

CVES

NEWS

THE CENTER FOR
MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

مركز الدراسات
المتوسطية
جامعة هارفرد

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SPRING 2019

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SPRING 2019 HIGHLIGHTS

GREETINGS AND SALAMAAT TO ALL THE MEMBERS OF OUR CMES FAMILY! I write this letter on a sunny summer morning reflecting on CMES's events over the past semester. As you will see in this abundantly rich and beautifully collated and edited newsletter, this past academic year has been bustling with wonderful people and activity.

The spring semester began on a sad note with the passing in December of our beloved professor, mentor, advisor, colleague, and friend Roger Owen. CMES had the honor of hosting a memorial reception in February, which brought together members of Roger's immediate and extended family, many of his former students, and colleagues and friends from across the globe. Although he has departed from us, his presence at CMES is felt every day.

On a happier note, we welcomed back Jesse Howell (PhD '17), who is now our new Academic Programs Manager and Associate Director of the CMES AM Program in Regional Studies. Jesse joins us with a doctorate in Ottoman history, first-hand experience with Harvard life, and several years of directing our Turkey winter term program for undergraduates.

Among the highlights of this past spring were the H.A.R. Gibb lectures, this year delivered by eminent historian and prolific scholar Jocelyne Dakhli, Director of Studies at the Center for Historical Research, Ecole des hautes études en sciences sociales, Paris; and the colloquium *Mecca: the Lived City*, co-sponsored with the Graduate School of Design, which opened with a keynote address by our own Professor Rosie Bsheer.

This year CMES Tunisia hosted a record fifteen Harvard students to its three-week winter term, and eight students joined our CMES winter term excursion in Istanbul. We also continued to fund research projects for an increasing number of students, many of whom conducted fieldwork throughout the Middle East. Above all, this spring we graduated our largest cohort of sixteen magnificent AM students and two joint PhD students.

I conclude by sharing with you the news that I have been offered, and have accepted, a third three-year term as CMES Director. Since this upcoming year falls during my previously scheduled sabbatical leave, the Center will be directed by my very capable and esteemed colleague Cemal Kafadar, Vehbi Koç Professor of Turkish Studies, former Director of CMES, and current Director of Graduate Studies.

With all my best wishes,

—WILLIAM GRANARA, CMES DIRECTOR

ROGER OWEN, MY MENTOR AND MY FRIEND

It is impossible to sum up the life of Professor Roger Owen in a few paragraphs; even Roger found it difficult to edit his life in his wonderful memoir. I will focus on being his student and then his friend, and how he taught me how to pass forward his special brand of mentoring.

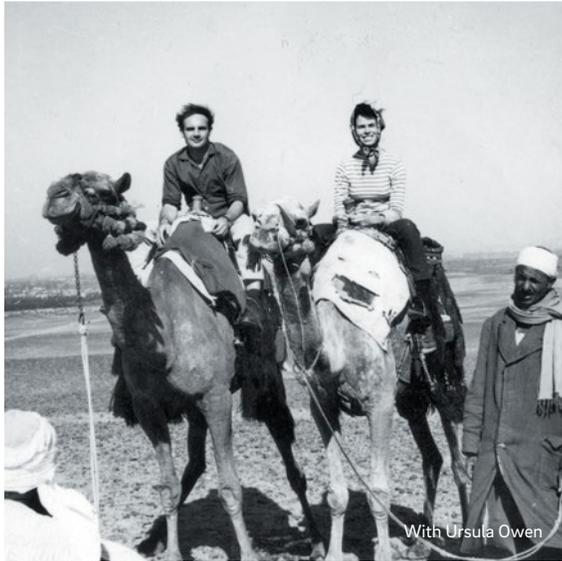
As a graduate student working on the history of Egypt and Sudan, I made my pilgrimage to Oxford to see Roger and Albert Hourani and receive their wisdom on my project. Albert enjoyed its potential but Roger told me in no uncertain terms that it

was too big and would be very difficult (I would like to think that both of them were right in their ways). When two years later Roger joined the CMES faculty, I worried that he would not agree to be my advisor. I was also hugely pregnant with my first son, already writing

my dissertation, and fearful that being a new mother would mean no one would take me seriously anymore. I was not looking to be molded—I was looking to be heard. And I was looking for an intellectual colleague to provide a home for historical ideas, as my husband



Photo: Kris Snibbe/Harvard University



With Ursula Owen



With Susan Miller, William Graham, Thomas Mullens, and Roy P. Mottahedeh



With Edward Said



With Rami Khouri

and I moved far from Harvard for his first academic job.

Roger got this. In September, we created a chapter schedule so that I would be able to graduate that May. We created a workable, realizable schedule to

make room for the birth of my baby and life with a newborn. This was in 1994, when email was but a dream. I would send Roger a chapter and he would send it back, with his comments, within two weeks. This

became a ritual, and because he was so regular in commenting and so helpful with his insights, I got used to being regular in completing my chapters. Under the steadiness of this relationship and despite my son's re-

fusal to sleep at night, I finished my dissertation and graduated from Harvard in May 1995.

Roger got to know my husband and both of my children, visited us, let us stay with him when we came to



With Khaled Fahmy, Mona Makram-Ebeid, and William Granara

Cambridge, and read drafts of my second book as well. We have a lovely memory of Roger, singing us a song and dancing a jig in the middle of Philadelphia to make the boys giggle. I have memories of Ben and Belle when they were little as well.

My older son is turning 25 this year. It's a benchmark of so much life being lived, and a signpost of my relationship to my teacher. We were never not in touch, we always talked, we sometimes argued, and we built, year by year, a lovely friendship. As Roger got older and so bravely dealt with his degenerative illness, he taught me the particular grace of aging. He respected the wisdom that comes from illness, and when my husband was diagnosed with the cancer that ended his life, Roger was always calling,

or writing, or sending us books for comfort. Losing Roger this past December was a punch in my gut. I miss my friend's voice and I always will.

Finally, Roger taught me that one's students are future colleagues, and the investment in their work is an investment in what can be an amazing and unique alliance. He was so proud of the people his students were and who they became as scholars. He gave that to me, and I feel the same way about mine. Just like Roger taught, there must always be a writing schedule.

I will not forget that as I forge ahead on a project—the first ever without Roger there to read it. Because, as he always said in ending a conversation: “Onwards!”

—Eve Troutt Powell, PhD '95

NEWS AND NOTES

FACULTY NEWS

In fall 2018, **Irit Aharony**, Senior Preceptor in Modern Hebrew, and NELC teaching assistant Osnat Aharoni led a program-wide project designing a Hanukkah-themed Escape Room in Modern Hebrew. In this educational activity, students have one hour to decipher puzzles, unveil clues, and ultimately unlock a box holding the answer to the escape room's major challenge. The game teaches critical thinking and complex problem solving. Language study in particular lends itself to this creative learning tool, because it allows one to test all four language proficiencies. In the innovative semester-long project, funded by the Harvard Foreign Language Advisory Group and the Center for Jewish Studies, the third-year Advanced class created an activity in Hebrew targeted for the lingual level of the second-year Intermediate course. The Highly Advanced Seminar course tested the activity, which was held in the Bok Center Learning Lab, and provided feedback that was used to tweak the activity before its final presentation to

students in December 2018. The activity allowed both designers and participants to interact with the language in ways that greatly differ from regular class time. Results were presented at the Harvard ABCD-TIE forum in April 2019. **Rosie Bsheer**, Assistant Professor of History, gave the talk “Countering Revolution: Saudi Arabia and the Arab Uprisings” as part of “Teach-In on Current Events in the Arab World: Return to Business as Usual after the Uprisings?” organized by Georgetown University and George Mason University, November 2018. She gave the talk “Yemen's Forgotten Wars” in February 2019 at Brown University. In April, she presented the paper “Building the Past: The Politics of Modernity in Saudi Arabia” at Harvard's Middle East Beyond Borders workshop, and participated in a panel discussion at MIT with Harvey Molotch and Davide Ponzini, co-authors of *The New Arab Urban: Gulf Cities of Wealth, Ambition, and Distress*, and other discussants. In May she gave the keynote “Mecca: From Revolution to Redevelopment” at the *Mecca: The Lived City*



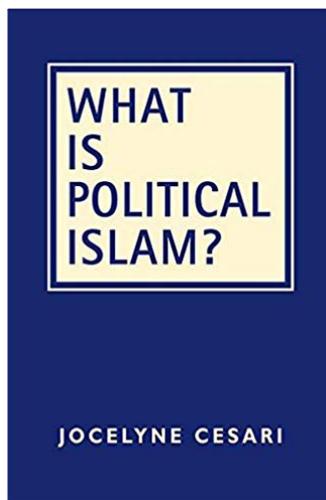
Sheida Dayani at the Mahindra Humanities Center

colloquium organized by CMES Director William Granara and Gareth Doherty, GSD. **Jocelyne Cesari**, J. Dermot Dunphy Visiting Professor of Religion, Violence, and Peacebuilding at HDS, published *What Is Political Islam?* (Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2018), which received the 2019 Book Award Honorable Mention by the Religion and International Relations Section of the International Studies Association. She published “Civilization as Disciplinization and the Consequences for Religion and

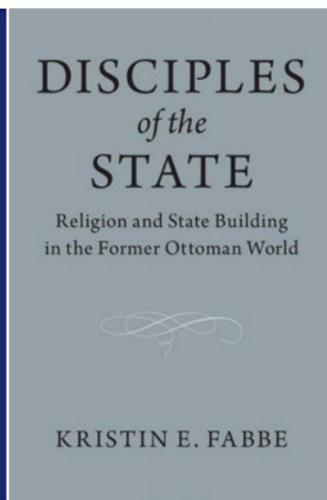
World Politics,” *Review of Faith and International Relations* 17:1 (2019), and “Unexpected Convergences: Religious Nationalism in Israel and Turkey,” *Religions* 9.11 (2018). She gave the talk “International Policies and the Rights of Women,” at the International Workshop on Women, Faith and Culture, Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Rome, in November 2018, and she gave keynote lectures at the Interreligious and Interfaith Summit, United Nation Development Program, Beirut,

and at the World Muslim Leaders Forum, Lambeth Palace, London, both in December 2018. **Sheida Dayani**, Preceptor in Persian, gave the talk “Juggling Revolutionaries: Making History with Theatre in Modern Iran” at the Mahindra Humanities Center in October 2018. This spring, the paper she gave at Symposia Iranica in St. Andrew’s received an Honorable Mention by the conference. She also organized and hosted the NELC Poetry Night in April, representing 16 languages in poetry. **Meryem Demir**,

