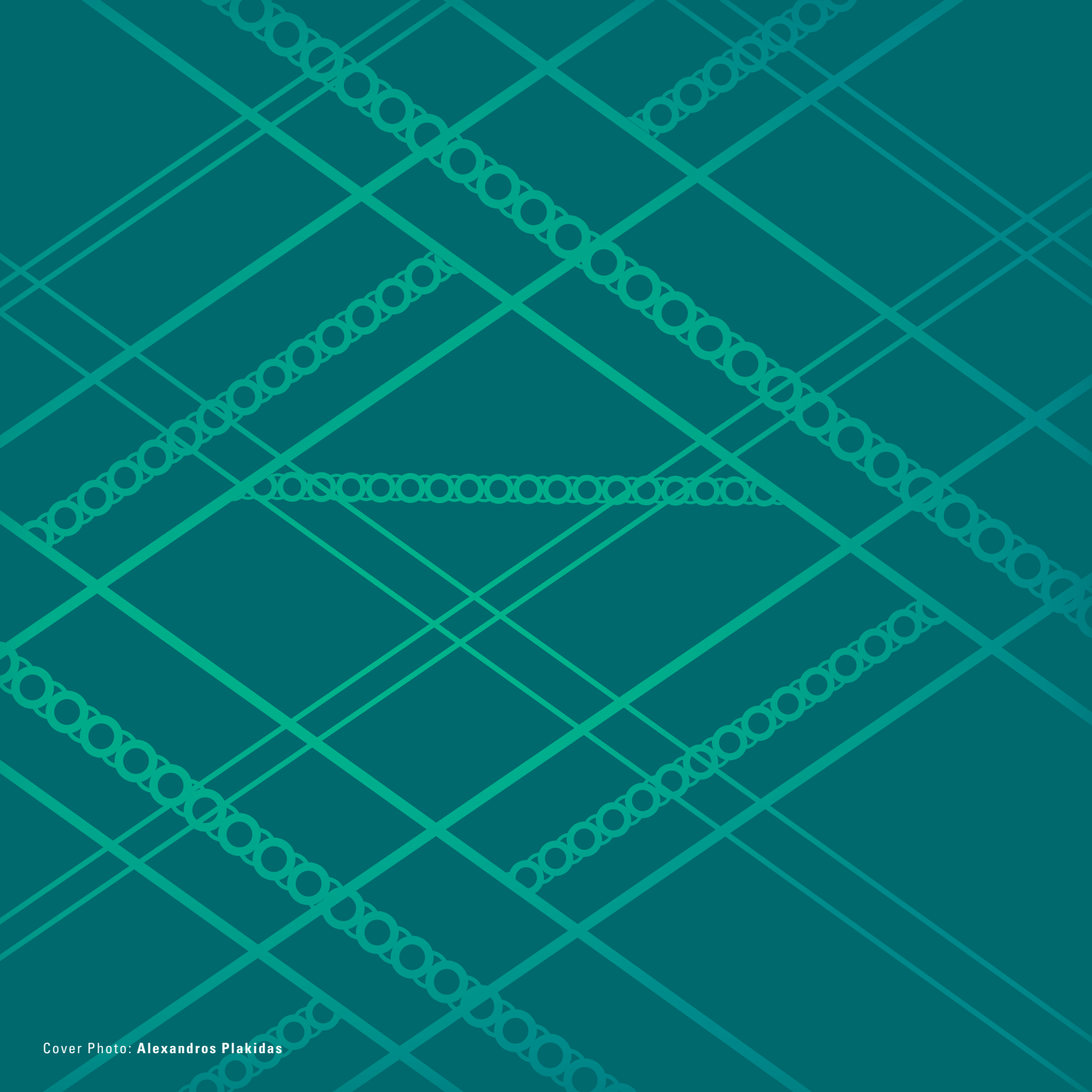


BROWN UNIVERSITY  
CENTER FOR  
MIDDLE EAST  
STUDIES

# ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023



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# LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

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

As the academic year comes to a close, I want to convey my gratitude to all of you with whom we have had the privilege of interacting and who have supported the Center for Middle East Studies (CMES). At times, we felt enlightened, inspired, enraged and saddened by our guest speakers, who covered a wide range of issues. We connected with audiences across the globe, achieving a viewership of over 20,000 people.

CMES partnered with colleagues at other centers, such as the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies, featuring a panel on the struggle for reproductive rights in the Middle East, Latin America and the Caribbean; a panel organized in collaboration with Brown University Masters in Public Affairs Candidate Narjes Jafarian on access to abortion in the Middle East and North Africa; yet another one with the Center for Human Rights and Humanitarian Studies on the recent earthquake in Turkey and Syria; as well as events on the twentieth anniversary of the 2003 American invasion of Iraq and its consequences, organized with the Costs of War project.

Under the umbrella research project on gender studies in the Middle East and its diasporas, we continued the series "Gender and Body Politics: Arts in the Middle East and its Diasporas," organized jointly between Brown University CMES and the Columbia University Middle East Institute (MEI), which examines the intersections of inequalities and body politics in both visual and performance art. We held conversations with artists Tania El Khoury and Amitis Motevalli, discussed gendered perspectives with Alia Al-Senussi and gender, body politics and authoritarianism as it related to the protests in Iran with Manijeh Nasrabadi.

CMES hosted a very interesting series of events marking the 60 years since the Algerian revolution, a project initiated by CMES associate Ph.D. student Adel Ben Bella. These included an exhibition of photography, film screenings and a one-day on-campus symposium featuring a conversation with two veteran Algerian female activists.

Another well-attended event was the Maghrebi micro-festival of Moroccan Gnawa music, culture and history, which included a concert and panel discussion featuring Club d'Elf musicians and Hassan Hakmoun.

