Center Plans for Next Four Years of Department of Education Funding

The U.S. Department of Education recently awarded the Center for Middle Eastern Studies (CMES) a grant of nearly $1.8 million to support area studies programming and scholarships for 2006-2010. The grant was made under the Title VI National Strategic Area Studies Act; it includes funding under the National Resource Center (NRC) program that will support academic programming and community outreach activities, and the Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) program that will provide scholarships for graduate students studying advanced Middle Eastern languages, including Arabic, Hebrew, Persian, Tajiki, and Turkish. The Center has been continuously funded by Title VI since the 1960s, and we are pleased to have once again been granted funding at a time when overall funding available for these programs has decreased. We are also pleased that the three other existing NRCs on campus, representing Latin America, South Asia, and Russia, East Europe and Eurasia, have also been re-awarded by Title VI, allowing us to continue to work in collaboration with one another on various programming.

The National Resource Center award will help fund the Center’s day-to-day operations and a variety of new and continuing initiatives. CMES will host international conferences on a range of topics, from Israeli studies to Iraqi reconstruction. Following up on the successful Islamic Ideologies conference that CMES co-sponsored last year (see article on page 6), we will host two major conferences in 2007-08 and 2009-10 in collaboration with the other NRCs on campus. These conferences are designed to explore topics of cross-regional, cross-disciplinary concern by bringing together top scholars from around the world. CMES will also continue to sponsor the spring workshop for the Western Consortium of teachers of foreign languages, which it hosted in 2006.

Funding for the CMES Outreach program will support a wide range of educational and cultural activities aimed at K-12 educators, their students, and the general public. The jointly sponsored Hemispheres outreach consortium will continue to expand its services for K-12 audiences, such as the development of new curriculum units, educator training, and other services for which the consortium has received statewide recognition (see page 5). The Center is planning to take groups of educators abroad over the course of the new grant cycle, repeating the successful educator seminar in Egypt that we led in 2005 (see page 4). A face-lift is also in store for the Middle East Network Information Center (MENIC), once one of the most important resources for Middle Eastern Studies on the Internet, in order to keep the site relevant and on the cutting edge of information technology.

The FLAS scholarship program will provide funding for graduate students studying Arabic, Persian, Tajiki, Hebrew, and Turkish over the next four years. The largest scholarship awarded to graduate students through CMES, FLAS scholarships for the full academic year fund tuition and fees and offer a stipend of $7,500 per semester, and the summer FLAS scholarships provide tuition and fees along with a $2,500 stipend. For the 2006-07 academic year, CMES has awarded a total of nine FLAS scholarships that will fund six students in the Arabic program, one in Persian, and two in Hebrew.

The Title VI program is funded as part of the Higher Education Act approved by Congress. Budget cuts in the Department of Education led to a substantial drop in the amount of available funding. CMES sustained the average cut in funding that other NRCs have seen this year, and the reduced funding levels will mean that we will be able to fund fewer FLAS students, and we will have to be more selective with Center programming. However, we have begun pursuing external funding from new sources, and even with the budget cuts, we are very excited about the Center’s programs on and off-campus for the next four years.
I am pleased to announce that the Center for Middle Eastern Studies has once again been designated a National Resource Center (NRC) under the Title VI Strategic Area Studies program (see article on page 1). The competition for funding during this grant cycle was particularly fierce, as Congress cut the overall amount of funding available for the program. Despite this, we are pleased that CMES was awarded an amount commensurate with our level and ranking in previous cycles. This new grant cycle runs for four years instead of the usual three, so we are now planning for programs and events through the spring semester of 2010.

For the Middle Eastern Studies program, the past two years have been characterized by dramatic expansion of our faculty, academic, publications, and outreach programs. We have gained a significant number of faculty from numerous disciplines—including ethnomusicology, government and history—whose interests range from suicide terrorism to modern Arab identity, from Jewish literature and students in Middle Eastern Studies are working on a project to build an online resource for graduate students through the Center’s web site. Christine Baker, a Ph.D. student in the History Department who received her M.A. in Middle Eastern Studies, notes that two distinguished Arabic letters and Sounds (1995, 2004) and Al-Kitaab fii Ta'allum al-'Arabiyya (1995, 1996, 2004). Al-Batal brings CASA (The Center for Arabic Study Abroad) to UT, which will be the new host for the program. One of the most prestigious programs for Arabic language study, CASA has been responsible for training 1,350 American students in Arabic as well as students for the fourth annual CASA Science and Technology Laboratory. CASA is proud to announce that two of the most prestigious Arabic language professionals are participating in the CASA Arabic Studies Program. CASA is one of the most prestigious programs for Arabic language study, and has been responsible for training 1,350 American students in Arabic as well as students for the fourth annual CASA Science and Technology Laboratory. CASA is proud to announce that two of the most prestigious Arabic language professionals are participating in the CASA Arabic Studies Program. CASA is one of the most prestigious programs for Arabic language study, and has been responsible for training 1,350 American students in Arabic as well as students for the fourth annual CASA Science and Technology Laboratory. 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Fulbright-Hays Grant Allows Texas Educators to Experience Egypt

