



BROWN UNIVERSITY  
CENTER FOR  
MIDDLE EAST  
STUDIES

# ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022

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# LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

## Dear colleagues, students, and friends of CMES,

As the academic year comes to a close, I want to convey a few words of gratitude to all of you who have been participating in, attending, and supporting the Center for Middle East Studies (CMES) over the past year. Thanks to my inspiring guests and the wonderful help of our Center manager, Barbara Oberkoetter, we managed to cover a wide range of issues and connect with audiences across the globe. Last year we had over 9,000 viewings of our on-line events in addition to those we hosted on campus. We have created a substantial archive of events and conversations that you can access on our website.

Amongst the range of different events we hosted, I would like to highlight the Herbert H. Goldberger-funded lecture series titled *Queering the Middle East*, to which we invited academics and activists to discuss the various ways queer approaches and activism further our understanding of the Middle East and its diasporas, while also contributing to our aim to de-exceptionalize the Middle East.

I am excited to announce a new series we have launched jointly with the Columbia University Middle East Institute (MEI) titled *Gender and Body Politics: Arts in the Middle East and its Diasporas*. In conversation with artists from the Middle East and North Africa as well as its diasporas, the series examines intersecting inequalities and body politics expressed, represented, and transgressed in both visual and performance art. Against the backdrop of war and conflict, the rise of authoritarian regimes, displacement and diaspora mobilization, Islamophobia, ongoing orientalist depictions, and challenges linked to the Covid-19 pandemic, this series explores the ways in which artists are informed by and/or contribute to anti-racist, transnational feminist, and queer praxis.

The series will feature artists both online and in-person. Exhibitions and performances will complement the series in locations around Providence and New York City. On April 26, we launched the series with two Palestinian artists, Ruanne Abou-Rahme and Basel Abbas, in an online conversation named "May Amnesia Never Kiss Us On The Mouth," followed by an in-person event on May 5 titled "The Politics of Queer Bots."

I was particularly happy to welcome our three visiting Darwish Fellows in Palestinian Studies, Professors Rema Hammami, Ruba Salih, and Noura Erakat. Next academic year, we will be fortunate to have Abed Takriti join us for one academic year as Darwish Visiting Professor in Palestinian Studies. We have also appointed our first CMES / Watson Alomran postdoctoral fellow in Middle East studies. Fulya Pinar will be with us for two years following completion of her PhD at Rutgers university.

Our annual report provides more details about our activities, projects, and initiatives.

I hope you all have a healthy, fulfilling, and interesting summer. We look forward to connecting with you in the new academic year.

Best wishes,

**Nadje Al-Ali**

*Director, Center for Middle East Studies*

*Robert Family Professor of International Studies*

*Professor of Anthropology and Middle East Studies*



# ABOUT

## MISSION

The Center for Middle East Studies is part of the Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs at Brown University. It promotes research, teaching, and public engagement on key issues of the Middle East in a historically and culturally grounded manner. Its coverage includes all time periods—from antiquity to contemporary geopolitics—and an expansive geographical imagination in which the Middle East is both a region with changing boundaries and a conceptual entity part of global discourses. As the hub for Middle East studies at Brown, the Center supports research and programming generated by a world-renowned faculty. It houses a thriving undergraduate concentration connected to an extensive interdisciplinary curriculum. The Center also acts as a second intellectual and social home for a large group of graduate students spread across Brown's departments that grant advanced degrees. Through collaboration with other units on campus, the Center furthers Brown's work as a global university especially dedicated to seeking a just and prosperous future for all. With an extensive footprint in research, teaching, and advocacy, the Center is a major academic node in the international network of institutions dedicated to discussing a region crucial to global affairs.

## RESEARCH INITIATIVES

ISLAM AND THE HUMANITIES

NEW DIRECTIONS IN PALESTINIAN STUDIES

## RESEARCH PROJECTS

GENDER STUDIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND BEYOND

GENDER AND BODY POLITICS: ARTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND ITS DIASPORAS

ISRAEL-PALESTINE: LANDS AND PEOPLES

KURDISH STUDIES

RACIALIZATION AND RACISM IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND ITS DIASPORAS

# RESEARCH INITIATIVES



## ISLAM AND THE HUMANITIES

Through an annual conference, lectures, and a book series, *Islam and the Humanities* explores the relationship between Islamic studies and larger debates in the disciplines of history, religious studies, comparative literature, philosophy, contemporary art, and the humanistic dimensions of anthropology and sociology. This initiative is led by **Shahzad Bashir**, Aga Khan Professor of Islamic Humanities and professor of history and religious studies.

