



BROWN UNIVERSITY
CENTER FOR
MIDDLE EAST
STUDIES

ANNUAL REPORT 2019-2020

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LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

I hope this message finds you healthy and prosperous. Under current circumstances, saying this is more than a formality. Even as we confront great challenges triggered by the coronavirus pandemic, we can wish that, when a new normalcy is established, we will find the world a more just, compassionate, and environmentally responsible place.

As with Brown as a whole during the academic year 2019-20, the work of the Center for Middle East Studies was curtailed significantly starting in the middle of March, when most students were sent home and on-campus presence became limited to essential staff. The Center was a place of vigorous programming prior to the shutdown, as reflected in the contents of this report. We also had a number of important events remaining to be held during the Spring semester that will, circumstances permitting, now take place in Fall 2020.

As you will see in this report, the work of a diverse group of students and faculty is key to the Center's mission. Over the past year, we covered topics ranging from North Africa to Xinjiang, and from the medieval period to contemporary societies of the Middle East. We paid attention to the Center's long-term initiatives in Palestinian Studies and Islam and the Humanities. We also welcomed new programs driven by faculty interests in Kurdish Studies and Israel and Palestine: Lands and Peoples. The news cycle generated the need for events pertaining to Iran, Syria, Turkey, and China. Our aim in addressing topics emerging and longstanding, about the past or the present and the future, remained to provide academic treatments geared toward a better and ever more compassionate understanding of the lives of people in the Middle East and elsewhere.

We were unable to say goodbye to our graduating concentrators in the usual style because Commencement was an online event. With the rest of Brown, we hope to welcome students and their families back for an on-campus celebration in the future. The lack of ceremony does not, of course, take anything away from our pride in the students' phenomenal work and their current and future achievements. I encourage you to read about the work of our students and alumni in this report.

This report marks the end of my term as the director of the Center for Middle East Studies at Brown. It has been a pleasure and an honor to occupy this role and I especially want to thank my colleagues Barbara Oberkoetter and Saraya McPherson for making CMES an extremely pleasant and efficient concern. The "magic" would not happen save for their tireless effort that always goes well beyond the call of duty. My thanks also to all students, faculty, and advocates inside and outside the University without whose support the director's job would be meaningless. We are exceedingly fortunate that Professor Nadje Al-Ali has agreed to take over the directorship. She is an inspiring choice to lead the Center. I wish her all possible success as she charts an ever brighter future for the study of the Middle East at Brown.

Shahzad Bashir

*Aga Khan Professor of Islamic Humanities
Director, Center for Middle East Studies*



