

# 100<sup>th</sup> MELCOM UK Meeting [Online]

## Minutes

Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2021 (11:00-13:00)

And record of MELCOM UK Election Meeting 19<sup>th</sup> July 2021 (appendix C)

1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present:           <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Waseem Farooq [WF] (Treasurer &amp; Website)</td> <td style="width: 50%;">Aga Khan Library, London</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lydia Wright [LW] (Secretary &amp; Website)</td> <td>Bodleian Library, Oxford</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Yasmin Faghihi [YF] (Previous Chair)</td> <td>Cambridge University Library, Cambridge</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Alasdair Watson [AW]</td> <td>Bodleian Library, Oxford</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mohammad Emami [ME]</td> <td>Ferdowsi Library, Oxford</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dominique Akhoun-Schwarb [DAS]</td> <td>SOAS University of London</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Carlos Leo-Roca [CLR]</td> <td>SOAS University of London</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Shah Hussain [SH]</td> <td>Aga Khan Library, London</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pedro Sanchez [PS]</td> <td>Aga Khan Library, London</td> </tr> <tr> <td>James Downs [JD]</td> <td>AWDU, University of Exeter</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wassilena Sekulova [WS]</td> <td>Qatar National Library</td> </tr> </table> </li> <li>• Welcome and Introductions: Welcome to new member James Downs</li> <li>• Apologies: MariaLuisa Langella</li> </ul>	Waseem Farooq [WF] (Treasurer & Website)	Aga Khan Library, London	Lydia Wright [LW] (Secretary & Website)	Bodleian Library, Oxford	Yasmin Faghihi [YF] (Previous Chair)	Cambridge University Library, Cambridge	Alasdair Watson [AW]	Bodleian Library, Oxford	Mohammad Emami [ME]	Ferdowsi Library, Oxford	Dominique Akhoun-Schwarb [DAS]	SOAS University of London	Carlos Leo-Roca [CLR]	SOAS University of London	Shah Hussain [SH]	Aga Khan Library, London	Pedro Sanchez [PS]	Aga Khan Library, London	James Downs [JD]	AWDU, University of Exeter	Wassilena Sekulova [WS]	Qatar National Library
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2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minutes of the 99<sup>th</sup> Meeting (document was circulated) – approved.</li> <li>• Matters arising           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Actions completed:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Board to draft a statement of support for Black Lives Matter with input from members. ✓</li> <li>○ Board to send out email to mailing list about GDPR exercise as soon as viable allowing time for furloughed staff to reply. ✓</li> <li>○ Board to find a way to hold elections online and to email members for their nominations once staff are back from furlough. ✓</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>ACTIONS:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Actions to carry forward:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Think about how to share e-resource holdings information amongst MELCOM UK members. One proposal was collate a document on existing resources and who has them and put it on the Melcom Uk website .</li> <li>○ Consider how to expand participation in MELCOM UK</li> <li>○ Consider further actions MELCOM UK can take to become anti-racist</li> <li>○ New board to look into the role of MELCOM UK and its aims</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>																						
3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Library Reports (see Appendix B)</li> </ul>																						

4)

- To discuss:
  - i. Library collecting policy and potential shifts
  - ii. The landscape of Joint purchases, Consortia, collaborative collecting and other approaches

Discussions on purchasing e-resources from the Middle East. Some difficulty acquiring resources due to technical issues. Vendors have been flexible in accommodating requests for changes to licence and to expand the number of IP addresses. Suggestion that these resources could be part of a consortium deal if enough members interested. Members discussed the high prices for what is a relatively small pool of users and questioned whether we could negotiate a reduced price based on this.

Many institutions prioritising e-material over print and looking into ordering more shelf ready materials and using embedded order data. Some book budgets temporarily restricted with focus on e-books and not ordering print unless necessary. The focus has been on supporting teaching and learning and not research this year and therefore fewer materials in Middle Eastern languages have been purchased as they do not feature as heavily in reading list material; this should change again in coming years. Members expressed concern about the gaps in UK Middle Eastern resources collections.

Discussions were held around the difficulties of how to select and what to select – options might include getting support from a board of academics or young academic scouts.

