

CVES

NEWS

THE CENTER FOR
MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

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FALL 2018

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FALL 2018 HIGHLIGHTS

TO ALL THE MEMBERS OF THE HARVARD CMES FAMILY—students, faculty, visiting scholars, affiliates in research, staff, and loyal friends and colleagues from the wider Cambridge and Boston communities—I extend my thanks for your combined efforts, interest, and enthusiasm for the work we do. Before I list some of the highlights of this past semester, I pause to remember our own and beloved Professor Roger Owen, who passed away in December. As you know, Roger was a towering figure here at CMES since his arrival as A.J. Meyer Professor of Middle Eastern History in 1993. He was a highly valued teacher, mentor, advisor, administrator, friend, and colleague to so many of us. We hope to pay homage to his legacy in our next newsletter.

CMES has been enriched this fall by a new cohort of graduate students, a very fine group of visiting researchers and scholars, and three wonderful new faculty: Rosie Bsheer comes to us from Yale University as Assistant Professor of History; Meryem Demir joined the Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations and CMES language faculty as Preceptor in Modern Turkish; and Sara Feldman joined the NELC and CMES language faculty as Preceptor in Yiddish.

Our Sohbet-i Osmani lecture series, convened by Vehbi Koç Professor of Turkish Studies Cemal Kafadar, had a robust semester with a number of lectures and two magnificent events: The Caliphate Redefined was a workshop on the newly published book by Hüseyin Yilmaz of George Mason University, a graduate of our joint PhD program in History and Middle Eastern Studies. Participants included Hüseyin's fellow alumni Cemil Aydın and Gengis Sisman, and Intisar Rabb, Professor of Law at HLS. And the highly acclaimed Vampires, Ghouls, and Alexander the Two-Horned evening at the Memorial Church featured a lecture by Professor Kafadar followed by a concert by composer and musician Mehmet Ali Sanlıkol with string orchestra A Far Cry.

CMES's Arabian Peninsula Studies Lecture Series hosted three lectures in the fall: a book talk by Kuwaiti novelist Saud Alsanousi on his award-winning novel *The Bamboo Stalk*; Zayed and Nation Building: Mirage to Reality, with Aisha Bilkair (UAE); and Generation MBS, with Harvard PhD in Government Kristin Smith Diwan.

CMES inaugurated the Armenian Studies Lecture Series this fall with a talk by Christina Maranci of Tufts University. We also inaugurated a joint lecture series with Harvard's Committee on Medieval Studies. Our first speaker was Brian Catlos of the University of Colorado, co-founder of the Mediterranean Seminar. And we hosted Abboud Zeitoune, who gave a talk on modern Assyrian music.

Finally, the CMES Tunisia Office continues to grow and prosper. Our fourth annual J-term hosted a record number of students, including six from the College. We also welcomed our second Tunisia Postdoctoral Fellow, Afaf Mougou, a professor of linguistics from Sousse, Tunisia. And PhD students Laura Thompson, Youssef Ben Ismail, and Aytug Sasman have been conducting dissertation research from the Tunisia Office.

—WILLIAM GRANARA, CMES DIRECTOR

NEWS AND NOTES

FACULTY NEWS

NEW FACULTY ARRIVALS

CMES welcomed three faculty members to Harvard's Middle Eastern studies community this fall. Rosie Bsheer joins the Department of History as Assistant Professor of History. A historian of the modern Middle East, Bsheer's teaching and research interests center on Arab intellectual and social movements, petro-capitalism and state formation, and the production of historical knowledge and commemorative spaces. She is currently finishing a book manuscript, provisionally entitled "Archive Wars: Spectacle, Speculation, and the Politics of History in Saudi Arabia" (under contract with Stanford University Press). She teaches graduate and undergraduate courses on oil and empire, social and intellectual movements, petro-modernity, political economy, historiography, and the making of the modern Middle East. She is Associate Producer of the 2007 Oscar-nominated

film *My Country, My Country*, Co-Editor of *Jadaliyya* e-zine, and Associate Editor of *Tadween* Publishing.

