

Annual Meeting 1998

MELA Business Meeting, Dec. 1, 1998 Minutes

Dona Straley opened the meeting and asked new members to introduce themselves. New members included Jim Armstrong, who has not attended for many years, Fedwa Boustani, Bassim Sulaiman and Mouffak Bitar.

Mary St. Germain read the Treasurer's Report (See below).

In the Editor's Report (see below) Jonathan Rodgers reported that no. 65/66 (Fall 1997-Spring 1998) of *MELA Notes* appeared as a double issue with a length of 92 p., including articles, books reviews, ads and the 1997 business meeting notes. The issue's extraordinary length was due to the inclusion of a particularly long article and a number of short articles that alone would have been insufficient to produce a separate Spring issue. No. 67 (Fall 1998) is nearly ready to go to press. It includes another contribution in the series of Miroslav Krek's catalogues of Arabic script manuscripts and Ali Houissa's paper on Internet resources, presented at our 1997 meeting. Jonathan called for the submission of more contributions and reminded those present that he would particularly appreciate receiving descriptions or histories of prominent Middle Eastern library collections. In addition, he would like to revive MELA's series of guides. Basic Reference Outline Series Nr. 1, originally published in 1971, was the "Guide to Using Carl Brockelmann's *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur*" by Richard S. Cooper. It is now accessible on the University of Michigan Library Near East site as <http://www.lib.umich.edu/libhome/Area.Programs/Near.East/brockelmann.pdf>. New guides should be concise and aimed at beginning graduate students. Jonathan would also like to receive evaluations of software. He thanked Rachel Simon for her work as Book Review Editor and Mary St. Germain for her help with payments and mailing of *MELA Notes*.

The Library of Congress reports were given. A few highlights follow. A new Armenian cataloger will start work in January 1999. A position for a new Hebraica cataloger will be announced soon. Work has begun on KBP, the Islamic law classification schedule. A contract has been given to OCLC Techpro to produce some 300 minimum level Arabic records. The Library of Congress will move to a new computer system in May, which will slow productivity while the staff adapts to the new system. The Library

of Congress is considering offering a subject cataloging forum at the 1999 MELA meeting in Washington D.C. The Library of Congress will provide meeting rooms at the 1999 meeting.

The Near East Section of the Library of Congress has hired a new area specialist for the Arab world, Dr. Mary Jane Deeb. The section is putting more emphasis on buying rare and antiquarian books. The Section considers itself current in microfilming newspapers.

The North-East Mid-Eastern Library Consortium announced its formation. Members are the University of Pennsylvania, Cornell, Yale, Princeton, New York University, Columbia, and Harvard. They will meet annually in conjunction with MELA.

It was announced that MELCOM will be held in Liège, Belgium, May 17-19, 1999.

A MELA life membership category has been announced. Its cost will be a one-time payment of \$300, which will be reviewed whenever annual dues are raised.

Leslie Wilkins reported from the Committee on Intellectual Freedom. The Committee set up a listserv for the exchange of information among subscribers during the past year. It drafted a mission statement. Among the issues examined by the Committee are concerns about the legality of the importation of publications from certain sanctioned countries or organizations. Information in this regard may be located among documents accessible on the U.S. Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control web site <http://www.treas.gov/ofac/>. A list of sanctioned countries and terrorist organizations with documents detailing regulations and sanctions imposed with respect to transactions with those countries and organizations is provided, in particular terrorist organizations: <http://www.treas.gov/ofac/t11ter.pdf>. Leslie announced that she has resigned as head of the Committee because of the press of other responsibilities.

A committee to study recruitment to the field of Middle East Librarianship was set up. Members are Midhat Abraham, Basima Beziorgan, and John Monastra.

Joan Biella reported on the meeting to develop an Arabic cataloging manual. Ali Houissa will set up a website which will include all information on which the group has reached a consensus. Discussion of each topic will occur on aracat. Despite its name, aracat is available for discussion of both Arabic and Persian cataloging.

Ed Jajko and Dona Straley both announced their support of the development of a MELA-sponsored directory of library collections. Initially, they had different conceptions as to what kind of information should be included in such a directory. Ed felt a list of all the people at each institution working with Middle Eastern materials, whether they were located in a library Middle East Section or not, was of immediate importance and probably more readily obtainable. Dona was thinking of descriptions of individual collections. As a compromise, an attempt will be made to collect both types of information. Brenda Bickett and Ed will work on a data collection form. As *MELA Notes* Editor, Jonathan will publish the similar statistics already collected by JAMES that provide pertinent information.

Jonathan Rodgers and Ali Houissa agreed to work on a proposal for a MELA-sponsored MESA Panel at the 1999 meeting.

