New Director

As this newsletter went to press, we were notified that Abraham Marcus had been asked by Dean Sheldon Ekland-Olson to be the next director of the Center, starting in September of 1995. Marcus is Professor of History on this campus, and has been Graduate Advisor of the Center for the past two years. His latest book, The Middle East on the Eve of Modernity: Aleppo in the Eighteenth Century, was the first winner of the Albert Hourani Book Award presented at MESA in 1991. His special area of research is the Ottoman Empire in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Professor Marcus had the following to say about his appointment:

My years of association with the Center for Middle Eastern Studies have been interesting in more ways than one. The opportunity to serve as the Center's next director now brings with it the prospect of some new challenges. I feel honored to have been selected to assume this responsibility. I appreciate the trust put in me by Dean Sheldon Ekland-Olson and by my colleagues, and will do my best to live up to it.

Ours is an established Center with international recognition as a leading academic institution in the field of Middle Eastern studies. We all share the goal of advancing it as a vibrant center of professional training and intellectual creativity. In thinking of this and other tasks that lie ahead I can take heart in our many strengths, above all our devoted staff, expert faculty, and committed students. I would like to invite all of you to offer me your ideas about the program and ways in which you can contribute to it. Your active participation is essential to our success.

A special debt of thanks is due to Bob Holz for his dedicated service as director over the last four years. Despite serious back surgery and three disruptive moves of the Center's quarters, he worked with unflagging commitment to promote the program. I wish him and his wife Joyce good health and all the best.

Istanbul Conference

The Center hosted a two-day conference, "Istanbul: the Making of a City," March 24-25. Participants from Turkey and the United States spoke on five different panels: Spatial Organization and Representation of the City in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries; Culture and Society in the Ottoman City; New Socioeconomic Trends in a Modernizing City; Planning and the Modern City; and The Contemporary Politics of Family and Gender. Professors Abraham Marcus (UT-History) and Ian Manners (UT-Geography) organized the conference as well as the accompanying pictorial exhibit on the history of the city.

The keynote address was given by Ilhan Tekeli, Professor at the City and Regional Planning Department of the Middle East Technical University. Other speakers were Cigdem Kafescioglu (Harvard University); Ian Manners; Bülent Aksoy (Bogazici University); Kemal Silay (University of Washington); Madeline Zilfi (University of Maryland); Ayhan Aktar (Marmara University); Donald Quataert (State University of New York); Zeynep Çelik (New Jersey Institute of Technology); Akile Gürsoy (Marmara University); and Jenny White (University of Nebraska). Abraham Marcus delivered a summation of the conference and directed a discussion at its ending.

The conference ranged over diverse areas: the physical landscape of Istanbul; music, fashion and poetry as well as high culture; women, the poor, and minorities as well as elites; and many aspects of the economy. Several thematic dualities developed during

(continued on page four)
From The Director

This is the last column I will write for the Newsletter as Director of the Center for Middle Eastern Studies. For both personal and professional reasons, I have decided to withdraw as a candidate for a second four-year term as Director.

I have enjoyed my four years as Center Director, and those years have certainly gone by quickly. I believe the Center has moved forward in a number of significant areas. Our total outside funding has increased, even in the face of reduced support by some of the oil companies. Center funding from the Department of Education is at a higher level than four years ago. As a result we have been able to extend our funding support to more faculty and students.

We have organized four major conferences and three major exhibits in the last four years, while assisting in a large number of lesser conferences and exhibits on campus in association with other programs. I think it is somewhat amazing that the staff and faculty of the Center could carry out these activities while the Center moved to new quarters three times in this four-year period. I believe I will have the distinction of being the only Director to lead the Center through three moves in four years. Our new quarters are excellent. They are newly refurbished and they are in the center of campus close to the most used facilities and offices on campus. The Center should remain in this location into the foreseeable future.

The Center has developed some new initiatives that are bringing considerable attention to the program. First, we have established a joint M.A. program with the College of Communication. Second, I have established an Electronic Initiative, to develop electronic networking between the Center and other Middle Eastern programs both nationally and internationally. We have a Home Page on the World Wide Web and we can honestly say that no other Center for Middle Eastern Studies has moved as far or as aggressively as we have in computer networking on the Middle East.

