

Program in Middle East and North African Studies

# Annual Report

## 2015-16

ANNE

Northwestern

WEINBERG COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES

Program in Middle East  
and North African Studies



# DIRECTOR'S NOTE

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The MENA Program enjoyed an extraordinary year of growth during 2015-2016. As we prepare to move into our new offices this coming fall, the MENA that will move into the renovated Kresge and Crowe Hall is a significantly bigger and more robust operation than that which was based at 1800 Sherman Avenue. I often have joked to people visiting our temporary offices these past couple of years that MENA was like a “start-up.” With sparse furnishings, mostly empty shelves, and not a few cardboard boxes, we did look a bit like a small tech company. To be sure, the long hours our staff—the amazing Lexy Gore and Tim Garrett—has put in, the commitment of our hard-working core faculty on top of their departmental obligations, and the manic pace I’ve asked everyone to keep added to the picture of a group picking itself up by the bootstraps.

Now, as we reflect on our third full year and report on our accomplishments and programs, is a good time to take stock of just how far MENA has come. That which started as a modest faculty working group back in 2007, sitting around café tables or on couches in my living room with plates of food balanced precariously on knees, is now a nationally recognized leader in modern and contemporary Middle East and North African studies.

We are grateful for the generosity of a major donor, the GPD Charitable Trust, whose support is allowing us not only to expand our public engagement and outreach but to plan yet greater projects for the coming year. We also received a significant grant this year from the Hicham Alaoui Foundation, which allowed us to host a four-day international conference, serving both as a meeting of leading scholars from across the US and abroad and as a way of celebrating and broadcasting MENA’s arrival as a site for serious attention to the modern and contemporary Middle East and North Africa.

These outside gifts and grants have been matched by the confidence demonstrated by both Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences and Northwestern’s central administration. MENA has been able to expand its own faculty this year in exciting new ways. We conducted two successful international job searches this year, one for a tenure-track faculty position in either modern Turkish or Iranian cultural studies, the other for a teaching-track position in our growing Arabic program. Between the two searches, we



had 300 applications from leading PhD programs in the United States, Canada, Europe, and the Middle East region. The pool of candidates was exceptional, and we were thrilled to recruit Emrah Yıldız, who emerges from the anthropology PhD program at Harvard, to the former position, and Asma Ben Romdhane, who wrote a PhD dissertation at the University of Iowa on the impact of social interaction on the acquisition of spoken Arabic in study abroad programs, to join the Arabic faculty.

Yıldız's work examines the mobility of people in the Middle East, Islamic ritual, and commerce across borders and states. His research is cutting-edge scholarship that overturns longstanding assumptions about how sectarian and national identities are constituted in the modern era in relationship to borders, economies, and gender. His dissertation examines the Shia "pilgrimage of the poor" and its interrelated contraband route that goes from bus stations in Iran through bazaars in Turkey to the famed Sayyida Zaynab shrine in Syria. The dissertation is based on an impressive 32 months of archival and ethnographic research conducted in Iran, Turkey, and Syria in three languages (Turkish, Persian, and Arabic). He will hold a joint position in both MENA and anthropology. Ustaaza Asma will build on the teaching of our other Arabic faculty in modern standard Arabic and help us also develop a new course in spoken North African Arabic, to complement our teaching of Egyptian and Levantine dialects. Both join the MENA faculty in the fall.

As we look forward to the next stage of our growth, MENA has subscribed to the philosophy of "MENA and..." As we continue to grow, we reach out to partners on campus, both for faculty positions such as those described here, and in our programming, where more than half of our events are co-sponsored. That means that we are showing how the interdisciplinary field of Middle East and North African studies both engages with and enhances the traditional disciplines. And it also means that the MENA community is constantly refreshed by engaging with other communities on campus. Please do join us for a MENA Monday event or an evening program at Evanston Public Library, and come witness for yourself the dynamic environment of the MENA program.

