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KEVORKIAN
CENTER
REVIEW

2015/2016

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2015–2016

The Hagop Kevorkian Center for Near Eastern Studies at NYU is a Title VI National Resource Center (NRC) for modern Middle Eastern Studies as named by the United States Department of Education. NRC support is essential to the Center's graduate program (area and language studies) and bolsters outreach programs to the NYU academic community, local educators, media and culture workers as well as the general public. Title VI funding, through its Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) fellowships, also enables important opportunities for NYU graduate students to intensively study the languages of the Middle East and South Asia (including Arabic, Hebrew, Hindi, Persian, Turkish and Urdu).

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Letter from the Director

It is a pleasure to celebrate the Kevorkian Center's achievements by looking back at another great year. This HK Review also marks the mid-point of the Center's 50th year, a milestone that we began honoring in Spring 2016 and will continue celebrating for the months ahead.

Our Master's program remains among the most competitive in the country, with a student population that is nothing less than the intellectual and social core of our community. We are delighted to see twenty-one students transition from being second years to alumni, welcome back eighteen students into their second year, and nineteen more joining as the Class of 2018.

During the 2015–16 academic year we held a range of academic, educational, and cultural events, some of which are highlighted throughout these pages. Scholars, filmmakers, artists, activists, journalists, writers, and others shared their expertise and touched on issues from Palestine to India, Israel to Saudi Arabia, Yemen to Syria, Turkey to Egypt. We were delighted to host author and activist Nancy Kricorian in Fall 2015 and human rights lawyer Sarah Leah Whitson in Spring 2016 through our residency program. They provided our students with unique opportunities through their specialized workshops and engaged us all through the public events they spearheaded - one marking the Centennial of the Armenian Genocide, and one investigating human rights abuses during the year-long Morsi administration in Egypt.

Diana Shin, our outreach coordinator, has done a phenomenal job with our teacher-training program. She organized five Saturday workshops as well as a summer program focused on the U.S. relationship with the Middle East, and her first study tour in Uzbekistan. Diana has also brought the Center into the digital world by improving our website and social media presence. If you haven't yet, do follow #NYUKevo on various platforms.

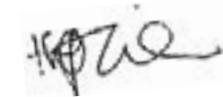
The Center would not be what it is without the dedication of its staff, student workers, and faculty. The dynamic administrative team of Tandi, Diana, and Greta deserves the deepest gratitude for their ongoing support. Tandi Singh joined us in October and has quickly become an integral part of the Center, and we are excited to welcome her newborn into the "kevo kids"

crew! Our indefatigable Associate Director, Greta Scharnweber, continues to make all aspects of what we do possible, and does so with excellence and affability. As of August 2016, we welcome Joshua Anderson into the team as the Center's Program Coordinator.

Our faculty fellow Begum Adalet, who joined us in Fall 2015, has been a bright addition to our intellectual profile. She taught two popular and successful seminars - "US and The Middle East" and "Technologies of Development in the Middle East" - and led the MA Thesis Writing Workshop. This past year, Director of Graduate Studies Joanne Nucho offered two new courses: "Infrastructures of (Im)mobility in the Contemporary Middle East" and "Document, Archive, Evidence: Making and Contesting Histories and the Politics of Collection in the Contemporary Middle East." She contributed prominently to our events programming and also managed to complete her monograph and documentary film. We wish Joanne the best as she joins the Anthropology department at Pomona College in sunny California. Economic sociologist, Marc Michael, joins us in Fall 2016 as the new DGS.

There is no doubt that the intellectual vibrancy of the Center owes much to our associated and affiliated faculty across the university, and those in the Department of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies especially. We were delighted to celebrate our 50th anniversary alongside MEIS's 20th anniversary this Spring. Listening to alumni from both programs during the anniversary event held in April confirmed our combined intellectual vibrancy and successes, and reassured us that we will be marking the achievements of future academic generations for decades to come. Both MEIS and Kevo will be hosting further anniversary events in Fall 2016, particularly at the annual MESA meeting, which we invite you to join us for.

As we look towards the immediate academic year ahead—and the next 50 years—we thank you for being part of this incredible, diverse, and productive community, and are eager to share and learn so much more with you.



—Helga Tawil-Souri, Director

The Hagop Kevorkian Center for Near Eastern Studies

Experiences of the Trans-Iranian Railway

by Mikiya Koyagi, Assistant Professor, Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies

If you travel around Iran today, you will likely travel by bus, not by train. The railway is a relatively marginal mode of transport in contemporary Iran, both for passenger and freight traffic. Yet the railway once occupied the center stage in Iranian nationalist politics as the symbol of modernity, particularly during the early Pahlavi period, when the Trans-Iranian Railway was completed with funding from the Iranian state. Although its completion in 1938 was more than three quarters of a century after India and Egypt had their first railways, the fact that the railway was built by the Iranian state, not by colonial powers, contributed to the symbolic status of the railway as the pride of the Iranian nation. My research is a social history of this little-studied massive infrastructure project from its conception in the mid nineteenth century through its early years of operation in the mid twentieth century.



The tramway between Tehran and the Shrine of Shah Abd al-Azim was opened in 1888, half a century before the Trans-Iranian Railway.

Scholarship typically sees the railway project from a top-down perspective; that is, whether one views Reza Shah Pahlavi as a great modernizer or a cruel dictator, the railway is largely seen as the product of the shah and his state. Instead of focusing on the shah and a small group of political elites, I examine how the railway project shaped and was shaped through interactions among a broad segment of Iranian society. My research explores contested experiences and understandings of the railway among various social groups, such as early intellectual disciples of “modernization,” merchants, nomadic tribes, travelers, and railway workers. It departs from most nationalist renderings of Iranian modernity by exposing how the railway project not only connected disparate parts of Iran, but also integrated Iran into global circuits of capital, labor, and ideas.

To look beyond a state-centric, national perspective, I use a broad range of primary sources, such as British consular reports, memoirs of Scandinavian and German engineers, Persian travelogues, and hitherto unused Persian periodicals, including publications of the Ministry of Road. My research is also informed by Iranian archival sources, in particular petitions submitted by villagers, landowners, Iranian and non-Iranian workers, and victims of industrial accidents. These sources provide vivid accounts of how the railway became a new site where difference was created along lines of nationality, ethnicity, local identity, and class.

Another area of my research is the history of intra-Asian connections, especially Japan’s interactions with the Islamic Middle East since the late nineteenth century. While scholarship in this area is mostly concentrated on intellectual history, I am more interested in the connections between concrete socioeconomic interactions and converging trans-regional identities. I find this a fascinating question considering that Japan was one of the top exporters to a number of Middle Eastern countries by the interwar period.

Turkey’s Role in American Developmental Thought and Practice During the Cold War

By Begum Adalet, Faculty Fellow, Near Eastern Studies

In 2003, American social scientists became active participants in the reconstruction of Iraq, offering grand theories of democratization, social change, and counterinsurgency to US military personnel, private defense contractors, and policymakers. Their work entailed predicting behavioral patterns of enemy combatants, and aiding the battle for the hearts and minds of local populations in the War on Terror. Some participants quickly became disillusioned with their experience, and wrote scathing critiques of the occupation. Others avowed that Iraq’s lessons would not be forgotten. Yet this was not the first instance of academic contributions to American foreign policy, interspersed with moments of scholarly self-reflexivity about the links between empire and knowledge.

My current research examines an earlier episode in a long history of entanglements between the social sciences and power. Specifically, I study how the idea of modernization, as theory and as a set of contested practices, was constructed and implemented in encounters between American and Turkish scholars, experts, and policymakers during the early phases of the Cold War. Examining political theories as embedded in a set of social practices and material sites, I show the concrete effects and realities they generate on the ground.

In the aftermath of World War II, political actors in Turkey presented the country as a staunch anti-communist ally of the United States. Turkey became one of the first beneficiaries of Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan funds, and an important venue in which postwar developmental thought and practice were tested and prefigured. American aid and expertise enabled agricultural mechanization, and the extension of roads and hotels across the country, providing the infrastructure for its political and economic restructuring. These tangible transformations in its material and social landscape, along with its program of market-oriented liberalization between 1945 and 1960, captured the imagination of American social scientists as they grappled with problems of development. They described the changes they observed as modernization, and by labeling it as such, they contributed to the transformation of their objects of inquiry.

Conventional literature depicts the West as the unique site of knowledge production. Instead, my research shows that scholarly theories, such as modernization theory, are often produced through specific and often uncertain encounters among a range of actors engaged in transnational intellectual and policy networks. For example, I use (for the first time), the private papers of political scientist Dankwart Rustow to explore the crucial work of translation and mediation that he performed between the United States, where he received his PhD and taught, and Turkey, where he did his undergraduate work and

returned in later years to enlist local allies for the making of modernization theory. The hesitations of his Turkish and American colleagues came to inform Rustow’s increasingly critical attitude towards linear models of development. Thus, modernization theory was not an intellectual endeavor and policy prescription designed in the United States and then applied to the global periphery, but an intellectual and political project that was from its inception in contentious dialogue with its object of development.

Although contemporary social scientists increasingly refrain from the language of modernization given its value connotations, its critical tenets are recycled in circles of international development and evoked in efforts like the reconstruction of Iraq and Afghanistan. Turkey now has its own agency responsible for developmental and technical assistance across the Balkans, the Middle East, and Africa. But their efforts both reproduce the inequalities intrinsic to the international development regime, and detract from the turmoil and the dispossession of populations who bear the brunt of uninhibited growth at home. As with postwar theories and projects of modernization, however, ideas of development and their material applications are once again pregnant with unexpected consequences and resistant participants.



The highway between Izmit and Istanbul, 1957, an indicator of modernization for social scientists like Dankwart Rustow.

Research off the Record

What the Visual Brings to Scholarship

By Joanne Nucho, Near Eastern Studies and Helga Tawil-Souri, Media, Culture, and Communication and Near Eastern Studies

In contributing to the Center's "Research off the Record" series--which explores different research methods the joys of carrying out scholarship--we took the opportunity to think through the various ways in which the visual has been a part of our thinking practices. Both of us used video not as a means of recording or documenting a fixed "reality," but rather as a way to connect with and reflect on an experiential mode of ethnographic engagement. Both of our video projects have taken place over a number of years, reflecting the span of time both through the changing technology of the camera and, in Helga's case especially, through the radically changing architecture of space.

Helga Tawil-Souri's film on the Qalandia checkpoint, which has been in the works since the checkpoint first emerged in 2002, traces the 'history' of Qalandia and brings into the focus its function as a space that stops time. The camera's gaze is not on the soldiers, on the barricades and the fortifications (what one would expect from a 'checkpoint movie') but on the taxi drivers, the merchants, the toys, the fingers thumbing through ID cards, and the range of relations that have both historically grown and shrunk since the early 2000's. The film's ethnographic approach is in its choice for long takes, single shots over extended periods of time, returns to the same place year after year, so as to reflect a picturesque quality which unexpectedly gains a political meaning, ver slowly seducing the viewer into looking at a terrain that does not immediately announce the horror of what is actually taking place. Filming over a long time, and representing the checkpoint in increments of time, began to parallel the stages in which the occupation transforms Palestinian space-time into one of volatility; or, how the occupation has "prepared" Palestinians for the

moments during which the checkpoint has increasingly severed and changed their experiences of space and time.

Joanne Nucho's project, filmed in Bourj Hammoud, a suburb of Beirut Lebanon between 2008-2015, is not so much a documentary about the history of this neighborhood, but rather a lyrical ethnographic reflection on space, time and the material accretions of the past as they are narrated by longtime residents as well as recent arrivals to the city. Countering usual forms of interviews or oral histories as reconstruction, the film experiments with drawing as a form of ethnographic engagement. Participants drew maps that radically challenge spatial and temporal histories of space and place in the context of postwar Lebanon in a neighborhood constructed through decades of violent displacement and eviction. By documenting the drawing process, the film challenges representational modalities of visual "evidence," instead exploring the status of these drawings as singular works of art that draw on memory and the materiality of cities, but are not reducible to reflections of a "reality" or the status of testimony.

The drawings themselves added an additional layer of visual work displayed in the ongoing online archive site mappingbourjhammoud.com. The visual here is not a way to add to a textual framework, in other words it does not supplement written text as a mode of illustration. Rather, the visual is a way to think through the relationship between memory, a set of ever-shifting urban spaces, migration, a sense of belonging, political and economic imaginaries, a sense of belonging or exclusion. By filming people as they draw, the associations between memories and visual representations of space are explored through their narrations in a way that sometimes challenged the linearity of time produced through other kinds of interviews. This was something that my interlocutors could do through the visual and that could

Mapping Bourj Hammoud



mappingbourjhammoud.com



Qalandiya Checkpoint. Photo courtesy of Helga Tawil Souri.

also be explored through editing and juxtaposition of their images, words and images of the streets of the neighborhood that inspired this ethnography.

It was exciting to have the chance to talk about the visual as a means of ethnographic activity in a way that goes beyond just a "methods" conversation that presumes the text as the end result of ethnographic inquiry.

The Program in Ottoman Studies

By Alex Boodrookas, MA NES '14, PhD Candidate MEIS

This year, the Hagop Kevorkian Center hosted seven speakers as part of the ongoing Ottoman Lecture Series. While the group represented a range of cutting-edge scholarship, they were particularly notable for reevaluating conceptions of space, drawing on new or underutilized sources, and challenging the portrayal of minorities in Ottoman historiography.

Several speakers pushed to more fully incorporate the Ottomans into global historiography by expanding the geographic boundaries of the field. Palmira Brummett drew on an array of sources, including maps, travelogues, and encyclopedias to explore how they mapped – and were mapped – space in the eastern Mediterranean in comparison to the Christian kingdoms. Harun Küçük, meanwhile, traced the emergence of empirical discourses in Ottoman medical practice in treatises from the early modern period.

By focusing on hypochondria and melancholy hypochondria, two conditions usually attributed to seventeenth-century Europe, Küçük traced a remarkable genealogy to an unexpected destination. And by examining how the late Ottoman Empire drew on discourses of international law and imperial diplomacy to try and enter the game of imperial expansion in Africa, Mostafa Minawi both highlighted the continued dynamism of imperial policy and showed how the empire struggled to retain relevance in the new community of nations.

Kevo @ 50

The Hagop Kevorkian Center for Near Eastern Studies at New York University was created in 1966 to foster the interdisciplinary study of the modern and contemporary Middle East and to enhance public understanding of the region. 2016 marks our 50th anniversary, and we launched a year of commemoration and celebration of 50 years of Middle Eastern Studies at NYU with a half-day conference. Panelists included alumni from both the highly regarded PhD program in Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies as well as the professionally-oriented MA program in Near Eastern Studies. See page 43 for program details and the lineup of speakers. More celebrations will continue through the Fall 2016 semester, including an event at the annual meeting of the Middle East Studies Association of North America in Boston, MA.

In their use of photographs and legal documents, two speakers showed how sources often dismissed as either too rare or too vernacular could be read in new and potentially productive ways. Edhem Eldem drew on detailed visual analysis of a vast number of vernacular photographs of Ottoman subjects to trace how Ottomans used a range of background objects and visual signals to self-consciously represent themselves. Ceyda Karamursel, on the other hand, showed how slaves built legal cases against their owners, excavating agency and vernacularizing concepts such as freedom and equality before the law.

Finally, two speakers directly confronted received narratives or loud silences in the history of Ottoman minorities. Julia Phillips Cohen challenged the idea of Jewish Ottomans as reluctant or disconnected Ottoman subjects, drawing on the papers of a number of merchants to show how they imagined themselves as dedicated members of an Ottoman imagined community. And in a stunning presentation on Armenians who remained in Turkey after World War I, Lerna Ekmeçioğlu asked how the community fought to continue living alongside the very people who had perpetrated the genocide. Bereft of its former leaders and intellectuals and surrounded by an increasingly exclusionary nationalist discourse, the Armenian community was largely ignored by a historiography that rarely acknowledged their partial survival.



Dissecting the Democratic Movement

The Morsi Administration's One Year of Power in Egypt

An interview by Jeremy Wheatley, NES '16 with Sarah Leah Whitson, the Human Rights Activist-in-Residence at the Hagop Kevorkian Center Spring 2016

JW: In Human Rights reporting, while often contested, there are usually clear victims and perpetrators, and assigning responsibility and blame seems straightforward. Using international law, we can evaluate actions. What are the standards we use to determine or investigate a “democratic” moment? How do we assign blame or get to the facts in politics? What was your experience translating your skills as a human rights reporter to the project of the workshop?

SLW: Because of my human rights experiences covering Egypt over the past decade—more than a decade—especially during the uprisings and the period of the Morsi administration, I was very familiar with the government's human rights record. I have a very good understanding of the period that preceded it under Mubarak, of the events during the uprising, the events during the [Morsi] coup, as well as during the Sisi presidency, which is of course [still] in place. So I had a pretty good understanding of the factual record, and had already established a lot of contact with members of the Morsi administration [as well as] people affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood because they had been our interlocutors during the Morsi administration. They had also been victims of abuses in the coup so we had gathered testimony from them as well. So, for me, there were interesting additional [unanswered] questions—not just the human rights questions—but also [questions about] the po-



Sarah Leah Whitson, Executive Director of the Middle East and North Africa Division, Human Rights Watch

litical and security dynamics during the period of the Morsi administration [that needed to be answered in order] to better understand [what] happened. This [residency] was definitely an opportunity for me to think about and seek answers to questions that I had that go beyond my human rights mandate. [It was an opportunity to] understand what happened during this period—this tumultuous [and highly contested] period. Many (...) blamed the Morsi administration, blamed the Muslim Brotherhood for the eventual coup that happened, [for] basically creating [the] conditions that made it possible, whereas others put the blame on the military and security establishment, and some even have the view that nobody stood a chance against [the] deep state.