We have expanded the Center’s Outreach Program and opened it to new directions of program service. Our Publication Series continue to grow and bring glowing accolades to the Center. The Publications Program in conjunction with the U.T. Press has been selected to develop a new initiative in electronic publishing and networking that will also be a first among Middle East centers in the United States.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the Center staff who are a truly amazing group of dedicated, loyal, hard-working and highly professional people. No task seems too large or complex for them, and each staff member has grown in his or her job over the last four years. I thank them for their help and for putting up with my many foibles. My greatest regret is that in these difficult financial times I could not do more to improve their salaries.

For the last two and a half years the Center has benefited from an Administrative Faculty team consisting of Moh Ghanoonparvar as Associate Director, Abe Marcus as Graduate Advisor and Esther Raizen as Undergraduate Advisor. They were truly a superlative team of able administrators and advisors. Moh was hard working and I was able to leave the Center’s operation in his hands, knowing that he would make good decisions in all matters. Abe Marcus completely revamped the graduate-student advising program. He gave generously of his time and, due to his hard work, we do a much better job of relating to and advising graduates than in the past. Esther Raizen initiated an electronic advising program for undergraduate students that was so innovative it has become the model for the College of Liberal Arts. Esther began an undergraduate honors program in the Center, and we now have seven students enrolled in it. She has been a most valued member of the Administrative Faculty. I shall very much miss working with these three faculty members.

Some major problems exist on the horizon that the new Director will have to address and devote considerable time and energy to in the years ahead. Three of these problems come to mind here. First, the Center will have to work out its relationship with the New Department of Middle East Languages and Culture. The Center needs a strong program in that Department, but at the same time the Center has its own role and set of objectives and goals within the University, and these are very much independent from those of the Department. Quite rightly, the Center is the focal point for all things concerning the Middle East on this campus and it should keep and expand that independent focus in the future. Second, the Center faculty is aging. I can count at least eight of our senior faculty who are over sixty years of age. The New Director must work very hard with the Dean and various department chairs to find new, younger faculty with interests in the Middle East, in order to keep the Center viable and growing and to maintain its highly esteemed national and international stature. Third, funding, especially from outside sources, will be an increasing problem. What would be the status and health of the Center if the Department of Education were eliminated, as is being discussed in the new congress? Will the oil companies continue their support of the Center in the face of declining profits? Where can we find new sources of outside funding? These are major questions facing the incoming Director.

Over the summer, I hope to work closely with the new Director, who ever that is, to inform that person of the Center’s status, position, and on-going programs. I wish him or her good-luck! To all students and faculty who I have worked with and who have supported me in my term as Director I say humbly, Thank you! And now, to paraphrase Douglas MacArthur, like an old director who did his duty as best he could, I plan to just fade away, back to the Department of Geography.

Robert Holz
Publications On-line

The Center, in collaboration with the University of Texas Press and the General Libraries, has proposed to go on-line with a series of scholarly works on the Middle East. The project has been selected for inclusion in the “University Presses in the Networked Information Environment” Joint Initiative of the American Association of University Presses and the Coalition of Networked Information. The University of Texas was chosen among nine institutions this year to participate in the Joint Initiative, which will defray some of the costs of the pilot project.

Works in the new electronic series will be selected by peer review and approved by the Center’s Publications Committee and the Press Faculty Advisory Committee. The Series will consist of dissertation research that is valuable but appeals to a small audience and multimedia presentations of research that lend themselves to electronic publishing. For a trial run of the technological and legal mechanisms, the Center may first put one of its out-of-print fiction translations on the World Wide Web through its home page site.

Representing the University at a Workshop of the Joint Initiative in Washington were Ali Hosseini from the Press, Carole Cable from the Libraries, and Elizabeth Bouri and Anne McCann-Baker from the Center. The Workshop integrated national groups experimenting with the logistics of publishing on Internet, with gaining security of intellectual property rights on-line, and with gaining recognition for such publications from tenure- and promotion-decision bodies across the United States. During the Workshop, the Library of Congress offered its expertise and resources concerning electronic cataloging, the securing of copyright, and guidelines for achieving technological quality of presentation.

