

Annual Meeting 2004 San Francisco

MELA Business Meeting

Thursday November 18, 2004
Hyatt Regency San Francisco

MELA Members in Attendance

Midhat Abraham, University of Arizona; Kamran Arjomand, Halle University; Paul Auchterlonie, University of Exeter; Zachary Baker, Stanford University; Elizabeth Beaudin, Yale University; Joyce Bell, Princeton University; Joan Biella, Library of Congress; Simon Braune, Indiana University; Debbie Cox, British Library; Paul Crego, Library of Congress; Saad Dagher, University of Arizona; An-Chi Dianu, Library of Congress; Christine Dykgraaf, University of Arizona; John Eilts, Stanford University; Hikmat Faraj, Emory University; Saima Fazli, San Jose/San Francisco State University; Karen Fung, Stanford University; Meryle Gaston, University of California Santa Barbara; James Gentner, Library of Congress; David Giovacchini, Stanford University; Abdul Ahad Hannawi, Brown University; Janet Heineck, University of Washington; David Hirsch, University of California Los Angeles; Michael Hopper, Harvard University; Jonathan Hopwood, Stanford University; Edward Jajko; Martha Jenks, University of Texas; Shayee Khanaka, University of California Berkeley; Akram Khabibulaev, University of Chicago; William Kopycki, University of Pennsylvania; Connie Lamb, Brigham Young University; Heidi Lerner, Stanford University; Peter Magierski, New York University; Christopher Murphy, Library of Congress; Sara Yontan Mushik, Bibliothèque nationale de France; Mehdi Rahimzadeh, Ferdosi International; Jonathan Rodgers, University of Michigan; Karen Rondestvedt, Stanford University; Simon Samoeil, Yale University; Emilie Satterwhite; Adam Seigel, University of California Davis; Abazar Sepehri, University of Texas; Karl Schaefer, Drake University; Rachel Simon, Princeton University; Arthur Smith, OCLC; Mary St. Germain, University of Washington; Paul Thomas, Stanford University; Will Tuchrello, Library of Congress; James Weinberger, Princeton University; Lesley Wilkins, Harvard Law School.

Minutes

The 2004 Annual Meeting of the Middle East Librarians Association convened at 9:00 a.m., Thursday November 18, 2004 at the Hyatt Regency San Francisco.

John Eilts, Vice-President and Program Chair for this meeting, greeted the group and provided information regarding lunch, mid-meeting refreshments, and general hotel site logistics. He thanked the vendors present, OCLC and Sulaiman's Bookshop, for their donations toward today's meeting expenses.

Lesley Wilkins, President, welcomed all to our thirty-second annual meeting, particularly those attending for the first time. She asked each person to stand and introduce themselves, starting with the officers. Lesley extended a particular welcome to the large number of attendees from overseas.

Lesley reported on Executive Board activities during the past year. A Legal Affairs Committee was established. In response to a request from MESA we sent a letter of concern regarding some provisions of H.R. 3077, the International Studies in Higher Education Act of 2003. We set up a members-only e-mail list. We sent a preliminary letter of support for the proposed "Arabic and Middle Eastern Electronic Library," an expansion of the "OACIS for the Middle East" project at Yale University Library. We considered a request to establish a committee on Afghan libraries. We suspended sale of our postal mailing list pending discussion at today's meeting. We decided to recommend a change in the bylaws to create a new category of membership, emeritus, for retirees. We will pursue joint sessions with the Africana Librarians Council in Washington DC and MELCOM International at WOCMES. We decided to act on the question of website management entailed by Janet Heineck's departure as Secretary-Treasurer. We voted to recommend to the membership acceptance of an award proposed by Dar al-Mahjar. Lesley thanked the Executive Board for their help during the year.

John Eilts, Vice-President and Program Chair, described topics in the afternoon program to come.

Janet Heineck, Secretary-Treasurer, gave her report, which was accepted along with the minutes of last year's meeting.

Jonathan Rodgers, Editor of *MELA Notes*, gave his report. During 2003/2004, two issues appeared: 75-76 (Fall 2002-Spring 2003)

and 77 (2004). Beginning with 77, on the website now, the journal is being numbered as an annual. It will be mailed to members and subscribers in the next several weeks. Jonathan described the contents of the two issues. The membership directory which in the past was printed in MELA Notes is now accessible only by user name and password to MELA members who request it through a form on the webpage. Jonathan thanked Rachel Simon, book review editor, for her hard work. Issues 1–32, 44 and 45, and 50–51 are now on the website in .pdf format. Jonathan continues to encourage submission of articles for our journal, whose backfile of unpublished articles is dwindling.