## NEW DIRECTIONS IN PALESTINIAN STUDIES



(NDPS) brings together an international community of researchers and practitioners to promote and shape knowledge production on Palestine and the Palestinians. Founded in 2013 by Professor Beshara Doumani, NDPS invests in emerging scholars through programming, an endowed postdoctoral fellowship, and a book series with the University of California Press. In 2020, NDPS also succeeded in raising an endowment for the establishment of the Mahmoud Darwish Chair in Palestinian Studies, the first of its kind. Beshara Doumani became the inaugural chair.

With generous funding from the **Darwish Chair in Palestinian Studies**, the Center for Middle East Studies hosted three internationally acclaimed female Palestinian academics, Professors **Rema Hammami**, **Ruba Salih**, and **Noura Erakat**. Each not only gave a public lecture and organized a workshop but also visited undergraduate student classes and met with graduate students.



## OTHER



# RESEARCH PROJECTS

## GENDER STUDIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND BEYOND

The new research project is led by CMES Director **Nadje Al-Ali**, Robert Family Professor of International Studies and professor of anthropology and Middle East studies. The project is based on the recognition that a gendered intersectional lens is central, not marginal, to a deeper analysis and understanding of political mobilizations, social developments, and cultural expressions in the Middle East. A gendered lens also allows for a comparative perspective and collaboration with other regional centers and initiatives at Brown University. The project involves panel discussions, lectures, and book talks, as well as relevant research.

In 2021-22, Herbert H. Goldberger Lectureship funding supported a lecture series titled **“Queering the Middle East and its diasporas.”** The series used non-normative gender and sexuality as a lens to discuss identity contestation, political transformations, authoritarianism, protest and resistance, war and conflict as well as forced displacement and everyday lives. We invited academics and activists to discuss the various ways queer approaches and activism further our understanding of the Middle East and its diasporas, while also contributing to our aim to de-exceptionalize the Middle East.

Friday, October 1, 2021  
12:00 - 1:00 p.m. EST  
Webinar | Registration required

Wednesday, November 17, 2021  
12:00 - 1:00 p.m. EST  
Webinar | Registration required

Thursday, March 3, 2022  
12:00 - 1:00 p.m. EST  
Webinar | Registration required

Thursday, September 23, 2021 | 12:00-1:30 p.m. EST  
Webinar | Registration required

Friday, October 7, 2021  
12:00 - 1:00 p.m. EST  
Webinar | Registration required

Thursday, October 7, 2021  
12:00 - 1:00 p.m. EST  
Webinar | Registration required

Friday, February 4, 2022  
1:00 - 2:00 p.m. EST  
Webinar | Registration required

Thursday, April 7, 2022  
4:30 - 5:30 p.m. EST  
Johannesky Forum, virtual and in-person

Thursday, October 7, 2021  
12:00 - 1:00 p.m. EST  
Webinar | Registration required

Friday, February 4, 2022  
1:00 - 2:00 p.m. EST  
Webinar | Registration required

Thursday, April 7, 2022  
4:30 - 5:30 p.m. EST  
Johannesky Forum, virtual and in-person

Panel  
**Islamism-Leftism**  
and Debates on Class, Gender, and Religious Hierarchies in France

Panelists:  
Éric Fassin  
Nacira Guénif-Soullamas  
Éléonore Lépinard  
Nonna Mayer

Wednesday, September 29, 2021  
12:00 - 1:00 p.m. EST  
Webinar | Registration required

Evren Savcı  
Yale University

**Queer in Translation**

**QUEER FEMINIST PERSPECTIVES ON POLITICAL HOMOPHOBIA AND ANTI-FEMINISM IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND EUROPE**  
Digital Conference  
SEPTEMBER 24 - 25, 2021

ORGANIZERS:  
Prof. Dr. Gertraud Finscher  
Prof. Dr. Nadje Al-Ali  
Prof. Dr. Katharina Gierke

