

The Middle East Institute

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

Annual Report 2016-17

mei.columbia.edu

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Letter from the Director

Founded in 1954, the Middle East Institute (MEI) supports Columbia University's world-class programs on the Middle East and North Africa. As a federally funded National Resource Center, the MEI also serves to inform the media, government, and the general public about the region. Working across disciplines and departments, the Institute acts to strengthen the curriculum of university course offerings and to provide forums for faculty and students to work together in workshops, lectures, conferences, and social events. The MEI additionally advises students on courses, language programs, and career opportunities and administers federal Foreign Language Area Studies (FLAS) fellowships to support language study and research by undergraduate and graduate students.

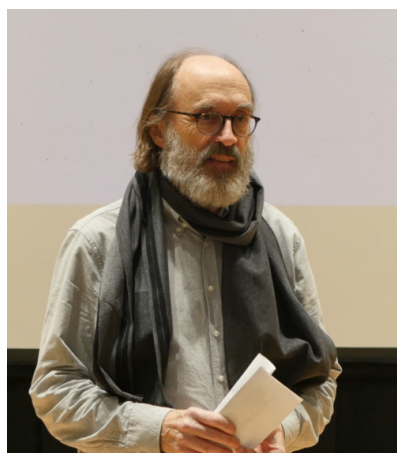
In 2016-17, the MEI underwent a formal review by the university's Academic Review Committee. This rigorous process started in the fall of 2016 with the preparation of the MEI's Self-Study, which served as the basis for the visit, in February 2017, of an External Review Committee, composed of leading scholars in Middle East Studies. The process concluded with a comprehensive Final ARC Report prepared by three university faculty members appointed by the ARC committee, which was submitted in April 2017.

This Annual Report addresses the findings of the ARC review concerning the re-launched, MEI-administered Masters Program in Islamic Studies, and the MEI-affiliated Center for Palestine Studies (founded in 2010). It also offers an overview of MEI-supported programming in academic year 2016-17, and provides a summary of the Institute's revitalized programs of federally-mandated outreach efforts.

For further information about the Middle East Institute at Columbia University, I encourage you to visit our new website: <http://www.mei.columbia.edu/>

Brinkley Messick

Professor of Anthropology
Director, Middle East Institute



Brinkley Messick is Professor of Anthropology and of Middle Eastern, South Asian and African Studies at Columbia University. He was the Chair of the Department of Anthropology from 2004-2011; was a founding co-Director of the Center for Palestine Studies (2010-15); and currently is the Director of the Middle East Institute. In 2009, he received the Outstanding Senior Scholar Award from the Middle East Section of the American Anthropological Association. He is the author of *The Calligraphic State*, which won the Albert Hourani Award from the Middle East Studies Association. His *Shari'a Scripts: A Historical Anthropology* is forthcoming from Columbia University Press.

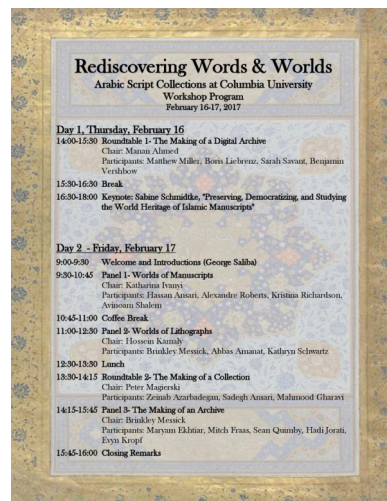
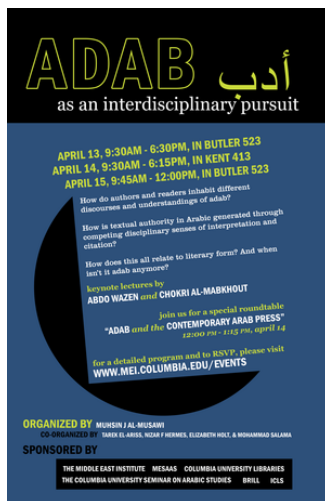
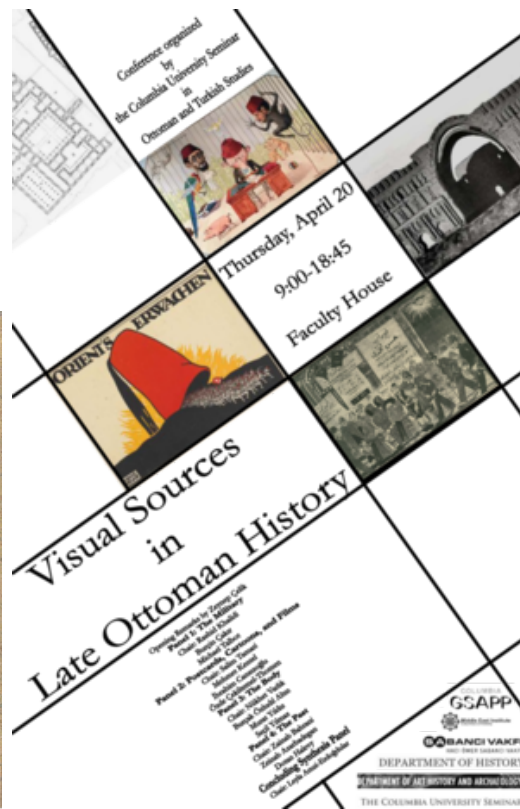