ABOUT

MISSION

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

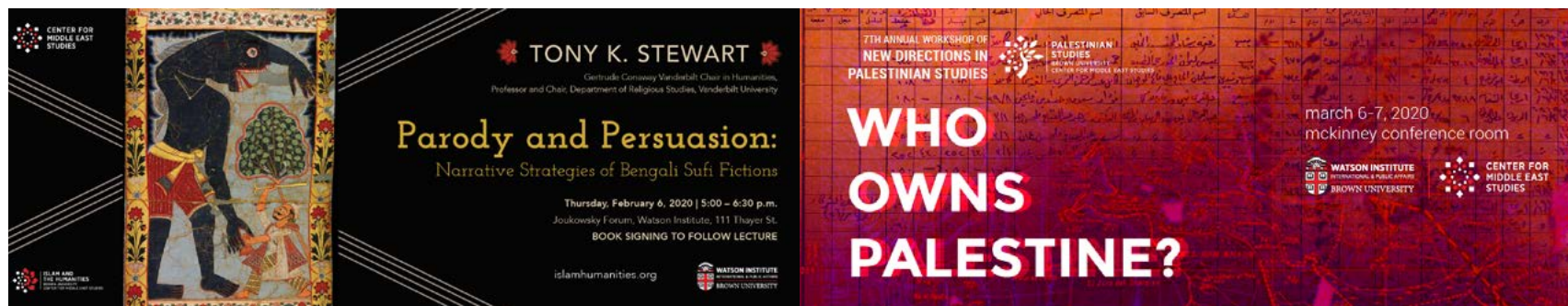


RESEARCH INITIATIVES



ISLAM AND THE HUMANITIES

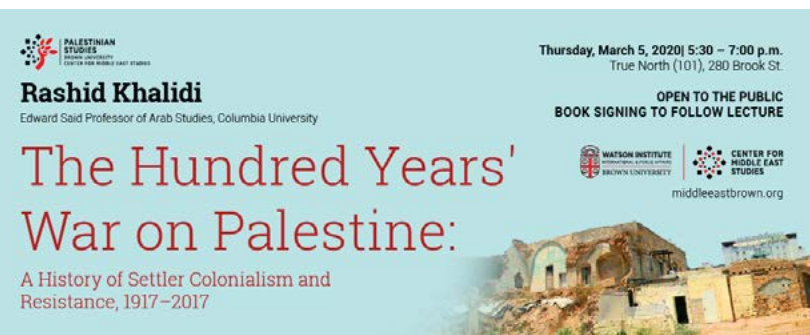
is a research initiative led by **Shahzad Bashir**, Aga Khan Professor of Islamic Humanities. It connects the study of Islam and Muslims to topics engaged by scholars in the humanities in general. The initiative's website is both a hub for those interested in the subject at Brown, as well as a signal of the University's commitment to the field for the outside world. During 2019-20, the initiative held a major conference (*The Primacy of Form*) and co-sponsored events on campus. The initiative participated in creating an exhibition at the John Hay Library (*Dis/Assemble: Making Meaning from the Minassian Collection*, March through May 2020) that was curated by graduate students in a collaborative humanities seminar co-taught by Professor Bashir and Professor Holly Shaffer (History of Art and Architecture). Aided by a grant from the Carnegie Corporation, the initiative's Open Access book series, *Islamic Humanities* (University of California Press), published its second title, Tony Stewart's *Witness to Marvels: Sufism and Literary Imagination* (September 2019). Papers from the initiative's first major conference held in April 2018 were published in the journal *History and Theory: Studies in the Philosophy of History* in a theme issue titled "Islamic Pasts: Histories, Concepts, Interventions" (December 2019).



NEW DIRECTIONS IN PALESTINIAN STUDIES

(NDPS) brings together an international community of researchers and practitioners to promote and shape knowledge production on Palestine and the Palestinians. Founded in 2013 by Joukowsky Family Distinguished Professor of Modern Middle East History **Beshara Doumani**, NDPS invests in emerging scholars through an annual thematic workshop, an endowed post-doctoral fellowship, and a book series with the University of California Press. NDPS has also succeeded in raising an endowment for the establishment, in 2020, of the Mahmoud Darwish Chair in Palestinian Studies, the first of its kind.

Each NDPS workshop invites a diverse group of emerging, mid-career, and established scholars dedicated to decolonizing and globalizing this field of study. More than half of the participants are women and a third are from overseas. The seventh annual workshop, "Who Owns Palestine?," held on March 6-7, 2020, drew scholars from the Middle East, Europe, Canada, and the United States who shared research papers on topics ranging from the legal history and political economy of land relations to urban planning and settler colonialism. This workshop was preceded by a large public event on March 5, which featured a conversation with Rashid Khalidi on his new book, *The Hundred Years' War on Palestine: A History of Settler Colonialism and Resistance, 1917-2017*.



RESEARCH PROJECTS

ISRAEL-PALESTINE: LANDS AND PEOPLES

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

This project therefore seeks to gain and provide a more nuanced and empathetic view of the myriad ways in which the land of Israel/Palestine has become part of the two peoples' mental, mythical, and religious landscape. Since 2015 the project has hosted seven international workshops where well over a hundred papers were presented and discussed, on topics such as "nationalism, settler colonialism, and decolonization"; "the Holocaust and the Nakba"; "Faith, Ideology, and Education"; "Space and Time"; "Future Scenarios"; and "Partitions." An edited volume with some of the most important contributions will be published next year. The project has also hosted a series of invited, public lectures, by such speakers as Tom Segev, Benny Morris, Gershon Shafir, Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian, Anita Shapira, Derek Penslar, David Myers, and Eric Weitz. Plans are under way to host another workshop in the fall 2020 semester on the question of federations within the framework of two states—one homeland.



THE KURDISH PROJECT

Kurdish studies have historically been sidelined within Middle East studies or reduced to the study of Kurdish nationalism. While there has been a proliferation of Kurdish studies across the US and Europe in recent years, there has been only limited engagement with Kurdish society in its complexity. The aim of this project led by **Nadje Al-Ali**, Robert Family Professor of International Studies, is to support and contribute to critical and original Kurdish studies that combine theoretically cutting-edge and empirically grounded work while highlighting creative approaches (films, art, literature) to the study of Kurds and Kurdish societies.

This year, the Kurdish Studies initiative supported a lecture by a visiting scholar, a teach-in, and a research project that resulted in a co-authored article.