Bsheer's work has been supported by the Mellon Foundation, the American Council of Learned Societies, the Social Science Research Council, the Whiting Foundation, and the Institute for Religion, Culture, and Public Life. She received her PhD in History from Columbia University and comes to Harvard from Yale University, where she was Assistant Professor of History. She received the Poorvu Family Award for Interdisciplinary Teaching at Yale University and Yale College's Sarai Ribicoff '75 Award for the Encouragement of Teaching.

Meryem Demir joins the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations as Preceptor in Modern Turkish. Previously, Demir was an Ataturk Turkish Fellow of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Edinburgh for two years and a Turkish lecturer at the Middle East Technical University in

Ankara for seven years. She received her BA from Istanbul University and MA from Marmara University in Turkish Education and her PhD in Turkish Literature from Bilkent University. She has taught a broad range of courses, including Turkish (as a native language and as a foreign language), critical reading, culture-society, literary criticism, oral communication, and written expression. Demir's research draws on modern Turkish language and literature, late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century Ottoman modernization, literary criticism, discourse analysis, and stylistics. She has published several conference papers and journal articles, and is a published short story writer.

And Sara Feldman joins the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations as Preceptor in Yiddish. Before coming to Harvard she was Hebrew and Yiddish Lecturer at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. Feldman earned her PhD in Near Eastern Studies, MA in Judaic Studies, and BA in literature from the University of Michigan. She teaches Yiddish language at the beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels.



Rosie Bsheer, Melani Cammett



Meryem Demir



Sara Feldman

ARAB AND EUROPEAN INTERACTIONS IN AIX-EN-PROVENCE

In summer 2018, Gordon Gray Professor of Arabic and CMES Director William Granara, along with Khaled al-Masri, Associate Professor of Arabic at Swarthmore, led a Harvard Summer School program in Aix-en-Provence, France. The program, which Granara has led for several years, brings together students of Arabic and French language and culture to examine historical, literary, and cultural aspects of Arab and European interactions in the colonial and postcolonial eras. Andrew Aoyama '21 wrote about his experience on the trip.

A curious chill had taken root at the dinner table, and not even the warm Mediterranean breeze seemed capable of dislodging it. “You’re wasting your time with all this Arabic stuff,” he said—in Arabic—from across a table laden with four different cheeses and a crusty baguette. “*Wallahi*,” Farid continued, “the future lies here, with the north.” He ripped a piece from the end of the baguette and spread a thick slab of Camembert across its surface. “It will be much more useful for you—*za’ama* for your future—to study French!”

I managed to suppress a sigh—I was a guest in his home

after all—but with several chapters of Suhail Idris’s *Al-Hay Al-Latini* left to finish after dinner for the next day’s Arabic class, I couldn’t prevent a hint of exasperation from creeping across my face. I was four weeks into the Harvard Summer School’s summer program in Aix-en-Provence, France, and the fact that I was studying the colonial and postcolonial Mediterranean in Arabic, not French, had been an on-and-off point of contention with my host since my arrival. Farid, a retired economics professor at the local university, was a Moroccan immigrant, a transplant from upper-crust Agadir society, who had studied in private French schools before moving to France for university. Since I don’t speak any French, I had initially been excited by the fact that we could communicate with each other easily in his native Moroccan Darija; however, Farid’s persistent claim that the contemporary Arab world was “retreating into its backwardness” meant that my living experience was to be much more complicated than I had first expected.

Given Aix’s location, many of my friends were also living with immigrants from

North Africa; others had been placed with so-called *piéd noir* families, individuals who could trace their roots to the European settlers of colonial French Algeria. In either case, our class material was intimately tied to our everyday experiences, meaning that interactions like this one were both inevitable and integral parts of the program.

The next day, I vented my frustrations to Professor Khaled al-Masri. Each morning, our cohort had three hours of class in our respective target languages, examining the colonial encounter through the writings of figures like Rifa’a al-Tahtawi and Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti. In the afternoon, the Arabic and French sides of the program came together for a seminar led by Professor William Granara that tackled the works of Said, Memmi, Fanon, Salih, and other postcolonial authors.

