

MELA NOTES 19, February, 1980

This statement is incorrect. The Catalog Publication Division has been and will continue forwarding outside-library reports to the Near East Section for inclusion in the card catalog.

'... I looked into the ... catalogues of the Hebraic [Section] ... To my surprise, I could find no Yale cards.'

To evaluate a system fairly, one must account for all of the parts. In the instance cited, no accounting was made of the large number of added locations which are published in the RAL.

'... 20,000 cards which had not been forwarded to the [Hebraic] section by the Catalog Publication Division.'

The 20,000 Hebraic cards referred to are awaiting searching and editing in Catalog Publication Division and all of them were photocopied and sent at the time they entered the arrears, despite statements to the contrary.

This response to the article in the February 1979 MELA Notes has been made in order that members of the Middle East Librarians Association may better understand the current services provided through the NUC and the Catalog Publication Division. For the system to operate properly, all reports must be directed to the Catalog Publication Division, and for this the cooperation of reporting libraries is essential.

The Catalog Publication Division welcomes any comments or inquiries. The mailing address is Library of Congress, Catalog Publication Division, Washington, D.C. 20540.

To her statement, Ms. Hsia attached two appendices -- one a flow chart of the Catalog Publication Division's procedures for processing Near East and Hebraic reports, and the other examples of CtY Hebraic and Near East reports in the RAL. The flow is lucid and available upon request from MELA Notes. In late February, I spoke to Jajko on the telephone about Hsia's rebuttal. Jajko is unconvinced that the NUC procedures really work as Hsia limns them and promises to open a second round of dialogue in a future MELA Notes.

MELA NOTES 19, February, 1980

THE DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE AGENCY LIBRARY by John M. Madden

The Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) Library is located at Arlington Hall Station in Arlington, Virginia, approximately three miles southwest of the Pentagon. It provides reference library services to all members of the intelligence and military communities in the United States. However, our primary users are our own DIA analysts and several Pentagon offices.

Library holdings consist of hard-copy, microfilm and microfiche books, periodicals, finished intelligence documents, and intelligence reports. These items are accessible through an on-line data-base system by all the traditional means of access of a card catalogue system, i.e., author, title and subject, and, additionally, by certain, "keywords" within the book, document or report. A slightly less complete version of this on-line system is available to our customers as a computer output microfilm catalogue. A final means of access to the library's collection is through a hard-copy title listing and hard-copy serials title and report number listings.

All materials processing is accomplished in a "Documents Analysis" section, separate from the reference library itself. Until approximately two years ago, documents analysis utilized the LC Subject Headings for its subject cataloguing. More recently, however, the section has developed and used its own Thesaurus, which has provided better coverage for military-related subjects.

Perhaps the most unusual feature of the DIA reference library is its division into several world areas, with a librarian in charge of each area for reference and acquisition purposes. My position is that of Middle East and general reference librarian. The Middle Eastern materials, like those of the other areas (e.g., Soviet Union, Latin America, Africa), are shelved in their own special section, and, within that section, by the individual country most pertinent to the subject content of the book or document, according to a modified LC classification scheme. At the head of each such section are the materials dealing with the area as a whole. In the Middle East area we also have a "Persian Gulf" location for materials dealing with more than one country in that region. This entire area arrangement allows for faster retrieval and more expeditious browsing on the part of our users. Intelligence reports are filed in a separate area, by producer and then by number).

As the Middle East reference librarian, I am called upon to

MELA NOTES 19, February, 1980

answer all Middle East-related reference requests, be they written, by phone, or in person. To aid me in my tasks, I can call upon a number of classified on-line data bases for access to our own holdings and intelligence reports, and upon the New York Times Information Bank and the ORBIT and DIALOG on-line systems for access to a wealth of unclassified information. Since I am the only person in the library who knows the Arabic script, I am also occasionally asked to identify a piece in that script for the documents analysis section.

The pressures associated with working at the DIA Library are rather different from those in an academic setting. Although it is a research library, the librarians are expected to do much more bibliographic development, retrieval and examination of materials than librarians or users at academic institutions would feel they should do. Time is often of the essence as well, an added pressure not usually encountered in the academic library. Too, since ours is a special library, the librarians there feel some obligation to let users or potential users know of their existence and the services they can perform.