Isabel Käser

What Kind of Femininity? The Kurdish Women's Liberation Movement between Revolution, Militarism and Body Politics

Teach-In on Northern Syria

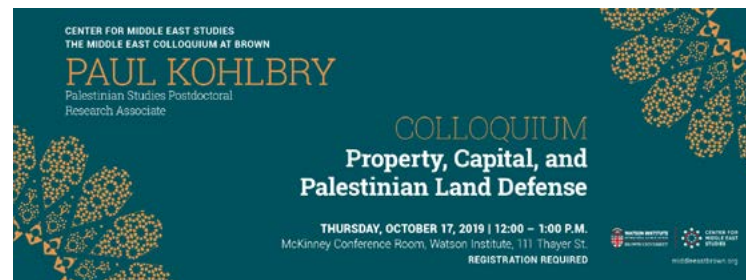
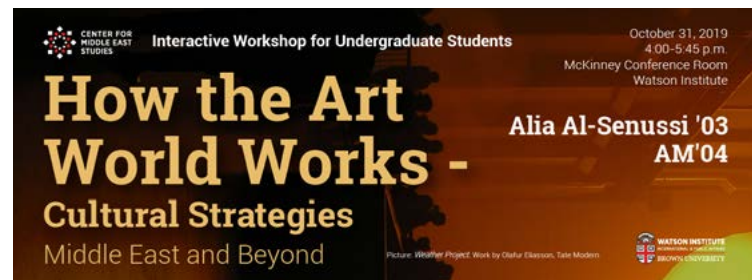
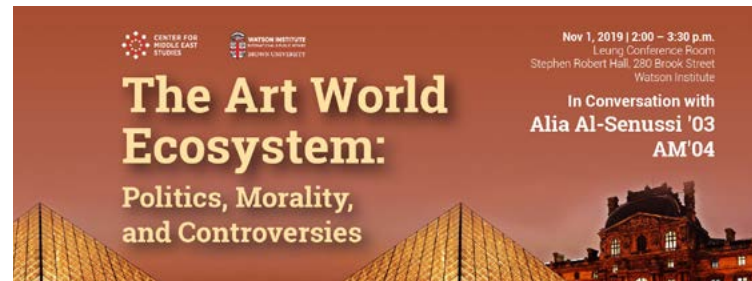
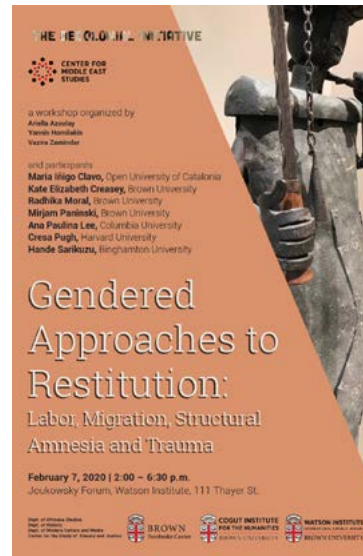
Understanding the Kurdish Struggle and Turkey's Invasion

***Jineoloji* and the Kurdish Women's Liberation Movement**

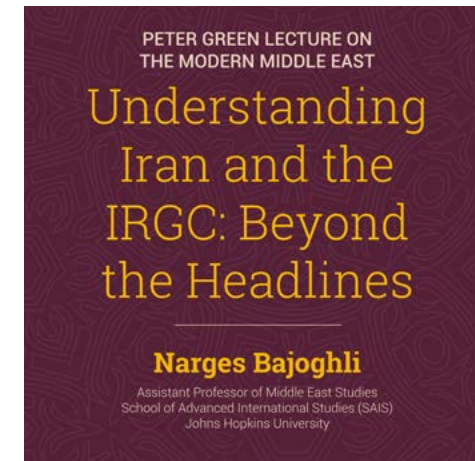
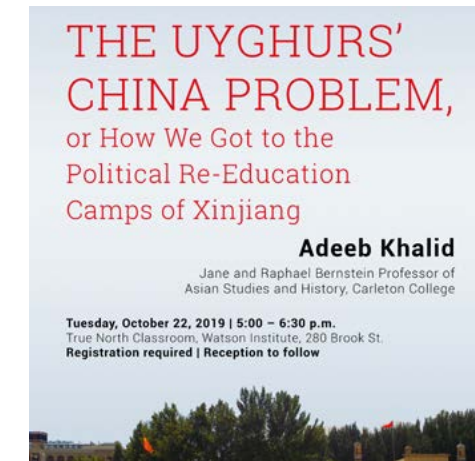
Jineoloji, the women's science proposed and developed by the Kurdish Women's Liberation Movement, has become central to their transnational organizing both in the Middle East, as well as in Europe and the Americas. Activists of the Kurdish women's movement critique positivist and androcentric forms of knowledge production as well as liberal feminism, and instead propose *Jineoloji*, which aims to rediscover women's histories and restore women's central place in society. Based on a series of interviews with Kurdish women involved in developing *Jineoloji*, this article firstly situates *Jineoloji* within wider transnational and decolonial feminist approaches, and secondly draws out the main underlying ideas constituting *Jineoloji*.

