



MIDDLE
EAST
STUDIES

ANNUAL
REPORT
2016-2017

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LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

I am happy to report that 2016-2017 has been a remarkably successful year and that we are on the home stretch of our journey from an undergraduate concentration into a center. Middle East Studies (MES), launched almost five years ago, is now widely considered the rising star of peer programs in the country. Our faculty-led signature research projects – such as Displacement, Islamic Humanities, and Palestinian Studies – have put Brown at the center of these critical areas of scholarship. Our compelling programming, always in partnership with other units, occupies a large footprint on campus. Enrollments in MES-coded and cross-listed classes this year of nearly 1,400 represent an equivalent of one-fifth of Brown's undergraduate student body.

We are close to achieving a critical mass of faculty that can sustain MES and its future growth. Three new assistant professors started teaching in the fall of 2016: Emily Drumsta, Jennifer Johnson, and Sreemati Mitter. Aga Khan Professor of Islamic Humanities Shahzad Bashir will join us in the fall, as will Amir Moosavi (modern Iranian studies) and Alex Winder (Palestinian studies). We are excited that the search for a senior social scientist of the Middle East to fill the Stephen Robert Chair is moving forward.



A major grant from the Mellon Foundation allowed MES to organize a year-long series of workshops and conferences on displacement led by a steering committee of faculty from seven different departments. This interdisciplinary and collaborative effort deepened the integration of MES into the intellectual DNA of Brown. The fourth annual conference of New Directions in Palestinian Studies, "The Politics of Archives and the Practices of Memory," as well as an agreement with University of California Press to publish the first-ever book series in the US in Palestinian Studies, further solidified Brown's role as a leading home for this field. These highlights are but two of the dozens of events organized by MES that bring deeply informed and critical perspectives on pressing issues of our time.

We have worked hard to combine a rigorous concentration with a close-knit family community feel, and that has fueled the growth and popularity of MES among undergraduates. It is very gratifying that most of my conversations with graduating seniors at this time of the year are about choosing from among the many options they have for top graduate schools and job offers. Their success is closely related to the opportunities we provide for engaged scholarship. A curricular highnote this year was the field trip for Professor Sarah Tobin's course on Displacement and Refugees. During spring break the students visited refugee camps in Jordan and witnessed firsthand the profound impacts of regional displacement.

The Middle East embodies the entire range of systemic challenges, from climate change to refugees, that our planet faces. The mission of MES is as pressing and vital as ever. We thank you for your support as we redouble our commitment to positive change during these troubled times.

Beshara Doumani

*Joukowsky Family Distinguished Professor of Modern Middle East History
Director, Middle East Studies*

ABOUT US

MISSION

Middle East Studies at Brown University promotes knowledge, understanding, and informed discussion about the Middle East, Islam, and Muslim societies through research, teaching, and public engagement.

ABOUT

Housed in the Watson Institute and supported by the Dean of Faculty, Middle East Studies (MES) has, since 2012, grown from an undergraduate concentration into one of this country's top programs in this field. Eschewing the hothouse legacy structures of the conventional Oriental and Area Studies models, MES is driven by thematic partnerships with other units that tap into Brown's tradition of interdisciplinary, critical, and engaged scholarship. MES seeks to integrate Middle East and Islamic Studies into the larger streams of intellectual life at Brown University by building a cutting-edge research community, producing innovative programming, and offering an exciting array of courses and opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students.

Jordan Class Trip, photography courtesy of Amélie-Sophie Vavrovsky



RESEARCH INITIATIVES

Middle East Studies is organized around niche research initiatives that seek to shape fields of knowledge through annual workshops, publications, pedagogy, and public outreach.

1. DISPLACEMENT AND THE MAKING OF THE MODERN WORLD
2. ISLAMIC HUMANITIES**
3. NEW DIRECTIONS IN PALESTINIAN STUDIES
4. ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP IN CONFLICT ZONES
5. ARTS AND SOCIAL CHANGE

** Includes: a) the Aga Khan Professorship in Islamic Humanities; b) Digital Islamic Humanities

STAFF



SARAH TOBIN, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

Sarah Tobin received her PhD in anthropology from Boston University in 2011. She oversees academic and governance matters for the program and is the liaison to MES faculty and concentrators. She also teaches and advises current and future concentrators.

BARBARA OBERKOETTER, PROGRAM MANAGER

Barbara Oberkoetter oversees operations, communications, and event logistics for Middle East Studies.

She is a former hotel owner and sales and marketing executive. She grew up in Chile and East Africa, has lived and worked in the UK, Germany, St. Kitts-Nevis, and Canada, as well as in the US in the last 20 years.



RACHEL EASTERBROOK, ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR

Rachel Easterbrook coordinates academic, communications, and events processes for Middle East Studies.

An alumna of the University of Pennsylvania and Florida State University, Rachel holds an M.A. in Middle East history, and has a background in media and communications.

SPECIAL MENTION



SABIYA AHAMED '17

is a graduating senior and double concentrator in Middle East studies and political science from Brooklyn, NY. Her thesis looks at the concept of human dignity and how the US resettlement process upholds or diminishes the dignity of Syrian refugees. Sabiya is one of the two inaugural MES Student Fellows in 2016-17. In that capacity, she has taken on the role of MES liaison to pre-concentrators.



ANNA MURPHY '19

is a sophomore from Virginia concentrating in Middle East studies and international relations. She is one of the leaders of the Middle East Studies' DUG and a collaborator on the MES Annual Report, as well as an editor for the *Brown Political Review*. Anna also writes for the *Brown Daily Herald* and is a campus tour guide.



ISABELLA CREATURA '18

is a junior from New York City studying Middle East studies and international relations. She is one of the leaders of the Middle East Studies DUG, and just got back from a semester at University of Jordan. She writes for *Brown Political Review*, sings in the Brown University Chorus, and studies classical voice/opera in the Applied Music Program.

KUTAY ONAYLI '17

is a graduating senior from Istanbul concentrating in Middle East studies and comparative literature. He worked as an assistant on this Annual Report and is one of the inaugural MES Student Fellows in 2016-17. Kutay's senior thesis examines the 1970 novel "A Long Day's Evening" by Turkish author Bilge Karasu, re-thinking the capabilities and political commitments of early literary postmodernism in Republican Turkey.



KATE TALERICO '18

is a junior from Minneapolis, Minnesota. In addition to working for Middle East Studies' graphic design team, she also owns a photography business, covers campus activism at the *Brown Daily Herald*, and is a peer mentor for students with disabilities.