Conference on Israeli Peace Accords

A conference addressing the future of Israel after the peace accords was held at the LBJ School of Public Affairs of the University of Texas at Austin on November 9. Max Sherman, Dean of the LBJ School, initiated the day’s events when he welcomed conference participants.

The morning panel, “The Peace Negotiations, Security, and Politics,” was moderated by Peter Abboud, MELC Chair. Pete Martinez, Director of the Office of Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Palestinian Affairs, U.S. Department of State, was the first panelist. Speaking of “The Status of Middle East Peace Negotiations,” Martinez said that the two events that led to the peace negotiations were the collapse of the Soviet Union and the use of power by the U.S. in the Gulf War. Following Martinez was Meir Romem, Counselor General of Israel, Houston, Texas, who focused on “Politics Within Israel and Israel’s Foreign Relations After the Peace Accords.” The third speaker, Joseph W. Eaton, retired Chair of Social and Economic Development at the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, The University of Pittsburgh, presented a paper on “Israel’s Security Considerations after the Peace Accords.”

The panel asked for questions and a discussion ensued, which Abraham Marcus (UT-History) moderated. Robert Holz, Center Director, moderated the second panel: “Internal Relations, Water Resources and Economics.” The first speaker, Avraham Zilkha, (UT-MELC), addressed “Relations Between Arabs and Jews After the Peace Accords.” Following Zilkha, Reverend Father David Jaeger, Judicial Vicar, Diocese of Austin, discussed “Religious Freedom and Peace in the Middle East: The Vatican-Israel Accord.” The next topic, “Water Resource Management in Israel After the Peace Accords” was developed by David Eaton, Bess Harris Jones Centennial Professor in Natural Resource Policy Studies, LBJ School. The Audrey and Bernard Rapaport Centennial Chair in Economics and Public Affairs, Ray Marshall, concluded the speeches with his focus on “Israel’s Economy After the Peace Accords.”

The speakers then answered the many questions that were raised with Kerry Baker, Rabbi of the Hillel Foundation, Austin, moderating.
Civil Society Conference

A Civil Society Workshop, organized by Clement Henry (Government) took place on March 4, in Burdine 602.

The first discussion, Western Perspectives, was chaired by Professor Henry. He introduced Robert Vitalis of Clark University who spoke about "Civil Society: A Pragmatic Perspective." Jill Crystal of Auburn University, Julius Ihonvbere of the UT Government Department, and Robert Fernea of the UT Anthropology Department joined him in a discussion.

The second panel dealt with literature in the Middle East and was chaired by M.R. Ghanoonparvar of the UT Government Department. Abraham Marcus of the UT History Department discussed "Civil Life and the State in the Middle East: Some Historical Observations." The next contributor, Walid Hamarneh of the UT Middle Eastern Languages and Cultures Department, spoke about "A Signifier in Search of a Referent." The final contribution to this section of the workshop came from Betigul Ercan of the UT Government Department who addressed "Re-Islamization and Civil Society in Turkey."

The final agenda for the workshop, "Toward New Meanings and Experiences," was chaired by Robert Fernea. Initiating this five-speaker section was Barbara Harlow of the UT English Department. Her focus was "Literature of Repression and Emancipation." Elizabeth Bouri of the UT Center for Middle Eastern Studies followed Harlow with a speech entitled "Civil Society Online." A third speaker, Stephen Bloom of the UT Government Department, spoke on "Opposition Movements as Incubators of Civil Society." The final talk, "The Search for a Religious Civil Society: the Model of Israel," had David Albert of the UT Government Department as its author. The final workshop contributor, Maan Hamze of the UT Communication Department, spoke about "Civil Society: Gathering Without Sheltering?"

Annual TAMES Conference at TCU

The Texas Association of Middle East Scholars convened its annual meeting at Texas Christian University in Fort Worth on February 24-25. Dr. Manochehr Dorraj of Texas Christian University welcomed everyone to the University and Dr. Esther Raizen of the University of Texas presided over the welcoming, the introduction and the business agenda of the conference.

A reception was hosted by the Department of Political Science on Friday evening.

The two-day conference consisted of four panels. The first panel dealt with literature in the Middle East and was chaired by M.R. Ghanoonparvar of the University of Texas at Austin. Speakers were Lamar Cravens (UT-Austin), Faridoun Farrouk (Texas A&M International), Margaret Schulenberg (UT-Austin), and Renate Wise (UT-Austin).

