

HAGOP KEVORKIAN CENTER
NEW YORK UNIVERSITY
2008–09

Center Staff

Director **Michael Gilson**

Associate Director & Outreach Coordinator **Greta Scharnweber**

Director of Graduate Studies **Sofian Merabet**

Program Coordinator **Amal Hageb**

Administrative Aide **Sarah Coffey**

CONTENTS

Letter from the Director	4
Public and Educational Programs	7
Research Workshops	9
Distinguished Lecture	10
Seminar Series.....	11
New Book Series.....	12
Special Events, Symposia, and Conferences	13
Visual Culture Series	15
Program in Ottoman Studies.....	16
Programs for M.A. Students	18
Outreach to the Media.....	19
Educational Outreach.....	21
News from Bobst Library.....	26
Faculty Spotlight	27
Faculty News	28
The Falak Sufi Memorial Essay.....	44
Student and Alumni News.....	46
FLAS Awards.....	51
Graduating Students.....	52

Hagop Kevorkian Center
 New York University
 50 Washington Square South
 New York, NY 10012
www.nyu.edu/gsas/program/neareast

Editors Greta Scharnweber, Elizabeth Harrington
Production Savitski Design

Copyright 2009. All rights reserved

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR



2008 marked the fiftieth anniversary of the Title VI program from which so many NYU students have benefited over the years. The existence of FLAS awards has been crucial in providing young scholars with the linguistic building blocks of their research, whether through intensive summer programs or through years abroad. Many have been awarded more than one FLAS fellowship and have translated that support into remarkable scholarship. The value of the investment by the Government

and the Department of Education over the past five decades has become clear to generations of students and we owe our thanks to those administrators in the program in Washington who have done so much to channel funds into our fields of study and to help us maintain our standards. The range of departments whose students have received these awards is wide and includes Anthropology, Art History, Music and Political Science as well as MEIS. This range is important as it allows for a much broader development of studies in different, sometimes overlapping, disciplines and it encourages intellectual collaboration.

In my report last year, I reworded President Clinton's famous motto to read: 'It's the language, stupid!' That emphasis remains. FLAS awards are one vital part of maintaining and increasing the expertise and scholarship to which our students aspire. Our language teachers, as always, are the backbone of our efforts. Their innovative pedagogy and the intensity of their training and teaching are quite remarkable to behold from a director's perspective. As always, I want to place on record our deep appreciation for their quite extraordinary commitment to the program and for their on-going explorations of processes of evaluation and assessment, subject of great interest to the Department of Education.

There have been major changes in personnel at the Kevorkian Center. Shiva Balaghi left us after ten years as Associate Director, a post of which she was the first holder. She developed a vibrant program of events from outreach to teachers and schools, to art and film festivals and individual encounters with artists and directors, to seminars and lectures. She also taught courses for us. These contributions have marked the character of the Center's activities and we are most grateful. Bill Carrick took up a post at Columbia University. Having spent almost exactly forty years in universities I can say that Bill is the most remarkable departmental administrator with whom I have had the pleasure of working. Despite what was often an

enormous workload, he preserved an almost preternatural appearance of calm. We all felt a complete confidence in his ability to manage any crisis and to take on any task, whether that involved the air conditioning systems (I use the word 'system' in the loosest sense), water supplies, roof leakages or, more problematically, the demands of colleagues, students and faculty. Our confidence was probably far too often turned to taking advantage of his competence and 'leaving it to Bill'. I hope he forgives for that and I am sure that he knows he has our deepest gratitude for decades of work at NYU.

Finding replacements to fill these posts was not easy. Fortunately, our searches led to the appointment of the present team in the office. Greta Scharnweber joined us from Yale where she already had extensive experience in coordinating program events for Title VI. She came in just in time to take on probably the most important task that falls to the Associate Director, preparing the application for the new round of Title VI awards, which now falls every four years rather than every three years as was previously the case. (The post of director is now also on a four-year basis to keep in synch with the change.) Greta has already made her mark in an imaginative program of outreach and many other activities on which I will report in more detail next year. I am delighted that she has joined us and brought her formidable energies to bear on developing our program in new directions, something the Department of Education very much looks for.

Amal Hageb managed the almost impossible task of taking over the Administrator's position from Bill Carrick and we are lucky to have her presiding over our financial and administrative needs. New budgeting procedures and administrative changes seem to rain down on us with even greater ferocity than usual and it takes a person of great competence and ability to navigate across a constantly shifting landscape. Students quickly learned how helpful Amal is and how responsive to their needs, whether dealing with the bureaucracy and inevitable paperwork, visas, payments and all the other problems that can arise moment to moment.

As the office went through a period of major transition, Sarah Coffey took on the crucial role of making that transition possible, assisting her new colleagues in every way, and giving continuity to the processes of administration that was essential to our functioning. We owe her our gratitude for such commitment and I personally would like to thank her for her work throughout a very demanding year.

Just to round out major changes at the Kevorkian, Sofian Merabet left us to take up a tenure-track job in the Anthropology department at the University of Texas, Austin. We congratulate him warmly on his success and thank him for all he did in the development and running of the academic side of the MA program during his two years with us. We are most fortunate to have Nadia Guessous as the new DGS and I will detail

her particular contributions in next year's report. Nadia is at the moment on the verge of completion of her Ph.D. in Anthropology at Columbia and she continues our tradition of having a social scientist in the DGS position.

Details of our activities are set out in the following pages. I would just like to highlight the major international conference on Prison Literature that we held in conjunction with the New School. This was a deeply moving as well as intellectually stimulating event. Elias Khoury, as always, animated our discussions and drove us on to be ambitious in our aims, bringing in writers from Turkey and Iran as well as the Arab world. Dr. Shareah Taleghani, whose own thesis on Syrian prison literature is an innovative and powerful work, made a crucial contribution to the success of the meetings both in terms of her scholarly qualities and in the many tasks involved in gathering people together from so many different parts of the globe. Her participation was a happy instance of the great contribution graduate students make to the Kevorkian, MEIS and the wider community of scholars and the interested public in the city. The conference stands for the best of what we do and I know that we will continue to develop such projects in the future.

These are now far more difficult economic times. The university has changed and is changing many of its procedures, including a far-reaching transformation of graduate funding. Budgets are extremely tight, posts frozen and no one knows how long the crisis will last or in what ways it will affect us. The Kevorkian's role is to battle to maintain the extremely high program standards it has achieved, regardless of other circumstances and in the closest collaboration with MEIS and all those other colleagues and friends from whose support we draw our strength. Let me adapt a French general's famous observation: The situation is desperate, attack!

— Michael Gilseman

NOTES ON KEVORKIAN PUBLIC AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS



Letter from the Associate Director

This year marked an important transition for me personally and professionally as I entered the ever-exciting world of the Kevorkian Center and New York City from my previous post at Yale University. I arrived in mid-semester, and had the pleasure of seeing through a busy year of seminars, workshops, conferences, film screenings, teacher-training programs and more while also navigating the complex administrative landscape of NYU.

In our capacity as a National Resource Center for modern Middle East Studies, we have had a successful year despite some major transitions—the combined total number of attendees at nearly 80 outreach activities and events this year surpassed 4,500. These events were often collaborations with student groups, other departments or centers at NYU as well as other institutions, and they ranged as widely in historical time period and geography as they did in disciplinary and interdisciplinary approach.

On the outreach front, I have been working hard to expand our offerings for local K-12 teachers. I have continued Kevorkian's long-term series of Saturday Seminars hosted with NYU/Steinhardt's School of Education that feature NYU and outside faculty. This year we were also able to provide new opportunities for less commonly taught language teachers (such as the STARTALK Summer Institute for teachers of Arabic, Persian, Urdu and Hindi held in July) and high school students as well, including a small group of Yemeni immigrant students in the Bronx who visited with some of our Arabic-speaking students in June.

K-12 Curriculum development is also an area I am exploring for Kevorkian, and I have so far organized three interdisciplinary projects that focus on visual culture, film, and modern art. I have initiated a study tour program for high school and community college educators: our first tour (indeed, a first for Kevorkian) is scheduled to take place as a collaboration with Friends of the Earth Middle East and the Friends Seminary High School in Spring 2011. This exciting program will focus on water resources as well as environmental peacemaking in the Jordan River valley across the borders of Israel, Palestine, and Jordan.

The public and educational projects that you will read about in the pages that follow are supported in no small part by my colleagues on the 4th floor: Amal Hageb, our Program Coordinator, who has worked long

hours managing all the comings and goings (and spendings!) of the Center and who supports our students in all of their endeavors; Sarah Coffey, our Administrative Aide, who ensures that our visiting scholars enjoy a smooth experience during their time at Kevorkian; and Sofian Merabet, who provided academic guidance to our M.A students. I thank them for their many contributions that have such a profound impact on what we are able to offer our students and the public each year.

Our M.A. and Ph.D. students also contribute generously by assisting with, inspiring and attending these myriad programs. This year I owe particular debts to the following graduate students: Shareah Taleghani for co-conceptualizing with Elias Khoury our Spring Conference on Prison Literature (and Amir Moosavi, Arta Khakpour and Omar Cheta for serving as translators); Ryvka Bar Zohar for consulting with me on curriculum projects and leading a Saturday Seminar; Zeynep Sertbulut, Zeynep Bilginsoy, Firat Bozcali and Hayal Akarsu for assisting with programs; Shana Minkin and Peter Valenti for lending time and expertise on our school of education collaborations; Canay Ozden for liaising with Middle East Desk; and Eman Morsi and Ahmad Diab for taking the initiative to organize a student led film series.

Finally, throughout the year, I have repeatedly tapped the expertise of our outstanding faculty in the department of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies. Their individual contributions are mentioned in detail throughout the report, and without their varied expertise none of these programs would have been nearly as stimulating or wide-ranging. I thank Michael Gilsenan in particular for granting me ample space to complete this work creatively while still offering a guiding hand, and Zachary Lockman for his consistent support and expert feedback on the countless hurdles that have cropped up this year. I look forward to many more years of engaging with this lively academic community, and again thank my colleagues for their help and patience as I made my way through this first enriching year at NYU.

— Greta Scharnweber

RESEARCH WORKSHOPS

The following scholars presented their research at the workshops this year:

- Nadya Sbaiti** (Smith College) on “Know Your History, Know Yourself: Visualizing the Nation Through History & Geography.”
Discussant: **Sofian Merabet** (NYU)
- Nancy Reynolds** (Washington University) on “Nylon, Gender, and Commodity Politics in Egypt, 1930s-1950s.”
Discussant: **Mario Ruiz** (Hofstra University)
- Joel Beinín** (Stanford University) on “Egyptian Workers, 2004-08: A Social Movement on the Margins of the Global Neo-Liberal Economic Order.”
Discussant: **Herrick Chapman** (NYU)
- Ahmed Kanna** (Trinity College) on “Flexible Citizenship in Dubai: Corporate Subjectivity and Ambivalences of Arab Identity in the Emerging ‘City-Corporation.’”
Discussant: **Farha Ghannam** (Swarthmore College)
- Zohair Ghazzal** (Loyola University) on “The Textuality of Murder: The Documentation of Norms in Contemporary Syrian Court Practices.”
Discussant: **Khaled Fahmy** (NYU)
- Homa Hoodfar** on “Religious Idioms and Rights-Based Demands: Can Iranian Women Act as Agents of a Reformation of Shi’a Islam?”