PHIL LAI '13

is Middle East Studies' designer at large. He double concentrated in international relations and human biology before finding his true calling in comparative anatomy. He now lives up the road in Boston, where he is working on a PhD in between projects for MES.



FACULTY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



BESHARA DOUMANI

joukowsky family distinguished professor of modern middle eastern history; director, middle east studies; chair, middle east studies faculty executive committee

Beshara Doumani is a professor of history and director of Middle East Studies at Brown University. His research focuses on marginalized groups, places, and time periods in the early modern and modern Middle East. He also writes on academic freedom, the politics of knowledge production, and the Palestinian condition. His books include *Family Life in the Ottoman Mediterranean: A Social History*, *Academic Freedom After September 11* (editor), *Family History in the Middle East: Household, Property, and Gender*, and *Rediscovering Palestine: Merchants and Peasants in Jabal Nablus, 1700-1900*. Doumani received the Sawyer Seminar award from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for his proposal, *Displacement and the Making of the Modern World: Histories, Ecologies, and Subjectivities*.



ARIELLA AZOULAY

professor of modern culture and media and comparative literature

Ariella Azoulay studies modern imperial political formations with a special focus on sovereignties, art plunder, revolutions, and human rights. She creates and uses archives in the production of potential history and non-imperial knowledge. The ruination of Palestine and the formation of the Israeli political regime has been a primary focus of her research, with recent work including *The One State Condition: Occupation and Democracy between the Sea and the River* (co-authored with Adi Ophir, Stanford University Press). She is also an independent curator and documentary filmmaker. Her photographic archive, *Act of State 1967-2007* is part of the Centre Pompidou, and her latest documentary, *Civil Alliances, Palestine, 47-48*, is accessible online.

MIRENA CHRISTOFF

senior lecturer in language studies

Mirena Christoff coordinates instruction in the Arabic Language Program and teaches Arabic language and culture. Before joining Brown's faculty, she was an assistant professor at Sofia University, and taught at various universities in Europe and the Middle East. In the US, she has taught Arabic at UCLA and the Beverly Hills Lingual Institute, and in intensive summer programs at Middlebury College Arabic School and UC Santa Barbara. Christoff is a member of MLA, ACTFL, MESA, and AATA, and serves on the Governing Board of CASA. Her research reflects her professional involvement with foreign language pedagogy, translation studies, and Arab cultural history.



EMILY DRUMSTA

assistant professor of modern arabic literature and comparative literature

Emily Drumsta works on form and disillusionment in the Arabic novel, meter in modernist Arabic poetics, and negotiations of language and identity in North African literature and culture. Her current book project explores how late twentieth-century authors in Egypt, Palestine, and Lebanon use the trope of investigation to interrogate the notion of "resistance literature." She is currently translating Iraqi modernist poet Nazik al-Mala'ika, with previous translations published in *McSweeney's*, *Jadaliyya*, *Circumference*, and the *Trinity Journal of Literary Translation*. She is a co-founder of Tahrir Documents, an online archive of ephemera collected during the 2011 uprisings in Egypt.



FACULTY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



SREEMATI MITTER

kutayba alghanim assistant professor of history and international and public affairs

Sreemati Mitter's work focuses on the economic and monetary dimensions of statelessness. She is currently completing her first book, *A History of Money in Palestine: From the 1900s to the Present*. Before coming to Brown, she was a postdoctoral research fellow at the Institute for Advanced Study in Toulouse, France. She received her Ph.D. from Harvard University's History department in 2014, and holds a master's in public policy from the Harvard Kennedy School. She previously worked for the Palestine Investment Fund in Ramallah, in the Palestinian Territories, and at Credit Suisse in New York.



ELIAS MUHANNA

manning assistant professor of comparative literature

Elias Muhanna is a scholar of classical Arabic literature and Islamic intellectual history. His research focuses on encyclopedic texts in the Islamic world and Europe, Mamluk cultural production, and the problem of the vernacular in different literary traditions. He has recently published an abridged translation of Shihab al-Din al-Nuwayri's 14th-century compendium, *The Ultimate Ambition in the Arts of Erudition* (Penguin, 2016) and an edited volume entitled *The Digital Humanities and Islamic & Middle East Studies* (De Gruyter, 2016). Muhanna is a contributing writer for *newyorker.com*, and his essays and criticism appear regularly in the *New York Times*, *The Nation*, and other publications.

IAN STRAUGHN

joukowsky family middle east studies librarian

Ian Straughn's research explores the archaeology of the Muslim world and the development of Islamic cultural heritage. His work has explored ways of bringing archaeological and textual records into productive dialogue and the role of material culture and landscapes in the study of religion, particularly Islam. Most recently, with funding from the British Library, he has traveled to Mali to document a private library of Arabic manuscripts originating from Timbuktu. He currently serves as the Joukowsky Family Librarian for Middle East Studies and has a forthcoming article in the *International Journal of Islamic Architecture*.



SARAH TOBIN

associate director, middle east studies, *ex officio*

Sarah Tobin's work explores transformations in religious and economic life, identity construction, and personal piety at the intersections with gender, Islamic authority and normative Islam, public ethics, and Islamic authenticity. Her recent book, *Everyday Piety: Islam and Economy in Jordan* (Cornell University Press), focuses on Islamic piety in the economy, especially Islamic banking and finance, Ramadan, and contested fields of consumption. She has been published in the *Middle East Research and Information Project*, *Middle East Policy*, *Digest of Middle East Studies*, and *Research in Economic Anthropology*, and has undertaken new research with Syrian refugees in Jordanian refugee camps.



RESEARCH INITIATIVES

DIGITAL ISLAMIC HUMANITIES

Each year, the number of digitized books, inscriptions, images, documents, and other artifacts from the Islamic world continues to grow. As this archive expands, so too does the repertoire of digital tools for navigating and interpreting its diffuse and varied contents. Drawing upon such tools as topic modeling, context-based search, social network maps, and text reuse algorithms, the study of large-scale archives and textual corpora is undergoing significant and exciting developments. Led by Professor Elias Muhanna, Middle East Studies' **Digital Islamic Humanities Project** organizes conferences, workshops, and symposia to explore the intellectual possibilities and the challenges created by these developments, and to create a community of scholars passionate about the emerging field of Digital Islamic Humanities.

This year's **Digital Islamic Humanities Project** gathering took the form of a workshop on the topic of print culture in the early modern and modern Middle East. Organized in partnership with Gale Publishers, the workshop included a talk by Dr. Kathryn Schwartz (Harvard University) titled "Towards a New Book History of the Modern Middle East" as well as a presentation of Gale's 2.5-million-page new digital text archive, "Early Arabic Printed Books from the British Library."

