**History Department Brown Bag Lunch Discussion Series**

**Making History: Researching and Publishing the January 25th Revolution**

Meggan Houlihan, Reference / Instruction Librarian  
Carolyn Runyon, Digital Collections Archivist  
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**Introduction**

Thank you for joining us today, and a special thank to Mike Reimer and Pascale Ghazaleh for asking us to speak here today, at the monthly Department of History Brown Bag discussion.

My name is Meggan Houlihan, and I am Coordinator of Instruction at AUC Library. As coordinator, I organize and assess all instructional activities at the library including workshops, one-shot information literacy instruction sessions and Learning and Libraries Technologies 101.

I’m Carolyn Runyon, and I’m the Digital Collections Archivist in the Rare Books and Special Collections Library. In addition to digitizing and providing access to AUC’s unique cultural heritage sources, I work with students, faculty, and administrators to promote AUC’s Open Access institutional repositories, DAR and the AUCWiki.

Today we will be discussing **Making History: Researching and Publishing the January 25th Revolution**. This discussion stems from a larger paper we will be giving at the annual American Libraries Association Conference this summer, where we will be presenting **Revolutionary Libraries: Building Collections and Promoting Research about the January 25th Revolution in Egypt**. We tailored this presentation to historians, and how you--AUC faculty and students--can contribute to revolutionary scholarship.

**Working Together**

Once the revolution was underway like many academic departments the library contemplated how it could contribute educating students, promoting awareness and preserving its history. Various departments in Libraries and Learning Technologies, including Research and Information Services, Rare Books and Special Collections, University Academic Computing Technologies and the Center for Teaching and Learning all worked together to start collecting archival materials, record oral histories, offer research assistance, help with instructional design and much more. Today we will highlight these contributions.

**Researching the Revolution**

In order to prepare the mass amounts of research that was sure to take place after the revolution, Research and Information Services started to improve library collections and promote research services. We wanted to educate users on how to locate, evaluate and use information properly related to the revolution. Especially since there were some many different forms of media available.
Enhancing Collections

As the library liaison to the Department of History, I along with Paul Fischer, the former History Library representative decided it would be a great use of funds to increase our holding of revolutionary texts to provide historical analysis and comparison. We collected heavily in the area of European revolutions—starting with the French Revolution moving all the way to modern revolutions such as Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. We also included monographs related to Latin American and African revolutions. These critical texts along with our online databases can better support revolutionary research and the interests of our students.

In order to increase the visibility of all these new resources, Public Service Librarians created Research Guides to help connect students to resources. Lamia Eid, Middle Eastern Studies Librarian, developed a Research Guide related Revolutions in the Middle East. The Public Services Department is also working on creating a new Middle Eastern Revolution Guide that would list background resources, media and various other sources broken down by country. This guide will be available Summer 2012.

In order to encourage students to research and write about the revolution Research and Information Services librarians offered one-shot instruction sessions to all subject specific classes. We were able to offer individualized sessions to meets the needs of various classes including—History, Political Science and Mass Communications.

Building Collections

In response to the ongoing revolution that began in early 2011, archivists, oral historians, regular historians (?), journalists, IT professionals, librarians, students, professors, and administrators have worked together to build new collections of rich primary sources that document the January 25th Revolution.

University on the Square

Following the University’s guiding principles, which commit us to teaching, research, and contributing to Egypt and the international community, the University on the Square project was imagined by students, faculty, staff, and administrators. During the 18 days of protest, diverse members of the AUC community gathered in the Zamalek dorm to brainstorm a documentation strategy that would create a transparent record of the Revolution.

Rare Books and Special Collections Digital Library

Almost a year and a half later, the University on the Square project has collected more than 4,000 photographs and over 300 videos with the help of politically engaged student volunteers and the tech savvy staff in University Academic Computing Technologies. Moreover, oral historians in the Economic and Business History Research Center have conducted over 50 interviews with political activists, student demonstrators, and academics to capture a full picture of the January 25th Revolution. Original artwork, inspired by the revolutionary events of early 2011, has also been contributed to the project with the help of instructors in the school of Performing and Visual Arts. A representative sample of these
contributions may be found in the Rare Books and Special Collections Digital Library.

**American University in Cairo Web Archive**

Finally, with the help of project contributors, we have been able to archive more than 30 million unique Web documents, which include Twitter feeds, blog posts, local and international new coverage, thousands of videos, Facebook profiles, candidate Web sites, and other items. We collect sites in Arabic and English, and solicit contributions of the Web site URLs on the University on the Square Web site. These rich Web-based resources are available in the American University in Cairo Web Archive.

**Publishing the Revolution**

In addition to the collections in the digital library and Web archive, we have worked collaboratively with teaching faculty, like Dr. Reimer, and the Vice Provost for Institutional Research, Mona Amer of Psychology, and the Dean of Graduate Studies to publish AUC’s rich scholarly output, related, and unrelated, to the January 25th Revolution.

**Digital Archive and Research Repository**

The Digital Archive and Research Repository, more commonly known as DAR, which happens to cleverly coincide with the Arabic word for house, is home to nearly 200 master’s theses, more than 230 undergraduate and graduate student projects, including interviews, oral histories, documentaries, research papers, and architectural models, and fewer than 50 journal articles, book chapters, conference proceedings, magazine articles, technical reports, and datasets authored by faculty. More than 80 of these “scholarly communications” reflect the AUC research community’s interest in the January 25th Revolution and resultant political changes taking effect in Egypt.

By the way, did you know that by depositing your work in an Open Access repository, like DAR, results in improved ranking and visibility in search engines which leads to increased citation of your work? Additionally, DAR has the rather more altruistic aim of promoting research AUC. If you’d like to contribution, visit dar.aucegypt.edu, log in with your AUC email username and password, and start depositing. If you hit a snag along the way, email me at dar@aucegypt.edu, and we’ll sort it out.

**AUCWiki**

As a supplement to DAR and in response to a request from your very own Michael Reimer, University Academic Computing Technologies developed a collaborative publishing tool, the AUCWiki. The wiki offers a collaborative workspace to develop articles, project documentation, and information on a diverse range of topics, including the January 25th Revolution.

The Isqat Al-Nizam is part of the larger AUCWiki, and boasts a Biographical Dictionary of the Egyptian Revolution that profiles 70 of the politicians and activists who played key roles in the revolution. The articles were created by students enrolled in Dr. Reimer’s History 412 course held last spring, and extensively edited by Nareman Amin, an undergraduate student AUC. The Isqat Al-Nizam wiki is an inspiring example of the kinds of projects that can be developed through collaboration. Working with Dr. Reimer, reference librarians, Meggan Houlihan and Lamia Eid provided instruction and research support, teaching students how to navigate scholarly information and evaluate Web resources. Meanwhile, I worked with Dr. Reimer and UACT to develop a new platform for collaborative publishing.
By bringing our diverse interests and specialties together, we have been able to capitalize on student interest in the January 25th Revolution to create inventive new assignments and build up our repositories of scholarly communications at AUC.

**Conclusion**

Although everything we discussed today is specifically about the revolution, we are more than happy to assist with creating interactive learning objects and getting student and faculty work preserved for future generations.

Thank you.