PROGRAMMING

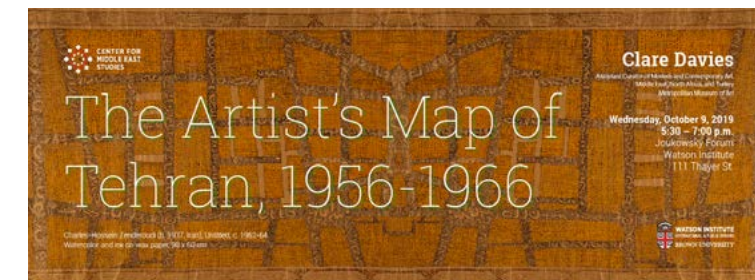
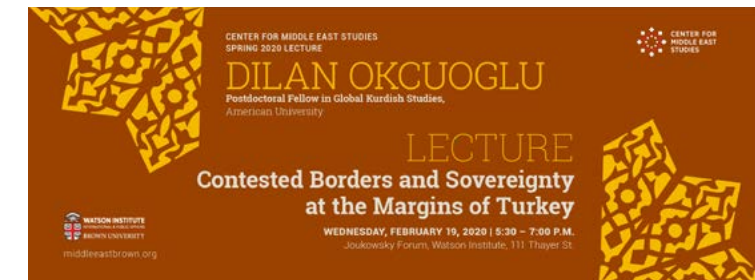
CONFERENCES, WORKSHOPS, PANELS, COLLOQUIA



PETER GREEN LECTURES ON THE MODERN MIDDLE EAST



GENERAL LECTURES





PROGRAMMING

SAMPLING OF SPONSORED PARTNER EVENTS

WRITING AND ROCK ART IN THE BLACK DESERT OF NORTHERN JORDAN

LECTURE | Ahmad Al-Jallad | Joukowsky Institute for Archaeology and the Ancient World

AT THE MARGINS: INTERCONNECTIONS OF POWER AND IDENTITY IN THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST

CONFERENCE | Department of Religious Studies

TRANSLATION ACROSS DISCIPLINES

CONFERENCE | Center for Language Studies

IN BETWEEN WITH IBRAHIM MIARI

LECTURE | Hebrew Program in Judaic Studies; Arabic Program in the Center for Language Studies

JEWS, MUSLIMS AND RELIGIOUS CHALLENGES TO THE EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS: THE HEADSCARF AND RITUAL MALE CIRCUMCISION DEBATES

LECTURE | Gökce Yurdakul | Program in Judaic Studies

LIVING THE NILE RIVER

LECTURE | Jennifer Derr | Program in Science and Technology Studies

MICHAEL RAKOWITZ - TALK WITH THE ARTIST

Itohan Osayimwese, Holly Shaffer, Vazira Zamindar | Department of the History of Art and Architecture, Center for Middle East Studies, Center for Contemporary South Asia, Cogut Institute for the Humanities, Joukowsky Institute for Archaeology and the Ancient World, Program in Early Cultures, Department of Visual Art

PRECARIOUS HOPE: MIGRATION AND THE LIMITS OF BELONGING IN TURKEY

LECTURE | Ayşe Parla | Department of Anthropology

RETHINKING THE BODY: HUMANITY AND ITS DISCONTENTS IN LATE ANTIQUITY AND THE MIDDLE AGES

2019 NEW ENGLAND MEDIEVAL CONFERENCE | Department of History

SETTING UP HOUSE: BACHELORS, DOMESTICITY, AND MOBILITY IN IMPERIAL SUDAN

LECTURE | Mary Grace Brown | Africa Speaker Series

GENDER IN ISRAELI AND PALESTINIAN FILM

SYMPOSIUM | Program in Judaic Studies

THE PALESTINE HEIRLOOM SEED LIBRARY - A JOURNEY OF RECLAIMING LIFE IN ONE OF THE WORLD'S CENTERS OF DIVERSITY: PALESTINE

LECTURE | Vivien Sansour | The Decolonial Initiative and the Photographic Archives Research Group, Department of Modern Culture and Media

TRANSIENT MATTER: ASSEMBLAGES OF MIGRATION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

EXHIBITION | Haffenreffer Museum of Anthropology

ACADEMICS

SAMPLING OF COURSES

Brown University’s Center for Middle East Studies has earned a reputation as an international interdisciplinary gateway to the study of the Middle East, broadly defined. Affiliated faculty reflect the growing diversity of Middle East studies, pushing the geographic and temporal boundaries of the field, while engaging in key themes such as gender and sexuality, displacement and refugees, law and society, and the politics of heritage. A growing number of college applicants and transfer students seek entrance to Brown with the express intention of pursuing Middle East studies, drawn by the opportunities and support for Middle Eastern language learning and research. Students at Brown often study more than one Middle Eastern language, and research and travel funding through the Center for Middle East Studies allows students to conduct primary research in the region. Inside the classroom and beyond it, through a diversity of academic, cultural, and artistic events, Middle East studies forges a tight-knit community of scholars—students and faculty—who bring their wide-ranging interests and perspectives together in the service of greater understanding.