I was particularly happy to welcome our Mahmoud Darwish Visiting Professor in Palestinian Studies, Abdel Razzaq Takriti, who infused Palestinian Studies programming with thought-provoking events. This year's activities culminated in the successful New Directions in Palestinian Studies two-day workshop "The Palestinian Revolutionary Tradition and Global Anti-Colonialism."

Next year, we will be joined by Mehrdad Babadi, our first Omar Khayyam Postdoctoral Research Associate in Iranian Studies, and Loubna Outami, the new Postdoctoral Research Associate in Palestinian Studies.

As always, we wish you all peace and good health. We look forward to connecting with you in the next academic year.

Best wishes,

**Nadje Al-Ali**

*Director, Center for Middle East Studies*

*Robert Family Professor of International Studies*

*Professor of Anthropology and Middle East Studies*



## MISSION

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

## CURRENT YEAR RESEARCH INITIATIVES

NEW DIRECTIONS IN PALESTINIAN STUDIES

## RESEARCH PROJECTS

GENDER STUDIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND BEYOND

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

ISRAEL-PALESTINE: LANDS AND PEOPLES

KURDISH STUDIES

# RESEARCH INITIATIVES



## NEW DIRECTIONS IN PALESTINIAN STUDIES (NDPS)

This initiative brings together an international community of researchers and practitioners to promote and shape knowledge production on Palestine and Palestinians. Founded in 2012 by Professor Beshara Doumani, NDPS invests in emerging scholars through programming, an endowed postdoctoral fellowship and a book series with the University of California Press.

In 2020, NDPS succeeded in raising an endowment for the establishment of the Mahmoud Darwish Chair in Palestinian Studies—the first of its kind. Beshara Doumani became the inaugural chair. During the latter's sabbatical in 2022-23, Abdel Razzaq Takriti assumed the role in a visiting capacity. Professor Takriti oversaw the two-day NDPS workshop titled "The Palestinian Revolutionary Tradition and Global Anti-Colonialism," at which 21 emerging scholars presented innovative research. In addition, he invited scholars and practitioners to campus to present on currently relevant topics, hosting events such as "Gaza: The Longest Siege in Modern History—2007 to the Present," "Silencing Journalism: Shireen Abu Akleh, Israeli Extrajudicial Killing, and Colonial Domination in Palestine," and "Palestine and American Law," featuring Professor Wadie Said. Professor Takriti also taught two courses, "The Palestinian Revolution, 1948-1982" and "Modern Palestinian History."





PALESTINIAN STUDIES  
BROWN UNIVERSITY  
CENTER FOR MIDDLE EAST STUDIES

8th annual workshop of  
**NEW DIRECTIONS IN  
PALESTINIAN STUDIES**

**The Palestinian  
Revolutionary Tradition  
and Global Anti-Colonialism**

FRIDAY, MARCH 10 - SATURDAY, MARCH 11, 2023  
JOUKOWSKY FORUM, WATSON INSTITUTE.



PALESTINIAN STUDIES  
BROWN UNIVERSITY  
CENTER FOR MIDDLE EAST STUDIES

**Wadie Said**  
University of South Carolina School of Law

**Palestine and American Law**

TUESDAY, APRIL 4, 2023 | 5:30 - 7:15 P.M. ET  
JOUKOWSKY FORUM



PALESTINIAN STUDIES  
BROWN UNIVERSITY  
CENTER FOR MIDDLE EAST STUDIES

# GAZA

## The Longest Siege in Modern History, 2007-Present

Hosted by Darwish Visiting Professor in Palestinian Studies,  
Abdel Razzaq Takriti



PALESTINIAN STUDIES  
BROWN UNIVERSITY  
CENTER FOR MIDDLE EAST STUDIES

Funded by the  
**Mahmoud Darwish Chair in Palestinian Studies**

MONDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2022 | 12:00 - 1:30 P.M. ET | WEBINAR | REGISTRATION REQUIRED

**SPEAKERS:**  
Jehad Abusalim | Aya Al-Ghazzawi | Swee Chai Ang | Hadeel Assali | Fady Joudah

**Ashjan Ajour**  
University of Leicester

**Reclaiming Humanity  
in Palestinian Hunger  
Strikes**

Friday, September 9, 2022 | 12:00-1:00 p.m.  
Webinar



**Silencing Journalism:**  
Shireen Abu Akleh, Israeli Extrajudicial Killing, and Colonial Domination in Palestine

Hosted by Darwish Visiting Professor in Palestinian Studies, Abdel Razzaq Takriti

Funded by the Mahmoud Darwish Chair in Palestinian Studies

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2022 | 5:30 - 7:00 P.M. ET

TRUE NORTH ROOM, STEPHEN ROBERT HALL, WATSON INSTITUTE, 280 BROOK STREET

**SPEAKERS:**

**Omar Shakir**  
Israeli and Palestine Director,  
Human Rights Watch

**Jennifer Zacharia Said**  
Attorney and Writer

**Sherine Tadros**  
Deputy Director of Advocacy and Representative  
to the United Nations for Amnesty International

# BOOKS



# RESEARCH PROJECTS

**Struggling for Reproductive Rights:** Perspectives from Latin America, the Caribbean, and the Middle East

Friday, September 30, 2022 | 12:00-1:30 P.M.  
Webinar

**CMES SPEAKERS**  
**Selma Hajri, MD**  
Women Have Wings  
**Leila Hessini**  
Independent Transnational Advisor and Activist

**CLACS SPEAKERS**  
**Tonni-Ann Brodber**  
UN Women Multi-Country Office-Caribbean  
**Mabel Bianco, MD**  
Foundation for Studies and Research on Women

