

Welcome to the 2010 Newsletter of the Department of Middle Eastern Studies

The Department of Middle Eastern Studies (DMES) has gone from strength to strength since the publication of the first issue of this Newsletter. Undergraduate and postgraduate numbers are healthy; the Department has served as host to two ESRC Post-doctoral Fellows, Dr Amy Rowe and Dr Ashraf Abdelhay; we have organised a number of successful conferences and symposia; and staff have played an active role nationally and internationally in their respective fields.

The Centre of Islamic Studies, a University institution but with strong links to DMES, has produced a high profile report for the Department of Communities and Local Government, *Contextualising Islam in Britain: Exploratory Perspectives*. The report and its associated project won handsome praise from the House of Commons Select Committee on Communities and Local Government in April of this year. As a result a second report has been commissioned and will be published in 2011. In 2010, the Centre has run a successful joint programme with the University of Azhar in Cairo to train graduates of Dar al-Uloms in the UK in the Islamic sciences. This programme is set to continue next year.

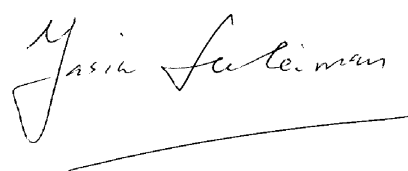


This year sees the retirement from the Department of one colleague after years of long and distinguished service: Dr Basim Musallam (Arabic and Islamic Studies). We offer him our heartfelt thanks and wish him good luck for the future. Dr Amy Rowe and Dr Ashraf Abdelhay finished their terms of office as ESRC Post-doctoral Fellows in April. We thank them for their contributions to the Department and wish them good luck in their future careers. We are also grateful to Ms Sabah Al Balushi, Sultan Qaboos University, Oman for her valuable contribution to our language teaching in Lent and Easter Terms. The students will miss her next year.

Paul Anderson has been appointed as HRH Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Lecturer in DMES and as Assistant Director of the Centre of Islamic Studies. He will take up his post in February 2011. Dr Saeko Yazaki, a specialist on Islamic Studies, has been appointed Administrative and Outreach Officer at the Centre to assist the Director in the next phase of developing the work of the Centre nationally and internationally.

Finally, a good-bye from me is in order. I will step down as Head of Department at the end of September 2010 after three exciting years at the helm that saw the three parts of the new Department – Arabic, Hebrew and Persian – develop a coherent identity. I will continue as Director of the Centre of Islamic Studies, but will be followed in the post of Head of Department by Professor Charles Melville. I wish him good luck in his new role.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all my colleagues in DMES, the Chair of the Faculty – who will be retiring from Office at the same time as me and the Head of East Asian Studies – and the Faculty Administrator and her staff for the support they have given me as Head during the past few years. And to Carol Pleasance who will be leaving us at some point before the end of November, a big thank you. The Faculty will not be the same without her.



Yasir Suleiman
Head of Department

Inside...

New Appointment	2
Staff Spotlight	2
Student News	5
Faculty Events	6
Conferences and events	6
Dates for Your Diary	9
Publications	9
Library News	9
Faculty Staff News	10
DMES Staff	11
Staying in touch	16

New Appointment



Paul Anderson

The Department warmly congratulates Paul Anderson on his appointment to the Assistant Directorship of the Centre for Islamic Studies and the HRH Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal University Lectureship in Islamic Studies.

"I am an anthropologist with research interests in exchange, trust, ethics, Islam and the Middle East. I have recently carried out ethnographic fieldwork among traders in Aleppo in northern Syria, and am currently completing my PhD thesis at the University of Edinburgh.

My doctoral research focuses on the yarn and fabric trades in Aleppo, and more broadly on the social and moral aspects of contemporary economic liberalisation in Syria. I am particularly interested in the way in which commodities are traded – and the basis of trust in the transaction – can tell us about the wider moral, social and political environment. For example, by examining ethnographically the different ways that Aleppan merchants trade yarn in commercial and financial operations, the different temporalities that the yarn can have, and the way that moral discourses are deployed to organise these contradictory futures, I am exploring actors' views about how the market should work, and what the wider moral and social responsibilities of traders are.

My first degree was in Arabic and Islamic Studies at the University of Oxford, where I specialised in modern Islamic intellectual history. After graduating I worked briefly in Morocco before joining the UK Civil Service, where I was a desk officer and policy adviser in the Cabinet Office and at the Department for Transport. During a period of four years in Whitehall, I was involved in managing the development of policy on issues varying from the UK's human rights commitments to the renewal of London Underground's infrastructure. While I enjoyed learning how government and Parliament operate, I missed the intellectual stimulation of the university environment, and returned to the academic world in 2006. I retrained as an anthropologist at the University of Edinburgh, with a focus on the Arab world. I was fortunate to be based at the Centre for Advanced Study of the Arab World (www.casaw.ed.ac.uk) and, during my fieldwork, at the French Institute in Aleppo (www.ifporient.org). I am delighted that I chose to specialise

in anthropology because it gives me a fascinating opportunity to study the complexity of everyday life in varied settings – exploring how the "big issues" that interest economists, political scientists, historians and moral philosophers actually emerge in ordinary and sometimes intimate settings.

At Edinburgh, I tutored courses in Arabic language and Modern Middle Eastern history, and was involved in designing and organising a number of outreach projects, exploring aspects of Arabic language teaching at schools and universities in the UK, methods of conducting research in the Middle East, and issues facing the teaching of Islamic Studies at higher education institutions. Most recently I was involved in producing a report, with Professor Yasir Suleiman, called "Contextualising Islam in Britain: Exploratory Perspectives". This project brought together Muslim scholars, academics, leaders and activists of diverse backgrounds from across the UK, and covered a wide range of issues including secularism, democracy, Shariah law, human rights and citizenship. The report is available at www.cis.cam.ac.uk/CIBPReportWeb.pdf.

In the coming years I hope to build on my doctoral research through a new project on Muslim entrepreneurs in the Diaspora in the UK and Europe, exploring the intersection of ethics, commerce, regulation, and concepts of legal, moral and religious accountability. I am delighted to be joining the Department of Middle Eastern Studies and the HRH Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Centre for Islamic Studies, and look forward to meeting many of you early next year".

Staff Spotlight

Dr Amira K. Bennison

On 18 March 2010, the Department of Middle Eastern Studies and the HRH Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Centre for Islamic Studies welcomed an FCO-sponsored delegation of four Afghan clerics from Helmand province. Dr Amira K. Bennison talked to the clerics about the Department and the degrees it offers and also about projects run by the Centre. The clerics were particularly interested in learning about the Contextualising Islam in Britain project directed by Professor Yasir Suleiman and about a pilot project run by the Centre in conjunction with al-Azhar University in Cairo to further the education of clerics from Islamic seminaries. The clerics also enjoyed looking at a display of items from the Faculty Library including an early published edition of Avicenna's *Qānūn fī'l-Ṭibb*. During their visit to Cambridge, the delegation also visited the Faculty of Divinity and the Muslim College.