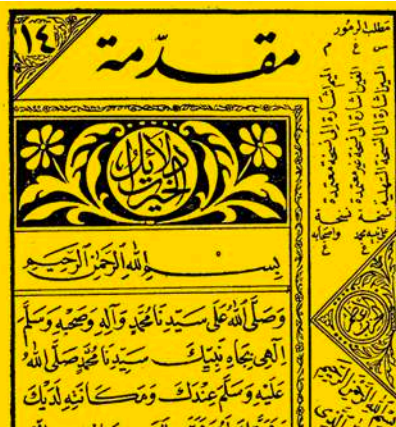


DIGITIZING EARLY ARABIC PRINTED BOOKS: A WORKSHOP

October 21, 2016 | 10:00 am - 2:00 pm
Joukowsky Forum, Watson Institute

Middle East Studies | Brown University
In partnership with Gale Publishers

Registration required



NEW DIRECTIONS IN PALESTINIAN STUDIES

New Directions in Palestinian Studies aims to shape scholarly works in this field through an annual workshop, an endowed postdoctoral fellowship, and a book series with the University of California Press. The thematically organized workshops bring together emerging and established scholars to take stock of research trends, identify promising new questions and sources, and encourage networking across academic and research institutions. The first three workshops – “Political Economy and the Economy of Politics,” “Political Culture and the Culture of Politics,” and “Approaches to Research on Palestine and the Palestinians” – explored such questions as the politics of knowledge production on Palestine, the promise and limitations of the settler colonial paradigm, and connections between Palestinian and Israeli studies.

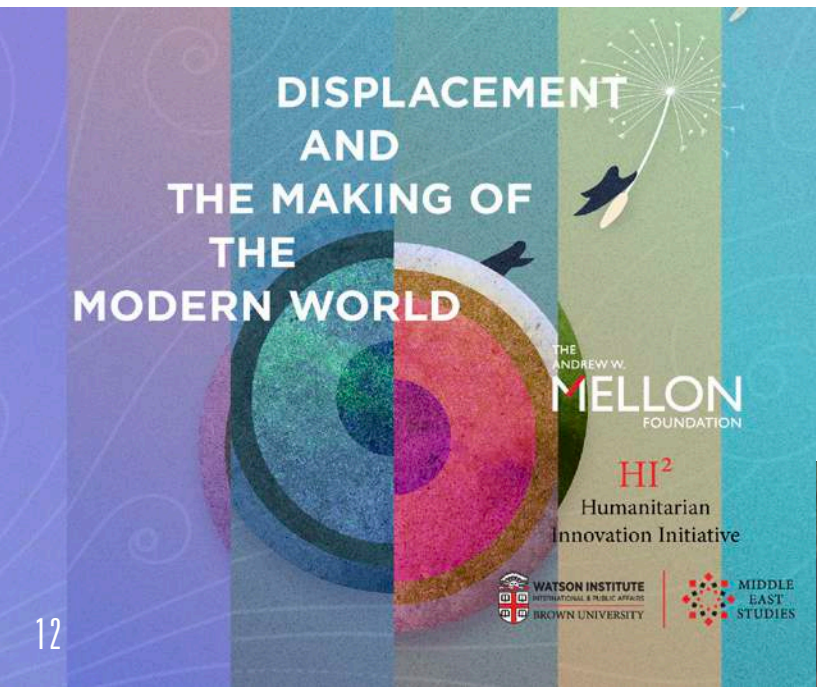
The 2017 workshop, “The Politics of Archives and the Practices of Memory,” focused on how sources and memories are identified, organized, and appropriated in a context characterized by the absence of a Palestinian state, an ongoing colonial occupation, and intense international and regional involvement. Pre-circulated papers ranged from theoretical reflections on archives and sovereignty to how to build open-access platforms for oral history databases.





DISPLACEMENT AND THE MAKING OF THE MODERN WORLD

Funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Sawyer Seminar series, the one-year program “Displacement and the Making of the Modern World: Histories, Ecologies, and Subjectivities” focused on occurrences and impacts of displacement in the last five centuries. Through monthly seminars and a two-day workshop, the seminar examined the role of displacement in shaping the world we inhabit today. It also investigated the agency of the displaced, artistic ways of highlighting forced movements, and non-human and non-living forms of displacement. Postdoctoral Research Associate Vikramaditya Thakur and graduate research assistants Francisco Monar and Julia Gettle maintained a website that covered the events related to the seminar.



PROGRAMMING

CRITICAL CONVERSATIONS (CC*)

CC is Middle East Studies' semesterly public discussion on issues of particular political urgency and historical significance. Featuring distinguished panelists from both inside and outside of Brown, the Critical Conversations program brings together academics, practitioners, and audience members for informal, invigorated discussions. The primary purpose of each Critical Conversations meeting is to detail the fundamental structures, power relations, and deep politics of the topic at hand.



CLINTON, TRUMP, AND THE MIDDLE EAST

The seventh Critical Conversations, on October 6, 2016, examined the diverging Middle East policies of then-presidential candidates Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump. Focusing on ongoing trends and shifts in the United States' relationships with numerous countries in the Middle East, the Critical Conversations panel sought to chart the ways in which different U.S. election outcomes could impact the region. Panelists included Brown faculty Narges Bajoghli, Jeff Colgan, Stephen Kinzer, and Beshara Doumani, with guest keynote speaker Rami Khouri from the American University of Beirut.



PALESTINE-ISRAEL IN THE TRUMP ERA

Middle East Studies' well-attended eighth Critical Conversations on March 2, 2017, was a comprehensive discussion about Palestine and Israel in the context of the current presidential administration. The keynote speakers were Rashid Khalidi, Edward Said Professor of Modern Arab Studies at Columbia University, and Sherene Seikaly, associate professor of history at UC Santa Barbara. The panel, chaired by Beshara Doumani, was made up of Brown faculty Brian J. Atwood, Omer Bartov, and Catherine Lutz.

PROGRAMMING

TEACH-INS

THE COUP, THE PURGE, AND THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY



THE COUP, THE PURGE, AND THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY IN TURKEY

Middle East Studies' first teach-in of the year focused on last July's attempted coup in Turkey and the purge that followed it. Examining the impact of the events on democracy and academic freedom in Turkey, the speakers also detailed the consequences for U.S.-Turkish relations and for regional geopolitics across the Middle East. Panelists included Brown faculty Beshara Doumani, Chas Freeman, Stephen Kinzer, Meltem Toksoz, and Engin Akarli, and MES concentrator Kutay Onayli '17.