Center for Middle East Studies  
Watson Institute  
Brown University

**Access to Abortion in the Middle East and North Africa**

THURSDAY, APRIL 6, 2023 | 12:00 - 1:30 p.m. ET  
WEBINAR | REGISTRATION REQUIRED

**Samia Al Nagar**  
Independent Researcher  
**Zeina Fathallah**  
American University of Beirut  
**Angel Foster**  
University of Ottawa

Center for Middle East Studies  
School of Public Health  
Watson Institute  
Brown University

## GENDER STUDIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND BEYOND

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

**Iran Protests:**  
Gender, Body Politics and Authoritarianism

IN CONVERSATION WITH:  
**Manijeh Nasrabadi,**  
Barnard College, Columbia University

OCTOBER 4, 2022 | 2:00-3:00 P.M.  
WEBINAR | REGISTRATION REQUIRED

MODERATORS:  
**Nadje Al-Ali**, Brown University  
**Kathryn Spellman Poots**, Columbia University

Center for Middle East Studies  
Watson Institute  
Brown University

**Nisa Göksel**  
Arizona State University

**Narratives of Exile and Migration:** Kurdish Women's Political Struggles in Europe

FRIDAY, MARCH 17, 2023  
1:00 - 2:00 p.m. ET  
WEBINAR | REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Center for Middle East Studies  
Watson Institute  
Brown University

**MAYA MIKDASHI**  
Rutgers University

**Sextarianism:**  
Sovereignty, Secularism and the State in Lebanon

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2022 12:00-1:00 P.M.  
MCKINNEY CONFERENCE ROOM  
REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Center for Middle East Studies  
Watson Institute  
Brown University

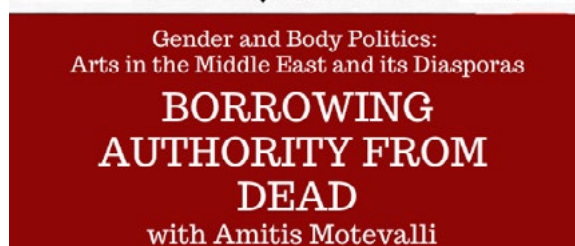
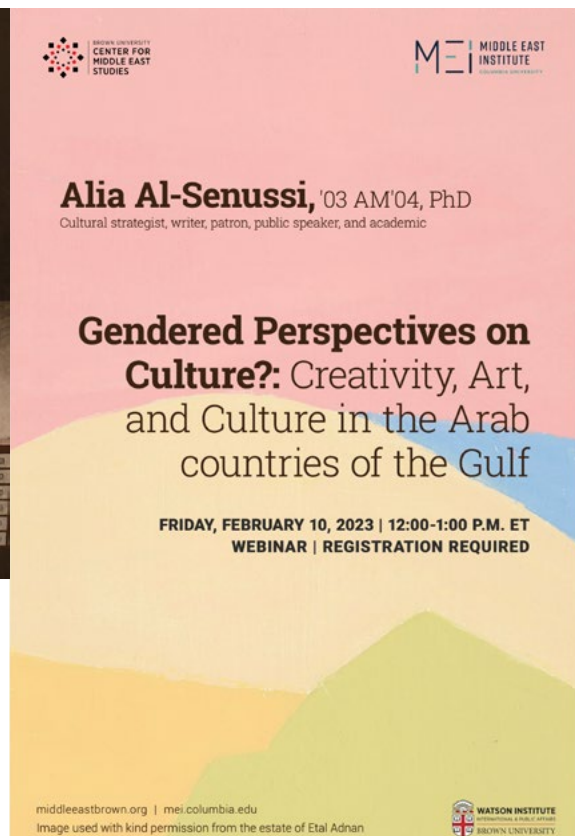




## GENDER AND BODY POLITICS: ARTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND ITS DIASPORAS

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

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



# RESEARCH PROJECTS

## 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 U.S. and Europe in recent years, there has been only limited engagement with Kurdish society in its complexity. The aim of this project, led by **Professor Nadje Al-Ali**, is to support and contribute to critical and original Kurdish studies that combine theoretical, cutting-edge and empirically grounded work, while highlighting creative approaches (films, art and literature) to the study of Kurds and Kurdish societies. In collaboration with Yale's Macmillan Center, a series of closed workshops were held titled "Decolonizing Kurdish Studies." In March, CMES hosted a panel with Nisa Göksel on her recent book, "Narratives of Exile and Migration: Kurdish Women's Political Struggles in Europe."



## ISRAEL-PALESTINE: LANDS AND PEOPLES



This multi-year project, led by Samuel Pizar Professor of Holocaust and Genocide Studies **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 side to recognize the other's longing for, yet ongoing inability, to feel at home.



# OTHER PROGRAMMING

**COSTS OF WAR**

## Twenty Years of War in Iraq: The Costs and Consequences

TUESDAY, MARCH 21, 2023 | 12:00 - 1:30 p.m. ET  
WEBINAR | REGISTRATION REQUIRED

**PANEL:**  
Khaled Al Hilli  
QUNY Graduate Center  
Zahra Ali  
Rutgers University Newark  
Kali Rubaili  
Purdue University  
Oula Kadhum  
Loughborough University

**Beyond the Numbers: Teach-in on Earthquake in Turkey and Syria**

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2023 | 12:00 - 1:30 p.m. ET  
WEBINAR | REGISTRATION REQUIRED

**Tayraner Akkurt**  
Syrian Philanthropy, Humanities, Neuroscience Research Center, Oxford, UK  
**Jinab Alomari**  
Syrian Philanthropy, Humanities, Neuroscience Research Center, Oxford, UK  
**Sarah Ayman**  
Rutgers University Newark  
**Youssef Fawzi**  
Rutgers University Newark