“This is why it’s so important that we study works like these,” replied Professor al-Masri after I filled him in on the latest back-and-forth with Farid. He gestured toward our copies of *Al-Hay Al-Latini*, a novel that tells the story of a young Lebanese student’s attempts to define himself amidst rising

Arab nationalist sentiment while studying in Paris. “The cultural faux pas committed by our protagonist, the resistance he encounters for being Arab—these are things that echo through history,” he continued. “I don’t agree with Farid, and I doubt Idris would either, but maybe this book can help us understand what’s going on in his head.” He leafed through its pages to find where we had left off the previous day. “*Yallah*.”

If the colonial encounter echoed through history, then so too did it reverberate across our program. The eight weeks we spent in Aix-en-Provence afforded my classmates and me a unique vantage point from which to view its continuing impact, and together we debated France’s efforts to ban the headscarf, interrogated famous works of orientalist art, and spent an afternoon listening to the stories of refugees at an NGO in Marseille. Aix at times felt like a small town—but our experience there was hardly provincial: every day, the contents of our classes bled into the composition of our surroundings. In Aix-en-Provence, there was a particular importance, a special relevance to the texts we worked with—regardless of whether we read them in Arabic or French. □



Visiting with refugees at an NGO in Marseille



Visiting Albert Camus's grave at Lourmarin, at the foot of the Luberon mountains



The Old Port of Marseille



Sam Eisendrath and Andrew Aoyama with their host father



The village of Roussillon

NEWS AND NOTES

STUDENT NEWS

STUDENT PROFILE: ELLEN STOCKERT

Ellen Stockert is a second-year student in the AM in Middle Eastern Studies program.

How did you become interested in Middle Eastern studies?

I have always enjoyed studying history, language, and government, and I pursued an undergraduate degree in foreign affairs to combine these interests. However, my first two semesters of college sparked my specific interest in Middle Eastern studies, as I enrolled in a modern Middle Eastern history course and subsequently in a course on the politics of the Middle East. These two classes inspired me to begin studying Arabic during my second year of college, and the combination of these and similar courses confirmed my decision to pursue a graduate degree in Middle Eastern studies.

Why did you choose CMES?

CMES offers unparalleled flexibility for master's candidates. As a result, I have had the opportunity to tailor my graduate program to my personal research interests. CMES also prioritizes language

study, requiring all AM students to study a modern Middle Eastern language during all four semesters of the program. One of my biggest goals in returning to school was to improve my Arabic language skills, and I feel that CMES has provided me with that opportunity. Lastly, CMES is a community, and I could feel this from the moment that I visited. CMES faculty and staff are highly supportive of their students, and the student community is collaborative and welcoming.

What are your research interests?

My research interests center on contemporary conflict and politics in the Levant, with a particular focus on Lebanon and Syria. I am interested in how postcolonial politics and institutions have shaped conflict and politics in the present, as well as how conflict impacts civilians and political institutions. To further my understanding of these topics and how they impact society, I have pursued classes in modern Middle Eastern history, political science, literature, law, religion, and public health.

What do you like best about studying at Harvard?

Studying at Harvard is an enriching experience in all dimensions. I am continually impressed by the Harvard faculty and staff, as well as my peers, and I enjoy learning from the breadth of experiences that each of these individuals

brings to the University. Harvard also provides an incredible depth of resources, from the library system to academic opportunities both in Cambridge and abroad.

What travel/research opportunities have you pursued at Harvard?



I have been fortunate to receive funding from CMES for two travel opportunities. I spent the summer between the first and second years of my master's program at a summer Arabic program at the American University of Beirut, which was an incredible opportunity to advance my Arabic language skills, to immerse myself in Lebanese culture, and to explore Beirut. I will also travel to Beirut and Geneva, Switzerland, during Wintersession 2019 for a joint HKS-HSPH course that focuses on the humanitarian and political negotiations of policies regarding refugees.

What advice would you offer a prospective/incoming student?

I would advise prospective and incoming students to take part in the CMES community as much as possible. I have been fortunate to find mentors among the faculty and staff, as well as friends and colleagues within the student community. I would also recommend taking a wide variety of classes across the University, as the opportunity to cross-register at all of the Schools within Harvard has been a highlight of my graduate school experience.

