Dear Friends and Colleagues,

As I write these words, the tragic and still unfolding humanitarian crisis in Gaza has yet again put the Middle East at the center of world attention. The importance of informed understanding is as high as ever; and I am truly grateful for being part of a vibrant and caring community at Brown University and for its generous support of Middle East Studies (MES). The recent endowment of two chairs – one by the former chancellor Stephen Robert to the Watson Institute for a Middle East historian, and one by HH Aga Khan for a professor of Islamic Humanities – represent strong votes of confidence in the future of the MES Initiative launched in 2012.

MES is approaching critical mass in terms of faculty and instructors. This year, and in addition to the searches for the two new chairs, we welcome philosopher Adi Ophir, visiting professor in MES and the Cogut Center; Shiva Balaghi, visiting professor in Iranian Studies; Amal Sachedina, Aga Khan visiting professor; and Nicola Perugini, Mellon Post-Doc at MES and Italian Studies. Rejoining us in 2014-2015 are Bashir Abu Manneh (visiting professor, English), Mayssun Succarie (Cogut post-doc), Sa’ed Atshan (Watson post-doc), and Mohsen Namjoo (artist in residence).

Undergraduate teaching is the heart of MES. This past year, the number of concentrators more than doubled, six new MES designated courses were introduced, and record numbers of undergraduate students enrolled in classes of our core faculty. An enthusiastic ceremony last May marked the graduation of our largest class, also notable for receiving multiple prestigious awards and for leading the most active DUG on campus. A new graduate students group of MES scholars will be launched in September, further enriching our community.

This past semester MES launched a state-of-the-art website and organized its best-attended semester of programming to date. In addition to the regular luncheon seminars, lecture series, film series, undergraduate paper series, and Critical Conversations on Palestine/Israel, MES held four major conferences. The first ever conference in North America on the Turkish poet Nazim Hikmet; the groundbreaking international conference, “New Directions in Palestinian Studies;” the 3rd annual Aga Khan conference, “Sharia, Government, and Development;” and the 3rd annual conference on Engaged Scholarship, “Embedded,” which explored the relationship between militaries and the disciplines of Anthropology and Archaeology. This fall, in addition to our regular programming, please join us for the 2nd annual Digital Islamic Humanities workshop, led by Elias Muhanna; a film series on 1948, curated by Ariella Azoulay; a Critical Conversation panel on Palestine-Israel with Ian Lustick; a lecture series on Iran in the 21st Century; a festival of underground Iranian music led by Mohsen Namjoo; and, to begin it all, a teach-in on Gaza. This promises to be another great year for MES at Brown.

Thank you for your support.

Beshara Doumani
Joukowsky Family Professor of Modern Middle East History
Director, Middle East Studies
**FACULTY UPDATES**


**Faiz Ahmed**, assistant professor of history, presented three papers in the past semester: “Digital Archives and the Future(s) of Middle East History: Glimpses from Turkey, Iran, and Afghanistan” at MIT’s IVy+ Symposium, “An ‘Islamic’ Rule of Law in Afghanistan? The Case of the Nizamnama Reforms of Amanullah Khan” at Brown’s Aga Khan Workshop, and “Islam, Social History, and the American Academy: Challenges, Opportunities, New Directions” at the Brown Religious Literacy Project.

**Sa’eed Atshan**, postdoctoral fellow, Watson Institute, presented papers at academic conferences including the Association for Asian American Studies and the Native American and Indigenous Studies Association. He delivered public lectures at Harvard’s inaugural LGBT Conference and at Boston University, Smith College, Earlham College, and Providence College.

**Shiva Balaghi**, Layla Khadavi Visiting Professor of Iranian Studies, published several articles in the journals Biography, Artforum, and Canvas. She spoke at the Albright Institute at Wellesley College and at the Asia Society. She participated in the Global Art Forum at Art Dubai. Finally, Balaghi introduced a new course, “Culture and Power in Iran.”