**FEMALE DOMESTIC LABOR IN BEIRUT**  
Reflections on Race and Gender

**SPEAKER**  
Sumayya Kassamali  
University of Toronto

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 2021  
12:00 - 1:00 p.m. EST  
Webinar | Registration required

Wednesday, December 1, 2021 | 12:00 - 1:00 p.m. EST  
Webinar | Registration required

**Dina Georgis**  
University of Toronto

**The Better Story**  
Queer Affects from the Middle East

Brown University (CMES) & Columbia University (MEI)  
Joint Series

**Gender and Body Politics: Arts in the Middle East and Its Diasporas**

Conversations With:  
Rachid Koraichi  
Annabel Daou  
Morehshin Allahyari  
Mani Nilchiani  
Ruanne Abou-Rahme  
Basel Abbas  
Sama Alshaibi  
Tania El Khoury

2022-2024

Center for Middle East Studies (CMES) and Middle East Institute (MEI) logos.

## GENDER AND BODY POLITICS: ARTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND ITS DIASPORAS

In conversation with artists from the Middle East and North Africa as well as its diasporas, the *Gender and Body Politics: Arts in the Middle East and its Diasporas* series examines intersecting inequalities and body politics expressed, represented, and transgressed in both visual and performance art. Against the backdrop of war and conflict, the rise of authoritarian regimes, displacement and diaspora mobilization, Islamophobia, ongoing orientalist depictions, and challenges linked to the Covid-19 pandemic, this series explores the ways in which artists are informed by and/or contribute to anti-racist, transnational feminist, and queer praxis.

The Brown University **Center for Middle East Studies (CMES)** and the Columbia University **Middle East Institute (MEI)** joint series features artists online and in-person events. Exhibitions and performances complement the series in locations around New York City and Providence.

Center for Middle East Studies (CMES) and Middle East Institute (MEI) logos.

**Basel Abbas and Ruanne Abou-Rahme**  
Gender and Body Politics: Arts in the Middle East and its Diasporas  
**May Amnesia**  
Never Kiss Us On The Mouth

Tuesday, April 26, 2022  
12:00 - 1:30 p.m. EST  
Webinar | Registration Required

Brown University (CMES) and Columbia University (MEI) present  
**Gender and Body Politics: Arts in the Middle East and its Diasporas**

**Morehshin Allahyari and Mani Nilchiani**  
**The Politics of Queer Bots**

Thursday, May 5th at 6PM, 2637 BROADWAY AT 95TH STREET

Please join us for performances and discussion examining intersecting inequalities and body politics expressed and transgressed in visual and performance art, followed by an audience Q + A.

Free and open to the public, reserve tickets here:  
<https://www.symphonyspace.org/events/hip-art-series-morehshin-allahyari-and-mani-nilchiani>

MEI Middle East Institute, CMES Center for Middle East Studies, CSMS Center for the Study of Muslim Societies, and Johannesky Forum logos.

# RESEARCH PROJECTS

## KURDISH STUDIES

Kurdish studies has historically been sidelined within Middle East studies or reduced to the study of Kurdish nationalism. While there has been a proliferation of Kurdish studies across the US and Europe in recent years, there has been only limited engagement with Kurdish society in its complexity. The aim of this project led by **Professor Nadjé Al-Ali** is to support and contribute to critical and original Kurdish studies that combine theoretically cutting-edge and empirically grounded work while highlighting creative approaches (films, art, literature) to the study of Kurds and Kurdish societies. In collaboration with Yale's Macmillan Center, two closed workshops were held on October 22 and April 8 titled "Decolonizing Kurdish Studies." In March, the Center for Middle East Studies hosted a panel with Isabel Käser on her recent book, *The Kurdish Women's Freedom Movement: Gender, Body Politics, and Militant Femininities*.

## RACIALIZATION AND RACISM IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND ITS DIASPORAS

This research project is co-organized and led by Professors **Nadjé Al-Ali** and **Beshara Doumani**, and is supported by Africana Studies. Within Middle East studies, we are intimately familiar with grinding generational struggles for dignity and freedom of colonized, occupied, disenfranchised, and oppressed people in the Middle East. Yet the history of slavery and racism within the region has remained understudied and insufficiently engaged with. The principals are committed to initiating internal conversations and dialogue within Brown and Middle East studies more broadly and to organizing activities that engage with the global issues of structural racism and exploitation.