The Center for Middle Eastern Studies was the recipient of a Fulbright-Hays award under the Group Projects Abroad program, allowing fifteen K-12 educators from around the state of Texas to travel to Egypt for a month of in-depth study and curriculum development. Led by Kamran Ashraf (then Associate Director and Assistant Professor of Islamic Studies) and Christopher Rose (Outreach Coordinator), the project entailed in-depth study of Egypt’s history, culture, and government from the ancient period to the present day.

The 15 teacher participants were selected from a highly competitive pool of nearly 50 applicants and represented a large geographic sampling from Texas, as well as the Washington, D.C. area. Following a two-day pre-departure orientation held on campus, the group flew to Cairo in June 2005.

While in Egypt, the group stayed primarily in Cairo, taking side trips to Alexandria and the Sinai and a longer excursion to Upper Egypt. The Egyptian Fulbright Commission organized an impressive slate of lecturers for the group, including Dr. William Sadiq, Director General of the Egyptian Museum; Hisham Emamine Picenti, Bishop of Helwan and Ma’arasa; and Ahmad Yousef, Assistant to the Secretary General of the Arab League.

Visits were arranged to most of Egypt’s famous monuments, including the pyramids of Saqqara and Giza, the Egyptian Museum, the “old Cairo” area that is home to several churches and one of the few remaining synagogues in Egypt, and the core of the Fatimid old city. Many of the most valuable experiences, however, were unscripted. For example, the excursion to Saqqara included a visit to a carpet school where young children were taught carpet weaving as part of their education.

The stop turned out to be one of the most valuable experiences for the group, serving as a clear example of how life in Egypt is different from life in the United States. The experience was revisited several times during group discussions throughout the program and remained one of the most vivid experiences for the participants.

The group also visited the brand-new Al-Azhar Park in Cairo, where they met with one of the architects of the project, as well as Director and Enhancement of Wonders (ADEW), a non-governmental organization that works with women living in a squatter settlement in Cairo. The teachers were able visit with the participants in ADEW’s microcredit program to understand how such programs help to empower lower-class women in a real-world setting.

At the conclusion of the program, participants committed to curriculum unit topics and began to work on their projects. The curriculum units, aligned to state and national teaching standards, address a variety of topics from ancient to modern Egypt. Throughout the fall of 2005, participants presented to their students in their home districts.

The units will be made available through the Center for Middle Eastern Studies Web site and through the national OutreachWorldLong Web site. Also available to educators throughout the nation will be a set of individual components available to download free of charge via the Outreach MESC Website.

The participants in the program were:

- Philip Bernhardt, JEB Stuart High School, Falls Church, Virginia
- Monica Birtwistle, Stephen F. Austin High School, Sugar Land
- Judy Brodigan, Lewisville ISD
- Dorele Clark, Thurgood Marshall High School, Missouri City
- Richard Goodwin, Townview Magnet Center, Dallas
- Roxanne Hackney, Captain John L. Chapin High School, El Paso
- Sarah Hueit, Hughes Springs ISD
- Mary Muenster, Northside Health Careers High School, San Antonio
- Gertrude Niewiaroski, Richard Montgomery High School, Rockville, Maryland
- Kerry Rodriguez, Cunningham Middle School, Houston
- Geraldine Waller, Clara Driscoll Middle School, San Antonio
- Rhonda Williams, Central Heights High School, Nacogdoches
- Dr. Lawrence Wolken, Texas A & M University
- Alicia Young, Dallas ISD
- Barbara Young, Burleson High School, Burleson

New Curriculum Units for K-12 Classrooms

Over the past two years, the Hemispheres outreach program has been long focused on training and providing resources for K-12 educators to better prepare to teach about the Middle East. Since 1998, the major teacher training event has been the annual Summer Teachers’ Institute, held in early June. Coordinated by Hemispheres in conjunction with the four Title VI-OEIC consortia of the four Title VI Outreach programs at UT, the institute offers as many as 40 attendees the opportunity to attend a work in residence in the UT campus. These workshops are usually full-day events, and focus on the preservice training of future teachers. Hemispheres’ annual summer workshop has become extremely popular over the past several years, regularly reaching its registration capacity well in advance.

Over the past two years, teacher training has expanded from the Summer Teachers’ Institute to include a series of curriculum development projects and related regional workshops held in locations around Texas. These regional workshops allow CMES, operating in conjunction with the Hemispheres consortiums, to increase its visibility and dramatically increase the number of educators reached through the outreach program.

