

For Immediate Release



International academic publishing house releases volume in honor of AUB Professor Ramzi Baalbaki

Beirut, Lebanon- 19/12/2011 - Brill, a distinguished academic publishing house founded in 1683 and based in Leiden, announced the publication of a collection of articles dedicated to AUB Professor Ramzi Baalbaki, in honor of his scholarly contributions to the Arabic language.

Titled *In the Shadow of Arabic: The Centrality of Language to Arabic Culture*, the volume is dedicated to Ramzi Baalbaki, the Margaret Weyerhaeuser Jewett Professor of Arabic at the American University of Beirut, on the occasion of his sixtieth birthday.

Bilal Orfali, editor of the volume and assistant professor of Arabic studies, explained that it is common practice in academia to honor prominent scholars for their remarkable career and enduring contributions. This is the second time such a volume is prepared in honor of a professor of the Arabic Department, the first is the 1981 volume dedicated to Ihsan Abbas on his sixtieth birthday edited by Wadad Kadi and published by AUB.

“Such volumes honor not only the dedicatee, but his department and institution as well, and Ramzi Baalbaki, the Arabic Department and AUB are worthy of many such volumes,” said Orfali, who is also former student, co-author, and current colleague of Ramzi Baalbaki.

“This publication proves that Ramzi Baalbaki is a remarkable scholar whose impact on Arabic studies will be felt for years to come,” added Orfali. “Many members on campus experienced Ramzi Baalbaki as an exceptional colleague, a selfless collaborator, a humane administrator, and an inspiring teacher, and this volume is a tribute to him from the whole AUB family as well as from a large number of scholars who hold his academic achievements in high esteem. “

Orfali said he had to limit topics of contribution to the areas that formed the core of Baalbaki’s scholarly work, to which the present collection pays homage. Nevertheless, the volume has swollen to a considerable size, attesting to the scale of Baalbaki’s influence and reputation. The volume reflects the central themes of Baalbaki’s scholarly work: history of Arabic grammar, Arabic lexicography, Arabic linguistics, comparative Semitics, Arabic epigraphy, and textual editing of classical texts. It provides intellectual, literary, and social historians, as well as Arabists, philologists, and linguists with an interesting glimpse into the early medieval and modern traditions related to the Arabic language, its grammar, historical development, and demonstrates its centrality to other fields of study such as Qur’anic studies, *adab*, folk literature, sufism, and poetry. Several of the

articles of this volume were inspired by Baalbaki's own research and address topics and questions first explored by him.

Orfali thanked all contributors, acknowledging debt to the staff of the Jafet Library at AUB who spared no effort in providing him with the books he depended upon, and to the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, represented by Dean Khalil Bitar and Dean Patrick McGreevy, for supporting the publication of this book.

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Note to Editors

About AUB

Founded in 1866, the American University of Beirut bases its educational philosophy, standards, and practices on the American liberal arts model of higher education. A teaching-centered research university, AUB has more than 600 full-time faculty members and a student body of about 8,000 students. AUB currently offers more than 100 programs leading to the bachelor's, master's, MD, and PhD degrees. It provides medical education and training to students from throughout the region at its Medical Center that includes a full service 420-bed hospital.

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