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THE DIRECTOR
A message from
William Granara

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AS WE EMBARK UPON THE NEW CALENDAR YEAR, 2016, as well as the beginning of spring term, I write to welcome back students, visiting scholars and researchers, faculty, and devoted members of the wider academic and public communities who continue to make CMES a vibrant intersection for Middle Eastern studies.

Many of us have just returned from the region, having participated in CMES’s inaugural Winter Session programs in Cunda, Turkey, and Tunis, Tunisia. The importance of maintaining contact with the peoples, languages, and cultures of our areas of expertise was reinforced by both these programs, which provided undergraduate and graduate students the opportunity to learn, explore, and cultivate new relationships.

I write also at this time to invite all the members of the extended CMES family to keep in our thoughts and prayers the many, many people from a multiplicity of countries of our region who are living the horrors of war, disease, forced migration and exile, political oppression, intellectual censorship, social injustice, and religious persecution. Many areas of the Middle East continue to undergo profound turmoil as the daily lives of ordinary citizens are being disrupted or destroyed. For those of us who have dedicated our academic lives to the Middle East, this is a time to reflect on what we do and to commit to making our scholarship never lose sight of our shared values and common humanity.

—William Granara, CMES Director
NEW FACULTY ARRIVALS
CMES welcomed three faculty members to Harvard’s Middle East studies community this fall. Justine Landau has joined the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations (NELC) as Assistant Professor of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations. Landau’s research focuses on classical Persian literature and poetics. She obtained her PhD in Iranian Studies from the University of the Sorbonne Nouvelle in Paris. She has taught Persian literature at the Sorbonne Nouvelle and at UCLA, and has worked as a researcher at the Institute of Iranian Studies of the Austrian Academy of Sciences in Vienna. Khaled Fahmy is in residence at CMES for both fall and spring terms as the Shawwaf Visiting Professor in Modern Middle Eastern History and is teaching courses in the Department of History and NELC. And Sheida Dayani has joined the Middle East language faculty as Preceptor in Persian, teaching elementary through advanced Persian. Her research is on modern theater and playwriting in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Iran.

Q&A WITH KHALED FAHMY
Khaled Fahmy is the 2015–2016 Shawwaf Visiting Professor in Modern Middle Eastern History. His research interests lie in the social and cultural history of modern Egypt. He has been conducting research in the Egyptian National Archives for the past twenty years on such diverse topics as the history of law, medicine, and public hygiene. Since the outbreak of the January 25 Revolution, he also has been a regular contributor to Egyptian and international media.

What courses did you teach this fall?
I taught two classes, one an undergraduate survey class and one a graduate class, and I have to say I enjoyed teaching them very much. I hadn’t been teaching for some time because I had been on sabbatical, and I had a fellowship at Columbia last year that also entailed very little teaching, so it was my first time to stand in front of a class in three years. It reminded me of how much I do enjoy teaching, but the students made it a particularly enjoyable experience because they are just on top of things, they are alert, and fresh, and excited, and very hardworking. The undergraduate class is a survey of modern Middle Eastern history, which
I have been teaching for many years. I started teaching it at Princeton, then NYU, then the American University in Cairo, but usually I teach the class, which is a survey from the late eighteenth century to the present, in one semester. Here, the history department told me that they would like this span to be divided into two courses, which meant this last semester I taught a class that covers the history of the Middle East from 1750 to the First World War. So most of it obviously was on the nineteenth century, which for me was very enjoyable, because that’s my area of specialty. I work on nineteenth-century Egyptian social and cultural history, I know this period well, and it was very enjoyable to be able to spend so much time on the nineteenth century. Also, I had an amazing TA, Kathryn Schwartz, who was really an amazing resource in helping me to figure out all the idiosyncratic systems of Harvard.