JW: So clearly you already had a background in the events, but I was asking, outside of the context that you developed through the intricate insider knowledge that you gained through your reporting, how do the techniques of human rights reporting carry over to dissecting a democratic moment?

SLW: The methods that (...) we've been using in the class are very much the methods that we use when carrying out a human rights investigation. A lot of our work relies on testimony and interview and knowing what questions to ask. When we try to understand what happened at a particular event, that's also what we were trying to do with the class. The reason why I decided to focus on the more specific events or incidents during the Morsi administration is because I thought the parallels would be strongest to what we would be doing in human rights investigation. Usually we have to drill down to the nitty gritty details to understand what happened literally minute to minute, hour to hour, in particular incidents, during particular events. So [for] the negotiations of particular provisions of the constitution, what we would do in a human rights investigation is take the testimony of what the person said, what that person heard, what that person saw. So, [in the workshop] we were using those very same techniques to understand what was negotiated, when, and how for the constitution—or, for example, the events in Ittihadiya which was, in a sense, a human rights incident—understanding what happened on that particular day and [during] those particular hours.

JW: So in your experience leading the MENA division of Human Rights Watch, how does gathering human rights information differ when collecting testimony from civilians vs. politicians vs. activists or others?

SLW: I don't know that it really differs...because when we're doing a human rights investigation we're really focused on a particular action or event or date and we don't usually step back to ask broader overview pictures.

JW: I was thinking that perhaps the question shouldn't have been "how does collecting testimony differ" but "how does interpreting testimony differ?" A large part of the introductory section of the class included readings and handbooks on how to interpret a speaker's behavior in order to understand whether they were lying or telling the truth or attempting to conceal something. Do you think there is a sort of different way to interpreting political testimony?

SLW: There is an element of reading body language when you're interviewing someone to try to detect if they're lying or if they're not giving you the complete truth. [But] we try to get to what happened typically by not relying on one person. When we carry out an investigation of, for example, two kids getting shot at a demonstration, we'll have ten witnesses, not one, and we'll interview them separately. We seek corroboration [and] we also rely on physical evidence where its available. [For example we might try] to find out where a bullet wound is, so if someone testifies that [the perpetrator] shot [the victim] in the back while [they were] fleeing then you have corroborating information and corroborating evidence.

JW: Yes, but that doesn't translate so easily to dissecting a democratic moment.

SLW: No, we were not engaged in gathering physical evidence in this class, we weren't doing field investigations, we were sitting in a classroom in New York city.

JW: So [in regards to what happened in the classroom] I imagine that you might agree that the biggest challenges we faced in the course were that frequently, the members of various political parties who spoke in the class would refuse to budge from their party's narrative. What do you think we can glean from this reluctance? Where do you think there were elements of truth in the party line, particularly vis-a-vis the Muslim Brotherhood?

SLW: Well to say that they didn't budge from a narrative, to assert that as a question, suggests that you believe that they're not speaking truthfully or honestly. I'm not sure that I agree with that or that I would make such an accusation to begin with. I think it really suggests a predisposition and a bias of the questioner rather than of the speakers per se; it would assume that you have a particular truth in your mind and because the person you're interviewing gave you answers different from the answers you were expecting to hear, it must be propaganda, party line, because the answers you have in your head are closer to the truth. So that's kind of an odd question to begin with. I think that the discussions and the questions were designed to focus on factual incidents and events as opposed to positions and platforms, and so for example understanding how it is that particular articles of the constitution made their way into the draft is a factual inquiry; it isn't really about a party line. Either somebody proposed a particular provision, and the paper record would support that, because the paper record exists, or they didn't. Either particular

people, like Amr Moussa, who's obviously not a Muslim Brotherhood member, agreed to particular provisions and signed a statement agreeing to those proposed provisions of the constitution, or he did not. So I don't know where the party line fits into that. I'm really not interested in party lines; those are already out there. I'm interested in actually understanding the who-what-where-why-when, which are more factual inquiries.



Emad Shahin (Professor, American University in Cairo) and Michael Hanna (New Century Foundation).



Wael Haddara, Heba Morayef, and Osama Rushdi (via Skype).



Wael Qandil and David Kirkpatrick.

JW: I suppose then, to rephrase the question, what challenges do you think we faced in the course, in terms of the interview process, within the workshop and outside of it?

SLW: Well, the biggest challenge was that a number of people who we approached to participate in the class were simply too afraid, particularly those [who live in or frequently visit] Egypt. They were



Abdul Mawgoud Dardery, Gamal Hishmat, and Yehia Hamed (via Skype).



Helga Tawil-Souri introduces Saif Abdelfattah, Mohamed Almohandes, Amr Darrag, and Sarah Leah Whitson at the workshop's public event.



Sarah Leah Whitson (Human Rights Watch), and Amr Hamzawy (Egyptian political scientist, human rights activist and public intellectual).

too afraid to appear in the same room alongside members of any opposition party, and so it was very challenging to find as much diversity as we'd have wanted during the same class sessions. [For example], we ended up interviewing one speaker at a separate event, because he was concerned about appearing in the same room as Muslim Brotherhood members, purely for security reasons. There was another invited speaker who cancelled the night before he was supposed to come because he got cold feet. So that is really an indication of how frightening the environment is in Egypt right now that people don't want to be seen with Muslim Brotherhood members for fear of being labeled and tarnished and getting into trouble. So that was a [frustrating] challenge. Additionally, a number of people whom we invited were denied visas by the US government. The State Department swore up and down that there was no deliberate effort to do that, but it is the unfortunate outcome that four of our speakers weren't able to come because they weren't able to get visas. I think that the quality of in-person interviews was much higher than people on Skype.

JW: What about this moment (Morsi's year in power) in particular did you find so interesting? How close do you feel the class came as a whole to dissecting the complexity of this political moment?

SLW: This is Egypt's only experience with democracy. For [the first time in Egypt's modern history] Egyptians were able to democratically elect a government, [and for 12 months, that democratically elected government] attempted to establish itself as the authority of the state. The factors that led to its overthrow are terribly important. The military coup deposed [Egypt's] only democratically elected government. It obviously took violence to carry out the military overthrow but they [also had] a lot of [popular] support. I think [it is very] important to understand the factors that led to this failure of the Egyptian people in the end and all of the participants that contributed to that failure.

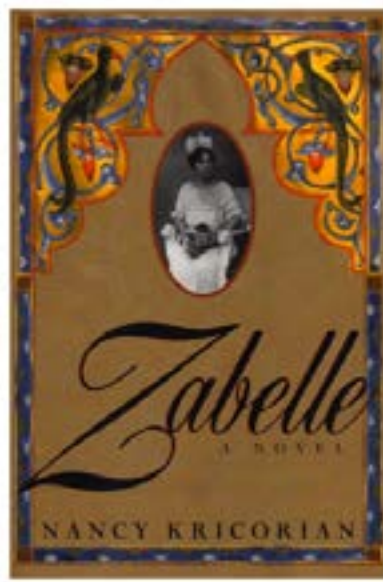
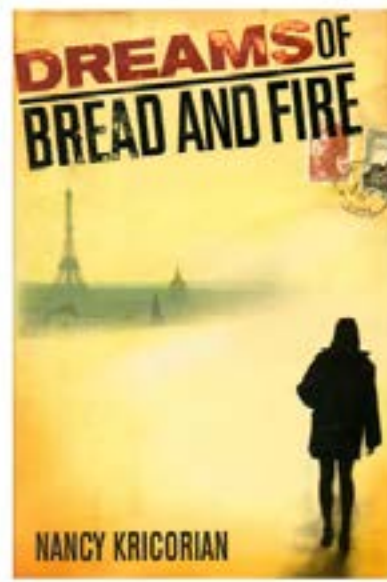
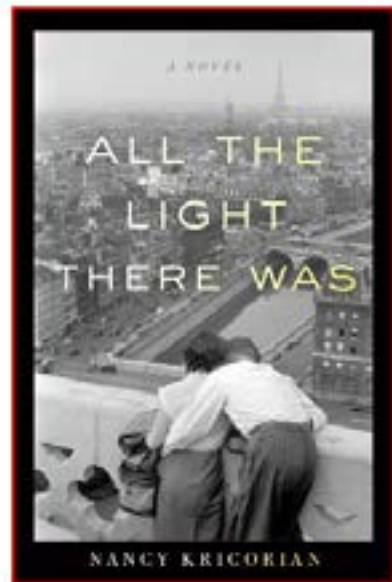
JW: What section of the course do you feel came closest to the truth we were seeking?

SLW: I found the interview with Amr Hamzawy extremely interesting and valuable but also very moving because it felt so painfully honest and reflective. I'm eager to go back and watch the video once it's distributed because I thought it was such an interesting assessment of what a liberal secular party faced, the challenges that he faced, and the environment in which they were operating. I also found Amr Darrag's interview and Yehia Hamed's interviews very interesting as well particularly because both were self reflective and self critical in terms of the Muslim Brotherhood's own shortcomings, challenges and failures. Amr [Darrag] in particular is so knowledgeable about that period of time; he was such a close and deep inside player in the constitution drafting process and the negotiations with the military during that period. So it was interesting to hear about the details of particular incidents from someone who was there.

Life Stories

Transforming Family and Oral Histories into Narrative

Nancy Kricorian, the Hagop Kevorkian Center's Fall 2015 Writer-in-Residence, is a New York City-based writer and activist. She is the author of the novels *Zabelle*, *Dreams of Bread and Fire*, and most recently *All The Light There Was*, which is set in the Armenian community of Paris during World War II. Her poetry and essays have been published in *Guernica Magazine*, *The Minnesota Review*, *The Mississippi Review*, *Parnassus*, and *Women's Studies Quarterly*, among other periodicals. She has been the recipient of a New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship, The Anahid Literary Award, a Gold Medal of the Writers Union of Armenia, and the Daniel Varoujan Prize of the New England Poetry Club, among other honors. She participated in the 2010 Palestine Festival of Literature and is a fellow of Columbia University's Women Mobilizing Memory Workshop. She has taught at Barnard, Columbia, Yale, Rutgers and Queens Colleges, as well as with Teachers and Writers Collaborative in the New York City Public Schools.



Writing Memory after Violence and Loss

By Stephanie Kraver, NES '16

During the Fall 2015 semester, in the Center's softly lit library, Writer-in-Residence Nancy Kricorian gathered with Near Eastern Studies MA students, aspiring journalists, and a few Ph.D candidates. We all convened over bagels and coffee for Nancy's writing workshop *Life Stories: Transforming Family and Oral Histories into Narrative Non-Fiction and Fiction*.

During our five Friday morning sessions, the group concentrated on pieces that explore constructions of memory after violence and loss. We read Palestinian author Liana Badr's novel *The Eye of the Mirror*, recounting the tragedies that female protagonist Aisha endures in the Tal el-Zaatar refugee camp in Lebanon. We also read Raffi Khatchadourian's *A Century of Silence* published in "The New Yorker" about his visit to Turkey roughly a century after the Armenian genocide, along with one of Nancy's own novels, *All The Light There Was*, which beautifully tells of an Armenian family's struggles living in France during WWII.

The readings were thought provoking and at times they told devastating stories. Each of them allowed us to reflect on the art of writing. For many of us, the highlight of the workshop was the last couple of class meetings -- when we were able to share works of our own.

Many wrote about their family histories; we read pieces telling of an Egyptian family's life in a fishing village during the 1960s, of a young man's return to his Bosnian town years after the genocide, and of women's mourning rituals in Iraq.

For me, this workshop was particularly meaningful. After losing both my sister and father a year apart from one another--and not long before Nancy's first session convened in Fall 2015 -- I was grateful to take part. It allowed me to write about my family and to memorialize those who were now gone. The workshop enabled me to take ownership over my story and to experiment with the most effective way of telling it. I appreciated the thoughtful feedback I received in the group, and I was also humbled by the opportunity to listen to my peers and their stories. I'm thankful for this creative outlet for literary exploration, and that Nancy and the other students in the workshop helped cultivate a safe and nourishing space for sharing our work.

Crafting My Own Narrative about Alexandria

By Mariam Elba, NES and Global Journalism, '16

This past fall, Nancy Kricorian, in her workshop, "Life Stories: Transforming Family and Oral Histories into Narrative Non-Fiction and Fiction" showed us how to take oral histories and experiences of trauma and craft them into written narratives. I had taken many creative writing courses in college, but this one was unique. We looked beyond fiction and non-fiction narrative to address family histories, personal and family trauma, and private and public memory.

I saw the class as an opportunity to write my own family history, especially their experiences embedded in the working-class urban spaces of Alexandria in the 70s and 80s, a period often overlooked in Alexandrian urban history. I wrote a fictionalized account of a family in a well-known working class (*sha'abi*) neighborhood in Alexandria, and tried to show how they grew up and apart from each other. I used landmarks such as the sea, the Qait Bay fort, and other known sites in downtown Alexandria as anchors for the story. I used my parents' memories and experiences of the neighborhood, the same one they grew up in, to reconstruct what this area was like

to them. I wanted to show how the experiences they had growing up are now quite uncommon in this same neighborhood today. I hoped to add another narrative of Alexandria, one outside of the nostalgic, pre-1952 narrative of cosmopolitanism that dominates the discourse around Alexandria, a narrative outside *bashawat*, *hawawem*, and *khawagat*.

I wrote an excerpt of what I envision to be a larger project. Such stories have all the more significance now, as the neoliberal transformation of Alexandria is in full swing. The state continues to demolish landmarks, historic buildings, and change the character of the city that was shaped by the very same residents who are overlooked in the city's narrative. I aimed to connect stories to central, everyday landmarks in Alexandria that are currently at risk of disappearing, or have already disappeared. To me, this form of writing is an act of resistance against the corporate and state interests seeking to erase these elements that my family knew so well. Kricorian's workshop helped me craft these thoughts and stories into a new narrative--my own narrative.

Art and Memory

Looking Back and Moving Forward on the Centennial of the Armenian Genocide

Kevorkian Gallery Exhibit November 9, 2015–February 6, 2016

1915

Diana Markosian

“1915” is a photography series examining the memory of the first genocide of the 20th century: the elimination of one and a half million Armenians by the Ottoman Empire.

One century later, I returned to Armenia in search of those who had survived. After months of researching archives and traveling across the country, I discovered the stories of three survivors, all well over 100 years old. I traveled to Turkey to re-trace their steps and bring back a piece of their memory. Each survivor also asked me to fulfill a wish. Movses, from Musa Dagh, asked me to find his church and leave his portrait on the footsteps of what are now ruins. Yeprkasia, from Kars, asked me to find her older brother from whom she was separated after the genocide. Mariam, from Sason, requested a handful of Turkish soil for her to be buried in.

All these years later, upon seeing the image of their native land, the survivors grabbed on, as if by holding the image close they would be taken back to a place they called home many years ago. This is a story of home — everything they had, everything they lost. And what they have found again.



Treasures

Silvina Der Meguerditchian

Much of Silvina Der Meguerditchian’s work as an artist has focused on concepts of the collective identity and cultural heritage of the Armenian people. Her installation Treasures continues her ongoing exploration of these themes and at the same time challenges any attempt to approach it in purely historical terms.

Treasures is based on a manuscript written in Turkish using the Armenian alphabet, a compilation of folk remedies the artist’s great grandmother put down on paper in Buenos Aires more than seventy years ago. Drawing on additional texts, collages and objects to supplement and comment on this historical source, Der Meguerditchian takes it as a point of departure from which to explore the relationship between text and commentary in her artist’s book and installation.

The artist’s decision to incorporate the extant display cases and create a site-specific installation attests to the special significance the location holds for her. For Der Meguerditchian and the others at the school she attended as a girl, the island of San Lazzaro degli Armeni was what Mount Ararat was for most other children in the Armenian community in Argentina: an almost mythical place of longing, particularly close to the heart and yet impossibly faraway. The title she has chosen for her installation points to the fact that the manuscript it is based on is much more than a document solely of interest to historians and possibly antique book dealers. Much like the fragment of a marble statue from Classical Antiquity, it is a

treasure that stands – pars pro toto – for the collective identity of a people, a priceless artifact evoking an entire bygone era.

Of course, old books are bound to elicit associations of transience and impermanence. However, by overlaying, digitally processing and framing her historical sources and thus entering into a dialogue with them, Der Meguerditchian manages to transcend these associations and build a bridge between past and present. Suggestive of the delight children take in drawing and scribbling in books, the techniques she uses translate commentary into visual form. Since commentary is generally concerned with examining the authenticity of texts and placing them into a wider context, it often serves to detach us from the text itself.

Der Meguerditchian gives this familiar practice a surprising twist by harnessing it to the opposite effect: In using it to amplify their “whisper,” she allows her sources to speak to us today and turns them into “treasures” whose significance goes beyond the purely historical.

*Berthold Reiss**

This text, by Berthold Reiss, is excerpted from the catalogue of “Armenity,” the Armenian Pavilion in the 56th Biennale Di Venezia, 2015



Rethinking “Iran” at the Film Festival

Cinematic Counternarratives and National Aesthetics

Laura Fish, PhD Candidate, Middle Eastern Languages and Cultures, University of Texas, Austin

(excerpted from the original that first appeared on the Ajam Media Collective) Counternarratives and National Aesthetics

“Rethinking Iranian Cinema: Aesthetics and Counternarratives” was a film series co-curated by Ajam Media Collective and Cine-Eye, sponsored by the Hagop Kevorkian Center, NYU Iranian Studies Initiative, and the Grey Art Gallery.