ANTH 1911 Gender and Sexuality in the Middle East

NADJE AL-ALI

The aim of this course is to offer an overview of the key issues in the study of gender and sexuality with reference to the Middle East. It provides a gendered understanding of prevailing structures, ideologies, social practices, and trends for those students interested in Middle East societies, cultures, and politics, as well as those interested in women and gender studies. While the course focuses on anthropological approaches, it is interdisciplinary in scope, with readings and theoretical underpinnings ranging from anthropology to history, sociology, and political science, to cultural studies.

COLT 1310M The Literature of Muslim Spain

ELIAS MUHANNA

Medieval Iberia was a place of great cultural, linguistic, and religious diversity. This course explores the rich Arabic literary production of Cordoba, Seville, Toledo, Granada, and other cities of Al-Andalus. The class will read picaresque narratives, literary anthologies, philosophical novels, and sung poetry. Reading knowledge in Arabic required.

HIST 1960S North African History: 1800 to Present

JENNIFER JOHNSON

This course focuses on the francophone Maghrib (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia) and offers an introduction to major themes in the history of Africa and the Arab world in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Students will gain the tools to analyze and historicize the dynamic history of this region. The class will examine a range of topics, including the transformations of pre-colonial social, economic, and cultural patterns, conquest and resistance, comparative histories of colonialism, nationalism, decolonization, and revolution, the consolidation of post-colonial states, regional cooperation, the rise of Islamism and civil conflicts, and the Arab Spring.

HIST 1969C Debates in Middle Eastern History

SREEMATI MITTER

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

ACADEMICS

SAMPLING OF COURSES

MES 1150 Labor and the Long Downturn in the Middle East

PAUL KOHLBRY

This course examines the question of labor in the contemporary Middle East. The 1970s saw a global economy defined increasingly by deindustrialization, intensified competition, financialization, and squeezes on profitability. For workers, these changes meant that technological development, agrarian change, debt, and increasing precarity have transformed who works, where they work, and the sorts of politics that work (or its absence) gives rise to. This course examines these wider concerns within the context of the Middle East. Through a focus on social history and ethnographic accounts, it illuminates the ways different groups of workers experience and grapple with these broader transformations.

MES 1170 Iranian Art: Sites and Sights

SAMINE TABATABAEI

This course introduces students to the modern and contemporary history of art in Iran, including architecture, visual art, cinema, theatre, and politics. It starts with the transition from the Qajar period (1781-1925) and its visual culture to the modern 20th-century nation-state, addressing processes of urbanization; spread of modern technologies; revolutionary sentiment of 1979; displacement and formation of diasporic communities after the Islamic revolution; and the emergence of Internet technology in the 21st century. This historical backdrop informs investigation into artistic milieus, platforms, and the ever-changing notion of creativity.

MES 1250 Palestinians and Kurds: The Condition of Statelessness

ADI OPHIR AND MELTEM TOKSOZ

This seminar seeks to achieve three interrelated goals: to introduce students to the condition of statelessness experienced by two ethnic groups in the Middle East, the Kurdish and Palestinian peoples; to examine the contours and potency of, and the problematics associated with, the concept of statelessness; and to offer the production and management of statelessness as a viable perspective for the study of the modern Middle East. The class will look for analogies and distinctions between the two cases, and qualify and multiply the condition of statelessness for each, guided by categories of Nation, State, Nationalism, Colonization, Settler Colonialism, Citizenship, and Precariousness.

RELS 0090M Islam, Violence, and Media

NANCY KHALEK (FIRST-YEAR SEMINAR)

One of the most controversial issues in contemporary political discourse is the question of Islamist violence and its relationship to Islamic religion and practice. This course explores the phenomenon and media representation of radicalization, and their relationship to a number of institutions and issues, including but not limited to religious texts, global politics, colonialism, war, and nationalism. The goals of this course are to familiarize students with the historical and discursive issues pertaining to radicalism and religious violence in Islamic and non-Islamic contexts, and to posit questions about what constitutes “radicalism” in a given tradition or cultural context.