The graduate class I taught here for the first time. This was a class in Arabic, so it was listed not as a history class but as an Arabic class, and it was reading original texts in something called hisba, which, simply put, is a system of market regulation and moral policing, both at once. It’s a new area of research for me that I’ve been working on now for two years, and last year I taught a seminar on it at Columbia. This time, it was a seminar not in substance, but in the sources, in the texts, which ranged in complexity and difficulty from very modern, contemporary texts written in the twentieth century to texts of jurisprudence written by jurists from the eleventh century onwards. I had only four students, whose Arabic was really amazing, who dug their teeth into these texts. They of course have experience, and three of them work with Malika Zeghal, so they have solid background in Islamic law, and Arabic, and of course Middle Eastern history. But what I sensed from them, and what they kept on saying, was that this was the first time they really had a class in which they read this kind of texts so closely or had this kind of experience. Usually they do it on their own, or one-to-one with their advisers, but not in a structured class with discussions and close reading of these texts. I’m not a language instructor—that’s a specific skill—but I know Arabic, I know Arabic grammar rather well, so I could answer questions or ask questions about this. But we also covered the actual content, the actual substance of the texts—we didn’t only spend time just getting through the language. These are texts I became familiar with over the past year and a half—I work with them, I study them closely, I use them in my forthcoming book—and I think the combination of language skills but also knowledge of the topic itself and of Islamic law, made it, at least for me, a very satisfying class.

What is the forthcoming book that you’re working on?

It’s a project that I have been working on for many years—too many years, probably—but it’s a big project, a project that started in my experience in the archives. It’s a book that deals with nineteenth-century Egyptian cultural and social history, using medicine and law together—these are my two main tropes—and it uses more specifically the areas in which these two disciplines intersect, which means that a big portion of the book deals with the very unsavory topics of torture—legal torture—and forensic medicine. The project started with my discovery in the Egyptian archives of reports by forensic doctors that were very technical and specific and detailed about violent crime from the 1850s, 1860s, 1870s—this is more or less my period. And I got fascinated by these reports—and it’s not one or two, we’re talking about hundreds of reports—and I got initially interested in them to see how average Egyptians, or even very poor Egyptians in the countryside in particular, understood modern medicine. For example, a mother finds her son dying, a poor, illiterate peasant woman, and she proceeds to bury him, and then the thing that we now call the state comes in and says, no, no, no, we have a say, we have not issued a death certificate, we have to ascertain a cause of death. And occasionally, when there are suspicious cases, this investigation evolves into a postmortem examination, and if that is not conclusive then an actual autopsy. What I discovered, and this was really the most interesting finding, is that sometimes it is the relatives of the deceased themselves who would ask for a dissection, which is of course a very difficult decision for them. But when they suspected foul play, even though they are illiterate and supposedly ignorant and so on, and even though this is a new practice, not more than ten years old in Egypt at that time, they understood what modern medicine, what forensic medicine can do for their quest for justice. I had
these very fascinating cases that could make the most interesting movie, in which the relatives of the deceased are the ones who ask for dissection.

And then I started saying, well, that’s the social history, the cultural history side of things—what about the medical history? How were these doctors trained? Where were they trained? Who were they? How did they go about doing their business, and what else did they do, where else were they stationed, and what are the institutions that trained them, that employed them, and so on. And that took many, many years of research.

And then there was the legal side of it, which is what kind of courts accepted these kinds of investigations, because these are not the old familiar shari’a courts that we as historians of this part of the world have been working with for the past thirty, forty years, the famous shari’a court records. These are court records, but not shari’a. So, the question is, what is this legal system, what is this medical system, how did people understand the interaction between these two systems, and that basically is what the book is about.

Final meeting of Arabic 160R: “Readings in Arabic Historians, Geographers, and Biographers,” with Roy P. Mottahedeh

ROY’S LAST CLASS

On December 8, 2015, in a classroom at 38 Kirkland Street, Professor Roy P. Mottahedeh taught his final session of Arabic 160R: “Readings in Arabic Historians, Geographers, and Biographers” and with it, the final course of his tenure.

Mottahedeh first came to Harvard as an undergraduate, graduating magna cum laude in history in 1960, and began his graduate work here in 1962, studying under Hamilton Gibb and Richard Frye. He was elected a Junior Fellow in the Harvard Society of Fellows and received his PhD in 1970.