Best wishes,

**BRIAN EDWARDS**

Crown Professor in Middle East Studies  
Director, MENA Program



# ANNUAL HIGHLIGHTS

## MENA HOSTS MAJOR INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

The MENA Program, with the generous support of a major grant from the Hicham Alaoui Foundation, hosted an international conference in October 2015. Entitled “Theorizing Transformations in the Middle East and North Africa,” the four-day event served both as an inaugural conference for the program and as a meeting of some of the most exciting scholars working in the field. Scholars addressed topics as varied as sovereignty, neoliberalism, and migrant military labor, and ranged in their area of focus from the Maghreb to the Gulf, with special attention paid to the Arab uprisings and the Syrian refugee crisis. Invited scholars were invited both to touch on existing paradigms as well as to propose new methodologies and approaches for understanding a complex region. A concluding session was directed especially toward students and investigated research methodologies.

Planned entirely by members of the MENA faculty, the conference featured the participation of twenty-five scholars from eighteen universities, as well as the active involvement of Northwestern faculty and students. Attendance at the six panel sessions and four plenary lectures was robust, and a concluding reception served as a celebratory moment for MENA itself, as we paused to take stock of how far we have come as a program.



The audience at the inaugural conference's opening night.



From left to right: Zakia Salime, Kate Baldwin, Brian Edwards, Moulay Hicham Ben Abdallah, Malika Benabdelali, Henri Lauzière, and Miriam Lowi at concluding reception.



# THEORIZING TRANSFORMATIONS IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

## WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21

### Introduction and Session 1: Borders, Areas, Regions

Brian Edwards and Jessica Winegar: Opening Remarks

Jonathan Wrytzen, Yale University: "Reimagining Political Space: Empire, Jihads, and the Interwar Making of the Modern Middle East and North Africa"

Paul Silverstein, Reed College: "A Global Maghreb: Crossroads, Borderlands, and Frontiers in the Rethinking of Area Studies"

## THURSDAY, OCTOBER 22

### Session 2: States, Territories, Citizens

Kevin Martin, Indiana University: "A State without Citizens: The Tragedy of Syrian History"

Mezna Qato, University of Cambridge: "Lessons in Exile: Palestinian Refugees, Territoriality, and Settler-Colonial Reverberations"

Michelle Campos, University of Florida: "'Unmixing' the Holy City: Historicizing Urban Sectarianism in Jerusalem Digitally and Textually"

### Session 3: Media, Politics

Ibtissam Bouachrine, Smith College: "Women, Islam, Film, and Privilege"

Roxane Farmanfarmaian, University of Cambridge: "Youth and Social Media Use in Political Transition in Tunisia and Turkey"

### Session 4: Neoliberalism, Political Action

Sarah Tobin, Brown University: "Neoliberal Piety: From Islamic Economics to Economized Islam"

Zakia Salime, Rutgers University: "The Uprisings and Their Margins: Legible, Illegible Bodies"

Plenary: Asef Bayat, University of Illinois: "Revolutions of Neoliberal Times"

## FRIDAY, OCTOBER 23

### Session 5: Sovereignties

Andrea Stanton, University of Denver: "Rethinking Sovereignty through a Levantine Lens"

Alice Wilson, Durham University: "Remaking Sovereignty in the Sahara: People, Territory and State Power in the Western Sahara Conflict"

Plenary: Marwan Kraidy, University of Pennsylvania: "Burning Man and Laughing Cow: Theorizing the Arab Uprisings Through the Body"

### Session 6: Margins and the Marginalized

Darryl Li, Yale University: "Mercenaries and Morality: Notes on Migrant Military Labor in the Trucial States"

Miriam Lowi, College of New Jersey: "Identity, Community and the Foreigner in Gulf Oil Monarchies"

Plenary: Judith Tucker, Georgetown University: "Pirates and Power: Transformations on the Middle East Margins"

### Closing Session:

Remarks:

Daniel Linzer, Northwestern Provost

Henry Bienen, Northwestern President Emeritus

Plenary: Moulay Hicham Ben Abdallah, Oxford University: "Gone with the Wind? Four Years After the Arab Spring"

## SATURDAY, OCTOBER 24

### Methodologies Workshop for Graduate Students

With the participation of Marwan Kraidy (University of Pennsylvania), Kevin Martin (Indiana University), Paul Silverstein (Reed College), Judith Tucker (Georgetown)

## CAPACITY CROWDS AT MENA MONDAYS

MENA Mondays—our weekly lunchtime colloquium—are the centerpiece of the program’s on-campus outreach and the place where the MENA community comes together. In the 2015-2016 academic year, the program hosted 25 MENA Monday events, showcasing new scholarship, addressing contemporary issues, and featuring the talents of a wide array of invited guests and Northwestern speakers. Free and open to the public, the events draw a diverse mix of publics, from undergraduates and graduate students to faculty, and Northwestern staff and administration on their lunch break to members of the Evanston community. On most Mondays, the Hagstrum Room—our regular venue— is filled to capacity. The energy in the room is palpable! The program is varied, featuring events on modern Iran to collaborations with the Keyman Modern Turkish Studies Program, to *halaqa* events which feature primary languages of the region. Graduate student colloquia give the program’s scholars-in-training space to present their developing research, and each quarter one member of Northwestern’s faculty presents new research on the region. A highlight of the series is the New Directions in Middle East and North African Studies series: each quarter the MENA faculty selects a leading younger scholar to present her or his most recent work at the Monday public forum, and to meet privately with graduate students—who are provided with copies of the scholar’s most recent book—over breakfast. This year’s New Directions speakers were **BANU BARGU** (New School), **AOMAR BOUM** (UCLA), and **LERNA EKMEKCIOGLU** (MIT).

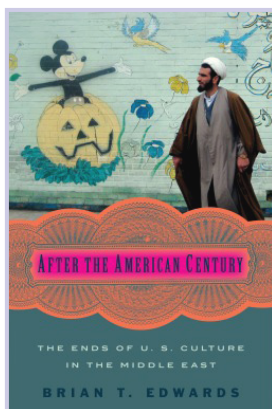


Professor Galya Ruffer and Başak Yavçan.

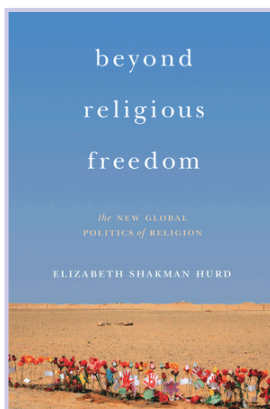


# BANNER YEAR FOR FACULTY BOOK PUBLICATIONS

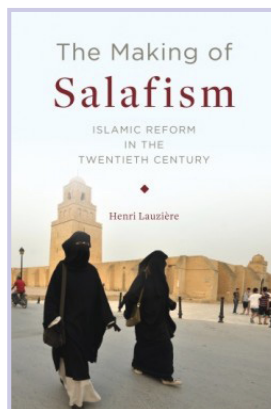
It was an especially productive year for the MENA faculty. In addition to numerous essays, articles, op-eds, and media appearances, MENA core faculty published four books during the 2015-2016 academic year. They have already been the subject of much discussion in press and academic reviews.



● Brian T. Edwards, *After the American Century: The Ends of U.S. Culture in the Middle East*. Columbia University Press, 2016.



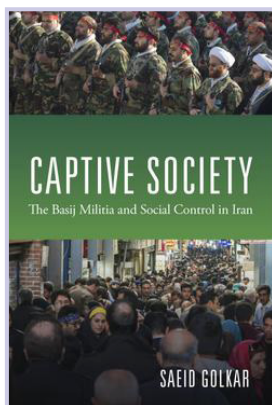
● Elizabeth Shakman Hurd, *Beyond Religious Freedom: The New Global Politics of Religion*. Princeton University Press, 2015.