Preceptor in Modern Turkish, was awarded a Certificate of Teaching Excellence for fall 2018. She published two short stories in Turkish in October 2018 and March 2019: “A Bicycle Made in Germany” (*Yeni E*) and “Yellow Heat: Vienna” (*Ek*). **Gareth Doherty** has been promoted to Associate Professor of Landscape Architecture at the Graduate School of Design. With CMES Director William Granara, he organized the colloquium *Mecca: The Lived City* in May 2019. **Kristin Fabbe** published *Disciples of the State? Religion and State-Building in the Former Ottoman World* (Cambridge University Press, 2019). With Efe Murat Balıkcıoğlu, she wrote the chapter “Political Islam in Turkey,” in Alpaslan Özerdem and Matthew Whiting (eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Turkish Studies* (Routledge, forthcoming 2019); with Matthew Franklin Cancian, the article “Informal Institutions and Survey Research in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq,” Special Issue on Peer-reviewed Symposium, ed. Mark Tessler, *PS: Political Science & Politics* (forthcoming); with Chad Hazlett, and Tolga Sunmazdemir, “A Persuasive Peace: Syrian Refugees’ Attitudes towards Compromise and Civil



War Termination,” *Journal of Peace Research* 56.1 (January 2019); and with Tolga Sinmazdemir, “Syrian Refugees in Turkey and the Politics of Post Conflict Reconciliation,” *Review of Middle East Studies* 52.2 (November 2018). She was named a Hellman Faculty Fellow at Harvard Business School this year, and, with Matt Buehler, she received a Faculty Research Grant from the Middle East Initiative at Harvard Kennedy School for their research project “Moroccan Attitudes towards Migrants: A National Level Survey.” **William Graham**, Murray A. Albertson Professor of Middle Eastern Studies and Distinguished Service Professor Emeritus, reviewed Alexander



Bevilacqua, *The Republic of Arabic Letters: Islam and the European Enlightenment* (Harvard University Press, 2018), in *The European Legacy*, *Journal of ISSEI*, Tel Aviv (forthcoming 2019). He delivered the radio podcast “‘Ein Gott, der sich selbst zur Barmherzigkeit verpflichtet’: Sura 6 Vers 12” in “Koran Erklärt,” Deutschlandfunk, March 2018. He was elected to membership in the American Philosophical Society in April 2018 and formally inducted in Philadelphia in November. **Lenore G. Martin**, CMES Associate and Professor in the Department of Political Science and International Studies, Emmanuel College, gave the talks “The Challenge of Turkish

Foreign Policy,” on the panel Human Rights and Hybrid Regimes for the Inauguration of the Sakıp Sabancı Center for Turkish Studies, Columbia University, May 2018; “Turkey and the Gulf: The New Dynamic,” on the panel Rethinking Statecraft: Perspectives from Emerging Market Democracies, International Political Science Association Biannual Meeting, Brisbane, Australia, July 2018; “The Turkish Electorate and Turkish–EU Relations: A Looming Crisis,” with Ersin Kalaycıoğlu, on the panel Public Opinion and Foreign Policy, American Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Boston, September 2018; “Analyzing a Tumultuous Relationship: Turkey and the US in the Middle East,” Middle East Studies Association, San Antonio, Texas, November 2018; and “Analyzing the State of Academic Studies of Turkish Foreign Policy,” on the panel Studying Turkey’s Foreign Policy: Old Habits or New Paths? at the International Studies Association Meeting, Toronto, March 2019. **Intisar Rabb**, Professor of Law, HLS, became the Faculty Director of the new Program in Islamic Law (formerly the Islamic Legal Studies Program), launched the

new *Journal in Islamic Law*, created a podcast series for Islamic law on the SHARIA-source Portal (beta. shariasource.com), and launched new Islamic law scholarship roundups on the SHARIASource Blog (shariasource.blog). She hosted NBA basketball legend Mahmoud Abdul-Rauf for a fireside chat as the keynote event for the 2019 Sports Law Conference at Harvard Law School at a session on Sports, Civil Rights, and the First Amendment. She published “The Appellate Rule of Lenity,” 131 *Harvard L. Rev. F.* (2018), and “Digital Islamic Law: Purpose and Prospects” (with Sharon Tai), 49 *Int’l J. Mid. E. Studs.* (2018). She presented the paper “Judicial Independence and Discretion as Institutional Dialog in Early Islamic Law” at the Middle East Legal Studies Seminar hosted by Yale Law School in Tunis, Tunisia, in January 2019, and presented “Comments on Shari’a Scripts” as a panelist on a recent publication by Brinkley Messick at Columbia University in New York, in December 2018. Together with other faculty who signed the open letter in the *New York Times*, “The Senate Should Not Confirm Kavanaugh,” she received

(continued on page 12)

REFLECTING ON THE MANY FACES OF MECCA, THE LIVED CITY

“Mecca is lived, experienced, and documented differently by different people,” began Rosie Bsheer, Assistant Professor of History at Harvard and author of the forthcoming “Archive Wars: Spectacle, Speculation, and the Politics of History in Saudi Arabia,” in her keynote address to the colloquium *Mecca: The Lived City*, hosted by the Center for Middle Eastern Studies in May.

Mecca is characterized by plurality. In two days of lectures, speakers drew on academic, professional, and personal experiences to explore disparate visions of Mecca. The city’s social, architectural, environmental, and political transformation in the modern era reflects changes taking place across the Arabian Peninsula. Yet, the particularities of modernity in the Holy City interact with its unique heritage to yield unexpected challenges for architects of modern Mecca.

The city’s physical reinvention as a global metropolis accompanies less visible revolutions in its spiritual character. The patterns of change in Mecca reflect global trends—the growth of state bureaucracies,

demographic shifts, environmental crises, and technological revolutions. At the same time, reinventing Mecca as a global space raises urgent concerns over the commercialization of Islam’s most sacred spaces. Macro-solutions promise to raise Mecca’s profile on the world stage and ameliorate overcrowding and urban sprawl. Simultaneously, they threaten to sweep aside the hybrid communities and local history that define the character of Mecca. Balancing local concerns with the impetus to remake the city in a global mold takes on tremendous urgency in Mecca for its significance as a pilgrimage destination, the birthplace of Islam, and the site of a local history found nowhere else.

Each year, some fifteen million Muslims travel to the Holy City as pilgrims, with several million arriving during the days of Hajj alone. Hajj is meant to offer a communal experience that flattens social stratification and erases boundaries between believers, leaving only shared faith and collective devotion to God. Individual experiences of worship are

naturally subjective, but most pilgrims expect to attain a shared bond that cuts across class and national divisions. Nation building, the expansion of global capitalism, and urbanization have undercut the idealized vision of Hajj by communalism and stratifying the experience of Hajj. Though pilgrim management and shrine maintenance has always represented a source of revenue to Mecca’s managers, the introduction of modern notions surrounding optimization seeks to maximize revenue and pilgrim volume at all costs—including the historic Holy City.

Mecca acquired a reputation for cosmopolitanism as a crossroads for Muslim intellectuals and pilgrims, many of whom chose to settle there after visiting. United by a common desire to reside close to the center of the Islamic faith and drawn to the dynamic atmosphere of the shrine city, pilgrims from all corners of the Muslim community regularly elected to remain and build new lives for themselves in the shadow of the birthplace of Islam. Bsheer recounted the paths through which intellectuals, activists, and rebels all converged on the Holy

City as a place to coexist and exchange ideas. The turbulence of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries made Mecca an especially attractive destination for innovative scholars and disruptive thinkers.

In a separate lecture, Yale University’s Tyler Kynn elaborated on the transnational linkages that converged in Mecca in the late Ottoman period by exploring data extracted from pilgrim narratives written on journeys to the Holy City. Supplemented with an exploration of Ottoman administrative records, Kynn explored the ways in which settled pilgrims contributed to the reproduction of Mecca as a cosmopolitan urban space in which diverse populations could live side by side. Scholarly discourse abounded among the jurists and preachers who made Mecca and its surrounding environs their home, and the pilgrimage served as a crossroads where intellectuals from far-flung corners of the Islamic community could meet and debate their perspectives.

Successive stewards of the Holy City projected their legitimacy and mastery over the city by overhauling its



Tyler Kynn, Hussam Dakkak, Omer Shah, William Granara, Ali Almajnooni, Drew Wensley, Rosie Bsheer, Gareth Doherty

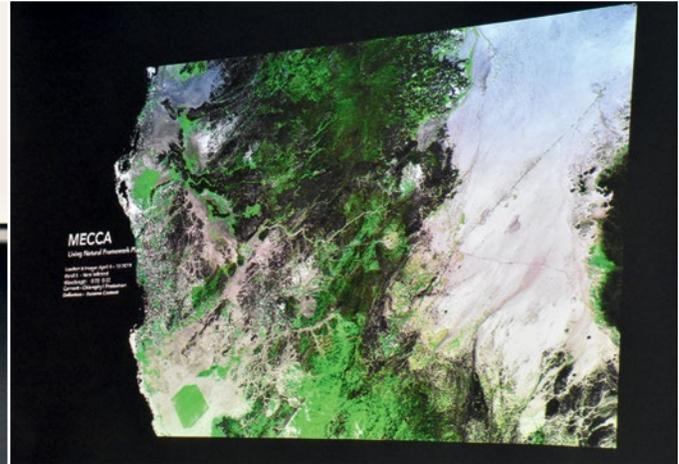
physical environs. Donating funds allowed rulers to endow foundations and sponsor building projects in the Holy City that left their own distinctive mark on its features. The contemporary Saudi state is no exception, devoting vast resources to remaking the city in its own image. Modern urban overhaul in Mecca began in earnest after the Saud family achieved control over the

city in their early twentieth century conquest of much of the Arabian Peninsula. New infrastructure allowed the Saud family to construct a newly homogenous Mecca comprising gleaming, uniform structures instead of the patchwork, winding alleys that characterized historic Mecca. Intended to address the challenges of crowd control, pilgrim management, and

urban congestion, large-scale construction projects also have the effect of erasing the prevailing architecture that gave the city its character.

The diversity that became embedded in Mecca's identity stood increasingly at odds with the imperatives of centralized state management. Ali Almajnooni of SUNY Binghamton focused on the architectural form of the

Meccan alley as a form of "architectural vernacular" that flattened social stratification and concentrated daily life in a tight, shared space. Sprawling across the Holy City's territory, the Meccan alley was capable of containing all aspects of daily life. Although nearly incomprehensible to the outsider, its residents were conversant in its arrangements. By contrast, the modern form of



grid organization that typifies global megacities—and the Saud family’s reconstruction project—neatly and inexorably assigns inhabitants places according to socioeconomic status and professional function. Premium spaces are clustered, drawing together wealthy residents while confining the remainder to their own delineated zones. Projecting the impression of organization and efficiency, the grid system accomplishes its work by violently disrupting the prevailing system of social organization. Residents find themselves isolated from one another, and cross-sectional contact becomes increasingly limited. Like the ritual of pilgrimage, modern urban transformation subjects

Mecca’s residents to social sorting on an unprecedented scale.