As international investment in and recognition of films labeled “Iranian” has grown within the past three decades, international audiences’ imaginings of what counts as both “Iranian” and “cinema” has shaped our expectations of what we will see at film festivals. The “Rethinking Iranian Cinema: Aesthetics and Counternarratives” series hosted by the Hagop Kevorkian Center Spring 2016 reconsiders how international film festival selections have privileged the definition of Iranian cinema as an auteur-dominated tradition that produces particular snapshots of Iran and its people without due attention to the methods of storytelling Iranians can create.

Experiencing Iranian cinema often comes down to name-dropping those Iranian filmmakers with whom international film scenes and festivals are familiar. No other Iranian filmmaker has become more recognizable to international audiences than Abbas Kiarostami, with his flare for sunglasses and teasing apart narrative structures to question the distinction between truth and fiction. The names of Jafar Panahi (*The White Balloon*, 1995), Majid Majidi (*Children of Heaven*, 1997), the Makhmalbaf family (*Marriage of the Blessed*, 1989 & *The Apple*, 1998), and more recently Asghar Farhadi (*A Separation*, 2011) spin around festival circuits, correlating “Iranian cinema” with the theory of auteur cinema.

Audiences understand Iranian cinema as marked by key filmmakers who leave a signature on their film productions through camera style, editing techniques, distinctive narrative structures, realist social critique, and

financing measures. As Azadeh Farahmand has noted, domestic financial restrictions have enhanced Iranian filmmakers’ reliance on international festivals, compelling them to appease the expectations of international festivals in order to acquire funding—an issue filmmakers from multiple national backgrounds also face, particularly Palestinian filmmakers. Often, external funding requires filmmakers to include the language of the aiding country, or thematically to include images of veiled women and children. The themes, aesthetics, and even languages expected of Iranian art films result in film styles that vary vastly from the commercial genre-driven films that only play in Iranian theaters. Prior to the Islamic Revolution, these popular domestically focused films were romantic melodramas, crime thrillers, and tales of patriotism, while during the Iran-Iraq War, war films dominated, and now comedies and even horror films have found their way to Iranian audiences. But these films have seen little of foreign film festivals.

International audiences attending festivals have also formed associations or expectations from festival offerings. Documentary film scholar Bill Nichols argues that “[i]ndividual films gain value both for their regional distinctiveness and for their universal appeal.” Viewing a film, a festival-goer becomes a “tourist” who encounters difference. Festival viewers expect to engage with difference, and Iranian films “usher us into a world of wind, sand, and dust, of veiled women and stoic men, of unusual temps and foreign rhythms.” From Nichols’s perspective, the festival-goer seeks the exotic but requires an understandable or relatable narrative, otherwise they will feel alienated by too much difference. There is an expectation that the viewer will see and experience “Iran” through what they can see in the film. Narratives revolving around children and gender relations, along with pictures of Iran’s landscape in Tehran or in villages, have found



Still from Anahita Ghazvinizadeh’s *Needle* (2013).

praise amongst international audiences.

The “Rethinking Iranian Cinema,” film series’ selection makes clear that while “place” may clearly and critically function within any one of the narratives exhibited, the audience cannot locate these narratives unambiguously in the Iran of their imagination. Instead, the quotidian spaces of apartments, coastlines, alleyways, and swimming holes of *Fat Shaker* and *Slaughterhouse* take precedence over Tehrani skylines pinned against the Alborz mountains and meandering village scenes so recognizable to the Iranian art cinema of Kiarostami, Panahi, Rakhshan Bani-E’tamad, and Bahram Beyzai.

In Mohamed Shirvani’s *Fat Shaker*, the constant close-up shots anchor themselves to the three central characters of the twisted, semi-surrealist plot. While the film moves from street scenes to an apartment and coastal area, it refuses to scrutinize any of these locales in depth. The viewer has no idea where the apartment is or even what space the apartment contains. Instead, the interactions between the stumbling fat, older man, the deaf young man who may or may not be his son, and the mysterious woman whom the man claims to be the boy’s mother, make room for an examination of abusive relationships and social outcasts of a society to which the viewer does not have visual access to un-

derstand. The characters appear stuck within the illegally-rented apartment or on the marsh boardwalk as the camera remains in close-up and medium-close-up shots. The obese man, struggling for every breath, seems stuck between reality and fiction, at times knowing who the woman is and at other times confused at her presence and brazen refusal to submit to his bullying. As the large man drinks more alcohol, cigarette packs float, shots proceed without rhyme or reason to subsequent scenes, the camera’s shakiness seems to reveal the alcoholic man’s drunken perspective and disconnect with reality.

While *Fat Shaker*’s disjointed narrative mixes potential dream with potential reality and plays with temporalities only discernible through the fat man’s shaved beard, Behzad Azadi’s *Slaughterhouse* and Anahita Ghazvinizadeh’s *Needle* retain stronger holds on decipherable realities, albeit rarely seen realities in Iranian cinema, or ones that make the viewer question “Iranian” cinema altogether. *Slaughterhouse*’s short storyline follows a group of Kurdish boys who obtain heroin in an attempt to make money in their neighborhood of “Koshtargah.” Persian, the national language, plays no role in the film, although “the north” or Tehran represents their escapist fantasies. In *Needle*, Persian again plays



A still from Behzad Azadi’s *Slaughterhouse*. Image Credit: Cinema Firozeh

no role. While Ghazvinizadeh is herself Iranian, along with some members of her film’s crew, the film itself takes place in the United States, or, rather, an English-speaking locale, with non-Iranian characters. In both cases, language and location destabilizes the expected “Iranianess” of the films.

Anahita Ghazvinizadeh’s *Needle* suggests that audiences should consider whether a film needs to address Iran at all. The story of an approaching divorce plays out through the daughter Lilly’s patient attempts to have her ears pierced. Unlike Hamid Naficy’s definition of (Iranian) émigré cinema in *Making Films with an Accent: Iranian Émigré Cinema* (2002), Ghazvinizadeh’s short does not attest to any political concern nor any traumatic relationship with a perceived homeland.[3] Taken on its own, *Needle* might not be viewed as an Iranian film. By juxtaposing the film with other films by and about Iranians, “Rethinking Iranian Cinema” questions whether authorship still matters in determining a film’s context. The white American girl, who escapes from her parents’ self-centered arguments by playing with a piece of indestructible blue gum, might not speak to any audience as an Iranian tale, or even a universal tale of adolescence. But do the Iranian and Iranian-heritage voices who contributed to the



Poster for Mohamed Shirvani’s *Fat Shaker* (2013).

film’s production allow it to fall within the realm of an Iranian project?

At the heart of this series is an opening for interpretation of what an audience can consider as belonging to the Iranian cinematic milieu in part through the injection of younger or alternative voices to cinema alongside more established filmmakers. This privileges neither generation of filmmakers and instead spotlights the multiplicity of stories that Iranian filmmakers can create. The series blasts “Iranian cinema” out of the confines of a national cinema that must define “Iranian” through spatially -- and linguistically-recognizable means. Instead, the films selected dislocate international audiences’ expectations of Iranianess by attending to stories of often-ignored groups and resisting the cinematic representation of a discernible place. Taken individually, none of these films might be considered Iranian, but as “Rethinking Iranian Cinema” gathers these films together, it persuades its audience to consider the role international film festivals play in shaping opinions regarding what counts as any nation’s “cinema.”

Post, Share, Arrest

Israel Targeting Palestinian Protestors on Facebook

by Alex Kane, NES/Journalism, '16

(This piece was adapted from an article first published by *The Intercept*)

On the morning of August 28, 2014, two days after the end of the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza, Sohaib Zahda hopped into a shared taxi in Hebron that was going to Ramallah, where he had a job interview. Thirty-three-year-old Zahda, who owns a paintball company, is an unlikely terrorist. An avid cyclist who speaks Arabic, Italian, French, and English, he is a member of Youth Against Settlements, a nonviolent organization that protests against Israeli settlers who live in and around Hebron. He is opposed to Hamas firing rockets into Israel. He likes to tell visitors his grandfather had Jewish friends in Hebron in the 1920s.

Hebron and Ramallah are about 25 miles apart. To get between them, Palestinians must pass through the “container checkpoint,” manned by Israeli soldiers on a road that connects the southern West Bank to its central and northern cities. At the checkpoint — named for a shipping container once located at the barrier — Palestinian pedestrians queue up to get their IDs checked, while cars wait for inspection and for soldiers to wave them through. When Zahda’s taxi drove up, masked Israeli soldiers stopped the vehicle, asked him to get out, and then handcuffed him.

They took his mobile phone and his bag and brought him to a room near the checkpoint. After two hours, he was told he was being investigated for threatening an Israeli army leader. The alleged threat was made on a Facebook page calling for an uprising in Hebron. Zahda was then blindfolded and placed in an Israeli military jeep

The soldiers took Zahda to a counterterrorism unit of the Israeli police, which held him for the crime of incitement to violence. At one point during Zahda’s interrogation, the police showed him content they had collected from his personal Facebook page. But Zahda wrote Facebook posts from the West Bank, an area governed not by Israeli civilian law but by Israeli military law. The police had no jurisdiction over Zahda, said Nery Ramati, his attorney. Instead of releasing him, the police transferred Zahda to an Israeli military prison. When asked about his arrest and interrogation, the Israeli army responded, “Because Mr. Zahda’s case is still open, we are unable to elaborate on any specific details.” The Israeli police did not respond to detailed requests about the interrogation.

Zahda’s case, still ongoing, is part of a new battleground in the long-running Israeli-Palestinian conflict, with Palestinians using social media to spread news about arrests and deaths, and Israeli intelligence and law enforcement officers scouring the web for clues about the next stabbing or protest.

Facebook has not changed the fundamental contours of the conflict, but it has accelerated it. A demonstration against the Israeli occupation can be organized in a matter of hours, while the monitoring of Palestinians is made easier by the large digital footprint they leave on their laptops and mobile phones.

Israeli officials have blamed social media for inciting a wave of violent attacks by Palestinians that began in October 2015. Since then, Israeli security forces have arrested about 400 Palestinians for social media activity, according to Palestinian rights groups Addameer and Adalah. Most of the arrests have been for postings on Facebook, a popular network among Palestinians.

In that year alone, the Israeli attorney general opened 155 investigations into alleged social media incitement, a marked increase from previous years, according to the Israeli newspaper Haaretz (although the law on social media incitement applies to all citizens and residents, the vast majority of cases have been directed at Arabs in Israel).

The arrests of Palestinians for Facebook posts open a window into the practices of Israel’s surveillance state and reveal social media’s darker side. What was once seen as a weapon of the weak has turned into the perfect place to ferret out potential resistance.

Zahda was the first Palestinian in the occupied territories to be arrested by the army for social media postings. Before his detention, the Israeli police had arrested Palestinians living in Israel for Facebook posts, including Razi Nabulsi, a Palestinian citizen of the state who was arrested in 2013 for posting about his hope that the “nightmare will be over” one day and writing against “Israeli terrorists” and in support of Palestinian prisoners, according to Nabulsi and his lawyers. (In court, the Israeli police claimed the evidence against Nabulsi was secret, even though it was based on public Facebook posts.)



In late 2014, the police arrested eight East Jerusalem residents for posting in support of violence against Israeli Jews. Omar Shalabi, one of those arrested, became the first person convicted for social media postings by an Israeli court, and in May 2015, he was sentenced to nine months in prison. According to the *New York Times*,

after two Palestinians killed five Israeli Jews, Shalabi wrote, “Ask death to grant you life; glory is bestowed upon the martyrs.”

Investigations of Palestinians for social media postings center around Israeli laws against incitement. For those who fall under Israeli civilian law, the attorney general has relied on Israel’s law against “Incitement to Violence or Terror.” The measure, passed in 2002, prohibits speech by Israeli citizens or East Jerusalem residents that supports or encourages violence or terrorism and would likely result in an attack. Civil rights attorneys say the law chills speech and is applied disproportionately to Israeli Palestinians and Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem, most of whom are not citizens but are still governed by Israeli civilian law.

Palestinians in the West Bank are governed under Israeli military law, which has its own broad prohibition against incitement. Zahda bounced back and forth between different branches of Israeli security forces: arrested by the army, turned over to the police, then returned to the army. His case illustrates a bewildering state of affairs in which cooperation and intelligence sharing among agencies with different jurisdictions, at least nominally, is routine.

Zahda was officially charged with “threats posed against a senior [Israel Defense Forces] officer” and calling “upon residents in his area to attack Israelis using Molotov cocktails,” an army spokesperson told me. Before those charges were laid out, however, the police investigated him for violating Israel’s civilian prohibition against incitement, despite the fact that Zahda is not an Israeli citizen, his lawyer said.

“Israel has access to anything it wants because when you think about it, the Israeli army can go and do whatever they want in the West Bank and no one can stop them,” said Amit Meyer, a former member of the military’s Unit 8200, Israel’s equivalent of the National Security Agency. “So if they want to go and dig a hole and add another cable ... they can just do it, and then all the communication goes to them as well.”

Meyer says collecting information from social media platforms became more of a priority while he served from 2010 through 2013. Facebook users, he explained, place a lot of information in the open, which makes the job of understanding Palestinian social networks easier. Facebook is considered open source information, i.e., content that is freely available for intelligence services without using special tools. Newspaper articles, Twitter posts, radio segments, demographic information, and academic papers are all open source information ripe for exploitation by intelligence agencies

In the pre-Facebook era, intelligence agents had to go into the field to find out who was part of a target’s network. Facebook has simplified that need. “It’s all there,” Meyer said. “It’s perfect for intelligence gathering.”

Islam and the Americas

A Summer Institute for K-12 Teachers

By Diana Shin, Outreach Administrator, Hagop Kevorkian Center

From August 18 to August 22, the Hagop Kevorkian Center hosted its 2016 Summer Institute on “U.S. and the Middle East” for k-12 educators. 35 teachers based in New York City and the broader tri-state area benefitted from the course, including 15 teachers who took it as a “3P-Course,” as accredited by the New York City’s Department of Education’s After School Professional Development Program (ASPDP). The course featured Peter Valenti (NYU) as the Lead Instructor, and also brought top experts as guest speakers: Eric Davis (Rutgers University), Michael W. Hanna (The Century Foundation), Benjamin Hopkins (George Washington University) Arang Keshavarzian (NYU), Toby Jones (Rutgers University), Zachary Lockman (NYU), Marc Lynch (George Washington University), Curtis Ryan (Appalachian State University), Mara Revkin (Yale University), and Chris Toensing (Middle East Research and Information Project). In addition to the lectures, the course incorporated curricular workshops vital to classroom teaching: an interactive role play of the Arab-Israeli conflict, a fun and engaging teaching method that enables students to have a greater understanding based on Barnard College’s “Reacting to the Past” Curriculum, modelling of units based on close readings of primary texts, and a modelling of a unit for incorporating graphic novels. In particular, teachers read graphic novels, *Operation Ajax: the Story of the CIA Coup that Remade the Middle East* by Mike de Seve and David Daniel Burwen as well as excerpts from *Palestine* by Joe Sacco. Teachers left the Summer Institute with a deeper understanding of the Middle East and equipped with a variety of new teaching resources and tools. We will let the teacher feedback speak for itself (see next page).



Teachers in the institute read two graphic novels—Joe Sacco's *Palestine* and *Operation Ajax* by Daniel Burwen and Mike de Seve

This workshop was a wonderful overview of the U.S. in the Middle East. All the scholars were engaging and extremely informative. I loved the use of primary documents and close reading modelled for the classroom. The role playing game modelled not only the intricacies of the Middle East but provided a model to incorporate research into teaching, point-of-view, close reading, speaking skills, and critical writing. I am looking forward to implementing the role playing in my ELL classes.

- **Christina Armas, Pioneer Academy, English Teacher, Grade levels k-5**

This was the most moving and inspiring seminar I have ever taken (and I have attended many!)

-**Walter Gern, Stuyvesant High School, English Teacher, Grade levels 10 & 12**

The use of graphic novels, modelled in this workshop to engage students in historical content that is sensitive, brings to life the human side of history. This course engaged me in the facts, but also allowed me to empathize with the human experience.

- **Shanna Douglas, Lower Manhattan Community Middle School, ELA Teacher, Grade 8**

This workshop provided an incredible swath and depth of information about the Middle East. I left the Kevorkian Center each day with the feeling that I had spent time with experts of the region – committed, informed, passionate scholars who wanted to illuminate the past to a clearer degree.

-**Abbe Karmen, Riverdale Country School, History Teacher, Middle School and High School Levels**

The 2016 Summer Institute “U.S., and the Middle East” provided a wealth of documents and knowledge that I will bring back into my history classes. Great speakers and discussion.

- **Marium Rizvi, M.S. 354 The School of Integrated Learning, History Teacher, Grade levels 6-8**

The 2016 Summer Institute 2016 “U.S. and the Middle East” was one of the most informative classes that I’ve ever taken. The information is great for my students in my classes.

- **Matthew, Ho, JHS 227, Social Studies Teacher, 7th Grade**

I’m always looking for ways to get my students to love history. This week I added a few more strategies to my toolkit that will help me to “hide the veggies.”

- **Stephanie Edwards, Abraham Lincoln, U.S. History and Government Teacher, Grades 9- 12**

This Institute offered consistently excellent presentations that enriched understanding and provided opportunities for expansion of curriculum and new units of study. Fantastic Institute. One of the best I’ve ever attended (in 29 years of teaching).

- **Maria Valentin, Scarsdale High School, World History Teacher, Grade 10**

This week-long program allowed time and space to learn about the Middle East and its impact on the U.S. and the world politically, socially, and economically. It was clear that the speakers were experts in their fields with extensive experience on the field. It was a privilege to gain their insights, interpretations, and analysis of a region with a complicated history.