**Palmira Brummett**, visiting professor of history, published “You Say ‘Classical,’ I Say ‘Imperial,’” Let’s Call the Whole Thing Off: Empire, individual, and encounter in travel narratives of the Ottoman empire,” in Living Empire: The Ottoman Transformation, 1700-1850, a special issue of the Journal of Ottoman Studies.

**Melani Cammett**, associate professor of political science, published “Is There an Islamist Political Advantage?” in the *Annual Review of Political Science* with Pauline Jones Luong. She also has two forthcoming books with Cornell University Press: Compassionate Communalism and The Politics of Non-State Social Welfare (co-edited with Lauren Morris MacLean).

**Beshara Doumani**, Joukowsky Family Professor of Modern Middle East History, director, Middle East Studies, taught a new graduate course, “Approaches to ME History,” and an undergraduate one, “Palestine vs. the Palestinians.” In Fall 2014 he is introducing a new methods course for MES concentrators. Doumani was awarded a Mellon Sawyer Seminar grant ($175,000) for a proposal on “Displacement and the Making of the Modern World,” and helped to raise endowments for two new chairs in ME history and in Islamic Humanities. He presented papers in Los Angeles, Berlin, and Istanbul, and submitted a manuscript for a new book on the history of family life to Cambridge University Press.

**Boğaç Ergene**, 2014 Aga Khan Visiting Professor in Islamic Humanities, published articles in *Islamic Law and Society and Economic History Review* (with Metin Cosgel). At Brown, he gave the Aga Khan Visiting Professor Lecture entitled “Making the Case for a Quantitative and Economic Approach to Ottoman Legal History,” and organized the two-day “Aga Khan Workshop on Sharia, Government, and Development.” Ergene received the College of Arts and Sciences Dean’s Lecture Award at the University of Vermont, his home institution, for outstanding scholarship and teaching.

**Sherine Hamdy**, Kutayba Afghanist Assistant Professor of Social Sciences, traveled to the Occupied Palestinian Territories and Israel, delivered a paper at the Universität Hamburg, presented on doctors and political violence in Egypt at CUNY, delivered a paper on social justice in Muslim bioethics in Doha, spoke at Harvard’s STS Circle, and co-organized the Brown’s Medics and Political Violence conference.

**Nancy Khalek**, William A. Dyer Assistant Professor in the Humanities, spoke at Boston College and at Emory University, and has an article forthcoming on relics and pilgrimage in the *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*. She is also the recipient of the 2014 John Rowe Workman award for Excellence in Teaching in the Humanities through the Dean of the Faculty.

**Maud Mandel**, associate professor of Judaic Studies and history, published her book, Muslims and Jews in France: History of a Conflict in January with Princeton University Press. She spoke on the subject this spring at Rhodes College and the University of London (Birbeck). In fall 2014, she assumes the position of Dean of the College.

**Elias Muhanna**, Manning Assistant Professor of Comparative Literature, gave talks this semester at the conventions of the MLA (Chicago), the ACLA (New York), and the Rhode Island Medieval Studies Circle. He was published in the *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, as well as *The New Yorker, Guernica Magazine*, and *The New York Times*.


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**Introducing**

Fall 2014/spring 2015 Aga Khan Visiting Professor in Islamic Humanities

Amal Sachedina joins Middle East Studies for the academic year 2014-15. She completed her graduate work in sociocultural anthropology and Middle East studies at the University of California, Berkeley.

2015-17 Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow in Italian and Middle East Studies

Nicola Perugini is an anthropologist who taught at and directed the Al Quds Bard Honors College Human Rights Program in Jerusalem. In 2008-2009 he taught at the International Relations Department at American University of Rome. In 2012-2013 Perugini was a Member at the Institute for Advanced Study (Princeton).
Seniors and MES staff at diploma ceremony
From left back row: Anthony Watson, Christina Kata, Kathryn Thornton; middle row: Nasim Azizgolshani, Elizabeth Resnick, Tiffany Zarabi-Aazam, Micah Greenberg; front row: Barbara Oberkoetter, Lauren Rouse, Elana Wenger ’14.5, Molly Ratner, Perri Gould, Beshara Daumani, Reva Dhingra, Katherine Long ’15.5

Special thanks to our Middle East Studies DUG, led by Nasim Azizgolshani ’14.