It was proposed that we create a working group for those interested in discussing acquisitions more in depth.

**ACTION:**

- Board to set up working group for those interested in discussing acquisition, selection processes and consortium deals.

**Special Collections:**

SOAS is reviewing acquisition policies and processes with greater emphasis on recording provenance for special collections material. Material over 100 years is classed as special collections. Whether books falls into the rare book category can change easily; they can be rare because of scarcity or because they are from a region that has conflict resulting in difficulty to replace. SOAS mostly not buying rare books as they don't have the budget. They do accept donations but have a due diligence process and need to check the licence to export; there are also countries they don't accept books from.

Aga Khan has done a similar transfer of books to special collections with a rolling 100 year wall, currently set at 1900, with books earlier than that

automatically going into special collections. Their special collections also includes other materials.

The archivist role at the Arabic World Documentation Unit at Exeter has recently been made permanent. Archives are mostly of Western diplomats, travellers, etc. with a focus on material from Israel, Palestine, Gulf, and Arab areas (more details in report in appendix). Many papers brought in by internal transfer which is problematic because of not being able to prove provenance. AUDU has seen an increased usage of the archives in recent years. JD catalogues archival material, blogs about it and conducts workshops with the material including class presentations for undergraduates. There is no dedicated Middle East librarian at Exeter but JD assists with this role unofficially. The Middle East budget has not been spent-up in the last few years.

Update from Qatar National Library. Family archives project: offering conservation in exchange for permission to digitalise. Collaborating on Corpus Coranicum with Germany. Other activities: early aviation archive, digital humanities summer school, 3 day conference on Arabic Manuscripts. The special collections team at Qatar National Library has a separate member of staff in charge of photographs, rare books, archives, and manuscripts. Their collections are not fully described but getting there. WS covers photographs, manuscripts and archives. The library only opened 4 years ago. They have a small team including conservation but a huge collection and a big digitisation department. They are currently using library software for special collection cataloguing.

**ACTION:**

- Consider adding point on archives and special collections as regular agenda item?

- 10 min break

5)

- The MELCOM UK board :
  - i. Reports:  
For Treasurer's report, see Appendix A.
  - ii. positions (current/potential) (see document attached)

It was agreed that we would trial holding elections, as proposed in the circulated document, in the first instance, and if that failed we would look at allocating positions to different libraries on a rolling basis. Some felt it was preferable to hold elections every 2 years and others every 1 year. The positions of Website and Social Media could be held by one person.

There were questions around who would be allowed to vote or hold board positions. It was agreed that whilst guests were very welcome to attend MELCOM UK meetings that voting and board positions should be for UK members only.

	<p><b>ACTION:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Hold board position elections in the coming weeks (report of election meeting in appendix C).</li> </ul>
6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To discuss: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. MELCOM UK and the question of engaging in social justice and open statements (document circulated)</li> </ul> <p>A discussion took place whether to engage in social justice and publish open statements. Some favoured taking a stance on humanitarian crises but not political issues and was open to putting a statement to this effect on the website. Considering the complexity of the topic it would benefit from a longer discussion before a general decision is made as there was little time to listen to all views.</p> <p>MELCOM UK was asked whether it would take a stand on WOCMES' decision to move the hosting venue from Tunis to a place where Israeli academic are able to participate and more specifically on boycotting Israeli academics to participate at WOCMES. The group decided it would not take a stand on this issue.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Revisit question of social justice and open statements at future meeting</li> <li>▪ New board to reply to the request on taking a stance on WOCMES decision.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	<p><b>All ACTIONS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Revisit if it would be useful to share information on e-resources holdings and if so how.</li> <li>▪ Consider how to expand participation.</li> <li>▪ Consider further actions MELCOM UK can take to become anti-racist.</li> <li>▪ New board to look into the role of MELCOM UK and its aims.</li> <li>▪ Set up working group for those interested in discussing acquisition, selection processes and consortium deals.</li> <li>▪ Consider adding point on archives and special collections as regular agenda item.</li> <li>▪ Hold board position elections.</li> <li>▪ Revisit question of social justice and open statements at future meeting</li> <li>▪ New board to reply to the request on taking a stance on WOCMES decision.</li> </ul>