TKSH 1100B Istanbul, Global Metropolis Seminar in English

ESRA OZDEMIR

This course introduces Istanbul as a global metropolis by examining a wide range of issues and challenges facing the city and its people. Each week, the focus is on a single aspect, such as a brief historical outline of the city; the Istanbulites; the power distribution between elites and underdogs; the effects of urbanization and rapid economic development; the uniqueness and interconnection of Istanbul’s neighborhoods; cultures and their politicization; social movements and city squares as symbols of social resistance; the city’s architectural masterpieces; the representation of Istanbul in cinema and Turkish TV series; and imagining Istanbul in modern Turkish literature.

URBN 1870K Jerusalem Since 1850:

Religion, Politics, Cultural Heritage

KATHARINA GALOR

This seminar surveys the history of archaeological exploration, discovery, and interpretation in the contexts of social, political, and religious debates from the mid-nineteenth century to the present, with an emphasis on the post-1967 period. It examines the legal settings and ethical precepts of archaeological activity and the developing discourse of cultural heritage. It analyzes the ongoing struggle to discover and define the city’s past, to expose its physical legacy, and to advance claims of scientific validity and objectivity against the challenges of religious zeal and political partisanship, the latter both intimately related though not necessarily limited to the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

ACADEMICS STUDENTS

(from top):
Anchita Dasgupta '21,
Jack Johnson '21,
Kelley Tackett '20

DEPARTMENTAL UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT GROUP (DUG)

The DUG is run by students in the Center for Middle East Studies who wish to build community both inside and outside of the concentration. The DUG aims to highlight the undergraduate-oriented nature of the concentration. This year's DUG leaders were **Anchita Dasgupta '21**, **Jack Johnson '21**, and **Kelley Tackett '20**. They organized two Undergraduate Paper Series and several other outreach events.



(from left): Zahra Asghar '20, Ryan Saadeh '20

MES UNDERGRADUATE FELLOWS (MUF)

Eligible to rising seniors writing an honors thesis and concentrating in Middle East studies, Middle East Studies Undergraduate Fellows play an active role in CMES life and assist with outreach efforts to underclassmen interested in becoming concentrators. This year's fellows were **Zahra Asghar '20** and **Ryan Saadeh '20**.



Robert Kashow

MIDDLE EAST STUDIES GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION (MESGSA)

Supported by the Center for Middle East Studies, MESGSA is an interdisciplinary group united by a shared scholarly interest in the Middle East and North Africa. Combining diverse humanities and social sciences backgrounds with regional expertise, the association aims to foster conversations that are theoretically diverse and regionally focused. This year, MESGSA leader **Robert Kashow** organized a back-from-the-field workshop for graduate student summer research presentations as well as various social events to build community.



UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT EVENTS



ACADEMICS GRADUATING SENIORS

HONORS THESES

SOPHIE ZACHARAKIS '19.5 is a double concentrator in Middle East studies and cognitive science. Her broader academic interests include examining how imprisonment is used as a tool to repress political dissent and how the rise of international human rights and trauma discourses have shaped the NGO landscape and affected political activism in the region.

Senior Project:
Symbols of Resistance: The Construction of Leila Khaled and Ahd Tamimi as Women Palestinian Heroes

ZAHRA ASGHAR '20 is a double concentrator in Middle East studies and behavioral decision sciences, as well as a 2019-20 Middle East Studies Undergraduate Fellow. Her honors thesis research focuses on interactions between aid workers and refugees in the Levant following the Syrian Refugee Crisis and public health and infrastructural development projects in Za'atari Refugee Camp.

Senior Project:
Homemaking in Emergencies: Resident-Led Infrastructural Development in Za'atari Refugee Camp

RYAN SAADEH '20 is a double concentrator in Middle East studies and political science, as well as a 2019-20 Middle East Studies Undergraduate Fellow. He is interested in critical security studies and post-conflict development, particularly in Lebanon and Syria. In the fall, he will pursue an MSc in Violence, Conflict and Development at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London on a Marshall scholarship.

Senior Project:
From Brother to Other: Sovereignty, (In)security, and the Construction of Syrians as "Threats" in Lebanon

CAPSTONE

BENJAMIN CHIACCHIA '20 is a triple concentrator in Middle East studies, political science, and history. His interests are in human security, climate change, and the conduct of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East and elsewhere. He will commission as an ensign in the U.S. Navy in May and report to USS Hopper (DDG-70) in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, after completing the Basic Division Officer Course.