**Thinking Algeria at 60: Images from a Revolution**

PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBIT

October 12-18, 2022  
Mohamed Khouli, Victim(s) of Algeria  
Curated by Adnan Saeed  
Watson Institute  
154 Angell St, Providence, RI

October 12-18, 2022  
7-8 pm Opening Reception  
8-10 pm Film and the Algerian Revolution  
Co-curated by Oliver Hachouche  
Watson Institute  
111 Thayer Street, Providence, RI

Symposium  
Friday, October 18, 2022  
12 pm-5:45 pm: From Revolution to Indifference: A Visual Inquiry  
Watson Institute  
111 Thayer Street, Providence, RI

**Maghrebi Micro-Festival of Moroccan Gnawa Music, Culture, and History**

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2022  
FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

PANEL 4:00-5:30 p.m.  
**Gifts of the Gnawa: A Conversation among Musicians and Scholars**  
Brahim Fribgane  
Hassan Hakmoun  
Richard Jarkowsky  
Mike Roward  
Joukowsky Forum, Watson Institute, 111 Thayer Street

CONCERT 8:00-10:00 p.m.  
**Live Performance**  
Club d'El F and Hassan Hakmoun  
Repar Atelier, 16 Church Street, Providence, RI, 02903

**MARIE OSTBY**  
Connecticut College

## The Global Genres of Modern Iran: Flexible Forms and Cross-Cultural Exchange from Travelogues to Twitter

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2022 | 12:00-1:00 P.M.  
MCKINNEY CONFERENCE ROOM

## WRITING GLOBAL HISTORIES TODAY

SEPTEMBER 16-17, 2022

PEMBROKE HALL 305  
172 MEETING STREET  
PROVIDENCE, RI 02912

Free and open to the public

**In Conversation with the poet Zeina Hashem Beck**

FRIDAY, APRIL 28, 2023 | 12:00 - 1:30 p.m. ET  
WEBINAR | REGISTRATION REQUIRED

**Alan Mikhail**  
Yale University

## BOOM CAIRO

McKinney Conference Room  
Thursday, September 15, 2022  
12:00 - 1:00 p.m.

CO-SPONSORED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

**FULYA PINAR**  
Associate Professor of International Studies  
Brown University

## The Bus that Transports Undocumented Migrants: Experimental Solidarities across the Refugee vs. Citizen Divide in Istanbul

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2023 | 12:00-1:00 P.M. ET  
MCKINNEY CONFERENCE ROOM | REGISTRATION REQUIRED

**MATTHEW TELLER**  
Harvard

## Nine Quarters of Jerusalem: A New Biography of the Old City

MONDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2022 | 12:00 - 1:15 P.M.  
JOUKOWSKY FORUM | BOOK TALK

## The New Antisemitism and the contemporary Middle East

**Panelists:**  
Noura Erakat  
Amos Goldberg  
Sherene Seikaly  
Rael Zreik

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2022  
12-1:30 pm ET | Webinar

**Modern Greek Studies**

## INVISIBLE CITIES: ISTANBUL OF THE 19TH CENTURY THROUGH THE LENS OF OTTOMAN CENSUS REGISTERS

**CHRISTINE PHILLIOU**  
Professor, Department of History  
Director, Ottoman & Turkish Studies Program  
UC Berkeley Center for Middle East Studies  
UC Berkeley Institute for European Studies  
Director, Modern Greek and Hellenic Studies Program

What lay beneath the "multicultural" facade of urban life in 19th-century Istanbul? While the concepts of tolerance and diversity are surely indicative to our historical moment today, what we scratch the surface we find that racial realities were far more complex. By examining the "internal" and "external" histories of micro-level communities in the Ottoman capital, and using Ottoman census registers that documented the Greek Christian (Rum) residents, the goal is to think differently about the historical experience of non-Muslims in an Islamic society on the edge of modernism was unfolding. The talk will

MONDAY  
APRIL 3, 2023

## DECOLONIAL SCIENCE: MUSLIMS IN INTERWAR GERMANY AND THE MAKING OF MODERN AFGHANISTAN

October 12th | 1:00PM - 2:30PM  
111 Thayer Street, Joukowsky Forum

**Iman Mersal**  
author of *The Translator*

Wednesday, 1 March 2023  
McKinney Conference Room 115  
Brown University

## Arabic & Persian Calligraphy Workshop

WITH ABBAS MOUSAVI

Fri March 3rd  
1:00 - 3:00pm  
MacMillan 115

Lunch will be served

## Jews Out of the Question: How Critical Theory Fights Anti-Semitism by Denying Judaism

**Elad Lipadot**  
University of Lille

Wednesday, April 12, 2023  
12:00 - 1:30 p.m. EST | Joukowsky Forum

Co-sponsors: Department of German Studies, Department of Religious Studies, French and Francophone Studies

**BROWN UNIVERSITY**

## Ninth Conference of the School of Mamluk Studies

JUNE 6-10, 2023  
PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND, USA

For more information: <https://mamlukstudies.brown.edu/conference2023>  
Email: [mamlukstudies@brown.edu](mailto:mamlukstudies@brown.edu)

**Lena Salaymeh**  
University of Oxford and Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, Paris

## Performing Legality in Service of Colonialism: 'Anti-Antisemitism' as Censorship

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2023  
12:00 - 1:15 P.M. ET  
JOUKOWSKY FORUM

**KATRIN JOMAA**

## Ummah: A New Paradigm for a Global World

NOVEMBER 15, 2022 | 4:00-5:15 P.M.  
JOUKOWSKY FORUM, WATSON INSTITUTE

# ACADEMICS

## SAMPLING OF COURSES

The Center for Middle East Studies at Brown University continues to foster an environment that encourages faculty and students to push the boundaries of Middle East studies, furthering the Center's well-earned reputation as the home of ground-breaking research and classroom innovation. Affiliated faculty have established Brown as a hub for research on gender and sexuality, conflict and displacement, and social and political movements while continuing to innovate in the study and teaching of the Middle East from antiquity to the present day.