AT THE CENTER

IRANIAN ORAL HISTORY PROJECT GETS AN UPDATE

The Iranian Oral History Project, launched in 1981 at the Center for Middle Eastern Studies and directed by Habib Ladjevardi, recorded the personal accounts of 134 individuals who played major roles in or were eyewitnesses to important political events in Iran from the 1920s to the 1980s. This unique resource, available through Harvard Library, provides scholars and practitioners the opportunity to listen to and read the personal accounts of many of Iran's former political leaders as they recall the times and events that shaped their lives and the life of their country.

"The interviews were originally recorded on

cassette tapes, now held at the Harvard Depository, and paper transcripts, now at Houghton Library," says Matthew C. Smith, Persian Cataloger at Widener Library. "As streaming technology became available, the recordings were digitized and, along with scans of the transcripts, made publically available via the internet."

Over time, however, due to changing technology, the audio files became difficult or impossible to access, and the technical platform used to maintain the collection database needed to be replaced. So the decision was made to transition to the Library's new digital collection platform, CURIOSity.

Marilyn Rackley, Aeon Project Manager and Digital Librarian, oversaw the transition. The technical work was done by Library Technical Services, where Metadata Analyst Robin Wendler worked on formatting the data for the new interface.

"The Iranian Oral History Project is one of the Middle East, Africa, and Asia Divisions's most popular online resources," says Smith. "I regularly field questions about it from students and scholars around the world, so we're really pleased that it is once again accessible." Visit the collection at library.harvard.edu/collections/iranian-oral-history-project. ▣

ان رفتم . وقتی آنجا رفتم و مسائل را از نزدیک دیدم ، دیدم که نیست . شرکت نفت مطلق العنان است . با زفلان حاج آقای اصفه دا ر قزوین را میشود گفت که ساکت باش اینجا دولت است و یا حکومت ا . برای شرکت نفت ساخته شده بود . اگر شرکت نفتی نبود آبادانی ن م خب تمام منابع و ثروت ایران را میبرد یک چیزی هم البته به ا برای اینکه قیمت دستمزدها خیلی پایین بود البته حزب توده شو

REVITALIZING ARMENIAN STUDIES AT HARVARD

Just over six decades ago, the late Harvard professor Richard N. Frye, one of the founders of the Center for Middle Eastern Studies, stated in a lecture to the Boston branch of the Armenian Students' Association that Armenia's rich heritage deserved recognition and that "Armenian Studies needs to be an established and respected discipline in the universities."

The Armenian community responded, forming the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR), in Belmont, Massachusetts, with the goal of establishing professorships of Armenian studies at leading American universities. Three years later, NAASR exceeded its initial fundraising goal and endowed at Harvard the first chair of Armenian studies in the United States. The chair, later named for the fifth-century Armenian scholar and cleric Mesrob Mashtots, creator of the Armenian alphabet, was also the first professorship to be endowed by a community organization.

Now CMES renews Harvard's commitment to Armenian studies with support from the Hrant Dink Memorial CMES Fund, established this

year by retired businessman Harry Parsekian, a lifelong resident of Watertown, Massachusetts, home to the oldest and one of the largest Armenian communities in the country.

"The aim of the initiative is to honor and promote the humanistic values espoused by the late Turkish Armenian journalist and intellectual Hrant Dink," says Parsekian, who is president of the Friends of Hrant Dink organization and is involved in the Hrant Dink Foundation in Istanbul. "Hrant's dream was to bring Turkish and Armenian people together on the basis of democracy, equality, and justice, creating a constructive future based on mutual respect."

Hrant Dink's assassination, by a Turkish nationalist in 2007, prompted "an outpouring of support for the cause of thinking about Turkish and Armenian as people that have been in ties with one another for a long time, part of whose history is a painful one," and about which there has been a lack of recognition, says Lisa Gulesserian, Lecturer on Armenian Language and Culture in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations. "Harry's interest

is largely about getting that conversation out and getting people to talk about a shared if painful past, openly and with recognition of the Armenian Genocide." Activities and programming supported by the fund will be focused on Armenian studies with an eye to human rights and to the interconnectedness of Armenians and other cultures that lived together in the Middle East.