● Henri Lauzière, *The Making of Salafism: Islamic Reform in the Twentieth Century*. Columbia University Press, 2016.



● Jessica Winegar (and Lara Deeb), *Anthropology's Politics: Disciplining the Middle East*. Stanford University Press, 2016.



In addition, **SAEID GOLKAR**, MENA lecturer in Iranian studies, published an important and well-received book. Golkar was frequently quoted this year in national and international media as an expert on contemporary Iran.

● Saeid Golkar, *Captive Society: The Basij Militia and Social Control in Iran*. Woodrow Wilson Center Press / Columbia University Press, 2015.

## KUTLUĞ ATAMAN: TURKISH CINEMA AT THE MARGINS

MENA hosted the celebrated Turkish filmmaker Kutluğ Ataman for a week-long residency on campus from February 25-29, 2016. This is the third year in a row that MENA has brought a filmmaker from the region to campus, providing the opportunity for the community to engage with social issues through the arts and enlarging the frame through which we perceive the region itself. For this year's entry in the annual series, MENA partnered with the Keyman Program in Modern Turkish Studies and, as always, with Block Cinema.

Ataman's visit included the public screening of two of his films at Block Cinema. The first was Ataman's award-winning film *Lola + Bilidikid* (Lola and Billy the Kid, 1998), a dramatic tragedy about Turkish drag queens in Berlin that exposed issues not only regarding sexuality and masculinity in both Turkish and German cultures, but also tensions around immigration and guest workers. On the second night at Block Cinema, we screened *Kuzu* (The Lamb, 2014), a strikingly different film both thematically and aesthetically. *Kuzu* portrays a poor Eastern Anatolian family who struggles to provide the traditional feast to celebrate their son's circumcision; the shocking narrative brings together social issues from rural Turkey with a plot reminiscent of *Medea*. Each screening was followed by an onstage discussion with the director, during which audience members engaged him directly.

During his visit, Ataman also visited undergraduate classes (including our Turkish language class, where he spoke in Turkish to students) and interacted with students in a number of venues. Ataman also had a public discussion with Northwestern faculty member Ozge Samanci in our MENA Monday series, during which he discussed his early artistic influences and his filmmaking methods.

Known for his perceptive and incisive reflections of the ever-shifting social, cultural, and political climate of contemporary Turkey, Ataman's films are notable for their strong characterization and exploration of human relationships. The winner of numerous prizes and top awards at major international film festivals, Ataman has made an equally significant impact in the contemporary art world. He won the prestigious Carnegie Prize in 2004, and his works have been exhibited at museums and galleries worldwide including the Museum of Modern Art, Tate Britain, and the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao.

Ataman's visit was a partnership of MENA, Keyman Modern Turkish Studies Program, the Center for Global Culture and Communication, and the Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art. Additional sponsorship was provided by the Department of Radio/Television/Film, the Screen Cultures Program, the Sexualities Project at Northwestern (SPAN), the Gender and Sexuality Studies Program, and the Postcolonial Film Project.





From left to right: Oya Topçuoğlu, Brian Edwards, Justin Lintelman, Kutluğ Ataman, Michelle Puetz, Ayça Alemdaroğlu, Martin Fryer, Ozge Samanci.

## MENA EXPANDS ITS FACULTY

The MENA Program is delighted to welcome new additions to the ranks of its faculty beginning in September.

- **ASMA BEN ROMDHANE** will join the language faculty as assistant professor of instruction in Arabic following the completion of her PhD at the University of Iowa.
- **EMRAH YILDIZ** will join the core faculty as assistant professor of Anthropology and Middle East and North African Studies. His research lies at the intersection of historiography and ethnography of borders and their states; ritual practice, visitation and pilgrimage in Islam as well as smuggling and contraband commerce in global political economy. He is also interested in studies of gender and sexuality in the MENA region (see more in Director's Note on page 2-3).
- Closer to home, **BRANNON INGRAM** joined the Core Faculty in MENA. Ingram is an assistant professor of religious studies and a specialist in the study of Islam, with a particular focus on Sufism and traditionally educated Muslim scholars.