Erecting a centralized state apparatus in the Arabian Peninsula subjected Mecca to similar centralizing and homogenizing influences. The hybrid identities of Mecca’s cosmopolitan heritage clashed with the vision of a unified Saudi identity. The new state needed to project unity and unquestioned sovereignty at home in order to acquire legitimacy on the world stage. State deputies needed to render Arabian Peninsula communities, including Mecca, legible to their system of management in order to claim them as their own. Collecting revenue generated in the city and regulating its residents

made asserting central governance all the more urgent. The modernization of the Saudi state led central administrators to become increasingly involved in the daily lives of Meccan subjects through the impersonal mechanism of bureaucratic management.

Practical imperatives reinforced the Saud family’s incentives for remaking Mecca in the twentieth century. Increasing numbers of pilgrims, facilitated by revolutions in transportation technology, triggered feverish governmental initiatives to overhaul Mecca’s roads and transit systems. Preserving the city’s famed rugged environs was and remains a vital concern for architects of the new Mecca, but state initiatives prioritize

optimized management over preservationist impulses. The effort to remake Mecca in the image of global megacities like New York, London, and Hong Kong looms equally large in the official mandate to remake the city as the Saud family seeks to establish Mecca as the heart of the global Islamic community in a modern sense as well as a spiritual one. By the late 1960s, demolition initiatives had cleared away historic buildings to make way for modern roads and residential structures. Most recently, the construction of the Abraj al-Bait complex has positioned structures that tower over the Grand Mosque and the Ka’aba.

The tower complex and the hotels it contains purport to address the overcrowding that

plague the pilgrimage season. As ever-increasing numbers of pilgrims travel to the Holy City each year, crowd management and hospitality services demand more resources and dedicated attention from Mecca's managers and the Saud family. The incentives for reshaping Meccan infrastructure to streamline the experience of Hajj—maximizing revenue, ensuring pilgrim safety, and promoting Saud family prestige—are clear. However, the particulars of the modernization strategy raise justified concerns that the experience of pilgrimage is becoming commercialized. Competitively priced hotel rooms and luxury package deals offer wealthy pilgrims a curated experience that sets them apart from their poorer counterparts, enforcing the class segregation that Hajj is meant to erase. The tower complex stands as an inescapable physical symbol of Mecca's modern transformation. Pilgrims cannot help but throw their attention to the glittering superstructure as they circle the Ka'aba in its shadow. The Saudi state is ever-present in the ritual of pilgrimage, as is its vision for a Saudi Arabia and a Mecca that is modern, globalized, and optimized.

Managing the growing crowds transiting the Holy City each year facilitated a shift in the way Saudi authorities view Mecca. As Columbia University's Omer Shah explored during his fieldwork at a startup near Mecca, the drive toward optimization grips Mecca's managers and influences the way they approach the city. As the Kingdom seeks to diversify its sources of revenue by looking to develop areas of economic activity other than the production of oil, Mecca presents itself as a site for building expertise and testing systems for the efficient management of pilgrims. In this way, the Holy City, its inhabitants, and its visitors represent a human resource to complement the natural resources that enriched the Saud family.

Mecca has been a tool for generating revenue since its earliest days. Control over its shrines allowed for the extraction of access and maintenance fees, in addition to the prestige accorded its stewards. The optimization imperative reframes that revenue generating capacity latent within Mecca as a potentially infinite resource, constantly in need of maximization.

The solutions offered for Mecca's challenges remold the city in its entirety. Although they reduce overcrowding and foster an image of Mecca as a gleaming, modern edifice, changes packaged as solutions exert a proportionately destructive influence on the city's heritage. Viewing Mecca as a visitation site in need of efficient management centers its status as a shrine, but ignores the rich community that grew out of the city's historic intellectual and commercial prominence. For those who call Mecca home, viewing the city primarily as a shrine leaves no room for the everyday lives they have built for themselves there. Eradicating the traditional in the name of optimization represents a threat to the organic patterns of life that animate the Holy City as a community.

Mecca is caught at a crossroads, torn between alternative futures. Urban development carries tremendous promise in its ability to solve the problems of overcrowding and high-volume pilgrim traffic. At the same time, top-down solutions centering on large-scale construction projects are highly disruptive to the communities and environmental features that make the Holy City what it

is. The architectural styles that typify global megacities—glass towers, concrete edifices, and neighborhoods segregated by function—exert a homogenizing influence on Mecca by sweeping aside its historical diversity. The alleyways and hybrid communities of the old Mecca become a problem to be solved in the eyes of administrators tasked with ensuring the safe passage of the city's millions of annual visitors. In the name of optimization, social and physical structures that are not immediately intelligible to bureaucratic management must be broken down to make way for more efficient replacements.

Some of this process is unavoidable. Mecca is no stranger to change, and the overhaul it has experienced in the modern era echoes its historical transmutations even as it remakes the city to an unprecedentedly pervasive degree. The colloquium *Mecca: The Lived City* demonstrated that the scholarly community is adroitly working to explicate the complexities of Mecca's encounter with modernity. Continued study will shed light on the many Meccas that make up the contemporary Holy City.

—Nicholas Norberg, *AM '19*

NEWS AND NOTES

Harvard Law School's Women's Law Association's Shatter the Ceiling Award for Excellence in Promoting Gender Equity.

David J. Roxburgh, Prince Awaleed Bin Talal Professor of Islamic Art History, returned from sabbatical leave to his role as Chair of the Department of the History of Art and Architecture. Since late spring 2018, Roxburgh co-chaired a conference—with Jeffrey Hamburger and Linda Safran—at Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, DC, on the diagram paradigm in Islamic, Byzantine, and Western Medieval manuscripts, and delivered invited lectures. These included “Illustrating Epic Poetry and History in Persian Manuscripts from the Mongols to the Timurids,” Master Series sponsored by ABBVIE and WGBH Forum Network, Worcester Art Museum, Worcester, Massachusetts, and “Islamic Art as a Research Model for Doing Global Art History,” at the International Art Education Conference, Central Academy of Fine Art, Beijing. In November 2018, he moderated panels at the CIHA (Comité International d’Histoire de l’Art) Colloquium Art, Design, and Society hosted by the National Museum Institute, New Delhi. In March 2019, he

was one of two international chairs at the CIHA Colloquium in Japan, Toward the Future: Museums and Art History in East Asia, held at the Tokyo National Museum. Since its publication, *An Album of Artists’ Drawings from Qajar Iran*, ed. Roxburgh (Harvard Art Museums, distributed by Yale University Press, 2017), was recognized with several awards, with the third given by the New England Museum Association, First Place (Exhibition Catalogues 2018). An exhibition featuring works from the permanent collection of the Worcester Art Museum ran from October 2018 through January 2019. Titled *Preserved Pages: Book as Art in Persia and India, c. 1300–1800*, the exhibition was co-curated by Roxburgh and Harvard graduate student Hannah Hyden and accompanied by a small catalogue, *Preserved Pages: Book as Art in Persia and India, c. 1300–1800* (Worcester Art Museum, 2018). Other publications came to press in 2018: “Emulation in the Arts of the Book: Baysunghur’s Two Kalila wa Dimna Manuscripts,” in *The Arts of Iran in Istanbul and Anatolia*, ed. Olga Davidson and Marianna Shreve Simpson (Harvard University Press and the ILEX Foundation, 2018);

and a review of Yuka Kadoi, ed., *Arthur Upham Pope and a New Survey of Persian Art, Studies in Persian Cultural History* vol. 10 (Brill, 2016), in *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 81.2 (2018). Roxburgh is currently working on several articles and his long-term book project on artistic and literary life in early 15th century Herat. The Arabic edition of CMES Associate **Sara Roy**’s book *The Gaza Strip: The Political Economy of De-development* was published in December 2018 by the Institute for Palestine Studies. She also published articles or reviews in: *Post-colonial Studies*, *London Review of Books*, *The Nation*, and the *Journal of Islamic Studies*. She gave lectures at the Carolina Center for the Study of the Middle East and Muslim Civilizations, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; Mediterranean Dialogues: Beyond Turmoil, A Positive Agenda, Rome, Italy; and Whitney and Betty MacMillan Center for International and Area Studies and the PIER Summer Institute for Educators program “Religious Literacy: Teaching on Religions of Africa and the Middle East,” Yale University. **Kristen Stilt**, Professor of Law at Harvard Law School, is also Faculty

Director of the Animal Law and Policy Program and Faculty Director of the Program on Law and Society in the Muslim World. She is working on a book project about animal welfare debates in the international halal industry, entitled “Halal Animals,” to be published by Oxford University Press. Related to the book project, she gave the talks “The Unfulfilled Promise of Halal” at the University of California, Santa Barbara, the University of Illinois School of Law, McGill Law School, and Harvard Law School. Also part of the book project, she presented the chapter “Debates about Death” at a workshop on the bureaucratization of Islam in Southeast Asia at Harvard Law School. She gave the talk “Animals and the Environment in Comparative Constitutional Law” at a conference at the University of Texas School of Law. She presented the paper “The End of the Ritual Bubble,” about ritual slaughter in US law, at Harvard Law School. Recent publications include the chapters “Animals” and “Hisba/Muhtasib” in the *Oxford Handbook of Islamic Law*. She continues to co-convene the Middle East Beyond Borders graduate student workshop with Malika Zeghal. □

AT THE CENTER

JESSE HOWELL RETURNS TO CMES

In spring 2019 Jesse Howell (PhD '17) returned to CMES as our new Academic Programs Manager, with responsibilities for managing CMES's AM and PhD programs, our Visiting Researcher program, and our alumni outreach. As part of his role, Jesse will serve as Associate Director of our AM in Regional Studies program.

Jesse has an extensive background in Middle Eastern studies and his will be a familiar name to many of you. He received his PhD from our joint history and Middle Eastern studies program in 2017 with his dissertation "The Ragusa Road: Mobility and Encounter in the Ottoman Balkans (1430–1700)." He developed and served as excursion leader for CMES's undergraduate winter term excursion in Turkey in 2016, 2017, and 2019. Participants of this acclaimed program combined academic studies with cultural immersion during their three-week sessions as they traveled throughout Turkey, with a focus on Istanbul and the Aegean coast. In 2014 and 2015, Jesse also served as Program Coordinator for the

Harvard–Sabancı University Summer School program in Istanbul.