- **Jennifer Kim, NYC Department of Education, TESOL Teacher, Grade 9**

Highest level of research shared by scholars working in the field – Turkey, Kurdistan, the councils – generously shared with elementary, middle and high school teachers. It seems that every week, nay, every day, brings various crises and challenges in the region, and in this class, we have explored the roots of these crises and social movements and have been able to gain insight on the social, political and economic aspects of these crises, as well as the ideological, psychological, philosophical, spiritual nature of these moments and events. Thank you again! And the fellow teachers were as enjoyable to work with as much as it was a privilege and honor to listen to the scholarly researchers and presenters.

- **John O’Mally, Townsend Harris High School, Social Studie and AP World History Teacher, 9th & 11th Grades**

Spotlight on K-12 Teacher Fellowships

By Diana Shin, Outreach Coordinator

Launched this academic year, the Hagop Kevorkian Center's Teacher Fellowships aim to enhance the development of k-12 curriculum materials that both convey a nuanced view of the Middle East and adhere to Core Curriculum standards. Fellows receive a number of benefits including: a grant in the amount of \$1,500 that covers costs for curriculum development, borrowing privileges at NYU Libraries for one calendar year, and a formal mentoring relationship with a NYU faculty member. Three Teacher Fellows were selected for academic year 2015-2016.

Twenty-eight 8th Grade students at M.S. 354, The School of Integrated Learning, benefitted from the curriculum project implemented by Marium Rizvi. Students were assigned specific countries, including the former Ottoman Empire, Egypt, Iran, and Palestine, given primary source documents, and commissioned to draft speeches that inform the assembly of member nations about the issues, challenges, and goals of their countries. The curriculum unit culminated on a Model UN-style Peace Summit, in which student delegations presented their drafted speeches to the assembly followed by a floor open to challenges.



Marium Rezvi's 8th grade social studies class at work. Photo courtesy of Marium Rizvi

Geoff Agnor, a high school teacher at Berkeley Carroll in Brooklyn pursued a curriculum project on Iran that centered around primary source analyses of CIA documents. The lesson gave Geoff's students the opportunity to explore the complex relationship between Iran and the United States through the CIA's involvement in the coup against Mossadegh. Using declassified CIA reports from 1953, students examine sourcing, contextualization, close reading, and corroboration of primary sources to better understand the events of 1953.



Geoff Agnor's students reviewing CIA documents on the 1953 coup in Iran. Photo courtesy of Geoff Agnor

Maria Valentin, who teaches high school in Scarsdale, developed a unit on the Cold War in the Middle East with a focus on Iran for her 10th grade World History course. Her curriculum project examined how Cold War tensions affected the politics of Iran in the early 1950s and how the U.S. / Soviet intervention resulted in the Pahlavi rule of Iran and the subsequent Iranian Revolution. Her unit was ultimately integrated into a series of lesson plans that present Cold War conflicts in various world contexts and explore their connections.

Heart of the Silk Road

A Study Tour in Uzbekistan for Educators

July 25–August 3, 2016

Together with the Center for Middle Eastern Studies at the University of California, Berkeley and GEEO.org (Global Exploration for Educators Organization), the Hagop Kevorkian Center for Near Eastern Studies at NYU co-hosted a fascinating 7-person study tour to Uzbekistan this summer. From the remarkable architecture and cultural life of post-Soviet Tashkent to the world heritage site of the ancient capital Khiva, travelers followed the legendary Silk Road through the best of Uzbekistan. Through stops in the famous bazaar in Bukhara to the the Islamic monuments and minarets of Samarkand, participants learned along the way about the famed Timurid dynasty that ruled over much of modern-day Afghanistan, Iran, and Central Asia. A true crossroads of empires, Central Asia (particularly the territory of today's Uzbekistan) provided the perfect venue through which teachers could explore the overlapping histories of the many social and political groups that have both passed through and remained influential in the region.



The 7 participants of the Uzbekistan Study Tour pose in front of Registan Square in the historic city of Samarkand.

Digging in the Turkish Archives

By Bengu Ezgi Aydin, NES '16

With support from a Kevorkian Center Travel Grant I conducted research in the Turkish state and newspaper archives. My thesis examined 1930s nationalization policies imposed on the Arab Alawite minority by the Turkish state. The entire experience in the archives was highly insightful for an aspiring academic. Compared to the Ottoman Archives located in Istanbul, the Prime Ministry's Republican Archives in Ankara attract a relatively small number of researchers, and therefore the archivists are more accommodating and helpful. Once my data collection in Ankara was complete, I visited Istanbul to dig through the newspaper archives in Ataturk Library. The library has a good view of the Bosphorus, and the staff is very welcoming but it is always full of Turkish high school students preparing for the university exams so the crowd can be overwhelming from time to time. In this archive, one can obtain original hard copies of the newspapers from the 18th century through the present day. I had failed to fathom how time consuming this research would be since you need to go through every single page of each newspaper in order to find an article related to your subject matter. This forced me to limit my time period to the 1930s. One of the nicest things about the Ataturk Library is that the older and more experienced researchers are always happy to offer help or advice once they see you are baffled, annoyed or completely lost. Afterwards, I returned to Ankara's National Library since Ataturk Library did not have one of the newspapers I was seeking. Although the National Library offers digital scans of the newspapers, you are not able to search via keyword. The National Library is also a highly bureaucratic institution and it was occasionally nerve-racking to get advice from the somewhat unhelpful staff.

Serving Refugees in the Transition to Life in New York City

By Soleiman Mustafa, NES '16

Thanks in part to my credentials from NYU and the Kevorkian Center, I was able to begin an internship with the International Rescue Committee in November 2015. I work in the Employment Services division of the New York Resettlement office, where my primary duty is to help refugees and asylees to find work during the early months and years of their transition to the United States. My "clients" come from all over the world, but I've found myself working primarily with people from West Africa, the Himalayas, and certain parts of the Middle East. I've also had the good fortune of being able to utilize Arabic skills I learned at the Kevorkian Center to assist clients with everything from housing issues to interview preparation to enrolling their kids in school.

At the same time, I've found myself dealing with the difficult tasks of un-selling a disingenuous American dream to Afghans who translated for the American army, or explaining to skilled immigrants that African university degrees mean very little in an American job market. My education informs my conversations, but the hawkish foreign policies and racist immigration policies that brought these refugees to NYC are ultimately irrelevant by the time they're sitting in front of me. Once they're here, I'm just teaching them how to get by in New York just like I had to learn when I first got here for graduate school. I'm explaining how my father came from Egypt with an engineering degree and started out washing dishes before he ever became an electrical engineer, or how I had to sleep on a couch for months before I was ever able to afford a decent apartment in this city. It is a very tough transition that I work to guide people through, and my experience as an American is one of the few things I can offer to people who are already extremely resourceful and resilient.

A few months into the internship, I was offered a full-time position with the organization, continuing much of the same work I had been learning to do in my internship. I spent my last few months at the Kevorkian Center working at the same time I was finishing up my degree, and have happily continued into this position past graduation.



The Nuts and Bolts of Thesis Writing

By Aqsa Khalid, NES '16

My master's thesis, "Unveiling the Silence: Understanding the nationalist sentiments among the 1947 Partition survivors," aimed to go beyond the nationalist discourses and the popular academic discussion of historical facts surrounding the event of the Indian partition. The idea of the project was to bring to light the human dimension of partition; essentially, how people saw, understood and situated the divide and the task of nation-building within their own experiences and struggles resulting from the partition.

One of the many challenges during the research process started with the first step: choosing the topic. This undoubtedly presented to be the most crucial step in the entire process as it basically determined the trajectory and focus of my research problem. Often times this proved to be the most challenging part, laying the foundation by deciding on the topic is just the first step in a series of attempts to come up with the right research problem that aligns your research aspirations with the research

resources at your disposal. One of my persistent anxieties in the whole process was to be able to be absolutely sure if my research material would be able to justify my thesis topic, the research topic undergoing constant revision until the very last minute to ascertain the alignment of research goals.

Once I was completely sure of the focus of my paper, another challenge seemed to be the availability of resources that would address my research aspirations. It is one thing to have a research idea in mind and another to be able to execute that research under the constraints of resources of time and other such factors. But eventually there are these thrilling moments when your study starts speaking to you in the manner you envisioned it, when the research data starts fitting your study like a glove. It is such moments that make that long journey worthwhile.

Investing in Post-9/11 Veterans

By Emily Bader, NES '16

In 2006 Bob Woodruff was covering the war in Iraq when he was seriously injured by a roadside bomb. The Bob Woodruff Foundation, created in his honor by his family, is dedicated to investing in the next chapter for our nation's wounded, ill, and injured veterans, service members and their families. I connected with the Bob Woodruff Foundation when I was researching internships at non-profit organizations in NYC. With a small staff that makes a big impact, I felt that the Foundation would be a great place for me to develop professionally before seeking full-time employment at a non-profit organization after graduation.

During my time interning at the Foundation, I have played an instrumental role in the execution of events designed to raise

awareness for and invest in post-9/11 veterans. Most recently, the Foundation has introduced a new plan to reach out to the next generation and get them involved in the Foundation's mission. Because the Foundation has such a small staff, I have been given a significant amount of projects to develop independently. I have designed proposals for our Executive Director, prepared briefing books for board members and staff to prepare for the Foundation's events, created a 50-page training manual for new hires to the organization, and conducted numerous outreach initiatives. Throughout my experience, I have learned how to effectively manage an organization's budget, review grant applications and contracts, enhance relationships with



Emily Bader '16 at the Bob Woodruff Foundation

our partners, and how to act as a liaison between the Foundation and our vendors.

The amount of administrative experience I have been exposed to while at the Foundation has exceeded the expectations I had as an intern. I look forward to the opportunity to bring these skills to a non-profit whose work is more focused on the Middle East.

In Fond Memory of Falak Sufi

Scholarships and Essay Prize

Falak Sufi was born in Pakistan in 1983. She possessed a generous heart, the urge to engage with and change the world, and a brilliantly original, vivacious mind. She graduated from the National University of Singapore with first class honors in Political Science. While young, she began to publish the work that showed her great gifts and talent. Among her interests were women and gender in South Asia, the historiography of this region, and the strength of the humanities. However, no list can capture the range of subjects about which she thought, spoke and wrote. She was a much beloved, deeply admired graduate student in Near Eastern Studies at NYU when she died tragically in Spring 2008. With the generous support of her family, Kevorkian has awarded an annual scholarship in honor of her memory.

The Falak Sufi Scholars have had a very busy year. For Aqsa Khalid '16 these past two years have been absolutely memorable, both academically and personally. She says she is genuinely going to miss her time at NYU. This past year for her was spent juggling coursework with internships. She interned at the Independent Diplomat for sometime over the summer and is now interning at the World Policy Institute.



Dean Thomas Carew awards Stephanie Kraver '16 the Falak Sufi Memorial Essay Prize.

Her research through her thesis looked at the nationalist sentiments in the first-person accounts of the 1947 Partition of India. Aqsa plans to take some time off in the summer to unwind while also looking for exciting job opportunities that might take her anywhere in the world.

Sabahat Zakariya '17 was able to attain her lifelong dream this year of living and studying in New York City thanks to the generosity of the Falak Sufi scholarship. Unlike previous recipients, however, her journey to the city was not conducted alone. She has brought her teenage son along who is studying at a high school in Brooklyn and enjoying the joys and challenges of his move to New York as much as his mother. The balancing of the intellectual demands of student life with the domestic pressure of family life has made her feel like a true adult, says Sabahat, and helped evolve a work ethic that is alien to the more laid-back pace of her home city of Lahore. Her first year classes at the Kevorkian Center and the partner program in Journalism have helped her reflect more deeply on issues close to her heart. She hopes to translate this into her MA thesis for which she is travelling to Pakistan this summer. Sabahat wants to write about the rise of single women and divorcees in the country and the impact of urban and social infrastructures on those who wish to lead 'alternate' lifestyles. She hopes to turn her thesis into a published book to fill a much needed void in Pakistani popular culture on the depiction of modern Pakistani women.

This fall, Shandana Waheed will be joining us from Forman Christian College in Lahore, Pakistan. After initially pursuing medical coursework, Shandana completed her BA in political science in May 2016. As an undergraduate, she has been interested in the plight of religious minorities in Pakistan—a subject she has studied through case studies of historical minority endowments and research in Punjab archives in Lahore. She is excited to join the legacy of Falak Sufi scholars in New York City.

In April 2016 Kevorkian also awarded the eighth annual Falak Sufi Memorial Essay Prize that recognizes originality and promise in MA scholarship to Stephanie Kraver '16. An honorable mention went to Nadeen Shaker '16.



Nadeen Shaker '16 (smiling, center), celebrates her honorable mention with colleagues and Falak Sufi's family

A number of outstanding essays were submitted this year on a diversity of subjects, historical time periods, and from a variety of methodological approaches. Four of these explored a remarkable range of issues connected with Egypt, including socializing as Infrastructure in urban Egypt, the broken prison system in the country, the early private press in nineteenth century Egypt and the indigenous Amazigh community of North Africa. Other topics included missionary involvement in the Early Arab migration to the US and Israeli state surveillance of social media. The papers relied on archival work, ethnographic methods, social research, pop cultural analyses and a host of other methodologies.

The paper that received honorable mention was Nadeen Shaker's "Egypt's Prison Nos-trums: Why the Prison System is Broken." Through in-depth interviews and extensive

research Shaker uncovers the brutality and secrecy shrouding the prison system in Egypt. Culling a variety of sources: media archives, personal interviews and personal observation she goes into the brutal and self-contradictory nature of Egypt's judicial and prison system that awards minor female debtors longer and harsher prison sentences than the dictators who looted the country.

The winner of the Falak Sufi memorial essay prize was Stephanie Kraver, whose paper, "Palestinian Diary Writing: A Performance of Human Rights" is a testimony to the adage 'the personal is political'. By surveying eight Palestinian diaries, Sharon and My Mother-in-Law, the Sealed Room, When the Birds Stopped Singing, Dahaysha Diary, Diary of an Invasion, Occupation Diaries, Gaza Mama, and The Drone Eats with Me, which

were all written in English and under occupation or siege, Kraver's essay examine the ways in which diary writing is not merely "a recollection," but also a means of "aspiration" for political change.

Applications for next year's scholarships will arrive in Fall 2016, and the essay prize competition will take place in Spring 2017. The Hagop Kevorkian Center remains indebted to Falak Sufi's family for supporting this recognition of outstanding M.A candidates and their writings.

MA Student News: Class of 2016

Nader Atassi: This past year, I completed my MA thesis on the economic thought of Arab intellectuals in the late Ottoman era. I focused particularly on the late nineteenth-century writings of a periodical published in Egypt by intellectuals from Greater Syria. This summer I will be engaging in private study to improve my modern Turkish language skills to prepare myself for studying Ottoman Turkish in the future. Next year, I will begin a PhD program in the Department of History at Columbia University, where I hope to expand upon my original MA thesis and conduct further research on the intellectual history of economic thought in the late Ottoman era.

Bengu Ezgi Aydin: This year I received a Kevorkian travel grant to conduct research for a month in Turkish archives to examine the nationalisation of the Alawite population in the Cilician plain during the 1930s. Apart from my studies, I have been working as an intern since March 2016 for the organization of the first-ever World Humanitarian Summit, an initiative of Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon. The Summit, which took place between May 23-24 in Istanbul, is now successfully complete. After graduation, I will return to my home country and start working for the Danish Refugee Council as a Reporting Officer on the Turkish-Syrian border.

Emily Bader: After an exhilarating summer studying Arabic at the Sijal Institute in Amman, Jordan in 2015, I returned to KEVO and commenced my thesis research on U.S. aid to Egypt. When I wasn't occupied by my research, workshops, or coursework, I spent my time working various KEVO events and interning at the Bob Woodruff Foundation. This summer I plan to continue my work at the Foundation while pursuing a position at a non-government organization whose work is focused on the Middle East.

Paul Bielecki: I happily graduated this May. My last academic year was about research for my MA thesis and for the Iranian Studies Conference in Vienna (August 2016). In my MA thesis, which I completed with the inspirational help of Prof. Zvi Ben Dor-Benite and Prof. Nahid Mozaffari, I tried to make several points. I was up against an historiography of science in the Early Islamic world and I tried to make an important intervention changing the way in which we think about Christian-Muslim interaction with regards to science during the early Abbasid period. Now, I am getting some rest and in the very near future I would love to continue my research about medical doctors during 'Abbasid period. I want to say thank you to all my professors and my fellow students at Kevo for giving me such a creative, demanding, and intellectual time in one of the best cities of the world. At Kevo I always felt like I was among friends. Thank you all for that.

Keith Collela: Over the past year, I have worked in a variety of positions as I finished my coursework and thesis. I interned at the United Nations Development Program, where I helped develop strategies for partnerships with private multinational firms and regional development banks. During the spring, I worked at the Council on Foreign Relations under Ambassador Robert Blackwill, providing research support on US-Israeli and US-China relations. This May, I began a full-time position as a Risk Analyst at JP-Morgan Chase & Co. here in Manhattan. I work on a team that coordinates firm-wide risk policies, both internally and in coordination with domestic and international regulators.

Jessica DeOliveira: During the 2015-2016 academic year, I completed my thesis analyzing cooperation and coordination amongst the member states of the

Gulf Cooperation Council. Following my graduation from the M.A program, I accepted a full-time offer at a management consulting firm in New York City as a Consultant. I plan to move to the United Arab Emirates in the coming months, opening my firm's first international office in Dubai.

Nafisa Dhanani: I have had a great last year at the Kevorkian Center, making the most of my time in NYC in between thesis writing. I've been working on establishing a startup that looks like it is turning into something bigger, so I'll be returning to Toronto to make it happen. I am going to miss the Center terribly!