Senior Project:
The Israel-China Relationship, Human Security, and the Symbiosis of Settler Colonialism in the West Bank and Xinjiang

GABRIELLE HSI '20 is a double concentrator in Middle East studies and international relations from Cincinnati, Ohio. Her interests lie in conflict mitigation, peacebuilding, and China-Middle East relations. After graduation, she will serve as a Fulbright teaching assistant in Taiwan.

Senior Project:
Failing to End the Conflict in Darfur: The Impact of Civil Society Framing on US Foreign Policy

PAULA PACHECO-SOTO '20 is a double concentrator in Middle East studies and international relations with a focus on Latin America. Her interests lie in migration, gender, and human rights. Upon graduation, Paula will continue pursuing her passions in legal activism.

Senior Project:
The Politics of (Queer) Shame: Relationality and Negotiating Queerness in Contemporary Tunisia

KELLEY TACKETT '20 is a triple concentrator in Middle East studies, archaeology, and linguistic anthropology, as well as MES DUG leader in 2019-20. Her honors thesis examines how the communities surrounding Petra, Jordan, are affected by archaeological practice, heritage institutions, and legal structures. She will spend next year in India researching community-driven, justice-oriented archaeology as a Fulbright Scholar.

Senior Project:
Others' Pasts: Processes of Archival Restitution in Petra, Jordan

ALEXANDER VAUGHAN WILLIAMS '20 is a dual concentrator in Middle East studies and international relations. He is a 2017 Critical Language Scholar in Arabic, and has pursued internships with the Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). His current research focuses on Saudi Arabian politics and governance.

Senior Project:
The 1979 Grand Mosque Seizure: Questions of Legitimacy in Saudia Arabia

ZENAB YOUSSEF '20 is a double concentrator in Middle East studies and gender and sexuality studies. Her capstone investigates intersectional diasporic Muslim subjectivities in the West. Her research analyzes the struggles of Muslim diaspora through contemporary literature, online visibility projects, and photography.

Senior Project:
Masjid Al-Rabia: Queering Traditional Muslim Spaces in America

ALUMNI UPDATES

RAFAEL CONTRERAS '15 completes his master of public policy degree at Georgetown University in May 2020. Inspired by his studies of displacement while an MES concentrator at Brown, Rafael has focused his graduate training on developing quantitative tools for the evaluation of education and aid delivery programs for refugee children and youth in both the Middle East and Latin America.

ISABEL DEBRE '18 is currently a reporter for The Associated Press in Cairo, covering Egypt, Libya, Yemen, and Sudan. After graduating from Brown with a degree in Middle East studies and honors in comparative literature with Arabic, she worked at AP's Jerusalem bureau through a fellowship with the Overseas Press Club Foundation. In 2018-2019, she reported on Israel and the Palestinian territories.

SIMON DEJESUS RODRIGUES '15 worked at a Boston-based management consultancy for three years after graduating before taking leave to trek the Camino Santiago and relocate to London. He is currently working as the CEO's chief of staff at a Series C property technology startup in London.

LAYLA HEIDARI '15, whose interest in word and image as a means of storytelling stemmed from her time at Brown studying the Middle East and art history, now works in advertising. She began on the media agency side, with brands such as AmEx, Turner Sports, and Adult Swim, then on the publisher side at Mic.com. Now at VIRTUE Worldwide, a Vice agency, she is personally involved with creative executions of campaigns, including for Target, Urban Decay, and Unilever.

ABBY LINN '15 has worked in a range of fields developing her operational and HR expertise. She has worked as a teacher and administrator in schools both domestically and internationally, as well as in sales and educational technology. Currently, she is the operations manager for an environmental startup called Grow Materials LLC based in East Greenwich, RI. The company supplies high-performance recycled-plastic material to manufacturers globally, helping to divert millions of pounds of waste from landfills.

LARA SAVENIJE '15 moved to Istanbul, Turkey, following graduation. She currently works as the founder of Displaced.tv, a YouTube web series on migration and displacement. The channel debuted in September 2019 and will release its second series, focusing on journalism and media, in 2020. She is also the community manager at European Leadership University, a newly founded university aimed at increasing mobility of global tech talent.