## OTHER PROGRAMMING

## ISRAEL-PALESTINE: LANDS AND PEOPLES

This multi-year project, led by John P. Birkelund Distinguished Professor of European History **Omer Bartov**, seeks to provide a forum for a deeper understanding of the region and its peoples. The century-long conflict over the land of Israel/Palestine has raised a plethora of questions about historical narratives and rights of possession, the morality of return and the injustice of displacement, the correction of past wrongs and the imponderables of reconciliation, the promises and conundrums of coexistence, and the centrality of self-determination. Precisely because this is a dispute over attachment and belonging to a place that both sides consider to be their historical and spiritual home, it is exceedingly difficult for each of them to recognize the other's longing for, yet ongoing inability, to feel at home.

# ACADEMICS

## SAMPLING OF COURSES

Brown University's Center for Middle East Studies has earned an international reputation as an interdisciplinary gateway to the study of the Middle East. Affiliated faculty research and teaching reflects Middle East studies' growth as a discipline in recent years, pushing the geographic and temporal boundaries of the field while engaging key themes such as gender and sexuality, displacement and refugees, law and society, and the politics of heritage. Brown students, as well as prospective students and transfer students, are drawn to Middle East studies by the opportunities to study the region's languages, cultures, and societies, as well as the ways in which the Middle East is connected to other parts of the world. Language study often serves as a gateway for students to become interested in other aspects of the Middle East, and Middle Eastern language offerings have expanded in recent years. Middle East elective courses offered in various departments expose students to different disciplinary perspectives and research methodologies, which they apply in their own research (including, when conditions permit it, in the region itself) with the support of Brown faculty and librarians and with research and travel funding from CMES. Inside the classroom and beyond it, through a diversity of academic, cultural, and artistic events, Middle East Studies forges a tight-knit community of scholars—students and faculty—who bring their wide-ranging interests and perspectives together in the service of greater understanding.

### Anthropology: Gendering Migration and Diasporas

**NADJE AL-ALI**

This course employs a decolonial and transnational feminist approach to explore gender and sexuality as central lenses in our understanding of different forms of migration and diasporas. Students address the various ways that experiences, processes and consequences linked to different migrations are gendered. The course introduces a range of geographical contexts and empirical examples/case studies with the aim to challenge the US centrism existent in many academic debates. The class analyzes relevant power relations and forms of oppression, as well as resistance strategies by migrants, asylum seekers and refugees. The course uses an intersectional lens to explore the way different power configurations interplay in specific contexts, paying particular attention to patriarchy, heteronormativity, nationalism, racism, Islamophobia and class-based inequalities. The course engages economic, political, social and cultural dimensions, but also the politics of non/belonging, and cultural productions.

### Assyriology: Astronomy, Divination and Politics in the Ancient World

**JOHN STEELE**

This course explores the relationship between astronomy, divination, and politics in the ancient world. The sky provided ancient cultures with many possibilities for observing occurrences that could be interpreted as omens. In many cultures, celestial omens were directed towards the king and his government. As a result, interpreting and controlling celestial omens became an important political activity. In this course, students explore how and why astronomical events were used politically in ancient Mesopotamia, the Greco-Roman world, and ancient and medieval China.

### Comparative Literature:

#### A Classical Islamic Education: Readings in Arabic Literature

**ELIAS MUHANNA**

This seminar introduces students to the essential texts of a classical education in the Arabic-Islamic world. What works of poetry, literary criticism, belletristic prose, biography, geography, history, and other disciplines were considered staples of a well-rounded education in medieval Baghdad, Cairo, Damascus, or Fez?

### Egyptology:

#### Magic, Mummies, and Drugs: Medicine and Physicians in Ancient Egypt

**SILVIA NIGRELLI**

Did you know the ancient Egyptians would rub crocodile fat on their heads to treat baldness? Or that an eel warmed in oil would supposedly combat the smell of sweaty feet? If you would like to know more about the practice of medicine in ancient Egypt (including treatments that actually worked), then welcome to Magic, Mummies, and Drugs! In this course, students read through medical papyri (in translation) and examine ancient mummies to learn how the Egyptians understood and treated the diseases that afflicted them. The course also looks at how physicians were trained, which instruments they used, and how much they knew about human anatomy. Lastly, the class explores such specialized branches of medicine as gynecology, dentistry, ophthalmology, surgery, and veterinary medicine.