This has been a necessarily brief overview of the DIA Library and my position in it. For me, personally, the change from academic to special librarianship has been a very positive one. The challenges of directly serving users, plus becoming conversant with numerous on-line data bases, have kept me very busy since I arrived here in May 1979. And I now have the added advantages of living in the Washington, D.C. area and being able to keep abreast of a world "hot spot" as part of my daily work.

#### COMRAD REPORT by Chris Filstrup

The Committee on Machine Readable Arabic Data (COMRAD) met on November 8, 1979, in Salt Lake City. We started off with a committee lunch and then moved to an open meeting at the Utah Hotel. Classicist and computer buff, Pierre MacKay (rhymes with "rye"), showed up to regale us with the ins and outs of putting the computer to Arabic script work. Over the last ten years MacKay has worked on computerizing Arabic-script languages for editorial purposes. Springer-Verlag used MacKay's editorial program KATIB and script display program HATTAT to produce Gerald Toomer's

MELA NOTES 19, February, 1980

edition and translation, Diocles on Burning Mirrors (1976). MacKay describes both programs in his article "Setting Arabic with a Computer" (Scholarly Publishing, January 1977).

Dressed in a fatigue jacket and looking more the archaeologist than computer programmer, MacKay joined us for cream cheese soup (a desert plateau specialty?) and sandwiches and afterwards spent several hours explaining how the computer can learn Arabic without tears. MacKay has programmed a Hewlitt-Packard keyboard terminal so that a standard IBM keyboard, when put into an escape mode, produces Arabic script on the screen. In its regular mode the keyboard inputs Roman characters and other conventional signs. In the escape mode, the same keys produce Arabic characters. For example, in the escape mode, p = پ, P = پ, r = ر, R = ر, and so forth. The escape mode arrangement follows that of an IBM Persian typewriter but expanded to include Ottoman variants and additions as well.

The escape mode procedure leaves the main frame -- the central "number cruncher" of the computer system -- insouciant of the Arabic form of the data displayed. Because the binary code remains the same, the main frame is happily ignorant of how its machinations become visible. Programmers do not have to tamper with the basic software of the main frame to accomodate Arabic script activity. It is important, according to MacKay, not to load down the main frame with particularistic software. MacKay's programs for editing and CRT display are restricted to a terminal, to the periphery, where they belong.

What KATIB and HATTAT do require are 1) the modified Hewlitt-Packard terminal, and 2) a main frame coded to standards set by the American International Standards Office, International Standards Office, and Federal Information Processing Office. MacKay says that not all computers are coded to these standards, but they should be. So if a systems officer in your institution attempts to beat down your first charge into computer politics by saying that the software will not accomodate KATIB, don't retreat. A main frame that does not hum according to ISO, ANSI, and FIP standards is sub-standard. MacKay contends that in the best of all worlds he could edit an Arabic script text by telephone as long as there was a modified Hewlitt-Packard terminal plugged into a properly coded computer. Since the program for script display resided in the terminal, neither can the systems office fend you off by saying it is too expensive to write a new program for the main frame. From

MELA NOTES 19, February, 1980

MacKay's vantage, the technology of the escape mode offers escape from dependence on programmers more concerned with checks than texts, with staff than kāf.

MacKay's programs and terminal are designed for the simplest, 7-bit computer. Limited to a basic set of 128 characters, it was impossible for MacKay to fashion an attractive font using one character per binary digit. Arabic cold type fonts run from a readable 450 bits to an elegant 900. To produce readable script, MacKay analyzed Arabic characters into 120 basic strokes of cursive script. In combining the appropriate strokes to form a letter, HATTAT abides by traditional rules of calligraphy. For the generation of texts such as Diocles this cursive style is a happy marriage of computerization and traditional form.

The CRT display is, in MacKay's estimation, as readable and no less pleasing than al-Ahram. The screen, 80 characters across and 24 lines high, is adequate for searching and editing. For more sophisticated display in hard copy form, one could write a VideoComp program that would be loaded in the main frame and would produce from gifs a script closer to cold type styles. So a library could use HATTAT for terminal work and reserve a more sophisticated and much more expensive VideoComp hook up for final, public copy.