TRUMP'S BAN A TEACH IN



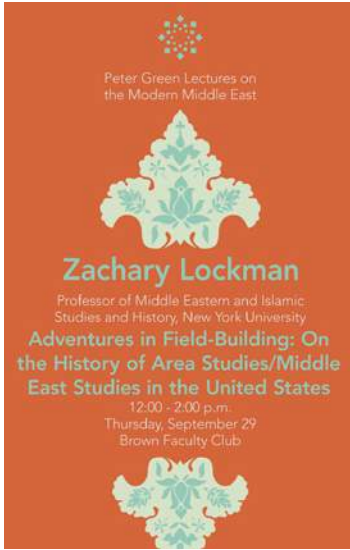
TRUMP'S BAN

Middle East Studies' second semester teach-in focused on the profound and long-term global implications of President Trump's executive order on refugees and immigrants. In addition to detailing how Muslim-majority societies and U.S. sociopolitical life will be affected, the teach-in sought to inform students and colleagues about the international legal dimension of the issue. A key focus of the panelists was to humanize the impact of the ban on people all over the world, and to equip participants to think comparatively across the Middle East, South Asia, and Latin America.

PROGRAMMING

PETER GREEN LECTURES ON THE MODERN MIDDLE EAST

REPORT ON ARAB YOUTH



Peter Green Lectures on the Modern Middle East

Zachary Lockman
Professor of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies and History, New York University

Adventures in Field-Building: On the History of Area Studies/Middle East Studies in the United States
12:00 - 2:00 p.m.
Thursday, September 29
Brown Faculty Club



Peter Green Lectures on the Modern Middle East

Suad Joseph
Distinguished Professor of Anthropology and Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies
University of California, Davis

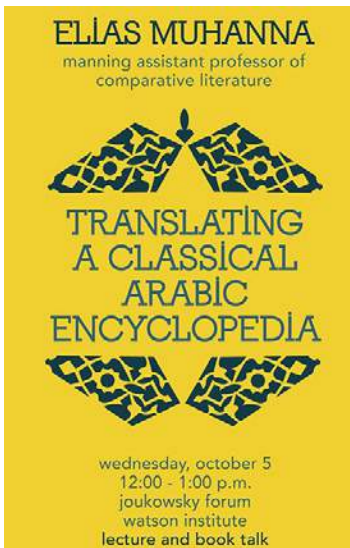
State of the Family and the Family of the State: Critical Arab Family Studies
12:00 - 2:00 p.m.
Monday, February 13, 2017
Brown Faculty Club, By Invitation



A Discussion of the Arab Human Development Report 2016

guest speaker
Jad Chaaban
Associate Professor of Economics at the American University of Beirut

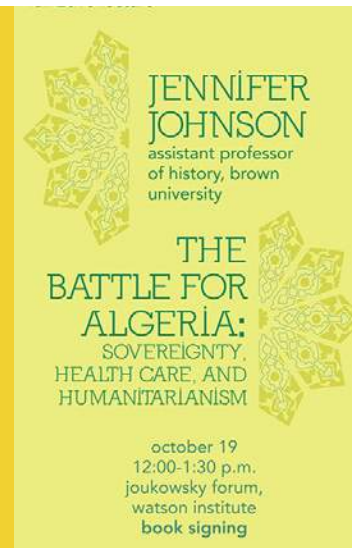
LECTURE SERIES



ELIAS MUHANNA
manning assistant professor of comparative literature

TRANSLATING A CLASSICAL ARABIC ENCYCLOPEDIA

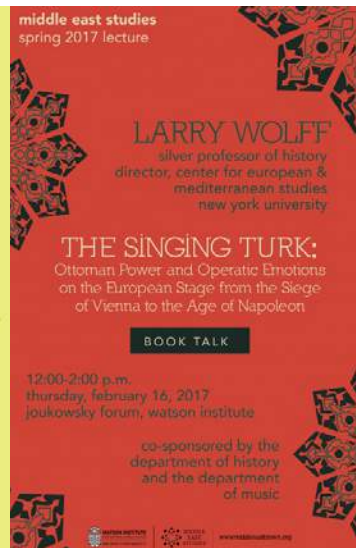
wednesday, october 5
12:00 - 1:00 p.m.
joukowsky forum
watson institute
lecture and book talk



JENNIFER JOHNSON
assistant professor of history, brown university

THE BATTLE FOR ALGERIA: SOVEREIGNTY, HEALTH CARE, AND HUMANITARIANISM

october 19
12:00-1:30 p.m.
joukowsky forum,
watson institute
book signing



middle east studies
spring 2017 lecture

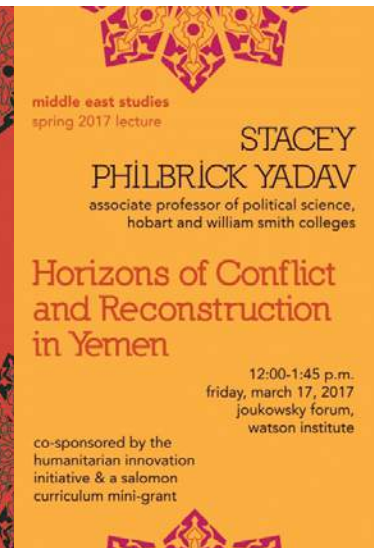
LARRY WOLFF
silver professor of history
director, center for european & mediterranean studies
new york university

THE SINGING TURK: Ottoman Power and Operatic Emotions on the European Stage from the Siege of Vienna to the Age of Napoleon

BOOK TALK

12:00-2:00 p.m.
thursday, february 16, 2017
joukowsky forum, watson institute

co-sponsored by the department of history and the department of music



middle east studies
spring 2017 lecture

STACEY PHILBRICK YADAV
associate professor of political science,
hobart and william smith colleges

Horizons of Conflict and Reconstruction in Yemen

12:00-1:45 p.m.
friday, march 17, 2017
joukowsky forum,
watson institute

co-sponsored by the humanitarian innovation initiative & a salomon curriculum mini-grant