February 2010 saw the start of a two year Leverhulme Trust project directed by Dr Amira K. Bennison with the assistance of Dr James Brown, who recently gained his PhD in the Department. The project will explore and compare notions of political legitimacy in Nasrid Granada and Marinid Morocco from the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries by analysing an assortment of Arabic chronicles, travel accounts, and reports of embassies to show how these dynasties justified and presented their rule to their subjects as well as to visitors from the Islamic east and from Europe. It will look at language, ritual and also space - the palaces these rulers built and the way they modified the cities in which they lived - to present a multi-faceted view of legitimation in the medieval Islamic west. As well as reading texts, the project team will spend time in the Alhambra, the Nasrid's most famous palace, and also in Fes, whose most beautiful monuments, the *madrasas*, date to the Marinid period. As the project develops, a website will be established enabling scholars and students to read the words of cynical courtiers, partisan historians, and awed visitors on the Nasrids and Marinids and view images of their most renowned buildings as

well as discover bibliographic materials on the topic. As part of the project, the Department will host a workshop conference on Political Legitimacy in the Islamic West in July 2011.

In January 2010, *The Great Caliphs: The Golden Age of the Abbasid Caliphate* (London: I B Tauris, 2009) by Amira K. Bennison was runner-up in the Longman-History Today Book of the Year Award 2009.

Professor Geoffrey Khan

The Encyclopaedia of Hebrew Language and Linguistics

Geoffrey Khan is currently working as the general editor of a major encyclopaedia project on the Hebrew Language: *The Encyclopaedia of Hebrew Language and Linguistics* (Brill).

The Hebrew language has one of the longest attested histories of any of the world's languages. We have records of its use from antiquity until modern times. Although it ceased to be a spoken language by the 2nd century C.E., it continued to be used and to develop in the form of a literary and liturgical language until its revival as a vernacular in the twentieth century. The majority of research on the Hebrew language has concentrated on specific periods of the language. Traditionally biblical Hebrew has received the most attention, but in recent decades there has been a flourishing of important scholarship in the post-biblical and modern forms of the language. Although a few overviews of the language as a whole have been published, it is beyond their scope to bring together in a systematic way accounts of the full range of scholarly research on the Hebrew language. The *Encyclopaedia of Hebrew Language and Linguistics* will be a reference work that offers a systematic and comprehensive treatment of the Hebrew language from its earliest attested form to the present day. It will contain approximately 1,000 entries that provide authoritative information on all aspects of the history and study of the Hebrew language. Overview articles will provide a readable synopsis of current knowledge of the major periods and varieties of the Hebrew language. Thematically-organized entries will provide further information on individual topics, including the Hebrew of various sources (texts, manuscripts, inscriptions, reading traditions); major grammatical features (phonology, morphology and syntax); script and paleography; linguistic thought from medieval to modern times; the relation of various neighbouring languages to Hebrew; the influence of other languages on Hebrew; and Hebrew elements in various other languages.

The North-Eastern Neo-Aramaic Database Project

Aramaic has survived into modern times as the spoken vernacular language of Christian and Jewish communities in the Middle East. Most of these spoken Neo-Aramaic dialects are now in danger of extinction. Our Department is currently a leading centre of research on Neo-Aramaic. Numerous graduates in the Department have written PhD. theses on this topic. In 2005 a major project was initiated, funded by the AHRC under the direction of Geoffrey Khan with the aim of systematically documenting the group of Neo-Aramaic dialects known as North Eastern Neo-Aramaic (NENA). This is the group that contains the greatest diversity of dialects, numbering approximately 150 in total, spoken in northern Iraq, south-eastern Turkey and north-western Iran, all of which are now endangered. Fieldtrips were undertaken by Geoffrey Khan and his two Research Associates (Eleanor Coghill and Roberta Borghero) among the surviving native speakers, most of whom are now scattered around the world. The fieldwork included trips to USA (Detroit, Chicago), Australia (Sydney), New Zealand (Auckland), Europe (France, Sweden), the Caucasus (Armenia, Georgia) and Israel. Informants were identified by means of extensive social networking within the communities and linguistic data were gathered in the form of a grammatical and lexical questionnaire and free monologue speech of various types (narratives, ethnographic



descriptions, oral poetry). The field data were recorded digitally. We now have recordings of approximately 140 dialects. For a large proportion of these we have full or near full questionnaire data. The documented dialects include some that are now highly endangered. In some cases the final speaker of a dialect was interviewed. The final speaker of the Christian dialect of Bedyel (Northern Iraq), for example, was located in Auckland, New Zealand. The final speaker of the Jewish dialect of Qal'adze (Northern Iraq) was located in a small town near Jerusalem, Israel.

A key and innovative element in our project was the construction of the NENA database (NENAD), which has been developed by an IT team (Mariko Brittain, Mark Wilding) to accommodate and process the diversity of the dialects in the NENA group. It allows efficient retrieval of linguistic data for individual dialects from a relational MySQL database. In addition to being a source of linguistic data for academics, aiming at a systematic coverage of the dialect group, the website is intended to allow members of the Aramaic speaking communities themselves to have access to descriptions and audio recordings of the dialects. It will preserve for them the endangered linguistic heritage of their communities.

Further funding for the documentation of Neo-Aramaic has been received from the Newton Trust and the Golden Web Foundation, which has supported the post of a further Research Associate (Alinda Damsma).



Dr Lori Allen

As an Academy Scholar at the Harvard Academy for International and Area Studies during the 2009-2010 academic year, Dr Lori Allen has been writing a book entitled *Victims of Politics: Human Rights Contradictions and the Paradox of Palestine*. It is an anthropological exploration of the social, political, and economic work of human rights

in Palestine over the last thirty years. Based on nearly three years of ethnographic fieldwork in the occupied Palestinian territories since the outbreak of the second intifada in 2000, this study traces the ways in which the legacy of human rights practices as they were developed to end the Israeli occupation have become implicated in contemporary Palestinian political battles—between the Palestinian Authority (PA) and citizens, between civil society and the PA and citizens, as well as between rival political factions, Fateh and Hamas.

The human rights system comprises a conglomeration of organizations, ideologies, activists, discourses and declarations. As its institutions, activists, workers, and public discourse have become increasingly visible and voluble in Palestine, especially since the

1980s, this system has come to infuse the ways in which Palestinians from all walks of life – from politicians and representatives of civil society, to militants and random victims of violations – speak and relate to outsiders and to each other. Human rights organizations and the human rights categories by which Palestinians speak their claims for justice have informed how Palestinians see themselves, how they provide nationalist pedagogy, and how they create solidarities and project their aspirations internationally.