Our community will benefit from Jesse's scholarly background; he earned his PhD under the supervision of Cemal Kafadar, Vehbi Koç Professor of Turkish Studies, he has studied history and Mediterranean languages (Modern Turkish and Italian) at the University of California, Berkeley, and he received a BA and Graduate Certificate in Theater Arts from the University of California, Santa Cruz. Most recently, Jesse was a postdoctoral fellow at the Mahindra Humanities Center at Harvard, where his research continued to expand upon his dissertation work exploring the multi-faceted dynamics of human mobility across the Balkan Peninsula. He has also served as a Lecturer in History at Soka University of America.

Jesse is the author of numerous academic publications, including the "Balkan Caravans: Dubrovnik's Overland Networks in the Ottoman Era" chapter in *Lazaretto in Dubrovnik* (2018), ed. Ante Milošević, simultaneously published



in English and Croatian. In addition to his impressive research credentials, our AM and PhD students will greatly benefit from Jesse's experience in teaching, fellowship proposal development, and academic presentations. His expertise in the digital humanities and GIS visualization tools will be helpful to our students as they

look for ways to enhance their understanding of their research results. Jesse is an advanced speaker of Italian, French, and Modern Turkish and reads Ottoman Turkish.

Please join us in warmly welcoming Jesse Howell to his new role at CMES.

—Lauren Montague,
CMES Executive Director

NEWS AND NOTES

STUDENT NEWS

AM STUDENTS

Oula Alrifai's film, *Tomorrow's Children*, was screened at Harvard in April 2019 thanks to the Middle East Initiative at Harvard Kennedy School and CMES. She was interviewed about the film by Montgomery Community Media (www.mymcmedia.org/syrian-asylees-produce-child-refugee-documentary/). **Fridtjof Lyse Falk** received funding from CMES to join a Harvard Kennedy School delegation to Pakistan in March 2019. Visiting Lahore, Islamabad, and Karachi,

the delegation met with political leadership, the opposition, civil society, and the Armed Forces to discuss topics such as Pakistan's role vis-à-vis Iran and Saudi Arabia, its impact on Afghanistan, Pakistan's economy, and the situation of the Shi'a and other religious minorities. With the support of CMES, **Oliver McPherson-Smith** travelled to Saudi Arabia in January 2019 to conduct fieldwork for his master's thesis. During this time he was a visiting fellow at the King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies in Riyadh. Oliver will continue his research by joining

the DPhil in Politics programme at the University of Oxford in the fall of 2019. In the coming academic year he will also be an Adam Smith Fellow at the Mercatus Center, and a Humane Studies Fellow at the Institute for Humane Studies in Washington, DC. Oliver contributed a chapter, "Government Incentives and Settler Mortality in Colonial Algeria," to a forthcoming edited volume that will be published by the Mercatus Center. With Juergen Braunstein, a postdoctoral fellow at Harvard Kennedy School's Belfer Center, Oliver co-authored an op-ed, "Saudi

Arabia's Moment in the Sun," for the Carnegie Endowment.

PHD STUDENTS

Caroline Kahlenberg published the article "The Star of David in a Cedar Tree: Jewish Students and Zionism at the American University of Beirut (1908–1948)" in *Middle Eastern Studies* in February 2018. The research for the article was supported by CMES summer funding. **Keye Tersmette** received CMES summer funding and a year-long grant from the Weatherhead Research Cluster on Comparative Inequality and Inclusion.



Oula Alrifai in Armenia



Fridtjof Lyse Falk in Pakistan

CONGRATULATIONS 2019 AM AND PHD GRADUATES!

AM PROGRAM

- **Hamad Al-Hajri**
- **Oula Alrifai**—*Thesis:* “The Self-Flagellation of a Nation: Assad, Iran, and Regime Survival in Syria.” *Advisor:* Nicholas Boylston
- **Amna Al-Thani**—*Thesis:* “Women’s Head Covering in Islam and Judaism.” *Advisor:* Afsaneh Najmabadi
- **Sahar Amarir**—*Thesis:* “Minorities and the State: A Comparative Study of Variations in Levels of Internal Dissidence within

Morocco and Jordan.”
Advisor: Tarek Masoud

- **Timothy Bauler**
- **Joshua Dean**—*Thesis:* “From Oslo to Taba: Was a Resolution of the Israeli–Palestinian Conflict Ever Truly within Reach?”
Advisor: Sara Roy
- **Tara Dhaliwal**—*Thesis:* “Javanmardi-e Fetyān: Spiritual Chivalry in Early Modern Iran.” *Advisor:* Sheida Dayani
- **Fridtjof Lyse Falk**—*Thesis:* “The Americanization of European Foreign Policy vis-

à-vis Iran: How the European Union Became Beholden to the United States’ Iran Policy.”
Advisor: Payam Mohseni

- **Mariam Ghanem**—*Thesis:* “So You Think You’re Empowering Women? A Critique of NGOs through Ethnographies of Female Breadwinners in Urban Cairo.” *Advisor:* Steve Caton
- **Amber Glavine**—*Thesis:* “Homosexuality and Same-Sex Union in Islam: An Analysis of Contemporary Debates.” *Advisor:* Nicholas Boylston

- **Colleen Hegarty**
- **Suzie Lahoud**—*Thesis:* “Khomeini’s Philosopher King: Examining the Philosophical Origins of Vilāyat-i Faqih.” *Advisor:* Khaled El-Rouayheb
- **Oliver McPherson-Smith**—*Thesis:* Institutional Change and Continuity in the Era of Mohammad bin Salman: A Case Study of the Solar Power Industry in Saudi Arabia.” *Advisors:* Kristin Fabbe and Meghan O’Sullivan
- **Nicholas Norberg**—*Thesis:* “Constitutionalism in Modern Iraq, 1839–1958.”
Advisor: Phillip Walker
- **Grace O’Brien** (AB/AM)
- **Ellen Stockert**
- **Steven Wickman**

JOINT PHD PROGRAMS

- **Efe Balıkcıoğlu**—
Dissertation: “A Coherence of Incoherences: Graeco-Arabic Philosophy and the Fifteenth-Century Ottoman Synthesis of Philosophy with Sharia.” *Chair/advisor:* Cemal Kafadar
- **Han Hsien Liew**—
Dissertation: “Piety, Knowledge, and Rulership in Medieval Islam: Ibn al-Jawzi’s Ameliorative Politics.” *Chair/advisor:* Roy P. Mottahedeh



William Granara with 2019 CMES AM and PhD graduates

COMMENCEMENT RECEPTION 2019



Sarah Stoll, Efe Balikcioglu



Badriyyah Alsabah, Ellen Stockert



Ali Alibhai, William Granara, Han Hsien Liew



Jesse Howell, Phillip Walker



William Granara, Han Hsien Liew, and guests



Ellen Stockert, Nicholas Norberg, and guests



Amber Glavine, Suzie Lahoud



Sheida Dayani, Fridtjof Falk, Mariam Ghanem, Tara Dhaliwal, Badriyah AlSabah, Oula Alrifai, William Granara



Mariam Ghanem and guests



Khaled El-Rouayheb and guest



Afaf Mougou, Oula Alrifai, and guests

STUDENT PROFILE: SULTAN ALTHARI

Sultan Althari is a first-year student in the AM in Middle Eastern Studies program.

How did you become interested in Middle Eastern studies?

My interest was driven initially by a passion to create a positive change in the Middle East. Although challenges such as sectarianism, inequality, conflict, and youth unemployment exist on a global scale, I always wondered why they're especially pronounced in the Middle East, and what I can do to change that reality. Thus, I sought to deepen my knowledge of the region, its history, current challenges, and potential solutions. How can I create a positive, everlasting impact on Saudi public policy for generations to come? How can I help lead the Middle East more broadly in its transition towards a knowledge-based economy? How can I empower youth in the region with tangible solutions and substantial opportunities? It is questions like these that shaped my interest in pursuing a higher degree in Middle Eastern studies.

Why did you choose CMES?

With a highly diverse and passionate array of students, and the flexibility to tailor a plan of study unique to my individual goals, CMES seemed like the perfect fit to pursue a master's degree. The Center provided me with an unparalleled opportunity to channel my passion into indispensable skills I can use to propel my career, and hopefully policy-making in the region. The challenges in the region

require a potent response rooted in a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the Middle East and its rich history. I was impelled to join the CMES program precisely to gain such knowledge and insight.

What are your research interests?

My research interests have certainly evolved over the past few years—this evolution is best described as an evolution in the lens through which I study the Middle East. In terms of subject matter, my research is focused on public policy, political philosophy and the socio-economic development of the Middle East. I initially approached these topics through a theoretical academic lens, which deepened my appreciation for the richness and complexity of the region. Slightly frustrated with the theoretical confines, I sought to analyze these topics from a policy-oriented lens. I believe pursuing the best of both worlds will equip me with the intellectual and professional arsenal needed to address the region's pressing challenges more effectively. Consumed by this balance between theory and practice, I wrote my senior thesis at Boston College about the correlation between Saudi youth empowerment and national development. To study this relationship, I employed both quantitative and qualitative methods in which one thousand Saudis were surveyed, thereby revealing statistically significant differences between perceptions according to survey variables (gender, age group, employment sector).

What do you like best about studying at Harvard?

The passion at Harvard has to be my favorite aspect of studying here—passion is evident in faculty and students alike, and I think that passion is at times passed on from faculty to students. Additionally, and more specifically, I'm an enormous fan of the environment at CMES—the Center feels like one big family with a strong sense of community. I'd be remiss to not mention the master's program itself, which gives students the flexibility to cross-register into various Schools within Harvard (HKS, HLS, GSD), affording us the opportunity to broaden our perspectives and research interests.

What do you like best about living in Cambridge?

Definitely the diversity; people in Cambridge come from all over the globe, and everyone has a unique story to tell and ambition to fulfill. That, and the delicious food options.

What kinds of extracurriculars have you pursued at Harvard?

As a proud Saudi, I took it upon myself to establish Harvard's first official Saudi Student Association, a University-wide group dedicated to increasing cultural awareness about Saudi youth and the Kingdom more broadly. I believe that this association—through workshops, public lectures, student/faculty discussion groups, social gatherings, and cultural awareness events—will fill a gap on campus. An organized and inclusive community for Saudi students on campus

is, I think, a great asset to the University and I'm proud to have taken initiative as its founder.

What are your plans after finishing your degree?

In the future, I plan to work in the Saudi public sector, and in the Kingdom's emerging non-profit sector with organizations such as the MiSK foundation. I aim to transfer the values and skills I gain at Harvard to my future career, with the hope of empowering Saudi youth. With over 65 percent of the Saudi population under the age of 30, I believe youth represent the country's most valuable asset. One of my aims is to help create an environment infused with ambition, creativity, and dynamism for young Saudis to thrive and prosper. My hope is that the experience and education I acquire from Harvard's CMES program will assist me in fulfilling that role, and pave the road for Saudi youth who look to positively impact policies for generations to come.