AWARDS

RESEARCH TRAVEL AWARDS

UNDERGRADUATE

OLIVIA HINCH
International Relations
ZENAB YOUSSEF
Middle East Studies; Gender and Sexuality Studies

GRADUATE

MARTIN UILDRIKS
Archaeology and the Ancient World



SHAHZAD BASHIR

DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR MIDDLE EAST STUDIES
AGA KHAN PROFESSOR OF ISLAMIC HUMANITIES
DEPARTMENTS OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES AND HISTORY



BARBARA OBERKOETTER

CENTER MANAGER



PHIL FAHN-LAI '13

PHD STUDENT, HARVARD UNIVERSITY
SENIOR GRAPHIC DESIGNER AND BRAND CONSULTANT



MARLEY CARROLL '21

ANNUAL REPORT ASSISTANT



MIRANDA MO '22

GRAPHIC DESIGNER



ZENAB YOUSSEF '20

STUDENT ASSISTANT

PEOPLE

ALEX WINDER

VISITING ASSISTANT PROFESSOR IN MIDDLE EAST STUDIES
DIRECTOR OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES



SARAYA MCPHERSON

ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR



GABRIELLE HSI '20

STUDENT ASSISTANT;
ANNUAL REPORT ASSISTANT



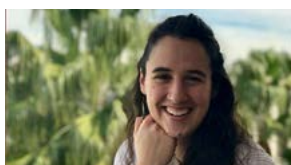
PAULA PACHECO-SOTO '20

STUDENT ASSISTANT



SOPHIE ZACHARAKIS '19.5

STUDENT ASSISTANT



STEERING COMMITTEE



SHAHZAD BASHIR

CHAIR
AGA KHAN PROFESSOR OF ISLAMIC HUMANITIES
PROFESSOR OF HISTORY AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Islamic studies with interests in the intellectual and social histories of the societies of Iran and Central and South Asia. He is currently finishing a book titled *Islamic Pasts and Futures: Horizons of Time*.

NADJE AL-ALI

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

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



DIMA AMSO

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF COGNITIVE, LINGUISTIC AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCES

The development of attention and memory in typical and atypically developing populations, with a special emphasis on how environmental variables shape these trajectories, using combined behavioral, genetic, and neuroimaging measures.

OMER BARTOV

JOHN P. BIRKELUND DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR OF EUROPEAN HISTORY
PROFESSOR OF GERMAN STUDIES

Nazi indoctrination and the crimes of the Wehrmacht; links between total war and genocide; the role of stereotypes in representations of violence; interethnic relations, communal massacres, and the politics of memory in Eastern Europe; coexistence and strife in Israel-Palestine.



BESHARA DOUMANI

JOUKOWSKY FAMILY DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR
OF MODERN MIDDLE EAST HISTORY

Social history of groups, places, and time periods marginalized by mainstream scholarship on the early modern and modern Middle East. Also writes on displacement, academic freedom, the ethics and politics of knowledge production, and the Palestinian condition.



NANCY KHALEK

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Specializes in Late Antiquity and Islam; hagiography, biography, and material culture related to the Companions of Muhammad; medieval material culture; currently researching the history of emotions and medieval (Arabic) Islamic pietistic literature.

ELIAS MUHANNA

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

Classical Arabic literature and Islamic intellectual history in addition to encyclopedic texts in the Islamic world and Europe, the cultural production of the Mamluk Empire, and the problem of the vernacular in different literary traditions.



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PAUL KOHLBRY, Postdoctoral Research Associate in Palestinian Studies

ADI OPHIR, Visiting Professor of Humanities and Middle East Studies

SAMINE TABATABAEI, Visiting Assistant Professor in Iranian Studies

MELTEM TOKSOZ, Visiting Associate Professor in Middle East Studies and the Department of History

FACULTY ANNOUNCEMENT

INCOMING DIRECTOR OF THE CENTER FOR MIDDLE EAST STUDIES



Effective July 1, 2020, **NADJE AL-ALI**, Robert Family Professor of International Studies and professor of anthropology and Middle East studies, will assume the role of Center Director. Nadjé Al-Ali joined Brown as the Robert Family Professor of International Studies and professor of anthropology and Middle East studies in 2018, after leaving a long-term position at the Centre for Gender Studies at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London. Her main research interests revolve around feminist activism and gendered mobilization, mainly with reference to Iraq, Egypt, Lebanon, Turkey, and the Kurdish political movement. Her publications include *Gender, Governance and Islam* (Edinburgh University Press, 2018, co-edited with Deniz Kandiyoti and Kathryn Spellman Poots); *What kind of Liberation? Women and the Occupation of Iraq* (University of California Press, 2009, co-authored with Nicola Pratt); *Women and War in the Middle East: Transnational Perspectives* (Zed Books, 2009, co-edited with Nicola Pratt); *Iraqi Women: Untold Stories from 1948 to the Present* (Zed Books, 2007); and *Secularism, Gender and the State in the Middle East* (Cambridge University Press, 2000). Her co-edited book with Deborah al-Najjar, titled *We are Iraqis: Aesthetics & Politics in a Time of War* (Syracuse University Press), won the 2014 Arab-American book award for non-fiction.

Professor Al-Ali is on the advisory board of *kohl: a journal of body and gender research* and has been involved in several feminist organizations and campaigns transnationally.

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