From left: Katherine Long ’15.5, Rafael Contreras ’15, Kathryn Thornton ’14, Nasim Azizgolshani ’14, and Lauren Rouse ’14.
On April 9, Meltem Toksöz, director of the Center for Asian Studies at Bogacizi University, presented “On Late Ottoman History Writing: Is There a New Kind?”

On April 16, Nikolaos Panou, visiting assistant professor of comparative literature, gave “Against Tobacco: An Eighteenth-Century Debate.”

On April 30, Anthony Watson, associate director, Middle East Studies, presented “Ideologies of Power and Minority Status in Medieval Persia: The Case of the Church of the East.”

On March 13, Fred Donner, professor of Near Eastern History at the University of Chicago spoke on “An Enigmatic Arabic Papyrus from Early Islam,” a discussion of some of the problems scholars face in studying the origins of the Islamic period, and the importance of documentary evidence for understanding early Islamic history. Co-sponsored by the Humanities Teaching and Research Fund.

On February 13, Elias Khouri, Global Distinguished Professor of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies at New York University, presented on “Commitment and Beyond in Modern Arabic Literature.” Khouri argued that the idea of an author’s obligatory commitment to his or her people was part of a national discourse dominated by the military.

On February 14, Mayssun Succarie, Cogut Postdoctoral Fellow in International Humanities and Modern Arab Culture and Society, presented “The Notion of Arab Culture in the Colonial Present.”

On March 5, Adi Ophir, Mellon Visiting Professor in the Humanities, gave “The One State Condition: Reflections on the Structure of the Israeli Regime and Its Unusual Resilience.” Ophir described Israel as a democracy with a lingering problem: the Occupation, a systemic condition that has played a crucial function in reconciling the conflicting tendencies of major state projects.

Retrospective of Spring 2014 Events

Lecture Series

The Lecture Series brings renowned scholars from universities around the world to present their latest research at Brown.

On February 13, Elias Khouri, Global Distinguished Professor of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies at New York University, presented on “Commitment and Beyond in Modern Arabic Literature.” Khouri argued that the idea of an author’s obligatory commitment to his or her people was part of a national discourse dominated by the military.

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Film Series

Saeed Atshan, Postdoctoral Fellow in International Studies, served as the curator for the popular and well-attended 2013-2014 Middle East Studies Film Series. The theme of the series was “Love and the City: Urban Lives in the Middle East” in which eight films from across the region were screened on Friday evenings at the Watson Institute. From Abu Dhabi to Beirut, Cairo to Jerusalem, Nablus to Tehran, the films captured the diverse experiences of gender, sexuality, and love in Middle Eastern urban centers.

Feb. 21 / CAIRO, The Yacoubian Building
March 14 / LONDON, My Brother, the Devil
April 18 / NABLUS, Paradise Now
May 2 / INTERNATIONAL, A Jihad for Love

Luncheon Seminars

Every month, Middle East Studies faculty, graduates or post docs present their latest research to peers, students and community members over lunch. These informal seminars build our Middle East Studies community and forge new connections across campus.

On February 14, Mayssun Succarie, Cogut Postdoctoral Fellow in International Humanities and Modern Arab Culture and Society, presented “The Notion of Arab Culture in the Colonial Present.”

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Other Film Showings

March 19, Jaffa, director Eyal Sivan, film screening and conversation with the director.

April 7, Sleepless Nights, director Eliane Raheb, also researcher and executive producer. Producer, Scriptwriter and Editor, Nizar Hassan. Through the stories of Assaad Shaftari, a former high ranking intelligence officer in a Christian right wing militia, responsible for many casualties in the protracted civil war in Lebanon and Maryam Saiidi, the mother of Maher, a missing young communist fighter who disappeared in 1982, the film digs into the war wounds and asks if redemption and forgiveness are possible.