MENA also named six faculty based at Northwestern University in Qatar (NU-Q) to its affiliated faculty. These colleagues have research and teaching specializations in Middle East and North African studies and can provide resources to Evanston-based students who travel and study abroad in Doha or who may seek out their expertise from afar. A full list of the faculty affiliates can be found on page 26.

## MENA HOSTS MAJOR MOROCCAN PLAYWRIGHT AND INTELLECTUAL

Driss Ksikes, Moroccan playwright, novelist, journalist, and human rights advocate, visited Northwestern from May 2-5, 2016. Currently a professor of media and culture at the Institut des hautes études de management (HEM) in Rabat, where he directs their research center and edits the Moroccan magazine *Economia*, Ksikes is a major figure in Moroccan intellectual life. He has published a number of well-received plays, novels (especially *Ma boîte noire* and *L'homme descend du silence*), and essays. He publishes primarily in French language, and has a following in both Morocco and France. In Rabat, he founded the important and dynamic theater company Dabateatr, which translates from Moroccan Arabic as “Theater now,” where he remains as co-artistic director. He is perhaps most famous, however, for his journalism career, most notably as editor-in-chief of the groundbreaking Moroccan magazine *TelQuel* and its Arabic sister publication *Nichane* from 2002 to 2006. His 2014 co-authored *Le métier d'intellectuel: dialogues avec quinze penseurs du Maroc* (The intellectual profession: interviews with fifteen Moroccan thinkers) won the 2015 Prix Grand Atlas, which is Morocco’s biggest book prize.

While visiting Northwestern, Ksikes delivered three lectures. The first, “Lessons Learned from Muslim Philosophy,” discussed the legacy of Ibn Rushd (“Averroes”) in the modern Arab world, and incorporated a discussion of his novel in progress, which engages



Driss Ksikes (third from right) speaks after the staged reading of his play *Le Match*.



this legacy. A second lecture, “Social Media and the Arab World: Lessons Learned,” compared the digital cultures of Egypt, Morocco, and Tunisia, and his third, “Literature, Politics, and Living Art in North Africa” discussed the ethical and political issues raised by film, literature, and theater in contemporary Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia. The crowning event of the week was the performance of a staged reading of *Le Match*, one of Ksikes’ plays, with Northwestern student and faculty actors and directed by professional director and Northwestern MFA Kathryn Walsh.



Rabih Alameddine and Driss Ksikes, two writers who visited MENA this year thanks to a partnership with the Center for the Writing Arts.

Ksikes’ visit to Northwestern was supported by a collaboration of MENA and the Center for the Writing Arts, along with the co-sponsorship of the Theater Department and the Buffett Institute French and Global Humanities Working Group.

## MENA’S FIRST WRITER-IN-RESIDENCE: RABIH ALAMEDDINE

Through a new collaboration with the Center for the Writing Arts, MENA was able to host its first writer-in-residence. Selected by a faculty committee, award-winning novelist Rabih Alameddine spent the entire spring quarter as the Center for the Writing Arts’ Visiting Author-in-Residence. One of the foremost Arab American writers of his generation, Alameddine’s bestselling novel *An Unnecessary Woman* won the 2015 Arab American Book Award, the California Book Award, and was a finalist for the National Book Award. In preparation for the author’s visit, approximately fifteen graduate students and faculty formed a reading group, led by graduate student Nora Eltahawy, which gathered several times throughout the winter to discuss Alameddine’s fiction. In addition to participating in a number of events and giving two public talks during the spring quarter, Alameddine taught two undergraduate courses: World Literature in a Comparative Frame: Narrative, Style, Form; and a writing workshop entitled The Art of Fiction.