Discussant: **Diane Singerman** (American University)

DISTINGUISHED LECTURE

Avi Shlaim gave our only distinguished lecture this year, and spoke on “Israel Confronts Its Past: The ‘New Historians’ and Their Critiques.” Shlaim is a Fellow of St Anthony’s College and a Professor of International Relations at the University of Oxford. He held a British Academy Research Professorship in 2003-2006 and was elected Fellow of the British Academy in 2006. His books include *Collision across the Jordan: King Abdullah, the Zionist Movement, and the Partition of Palestine* (1988); *The Politics of Partition* (1990 and 1998); *War and Peace in the Middle East: A Concise History* (1995); *The Iron Wall Israel and the Arab World* (2000), and *Lion of Jordan: The Life of King Hussein in War and Peace* (2007). Professor Shlaim is a frequent contributor to the newspapers and commentator on radio and television on Middle Eastern affairs.

SEMINAR SERIES

The Center’s ongoing series of lectures and seminars on featured 15 speakers, including:

- Shahan Mufti** (Christian Science Monitor) on “Pakistan: Fighting Big Wars, Playing Great Games;”
- Rasmus Elling** (University of Copenhagen), on “Ethnic Minorities and Unrest in Iran: Challenges to National Identity and Security in the Islamic Republic;”
- Tara McKelvey** (New York University) on “The Story Behind Abu Ghraib;”
- Faisal Devji** (The New School) on “Between Gandhi and Bin Laden: The Caliphate in Modern Politics;”
- Thomas Eich** (Ruhr-Universität) on “What are Hymens Actually Good For? Public Debate and The 2007 Egyptian Fatwa On Hymenorrhaphy;”
- Gholam Afkhami** (Foundation of Iranian Studies) on Fact and Fiction in US-Iran Relations Under the Shah: Policy Implications for the New US Administration.
- Najwa Adra** on “The Anthropology of Dance in the Arabian Peninsula: Women, Culture and Private/Public space in Yemen;”
- Jurgen Todenhofer** on “Why do you Kill? The Untold Story of the Iraqi Resistance;”
- Mona Eltahawy** on “Blogs, Social Networking Site and the New, New Media in the Arab World;”
- John Ryle** (Bard College) on “The International Criminal Court and the Pursuit of Peace and Justice in the Sudan;”
- Robert Mabro** (Oxford University) on “The Egyptian Versus the Cosmopolitan Alexandria.”

NEW BOOK SERIES

Kevorkian's New Book Series featured the following two authors with their latest publications:

Michael Gasper (Yale University) on *The Power of Representation: Publics, Peasants, and Islam in Egypt*

The Power of Representation breaks new ground by calling into question the notion, common in historiography of the modern Middle East and the Muslim world in general, that in the nineteenth century “secular” aptitudes and areas of competency were somehow separate from “religious” ones. Instead, by tying the burgeoning Islamic modernist movement to the process of identity formation and its attendant political questions the author shows how religion became integral to modern Egyptian political, social, and cultural life in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Waleed Hazbun (Johns Hopkins University) on *Beaches, Ruins, Resorts: The Politics of Tourism in the Arab World*.

Despite being viewed as a dangerous region to visit, leisure travel across the Middle East has thrived even in the post-9/11 era. Hazbun tells the new and surprising story of how the draw of glittering beaches, luxury hotels and resorts, and sightseeing at ancient ruins impact the Arab world—promoting both economic globalization and political authoritarianism.

SPECIAL EVENTS, SYMPOSIA, AND CONFERENCES

Obama and the Middle East

In January, aligned with Barack Obama's inauguration the Center hosted a symposium on “The Obama Presidency: What It Could Mean For the Middle East and The Muslim World.” **Zachary Lockman** (NYU), **Ervand Abrahamian** (CUNY) and **Chris Toensing** (Middle East Report) spoke on Palestine/Israel, Iran, and Iraq respectively in a panel titled “Is Change Going to Come? Obama's Plans for the Middle East.” In a second panel focused on “Race, Identity, and Global Citizenship: Arabs, Muslims and Africans under Obama,” **Hisham Aidi**, (Columbia), **Moustafa Bayoumi** (CUNY), **Michael Gilson** (NYU) and **Xerxes Malki** (NYU) addressed the unique situation of Arab and Muslim Americans as well as international relations between and among the U.S, Africa and Southeast Asia.

Property in Israel and Palestine

Later in January, the Center co-sponsored a special panel with the Taub Center for Israeli Studies at NYU focused on “The Price of Peace: Palestinian Property in Israel and the Peace Process,” including **Michael Fishbach** (Randolph Macon), **Marwan Jilani** (Geneva Peace Initiative), **Michael Marrus** (Toronto), **Roby Nathanson** (Macro Center for Political Economics), **Hagar Tzameret-Kertcher** (Macro Center for Political Economics), and **Ronald Zweig** (NYU).

Prison, Literature, and Cultural Politics

In March, with support from The New School, Kevorkian held an international two-day literary conference on “Prison, Literature and Cultural Politics.” Chaired by acclaimed Lebanese novelist **Elias Khoury** (Global Distinguished Professor, NYU) and co-organized by **Shareah Taleghani** (MEIS PhD '09), the successful conference brought together a prominent group of writers, poets and political dissidents from around the Arab world, Iran and Turkey as well as authors, critics and scholars from the U.S. Presenters examined the poetics and politics of political opposition that are constructed through works of prison literature and reflected on the relationship between literature and struggles for democracy and human rights.

Attention was also paid during the conference to the work of filmmakers who had reflected upon the prison experience in their works. We included screenings and critiques of the following films:

From Scream to Scream by Pantea Bahrami (Iran)
Don't Let Them Shoot the Kite by Feride Cicekoglu (Turkey)
Khiyam by Joana Hadjithomas and Khalil Joreige (Lebanon)
Ghayr Khaduni by Tamer El Said (Morocco)

Egyptian Legal History and Practice

In June **Khaled Fahmy** (NYU) with **Amr Shalakany** (American University of Cairo) organized a successful two-day conference in Cairo, Egypt entitled “New Approaches to Egyptian Legal History: Late Ottoman Period to the Present.” The conference brought together scholars of Egyptian legal history with actual practitioners of law in Egypt and investigated three areas of current public policy debate: Islamic law reform, feminist jurisprudence, and law and economic development. In addition to 20 scholars hailing from the US, Europe and Egypt, two NYU students and two alumni also presented papers. Notably, eight senior Egyptian jurists, including a Supreme Court Justice, attended responded to the academic papers that detailed the history of their profession. Sessions were bilingual and many local researchers and journalists were also present. Discussions are under way with the American University in Cairo Press and Dar Al-Shorouk to publish the proceedings in both English and Arabic by the end of 2010.

VISUAL CULTURE SERIES

The Visual Culture Series, now in its 5th year, featured the work of a number of filmmakers and visual artists through various collaborations within and outside of New York University.

With the Center for Religion and Media at NYU, Kevorkian convened the following screenings and discussions:

- *Lioness* by Meg McLagan and Daria Sommers;
- *In Search of Bene Israel* by Sadia Shephard; and a
- *A Jihad for Love* by Parvez Sharma;
- **Hamid Naficy** (Northwestern University) on “Female Trouble: Women’s Representation in Iranian Cinema;”
- *Under the Skin of the City* (Iran, 2001) by Rakhshan Bani Etemad

With ArteEast, Kevorkian supported the Cinema East Fall 2008 Film Series, which included the following programs:

- *Heavy Metal in Baghdad* by Eddy Moretti and Suroosh Alvi
- *How We Fight: Conscripts, Mercenaries, Terrorists, and Peacekeepers*, a program of short films about Iraq and by Iraqi directors
- *Chronicles of a Refugee*, a six-part documentary series on Palestinian refugees directed by Perla Issa, Adam Shapiro, and Aseel Mansour.

With student led-initiatives at NYU, including Students for Justice in Palestine, Women’s Herstory Month, and Shuruq 2009 (an annual celebration of Islam’s rich diversity at NYU), Kevorkian supported the following screenings:

- *Sling Shot Hip Hop* by Jackie Salloum (Israel and Palestine)
- *Dishing Democracy* by Bregtje van der Haak (UAE, Lebanon)
- *Warring Factions* by Justin Mashouf (Iran)
- *Kashf: Lifting the Veil* by Ayesha Khan (Pakistan)

Finally, a committee led by MEIS PhD Candidates Eman Morsi and Ahmad Diab curated the Hudood Film Series, which featured the following screenings:

- *Chronicle of a Disappearance* by Elia Suleiman (Palestine);
- *Ali Zaoua* by Nabil Ayouch (Morocco)
- *Masumiyet* by Zeki Demirkubuz (Turkey)
- *A Moment of Innocence* by Mohsen Makhmalbaf (Iran)
- *These Girls* by Tahani Rached (Egypt).

PROGRAM IN OTTOMAN STUDIES

The Program in Ottoman Studies, established in 2006 to organize public events related to Ottoman Studies broadly construed, sponsored a full calendar of individual talks, panel discussions, and a concert during the 2008-2009 academic year. Within each year's roster of events, the Program aims to sample the broad chronological and geographic expanse that was the Ottoman Empire, and to feature younger as well as established scholars. The Program is directed by Leslie Peirce, Silver Professor in the departments of History and Middle East & Islamic Studies, and is assisted by Hasan Karataş, Lecturer in Middle East & Islamic Studies. This year's events spanned the medieval period to the outbreak of World War I, and featured Christian monks, reforming pashas, and the tombstones and streets of Istanbul.

In the fall semester, **Mustafa Aksakal** (American University) spoke about the Ottoman entry into World War I, **Robert Dankoff** (University of Chicago) about value judgements in the work of the 17th-century traveller, writer, and humorist Evliya Çelebi, and **Karen Barkey** (Columbia University) about the question of toleration and persecution in the Ottoman Empire. Spring talks included **Hasan Karataş** (NYU) on 15th-century Ottoman political and religious tensions and Elias Kolovos (University of Crete) on the monks of Mount Athos and their relations with the Ottoman

regime. Our fall concert featured the New York-based **Ozan Aksoy** trio, which performed works from a variety of Anatolia musical traditions. During the spring semester, the Program organized three theme-based panel events that were designed both to explore a theme and to engage audience participation. The first, a symposium on the dynamics of conversion in February, featured **Tamer El-Leithy** (NYU) speaking on Coptic converts in medieval Cairo, **Sara Wolper** (University of New Hampshire) on the conversion of Hagia Sophia and the Damascus Great Mosque, and **Tijana Krstic** (Penn State University) on Orthodox Christian converts to Islam, and **Marion Katz** (NYU) providing comments; this event was co-sponsored with the Medieval and Renaissance Center and the Center for European and Mediterranean Studies. In March, **Virginia Aksan** (McMaster University) and **Khaled Fahmy** (NYU) engaged in a discussion of “thugs and pashas”, namely the 19th-century statesmen Husrev Pasha and Mehmed Ali Pasha. In April, the topic of “life and death in late Ottoman Istanbul” was taken up by **Edhem Eldem** (Bosphorus & Harvard Universities) who spoke on tombstones and the social identity of the dead, and **Shirine Hamadeh** (Rice University), who considered the street as a space where social order was threatened; **Larry Wolff** (NYU) provided a comparative comment.