### History: Global Palestine

**ALEX WINDER**

Global Palestine: Palestine is often imagined as being locked into a national conflict with Israel over a territory slightly larger than the state of Vermont. This class seeks to break out of this framework, considering Palestine within larger—global, even—structures and processes of colonialism and decolonization; forced displacement and securitization; and shifting modes of temporality and spatialization. The goal is not only to provide useful and nuanced approaches to Palestinian history, but to use the histories of Palestine and Palestinians to examine more closely the workings and effects of global dynamics.

### History: Debates in Middle Eastern History

**SREEMATI MITTER**

This seminar investigates the historical bases of some of the major debates which continue to dominate contemporary discussions on the Middle East. These include debates on colonialism and its legacies; problems associated with the post-colonial Middle Eastern state (the “democracy deficit”: human rights; oil; political Islam); and arguments about the causes and consequences of some of the major events in Middle Eastern history (the Israel-Palestinian conflict; the Iranian revolution; the Lebanese civil war; 9/11 and the Iraq invasion; and the Arab Spring.)

### Judaic Studies: Jewish Women: Between Conformity and Agency

**KATHARINA GALOR**

This undergraduate seminar studies Jewish women in different temporal and geographical contexts, internally within their own communities and externally with other neighboring religious groups. Visual and material sources (iconography, artifacts, architectures, film) are examined in dialogue with texts (biblical and Talmudic writings, medieval and modern commentaries, contemporary literature) to explore the binary of male authority and female agency. Case studies encompass the Middle East and Europe from antiquity to the present.

### Persian: Modern Iran: Literature, Media & Pop Culture

**MICHELLE QUAY**

From the world-famous novels of Shahrnosh Parsipour to the subversive rap lyrics of Hichkas; from the Oscar-winning films of Asghar Farhadi to state-sponsored TV propaganda of the Islamic Republic – this course takes a wide-ranging approach to understanding contemporary Iranian culture and society. Through a broad selection of sources translated into English, students familiarize themselves with recent historical events in Iran and become more acquainted with various aspects of Iranian culture. The chronological focus is from the 1979 Iranian Revolution to the present and is organized around a number of social and political themes, including corruption, authoritarianism, multiculturalism, race, social class, religion and gender relations.

### Sociology: Migrants, Refugees and the Mediterranean

**LISA DICARLO**

The Mediterranean Sea is one of the deadliest bodies of water on the planet to cross. It is also one of the most frequently crossed for migrants and refugees. This course examines the history, the origins, the destinations, and the definitions of human population flows across the Mediterranean. Students explore push and pull factors as well as sending and host country classifications of people as they cross from one side to the other. The class focuses in particular on the tensions between sending and host countries from individual, societal, and institutional levels.

### Turkish: Understanding Modern Turkey Through Film and Literature

**ESRA ÖZDEMİR**

This course introduces students to modern Turkey and offers a wide range of perspectives on the society and its culture. Each week, students focus on a single theme such as: family and gender; social classes and their interaction with each other; Istanbul and its neighborhoods; Turkey's role within Europe; ethnic identities and their recognition by Turkish society; Turkish media and entertainment; modernism and political Islam; important events in the very recent history of Turkey including the Hrant Dink assassination, terror attacks, and the 2016 coup d'état attempt; education and academic freedom; modern literature; specific cultural practices and rituals; foreigners' perspectives on Turkish society; and modern Turkish sensory experiences including music and cuisine.



Farah Nabulsi

Tunay Altay

Nadje Al-Ali

Nadje Al-Ali

Isabel Kaiser

Handan Caglayan

Cynthia Erbe

Gökçe Yurdakul

Katharina Galor

Deniz Kandiyoti

Ruainne & Basel

Handan Caglayan

Cynthia Erbe

Lia Abu-Lughod

Lucia Nejmakis

Olga Najar - ICARDA

Sabine Manigat

Yara M. Asi

Yara M. Asi

Yara M. Asi

Yara M. Asi

Yara M. Asi

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Yara M. Asi

Yara M. Asi

Yara M. Asi



# ACADEMICS STUDENTS

BROWN UNIVERSITY  
CENTER FOR  
MIDDLE EAST  
STUDIES

Friday, December 3, 2021  
12:00-1:30 p.m.  
McKinney Conference Room  
Watson Institute  
111 Thayer St.  
Refreshments provided

