

2019-2020 ANNUAL REPORT

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

MEI

MIDDLE EAST
INSTITUTE





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DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Academic year 2019-20 at the Middle East Institute and Columbia University will be remembered for the dual impacts of the Covid-19 rampage in New York City, with the loss of lives and economic turmoil, and also of the widespread protests and calls for racial justice associated with the Black Lives Matter movement. The university's responses have included efforts to create new pandemic research initiatives and to focus attention on patterns of injustice in the academy itself and its communities. The institute's versions of the latter include combating Islamophobia and anti-Semitism.

In an attempt at a semblance of academic normalcy, the university turned to Zoom technology to finish the spring semester courses and then to conduct a summer-full of administrative and faculty meetings to figure out how to proceed. In the new academic year, the MEI remains in a predominantly "distanced" format, as does the university at large. Nevertheless, academic life goes on...

Our innovative Dual Degree program with our partner, the Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilizations (ISMC) at Aga Khan University has been successfully launched, with a signing by the two Provosts in December 2019, and our first class of students admitted and now taking Fall 2020 courses online. Building on the success of our free standing one-year MA in Islamic Studies, which is continuing, the Dual program provides for a first year in New York and second in London, and two MA degrees. The partnership brings together two leading institutions in the study of Muslim societies, historically and in the contemporary era, with interdisciplinary and global perspectives.

Our close affiliate, the also recently constituted Center for the Study of Muslim Societies (CSMS), which brings together interested faculty from across the university, from its numerous and far-flung departments and schools, has been building momentum. Despite the pandemic, CSMS put on a remarkable late spring musical performance event, with Zoom taking us to the residences of a series of noted Muslim musicians from countries from North and West Africa to Pakistan, all now residing in the US. Starting this fall, a new Adab Colloquium, the project of assistant professors Sarah Bin Tyeer (Columbia) and Matthew Keegan (Barnard), will commence a series focused on historical literary forms in related regional Islamic languages—Arabic, Ottoman Turkish, Turkish, Persian and Urdu.

Another affiliate, the Center for Palestine Studies (CPS)—still the unique center of its type in the US—is celebrating the achievements of its first full decade, while also taking stock and looking forward. At the conclusion of its programming year, CPS also employed Zoom for a screening of an Israeli film, *Advocate*, followed by a discussion by lawyers, including Katherine Franke of CPS and the Columbia Law School. Despite its drawbacks, the technology allowed for a far larger audience than a conventional screening.

This fall CPS will join with CSMS and the Columbia and NYU Libraries in an event on the Khalidiyya Library of Jerusalem. This famous manuscript collection, endowed by a member of the Khalidi family, has recently been digitized, an important milestone in its accessibility. Moderated by family member Rashid Khalidi, the Edward Said Professor in the History Department, the discussion will cover cataloguing, public access in Palestine, the digitization and the possibilities of a further broadening of access via university libraries in New York. The plan is for this introductory session to lead to a series of studies of individual manuscripts.

Our Sharia Workshop completed its fifth year with dates in the fall and spring in our standard format of pre-circulated papers and in-person sessions, with Yossef Rapoport and Christian Müller, and graduate student commentators. This fall, however, we are opening with a different format, a Zoom roundtable on new work by recently finished or soon-to-be finished PhD students. Later in the fall and in the spring we will have further workshops with the participation of scholars from the Middle East Studies Association's Global Academy Program.

This past year at the MEI was notable for the warm and stimulating presence of the Hussein Abdulsater, of Notre Dame University, who was with us as a Mahdi Fellow, a role in which he did his own research and also taught a course on Islamic theology. In December, the Institute joined with the Yarshater Center for Iranian Studies, the Institute for Religion, Culture and Public Life (IRCPL), and the Iranian Studies Initiative at NYU, in sponsoring a major conference on the Iranian Revolution. In the spring semester, the Institute supported a course offering on climate change in the MESAAS Department, taught by Dr. Sonia Ahsan, whose course will be repeated in spring 2021.

The forecast for the already started 2020-21 academic year is very good indeed, inasmuch as a pair of major grants, from the CU President's Global Initiative Fund and the Carnegie Foundation, will support a project under the rubric of the "Commission on MENA Research," under the leadership of former MEI Director (and Dean emerita of SIPA) Lisa Anderson.



BRINKLEY MESSICK

MISSION STATEMENT

The Middle East Institute fosters an interdisciplinary and interdepartmental approach to enhancing Columbia's Middle East and North Africa programs. It strengthens the curriculum by offering courses to supplement and complement departmental offerings, and it provides a vibrant forum for faculty and students to work together across the different disciplines through workshops, lectures, conferences, and social events. The institute offers fellowships to students for study and research in the MENA region and at home, and it advises students on course selection, language programs, and career opportunities. Outreach programs offered by the MEI inform and educate the media, government and general public about the Middle East and North Africa and help diversify K-14 curricula regarding regional content. MEI also collaborates with other regional institutes and university units to advance knowledge about issues and processes that transcend regions. MEI utilizes existing earmarked support for visiting scholars and currently is seeking further endowment support for its mission objectives.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

MEI hosts two masters degree programs, the Islamic Studies MA (ISMA), and the Dual Degree MA program with Aga Khan University in Islamic Studies and Muslim Cultures. Additionally MEI offers a Graduate Certificate and coordinates the Regional Specialization.



I.S.M.A.

The Islamic Studies MA Program (ISMA), which the Middle East Institute has been supervising for the past 7 years, continues to attract a strong cohort of dedicated students focusing on a wide variety of subjects related to the Islamic religious and intellectual tradition and the diverse regional histories, cultures, and social formations of Muslim communities around the world. Interdisciplinary in character, our innovative program draws on the range of area specializations, departments and schools represented at Columbia, a leader in the field. During the 2019-20 academic year, the ISMA program had 11 students enrolled and working towards their degrees.

All students take the core seminar “Foundation to Islamic Studies and the Study of Muslim Societies,” during the fall term to gain a rigorous foundation in key concepts, theories, and debates in Islamic studies. Students also choose from a wide selection of courses to build a coherent program of study tailored to their unique research interests. Based on the exposure to critical scholarly approaches and training in research methodologies, students complete their degrees by writing a master’s thesis under the mentorship of a faculty advisor.

FOUNDATION TO ISLAMIC STUDIES AND MUSLIM SOCIETIES

Fall 2019

This seminar provides students with an introduction to key concepts, theories and debates in Islamic Studies, broadly conceived. Required for students in the MA Program in Islamic Studies, this course is also suitable for graduate students in other departments who study the Middle East, South Asia & Africa or are interested in Islam as a global phenomenon.

ISLAMIC CULTURE STUDIES GR5000
KATHRYN SPELLMAN POOTS
 T 10:10am-12:00pm / KNOX 207

Qualified undergraduates may register with permission of the instructor. Interdisciplinary in scope, and wide-ranging in substantive coverage, the seminar features weekly visits by faculty from across the university.

SELECT FACULTY PARTICIPANTS

Manan Ahmed History	Wael Hallaq MESAAS
Akeel Bilgrami Philosophy	Mana Kia MESAAS
John Chen EALAC	Peter Magierski Libraries
Hamid Dabashi MESAAS	Brinkley Messick Anthropology
Marwa Elshakry History	Avinoam Shalem Art History & Archaeology
Najam Haider Religion	Sarah bin Tyeer MESAAS

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

“My time at ISMA has thus far been phenomenal, and it would be no exaggeration to say that enrolling in the program has substantially expanded the depth and breadth of my knowledge in a wide range of topics in Islamic Studies. During the program, I received a FLAS scholarship for the summer of 2019 and for the academic year 2019–2020, which allowed me to undertake Arabic language study in Egypt at AUC and during the regular school year thereafter. Though the program does not require that we undertake language study, I appreciated that it offers students the opportunity to do so, nonetheless.