Students are drawn to Middle East studies by the opportunities to study the region's languages, cultures and societies, as well as its connections to other parts of the world. Language study often serves as a gateway for students to become interested in other aspects of the Middle East, and Middle Eastern language offerings at Brown continue to expand. Elective courses offered in various departments expose students to different disciplinary perspectives and research methodologies, which they apply in their own research with the support of Brown faculty and librarians and with research and travel funding from CMES.

As the world emerges from the restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, students are once again traveling to the Middle East for language study, internship opportunities and research. Meanwhile, scholars, artists and practitioners are visiting campus for CMES events, often as classroom guests, providing an opportunity for students to engage directly with experts in various fields. CMES thus continues to be the gravitational center of a tight-knit community of scholars—students and faculty—who bring their different interests and perspectives to the classroom and beyond it, in the shared endeavor of better understanding the Middle East.

### Anti-Semitism, Racism, Anti-Zionism: Debates, Contexts, Stakes

**ADI OPHIR**

Over the last two decades, negative perceptions, conceptions and treatment of Jews, and the effort to preempt and suppress them, have been marked by fierce debates about “antisemitism.” Everything about the term—what it designates, its historical, theological and scientific origins, its current targets, how to trace and fight it, and its relation to racism, colonialism and anti-colonial struggles, anti-Zionism and Islamophobia—is disputed among scholars, educators and political actors, creating odd alliances and dividing old communities.

### Interventions and Activism in the Contemporary Middle East

**FULYA PINAR**

It is not uncommon to hear simplifying perspectives when it comes to analyses of politics and the everyday lives of people in the Middle East. Instead of reducing lived experiences into binary categorizations (success or failure, authoritarian or democratic), this course examines the intricate relations between top-down political decisions, interventions and bottom-up resistance movements. It raises questions about the connections across the economy, crises, democracy and humanitarianism and introduces diverse stories and perspectives. Using comparative historical and social scientific analysis, students consider topics ranging from struggles against colonial containment to the role of urban movements in social change; from the impacts of Global North-induced crises on Islamic mobilization to the use of humanitarianism as a governance tool; from LGBTQ+ movements to artistic and digital unrest; and from Arab Spring to the intersectionality of struggles across identities.



## The Palestinian Revolution, 1948-1982

**ABDEL RAZZAQ TAKRITI**

The phenomenon generally referred to in Arabic as the Palestinian Revolution (al-Thawra al-Filastiniya) was momentous by any standard. Unfolding over several decades between 1948 and 1982, it had profound implications for the history of Palestine, the Middle East and global anti-colonialism. Traditionally, it is studied using top-down state, diplomatic and military themes in history and politics. In contrast, this course focuses on the grassroots level, approaching Palestinian revolutionaries as subjects, rather than objects, of politics and history. While taking account of the role of external historical forces, the focus here is on Palestinian popular structures, movements, cadres, philosophies, feminist initiatives, songs, poetry, art, tactics and strategies. As such, the course explores the development of collective agency, political production and active engagement with history. It also addresses transnational connections that bound the Palestinian revolution with other anti-colonial struggles and solidarity movements worldwide.

## The Middle East in Berlin

**KATHARINA GALOR**

This seminar explores the physical and human landscapes of post-war Berlin and its steadily expanding urban fabric and how it engages with the rapidly changing population makeup. The class focuses on the tension between past and present histories, new German identities, the recent massive migrations, antisemitism and Islamophobia and how these social and geopolitical phenomena interact with the city's urban spaces and monuments. As case studies, students explore the relationship between Germans and three other significant communities: Turks, Israelis and Palestinians.

## 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 gain the tools to analyze and historicize the dynamic history of this region. They 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 postcolonial states, regional cooperation, the rise of Islamism and civil conflicts and the Arab Spring.

## Heresy and Orthodoxy in Islamic Thought

**NANCY KHALEK**

Orthodoxy is defined as "right belief," while Heresy is just the opposite, but those definitions have always been in tension with society and culture. This course interrogates theory and history to ask "What are Islamic Orthodoxy and Heresy?" From Islamic Law to who is or is not a "heretic," students uncover interpretations of religious law, practice and culture to learn how scholars apply orthodoxy or heresy to disrupt and unsettle notions of what "Islam" was at different moments and how their interpretations force us to think of new ways to envision the formation of communities.

## Islam Between Theatre and Performance

**KENNETH MOLLOY**

This course explores the nuanced relationship among concepts of theater, performance and Islam in diverse texts and contexts. Readings cut across disciplinary divides, weaving together theater history, Islamic intellectual-cultural history, theory of performance and theory of religion to support a dynamic, critical approach to this field of inquiry. Students discuss how attention to theatricality and performance may enrich our understanding of representations of Islam by Muslims, representations of Islam by non-Muslims and the relationships between these representations. Taking as a point of departure the extreme opposition between "Islam" and "theater" that contemporary discourse typically supposes when overlapping these topics, the class evaluates this convention and considers the reasons for its long and continuing prevalence.

## Understanding Modern Turkey Through Film and Literature

**ESRA ÖZDEMİR**

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

## The Arab Renaissance

**ELIAS MUHANNA**

This course explores the 19th-century Arabic cultural renaissance known as the Nahda. Topics include intellectual encounters between Europe and the Middle East, the birth of the Arabic novel and the rise of Islamic modernism. Students read selections from the works of Shidyaq, Tahtawi, Zaydan, Shawqi, Bustani and others alongside historiographical and theoretical texts. At least three years of Arabic are required.