These campus workshops are specifically targeted to teachers, library media specialists, and curriculum coordinators who do not have the opportunity to attend a workshop in residence on the UT campus. These workshops are usually full-day events, and focus on the presentation of co-created curriculum units. The program has been so well received that it has given presentations at several national events such as the National Council for the Social Studies, the National Council on Geographic Education, and the National Council on History Education.

Hemispheres received national recognition for its innovative efforts to reach educators at the national meeting of Title-VI outreach coordinators in Madison, Wisconsin, in May 2006.
In February 2006, the University of Texas hosted scholars from around the world who came to Austin to participate in a conference on Contemporary Islamic Movements: Ideology, Aesthetics, Politics. The two-day conference was held at the University of Michigan, and was sponsored by the Center for Middle Eastern Studies, the South Asia Institute, and the Shehr Net (http://www.shehr.org). It provided a forum for its various participants to try to capture the experience of daily life in differently placed urban landscapes, and to analyze the differences between the need to live violently, on the one hand, and the problem of living with everyday violence, on the other. Whether the product of externally or internally authored conflict, much of the workshop’s work (http://www.shehr.org) sought to de-exoticize Islam and contextualize it within particular geographies and histories.

Participants in the conference included Reza Aslan, keynote speaker; Laura Adams, Princeton; Irfan Ahmad, University of Amsterdam; Schirin Amir-Moazami, University of Frankfurt-Oder; Azel Bayat, ISIM (Leiden University); Moustafa Bayoumi, City University of New York; Bart Meulman, University of Amsterdam; Yasmin El-Moutawakel, University of Michigan; Lara Deeb, UC Irvine; George Katselis, Northeastern University; Faisal Devji, New School University; Mark A. Gabriel, American University; Schirin Amir-Moazami, University of Frankfurt-Oder; Arjun Appadurai, New York University; Nazif M. Shahrani, ISIM; Barbara Metcalf, University of Michigan; Najeeb Jan, University of Michigan; Scott Kugle, ISIM; Barbara Metcalf, University of Michigan; Nash M. Shahriani, Indiana University; Francesco Panariti, Anthropology, University of California, San Diego; Nele van der Wildt, Communication, University of Amsterdam; and Reza Aslan, keynote speaker; Stuart E. Corbridge, Cultural and Media Studies, The University of Texas at Austin; Nirmal Jayagopalan, South Asia Institute, and the Shehr Network.

The workshop was sponsored by the Center for Middle Eastern Studies, in Spring 2005, the University of Texas hosted the workshop Urban Geographies of Conflict during the two-day conference at the University of Michigan, which gave the conference’s closing remarks, observing that the two days of deliberation seemed productive. The workshop also explored the role of the modern city as a “stop” in the promise of the modern city is giving way to the realities of city life in situations of war or severe economic deprivation. Participants in (alphabetical order) were Lori A. Allen, Prenk, University of Michigan; Paul Aman, Law and Society, University of California-Santa Barbara; Stuart E. Corbridge, Cultural and Media Studies, The University of Texas at Austin; and Martina Rieker, Humanities and Social Sciences, American University in Cairo. Whether the product of externally or internally authored conflict, much of the workshop’s work provided the promise of the modern city in situations of war or severe economic deprivation. The workshop also explored the role of the modern city as a “stop” in the promise of the modern city is giving way to the realities of city life in situations of war or severe economic deprivation. Participants in (alphabetical order) were Lori A. Allen, Prenk, University of Michigan; Paul Aman, Law and Society, University of California-Santa Barbara; Stuart E. Corbridge, Cultural and Media Studies, The University of Texas at Austin; and Martina Rieker, Humanities and Social Sciences, American University in Cairo.

Yaron Shemer, senior lecturer, together with graduate students Zeina Halabi (Anthropology), Mark Westmoreland (Anthropology), Emrah Zarinofu (Engineering), Tessa Farmer (Anthropology), and Assem Nasr (Radio-TV Film), in September 2005 launched a Middle East film series that screens films from the region on an ongoing basis. Begun under the auspices of the Center for Middle Eastern Studies, in Spring 2006 the series curators established the Middle East Film Club, a student organization that has since overseen the series. The films featured in the series reflect the diversity of populations, languages, religions, and cultures of the Middle East. Each semester, the series curators choose a theme for its twice-monthly screenings. The theme for Fall 2005 was “Children and Adolescents in Middle Eastern Cinema,” and films included shown Frontiers of Dreams and Fears (Palestine/Lebanon), Saint Clara (Israel), Ali Zaoua, Prince of the Streets (Morocco), Silence of Palaces (Tunisia), Date Wine (Egypt), and Hats Out of Watermelon Rinds (Turkey). The spring 2006 semester theme was “Minorities.” Screenings included The Silence of Palaces (Tunisia), Turks Can Fly (Iran), Tear Left at the End of the World (Israel/France), The Syrian Bride (Syria), and Offside (Turkey).