One thing I enjoyed about the program was the manuscript workshop we had one Friday morning. The hands-on approach gave me the practical skills I would need to read Islamicate manuscripts, which I am sure will serve me well one day down the line.

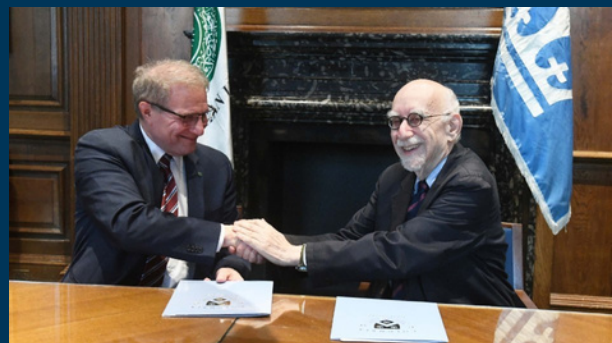
After I finish the MA, I plan on applying for JD/PhD programs, as well as continuing to write, organize, and work on independent projects that draw from the rich repository of knowledge and resources that I was given access to during my time at MEI. The program has been important to my life and career because it taught me how to appreciate scholarship with an eye toward openness and collaboration, and how to generate work as part of a larger community of scholars aiming to advance the human condition. I am grateful that the program has given me both the resources and knowledge needed to be the thinker I strive to be.”

- Asad Dandia, 2021

MA DUAL DEGREE PROGRAM

In December 2019, MEI officially launched the new Dual Degree program in Islamic Studies and Muslim Societies with our partner, the Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilizations (ISMC) at Aga Khan University, with a signing by the two Provosts. The first class of students was admitted, beginning classes in the Fall 2020 semester. Building on the success of our free standing one-year MA in Islamic Studies, the partnership brings together two leading institutions in the study of Muslim societies, historically and in the contemporary era, with interdisciplinary and global perspectives. This 21st century Muslim Cultures degree will provide students with the tools and frameworks to understand Muslim cultures in a comparative and historical context to deepen their understanding of the richness and complexity of the religious and intellectual traditions of Islam and the diverse regional histories, cultures, and social formations of Muslim societies around the world.

The dual program unites a cutting-edge scholarly community of over one hundred specialized faculty members and language instructors and gives students access to the distinctive academic resources of both universities. The partnership will also foster joint research projects and



Carl Amrhein (left), Provost of Aga Khan University, shakes hands with Ira Katznelson, Columbia's Interim Provost



Provosts Carl Amrhein and Ira Katznelson.

publications through faculty exchanges. Students spend the first part of the program at Columbia University in New York, and part two at Aga Khan University's Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilizations in London and receive degrees from both institutions.

The innovative curriculum includes intensive foreign language instruction in either Arabic or Farsi. Enrolled students will be trained in thesis research, planning and methodology. They will take core courses that cover foundational concepts, theories and debates in the field of Islamic and Muslim studies. They will have access to elective courses that span different time periods and academic disciplines, providing them with the freedom and opportunity to design their own courses of study.



Faculty leadership at Columbia's MEI and Aga Khan's AKU-ISMC

What people are saying



“This partnership will foster the development of the theoretical and practical perspectives needed to understand how Muslim societies are responding to pressing global challenges. At this moment in history, such an endeavor is especially important.”

- Ira Katznelson, Columbia University’s Interim Provost and Ruggles Professor of Political Science and History.

“This is an excellent opportunity for students to experience two world-class programs which complement and add value to each other in many ways. Now more than ever, we need to educate people to become leaders who have a deep and nuanced understanding of Islamic issues, enabling them to offer clear and thoughtful insight and guidance. The depth and breadth that this new program offers is unique and will prepare a group of young people to tackle some of the most important and pressing issues of their generation.”

- AKU-ISMC Dean, Professor Leif Stenberg.

“The partnership of Columbia's Middle East Institute (MEI) with the Aga Khan University's Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilizations marries two of the strongest Islamic Studies programs in the world. Columbia's historic depth in the field, which begins in the nineteenth century, and AKU's wide-ranging breath, with its extensive academic networks from Central Asia to East Africa and even North America, will offer students and the public unparalleled opportunities for learning new and important knowledge about the Muslim world,”

- Lisa Anderson, special lecturer and dean emerita at Columbia’s School of International and Public Affairs.





TWO MA PROGRAMS
TO CHOOSE FROM

- The Islamic Studies Master's Program
- The Dual Degree Master's Program of Islamic Studies and Muslim Cultures at Columbia (New York) and Aga Khan University (London)

ABOUT THE MIDDLE EAST INSTITUTE AND THE
CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF MUSLIM SOCIETIES

The Islamic Studies MA program is hosted by the Middle East Institute (MEI) in collaboration with the Center for the Study of Muslim Societies (CSMS). MEI, founded in 1954, promotes the interdisciplinary study of the Middle East and North Africa together with associated regions of Central Asia, South and Southeast Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa and related global communities. CSMS is a collective for new research, integrated, innovative teaching and public outreach on the study of Muslim societies worldwide that addresses majority and minority Muslim societies and their intersections with other religions, cultures, and secular outlooks.

Continuing its long-standing tradition of research in the study of Islam, Columbia University currently counts over eighty scholars concerning the various aspects of Muslim societies including those in the Middle East, Africa, South and Southeast Asia, Europe and the Americas.



ISLAMIC STUDIES PROGRAM

The Islamic Studies Master's Program focuses on the critical academic study of Islamic religious and intellectual traditions and on the diverse regional histories, cultures, and social formations of Muslim communities around the world. Interdisciplinary in character, our innovative program draws on the range of area specializations, departments and schools represented at Columbia.

DUAL DEGREE PROGRAM



A unique partnership of two leading universities, the dual program is a 21st Century Muslim Cultures degree that will provide students with trans-disciplinary frameworks and tools to understand Muslim cultures in a comparative and historical context. Students spend the first part of the program at Columbia University in New York, and part two at AKU-ISMC in London, and receive degrees from both institutions.

OUR PROGRAMS

- All students begin with the core seminar, Foundation to Islamic Studies and the Study of Muslim Societies, providing a rigorous foundation in key concepts, theories, and debates in Islamic studies.
- Students choose from a wide selection of classes taught by world-class faculty to build a coherent program of study tailored to their unique research interests. Relevant courses range from the classic areas of religion, law, literature, and history to inquiries of social scientists, feminist and gender research, media and film, and colonial and postcolonial studies.
- Based on the exposure to critical scholarly approaches and training in research methodologies, students of both programs complete their degrees by writing a master's thesis under the supervision of a faculty advisor.
- Graduates are prepared for a wide range of careers in fields including academia, international development, journalism, law, and public service.



ADMISSIONS PROCESS

- The deadline for fall admission is in February and spring admission is in November.
- Applications are accepted online only.
- GRE scores are optional.

For complete information about admissions please visit: www.mei.columbia.edu/academic-programs

CONTACT

ACADEMIC PROGRAM DIRECTOR:
Kathryn Spellman Poots
kp2692@columbia.edu
website: www.mei.columbia.edu



MORE ABOUT MEI AND CSMS

CSMS and MEI develop and oversee a wide variety of scholarly events and programs such as book launches, film screenings, guest lectures, and research initiatives. Other offerings at these two centers include:

Workshop Series: Regular programming includes the Shari'a Workshop, Adab Colloquium, and Ifriqiyya Colloquium, each dedicated to the discussion and dissemination of new research.

Fellowships: Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowships are available along with other awards for incoming students. Travel grants for conferences are also available.

Language Instruction: Instruction is offered in Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Swahili and Urdu, among other languages. Students can also enroll in summer intensive programs at Columbia or abroad.