## ENGAGING THE PUBLIC: MENA IN EVANSTON

Thanks to the generosity of the GPD Charitable Trust (see article below), MENA has been able to engage a much larger public beyond the walls of Northwestern itself and has become a major presence in the Evanston community. Partnering with the Evanston Public Library, MENA organized and hosted eight evening events between September and June, each of which was exceptionally well attended by members of the community, with audiences frequently exceeding 100, and incorporating energetic discussion periods. Enthusiastic reviews have filtered back to both the head of the library and the MENA program, and a mix of both regular attendees and new guests populate the audience, with some Northwestern faculty and students spotted as well. Following the program's affinity for both alliteration and hosting events at the beginning of the week, the events are known as MENA Monday Nights at EPL.

A new feature of this series, which was inaugurated in January 2015, was the video-recording of MENA Monday Night lectures. Interested viewers may find an expanding bank of such lectures on the MENA website under the Community Videos tab.

Speakers this year included **ANDRÉ LEVY** of Ben-Gurion University of the Negev speaking about his return to Morocco, where he was born, as an Israeli anthropologist, and the Armenian-American author **MELINE TOUMANI** discussing her return to Turkey trying to understand competing discourses on the Armenian genocide. MENA faculty hosted or commented on the presentations of several speakers, and three MENA faculty (Edwards, Shakman Hurd, and Golkar) presented their own new books at MENA Monday Nights. One of the most riveting evenings in the series was when Northwestern associate chaplain and director of interfaith engagement **TAHERA AHMAD** spoke about Islamophobia to a rapt and concerned audience.

## MAJOR GIFT SUPPORTS MENA

MENA is pleased to announce that it has received a major gift from the Global Peace and Development (GPD) Charitable Trust, which allows us to expand our public engagement significantly, to enlarge the scope of our public programming and outreach, and to imagine new and expanded ways to grow the program itself into its next stage of development. The Global Peace and Development (GPD) Charitable Trust seeks to help build a peaceful and stable world by investing in youth, strengthening civil society, and inspiring others through creative partnerships. We acknowledge the support of this gift, as well as the complete independence in how we use it. GPD's gift has made possible the visits of a number of prominent speakers, MENA's ongoing public lecture series at the Evanston Public Library, and our public outreach. We look forward to further developments in the coming year made possible by this generosity.



# UNDER-GRADUATE PROGRAM



MENA Arabic Language Students at End-of-Year Celebrations.

## 2016 GRADUATES

WILLIAM ARNOLD

TAL AXELROD

JOSEPH BAKA<sup>H</sup>

ELI BLEEMER

CASSANDRA BRYAN

COLLEEN CASSINGHAM

TALI JONA

NESA MANGAL

KENDRA MAYER<sup>M</sup>

ALEXIS O'CONNER

<sup>H</sup> indicates that the student graduated with honors in MENA

<sup>M</sup> student graduated with a minor in MENA Studies

## UNDERGRADUATE AWARDS

PHI BETA KAPPA: Joseph Baka and Colleen Cassingham

DAVIS PROJECT FOR PEACE AWARD: Lena Elmigly

SUMMER FLAS AWARD: Forrest Palamountain

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH GRANT: Molly Benedict

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH GRANT: Angela Lin

# PROGRAMMING CALENDAR

## FALL 2015

September 28

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***There Was and There Was Not: A Journey Through Hate and Possibility in Turkey, Armenia, and Beyond***

Meline Toumani, Author

***Transcending Nationalism in the Armenian Genocide Debate***

Meline Toumani, Author, and Elizabeth Shakman Hurd and İpek Yosmaoğlu, Northwestern



October 5

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***Gendered Nuances in Historiographical Discourses of Medieval Egypt and Syria***

Carl Petry, Northwestern

October 12

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***New Directions: Seeking Asylum: Lip-Sewing and Truth-Telling***

Banu Bargu, The New School

CO-SPONSORED BY THE KEYMAN PROGRAM IN MODERN TURKISH STUDIES

October 21-24

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***MENA Inaugural Conference: Theorizing Transformations in the Middle East and North Africa***

CO-SPONSORED BY THE HICHAM ALAOUI FOUNDATION

From left to right: Foroogh Farhang, Taymaz Pour Mohammad, Fadia Antabli, and Fatima Khan.