**Appendix:**

**A) Treasurer's Report**

**MELCOM (UK)**

## Financial Report - Jul 2021

**Current account**

	<b>Previous total</b>		<b>£2,602.72</b>
07.08.20	Website, Gandi via Lydia	-£50.40	
	<b>Present total</b>		<b>£2,552.32</b>

**Reserve account**

	<b>Previous total</b>		<b>£2,925.61</b>
02.07.2021	Total Interest	£0.30	
	<b>Present total</b>		<b>£2,925.91</b>

**B) MELCOM UK Institutional Reports – 02/07/2021****Middle East Centre (MEC) Library, St Antony's College, Oxford University**

The MEC Library's workflow has been hugely affected by the global Covid-19 pandemic. The library has been offering a Click&Collect service to enable local Oxford University readers to borrow books, and a Scan&Delivery service (for scan requests up to a maximum of 5% of content from a published item) to both Oxford and external readers. These services are still running.

In terms of acquisitions, priority has been given to providing e-resources both for reading lists, and to readers unable to access the print collections. Access to the HathiTrust's *Emergency Temporary Access Service* as well as courtesy access to e-resources provided by several publishers and aggregators, have helped enhancing e-resource provision especially for reading list material. A temporary relaxation of the key terms of the Copyright Licensing Agency (CLA) Higher Education Licence has also been useful in providing libraries and students with increased access to resources during the lockdown.

In order to help readers more easily navigate reading lists, the Librarian has attended training in ORLO (Oxford Reading Lists Online), the University reading list tool in Canvas that

allows students to quickly access electronic resources and scanned extracts, supporting inclusive teaching provision.

After closing in mid-March 2020, the library reopened its doors in October 2020 to Oxford readers by appointment. With the new lockdown, the library had to close its reading room again at the end of January 2021. The reopening has been gradual and there is hope to be able to fully reopen to both Oxford and external readers by the end of July.

The Librarian was on duty, mainly onsite, throughout 2020, except for a short period of furlough at the end of June and at the end of July 2020. The library's casual helpers were on furlough for most of 2020 and resumed work at the beginning of the academic year 2020-2021.

Some projects have now resumed, such as the book shelf-mark reclassification project, started in October 2016, with the aim to standardize the shelving system across all the library collection according to the official Library of Congress (LC) class number. The MEC Library book sale has continued throughout the past year and a half via the library's website.

### **The Bodleian Libraries**

As of 21<sup>st</sup> June, the Bodleian Libraries have reopened their doors to external readers once again. We continue to operate via timed bookings, click & collect and scan & deliver services. We continue to benefit from the Hathi Trust Emergency Temporary Access Service until 5<sup>th</sup> July, when the service will be reviewed again.

The Bodleian Libraries have implemented an e-first policy for reading list material but the subject librarian retains the choice to buy in print if preferable. We have also been looking into provision of e-resource databases and have trialled al-Ahram, Early Arabic Printed Books from the British Library and Gale's Middle East Online 2. We hope to trial NoorMags and e-Marefa but ongoing licencing negotiations are making it difficult for us to progress with these at the moment. Our aim is to increase the number of vernacular language e-resources that are available via the library but the high cost and licencing issues are recurrent barriers in doing so.

The Bodleian has recently resumed its work on the collaborative public engagement project Syria & Silence, which is now scheduled for the autumn. This event will include a public pop-up library on Syria, as well as an essay competition, readings by selected authors and show & tells amongst other activities.

### **The Bodleian Nizami Ganjavi Library**

Over the past year the Oriental Institute Library, now renamed the Nizami Ganjavi Library (NGL), has undergone some renovations that include a refurbished entrance and a change in layout. Some of the library space has been returned to the University in order to create a new Centre for the study of the Caucasus and Central Asia and more teaching spaces in the basement. As part of the renovations, we have had to reduce the amount of open shelf material and we therefore decided to send many of our online journals offsite as well as our older pre-1900 books. The reclassification of the collection to the Library of Congress classification scheme is ongoing. The NGL closes again this summer for further building works but click & collect and scan & deliver services will continue to provide access to the collections.