MEI Mission Statement

The central mission of the Middle East Institute (MEI), in accord with its long-established institutional duties and responsibilities, is to foster an interdisciplinary, inter-departmental approach to enhancing Columbia's world-class Middle East program. It strengthens and broadens the curriculum by offering courses to supplement and complement departmental offerings, and provides a vibrant forum for faculty and students to work together across the different disciplines through workshops, lectures, conferences, and social events. The institute offers fellowships to students for study and research in the region and at home, and it advises students on courses, language programs, and career opportunities. Working to inform and educate the media, government, and the general public about the Middle East, the Institute also collaborates with other regional institutes and units of the university to advance knowledge about issues and processes that transcend one region. The Middle East Institute has earmarked support for visiting scholars and it currently is seeking endowment support for its mission objectives.



To complement its newly assumed responsibilities in administering the MA Program in Islamic Studies (see below), the Institute is working to mobilize the far-flung and hitherto unrealized capacity of the university in this venerable field. In pursuit of this new role in support of Islamic Studies, the Institute has moved beyond a restricted commitment to the Middle East region, and also beyond familiar departments and disciplines.



Programming

The in-house programming of the MEI includes its Brown Bag Lunch Series, Halaqa 'Arabiyya (Arabic Circle) and Shari'a Workshop. Additionally, the Institute supports the initiatives of faculty, students and visiting scholars and it partners with counterparts across Columbia and in New York City.

BROWN BAG LUNCH SERIES

The Middle East Institute has re-instituted its weekly lunchtime series to handle the volume of scholarly visitors to Columbia and New York City who want to speak about their new publications or current research.

<p>Brown Bag Lunch Series sponsored by The Middle East Institute</p> <p>Qing Law through Ottoman Eyes: Sa'id al-'Asali's Law of China (Qanun al-Sin)</p> <p>A discussion of the life and work of Sa'id al-'Asali, a Muslim scholar who moved between the Ottoman Empire and China in the first decades of the twentieth century, and was the author of a little known work entitled The Law of China (1905). The talk will present an analysis of this work as unique moment of intellectual exchange between late-Ottoman Islamic reformist circles, and the revitalized Confucianism of the late Qing.</p> <p>David Brophy</p> <p>Senior Lecturer in the Department of History and currently an Associate Research Scholar in Columbia's Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures. In 2016 he published <i>Uighur Nation: Reform and Revolution on the Borderlands of China</i> (Harvard University Press).</p> <p>For more information, please visit www.mei.columbia.edu/events</p> <p>Middle East Institute Columbia University</p>	<p>Brown Bag Lunch Series sponsored by The Middle East Institute</p> <p>Fear of the "Dark": Understanding Religious Diversity in Greece</p> <p>On debates about religious education in Greece involving the placement of Christianity and Islam, and the first undergraduate program on Islamic Studies at the School of Theology at Aristotle University in Thessaloniki.</p> <p>Angeliki Ziaka</p> <p>Mahdi Visiting Research Fellow (Spring 2017)</p> <p>Dr. Ziaka (Ph.D., University of Strasbourg, 2002) is Associate Professor of Religion, Islamic Studies and Interfaith Dialogue, the academic coordinator of the Undergraduate Program on Islamic Studies at the School of Theology of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, and visiting professor at the Schools of Political Science and Education.</p> <p>For more information, please visit www.mei.columbia.edu/events</p> <p>Middle East Institute Columbia University</p>
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HALAQA 'ARABIYYA



Ghada Jerfel

The Middle East Institute's weekly Arabic Circle provides extra language practice for Arabic language students in a conversational setting. Its core group of 5-11 attendees is composed of Columbia University and Barnard College students as well as some non-university affiliated individuals. **Ghada Jerfel** – a rising junior at Barnard – moderates the sessions and provides feedback. The Arabic Circle is primarily held in Modern Standard Arabic, with some use of the Shami, Egyptian and Tunisian dialects. During the conversations, Ghada emphasizes vocabulary acquisition and reinforces grammar and conjugation skill sets. This year's activities ranged from discussions on political and social issues to listening to music to watching an Arabic film.

SHARI'A WORKSHOP

The MEI offers regular programming on topics related to Islamic law through its own "Shari'a Workshop," launched in 2015. With faculty members in three different departments (MESAAS, Religion, Anthropology) regularly offering courses on "Islamic Law," the university is uniquely well positioned in this field. The workshop brings together faculty and graduate students from Columbia and other universities in New York, and from Princeton and the University of Pennsylvania, for intensive discussions of pre-circulated papers by scholars invited from the US and abroad. The MEI has also begun to co-sponsor the longstanding spring conference organized at NYU on "Islamic Law in Society," in which Columbia faculty and graduate students have been regular participants.

Middle East Institute Columbia University

Shari'a Workshop

AHMED EL SHAMSY

Two Hitherto Unknown Texts on the Formation of Islamic Legal Theory

December 15, 2015
4:10pm - 6:00pm
Room 208 Knox Hall
606 West 122 Street
 btwn Broadway & Claremont Ave

Ahmed El Shamsy, Assistant Professor of Islamic Thought at the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations of the University of Chicago will discuss his pre-circulated paper. To receive a copy of the paper and to be added to our mailing list please contact amb49@columbia.edu. The workshop will meet regularly and feature leading scholars of Islamic Law from across periods and regions for detailed discussions of their current research.