Manochehr Dorraj was both the chair and discussant for the second panel entitled, "Politics in the Middle East." Presenters included Mohamed Ben Ruwin (Mountain View College), Eric Bents (UT-Austin), Linda Boxberger (UT-Austin), James D. Clark (UT-Austin), and Nasser Momayyezi (Texas A&M International).

The third panel, "Israelis and Palestinians in Transition" was chaired by Clifford Dorne of Texas A&M International. Mohammed Olimat (University of North Texas), Esther Raizen (UT-Austin), and Aaron Segal (UT-El Paso) presented papers on this topic.

Dr. Dorraj led a lively discussion on current events in the Middle East. Islamic fundamentalism in Algeria and Egypt, the future of the Arab-Israeli peace process, and human rights in the Middle East were among the numerous topics addressed by the discussants and the audience.

It was decided that the annual meeting will be held at the University of Texas at Austin in 1996 and at Texas A&M International in Laredo in 1997. At the Business Meeting, Dr. Raizen announced that Fawn Shirazi-Mahajan (UT-Austin) was elected incoming president. New council members elected are M.R. Ghanoonparvar (UT-Austin) and Aaron Segal (UT-El Paso).

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Faculty and Staff News

Elizabeth Bouri (CMES) presented a paper explaining the Middle East Network Information Center (MENIC) at the "Becoming Better Partners" conference, a symposium on international education funded by the U.S. Department of Education. She also gave a lecture, "Electronic Gateways: Sharing Resources through a Virtual Library" at the Georgetown University Symposium on the Information Revolution in the Arab World.

Yildiray Erdener (MELC) is the author of The Song Contests of Turkish Minstrels, Improvised Poetry Sung to Traditional Music published by Garland Publishing, Inc. in New York & London.

Elizabeth Fernea (English) is on leave this semester, researching for her next book in Morocco, London, Berlin, Kuwait, Abu Dhabi, Morocco, Istanbul and Cairo.

Robert Fernea (Anthropology) was appointed to the Consultative Commission to advise on the UNESCO Plan for the Promotion of Arab Culture. The Commission will hold its second meeting this year.

Clement Henry (Government) visited Cairo over spring break to organize courses with AUC which will appear on the Internet with the help of UT-MENIC. A simulation game of oil diplomacy, played April 4-22 between his students in a course on the Politics of Oil and students at AUC and Clark University, is already on line (http://menic.utexas.edu/menic/oil). Henry presented a paper about this game and other simulations at the Symposium on the Information Revolution in the Arab World held at Georgetown University April 20-21. Henry's edited work Maghreb et Maîtrise Technologique: Enjeux et Perspectives, has been published in Tunis by the Centre des Etudes Recherches et Publications (CERP) of the Faculty of Law.

Michael Hillmann (MELC) organized a workshop in September on Persian-language teaching. Persianist experts from around the U.S. and today's Department of Middle Eastern Languages and Cultures focused on creating a Persian-language textbook called Reading Iran, Reading Iranians.

Annes McCann-Baker (CMES) presented a paper on "Mothers, Sons, and Religion: The Impact of International Translations of Sitt Marie Rose" at the Forces of Change Symposium of the Jimmy Carter Center in Atlanta on March 16-18. The Symposium on Women, Art, Literature and Social Change in the Arab World was hosted by Emory University in conjunction with an international exhibit of Arab Women Artists.

James Neely (Anthropology) co-wrote Early Settlement and Irrigation on the Luran Plain: Village and Early State Societies in Southwestern Iran, Technical Report No. 26, Museum of Anthropology, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. The monograph is the first of three dealing with the findings of Neely and others' archaeological survey of the Deh Luran Plain of Khuzistan.

Thomas Palaima (Classics) presented a paper "Linear A>Linear B: How?" with Elizabeth Sikkenga at the meetings of the American Philological Association in Atlanta on December 29. The paper dealt with the evolution of writing systems in the eastern Mediterranean.

Esther Raizen (MELC) received a grant from The Institute for the Translation of Hebrew Literature to pay for the authors' rights to the poems translated by her and printed in English and the original Hebrew in her upcoming book.