April 9, “Occupy Turkey: Resistance in Baseworld.” director and producer Watson Postdoctoral Fellow Amy Austin Holmes. With over 1,000 military installations on foreign soil, the US has erected what some call an empire of bases. This film provides a glimpse into this little-known world by taking a close look at the history of the American presence in Turkey – and the rise of resistance to it.
**Undergraduate Paper Series**

The biweekly undergraduate paper series gives students the chance to present their original research on panels before their peers and faculty members, learning from one another while gaining valuable public speaking experience.

The semester opened with Micah Greenberg ’14 and Kathryn Thornton’s ’14 presentation on February 12 of “Hafiz and Al-Ghazali: A Study of Persian Medieval Mystics.” Thornton discussed challenges of translating the Persian poet Hafez, while Greenberg spoke on Al-Ghazali’s rejection of the Greek philosophical method. Over 35 students, professors and community members attended the first paper series of the semester.

On March 11, Elizabeth Resnick ’14 and Sime Luketa ’15 presented “The Muslim Brotherhood and Ennahda: The Evolution of Two Islamist Parties.” On April 1, Annika Lichtenbaum ’14 and Abraham Evans ’16 gave “Between Terrorism and Politics: The Evolution of Hamas and Hezbollah.” The last presentation of the semester was in front of a large audience in McKinney at the Watson Institute. “Intersections of the Private and Public Spheres: Women’s Rights, Mosques, and Soccer,” was presented by Felice Feit ’14, Simon de Jesus Rodrigues ’15, and Madeleine Luckel ’14 on April 22.

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**New Concentration Requirements for MES Class of 2015**

1. Middle East Studies Seminar
2. Foundational Courses
3. 4 Language Semesters
4. 4 Electives
5. 1 Capstone or Honors Project

Visit the Middle East Studies website at middleeastbrown.org for more information.

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**FALL 2014 COURSES**

Middle East Studies is proud to unveil its course listings for fall 2014, including the highest number of MES-coded courses in the history of the program.

**MIDDLE EAST STUDIES SEMINAR**

HIST 1970Q “Approaches to the Middle East,” Beshara Doumani

**FOUNDATIONAL COURSES**

RELS 0150 “Islam Unveiled,” Nancy Khalek
MES 0155 “Cultures of the Contemporary Middle East,” Sa’ed Atshan
MES 1001 “Revolution and Poets: Content and Form in Iranian Poetry,” Mohsen Namjoo
MES 1055 “Israel/Palestine: A Critical Lexicon,” Adi Ophir
HIST 1453 “Civilization, Empire, Nation: Competing Histories of the Middle East,” Beshara Doumani
MES 1997B “Visualizing the Middle East: Oriental Construction, Exhibition, and the Culture of the Screen” Amal Sachedina
MES 1999B “Colonialism and Human Rights,” Nicola Perugini
MES 1999C “Elites in Arab Culture and Society,” Mayssun Succarie

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**Other Undergraduate Events**


April 1 Middle East Studies DUG: What to do with an MES degree. 6:30-8:00 p.m. Watson Institute, Joukowsky Forum. With Naomi Choy Smith and Will Wray.
Awards, Scholarships, Accolades

Reva Dhingra ’14 and Kyle Zurcher ’14 both received Fulbright Awards for 2014-15. Dhingra will spend the year in Jordan completing research, while Zurcher will teach English in Turkey. Dhingra was also named magna cum laude and received honors in Middle East Studies for her thesis, Phi Beta Kappa, academic excellence in International Relations, and a Dean of the College award for research in Middle East Studies.

Micah Greenberg ’14 won a Critical Language Scholarship to study advanced Arabic in Oman, and a Middle East Studies Undergraduate Research Award to attend a conference in Tunis on local governance reform. Kathryn Thornton ’14 won a Critical Language Scholarship to study Turkish in Bursa. Rafael Contreras ’15 was named a Watson Undergraduate Fellow for 2014-15. Katherine Long ’15.5 is the recipient of both a Boren Scholarship and a Demers Fellowship to study Persian in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, and a Middle East Studies undergraduate research award to research American-Iranian negotiations. Christina Kata ’14 and Elizabeth Resnick ’14 were named members of the Phi Beta Kappa Society in appreciation of their outstanding academic achievement. Kata also was named magna cum laude and received honors in Middle East Studies for her thesis.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