In October 2018, CMES inaugurated the Armenian Studies Lecture Series with a talk by Christina Maranci, Arthur H. Dadian and Ara Oztemel Chair of Armenian Art and Architectural History at Tufts University, titled "How to Read Armenian (Art)." Maranci has engaged with the cultural heritage of Armenians for over a decade, working on historically Armenian churches and monasteries, and her campaign for the Cathedral of Mren, near the ruins of the medieval Armenian city Ani in present-day eastern Turkey, resulted in its inclusion on the World Monuments Watch List.

"Christina talks a lot about historically Armenian sites in Turkey that are under threat [of being] purposefully dismantled

or destroyed," as many historically Armenian sites have been, says Gulesserian, "so we thought that she would be a good fit and a good introductory lecturer for the series." The talk drew a capacity crowd at 38 Kirkland Street, which Gulesserian sees as "a sign that there's interest in this area and that we're selecting speakers that people want to hear from."

Gulesserian, who serves as chair of the new lecture series and is the driving force behind a range of related Armenian studies programming, grew up in a large Armenian community in Los Angeles and earned her PhD at the University of Texas, Austin, where her dissertation focused on the Armenian Genocide trilogy by Armenian-American novelist Micheline Aharonian Marcom.

At Harvard, she has been thinking about new ways of teaching Armenian. Last summer she attended a month-long workshop on project-based learning, and has since begun using projects to teach Armenian in immersive environments. In fall 2018 she took students to an Armenian nursing home in Jamaica Plain, where they held a dance workshop with Armenian-speaking residents. And currently she is working with

the principal of St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School in Watertown to develop a project through which her students can make a useful contribution to the school.

Also in the fall, Gulesserian and her students joined a NAASR-organized daytrip to the "Armenia!" exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the first major exhibition to examine medieval Armenian art and culture in a global context, through art objects, illuminated manuscripts and printed books, textiles, and religious artifacts, including the characteristic Armenian cross stones called *khachkars*. During their visit, the students participated in a daylong symposium developed by the Met in collaboration with the Armenian Center at Columbia University, attending a number of talks exploring materials in the exhibition with an emphasis on how they demonstrated Armenia's impact on international trade during the Middle Ages.

Harvard itself, says Gulesserian, has "an incredible collection of Armenian manuscripts and language materials," in Widener and Houghton Libraries. "We have manuscripts, journals, Armenian children's books, textbooks—all sorts of things.



William Granara, Christina Maranci, Lisa Gulesserian, Julia Hintlian, and Harry Parsekian

We have materials here that are available at maybe three other institutions in the world. We have a plethora of materials to use as researchers and as teachers and students of the language." The Armenian Museum of America, in Watertown, also houses a major collection of all forms of Armenian material culture, and its Mesrob G. Boyajian Library holds over 27,000 titles.

To round out the academic year, CMES, with support from NAASR, will host in

spring 2019 a graduate student symposium, titled "Entangled Encounters: Antiquity and Modernity in Armenian Studies." Over two days, four prominent Armenian studies scholars will mentor student participants from around the world and will hold a panel discussion open to the public, moderated by Gulesserian and Julia Hintlian, PhD candidate in the Study of Religion. The symposium is "about bringing past and present together and showing that they are

mutually constitutive, that they inform one another, that our understanding of the past influences our reading of the present and vice versa," says Gulesserian. And in a larger sense, the symposium and the lecture series, together with other potential Armenian studies programming, are "about building a community of Armenian studies and showing that we have resources at Harvard and in the Boston area that can be invaluable to people working in the field." ▣

FALL RECEPTION 2018



Lisa Gulesserian, William Granara, Roy Mottahedeh, Lauren Montagué, Sarah Stoll



Özgün Deniz Yoldaşlar, Damla Özakay



Sami Alkyam, Said Hannouchi



Hilary Rantisi, Nevenka Korica Sullivan, Denis Sullivan



Mona El-Kouedi and daughter



Farzin Vahdat, Sheida Dayani



Marijana Mišević, Sam Dolbee, Jesse Howell



Eda Ozel



Afaf Mougou



Oliver James McPherson-Smith, Hamad Al-Hajri



Sultan Althari

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

SEPTEMBER 2018

International Law and the Israeli–Palestinian Conflict: Is Israel Still a Lawful Occupier?