The Film Club is open to all students and faculty interested in Middle Eastern cinema, and it welcomes new members who would like to assist with film selection and advertising. Screenings are free of charge and open to the public. Some recommended films include:

- Kandamat, a feature film about freedom and the struggle for independence in the Middle East, directed by Ali Zaoua.
- Children of Heaven, a film about poverty and the human spirit, directed by Majid Majidi.
- The Breadwinner, a film about the life of a young girl in Afghanistan, directed by Atiq Rahbar.
- The Pearl Harbor, a film about the life of a Palestinian refugee, directed by Hany Abu-Assad.
- The Promise, a film about love and war, directed by Joseph Safdieh.
A surrealistic novel from Turkey, a collection of short stories from Morocco, and a collection of popular folktales from Syria are the most recent additions to the Center's Modern Middle East Literature Series.

The next two books forthcoming in the Modern Middle East Series move its subject matter from Syria to tribal politics in Yemen and the Islam movement in Iran. Shelyak Weir's ethnographic study A Tribal Order: Politics and Law in the Mountains of Yemen, which is due to be published at the end of this year, is based on her field research beginning in the 1970s on the tribes of a remote area called Jabal Razih in the northwest highlands of Yemen. Of interest not only for specialists on Yemen, but for scholars of law, tribal politics, and politics more broadly, Weir's study works against the common image of tribal politics as chaotic, violent, or lacking effective structures for government or dispute mediation. Instead, Weir analyzes the complexity of tribal social and political organization, the connection between forms of violence and structures of mediation, and the sophisticated and changing relationship between tribes and the state.

With a planned publication in fall 2007, Farhang Rajaei's book, presently titled Islam and Modernity: A Century of Islam-Centered Discourse in Iran, offers a nuanced analysis of the impact of Islamic and modernity in the face of this radicalism. The Center is proud to welcome these new additions to the Modern Middle East Series, which began in 1976 and has published 22 books to date. For more information on these and other titles in the series, see http://www.utexas.edu/cola/centralseries/publications or http://www.utexas.edu/utpress/subjects/cmes.html.

The most recent addition to the series comes from popular Turkish writer Nazli Eray, whose novel has been translated by scholar and diplomat Robert Finn, with an introduction by Sibel Erol, senior lecturer in Turkish language and literature at New York University. Set in a rapidly urbanizing coastal resort town, Eray's novel is told from the perspective of a modern Eurydice who attempts to “relive” the Orpheus myth in 1980s junta-ruled Turkey. As Eurydice and her enigmatic assistant repeatedly return to an archaeological site from which they watch Orpheus' tale, the narrative weaves together seemingly disparate, often humorous threads—from a statute that commemorates the only letters delivered by a carrier pigeon, to a personified capital city of Ankara who brings streets and developments to the resort town, to pieces of the Bertolucci film Last Tango in Paris. In Eray’s novel, the Orpheus myth is expropriated and elaborated by Finn’s translation, the novel leads readers into a world that straddles history, myth, and fantasy, engaging such themes as modernity and the limits of historical vision.

In fall 2005, the Center published a collection of new stories by acclaimed Armenian writer Lela Abouzeid, author of the Center's best-selling translation Year of the Elephant: A Moroccan Woman's Journey toward Independence (1989). Translated by Abouzeid herself and with an introduction by the Center’s own Elizabeth Fernese, The Director and Other Stories from Morocco deals with issues both traditional and modern—relations between parents and children, between husbands and wives, and between citizens of newly independent Morocco and its new nationalist representative government. Independence from French colonial rule brought many changes to Morocco, and Abouzeid’s stories show us how these changes have affected ordinary men and women, how small everyday events loom large in individual lives. Abouzeid, who lives in Rabat, Morocco, writes first in Arabic, a political choice that makes her a literal representative of North Africa, where, until recently, most authors wrote in French.

Finally, in 2004 the Center published Folktales from Syria. Syrian poet Samir Tahan has gathered folktales from old men sitting outside their houses in Aleppo, drinking tea. Afraid these stories would disappear with the passing of this generation, Tahan also went to halls and events to hear professional storytellers and record their performances. Anthropologist Arina Rugh helped translate the resulting stories from the original Arabic and wrote the informative introduction to this collection. Some of the tales appeared in Middle Eastern folktales in Arabic and some were based on events that are said to have actually taken place in Aleppo. With two of the poems, the Arabic and the English are shown side by side in order to demonstrate the interdependencies of the storehouse of the original rhymes. Professional illustrator Douglas Rugh has provided transliterated Arabic text, notes, and other titles in the series, see http://www.utexas.edu/cola/centralseries/publications or http://www.utexas.edu/utpress/subjects/cmes.html.