October 26

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***Halaqa: Arabic Children's Television***

Fatima Khan, Northwestern

***The Basij Militia and Social Control***

Saeid Golkar, Northwestern

November 2

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***The MENA Refugee Crisis: Implications for Turkey and Europe***

Galya Ruffer and Başak Yavçan, Northwestern

CO-SPONSORED BY THE INTERNATIONAL STUDIES PROGRAM

November 9

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***Governing Islam Abroad: The Turkish Presidency of Religious Affairs (Diyanet) and Diaspora Islam in France and Germany***

Benjamin Bruce, Sciences Po

CO-SPONSORED BY THE KEYMAN PROGRAM IN MODERN TURKISH STUDIES

November 16

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***The Politics of Sadness: Paralyzing the Masses in Post-Revolutionary Iran***

Saeid Golkar, Northwestern

November 30

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***Graduate Student Colloquium:  
The Transparent Eyeball  
Materialized: Emerson Reads  
Persian Poetry***

Taymaz Pour Mohammad,  
Comparative Literature

***After the American Century:  
The Ends of U.S. Culture in the  
Middle East***

Brian Edwards, Northwestern

## WINTER 2016

January 4

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***The Middle East and North  
Africa: 2015 in Review (and  
what to look for in 2016)***

Ayça Alemdaroğlu, Saeid Golkar,  
Rana Khoury, and Nermeen  
Mouftah, Northwestern



Brian Edwards and Tahera Ahmad.

January 25

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***Dare to Disappoint: Growing  
Up in Turkey***

Ozge Samanci, Northwestern

February 1

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***How Do You Say Yahud in  
Hebrew? The Canaanite  
Movement in a Short Story on  
1948***

Yael Dekel, Northwestern

***Beyond Religious Freedom:  
The New Global Politics of  
Religion***

Elizabeth Shakman Hurd,  
Northwestern

February 15

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***New Directions: The Anti-  
Fascist Alliance: North  
African Jews and Muslims  
Partner Against French and  
Nazi Anti-Semitism, 1936-  
1940***

Aomar Boum, University of  
California, Los Angeles

CO-SPONSORED BY THE CROWN FAMILY  
CENTER FOR JEWISH AND ISRAEL  
STUDIES AND THE PROGRAM IN AFRICAN  
STUDIES THROUGH SUPPORT OF THE U.S.  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION'S TITLE VI  
NRC PROGRAM



From left to right: Henri Lauzière,  
Alice Wilson, Andrea Stanton

February 22

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***Before the Ruins: Waiting for  
the Bulldozer in the Algerian  
Street***

Jane Goodman, University of  
Illinois

CO-SPONSORED BY THE PROGRAM IN  
AFRICAN STUDIES THROUGH SUPPORT OF  
THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION'S  
TITLE VI NRC PROGRAM

February 25-29

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***Kutluğ Ataman: Turkish  
Cinema at the Margins:***

February 25

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***Film Screening: "Lola +  
Bilidikid"***

February 26

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***Film Screening: "Kuzu (The  
Lamb)"***



February 29

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***An Interview with Kutluğ Ataman***

CO-SPONSORED BY THE KEYMAN MODERN TURKISH STUDIES PROGRAM, THE CENTER FOR GLOBAL CULTURE AND COMMUNICATION, AND THE MARY AND LEIGH BLOCK MUSEUM OF ART, WITH ADDITIONAL SPONSORSHIP FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF RADIO-TV-FILM, THE SCREEN CULTURES PROGRAM, THE SEXUALITIES PROJECT AT NORTHWESTERN (SPAN), THE GENDER AND SEXUALITY STUDIES PROGRAM, AND THE POSTCOLONIAL FILM PROJECT