PROGRAMMING

LUNCHEON SEMINARS

<p>middle east studies seminar series</p> <p>Sreemati Mitter assistant professor of history and international and public affairs "No Doubt The Actual Oranges Have Already Been Consumed By The Turkish Public"; Palestinian Citrus Growers Sue Barclays Bank, 1956"</p> <p>12:00-1:00 p.m. wednesday, september 14 mckinney room, watson institute register on www.middleeastbrown.org</p>	<p>middle east studies seminar series</p> <p>Rej Sabbagh-Khoury palestinian studies postdoctoral research associate, middle east studies, brown university "The Zionist Left: Settler Colonial Practices and the Representation of Palestinian Nakba in Northern Palestine"</p> <p>12:00-1:00 p.m. wednesday, october 26 mckinney room, watson institute register on www.middleeastbrown.org</p>	<p>middle east studies seminar series</p> <p>Ikram Thakur postdoctoral research associate, middle east studies, brown university "After Displacement: Circular Modernity in Quest for a Viable Resettlement"</p> <p>12:00-1:00 p.m. monday, december 12 mckinney room, watson institute register on www.middleeastbrown.org</p>	<p>middle east studies seminar series</p> <p>Adam Teller professor in the department of history and the program in judaic studies "Captives, Slaves, and Refugees: Ransom and Resettlement of Jews in the Mediterranean World After 1648"</p> <p>12:00-1:00 p.m. thursday, february 2 mckinney room, watson institute register on www.middleeastbrown.org</p>	<p>middle east studies seminar series</p> <p>Anila Daulatzai emphire visiting assistant professor of anthropology and gender studies "Remaining Undone: Trauma in the Time of Serial War"</p> <p>12:00-1:00 p.m. wednesday, february 8, 2017 mckinney room, watson institute register on www.middleeastbrown.org</p>	<p>middle east studies seminar series</p> <p>Hanan Toukan eminassian visiting professor in visual art and middle east studies "Starting the Revolution from a Different Place: Art, Dissent and Diplomacy in the Arab World"</p> <p>12:00-1:00 p.m. wednesday, march 8, 2017 mckinney room, watson institute register on www.middleeastbrown.org</p>	<p>middle east studies seminar series</p> <p>Emily Drumsta assistant professor of comparative literature "Between the Archive and the People: The Arabic Novel in the Age of Disillusionment"</p> <p>12:00-1:00 p.m. wednesday, april 19, 2017 mckinney room, watson institute register on www.middleeastbrown.org</p>
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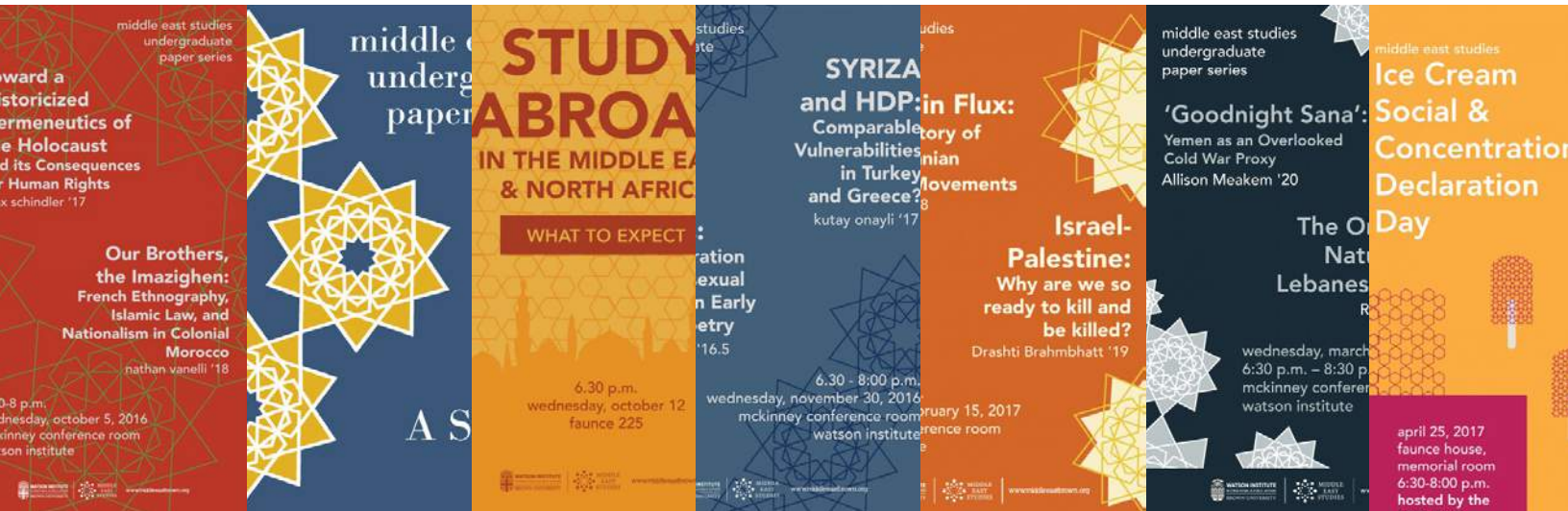
FILM SCREENINGS

Special appreciation extended to Dr. Pelin Kadercan, who organized this year's series with the support of Kutay Onayli '17, and in collaboration with BUFF (Brown University Film Forum).

<p>Uzgarin Natirali 2015 Memories of the Wind 12 minutes Turkish with English subtitles.</p> <p>Tuesday, October 4 7:00-9:30 p.m. Joukowsky Forum, Watson Institute</p>	<p>Kasaba 1998 The Small Town 88 minutes Turkish with English subtitles.</p> <p>Tuesday, November 1 7:00-9:30 p.m. Joukowsky Forum, Watson Institute</p> <p>"Us and Them: Across the Borders" Turkish Film Series, presented by Prof. Pelin Kadercan and Kutay Onayli '17 in partnership with BUFF</p>	<p>hacivat karagoz neden olduruldu 2006 Killing the Shadows, 135 minutes Turkish with English subtitles Directed by Ezel Akay</p> <p>Tuesday, January 3 7:00-9:30 p.m. Joukowsky Forum, Watson Institute</p> <p>"Us and Them: Across the Borders" Turkish Film Series, presented by Prof. Pelin Kadercan and Kutay Onayli '17 in partnership with BUFF</p>	<p>eskiya 1996 The Bandit, 128 minutes Turkish with English subtitles.</p> <p>Tuesday, March 7 7:00-9:30 p.m. Joukowsky Forum, Watson Institute</p> <p>"Us and Them: Across the Borders" Turkish Film Series, presented by Prof. Pelin Kadercan and Kutay Onayli '17 in partnership with BUFF</p>	<p>iftarlık Gazoz 2016 61 Days, 115 minutes Turkish with English subtitles.</p> <p>Tuesday, April 11 7:00-9:30 p.m. Joukowsky Forum, Watson Institute</p> <p>"Us and Them: Across the Borders" Turkish Film Series, presented by Prof. Pelin Kadercan and Kutay Onayli '17 in partnership with BUFF</p>
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PROGRAMMING

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT EVENTS



The Undergraduate Paper Series is one of the DUG's most popular events, giving junior scholars the opportunity to present their research to both peers and professors and to develop the necessary skills for future work with Middle East Studies. Research papers are presented throughout the academic year and represent a wide range of interests within the Middle East Studies undergraduate community. This year, topics have ranged from Sophie Ashai's ('16.5) "Exploration of Homosexual Imagery in Early Arabic Poetry" to Nathan Vanelli's ('18) presentation of "French Ethnography, Islamic Law, and Nationalism in Colonial Morocco".