Zeynep Ekmekci: This year has been a busy one. I completed my thesis on state violence in Turkey, focusing on Maraş massacre that took place before the 1980 coup d'état. I tried to understand how violence that target an ethnic community, in this case Alawi population in Turkey, and impunity that protects the perpetrators articulate a specific type of experience of citizenship. In the summer, I will do an internship in Middle East Institute at Washington, DC in order to broaden my understanding of the politics of the region.

Mariam Elba: I spent an engaging year looking at urban spaces and class identities in contemporary Egypt. I finished my thesis in which I looked at the development of communities of Egyptians, Syrians, Iraqis, and others in a private, gated housing compound on the outskirts of Cairo. Additionally, this fall semester I explored social infrastructures that are emerging in Cairo and Alexandria. This past spring I worked on looking the social, political, and economic context of the development of sha'abi music in Egypt. I am now looking forward to working with public and/or independent media and applying for a PhD in anthropology sometime in the near future.

Alex Kane: My last year at the Kevorkian Center was fantastic. The highlight of the year--aside from eating delicious Tanoreen meals with friends at Kevo parties--was the completion of my thesis on Israeli surveillance of Palestinian social media users. I plan to publish a series of articles derived from my thesis in the next few months, and continue to do freelance journalism on issues related to social media and surveillance in Israel/Palestine and the United States. I will also be exploring funding opportunities for more long-form journalistic projects in Israel/Palestine.

Aqsa Khalid: My two years at the Kevorkian Center went by really fast but provided me with a deeply memorable and enriching experience. I interned at the Independent Diplomat and the World Policy Institute over the course of the last year. I won the internship grant from the Wasserman center during the year. My MA thesis looked at the nationalist sentiments among the 1947 Partition survivors. I plan to stay in the country for a while looking for work and exploring the city.

Stephanie Kraver: During this past year, I had the opportunity to participate in novelist Nancy Kricorian's rewarding writing workshop on composing family stories and histories. I wrote my Master's thesis on Palestinian diary writing, or Palestinian refugees' everyday chronicling of their experiences under occupation and siege, and I was awarded the Falak Sufi Memorial Essay prize for an abridged version of this work. This summer, I will spend four weeks living with a Jordanian family and studying Arabic in Amman at Qasid Institute. I plan on applying for doctorates this coming fall.

Brian Gareth Lewis: I have thoroughly enjoyed my final year with the Kevorkian Center, during which I developed my thesis analyzing the contemporary rein-

scription of transgender Iranians within homonationalist subjectivities by international LGBT organizations. This summer I will travel to Oman to continue my Arabic studies with the SALAM 2016 scholarship. Afterwards I hope to return to my career developing grants focused on capacity-building of civil society within the Middle East.

Soleiman Moustafa: I had an incredible second year at the Kevorkian Center, and I'm sad to be saying goodbye to many of my colleagues and professors and friends in the program. In this past year I traveled to Egypt and Jordan, completed a thesis on the history of political activity in the Egyptian prison system, and began an internship with the International Rescue Committee where I help refugees get resettled in New York City. I was hired from my internship in March to a full-time position with the IRC, and will be continuing my work with refugee resettlement into next year and beyond.

Julian Phillips: Over the past academic year, I completed two research fellowships in mission history. Along the way, I published an article in the peer-refereed journal *L'Espace Politique*, and presented my research at universities in Florida, New York, and Pennsylvania.

Simone Rutkowitz: I enjoyed my final year at the Kevorkian Center and my work as a research assistant for Joanne Nucho. This summer I am finishing my thesis, "Reading the UAE through Brown Book Magazine."

Nadeen Shaker: Last year, I have grown so much as a journalist and scholar. I've written extensively about Egypt's prison system and explored other exciting ideas. I won an honorable mention in the Falak Sufi Essay award competition, and my thesis will be published soon. I interned for CNN and through other classes dis-

covered my love for video production and documentary making. I plan to spend the summer further exploring these interests.

Kathryn Thornton: This year I had ample opportunity to apply my thoughts about the media that began in my first year to my academic work through taking a class about the ethnography of the media through the Anthropology department. I also completed my master's thesis, a longform journalistic article about the production of alternative news at Dicle News Agency in Turkey. I will be moving to Turkey this June to pursue journalism and English teaching, and I plan to apply to PhD programs in Media Studies and Anthropology in the Fall.

Jeremy Wheatley: My work at the Kevorkian Center has focused mainly on the relationship between visual media and state power. In my first year I explored the ways the Islamic State's media replicates, and often mimics, methods used by the United States to project its own military capabilities via popular culture during the early 2000s. In keeping with the general theme of vision and power, though diverging slightly to more emotionally bearable media, my thesis examined the political potential of Snapchat within the context of Israel-Palestine. I'm currently searching for work in the humanitarian sector and hold an internship position at PAX for Peace, working on human rights advocacy targeted at the United Nations.

MA Student News: Class of 2017

Saghar Bozorgi: I had an interesting but tough first year! At the end of the year I had the fascinating opportunity to continue my project on early elections in Iran while employing the insights gained in my classes. I tried writing on a different topic: the use of Persian secondary sources by historians who work on Iran. For summer 2016, I am working on my thesis comparing the experience of elections for the first and second Iranian parliament (around 1906 and 1909) in different cities. I hope to check a number of Iranian archives/libraries in support of this research. I am also teaching Elementary Persian and plan to continue during the summer.

Jesse Brent: In my first year at NYU I took classes on Nationalism and the Nation-State, Musical Ethnography, and Comparative Politics in the Middle East and North Africa. I received a FLAS grant to study Arabic over the summer in Fes, Morocco.

This summer, I will also be researching for my thesis on Gnawa reggae and Berber metal in Morocco.

Clare Busch: I received the 2015-2016 academic year FLAS fellowship, which allowed me to focus on and improve my Turkish speaking and writing abilities. I also interned for the magazine Women Across Frontiers as a writer and social media fellow. I also wrote for Bedford + Bowery and Al-Jazeera English. This summer I received an ARIT fellowship for research and language study in Turkey. In addition to conducting my thesis research, I hope to publish additional stories on Turkish politics.

Aristo Fatwan: My first year at Kevo has been nothing short of incredible. From the classes on rethinking the Middle East to digitizing the Jack G. Shaheen Collection, I have had the opportunity

to expand my interests while also having a clearer idea of what I want to write for my thesis. This summer I am spending a few weeks in California to interview the Iranian Americans of Orange County while also visiting some museums on the East Coast. Of course, I will also be expanding my culinary repertoire since picking up cooking this past year. I hope the next year will prove as stimulating and challenging as the first!

Ghayde Ghraawi: During the school year, I began work on the Jack G. Shaheen archive's digitization project. This summer, with the support of FLAS funding, I'll be studying Arabic in Amman, Jordan.

Mone Makkawi: In this first year of my MA, I've focused on expanding my understanding on issues of biopolitics, infrastructures, borders, and camps. This summer I will be continuing my work in the Pal-

estinian refugee camps in South Lebanon. While working in the camp I hope to look at the politicization of water and the ways in which different water sites and infrastructures create a new mapping of the camp configuration itself.

Kelley O'Dell: This summer I will be conducting research in Beirut for my tentative thesis topic—exploring how humanitarian framings of “gay raids” in Lebanon obfuscate both the Lebanese state's oppression of Syrian refugees and the United Nations' pathologizing of straight male Muslim refugees as terrorists. For five weeks I will also be working for LEAP, a program that works to empower Palestinian refugees in Southern Lebanon through educational enrichment.

Ada Petiwala: I was grateful to receive a FLAS fellowship for Arabic this past year. I also worked with the NYU Speaking Freely Online program as an Arabic coach and continued freelance translating and editing. I am hoping to continue my research on Bollywood and Indian culture in Egypt this summer despite being refused entry to the country.

Layla Quran: I enjoyed writing and working around the Kevorkian Center and New York at large this year. Throughout the year, I focused on labor and minorities and in the spring I interned for the UN bureau of Al Jazeera English. I will be in Jordan this summer writing for the Associated Press in Amman and conducting research on migrant domestic workers in the country.

Matthew Reynolds: This summer, I will be a student affairs intern at Global Maximum Educational Opportunities, a startup company based in New York that administers study abroad programs in various locations. I also plan to conduct preliminary research for my M.A. thesis. Thanks to the generosity of the Kevorkian Center, I look forward to returning in the fall as a FLAS fellow in Arabic.

Alexander Schinis: I had a tremendous year at Kevo developing my Arabic as well as studying the Qur'an, Islam, and fine arts in Syria. This year I was also fortunate enough to begin working as an editor with the online publication Muftah, where I write critical and expository pieces about Middle Eastern affairs. Over the summer, I will continue my work with Muftah as well as beginning research on my thesis, which will revolve around the crisis in Syria.

Kasper van Laarhoven: This year I took courses at both the Near Eastern and the Journalism departments. I have worked on, among other things, the plight of Eritrean refugees and the informal economy of Beirut. Tying into this last topic, I will travel this summer to Lebanon to make a short documentary film on the lives of the people of Beirut in the light of the influx of Syrian refugees, focusing on Lebanese, Syrian and Palestinian residents alike.

Olga Verlati: During my first year at the Kevorkian Center, I had the chance to deepen my understanding of the pre- and modern Middle East through the lens of material history and the study of media flow and reproduction. In particular, I focused on the development and circulation of printed media in turn of the century-Egypt, a topic that I will expand for my thesis during the summer through archival research on Egyptian newspapers and advertising. I will also attend a MSA course at the International Language Institute in Cairo. This year, I presented a paper at the ME-SAAS Graduate Student Conference at Columbia University, and combined my studies with working experiences at the Richard Ettinghausen Library and as Research Assistant in the department.

Zavier Wingham: As a Fulbright Student Researcher, I've been in Turkey for the past year, researching AfroTurks - the descendants of African slaves from the Ottoman Empire. During my time here, I've had a

chance to engage with people across professions - from professors to journalists to artists - which really challenged my own career goals. Most recently, I've been covering Dana Bayrami, a special Bayram, or festival, celebrated by AfroTurks. In terms of this summer, I'll be heading to Iran for two weeks in July to pursue Persian language study.

Gabriel Young: A very stimulating first year at the Kevorkian Center deepened my interest in development politics, political economy, and modern Egyptian history - all fields which will feature in my thesis on labor at the Aswan High Dam. I will spend this summer studying Arabic in Jordan on a Critical Language Scholarship, traveling in the region, and preparing applications to doctoral programs in History and Middle Eastern Studies. I would like to thank our graduate students, faculty, and staff for providing such a welcoming community of friends and scholars, and for making my time in New York thus far so enjoyable!

Sabahat Zakariya: My year at Kevo taught me much more than I had bargained for, both inside and outside the class. Problems and Methods and Tahira Naqvi's Advanced Urdu class helped me focus on comparative literature work I intend to do in the future. In the summer I will be working on my thesis on the response of Pakistani urban and social infrastructures to a rising class of single and divorced women in Pakistan.



The MA class of 2017 begins at NYU

PhD Student News

Robert Bell: This academic year marked my first in the Joint History and Middle Eastern Studies PhD program, which has proved to be an enlightening and stimulating experience. While in courses I worked to develop and expand the scope and horizons of my potential dissertation topic, a potential chapter of which I have been working on since February of 2016. For the summer of 2016 I look forward to informally working on this chapter as well preparing for my 2017 comprehensive exams. I have also been awarded with a fellowship by the American Institute of Iranian Studies to study Persian intensively in Iran and am currently awaiting a visa to travel to the country in July and August. While in Iran I also hope to begin archival research.

Samuel Dolbee: I spent part of the fall at NYU London, where I both worked on my dissertation and periodically haunted the National Archives at Kew. In the spring I presented a paper on locusts and borders at the American Society for Environmental History conference, which occurred during four gloriously rain-free days in Seattle. Over the summer I'm teaching a course on modern Iraqi and Syrian history at NYU. And next year, with support of the Mellon/ACLS Dissertation Completion Fellowship, I'll be completing my dissertation (in sha Allah).

Alya El Hosseiny: This year I've defended my dissertation prospectus and advanced to candidacy. I presented a paper at the MLA in Austin this past January, and my review of Mervat Hatem's monograph, *Literature, Gender and Nation-Building*, was published by the *Arab Studies Journal* in its spring 2016 issue. Finally, I was awarded the Humanities Research Fellowship at NYU Abu Dhabi for the academic year 2016-2017.

Isaac Hand: In the fall I presented my research on Turkish Panorama paintings and Ottoman nostalgia at the Middle Eastern Studies Association Conference in Denver and the University of Illinois at Chicago's Discipline and Doctrine Conference. This year I have continued research into eugenicist city officials in early Republican Turkey. This summer I will be studying Turkish and visiting archives in Istanbul.

Ilker Hepkaner: The academic year of 2015-2016 has been an incredible year for me. I finished my coursework and second comprehensive exams in the fall semester. Meanwhile, I was research assistant to Professor Ella Shohat, and I have learned a lot from her work. At MESA in Denver, I presented a paper on a panel about museums in the Middle East with colleagues from NYU. During the spring semester, I held a Global Research Initiative Fellowship and I was away for my archival research and fieldwork on Turkish Jews in Palestine/Israel and Turkey.

Shimrit Lee: This academic year, I passed my final comprehensive exam in fulfillment of my PhD requirements. I presented papers at the annual meetings of the International Studies Association and the Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association. I received the GSAS Predoctoral Summer Fellowship to conduct preliminary fieldwork in June, as well as the Kathryn Davis Fellowship to study Hebrew at Middlebury College. In August, I will present my research at a Science and Technology Studies conference (4S/EASST) in Barcelona, and in the fall I will participate in a panel I organized on "Israel's Arms Industry" for the Middle East Studies Association (MESA) annual conference.

Amir Moosavi: During the 2015-16 academic year, I was a recipient of the Carola Collier

Berthelot Trust Fellowship through the MEIS Department, which helped me successfully defend my dissertation. During part of the fall 2015 term I was a graduate research fellow at NYU-Shanghai. In the spring 2016 term, I taught intermediate and advanced Persian and was invited to give lectures on my research at Harvard and Swarthmore. Beginning in August 2016, I will have a postdoc with the Volkswagen and Mellon Foundations and be affiliated with the Europe in the Middle East--Middle East in Europe (EUME) program in Berlin for a year.

Jennifer Varela: During the academic year of 2015/2016, I taught undergraduate students for the first time in my role as teaching assistant for Arang Keshavarzian's course, *Politics of the Middle East*. The experience was immensely valuable and enjoyable, especially when I was invited to lecture the students on material related to my research interests. I also presented at the annual MESA conference in Denver on a panel consisting of fellow MEIS PhD students and faculty. Concerning my dissertation, I began work on both my preliminary research and my prospectus. Several drafts later, I will be defending in the upcoming fall term.

Alex Winder: In early 2016, the Institute for Palestine Studies published (in Arabic) *Between Jaffa and Mount Hebron: The Diaries of Muhammad 'Abd al-Hadi al-Shrouf, 1943-1962*, which I edited and introduced. I recently returned from a trip to Palestine, to launch the book, and Cyprus, where I presented at the International Auto/biography Association Conference. I have also been awarded the Carola Collier Berthelot Dissertation Writing Fellowship for the 2016-17 academic year.

Faculty News

Begum Adalet: This year, which was my first at the Kevorkian Center, I taught two courses, "Technologies of Development in the Middle East," and "US and the Middle East." I also offered the Thesis Writing Workshop for our MA students. In each experience, I very much enjoyed the opportunity to interact with engaged, rigorous, and creative students. In the fall, my article, "Questions of Modernization: Coding Speech, Regulating Attitude in Survey Research" was published in *Comparative Studies in Society and History*. I spent most of the year revising my book manuscript, which was discussed at the Junior Scholars Book Development Workshop organized by the Project on Middle East Political at Princeton University in November. I also began writing a new article about land reform in postwar Turkey and presented this project at the Annual Meeting of the International Studies Association in March. I look forward to another productive, stimulating year at the Kevorkian.

Sibel Erol: I've offered six Turkish courses this year, four of which were at the advanced textual level. In the fall, we read *Sabahattin Ali's Kürk Mantolu Madonna* (The Madonna in a Fur Coat), the perennial run-away bestseller originally published in 1943 together with Peyami Safa's 1931 novel *Fatih-Harbiye*. We devoted the spring semester to the exploration

of a greater variety of selections from modern classics such as Sinekli Bakkal, Huzur, Anayurt Oteli, Berci Kristin as well as to historical and critical essay selections. At the advanced level, we watched and discussed the ten episodes of the soap opera *Çilek Kokusu* (Smell of Strawberries) in addition to our regular work. All Turkish classes at all levels benefited from the caring and enthusiastic work of our Fulbright assistant Merve Zalgi who could provide images and sound for any reference we ran into. She tutored students individually and provided them with opportunities for conversation, for individual reading and help with research. I'm thankful for the wonderful work she's done. I've enjoyed my work as the Director of Undergraduate Studies this year, including attending graduation ceremonies in May. I thank Subrina Moorley for the dedicated and nurturing way she helps our undergraduates at the office. In terms of professional service, I was on the Book Prize Committee for the Association of Ottoman and Turkish Studies as well as on this year's MESA Program Committee, preparing the program for next year's meeting in November in Boston. I continue to serve on the board of the Institute of Turkish Studies. My essay on Sevgi Soysal's "Hanife" came out in the fall in a collection of essays on her works entitled *Isyan-Kar Neşe* (Rebellious Joy).

Daniel Fleming: My work straddles questions about ancient Israel in its regional context and ancient Syria and Mesopotamia, working in both cases especially from written sources. On each side, I have been engaged in long-term research with one colleague. Sophie Demare-Lafont, a specialist in Near Eastern law at the University of Paris 2 and the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, and I pursue an alternative political and social perspective on what is usually considered a world of centralized authority, through the vehicle of a single small city and its archives. Our first major publication from this work appeared this year: "Emar Chronology and Scribal Streams: Cosmopolitanism and Legal Diversity," *Revue d'Assyriologie* 109 (2015) 45-77. On the Israel side, Lauren Monroe of Cornell University and I are in the last stages of completing a major article to be titled, "Greater Israel and Little Israel: Reading Biblical Literature with Historical Interest."