A talk with S. Michael Lynk, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian Territory occupied since 1967; Associate Professor of Law, Western University, London, Ontario. Co-sponsored with the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs.

CMES Summer in Review.

A presentation by CMES-funded graduate students on their MENA-related summer internships, research, and travels.

Robert Underhill: A Life Devoted to the Study of Linguistics.

A talk with linguist Engin Sezer, formerly of Harvard University.

Reflections on a Lifetime Effort to Bring Peace to the Middle East.

An interview with Herbert C. Kelman, Richard Clarke Cabot Professor of Social Ethics *Emeritus*, Harvard University. Co-

sponsored with the Herbert C. Kelman Seminar on International Conflict Analysis and the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs.

Caliphate Redefined: The Mystical Turn in Ottoman Political Thought.

A conversation about Hüseyin Yilmaz's new book, with the author and Cemil Aydin, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; Cengiz Sisman, University of Houston, Clear Lake; Hayrettin Yücesoy, Washington University; and Intisar Rabb, Harvard University.

OCTOBER 2018

Influence of Neighboring Cultures and Languages on Modern Assyrian Music.

A talk with specialist in Assyrian music Abboud Zeitoune. Co-sponsored with the Mishael and Lillie Naby Assyrian Lecture Fund, Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations.

The State of Evliya Çelebi Studies.

A talk with Robert Dankoff, Professor of Turkish and Islamic Studies *Emeritus*,



Sara Roy, S. Michael Lynk



Maryam Patton

Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, University of Chicago.

Situating Sufism in Islamizing Anatolia and the Balkans (14th and 15th Centuries).

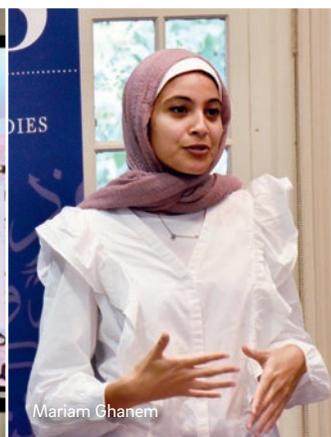
A talk with Ahmet T. Karamustafa, Professor of History, University of Maryland, College Park.

Nukes in the Middle East: Who Will Get the Bomb?

A talk with Gary Samore, Senior Executive Director, Crown Center for Middle East Studies, Professor of the Practice of Politics, Brandeis University, and discussant Sahar Nowrouzadeh, Research Fellow, Belfer Center for Science and International



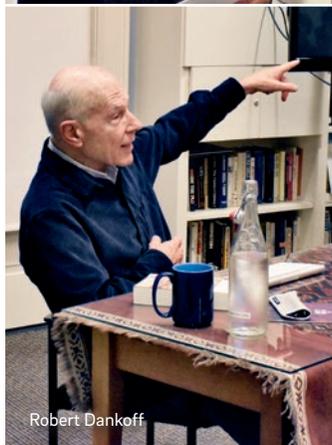
Abdoud Zeitoune



Mariam Ghanem



Ahmet T. Karamustafa



Robert Dankoff



Nadya Hajj



Saud Alsanousi, Jonathan Wright

Affairs, HKS. Co-sponsored with the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs.

The Impoverishment of the African Red Sea Littoral, 1640–1945. A book talk with Steven Serels, Visiting Fellow, Center for Middle Eastern Studies; Research Officer, Zentrum für Interdisziplinäre

Regionalstudien, Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg.

Rebuilding Vibrant Communities among Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon: Societal Reconstruction Amid Intractable Conflict. A talk with Nadya Hajj, Assistant Professor, Peace and Justice

Studies Department, Wellesley College. Co-sponsored with the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs.

Saud Alsanousi and Jonathan Wright on *The Bamboo Stalk*. A talk with the author and translator of the International Prize for Arabic Fiction–winning novel.

Vampires, Ghouls, and Alexander the Two-Horned: An Otherworldly Evening of 17th-Century Myth and 21st-Century Music. A talk by Cemal Kafadar, Vehbi Koç Professor of Turkish Studies, Department of History, Harvard University, and musical performance by composer and musician

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS



Mehmet Ali Sanlıkol joined by Grammy-nominated string orchestra A Far Cry, inspired by Ottoman traveler Evliya Çelebi.