Virginia Aksan and Khaled Fahmy discussing “Thugs and Pashas” in March 2009.

PROGRAMS FOR M.A. STUDENTS

Internships and Career Counseling

A thorough academic training is the core purpose of the MA Program in Near Eastern Studies (NES). It is based on an interdisciplinary approach that includes advanced lectures and seminars in the Humanities and Social Sciences. Even if roughly 50% of our graduates pursue a PhD in, say, History, Literature, or Anthropology, many leave academia and look for a job in the so-called ‘outside world,’ including the non-for-profit sector but also the larger business world. However, it must be said that the number of students staying within the seemingly more secure realm of the university has increased since the start of the current economic downturn.

There are limited but crucial resources that both the Kevorkian Center and NYU have to offer to those NES students interested in pursuing a professional career. Every fall semester, the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) meets with students who intend to participate in the Center’s Internship Program that is held each year during the spring semester. Over the last couple of years, the Center has been in close contact with a whole host of New York-based agencies that recruit highly qualified interns on a regular basis. In the past, these agencies have run the gamut from human rights organizations all the way to art auction houses. The primary intention behind the Kevorkian Internship Program is to expose those students who are interested in a professional career to the realities of a particular agency of their choice that might also consider them as potential future employees. While internships are not mandatory in order to graduate in NES, interested students can register for up to 4 credits. In exchange, they are asked to intern for an average of 12 hours at an organization of their choice and submit short weekly reports, as well as a longer final one, to the DGS. It is also the DGS that manages the application process, including the submission of the students’ CVs and cover letters to the organizations they plan on interning at.

Apart from these internal resources, the Kevorkian Center encourages its students to seek advice early on at NYU’s Wasserman Center for Career Development. In the past, joint seminars have been organized by the Kevorkian’s DGS and the friendly and very competent staff at the Wasserman Center. Moreover, it is possible for every student to schedule throughout the entire academic year a personal counseling session with one of the Career Center’s specialists. All of these are efforts the MA Program in NES undertakes in order to help its students with a smooth transition into the post-graduate world, one that has become exceedingly competitive. While our two-year M.A. Program may lead its students in all kinds of new directions, the Kevorkian Center encourages everybody to

think from the very beginning about their “life after NYU.” Therefore, each and every student is encouraged to cultivate a close and sustained relationship with both the Kevorkian and Wasserman Centers.

In addition to these more institutional efforts, Kevorkian held a career guidance workshop for students seeking careers in creative fields organized by MEIS alum **Livia Alexander** (Executive Director of ArteEast). The workshop was titled “The Other Half: How to Build a Creative Career” and featured several professionals and artists from the non-profit and creative fields.

OUTREACH TO THE MEDIA

Middle East Desk

Middle East Desk provides information and expertise to journalists via the Internet. A joint project with the *Middle East Research and Information Project* (MERIP), the website features a clickable map of the Middle East, with a “Datebook” section highlighting upcoming political and cultural events, and a list of experts drawn from among Center faculty and *MERIP* editors and writers. Journalists using the site can contact experts on the list for information and interviews. *MERIP* also distributes regular Updates with contact information for scholars who can offer expert commentary on breaking stories. These Updates go to a list of over 900 reporters, editors and producers in the US and around the world. NYU/Middle East Desk was awarded an SSRC grant for \$50,000 for 2008-2009 to redesign and expand the website, upgrade the computer systems hosting the site, and to host a media training workshop for Washington-area scholars. Experts featured by Middle East Desk were interviewed and/or quoted by ABC News, the Associated Press, the BBC, the Chicago Tribune, the Christian Science Monitor, the Guardian (UK), al-Jazeera, the Los Angeles Times, the New York Times, the New Yorker, PBS Newshour, Reuters, USA Today and the Washington Post, among numerous smaller, international and regional outlets.

Media Training for Scholars

In February 2009, with assistance from the Center, *MERIP*/Middle East Desk organized a media training workshop for Washington-area scholars of the Middle East. The workshop featured a keynote address by **Zachary Lockman**, as well as presentations by the Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter **Anthony Shadid** of the Washington Post and the veteran PBS reporter and producer **Robert Zeliger**, and *MERIP*-affiliated scholars with extensive experience interacting with the media. The workshop was attended by 15

members of the *MERIP* editorial committee as well as 15 professors and graduate students in Middle East studies from area universities.

A Teach-in on Iran

In June 2009, immediately following the presidential campaign and elections in Iran, NYU hosted a Teach-In for journalists, educators and the general public entitled “Iran: What You Need to Know.” Speakers at the session included MEIS faculty member **Arang Keshavarzian** (NYU), **Golnoush Niknejad** (Tehran Bureau) and **Kouross Esmaili** (AMEJA) and **Mahdis Keshavarz** (The Make Agency). The panel of experts contextualized the June events within Iran’s history of political participation since the Islamic revolution, discussed the challenges to journalists working to cover the events as they unfolded, and provided invaluable insights into Iranian politics today. Attendance at the event was 275, with an additional 200 watching live via webstream.

EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH

Coordinated by Associate Director Greta Scharnweber, the Kevorkian Center aimed to expand its robust educational outreach through ongoing teacher-training seminars (including language teachers), programs for students, and curriculum development.

SEMINARS FOR TEACHERS

Together with NYU’s Steinhardt School of Education, the Kevorkian Center continued its series of Saturday Seminars for Teachers for NY area teachers.

Women, Islam and the Law

This workshop provided an overview of *Islamic law as it pertains to women and discussed concepts of Islamic feminism, and made suggestions for bringing films and literature about women’s issues and rights in Islam directly into the classroom.* **Marion Katz**, Associate Professor of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies at NYU discussed textual and other sources of Islamic law as they pertain to women. **Mounira Soliman**, Associate Professor of Comparative Literature at Cairo University tackled Western misconceptions about Muslim women by discussing the notion of women’s equality in Islam and highlighting feminist examples of Muslim women in Islamic history. **Ziba Mir-Hosseini**, Global Visiting Professor of Law at NYU discussed contemporary struggles for women’s legal rights in Islam and screened clips from her acclaimed documentary film *Divorce Iranian Style*. 30 teachers benefitted from the workshop.

The Arabic Language: Ways of Teaching, Learning and Understanding

With more and more emphasis on developing K-12 Arabic language programs throughout the United States, there is a great need for raising awareness of what creating such programs may entail, what curricular challenges may arise. In order to meet this rising need, **Ahmed Ferhadi**, Professor of Arabic Language and Linguistics at NYU introduced the Arabic language and its unique linguistic attributes across the Arab World and beyond, focusing primarily on the socio-cultural elements of one of the worlds most complex and influential language systems. **Anna Swank**, Arabic Teacher at Friends Seminary, New York City, also discussed her experience developing a high school course in Arabic, focusing on the practical concerns of curriculum adaptation, classroom activities, and other challenges in bringing this less commonly taught language to an American school. 25 teachers attended.

How Real is Race? The Politics of Race in Comparative Perspective: Reflections on the U.S., the Middle East, and Latin America

From biology and anthropology to social science and history, this workshop investigated concepts and realities of racial science, politics, and identity in comparative international perspective. The workshop included presentations by **Khalid Medani** (McGill), **Aisha Khan** (NYU), **Louise Cainkar** (Marquette), and **Augustin Lao Montes** (Boston U), and featured short screenings of the California Newsreel documentaries on *Race: The Power of an Illusion*. This seminar left participants (and subsequently their students) more aware of the intricacies of the social construct of race as a system of social classification and its very real effects in different regions of the world. The seminar was hosted in collaboration with NYU's Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies and Yale's PIER Outreach programs in Middle East and Latin American Studies, and 61 teachers from the tri-state area participated.

Palestine Through the Eyes of its Youth

This interactive workshop was designed to provide helpful information to educators teaching about the history, current events, and the lives of youth in Palestine. **Zachary Lockman**, Professor of History and Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies at New York University discussed the importance of understanding the views and experiences of young people in studying the Middle East in general and Palestine in particular. **Ryvka Bar Zohar**, a PhD Candidate in the department of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies at NYU, led an interactive workshop using film, music, digital media and short articles to talk about media (mis)representation and stereotypes as well as the history of Palestine from the 1920s-present. The 25 participating teachers left better informed about the less commonly heard perspectives of Palestinian youth. This workshop was co-facilitated by the Palestine Education Project (PEP)—an initiative of educators, artists, and activists based in New York City.

Outreach to Language Teachers

In July Kevorkian organized a two-week summer institute for teachers of Arabic, Persian, Hindi and Urdu. Led by **Gabriela Nik Ilieva** (NYU) **Greta Scharnweber** (NYU), and **Milena Savova**, Director of Foreign Languages at NYU's School for Continuing and Professional Studies, the institute was largely funded by federal STARTALK funds and supplemented with Title VI outreach funds. The institute offered expert training in pedagogy and curriculum development for mainly native speakers of these

languages who aim to teach LCTLs in middle schools, high schools, community centers and universities. 40 teachers participated in the sessions, which featured workshops with LCTL teaching leaders **Mehdi Khorrami** (NYU-Persian), **Gabriela Ilieva** (NYU-Hindi), **Tahira Naqvi** (NYU-Urdu), **May Ahmar** (Columbia-Arabic), **Mohssen Esseesy** (George Washington-Arabic), and **Wafa Hassan** (Michigan State-Arabic). The course was co-taught by language pedagogy experts at NYU's Steinhardt School of Education: **Tasha Darbes** led the Hindi/Urdu sections, while **Beth Clark-Gareca** taught the Arabic and Persian cohort.



Participants in the STARTALK Summer Institute for Persian and Arabic teachers pose with their teachers May Ahmar (Arabic, Columbia), Mehdi Khorrami (Persian, New York University) and program coordinator Greta Scharnweber (New York University).

PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS

The Center expanded existing outreach to K-12 constituencies through two major off-site teacher training and student programs.

Teaching the Medina

The first new program, entitled Teaching the Medina: A Marketplace of ideas” is a year-long collaboration with Area Cooperative Educational Services (ACES) in Southern Connecticut that provides teacher training and student programs focused on the Middle East. The project, which involved 9 public schools, 15 teachers, and roughly 200 students, focused on the diversity of language and culture in the Middle East. LCTL exposure lessons in Hebrew, Arabic, Persian and Turkish began the year-long initiative, which later turned to look at gender, religion, youth, politics, media, and more. **Monira Soliman** (Cairo University), Kevorkian Center Associate Director **Greta Scharnweber** (NYU), and **Barbara Petzen** (Education Director, Middle East Policy Council) led professional development programs for the 15 teachers involved the project. A field study



Ramzi El-Edibli leading a lesson in Arab folk dance to Connecticut High School Students in June.

tour of New York City in May included a site visit to the Queens Museum of Art for an exhibit focused on the Middle East, live musicians performing folk songs from across Turkey, and a stand-up comedy show with Iranian-American comic **Negin Farsad** (110 student and teachers participated). More than 200 students and their teachers concluded the year's activities in June when student groups presented their ongoing research projects to each other in a full-day program. A workshop on Arab music and dance with **Ramzi El-Edibli** was the highlight of the day.

