

LC CAIRO OFFICE FY 2008 - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Collection Development Activities - Highlights

- Acquisitions travel - Ismail Soliman and Ahmed Moustafa had a successful joint acquisitions trip to Tunisia for the annual book fair there as well as to Algeria. Ismail also traveled to Mauritania and Morocco on one trip and to United Arab Emirates and Qatar on another. This was a reduced level of acquisitions travel due to budget difficulties.
- Cairo Book Fair – The Office chose to forgo working with Leila Books this year, which meant that full publisher discounts were available to the Office – as a result, a record number of items were acquired during the Book Fair at low per-item cost. Special effort was made to send out lists to MECAP participants quickly and act on their responses during the Book Fair.
- Evolving exchange relationship with the National Library of Egypt (NLE) – NLE expressed a strong interest in increasing the extent of materials exchanged and is now supplying books from its deposit copies. Materials supplied by NLE that LC has already received from other sources can be offered by the Office on exchange.
- FRD Ephemera Project – The Office was tasked with collecting ephemeral materials for FRD on behalf of an FRD client. The Office worked with FRD and the New Delhi Office to develop a workflow and a first shipment of over 100 items was sent to New Delhi for evaluation – about half the items acquired were intentionally acquired in two copies when the items were in scope for LC; the second copies will be added to LC collections.
- “Banned books” – Ismail Soliman succeeded in acquiring a copy of the first Egyptian “graphic novel,” titled “Metro” (title translated) that was released at the time of the Cairo Book Fair in January and almost immediately banned. He also acquired a copy of “The Final Days” (again, translation of title into English), a book on the Mubarak regime by journalist Hamdi Qandil that was also immediately banned.
- Web Harvesting initiative – The Cairo Office proposed a web harvesting pilot initiative to specialists in the African/Middle East Division and following approval worked with the Office of Strategic Initiatives to harvest Egyptian web sites and blogs for the Library’s collections. A finished online “collection” will be made available on site at LC early in FY 2009 and should be ready to show at MELA.

Acquisitions & Cataloging Section - Highlights

- The Section acquired 6,947 purchase monograph items for LC and an additional 9,123 for MECAP participants (a total of 16,070 items). 202 items in other formats were acquired for LC and 172 for MECAP participants; a total of 374 items. The total number

of items acquired by purchase by the Section was 16,444. An additional 3,125 items was acquired by exchange.

- This year marked the full transition to Whole Book cataloging, assigning Library of Congress subject headings and LC class numbers to records for 1,138 titles during the year. Ansam Banarek took considerable time to train the Office's catalogers to do this work.
- The Section's catalogers created or upgraded 5,687 bibliographic records for materials acquired. There were 2,401 copy cataloging monograph records updated for LC holdings as well as 1,483 Core monograph records, 1,138 Whole Book records, 291 MLC records, 80 added volumes, 119 fiche monograph records, and 175 records for items in other formats.
- The Office began to make use of IBC records created by Leila Books in OCLC to increase the speed of making lists of items available; these records also serve as the basis for full catalog records, saving time.
- During most of the year the dollar progressively weakened against some of the more important currencies of the region, including the Egyptian pound and the Turkish new lira, falling six or more percent. At the very end of the year the dollar began to recover as demand for dollars increased in the unusual economic situation prevalent. In Egypt, for example, at the end of the fiscal year half of the ground lost by the dollar has been recovered.

Serials, Binding & Shipping Section - Highlights

- 348 new serial catalog records were created during the year. The Section's catalogers moved to creating records with full subject access (subject headings and LC class numbers). 41 other records were modified to reflect changes required to link to newly created records. 106 new authority records were created.
- The Section subscribed to 3,129 newspaper and serial titles on LC's behalf and received 44,196 issues on a commercial basis; an additional 1,734 issues were received either as gifts or on exchange. 34,519 issues were received for MECAP participants.
- A total of 11,749 volumes were bound, of which slightly less than half, or 5,657 volumes, were for the Library of Congress' collections.
- 1,566 holdings record transactions were made for Law Library materials and 629 for Self Contained Units (SCUs) in western languages.
- The Section shipped 2,052 boxes and 207 envelopes of materials to LC and MECAP participants.

Automation - Highlights

- Install and configure a new file server running Windows Server 2003 edition; automate the Windows update processes by installing WSUS server.
- Install 27 New PC's with Windows XP, seven new printers, ILS Voyager for Windows XP, SPLAT, and OCLC Connexion software.
- Continue developing and enhancing the Acquisitions Orders System (AOS) program.
- Start development of Z_ALG that will replace ALG program to retrieve MARC records from the ILS using Z3950.

Administrative, Financial and Personnel - Highlights

- Fawzi Tadros was the acting field director for the office as the fiscal year began. From February to early July and then from late August to the end of the fiscal year, Michael Neubert was acting field director. As fiscal year 2008 ended the process of hiring a new permanent field director was under way.
- Two new staff were added to the Acquisitions & Cataloging Section – Mahmoud Sayed Abdou as a cataloging technician and Yasser Said Hussein as a cataloger. They replaced two staff who resigned for better opportunities the year before.
- In August, Ansam Baranek retired – she had been rehired on contract to train cataloging staff. Also in August, Nabil Ramzy, a technician in the Serials, Shipping & Binding Section, retired after more than thirty years of service.
- Through the Computer Assisted Job Evaluation (CAJE) process the position of the head of the Serials, Shipping & Binding Section was successfully reclassified from LES-9 to LES-10. The position of Lead Serials Cataloger was also “CAJE’d” to include duties as assistant section head and reclassified from LES-7 to LES-8. The process of CAJE’ing an additional four positions with eight incumbents was underway as the fiscal year ended.
- Negotiated the addition of 72 square meters to the existing Office’s space and made plans for how this space may be made use of when occupied in FY 2009.
- Sixteen Office staff received “extra mile” awards for their work to make acquisitions of materials during the Cairo Book Fair a great success and two other staff received “extra mile” awards for special efforts made during the year in other areas.

Middle East Cooperative Acquisitions Program (MECAP) - Highlights

- 9,123 monograph items and 34,519 serial items as well as 172 items in other formats were supplied to MECAP participants during FY 2008, an increase of 1,240 items over FY 2007. 523 lists were circulated to MECAP participants.

- At the end of FY 2008 the Cairo Office had 42 participant organizations. During the year two public libraries left MECAP – Boston Public Library and Cleveland Public Library. The University of Texas Library also left the program.
- The Section was able to reduce significantly the number of outstanding titles backordered by MECAP participants during this year – by more than seventy percent. Eighty percent of titles ordered by MECAP participants during the fiscal year were acquired.

World Digital Library partnership with National Library & Archives of Egypt (NLAE) - Highlights

- Interim Field Director Michael Neubert renegotiated the agreement so that NLAE receives compensation for staff time already spent on digitization of materials. The Office continued to receive materials digitized on DVD and send to Washington.
- The Chairman of NLAE was very interested in having newly arrived Ambassador Margaret Scobey visit to the National Library's recently renovated Bab el Khalq facility – Michael Neubert arranged for the Ambassador's visit and escorted her there on June 29th.