LITERATURES IN TRANSLATION SERIES GROWS WITH GRANT TO PUBLISH PERSIAN TRANSLATIONS

The Society of Iranian American Women for Education, based in Houston, is a nonprofit organization dedicated to strengthening relationships between Iranians and Americans. Funded by donations from the community, the group provides scholarships to college students of Iranian origin, organizes community seminars, and promotes Iranian culture by sponsoring cultural events, lectures, films, and performances. The next book forthcoming in the Modern Middle East Series moves its subject matter from Syria to tribal politics in Yemen and the Islam movement in Iran. Shelyak Weir's ethnographic study A Tribal Order: Politics and Law in the Mountains of Yemen, which is due to be published at the end of this year, is based on her field research beginning in the 1970s on the tribes of a remote area called Jabal Razih in the northwest highlands of Yemen. Of interest not only for specialists on Yemen, but for scholars of law, tribal politics, and politics more broadly, Weir's study works against the common image of tribal politics as chaotic, violent, or lacking effective structures for government or dispute mediation. Instead, Weir analyzes the complexity of tribal social and political organization, the connection between forms of violence and structures of mediation, and the sophisticated and changing relationship between tribes and the state.

With a planned publication in fall 2007, Farhang Rajaei's book, presently titled Islam and Modernity: A Century of Islam-Centered Discourse in Iran, teaches four generations of Islamic thinking and politics in Iran. Drawing on a wealth of primary sources ranging from letters and journals to personal interviews with protagonists of the movement, Rajaei follows the shifting encounter between Islamism and modernity from the radicalism of the post-Khomeini period and finally to a more progressive generation who advocate for a balanced relationship of Islamic and modernity in the face of this radicalism.

The Center is proud to welcome these new additions to the Modern Middle East Series, which began in 1976 and has published 22 books to date. For more information on these and other titles in the series, see http://www.utexas.edu/cola/centralseries/publications or http://www.utexas.edu/utpress/subjects/cmes.html.
Program News

The Center for Middle Eastern Studies once again conducted its faculty-led study abroad program, Mediterranean Crossroads, in the spring and summer of 2006. Mediterranean Crossroads is an interdisciplinary program devoted to the in-depth study of the lands and societies of the eastern Mediterranean in the past and present. Through a combination of coursework, four weeks of in-country travel, and individual research, the program offers students an exciting opportunity to study and experience first-hand the rich heritage and complex realities of a region that occupies a unique place in world history. Students explored a wide range of issues, from religion and language to space and identity, as a way of appreciating the forces that have shaped the region's landscapes and societies.

The program was directed by Kamran Afghahi, Professor of Middle Eastern Studies at UT, and Amy Pedahzur, Associate Professor of Government. The eleven students—nine undergraduates and two graduate students—represented a variety of academic majors and interests. In the spring semester, students attended a required seminar course that provided background information and a structural overview. The seminar explored a wide range of topics from the ancient period to the present, lectures addressing a wide range of topics were organized by the Egyptian Fulbright Commission, utilizing faculty from Egypt’s most prestigious universities and institutions. In addition, students met with representatives from the Aga Khan Trust for Culture’s Historic Cities Revitalization Programme to learn more about efforts for sustainable development and urban renewal in the city’s historic core.

A side trip to Alexandria provided the chance for students to visit the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, a $500 million-dollar state-of-the-art facility intended to revitalize the city as a center for learning and research in the eastern Mediterranean. In route, the group also visited the Coptic monasteries in Wadi Natrun, an important center for religious thought and pilgrimage since the ancient period.

In the fall semester, each student will complete an independent research project based on their work in the spring and summer under the guidance of Dr. Afghahi and Dr. Pedahzur. The seminar is tentatively scheduled to run again in the summer of 2007.

Mediterranean Crossroads Program 2006

Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation Helps Create $12 Million Center for Jewish Studies

The University of Texas at Austin will be home to the new $12 million Schusterman Center for Jewish Studies, thanks in part to a $6 million challenge grant from the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation, and to the original grant-proposal by Adam Zachary Newton, chair of the Jewish Studies committee. The College of Liberal Arts has committed to raising the matching $6 million over the next five years to start the Center. The first of its kind in Texas, the Center will be dedicated to enhancing the understanding and appreciation of Jewish history, culture, and religion through outreach throughout the university and across the nation.

The Schusterman Center will greatly expand the range and depth of UT’s Jewish Studies offerings across multiple disciplines. The Center will support three new endowed faculty chairs in Jewish history, Jewish thought, and cultural studies, as well as two new professorships in literature and the social sciences. In addition to offering scholarships to attract outstanding students in Jewish Studies, the Center will also foster a stimulating intellectual environment for undergraduates, students, and faculty, with funding to support faculty research, endowments for lecture series, symposia, special events, and exhibits.

Reflecting the goal of making UT one of the top institutions for Jewish Studies, the Schusterman Center will complement programs and resources already at the university, among them the Jewish Studies and Hebrew Studies programs, the extensive Judaica collections held by the university libraries, and the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center’s Gotthold Ephraim Lessing collection and archives of notable Jewish writers.