David Hirsch gave the Atiyeh Award Committee report. The award honors George Atiyeh, retired head of the Near East Section of the Library of Congress and a founding member of MELA and the Middle East Microforms Project, for his many contributions. Its intent is to assist students currently enrolled in an M.L.S. program and who have an interest in Middle East studies to attend our meeting and that of the Middle East Studies Association. It comprises a \$250.00 cash award and reimbursement for MELA and MESA registration fees. This year's winners are Simon Braune, Saima Fazli, and Emilie Satterwhite. David thanked Roberta Dougherty for her assistance and reminded everyone to encourage likely applicants.

Shayee Khanaka reported for the Iraqi Libraries Committee in the absence of chair Andras Riedlmayer. The committee was organized in response to the looting of Iraqi libraries in April 2003. Its first major issue was that of lost manuscripts. The committee's website at <http://oi.uchicago.edu/OI/IRAQ/mela/melairaq.html> gathers committee and other useful documents and resources, and links to IraqCrisis, a moderated list on these issues. They also work as an advocacy group for Iraqi librarians' professional growth. Shayee also reported on a recent project that has several MELA members on its advisory committee. This was an NEH grant obtained by Simmons College and the Harvard Libraries that funded a meeting to plan training courses to upgrade Iraqi librarians' skills. Shayee and Lesley were in Amman to guide the planning for these courses that would include library schools in all parts of Iraq, not neglecting the north. Sending material into and out of Iraq will be very difficult until the situation is more stable. Shayee thanked Lesley for the report she gave at MELCOM last year on behalf of the committee and Andras for his work in establishing the committee and for his great concern for these issues.

Peter Magierski reported for the Legal Affairs Committee formed to monitor and report on proposed and existing legislation affecting Middle Eastern librarianship, on activities of other library and area studies groups in response to such legislation, and to recommend action to be taken by the MELA Executive Board with respect to such legislation. The committee studied H.R. 3077 and drafted a letter that it recommended be sent to Congress. It identified and summarized a number of issues in addition to the USA Patriot Act of 2001 (H.R. 3162). These are issues of copyright and intellectual property and involve the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), International Studies in Higher Education (H.R. 3077), Communications Assistance for Law Enforcement Act of 1994 (CALEA), Digital Media Consumers' Rights Act (H.R. 107), Emergency Protection for Iraqi Cultural Antiquities Act of 2004 (H.R. 1047), and the Cultural Conservation of the Crossroads of Civilization Act (H.R. 4641). The summaries will be posted on MELA's website, and the committee asks for feedback. Lesley thanked Peter and the committee for their hard work.

Meryle Gaston reported for the Nominating Committee. She thanked the other committee members as well as all those willing to be nominated. The candidate for Vice-President/Program Chair was An-Chi Hoh Dianu and for Editor was Jonathan Rodgers. Each was unopposed. For Secretary-Treasurer the candidates were William Kopycki and Mary St. Germain. For Member-at-Large 2004/2005, candidates were Michael Hopper and Shayee Khanaka. There were no further nominations. The election determined that An-Chi Hoh Dianu would be our new Vice-President/Program Chair and that William Kopycki would be our new Secretary-Treasurer. The new Member-at-Large is Shayee Khanaka. Jonathan Rodgers continues as Editor. Congratulations to all.

Joan Biella gave the Library of Congress technical services report for MENA team leader Sara Ozturk. Over 11,000 items were completed last year, a very high number, and a similarly high number of authorities were created or changed. Two MENA cataloging team members departed. Kurdish romanization table changes were adopted, and Kurdish cataloging numbers have greatly increased. Paul Crego travelled to Armenia and cataloged much Armenian and Georgian material. Staff is preparing for the transition from RLIN to RLIN-21, which is being delayed by display problems. Allen Maberry is working on the KBP schedule. Joan stated that there is considerable material for the Arabic cataloging manual now on the web at

<http://infoshare1.princeton.edu/katmandu/acm/acmmain.html>. E-mail Joyce Bell at joyceb@princeton.edu or Joan at jbie@loc.gov with comments and suggestions for the Arabic cataloging manual.

Chris Murphy gave the Library of Congress Near East Section report. Mary Jane Deeb is the new section head. Hiran Dinavari is the new Reference Librarian (Iranian World). A trip to discuss cultural issues was made to Iran, the eventual report on which to the Librarian of Congress will appear on MELANET. Staff from LC's Islamabad office travelled through Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan and uncovered many government and NGO publications whose acquisition by LC is now being worked out. The section anticipates a flat budget for some months ahead. Near East Section staff travelled to California pursuing acquisition of Iranian emigre publications. Levon Avdoyan went to Armenia, Georgia, and Paris on a collection development trip in search of NGO, government, and emigre materials. Chris Murphy travelled to London to visit Arthur Probsthain Booksellers to determine the national property and patrimony status of certain materials, of which LC acquired 32 titles, mostly in Persian. Fascinating Africana material is to be had for very good prices from Probsthain currently. Section staff met with Dar al-Kutub, Cairo, staff to discuss digitization of the Mansuri collection. No final agreement has been reached. This action would fit in with LC's Global Gateway initiative regarding international cooperative digitization projects.