It is important to keep in mind that KATIB is an editorial program with clever editing maneuvers and simple CRT display. MacKay's software does not tag different kinds of information or search keywords or find combinations of data. Whether KATIB and HATTAT can be adapted to library use is unclear, at least to members of COMRAD.

In the meantime, MacKay's development work is finished. He can produce results on the one terminal he had adapted. It is up to Hewlett-Packard to take the next step of making the terminal commercially available. MacKay estimates that if Hewlett-Packard would make 500 terminals, they would sell for about 3500 dollars each, a price affordable by any institution working with Arabic script materials.

After listening to MacKay, COMRAD became more convinced than ever that the library community needs a rigorous, comprehensive survey of what hardware and software is available and how they can be adapted to library purposes. This would require a grant to hire an independent consulting agency. COMRAD agreed 1) to discuss this

MELA NOTES 19, February, 1980

matter with systems people in home institutions and networks, and 2) to draft a letter to Joe Howard at LC requesting LC's cooperation in developing MARC-compatible hardware and programs. Since COMRAD's meeting in Utah, RLG has contracted with LC to develop the hardware and software necessary to make East Asian scripts MARC-compatible. Having secured funding of 1.2 million dollars, RLG promises to deliver the package in three years. This takes RLG out of the Arabic script business for at least that long. Other agencies bruited about are OCLC, the League of Arab States, various universities in the Middle East, especially in the Arabian Peninsula, and Morocco. COMRAD continues to hear sundry reports of good intentions and pilot projects, but a coherent picture eludes us. It seems imperative that libraries of the West and the Middle East somehow coordinate their efforts and start serious discussions on standardization and MARC-compatibility.

#### HARVARD CONSER UPDATE by Francine McNulty

Since April 1978 the Middle Eastern Department of Harvard College Library has been engaged in the difficult and complex project of inputting its bibliographic records for Arabic and Modern Turkish serials to the CONSER data base. This initial stage of the project, the culmination of thousands of hours invested in recataloging and inventorying the collections, preparing accurate holdings records, tagging and inputting, is at last completed. The Department's on-line serial file now contains some 650 Arabic and 140 Turkish bibliographic records, with a corresponding locally accessible holdings record for each title. The vast majority of these records represent either original input or a substantial upgrading of existing records in the CONSER data base.

Preparations for the final stage of the Department's participation in CONSER are now under way. This stage consists of recataloging Widener Library's entire Ottoman Turkish serial collection of well over one hundred titles and preparing them for input to the data base. Moreover, some sixty Arabic records representing recently cataloged or recataloged titles will be added to the existing file. The Department expects to complete this final stage of the project in June 1980, by which time it will have contributed over 950 bibliographic records to CONSER.

MELA NOTES 19, February, 1980

A number of distributable products derived from Harvard's CONSER data have been envisioned. The most valuable in terms of bibliographic control is an alphabetic listing of Harvard's Arabic and Turkish titles, together with complete holdings information. Such a list will provide for access to all added entries, including added titles, editors, and corporate bodies. In addition, the Department expects to produce chronological and geographical listings as well as a listing by subject so as to give the greatest possible access to the records and to increase the potential value of the data for bibliographic research.

BOOK REVIEW by David Partington

The rarity of an occurrence is oft likened to a blue moon's appearing within human eye-sight. Although few librarians were looking skyward at the time, we can thank our stars for the appearance of Gustav Meiseles' Reference Literature to Arabic Studies; a bibliographical guide. (Tel Aviv: University Publishing Projects, 1978).

This is the kind of book that every young orientalist hopes to ensconce among the fixed stars in the firmament of bibliography, raised up from a carefully tended file of 3 x 5 cards. Alas, it rarely happens that a person with a catholic range of interests can bring a protestant perspicuity to the task: Dr. Meiseles of Tel Aviv may be the ecumenist we need.

The first law of bibliographics is that a bibliography must be useful to mankind. The first requirement of the compiler is to clearly delineate the boundaries of his topic so that anyone who tries the work will immediately see its pertinence for his quest. While Reference Literature is beyond question a needed and useful work, Meiseles does not clearly delineate his concept. On one hand he seems to restrict himself to philology, on the other he intends "a contribution to the whole field of Middle Eastern studies" (p. xiii). To this reviewer, the book in hand falls between these objectives.