Middle East Studies  
Undergraduate  
Paper Series

On the Siege of Homs: Blurring the Line  
Between Truth and Fiction  
**Luisa Bocconcelli '21.5**

Second-Shift Schooling as a Solution to  
Educating Syrian Refugees in Jordan  
**Isabel Cox '23**

Terrorist Nations: A Study of U.S. Media  
Constructions of Palestinian and Tamil Identity  
**Neha Narayan '24**

middleeastbrown.org

WATSON INSTITUTE  
INTERNATIONAL & PUBLIC AFFAIRS  
BROWN UNIVERSITY

## DEPARTMENTAL UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT GROUP (DUG)

The DUG is run by students concentrating in Middle East studies who wish to build community both inside and outside of the concentration. The DUG aims to highlight those aspects of the Center that are related to undergraduate activities. This year's DUG leaders were **Alexandra Wells '22** and **Jaylim Aboneaj '22.5**. They were undergraduate student ambassadors disseminating pertinent announcements to their peers and organized an Undergraduate Paper Series, among other outreach events.



(from left): Jaylim Aboneaj '22.5, Alex Wells '22

CENTER FOR  
MIDDLE EAST  
STUDIES

CONVERSATION + FILM SCREENING  
TALA HADID '95, DIRECTOR

**HOUSE  
IN  
THE FIELDS**

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13, 2022  
5:30-7:45 P.M. EST  
Joukowsky Forum  
Watson Institute

WATSON INSTITUTE  
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BROWN UNIVERSITY

CENTER FOR  
MIDDLE EAST  
STUDIES

Friday, November 19, 2021  
12:00 - 1:30 p.m.  
Virtual event  
Registration required

A Middle East Studies Associated Graduate Student  
(MESGSA) Event

CMES Graduate  
Student  
Presentations

Presenters

**Mairéad Smith**  
Anthropology

**Yasemin Bavbek**  
Sociology

**Dima Nasser**  
Comparative Literature

WATSON INSTITUTE  
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BROWN UNIVERSITY

## MIDDLE EAST STUDIES GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION (MESGSA)

Supported by the Center for Middle East Studies, MESGSA 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 that are theoretically diverse and regionally focused. This year, MESGSA organized a graduate student research symposium, as well as discussion groups with Darwish Visiting Fellows Rema Hammami (Birzeit), Ruba Salih (SOAS), and Noura Erakat (Rutgers). PhD candidate in Modern Culture and Media Adel Ben-Bella invited Brown alumna Tala Hadid '95 to campus for a discussion and screening of her film *House in the Fields*.

MESGSA is led by **Joe Leidy**, a PhD candidate in the History department specializing in modern Middle Eastern history. His dissertation explores the history of youth as a political category in Lebanon and its diaspora. He has an MA in Middle Eastern studies from the University of Texas at Austin and a BA from Williams College.



Joe Leidy

# ACADEMICS CLASS OF 2022



## LUISA BOCCONCELLI

graduated in December 2021 with a concentration in Middle East studies. Over the winter and spring, she worked as an intern at an international development firm in Brussels, Belgium. This summer, she will travel to Ankara, Turkey, to participate in the Critical Language Scholarship program.

**Capstone Project:**

*On the Siege of Homs: Blurring the Lines Between Truth and Fiction*



## HUMA RAMAZAN-ALI

is from Québec, Canada, and is a double-concentrator in Middle East studies and South Asian studies. Her interests include Persian literature and advocacy for Afghanistan. Following her graduation, Huma will return home, as she dearly misses her mother's Afghan food and her father's jokes. Huma will also continue campaigning for a socialist-green party to be appointed for the first time in the province's upcoming elections.

**Capstone Project:**

*Tajik-Pamiris and the breakdown of the Afghan-Tajik border:  
The power of imagination in resisting the grip of the Tajik-State*

## ADRIANA LORENZINI,

a North Carolina native, is a double concentrator in Middle East studies and international relations. In Middle East studies, her focus has primarily been on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and she has spent several years studying Arabic. In international relations, her regional focus has been both the Middle East and western Europe. Adriana's capstone focuses on the way states use language to define and create belonging. After graduation, Adriana will move to Vienna, Austria, where she will use her fluent French and German to work in logistics at the Viennese branch of the French energy company TotalEnergies.