## Ethiopia Shall Stretch Forth Her Hands:

## Black Reception of Ancient Egypt and Nubia

**CHRISTOPHER COX**

The class explores how Black people have thought about, understood and used the concepts of ancient Egypt and Nubia over the last few hundred years. The class begins with a short introduction to ancient Egypt and Nubia with particular attention to questions of ethnicity. Then, it will cover the dominant (white) discourse of ancient Egypt from before the decipherment of Egyptian Hieroglyphs into early Egyptology. The third and longest section will be a chronological discussion of the literature, art and scholarship produced by Black people in relation to ancient Egypt and Nubia. Students see how these pieces fit together to show the long history of Black thought on the subject. Primary sources range from 18th-century letters to modern music videos.







Photo Credit: Mara Kessler '23.5




# ACADEMICS STUDENTS

## DEPARTMENTAL UNDERGRADUATE GROUP (DUG)

The DUG is run by students concentrating in Middle East Studies (MES) who wish to build a community both inside and outside of the concentration. The MES DUG aims to highlight those aspects of the Center that are related to undergraduate activities. This year's DUG leaders were Mica Maltzman '25 and Jad Hamze '25. In their role, they acted as undergraduate student ambassadors, disseminating pertinent announcements to their peers and organizing a DUG Meet and Greet, a paper presentation event and other outreach efforts.




(from left): Jad Hamze '25, Mica Maltzman '25

 CENTER FOR MIDDLE EAST STUDIES  
middleeaststudies.org

## MES Undergraduate Paper Series

**SPEAKERS:**  
**About Ashhab '25**  
"Revolutionary Imagery: Aestheticizing Palestine within South-South Solidarity Art"  
**Isabel Cox '23**  
"Exploring the Role of Agency in the Movement of Displaced Syrians During the Syrian Civil War"

FRIDAY, APRIL 21, 2023 | 12:00 - 1:45 p.m. ET  
MCKINNEY CONFERENCE ROOM,  
WATSON INSTITUTE

 WATSON INSTITUTE  
WATSON INSTITUTE  
BROWN UNIVERSITY

## THE HOUR OF LIBERATION HAS ARRIVED

A FILM BY HEINY SROUR (1974)

الخليج العربي  
ساعة التحرير دقت  
برّه يا إستعمار

ساعة التحرير دقت  
L'HEURE DE LA LIBERATION A SONNE

## FILM SCREENING & DINNER

11.10.2022 | 6:30 PM | [RSVP Form](#)

Robert Center Petteruti Lounge  
(Campus Center, 2nd Floor)

Organized by undergraduate students in MES and History.

 CENTER FOR MIDDLE EAST STUDIES

Middle East Studies

## DUG MEET AND GREET

Friday, February 24, 2023  
12:00 - 1:00 p.m. ET  
Petteruti Lounge,  
Stephen Robert '62  
Campus Center

 WATSON INSTITUTE  
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Rita Slaoui '23.5

## MES UNDERGRADUATE FELLOWS (MUF)

Eligible to rising seniors writing an honors thesis and concentrating in MES, 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 fellow was Rita Slaoui '23.5.

## MIDDLE EAST STUDIES GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION (MESGSA)



Mariz Kelada

Supported by the Center for Middle East Studies, MESGSA is an interdisciplinary group of graduate students 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 hosted several themed lunches at the Faculty Club, organized a seminar highlighting presentations by 2022 recipients of the Sams Family Research Travel Grant and a roundtable discussion on emerging practices of research.

MESGSA is led by **Mariz Kelada**, a Ph.D. Candidate in the Department of Anthropology, M.A. Student in the Department of Modern Culture and Media, and a Cogut Fellow in Collaborative Humanities. Her research examines the political economy of Egypt's visual media industry through the invisible labor of its technical workers.





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# Practices in Middle East Studies

**PANELISTS:**

**Julia Wartmann**  
*Negotiating Freedom:  
Gender Equality in North and East Syria*

**Ramil Zamanov**  
*Queer Masculinities in Azerbaijan*

**Faiq Mari**  
*Alternative Spaces of Revolt:  
the Commons of the  
Palestinian Liberation Struggle*

Moderated by Mariz Kelada, Department of Anthropology

THURSDAY, APRIL 20, 2023 | 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. ET  
McKinney Conference Room 353, Watson Institute | RSVP Required



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# Graduate Student Summer Research Presentations

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2022 | 12:00 - 1:30 P.M. ET | BIRKELUND BOARDROOM  
REGISTRATION REQUIRED

**PRESENTERS:**

**Lee-Or Ankori-Karlinsky**  
*"Symbols and Violence in Jerusalem/Al-Quds." | Political Science*

**Aseel Azab-Osman**  
*"Do What You Can to Keep the Good Word Alive": Salafi Subjectivity and Transformation in Post-2013 Egypt." | Religious Studies*

**Adel Ben Bella**  
*Photographs and the Algerian Revolution: Video interviews, Algerian points of views, and Visual archive." | Modern Culture and Media*

**Kate Elizabeth Gregory**  
*"The 12 September Coup and Turkey's Place in the Late Cold War." | History*

**Carolina Mendoza**  
*"From Aljibe to Aljofes: Investigating the Textual-Cultural Landscape of Early Modern Muslim Iberia." | Religious Studies*

# ACADEMICS CLASS OF 2023



## JAYLIM ABONEAJ

('22.5) is a recent graduate with concentrations in Middle East Studies and Public Policy. Within the department, he served as DUG leader in his senior year and wrote a capstone focusing on Paul Virilio's concept of "acceleration" as it applies to transportation networks within his family's *watan*: Palestine. At Brown, he captained the Brown Men's Club Soccer team, tutored for BRYTE, and edited for the Brown Journal of World Affairs. After completing his last semester abroad in Granada, Spain, he joined Barclays Bank in New York City as a sales and trading analyst, with time in between dedicated to travel, language learning and family.