Generation MBS: Understanding Social and Political Change in Saudi Arabia. A talk in the Arabian Peninsula Studies Lecture Series by Kristin Smith Diwan, Senior Resident Scholar, Arab Gulf States Institute, Washington, DC.

Ali Ufuki and Musical Knowledge Transfer in 17th-Century Istanbul. A talk with Judith I. Haug, Research Fellow in Musicology, Orient-Institut Istanbul.

NOVEMBER 2018
Zayed and Nation Building: Mirage to Reality. A talk

in the Arabian Peninsula Studies Lecture Series by Aisha Bilkhair, United Arab Emirates cultural expert, lecturer, and columnist.

Conceptualizing Turkish Foreign Policy: Weak State—Emerging Middle Power. A talk with Emre Çalışkan, author, with Simon Waldman, of *The “New Turkey” and Its Discontents*.

Kingdoms of Faith: Writing a New History of Islamic Spain. The inaugural Joint Lecture in Medieval Middle Eastern Studies, featuring Brian Catlos, Professor of Religious Studies, University of Colorado, Boulder. Co-sponsored with the Committee on Medieval Studies.

And God Knows Best: Scientific Expertise, Piety, and Islamic Legal Opinions.

A talk in the Harvard Law and Religion Lecture Series with Ahmed Ragab, Richard T. Watson Associate Professor of Science and Religion, Director of the Science, Religion, and Culture Program, HDS. Co-sponsored with the Committee on the Study of Religion; Center for Middle Eastern Studies; and the Julis-Rabinowitz Program on Jewish and Israeli Law and the Islamic Legal Studies Program: Law and Social Change, HLS.

Impact of the US Departure from JCPOA on Iran—US Bilateral Relations and the Regional Crisis. A talk with Seyed Hossein Mousavian,

Program on Science and Global Security, Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, Princeton University, and former Iranian Ambassador and Foreign Policy Advisor to the Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council, Iran; and discussant Payam Mohseni, Director, Iran Project, HKS, and Lecturer, Department of Government, Harvard.

The Iran Agenda Today: The Real Story inside Iran and What’s Wrong with US Policy. A talk with Peabody Award-winning journalist Reese Erlich.

Coethnicity and Clientelism in Divided Societies: Insights from an Experimental Study



Brian Catlos



Payam Mohseni, Seyed Hossein Mousavian, Lenore Martin



Reese Erlich



Lama Mourad, Melani Cammett



Paul F. Saba

of Political Behavior in Lebanon. A talk with Melani Cammett, Clarence Dillon Professor of International Affairs, Department of Government, Harvard University, Chair, Harvard Academy for International and Area Studies, Department of Global Health and Population,

Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health; and Dominika Kruszewska, PhD candidate, Department of Government. Discussant: Lama Mourad, Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Middle East Initiative, HKS. Co-sponsored with the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs.

DECEMBER 2018
How to Read Armenian (Art). The inaugural presentation in the 2018–19 CMES Armenian Studies Lecture Series, with Christina Maranci, Arthur H. Dadian and Ara Oztemel Chair of Armenian Art and Architectural History, Tufts University.

The Political Economy of Energy and the Potential for Conflict in the Middle East: From Iran to Gaza and Beyond. A talk with Boston-based international energy attorney Paul F. Saba, Esq. Co-sponsored with the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs.

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

AN OTHERWORLDLY EVENING OF 17TH-CENTURY MYTH AND 21ST-CENTURY MUSIC

On a rainy October evening, the Memorial Church of Harvard University was packed with a crowd who had gathered to hear Cemal Kafadar, Vehbi Koç Professor of Turkish Studies, present a talk on matters that time and time again have gripped the human conscious and societal anxiety: time, immortality, and, of course, vampires.