What, then, are "Arabic Studies?" The word "Arabic", while it once referred to the natives of Arabia, is an adjective that today refers most properly to the language of the Arabs. In

MELA NOTES 19, February, 1980

Meiseles' book, "Arabic Studies" covers not only the philology and literature that a strict definitionist would expect, but a wider range of topics: biography; encyclopedias; paleography; Koran; hadith; historical and geographical sources; Islamic art; and, finally, periodicals -- almost the orientalist corpus presented within an Arabic frame of reference. The "social sciences" are virtually ignored, as one would expect; but Meiseles' also excludes philosophy and the physical or exact sciences, except for references to the lexicography of those subjects. It is incomprehensible to this reviewer why Islamic art is included in a work whose intent is "philology, in the broad sense of that term." Despite the emphasis on language and literature (76% of the text does deal with subjects from a philological slant) the book ignores proverb literature and makes no mention of printing history.

Meiseles chose not to include the names of publishers in his bibliographical data. Nevertheless, this is a useful book because it is systematically and well-arranged in convenient format and size. The items selected for inclusion are in English, German, French, Italian, Russian, Arabic and Hebrew. Specialists will welcome especially the more than 450 entries in Arabic script, ensuring that the beauty of the page be unblemished by the scars of "romanization."

The value of the book for librarians is enhanced by lists of periodicals, tables of romanization, explanations of abbreviations found in Arabic books, chronological tables of the genesis of Arabic studies in East and West. Fifty plates of pages from significant bibliographical sources follow the text (pp. 187- [238]), and the final touch is provided by indexes in Latin and Arabic type.

This is a selective bibliography by a man who knows his terrain; yet every person, while grateful for guidance, may have his own ideas about the path followed and the objects pointed out. Certainly, Littlefield's The Islamic Near East and North Africa (1977) should be included in "general sources," and Abdalrazak's Arabic historical writing (1974-) deserves a spot under historiography. Manzalaoui's Arabic writing today... (1970) was overlooked in Meiseles' "Modern Arabic Literature" section. Also, the section on Ismaili authors would be strengthened by Poonawala's Bibliography... (1977). On the positive, this reviewer notes with favor the exclusion of European derogating biographies of the Prophet.

It is noteworthy that neither Hitti's Descriptive Catalog of



MELA NOTES 19, February, 1980

the Garrett Collection (1938), nor R. Mach's Catalog... (1977)  
are mentioned under "Some Important Catalogs."

The section on periodicals should prove useful to librarians. Over two hundred titles are listed and arranged in these topics: Arabic studies; Semitic studies; Middle East and Islam; Christian Middle East; North Africa; Orientalist; General; Historical; Religious Sciences; Anthropology and Social Sciences; and "Some Leading (Arabic) Cultural Periodicals." The scope of the periodicals is more extensive than the scope of this bibliography. Amongst the Arabic cultural periodicals, the absence of al-Mawrid is serious.

Meiseles' appendices (pp. 159-183) are interesting and useful, as stated above. They include a chronologically arranged list of major Western contributors to Arabic studies that should provide many names to be dropped in casual conversation whenever Middle Eastern librarians congregate. This reviewer thinks that Margoliouth, A. Guillaume, D.B. MacDonald, Gottheil, and Juynboll deserve inclusion more than some on the list.

Finally, the careful preparation of this book has resulted in few typographical errors. Pfannmüller is misspelled several times; "treaties" occurs often for treatises; undotted "i's" are not used in the Turkish citations; "mimeographied" is applied to several items that are not mimeographed' A. Walsh (p. 24); Kesf-el-Zunun (p. 44); ahbar (p. 73); W. Nassau Lees (p. 75); وجدى (p. 75); Handbücher (p. 78); Ahlwardt (p. 82); M.F. Said (p. 107); السجستاني (p. 117); Littmann (p. 142); Reiske (p. 173); Edward (p. 174) -- were spotted without deliberately proofreading the text.

#### COLLATION

Wolfgang Behn has published The Iranian Opposition in Exile: an Annotated Bibliography of Publications from 1341/1962 to 1357/1979 with Selective Locations (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1979; DM 59).

The International Association of Orientalist Librarians will meet with IFLA in Manila, Philippines, August 17-23. Registration forms can be obtained from The National Library, T. M. Kalaw St., Manila, Philippines.