Finbarr Barry Flood: During the academic year 2015-16 I was a fellow of the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin, working on a book provisionally entitled *Islam and Image: Polemics, Theology and Modernity*. When I arrived in Berlin in August, I co-taught with Jas Elsner of Oxford University in the summer school *Globalized Classics* at the Humboldt University. During the year, I taught a seminar

on Islamic Art and Architecture at Jnanapravaha, Mumbai and a one-week seminar in the series *From the Miraculous to the Mundane*, at Ashkal Alwan in Beirut. While a fellow at the Wissenschaftskolleg, I co-organized a workshop on *Artifacts and Islamic Law*, with Leor Halevi of Vanderbilt University. In October, I organized a panel and delivered a paper on "Globalism Before Europe?: Object Histories and Medieval Ethiopian-Indian Contacts," in the conference *Africa-Asia: A New Axis of Knowledge*, at the University of Accra, Ghana, a topic on which I also spoke at the Universities of Cambridge and Oxford. In October, I spoke in a conference on *Buddhist and Muslim Encounters in Premodern South Asia* at the University of Lausanne and in November delivered a paper on marble mosques and modernism at the University of Basel. In December, I delivered a keynote talk, "Seeing Time: Alteration, Cumulation and the Palimpsest Artwork," to the conference *Spolia Reincarnated: Second Life of Spaces, Materials, Objects in Anatolia from Antiquity to the Ottomans*, at Koç University in Istanbul. In May, I presented "Islam and Image: Paradoxical Histories," as the annual lecture of the Institute for Advanced Study, Central European University, Budapest. During the course of the year, I also gave public lectures on this and other topics at NYU Abu Dhabi and various

venues in Germany and Switzerland. In May I spoke on “European Moments in the Making of Islam’s ‘Image Problem’”, at the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin. The year also saw the publication of several articles, and reviews, among them “Staging Traces of Histories Not Easily Disavowed,” in Eva Respini, ed., *Walid Raad, the catalog of an exhibition held at The Museum of Modern Art* in fall 2015. Other publications included an essay on the historiography of Islamic ornament in Gülru Necipoğlu & Alina Payne, eds., *Histories of Ornament: From Global to Local*, an opinion piece on the transmission of medieval architectural knowledge in *Ars Orientalis*, and an essay on early Islamic wall-paintings as talismans in *Representations*. During the year, two books for which I had written forewords appeared, Azra Akšamija’s, *Mosque Manifesto: Propositions for Spaces of Coexistence*, and Kathleen James-Chakraborty’s edited volume, *India in Art in Ireland*.

Michael Gilsean: Administratively last year was dominated for me by our Law and Society search which led to the appointment of Dr. AlAtas who will join MEIS in the Fall. He will be a terrific new colleague. Chairing the committee was a pleasure thanks to my colleagues Sally Engle Merry of Anthropology and Zachary Lockman of MEIS. The seventh annual workshop on Islamic Law in Society was held in May with Kevorkian and MEIS support, and this time with additional sponsorship from Georgetown (through Prof. Jonathan Brown) and Columbia (through

Prof. Brinkley Messck). Interest in the field is growing remarkably and our participants come from many disciplines (and countries).

Jeff Goodwin: The 2015–16 academic year was my twenty-fifth at NYU. In the fall, I taught a course on terrorism (which included material on U.S. state-terrorism, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and Al Qaeda) as well as a freshman seminar on the thought of Karl Marx. In the spring, I taught an undergraduate course on politics and power and a graduate seminar on political sociology. I also published the third edition of *The Social Movements Reader: Cases and Concepts* (Wiley-Blackwell), coedited with James Jasper, which includes some new readings on the Arab uprisings. I will be on leave next year, completing a wide-ranging book on political violence and terrorism, which will include material on Israeli state-terrorism, Palestinian resistance-terrorism, and U.S. state-terrorism, including drone warfare.

Bruce Grant: This past academic year I was pleased to be able to work with a new round of excellent Kevorkian students, both in my graduate seminar on political anthropology, as well as in regular visits to the center. I greatly enjoyed the chance to meet new faces through an invitation to participate in the “Notes from the Field” seminar. In research, I continued work on the role of satire in authoritarian settings as seen through the life and work of Celil Memmedquluzade, editor of the Azeri-language, Tbilisi-based, multi-regional journal, *Molla Nesreddin*, which

was published from 1906-1931. I have also remained part of a Germany-based, international team of scholars writing on sacred shrines in the Caucasus region. I was grateful to receive a fellowship from the American Council of Learned Societies toward the Molla Nesreddin work and will be on leave for the 2016-2017 year.

Hala Youssef Halim: With two of my graduate students in MEIS defending their doctoral dissertations, fall semester 2015 got off to an auspicious start. One of the projects I worked on during my sabbatical in spring 2016 was serving as guest editor of a special issue of *Alif: Journal of Comparative Poetics*, on literature and journalism. I also gave an invited lecture, titled “Internationalist and Surrealist Inflections in Edwar al-Kharraṭ’s Resistant Literary Modernity,” at Cornell University’s Institute for Comparative Modernities.

Amani Hassan: Last year I taught my usual three Arabic courses in the Spring and another three in the Fall. It was in the fall that I taught a new and interesting course that had not been offered at NYU for more than 15 years. It was an introduction to Egyptian dialect (Cairene Arabic). I was thrilled to teach my dialect at NYU. The class focused entirely on conversational skills. I tried to build on my students’ prior knowledge of Standard Arabic to make the transition from MSA to speaking the Egyptian dialect. Lessons revolved around daily circumstances and real-life situations such as shopping, going to the doctor’s office, being

at the airport, ordering food in a restaurant, renting an apartment and asking for directions. I used materials from Youtube videos, pop music and songs, cooking recipes, commercials, blogs, soap operas (mussalsalat) and proverbs. The result was amazing. Students were speaking the dialect in the first week of classes. Students who had no exposure to a dialect before were communicating in Egyptian, recording their own conversations and sending them as sound files for me to evaluate and give feedback. Heritage students learned a lot about their own dialect and told me that they understood their parents’ converstaions much better at home during and after this class. They understood better the relation between written and spoken Arabic, between language and culture and most importantly, they spoke Arabic with confidence! Having dialect classes offered at NYU is a great opportunity that graduate and undergraduate students should make use of before graduating. The plan is to continue offering a dialect class every semester. The Arabic program will alternate between Levantine and Egyptian classes which are two of the major dialects.

Nasser Isleem: This was a very busy year for me. Along with teaching courses on MSA, Shami and Emirati dialects to students, I taught Arabic 101 to faculty and Emirati dialect and culture to members of Tamkeen in Abu Dhabi. I also taught Emirati dialect and culture in Al-Ain city. This summer I am teaching Arabic 101 and 102. In 2015–2016 I served as Arabic writing Jurist

for The first annual New Fairytales & Fables from the UAE Writing Competition. I also translated ‘The man who committed suicide’, a short story written by Morton Marcus for professor Jim Savio in NYUAD writing center for his workshops and film projects. The translation will also find a home in the literary archive of Morton Marcus’ work that is being curated by Mark Ong. Foto-Evidence publishing company published 13 pics (out of 63 images) from my book ‘Popular Proverbs’ for the book *Occupied Pleasures* by Tanya Habjouqa. Some publications of 2015–2016 include *Kalima wa naghām*, Textbook for beginner learners of Arabic with DVD, answer key, volume 1 and 2, *Emirati Ramsah with DVD, Textbook for Emirati dialect and culture* (Kuttāb Publishing House) 2015, *Colloquial Palestinian/Jordanian Arabic with DVD*, (Amazon) 2015. Currently I am working on two projects that involve teaching Arabic through integration of Emirati Films and Popular Emirati proverbs, more information about publications, see also www.arabiyyaat.com.

Deborah Kapchan: I gave the keynote lecture at the International Society for Ethnology and Folklore in Zagreb, Croatia. It was entitled “Slow Ethnography, Slow Activism: Lingering in Paradox & Listening in the Longue Durée” (Utopias, Realities, Heritages: Ethnographies for the 21st century). A short version of this talk was published in the *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* in January 2106. I edited two recent volumes: *Intangible Rights: Cultural Heritage in Tran-*

sit (2014 University of Pennsylvania Press) and *Theorizing Sound Writing* (in press, Wesleyan UP). I am also translating and editing a volume entitled *Poetic Justice: An Anthology of Moroccan Contemporary Poetry*. With the help of the Kevorkian Center and Greta Scharnweber, two poets in this volume—Driss Mesnaoui and Id-riss Aissa—visited NYU during the PEN Writer’s Festival in May.

Philip Kennedy: I had a busy year hosting just under 70 events at the NYUAD Institute. I took part in several colloquia through the year, including meetings on Nabati Poetry, the Charisma of the Book, Publishing in the Arab world and the Library of Arabic Literature. This last event took me back to the American Oriental Society after many years. I had an article on Abbasid historiography and fiction accepted by the *Journal of Abbasid Studies* and delivered a finished book MS to Edinburgh University Press entitled *Recognition in the Arabic Narrative Tradition*—it is due out within weeks. I enjoyed teaching an eclectic new course in the fall using books from LAL. It was enjoyable—I will certainly elect to teach it again soon!

Arang Keshavarzian: During the 2015–2016 academic year three PhD students with whom I have been working with, Amy Kapit, Azam Khatam, and Narges Bajoghli, completed their doctorates. Not only did they all write highly original dissertations, but I had the opportunity to work with two of them on publishing collaborative projects. Azam and I coauthored an essay on decentralization and the

governance of Tehran, and I co-authored an essay with Narges that examined Iran’s policy during and the Arab Uprisings that will be published this summer. An essay of mine on the urban process and restructuring of port cities in the Persian Gulf will be published this year in an edited volume on Gulf cities and allowed me to advance my ongoing research on the Gulf region in the twentieth century. Finally, I re-joined the editorial committee of *Middle East Report* (MERIP), with whom I worked in the 2000s. I dived into the deep end by writing an essay on the political economy of the “Iran Deal” for a special issue on social classes and struggles in Iran. This essay was based on a roundtable talk I gave at the Kevorkian Center in the Fall as part of the Iranian Studies Initiative. ISI continued its activities, including a workshop for graduate student development that was organized in collaboration with colleagues at Princeton University and the University of Pennsylvania. For the spring semester I developed a new graduate course. This seminar was titled “The Political Economy of the Middle East,” which covered issues such as capitalist integration, the role of the state in the process of industrialization, and the formation of class solidarities and subjectivities. I hope to continue teaching this seminar in coming years and to develop an undergraduate version as well.

Aisha Khan: This was a great year. My volume, *Islam and the Americas*, was published (with a lovely book launch sponsored by the Kevorkian Center and the

Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies). I had the opportunity for a first-time visit to NYU/Abu Dhabi, to participate in the conference, “Islam in Global Perspective.” While there, we were treated to a wonderful few days of learning about this region—especially fascinating for someone, like me, whose research focuses on the “New World.” I published an essay about the mourning rituals of Muharram, called “Hosay” in the Caribbean, and a review of the anthology, *Crescent Over Another Horizon: Islam in Latin America, the Caribbean, and Latino USA*. I also continued working on my current monograph project, *Sacred Sacrilege: Religion and the View from Caribbean Obeah and Hosay*, doing some additional research along the way. I’m also delighted that I was able to assist three of my graduate students in the publication of their entries on Islam in the Encyclopaedia of Latin American Religions (in press). Finally, I was fortunate to receive a residential fellowship at Harvard University’s Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, where I will be spending the next academic year.

Mikiya Koyagi: The 2015–2016 academic year was my first year at NYU. I taught three new courses, including a graduate seminar on modern Iranian history and historiography. I also taught an undergraduate course entitled “Transnational Asia” in the Core Curriculum. This course examined the history of the idea of Asia in various parts of “Asia” from Japan and China to Turkey and Iran, with a focus on the nineteenth and twentieth centu-

ries. I really enjoyed teaching a course that took so much time to organize from scratch. I hope to tailor this course for different levels in the coming years. I should also mention that I was fortunate to have two excellent recitation instructors for the course. Both Jennifer Pineo-Dunn and Maryam Rutner did a wonderful job leading weekly recitation sections. In terms of research, in Fall 2015, my article on railway travelers in early Pahlavi Iran came out from *The International Journal of Middle East Studies*. I also had opportunities to share part of my research at various conferences. In addition, I had time to start working on a paper about the biography of the first Japanese hajji who traveled around the world from South America to Palestine during the interwar period. Finally, since March 2016, I have had the honor of serving as the Iranian Studies book review editor for *The International Journal of Middle East Studies*. In addition to teaching and working with graduate students, I devoted a fair amount of time this academic year, as in past years, to my work as a member of the Middle East Studies Association's Committee on Academic Freedom (CAF). We all know what a grim period this is for the Middle East, with catastrophic levels of human suffering, massive violations of human rights and escalating assaults on academic freedom. My CAF colleagues have done a truly heroic job of monitoring and protesting infringements of academic freedom across the region. The component of CAF that focuses on North America has tried to do its part as well, by combating threats to, and vi-

olations of, academic freedom. These include growing (and obviously coordinated) efforts to have state (and in Canada, provincial) governments suppress free and open discussion of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the advocacy of certain political perspectives. Perhaps most egregiously, in June 2016 Governor Andrew Cuomo of New York issued an executive order creating a blacklist of institutions and companies allegedly advocating for boycott, divestment or sanctions aimed at Israel, and barring departments and agencies of the state government from doing business with them. Whatever one thinks of the BDS campaign, this is crude McCarthyism and must be vigorously opposed as a grave threat to constitutionally protected free speech rights and to the principles of academic freedom.

Nancy Kricorian: As writer-in-residence at the Kevorkian Center in the fall of 2015, I taught a 5-week writing workshop entitled "Life Stories: Transforming Family and Oral Histories into Narrative Non-Fiction and Fiction." I helped organize and participated in a panel discussion entitled "Art and Memory: Looking Back and Moving Forward on the Centennial of the Armenian Genocide." My prose poem "Letter to Palestine (With Armenian Proverbs)" appeared in the anthology *EXTRAORDINARY REN-DITION: (American) Writers on Palestine*, which was published by O/R books in December 2015. The Center for Fiction in Manhattan hosted a book launch event at which I read alongside a roster of distinguished poets and

novelists. I continued as a Fellow in the Women Mobilizing Memory workshop at Columbia's University Center for the Study of Social Difference. I very much enjoyed being part of Kevo's community of passionate and engaged faculty and students.

Brooke Kroeger: I've contracted with Excelsior, the trade division of SUNY Press, for publication of my fifth book, *The Suffragents: How Women Used Men to Get the Vote*, for publication in 2017, and the GloJo program, which I direct, is flourishing. Some highlights among our GloJo-Near Eastern Studies students and alumni: Thalia Beaty (2015) has a Fulbright Fellowship for Young Professionals, based in Germany; Layla Quran (2017) has the AP summer internship in Amman; Yasmine Al-Sayyad (2015) is a full-time staffer at the New Yorker; Jared Malsin (2013) became Middle East bureau chief for Time, based in Cairo, and Eline Gordts (2011) has moved from World Editor of the Huffington Post to become community editor for News Deeply.

Zachary Lockman: During the 2015–2016 academic year I completed the manuscript of my latest book, *Field Notes: The Making of Middle East Studies in the United States*; it was published by Stanford University Press in spring 2016. Having a book published can feel a bit anticlimactic, because the concentration and hard work abruptly come to an end and there ensues a lull before one begins to receive feedback on it, whether directly from colleagues or in book reviews. I look forward to

finding out what people make of Field Notes, which has been my main research and writing project over the past few years.

Joanne Nucho: The 2015–2016 academic term was an exciting year. As always, I enjoyed watching another cohort of MA students complete their theses and move on to graduate. It was wonderful getting to know the new incoming MA students and discussing what will become their thesis research projects this summer and next academic year. I also taught two new courses—one course focusing on critical studies of infrastructure in the contemporary Middle East, and another on the politics of archives and collections. The second course drew on NYU's extensive archive resources at Tamiment and Fales as well as the experiences of our esteemed guest lecturer in class, Guy Burak, scholar and Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies librarian. The breadth of student projects and the creative ways in which they approached research questions in these two courses was incredibly inspiring. This year, I completed revisions for my upcoming book, *Everyday Sectarianism in Urban Lebanon: Infrastructures, Public Services and Power* that will be released in November 2016 with Princeton University Press. I also completed editing my first feature length non-fiction film, *The Narrow Streets of Bourj Hammoud*, about the working class Beirut suburb of Bourj Hammoud. The affiliated website, which was designed with the extensive help of research assistant Simone Rutkowitz, can be viewed

at mappingbourjhammoud.com. I had two exciting opportunities to present my research at the American Anthropological Association meetings this past fall and at the Infrastructures in/of the Middle East workshop we hosted at the Kevorkian Center last month. The workshop provided an exciting space to think about future directions in research about critical infrastructures like sanitation, electricity, road networks and even technical apparatuses like turnstiles in the context of broader social, political and economic processes in the region and throughout the world. As this is my last term serving as Director of Graduate Studies, I would like to thank everyone at the center and in the MEIS Department for being such wonderful colleagues. My warmest congratulations to the graduating MA students and my best wishes to all!