MES Developing Online Resource for Persian Language Learning

MES is developing an online resource for Persian language learning. Continuing to stand at the forefront of innovative techniques for teaching Middle Eastern languages, UT is turning its attention to creating new resources for learning Persian. The College of Liberal Arts is raising $100,000 in funding that allows MES to hire a dedicated professional who will develop a set of online language learning tools designed for language learning and instruction. Conceptualized by Professor M.R. Ghanoonparvar, who teaches Persian languages and literature at the project is a collaboration between Middle Eastern Studies and the College of Liberal Arts Instructional Technology Services, and we participate that it will be completed over the course of the next four years. The interactive, multimedia will include an online grammar of Persian, an English-Persian and Persian-English dictionary, Persian language courses for beginners and advanced students, and an instructional unit on Persian culture and society for schools in the United States and abroad.

These resources will be used for courses at UT and other institutions, and they will be available free of charge to the general public. The project organizers hope the resource will eventually serve as a means for connecting teachers and students around the world, and they would like to incorporate pages covering various aspects of Persian culture, from topography to history, from Persian literature to the visual arts, from the interests of the youth in today’s Iran to their counterparts abroad.

Dr. Koorosh Angali, who joins UT and MES in the fall of 2006 as a Senior Research Fellow, has been invited to work with Dr. Ghanoonparvar to launch the project. Angali received his first B.A. in Public Relations in 1973, his M.A. in Fine Arts from The College of Mass Communication Sciences at Tehran. In 1976 he migrated to the United States, and he received his sec- ond B.A. in Fine Arts from Humboldt State University in 1980. In 1993 he enrolled in the Department of Near Eastern Studies, at the University of California, Berkeley, where he received his M.A. in 1998, and his Ph.D. in 2004, both in Iranian Studies. Until June 2006, he taught Persian Syntax and Grammar at the University of California at Berkeley and at De Anza Commu- nity College in Cupertino, California. In addition to his work as a language instructor, Angali is also accomplished as a writer, artist, musician, and actor. In 1997 he published a compilation of his Persian poetry titled In Search of One’s Own Self (Nastrá- khet Publishers, Los Angeles, California). His art exhibitions include: Life As Art Life, a group-show held in 2005, and exhibitions at the Seymour Gallery in Tehran (2002). He is also the first prize winner of the Ovisi Gallery Art Contest (1996) and Humboldt State University Art Contest (1980).
The Center for Middle Eastern Studies is pleased to welcome new faculty member Sonia Seeman, who takes up a position as Assistant Professor of Ethnomusicology beginning Fall 2006. Dr. Seeman specializes in the music of Roma (or Gypsy) communities, and her scholarship and academic interests extend beyond this field. In her M.A. and Ph.D. programs at the University of California Santa Barbara (UCSB), she was a lecturer in ethnomusicology from 2004 to 2006, and where she previously held a two-year post-doctoral faculty fellowship that began in 2002. While at UCSB, she taught a variety of courses covering the music of Turkey, Ottoman communities, Roma communities, and Western Europe. She also participated in seminars on ethnomusicological theory, world popular music, and the anthropology of music.

Seeman received her Ph.D. in Ethnomusicology from UCLA in 2002. Her dissertation, “You’re Roman!” Music and identity in Turkish Roman Communities,” investigated the cultural construction of Roma social identity by exploring the tension between music as lived experience and socially and politically constructed from the Byzantine and Ottoman periods through the present. Continuing to pursue her scholarly interests in Roma, Ottoman, and modern Turkish music, Seeman has articles published and forthcoming in Middle East Studies Association Bulletin, Ethnomusicology Forum, and Music and Anthropology. Most recently, she has been researching the emergent Turkish cultural expressions in the wake of the European Union accession processes. As a past Fulbright IIE, Fulbright Hayes, and Social Science Research Council grant recipient, she has done field research in Macedonia and Southeastern Europe (1995-97; 1999) and in Turkey (1995-1999; 2003), studying Ottoman-derived musical traditions, Macedonian wedding music and rituals, and the impact of transnational music market networks on Roma musical practice.

Seeman’s interest in Roma and Turkish music extends beyond her scholarly research. A performer herself, Seeman plays the Turkish Çaturlama clarinet and has performed in the UCSB Middle East Music Ensemble and with Turkish ensemble Garip Bülünül, under the direction of Ergün Tamer, in Los Angeles. In Austin, she plans to organize a Middle East Ensemble that will specialize in music of the former Ottoman Empire, modern Turkey, the Arab world, and North Africa. She also has produced a cross-disciplinary research project in collaboration with Thracian clarinetist Selm Sades, written liner notes for CDs of Roma and Turkish music, and served as an ethnographic consultant for the Ta-Tek Dance Initiative.