What advice would you offer a prospective student?

I would advise prospective students to take advantage of the opportunity to cross-register in different Schools within Harvard, and to not be afraid to step outside of their comfort zones. CMES makes it easy to do so, as it encourages students to test their boundaries within the inclusive and supportive framework it provides. For incoming students, I would advise them to simply relax, and try their best to embrace the uncertainty that comes with being a graduate student.



NEWS AND NOTES

ALUMNI NEWS

AM ALUMNI

Zena Agha ('17) is the US Policy Fellow for Al-Shabaka, The Palestinian Policy Network, a transnational think tank based in New York. In addition to publishing numerous briefs on a range of issues from aerial photography to climate change, Zena's writing has appeared in *Foreign Affairs* and *Mondoweiss*. She has been featured several times on Voice of America and has spoken at various fora including Columbia University, the Foundation for Middle East Peace, and on Capitol Hill. Zena also writes fiction and poetry and has performed at Northeastern University and the People's Forum in New York. She has been working on a book project at the Asian American Writers Workshop where she is a Margins Fellow. **Pouya Alimaghani** ('09) is lecturer of Middle East history at MIT's history department. In the spring of 2019, Alimaghani received the Levitan Teaching Award in the School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences. The award is the result of student-initiated process in which students write letters in support of their nomination. His forthcoming book, *Contesting the Iranian*

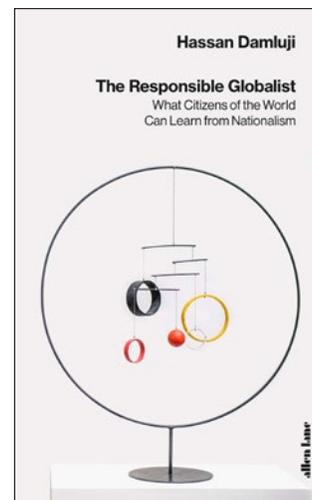
Revolution: The Green Uprisings, will be out later this year from Cambridge University Press. **Hannah-Louise Clark** ('03) presented her research "Algeria's Other Doctors: Jewish Lives and Livelihoods in the History of Medicine in Algeria" at the Association for Jewish Studies Annual Conference in Boston in December 2018. In January 2019 she was appointed lecturer in Global Economic and Social History at the University of Glasgow. She is piloting a series of "Global History Hackathons"—Scotland's first history hackathons—in which students make global stories from Glasgow's heritage collections and come up with fresh, creative ways to make this past useable and accessible to people in places touched by these stories; she is keen to talk to everyone about hacking. **Ben Cuddon** ('08) published the novel *Tehrangelles*, set in and about the Iranian community in Los Angeles. He is British and after graduating from Harvard had a one-year work visa to stay in the US. He moved to LA for a year to research the book and finally finished it last year. Any royalties from the sale of the book are being used to support a nonprofit he set up called Climate Ed (www.climateed.net) which teaches children in

the UK about climate change.

Hassan Damluji's ('08) first book, *The Responsible Globalist*, will be published by Penguin in September 2019.

Richard A. Johnson's ('05) latest publication, "Canoeing with Thoreau," appears in the Spring 2019 issue of *The New Quarterly*. He recently moved to Victoria, British Columbia, with his wife and their toddling son, where he's an associate with a public-engagement consulting firm that facilitates community involvement in policymaking and city planning.

Mona Ali Khalil ('88) continues her efforts to uphold the rule of law and human rights in international relations through MAK LAW and through her affiliation with the Harvard Law School Program on International Law and Armed Conflict. In the past year, she has assisted the outgoing High Commissioner for Human Rights to report serious violations of international humanitarian and human rights law in Myanmar, Syria, and Yemen as well in Israel and Palestine. She has also contributed to Yazidi and Darfur women's efforts to promote criminal accountability for those responsible for genocide and sexual violence in Iraq and Sudan respectively.



In 2018, she published several opinion pieces including one about robust UN peacekeeping operations in the *ICRC Humanitarian Law and Policy Blog* and about how to overcome the veto in the face of mass atrocities in *Opinio Juris*. **Scott Liddle** ('12) was Regional Director for the Middle East and Afghanistan for the Turquoise Mountain Trust, a British charity working in heritage preservation and economic development. After three years in Kabul, last year he launched a new project for the NGO, working with Syrian artisans and refugee communities in Jordan. He recently returned to London to take a new job with the British government working

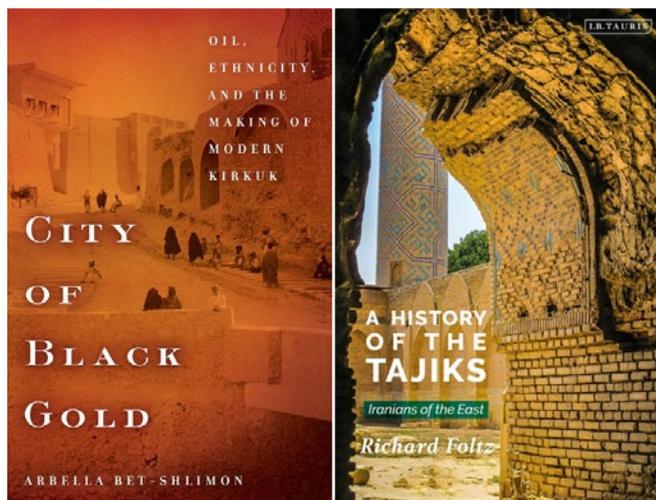
on Brexit negotiations. **Aaron Magid** ('15) published the article "Jordan Can't Keep Up Its Double Game" in *Foreign Policy* (August 2018). The Arab Center Washington DC think tank invited Aaron to speak on a panel about the summer 2018 Jordanian protests. Al-Jazeera TV invited him to speak on the Jordanian protests. He now works as an Iraq analyst for Tesla Government. **George Somi** ('12) graduated with a JD from Brooklyn Law School in May. **Caroline Williams** ('65) and her husband have moved from Williamsburg, Virginia, to Baltimore. It was an eviscerating affair, but many of the things they collected in Egypt over a sixty year period are now at the Aga Khan Museum in Toronto, the Oriental Museum in Durham, England, the American Research Center in Egypt office in Alexandria, Virginia, the Special Collections at the College of William and Mary, and the Aga Khan Documentation Center at MIT. **Alex Winder** ('09) co-authored with Beshara Doumani an introduction, titled "1948 and Its Shadows," to a special issue of the *Journal of Palestine Studies* (Autumn 2018) focused on the politics of commemoration seven decades after the Palestinian *Nakba*

of 1948. The articles in the special issue emerged from the fifth annual New Directions in Palestinian Studies workshop, which he co-organized with Beshara Doumani, and which was convened at Brown University in March 2018. He also co-organized the sixth annual NDPS workshop, "Palestinian Homes and Houses: Subjectivities and Materialities," held at Brown in March 2019. He co-edited with Roberto Mazza a special issue of *Jerusalem Quarterly* (Autumn 2018) on policing, imprisonment, and securitization in Palestine. **John Zavage** ('13), an Army colonel, recently completed a year in Saudi Arabia as the Senior Defense Official and Defense Attache for the US Diplomatic Mission to Yemen, which had evacuated from Yemen to Saudi Arabia in 2015. John's year on the Yemen Mission saw improvement in the US–Yemeni military and diplomatic relationship. Following that, John took an assignment as the Foreign Area Officer Chair at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California, where he serves on NPS's National Security Affairs faculty. John is currently teaching a graduate-level course in US government Security Sector Assistance.

PHD ALUMNI

Arbella Bet-Shlimon's ('12) new book, *City of Black Gold*, is now available from Stanford University Press. She will be promoted to Associate Professor with tenure at the University of Washington in September 2019. **Alireza Doostdar**'s ('12) book *The Iranian Metaphysicals* won the Albert Hourani Book Award from MESA. **Aykan Erdemir** ('04) was appointed in November 2018 as one of the eight members of the Anti-Defamation League's Task Force on Middle East Minorities and spoke at the task force's inaugural event, "Vulnerable Minorities, Illiberal Ideologies and Governments," held at the Brookings Institution. In April 2019, he published "Scapegoats of Wrath, Subjects of Benevolence: Turkey's Minorities Under Erdoğan," in *Current Trends in Islamist Ideology*, and discussed the transformation of demographics, technology, and governance in Turkey at the Hoover Institution's Stanford University panel "The Middle East in an Emerging World." **Carter V. Findley** ('69) is Humanities Distinguished Professor Emeritus at Ohio State University. He is delighted to inform Harvard's CMES community that his new book has at

last been published: *Enlightening Europe on Islam and the Ottomans: Mouradgea d'Ohsson and His Masterpiece* (Brill, 2019). Mouradgea d'Ohsson's *Tableau général de l'Empire ottoman* offered the Enlightenment Republic of Letters its most authoritative work on Islam and the Ottomans, also a practical reference work for kings and statesmen. Profusely illustrated and opening deep insights into illustrated book production in this period, this is also the century's richest collection of visual documentation on the Ottomans. Shaped by the author's personal struggles, the work yet commands recognition in its own totality as a monument to intercultural understanding. In form one of the great taxonomic works of Enlightenment thought, this is a work of advocacy in the cause of reform and amity among France, Sweden, and the Ottoman Empire. **Richard Foltz** ('96) is Professor in the Department of Religions and Cultures, Concordia University, Montréal. He has published a new book, *A History of the Tajiks: Iranians of the East*, the first book on this subject to be published in any Western language. Rostam Shukurov of Moscow State University calls the book "an outstanding achievement."