The "calligraphy sheets" project continues. The calligraphy sheets are being examined by an art historian whose descriptions will accompany the materials when they are eventually mounted on the Library of Congress website. The LC website and that of the Freer and Sackler Galleries of the Smithsonian Institution, which holds similar items and other pages from manuscripts held by LC, will be linked. The project and its website will be completed by December 31, 2005.

The Timbuktu manuscripts digitization project's website will be up by the end of June 2005. Chris was enthusiastic about the manuscript and document treasures, in Arabic and in local African languages in Arabic scripts, awaiting study in Mali.

Christine Dykgraaf, University of Arizona Library, described her dissertation research project regarding the USA Patriot Act and its influence on Middle East library collection development from October 2001 through October 2004. She asked librarians present to respond to the e-mail survey they will soon receive from her.

Lesley Wilkins read a letter from Fawzi Abdulrazak in which he proposed a “David H. Partington Award” in 2004 and another award to be established, named, and announced in 2005. The purpose of both awards, which are to be managed by the Executive Board, is to honor founders and leaders of MELA and to reward current librarians for their contributions to the profession. The letter went on to specify further Fawzi’s wishes. The Executive Board has voted to thank Fawzi for his generosity and will form an award committee.

Regarding ALA, John Eilts said that the Kurdish romanization is on its way to being implemented soon.

David Hirsch reported on the large October 6–10 Frankfurt Book Fair, which several MELA members attended. “The Arab World” was the honored guest.

Lesley attended MELCOM International May 24–26 in Munich. She also attended the March 23–27 meeting of ISAP, the International Society for Arabic Papyrology, in Granada, Spain. ISAP meets next in Alexandria, Egypt, in 2006.

The future management of postal mailing list and advertisement sales came under new business. The Executive Board had discussed during the past year the pros and cons of resuming the sale of the postal mailing list and wished to propose it for further discussion, duly opened by Lesley, at today’s meeting. The membership voted 21 to 4, with two abstentions, to resume the sale of the postal mailing list. The Executive Board will determine the amount by which its sale price, currently \$50.00, will be increased. Sale of the e-mail list was uniformly opposed.

Establishing a new membership category, emeritus, which would require amending the bylaws, came next under new business. John Eilts explained the reasons behind this proposal. The organization would be able to benefit from the continuing involvement of the experienced members so recognized. Lower dues would be a feature of the category. The Executive Board will draft amended bylaws text and circulate it to the whole membership at least thirty days before our 2005 meeting in Washington DC, where it will be discussed and voted upon. Lesley invited anyone with ideas on this topic to get in touch with the Executive Board before the end of today’s meeting.

Proposals for various joint sessions were the next item of new business. The Africana Librarians Council and MELA will each meet in Washington DC in November 2005 at the same hotel, the Marriot

Wardman Park. Lesley suggested to the group that MELA plan a joint session with the ALC on the morning of Friday November 18, 2005 to be followed by a no-host luncheon nearby. The proposed theme is "Librarianship for African Studies and Middle East Studies: Points of Intersection." A vote indicated wide support for a joint session with the ALC on this topic.

The other proposed joint session would be at the World Congress for Middle Eastern Studies (WOCMES) meeting in Amman, June 2006, which is to be under the coordination of the Royal Institute for Inter-Faith Studies (RIIS), Jordan. MELCOM International is interested in meeting there. A vote indicated that MELA is likewise interested in planning a joint session at WOCMES with MELCOM International and possibly with other library associations as well.

MELA website management was the next item of new business. Because Janet Heineck is no longer Secretary-Treasurer, the part of the MELA website that resided on University of Washington computers must move. The Executive Board accepted John Eilts's offer to be interim website manager and to migrate the site to the Stanford server for the time being. Ali Houissa will continue to manage the listserv. A future "Electronic Information Officer", a role on which would devolve responsibility for management of both the website and the listserv, remains a possibility.

Other topics were brought up. Rachel Simon described administrative changes at Princeton. Abazar Sepehri announced the opening of his Middle Eastern Studies Librarian position at the University of Texas at Austin upon his retirement. David Hirsch described the current Arabic cataloger opening at UCLA. James Gentner said that Judy McDermott, long-time chief of African and Asian Acquisitions in LC's Overseas Acquisitions Division, retired on October 1. Michael Albin retired from LC on October 29. Hiram Dinavari of LC asked for help in locating sources of Assyrian, Chaldean, Aramaic, and Azeri material, both diaspora and inside Iran.