To get at these stories, Dr Allen has interviewed and worked with a variety of human rights practitioners. She talked with the founders of the first Palestinian human rights organization, who set it up in 1979 with the hope of explaining the occupation to the world through law, as well as representatives of Hamas. They explained the universality of human rights principles, based in the nature of people's closeness to God which makes everyone "brothers in humanity anywhere, no matter where." The director of the Human Rights and Democracy Unit in the Ministry of Interior in the West Bank, tried to explain how "the PA is intent on deepening the concepts of a modern state, built on the principles of democracy, pluralism, respect of freedoms and human rights." Dr Allen also participated in numerous human rights training workshops, where she observed how Palestinians are being taught what they should expect from their fellow citizens, what to demand of the Palestinian state-in-the-making, and what they are entitled to from the international community. Talking with these trainees, from members of the police and other security services to refugee youth, illuminated the effect of these courses in forming the political horizons, and the political subjectivities, of diverse rights trainees in sometimes conflicting ways. Research also involved volunteering at a children's rights organization during the height of the second intifada, observing the round-the-clock efforts of people trying to document the effects of the fighting. This prompted questions as to why the nature of human rights work changed dramatically between the first and second intifadas, as suffering and victimhood came to the fore in the graphic photographed representations of the dead and injured.

In sum, *Victims of Politics* focuses on the dialectical interaction between, on the one hand, the role of human rights in political claims and their framings for international interlocutors, and on the other, the role of human rights in Palestinian state creation and the formation of local governance and political subjectivity. The book explores what kind of Palestinian political subject is being produced at this intersection of liberal rights ideals and people's daily realities, where they try to find a balance between their pragmatic and material concerns on the one hand, and their moral principles that are informed by long years of nationalist struggle against occupation on the other. As such, *Victims of Politics* reveals the strains of ethical discourse that are a core element of the Palestinian public sphere. And it makes a theoretical argument about the necessity of incorporating analysis of practices of moral judgment into our understandings of nation-state politics more generally. Ultimately, it argues that the increased importance of human rights has had profoundly paradoxical results for Palestinians and for the conflict more generally. It tells the story of how human rights have become a central aspect of international governance and Palestinian efforts at state-making, and, unexpectedly, a key part of the struggles against both forms of power.

Professor Nicholas de Lange

Nicholas de Lange has been awarded a major research grant (value just under 1 million euros) by the European Research Council for a three-year project entitled 'Mapping the Jewish Communities of the Byzantine Empire'.

The aim of the project is to gather all firm data having both a spatial and a temporal component and relating to the Jewish minority in Byzantium, and then using GIS (Geographical Information Systems)

technology to create interactive online maps. These maps will be available to all Internet users, not just specialists. They will show not only where Jewish communities existed at various times, but also their relationship to each other and to the Byzantine and wider environment. It will also be possible to create tailor-made searches by (e.g.) occupation, gender, place of origin, and many other criteria.

The project will conduct an exhaustive search for published and unpublished sources, particularly Hebrew manuscripts, tombstones and other inscriptions, and Christian records relating to Jews.

Minority history in Byzantium has been a neglected subject, and the project aims to rectify this to some extent, using a self-contained set of data of a manageable size. Other analogous studies could follow.

Relatively little has been published about Byzantine Jewry, so the project will also make an important contribution to medieval Jewish history, by putting the Jews of Byzantium 'on the map'.

This project follows hot on the heels of another three-year project led by Nicholas de Lange, which was completed in August 2009, entitled 'The Greek Bible in Byzantine Judaism'. The aim of this project was to collect all the surviving fragments of Bible translations in Greek used by Jews in the Middle Ages, and integrating them into a fully searchable on-line corpus.

Nicholas de Lange commented: "My experience, particularly from teaching students, suggests that printed books and articles are giving way to the Internet as tools of research and for the dissemination of ideas and discoveries. Consequently both my projects have as their primary 'output' not printed volumes but websites which enable the public and specialised researchers to define the types of search that best suit their interests. I love books and hope that they will be with us for many years to come, but we academics must not be so attached to the technology of the past that we neglect the needs of our public."

Professor James Montgomery

Professor James Montgomery has been appointed as one of the two Executive Editors for the five-year, multi-million pound project, The Library of Arabic Literature, announced in February at New York University's Abu Dhabi Institute.

The Library of Arabic Literature will produce a library of the classic works of Arabic Islamic literature and culture in parallel-text editions – Arabic and English running texts on facing pages. The translations – the first of their kind in the Anglophone world – will be produced in a clear, modern idiom and will be accessible by general readers and academics alike. Editors will include leading Arabic scholars from all parts of the world, each of whom will also discuss his or her work at public workshops and lectures in Abu Dhabi and New York.

Some thirty-five works are envisaged as part of the first tier of the project and will promote a broad notion of both literature and translation, from the biography of Prophet Muhammad and the maxims of Ali b. Abi Talib to works by major religious scholars of Islam such as al-Shafi'i to Ahmad b. Hanbal, the mighty odes of the pre-Islamic Bedouins and the glorious creations of writers such as al-Jahiz and al-Ma'arri. In the first stages of the project, emphasis will be placed on works, that have not previously been translated into English, though some exceptions will be made for works of particular relevance. At the heart of the project lies the recognition that not all works will appeal to the same sort of audience, and the Editors aspire to a balance between works of a general appeal, works which may be of benefit in curricula, and works intended for the scholar. In the course of the project a number of Library of Arabic Literature Readers will be published.

In this way the Editors hope to bring to greater prominence in the Anglophone world the wonders of Arabic literature while simultaneously stressing that there is no substitute for reading these works in their original Arabic.

In September 2009, Professor Montgomery met up with Channel 4's Time-Team at the British Museum in London in order to explore the Arabic sources for the Vikings, as part of a special programme which aims to capture the shifting identities of this intriguing people. The broadcast date is yet to be announced.

In April, Professor Montgomery travelled to New York to deliver a lecture at NYU entitled: 'Reading al-Farabi with Berio and Bacon', an attempt to engineer a conversation between the tenth century Arabic philosopher Abu Nasr al-Farabi and two twentieth century European artists, the Italian composer Luciano Berio and the British artist Francis Bacon. Later that month he will be chairing a panel discussion as part of the Yale University colloquium, Conceptualising Literary History: Foundations of Arabic Literature.

Publications

Two published versions of FAMES PhD dissertations have recently featured in the Continuum Press 2010 list. Sarah Lebhar Hall has published *Conquering Character: The Characterization of Joshua in Joshua 1-11*, and Rodrigo de Sousa has published *Eschatology and Messianism in LXX Isaiah 1-12*, the latter in the Faculty-based LHOTS subseries 'The Hebrew Bible and its Versions'. Two other FAMES dissertations that will appear as HBV volumes are currently in press.