WORKSHOPS IN COLLABORATION WITH THE CENTER FOR LANGUAGE STUDIES



October 14, 2016 Arabic Calligraphy Workshop



February 24, 2017 Dabke Workshop

FACULTY

FAIZ AHMED, History

IRAJ ANVAR, Center for Language Studies

ARIELLA AZOULAY, Modern Culture and Media, Comparative Literature

ABED AZZAM, Religious Studies

OMER BARTOV, History, German Studies

RUTH ADLER BEN YEHUDA, Judaic Studies

REDA BENSMAIA, French Studies, Comparative Literature

SHEILA BONDE, History of Art and Architecture

PALMIRA BRUMMETT, History

VANGELIS CALOTYCHOS, Comparative Literature

MIRENA CHRISTOFF, Center for Language Studies

JONATHAN CONANT, History

ANILA DAULATZAI, Anthropology, Gender Studies

LEO DEPUYDT, Egyptology, Assyriology

LISA DICARLO, Sociology

BESHARA DOUMANI, Middle East Studies, History

EMILY DRUMSTA, Comparative Literature

MILED FAIZA, Center for Language Studies

LINA FRUZZETTI, Anthropology

SHERINE HAMDY, Anthropology

YANNIS HAMILAKIS, Archaeology, Modern Greek Studies

JO-ANNE HART, Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs

SUSAN HARVEY, Religious Studies, Medieval Studies

ALLA HASSAN, Center for Language Studies

DENNIS HOGAN, Sociology

DAVID JACOBSON, Judaic Studies

JENNIFER JOHNSON, History

MARTHA JOUKOWSKY, Archaeology

NANCY KHALEK, Religious Studies

STEPHEN KINZER, Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs

MAUD MANDEL, History, Judaic Studies

SREEMATI MITTER, History, International and Public Affairs

OURIDA MOSTEFAI, French Studies, Comparative Literature

ELIAS MUHANNA, Comparative Literature

PAUL NAHME, Judaic Studies, Religious Studies

SAUL OLYAN, Judaic Studies, Religious Studies

ADI OPHIR, Cogut Center for Humanities, Middle East Studies

EFSTRATIOS PAPAIOANNOU, Classics, Medieval Studies

AMY REMENSNYDER, History

RACHEL ROJANSKI, Judaic Studies

MATTHEW RUTZ, Egyptology, Assyriology

JOHN STEELE, Egyptology, Assyriology

IAN STRAUGHN, Middle East Studies, Anthropology

NINA TANNENWALD, International Relations, Political Science

SARAH TOBIN, Middle East Studies

HANAN TOUKAN, Middle East Studies

MELTEM TOKSOZ, History, Middle East Studies

VAZIRA F-Y ZAMINDAR, History

POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATES

AREEJ SABBAGH-KHOURY, Middle East Studies

VIKRAMADITYA THAKUR, Middle East Studies

NARGES BAJOGHLI, Watson Institute

M. ALI KADIVAR, Watson Institute

ELIZABETH WILLIAMS, Watson Institute

MES VISITING FACULTY AND POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATES

VISITING FACULTY



ADI OPHIR

is a visiting professor, affiliated with the Cogut Center for the Humanities and the Program for Middle East Studies, a professor emeritus at Tel Aviv University, and a coordinator of the Political Concepts initiative at Brown University.



HANAN TOUKAN

is Adrienne Minassian Visiting Professor in Middle East Studies and History of Art and Architecture. Her research is visual cultures and postcolonial and transnational politics of culture in Jordan, Palestine, and Lebanon.

MELTEM TOKSOZ

is associate professor of history, Bogazici University, Istanbul, and visiting scholar in Brown University's Middle East Studies program and Department of History. Her field of study is Ottoman intellectual history and historiography.



POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATES



Areej Sabbagh-Khoury, inaugural 2016-17 Palestinian Studies Postdoctoral Research Associate, completed her PhD in sociology and anthropology at Tel Aviv University. Her current book project, now under contract with Stanford University Press, examines relations between leftist Zionist kibbutzim and Palestinian villagers in Northern Palestine within a settler colonial framework.



Vikramaditya Thakur, Mellon Sawyer Postdoctoral Research Associate, a sociocultural anthropologist, earned his doctorate from Yale in 2014. This year, he oversaw the Mellon Sawyer seminar series on Displacement and the Making of the Modern World.

INCOMING FACULTY



SHAHZAD BASHIR

aga khan chair in islamic humanities

Shahzad Bashir received his PhD from Yale University and will come to Brown after 10 years at Stanford University. He works on the intellectual and social histories of Iran and Central and South Asia circa 1300 CE to the present. His current projects are aimed at reevaluating how we understand the relationship between Islam, history, and historiography. He is the author of *Sufi Bodies* (2011), *Fazlallah Astarabadi and the Hurufis* (2005), and *Messianic Hopes and Mystical Visions* (2003), and has co-edited *Under the Drones* (2012).



AMIR MOOSAVI

visiting assistant professor in modern iranian studies

Amir Moosavi received his PhD in Middle Eastern and Islamic studies from NYU and is currently a postdoctoral fellow of the Volkswagen and Mellon Foundations, based at the Europe in the Middle East – the Middle East in Europe (EUME) program in Berlin. His research and teaching interests include modern Persian and Arabic literatures, war and cultural production, and the cultural histories of the modern Middle East. He has previously taught at NYU, Bard College, and Hunter College. His current book is a comparative study of Persian and Arabic fiction from the Iran-Iraq War.



ALEX WINDER

palestinian studies postdoctoral research associate

Alex Winder will receive his PhD in May 2017 from the joint program in history and Middle Eastern and Islamic studies at New York University. His dissertation focuses on policing and crime in British Mandate Palestine, with attention to negotiations and tensions between Arab policemen and Arab communities and between legal and social order. He edited *Between Jaffa and Mount Hebron: The Diary of Muhammad 'Abd al-Hadi al-Shrouf* (Institute for Palestine Studies, 2016) and is associate editor of *Jerusalem Quarterly*.

