



The Middle East Librarians Association Presents the 2016 David H. Partington Award to Two Librarians of Middle East Studies at its Annual Meeting, November 16, 2016, in Cambridge, MA.



The Middle East Librarians Association established the Annual David H. Partington Award in 2004 to grant public and tangible recognition to its members who have displayed a high standard of excellence and accomplishments in and contributions to the field of Middle East librarianship, librarianship in general, and the world of scholarship. Traditionally, nominations are solicited from library administrators of libraries where MELA members work.

The 2016 David H. Partington Award Committee (Jonathan Rodgers, University of Michigan, Chair; Eryn Kropf, University of Michigan; and Lior Sternfeld, Pennsylvania State University) decided to bestow the award on two exceptionally worthy nominees, namely **Roberta L. Dougherty**, Yale University, and **David G. Hirsch**, University of California Los Angeles. The committee considered several other deserving nominees as well and settled in favor of two, because not

awarding the prize to one or the other of these two top candidates would have been unjustifiable. Both Robin and David are unquestionably deserving. Their activities as librarians, scholars, and in giving generously to the profession, and especially to the Middle East Librarians Association, for many years has been devoted and is to be admired.

David G. Hirsch has been the University of California Los Angeles Librarian for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, simultaneously with Judaica and Armenian Studies, Central Asian Studies and South Asian Studies since 1989. Before coming to UCLA, David's distinguished career path included work, while on leave from UCLA, at the Abu Dhabi National Library, Abu Dhabi Authority for Culture and Heritage, Abu Dhabi, UAE (2009–2011); Department of Near Eastern Languages & Cultures, UCLA (2002–2008, 2011– as Adjunct Assistant Professor); Zayed Central Library, United Arab Emirates University (1999–2000); Firestone Library, Princeton University (1987–1989 where he worked with Joan Biella); Joseph Regenstein Library, University of Chicago (1984–1986, where he worked with his mentor, Bruce Craig, another Partington Awardee). Along the way, David has presented lectures and workshops for the Department of State in the UAE, Oman, Senegal, and Mali. He has presented papers at several MELCOM meetings, most recently in Leiden. Additionally, he has lectured and translated during two workshop programs for Iraqi Librarians in al-Ain, UAE, and Amman, Jordan in 2005 and 2006 as part of an NEH grant funded program.

David studied at the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia (BA, 1975–1980); University of Chicago (1984-1986, MA, and MLS 1990; *beta phi mu* 1990); Università degli Studi di Venezia, Italy (Summer 1995); University of California, Los Angeles (Summer Uzbek language and culture program, 1990); and Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, Istanbul, Turkey (Turkish language training program, Summer 1986). For David, the Center for Arabic Study Abroad played a very important part in his early training and career, where he spent 1980–1981 and 1981-1982 at CASA II.

During his notable career, David has worked at a level of astoundingly diverse responsibility, which is rather unusual for one librarian in a research university of such size and distinction as characterize UCLA. As we know, however, David is no ordinary librarian. Indeed, he has excelled in handling each area in this complex portfolio of responsibility.

His linguistic proficiency is not limited to the primary languages of the Middle East, Arabic, Persian, Turkish and Hebrew, but also extends to several others, as is well known and frequently demonstrated before us at international meetings and other settings where such proficiency is enviable and useful. Along with language expertise, David is able to exploit his facility with an array of cultures, in the Middle East and elsewhere. All these skills have provided him with access to people, places, and organizations around the world, a circumstance that enables networking, in-depth collection development, and international cooperation.

David's collection development voyages have taken him far afield internationally and have resulted in great successes in locating, thanks to his broad network of contacts, and acquiring, for UCLA and MEMP, unusual, unique, and valuable research materials, some of which ordinary librarians would not have considered. Through his reports at MELA and elsewhere, we are well aware of his many and frequent travels abroad, whether specifically for acquisitions or to board meetings of The Islamic Manuscripts Association, for example, to a conference or privately on vacation. His frequent travels provide crucial opportunities to seek out and acquire interesting materials, including scarce items that would be of interest to collections beyond the social sciences and humanities focus, such as UCLA's Biomedical Special Collections, Arts, Music, and East Asian libraries.

David G. Hirsch has served the profession, and in particular the Middle East Librarians Association, faithfully and admirably for his entire career. He was President of MELA two times (2011-2012 and 2001-2003), and Vice-President/Program Chair (2010–2011 and 1996–1997). His service extends more broadly to the Middle East Materials/Microfilm Project (MEMP) and the Islamic Manuscripts Association, among several other organizations. He has contributed to the MELA annual meeting program numerous times.

Among the honors and recognition bestowed on David G. Hirsch are the Dorothy Schroeder Award of the Association of Jewish Libraries of Southern California, in recognition of excellent service to the profession of Judaica librarianship, and the Librarians Association of the University of California-Los Angeles (LAUC-LA) 2013 Librarian of the Year Award. He has won numerous research grants and has published his work in reputable professional and academic journals, including in MELA Notes.

We, the David H. Partington Award Committee, with the membership of the Middle East Librarians Association hereby commend you David G. Hirsch and bestow on you an honor you well-deserve, the 2016 Partington Award. Congratulations!