From Yemen to New York—Teaching Arabic in Two NYC High Schools

The second off-site project involves Arabic curriculum consulting and student programming with the International Community High School in the Bronx (a public school with a significant population of Yemeni immigrant students who have an Arabic heritage language program) and the Friends Seminary (an affluent private school in Manhattan with an Arabic language and Middle East History program). Linkages between these contrasting schools are being facilitated by the Center in collaboration with two local community organizations (American Association of Yemeni Scientists and Professionals as well as the Arab American Family Support Center). Approximately 40 students and 8 teachers are involved in the exploratory exchange, with plans to continue in the coming year. Also in June, a separate student program featured an exchange event between Yemeni students from the International Community High School and American Students studying Arabic at the Friends Seminary. Several

Kevorkian MA students presented on the usefulness of the Arabic language during the high school students' visit to NYU as well as the challenges facing Arab and Muslim students in the U.S.

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Modern Art in the Middle East

The Center partnered with ArteEast and the Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art to develop an online curriculum for K-16 educators focused on arts and culture in the Middle East. The final project will integrate cutting edge Middle Eastern film and visual arts with national standards for art and the social studies in a modular, scalable set of online teaching units. The Center held three focus group meetings to assess the curricular needs of teachers across the country, including 6 high school and college educators from various U.S. regions, two curriculum design experts, and an educational design technician to determine the form and content of the proposed project. If supplemental funding is ensured from Doris Duke, the curriculum will be crafted during FY2009-2010.

Politics, Visual Culture and Film

Kevorkian is also pursuing additional curriculum development projects: with **Arang Keshavarzian** (MEIS Faculty) and **Amir Moosavi** (MEIS PhD Candidate), **Greta Scharnweber** is compiling teaching tools with campaign posters used during the Iranian presidential elections in June 2009; with **Ryvka Bar Zohar** (MEIS PhD Candidate), she is developing materials around the Tarjama/Translation Exhibit hosted at the Queens Museum in summer 2009 as well as short film discussion guides in conjunction with the Kurdish Film Festival to be held at NYU October 2009. These curriculum projects are scheduled to go online as part of the Virtual Classroom by December 2009.

NEWS FROM BOBST LIBRARY

There were several noteworthy additions to Middle East resources of NYU Libraries, including online versions of 3rd edition of the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, *Encyclopedia of Women & Islamic Cultures* and *Encyclopaedia Islamica*. Another important resource is *Oxford Islamic Studies Online*, a collection of reference works, chapters from scholarly and introductory works, primary sources and images. Additionally, NYU now has access to Cambridge Histories Online that offers searchable collection of over 250 volumes published since 1960. The collection covers over 15 different academic subjects and includes titles such as: *Cambridge History of Islam*, *Cambridge History of Egypt*, *Cambridge History of Iran*, *Cambridge History of Turkey*, *Cambridge Economic History of India*, *Cambridge History of Arabic Literature*, *Cambridge History of Early Inner Asia*, among many others.

In terms of journalistic media, The Library has recently subscribed to MideastWire, a service that offers translation of more than 500 Arabic and Persian news outlets reporting stories from and about the Middle East. The service provides daily briefs translated into English from the Arabic and Persian media outlets that include top newspapers, some satellite TV and radio stations. There are about 35 briefs each business day covering opinion, business, political and society/cultural pieces that appear in these various media outlets.

Finally, the Afghanistan Digital Library continues to add newly digitized works to its website at <http://afghanistandl.nyu.edu>. There are close to five hundred unique titles currently available. The team is now collaborating with British Library and Princeton University Library and will soon include several works from these libraries.

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

Mona Mikhail, who has served NYU and the department of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies for more than twenty-five years, has retired. Her contributions to the field of Arabic literature and gender studies have made a lasting impact on the field. She has moved to Cairo, where no doubt she will continue research and writing on the Arab World.



Mona Mikhail teaching an Arabic class during the early years of her career at NYU

Sofian Merabet, who has served as the Director of Graduate Studies at Kevorkian for two years, has departed New York University for a tenure-track post at the University Texas-Austin's Anthropology department. **Nadia Guessous**, who comes from Columbia University's Anthropology program (PhD expected Fall 2009), has been hired as the new DGS. She brings with her significant student advising experience in addition to her scholarly work that focuses on feminist movements in Morocco.

We were fortunate this year to host **Robert Malley** (International Crisis Group) and **Robert Mabro** (University of Oxford) to teach graduate seminars to our M.A. students. Both scholar-practitioners bring significant expertise to bear through their impactful careers in the region, and brought a much-needed discussion of policy and economics to our intellectual community. We expect to continue enhancing our M.A. program in this by hosting four guest seminar instructors during 2009-2010.

New Area Studies Appointments

The Department of Middle Eastern & Islamic Studies (MEIS) concluded

two searches during the reporting period. The first position sought a senior scholar focused on early modern Persianate societies. **Kathryn Babayan**, currently Professor of Iranian History and Culture at the University of Michigan, will be joining NYU in the Fall of 2011.

The second search was in Classical Arabic literature (while Philip Kennedy is away at NYU-Abu Dhabi), and we are pleased to welcome **Maurice Pomerantz**, who is completing his PhD at the University of Chicago NELC department (PhD expected January 2010). He brings expertise in Islamic thought and Arabic literature, and will begin teaching September 2009.

FACULTY NEWS

Sinan Antoon

I spent the 2008-2009 academic year as a postdoctoral fellow at the Europe in the Middle East/The Middle East in Europe program at the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin. In addition to working on my book project on the poetry of Ibn al-Hajjaj, which I hope to finish by the end of 2010, I gave talks at the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin and the Free University of Berlin. Conference papers in Germany included “Ruins and Specters: Mahmoud Darwish’s Late Poetry” at the Literature as Palimpsest Conference organized by the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy (Nov, 08), “Echoes of Future Nightmares: On the Poems of Sargon Boulus,” as part of “Cultural Voices of a Fragmented Nation: War, Trauma and Remembrance in Contemporary Iraq,” Marburg University (Dec, 08). I did return to the US twice to take part in a conference at Georgetown to honor Hanna Batatu (October 08). My paper was entitled “Notes on Native Informants.” I also participated in the Kevorkian’s own “Prison Literature and Cultural Politics in the Middle East (March, 09) with a paper on the famous prison poem by Muzaffar al-Nawwab.

I published articles in *The Nation*, *Banipal*, *al-Akhbar*, *al-Ahram Weekly* and *The National* and poems in *Ploughshares*. I also finished translating Darwish’s last prose book, *In the Presence of Absence* into English (forthcoming from Archipelago in 2010). While in Berlin I organized and participated in a roundtable discussion “Poetry and Politics: Reading Darwish in Berlin” and a bilingual poetry reading at the House of World Cultures on the anniversary of the Nakba. I received a grant from TAARII (The American Academic Research Institute in Iraq) to finish a documentary film project on the Iraqi poet Saadi Youssef.

Readings at literary festivals took me to Mexico, Edinburgh, Bern and Basel. My novel, *I’jaam*, was published in German as *Irakische Rhapsodie* (Lenos, 2009) and Portuguese as *Morrer em Bagdá* (Globo, 2009).

Peter Chelkowski

In Fall 2008 I took an academic sabbatical to do research on the libretto of the opera, *Turandot*, by Puccini. In my research, I am trying to prove that the libretto is based on a story by the 12th-century Persian poet, Nezami. I also completed the editing for a book on Muharram rituals entitled, *Eternal Performance: Ta’ziyeh and Other Shiite Rituals*, which grew out of a special volume of *The Drama Review (TDR)* devoted to Shi’i rituals and performances entitled, *From Karbala to New York: Ta’ziyeh on the Move*. The volume has been accepted by the publisher and is scheduled for publication in 2010.

My other publications included a review of Roxanne Varzi’s book, *Warring Souls: Youth, Media, and Martyrdom in Post-revolution Iran for Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East*, Vol. 29, Number 2, 2009; and a review of *Kimmerowie, Scytowie, Sarmaci: Księga poświęcona pamięci profesora Tadeusza Sullimirskiego*, ed. Jan Chochorowski for *The Polish Review*, Volume LIII, No. 3, 2008. I also contributed an essay on “Hosay: A Shi’i Ritual Transformed” to a special issue of *Viewpoints* entitled, *The State of the Arts in the Middle East*, which was published in May 2009. I was honored to write In Memoriam: Professor Ann K.S. Lambton (8 February 1912-19 July 2008) for the February 2009 issue of *Iranian Studies*.

During the last academic year, I was in London two times for conferences on modern Iranian theatre and storytelling in the Middle East. I returned to my native country to lecture at the Polish Academy of Science in Warsaw and the Polish Academy of Arts in Krakow. While there I also lectured at Jagiellonian University and the University of Warsaw. Closer to home, I addressed a conference on the Iranian revolution: thirty years after, at Rutgers University.

I served on two promotion committees, one for Dr. Faegheh Shirazi at the University of Texas at Austin, and one for Dr. Etienne de la Vaissiere at New York University. On the teaching side, I taught two classes in the spring semester: an undergraduate course on Islamic Societies with 125 students, and a graduate course on Modern Iran.

Medhat Credi

I joined The University of Virginia-Yarmouk University Summer Arabic Program in Irbid, Jordan as an administrator from July 11 to August 11. It’s a program in Modern Standard Arabic designed for undergraduate and graduate students currently pursuing a degree program. My role consisted in helping running the program and helping the students in the form of extended office hours.

Hala Halim

This past year was certainly a productive one for me, thanks to a Faculty Fellowship with the Humanities Initiative (HI), NYU, which afforded me the time to pursue research and writing projects. One of two research projects I pursued – involving interviews and collecting manuscripts, diaries, letters and recordings by a virtually unpublished author – took me to Long Island, Paris and my hometown Alexandria. Such perks of research aside, I was gratified when the long article that came out of this project was accepted for publication in the inaugural issue of *California Italian Studies* on “Italy in the Mediterranean.” November saw me in Cairo, giving a presentation entitled “Cairo and the Afro-Asian Moment” at the Ninth International Symposium on Comparative Literature, “Egypt at the Crossroads,” organized by the English Department at Cairo University. It was a great opportunity to catch up with colleagues in the field and make the acquaintance of other scholars doing exciting work. Speaking of travel, the highlight of my year was a visit to Florence with Jane Tylus, Faculty Director of HI, and other HI fellows, at the invitation of the office of Uli Baer, the vice provost for globalization and multicultural affairs. Our days in Florence – during which we met with faculty at NYU’s La Pietra for a discussion about the humanities – were quite splendid. Last but not least, the past academic year saw the publication of my translation of a novel by Mahmoud Al-Wardani, *Heads Ripe for Plucking* (American University in Cairo Press, 2008), which has already received favorable reviews in the press.

Tamer El-Leithy

This past year I taught two undergraduate courses: a Freshman MAP course (a historical survey, The Making of the Muslim Middle East) and a seminar, Conversion and Apostasy in the Middle Ages. I also offered two graduate seminars: Everyday Life in Medieval Cairo, a colloquium based on close readings of Arabic documents; and, a new seminar on ‘Aja’ib (Marvels) in medieval Arabic sources.

During the Spring semester, I presented a paper at a symposium entitled “Dynamics of Conversion in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East” (here at NYU). The paper is part of a book manuscript I am now completing on Coptic conversion to Islam in medieval Egypt.