In conjunction with the book's publication, Foltz lectured at a number of European universities throughout May, including Naples, London, Cambridge, Oxford, Exeter, and Moscow. Foltz has also published an English translation of Jean Kellens' critical survey of Avestan studies in the West, entitled *The Fourth Incarnation of Zarathushtra*. Kellens held the Chair of Indo-Iranian at the Collège de France until his retirement. In June Foltz will lecture at Nazarbayev University in Astana, Kazakhstan, after which he will present a paper at the 6th Salzburg Conference on Nestorian Christianity in Almaty. The conference is dedicated to presenting and discussing exciting new discov-

eries of medieval Christian sites in southern Kazakhstan, which demonstrate a much greater presence of Christianity along the Silk Road than was previously thought. **Jesse Howell** ('17) returned to Cambridge last fall as a postdoctoral fellow at the Mahindra Humanities Center. He gave papers at the Mediterranean Seminar conference "Margins of the Mediterranean" and at the AHA annual meeting. In addition, he contributed a chapter to a collected volume on the Lazaret (quarantine facility) of Dubrovnik (Croatia), published by the Institute for the Restoration of Dubrovnik. As of April 2019, Jesse is back at CMES as Academic Programs Manager and Associate Director of the AM

Program. **Zahra N. Jamal** ('08) served as a delegate to the G-20 Interfaith Summit in Argentina, faculty at Global Encounters Kenya, and as a panelist for the US Department of Justice Community Relations Service's Securing Houses of Worship and curriculum reviewer for their Engaging American Muslim training for civic leaders. She published a chapter in *The Meaning of My Neighbor's Faith: Interreligious Reflections on Immigration* (Fortress Academic, 2018), and pieces in the *New York Times*, *The Hill*, and *LeadersIn*; delivered keynote addresses at MD Anderson Cancer Center, Houston's City Hall, Junior League of Dallas, Developments in Literacy Gala, and HEB Diversity Summit; and won the Hudspeth Award and DIL Excellence Award. She addressed hate crimes and promoted the contributions of religious minorities to America through programs and local, state, and federal policies via her work with the Boniuk Institute, Muslim Jewish Advisory Council, Houston Coalition Against Hate, and others. **Philip S. Khoury** ('80) remains Associate Provost and Ford International Professor of History at MIT. He joined the Board of Trustees of Underwriters Laboratories in

December 2018 and received the Central Square Theater's Inaugural Legacy Award in April 2019 in Cambridge. **David Lesch** ('91, AM '86) published two books in 2019: *The Arab-Israeli Conflict: A History* (Oxford) and *Syria: A Modern History* (Polity Press). He is currently the Ewing Halsell Distinguished Professor of History at Trinity University in San Antonio, Texas. **Han Hsien Liew** ('18) defended his dissertation, "Piety, Knowledge, and Rulership in Medieval Islam: Ibn al-Jawzi's Ameliorative Politics," and obtained his PhD in History and Middle Eastern Studies in November 2018. He will begin teaching as an Assistant Professor of Arts and Humanities at the Minerva Schools at Keck Graduate Institute in fall 2019. **Paul J. Magnarella** ('71) now serves as Adjunct Professor of Law at the University of Florida College of Law. **Avi Rubin** ('06), is Associate Professor and Chair, Department of Middle East Studies, at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. He published *Ottoman Rule of Law and the Modern Political Trial: The Yildiz Case* (Syracuse, 2018); he published "Was There a Rule of Law in the Ottoman Empire?" *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* (2018). ▣

VISITING RESEARCHER NEWS

Visiting Postdoctoral Fellow **Ohannes Kilicdagi** published “From Failed Recovery to Mutation: Armenian Women and Community in Post-Genocide Turkey” in *Diaspora 20:2* (Spring 2019). He presented a paper at the conference “Borders, Identities, and Refugees: The Kurdish Experience in the Middle East International Conference,” organized by the Kurdish Political Studies Program in Orlando; gave the talk “Subjects or Citizens? Christians and Jews from the Ottoman Empire to the Turkish Republic,” at Bates College; and a talk on a similar topic, “Burning Pot Society: Turkish Model of Minority Politics,” at the Islamic Civilizations and Societies Program of Boston College, all in March 2019. He presented the paper “Time and Space Problematics in Studying Genocides: The Armenian Case” at a conference in Thessaloniki in May. Visiting Fellow **Mansour Salsabili** presented a dissertation chapter titled “Religiosity and Violence: Secular Educational Innovations and Traditional Establishments’ Responses prior to the Iranian Constitutional Revolution” at the Middle East Beyond Borders

Workshop in November. He participated in a range of seminars, forums, and workshops outside CMES, including Middle East Science, Religion, and Culture and Religion and the Practice of Peace at HDS; the Program in Islamic Law at HLS; and the Middle East Initiative, International Security Program, and Project on Managing the Atom at Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs at HKS. Visiting Fellow **Carol Solomon** contributed the essay “Post-memory and the Disappeared” to the exhibition catalogue *De Liens et et d’Exils* (Brussels: Boghossian Foundation—Villa Empain, 2018) and published “Recuperating the Past: Memory, Postmemory, and the Visual Archive in the Works of Wiame Haddad,” in *Enquête d’archives/ In Search of Archives: Contemporary Approaches to the Past* (Archive Books, forthcoming). She gave the talk “The Disappeared, the Silenced, and the Invisible: Art and the Transformation of Society in Morocco,” at CMES in March 2019. Visiting Scholar **Degang Sun** published *The Middle Eastern Development Report, 2017–2018* (Beijing: World Affairs, 2019), ed. with Zhongmin Liu; *Marriage without License: The Origins of Quasi-alliance Diplomacy in the Middle East* (Gerlach, forth-

coming) with Dandan Zhang. He published the articles “Outside Powers’ Military Deployment in the Eastern Africa: Postures and Implications,” *Journal of Contemporary International Relations* 45.12 (December 2018), with Zhiqiang Zou; “Pains and Dreams on the Silk Road,” *The Cairo Review of Global Affairs* 31 (December 2018); “NATO vs. SCO: A Comparative Study of Outside Powers’ Military Presence in Central Asia and the Gulf,” *Asian Journal of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies* 12.4 (December 2018), with Hend Elmahly; and “Functional Alliance: The New Posture of the Middle East Alliance Politics since the ‘Arab Spring,’” *Journal of World Economics and Politics Forum* 34.2 (March 2019), with Shuai Zhang. He gave the talk “China’s Participation in Middle East Security Affairs: A New

Model?” for the CMES/WCFIA Middle East Seminar Series in January 2019; “China’s Seaport Diplomacy in the Middle East: Implications to the US,” at the panel discussion “China and the Middle East in the 21st Century”, at CMES in April; and “Hard Forces for Soft Targets: China’s ‘Prudent Power’ and the Legitimization of Its Military Base in Djibouti,” at the 34th Annual Middle Eastern History and Theory Conference at the University of Chicago, in May. Visiting Scholar **Özgün Yoldaşlar** gave the presentation “Reading the Ottoman Religio-Legal Dynamics of the Seventeenth Century through a Religious Debate: Minkarizade Yahya’s Rebuttal to Kürd Molla’s Commentary” at the 15th Great Lakes Ottomanist Workshop, at the University of Vermont in April. □



EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

JANUARY 2018

The Written Word under Pressure: Namık Kemal (1840–1888) and the Beginnings of Modern Turkish Prose. A talk with Emrah Pelvanoglu, Department of Turkish Language and Literature Teaching, Yeditepe University, Istanbul.

China's Participation in Middle East Security Affairs: A New Model? A talk with Degang Sun, Visiting Scholar, CMES, Professor and Deputy Director, Middle East Institute, Shanghai International Studies University. Discussant Bruce Rutherford, Associate Professor of Political Science, Colgate University, and Visiting Research Fellow, Middle East Initiative, BCSIA, HKS. Co-sponsored with the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs.

FEBRUARY 2019

Black Power and Palestine: Transnational Countries of Color. A talk with Michael R. Fischbach, Professor of History, Randolph-Macon College.

Covering the Syrian Refugee Crisis: Analyzing from a Turkish Perspective. A talk

with Afşin Yurdakul, Robert Long Fellow, Nieman Foundation for Journalism, Harvard; News Anchor and correspondent for Habertürk News Network, Turkey. Co-sponsored with the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs.

Memorial Service for Professor Roger Owen. A memorial service honoring the life of E. Roger Owen, A.J. Meyer Professor of Middle Eastern History *Emeritus*, at the Memorial Church, followed by a reception at CMES.

Ambiguity and Notation: Jewish Law and Legal Pluralism. A talk in the Harvard Law and Religion Lecture Series with Adam B. Seligman, Professor of Religion and Research Associate at the Institute on Culture, Religion, and World Affairs, Boston University. Co-sponsored with the Committee on the Study of Religion, the Julis-Rabinowitz Program on Jewish and Israeli Law at HLS, and the Program on Law and Society in the Muslim World at HLS.



Michael R. Fischbach



Afşin Yurdakul, Lenore Martin

MARCH 2019

Just Don't Know What to Do with Turkish–American Relations. A talk with Soli Özel, Tom and Andi Bernstein Human Rights Fellow, Schell Center, Yale Law School; Lecturer, Political Science Department and International

Relations Department, Kadir Has University, Istanbul. Co-sponsored with the Özyeğin Forum on Modern Turkey, Minda de Gunzburg Center for European Studies; Middle East Initiative, BCSIA, HKS; and the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs.

Rethinking Recruited Children: Body Politics of the Devshirme System in the Ottoman Empire. A talk with Gulay Yilmaz, Visiting Fellow, CMES; Associate Professor of Ottoman History, Department of History, Akdeniz University.

The Transformation of Saudi Arabia and the Geopolitics of the Middle East. A talk with Bernard Haykel, Professor of Near Eastern Studies and Director of the Institute for Transregional Studies and the Program in Near Eastern Studies, Princeton University. Co-sponsored with the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs.

The Disappeared, the Silenced, and the Invisible: Art and the Transformation of Society in Morocco. A talk with Carol Solomon, Visiting Scholar, CMES.

City and Countryside as Understood in Medieval Arabic-Persian Dictionaries. An Alwaleed Bin Talal Seminar in Islamic Studies presentation by Roy P. Mottahedeh, Gurney Research Professor of History, Harvard. Co-sponsored with the Alwaleed Islamic Studies Program.



Christina Maranci, Marie-Aude Baronian, David Zakarian, Sylvia Alajaji, William Granara



Gulay Yilmaz



Carol Solomon



Roy P. Mottahedeh

Order in Turmoil: Kaleidoscopic Change in the Middle East. A talk with Ambassador Chas Freeman, Senior Fellow, Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs, Brown University; former US Assistant Secretary of Defense; former

US Ambassador to Saudi Arabia. Co-sponsored with the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs.

Ahead of Time: Exploring the Relationship Between Ancient and Modern Armenian Studies. A panel discussion on

Armenian studies presented by the Hrant Dink Memorial CMES Fund and featuring Christina Maranci, Tufts University; David Zakarian, Oxford University; Marie-Aude Baronian, University of Michigan; Sylvia Alajaji, Franklin and Marshall College. Moderated by

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS



Betül Ekşi



Tuna Şare Ağtürk, Cemal Kafadar

Lisa Gulesserian, Lecturer on Armenian Language and Culture, NELC, Harvard; and Julia Hintlian, PhD candidate, Committee on the Study of Religion, Harvard. Co-sponsored with the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research.