The Islamic Studies Library: Students gain access to Columbia's large research collection of manuscripts and printed materials on Islamic Studies, in regional languages as well as in English and Western European languages.

Photos courtesy of Columbia GSAS and Katherine von Ofenheim

FACULTY

- Lila Abu-Lughod
ANTHROPOLOGY
- Manan Ahmed
HISTORY
- Gil Anidjar
RELIGION
- Akeel Bilgrami
PHILOSOPHY
- Marwa Elshakry
HISTORY
- Katherine Ewing
RELIGION
- Hamid Dabashi
MESAAS
- Souleymane Bachir Diagne
PHILOSOPHY
- Najam Haider
RELIGION
- Wael Hallaq
MESAAS
- Ziad Jalleddine
ARCHITECTURE
- Mana Kia
MESAAS
- Rashid Khalidi
HISTORY
- Brinkley Messick
ANTHROPOLOGY
- Kathryn Spellman Poots
MESAAS
- Avinoaam Shalem
ART HISTORY
- Sarah bin Tyeer
MESAAS
- Elaine Van Dalen
MESAAS
and more.

Program Brochure

REGIONAL SPECIALIZATION

MEI coordinates the Middle East Regional Specialization for students in the School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA) who chose to specialize in the region as part of their degree via multiple academic disciplines. During this academic year, 24 SIPA students undertook the Middle East regional specialization, developing a solid basis in regional studies to carry into their future careers.

In February, MEI hosted the Middle East Specialization Spring Happy Hour, bringing together over 40 students and professors from the MENA specialization and Islamic Studies Masters for drinks, Middle Eastern mezze, and new connections and conversation.



The Middle East Specialization invites you to our

SPRING HAPPY HOUR!

at **Silvana**
300 W 116th

Wed, February 5th
6:00 PM

Come join students and professors from the MENA specialization and Islamic Studies Masters for drinks, Middle Eastern mezze, and great conversation!



MEI MIDDLE EAST INSTITUTE COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY **CSMS**

GRADUATE CERTIFICATE

MEI offers a Graduate Certificate, which students can pursue in conjunction with graduate-degree programs, providing a rich multidisciplinary course of studies that will equip students with a strong basis of knowledge of the Middle East and Muslim World. During this academic year, 2 students pursued this certificate.

COURSES

MEI used its Title VI grant funding and endowment to support additional courses on the region, including courses at the School of International and Public Affairs and in the School of Arts and Sciences.

The following courses were supported during this year include the following:

- **Persian Gulf Security** with professor Lawrence Potter
- **Modern Iran** with professor Lawrence Potter
- **Themes in Islamic Theology** with professor Hussein Abdulsater
- **Climate and Empire** with professor Sonia Ahsan

PROGRAMMING

Throughout the year the MEI hosts regular events including lectures, conferences and colloquia on culture, history, arts and other thematic areas related to the Middle East region. These events support the initiatives of faculty, students and visiting scholars, and take place in collaboration with its counterparts across Columbia and New York City. A sample of our programming from this year follows.



PUBLIC EVENTS - FALL 2019

September 6: **Arabic Digital Humanities Open Seminar**

Sarah Bowen Savant, Professor, Aga Khan University-ISMC

September 20: **Describing Manuscripts from the MWM Project: A Hands-On Codicology Workshop with Kelly Tuttle**

Kelly Tuttle, Cataloging librarian for the Manuscripts of the Muslim World project,

October 2: **The (R)evolution of Arab Queer Cinema: Queer Representation in Film Pre- and Post-Arab Uprisings**

Anthony Chidiac, Independent Film Artist
Cyrine Hammemi, Coordinator of Mawjoudin

Sam Abbas, Co-founder ArabQ Films
Rolla Selbak, Board member of Outfest

October 10: **Book Talk: Law and Revolution in the Arab Spring**

Nimer Sultany, Reader in Public Law at the SOAS, University of London

October 15: **Queer Palestine and the Empire of Critique - A Lecture by Dr. Sa'ed Atshan**

Dr. Atshan, Assistant Professor of Peace and Conflict Studies at Swarthmore College

October 17: **North Africa in Africa: The Decolonizing Centrality of Algeria**

Daho Djerbal, Professor, University of Algiers-Bouzaréab

Mohamed Amer Meziane, Research Fellow at the IRCP and the Institute of African Studies, Columbia University

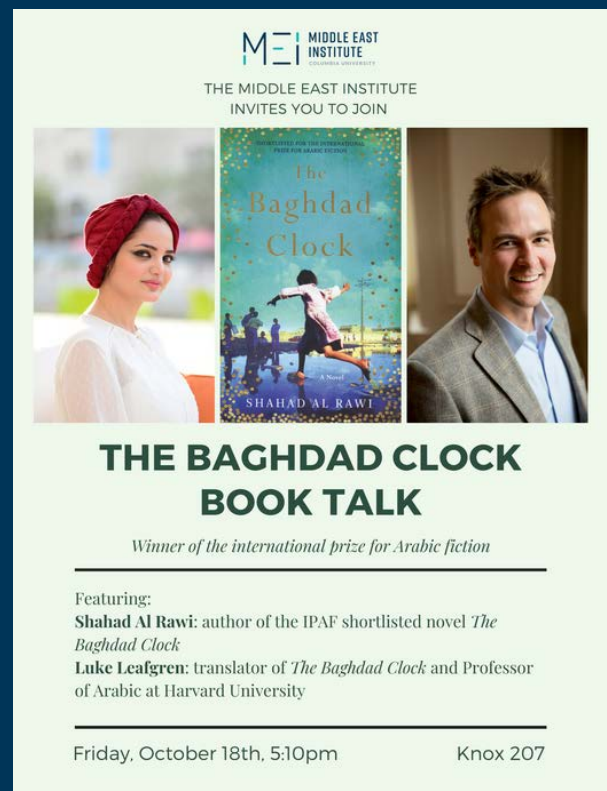
Mamadou Diouf, Professor, Columbia University

Mahmood Mamdani, Professor, Columbia

October 18: **Book Talk: The Baghdad Clock with Shahad Al Rawi**

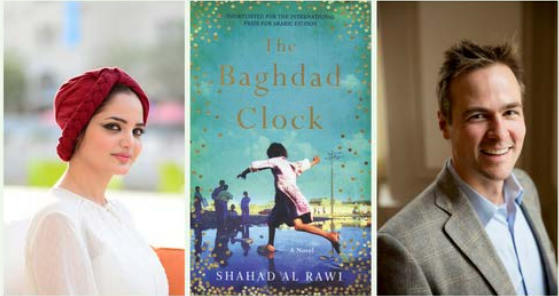
Shahad Al Rawi, author

Luke Leafgren, translator of The Baghdad Clock and Professor of Arabic, Harvard University



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COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

THE MIDDLE EAST INSTITUTE
INVITES YOU TO JOIN



**THE BAGHDAD CLOCK
BOOK TALK**

Winner of the international prize for Arabic fiction

Featuring:
Shahad Al Rawi: author of the IPAF shortlisted novel *The Baghdad Clock*
Luke Leafgren: translator of *The Baghdad Clock* and Professor of Arabic at Harvard University

Friday, October 18th, 5:10pm Knox 207

October 24: **Film Screening and Talk with director: Tunis by Night**

Elyes Baccar, Director

November 1: **Between Genre's Straits: A Conversation on Literature, Philosophy, and Genre in Morocco with Driss Ksikes**