After first teaching at Princeton, he returned to Harvard in 1986, as Professor of Islamic History. He served as CMES Director from 1987 to 1990 and was appointed Gurney Professor of History in 1994. Along the way he won Guggenheim and MacArthur Fellowships and has produced a string of publications, including The Mantle of the Prophet (1985), his acclaimed study of contemporary Iran as understood through two millennia of history.

Per tradition, current and former students and colleagues packed into room 208 to share in the last moments of class. As the crowd grew, Mottahedeh muttered that he “suspect[ed] a plot” but otherwise remained unfazed, offering final observations on public and private spaces in the medieval Islamic city. After class it was on to toasts and appreciations downstairs, where Mottahedeh rallied those gathered to sustain and to build upon Harvard’s well-cultivated strengths in the study of the Middle East and of the range of Middle Eastern history.

Was this really Roy’s last class? “A happily taught class but by no means a last class!” he says. “I love teaching and will look for opportunities to teach. But I have so many unfinished books and essays that I want to complete and will give a lot of attention to such things. Also there are enjoyable aspects of life like music waiting to be ravished.”

Read the full interview at cmes.fas.harvard.edu
Q&A WITH HASSAN AL-DAMLUJI

Hassan Al-Damluji, CMES AM ’08, is Head of Middle East Relations at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. He is responsible for the foundation’s Middle East strategy across program areas and serves as the lead Middle East adviser to Bill and Melinda Gates.

What are your goals and responsibilities as Head of Middle East Relations at the Gates Foundation?

At the Gates Foundation, all our goals are tied to the belief that everyone deserves the chance to lead a healthy and productive life. Stemming from that, we work to remove the biggest drivers of inequity for the world’s poorest people, such as removing diseases that primarily poorer people suffer from, or lifting agricultural production for poor farmers. I’m responsible for leading our work in the Arab world, which means, for example, representing the foundation publicly, making grants to development partners, and advising my colleagues as to their investments to the extent they intersect with the Arab world. My team’s focus is on working with other major donors in the region to forge sustainable partnerships that can impact poor people across the region and the world. As an example of that, I am leading the efforts to create a $2.5 billion development fund in the Islamic Development Bank (IDB). The Lives & Livelihoods Fund will pool grant money (including up to $100 million from us) with loans from the IDB, to finance projects across the Muslim world, targeting health, agriculture, and basic infrastructure. We work closely with the IDB to help shape those projects, and ensure they are really helping the poorest people.

One of the most interesting parts of my job is arranging, and participating in, visits to the region by Bill and Melinda Gates. Bill Gates has been coming to the Middle East once or twice a year in recent times, and it’s always an opportunity to meet some of the key decision makers, and rapidly advance our agenda. One of the highlights was joining Bill in a meeting with King Salman of Saudi Arabia in 2014. The trips are also a great opportunity to spend time with our leadership, who are truly inspirational people.

Prior to joining the Gates Foundation, you worked at management consulting firm McKinsey & Company. What did you do there, how did this experience prepare you for your current position, and why did you make the switch?

At McKinsey I worked entirely on education reform and economic development, in Yemen, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and UAE. McKinsey is a great experience because it gives you general tools that can be applied in any business or management setting, but it also prepared me specifically for this work because I got to know how different countries function in the Middle East, the way governments work, and the broad field of development. It was still a big jump to the Gates Foundation though, because I had never worked on health or agriculture, and those are the biggest things we focus on here. I had to trust in the value of my regional knowledge, which is what I was hired for, and then rapidly learn about things like malaria, wheat production, and many other issues. I made the switch because coming to the foundation to set up their Middle East presence was a rare opportunity that would not come around again soon. The impact we are working to achieve is so meaningful, and is at such scale, that it is hard to beat for starry-eyed dreamers like me.

How did you decide to come to Harvard and CMES rather than a Middle East studies program elsewhere, or some other kind of graduate program entirely?