APRIL 2019

The Sultanic Harem in Movement: State Logic and Feminine Mobility in Morocco (1500–1800). Jocelyne Dakhliya, Director of Studies, Center for Historical Research, Ecole des hautes études en sciences sociales, delivers the first talk in the 2019 H.A.R. Gibb Arabic and Islamic Studies Lecture Series.

The Two-State Solution: The Only Viable Option.

A talk with Chuck Freilich,

Senior Fellow, International Security Program, BCSIA, HKS; Former Deputy National Security Advisor, Israel.

Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Nadia Murad in Conversation with Jennifer Leaning.

The Samuel L. and Elizabeth Jodidi Lecture featuring 2018 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Nadia Murad. Co-sponsored with the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs.

Undesired Bodies: Figures of Continuity and Discontinuity in the Mediterranean of Lady Montagu.

Jocelyne Dakhliya, Director of Studies, Center for Historical Research, Ecole des hautes études en sciences sociales, delivers the second talk in the 2019

H.A.R. Gibb Arabic and Islamic Studies Lecture Series.

Flowers, Tough Guys, and TOMAs: Police Masculinities and Political Transition in Turkey.

A talk with Betül Ekşi, Robert G. James Fellow, Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study; Postdoctoral Research Associate, Global Resilience Institute, Northeastern University.

Palestine in the Era of Trump: A New Strategy for Political Change.

A talk with Ambassador Husam S. Zomlot, Head of the Palestinian Mission to the United Kingdom; Strategic Affairs Advisor to the President of the Palestinian National Authority and State of Palestine. Co-sponsored

with the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, and the Middle East Initiative, BCSIA, HKS.

Urban Archaeology and Classical Heritage in Turkey: Uncovering the Lost Roman Capital City of Nicomedia.

A talk with Tuna Şare Ağtürk, Hilles Bush Fellow, Radcliffe Institute of Advanced Study, Harvard; Associate Professor, Classical Archaeology and Art History, Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University, Turkey.

China and the Middle East in the 21st Century.

A panel discussion on China and the Middle East, with Ezra F. Vogel, Harvard; Robert S. Ross, Boston College; Bruce Rutherford, Colgate University; Degang



Lenore Martin, Degang Sun, Robert Ross, Ezra F. Vogel, Bruce Rutherford



Rosie Bsheer, Hiba Bou Akar, William Granara



Anver Emon



Sara Roy, Alexandra Senfft

Sun, Shanghai International Studies University.

For the War Yet to Come: Planning Beirut's Frontiers.

A book talk with author Hiba Bou Akar, Assistant Professor, Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation, Columbia University.

Islamic Legalities across the Longue Durée: A Preliminary Historical Epistemology of Islamic Law.

A talk in the Harvard Law and Religion Lecture Series with Anver Emon, Professor of Law and History, Canada Research Chair in Religion, Pluralism, and the Rule of Law, and Director,

Institute of Islamic Studies, University of Toronto Faculty of Law. Co-sponsored with the Committee on the Study of Religion at Harvard University, the Julis-Rabinowitz Program on Jewish and Israeli Law at HLS, and the Program on Law and Society in the Muslim World at HLS.

Germany and Israel: Changing Dynamics of a Complex Relationship.

A talk with Alexandra Senfft, an award-winning German journalist and author specializing in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the aftermath of the Holocaust in Germany.

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EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

PRACTICES OF MOBILITY, REGIMES OF VISIBILITY

Jocelyne Dakhliya on *Women in the Early Modern Maghrib*

Jocelyne Dakhliya, Director of Studies, Center for Historical Research, Ecole des hautes études en sciences sociales, was the distinguished speaker this year for the H.A.R. Gibb Arabic and Islamic Studies Lecture Series, established in 1964 in honor of Sir Hamilton A.R. Gibb, who was a director of CMES as well as University Professor and James Richard Jewett Professor of Arabic at Harvard. Youssef Ben Ismail, PhD candidate in Muslim Societies and Cultures in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, covered the lectures for CMES.

In the summer of 1535, Charles V sailed to Tunis to drive Ottoman troops out of the Hafsid Kingdom. Dutch painter Jan Cornelisz Vermeyen accompanied the emperor on his expedition. Based on his observations, Vermeyen produced a series of tapestries portraying the fighting with a quasi-ethnographic attention to detail. One of the most striking elements of Vermeyen's depiction of *The Conquest of Tunis* is the ubiquitous presence of women on the battlefield. They are portrayed performing many crucial

tasks, such as serving water to the soldiers and healing the wounded among them. Vermeyen's vivid depiction of North African women's active role in battle stands in stark contrast with the commonplace notion that they were confined to an isolated and sedentary lifestyle in the early modern Maghrib. What are we to make of Vermeyen's women on the battlefield? How does this square with the traditional view of women's quarantined harem life? In her two Gibb lectures at Harvard, Jocelyne Dakhliya provided important answers to these questions, as she set out to trace the social practices and political stakes of female mobility and visibility in early modern North Africa.

A widely acclaimed historian of the Mediterranean, Dakhliya has dedicated much of her scholarly career to the cultural history of political life on its southern shore. Particularly insightful in this regard is her brilliant book *Lingua Franca*, which examines the history of the eponymous "pidgin" that served as a shared language of politics and diplomacy on the two shores of the early modern Mediterranean. In her first

lecture, entitled "The Sultan's Harem in Movement: State Logic and Feminine Mobility in Morocco (1500–1800)," Dakhliya focused on the Moroccan harem's continuous movement outside the walls of the Sultan's palace. One could be tempted to ascribe this movement to moments of political crisis: in the early seventeenth century, forced to contend with an increasingly threatening political climate, Mawlay Zidân chartered a French ship to send two hundred of his harem's women away to safety (another ship was loaded with thousands of manuscripts from his personal library). Yet what makes Dakhliya's approach most compelling is that she does not see the movement of the sultan's harem as a contingent outcome of political events. Instead, she proposes that it be considered a structural characteristic of the ever-expanding Moroccan Sultanate, for Dakhliya locates the *extra muros* life of the harem's women at the heart of the state's techniques of government.

In her first lecture, Dakhliya began by showing how the accumulation of women in the

Sultan's harem mirrored the expansion and centralization of the Moroccan state. In the late seventeenth century, the heyday of the Alawite Dynasty, European observers ascribed up to eight thousand women to Mawlay Ismail's harem. As the state established its rule over increasingly vast territorial domains, urban elites and tribal leaders gifted their women to the Sultan as a symbol of political alliance or a sign of renewed allegiance. During this period, virtually any travel of the Sultan outside of his palace resulted in more women joining the harem. The travel from their village to the palace was hardly the last trip the new recruits would take. The Alawite state conceived of itself as a *gazi* warrior state. When the Sultan was not at war, he led his *mahalla* to the countryside to ascertain his rule. Like the rest of the state apparatus, the Moroccan harem was thus a traveling one. Abroad, women often accompanied the Sultan as part of his official retinue. In the late eighteenth century, Mawlay Yazid travelled to Tripolitania with seven women. There, he abducted and married the daughter of a

powerful tribal *shaykh* before returning to his kingdom. But it is within Morocco that these women's contribution to the inherent workings of the state was most visible.

Dakhliya's lecture was most compelling when she described how the mobility of these women played into the Sultan's strategy of what we may call—somewhat anachronistically—governance: on a trip to Marrakesh, the ruler made sure to take with him women who originally hailed from the region. This way, they could meet with their families, express public support for the Sultan, and defend his interests. As a result, the women of the harem came to constitute a system of local representation that could be wielded by the increasingly centralized Moroccan state in order to further enshrine its legitimacy on the ground. There were other examples of what Dakhliya called the moving harem's "political capillarity." Many of the Sultan's newly acquired women were sent to the houses of urban notables for education and training. This was for instance the case during the reign of Mawlay Ismail, who instituted a group of black female servants within his palace, many of whom were

first placed with prominent families in the city of Fez. The notables were responsible for women's education and security but also for their honor. This system created a direct link between the state and urban elites which, in turn, formed complex relations of solidarity and surveillance vis-à-vis potentially rebellious families. As it were, this practice turned on its head the pre-existing tradition of gifting women to the Sultan's harem in order to secure influence in the palace.

Of concern to Dakhliya, the effort to paint the picture of

a harem in flux pushes back against the historiographical emphasis on its static nature, secluded from social dynamics and political life. Through her frequent recourse to local chronicles and European travelogues, she presented these women as both power brokers and social mediators. The political role of the harem's women urges us to call into question the *idée reçue* of a strict separation between masculine and feminine worlds. Admittedly, some of the women—often those of the highest social rank—were not

allowed outside of the palace. But, Dakhliya shows, this was not true of all the harem's women: European travelers such as Nicolas de Nicolay or Count Potocki noted the free circulation of female slaves and servants outside the palace walls in the eighteenth century. British diplomat John Braithwaite wrote that he was surprised when one of these women, unveiled and covered in jewelry, approached him to offer her mediation. In the 1760s, Princess Fatma travelled alone from Marrakesh to Fez in order to visit various pilgrimage



Photo: Martha Stewart

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sites. She made the trip on horseback accompanied by a large escort of a thousand men. Following these women's ventures outside of the palace, one is forced to dismiss as illusory "the utopia of honor and virtue" that is the closed harem. It appears instead as a porous space composed of highly visible women.

It is to this question of visibility that Dakhliya turned for her second Gibb lecture, entitled "Undesired Bodies: Figures of Continuity and Discontinuity in the Mediterranean of Lady Montagu." As the accounts of Nicolay, Potocki, and Braithwaite suggest, North African women did not go unnoticed in the accounts of European travelers. As is well studied in the secondary literature, "oriental" women in European sight have frequently been portrayed in an eroticized and hypersexualized manner. This orientalist portrayal was especially prevalent in the nineteenth century, a time when colonial projects flourished on the southern and eastern shores of Mediterranean. That orientalist discourse and colonial endeavors went hand in hand is, by now, a well established fact. But what can be said of the

European perception of oriental women before this explosion of orientalist discourse? For her second lecture, Dakhliya proposed to examine other modalities of otherization ("the other leg of racism"), namely the cast of the other's body, not as desirable and erotic, but as undesirable and de-sexualized.

In 1718, Lady Montagu, the famed wife of the British ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, made a stop in Tunis during her Mediterranean travels. Lady Montagu's "Turkish letters" are well known for their eroticized depiction of Ottoman harems. Her enthusiastic descriptions of female naked bodies in the hammams of Sofia earned her the nickname "Sappho" among some of her British readers. She had come to represent something of an early feminist who praised women-only spaces of the East as spaces of freedom and harmony. But in her writings on the women of Tunis, she did not display any of the feminine solidarity that she had expressed towards the women of the Ottoman east. Under the Lady Montagu's pen, Tunisian women appear as frightful and masculine, deformed and ugly, at times even compared to "baboons" and "monkeys." How are we to

understand the immense gap between the penetrating charm of Turkish women and the repulsive ugliness of Tunisian women in her account?