Driss Ksikes, Writer

Gil Anidjar, Professor, Columbia University

November 11: **Gender, Governance and Islam Book Launch**

Kathryn Spellman, Visiting Associate

Professor at Columbia University &

Associate Professor at Aga Khan University

Deniz Kandiyoti, Emeritus Professor at

SOAS, University of London

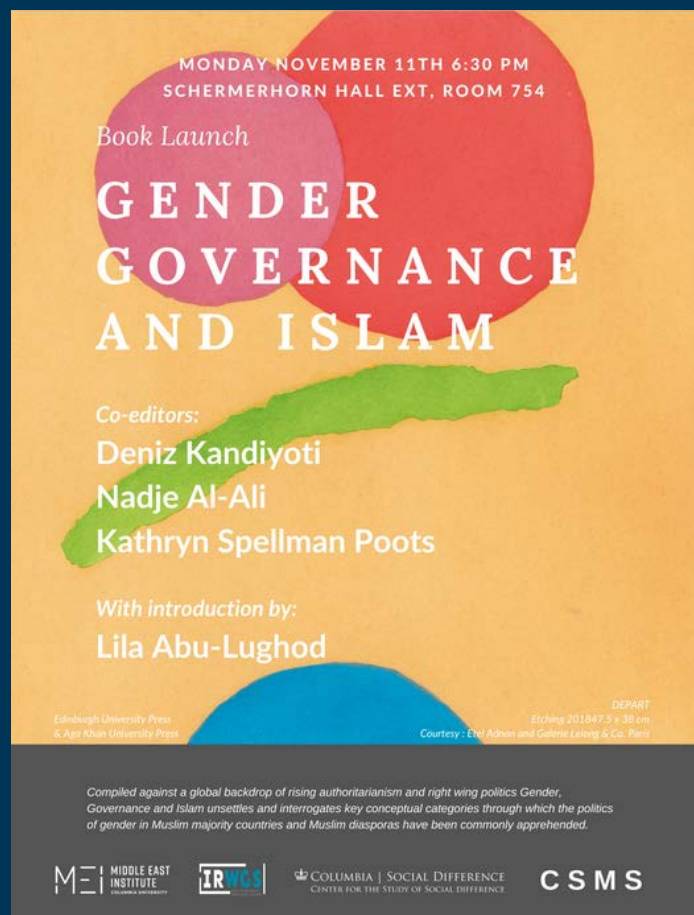
Nadje Al-Ali, Professor, Brown University

November 12: **Defeated Revolutionaries, Lasting Legacies: the afterlife of revolution in Dhufar, Oman**

Professor Alice Wilson, Lecturer in Social Anthropology, University of Sussex

November 19: **Rethinking the Arabic Literary Canon: Nağib Mağfūz Through Literary-Critical Experimentalism**

Dr. Chiara Fontana, Adjunct Professor of Arabic Philology, University of Bologna



December 5: **Iranian Revolution and Its Literary Consequences: Home, Exile and Displacement**

Fatemeh Shams, Assistant Professor, University of Pennsylvania

Omid Tofighian, Lecturer, American University of Cairo

Behrouz Boochani, Journalist

December 6: **How to Represent Iran at the Intersection of Academy and Community**

Nasrin Rahimieh, Professor, University of California, Irvine

Ali Mirsepassi, Professor, New York University

PUBLIC EVENTS - SPRING 2020

January 23: **The Making of Lissa: Comics, Gender, and Medicine in the Arab World**

Sherine Hamdy, Associate Professor, University of California, Irvine
Caroline Brewer, illustrator
Sarula Bao, illustrator

February 11: **Talk: Fiction as Islamic Historiographical Alterity**

Shahzad Bashir, Director, Middle East Studies Aga Khan Professor of Islamic Humanities Professor of Religious Studies

February 20: **Islamic History Workshop: Sameness, Difference, and Embodiments of Desire in the 1001 Nights**

Prof. Zayde Antrim, Associate professor, Trinity College

February 13: **Mestizaje In Arab Amairka**

Sarah Gueltieri, Professor, University of Southern California

February 28-29: **Iraqi Studies Conference: Past, Present, and Future**

March 3: **Book Talk: The Universal Enemy: Jihad, Empire, and the Challenge**

Darryl Li is Assistant Professor of Anthropology and Lecturer in Law at the University of Chicago.

May 30: **New Moon Rising: American Muslim Artists Perform**

Performing artists: Rachid Halihal, Salieu Suso, Amir Sulaiman, Mitra Sumara, Zeshan Bhagwadi, Akram Ahmad Al-Mustafa, Maalem Hassan Benjaafar, Amir ElSaffar, Maimouna Youssef, and Alsarrah of the Nubatones, musicians



ONLINE CONCERT
SATURDAY, MAY 30TH
3PM - 5PM EST

PRESENTED BY:
MEI MIDDLE EAST INSTITUTE
C S M S
Center for the Study of Muslim Societies
COLUMBIA RELIGIOUS LIFE

NEW MOON RISING
AMERICAN MUSLIM ARTISTS PERFORM

FEATURING:
Salieu Suso
Amir Sulaiman
Maimouna Youssef
Zeshan B
Rachid Halihal
Alsarrah of the Nubatones
Amir ElSaffar
Maalem Hassan Benjaafar
Mitra Sumara
Akram Ahmad Al-Mustafa

WORKSHOP SERIES

Sharī'a Studies

The Sharī'a, or Islamic law, an exceedingly rich and essential part of the wider Islamic tradition, is a focus of robust academic scholarship. The MEI has organized the Sharī'a Workshop series, since 2015 to actively promote scholarly inquiry and debate in the field of Sharī'a Studies. This workshop brings together faculty and graduate students from Columbia and other universities in the region for intensive discussions of new research on topics related to Islamic law by leading specialists invited from the US and abroad.

Workshops:

October 31: **"Power of the Pen: Cadis and their Archives"**

With Christian Müller (CNRS Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes),

January 30: **"Tribal Villages in Mamluk Palestine: Exploring the Haram Al-Sharif Documents"**

With Yossef Rapoport (Queen Mary University of London) and commentary by PhD Candidates Ibrahim Khaled El Houdaiby and Aseel Najib

M E I MIDDLE EAST INSTITUTE
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

C S M S

Sharī'a Workshop with Yossef Rapoport
Professor of Islamic History,
Queen Mary University of London

Tribal Villages in Mamluk Palestine

Exploring the Haram Al-Sharif Documents

Commentators:
- Ibrahim Khaled El Houdaiby - PhD Candidate, MESAAS
- Aseel Najib - PhD Candidate, Religion Department

30 JANUARY
4:00 - 6:00 PM
207 KNOX HALL

For a copy of the pre-circulated paper, contact Kelley Odell at kao2145@columbia.edu

Ifriqiyya Colloquium

Launched in 2010 as a faculty colloquium, Ifriqiyya is dedicated to giving historical depth to the study of Africa at Columbia University. The group meets regularly during the academic year and organizes occasional public lectures.

Workshops:

February 13: **Training Slaves for the Camera: Race and Memory in Representations of Slaves, Cairo and Khartoum, 1882-1892**

December 5: **Pastimes and Politics: Culture, Community, and Identity in Post-Abolition Urban Zanzibar, 1890-1945**

November 26: **The Feast of History: Enrico Cerulli, Heruy Wäldä Śelassé, and the Colonial Politics of Expertise**

September 12: **Africans in Asia AD 600- AD 1900 - Decolonizing and debunking the Myths**

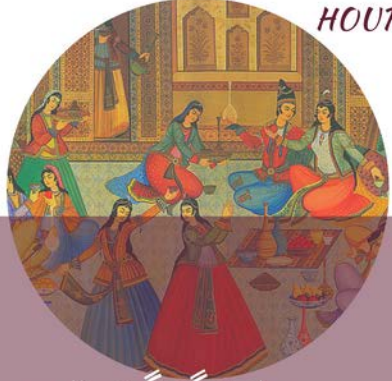


LANGUAGE CIRCLES

MEI supports weekly language circles for Arabic and Persian to provide extra practice for language students in a conversational setting. The circles create weekly opportunities for language students of all levels to meet and practice with the help of native speakers. Learners of all levels are welcome so long as they have some proficiency, however basic. The subject of conversation is entirely free and determined by the participants, their skill levels and their interests. The conversation is often broken up into smaller groups when practicing with learners of a similar level is more beneficial. MEI also supports a Persian language film series that was ongoing throughout the year.