Leslie Peirce: In October I gave the Special Lecture at the formal opening of the Centre for Gender, Identity, and Subjectivity at Oxford University; the topic was "Writing biography with few sources and fewer models: The case of an Ottoman concubine." While at Oxford, I also acted as commenter at a workshop on Imperial Identities: Intersections and Transformations sponsored by the Centre as part of the opening events. In December I gave the Natalie Zemon Davis Annual Lectures at Central European University in Budapest. Entitled "Aspects of Captivity in the World of the Ottomans", the series' three lectures focused on Desirable Bodies, Captivity as Opportunity, and A Captive

Queen. Publications this year include "Becoming Ottoman in 16th-century Aintab", in *Living in the Ottoman Realm: Everyday Life and Identity* (Indiana University Press); "Suleyman in Aleppo", in *Turkish Language, Literature, and History: Travelers' Tales, Sultans, and Scholars since the Eighth Century* (Routledge); and nine articles in *Dictionnaire de l'Empire Ottoman*.

Nathalie Peutz: In the fall, I enjoyed a Goddard Junior Faculty Fellowship that allowed me precious time to write. I completed three book chapters and an article that I will submit to *IJMES* in the coming month. In the spring, I taught my "Anthropology and the Arab World" class, during which my students conducted interviews with a wide array of Abu Dhabi residents on behalf of the Louvre Project. For my "Extinction" core class, I had the privilege of conducting another regional seminar on endangered species and language and music endangerment in Uganda. This academic year, I presented my ongoing research on Yemen's Soqatra Archipelago locally, at the Paris-Sorbonne Abu Dhabi in the Fall and as part of a "Global Gulf" workshop at NYUAD in the Spring. In November, Soqatra was hit by two severe cyclones, which destroyed many homes in the community where I had lived. In February, I appreciated being able to attend an emergency response workshop and fundraiser for Soqatra hosted by the Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage in Bahrain. This summer, I will spend most of the time in Abu Dhabi preparing for my new research project: "Yemen's Hu-

manitarian Crisis and the Mixed Migration Flows of Refugees, Migrants and Returnees Crossing the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden." With support from an NYUAD Research Enhancement Fund grant, I will be traveling several times to Somalia, Djibouti, Ethiopia and Sudan in the coming year to conduct exploratory work for a longitudinal, multi-sited ethnographic study of Yemen's current conflict through the perspectives of those uprooted by it.

Everett Rowson: I was particularly happy this year to be invited, for the third time, to give a plenary lecture at the annual meeting of the American Oriental Society, in March in Boston. My previous talks were about "Love" and "Sex"; this one was, less complicatedly, about "Travel," which gave me the opportunity to argue for the extraordinary mobility of elites in medieval Islamic societies, due to the centrifugal duty to make pilgrimage to Mecca and the centripetal one to spread knowledge of Islam "as far as China", as well as less ideologically charged motivations such as making a buck with long-distance trade.

Jack Shaheen: Much of my time this year has been spent working on a screenplay for a proposed sequel to my Reel Bad Arabs documentary. If funding requests come through, filming may begin mid-October. In March, I lectured on perceptions of Arabs and Muslims at Georgia Southern University, focusing especially on Hollywood Cinema and Islamophobia. And in April, my good friend and colleague

at the University of Michigan, Professor Evelyn Al-Sultany, conducted a one-on-one interview with me, highlighting my 40 years of research documenting and contesting damaging stereotypes. Later this year, I will attend the annual American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee's conference and award five Shaheen scholarships to outstanding media scholars; I will also lecture at NYU and at the University of South Carolina.

Ella Shohat: In the academic year 2015–2016, two of my works were republished in translation as *Le Vittime Ebreie del Sionismo* (Italian, originally published "Sephardim in Israel: Zionism from the Standpoint of its Jewish Victims," 1988) and *Race in Translation: Kulturkämpfe rings um den postkolonialen Atlantik* (German, originally published *Race in Translation: Culture Wars around the Postcolonial Atlantic*, 2012, co-authored with Robert Stam). I contributed chapters to edited volumes, publishing "The Question of Judeo-Arabic(s): Itineraries of Belonging" in *Languages of Modern Jewish Cultures: Comparative Perspectives*; "Critical Ethnic Studies, Identity Politics and the Right/Left Convergence" in *Critical Ethnic Studies*; "The Red Atlantic Dialogue: Response 1" (with Robert Stam) in *Red Pedagogy: Native American Social and Political Thought*; as well as essays in journals: "Genealogies of Orientalism and Occidentalism: Sephardi Jews, Muslims, and the Americas" in *Studies in American Jewish Literature: a Journal of Literary Criticism and Theory*; and "The Question of Judeo-Ar-

abic” in the *Arab Studies Journal*. Some of my essays have also been republished, including in translation, such as “Dislocated Identities: Reflections of an Arab-Jew” (1992), which appeared in the multilingual volume *Cousins: Jewish-Arab Identities in Postcolonial Cultural Discourse* (German, Cousinen: Jüdisch-Arabische Identitäten im Postkolonialen Kulturellem Diskurs) in German and in Arabic. The same essay was included in *To Live in Two Worlds: the Pains of Displacement* and in *Live Encounters Magazine*. “The Invention of the Mizrahim” (1999) was republished in *A Companion to the Anthropology of the Middle East*, alongside “The Mizrahi Cinema of Displacement” (originally published as a subsection of the postscript to *Israeli Cinema*, 2010). Likewise, “A Voyage to Toledo: 25 Years After the ‘Jews of the Orient and Palestinians’ Meeting” (2014) was translated as “Eine Reise nach Toledo: 25 Jahre nach der Konferenz, ‘Orientalische Juden und Palästinenser’” in *Inamo* magazine. Among my speaking engagements, I participated in a discussion about the documentary film *Forget Baghdad* at the Arab Film Festival in Berlin and served as a panel discussant on the subject of “Arab Jews in Postcolonial Cultural Discourse – Who is Representing Whom?” at the same event; I presented “Islamophobia” at the NYU Art & Public Policy Colloquium seminar; I gave the keynote lecture “The Question of Judeo-Arabic—Between Jewish Studies and Arab Studies” at the Bruno Kreisky Forum’s “Arab-Jewish Engagements” conference, as

well as the Forum’s Karl Kahane Public Lecture “Orientalist Genealogies: The Split Arab/Jew Figure Revisited;” I discussed “Orientalist Genealogies: The Split Arab/Jew Figure Revisited” in conjunction with the Jumana Manna Exhibition and Speaker Series at the Chisenhale Gallery, Mosaic Rooms; I lectured on “Iraq, Trauma, and Artistic Practices” at the Department of Art & Public Policy Faculty Presentations Series; I presented recently published research in my lecture “The Question of Judeo-Arabic” at the Kevorkian Center, NYU; I gave the opening lecture “Lost Homeland, Imaginary Returns: Between Hebrew and Arabic” at the “Between Baghdad and Haifa: A Tribute to Sami Michael” conference, Northwestern University; I presented “Orientalist Genealogies: The Split Arab/Jew Figure Revisited” as part of the Council on Middle East Studies Colloquium Series, Yale University; I delivered the opening panel presentation “The Janus-Faced Blackamoor: Figuring Africa and the Orient” at “Black Portraiture[s] II: Imaging the Black Body and Re-Staging Histories” conference, NYU; I gave the keynote lecture “Disorienting Cleopatra: A Modern Trope of Mediterranean Identity” at the “Lines Between: Culture and Empire in the Eastern Mediterranean” conference co-sponsored by The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey and the European University; I lectured on “Genealogies of Fear: Jews, Muslims, and the West” as part of the Lecture Series “La Peur: Raisons et Déraisons” at the Musée Des Civilisations De l’Europe Et De La Méditerranée; I

gave “The Making of an Archive” as a presentation and conversation with documentary filmmaker Avi Mograbi at the Series “The Trouble with Avi...” Musée Jeu de Paume; I participated in the Modern Languages Association Conference’s inaugural, pre-organized panel, *Diasporic Communities, Transnational Publics, and the Global Arab*, speaking on “The Place of the Arab Jew in Postcolonial and Diasporic Arab Studies” for the Comparative Literature and Cultural Studies Global Arab and Arab American Forum; and I delivered the opening panel presentation, “Orientalist Genealogies: The Split Arab/Jew Figure Revisited,” at the “Islam in Global Perspective” conference, NYU Abu Dhabi.

Mark Smith: I have served for sixteen years as Skirball Professor of Bible and Ancient Near Eastern Studies in the Department of Hebrew and Judaic Studies, but am now leaving NYU to become Helena Professor of Old Testament Literature and Exegesis at Princeton Theological Seminary. My sixteenth book, *Where the Gods Are: Spatial Dimensions of Anthropomorphism in the Biblical World*, has just appeared from Yale University Press.

Helga Tawil Souri: This has felt like a busier than usual academic year, and was also my first full year as Kevorkian director. I taught two undergraduate courses in the Fall in the department of Media, Culture, and Communication: *Mediating Israel-Palestine and The Cultural Geography of Commodities* which focused on coffee. I published five chap-

ters in separate edited volumes (one on cellular telephony in Israel/Palestine, one on territorial exceptions, and three generally dealing with the relationship between territorial and virtual borders) as well as gave a number of talks. An extremely rewarding experience was the release of my co-edited volume, *Gaza As Metaphor*, published by Hurst in Spring 2016, which was a joy to work on with twenty-one other contributors. I am hoping to check off a few things from my “writing to-do list” this summer and also catching some much needed down-time before gearing up for the year ahead.

Peter Valenti: This year I published a chapter entitled “In the Shadows of Prison: Sayyid Qutb’s Visions of a Perfect World” in *Great Books Written in Prison* (McFarland, 2015). Also over the summer I presented a paper entitled “Writing Units in the Foundation Sequence” at the Liberal Studies Summer Symposium on Writing, at NYU-London. In November I gave a talk at the LS Politics Club entitled “George W. Bush’s Iraq War: The Gift that Keeps on Giving.” Over the course of AY2015–16 I have performed a manuscript review for Cambridge University Press, and peer reviewed for *Middle East Journal*. I also served as a judge for the Policy Case Competition of the NYU Politics Society in April, and prior to that served as a member of the MA Admissions Committee for the Hagop Kevorkian Center for Near Eastern Studies. Furthermore, this year I have served on three thesis committees: an MA thesis in Center for European and Mediterranean

Studies for Amanda Islambouli, “The World Bank and Morocco’s Implementation of Educational Reforms: Curing Inequality through Collaboration”; a BA thesis in PRD (Politics, Rights, Development), *Global Liberal Studies*, for Satchie Snellings, “The Convergence of Homosexuality and National Identity in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: Exploring the Impact on Homosexual Populations in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories”; and a BA thesis in PRD, GLS, for Francesca Gelet, “From Community to Society: Female Citizens and the Islamic State.” I am currently finishing a chapter for a book project, *Cultures of War in Graphic Novels*. The chapter is tentatively entitled “Children of the Occupation, Generational Legacies, and a Culture of Resistance in Joe Sacco’s Palestine.”

Sarah Leah Whitson: This Spring, in my capacity of “Human Rights Activist in Residence”, I had the opportunity to teach a course designed to explore the year of the Morsy administration through the testimonies of politicians, activists, and journalists involved in politics at the time in Egypt. The course was designed to give students a chance to research particular incidents during the year of the Morsy administration by interviewing first-hand witnesses and participants who had ground-floor experiences to relate. We were fortunate to have the Kevorkian Center’s incredible support to bring several of the speakers to New York to appear in person, and the active engagement of a wide variety of Egyptians with contesting views about “what happened.”

For many of the participants, this was a first look-back and debate, and thus emotionally taxing as well; for many of the students, this was a first exposure to the intersection of journalistic study, oral history, and academic research. I hope that the recorded videos will serve as a good source of information for scholars and historians for years to come. Alongside my teaching responsibilities, I continued to manage Human Rights Watch’s Middle East and North Africa Division, where our team’s time and attention is largely consumed by the ongoing military conflicts enflaming the region, particularly in Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Libya, and Egypt. In March, I traveled to Yemen to see first-hand the effects of Saudi Arabia’s devastating aerial bombardment of the country, and to interview victims, civil society leaders, and political representatives. Human Rights Watch launched its call for an arms embargo against Saudi Arabia based on the strength of the evidence we documented of dozens of indiscriminate strikes in Yemen, which have killed thousands of civilians.

Muserref Yetim: During the 2015–2016 academic year, my book, *Negotiating International Water Rights: Resource Conflict in Turkey, Syria, and Iraq*, was published by I.B. Tauris. Transboundary watercourses account for an estimated 60 percent of global freshwater flow and support the livelihoods of hundreds of millions of people worldwide. Yet the indeterminate status of water rights in many international watercourses presents a continuing problem and many

attempts to resolve water rights issues have failed. Knowing how and where negotiations fail is essential if successful resolution is to be achieved. My book seeks to illustrate a means to the peaceful resolution of natural resource-based conflicts. Through a detailed study of the Tigris-Euphrates water conflict, I explore the collective action dilemmas confronting Middle Eastern watercourses and reveal the bargaining bottlenecks where negotiations fail. I develop an original framework that explains bargaining failures and proposes conditions for creating a new property rights regime among watercourse states that offers a route to governing their shared water resources in ways that are politically, economically and environmentally sound. *Negotiating International Water Rights* offers both a timely contribution to a matter of international concern and important insights into resource conflict in Turkey, Syria and Iraq, countries of vital security interest to the world at large. I also developed two new courses. The first focused on international development and the second focused on more in-depth exploration of inequality and conflict as the world currently faces severe social and environmental crises and growing inequality, which have become major concerns for developing and developed countries alike.

Angela Zito: I’ve been on leave in academic year 2015–2016 and spent the fall semester as a visiting fellow at NYU Shanghai. There I worked on a new project about *Forms of Filiality in China*, a book-length collection of essays

on the bodily capacities, ways of knowing and hierarchies of power past and present that have been encouraged through stories, images, architecture, and ritualization. I have been giving talks on aspects of the projects, including revival of medieval sacred stories of filial prowess, and new museums dedicated to the virtue. In the late fall, a grant that I wrote for the Center for Religion and Media with Kali Handelman, editor of the CRM’s online magazine *The Revealer* and our program coordinator, received funding from the Henry R. Luce Initiative on Religion in International Affairs. The project, “Religious Stakes in Digital Times: Scholars and Journalists in conversation,” will bring one post-doc yearly for three years to work closely on *The Revealer*, burnishing skills in public writing. This is a continuation of a previous grant on “Digital Religion” from Luce that brought journalists into our academic milieu. Much of the programming for that grant was done in close cooperation with Kevorkian, and tracked mediations of religion and political life in the Middle-East. Looking forward to more collaborations in the future.

2015–2016 Events Archive

RESEARCH

OFF THE RECORD

A series designed to introduce students and others to the variety of ways research is done, thus rendering the 'methods' aspects of research more transparent and concrete whilst engaging with faculty across NYU who work on issues related to the Middle East.

Notes from the Field: The Translator's Authority

Nader Uthman, MEIS, NYU

Notes from Behind the Lens: Another Way of Seeing

Helga Tawil-Souri, Media, Culture, and Communication and NES, NYU; Joanne Nucho, NES, NYU

Notes from the Field: On the Social Lives of States and the Mobile Archive

Bruce Grant, Anthropology, NYU

Notes from the Sufi Files: Mystical Universalism & Missionary Zeal:

Elisha Russ-Fishbane, Hebrew and Judaic Studies, NYU

SEMINARS

An interdisciplinary series of lectures and presentations pertaining to the field of Middle East Studies:

Inside Assad's Syria (Frontline 2015)

Martin Smith, Journalist

The Shadows of the Tunisian Miracle

Nadia Marzouki, Research Fellow, CRNS-

Paris, Benoit Challand, Sociology, The New School, Thalia Beaty, NES MA '15, Freelance Journalist

The Politics of the Square in the Arab Revolution

Asef Bayat, Sociology and Middle East Studies, University of Illinois
With the Urban Democracy Lab, Gallatin, NYU

The Question of Judeo-Arabi

Ella Shohat, Art and Public Policy and MEIS, NYU

In the Proximity of ISIS: Observations Galore

Ahmed Ferhadi, MEIS, NYU

Trauma without Victimhood? On Combat, Killing, and Responsibility

Nadia Abu El-Haj, Anthropology, Columbia University

The New Political Regime of Turkey

Koray Caliskan, Associate Professor of Politics at Bogazici University

Persian Lithographs of the 19th and Early 20th Centuries at NYU

Guy Burak, Dagmar Riedel, Iranian Studies, Columbia University
With the Grey Art Gallery

Jet Set Frontiers: Tourism, Hijackings, Petrodollars, and the Politics of

Waleed Hazbun, University in Beirut

Security Revolutions and Gender Justice in Contemporary Egypt and Brazil

Paul Amar, International Studies, University of California, Santa Barbara; Lisa Duggan, Social and Cultural Analysis, NYU
With the Urban Democracy Lab, the Gender and Sexuality Studies Program, the department of Social and Cultural Analysis, and the department of Media, Culture and Communication.

How to Respond to the Targeting of AMEMSA (Arab, Middle Eastern, Muslim, and South Asian) Communities

Lakshmi Sridaran, SAAALT
With the Asian/Pacific/American Institute

Displacement. Borders. Home: Echoes of the Middle Eastern, North African, and Mexican experience

Mark Gonzales; Bocafloja; Laura Torres-Rodriguez, Spanish and Portuguese, NYU
With the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies

RESEARCH WORKSHOPS

The program's academic cornerstone features new unpublished work by established and up-and-coming scholars of the region. Promotes cross-regional and interdisciplinary engagement of analytical issues in Middle Eastern Studies and beyond.