Neo-Assyrian Symposium

An international symposium sponsored jointly by Edinburgh and Cambridge Universities was held in Edinburgh on 11 and 12 December 2009, addressing the topic of prophecy in Israel and the near east in general in the Neo-Assyrian period. Fifteen speakers participated and there were two keynote lectures, by Martti Nissinen (Helsinki), 'Neo-Assyrian Prophecy in Context', and by Robert Gordon (Cambridge), 'From Mari to Nineveh: Prophecy in Assyria and Israel a Thousand Years after Mari'. The other papers were as follows: J. Schaper, 'Prophecy in Israel and Assyria: Are we Comparing Apples and Pears?'; H. Williamson, 'Isaiah - Prophet of Weal or Woe'; D. Bostock, 'Rabshakeh in 2 King 18-19; A False Prophet?'; C. Crouch, 'War Becomes Her: Istar and the Motif of the Cosmological Warrior'; L.-S. Tiemeyer, 'Were the Neo-Assyrian Prophets Intercessors? A Comparative Study of Neo-Assyrian and Israelite Prophecy'; J. Atkinson, 'SAA 3.13 as Prophetic Literature'; G. Hamborg, 'The Post-722 and Late Pre-exilic Compositions underlying the Amos-text'; J. Stökl, 'Astral Images in Neo-Assyrian Prophecy'; J. Hilber, 'Royal Cultic Prophecy in Assyria, Judah, and Egypt'; H. Barstad, 'Hosea and the Assyrians'; H. Marlow, 'Between Law and Land: Physical, Social and Religious Disjuncture in Hosea'; D. Reimer, 'Micah and Politics'; B. Becking, 'Micah in the Light of Neo-Assyrian Texts'. The proceedings of the conference will be published by Eisenbrauns, Grand Rapids.



Fond farewell

Dr Sabah Al-Balushi was welcomed to the Department this year from Sultan Qaboos University to further her interests in the teaching of Arabic language and work in the language teaching department.

"One active teaching day, on my way back from the photocopying room at the Language Center (LC) at Sultan Qaboos University (SQU), I ran

into Dr Rahma Al-Mahrouqi, the director of the LC who asked me a quick question: "Sabah, are you interested in teaching Arabic?" My answer was a simple "yes"; my memory taking me back to my two years in the United States when I used to volunteer and teach Arabic to Muslim children. "That was fun", I thought, "So why not do it again?"

I accepted to do so without even knowing that it included a training course abroad and in a university none other than the prestigious University of Cambridge! Such shocking, exquisite news!

Despite the very cold weather of the old and fascinating city of Cambridge, the warmth of the people at the Faculty of Middle Eastern Studies made my arrival a pleasant experience although there was an immediate "let's get to business", having to attend a meeting right after introducing myself. That was, I must admit, very professional and I liked it.

The Arabic language teachers, Dr Harris, Dr Marogy and Mrs Auty, were very helpful and started with explaining everything I needed to start the semester. I appreciate their trust in having me take their classes and be responsible for their students. That, for me, being the sceptical person I am, was tremendously encouraging but at the same time placed a huge burden on my shoulders for the next few months. And so it was my duty to reciprocate trust. I decided to let my actions speak for my gratitude through responsible and conscientious teaching.

Teaching the students at the Faculty has had two effects. First, I came closer to a language I was born to speak but have long forgotten to appreciate because I took it for granted. The second is that I have become more proud of having Arabic as my mother tongue. A student I supervised once said in noticeable enthusiasm: "I love Arabic; it's so beautiful".

Professor Yasir Suleiman's positive anticipation of the people to be working with him makes the latter value the experience before it even begins, which leads to the apparent success of any institution. Perhaps the only thing that I have doubts about is the University's optional attendance policy. On one hand, it is great for any student to be able to choose whether to go to a class based on their priorities and time. On the other hand, however, a language student in particular still needs the simplest interaction with the language.

This has been a valuable experience for me because I feel I have grown both as a person and teacher. I also know that it will still prove to be even more priceless, for I believe each step we take has a meaning that goes far beyond us as individuals.

Finally, I would like to thank the many people at the Faculty who have showed me kindness and helped me feel like I have always been part of the place and its 'extended family'.

Student News

Dr Eleanor Coghill

My role in the Faculty for the last five years has been as Research Associate on the North-Eastern Neo-Aramaic project, headed by Geoffrey Khan. The task of this project, funded by the AHRC, has been to document a diverse group of Neo-Aramaic dialects spoken in Iraq and surrounding countries, many of which are close to extinction. With my colleague Roberta Borghero, I travelled to such exotic places as Detroit and Sydney in search of Neo-Aramaic speakers, many of whom have left their homeland due to war and persecution.



Dr Coghill's leaving party

Now I am moving on, after spending fifteen years at the Faculty, as an undergraduate, postgraduate and finally a post-doc: I have a research fellowship at the University of Konstanz in Germany, at the recently founded research institute, the Zukunftskolleg ('Future College'). I am looking forward to conducting my own research there, perhaps in time with a small research group of my own. It is a beautiful place to live and work: by the shores of Lake Constance, with the Alps as a backdrop. But I know I will miss Cambridge and my friends at the Faculty a great deal, and will soon be looking for excuses to come back to visit.

Tripes Exam Prizes 2010

The Middle Eastern Studies Dissertation Prize

In recognition of their outstanding academic performance, the Department awarded the Middle Eastern Studies Dissertation Prize to Ms C. Santagda and Ms S. Nasralla and the R.A Nicholson Prize to Ms M. E. Storrs-Fox.

Faculty Trust Fund Awards

The Ali Reza and Mohamed Soudavar Fund for Persian Studies

Congratulations to Shivan Mahendrarajah, who was awarded £5,000 and will work on the Sufi Shaykhs of Jam in the Il-Khanid and Early Timurid Periods.

Browne Memorial Fund

Charlie Gammell was awarded £5,000 as a Studentship to fund an M.Phil.

Faculty Events

Festival of Ideas

Festival of Ideas at FAMES, 21-27 October 2009 was the second year running for Cambridge's Festival of Ideas and the second time that the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies participated in it.

The aim of the Festival is to present an opportunity for Cambridge's local community to explore various aspects of the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities. It first took place in 2008 and last year it continued to prove a highly successful venture.

The events took place over seven days. Many of the Faculty's academic staff presented seminars on their fields of expertise. Professor David McMullen gave a talk on China in the First Millennium, Professor Roel Streckx spoke about the influence of Confucius on Modern China, Professor Hans van de Ven's talk explored China during World War II. Dr Mark Morris gave a

presentation of East Asian film and Dr Brigitte Steger spoke about Japanese high school students' sleep patterns.