MEI MIDDLE EAST INSTITUTE

الحلقة العربية
ARABIC
CONVERSATION
HOUR



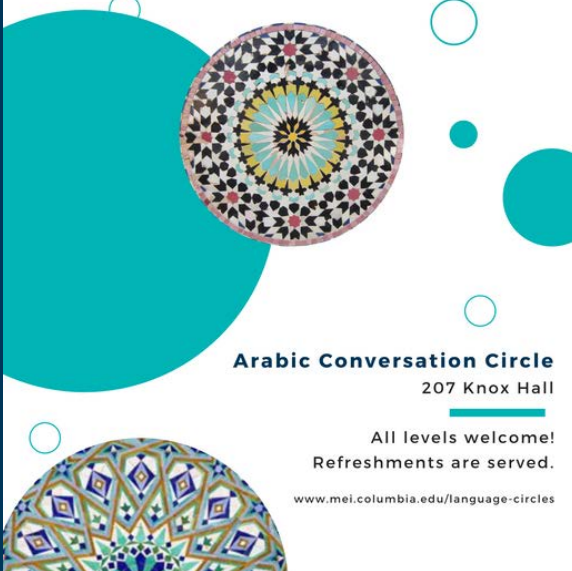
ساعت گفتگوی فارسی
PERSIAN
CONVERSATION
HOUR

MEI MIDDLE EAST INSTITUTE

COLUMBIA | MESAAS
MIDDLE EASTERN, SOUTH ASIAN, AND AFRICAN STUDIES

MEI MIDDLE EAST INSTITUTE
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

الحلقة العربية



Arabic Conversation Circle
207 Knox Hall

All levels welcome!
Refreshments are served.

www.mei.columbia.edu/language-circles

Iranian Cinema
AT MESAAS

FALL 2019

Sep 3 - Maxx (2005)
Comedy by Saman Moghaddam

Sep 17 - The Lizard (2004)
Comedy by Kamal Tabrizi

Oct 1 - Ten (2002)
Drama by Abbas Kiarostami


Oct 15 - Gheysar (1969)
Drama by Mas'ud Kimia'i

Oct 29 - A Girl Walks Home
Alone At Night (2014)
Horror by Ana Lily Amirpour

Nov 12 - Song of Sparrows
(2008)
Drama by Majid Majidi

Nov 26 - The White Balloon
(1995)
Drama by Jafar Panahi

Dec 10 - Offside
Social drama by Jafar Panahi



free and
open to the public

ALTERNATE
TUESDAYS
KNOX HALL
7-9PM

QUESTIONS? CONTACT:
MQ2213@COLUMBIA.EDU

FELLOWSHIPS

The MEI makes a number of fellowships available to students at all levels in their academic careers. MEI's fellowships and scholarships provide financial support to cover academic studies and language studies in particular.



F.L.A.S.

The Middle East Institute is designated by the U.S. Department of Education as a Middle East National Resource Center and is authorized to award graduate and undergraduate Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowships. FLAS awards this year were offered for Academic Year study at Columbia, and for intensive summer language study in the U.S. or abroad. The MEI oversees awards for Arabic, Persian, Turkish and Hebrew FLAS awards. During the 2019-2020 academic year, MEI awarded full year fellowships to eight graduate students and one undergraduate student. Additionally, nine students received summer fellowships, however, only five were able to take advantage of the fellowship due to the coronavirus restrictions on travel. The remaining four deferred their summer FLAS until Summer 2021.

MEI has also supported the study of regional languages at Hunter College since 2014 by offering a FLAS to a Hunter student each summer.

A graphic for the Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowship. The top half features a white background with a dark blue, stylized Arabic calligraphic pattern. In the upper center, there is a teal rectangular box containing the MEI logo (the letters 'MEI' in a stylized font) and the text 'MIDDLE EAST INSTITUTE' and 'COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY' in white. Below this, the text 'FOREIGN LANGUAGE AND AREA STUDIES (FLAS) FELLOWSHIP' is written in large, bold, white capital letters. Underneath, in smaller teal text, it says 'Applications are now open!' followed by 'Deadline: February 13th, 2020' in bold white text. Further down, it says 'Fellowships awarded in Arabic, Turkish, Persian and Hebrew' in teal. At the bottom, it says 'For more information visit: mei.columbia.edu' in teal.

MEI MIDDLE EAST
INSTITUTE
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

**FOREIGN LANGUAGE AND
AREA STUDIES (FLAS)
FELLOWSHIP**

Applications are now open!
Deadline: February 13th, 2020

Fellowships awarded in Arabic, Turkish,
Persian and Hebrew

For more information visit: mei.columbia.edu

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Yunus Kovankaya

One of the FLAS recipients for this summer was Yunus Kovankaya, an undergraduate who is majoring in Civil Engineering and minoring in Middle East Studies. His family left Turkey when he was young, but he maintained his connection to the country and has been studying Turkish. His goal is to work on protecting water resources in Turkey while facilitating growth. This demands both technical skills and cultural competency. He has gained experience on the technical side of fighting water insecurity through his work with Engineers Without Borders. His plan to study Turkish in Izmir during the summer was upended by the pandemic, so he studied Advanced Turkish at the University of Wisconsin, Madison and hopes to be able to return to Turkey after graduation to work with local governments to address water insecurity issues.

DE BARY FELLOWSHIP

The new Theodore de Bary Language Study Fellowship supports undergraduate language study during the summer. It offers up to \$8000 towards summer program tuition and living expenses for the study of Arabic, Hebrew, Persian or Turkish. This fellowship complements the Summer FLAS for undergraduates, making study abroad funding available to international students who are not American citizens or permanent residents. During this academic year, two Columbia undergraduate students were selected to receive this fellowship.

MEI MIDDLE EAST INSTITUTE
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

FELLOWSHIPS FOR INTENSIVE LANGUAGE STUDY

Fellowships awarded in Arabic, Turkish, Persian and Hebrew for intensive language study in 2020

Intensive language study funding for American citizens and permanent residents.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE AND AREA STUDIES (FLAS) FELLOWSHIP

Deadline:
February 13th, 2020

Intensive language study funding for international students.

THEODORE DE BARY LANGUAGE STUDY FELLOWSHIP

Deadline:
March 23rd, 2020

Application Details at:
mei.columbia.edu

NATAKALLAM

For the 2019-2020 school year, MEI partnered with Natakallam to offer students fully-funded Language Conversation Practice online. This created opportunities for Columbia students to gain language practice and cross-cultural exchange with native speakers of Arabic, Persian, and Kurdish – all of them individuals displaced by conflict. A total of 24 students, from undergraduates to PhDs received scholarships for online lessons with native speakers. Additionally, 26 students participated in the in-class sessions to complement existing coursework of their Persian and Arabic classes at Columbia. These sessions allowed students to practice what they learning in the classroom, prepare for future research or job opportunities, gain greater confidence speaking, and make connections with their conversation partner.

ABOUT NATAKALLAM

NaTakallam, founded by a Columbia SIPA alumnus, connects refugees with remote income-earning opportunities, providing them with economic empowerment, purpose, and re-gained dignity.

Want to brush up on your language skills?



APPLY NOW FOR A SCHOLARSHIP

LANGUAGE CONVERSATION PRACTICE

MEI is offering students:
10 **fully-funded** 1-hour sessions
with a NaTakallam Conversation
Partner on Skype.