Among the faculty and student initiatives, in the Spring of 2017, the MEI sponsored two multisession conferences, "Adab as an Interdisciplinary Pursuit," organized by Professor Muhsin al-Musawi and "Rediscovering Words & Worlds: Arabic Script Collections at Columbia University," organized by a group of graduate students. The Spring semester brought the launch of the Jerusalem Project, a research and learning tool on the past and future of Jerusalem by the Center for Palestine.

ADAB AS AN INTERDISCIPLINARY PURSUIT

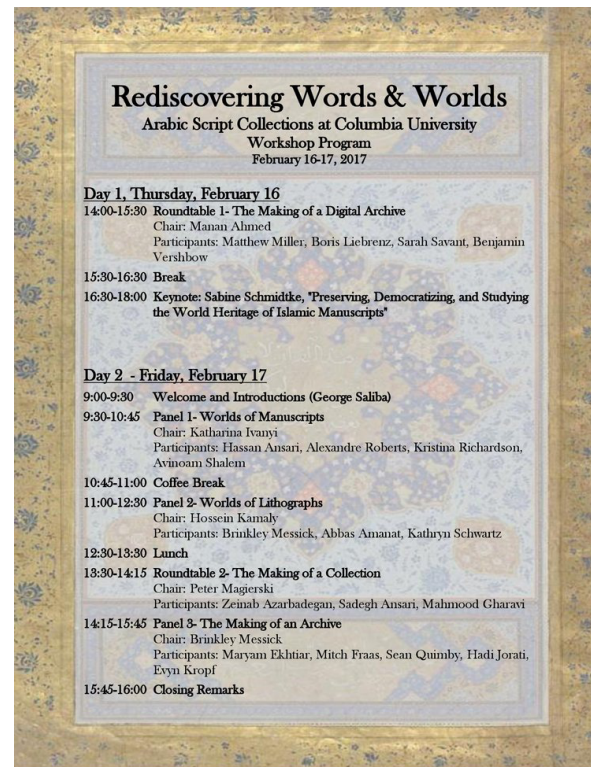
In Arabic, adab encompasses multiple fields of knowledge, resisting compartmentalization and circumscription. Adab points to both our modern sense of literature, as well as a much longer prose heritage associated with modes of proper comportment, courtly edification, and eloquence.

How do authors and readers inhabit different discourses and understandings of adab? How is textual authority in Arabic generated through competing disciplinary senses of interpretation and citation? How does this all relate to literary form? And when isn't it adab anymore?

The April 14th, 2017 session of the conference included a special roundtable on "Adab and the Contemporary Arab Press," with distinguished Arab journalists working in Arabic and English in Europe and the Middle East. The roundtable focused on how the category of adab is contested, claimed, attenuated, and/or celebrated in our time by the Arab cultural press.

Conceived of and spearheaded by Professor Muhsin J. al-Musawi (MESAAS), Adab as an Interdisciplinary Pursuit was co-organized by Tarek El-Ariss, Nizar F. Hermes, Elizabeth Holt and Mohammad Salama.

Adab was sponsored by The Middle East Institute and co-sponsored by Brill Academic Publishers, Columbia University Libraries, The Columbia University Seminar on Arabic Studies, Institute for Comparative Literature and Society, and The Department of Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies.



ADAB أدب
as an interdisciplinary pursuit

APRIL 13, 9:30AM - 6:30PM, IN BUTLER 523
APRIL 14, 9:30AM - 6:15PM, IN KENT 413
APRIL 15, 9:45AM - 12:00PM, IN BUTLER 523

How do authors and readers inhabit different discourses and understandings of adab?
How is textual authority in Arabic generated through competing disciplinary senses of interpretation and citation?
How does this all relate to literary form? And when isn't it adab anymore?

keynote lectures by
ABDO WAZEN and CHOKRI AL-MABKHOUT

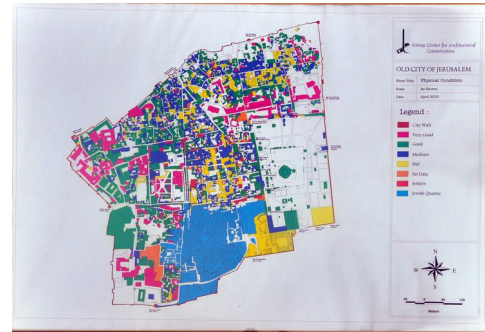
join us for a special roundtable
"ADAB and the CONTEMPORARY ARAB PRESS"
12:00 PM - 1:15 PM, April 14

for a detailed program and to RSVP, please visit
WWW.MEI.COLUMBIA.EDU/EVENTS

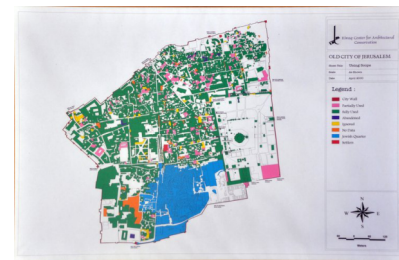
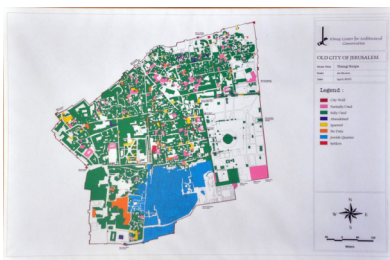
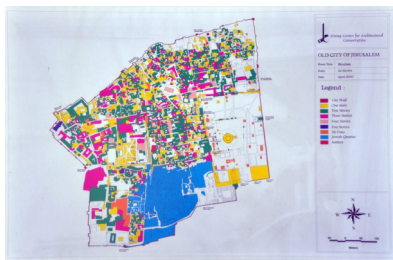
ORGANIZED BY MUHSIN J AL-MUSAWI
CO-ORGANIZED BY TAREK EL-ARISS, NIZAR F HERMES, ELIZABETH HOLT, & MOHAMMAD SALAMA