From the Middle Eastern Department there were contributions by Professor Charles Melville, who spoke about Persian miniature painting and the epic verse *The Shahnama – The Book of Kings*, Dr Amira Bennison, who described the Islamic world and everyday life during the 'Abbasid caliphate, and Mrs Rachel Williams, who presented the basics of Modern Hebrew.

All events were very well attended and received many enthusiastic responses. Some travelled from outside Cambridge to hear these seminars.

There were also contributions by persons from outside the Faculty and these, too, proved very successful. Mr Davidson MacLaren from the Thesaurus Islamicus Foundation presented an exhibition of the gilded prints of the Mamluk & Il-Khanid Masterpieces Collection. The Foundation also invited Mr Ahmad Faris Rizq, who came especially for this occasion from Cairo to offer two Arabic calligraphy sessions. Another Arabic calligraphy session was presented by Issam Kourbaj, Christ's College's Artist in Residence. Ms Amanda Tuck displayed a photographic slide show of the Far East from the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Finally, Mrs Yu Rong offered a workshop of Chinese paper-cutting.

The events of the Festival at the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies contribute to opening the Faculty up to the community and raising its profile among the public. They are one of the main opportunities to form a unique link between the University's institutions and the community. The enthusiastic response shows that there is a great need for such a link.

We would like to thank both Departments for their generous financial contribution, which enabled the Faculty to invite presenters external to the Faculty. Our thanks also go to the administrative staff, particularly Ms Mary Howe, for all their hard work and involvement in this venture.

Dr Marta Marzanska-Mishani

Events and Conferences

Inaugural Lecture: Professor Charles Melville



Professor Charles Melville provided a fascinating insight into, and a deeper understanding of, Iran's culture and past history at his Inaugural Lecture on 2nd October 2009. Whilst surveying a lifetime's research on different aspects of Persian history, from the study of earthquakes to Persian manuscript painting, Professor Melville discussed his interest in the recording of history: "we cannot

overlook the political and social situation in Iran at the moment, but the more we study why it is the way it is, the more likely we are to find effective ways of engaging with people”.

The Summer Hebrew ULPAN for University students 4th to 16th July

The popular course was again led by Mrs Rachel Williams, a language Teaching Officer at the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies. Students at all levels were treated to four daily hours of intensive language tuition as well as various activities including a visit to the Taylor-Schechter Genizah collection and film screenings. Feedback from last year's ULPAN can be found here: www.ames.cam.ac.uk/ulpan/feedback.html.

Graduate student-organised conference: Language and Knowledge in Middle Eastern Societies

The Department of Middle Eastern Studies Graduate Symposium, held in October, took the opportunity to recapitulate the broad theme of the previous year's conference, 'Language and Knowledge in Middle Eastern Societies'. Thanks to the generous support of the Ali Reza and Mohamed Soudavar Fund for Persian Studies, The Modern Hebrew Studies Fund and a donation from the Department of Middle Eastern Studies, together with the hospitality of the Faculty, the recently refurbished Rooms 8 and 9 played host to six panels of international academics and graduate students over three days.

Our own Professor Yasir Suleiman gave the assembled delegates from Washington, Istanbul, Oxford, Harvard, CNRS, Cairo, Georgetown, Leuven and many other universities the chance to hear (and participate in!) his Inaugural Lecture about his experiences as a consultant on Arabic language teaching reform in the Gulf.

The delegates were well looked after at Murray Edwards and Wolfson Colleges, where we discovered (again) that whilst a traditional English breakfast is not a good halal or kosher option, British cuisine proved to be, in the words of one almost delighted Turkish colleague, 'not as depressingly bad as I had expected'.

Among the many papers we heard, highlights included: Asdaq Ahmad on the late nineteenth century movement to translate the great medieval Arabic logical treatises into Urdu, and the scholarly shenanigans that went on in trying to secure patronage for the project; Professor Amnon Raz-Karakotzkin on the concepts of orientalism and secularism from a Jewish perspective; Dr Sinan Yildirmaz on the Nationalists' 'redefinition' of the Turkish peasantry after WWII; and Marc Aymes on the various strategies employed by the Ottoman government to restrict the increasing flow of counterfeit currency throughout the nineteenth century.

The conference was designed with the explicit goal of giving graduate students from the Department a chance to present their work in an atmosphere that is convivial whilst exposing them to advice and criticism from scholars and peers outside this institution. To this end, we heard, to name but a few, papers from Phoebe Luckyn-Malone on the dissemination of agricultural science in Islamic Spain, Manar Makhoul on Palestinian identity in Israel, Ignacio Sánchez on the relationship between the works of al-Shāfiʿī and al-Jāhiz, and Alice Wilson on language as a tool of revolution amongst refugees from Western Sahara.

The conference was organised by Matthew Keegan, Ignacio Sánchez and James Weaver under the direction of Professors Khan, and Suleiman, and Dr Van Ruymbeke.

Student publication

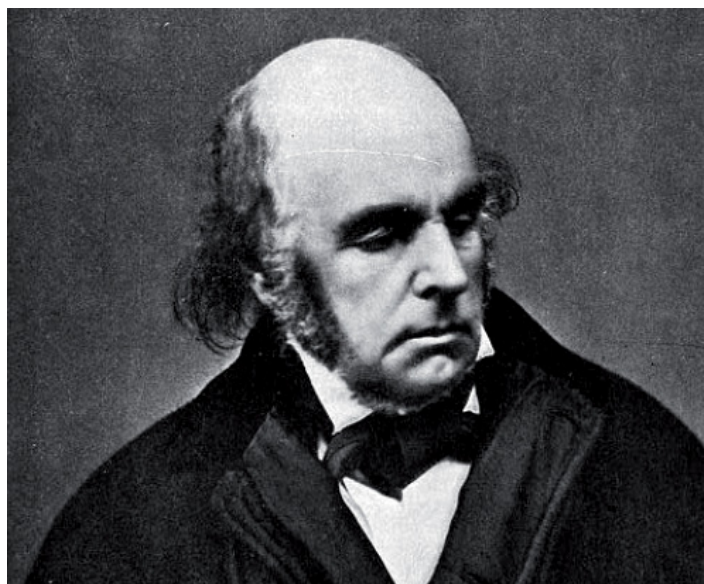
De Nicola, B., Mendel, Y., and Qutbuddin, H. (eds.): 'Language and Knowledge in Middle Eastern Societies.' Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle, 2010.

