

generally been of a classical and theological nature, but since the 19th century successive official reports on oriental studies have called for better provision for modern and non-linguistic subjects. The expansion of these studies in the universities in recent years has been guided in the main by the Scarbrough and Hayter Reports, though only the latter discussed libraries in any detail. In the wake of these reports there has been a proliferation of committees and conferences for interested libraries, tending to subdivide into specialized groups such as MELCOM.

The greatest common problem is the selection and acquisition of material from the Near and Middle East, an area with under-developed publishing and bookselling trades, and inadequate bibliographical control. Various types of selection tools are available; the process of selection may be done by library staff, academic staff, or a combination of the two, but in all cases should ideally be guided by a well-defined selection policy. Techniques for the actual acquisition of material vary considerably: co-operative acquisition may ultimately be the most efficient and effective procedure, with participating libraries organized on a basis which may be anything from local to international.

Cataloguing and classification are largely subject to the general policies of the parent library where one exists, and so there is little standardization of practice. Bibliographical controls of British collections are uneven in coverage, but are constantly being extended. Staff with suitable qualifications in both librarianship and Near and Middle Eastern subjects are desirable but rare; their deployment as subject specialists is a controversial topic in many libraries, and there is a preference for subject qualifications over library qualifications where both are not available together.

Developments at national and international levels will become increasingly important, and will probably provide the greatest area of change in the foreseeable future. However, there is an immediate danger of a rift between modern and classical studies in which the latter are more likely to suffer.'

P.B. Morgan
Cambridge

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Mr M.R. Abd El-Muttalib (1917-1975)

The sudden death in Cairo on 12 January 1975, at the age of 57 and apparently from a heart attack, of Muhammad Rashad Abd El-Muttalib has robbed the world of Arabic bibliographical and manuscript studies of one of its outstanding scholars. He was in many ways an autodidact, but acquired an encyclopaedic knowledge of Arabic literature and books, and built up for himself a fine library of Arabic and European works, which is reputed to have been now purchased by the University of Riyadh. For many years he was Chief Secretary at the Arab League Institute of Arabic Manuscripts in Cairo, and this job took him to all quarters of the Muslim world and to many countries of Europe, both West and East, where Arabic manuscripts could be found, searching them out and microfilming them for the central manuscript archives of his Institute. He was thus as familiar with the libraries of Spain and Morocco as with those of Anatolia and the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent. The results accruing from these quests are embodied in the *Fahāris* and the pages of the Institute's *Majalla*, which Arabic scholars have found an indispensable tool.

Mr Abd El-Muttalib had a gift for languages. His Turkish, for instance, was excellent--a comparatively rare accomplishment among Arabs of today--and his English fluent and correct. His visit to Britain in 1972 gave him particular pleasure as he had long been eager to visit UK. While he was here, many of our orientalist libraries and manuscript collections benefited from his freely-given advice and expertise. The present writer reflects with sadness that visits to Cairo will never be the same without the company of that imperious but kindly presence, the visits to the book-lined flat in Lazoghli and the convivial evenings at Rashad's favourite restaurant, Abu Shaqra. His death has left a gap in that small and select band who possess the true bibliographical mind and who do so much to provide the foundations for others to build upon.

C.E. Bosworth

Mr T. Little (1911-1975)

Tom Little, who died on 22 February 1975 was one of a small group of outstanding British journalists working in the Middle East in the decade after World War II. His cool and sane approach to the tumultuous events of those years and his analysis of the Nasser revolution in Egypt and its many consequences for the whole area went a long way towards redeeming the tendentious and often misleading reporting that appeared in the British press.

Tom Little joined the British-owned Arab News Agency in 1943 after army war service. He served as Diplomatic Correspondent in New York, Washington and Paris, General Manager in Cairo and London and from 1962 was Managing Director and General Manager. As such, he was a pioneer in the development of a speedy and efficient system for gathering and disseminating news in the Arab world. From the Middle East he contributed regularly to the *Times*, *Observer* and *Economist*, and in the 1960s, when he was based in London, he was a frequent and sagacious broadcaster on Middle East affairs as well as contributor of articles for *The World Today* and similar periodicals. In 1971 he became the first editor of the new monthly magazine *Middle East International*, and during the last years of his life he was the London representative of the Saudi News