SPONSORED BY
THE MIDDLE EAST INSTITUTE MESAAS COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES
THE COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY SEMINAR ON ARABIC STUDIES BRILL ICLS

The (CPS) initiated the Jerusalem Project as a research and learning tool on the past and future of Jerusalem. The project includes course offerings, workshops, guest lectures, and an extensive digital archive housed on the CPS website. Several programs were introduced in the Spring of 2017.



THE JERUSALEM PROJECT



JERUSALEM ARCHIVES AT COLUMBIA

The CPS website is now home to an extensive digital archive dedicated to issues pertaining to Jerusalem. The archive includes historical newspapers such as al-Quds (1908-1914)—the first private newspaper, published between 1904-1914. al-Quds newspaper is available in its entirety on the CPS site. In addition, the full archives of the Jerusalem Quarterly (IPS—the only journal dedicated to the history and current status of the city), and a collection of historic maps (most notably Riwaq's Jerusalem cartographic survey) have been added to the site. More collections will be added including, Jerusalem Calling (archival material from Radio Jerusalem during the British Mandate). Further expansion of the cartographic collection, with links to worldwide collections, as well as a postcard collection is underway.

Tamer Manhood, CPS administrator, and researcher Myra Rahim (Bard College) undertook the digitization and organization of this archive. Myra is currently preparing a number of thematic monographs derived from JQ material on the subjects of Jerusalem biographies, pilgrimage, residency, sex and gender issues, and surveillance.



JERUSALEM: THE WORLDLY AND IMAGINED CITY



Salim Tamari

Arcapita Visiting Professor **Salim Tamari**, offered “Jerusalem: The Wordly and Imagined City,” a graduate seminar in Spring 2017. The course included research papers on the history of Jerusalem by Columbia and NYU students. Tamari also gave a special public lecture on “Jerusalem Endowments and Family Waqf,” based on a forthcoming book on landed properties in Jerusalem (forthcoming IPS publication, co-authored with Munir Fakhr Eddin, December 2017).

THE JERUSALEM COMMITTEE

The programs and activities of the Jerusalem Project were coordinated by several faculty members of CPS and MEI and visiting scholars including, Lila Abu-Lughod (Anthropology), Nadia Abu El-Haj (Anthropology), Rashid Khalidi (History), Nora Akawi (GSAPP), Brian Boyd (Anthropology) and Brinkley Messick (Anthropology, MEI); Astrid Benedek (MEI Associate Director), Tamer Manhood (CPS Administrator) and Myra Rahim (CPS Research Assistant); Visiting members included Sobi Sammour (Abu-Lughod Fellow), Suad Amiry (Riwaq), Alex Winder (NYU and Brown University), and Salim Tamari.

In another recent development, the MEI has begun to share administrative responsibility with the Institute for African Studies for Ifriqiyya, the interdisciplinary faculty colloquium on pre-colonial Africa founded in 2010 by Professor Mahmood Mamdani. Unique to Columbia, the monthly Ifriqiyya seminar also is based on pre-circulated papers by leading scholars, and the substantive focus frequently is upon Muslim communities and Islamic phenomena. Ifriqiyya has developed research networks on specific topics, such as “Trans-African Slavery” and “The Indian Ocean Before Western Colonization.”

The institute has encouraged other faculty initiatives. Since his appointment at Columbia, Professor Avinoam Shalem of the Department of Art History has developed various annual lecture series in the Islamic arts such as, in Fall 2015, “Islamic Art: Disrupting Unity and Discerning Ruptures,” which was co-sponsored by the MEI. Professor Marwa Elshakry developed a series on “Rethinking Arabic Canons: Critical Conversations,” the inaugural workshop of which was last spring. Created as a “multidisciplinary conversation between established and emerging scholars of the Arabic humanities about the historical construction of a classical Arabic canon and heritage (turāth),” the series will comprise future sessions on such specialized topics as Arab science, Islamic law, Qur’an exegesis, etc.

In a different type of collaboration that is both university-wide and of general public significance, the MEI is involved in the Columbia President’s “World Leaders Forum” partnering also with the IRCPL. In 2014, a major Tunisian figure Rached Ghannouchi, the leader of Ennahda, the governing Islamist political party in Tunisia, appeared in various campus forums. In one, Ghannouchi spoke on “Islam, Democracy, and the Future of the Muslim World.” Continuing in this specific line of interest in Tunisian leaders and public intellectuals, the university, with the MEI again participating, in the spring of 2017, hosted the noted political figure and public intellectual Yadh Ben Achour in an extended residence.