For their invaluable contributions and passion to making MES a success: Reva Dhingra ’14, Rafael Contreras ’15, Katherine Long ’15.5, Lara Savenije ’15, and Emma Funk ’16

SPECIAL TRIBUTE

To Phil Lai ’13 ScM ’14, who reinvigorated the look and feel of Middle East Studies from the ground up, we will be forever grateful. He will be sorely missed as he embarks on his next adventure. Phil graduated from Brown in 2013 with a double concentration in international relations and biology, and earned his master’s this year in ecology and evolutionary biology. He plans to take a well-deserved break to travel and backpack in the year ahead.

SINCERE APPRECIATION

Middle East Studies Faculty Advisory Committee/spring 2014

From left: Mirena Christoff, Beshara Doumani, Ariella Azoulay, Maud Mandel, Anthony Watson, Ian Straughn, Robyn Creswell
Major Events in Spring 2014

NAZIM HIKMET: ONE POET, ONE NATION, ONE WORLD

On February 11, Middle East Studies | Brown University hosted the first conference in the United States devoted to the Turkish poet Nazim Hikmet’s life and work, organized by professor of English Mutlu Blasing. Hikmet’s poetry has served as an inspiration to people, especially in the Middle East, aspiring to self-determination as they emerged from the ruins of empire. At the same time, his life and work raise the issue of the relationship between nation-building and a national language. And in an age when so many countries with diverse populations look poised to make the leap from one-man or one-party rule to pluralistic nationhood, the Turkish model appears to be increasingly appealing.

Hikmet is “more of a legend than a body of texts,” conference participant and Professor of Comparative Literature Robyn Creswell told The Brown Daily Herald. “He represents a moment when politics and poetry were combined, back when it was possible to combine them.” The conference was co-sponsored by the Dean of the Faculty, the Office of Global Engagement, and the Department of English.

The event was praised in Turkish newspapers and cultural blogs, including the major publications Hurriyet, Today’s Zaman and Bugun Bugece. Conference participants included former Turkish minister of culture Talat Sait Halman, translator Mutlu Blasing, writer and psychologist Gunduz Vassaf, lecturer in history Stephen Kinzer and professor of comparative literature Robyn Creswell. David Ben-Merre kindly stepped in to give Azade Seyhan’s presentation on Hikmet’s cross-border poetic influence. Seyhan is professor of Comparative Literature at Bryn Mawr College, and was unable to be present at the last minute.

The 2014 Engaged Scholarship workshop, themed “Embedded: Archaeologists and Anthropologists in Modern Landscapes of Conflict” organized through Middle East Studies by Ömür Harmansah, professor of archaeology, took place at the Watson Institute’s Joukowsky Form on May 1-2, 2014.

More information on http://engagedscholarship.org/2014

The event opened to debate the ethical and political dimensions of the engagement of archaeologists and anthropologists with the military, especially in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Palestine. Sessions at the workshop focused on the Human Terrain System program of the US Army, the newly initiated archaeological projects in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the adoption of military technologies such as satel-lite imagery and drones or the military funding for field research. The workshop started with a keynote address by Yannis Hamilakis, who highlighted the deep history of archaeological participation in the combat zone. Following the three sessions, each featuring three speakers and a discussant, the workshop concluded with a round table discussion. In conclusion, a new network of academics concerned with militarization of academia and the ethics of field research in collaboration with the military has been formed.

Participants:
Keith Brown, David B. Edwards, Kerry B. Fosher; Yannis Hamilakis, Omur Harmansah, Caren Kaplan, Morag Kersel, Catherine Lutz, Adrian Myers, David Price, Felipe Rojas, Maria Theresia Starzmann, Mayssun Succarie, Vazira F-Y Zamindar

STUDENT REACTION TO THE CONFERENCE

The talks by Professor Vassaf and Dr. Halman were particularly captivating as their personal stories showed how Nazim Hikmet continues to shape lives, similarly demonstrated by the use of his writings during the recent civil protest across Turkey.