We are gradually expanding our purchasing of materials from the Caucasus and Central Asia thanks to a recent donation of funds for this purpose. After some delay, we soon hope to be in the position to recruit a new subject librarian for the Caucasus and Central Asia to support this collection development. We are currently in the process of recruiting a new technical services staff member to assist with Persian, Arabic and Middle Eastern acquisitions and cataloguing.

### **Bodleian Special Collections – Islamic and Middle East**

Fihrist cataloguing has continued during lockdown working from home. Records have been added mainly converted from the Persian printed catalogue. Basic provenance and acquisition information has been added for all named collections such as Marsh, Huntington, Ouseley, etc. So now, for example, it is possible to see which Ouseley MSS were owned previously by J. B. Elliott, or which Marsh MSS by Golius.

5 Short films were made recently about the Persian Arts of the Book and may be viewed on the Bodleian's YouTube channel:

[https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLMMT6JPEQdLqza\\_9NRA3XESQbpA9zyw3S](https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLMMT6JPEQdLqza_9NRA3XESQbpA9zyw3S)

An online conference celebrating the Bahari Fellowships for the Persian Arts of the Book will be held in July. Details here: <https://visit.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/event/persian-arts-of-the-book>

As part of the Tolkien project, around 35 digitized Islamic/ME manuscripts were added to Digital.Bodleian with links to Fihrist. These include Gazurgahi's book of Sufi Saints Majalis al-'Ushshaq ([MS. Ouseley Add. 24](#)); two Safavid era Qur'ans ([MS. Arab. d. 98](#); [MS. Ouseley Add. 178](#)); a book on poetics in Chaghatai ([MS. Elliott 127](#)) and Saladin's Military Manual ([MS. Huntington 264](#)).

### **The Ferdowsi Library - Wadham College Oxford**

The Ferdowsi Library at Wadham has been barely open to external users since March 2020, and has only been able to allow in a limited number of Wadham students at pre-booked time slots. Several books were, however, purchased and delivered directly to students' homes, which were later returned and added to the collection. A large amount of retrospective cataloguing has also been completed while I was working at home, including for a good number of 19th-century lithographs, with actual books processed and made available on Oxford's Solo when I have eventually been able to work on-site.

### **Middle East archives and the Arabic World Documentation Unit (AWDU) at the University of Exeter**

During the last three years over a dozen archives have been sorted and catalogued by the archivist for the Middle East Collections. These include the papers of Sir William Luce relating to Aden and the Gulf, the professional papers of journalist Jonathan Crusoe relating to Iraq and Kuwait, the Bahrain diary transcripts of Charles Dalrymple-Belgrave, the papers of Michael Adams relating to Palestinian activism, the correspondence and academic papers of Professor Nazih Ayubi, the diaries of Admiral George H.P. White, the archive of Sir John and Lady Diana Richmond relating to the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Omani papers and photographs of John Shebbeare, photocopied papers and correspondence of brothers Adil and Nabih Al-Azmah, research papers and Omani manuscripts of John Craven Wilkinson, audio material collected by Abd El-Fattah El-Awaisi for his research on the Muslim Brotherhood, the correspondence and research papers of Robin Bidwell and the extensive archive of Omar Sheikmous relating to Kurdish politics and research.

Work done in cataloguing and promoting these archives has resulted in a substantial increase in usage - not only of these collections but also of other Middle East archives held at the University. Growing interest in Kurdish studies has been reflected by the acquisition of an important photographic archive as well as the establishment of links with two Kurdish archival institutions.

Archival materials held in Special Collections are augmented by Arabic World Documentation Unit (AWDU), a reference library housed in the same building. Although this has been under-used in recent years, plans are underway for the library to be returned next summer to the University's Institute for Arabic and Islamic Studies (IAIS), from which it was transferred in 2012. This move will also coincide with an ambitious digitisation project, the Digital Archive of the Middle East (DAME), which will draw upon material from both AWDU and the archival collections. It is expected that both DAME and the rehousing of AWDU will help raise the profile of the University's Middle East collections and increase usage. The archivist will be part of the DAME team and has been working closely with academic staff at IAIS over the last three years to encourage staff and students to engage more with archival material for both research and teaching. After a hiatus of some years, new acquisitions are now being purchased for AWDU while archive workshops and class presentations have become integrated in a number of modules.