With the launch of the three year project of the Center for the Study of Social Difference (CSSD) on “Religion and the Global Framing of Gender Violence,” co-directed by Professor Lila Abu-Lughod in collaboration with colleagues from the region, new opportunities will arise for programming and workshops that enhance the study of the Middle East at Columbia. The three-year initiative, supported by the Henry Luce Foundation, will mobilize the collective experience, expertise, and creativity of an international group of critical feminist scholars, practitioners, activists, and journalists, to explore the role of religion in naming, framing, and governing gender violence, with a focus on the Middle East and South Asia.

Outreach

The MEI - a recipient of federal National Resource Center and Title VI grants - is committed to supporting K-14 teachers with resources, training, and knowledge to best teach and educate their students about the Middle East. MEI is particularly focused on supporting high-need areas of New York City and its surrounding suburbs.

GLOBAL LANGUAGE PROJECT

The Global Language Project (GLP) supports K-16 world language teachers to strengthen their practice and thus deepen their impact on their students.

The GLP Director writes,

We have been fortunate to partner with the MEI at Columbia again this year through two of our key teacher training programs: our New York Arabic Teachers' Council (NYATC) and our summer STARTALK program.

NYATC has served 51 teachers of Arabic through the fall, winter, and spring workshops at MEI that centered on the theme of "Beyond the Classroom Walls" and explored various ways of connecting K-16 Arabic students with the outside world. We also launched a leadership cohort of Arabic teachers at the winter workshop, who are working to be leaders in their schools and the language teaching community in general.

In July 2016, GLP held their second STARTALK summer program at MEI for teachers of critical needs languages that included 24 teachers of Arabic, Korean, and Mandarin.

LAGUARDIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE PARTNERSHIP

We have an ongoing partnership with LaGuardia Community College, a City University of New York (CUNY) school in Queens, New York.

Guest Lecture Program & Speaker's Bureau

The MEI placed Ph.D. students from Columbia as guest lecturers at LaGuardia. Andrew McLaren, PhD candidate in the Department of Religion, lectured on early Islam in Professor Robin Kietlinski's course on World History in May 2017. Another Ph.D. candidate from the Religion department, Verena Hanna Meyer, lectured on the spread of Islam in Java in June 2017. Additionally, MEI established a "speaker's bureau" of Columbia Ph.D. candidates who are prepared to offer a variety of guests lectures on the Middle East at community colleges and local schools.

Amazigh/Berber Film Festival

We assisted LaGuardia professor, Habiba Boumlik with the promotion and advertising of an Amazigh/Berber film festival in May 2017. Next year, we plan to officially co-sponsor the festival.

Faculty Seminar

In April 2017, MEI's Outreach Coordinator, Dahlia El Zein, participated in a faculty seminar with LaGuardia faculty on teaching about Israel/Palestine. Dahlia also teaches an annual summer course on the Middle East at Princeton University. Additionally, Dahlia took part in a Professional Development series organized by Professors Boumlik and Kietlinski at LaGuardia. The seminar was a success and Dahlia will return next year to give a similar seminar.

SUMMER OUTREACH

TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND WORKSHOPS

At MEI we are committed to offering K- 14 teachers robust and useful professional development opportunities on teaching about the Middle East in a nuanced and well-informed manner.

Reconfiguring Representations of the Middle East and South Asia

The MEI partnered with Teacher's College at Columbia University to create a workshop for K-12 public school teachers on "Rethinking Representations of the Middle East and South Asia." Held at Teachers College, the workshop included a diverse group of panelists

Citizenship and Nationality in Israel/Palestine

MEI hosted a teacher's workshop at Columbia Law School on citizenship and nationality in Israel/Palestine chaired by Columbia law professor Katherine Franke.

OUTREACH RESOURCES

We encourage you to explore the new outreach section of our website, a dedicated space for teachers, faculty, and school staff to explore resources focusing on the Middle East. (*Under construction*)

**CITIZENSHIP AND NATIONALITY
IN ISRAEL/PALESTINE**

A TEACHERS WORKSHOP

JUNE 24, 2017
9AM-4PM
COLUMBIA
UNIVERSITY



The Center for Palestine Studies and Middle East Institute invite you to a teachers' workshop held at Columbia University on citizenship and nationality in Israel/Palestine and its history more broadly. The workshop will focus on the challenges of establishing a state in 1948 that commits itself to be both Jewish and democratic; the status of the Palestinian minority in such a state; and the critical differences between a "homeland," a "nation," and a "state". The workshop will include a set of short readings that will be distributed in advance for discussion.

Registration fee: \$25

Please register on our website:
www.mei.columbia.edu



A TEACHERS SYMPOSIUM AND WORKSHOP

**RECONFIGURING
REPRESENTATIONS**

OF THE MIDDLE EAST, NORTH AFRICA, AND
SOUTH ASIA

Thursday, June 15, 2017
5-9PM
Teachers College, Columbia University




Ameena Chaffar-Kucher,
University of Pennsylvania

Dr. Debbie Almontaser,
Muslim Community Network

Maria Hantzopoulos,
Vassar College

Roosbeh Shirazi,
University of Minnesota

Sa'ed Atshan,
Swarthmore College



All educators welcome. Register at mei.columbia.edu
Dinner will be provided.