The truth is that I wasn’t planning on doing postgraduate study at all. When I was graduating from Oxford the President of my college encouraged me to apply for a fellowship to Harvard because he thought I’d have a good chance of getting it. So I applied to that and nothing else. Miraculously, I got it, and could choose any subject to study at Harvard for a year. I chose Middle East studies because it was my passion—I had spent the previous years learning Arabic and reconnecting with
AT THE CENTER

CMES WELCOMES NEW STAFF

CMES welcomed two new staff members this fall. Harry Bastermajian joined CMES as Graduate Program Administrator and is responsible for administering the AM and PhD Programs, the Visiting Researcher Program, and alumni relations activities. He has a strong background in the modern Middle East and also has extensive grant, program management, and student support experience. Harry was the Program Coordinator and Academic Advisor for the Islamic World Studies Program at Lake Forest College, which he helped to create, and at the University of Chicago he served as Program Manager of the University Community Service Center and Program Coordinator for the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Islamic Studies Initiative at the Divinity School. He received his BA in Economics and International Relations from Lake Forest College and has MA degrees in Islamic History and Civilization and Middle Eastern Studies from the University of Chicago. He is currently finishing his PhD in Islamic History and Civilization from the University of Chicago. Harry’s programmatic administration experience, academic background, and language skills make him ideally suited to this role.

Eric Edstam joined CMES as Web Editor and Communications Coordinator and is responsible for print and electronic publications, including the website, newsletter, posters, and program brochures. Eric has extensive web and design experience. Previously he served as Web Editor and Digital Communications Manager at Harvard Divinity School and as Associate Editor at the Center for the Study of World Religions. Eric received his AB in English and American Literature and Language from Harvard and studied graphic design at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Did you come to Harvard with a career path in mind? Did your time at CMES help clarify a career path for you?

When I arrived at Harvard I knew I was passionate about contributing to positive change in the Middle East but I didn’t know how to translate that into a career. It was definitely during my time at CMES that I clarified my goals. I decided that if I wanted to have maximum impact I should not stay in academia, work in the UN, or go back to journalism, which I had spent a year in before Harvard. I needed to go to the region, pick a sector in which to get deep expertise, and try to get to the top of that space. I picked education, and decided to work for McKinsey because they do a lot of education work in the Middle East, and I knew I’d get great training in a range of important skills.

What advice would you give to students interested in foundation or NGO work?

If you want to work in a foundation, NGO, or similar, be a management consultant first. You will get business skills which will be valuable, and respected, in the field, but which many other job applicants will not have. Plus it will be easier to go and do private sector work later, if you decide to.

my Iraqi roots, but still had a lot to learn in that journey. I thought that spending that year continuing the journey, and then an additional year to finish the master’s, was a great way to spend my time. It was a very personal journey to me. And it’s one I’m still on now.

Are there any favorite courses or faculty that stand out?

I followed my passions, and did a wide range of courses. To pick a few that I remember most fondly, there was French literature, where we read many of the greats through the ages, and undergraduate economics. To be able to study medieval French literature and pure economics was just incredible, and both were directly helpful in my Middle East career (there are many French speakers across the region!). Emad Shahin’s political economy of the Arab world was another great one. I loved all of the faculty I worked with, but the single biggest influence on me was Khaled Al-Masri, because he introduced me to Iraqi poetry that I still read and even remember by heart to this day.
UPCOMING EVENTS

SPRING CONFERENCES

The schedule of events at CMES for spring 2016 includes three conferences:

**FEB 11-12**

**The Iran–Iraq War: Literature, Art, and Film:** Organized by CMES Director William Granara. The Iran–Iraq War lasted eight years, ended in stalemate, and cost hundreds of thousands of lives on both sides. As this war traumatized both Iraqi and Iranian society, it spawned rich cultural production, as novelists, poets, artists, and filmmakers in both countries have reflected upon and confronted the experience of this devastating conflict in ways more various and complex than, and frequently at odds with, official narratives of patriotism, heroism, and martyrdom dictated by their respective states. This symposium brings together eight scholars to consider the artistic output arising from this time and place.