Over the past year, I have been a member of a multidisciplinary collective studying the history of al-Qarafa, Cairo’s City of the Dead, from the middle ages through the present; during this period the group met for several workshops in Cairo to share and discuss our research. I spent most of this summer in Cairo, where I continued my research for the project and prepared a final report of my findings. The project was my first foray into the Ottoman period, which was very exciting, but also challenging as I

tried to make sense not only of new sources and notarial scripts, but also of the bureaucratic marvel of a new archive.

This summer I also began work with another collaborative project entitled Islamic Law Materialized (sponsored by the CNRS in Paris, where we had our first workshop in July). The project brings together historians of Islamic law, with a focus on pre-Ottoman documents. While the history of Islamic law has traditionally been written from prescriptive sources (especially *fiqh*), this ambitious project aims to develop a new database of all extant documents issued by Muslim courts in the pre-Ottoman period (including several unpublished collections).

Sibel Erol

During the 2008-09 academic year, The Turkish language classes were enriched by the contributions of the Fulbright Language Assistant Ugur Butun who held conversation sessions with each level, and worked as a tutor individually with all students. He took students out on various field-trips to Turkish shops, and shared with them clips from Turkish movies, commercials and songs. He read articles into sound files for students to listen to. Afterwards, he listened to the students’ reading of the same pieces, corrected their writing of these oral selections as dictation. Additionally, he evaluated their oral summaries of the stories we read in the intermediate and advanced levels, emphasizing the new vocabulary that came with each piece.

The students thrived with the work they did both for class and with Ugur. Jareka Dellenbaugh- Demsey and Dale Correa from elementary Turkish were offered Critical Language scholarships for intermediate level summer courses in Turkey. Jennifer Auerbach and Veronika Horwath (who joined advanced Turkish from CUNY for the year) received ARIT fellowships for intensive study of advanced Turkish in Turkey for the summer. The Evliya Celebi undergraduate prize for language went to Daniel Honig for his excellent and enthusiastic work. Additionally the departmental undergraduate prize was awarded to Mackensy Bauman who wrote an honor’s thesis on Orhan Pamuk, in conjunction with an independent reading course we did together on this subject.

I started the year with a presentation entitled “The Chronotope of Istanbul in Turkish Literature” at a conference on Istanbul at the University of California, Berkeley in October. At MESA in November I gave a paper on the films of Nuri Bilge Ceylan and his examination of masculinity. I also organized a workshop on Halide Edib for MESA that analyzed this nationalist feminist from different perspectives. In April, I gave a talk on the poet Orhan Veli Kanik at Princeton University and discussed Halide Edib for a gender course at Barnard. I introduced Adalet Agaoglu at her two programs in New York, one of which was held at the Kevorkian in

May on the occasion of the publication of her novel *Summer's End* in English, for which I had written the introduction. In June, I discussed Orhan Pamuk's *My Name is Red* at the Brooklyn Museum on the opening night of their exhibition on Islamic Art.

In the spring semester, the Tisch School of the Arts offered an undergraduate course entitled "Turkey" which culminated with a trip to Turkey. For this course, I lectured on Orhan Pamuk's *Istanbul*, which the class read for their literature selection. The Fulbright assistant Ugur Butun made presentations for this course on Turkish alphabet and culture. He also helped the class during their Istanbul leg of their trip.

I was elected to the board of the Turkish Studies Association last year and served on the Halide Edib Scholarship undergraduate prize committee. I worked as an evaluator on language programs sponsored by the State Department and by ARIT, and evaluated the State Department-AATT summer program in elementary Turkish in Izmir, Turkey.

Khaled Fahmy

During the AY 2008-09 I continued to serve as the department's DGS, I also continued to serve on MESA's Board of Directors of MESA, and MESA's Committee on Academic Freedom, Middle East and North Africa. (CAF MENA). My by short biography of Mehmed Ali was published by Oneworld in October 2008. Over the summer I conducted research in the Egyptian National Archives on my forthcoming book on social and cultural history of Egypt in the 19th century. I also organized an academic conference in collaboration with Prof. Amr Shalakany of AUC on the history of Egyptian law from Mamluk times to the present. The conference was held in Cairo in June 2009. Throughout the year I participated in conferences at the following universities: Oxford, UCLA, Harvard, and Florida State, and delivered talks in Cairo, Barcelona and Kavala. The two-year long collaborative work on the Suyuti cemetery of Cairo in which I participated came to an end in the summer of 2009.

Finbarr Barry Flood

During the academic year 2008-2009, I was on leave in the fall working on a book project supported by the Carnegie Foundation. In fall, I published "Piety and Politics in the Early Indian Mosque" an edited volume in the *Debates in Indian History and Society* of Oxford University Press, India. In spring, *Objects of Translation: Material Culture and Medieval 'Hindu-Muslim' Encounter* was published by Princeton University Press. During the year, I also published two articles: "An Ambiguous Aesthetic: Crusader Spolia in Ayyubid Jerusalem," in Sylvia Auld & Robert Hillenbrand, eds., *Ayyubid Jerusalem* (London, 2009), 202-215; "Islamic Identities and Islamic

Art: Inscribing the Qur'an in Twelfth-Century Afghanistan," in Elizabeth Cropper, ed., *Dialogues in Art History, from Mesopotamian to Modern: Readings for a New Century* (Studies in the History of Art Series) National Gallery of Art (Washington, D.C.), 2009, 91-118.

In the spring I taught an undergraduate survey course on Islamic art of the post-Mongol period and a graduate lecture course on the material culture of Islam in pre-Mughal South Asia. In addition, I gave a number of invited lectures during the year, including "From Dystopia to Utopia: Shifting Meanings of the Minaret of Jam," at *Recovering Afghanistan's Past*, a conference held at the University of California, Berkeley (November); "Icon to Coin: Potlatch, Piety, and Idolatry in Islam," presented in absentia (due to 'flu) in December at an international workshop on Images, Ritual, and Daily Life hosted by the Austrian Academy of Sciences, Krems an der Donau, Austria; "The Trouble with Images: the Contexts of 'Cartoon Wars'," presented in the Lectures in Art History series, Stanford University, in April.

Michael Gilsenan

During the year I continued to work on my research project on the anthropology and history of Hadhrami Arab migrations between Arabia and Southeast Asia from the later nineteenth century to the present. The main research is finished and there is some, but only some, semblance of organization in the mountains of documents of different kinds that have invaded my apartment as well as my mind. My current writing focuses on questions of inheritance and the inter-generational transmission of goods and properties of all kinds. The topic probably sounds dry and boring but family disputes over wills and property frequently turn into sagas or social dramas that extend over decades. The relations between colonial and Muslim laws and legal practices, whether in India or Singapore, are enormously complex and fascinating. I am working through various legal cases of inheritance in which disputes arising amongst heirs as to the validity of wills by Muslims were finally adjudicated in British or post-colonial judges using principles of case law or statute and/or ruling between the opinions of different Muslim expert witnesses on what was or was not a 'true interpretation' of Muslim law, as well as making a 'true construction' of the wills themselves in terms of their readings of the testators' intentions. It is worth noting that there are contemporary cases in Singapore on precisely these issues and sometimes in language that seems very familiar from arguments of the 1860s. I had the opportunity to give conference papers and lectures in Vienna and Berlin in May and in London in July. These events brought me into contact with an international range of scholars working on the Hadhrami diaspora on the one hand and, more generally, on the anthropology

of Islam on the other. Their critiques and comments have been very constructive for my writing in this enormous field of law and society. In terms of publications, with Anthony Reid, I edited a volume *Islamic Legitimacy in a Plural Asia*, Routledge, 2009. I also published an article 'Topics and Queries for a History of Arab Families and Inheritance in Southeast Asia: Some Preliminary Thoughts' in Eric Tagliacozzo, ed. *Southeast Asia and the Middle East: Islam, Movement, and the Longue Durée*. National University of Singapore Press/Stanford University Press, 2009.

Ogden Goelet, Jr.

During the past year I have continued teaching on both the graduate and undergraduate level. As in previous years, I taught a course in Egyptian history in the fall; during the current spring term, I gave my Egyptian religion course. On the graduate level, I taught introductory and advanced graduate courses on various aspects of the Egyptian language during both terms.

Over the past few years, I have become increasingly interested in how the Egyptian students learnt first how to write the cursive hieratic script and then the more formal hieroglyphs, and how these skills were employed, particularly in connection with workshop produced documents such as the famous Book of the Dead papyrus of the scribe Ani in the British Museum. In addition, scribal training plays a central role in our knowledge of Egyptian literature; it is through the rather imperfect student copies on papyri and ostraca that much Egyptian literature has been preserved. The orthographical mistakes in these didactic texts indicate that students learning hieratic may have learned chiefly by mechanically copying the work of their experienced masters and doing so with only a tenuous knowledge of the signs composing the words in the texts they were reproducing. My study on this subject, "Writing Ramesside Hieratic: What the Late-Egyptian Miscellanies Tell us about Scribal Education," has recently appeared in the festschrift for my colleague Richard Fazzini, the recently retired curator of the Egyptian Department at the Brooklyn Museum. For another festschrift, I have submitted a related study on the training of scribes in the hieroglyphic script and the use of that form of writing in the funerary industry of the Ramesside period. Finally, a monograph-length on literature in the age of Ramesses III is now in the last stages of editing for its publication, at present sometime later this year.

My current and chief writing project connects well with my years of teaching Egyptian language at NYU. I am presently under contract with Cambridge University press to produce a reader of the Middle Egyptian dialect that will supplement Prof. James P. Allen's (Brown University) widely used Middle Egyptian. An Introduction to the Language and Culture of the Hieroglyphs (Cambridge 2000). I hope to present students

with a wide range of texts in this, the 'classical' stage of the Egyptian language, and introduce them to the practices of looking at Egyptian texts in their full context and noticing the effects of register on the presentation of the material. The book will present the material in modern hieroglyphic transcriptions along with photographs of the original with the aim of encouraging students to refer always to images of the texts in their original forms.

A recent graduate of MEIS, Dr. Sameh Iskander, and I have started an epigraphic project to copy the inscriptions and scenes in the "Temple of Millions of Years" of Ramesses II at Abydos. I had planned to join him and the rest of our small team this winter, but problems with my knees prevented me from doing so. The interior of the temple has now been photographed in its entirety. This season I will join the project once more with an augmented team of epigraphers and photographers. We conducted some experiments in digital epigraphy that will enable us to make a complete record of the temple in a much more efficient manner. This season we will also be joined by some experts supplied to us the Supreme Council of Antiquities, the supervisory authority over all ancient monuments in Egypt.

I continue to serve on the boards of a number of three scholarly societies: the Archaeological Institute of America; the Society for Textual Scholarship; the Egyptological Seminar of New York (ESNY). In addition, I have become the chief editor of ESNY's associated journal, The Bulletin of the Egyptological Seminar.