MA in Islamic Studies

Columbia is a leading institution in the field of Islamic Studies. The distinguished history of scholarship at the university dates to the 19th century, based on innovative faculty research and publication on such venerable topics as Islamic law and the study of the Qur'an, alongside instruction in regional languages.

The Masters in Islamic Studies now offered by the Middle East Institute is an interdisciplinary program focusing on the critical academic study of the religious and intellectual traditions of Islam and on the diverse regional histories, cultures, and social formations of Muslim communities around the world. The program offers instruction in the classic areas of law, literature and history and also in the new inquiries of social scientists, feminist and gender research, media and film, and colonial and postcolonial studies--an Islamic Studies for the 21st century.

The MEI eagerly accepted a new role in fostering and promoting this fresh conception of Islamic Studies across the university. The faculty members identified with our MA Program span the departments, schools and other units, such as Union Theological Seminary. This revitalized program in Islamic Studies activates an important intellectual network at the university, one that consists of widely dispersed scholars and projects, involving numerous unrealized connections and unengaged strengths.

In the estimation of the Academic Review Committee (2017),

a rigorous MA degree in Islamic Studies...is a potential differentiator of Columbia and the MEI. The need for the interdisciplinary study of Islam and the Middle East cannot be overstated, and it behooves Columbia, with its rich intellectual resources and eminent legacy to lead in this area.

The pressing priorities associated with this re-launch of the Islamic Studies MA Program under the auspices of the MEI are 1) to establish a regular position for a program coordinator and advisor, who also would teach the requisite core course for incoming students, and 2) to secure competitive fellowship support to attract the best students.

Academic Review Committee (2017)

The faculty committee for the ARC review of the **Center for Palestine Studies** stated

Capitalizing on a rich Columbia tradition, which to a large extent originated in Edward Said's presence at the university (1963-2003), and continued with the hiring of a number of important specialists, the center has been remarkably successful in its mission to define the contours and establish the field of Palestinian Studies in the United States. To this day, it is the only center entirely devoted to the study of Palestine in the western hemisphere.

The reviewers continued that they

have been struck by the dynamism, quality and variety of research and outreach activities of CPS. The center has already achieved scholarly quality and public recognition.

Based on the recommendations of the final ARC report, Arts & Sciences is considering the following:

- a match for the existing outside funding that supports the center's Ibrahim Abu-Lughod Post-doctoral Fellowship. These matching funds would "allow the fellowship to be extended from one semester to a full academic year," and the incumbent would "help coordinate the intellectual dimension of the center's programs and could also teach a course."
- a continuation of the existing administrative support for the center, "permitting the hire of a more experienced administrator who could both teach and administer."

The Center for Palestine Studies

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

The center's programming ambitions initially included three principal areas: "The Arts," "Law," and "History of the Present." The Arts programming has comprised Palestinian poetry, literature, photography, and dance, although the main emphases have been on theater and film, with the latter eventually supported by dedicated funding for a series called "Palestine Cuts." The Law project is intended to promote legal scholarship on Palestinians living under Israeli rule. In recent years, together with its partner, Adalah, the Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel, CPS developed a project on "The Nakba and Law," which received Dutch funding. This also provided for an important new blog, "The Nakba Files" (<http://nakbafiles.org/>), launched in spring, 2016, and for an international workshop convened in Palestine on December 7-8, 2016. The center's History of the Present programs have attracted prominent public intellectuals and distinguished scholars of Palestine, on such topics as the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) Movement. CPS has hosted prominent public intellectuals, such as Cornel West, Judith Butler, Noam Chomsky, Robin Kelly, Eyal Weizman and Angela Davis, who have appeared together with numerous major scholars of Palestine, including our own Rashid Khalidi, Nadia Abu El-Haj, Lila Abu-Lughod, and Mahmood Mamdani.

Our Jerusalem Project (described earlier) is the latest addition to CPS programming and research areas. It includes a web presence, starting with a historical newspaper collection and including the Jerusalem Quarterly and maps.



HISTORY OF THE PRESENT

This programming attracts prominent public intellectuals and distinguished scholars of Palestine.

THE ARTS

To encourage and present the vital work of Palestinians in the arts, CPS hosts poets, authors, playwrights, actors, and film and theater directors



PALESTINE & LAW

To promote and communicate legal scholarship on Palestinians living under Israeli rule, CPS brings together leading lawyers and international legal scholars in workshops on such topics as military law in the West Bank, the legal aspects of the Palestinian state question, the ongoing nature of the legal Nakba, citizenship issues, and property dispossession.

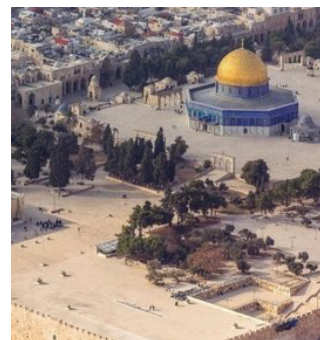


PALESTINE LIBRARY

Palestine Library events focus on new books on Palestine and Palestinians. Discussions with authors and Columbia faculty members engage audiences around recently published research.

JERUSALEM

This latest addition includes a lecture series, digital archival work and course offerings.



PALESTINE CUTS

Palestine Cuts is a new space for emerging and established filmmakers and video-artists to present and discuss their work in an engaging and encouraging environment.