**MAR 3-5**

**Subterfuge and Deception in the Pre-Modern Mediterranean:** Co-organized and sponsored by the Center for Middle Eastern Studies and the Mediterranean Seminar (Brian Catlos, University of Colorado at Boulder, and Sharon Kinoshita, University of California, Santa Cruz, directors). The conference includes an opening session, “What Is Mediterranean Studies and Why?”; a day-long workshop, “Subterfuge and Deception in the Pre-Modern Mediterranean,” consisting of three pre-circulated papers, audience comment, and a presentation by featured scholar Thomas F. Glick, Boston University; and a roundtable discussion, “Harvard on the Mediterranean: A Conversation with Graduate Students.”

**MAR 11**

**Iraq: Possible Futures—Including a Return to the Past:** Organized by Professor Roger Owen and Muhamed H. Almaliky, MD, Associate, Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Harvard University. Since its creation out of the three Ottoman Provinces—Basra, Baghdad, and Mosul—after 1914, Iraq has been occupied several times, battled with Kurdish separatism, been subjected to political revolutions, endured the long dictatorship of Saddam Hussein and several wars or periods of great tension with Iran. Not to speak of huge annual floods, uncertain title to land, and now, paradoxically, low oil prices, heightened sectarianism exacerbated by the Islamic State movement (ISIS), and a severe shortage of electricity and water. What now? The aim of this one-day symposium will be to discuss a range of future political and economic possibilities including a return to new versions of such past political and constitutional arrangements as those of 1925, 1958, 2005, and so on.
EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

SEPTEMBER 2015

Health System Resilience amidst Political Instability: The Case of Lebanon: A seminar with Walid Ammar, Director General, Ministry of Public Health of Lebanon; Professor, the Lebanese University; Senior Lecturer, American University of Beirut. Co-sponsored with the Middle East Initiative.

Being an Armenian Intellectual of Turkey in Twenty-First Century: Life and Death of Hrant Dink: A talk with Tuba Çandar, Turkish journalist and author of Hrant, forthcoming in English as Hrant Dink: An Armenian Voice of the Voiceless in Turkey. Co-sponsored with the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs.

The Future of Arab Upheavals: A public address by His Excellency Dr. Mahmoud Gebril, former Prime Minister of Libya. Moderated by Tarek Masoud, Sultan of Oman Associate Professor of International Relations, Harvard Kennedy School. Co-sponsored with the Middle East Initiative and the Islamic Legal Studies Program.

OCTOBER 2015

Symposium on Gallipoli 1915: A one-day symposium marking the centenary of the Battle of Gallipoli, organized by Professors Roger Owen and Cemal Kafadar. Gallipoli: An Early Assessment, Mustafa Aksakal, Georgetown University; Wartime Reform: Monogamy in the Ottoman Empire, Ahmet Kuyaş, Université Galatasaray; Gallipoli: The Campaign That Kept the Ottoman Empire in the War, Tilman Luedke, Arnold Bergstraesser Institut für kulturwissenschaftliche Forschung; A Note on Military Graveyards and Other Forms of Post-Battle Burial, Roger Owen.

Behind the Scenes and Off-the-Record: Sustaining US–Turkish Collaboration, Despite Everything: A talk by Francis J. Ricciardone, Atlantic Council vice president, director of the Rafik Hariri Center for the Middle East, and former U.S. Ambassador to Turkey. Co-sponsored with the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs. Ricciardone also attended a lunch with students to discuss careers in diplomatic service and the State Department.

NOVEMBER 2015

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

The Politics of Participation: Palestinians and the Peel Commission, 1936–1937: A talk by Laila Parsons, Associate Professor, McGill University, about her study of Palestinian participation in colonial commissions during the Mandate period.

The Seam-Line That Passes through Haifa and the Works of Sami Michael: A talk by Nili Gold, Associate Professor of Modern Hebrew Language and Literature, University of Pennsylvania. Co-sponsored with the Center for Jewish Studies.

Kurdistan: The New Reality in the Middle East? A talk by Bayan Sami Abdul Rahman, Kurdish Regional Government Representative to the United States. Co-sponsored with the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs and the Middle East Initiative.