### **Cambridge University Library - Near and Middle Eastern Department**

Cambridge University Library has been opening up for readers and subject librarians have started working on premises for about two days per week.

The brief over the past year, evolving with the on-going closure since 2020 has been increasingly towards the acquisition of digital resources for ease of access and processing. During the Covid-19 pandemic, electronic versions of some print items have been made available for current staff and students at the University with a Raven password through the HathiTrust Emergency Temporary Access Scheme (ETAS). Under the terms of the ETAS scheme, the print versions of these items cannot be loaned whilst the electronic version is available. This means that members of the library who don't have Raven passwords can't currently access some items from our collections in electronic format, nor can they borrow them. To reduce the occurrence of this friction, the Library is not yet promoting Browse, Borrow & Read to our wider library membership until access to print versions of this material is restored for all members (we anticipate this will happen on 9 July).

Print Operations

Planning continues around the question of how to embed Scan & Deliver as a permanent library service.

#### **Near and Middle Eastern Department**

We are making progress with automating processes through the acquisition of full RDA records including embedded order data from vendors. So far this service had been acquired from Leila Books and al-Muthanna (currently not operating) and is being rolled out to Sulaiman's Bookshop and Ferdosi, who can both supply this service.

Embedded Order Data (EOD) practically means that an additional 9XX field is added to the record, including data such as the price, vendors ID, fund code for procurement, number of copies, etc., from which the system can generate a complete order. I am experimented with this service and experienced an estimate of at least 50% less time spent of processing per item.

Further on purchases, I am in the process of arranging a trial for Noormags and Noor Digital Library from Iran, which seems to be a highly sought after resource.

### **SOAS University of London**

#### **Library reopening**



At the moment, the Library is allowing students and staff access to reading spaces, browsing of certain collections (not yet the Middle East, Central Asia and Islamica on the third floor of the Library) and students from partner institutions, including the Institute of Ismaili Students. It is imminent the reopening for UoL members and research students in the first place and progressively to all the usual categories of members through the summer, if regulations allow. The Special Collections are open for existing members.

### **Recent and planned changes**

SOAS Library has been impacted in 2020 by a School-wide restructure, that was announced during the Spring term of the 2019-2020 academic year, i.e., 11 months after implementing the previous restructure (OPS, which affected the professional services only). The Library (previously part of the *Library and Learning Services*) is now part of the larger directorate *Library, Learning, Research and Enterprise*. This results after a merge with the former directorate of *Research and Enterprise Office*.

The second restructure has not implied the loss of any individual regional nor subject librarian, but it has come with the reduction of some librarians' working hours (some of these reductions have been voluntary and temporary). The Reader Services Team has lost 2.5 FTE staff. The librarians lost their FT Acquisitions Assistant. There are plans to replace them with a Collection Assistant, who will work within both the Main Collections and the Special Collections in a wider tasks' spectrum.

The team of subject and regional librarians has operated for nine months under the Head of Library, Learning and Teaching Innovation, until they left SOAS to a senior role into another British university. The former Reader Services Manager was appointed in February 2021 to the newly created Access, Discovery and Reader Services Manager role and will be, from July 2021, line reporting to the Director of Library, Learning, Research and Enterprise.

The School's Board of Trustees appointed Adam Habib as Director of SOAS and has recently announced Khadir Meer's appointment as the new COO.

The School is finishing the proposal for a new strategic plan after a months-long consultation with all stakeholders, including Library staff. This is expected to be approved by the Board of Trustees shortly. The proposal includes a return to being a research-intensive institution, while simultaneously keeping recruitment of taught degree students high for financial sustainability purposes. This comes also with a second all-staff consultation about the Research and Enterprise office and its working force and may imply changes in the near future.

The Library has created a new Collection Care and Digitisation (CCD) unit. Our former Digital Archivist has been appointed CCD manager. The Library has also appointed its first conservation leader, whose tentative starting date is in early September.

