

Inside MCAA

MCAA People 2010

Visiting Fellows

Again in 2010, generous financial support from the German Research Foundation (DFG) enabled us to invite two outstanding specialists to take part in our research team. They both covered topics on manuscript cultures that are outside those being worked on in our group's projects.

Professor Dr Avihai Shivtiel, a specialist in Semitic languages, literatures, and cultures, stayed with us from May through June. He has published over 150 books, articles, and reviews, as well as entries in three encyclopaedias: the Encyclopaedia of Islam, of Language and Linguistics, and of Arabic Language and Linguistics. Until his retirement in 2007, Professor Shivtiel taught Semitic languages, literatures, and cultures, and served as Head of the Department of Semitic Studies and later of Arabic Studies at the University of Leeds. For many years he also worked concurrently as a Senior Research Fellow at the Taylor-Shechter Genizah Research Unit at the University of Cambridge, which is undertaking a comprehensive programme of conserving, cataloguing, and studying the manuscripts in the Genizah Collection. Professor Shivtiel made a great contribution to the activities of our research group, not only by introducing Arabic and Judaeo-Arabic manuscripts into our discussion, but also by introducing former and current research being done on the topic in the UK, mainly at the University of Cambridge. Professor Shivtiel shared his knowledge with the interested public by giving a public lecture on the Cairo Genizah Collections, and conducted a workshop for our research group on Arabic and Judaeo-Arabic (and to a lesser extent, Hebrew) codicology and palaeography. Professor Shivtiel utilised his stay in Hamburg for collecting materials on various manuscript-related articles he is currently writing.

Professor Dr Hamza M. Njozi from the Muslim University of Morogoro in Tanzania, where he currently serves as Vice Chancellor, stayed with us for the month of June. Be-

fore his appointment as an Vice Chancellor in 2007, Professor Njozi taught literature for twenty-three years at the University of Dar-es-Salaam, with temporary stays abroad on the invitation of various renowned institutions, including the University of London (SOAS) and the Center for African Studies at the University of Florida. Professor Njozi's broad range of interests and considerable authority in the fields of literature, folklore, and politics are documented in numerous books and articles, of which many have been translated into more than one language. Professor Njozi is one of the few experts worldwide on Swahili literature and Swahili manuscripts in Arabic script. While in Hamburg, Professor Njozi continued his research on the relationship between manuscripts and textual transmission, and in spite of his very short stay, made a considerable number of new discoveries, that will, among other things, shed new light on the transmission of the 'Poem of Mercifulness' (Utenzi wa Shufaka), a classical Swahili epic. Professor Njozi gave a talk on Swahili manuscripts in Arabic script to an interested public.

During their stays, both visiting fellows were able to conduct their research in the idyllic atmosphere of our premises at Rothenbaumchaussee 34, and participated actively in the research activities of our group. It was very special to have two such inspiring personalities at our institute, and we were grateful for the daily chances we had for informal exchange about our work in the field of manuscript studies. Both experts are held in great esteem and were much sought after by colleagues as well as students, stimulating the research being done in the field of manuscript studies on many levels. We wish to express our warmest thanks to our visiting fellows for their contributions to our project, and we all hope that there will soon be another occasion to continue our discussions.

Hanna Sofia Hayduk | Hamburg