

From the Editor's Keyboard...

Congratulations on MESA's first 40 years!! For forty years, and counting, MESA has played a vital role in the building of a community of scholars, students, teachers, and public intellectuals united by their curiosity about the peoples, languages, cultures and histories of the Middle East. With the two issues of Volume 40 of the *Bulletin*, we celebrate the accomplishments of the first decades, take stock of our strengths and weaknesses, and look to the future of the organization and of the field of Middle East Studies.

This issue, and the next, contain a number of features that I hope you will find interesting, entertaining and enlightening—some of you because you remember the events, people and places of MESA's first 40 years, and others because they present a broad overview of the background and development of the organization. Among them are the winning entries in the 40th Anniversary Cover Photo/Essay Contest, presented by Chris Allibone (June, 2006) and Melanie Arnold (December 2006); Howard Reed's appreciation of MESA's early years; reproductions of the first MESA meeting program and covers from *Bulletins* over the years. We also have a collection of retrospective works on major scholars and works in the field, including Albert Hourani. More will be coming in the December, 2006 issue, including a People's History of MESA, and more retrospective reviews. Compiling the materials for these celebration issues has been highly informative and vastly entertaining, and I want to thank those who have worked hard to help these issues come to fruition: Francois Deschamp, Nancy Dishaw, Robert Fernea, Amy Newhall, William Ochsenwald, Kaya Sanan, and William Zartman.

In addition to celebrating 40 years of accomplishment, this issue looks to current difficulties and future possibilities, with an essay by Ibrahim al-Marashi on the British government's plagiarizing of his work for its own ends, and a report by Alan Mikhail, of MESA's Graduate Student Organization, on getting an academic appointment in the field.

Marking another anniversary, the 25th year of HIV/AIDS, Rachel Kaplan discusses research and resources on HIV/AIDS in the region, and Angel Foster reports on a Thematic Conversation about creating a Global Network of Researchers on HIV/AIDS.

Just as MESA is your organization, the *Bulletin* is your journal. Please let me know what you think of this issue, and please send me your suggestions for the next issue.

Finally, on a more personal note, I want to wish Dan Goffman, my friend and mentor, and editor of the *Bulletin* 1999-2002, a speedy and complete recovery. Our thoughts and prayers are with you, and we all look forward to seeing and hearing from you at many future MESA meetings!

Celebrating 40 years!