Subtitling Islam: Translation, Mediation, Critique

Yasmin Moll, Anthropology, University of Michigan; Marwan Kraidy, Communication, University of Pennsylvania

Building Politics: Urban Renewal and the Transformation of Personhood

Sarah El-Kazaz, Politics, Oberlin College; Arjun Appadurai, Media, Culture, and Communication, NYU

The Archive Question: Commemoration, Destruction, and the Politics of History in Saudi Arabia

Rosie Bsheer, History, Yale University; Marita Sturken, Media, Culture and Communication, NYU

NEW BOOKS

A series featuring new, groundbreaking publications with relevance to the field of Middle East Studies.

Starve and Immolate: The Politics of Human Weapons (Columbia University Press, 2014)

Banu Bargu, Politics, The New School

The Other Saudis: Shiism, Dissent and Sectarianism (Cambridge University Press, 2015)

Toby Matthiesen, Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies, University of Cambridge

Dying to Forget: Oil, Power, Palestine and the Foundations of US Policy in the Middle East (Columbia University Press, 2015)

Irene L. Gendzier, Political Science, Boston University
With the Middle Eastern and Middle Eastern American Center (MEMEAC)

The Fall of the Turkish Model: How the Arab Uprisings Brought Down Islamic Liberalism (Verso, 2016)

Cihan Tuğal, University of California, Berkeley

Workers and Thieves: Labor Movements and Popular Uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt (Stanford University Press, 2015)

Joel Beinin, History, Stanford University

Broken Mirrors: Sinalcol (Archipelago Books, 2016)

Elias Khoury, Novelist
With Archipelago Books

Men of Capital: Scarcity and Economy in Mandate Palestine (Stanford University Press, 2015)

Sherene Seikaly, University of California, Santa Barbara

Burning Country: Syrians in Revolution and War (University of Chicago Press, 2016)

Robin Yassin-Kasseb and Leila Al-Shami

SPECIAL EVENTS

America & Its Unfit: Eugenics Then & Now

Mindy Fullilove, Columbia University; Vasuki Nesiah, NYU; N Ordover, author, American Eugenics; Rebecca Amato, NYU; Noah Fuller, NYU; Anika Paris, Queens College; Dylan Yeats, NYU; Paul Tran, [Tell Me What Killed You]; Cara Page, artist and Audre Lorde Project; Loretta Ross, organizer and reproductive justice leader; Aimee Suzara, poet; Tomie Arai, artist; Caron Atlas, Arts and Democracy Project; Michael Oatman, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute; Ashley Rahimi Syed, artist; Judy Tate, American Slavery Project; Tommy Pico, poet; Catherine Bliss, University of California San Francisco; Simone Browne, University of Texas Austin; Catherine Lee, Rutgers University; Ayesha Omer, NYU; Cara Page, Audre Lorde Project; R Joshua Scannell, CUNY Graduate Center; Scott Bernstein, Center for Neighborhood Technology; Ryan Gilliam, Downtown Art & FABnyc; Kelli Harding, Columbia University; LaToya Strong, New York Collective of Radical Educators; Marta Moreno Vega, Caribbean Cultural Center African Diaspora Institute and NYU; Kim TallBear, University of Alberta; Jack Tchen, NYU

Co-sponsored by the NYU Department of History, NYU Department of Social & Cultural Analysis, Native Studies Forum, Tisch School of the Arts Art and Public Policy Department, NYU Kevorkian Center for Near Eastern Studies, and Urban Democracy Lab.

Celebrating 50 years of Middle Eastern Studies at NYU

With alumni presentations by Lara Harb, Near Eastern Studies, Princeton University; Kristin Sands, Islamic Studies, Sarah Lawrence College; Omar Cheta, Middle Eastern and Historical Studies, Bard College; Katherine Gallagher, Senior Staff Attorney, Center for Constitutional Rights; Adrienne Fricke, Consultant, Human Rights and Refugee Issues in the Middle East and North Africa; James Ketterer, Dean of International

Studies and Director of Globalization and International Affairs Program, Bard College

Art and Memory: Looking Back and Moving Forward on the Centennial of the Armenian Genocide

Nancy Kricorian, Writer in Residence, Hagop Kevorkian Center, and Novelist; Silvina Der Meguerditchian, Artist; Diana Markosian, Photographer; Hrag Vartanian, Founder, Hyperallergic
Exhibition and Panel Discussion

The Morsy Administration's One Year in Power: What Happened?

Sarah Leah Whitson, Human Rights Watch; Emad Shaheen, Georgetown University; Michael Hanna, The Century Foundation; Amr Hamzawy, Stanford University; Yehia Hamed, Former Minister of Investment; Abdelmawgoud Dardery, Former Member of Parliament, Freedom and Justice Party; Gamal Hishmat, Leading Member, Freedom and Justice Party; Osama Rushdi, former member of the National Council for Human Rights; Heba Morayef, Human Rights Defender; Wael Haddara, Former Advisor to Mohamed Morsi; Salah Abdulmaksoud, Former Egyptian Minister of Information; David Kirkpatrick, The New York Times; Wael Qanduil, Editor-in-chief of al-Araby al-Jadeed Arabic edition; Amr Darrag, Former Minister of Planning and International Cooperation, Member of the Muslim Brotherhood's Guidance Council, Secretary General of the 2013 Constituent Assembly; Khaled Dawoud, American University in Cairo, Al-Ahram Weekly, and former spokesperson of the Constitution Party and the National Salvation Front; Mohamed Almohandes, Member of the Supreme Council of the Egypt Strong Party; Saif Abdel Fattah, Former advisor to President Mohamed Morsi, and former Professor of political science, Cairo University

Infrastructures in/of the Middle East

Julia Elyachar, Center for Global Peace and Conflict Studies, University of California, Irvine; Nasser Abourahme, Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies, Columbia University; Jared McCormick, Social

Anthropology, Harvard University; Pascal Menoret, Anthropology, Brandeis University; Arang Keshavarzian, MEIS, NYU; Gokce Gunel, Anthropology, Columbia University; Leopold Lambert, The Funambulist; Laleh Khalili, Department of Politics and International Studies, SOAS, University of London; Brian Larkin, Anthropology, Barnard College; Zachary Lockman, MEIS, NYU; Toby Jones, History, Rutgers University; Joanne Nucho, Near Eastern Studies, NYU; Begum Adalet, Near Eastern Studies, NYU; Helga Tawil-Souri, Media, Culture, and Communication, NYU; Mandana Limbert, Anthropology, Queens College, CUNY

Approaches to Islamic Law in Society: 7th Annual Research Workshop

Michael Gilson, NYU, Chair; Ibrahim El Houdaiby, Columbia University; Matthew Keegan, NYU; Brinkley Messick, Columbia University; Abdul Rahman Mustafa, Georgetown; Rasoul Naghavi, Georgetown; Yasmina Raiani, University of California, Berkeley; Maliheh Zare, NYU; Jonathan Brown, Georgetown University; Guy Burak, NYU; Hussein Agrama, University of Chicago; Daragh Grant, University of Chicago; Ghislaine Lydon, UCLA; Fahad Bishara, College of William and Mary; Morgan Clarke, Oxford University; Samera Esmeir, University of California, Berkeley; Jessica Marglin, University of Southern California; Mark Massoud, University of California, Santa Cruz; Michael Peletz, Emory University; Nora Barakat, Qatar University

IRANIAN STUDIES

Scholarly presentations on Iran, curated by Professor Ali Mirsepassi with a steering committee drawn from MEIS and other faculty and students with support from the Gallatin School for Individualized Study and the Hagop Kevorkian Center.

Traveling Citizens in the Iranian Railway Space, 1900-1950

Mikiya Koyagi, MEIS, NYU

Recreating 1970s-1980s Iranian Cultural History

Naghmeh Sohrabi, Middle East History, Brandeis University; Manijeh Nasrabadi, Asian American Studies, UC Davis; Belle Cheves, History, Harvard University

Mediating Mercy: Stirring Faith in Forgiveness

Arzoo Osanloo, University of Washington

Dual Society and Culture Wars in Iran

Houchang Chehabi, Boston University

Iranian New Wave Songwriting

Shahyar Ghanbari, Artist and Poet

Reflections on the Iran Deal: The Nuclear Agreement in Political, Social, and Historic Contexts

Ervand Abrahamian, History, Baruch College, CUNY; Arang Keshavarzian, MEIS, NYU; Nahid Siamdoust, Hagop Kevorkian Center, NYU; Ali Mirsepassi, Gallatin, NYU

From Iranian Immigrant to American Murderer: The Trial of Brian Yasipour

Camron Amin, History, University of Michigan, Dearborn

Women's Worlds in Qajar Iran: Fabricating an Archive

Afsaneh Najmabadi, Harvard University; Azadeh Tajpour, Visual Artist; Maryam Momeni, University of Vienna

The Fabulous Life and Thoughts of Ahmad Fardid

Ali Mirsepassi, Gallatin, NYU; Richard Wolin, History and Political Science, CUNY Graduate Center; Andrew Arato, Sociology, New School; Asef Bayat, Sociology and Middle East Studies, University of Illinois *With the Urban Democracy Lab and the Gallatin School for Individualized Study*

OTTOMAN STUDIES

Professor of History Leslie Peirce curates this wide-ranging interdisciplinary series on the Ottoman Empire and its legacies.

Hypochondria in Seventeenth-Century Istanbul: Hayatizade's Quintet of Modern Diseases in Context

Harun Küçük, University of Pennsylvania

Slavery, Freedom, and Vernacularization of Rights in the Late Ottoman Empire

Ceyda Karamursel, University of Pennsylvania

Mapping the Ottomans: Space, Sovereignty, and the Circulation of Information in the Early Modern Mediterranean

Palmira Brummett, History, Brown University

Aman My Pasha! Time is Precious and Short: Ottoman Central Africa Strategy in Late 19th Century

Mostafa Minawi, History, Cornell University

Survivors into Minorities: Armenians in Post-genocide Turkey

Lerna Ekmekçioğlu, History, MIT

Staging, Posing, (Self-) Fashioning: Ottoman Subjects before the Camera

Ethem Eldem, Professor of History, Boğaziçi University

Cosmopolitans for Empire: Ottoman Jews and Political Economy from the Margins

Julia Phillips Cohen, Vanderbilt University

VISUAL CULTURE

A series of films, presentations, performances, and exhibitions centered on visual art and media from and about the modern Middle East.

The Wanted 18 by Paul Cowan and Amer Shomali (Palestine, 2015)

Emma Alpert, Public Engagement Coordinator, Just Vision
Just Vision

In the Labyrinths of Exhibition Histories

Kristine Khouri and Rasha Salti, Co-Curators

Arabic Movie by Eyal Sagui Bezawe & Sara Tsifroni (Israel, 2015)

With the MEIS Department and the Taub Center for Israel Studies

Bloody Beans by Narimane Mari (Algeria, 2014)

Narimane Mari, filmmaker; Sukhdev Sandhu, NYU
With Bidoun Magazine and The Infinite Child series for Flaherty NYC

Iraqi Odyssey: A Global Family Saga by Samir (Switzerland and Iraq, 2016)

Ella Shohat, Art and Policy, MEIS, NYU; Sinan Antoon, Gallatin School, NYU

Filming Revolution: A Meta-documentary about Documentary and Independent Filmmaking in Egypt Since the Revolution

Alisa Lebow (Film Studies) University of Sussex; Alia Ayman Doctoral Student of Anthropology, NYU
With the Center for Religion and Media and the Center for Media, Culture and History, NYU

Salam Neighbor: The Syrian Refugee Experience by Chris Temple and Zach

Ingrasci (2015)

With Global Liberal Studies: Politics, Rights, and Development & Global Cultures Committee, NYU

New York 48mm Film Festival: International Film Festival on Nakba and Return

With Zochrot.org

Ismail: a film by Nora Alsharif (2013) / On The Side of The Road: A film by Lia Tarachansky (2013) / The Wanted 18: A film by Amer Shomali and Paul Cowan (2014) / A World Not Ours: A film by Mahdi Fleifel (2012)

The 2nd International Yemeni Film and Arts Festival

With the Yemen Peace Project

An Exhibition of Contemporary Art, Photography and Film: Featured artists and speakers: Nada Abu Taleb / Bushra al-Fusail / Lyla Hasan / Salma Hasan / Arwa al-Hubaishi / Shehab Karman / Yasmin Alnadheri / Talal al-Nagar / Mazher Nizar / Alex Potter / Murad Subay / Morooj Alwazir / Fatima Abo Alasrar / Bushra Al-Fusail / Morooj Alwazir / Marjorie Ransom. Films: The Mulberry House by Sara Ishaq (2013) / Shake the Dust by Adam Sjöberg (2014) / Rise by Mohamed Samy (2015) / Bara'ah: a film by Amal Al-Yarisi (2015) / A Broken Home by Abdurahman Hussain (2015) / The Color of Injustice by Abdurahman Hussain (2015) / The Melody of Our Alienation by Abdurahman Hussain (2014) / Lost in Yemen by Sami Taresh (2015) / Hope Always Remains by Dares Qaid al-Masaabi (2015) / I Am Nojoom, Age 10 and Divorced by Khadija Al-Salami (2015)

Girls Only (2014)

Basma Alsharif, filmmaker; Suzy Halajian, curator

Rethinking Iranian Cinema: Aesthetics and Counternarratives

With the Ajam Media Collective, Cine-Eye, the Grey Art Gallery, and the Iranian Studies Initiative

- **Fat Shaker by Mohamed Shirvani (2013) / Slaughterhouse by Behzad Azadi (2015)**
After-film discussion with Kamran Rastegar, Tufts University
- **I Want to be a King! by Mehdi Ganji (2013) / This Worldview Goblet, I Said by Mohamed Reza Aslani (2013)**
After-film discussion with Persheng Vaziri, Film Critic
- **Bitter Dream by Mohsen Amiryoussefi (2004) / Scheherazade by Mehroush Aliaghaei (2013)**
After-film discussion with Parviz Jahed, Modern Languages, University of St. Andrews
- **The Paternal House by Kianoush Ayyari (2012) / Needle by Anahita Ghazvinizadeh (2013)**
After-film discussion with Vahid Mortazavi, Louisiana State University

South Asian Film Series

With South Asia @ NYU, the Urban Democracy Lab, the Center for Religion and Media, the Center for Media, Culture, and History, the NYU Council for the Study of Disability, and the Department of Media, Culture, and Communication

- **An Ordinary Election by Lalit Vachani (2015)**
with South Asia @ NYU
- **The Factory by Rahul Roy (2015)**
with South Asia @ NYU
- **Placebo by Abhay Kumar (2014)**
- **Margarita with a Straw by Shonali Bose (2014)**

K-12 TEACHER TRAINING

As mandated by our Title VI grant, K-12 workshops are hosted by the Hagop Kevorkian Center for Near Eastern Studies in collaboration with the Steinhardt School of Education at NYU as well as NYU's Faculty Resource Network. Middle and High School teachers as well as Community College faculty from the tri-state area regularly attend alongside teachers-in-training from Steinhardt. The programs increase the quality of Middle East-related content in our region's K-12 curriculum.

Spotlight on Contemporary Iranian Art

Maryam Ekhtiar, The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Lucy Oakley, Grey Art Gallery
With the Grey Art Gallery in conjunction with the Spring 2016 "Global/Local 1960/2015: Six Artists from Iran" Exhibit

Theatre and Political Resistance in Syria

Ted Ziter, Associate Professor of Drama, NYU; Naila Al Atrash, Syrian theatre director and human rights activist

Refugee Stories from the Middle East

Sarab Al-Jijakli, Syrian-American community organizer and National President of the Network of Arab-American Professionals, NAAP; Killian Clarke, PhD Candidate, Politics, Princeton University; Gozde Guran(PhD Candidate, Sociology, Princeton University; Barbara Petzen, Middle East Connections and Center for Strategic and International Studies, CSIS; Leila Abdelrazaq, graphic novelist

Kurdish Nationalism and Multiple Identities in Modern Turkey

Omer Taspinar, Brookings Institution; Ozan Aksoy, Independent Scholar

World War I and the Middle East

Osama Abi-Mershed, Georgetown University; Mustafa Aksakal, Georgetown University; Najwa Al-Qattan, Loyola Marymount University; Zachary Lockman, NYU; Nancy Kricorian, Fall 2015 Writer-in-Residence, Hagop Kevorkian Center, NYU and novelist; Joan Brodsky Schur, Curriculum Development Consultant

The United States and the Middle East

Peter Valenti, NYU; Curtis Ryan, Appalachian State University; Arang Keshavarzian, NYU; Zachary Lockman, NYU; Curtis Ryan, Appalachian State University; Toby Jones, Rutgers University; Michael Wahid Hanna, The Century Foundation

Heart of the Silk Road:

A Study Tour in Uzbekistan for K-12 Educators

A ten-day journey led by Diana Shin, Outreach Administrator, NES, NYU
With the Center for Middle Eastern Studies at the University of California, Berkeley and GEEEO.org (Global Exploration for Educators Organization).

JACK G. SHAHEEN

ARCHIVE

NYU holds the archive of media scholar Jack Shaheen, which includes over 3,000 TV shows, feature and documentary films, movie posters, comic books, editorial cartoons, and personal papers focused on stereotypes and images of Arabs and Muslims in American popular culture.

Powerful, accessible and compelling, the **A is for Arab** traveling exhibition, which features images from the Jack G. Shaheen Archive, reveals and critiques the stereotypical portrayals of Arabs and Muslims in U.S. popular culture. Providing historical context about these images, which range from film stills to comic books to editorial cartoons, this traveling exhibition aims to educate and stimulate discussion about the impact of stereotypes on both individual perceptions and national policy. This year, the exhibit was displayed long-term at three universities, organizations, and conferences, including the Moraine Valley Community College, Bronx Community College, and Rutgers University.

HAGOP KEVORKIAN CENTER REVIEW 2015/2016