Gabriela Nik Ilieva

This year I published *Glavove I Bagri ot India* – (Damyan Yakov, Sofia, Bulgaria, 2008) and *Project-Based Learning of Hindi: Managing the Mixed-Abilities Classroom* – in *SALPAT (South Asia Language Technology and Pedagogy)*, vol.1. 2008. I received the 2008 Excellence Award, University Continuing Education Association (UCEA) Mid-Atlantic Region. I also had the good fortune to receive several grants this year, including serving as Academic Director on two Startalk Grants that supported the Hindi-Urdu and Arabic-Persian Teacher-Training Workshops in July 2009. These grants were awarded by the National Foreign Language Center at the University of Maryland and are a component program of the National Security Language Initiative (NSLI), jointly funded by the Director of National Intelligence and the Department of Defense (2009). I am also the recipient of a three-year material development project (NSEP) as part of The Language Flagship: Promoting Diffusion of Innovation. My project, *Language for Health: The Practice of Medicine in Hindi and Urdu*, is in partnership between NYU and the University of Texas. I was the Principal Consultant and Developer for National Standardized Test in Hindi and Consultant for Urdu (Standards-Based Measurement of Proficiency),

SALRC, University of Chicago and University of Oregon, Eugene. In addition to all of this, I was invited to several workshops as a presenter or the sole instructor.

Marion Katz

In addition to teaching courses on gender and Islamic law and on the Qur'an and its exegesis, this year I worked on my manuscript on the history of women's mosque access, which is now two-thirds complete. Focusing on an early sixteenth-century case study where the authorities in Mecca unsuccessfully attempted to regulate women's access to the Sacred Mosque, the study uses a wide variety of textual genres (travel literature, biographical dictionaries, belles lettres, etc.) to explore how extensively women frequented mosques in selected times and places and how their ritual and social use of mosque space differed from that of men. It also juxtaposes the evolution of legal doctrine on this point over time and space (i.e., the degree to which scholars prohibited, condoned, or encouraged women's mosque attendance) with historical evidence of women's activities to explore the interrelationship between men's normative discourses and women's ritual behavior. (Perhaps unsurprisingly, in this case normative stances appear to react to women's behavior more often than they dictate it.)

This summer, I presented research on the issue of women's domestic labor in Islamic jurisprudence at the Sixth International Conference on Islamic Legal Studies at the University of Exeter. This work correlates changing legal discourses on women's marital duty (or, more often, lack thereof) to perform housework with shifting representations of ideal elite femininity in biographical sources, showing how the meaning of domestic labor functioned in reconfiguring ideas about gender. I also presented a paper at the American Oriental Society conference in Albuquerque and participated in a workshop on "Reason and Authority in Islamic and Jewish Law" at the University of Toronto.

Farhad Kazemi

This has been an eventful year for me. All the many issues surrounding Iranian politics have kept me quite busy. I gave several academic papers on the subject including papers on "Iran-Israel Relations" at Tufts University, on "Obstacles to Democracy in Iran" at Tel Aviv University, and on "Iranian Presidential Elections" at the National Defense University in Washington, DC. I have also signed a contract (along with two colleagues in the Boston area) on a forthcoming book that will deal with Iranian politics, its relations with the US, and transnational forces in the Gulf region.

I have continued my involvement with the American University in Cairo serving on the Executive Committee of its Board of Trustees and

several Board Committees. The University officially opened its grand new campus in New Cairo in February 2009 with all the Board members and others in attendance. Some operations will be maintained in downtown Cairo's Tahrir Square even though most of the teaching and research will take place in the new state-of-the-art campus. I have further kept up my involvement with NYU Abu Dhabi serving on the NYUAD Institute panel as well as agreeing to teach.

I taught primarily graduate courses this past year but will teach an undergraduate course in the fall. I am very much thankful to the Department of Middle East and Islamic Studies (particularly Khaled Fahmy) for providing me with excellent teaching assistants for my courses. I very much look forward to another busy and fruitful year.

Philip Kennedy

This year was eventful. In August 2008 I relocated to Abu Dhabi to take up the role of Faculty Director of the NYU Abu Dhabi Institute. The Institute, in its start-up phase, offers a program of academic and cultural events to the Abu Dhabi community in the form of lectures, conversations, workshops, and conferences across the full spectrum of subjects in the liberal arts. My role as Faculty Director is to program and host these activities that are driven by NYU faculty from across the schools. The results have generally been rewarding for all involved. Events this year ranged from an international conference on climate change and "green" fiscal mechanisms to a film festival on Muslim themes of Bombay cinema. Subjects of Middle Eastern interest included public conversations: with Elias Khoury on the art of the novel; with Marina Warner on Edward Said's *The Word, the Text, and the Critic*; and with Saudi scholar, Saad Sowayan, on his prolific studies of Arabian oral poetry and lore.

Given my full-time involvement, my report for this year is largely about the NYUAD Institute. However, I was delighted that, par moment, my own work came to the fore: a book I co-edited with Marilyn Lawrence was finally published in November 2008, entitled *Recognition: The Poetics of Narrative. Interdisciplinary Studies on Anagnorisis* (Peter Lang). Further, I enjoyed the occasion of delivering a paper at a conference held at the Paris Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi on "Jorge Luis Borges's Imagined East." A supplement to this paper will be delivered in December at a conference which I am convening at the NYUAD Institute on "The Arabian Nights: Encounters and Translations in Literature and the Arts".

Some of my work now still remains in press. An article entitled "Love in the Time of Pilgrimage: A Topos in the Poetry of Abu Nuwas" will appear imminently in a volume entitled *The Weaving of Words: Approaches to Classical Arabic Prose*, edited by Lale Behzadi and Vahid Behmardi (Ergon:

Beiruter Texte und Studien; vol. 112). Another is currently in production with the journal *Arabic Literature*, entitled “Sons and Lovers and the Mirage: Recognition, Melodrama and Psychoanalysis in Mahfouz’s al-Sarab.”

Arang Keshavarzian

During the 2008-09 academic year, I was on leave and was a Visiting Associate Research Scholar at Princeton University’s Niehaus Center for Globalization and Governance. I used this opportunity to continue my work on a new research project focused on tracing the development and global integration of the political economy of the Persian Gulf over the last half century. I read in the areas of theories of international relations, theories of globalization, and history of imperialism, while conducting primary research in Princeton’s libraries and the Gulf region. I completed work on an article titled the “Geopolitics and the Geology of Free Trade Zones in the Persian Gulf,” which I presented at the University of Arizona and Princeton University and submitted to a journal for publication.

Meanwhile, I continued my writing and research on various aspects of politics in Iran. Building on my earlier research on the Tehran Bazaar, “Regime Loyalty and Baâzâri Representation under the Islamic Republic of Iran: Dilemmas of the Society of Islamic Coalition,” was completed and published in the *International Journal of Middle East Studies* (41,2(May 2009)). In addition, with Narges Erami, I have been working on an essay on smuggling, bazaari subjectivities, and the structure of the Tehran and Qom bazaars. I presented an initial version of this essay at Loyola University in Chicago, and Narges Erami and I plan to present another version at this year’s American Anthropological Association annual meeting. Also, I contributed an essay to the Middle East Institute’s Viewpoints special issue on “The Iranian Revolution at 30.” Finally, I continue to be on the editorial committee and the Board of Directors of Middle East Report. During this year, I was particularly busy with developing and editing the special double issue titled “The Islamic Revolution at 30,” issue 250(Spring 2009). “Tehran, June 2009,” was a *Middle East Report* Online essay, which I co-authored with Kaveh Ehsani and Norma Moruzzi. This essay was in part based on my three-week stay in Tehran that spanned the pre and post-election time period.

In the summer, I moved to New York and I am enthusiastically looking forward to my first year teaching at NYU and working with my new colleagues at the Kevorkian Center.

Mehdi Khorrami

Last year we completed the third stage of Persian Test Items for Elementary and Intermediate Levels. This is a project that I initiated through our

Center for Near Eastern Studies three years ago and we collaborated with the Center for Applied Second Language Studies at the University of Oregon, Eugene. In April 2008 we completed the review process and we began the piloting stage in Fall 2008. I believe this is a crucial step for the standardization of the assessment process as well as the instruction of Persian language.

In the academic year of 2008-2009, I have also been involved in a number of teacher training workshops. In particular, I co-organized a major teacher training workshop for instructors of Persian in Tajikistan. This workshop was held in June 2009 in Dushanbe.

On the literature front, I have continued my research on a book project which focuses on analyzing literary counter-discourses and counter-narratives in contemporary Persian fiction. I also worked with Dr. Pari Shirazi to complete *Sobrab’s Wars*, a collection of short stories translated from Persian to English. This collection was published in August 2008.

Zachary Lockman

My term as chair of the Department of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies continued through the 2008-2009 academic year, which meant that departmental and university concerns took up most of my working life. This was compounded by the fact that I also served as acting director of the Hagop Kevorkian Center in the fall of 2008, at a time when both a new associate director and a new administrator were joining the center staff. It was a pleasure getting to know, and working with, Greta Scharnweber and Amal Hageb, and I am happy that they are now firmly in the saddle and helping the center move ahead.

MEIS witnessed some faculty comings and goings in 2008-2009. Mona Mikhail, who taught modern Arabic literature at NYU for some two and a half decades, retired at the end of the academic year; we said our collective goodbye to her at a lovely party in her honor at the Torch Club. Bernard Haykel, who joined us in the early years of rebuilding the department, has now left us for Princeton; we valued having him as a colleague and hope that he will flourish in the wilds of New Jersey. Meanwhile, two new faculty joined MEIS in the fall of 2008: Hasan Karatas as Language Lecturer in Ottoman and Nader Uthman as Language Lecturer in Arabic. Both have strengthened the department’s teaching capacity in important ways, and we are happy to have them on board. Finally, Arang Keshavarzian will finally begin teaching at NYU in the fall of 2009; his presence will greatly enhance the department’s capacity in Middle East politics and the social sciences more broadly, and we are excited about having him as a colleague.

On the scholarly front, in the course of the year I devoted considerable time to preparing a second edition of my book *Contending Visions of the*

Middle East, which should appear in the fall of 2009. I also completed a book review or two, reviewed article and book manuscripts for various publications and publishers, and finalized (or so I hope) a major encyclopedia entry on Zionism (still forthcoming). I gave lectures at Concordia University in Montreal, at Pace University in New York, and in NYU's Scholars' Lecture Series, participated in symposia at Columbia and NYU, and chaired a panel at the American Historical Association's annual meeting. I also served on the Middle East Studies Association's Committee on Academic Freedom, which given the state of the world took up a fair amount of my time. Happily, I will be on leave in the fall of 2009 – the first leave I have taken since 2003 – and I am very much looking forward to the opportunity that this will (I hope) give me to devote more time to thinking, research and writing.

Sofian Merabet

It feels as if I barely started as the Kevorkian Center's Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), and now I'm already leaving NYU to take up a teaching position in the Department of Anthropology at The University of Texas at Austin. My two years on and around Manhattan's Washington Square have been extremely rewarding. I have enjoyed advising the Kevorkian Center's MA students whose diligence and intellectual commitment continue to impress and stimulate me quite a bit. Over the past year, I taught two graduate seminars, one on Cities in the Middle East and the other one on Anthropology for Middle Eastern Studies. Both courses gave me the great pleasure to interact with highly skilled individuals who turned the classroom into a setting that even Socrates may have longed for.

Next to finalizing a series of articles and converting my dissertation into a book manuscript, I attended the 2008 annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association in San Francisco. In the fall, I gave a lecture at Hunter College's Department of Anthropology. And, in the spring, I participated in a conference on public and private spaces in the Middle East organized by faculty at Amherst College.