### Capstone Project:

"Accelerating (Im)mobility: Transportation in Palestine across 100 Years"

## MICHELLE J. CHEN

is a graduating senior from Boston, double concentrating in Middle East Studies and Biology. She tutored for Brown's Refugee Youth Tutoring and Enrichment program and is involved in art spaces at Brown, such as ColorWheel and Create@Brown. Her studies in MES are focused on the Arabic language and culture and religion in the Arab world. After graduation, she will be working as a scientific researcher in the biology field. Her long-term goal is to create spaces for underrepresented and marginalized groups in the STEM field.

### Capstone Project:

"Modern Sufism and its Adaptation to Capitalism and Commodification:  
A Study of 19th and 20th-Century Senegalese Sufi Orders"





**ISABEL (IZZY) COX** is a double concentrator in Middle East Studies and Human Rights & the Refugee Experience (an independent concentration) from the Chicago area. This semester, she is studying Arabic literature as a culmination of her eight semesters of Arabic learning at Brown. She is an active member of the coed varsity sailing team. Izzy's capstone discusses the factors that contributed to Syrian displaced peoples' ability or inability to exercise agency in their flight from violence. After graduation, she hopes to remain in the Rhode Island area and pursue nonprofit work.

**Capstone Project:**

"Exploring the Role of Agency in the Movement of Displaced Syrians During the Syrian Civil War"

**LILAH GABER** is a double concentrator in Middle East Studies and International and Public Affairs on the Development Track. At Brown, she participated in several student activism groups, such as the Brown Divestment campaign, which passed through a University Board in 2019. She also spent her time writing, singing and playing guitar for her indie-rock band, TV Dinner. She does not have plans for after graduation, though she hopes to end up back in her family home in Egypt to study and work in the near future.

**Capstone Project:**

"Beyond the Nile: Nubian Conceptions of Identity After their Displacement"



**JOSEPH SCHLECHTER** was born and raised in Portland, Oregon. They began studying Arabic at their local public school in sixth grade and continued throughout their high school and college career culminating in a Bachelor of Arts in Middle East Studies. This love for language learning also inspired them to pursue a second Bachelor of Arts in Multilingual Education. During their time at Brown, they found most of their joy and respite away from campus, exploring libraries and cafes across the greater Providence area, attending local music events and working at any one of their multiple jobs. Joseph is excited to take these lessons and experiences with them when they return home after graduation.

**Capstone Project:**

"Boys' Love: Translations of Abu Nuwas' Masculine Ghazals"



# PEOPLE



## NADJE AL-ALI

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

## ALEX WINDER

VISITING ASSISTANT PROFESSOR IN MIDDLE EAST STUDIES  
DIRECTOR OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES



## BARBARA OBERKOETTER

CENTER MANAGER

## EMILY RUEBELMAN

EVENT AND OUTREACH COORDINATOR



## VISITING FACULTY

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## ABDEL RAZZAQ TAKRITI

MAHMOUD DARWISH VISITING PROFESSOR IN PALESTINIAN STUDIES

## FULYA PINAR

ALOMRAN FAMILY POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATE  
IN MIDDLE EAST STUDIES





## VISITING RESEARCH FELLOWS

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FAIQ MARI

PH.D. CANDIDATE  
INSTITUTE FOR THE HISTORY AND  
THEORY OF ARCHITECTURE (GTA)  
ETH ZÜRICH

JULIA WARTMANN

PH.D. CANDIDATE  
UNIVERSITY OF BASEL

RAMIL ZAMANOV

PH.D. CANDIDATE  
CHARLES UNIVERSITY

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## STUDENT STAFF



ERICA HYUNJEE NAM '24

GRAPHIC DESIGNER

MARA KESSLER '23.5

STUDENT COORDINATOR



BIANCA ROSEN '25

PALESTINIAN STUDIES STUDENT ASSISTANT



CECILIA MARRINAN '24

STUDENT ASSISTANT



# STEERING COMMITTEE

## NADJE AL-ALI

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

Feminist activism and gendered mobilizations in the Middle East (Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Turkey and the Kurdish regions); gendered dimensions of war and conflict; transnational migration and diaspora mobilization; anti-gender discourses amongst political right movements in the Middle East and Europe.



## MAAN ALSAHOUI

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

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



## KATHARINA GALOR

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

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



## ELSA BELMONT FLORES

LECTURER IN LANGUAGE STUDIES (ARABIC)  
AND ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF THE CENTER FOR LANGUAGE STUDIES

Youth culture, contemporary film and social media in the Arab World, the integration of social justice and multiculturalism in the Arabic language learning curriculum (beginning through advanced levels, MSA and Levantine Colloquial Arabic) and the use of technology in the teaching of Arabic.



## VANGELIS CALOTYCHOS

VISITING ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF CLASSICS

Comparative literature, cultural and reception studies. Literature, film and politics in the Eastern Mediterranean and Balkans. Modernity and "self-colonization" in Greece; resistance in Greek film. Ethnic conflict, reconciliation and peace processes in Cyprus.