Why was it that vampire lore exploded in the early 18th century and continues to have cultural salience to the present day? The answer lies in part with the figure of Evliya Çelebi, the 17th-century Ottoman traveler known best for his 10-volume travelogue *Seyahatname*, possibly the longest ever written. Insatiably curious and unconventional by nature, Evliya Çelebi traveled over forty years throughout the entire empire, and his account presented the world through the eyes of an educated Ottoman Muslim who was nonetheless cosmopolitan in his worldview, containing both light and dark, tragedy and comedy. It was during

Evliya Çelebi's travels to the Caucasus that he encountered witches, vampires, and other such demons, especially in the Alburz mountains regions south of the Caspian Sea. When Evliya returned to Istanbul to explain all that he had seen to his audience, he used the Turkish word *obur*, meaning to suck, to help explain the mechanics by which vampires claimed their victims. It is through this Turkish etymology of *obur* that Kafadar argues our modern term "vampire" derives.

Although Evliya's travels and encounters in the Caucasus helped to illustrate the growing salience of vampires, it did not explain their explosion in the 18th century. As Kafadar explained in the second half of his talk, witchcraft is widely regarded among historians as an early modern phenomenon, in that, after the 17th century, witch sightings or persecutions of supposed witches largely disappeared. Kafadar showed how the fall of witches was followed by the rise of vampires, and that vampires took on the

fears formerly directed toward witches. They did so precisely because of a shift in the 18th century over social anxieties concerning blood and identity.

Vampires, like witches before them, worked as a complex site for negotiating timeless issues like anxiety over blood, the dead, and neglect of filial duties. Vampires were thus metaphors for negotiating liminality, being neither here nor there. As the undead, they were neither dead nor alive. Every being needs to be put to rest, so that we can go on living. But vampires are restless, and therefore timeless. And their rise in the 18th century and continued importance are tied in part to the growing link between blood and identity. The question of blood purity and nations of people came together so well in this time because of the rise of nationhood, which simply wasn't relevant to the 17th century. Keeping in mind further the significance of shifting border regions between Hapsburgs and Ottomans,



Audrey Wozniak, Meryem Demir, Engin Sezer



Cemal Kafadar



Ceylan Özgen Erişen, Cemal Kafadar



Sihem Lamine, David Coker

Photos: Martha Stewart

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vampires were thus a kind of lens for 18th-century anxieties over who we are.

The evening was a two-part affair. After Kafadar's talk, the setting shifted to a musical performance by A Far Cry, an 18-member Grammy-nominated string orchestra based in Boston. For the next hour, the audience sat rapt as we listened to *A Gentleman of Istanbul*, a symphony composed by Mehmet Ali Sanlıkol, a faculty member at New England Conservatory and former CMES Visiting Researcher. Sanlıkol explained how each of the four movements drew inspiration from various passages from Evliya Çelebi's travelogue. The first movement, "The Clocks and Bells of Vienna," heavily featured percussion instruments and placed us in a more European setting. A ticking clock featured in the background of the whole movement and was not just a way of keeping rhythm but a reminder for the audience of time's ineluctable advance. The second and third movements featured a jazz ballad with piano, and a mix of Sufi mystic sounds featuring the reed flute known as a *ney*. The fourth movement yet again charted its own path with classical Ottoman styles punctuated by the eerie Qur'anic recitations chanted by Sanlıkol himself, during which time all other instruments ceased playing.

Although the four movements were quite eclectic, they followed a classical symphonic structure. The combined effect of the symphony imparted the exact cosmopolitan expression Sanlıkol wished to give the audience in order to illustrate, via music, the rich, colorfully diverse world of Evliya Çelebi.

—Maryam Patton, PhD candidate in History and Middle Eastern Studies





Mehmet Ali Sanlikol and A Far Cry string orchestra



Photos: Martha Stewart

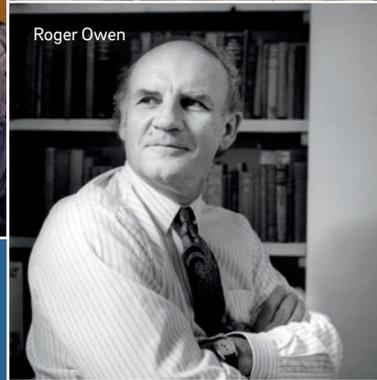
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والتراث



Ahmed Ragab, Khaled El-Rouayheb,
Roy P. Mottahedeh, William Granara, Han Hsien Liew



William Granara,
Sami Alkyam, Will Tamplin



Roger Owen

AT A GLANCE

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THE TWO-HORNED

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