I am very grateful to the collegial support I have been experiencing from day one onwards at NYU's Kevorkian Center. And although I am looking forward to exploring the Texan Hill Country, parts of my mind will always wander somewhere between W3rd and Sullivan Streets...

Ali Mirsepassi

Last year was a transition year for me. After serving as Interim Dean and Vice Dean at Gallatin School for five years and taking a yearlong sabbatical, I returned to my full-time faculty position. I taught two Middle Eastern studies courses at Gallatin and a graduate seminar (Islam, Politics, and

Modernity), at the Middle East and Islamic Studies Department. It has been a real pleasure working on new courses and focusing on teaching and not worrying about administrative matters.

This also was a pretty productive year for me. I finished a book manuscript (*Democracy in Modern Iran: Islam and Political Change*). This book will be published this coming spring by the NYU Press. I am now working on final revisions of my second book (*Intellectuals, Islam and the West*). This book will be published by the, Cambridge University Press in 20011. Next month, (October 2009), a book I wrote in Farsi (*Ethics in Public Sphere*, Nashre Sales, Tehran) will be published in Iran.

This year is the 30th anniversary of the Iranian revolution and Radical History Review is publishing a special issue this fall. I have written an article for this issue ("Intellectual Life after the 1979 Revolution: Radical Hope and Nihilistic Dreams,"). I also wrote a short preface to Christopher Nouryeh, *From Acts of Madness of the Arts of Care for the Self and Shura: A Reinterpretation of Arab Muslim Heritage*, (Edwin Mellen Press, 2009).

Leslie Peirce

I taught three new courses in 2008-2009: a graduate seminar on the Ottoman seventeenth century, another with History professors Karen Kupperman and Joanna Waley-Cohen entitled "Trading Cultures in the early modern Atlantic, Ottoman, and Ching worlds", and an undergraduate lecture course, "The Ottoman empire and the world around it". I participated in conferences in Rethymnon, Greece, and Geneva, and also gave lectures at the University of Pennsylvania's Middle East Center, Binghamton University's Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Princeton's Near Eastern Studies Department, and the American Historical Association's annual conference. I also continued to direct the Program in Ottoman Studies lecture and conference series, and initiated a informal graduate student forum in Ottoman and Turkish history. I also served as director of the Program in the History of Women and Gender in the Spring 2009 semester.

I am happy to report that this year I have been granted a John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation fellowship and a residential fellowship in Istanbul at Koç University's Research Center in Anatolian Civilizations, and thus will be on leave in 2009-2010. I will be working on a new project on abduction as a political, legal, social, and literary phenomenon in the Ottoman domains of the 16th and 17th centuries.

Everett Rowson

My chief focus this past year has been on our undergraduate majors and minors, primarily because of my new position as the department's Director

of Undergraduate Studies. It has been very gratifying to offer guidance to our students, but also quite time-consuming, given the phenomenal growth in our undergraduate program, with about one hundred majors (up from perhaps twenty some five years ago) and about thirty minors. I also offered undergraduate seminar courses, intended chiefly for majors, both terms, focusing on medieval Islamic education in the fall and Islamic theology and philosophy in the spring. For our graduate students I taught an Arabic text seminar in the spring in which we sampled various genres of literature on ethics and advice.

While continuing my research on premodern Arabic erotica, and specifically homoeroticism, I have completed a review article on two editions of narratives of homoerotic love affairs attributed to the fourteenth-century literary giant al-Safadi, sorting out some long-standing puzzles in literary history. I was also asked to participate in the plenary session of the annual meeting of the American Oriental Society in March, as representative of the Islamic Near East section; the plenary theme this year was “Sex”, and in my contribution I stressed the openness of premodern Islamic writing to the subject (in stark contrast to the modern situation). I was pleased to accept an invitation to deliver an expanded version of this talk at the Columbia University Arabic Studies seminar in April, where I received valuable feedback.

My duties as one of the four executive editors of the third edition of the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* continue to keep me busy as well, particularly as the pace of publication has been accelerating. The editors enjoyed a spirited discussion of the letter C at our meeting in Rotterdam in July, after which I continued on to Cairo, where I was able to pursue some research on Arabic erotological manuscripts in the impressive new facilities of the manuscript division of the Egyptian National Library.

Ella Shohat

This academic year began with a new teaching experience. During the Fall of 2008 I taught at the NYU in France Program, Paris and Université Sorbonne Nouvelle – Paris III, focusing on issues of postcolonial diasporas, especially from the Middle East/North Africa. My publications include book chapters: “Cosmopolitan, Provincial and Crossing Borders,” an introduction to Zubin Shroff’s *Cosmopolitans: Photographs* (Rotterdam- NL: Veeman Publishers); and “Cultural Debates in Translation” (coauthored with R. Stam), in *The Postcolonial and the Global*, Revathi Krishnaswamy & John Hawley, eds. (The University of Minnesota Press). A few of published essays have been translated and republished: my 1992 “Dislocated Identities: Reflections of an Arab-Jew,” was translated into French, “Réflexions d’une Juivre arabe,” in *Courrier International*; my 1998

“Narrativizing Visual Culture” was translated into Spanish as “Relatos de la cultura visual: Hacia una estética policéntrica,” in *Miradas revista del audiovisual*; my 2003 “Disorienting Cleopatra” was translated into Portuguese as 2-parts essay—“Heranca Racista” and “Um Tropo Moderno,” in *Leituras da Historia*, special issue “A Inigualavel Cleopatra”(Sao Paulo, Brazil); and my 1999 essay, “Taboo Memories and Diasporic Visions: Columbus, Palestine, and Arab-Jews,” was republished in *Genealogies of Orientalism: History, Theory, Politics*, co-edited by Edmund Burke III & David Prochaska (University of Nebraska Press).

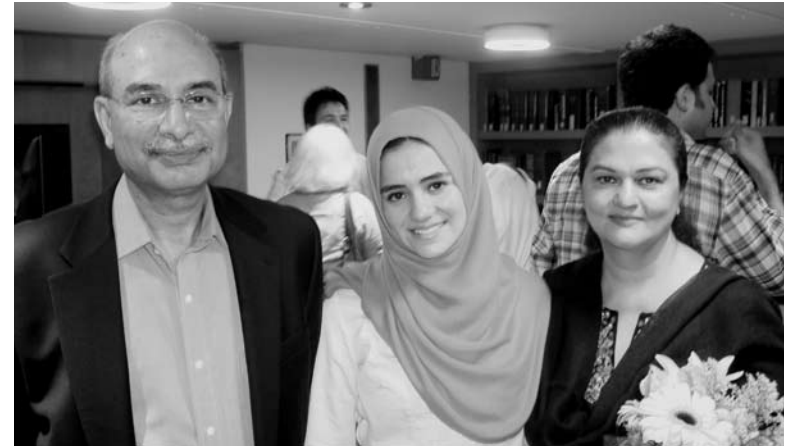
My lectures and paper presentations include: the keynote address at the 12th Annual Kyoto University International Symposium, “Transforming Racial Images: Analyses of Representations,” Kyoto, Japan; Plenary Session Panelist, “Situating Orientalism: On the Margins of Middle Eastern Studies,” Middle East Studies Association 2008 Annual Meeting, Plenary Session, “Celebrating the Thirtieth Anniversary of Orientalism: Critiques and New Insights,” Washington, D.C.; and at MESA I also chaired a panel on the “Entertainment Industries and the Recent Wars in the Middle East.” At the newly launched Ph.D. Program in Culture and Theory at University of California, Irvine, I gave a lecture, “The Culture Wars in Translation,” as part of the inaugural Speaker Series; Presentation and Discussion, “Exile, Displacement and Arab-Jews,” at the “Anywhere but Now: Symposium and Screenings on Human Flows and Geographies of Belonging in the Eastern Mediterranean,” The Middle East Office of the Heinrich Böll Foundation Beirut, Lebanon (via teleconferencing); “Screen Representations of East & West,” speaker and symposium participant at the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra, Barenboim-Said Foundation, Seville Spain; and a Keynote lecture, “Eurocentrism and the Denial of Indigenous Agency,” along with Book Launch introductory presentation of Saree Makdisi’s *Palestine Inside Out* in “New Worlds, New Sovereignties” conference, The University of Melbourne, Australia.

I joined the editorial board of *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies* (Routledge); the National Advisory Board, Levantine Cultural Center, <http://www.levantinecenter.org/>; and the Advisory Board of the new journal *Middle East Journal of Culture and Communication* (Brill), while also continuing to serve on the advisory board for the planned, “Orientalism Exhibit,” at the Arab-American National Museum, Dearborn Michigan. The academic year concluded with another new teaching experience, at the University of Bremen, Germany, in conjunction with my lectures, inaugurating the position of The First International Guest Professorships at the Institute of Postcolonial & Transcultural Studies (INPUTS), in June-July, 2009.

THE FALAK SUFI MEMORIAL 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 New York University when she died tragically in Spring 2008. To honor her memory and with the support of her family, Kevorkian awarded the first annual Falak Sufi Memorial Essay Prize to **Janan Dassum Delgado** for her outstanding essay on “Medieval Arab Muslim Perceptions of Black Africa.” An honorable mention went to **Canay Ozden** for her essay on “The Wardrobe Republic: On Clothing, Symbols, and Modernity in Turkey.” Other essays that were submitted for competition included (in alphabetical order by last name): “Leaving Baghdad: How the Story of the Jewish Exodus from Iraq has been Told” by **Habib Battah**; “Settling the Empire: Habil Adem on Imperial Order” by **Zeynep Bilginsoy**; and “The Population Exchange between Turkey and Greece and the Construction of the Anatolian Exchange’s Identity” by **Zeynep Sertbulut**. Competition for next year’s award will begin at the beginning of the spring semester 2010. The Kevorkian Center remains indebted to the family of Falak Sufi for making this recognition of outstanding M.A. scholarship possible.

In the coming years, we are also grateful to Falak’s family for making possible a permanent scholarship fund for aspiring students to attend NYU in her name. The first awards will be issued to incoming students in AY 2010-2011. We appreciate the opportunity to make Falak’s time with us at Kevorkian all the more meaningful and impactful.



Janan Delgado, the winner of the first Falak Sufi Memorial Essay Prize, with Falak’s parents, Rashiq and Seemi Sufi



in the Falak Sufi Memorial Prize Section: Janan with Dean Stimson after receiving the prize.

STUDENT AND ALUMNI NEWS

Waiel Abdelwahed (MEIS PhD '09) took a position at Temple University as a tenure-track Assistant Professor of Arabic.

Shifa Ali, (NES MA '10) was awarded a Critical Language Scholarship to study Arabic in Tangier, Morocco.

Habib Battah (NES MA '10) completed an intensive Arabic program in Beirut through a FLAS summer grant, in addition to working on his research in Lebanon. He published extensively this year in publications such as *The Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, *Al Jazeera* English, *Variety* magazine and the Spanish publication, *Tres Culturas*.

Matt Berkman (NES MA '09) accepted a position as a Research Associate at the U.S./Middle East Project. Matthew will also be presenting a paper at the University of Chicago's Middle Eastern History and Theory Conference.