Dakhliya offered several possible explanations to this puzzle. It could be the result of a form of aristocratic contempt vis-à-vis the women of Tunis. After all, the British aristocrat could identify with high-class Turkish ladies in a way that was certainly impossible with lower-class Tunisian women. But something else seems to underlie Lady Montagu's views as suggested by the use of the terms "baboon" and "monkey." At the heart of her judgment lies a rejection of a specifically African alterity. Other common European tropes may also be at play: the fundamental distinction between "Turkish" and "Moorish" territories and populations, lament for the degradation of ancient ruins (in this case Carthage) at the hands of "uncivilized societies." As a cultural historian, Dakhliya is interested in the roots of these motifs of disgust. Often times, classist and racial dynamics appear to be at play together. In his *Description of Africa*, Leo Africanus described the *sahaqat* of Fez, a lesbian sisterhood cast who led honorable women astray from marital duty by

initiating them to same-sex love. By the eighteenth century, such accounts had given rise in Europe to a cultural bundle associated with North African women: oversized sexes, masculine behavior (mirroring the femininity of men), repulsive tattoos. Their bodies came under the same level of scrutiny as did Ottoman ones, but with the additional dimension of unattractiveness.

Returning to Lady Montagu, her views regarding the repulsiveness of tattooed women is particularly striking. Her position on the matter was shared by many other foreign observers in the eighteenth century Maghrib, such as Elizabeth Broughton in Algiers and Miss Tully in Tripolitania. The tattoos harbored by bedouin women had been praised as an important feature of their beauty in the writings of Maghribi men of letters such as Ibn Khatib and Ibn Khaldun. The latter even quoted a *hijazi* poem on the beauty of bedouin women with their tattooed arms. But as Dakhliya observed, Lady Montagu was blind to this poetic beauty. In fact, what is striking in her account, and in those of her contemporaries, is the totally de-eroticized character of women's bodies. For any student of European discourse



Photo: Martha Stewart

William Granara, Jocelyne Dakhliya, Baber Johansen, Cemal Kafadar, William Graham

on women of the Orient, this is a remarkable absence. Dakhliya's careful reading of these sources forces us to readjust our understanding of the nexus between otherization and sexualization and pay further attention to the plurality of ways in which the alterity of oriental women was expressed in early modern Europe.

At least since Fernand Braudel, historians of the early modern Mediterranean have defined the region as a space of social contact and cultural exchange. Jocelyne Dakhliya goes even further: the Mediterranean is a continuous space, composed of societies that are coextensive rather than merely connected. But

a continuous world is not necessarily a homogeneous world: the histories of circulation and encounters should not foreclose those of violence and othering. In this context, the task of the historian is to carefully excavate continuities without flattening out the various points of contention and resistance that

may arise in the process. Both aspects are equally precious to our understanding of the early modern Mediterranean. Seen under this light, Dakhliya's Gibb lectures appear as an insightful complement to *Lingua Franca*. Early modernists and historians of the Mediterranean historians alike should look forward to her next book with enthusiasm. ▣

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

Film Screening and Discussion with Director Anahita Ghazvinizadeh. A Q&A with filmmaker Anahita Ghazvinizadeh, Assistant Professor of Cinematic Arts, University of Iowa, and first prize winner at 2013 Cannes Film Festival, with a screening of two short films, “When the Kid Was a Kid” and “Needle.”

Patrimonial Empire-Building and the Case of Authoritarian Turkey. A discussion with Soli Özel, Professor of International Relations, Kadir Has University, Istanbul, and columnist for *Habertürk* daily newspaper; and Ayşen Candaş, Rice Faculty Fellow and Visiting Associate Professor, Yale MacMillan Center, Council on Middle Eastern Studies, Yale University, and Associate Professor of Political Science, Boğaziçi University, Istanbul.

MAY 2019

Mecca: The Lived City. A colloquium examining the ways in which the city of Mecca is imagined, remembered, represented, and visualized from the perspectives of history, literature, landscape architecture, and urban planning. Organized by William Granara, CMES Director and Gordon Gray Professor of the Practice of Arabic; and

Gareth Doherty, Director of the Master of Landscape Architecture Program and Associate Professor of Landscape Architecture, GSD. Keynote address by Rosie Bsheer, Assistant Professor of History, Harvard. With Tyler Kynn, Yale University; Ali Almajnooni, SUNY Binghamton; Omer Shah, Columbia University; Drew Wensley, MoriYama and Teshima Planners, Toronto; and Hussam Dakkak, Studio Bound, London.

Art, Minorities, and Social Change Art Exhibition Reception and Film Screening. An event to open the Art, Minorities, and Social Change exhibition of work by young Iranian artists on view in CGIS South Concourse May 3–August 27.

Persecution and Persistence: 75th Anniversary of the Deportation of the Crimean Tatars in Historical Context. A discussion in the Crimean Tatar Studies Lecture Series with Brian Glyn Williams, University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth; Huseyin Oylupinar, Turkish-Ukrainian-Crimean Tatar Studies Fellow, CMES; and Hanna Abakunova, Mihaychuk Research Fellow, Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute. Followed by a screening of the docudrama *Haytarma* (2013).



Anahita Ghazvinizadeh



Ayşen Candaş Soli Özel



NADIA MURAD: THE MAKING OF AN ACTIVIST

In Harvard visit, Nobelist and ISIS survivor focuses on the need to persevere

Nadia Murad came to Harvard as a survivor of genocide under ISIS, an advocate for victims of sexual violence, and the first Iraqi citizen to win the Nobel Peace Prize. Her talk at the Memorial Church, as part of the Weatherhead Center's Samuel L. and Elizabeth Jodidi Lecture Series, focused on her personal journey and how her ordeal turned her into an activist.

As moderator Jennifer Leaning, Professor of the Practice of Health and Human Rights at Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, explained at the outset, the talk didn't deal with the details of Murad's imprisonment. (Her book, *The Last Girl: My Story of Captivity, and My Fight against the Islamic State*, describes the rape and torture she endured as a prisoner.) Rather, she examined the events leading up to her capture in the ISIS attacks of 2014, and how they shaped her actions afterward.

Murad grew up in Iraq's Sinjar District. She and her family were Yazidis, an ethnic and religious minority targeted by ISIS. Speaking through interpreter Shahnaz Oso, she said that her life centered on her family's farm, where they raised wheat and sheep, digging 75-foot wells to find water in the desert.

"When this is your way of life, you go to any ends to make it work," she said. "I thought the best thing was to relax with my family at the end of a work day; I didn't know there was anything better or worse in the world. People wouldn't think that a farm in the desert would be a great life. But it was our life, it was peaceful to us, and



Nadia Murad, Shahnaz Oso, Jennifer Leaning

Photo: Martha Stewart

we would love to have experienced it just a little bit longer."

The night before her capture began peacefully. She recalled sleeping with her sisters in the yard, because her brothers were keeping them awake talking about ISIS' approach on their cellphones. But as the night went on, the family began thinking about an escape route. "The mountain was the only place to go, but we lived so far from the mountain that we didn't think we'd be able to make it. We had heard of people getting caught, and our village was very quick to be surrounded. We had run out of options by that point."

She decided to fast-forward through her capture and abuse to focus instead on

her escape. That, Murad said, was actually relatively easy: The hard part was staying alive afterward.

"Many people had escaped through doors and windows, but once you found a family to take you in, they would return you to ISIS," she said. Today, she added, more than 350,000 Yazidis remain in refugee camps.

Murad survived by finding a family she could trust, through what she said was a mix of intuition and luck.

"Everybody knew what had happened to the Yazidis. I knocked on a door and all I could say was, 'I have escaped, can you help me?' I saw old homes and thought that if these people are similar to my family in

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their morals and values, they will recognize someone like them and maybe take me in.”

Though Murad spoke quietly, there were hints of how much she had endured. “Women saw the roughest part of what ISIS was doing. The men were often killed, but they made sure that women saw the most heartache and suffering. I have talked to many Yazidi women who would say they wish they had been killed like . . . the men.”

Thus, Murad’s activism, including the 2016 formation of the nonprofit support group Nadia’s Initiative, was born of a desire to see justice.

“Actions should have consequences. As a child I thought the worst thing was to have your hard work go to waste. I didn’t know there was something as horrible as a mother’s work being wasted, raising 11 children and having them be killed.” The word genocide, she said, didn’t occur to her at the time. “We referred to it by a Kurdish word, which means ‘the end.’”

“I think we can understand how difficult the road ahead of you is going to be,” Leaning said. “But we can also see how crucial it is.”

Murad’s talk was interpreted by Shahnaz Osso of Lincoln, Nebraska. Originally from

Northern Iraq, Osso speaks both Kurdish and English fluently. She and her family came to Nebraska in 1998.

The Jodidi Lecture is among the most prominent lecture series of the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs and is among one of the most distinguished at the University. The event was co-sponsored by the Weatherhead Center and the Center for Middle Eastern Studies.

This story, by Harvard Correspondent Brett Milano, originally appeared in the Harvard Gazette, April 4, 2019.



William Granara, Michèle Lamont, Patricia Bellinger, Lawrence Bacow, Nadia Murad

Photo: Martha Stewart

END PAPER

UNDERGRADUATE PHOTOGRAPHY FROM THE REGION

CMES awarded a first prize and two honorable mentions in the 2018–19 Harvard College International Photo Contest for photos taken in the Middle East region. First place and an honorable mention went to Wyatt Hurt ('21), recipient of

CMES's A.J. Meyer fellowship, who studied Arabic at the Qasid Arabic Institute in Amman, Jordan, in summer 2018. "On weekends, I took a break from a seemingly endless sea of flashcards by exploring Amman and rural areas of Jordan with

my camera. The first of these photos features Gaith Jann, a Madaba bookseller. The police told him he didn't have the license required to sell books on the sidewalk, so he instead piles books on top of his car, turning it into a bookstore that is both

mobile and legal." The second photo was taken in Al-Hussein Sports City.

Molecular and Cellular Biology concentrator Julia Canick ('17-'19) took this photo on a Harvard Hillel-organized Birthright trip in January 2018 on a hike in the Negev Desert in Israel.



Wyatt Hurt, Jordan



Wyatt Hurt, Jordan



Julia Canick, Israel

الفنون
والتراث



Winter term in Tunisia



Himmat Taskomur, Said Hannouchi



Carol Ann Young

AT A GLANCE

REMEMBERING ROGER OWEN
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