Dona Straley will coordinate nominating George Atiyeh for a MESA Service Award.

There was prolonged discussion of amending the by-laws to make provision for the MELANET listserv manager as a MELA officer who would be a member of the Executive Board. The wording of the original proposal, as distributed on MELANET-L before the meeting by Ed Jajko, the proposal's initial advocate, was changed and approved as an ammendment. Ali Houissa was appointed to the Board for an indefinite term.

The ammendment to to the By-laws is as follows:

Article IV. Organization

Section 1. Officers.

The officers of the Association shall consist of the following:

...

[ADD:] E. MELANET listserv manager, whose duties shall include:

1. Managing MELANET-L, the on-line listserve of the Association;
2. Adding and removing subscribers as required;
3. Maintaining standards of conduct as required;
4. Maintaining archives of MELANET-L messages.

Section 4. Terms of Office.

The term of office for the President shall be two years. The term of office for the Vice-President shall be one year. The Secretary-Treasurer shall serve for a term of three years and may not serve in that position for more than two successive terms. The Editor shall serve for a term of three years and may not serve in that position for more than two successive terms. **The**

MELANET list manager shall be appointed by the Board for an indefinite term. The two Members-at-Large of the Executive Committee shall serve for two years with one being elected at each annual meeting.

Treasurer's Report, Nov. 20, 1997-Dec. 1, 1998

INCOME

Beginning Balance, Nov. 20, 1997		\$7533.71
Interest Income	113.44	
Other Income (dues, subscriptions)	4859.28	

TOTAL

4972.72

EXPENDITURES

MELA Notes (production and postage for 3 issues)	1044.77
Postage and Supplies	525.95
Conference, 1997 and 1998	2450.64
Contribution to the G. Atiyeh Library Fund	500.00

TOTAL

4521.36

INCREASE

\$451.36

BALANCE Nov. 19, 1997

\$7985.07

Respectfully submitted,

Mary St. Germain
Secretary/Treasurer

**MELA Notes
Editor's Report**

Since the last annual meeting, one double-issue of *MELA Notes* was published, namely issue 65-66 (Fall 1997-Spring 1998). This issue contained 92 pages of articles and book reviews and the proceedings of the 1997 Annual Meeting of the Middle East Librarians Association. The editor decided to produce a double-issue, for a number of reasons, foremost to accommodate a lengthy article (45 pages) and include other shorter articles and book reviews that by themselves would not have justified printing a single Spring 1998 issue.

The editing and typesetting of *MELA Notes* no. 67 (Fall 1998) is almost complete. The editor awaits the arrival of one book review before preparing

a final draft. This issue, in addition to printing Ali Houissa's Internet resources guide (presented at last year's MELA meeting) and several reviews, will contain a valuable contribution by Miroslav Krek, another installment in his series ULASMAI = Union List of Arabic Script Manuscripts in American Libraries. Previous issues of *MELA Notes* have included articles in this series.

The editor hereby invites members and non-members as well to submit articles with both scholarly and professional content to *MELA Notes*. In particular, the editor would like to accept for consideration detailed historical descriptions of notable Near/Middle Eastern and Judaica collections, not necessarily confined exclusively to vernacular collections or your own, but also distinguished western language collections that focus on the Near or Middle East. Additionally, the editor would like to revive the MELA Guides series, only one installment of which to my knowledge ever appeared, namely the Brockelmann guide, published many years ago. I have re-edited and reprinted (without the explicit permission of the author, whom I am unable to locate) this very useful and concise guide in pdf. It is accessible among the course handouts I make available to my students on the UM Library Near East web site: <http://www.lib.umich.edu/libhome/Area.Programs/Near.East/cmena520.htm>. I would suggest other bibliographic resource guides for inclusion in the new MELA guide series, whatever we decide to call it. Such titles as the EI (both old and new), the Index Islamicus (all manifestations), Sezgin, Kahhalah, Graf, Zirikli, and so forth come to mind. The guides should be concise and aimed at beginning graduate students. Other areas for serious consideration in *MELA Notes* should be brief and informational reviews or practical evaluations of software, particularly products that relate to Middle East studies and non-roman alphabet capabilities.

I would like to acknowledge the assistance and valuable cooperation of Rachel Simon, *MELA Note's* capable and persistent Book Review Editor and Mary St. Germain, MELA's Secretary-Treasurer, in the production and distribution of *MELA Notes*. After all, she pays the bills and mails the journal. Without that, no journal.

I am happy to address any questions that you might bring up.

Respectfully submitted,
Jonathan Rodgers
Editor