Executive Committee



LILA ABU-LUGHOD

Lila Abu-Lughod is the Joseph L. Bottenwieser Professor of Social Science at Columbia University and teaches in the Department of Anthropology and at the Institute for Research on Women, Gender, and Sexuality. A former MEI Director, she is a leading voice in debates about gender, Islam, and global power. Her most recent books include *Nakba: Palestine, 1948 and the Claims of Memory* (co-edited with Ahmad H. Sa'di), *Do Muslim Women Need Saving?* and a thirtieth anniversary edition of *Veiled Sentiments*.



GIL ANIDJAR

Gil Anidjar is Professor in the Departments of Religion and of Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies (MESAAS), and the Institute for Comparative Literature and Society (ICLS). He is the author of *'Our Place in al-Andalus': Kabbalah, Philosophy, Literature in Arab Jewish Letters*; *The Jew, the Arab: A History of the Enemy*; *Semites: Race, Religion, Literature*; and *Blood*.



MARWA ELSHAKRY

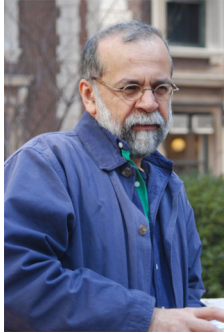
Marwa Elshakry is Associate Professor in the Department of History and specializes in the history of science, technology, and medicine in the modern Middle East. She is the author of *Reading Darwin in Arabic, 1860-1950*.



KATHERINE PRATT EWING

Katherine Pratt Ewing is Professor of Religion, Director of the Institute for Religion, Culture and Public Life and the Coordinator of the Program in the South Asia Institute. Her books include *Arguing Sainthood: Modernity, Psychoanalysis and Islam*; *Stolen Honor: Stigmatizing Muslim Men in Berlin* and the edited volumes *Shariat and Ambiguity in South Asian Islam* and *Being and Belonging: Muslim Communities in the US since 9/11*.

Executive Committee



HAMID DABASHI

Hamid Dabashi is the Hagop Kevorkian Professor of Iranian Studies and Comparative Literature at Columbia University. His most recent work includes *Shi'ism: A Religion of Protest*; *The Arab Spring: The End of Postcolonialism*; *Corpus Anarchicum: Political Protest, Suicidal Violence, and the Making of the Posthuman Body*; *The World of Persian Literary Humanism*; *Being A Muslim in the World*; and *Can Non-Europeans Think?*



NAJAM HAIDER

Najam Haider is Associate Professor in the Department of Religion at Barnard College. His research interests include early Islamic history, the methodology and development of Islamic law, and Shi'ism. He is the author of two books, *The Origins of the Shi'a and Shi'ī Islam*.



RASHID KHALIDI

Rashid Khalidi is the Edward Said Professor of Arab Studies, formerly the chair of the History department and a former MEI Director. He is the author of award winning books including: *Brokers of Deceit: How the U.S. has Undermined Peace in the Middle East*, winner of the Lionel Trilling Book Award and the MEMO Book Award and *Palestinian Identity: The Construction of Modern National Consciousness*, winner of the Middle East Studies Association's Albert Hourani Prize for best book of 1997.



TIMOTHY MITCHELL

Timothy Mitchell is the William B Ransford Professor of Middle Eastern, South Asian and African Studies, and department Chair MESAAS. Mitchell's first book *Colonising Egypt*, has been influential in fields as diverse as anthropology, history, law, philosophy, cultural studies, and art history. He is also the author of *Rule of Experts: Egypt, Techno-Politics, Modernity and Carbon Democracy*.

Administration

BRINKLEY MESSICK

Brinkley Messick is Professor of Anthropology and of Middle Eastern, South Asian and African Studies at Columbia University. He was the Chair of the Department of Anthropology from 2004-2011; was a founding co-Director of the Center for Palestine Studies (2010-15); and currently is the Director of the Middle East Institute. In 2009, he received the Outstanding Senior Scholar Award from the Middle East Section of the American Anthropological Association. He is the author of *The Calligraphic State*, which won the Albert Hourani Award from the Middle East Studies Association. *His Shari'a Scripts: A Historical Anthropology* is forthcoming from Columbia University Press.

ASTRID BENEDEK

Astrid Benedek has been the Associate Director of the Middle East Institute since December 2003. Holder of an M.A. from Columbia's School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA) and a B.A. in Middle East and African Studies from Georgetown University, she previously spent 12 years in the not-for-profit sector managing international education programs, including teacher-training programs in the Former Soviet Union for the Open Society Institute.

SIMONE RUTKOWITZ

Simone Rutkowitz recently earned her MA in Near Eastern Studies from New York University's Hagop Kevorkian Center where her research interests included soft power, visual and printed culture and urbanism. She holds a BA in Photography from Hamilton College. A two time FLAS recipient, Simone is near-fluent in Arabic. She has lived in Cairo, Egypt several times and studied at the Arabic Language Institute at the American University in Cairo. Outside of the MEI, Simone volunteers at the International Refugee Assistance Project as an Arabic Intake Caseworker.

DAHLIA EL ZEIN

Dahlia El Zein obtained a Masters in Arab Studies from Georgetown University. A Lebanese national Dahlia was raised in Egypt and currently lives in the United States. She is passionate about teaching about the Middle East. Formerly, she was the Program Director at the Center for Palestine Studies. Prior to that she was the Middle East researcher at the Committee to Protect Journalists. She has travelled widely across the Middle East. Additionally, Dahlia worked as a history teacher in New York charter schools. She teaches an annual summer course for high school students about the Middle East at Princeton University.