Zeynep Bilginsoy, (NES MA '09) presented a paper at the University of Chicago, entitled "Settling the Empire: Hâbil Adem on Imperial – Colonial Order" for the Middle Eastern History and Theory Conference. She is currently working in Istanbul.

Firat Bozcali (NES MA '09) is a PhD candidate at the Department of Anthropology at Stanford University. Firat presented a paper at the European Consortium for Political Research Joint Session in Lisbon, entitled "Protecting Turkish Women? Gender Equality, Migrant Women and Prostitution in Turkish 2003 Citizenship Law."

Alan Campbell (M.A. Near Eastern Studies '09) is currently working at the Collaborative Studies Coordinating Center at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He was hired Technical Advisor to work on The UAE-UNC Indoor Air, Health, and Nutrition Study, a collaboration of UNC-Chapel Hill, the University of the United Arab Emirates, and The Environmental Agency of Abu Dhabi. In October he is traveling to Al Ain, U.A.E. to work on the study and will be living there until April 2010.

Lale Can (MEIS PhD Candidate) was awarded a Dean's Dissertation Fellowship for 2009-2010.

Omar Cheta (MEIS PhD Candidate) presented a paper entitled "Imperfectly Mixed? The Merchant Councils of Late Ottoman Egypt" at a conference on "New Approaches to Egyptian Legal History: From Mamluk Times to Present" held in Cairo in June. He also received the SSRC-ACLS International Dissertation Research Fellowship to conduct dissertation research in 2009/2010.

Caitlin Cook (NES MA '10) is interning at an organization called Sauti Yetu, run by Sudanese women to work on the advocacy/education/empowerment for African immigrant women in New York City; Caitlin is using this experience to inform her Masters thesis and connect with the Sudanese community in NYC.

Dale J. Correa (MEIS PhD Candidate) participated in the International Symposium on Imam al-Maturidi and Maturidism at Marmura University in May 2009. Her paper, "The Vehicle of Tawâtur in al-Mâturîdî's Epistemology," will be published shortly as part of the symposium proceedings. She also attended Boğaziçi University's summer Turkish language program as part of a FLAS grant, and began her dissertation research on the epistemology of Islamic legal theory and theology at the Süleymaniye library in Istanbul.

Janan Dassum Delgado was the winner of the Falak Sufi Memorial Essay Prize this year; the award was presented by the GSAS Dean Catherine Stimpson and established to honor the memory of NES Student, Falak Sufi. Janan's winning essay was entitled, "Medieval Arab Muslim Perceptions of Black Africa: Issues and Variables affecting the use of Labels and Categories."

Munir Fakher Eldin (MEIS PhD '08) was awarded a postdoctoral fellowship at the "Europe in the Middle East—The Middle East in Europe" program at the Wissenschaftskolleg in Berlin.

Elizabeth Harrington (NES MA '10) interned at the Guggenheim on their Abu Dhabi project and at Sotheby's with their Emerging Markets team. Beth is a researcher for an initiative called FeminIjtihad, which examines alternative interpretations of Islam and women in Afghanistan. She is interested in socio-cultural influences and studied in Damascus this summer to research museums and historic sites in Syria.

Reema Hijazi, a 2nd-year graduating student presented a paper at the Graduate Student Conference jointly held by Columbia University and

City University of New York Graduate Center, entitled, “What is possible? Considering the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict Outside the Confines of the State”. Reema is currently exploring opportunities in Global Affairs.

Aaron Jakes has been awarded an SSRC Dissertation Proposal Development Fellowship and GSAS’s Andrew Sauter Fellowship for Predoctoral Students in the Humanities and Social Sciences, both for summer 2009.

Rania Jawad has been in Israel/Palestine during the 2008-9 academic year on a Fulbright-Hays and NYU GSAS Torch Fellowship conducting dissertation research on Palestinian theatre. She presented papers at MESA and ASTR (American Society for Theatre Research) conferences in November 2008, published an article in JDTC (Journal of Dramatic Theory and Criticism), and was one of the main organizers of a delegation of 11 Native American and Xicana artists to Palestine in August 2009. She will continue pursuing her academic work in Palestine while also teaching part-time at Birzeit University.

Fatma Melek, a first year student and graduate fellow interned with Al-Jazeera’s bureau in Turkey this summer.

Shana Minkin began teaching at Swarthmore College in a three-year post in Fall 2009. In addition to the job market last year, she found time to lecture at the University of Pittsburgh and its satellite school on the following subjects: “The Death of Empire: British Cemeteries in Alexandria, Egypt, 1827-1972”; “The Veil in Islamic Societies: An Historical and Social Overview.” Shana also attended MESA to present “Foreign Hospital, Local Ailment: Public Space and Public Health in Late 19th Century Alexandria, Egypt.” Shana was a participant in the Global Dissertation Writing Workshop of NYU and the University of Amsterdam in Amsterdam in August 2008, and presented a chapter called “Foreign Hospital, Local Institution.” Finally, she was a fellow with the Humanities Initiative, an NYU working group of faculty and advanced PhD students, which also funded her final year of writing.

Susynne McElrone reports that dissertation field research is keeping her quite busy. She completed a 2008-2009 Fulbright-Hays Dissertation Research Abroad 12-month Fellowship—for Israel, Jordan, and Turkey. In 2009-2010 she will do dissertation research in Jordan on an ACOR (American Center of Oriental Research) fellowship, as well as pursuing research in the West Bank on a PARC (Palestinian-American Research Center) fellowship.

Amir Moosavi (of MEIS) and **Aaron Jakes** (of the joint History/MEIS PhD program) have been awarded fellowships to the prestigious CASA II program for advanced Arabic in the spring of 2010.

Canay Ozden (NES MA ’09) is a PhD candidate in History, Anthropology, Science, Technology and Society at MIT. Canay presented a paper at the American Anthropological Association’s annual meeting entitled, “A Bellicose Dam: Building the Ilisu Dam in the Midst of a Turkish-Kurdish Civil War”. She also received the Best Student Paper Award from the Middle East Section of the American Anthropological Association for her paper, entitled “The Wardrobe Republic: On Clothing, Symbols and Modernity in Turkey”; finally, Canay also received honorable mention for the same paper for the Falak Sufi Memorial Essay prize competition this year. During the summer, Canay presented a paper entitled, “Blaming it on the Kurds: the Racial Framing of Honor Killings in Turkey” to the Feminist Research Conference at Utrecht University.

Norah Rexer, (NES MA ’10) conducted research on Morocco’s Truth Commission for the International Center for Transitional Justice this summer.

Sherene Seikaly (MEIS ’08) took a position as assistant professor in the Department of History at the American University in Cairo.

Zeynep Sertbulut interned at the Permanent Mission of Turkey to the United Nations during Turkey’s presidency at the Security Council in June 2009.

Katayoun Shafiee was selected to participate in the National History Center’s 2009 Seminar on Decolonization.

Noor Shoufani, was selected for a competitive internship with the United Nations Office for Partnerships. In this role she worked on projects linking sector partners working to develop human capital in the Middle East. Noor also interned at the Synergos Institute this summer where she helped to establish a social entrepreneurship program to grant young Arab innovators opportunities to develop community-wide programs.

Basak Tug (MEIS PhD ’09) accepted a tenure-track position in the History Department at Bilgi University in Istanbul.

Peter Valenti has been in the archives since summer 2008. He has spent time at the Dar al-Watha’iq in Cairo; Basbakanlik in Istanbul; and Saudi

Arabia based out of the King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies. He was pursuing research for his dissertation, and was funded by a Multi-Country Research Fellowship, Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC). Furthermore, for the upcoming 2009-2010 academic year, he received a Humanities Initiative Research Fellowship. Over the past year he has written 16 encyclopedia entries or book chapters for a variety of publishers, both collegiate and high school academic publishers, and these publications have either been published or are in various stages of publication now. Two examples are: “Hormuz Hustle, 1622: The English-Persian Alliance Ousts the Portuguese” in *Encyclopedia of World History. ABC-CLIO* (forthcoming); “Bahrain” in *Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern World: 1750 to the Present*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Helena Zeweri (NES MA '10) was hired as a Program Assistant for the NYU Center for Dialogues: Islamic World-US-the West to coordinate a number of important panel discussions. She also served as the conceptual and organizational leader in conjunction with Women for Afghan Women and the NYU Afghan Students Association for a panel entitled, “The Politics of Identity within the Afghan Diaspora in the U.S.” held at NYU. This summer Helena worked on a research project focused on first generation members of the Afghan Diaspora in New York.

FLAS AWARDS

Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship, Academic Year 2008-09

Shifa Ali (NES), *Arabic*
 Elizabeth Behrend (NES), *Persian*
 Alan Campbell (NES), *Arabic*
 Caitlin Cook (NES) *Arabic*
 Reema Hijazi (NES) *Arabic*
 Ursula Lindsay (NES) *Arabic*
 Wahzmah Osman (Steinhardt) *Persian*
 Norah Rexer (NES) *Arabic*
 Summar Shoaib (NES) *Arabic*
 Besnick Sinani (NES) *Arabic*
 Daniel Smith (NES) *Arabic*
 Rebecca Wiggins (NES) *Arabic*
 Helena Zeweri (NES) *Persian*

Summer 2009

Roman Matveyev (NES), to NYU Intensive Program,
Intermediate Arabic
 Rijin Sahakian, (Gallatin), to University of California at Berkeley,
Intermediate Arabic
 Masha Kirasirova (MEIS), to IFPO Damascus, Syria,
Advanced Arabic
 Habib Batta (NES), to Lebanese American University,
Intermediate Arabic
 Elizabeth Harrington (NES), to IFPO Damascus, Syria;
Intermediate Arabic
 Dale Correa (MEIS) to Bogazici University; *Advanced Turkish*
 Anna Fahr (Film and Middle Eastern Studies, Gallatin), to University
 of California, Los Angeles; *Advanced Persian*
 Allen Roda (Ethnomusicology), to American Institute of India Studies,
 Intermediate Urdu

GRADUATING STUDENTS

The following students with research interests in the Middle East and Islamic Studies received graduate degrees from NYU in September 2008, January 2009, and May 2009.

Ryvka Bar Zohar (M.A. Near Eastern Studies, Spring 2009)
Matthew Berkman (M.A. Near Eastern Studies, Spring 2009)
Zeynep Bilginsoy (M.A. Near Eastern Studies, Spring 2009)
Firat Bozcali (M.A. Near Eastern Studies, Spring 2009)
Allison Brown (M.A. Near Eastern Studies, Summer 2008)
Alan Campbell (M.A. Near Eastern Studies, Spring 2009)
Munir Fakher Eldin (Ph.D. Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies,
Summer 2008)
Tanjila Islam (M.A. Near Eastern Studies, Spring 2009)
Ursula Lindsey (M.A. Near Eastern Studies, Spring 2009)
Christopher Mishek (M.A. Near Eastern Studies, Summer 2008)
Shahan Mufti (M.A. Near Eastern Studies/Journalism, Fall 2008)
Canay Ozden (M.A. Near Eastern Studies, Spring 2009)
Summar Shoaib (M.A. Near Eastern Studies, Spring 2009)
Basak Tug (Ph.D. History/Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies,
Spring 2009)

During this period, 49 undergraduates earned degrees with a major in Middle Eastern Studies; and 13 further B.A. degrees were granted with a minor in MEIS.