Lara Savenije ’15 / MES concentrator
In spring 2014, Associate Professor of History at University of Vermont Bogac Ergene resided at Brown as the Aga Khan Visiting Professor in Islamic Humanities at Brown University. He is the author of *Local Court, Provincial Society and Justice in the Ottoman Empire: Legal Practice and Dispute Resolution in Cankiri and Kastamonu (1652-1744)*. During the semester, he taught a course on “Islam and Human Rights.”

A weekend of events was organized in his honor beginning with the 2014 Aga Khan Visiting Professor Lecture on April 3 and followed by the Aga Khan Conference/Workshop from April 4-5.

“The Aga Khan Workshop on Sharia, Government, and Development” brought together scholars whose works explore the relationships between Islamic law, governance, and socioeconomic development in early modern and modern Muslim settings. In this general vein, the event focused on two interrelated topics. The first theme (“Law and Governance”) combined Islamic jurisprudence, legal practice, and politics. The presentations that highlighted this theme explored the ways in which legal structures and political factors influenced one another in different historical and modern contexts. The second theme (“Law and Development”) concerned the relationship between Islamic law, its various context-based articulations, and socioeconomic development. Renowned scholars, including Nathan Brown, Beshara Doumani, Mahmoud El-Gamal, Timur Kuran, Martha Mundy, and Brinkley Messick, participated in this workshop and presented their research on historical, economic, legal, and anthropological topics.”

– Bogac Ergene, Aga Khan visiting professor in Islamic Humanities, 2013-14

More on http://agakhanbrown.org/
After OSLO

September 2013 brought the 20th anniversary of the Oslo Peace Accords, and the signing of the Declaration of Principles on the White House lawn. To mark this historic moment, Middle East Studies planned a yearlong series of events related to this issue. The events explore questions including: What is the “peace process”? What has changed on the ground? And what are the possible futures of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict?

RASHID KHALIDI: CRITICAL CONVERSATIONS ON PALESTINE/ISRAEL, FEB. 27

After the phenomenal success of Dr. Hanan Ashrawi’s talk “Process vs. Peace” in the fall, Rashid Khalidi, Edward Said Professor of Arab Studies at Columbia University, discussed possible futures for Palestinians and Israelis on a panel of Brown faculty.

Director of Middle East Studies Beshara Doumani opened the event by welcoming Khalidi, as a friend and a colleague, to a packed Joukowsky Forum. Khalidi offered a realistic take on Palestine’s future, citing internal divisions and the “fiction” of peace talks and the Palestinian Authority as obstacles to ensuring a safe and secure future for Palestine and Palestinians.

Brown faculty Omer Bartov, Stephen Kinzer and Beshara Doumani had more optimistic expectations, noting shifts in the discourse to accept the legitimacy of Palestinian claims to the land as a momentous step.

Associate Professor of Judaic Studies and History Maud Mandel moderated the discussion.
New Directions In Palestinian Studies
Symposium 2014: “Political Economy And The Economy Of The Political”

More at http://palestinianstudies.org

Over forty scholars participated in the conference, the first of its scope.

There is now a critical mass of innovative scholars in the US, Europe, and the Middle East who work on Palestine and the Palestinians. The field has grown quantitatively and qualitatively, with new lines of inquiry pushing in several new directions simultaneously.

New Directions in Palestinian Studies, a series of annual and thematically organized symposia supported by the Middle East Studies Initiative at Brown University in cooperation with other universities and institutes, provides a space for systematic reflection on the fast-paced academic knowledge production on Palestine and the Palestinians. The symposia bring together established and emerging scholars in a low-pressure workshop environment to take stock of research trends, to identify promising new questions and sources, to exchange experiences and insights, and to encourage networking across disciplinary and field boundaries. New Directions in Palestinian Studies is founded and led by Beshara Doumani.