Is the Other Necessary? A talk by Kamel Daoud, Algerian journalist and author of The Meursault Investigation, moderated by Youssef Ben Ismail, CMES AM ’14 and NELC PhD candidate. Daoud also participated in a lunchtime workshop for Harvard graduate students and professors who work on North Africa.

Muslims in Europe in the Interwar Years: A Trans-Cultural Perspective: A talk by Umar Ryad, Associate Professor, Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, Utrecht University. Co-sponsored with the Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Islamic Studies Program.

An Armenian Symbolist Poet in Constantinople: Misak Medzarents: A talk with poetry readings in Armenian by James Russell, Mashtots Professor of Armenian Studies, NELC.

Deciphering Streetscapes through Qualitative GIS: Examples from Istanbul’s Waterfront: A presentation including data visualization by Murat Güvenç, Professor of Sociology, Kadir Has University, Istanbul.

Ottoman Legal Studies from the Perspective of “Law And Economics” Scholarship: A talk by Bogac A. Ergene, Associate Professor of History, University of Vermont; Visiting Fellow, Islamic Legal Studies Program, Harvard Law School (fall 2015).

Terror in the Name of God: A discussion with Jessica Stern, Fellow, FXB Center for Health and Human Rights, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health; Research Professor, Pardee School of Global Studies, Boston University; and co-author of ISIS: The State of Terror.

→ Video of the H.A.R. Gibb Lectures and Is the Other Necessary? with Kamel Daoud is available at cmes.fas.harvard.edu
SERIES SPOTLIGHT

MIDDLE EAST SEMINAR

This seminar series, co-sponsored by CMES and the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs (WCFIA), brings ambassadors, dignitaries, journalists, and scholars to lecture on topics in modern Middle East politics. Begun in 1975 by Edward Sheehan, a WCFIA Fellow and former diplomat and journalist, the series has been chaired by Richard Clarke Cabot Professor of Social Ethics Herbert Kelman since 1977. CMES research associates Lenore G. Martin and Sara Roy joined Professor Kelman as co-chairs in 1996. The fall 2015 line-up included the following talks:

- **Understanding or Misunderstanding the Middle East and Turkey in 2015**, September 10, 2015 | Cengiz Çandar, senior columnist, Radical, and op-ed writer, Al-Monitor. Co-sponsored with the Center for European Studies.
- **New Visions and Strategies for an Israeli–Palestinian Peace**, September 17, 2015 | Hilik Bar, Member of the Israeli Knesset and Secretary-General of the Labor Party, and Husam Zomlot, Ambassador-at-Large, Palestine, moderated by Gudrun Kramer, Head of the Program Supporting Palestinian Refugees, German Association for International Cooperation.
- **The Conditions inside Syria: A View from the Field**, October 15, 2015 | Ammar Kourany, Safety and Liaison Manager, Save the Children, Syria, and Abdulkarim Ekzayez, Health Program Manager, Save the Children, Syria. Co-sponsored with the Middle East Forum.
- **People at the Gates of Sovereignty: Have We Reached a Turning Point?** October 22, 2015 | Jennifer Leaning, Director, François-Xavier Bagnoud Center for Health and Human Rights, Harvard University, and FXB Professor of Practice of Health and Human Rights, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health.

In conjunction with his Seminar on Turkey in the Modern World presentation, Ambassador Francis J. Ricciardone held a lunchtime professional development talk with students at CMES. After the talk, CMES AM candidate Kevin Moss interviewed Ricciardone for the Inside the Middle East video Q&A series produced by the Middle East Initiative at Harvard Kennedy School.

After their Middle East Seminar presentation, Ammar Kourany and Abdulkarim Ekzayez, of Save the Children, Syria, were joined by Save the Children, Syria Country Director Martha Myers for a lunchtime talk with students about their organization’s work on the front lines of the humanitarian crisis in Syria, providing education, health services, food, clean water, warm clothes, and support for traumatized children.
AT A GLANCE

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