The Center for Middle Eastern Studies is pleased to welcome new faculty member Yoav Gelber to UT for the 2006-2007 school year. Yoav Gelber, Schusterman Visiting Professor of Israeli Studies, is Professor of Law at Ben-Gurion University in Israel. Gelber received his Ph.D. in political science and international relations from the University of Haifa. He has twice won the Izhak Sade Award for his book on the topic of the Jewish State and the Holy Land. Gelber is the author of seventeen books on Israeli history, most recently Israeli-Jordanian Dialogue, 1948-1953: Cooperation, Conspiracy, or Collision? (2004) and History, Memory, and Propaganda, which will be published in both Hebrew and English. Other books have treated diverse subjects including Jewish Palestinian atrocities in the British Army during World War II; the history of the Israeli military and intelligence service; and the relationships among Israel, Palestine, and the Arab states.

Yoav Gelber holds extensive experience in public service. In his new position, he will continue his research and teaching on issues of Israeli-Jordanian history, and he will contribute to the Center’s mission, and we wish him all the best in his new position.
CMES WELCOMES NEW MIDDLE EAST LIBRARIAN

R obin Dougherty joined the University of Texas Libraries and the Center for Middle Eastern Studies in March 2006, as the new Middle East Librarian. She comes to Austin from Cairo, where she was formerly Head of Collection Development for the American University of Cairo Library. Dougherty received her Master of Information and Library Science (MLS) degree from the University of Michigan; her M.A. in Contemporary Arab Studies from George-town University; and her B.A. in Oriental Studies from the University of Pennsyl-

vania.

Dougherty, who is fluent in Arabic and has lived in Egypt and the United Arab Emirates, originally became interested in the Middle East by way of an- cient Egypt. She studied Egyptology as an undergraduate and first traveled to Egypt in 1981 to work on two archaeo-

logical digs. While the experience taught her that she wasn’t cut out for life on a dig, it spurred her interest in contempo-

r ary Egypt. After graduating in 1982 she returned to graduate school to study Ar-

abic. She participated in the CASA and Middlebury summer programs, then in

1985-86 spent a year with the CASA pro-

gram in Cairo, during which she also per-

formed as a dancer with the Reda Troupe for Contemporary Arts. Dougherty catalogs her M.A. in Contemporary Arab Studies at Georgetown University in 1988. She re-

turned to Egypt that year as an editor-

ial intern at the American University in Cairo Press. After the internship came to an end, she stayed on at AUC as Cultural Programs Officer in the Office of Public Relations until 1991.

Planning to build on her background in Arabic to become a subject-specialist librarian, Dougherty entered the Uni-

versity of Michigan’s Library School in 1991, the first student in that program to also be awarded a Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) fellowship for Middle Eastern Studies. After complet-

ing her degree in 1993, Dougherty held positions as an Arabic cataloguer for the United Arab Emirates University Library; Middle East Bibliographer for the Univer-

sity of Pennsylvania Library; and Senior Cataloguer for the Library of Congress, Middle East/North Africa Division. When her husband, Walter Armbrecht, accepted a position in the Middle East Centre at St. Antony’s College of Oxford University in 2001, she moved to England with him and worked at the Oriental Insti-

tute in London. She is now cataloguing Arabic, Persian, and Hebrew materials. While in Oxford, Dougherty also served as the Research Libraries Group’s Mem-

ber Services Officer for Europe and the Middle East. She returned to Egypt in 2004 to lead collection development for the AUC Library, where she worked until she arrived at UT.

One of Dougherty’s primary goals in her new position is to integrate technolo-

gies more effectively into daily library op-

erations for the Middle East collections. Eventually, she would like to enable the public to see more easily what materials are on open-shelf languages, and to make it possible to view and search records containing Arabic script in the public catalogue. She also plans to evaluate and expand the library’s pe-

riodical subscriptions for Middle East-

ern Studies, and—building on her own experience in Egypt—she would like to develop a collection of classic Egyptian cinema resources for the collection.

STUDENT & ALUMNI NEWS

Hope Fitzgerald: (Ph.D. student, Geography) studied Arabic at the Uni-

versity of Jordan in Amman during the summer 2006 semester. She will be a CMES Center for Arabic Study Abroad fellow in the 2006-07 Academic Year.

Hanan Hammad: (Ph.D. candidate, History; MA, Middle Eastern Studies) returned from Egypt with the CASA Center for Arabic Study Abroad during the summer semester of 2006. She plans to spend the 2006-07 academic year in Egypt on a Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad Grant to research “Industrialization and Social Transformation in Modern Egypt: al-Ma-
halla al-Kubra 1910-1958.” Hanan and her husband, James Patrick Reidy wel-

comed their second child, Leyla Sanaa Reidy, in early August.