### **Funded projects**

Two librarians, Carlos L Roca (Middle East & Central Asia) and Burzine Waghmar (South Asia) have secured a small grant from Research England's Higher Education Innovation Fund Scheme to continue works with the crowdsourcing cataloguing project *Help us learn Urdu*, created in 2019 by the Library's Head of Planning and Strategy.

Reader Services team leader Amma Poku has secured a small grant from the same scheme for the project *African History: Library and Archives and Engaging with the Diaspora*.

Various funding obtained for Special Collections cataloguing, preservation/conservation and digitisation projects. The biggest ones were the Wolfson grant (£800K) to establish a conservation and Digitisation studio onsite, and the AHRC grant (£1million) to revamp our HVAC system in our archives stores. Smaller grants have been obtained to catalogue our Hausa mss / catalogue, preserve and digitise our Sanskrit mss and rare books (£10K) / etc.

### **New Collections Board and donations policy**

The Library has established a new Collections Board with members from the Library, from the academic body and from the School's senior staff.

A Rare Books Collection Development Policy was drafted in March 2021 and a RB Collection Development Strategy is being worked on in collaboration between the Special Collections RBMS curator and the A&D librarians to rationalise the transfer of rare books from the Main Library to the SC, to bring the Library collections in line with the sector's more stringent criteria and scrutiny for provenance information.

### **Outreach and promotion:**

#### **1. Phillips Building's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

The Phillips building, in Russell Square (London), current home of a majority of the SOAS main collections and the special collections, was built in 1973 and is one of the main local representatives of brutalist architecture. The Library is currently planning some activities to celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2023.

#### **2. Exhibitions and Talks (past and future)**

##### **Talks:**

Akhoun-Schwarb, Dominique. (2021) 'Going down the rabbit hole: tracking the provenance of non-Western manuscripts in the SOAS Collections. The Warburg Institute, online, 11 March.

Akhoun-Schwarb, Dominique. (2021) Middle Eastern manuscripts at SOAS Library and their provenance: case study of the Tbilisi Manuscripts. MELCom International, online, 18-19 May.

Akhoun-Schwarb, Dominique. (2021) African language material in SOAS Special Collections (Archives, Rare Books, Mss). SCOLMA, online, 14 June.

Khur-Yearn, Jotika and Roca, Carlos L. (2021) Let the East Speak: cataloguing non-Western resources at SOAS. WHELF Conference, online, 22 April.

##### **Exhibitions:**

Opium, Silk and the Missionaries in China (in partnership with Kew, RAS, KCL, City of Westminster Archives).

Oriental Ceramics Society - Centenary exhibition (with a large selection of SOAS / PDF rare books and mss).

Rose Issa - Signs of Our Times, for 2023 (with a big selection from SOAS Arabic script mss).

## **Aga Khan Library**

### **Structural /spatial changes**

The library has been through a restructuring, which has led to two vacant positions. These will be advertised shortly.

### **Trials**

The library has recently started trials with al-Manhal database and Wikilala. The former is meant to have been improved and updated from its previous iterations. The latter is a database of Ottoman newspapers and journals. It seems to be still a beta version, only the front-page interface is in English/Turkish, the rest seems to be in Turkish only. We can update on this at a later meeting.

### **Acquisitions**

During the recent period we have not been acquiring as we were in the past years. To reduce manual processing in-house, we are looking in to acquiring shelf ready books from our vendors. Currently, we are communicating with Brown's Books on this.

### **Aga Khan Library Digital Collections**

In addition to the 67 Ottoman books, we have added some titles from the Ismaili Print Collection. Further updates of some Manuscripts and further Ottoman printed titles will be added later in July. The collection can be accessed at: <https://www.agakhanlibrary.digital/>

**C) Report of Elections held 19/07/2021**

Elections were held for the board on the 19/07/2021. There were a total number of 8 participants.

As there were a couple of joint outcomes in the election, it was agreed that Waseem will take on the position of chair with Lydia in the position of vice-chair for the first year and these positions will be swapped in the second year. Carlos accepted the position of secretary for two years. The treasurer position will be shared by all three board members.

New elections will be held after two years.