The first in the symposia series took place from February 28 – March 1 at the Watson Institute. The two-day conference featured seven panels, all related to this year’s theme: Political Economy and the Economy of the Political. The panels were organized by broad topic area, ranging from “land” to “class” to the “political economy of peace.” Each panel featured young scholars, and reflected the multitude of new directions in Palestinian Studies scholarship. Generous support for the conference was provided by The Watson Institute, Brown University; the Center for Palestine Studies, Columbia University; the Hagop Kevorkian Center for Near Eastern Studies, New York University; Birzeit University; the Institute for Palestine Studies; Muwatin: Palestinian Institute for the Study of Democracy; Masarat: the Palestinian Center for Policy Research and Strategic Studies; and Mada al-Carmel: The Arab Institute for Applied Social Research.

“Even I was not prepared for the enormous amount of interest” in the conference, Professor Doumani told the Watson Institute’s blog. Event participants and attendees filled the Joukowsky Forum and two overflow rooms. “In addition to the senior scholars, there were people who attended from Europe, from Canada, and from around the US, all on their own expense. There’s a real hunger for knowledge on Palestine and Palestinians,” Doumani added. Middle East Studies undergraduate Molly Ratner ‘14 noted that, “Thirty years ago, these topics wouldn’t have been acceptable; there wouldn’t have been an audience for it. [This conference] helped to create that audience.”

Courtesy of Noah Elbot ‘14, Watson Institute Communications
Mohsen Namjoo, Artist In Residence

Hailed as “the Bob Dylan of Iran” by The New York Times, Mohsen Namjoo, Middle East Studies 2014 artist in residence, is a visionary artist who speaks for and touches the souls of today’s youth. His music seamlessly blends the classical with the modern, and the ancient with the current.

During his residency, Namjoo is engaging in a number of activities. In spring 2014, he taught a course titled “Tradition and Protest: Persian and Iranian Music,” and gave several musical talks to public audiences on topics including “Iranian Rhythms,” “Shahram Shabpareh: Honesty and Minor Scale,” and “Comparing Eastern Music and Western Music through High Pitch and Low Pitch,” co-sponsored by the Music Department.

The spring semester was capped by a well-attended concert on the evening of May 10. Webcasts are available to view on MiddleEastBrown.org.

In fall 2014, Namjoo will teach “Revolution and Poets: Content and Form in Iranian Poetry.”

He will take part in a panel discussion on Protest Music/ Music Performance and Social Change on Thursday, November 13, as well as take the lead on assembling a group of three Iranian bands, banned from playing in their own country, who will come together for the first time in an Iranian Music Festival titled “Iran Underground” on November 15th at RISD Auditorium. The event is co-sponsored by Brown’s 250th Anniversary fund, CAC, the Cogut Center for the Humanities, the Music Department, and TAPS.

Seminar Organized by Beshara Doumani Wins Mellon Award

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation has awarded $175,000 for a Sawyer seminar, “Displacement and the Making of the Modern World: Histories, Ecologies, and Subjectivities,” organized by Beshara Doumani, Joukowsky Family Distinguished Professor of Modern Middle East History and director of the Middle East Studies Initiative. The award provides resources for post-graduate research fellowships, three workshops, and a seminar series.

Through a yearlong series of workshops, seminars, courses, and cultural activities, “Displacement and the Making of the Modern World” will explore three broad themes that integrate disparate studies of displacement. Displacement will be considered through the following perspectives: 1) as a global and historically enduring phenomenon; 2) as an ecological and technological phenomenon; and 3) as a discursive phenomenon.

Professor Doumani’s research focuses on the social history of Palestine and Palestinians. His efforts will be aided and guided by an active steering committee that includes the following Brown faculty: Vazira Zamindar, Rebecca Nedostrup, Ariella Azoulay, and Anthony Bogues.
**Major Events**

Oct. 17-18  **Textual Corpora + The Digital Islamic Humanities: A Workshop**

Oct. 29  **Critical Conversations on Palestine / Israel** with Ian Lustick, UPenn, and Brown Faculty

Nov. 13  **Music Performance and Social Change / Panel**

Nov. 15  **Musical Festival/Underground Iran. RISD Auditorium, Providence, RI**

Nov. 20  **Aga Khan VP Lecture. Amal Sachedina**

**Middle East Studies Film Series**

**DREAMING OF TOMORROW: YOUTH CULTURE IN THE MIDDLE EAST**

Friday Screenings, each at 5:30 p.m., Joukowsky Forum, Watson Institute

Oct. 17  Iran / **No One Knows About Persian Cats**

Nov. 7  Jordan / **Captain Abu Raed**

**1948 - ONCE UPON A PALESTINE**

Movie series curated by Ariella Azoulay, assistant professor of Comparative Literature and Modern Culture and Media.