The book, entitled *Language and Knowledge in Middle Eastern Societies*, is an academic publication edited by Bruno De Nicola, Yoni Mendel and Husain Qutbuddin, three graduate students of the Department of Middle Eastern Studies. It will be published by Cambridge Scholars Publishing in late 2010. This publication is based on the first international Symposium of Middle Eastern Studies, which was held at the University's Centre for Research in the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities (CRASSH) in October 2008. The Symposium, of the same title, was organised by the editors of this book. The event brought together scholars from universities around the world to explore and discuss the relationship between Language and Knowledge in different areas of study such as History, Religious Studies, Media, Politics and Literature. The Symposium strove to discuss these issues, while bringing together, in each panel, diverse case studies and researchers from different historical periods with a variety of academic approaches.

The same approach employed in the Symposium has been retained in the book – being a selection of fourteen papers presented at the conference – in which each chapter includes essays dealing with different regions, periods and methodologies. The editors hope that this scheme will emphasise the similarities and links between the so-called 'different' themes, and by so doing bring back to the fore the important insights into Middle Eastern societies offered by the area studies approach.

For the three editors, this publication was a long and difficult process, but also a rewarding, satisfying and illuminating one. This is their first edited publication, and they would like to thank the Department for its support.

Conference: Omar Khayyam, Fitzgerald and the Rubaiyat



Edward Fitzgerald

2009 marked the Bicentenary of the birth of Edward FitzGerald (1809) and the 150th Anniversary of the publication of the first edition of *The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam* (1859). *The Rubaiyat*, rather loosely based on the verses attributed to Omar Khayyam, is a household name and one of the most widely-known poems in the world. It has been republished virtually every year from 1879 (the year of FitzGerald's 4th edition) to the present day, and translated into over 80 different languages.

In July 2009, a four-day conference was organised by the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies and Faculty of English in collaboration with the Persian Department at the University of Leiden (the Netherlands). The conference was made possible thanks to the help of several generous funding bodies (the Soudavar Cambridge Fund for Persian Studies, the British Institute of Persian Studies, the Iran Heritage Foundation, the Faculty of English, the Ancient India and Iran Trust, Trinity College, Pembroke College and 'Cambridgeshire Culture' Cambridgeshire County Council). Aside from their financial help, the recognition of the conference by these organisations also lent it high academic credibility and recognition.

During the two days in Leiden, the emphasis of the conference presentations lay on the life and work of Omar Khayyam, while the Cambridge part of the conference examined the life and work of FitzGerald, who was a student at Trinity College Cambridge, which hosted the conference. The commemoration of the Bicentenary also inspired three Sixth Form Colleges in Cambridgeshire to hold a year-long series of classes centered on *The Rubaiyat* and thus triumphantly revived the impact of the Victorian poem and fostered awareness of the presence of Persian culture in nineteenth and early twentieth century and present-day Europe.

The two-day lecture programme was open to the public and featured presentations by academics of international standing (from the UK, Iran, Georgia, Canada and the US), concerned with both English and Persian literature. Papers were presented within the context of six panels on: Historical and Literary Context, Close Reading of the Poem I, close reading of the Poem II, The Reception of the Poem, The influence on English Literature, The Editions of the Poem. The key-note lecture was delivered by Professor Dick Davis of Ohio State University.

The specific interest of the conference lay in the way it encouraged a dialogue between scholars in English and in Persian literature, who rarely find the opportunity to question each other's views and approaches to their fields. It helped their mutual understanding of this famous English-Persian poem and of the interest in Persian literature amongst Edward FitzGerald and his contemporaries.

The conference was convened by Dr Christine van Ruymbeke (Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies), Professor Adrian Poole (Faculty of English) and Professor Charles Melville (Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies), in memoriam Peter Avery, OBE.

The social programme at Cambridge opened with an evening at Impington Sixth Form College. The conference participants viewed a display of the results of the art classes, followed by a remarkable evening of dance, music and video inspired by FitzGerald's poem and a buffet reception with the awarding of a prize to the schools by the conference organisers. The conference participants also received an invitation to a private visit to FitzGerald's house in Woodbridge. The Ancient India and Iran Trust at Cambridge welcomed the participants and the public at a Garden Party (during which a crew from BBC Persian was present and conducted several interviews) and the conference wound up with a seated dinner for the participants at Pembroke College.

Language Conflict and Security in the Middle East Conference

April 10th–11th 2010

The recent conference on language, conflict and security – hosted by the Department of Middle Eastern Studies and Centre for Islamic Studies – sought to study socio-political realities, inner and external conflicts, and security considerations of the Middle East as phenomena specifically linked to language. Extensive scholarly literature on the Middle East, ranging from political science and

history to social anthropology and media, generally lacks a focused examination of the place of language, linguistics, terminology and semantics in human social and political actions. This conference – which hosted leading scholars from around the world, as well as military intelligence language experts and policy makers – chiefly aimed to examine language not as a mere mechanism for delivering messages, but as the message itself.



Language Conflict and Security in the Middle East Conference

During the two-day conference twenty-eight papers were given in seven different panels. The first panel focused on the concept of security within academia, in addition to security's various linkages with Middle Eastern studies and institutions. The second panel presented case studies from Algeria, Lebanon, Iran and Israel in order to highlight the dynamic and meaningful place of language in conflict zones. The third panel of the day highlighted the security organisations themselves, their interest in Middle Eastern languages, and the function of language in war-zones. Representatives of the US Military Academy, US Department of Defence Language School, and British GCHQ secret service, shed light on the pedagogy and aims of teaching Middle Eastern languages in Western security forces. The last panel of the day stressed different linguistic issues relating to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which due to its perdurability reveals some crucial insights regarding the place of language in conflict.

The second day of the conference began with a panel looking at 'the other side' of language and politics. This panel uncovered less obvious aspects of language in well-researched conflicts. European countries' language tests, the Danish cartoon affair, and a nineteenth-century French transliteration of the map of Egypt uncovered some significant issues relating to language, conflict and security. The second panel discussed national education institutions – mostly Ministries of Education – and their special motivation to foster proficiency in second or third language pedagogy and acquisition. The four fascinating case studies examined the place of Hebrew in Egypt, Arabic in Israel, Persian in Syria and Arabic in Iran. The last panel of the conference focused on the Arabic language itself as a target language of western countries. The word 'target' was analysed through its double meaning, and the discussion which followed the panel focused on the repercussions and consequences of studying a language as a military sword or a shield.

The conference received great feedback from the speakers and delegates who participated. They praised the original research presented in the conference, and commented on the importance of dedicating more research to one of the most crucial aspects of conflict and security: language. The dominant notion was that 'speech acts' – the idea that words are a form of action – should not be perceived through a philological prism, but through a socio-political one: our speech actually acts. It enables political

and social processes and creates real or perceived national security sensations and lies behind every social and political development we experience, whether we are capable of saying it or not.