**Capstone Project:**

*Language Management Policies as Tools for Producing the Nation:  
the Cases of Turkey and Israel*



## ALEXANDRA WELLS

is a senior from New York City double concentrating in history and Middle East studies. She is interested in solidarity and shared experiences between Arab-Jewish and Palestinian communities, as well as the intersections between art, social justice, and education. She is also involved in activist circles advocating for the rights of marginalized communities in the Middle East and throughout the globe. After graduation, she plans to return to New York City to seek an MA in art history and pursue a career in museum work.

**Capstone Project:**

*Tracing Cross-Cultural Solidarity and Conceptions of Indigeneity through Indigenous North American and Palestinian Artwork*



# PEOPLE



## NADJE AL-ALI

DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR MIDDLE EAST STUDIES  
ROBERT FAMILY PROFESSOR OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES  
PROFESSOR OF ANTHROPOLOGY AND MIDDLE EAST STUDIES



## PHILIP FAHN-LAI '13

RESEARCH ASSOCIATE, HARVARD UNIVERSITY  
SENIOR GRAPHIC DESIGNER AND BRAND CONSULTANT



## ALEX WINDER

VISITING ASSISTANT PROFESSOR IN MIDDLE EAST STUDIES  
DIRECTOR OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES



## CECILIA MARRINAN '24

STUDENT ASSISTANT



## BARBARA OBERKOETTER

CENTER MANAGER



## MARA KESSLER '23.5

STUDENT ASSISTANT



## MIRANDA MO '22

GRAPHIC DESIGNER

# STEERING COMMITTEE



## NADJE AL-ALI

ROBERT FAMILY PROFESSOR OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES  
AND PROFESSOR OF ANTHROPOLOGY AND MIDDLE EAST STUDIES

Feminist activism and gendered mobilizations in the Middle East (Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Turkey, and the Kurdish regions), gendered dimensions of war and conflict, as well as transnational migration and diaspora mobilization (with reference to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iraq, and the Kurdish political movement).



## SREEMATI MITTER

KUTAYBA ALGHANIM ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF MIDDLE EASTERN HISTORY  
AND INTERNATIONAL AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

She is completing her first book, *A History of Money in Palestine*. Her work examines the economic, financial and monetary history of Palestine, and, more generally, the modern Middle East.

## MAAN ALSAHOUI

JOUKOWSKY FAMILY MIDDLE EAST STUDIES LIBRARIAN  
AND ADJUNCT ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF FRENCH STUDIES

Specializes in French and Francophone literature, dealing particularly with the representation of otherness in contemporary French and Levantine francophone fiction. Two of his books were published in 2020: *JMG Le Clézio et les miroirs de l'autre* and a translation of JMG Le Clézio's *Trois Villes Saintes* into Arabic. He recently published a translation into Arabic of Jean-Christophe Rufin's *Checkpoint*.



## ELIAS MUHANNA

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF COMPARATIVE LITERATURE  
AND ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF HISTORY

Classical Arabic literature and Islamic intellectual history; more specifically, the history of encyclopedic writing in the Islamic world and Europe, the cultural production of the Mamluk empire, and the problem of the vernacular in different literary traditions.



## KATHARINA GALOR

HIRSCHFELD SENIOR LECTURER IN JUDAIC STUDIES  
AND SENIOR LECTURER IN MIDDLE EAST STUDIES

Mediterranean and Near Eastern art and archaeology with a focus on the visual and material culture of Israel/Palestine. Urban landscapes with a theoretical interest in religious and ritual practice, ethnicity, gender; and interactions and differences among Jews, Christians, and Muslims.



## BANU OZKAZANC-PAN

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF THE PRACTICE OF ENGINEERING

Postcolonial and transnational feminist perspectives on organizations, migration, and entrepreneurship. Secular and Islamic feminist entrepreneurship in the context of neoliberal development agendas and authoritarian regimes in Turkey.

# FACULTY IN 2021-22

**RUTH ADLER BEN YEHUDA**, Judaic Studies

**FAIZ AHMED**, History

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