington Award will be made in November 2022.