Lesley again thanked OCLC and Sulaiman's Bookshop for their support and Janet Heineck for her years of service.

After a delicious lunch, members returned to enjoy an interesting afternoon program on "Collection Development at the National Level: Theory and Practice."

**Secretary-Treasurer's Report
November 19, 2004**

INCOME

Dues, subscriptions	\$6,419.79
donations, pre-registrations, refund	
Four Mailing list sales	350.00
TOTAL	\$6,619.79

EXPENSES

MELA Notes no. 75-76 printing and shipping	\$2,491.38
MELA/MESA Expenses 2003	4,935.00
Three 2004 Atiyeh Prize awards	750.00
Postage and supplies	630.40
MELA/MESA Expenses 2004	550.00
Pre-Registration Reimbursement	25.00
Total	\$9,381.78

Checking account balance November 17, 2004: \$10,297.80 Savings account balance November 17, 2004: \$3,773.84

As of November 17, 2004, we have 161 personal members, 27 library subscriptions, and 21 subscriptions handled through vendors.

Respectfully submitted,
Janet Heineck
Secretary-Treasurer

**Editor's Report
November 2004**

During the year 2003-04, two issues of MELA Notes, number 75-76 (Fall 2002/Spring 2003) and number 77 (2004), were published (in print and electronically: <http://www.lib.umich.edu/area/Near.East/MELANotesIntro.html>) and distributed to the membership and subscribers.

MELA Notes 75-76 consisted of one long article: Omar Khalidis "A Guide to Arabic, Persian, Turkish, and Urdu Manuscript Libraries in India"; three contributions by George Atiyeh Award recipients: by Christine Dykgraaf, Julie Coons, An-Chi Hoh Dianu; a Brief Communication: "A Brief Survey of the Iranica Periodicals at the International Library, Haifa, Israel" by Jan Teofil Jasion; several book reviews;

minutes of the MELA Business Meeting, November 20th, 2002, at the Library of Congress; and the MELA Bylaws, revised November 2002. The printing of 75–76 (a total of 138 pages) cost \$2,491.38 plus postage.

Number 77 (2004), the current issue (only 46 pages plus the Bylaws) consists of three articles: “Persian Manuscripts in McGill University Libraries” (Includes links to color illustrations in the electronic version) by Adam Gacek; “Print Catalogs of Islamic Manuscripts: al-Beruni Institute for Oriental Studies, Uzbekistan” by Khabibullaev Akram; and “Recon Plus: Near East Collection at Yale University Library” by Simon Samœil; book reviews; the minutes of the 2003 Annual Business Meeting (Nov. 6th, Anchorage). There is also one revenue-producing ad.

You might recall that in the past, the complete membership directory of MELA was printed in issues of *MELA Notes*. For some time, the directory has been published in one form or other on the MELA Notes web page. Access to this searchable electronic membership directory and its printed (PDF) counterpart is now restricted by user-name and password to MELA members who request access to it by filling out an email form on the MELA web-page. The versions now accessible are abbreviated, with only names, email addresses, and organizational affiliations divulged. I have been convinced that revealing full postal addresses and telephone numbers (work and/or home), even in a restricted access file, would not be prudent—or alas technically realizable in the various degrees of fullness or abbreviation stipulated by the members on account of the structure of the membership database.

We are extremely grateful for the hard work of Rachel Simon, Book Review Editor, who continues to solicit with success a significant number of books for review from publishers and, somewhat astonishingly, many competent and helpful reviews from time-pressed or seemingly reluctant contributors. We wish as well to thank our Secretary-Treasurer, Janet Heineck, for the much appreciated services she provides, such as maintaining the member files, taking care of the distribution of the issues, and paying the bills.

There is some progress to report this year on the *MELA Notes* back-run electronic conversion project: Numbers 28, 29, 30, 31, 32 (1983–84)—thanks to John Eilts—and 45 (1988) have been finished (There are now 35 issues in electronic format.). The sole volume of Middle East Librarians Association Occasional Papers in Middle Eastern Librarianship, (No. 1, 1981), edited by David Partington, is now available

in a very large (5MB) PDF file, as it consists of 105 page images.

As always, the editor urges the membership to submit articles and to encourage colleagues to do so. I am seeking in particular this year articles that describe significant collections (books, manuscripts, and archives) of institutions or individuals and their histories. Additionally, submission of articles of a more practical or professional or technological nature is also encouraged.

Respectfully submitted,
Jonathan Rodgers
Editor