Visiting Scholars

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



ANGELIKI ZIACA

Mahdi Visiting Research Fellow (Spring 2017)

Dr. Ziaka (Ph.D., University of Strasbourg, 2002) is Associate Professor of Religion and the scientific coordinator of the new *Undergraduate Program on Islamic Studies* at the School of Theology of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, and visiting professor at the Schools of Political Science and Education. She studied at the Institute of Arabic and Islamic Studies in Rome, the History Department of the Royal University of Amman, and has conducted research in Iran and Oman since 2006. Dr. Ziaka was a LUCIS Fall Fellow in 2014 (Leiden University Centre for the study of Islam and Society).

Her publications include *La Recherche Grecque contemporaine et l'islam* (Strasbourg 2002 / Lille, 2004); *Shi'ism. Religious and Political Dimensions in the Middle East* (Thessaloniki, 2004, in Greek); *Between Polemics and Dialogue: Byzantine, Post Byzantine and Contemporary Greek Literature on Islam* (Thessaloniki, 2010, in Greek); *Interreligious Dialogue: The Meeting of Christianity with Islam* (Thessaloniki, 2010, in Greek); *Early Islamic Apocalyptic and Messianic Movements: Mahdi the Eschatological Savior* (Thessaloniki, 2011, in Greek); *On Ibadism* (Hildesheim/N.Y., 2014); *Kalam and the Islamic Trends of Thought* (Thessaloniki, 2016, in Greek).



DR. SARA ABABNEH

Carnegie Centennial Fellow (Fall 2016)

Dr. Sara Ababneh is Assistant Professor at the University of Jordan's Center for Strategic Studies. After receiving a BSc in Politics and Economics from Earlham College in Indiana and an MScEcon in International Politics from the University of Wales, Aberystwyth, Dr. Ababneh earned her DPhil in Politics and International Relations from the St. Antony's College, University of Oxford in 2010. Her dissertation topic focused on female Islamists in Hamas in occupied Palestine and the Islamic Action Front in Jordan. Dr. Ababneh has conducted research on Mandate Palestine, gender and Islamism, and labor movements.

Currently, she is studying the popular Jordanian protest movement (al-Hirak al-Sha'bi al-Urduni). While in residency at the MEI she worked on finishing the first draft of her book on the Hirak.

Visiting Scholars



DR. ABDULRAHMAN AL-SALMI

Mahdi Visiting Research Fellow (Fall 2016)

Dr. Abdulrahman al-Salmi is the Editor-in-Chief of the journal *Al-Tafahom* (Tolerance/Understanding) and an Omani expert on ancient Islamic manuscripts. He has authored numerous books including *Early Ibadi Literature*; *Early Ibadi Theology*; and *Islamic Art in Oman*. Dr. al-Salmi has taught Islamic studies at the Institute of Shariah Sciences in Muscat.

Dr. al-Salmi joined us as the Mahdi Visiting Research Fellow and worked on an edition of a hitherto unpublished old commentary of the Qur'an by the prominent 5th/11th century Mu'tazili scholar, al-Hakim al-Jushami (d. 494/1100). He gave two lectures on the importance of this commentary and on the methodology he adopts for producing an authoritative edition of it. The book will be published next year in ten volumes.



DR. SHADAAB RAHEMTULLA

Visiting Scholar (Fall 2016)

Dr. Rahemtulla serves as Assistant Professor at the University of Jordan's School of International Studies, where he leads courses on Islam, human rights, and qualitative research methods. An Indo-Canadian Muslim, Dr. Shadaab Rahemtulla received his doctorate in Islamic thought at the University of Oxford in 2013. Dr. Rahemtulla also holds a Bachelor of Arts and a Master of Arts in History from Simon Fraser University; a Master of Arts in Near and Middle East Civilizations from the University of Toronto. His book entitled *Qur'an of the Oppressed: Liberation Theology and Gender Justice in Islam* (forthcoming from Oxford University Press) explores how contemporary Muslim thinkers have read and grappled with the Qur'an in the light of lived realities of marginalization, engaging questions of race, gender, class and pluralism.



DR. KATHRYN SPELLMAN POOTS

Visiting Scholar (Academic Year 2016-2017)

Dr. Kathryn Spellman Poots is Associate Professor at the Aga Khan University's Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations in the United Kingdom. She earned her MSc and PhD in Politics and Sociology from Birkbeck College, University of London. Her research interests include Muslims in Europe and North America; the Iranian diaspora; transnational migration networks; and gender and religion in the Middle East and North Africa. Her publications include *the monograph: Religion and Nation: Iranian Local and Transnational Networks in Britain* (Berghahn, Oxford and New York) as well as the edited volumes: *The Political Aesthetics of Global Protest: The Arab Spring and Beyond* (Edinburgh University Press); and *Ethnographies of Islam: Ritual Performances and Everyday Practices* (Edinburgh University Press). She consults for organisations focusing on the rights and experiences of refugees and minority groupings, including the UNHRC (Geneva), UNESCO (Paris), UK Foreign Office, US State Department, German Foreign Office, and the London Detainee Support Group.

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The Middle East Institute

mei@columbia.edu
212-854-2201

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

mei.columbia.edu