Christopher Micklethwait: (Ph.D. student, Comparative Literature) stud-

ied Arabic with CASA (Center for Arabic Study Abroad) during the summer semester of 2006.

New Staff Join Middle Eastern Studies

The Middle Eastern Studies programs are pleased to welcome Michael Godwin as our new Financial Affairs Coordinator. Godwin joins UT from the private sector, where he has served in a variety of administrative positions. Most recently, he was the Admin-

istrative Operations Manager for an Austin-based electronics company.

Godwin is a veteran of the United States Navy. He served for four years as an engineer on board the USS Independence-air-

craft carrier, which was stationed in Yokosuka, Japan. Most of his service was completed over the course of several tours of duty in the Persian Gulf; where he had the opportunity to make repeated visits to the United Arab Emirates, Oman, and Bahrain.

Godwin was drawn to his position here not only by his interest in the Middle East, but by his academic interests. He completed his M.A. in Religious Studies, with a research concentration in Biblical Hebrew and Second Temple Judaism, from Loyola University of New Orleans in 2003. He received his B.A. in Comparative Literature and Modern Middle Eastern Studies from the University of Michigan in 2001, and has lived in Egypt and the United Arab Emirates, originally became inter-

ested in Egyptology as a child. She studied Egyptology as an undergraduate and first traveled to Egypt to work on two archae-

ological digs. While the experience taught her that she wasn’t cut out for life on a dig, it spurred her interest in contempo-

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ern Studies, and—building on her own experience in Egypt—she would like to develop a collection of classic Egyptian cinema resources for the collection.

STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP AND FELLOWSHIP AWARDS

Continuing fellowships

• Matthew Boris (M.A. program, CMES): University Con-

tinuing Fellowship
• David Ingram (M.A. program, CMES): University Bru-

ton Fellowship
• Luke Peterson (M.A. program, CMES): University Bru-

ton Fellowship
• Ahmed Zaheer (Ph.D. program, Arabic): University Tu-

ition Fellowship

2006-2007 Pre-empptive fellowships

• Joanna Canoiva (M.A. program, Hebrew)
• Adrienne Dunlap (M.A. program, CMES)

CMES Scholarships

• Mahyar Entezari (M.A. program, CMES)
• Dan Gilman (Ph.D. program, Anthropology)
• Kudsi Markos (M.A. program, CMES)
• Cameron Tibbott (M.A. program, CMES)
• Christopher Ulack (M.A. program, CMES)

Ann Grabhorn-Friday Scholarship

Alyssa Miller (M.A. program, CMES)

Hibbs scholarship for 2006-2007

• Adam Kamen (Jewish Studies)

Hebrew Studies Scholarships

Graduate students:

• Holly Blaisdeller (M.A. program, Hebrew)
• Andy Bredstein (Ph.D. program, Hebrew)
• John Messick (M.A. program, Hebrew)
• Michal Raizen (M.A. program, Hebrew)

Undergraduate students:

• Carli Bitting (Journalism)
• African Studies (Plan II)
• Daniel Rabinstein (Government)
• Erin Selleck (Government)

Various University Awards

• John Baskerville (Ph.D. program, Arabic): Academy Professorship (West Point)
• Patrick Boyle (M.A. program, Persian): COLA Fellow-

ship
• Lella Devari (M.A. program, Persian: McNair Fellow-

ship and COLA Fellowship
• Joanna Dills (M.A. program, Hebrew: Pre-emptive Fel-

lowship and Jewish Studies Fellowship
• Shon Hopkins (Ph.D. program, Hebrew): Fellowship
• Alexander Magidov (M.A. program, Arabic: Graduate Recruitment Fellowship and COLA Fellowship
• Mu Torg (M.A. program, Arabic): COLA Fellowship
• Marjina Yousif-Halper (Ph.D. program, Hebrew: Graduate Recruitment Fellowship and Jewish Studies Fellowship

NEW STAFF JOIN MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES

Dahl comes to UT from CASA (Center for Arabic Studies at the University of Jordan) where she was an administrative assistant working on travel, professional services authorizations, and special projects such as the Keene Prize for Liter-

ature and Explore UT. She received her B.A. in Linguistics and Spanish from UT-Austin in 2004. Dahl took over as Graduate Coordinator following the retirement this year of Diane Watts. The Center’s graduate coordinator for over 26 years, Watts helped hundreds of students through admission, course registration, and graduation. Also the artist for the Center, Watts designed the covers for most of the books in the Center’s Modern Middle Eastern Literatures in Translation series. Her photogra-

phy is on display in the 6th Floor hallway in the West Mall Build-

![Image](https://via.placeholder.com/150)

![Image](https://via.placeholder.com/150)
Among the highlights of the Mediterranean Crossroads program (see p. 10) was a performance by the Egyptian Heritage Tannoura Sufi Dance Troup at the newly restored Wikala of Sultan al-Ghuri in Cairo.