Denise Spellberg (History) had her book Politics, Gender, and the Islamic Past published by Columbia University Press this winter. In her honor, europa books held a reception and book signing on January 30.

Two New Translations

The Center published two fiction translations this year: The Waiting List, An Iraqi Woman's Tales of Alienation by Daisy al-Amir and Suri & Co.: Tales of a Persian Teenage Girl by Mahshid Amirshahi. In the fall, two books will come out: Women and Men in Late Eighteenth-Century Egypt by Afaf Marsot and No Rattling of Sabers, An Anthology of Israeli War Poetry by Esther Raizen.

All books may be purchased through the University of Texas Press, P.O. Box 7819, Austin, TX 78713, (512)471-7233, (fax)(512)320-0668. Authors wishing to query Center Editor Annes McCann-Baker, may write to the Center or phone (512)471-3881 or fax (512)471-7834.
The Palestine Solidarity Committee hosted a colloquium featuring Walid Hamarneh, Barbara Harlow, Kate Gillespie, Lisa Hajjar, and Nasseer Aruri on April 12 at the Union. The title of the event was “State of Palestine: Emergence or Emergency?”

Azizah Y. al-Hibri, Professor at T. C. William School of Law at the University of Richmond spoke at the Law School on April 20. Her topic was “Women and Islam: A Jurisprudence for a New World.”

MELC held a Visiting Lecturer Series during April. Speakers were Bilal Kuspinar speaking on “Facets of Two Rational Forces in Islam: Philosophy and Theology”; Mohammad Fadel on “Two Women = One Man: Ambivalence Towards Women in the Islamic Law of Testimony”; and Khaled Abou El Fadl on “Juridical Positions on Guerilla Warfare in Islamic Law: Rebellion or Justice.”

Four Visiting Scholars will spend periods of time at the Center during the academic year 1995-1996. Dr. Mohamed A. Ghanem, an editor and professor at Suez Canal University in Egypt, arrived April 21 and will stay through October 15. Dr. Saif Abbas Abdulla, chair of Political Science at Kuwait University will be in residence from September 1995 to September 1996. Dr. Fahad Hamad Al Mekrad, lecturer in Political Science at Kuwait University, will be on campus from July 1995 to July 1996. Dr. Zeinab Mohamed Afifi Shaker, professor of Political Islamic Philosophy at Menoufi University in Egypt, will be here from June to August of 1995.
Student News

Graduates

Many of the graduate students who have worked diligently over the past two or three years are experiencing the fruition of their labors in the form of obtaining interesting jobs for next year. Allison Hodgkins, who will receive a Master's from the Joint Degree Program between Middle Eastern Studies and the Lyndon Baines Johnson School, will be Academic Director for Middle East Peace and Conflict Studies, a program sponsored by the School for International Training in Brattleboro, Vermont. She will take American students to Israel and Jordan to gain firsthand knowledge of the Arab-Israeli conflict from the Israeli, Palestinian and Jordanian perspectives. Allison feels that she is doing something the joint degree trained her for as well as something she believes important, "portraying the conflict in as unbiased a way as possible for the American public."

Connie Meskill and Robert Blanke, who will receive Master's Degrees in Middle Eastern Studies, have been hired as Middle East Intelligence Analysts for the national Air Intelligence Center. They will work at the Pentagon in Washington D.C. With her Master's in Middle Eastern Studies, Carol Northrup will be an Intelligence Analyst in Shreveport, Louisiana.

John VanderLippe has been appointed Assistant Professor of History at SUNY New Paltz effective fall 1995. He and Pinar Batur-VanderLippe have received grants from the Hoover Institute (winter 1995) and the Kennan Institute in Washington, D.C. (summer 1996) for research on Muslim Turkic intellectuals.

Undergraduates

A group of nine students from UT participated in the Model Arab League Conference, which was held at Midwestern State University in Wichita Falls. The students were Blanca Chow (CMES), Andrew Clarno (CMES), John Vandenberg (CMES), Steven Hyland Jr. (CMES), Samar Khleif (Journalism), Nathalie Atallah (Government), Phillip Kaylani (CMES), Amir-Mohsen Mirabi (CMES) and Mohammed Shammi (CMES). The group, acting as a delegation from the Yemen Republic, had worked on the project throughout the semester, and managed to pass quite a few resolutions at the Cultural Affairs, Economic Affairs and Palestinian Affairs committees of the conference. The delegation brought back two Best Delegate awards—congratulations to Blanca Chow and John Vandenberg!