*Applications are open on a rolling basis,
while funds available!*

Apply now at: mei.columbia.edu

Languages available:

- Arabic
- Persian
- Kurdish

MEI MIDDLE EAST
INSTITUTE
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY



In partnership with Natakallam

*Natakallam connects language learners
with refugees and displaced people around
the world for language practice over Skype.*

LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE TUTORIALS

During this year MEI offered subsidies to 13 students seeking to improve their Arabic, Hebrew, Turkish, and Persian through Columbia's Language Resource Center. These tutorials are designed for students who want the opportunity to maintain and advance their skills in a second language, with particular emphasis on spoken communication.

ABOUT THE LANGUAGE RESOURCE CENTER

The LRC regularly hosts reading groups, workshops, and symposia for language faculty specifically, and for the broader language community as well. These include the Second Language Acquisition Reading Group, the Instructional Innovation Workshops, and talks by invited guests. In addition, the LRC aggregates information about language tables, foreign language film clubs, and other language events for students.

OUTREACH

The Middle East Institute is committed to supporting K-14 teachers in high need areas of New York City and its surrounding suburbs with resources and training to incorporate quality content related to the MENA region into curriculum and classes.

an era of restrictions and bans

collecting oral histories

a two day professional development course*
at Teachers College, Columbia University

june 28 & 29

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS

MEI offers teachers robust professional development opportunities in the form of intensive two-day accredited workshops. These workshops demonstrate how to incorporate content related to the MENA region into the NYS curriculum. Take-home assignments and in-session activities build workshop participants' capacity for self-reflection and for interrogating their own (or their institution's) assumptions and instructional practices in order to cultivate a critical consciousness in their classrooms and institutions, decenter hegemonic voices and create more inclusive educational environments. While programming was cut short this year due to COVID-19, progress in developing new curricula continues.

Partnerships with LaGuardia Community College and Hunter College

MEI has partnered with LaGuardia Community College since 2016 and Hunter College since 2014 to advance Middle East Studies and related programming at public educational institutions in New York City. With LaGuardia CC, MEI cosponsors the annual New York Forum for Amazigh (Berber) Film; at Hunter, we provide a Foreign Language and Area Studies fellowship to a student each summer.

PARTNERS AND AFFILIATES

MEI collaborates closely with a wide range of institutions and organizations at Columbia and around the world. Some of our closet partners include the Center for Palestine Studies (CPS) and our affiliated collective, the Center for the Study of Muslim Societies (CSMS).



COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR PALESTINE STUDIES

The Center for Palestine Studies (CPS) promotes the academic study of Palestine by supporting research, teaching, and intellectual collaboration among scholars within Columbia University and beyond. CPS provides an institutional home for faculty, post-doctoral researchers, and students at Columbia in fields that include history, literary studies, the social sciences, religion, philosophy, law, archaeology, architecture, and the arts. CPS also builds connections with other institutions and scholars to strengthen the academic study of Palestine and Palestinians throughout the United States and the world. Launched in 2010, the Center for Palestine Studies at Columbia University is the first such center in an academic institution in the United States.

PROGRAMMING & RESEARCH AREAS



HISTORY OF THE PRESENT



THE ARTS



PALESTINE & LAW



PALESTINE LIBRARY



PALESTINE CUTS



JERUSALEM

CPS Events

July 14: **Systemic Racism in the US And Israel: Analogies and Disanalogies**

May 14: **Nakba Day: A Conversation with Rashid Khalidi and Noura Erakat**

March 9: **Citizenship as Gesture**

March 4: **The Hundred Years' War on Palestine**

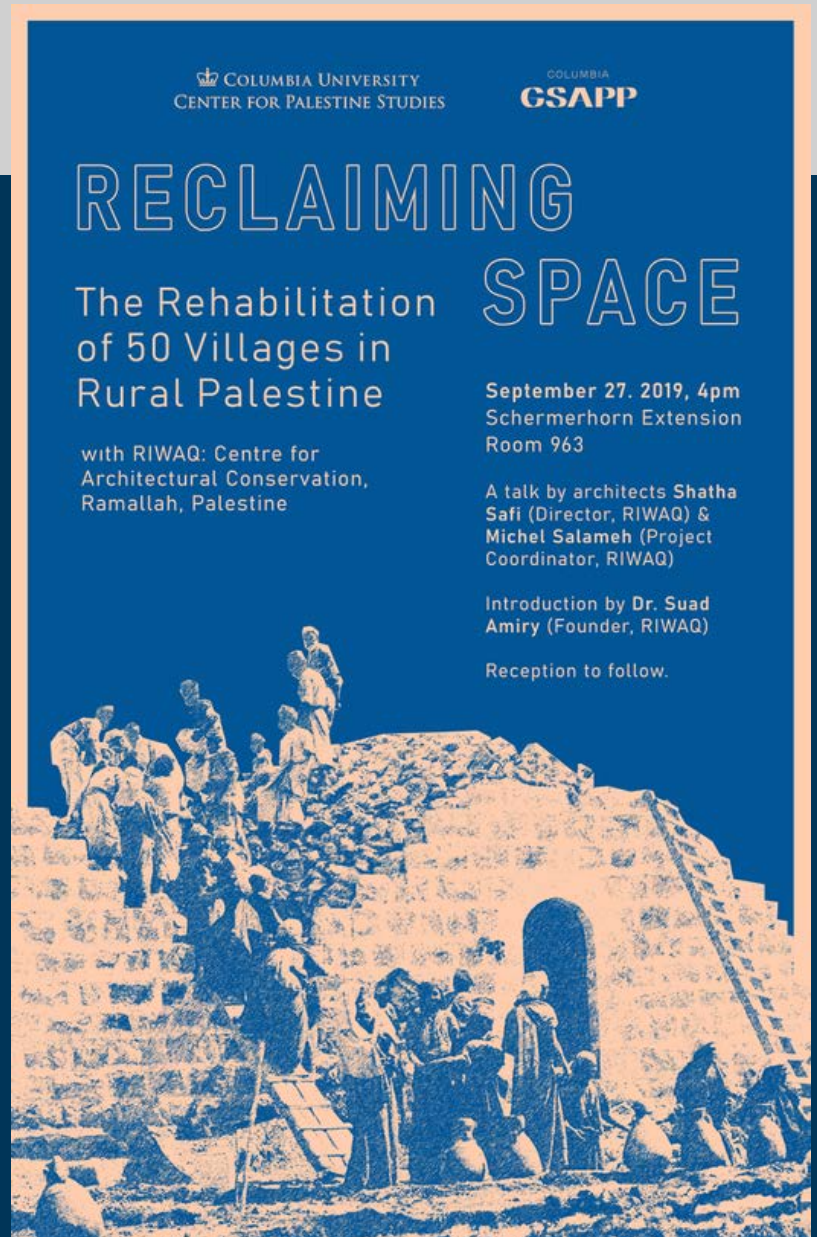
February 3: **Waste Siege**

February 14: **Stone Men**

January 21: **A Talk by Mk Aida Touma-Sliman**

November 21: **The Movement and the Middle East, Book Talk with Michael Fischbach**

September 27: **Reclaiming Space: the rehabilitation of 50 Villages in Rural Palestine**



COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
CENTER FOR PALESTINE STUDIES

COLUMBIA
GSAPP

RECLAIMING SPACE

The Rehabilitation of 50 Villages in Rural Palestine

with RIWAQ: Centre for Architectural Conservation, Ramallah, Palestine

September 27, 2019, 4pm
Schmerhorn Extension Room 963

A talk by architects **Shatha Safi** (Director, RIWAQ) & **Michel Salameh** (Project Coordinator, RIWAQ)

Introduction by **Dr. Suad Amiry** (Founder, RIWAQ)

Reception to follow.