The Department of Middle Eastern Studies and Centre of Islamic Studies are currently editing a comprehensive report that will encapsulate the main ideas, discussions and debates that arose during the two-day conference. The report will be finalised in a month and will then be disseminated to academic institutions, as well as to policy makers who have shown interest in the proceedings. Moreover, the conference organisers are considering the publication of an edited volume of the conference's most illuminating and original papers. Hopefully, this will be an effective academic addition to future political and social studies of the contemporary Middle East. The conference was co-organised by the Head of the Middle East Studies Department and Centre of Islamic Studies, Professor Yasir Suleiman, and Yonatan Mendel, a PhD candidate in the Department.

Dates for Your Diary!

Four Hundred Years of the King James Version

A one-day conference will be held on Wednesday 23rd April 2011 to celebrate 400 years of the King James Version (aka Authorized Version) of the Bible. Several speakers will discuss a range of aspects of the translation and its history. They include Pauline Croft (Royal Holloway), situating the translation in its historical setting, William Horbury (Cambridge), on the Cambridge contribution to the KJV (Cambridge provided two of the six translation teams), Scott Mandelbrote (Cambridge), explaining why the translation became a success, Brian Cummings (Sussex), on the literary legacy of the KJV, and Mark Noll (Notre Dame, Indiana), on the importance of the version in North America. Anyone interested in attending may contact Robert Gordon (rpg1000@cam.ac.uk). There will be nationwide events celebrating the KJV's quatercentenary and these are being coordinated by the 2011 Trust (see their website). There will be satellite programmes and events locally, including an exhibition in the University Library, running from January to June in 2011.

The foundations of Arab linguistics, Sibawayhi and the earliest Arabic grammatical theory,

September 3rd – 4th 2010

This conference was designed to bring together Arabists, specialists in linguistics and research students to explore the foundations of the Arabic linguistic tradition and its development. Its main focus was on the understanding of the nature and role of language as a medium of knowledge and communication. Within Arabic linguistics, *Sibawayhi* occupies a unique position and his *Kitāb* is still the acknowledged masterpiece of Arabic grammatical thinking to date. The conference offered a special session on the hotly debated issue of possible foreign influences in the formative stage of Arab linguistics. The five linguistic traditions under discussion will be Hebrew, Persian, Syriac, Greek and Sanskrit. The perspectives on language across these traditions, and the similarities and/or differences between them formed the focus of the session.

Publications

Kitab Sibawayhi. Syntax and Pragmatics

Dr Amal Marogy

Kitāb Sībawayhi. Syntax and Pragmatics. (2010). Studies in Semitic Languages and Linguistics, vol. 56. Brill: Leiden and Boston.

This book presents a comprehensive portrait of the *Kitāb Sībawayhi*. It offers new insights into its historical and linguistic arguments and underlines their strong correlation. The decisive historical argument highlights al-Ḥīra's role, not only as the centre of pre-Islamic Arabic culture, but also as the matrix within which early Arab linguistics grew and developed. The *Kitāb*'s value as a communicative grammar forms the crux of the linguistic argument. The complementarity of syntax and pragmatics is established as a condition *sine qua non* for *Sibawayhi*'s analysis of language. The benefits of a complementary approach are reflected in the analysis of nominal sentences and related notions of *ibtidā'* and definiteness. The pragmatic principle of identifiability is uncovered as the ultimate determiner of word order.

An anonymous reviewer described the book as follows: "My overall assessment of this work is that it is one of the top of 25% of the books in the field that I have read, and it is certainly worthy of publication at Brill's."

Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies, eds: Dr A. Bennison and Dr M. Gallego

In July 2010, a special issue of the *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies* dedicated to Religious Minorities under the Almohads will appear edited by Amira K. Bennison and María Angeles Gallego. This volume is the product of a two-year British Academy funded international joint project involving the Department of Middle Eastern Studies and the Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Madrid. It brings together articles by leading Spanish and British scholars in Jewish and Islamic Studies which confront the firmly entrenched stereotype of the twelfth century Almohad dynasty as a fanatical regime which forcibly converted Jews and Christians across Islamic Spain and the Maghrib. The articles explore the historiography of the subject, the doctrinal aspects and review what the sources actually tell us from both the Jewish and Islamic perspectives.

Library News

Staff news

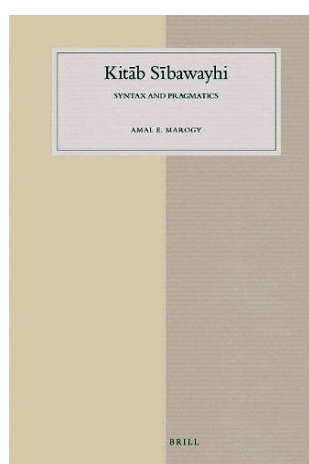
A few years ago Catherine Ansorge, who had been running the Faculty Library for almost two decades, moved to the University Library to become the Head of the Near Eastern Department. She was replaced by Françoise Simmons, who used to work in the Library in the 1980s before she became an undergraduate student of Japanese at the Faculty. Françoise's team consists of Catherine Sutherland, a Cambridge graduate in Music and Miki Jacobs who is currently doing a part time MSc course in Library and Information Studies at Aberystwyth. Nathaniel Johnson, who had been helping

out in the library for many years as a volunteer, has become a permanent member of the team, working part time.

The FAMES Library now has approximately 70,000 monograph volumes increasing by around 1,000 volumes per year on average. We also subscribe to 180 journal titles, 30 of which are also available online to members of the University through our subscriptions.

Going digital

As the world is entering the digital age, libraries are gradually adapting their services to the electronic environment. The FAMES Library is no exception. We are continuously developing our library website (www.ames.cam.ac.uk/faclib/index.html), providing links to our online journals and databases and high-quality academic internet resources as part of our FAMES Library on the Web initiative. As the number of e-books in our subjects increases, core reading materials are purchased as e-books rather than multiple printed copies. Students can also access past exam papers online from the Library's website.



In spite of the increasing number of online library resources accessible via students' own computers from anywhere (as long as you have a RAVEN password!), the FAMES Library is still heavily used by students in person during term time. The Library is also very popular with students from other Faculties because of the 'pleasant environment' it provides, of which we are very proud.

In order to improve our library services, we carried out a major survey last year. One of our most interesting findings was that

students of the digital age still preferred their reading material in printed rather than in electronic format and they tend to print out all the online articles rather than reading them online. We hope that this trend will change as digital technology improves and moves towards a more environmentally friendly solution.

In the survey, many students expressed their wish for longer library opening hours. With the financial support of the Faculty, the Library is now open during every Easter Term until 7 pm and on Saturdays until 5 pm.

Last year we introduced the extremely popular 'Library tea-time' when students studying in the Library could join the Library team for a cup of tea and home-baked cakes every afternoon for a whole week towards the end of their revision period. It is lovely to see students from various subjects and years mixing together, exchanging information and giving advice to each other on exam techniques and on how to deal with sleepless nights.