# FACULTY IN 2022-23

**RUTH ADLER BEN YEHUDA**, Judaic Studies

**FAIZ AHMED**, History

**NADJE AL-ALI**, Middle East Studies, Anthropology, Watson Institute

**JAMES ALLEN**, Egyptology and Assyriology

**CHRISTELLE ALVAREZ**, Egyptology and Assyriology

**ARIELLA AZOULAY**, Modern Culture and Media, Comparative Literature

**OMER BARTOV**, History

**SHAHZAD BASHIR**, Religious Studies, History

**ELSA BELMONT FLORES**, Center for Language Studies

**LAUREL BESTOCK**, Archaeology, Egyptology and Assyriology, HIAA

**SHEILA BONDE**, History of Art and Architecture (HIAA), Archaeology

**VANGELIS CALOTYCHOS**, Comparative Literature

**MIRENA CHRISTOFF**, Center for Language Studies

**JONATHAN CONANT**, History, Classics

**JOAN COPJEC**, Modern Culture and Media

**LISA DICARLO**, Sociology

**BESHARA DOUMANI**, History

**MILED FAIZA**, Center for Language Studies

**LINA FRUZZETTI**, Anthropology

**KATHARINA GALOR**, Judaic Studies and Middle East Studies

**YANNIS HAMILAKIS**, Archaeology, Modern Greek Studies

**JAE HEE HAN**, Religious Studies, Judaic Studies

**SUSAN ASHBROOK HARVEY**, Religious Studies, Early Cultures

**ALLA HASSAN**, Center for Language Studies

**JENNIFER JOHNSON**, History

**NANCY KHALEK**, Religious Studies

**STEPHEN KINZER**, Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs

**VIRGINIA KRAUSE**, French Studies

**OURIDA MOSTEFAI**, Comparative Literature, French Studies

**ELIAS MUHANNA**, Comparative Literature, History

**PAUL NAHME**, Judaic Studies, Religious Studies

**SAUL OLYAN**, Judaic Studies, Religious Studies

**ADI OPHIR**, Cogut Center for the Humanities, Middle East Studies

**ESRA ÖZDEMİR**, Center for Language Studies

**FÜLYA PINAR**, Alomaran Family Postdoctoral Research Associate, MES

**MICHELLE QUAY**, Center for Language Studies

**AMY REMENSNYDER**, History

**RACHEL ROJANSKI**, Judaic Studies

**FELIPE ROJAS SILVA**, Archaeology, Egyptology and Assyriology

**MATTHEW RUTZ**, Egyptology and Assyriology

**KENNETH SACKS**, History

**MICHAEL SATLOW**, Judaic Studies, Religious Studies

**HOLLY SHAFFER**, History of Art and Architecture

**JOHN STEELE**, Egyptology and Assyriology

**SUZANNE STEWART-STEINBERG**, Comparative Literature, Italian Studies

**ABDEL RAZZAQ TAKRITI**, Middle East Studies

**NINA TANNENWALD**, Political Science

**ADAM TELLER**, History, Judaic Studies

**PETER VAN DOMMELEN**, Anthropology, Archaeology

**PARKER VAN VALKENBURGH**, Anthropology

**ALEX WINDER**, Middle East Studies

**VAZIRA ZAMINDAR**, History

# FACULTY ANNOUNCEMENTS

## ARRIVING IN 2023-24

**MEHRDAD BABADI**, Omar Khayyam Postdoctoral Research Associate in Iranian Studies

**LOUBNA QUTAMI**, Postdoctoral Research Associate in Palestinian Studies

## STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES

### SAMS FAMILY RESEARCH TRAVEL AWARD RECIPIENTS FOR SUMMER 2023

**MAYA AVELINO**: MES Undergraduate Student

**MARA KESSLER**: MES Undergraduate Student

**JANA ELKHATIB**: Literary Arts

**SHERENA RAZEK**: Modern Culture and Media

**AYSE SANLI**: Anthropology

**MAIREAD SMITH**: Anthropology

**NOAH TETENBAUM**: Religious Studies

### UNDERGRADUATE INTERNSHIPS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

**MAYA AVELINO**: Al-Haq; BADIL Resource Center

**PAULINE GREGORY**: SALAM scholarship with the Sultan Qaboos Cultural Center

**MARA KESSLER**: Arab Reporters for Investigative Journalism

**MICA MALTZMAN**: Arab Studies Institute

**RITA SLAOU**: Human Rights Campaign



# ADVISORY COUNCIL (2022-23)

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ALIA AL-SENUSSI '03, AM'04

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AYSHA SHOMAN '04

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D. PATRICK MALEY '67

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LISA SAMS

MOSA ALOMRAN P'23, P'26

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OMAR MASRI

OSSAMA M. EL BATRAN '07

RAGHAD F. ALKHUDAIRY P'17

RASHA ABU GHAZALEH FAROUKI

SAMER M. KHALIDI '90

SHIRINE G. AGGAD P'22

SIRINE ABU GHAZALEH P'24, P'26

TANSA MERMERCI EKŞİOĞLU '97

TAREK O. AGGAD P'22

“The MES department is not only one of the most genuine and responsible centers of learning I’ve been part of on campus, but has also been intentional in building a wonderful community.”

ZACHARY FEDERMAN '23.5

“The Middle East Studies Department has been central to making my experience at Brown positive and meaningful. The faculty, staff, students, classes, (numerous!) events and research opportunities have all contributed to shaping my intellectual views and creating a sense of community. I feel grateful that the CMES has been part of my experience at Brown, and I know that I will carry the knowledge that I have gained and the relationships that I have built long after graduation.”

RITA SLAQUI '23.5

“Choosing to study Middle East Studies and work for the Center of Middle East Studies was perhaps the most pivotal and formative decision I made while at Brown, as it pushed me to grow not only as a student but as an individual as well. I will be forever grateful for the intellectual space and community that CMES has cultivated through its thought-provoking courses and events, and accessible and supportive faculty, staff and students—and will miss it all dearly after graduation!”

MARA KESSLER '23.5

The background is a solid teal color. Overlaid on this is a large, dark teal diamond shape. Within the diamond, there is a pattern of small, light teal circles arranged in a series of parallel lines that follow the diamond's edges. The overall effect is a modern, geometric design.

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## CENTER FOR MIDDLE EAST STUDIES

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