IBRAHIM ABU-LUGHOD POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP

The Ibrahim Abu-Lughod Award is an annual post-doctoral fellowship at Columbia University. The award recognizes and fosters innovative and groundbreaking scholarship on issues related to Palestine and Palestinians. The award supports a post-doctoral scholar working on a book project in any field of the humanities or social sciences.

The 8th recipient of the Ibrahim Abu-Lughod Award in Palestine Studies is Lana Tatour.

Nate George has been selected as the 9th recipient of the Ibrahim Abu-Lughod Award in Palestine Studies and will be in residence at the Center for Palestine Studies during the 2020-2021 academic year.

FELLOW SPOTLIGHT

Lana Tatour

Lana Tatour was in residence at the Center for Palestine Studies during the 2019–2020 academic year. During this postdoctoral fellowship, Lana Tatour focused on her book manuscript, *Ambivalent Resistance: Palestinians in Israel and the Liberal Politics of Settler Colonialism and Human Rights*, that explores the contemporary impasse of indigenous resistance to settler colonialism, focusing on '48 Palestinians (known as Palestinian citizens of Israel). Building on an understanding of settler colonialism and liberalism as convergent and co-constitutive, rather than antithetical, and on an understanding of liberalism as entangled with racism, the book demonstrates that native resistance to settler colonialism has been shaped in relation to—and as a product of—the encounter of native populations with the liberal and racial politics of both human rights and the settler state. *Ambivalent Resistance* is based on ethnographic and archival research and foregrounds the institution of citizenship—marked by inclusionary and exclusionary sensibilities—and liberal human rights—functioning as vehicles of empowerment and domination—as ambivalent bases for native resistance in the national movement.

Showing how liberal and multicultural versions of rights can reproduce the racializing logics of settler colonialism and entrench colonial domination, she analyses three cases: the national movement of '48 Palestinians, the indigeneity claims of the Naqab Bedouin, and the politics of the Queer Palestinian movement.

During her fellowship, Lana Tatour along with Professor Nadia Abu El-Haj won the 2020-21 Joint Projects Award from the Institute for Religion, Culture and Public Life at Columbia. The project will explore the intertwining of racial and religious difference in the context of Israel-Palestine. By pulling race and religion into a single analytic frame, it seeks to expand the existing conversation on the different practices and projects of racialization that govern Palestinians (citizens of Israel, Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and refugees), the "Other" Jews (Mizrachim and Ethiopian), and African refugees and asylum seekers.

CSMS

CENTER FOR THE STUDY
OF MUSLIM SOCIETIES

Founded in 2018, the Center for the Study of Muslim Societies (CSMS) is in its second year. This emerging collective acts as an umbrella for faculty collaborations in cutting-edge research, integrated programming, innovative teaching and new forms of public outreach across the related fields of research on Islam and Muslim societies at Columbia University. It addresses majority and minority Muslim societies, and their intersections with other religions, cultures and secular outlooks. CSMS crosses disciplines, area specializations and schools to create an institutional venue for faculty to collaborate on scholarly projects, build new initiatives and develop pedagogical tools. CSMS draws together over 80 Columbia scholars and 14 language lecturers concerned with aspects of Muslim societies, including those in the Middle East, Africa, South and Southeast Asia, Europe and the Americas.

During the 2019 calendar year, CSMS received initial funding from Columbia's Institute for Social and Economic Research and Policy to convene workshops and host new programming. At the end of the academic year, CSMS won a Dean's Humanities War & Peace Initiative Grant for its proposal, "The Humanities in the Wake of War? Technologies of Power, Displaced Histories and Reconstruction," which will bring faculty and fellows, students and scholars at risk, together with artists and archivists to consider the past and future role of the humanities in the wake of wars. The project is a response to the destruction witnessed in recent years in the Middle East in particular, and it is a recognition of our responsibility as much as our interest to rethink disciplinary knowledge and the role of the academy in the aftermath of a century of wars.

CSMS Events

July 6, 13, 20, & 27: **Wisdom Encoded: The Digital Kalīla wa-Dimna**

May 30: **New Moon Rising: American Muslim Artists Perform**

February 28: **Iraqi Studies Conference: Past, Present, and Future**

February 10: **Lecture: Conservation and Restoration Documentation as a Source in Architectural History**

September 20: **The Muslim World Manuscript Project: A Codicology Workshop**

September 26: **Al-Hariri's 12th-Century Trickster Tales and the Islamic Archive**

September 9: **Lecture Series: Re-Approaching Architecture of the Lands of Islam**

PEOPLE

All of the work that the MEI undertakes throughout the year is made possible by a passionate team of dedicated staff and scholars. In addition to the people working directly at the Institute, MEI also brings together a world-class faculty from across a wide range of departments at Columbia university.



VISITING SCHOLARS

The MEI has a long tradition of hosting visiting academics, through Fulbright, European grants, and other sources. It also has its own earmarked, but now undercapitalized endowment funding to host each year the Arcapita Visiting Professor in Arab Studies. In addition to the various types of pre-doctoral, postdoctoral and faculty visitors, the MEI together with the MESAAS Department in recent years won a prestigious grant for visiting scholars from the Carnegie Foundation. This provided for a total of four Arab social scientists to join us as Carnegie Centennial Fellows.

Bahar Tabakoğlu

Visiting Scholar (2019-2021)

Bahar Tabakoğlu holds a PhD in Sociology from the New School For Social Research. She was previously a visiting scholar (2015-2017) at the Institute for Religion, Culture and Public Life (IRCPL) at Columbia University. Her current work examines the social constituents, particularly the working class component, of religious politics in Turkey and India. Her research interests intersect political sociology, sociology of religion and sociology of labor with a focus on modern Turkey and India. Her research and teaching interests extend as well to modern social movements, civil society and state theory, classical and contemporary social theory and research methods. She has been the recipient of multiple grants, fellowships and awards from the New School For Social Research and the India China Institute (ICI) of the New School. She is currently teaching at New York University (NYU) and City University of New York (CUNY).

Hussein Abdulsater

Mahdi Visiting Research Fellow, (Fall 2019–Spring 2020)

Hussein Abdulsater (PhD Religious Studies, Yale 2013) is assistant professor of Islamic Studies and Arabic culture in the Department of Classics at the University of Notre Dame. His research focuses on the interaction between Islamic theology, classical Arabic literature and historiography. His book, *Shi'i Doctrine, Mu'tazili Theology* (Edinburgh University Press, 2017) won the World Award for Book of the Year of the Islamic Republic of Iran. At the Middle East Institute, he will offer an advanced seminar covering major themes in Islamic theology. The seminar combines close reading of selected primary texts and deep engagement with their broader contexts as discussed in secondary literature.

Raphael Cormack

Visiting Scholar (Fall 2019–Spring 2020)

Raphael Cormack (PhD in Arabic literature from the University of Edinburgh) primary research interests include Arabic theatre, literature and popular culture as well as the reception of Ancient Greek literature in the modern Arab world. He is an active translator from Arabic to English and has edited two collections of modern Arabic short stories, *The Book of Khartoum* (Comma Press, 2016 [with Max Shmookler]) and *The Book of Cairo* (Comma Press, 2019). At MEI he focused on researching Cairo's early 20th century entertainment scene, with a particular emphasis on female actresses, dancers, singers and film makers. His book on the subject is forthcoming in 2020 with Saqi Books.




EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

LILA ABU-LUGHOD is the Joseph L. Buttenwieser Professor of Social Science at Columbia University where she teaches anthropology and gender studies. She is a former director of the Middle East Institute, the Institute for Research on Women and Gender, and the Center for the Study of Social Difference. A leading voice in the debates about culture, gender, Islam, and global feminist politics, her books and articles have been translated into 14 languages. Her scholarship, mostly ethnographic, has focused on the relationship between cultural forms and power; the politics of knowledge and representation; and the global circulation of human and women's rights discourse as it affects the Middle East and the Muslim world.