The series is part of an ongoing research project to re-visit the history of Palestine-Israel outside the framework imposed by the paradigm of an unending “national conflict”, and to study the catastrophe of 1948 as not merely an internal Palestinian affair.

Sept. 9  **Khirbat Khize**, director: Ram Loey (1978), Israel (Hebrew, English subtitles, 48 min) and **al-Midya**, director: Dani Gal, (2014) Israel (Arabic, English subtitles, 26 min)

Presented by Ariella Azoulay

Sept. 30  **Hill 24 Doesn’t Answer (Giv’a 24 Eina Ona)**, director: Thorold Dickinson (1955), Israel (Hebrew/English, English subtitles, 101 min)

Presented by Orly Lubin

Oct. 28  **The Dupes (al-Makhdu’un)**, director: Tewfik Saleh (1972), Syria (Arabic, English subtitles, 107 min.)

Based on Men in the Sun by Ghassan Kanafani.

Presented by Mayssun Succarie

Nov. 11  **1948**, director: Mohammad Bakri (1998), Palestine-Israel (Arabic, English subtitles, 54 min)

Presented by Ariella Azoulay

**Lectures**

**IRAN IN THE 21ST CENTURY**

**Luncheon Lecture Series. Cosponsorship with the Watson Institute**

Wednesdays, 12:00-1:30 p.m. Joukowsky Forum, Watson Institute

Oct. 1  **Hooman Majd** - “Waiting for Something Big: Inside Today’s Iran.”

Oct. 15  **Hussein Banai** - “The US and Iran: Prospects for a Breakthrough.”

Nov. 19  **Nazila Fathi** - “The Lonely War: A Woman’s View of Iran.”

**EVENING LECTURE SERIES**

Joukowsky Forum, Watson Institute

Thursdays, 5:00-6:30 p.m.

Sept. 18  **Jenny White**, Boston University, “Turkey at the Tipping Point.”

Cosponsorship with the Watson Institute Security Seminar Series


Cosponsorship with the Watson Institute Security Seminar Series


**Luncheon Seminars**

McKinney Room, Watson Institute 12:00 - 1:00 p.m.

Sept. 10  **Alexei Abrahams**. “Mobility & Inequality: Evidence from the Second Intifada.”

Oct. 8  **Elias Muhanna**. “The Death of Arabic is Greatly Exaggerated: Notes on the Future of a World Language.”

Oct. 30  **Ian Lustick**, UPenn, “The Two State Solution as a Degenerative Research Program,” 12:00-2:00 p.m. Petteruti Lounge, Stephen Robert Center. **Note: different venue and day of week**

Nov. 5  **Andrew Robarts**, RISD, “Environment, Human Mobility, and the Ottoman State.”

Dec. 3  **Lisa DiCarlo**, “Research on the Roboski Massacre.”

**Undergraduate Student Events**

McKinney Room, Watson Institute, 6:30 p.m.

Sept. 23  **Undergraduate Paper Series**

Oct. 7  **Undergraduate Paper Series**

Oct. 14  **Study Abroad in the MENA: What to expect?**

Nov. 4  **Undergraduate Paper Series**

Dec. 2  **Undergraduate Paper Series**

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**Middle East Studies Launches New Website**

The state-of-the-art new website, with five times the functionality of the average site — including Google maps, calendar, and RSVP functions for events, seamless integration with social media sites and key university resources, and a powerful database-driven archive — was developed with the input of faculty, students, and staff. The development team, led by Associate Director Tony Watson, included John Mazza, Elias Muhanna, and Barbara Oberkoetter. Emma Funk ’16 was instrumental in designing the new site. Her expertise, dedication, and attention to detail was invaluable.