

Literary Translation and Language Education

• *The MLA-Roth Award for Literary Translation* (\$1000) is given in alternate years and was not presented in 2006. Last year's awardee Joel Agee's translation of Hans Erich Nossack's *The End: Hamburg 1943* has attracted attention as a disturbing meditation on the destruction of the great German port city. Discussions with MLA continue on how we might annualize, enrich or expand this award.

• *American Institute of Iranian Studies*. At this writing, we have no news of this year's selection by the AIIS for its 2007 award. Details about last year's award of \$1500 to Jawad Mojadeddi, for his translation of the first of Rumi's six-volume *Masnavi*, hold interest. Because Rumi has become a best-seller in the U.S., the AIIS is pleased that a serious translation of the entire opus of Rumi has begun. It is, writes AIIS President Franklin Lewis, "a daunting task, requiring a commitment of heroic patience and intellectual persistence." He believes the Roth-AIIS award will encourage Dr. Mojadeddi to carry through to the end of this long project. Meanwhile, critics are praising the achievement of twice-laureate Dick Davis for his splendid translation of the complete *Shahnameh* of Ferdowsi, which Michael Dirda of the *Washington Post* called "one of 2006's great works of fiction."

• *The Maurice Coindreau Prize* (\$2000) was again awarded at the seat of the Société des Gens de Lettres, the Hôtel de Massa in Paris. The prize went to Marc Amfreville for his translation of Monique Truong's *The Book of Salt* (Houghton-Mifflin 2003). Anticipating success in raising the Coindreau sub-fund to \$25,000, we augmented our contribution this year. With the unstable dollar, this has helped ease concern in France

about the future of the Prize honoring the great translator and Princeton professor. Despite the continuing generosity of one anonymous donor, the going has been slow: as of this writing, the sub-fund still falls short of \$7000.

• *The Jeanne Varney Pleasants Award* of the French Department, Columbia University, was raised to \$750; it was given in May 2006 to Matthew Bridge, working towards his doctorate in comparative literature, focusing on interaction between literature and theory in France and East Asia. A long appreciative letter from Matthew reveals the born pedagogue, who uses humor, role-playing and movement to make his classes unforgettable. He sees teaching as a collaboration between teacher and students: "My students will be happy to hear that I have won this award. But I know it is as much theirs as mine."

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Over the years, we have referred often to our ongoing needs. They are real: only with continued contributions and bequests can the Endowment keep growing as a public foundation. Passing the half-million mark, we have entered a new decade and we are ready to explore new areas. Please help with gifts or bequests, either general or earmarked for specific projects, some of which have already accumulated substantial supporting sub-funds. New sub-funds may be opened with a minimal earmarked gift of \$1000, for any project approved by the board. For sub-funds holding \$10,000 or more, the Endowment will guarantee an annual award of \$1000, an annual return of 10% on the donation.

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