GIL ANIDJAR is Professor in the Department of Religion and the Department of Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies. He is the author of *Our Place in al-Andalus: Kabbalah, Philosophy, Literature in Arab Jewish Letters* (2002), *The Jew, the Arab: A History of the Enemy* (2003), *Semites: Race, Religion, Literature* (2008), *Blood: A Critique of Christianity* (2014) and *Qu'appelle-t-on destruction? (Heidegger, Derrida)* (2017).

MARWA ELSHAKRY is Associate Professor in the Department of History and specializes in the history of science, technology, and medicine in the modern Middle East. She is the author of *Reading Darwin in Arabic, 1860-1950*.




KATHERINE PRATT EWING is Professor of Religion and a fellow at the Institute for Ideas and Imagination (2019–20). Her books include *Arguing Sainthood: Modernity, Psychoanalysis and Islam* (1997); *Stolen Honor: Stigmatizing Muslim Men in Berlin* (2008); and the edited volumes *Shariat and Ambiguity in South Asian Islam* (1988), *Being and Belonging: Muslim Communities in the US since 9/11* (2008), and *Sufis and the Modern State: Rethinking Islam and Politics in South Asia and Beyond* (forthcoming). Her research ranges from debates among Muslims about the proper practice of Islam in the modern world to sexualities, gender, and the body in South Asia. She is currently writing a book on the politics of sex change surgery within India's middle class with Baishakhi Taylor and is PI on the Luce-funded project "Rethinking Public Religion in Africa and South Asia."

HAMID DABASHI is the Hagop Kevorkian Professor of Iranian Studies and Comparative Literature at Columbia

University. His most recent work includes *Can Non-Europeans Think?* (2015); *Iran without Borders: Towards a Critique of the Postcolonial Nation* (2016); *Iran: Rebirth of a Nation* (2017); and *The Shahnameh: The Persian Epic as World Literature* (2019). Hamid Dabashi is the Series Editor of *Literatures and Cultures of the Islamic World* for Palgrave Macmillan. He is also the founder of *Dreams of a Nation*, a Palestinian Film Project dedicated to preserving and safeguarding Palestinian Cinema.

NAJAM HAIDER is a Professor in the Department of Religion at Barnard College. His research interests include early Islamic history, the methodology and development of Islamic law, and Shi'ism. He is the author of three books, *The Origins of the Shi'a* (2011), *Shī'ī Islam* (2014), and *The Rebel and the Imam in Early Islam* (2019). His current project focuses on the social geography of communities in early Islamic cities.



RASHID KHALIDI is the Edward Said Professor of Arab Studies, a founder of the Center for Palestine Studies (CPS), formerly chair of the History Department and a former MEI Director. He is editor of the *Journal of Palestine Studies*, and was President of the Middle East Studies Association, and an advisor to the Palestinian delegation to the Madrid and Washington Arab-Israeli peace negotiations from October 1991 until June 1993. He is the author of a number of books including: *The Hundred Years' War on Palestine: Settler-Colonialism and Resistance, 1917-2017* (2019), *Brokers of Deceit: How the U.S. has Undermined Peace in the Middle East* (2013), and *Palestinian Identity: The Construction of Modern National Consciousness* (1997).

TIMOTHY MITCHELL is the William B. Ransford Professor of Middle Eastern, South Asian and African Studies in the Department of Middle Eastern, South Asian and African Studies, for which he served as chair from 2011 until 2017. Mitchell is the author of *Colonising Egypt* (1991), *Rule of Experts: Egypt, Techno-Politics, Modernity* (2002) and *Carbon Democracy: Political Power in the Age of Oil* (2012). In 2012, Mitchell brought the journal *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East* (CSSAAME) to Columbia. Much of his current work is concerned with ways of thinking about politics that allow material and technical things more weight than they are given in conventional political theory.

ADMINISTRATION

BRINKLEY MESSICK is a Professor both in the Department of Anthropology and in the Department of Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies. The author of *The Calligraphic State* (California, 1993), which was awarded the Albert Hourani Prize of the Middle Eastern Studies Association, and a co-editor of *Islamic Legal Interpretation* (Harvard, 1996), his *Sharī'a Scripts: A Historical Anthropology* appeared from Columbia University Press in 2018. His current book project concerns the figure of the witness in sharī'a litigation, a study that utilizes both juridical doctrine and court case transcripts to address issues of truth and method, and questions of evidence and interpretation.

ASTRID BENDEK has been the Associate Director of the Middle East Institute since December 2003. She holds an MA from Columbia's School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA) and a BA in Middle East and African Studies from Georgetown University. Before joining the MEI she spent 12 years in the not-for-profit sector managing international education programs, including teacher-training programs in the Former Soviet Union for the Open Society Institute.

KATHRYN SPELLMAN POOTS is a Visiting Associate Professor at Columbia University and Associate Professor at Aga Khan University's Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilizations in London. Her work,

mainly ethnographic and based in the UK, has centered on the Iranian diaspora, Shia transnational networks, cultural hybridity, gender relations and the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion. In 2019 Kathryn was awarded an Advanced Research Collaborative Fellowship at CUNY's Graduate Center to develop her work on shifting communal boundaries in relation to specific political, social and material logics within Muslim diasporic communities. Her forthcoming co-edited volume *Gender, Governance and Islam* (2019) looks specifically at creative ways that diasporic women challenge dominant gender ideologies in the era of blatant Islamophobia and rising male centered authoritarianism. This has led to a new project on political 'othering' in the Trump era and the extent to which nativist discourses and fear mongering feed into and affect relations within and between (discursively constructed) minority communities. Kathryn serves as Academic Program Director of the Islamic Studies

MA program and played a central role in developing a Dual Degree with Aga Khan University in Islamic Studies and Muslim Cultures starting Fall 2020.

SIMONE RUTKOWITZ holds an MA in New Eastern Studies from the Hagop Kevorkian Center at New York University and a BA in Visual Art from Hamilton College. Simone has lived in Cairo, Egypt and studied Arabic at the Arabic Language Institute at the American University in Cairo. She volunteers at the International Refugee Assistance Project as an Arabic Intake Caseworker.

KELLEY O'DELL holds a BA in Middle Eastern Studies and Near Eastern Language and Literature from the University of California, Berkeley and a Master's Degree in Middle Eastern Studies from New York University. She was the MEI's Program Manager for the 2019-2020 academic year.



STUDENT ASSISTANTS AND INTERNS

KATHERINE VON OFENHEIM was the SIPA Program Assistant at the Middle East Institute for the 2019–2020 school year. Katherine von Ofenheim completed her Master of International Affairs in the spring of 2020, with a concentration in international security policy and specializations in technology, media, and communications and the Middle East region. Prior to SIPA, Katherine spent six years working in the humanitarian response and international development across the Middle East. She earned her undergraduate degree at the University of Oregon, where she majored in international affairs and geography. After graduation, Katherine will begin a Presidential Management Fellowship at the Department of State.

ISABEL YOUNG DE KATONA has worked with the Middle East institute for four year. She completed her Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology and Economics at Barnard College in spring 2019 and completed her Master of International Affairs at SIPA in the spring of 2020 as part of the 5-year BA/MA program. Isabel is passionate about voter rights, immigration and refugee advocacy, reproductive justice, and international economic development.

NASREEN ABD ELAL has interned at the Center for Palestine Studies since Spring 2017. She is currently pursuing her BA in Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies at Columbia University, with a special interest in Arab cinema and visual cultures. In between her studies she works as a freelance designer. Nas received a Summer 2018 FLAS to study Arabic at the Sijal Institute in Amman, Jordan.



www.mei.columbia.edu

606 West 122 Street
Knox Hall - 3rd Floor
New York, New York 10027