The Library also publishes its own online newsletter once a term highlighting major changes and developments (see Library website).

The Faculty owns some very important archive materials. A few years ago these were catalogued and made available online through the Library's website. Since then, the Faculty's Archive collection has attracted much interest and we receive many enquiries from all over the world.

We are also involved in modest fund-raising activities. We have set up a link to Amazon on the front page of our website. If you buy books via this link, a percentage of the cost will be donated to the

Library by Amazon in the form of gift vouchers. We use this income to purchase additional titles for the Library.

The Library organises several exhibitions a year, amongst which the most popular is the display of the recommended preliminary reading materials for prospective students on the Open Days. Publications by the academic staff of the Faculty can be found on permanent display in the Library.

Donation of Flowers to the Arthur Rank Hospice



The HRH Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Centre for Islamic Studies generously donated the flowers from the benefactors' postponed visit, to the Arthur Rank Hospice at the Brookfields Hospital where they made a cheerful display for staff, patients and visitors.

Faculty Staff News

Mrs Carol Pleasance



Carol Pleasance, or "Mother hen" as she is affectionately known, has retired this year. Carol has been a constant source of cheerfulness, fun and help in the Faculty over the years and she will be greatly missed. Carol has penned a few words below as a farewell. "I was born in Newcastle in

1945 and moved to Gateshead in 1951 on the death of my mother. I lived there with my father, grandparents and sister Vicky.

While at secondary school, I went ballroom dancing with Dad and watched him playing in a dance band.

At the age of 15, I joined a small group called 'The Colts', 3 guitars and drummer, and sang with them in clubs and at parties. I left school and went to work as a civil servant at M.P.N.I. in Newcastle and started singing with a 22-piece dance band called 'The Mark Maddison Band' at the age of 17 and did quite a few appearances.

After that, I joined the Navy and went to Scotland to work with helicopters. This was a 9-to-5 job with a uniform.

I married for the first time in 1967 and had my first girl, Julie, in Newcastle in 1968 and the second one, Sam, in Gibraltar in 1972 as my husband was in Army. We then went to Northern Ireland with the Army straight from Gibraltar. Met up with two other 'squaddies' there who played guitar as well, so I joined up with them and we played and sang folk music in the NAFFIS or MESSES on camps.

First marriage ended in 1977 and I then met my new husband and married him in 1979. I have been very happily married to Peter for over 30 years. Between us we have four children and ten grandchildren...at the moment...

We enjoy going away in our caravan. We also do a lot of fishing. We are members of the Histon and Impington British Legion Club and we play on two Cribbage teams there.

I came to work here 13 years ago as Secretary to the Chairman of the Faculty. Professor Robert Gordon was Chairman then.

I have enjoyed my time here and the students have been wonderful. Two Japanese students called me Nana for about two years because I said I had bigger grandchildren than they were. I used to joke with the students and say that I had taken over where their mums left off when they came here and that if they were very, very good they would get a sweetie out of my tin, but if they were not, they would get their ears boxed!! It has always worked!"

DMES staff

Arabic and Persian Studies teaching staff

Dr Lori Allen

Lecturer in Contemporary Middle Eastern Politics and Society

Mrs Nadira Auty

Senior Language Teaching Officer in Arabic

Dr Amira K Bennison

Senior Lecturer in Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies

Dr James Brown

Research Associate

Dr Kate Fleet

Newton Trust Lecturer in Ottoman History

Dr Rachael Harris

Senior Language Teaching Officer in Arabic

Dr Amir Khosravi

John Cooper Memorial Fellow

Dr Amal Marogy

Lector in Arabic

Professor Charles Melville

Professor of Persian History

Professor James Montgomery

Professor of Classical Arabic

Dr Basim Musallam

Lecturer in Islamic Studies

Dr Amy Rowe

ESRC Postdoctoral Fellow

Professor Yasir Suleiman

His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Bin Sa'id Chair of Modern Arabic Studies

Dr Christine van Ruymbeke

Ali Reza and Mohamed Soudavar Lecturer in Persian Studies

Affiliated Staff

Dr Sabah Ahmed Al-Balushi

Visiting Arabic Language Teacher from Sultan Qaboos University

Dr Kate Daniels

Affiliated Lecturer

Dr Khaled Hroub

Hebrew & Semitic Studies teaching staff

Professor Robert Gordon

Regius Professor of Hebrew

Professor Geoffrey Khan

Professor of Semitic Philology

Professor Nicholas de Lange

Professor of Hebrew and Jewish Studies

Dr Marta Marzanska-Mishani

Kennedy Leigh Lecturer in Modern Hebrew

Dr Giulia Miller

Temporary Lecturer in Modern Hebrew

Mrs Rachel Williams

Language Teaching Officer in Modern Hebrew

Affiliated Staff

Dr Andrew Macintosh

Dean of St John's College

Mr Brian Mastin

Affiliated Lecturer in Hebrew

The Faculty

In March 2007, the former Faculty of Oriental Studies was renamed the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies (FAMES) to better reflect its geographical scope and teaching and research focuses, and two new Departments were established. The Department of East Asian Studies encompasses Chinese, Japanese and Korean Studies. Hebrew and Aramaic, Arabic and Persian Studies now constitute the Department of Middle Eastern Studies. Sanskrit and South Asian Studies are currently offered at graduate level only and the study of the Ancient Near East has been reassigned to the Faculty of Archaeology and Anthropology.

The Faculty building has been refurbished and we now have a much more welcoming reception area and state-of-the-art lecture rooms. We organise many events throughout the year and we would be delighted to welcome you back.

All events are publicised on the 'News and Events' pages of the website at:

www.ames.cam.ac.uk/news_events

Stay in touch

We hope you have enjoyed reading this edition of the newsletter. We plan to produce issues regularly to keep our friends and members up-to-date with our activities so if you have any suggestions or contributions for future issues do get in touch.

Contact us at:

The Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies
Sidgwick Avenue
Cambridge
CB3 9DA
Tel: +44 (0)1223 335106
Fax: +44 (0)1223 335110
Email: enquiries@ames.cam.ac.uk

www.ames.cam.ac.uk

Media links

If you are a journalist seeking an expert on topics related to the teaching and research areas of the Department you may find the Guide to Expertise a useful resource.

Managed by the University's Office of Communications, the Guide is an online directory of experts willing to be contacted by the media and includes many of the Faculty's staff. The database can be searched by keyword or context to help find an academic with the necessary expertise. For further details visit www.admin.cam.ac.uk/news and click on the 'Find an expert' link. Do contact the Department and let us know which projects, programmes or publications you are working on too. Send an email to enquiries@ames.cam.ac.uk.



www.ames.cam.ac.uk/dmes