SAMPLING OF MES COURSES

Middle East Studies continues to attract more and more students, resulting in yet another all-time high in both concentrators and course enrollments. The concentration offers unmatched access to top-ranked faculty from all interdisciplinary perspectives and course offerings on a wide range of topics that best prepare students for employment after graduation. In addition, extracurricular lectures, films, and other programs generate students' research project ideas and help bring them to fruition as capstones, honors theses, and multimedia productions.

SHEILA BONDE

HIAA 0041 The Architectures of Islam

Through selected case study examples, the course examines the varied manifestations of Islamic architectures. The course spans fourteen centuries and three continents, and examines religious as well as secular buildings. We will trace the sources and 'invention' of Islamic architecture in the Umayyad dynasty of the seventh and eighth centuries, and will explore its varied manifestations up to the contemporary period. By examining cross-cultural and trans-regional interactions, we will also investigate the relationship between Islamic and non-Islamic architectural traditions.

EMILY DRUMSTA

COLT 0610Y Women's Writing in the Arab World

This course examines Arab women's writing through the lenses of both Arabic and Western feminist theory and criticism. Beginning with a survey of pre-modern female literary personae in Arabic (the elegist, the mystic, the singing slave), we will then examine major figures in the early modern feminist movement, modernist poetry, autobiography, film, and the novel. Texts by Etel Adnan, Salwa Bakr, Hoda Barakat, Assia Djebar, Nazik al-Mala'ika, Alifa Rifaat, Hanan al-Shaykh, Miral al-Tahawy, Fadwa Tuqan, Adania Shibli. Films by Moufida Tlatli, Annemarie Jacir.

LISA DICARLO

SOC 1872T Social Innovation and Disruption: The Case of Modern Turkey

This course explores life in contemporary Turkey with a focus on change agents. The founders of modern Turkey severed ties from the fading Ottoman Empire through a series of intense and disorienting social reforms. This set a precedent for sudden, sweeping social engineering of a top-down nature. Contemporary Turkish innovators, entrepreneurs and other disruptors are navigating issues of politics, culture and economy in new ways that serve as models for the citizen-centered design of Turkey's future.

SHERINE HAMDY

ANTH 0066S Contemporary Egypt in Revolution

On January 25, 2011, protesters in Egypt amassed in Tahrir Square in Cairo with basic demands: Bread, Freedom, Social Equality, and Human Dignity. After hundreds of peaceful protestors were killed at the hands of riot police and hired thugs, eighteen days later, President Hosni Mubarak resigned. Yet since then, hundreds more have been killed, Egypt's revolution continues, and the basic demands are as crucial today as they were at its inception. We will read contemporary Egypt from the perspectives of anthropologists and social historians, and discuss the value of social theory and analysis for understanding current political turmoil.

ADI OPHIR

MES 0850 The Wall, the Drone and the Tunnel-Theaters of Sovereignty and Resistance

Israel/Palestine is a site for experimenting with technologies of security and warfare, including those serving resistance and insurgency. The seminar examines three technologies: drones used for collecting intelligence and "targeted killings;" heavily surveilled separation walls used to enforce a strict regime of movement; tunnels used by insurgency forces for undercover movement. We will study these technologies' modes of operation; the discourse that represent and justifies their actual deployment; the local and global economy of violence in which they are embedded; the system of state sovereignty which they enable or undermine; and the political regime which they help reproduce or destabilize.

HANAN TOUKAN

MES 0950 Cultures, Societies, and Resistance in the Arab World

This course examines the manifestations of counter-hegemony, resistance and dissent in the Middle East and North Africa. It studies the ways in which dominant forms are countered in cultural production and everyday cultural practices, analyzing how subcultures, social movements and individuals have negotiated with, subverted and resisted these forms of social and political hegemonies through the use of art forms such as writing, poetry, music, political film, political posters and pamphlets, performance art and public art and the mixed outcomes of many of these struggles. The readings cover major issues in cultural theory, cultural sociology, cultural studies.

SARAH TOBIN

MES 1999E Displacement and Refugees in the Middle East

Displacement and refugees constitute one of the most significant sources of upheaval, instability, and uncertainty in our time. In 100 years, the Middle East saw waves of displaced persons, with no singular explanation and no end in sight: Armenians, Circassians, Palestinians, Iraqis, Yazidis, Kurds, and Syrians. The impetuses for displacement include wars, fall of empires and nations, crafting of new states, and modernization attempts and environmental disasters. These stories of displacement are distinctive for their multitude of causes and protracted defiance of resolutions. They challenge the narratives of the durability of nation-states, ascendancy of capitalism, and emplaced, "timeless" Arab populations.

STUDENTS



Nathan Vanelli, Anna Murphy

Isabella Creatura

THE DUG

The **Departmental Undergraduate Group** is run by students in the Middle East Studies program who wish to build community both inside and outside of the concentration. The DUG aims to highlight the undergraduate-oriented nature of the department, and encourage the expansion of the concentration within related fields. This year's DUG leaders were Anna Murphy '19, Nathan Vanelli '18, and Isabella Creatura '17. In addition to helping fellow students prepare for capstone projects and study abroad programs, they organized a number of events, including information sessions on the concentration, and the Undergraduate Paper Series.

MESGSA

The **Middle East Graduate Student Association** is an interdisciplinary group united by a shared scholarly interest in the Middle East and North Africa. Combining diverse humanities and social sciences backgrounds with regional expertise, the association aims to foster conversations among graduate students that are theoretically diverse and regionally focused. Led this year by Julia Gettle and Sara Hefny, the association offered a series of paper workshops and reading groups over the course of two semesters and held a panel on fieldwork in the Middle East in the spring, led by graduate students with experience conducting dissertation work across the Middle East and North Africa. These gatherings serve to support and foster critical and engaged Brown student scholarship in the Middle East at the graduate level.



Julia Gettle

Sara Hefny

GRADUATING SENIORS

HONORS THESIS:



Sabiya Ahamed is a double concentrator in Middle East studies and political science from Brooklyn, NY. Her thesis looks at the concept of human dignity and how the US re-settlement process upholds or diminishes the dignity of Syrian refugees.

Nikhita Mendis is a double concentrator in international relations and Middle East studies, with honors. Her thesis is on the self-cultivation and spatialization of Sri Lankan migrant domestic workers in Lebanon.



Kutay Onayli is a double concentrator in Middle East studies and comparative literature. With interests in nationalisms, interethnic exchange, and in particular Greco-Turkish interactions in the late Ottoman Empire, he will begin a PhD in Near Eastern Studies at Princeton University in the fall.



CAPSTONE:

Raphaela Chakravarti is a Middle East studies concentrator from New York. For her capstone project, she is looking at the Algerian War of Independence and the recruitment tactics employed by the National Liberation Front.