Andrew Clarno and Lauren Apter were recognized at the Liberal Arts Honors Convocation—congratulations to both of them! In fact, double congratulations to Andrew, who won the Bettie Johnson Halsell Endowed Presidential Scholarship in Liberal Arts, and to both Lauren and Andrew, who were accepted to the Junior Fellows Program!

There is life after school! Asa Clough ('94) will begin his Law School training in 1996, and Sherry Youssef ('94) is working at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, D.C. She is a member of a team working on a project entitled "Islam and the West." Jennifer Goffman ('93) is coming back to Austin after two years of working in Washington, D.C. She will do graduate work at the LBJ School. Good luck to all!

Blanca Chow and Armaity Bharucha will work this summer as interns for the Council on US-Arab Relations in Washington, D.C. Steven Hyland Jr. will work with Palestinian orphans in Amman as an intern with YMCA. Gabrielle Nathanson will intern with the ADL in New York, and Caron Gremont will intern with AIPAC in Washington, D.C.

Our honors program is growing! Right now we have nine students in our honors track: Amir-Mohsen Mirabi, Lauren Apter, Andrew Clarno, Hina Ijaz Ahmad, Jessica Lee, Steven Hyland Jr., Roshanak Orang-Khadivi, William E. Miller and Yaron Shaham.

Awards and Fellowships

Four graduate students were chosen for Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) awards from the U.S. Department of Education for the 1995/96 academic year. The students and their selected languages are—

Jeffrey Jurgens - Turkish
Harold Revelson - Hebrew
Jeffrey Sacks - Arabic
Dylan Oehler-Stricklin - Persian

Students chosen for the summer of 1995 are—

Jennifer Grocer - Turkish
Shirin Khanmohamadi - Persian
Karen Shevlin - Arabic

Students chosen for the 1995 Turkish Fellowship from the Institute of Turkish Studies were James Grehan and Caroline Knight. Winner of this award last year was Margaret Lynch.
Outreach News

This summer the Outreach program will collaborate with the three other area studies centers on campus in a two-day workshop for precollegiate social-studies teachers. The workshop will introduce the teachers to the resources of the Internet through our network information centers. Teachers will learn how to use the Internet, including Gopher and the World Wide Web, and also how to use teaching strategies on the Net. All sessions will be hands-on and the teachers will be supplied with print and online handouts to assist them in the future as well as to help them train their colleagues.

The Outreach Program continues to expand its presence on the Internet, through MENIC. In addition to the teaching materials catalogue already available on-line, a full description of outreach services will soon be added, along with information on the Middle East Outreach Council. Links to Middle East teaching resources for K-12 will soon be posted, and in the next two years the Outreach Program will design and add teaching units of its own.

Deborah Littrell, Outreach Coordinator, represented the Center at the "Becoming Better Partners: Building Educational Alliances for International Competence" conference April 10-11 in Washington D.C. She participated also as the President of the Middle East Outreach Council (MEOC).

MENIC News

UT-MENIC, the Center's electronic gateway for Middle East Studies, was expanded during March and April, and today includes over 500 links to other databases. The home page (http://menic.utexas.edu/menic.html) now incorporates 45 new home pages divided into two major sections. The first section points to each of the countries of the Middle East and North Africa. These 22 home pages in turn lead into information coming from and about each country. The second section arranges information topically. The topics range from archeology and architecture to associations, societies, clubs, and student organizations; political, economic and social data; Islamic and Jewish resources; K-12 educational resources; and maps, pictures, and virtual classrooms. A third section of the home page assists the user in navigating through cyberspace.

Usage has been steadily increasing since August 1994, when the original home page was launched. In the month of March 1995, the page registered 10,964 accesses and 4,262 direct telnet connections. UT-MENIC's gopher (gopher menic.utexas.edu), established in October 1993, registered 8,780 accesses during the month.

Editor: Annes McCann-Baker
Production, Design, Photography: Diane Watts

Not printed with state funds