STUDENTS



Melissa Dembski-Sullivan spent a semester studying in Morocco to further her interests in Arabic language and literature and particularly its pedagogy at the US high school level. As part of her capstone for the MES concentration, she developed a curriculum module for secondary school Arabic learners with a focus on the dramatic arts.

Asya Igmen is a double concentrator in Middle East studies and political science from Istanbul, Turkey. Her capstone focuses on the untapped potential of diaspora-based organizations to provide humanitarian aid to displaced Syrians. Asya is fascinated by the sociopolitical and historical parallels between the Middle East and Central America, particularly in the sphere of human rights.



Ruby Moore-Bloom is a double concentrator in anthropology and Middle East studies from Berkeley, CA. She is involved with the local Syrian refugee community through ESL tutoring and, for her capstone, is conducting a GIS project about refugee resettlement.

Naishad Kai-ren is a double concentrator in history and Middle East studies from Singapore. He spent a semester studying in Jordan, working with refugees and traveling around the region. Next year, Naishad will join the Schwarzman Scholars Program and study in Beijing, China, before returning home to serve in the Singapore Armed Forces.



Max Schindler '16.5 is back in the Middle East! After living in Ramallah in the Palestinian territories, Max is now working for TV station i24NEWS in Tel Aviv.

SENIOR PROJECTS

HONORS THESIS: **SABIYA AHAMED**

Demanding Dignity: Syrian Refugees and the Resettlement Process in Providence, RI

NIKHITA MENDIS

Breaking and Making Sri Lankans: Serlankiyye Subjectivities and Practicing Lajja

KUTAY ONAYLI

Other Things That May Have Happened During a Long Day

CAPSTONE: **RAPHAELA CHAKRAVARTI**

Reassessing Contentious Politics: The Algerian War of Independence

MELISSA DEMBSKI-SULLIVAN

The Use of Supplemental Resources in Arabic Foreign Language High School Curriculums

ASYA IGMEN

The Syrian Diaspora's Potential to Fill the Gaps in Traditional Humanitarian Response

NAISHAD KAI-REN

Under What Conditions do Oil Exports Lead to Exporter Interventions in Third World Countries?

RUBY MOORE-BLOOM

A GIS Spatial Analysis of Iraqi and Syrian Refugees Resettled in New England

MAX SCHINDLER

Toward a Historicized Hermeneutics of the Shoah and its Consequences for Human Rights

Middle East Studies

Senior Paper
Presentation Day

ALUMNI FEATURES



Kiara Butrosoglu '16 graduated from Brown with a double concentration in economics and Middle East studies. She is currently working in the Group Strategy Office of Mahindra Group, an Indian multinational conglomerate. Kiara plans to pursue an MBA after gaining work experience in emerging markets.



Julian Jiggetts '16 matriculated at Harvard Law School in fall 2016. He works as a student attorney for Harvard Defenders, representing low-income clients in criminal hearings. He is also involved in the Harvard Islamic Legal Studies Program, where he researches and studies different applications of shari'a law across the Middle East.



Abby Linn '15 is currently working as the operations manager of a nonprofit boarding school in the southern state of Tamil Nadu, India. In addition to teaching children ages 4 through 18, Abby serves as a mentor and manager to a large group of volunteer teachers. In June 2017, she plans to move back to the East Coast.



Simon de Jesus Rodriguez '15 After graduating, Simon spent several months traveling through the UK and US and cycling in his hometown in Massachusetts. He began working as an associate consultant at Bain & Company in October 2015 and has since worked in private equity, industrials, and consumer products in a variety of strategy and performance improvement capabilities.

Reva Dhingra '14 will pursue a PhD in government at Harvard University in fall 2017. She currently works at the International Rescue Committee on the humanitarian response to the conflicts in Syria and Iraq. She was a 2014-2015 Fulbright Fellow in Jordan. Her research at Harvard will focus on forced migration and institutional formation in the Middle East.



Sureya Koprulu '13 moved to Istanbul, Turkey, in the fall of 2013, where she joined the *Turkish Policy Quarterly* as an intern. Within a year, she was promoted to associate editor and she is now the editor-in-chief of the journal, working on editorial content and institutional development.



Katherine Pollock '16 After graduating, Katherine moved to Cairo, Egypt, to participate in the AUC Presidential Internship Program. In August 2017, Katherine will move to Washington, DC, to work for a year as a James C. Gaither Junior Fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.



Tiffany Zarabi-Aazam '13.5 After working on the *Encyclopædia Iranica*, Tiffany taught general and business English in Tehran for seven months. She then pursued her idea of creating a temperature-regulating headscarf as an assistant product developer at Collection XIIX. This fall, she will join the Packer Collegiate Institute as a kindergarten associate teacher.



AWARDS AND FELLOWSHIPS

FACULTY FELLOW 2017-18

FAIZ AHMED

UNDERGRADUATE FELLOWS 2016-17

SABIYA AHAMED '17

KUTAY ONAYLI '17

UNDERGRADUATE FELLOWS 2017-18

ALEXANDER ABUAITA '18

OONA CAHILL '18

RESEARCH TRAVEL AWARDS

undergraduate: KATHERINE CHU '18, SOPHIE KASAKOVE '17.5, AND FRISHTA QADERI '20

graduate: DORIA CHARLSON, SAMEE SULAIMAN



MES ADVISORY COUNCIL

MEMBERS

MS. ALIA AL-SENUSSI '03 AM'04

MR. SALEH AL-TURKI P'03, P'05 AND MS. FAWZIA ALGOSAIBI P'03, P'05

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MS. LAYA KHADJAVI '84

MR. PATRICK MALEY '67 AND MS. NANCY B. TURCK '68 AM'68

MS. CYNTHIA J. OAKES P'15

MR. STEPHEN ROBERT '62 LHD'04 HON., P'91 AND MRS. PILAR CRESPI ROBERT P'91

MR. KAREEM SAKKA P'18 AND MRS. DANIA SAKKA P'18

E. PAUL SORENSEN, PH.D. '71 SCM'75 PHD'77, P'06, P'06

MR. MUSTAFA N. ZAIDI '90



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GREAT TEMPLE
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EXCAVATION



*Sabiya Ahamed on
MES trip to Jordan*



*Suad Joseph, UC Davis,
delivering the spring 2017
Peter Green Lecture on the
Modern Middle East.*



Peter Green Lectures on
the Modern Middle East



Suad Joseph

Distinguished Professor of Anthropology and
Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies
University of California, Davis



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Box 1970
Watson Institute
111 Thayer Street, Providence, RI 02912

*www.middleeastbrown.org
cmes@brown.edu*



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