March 7

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***Graduate Student Colloquium: Drawn Apart: Visual Representations of the Persian Wars***

James Proszek, Rhetoric and Public Culture

March 14

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***Graduate Student Colloquium: The Unmaking of the World: Torture, Speech, and Sovereignty in Jérôme Ferrari's *Où j'ai laissé mon âme****

Rachel Mihuta Grimm, French and Italian

March 21

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***Islamophobia 101***

Tahera Ahmad, Northwestern

SPRING 2016

April 4

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***Rethinking Patriarchy Through Unpatriarchal Male Desires***

Gul Ozyegin, William and Mary College

CO-SPONSORED BY THE KEYMAN PROGRAM IN MODERN TURKISH STUDIES

April 11

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***Burning Country: Syrians in Revolution and War***

Robin Yassin-Kassab and Leila Al-Shami

April 18

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***Halaqa: Visual Media as a Tool of Learning Arabic: Applied Exercises and Practice***

Ragy Mikhaeel, Northwestern

April 25

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***Know God in My Presence: Sufism and Islamic Learning in West Africa***

Zachary Wright, Northwestern

CO-SPONSORED BY NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY IN QATAR



Kutluğ Ataman and Hamid Naficy.



Marwan Kraidy at MENA's Inaugural Conference.

May 16

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***Truth-telling and the Critique of Violence***

Kabir Tambar, Stanford University

CO-SPONSORED BY THE BUFFETT INSTITUTE GLOBAL POLITICS AND RELIGION RESEARCH GROUP AND THE KEYMAN MODERN TURKISH STUDIES PROGRAM

May 23

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***New Directions: Recovering Armenia: Limits of Belonging in Post-Genocide Turkey***

Lerna Ekmekcioğlu

May 2-5

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*Driss Ksikes at Northwestern*

May 2

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***Lessons Learned from Muslim Philosophy***

***Social Media and the Arab World: Lessons Learned***

May 3

---

***Literature, Politics, and Living Art in North Africa Today***

May 5

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***Staged Reading: "The Match"***

CO-SPONSORED BY THE CENTER FOR THE WRITING ARTS, THE THEATER DEPARTMENT, THE ALICE KAPLAN INSTITUTE FOR THE HUMANITIES, AND THE BUFFETT INSTITUTE FRENCH AND THE GLOBAL HUMANITIES WORKING GROUP

May 9

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***On the Loss of Humanity: The Case of Former Militia Fighters in Lebanon***

Sami Hermez, Northwestern

CO-SPONSORED BY NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY IN QATAR

June 6

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***The Missing Chapter: Remarks by an Israeli Anthropologist Who Didn't Read His Own Book***

André Levy, Ben Gurion University of the Negev

CO-SPONSORED BY THE CROWN FAMILY CENTER FOR JEWISH AND ISRAEL STUDIES AND THE DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY

***Return to Casablanca: Jews, Muslims, and an Israeli Anthropologist***

CO-SPONSORSHIPS LISTED ABOVE

# GRADUATE PROGRAM

The MENA graduate program revolves around an active community of students who, while pursuing their PhDs in disciplinary departments, take special courses through MENA and participate in a range of programs and activities sponsored by the program. The MENA Graduate Student Group is a student-run organization that plans its own activities, which complement the academic program. With elected co-chairs (Arif Camoğlu and Rana Khoury, in 2015-16), MENA Grad organized a dynamic set of events this past year. Highlights included a methodologies workshop during the MENA inaugural conference; an event on the refugee crisis held during a MENA Monday; a workshop on getting published; a works-in-progress gathering; and group outings to the Chicago Humanities Festival and Iranian Film Festival events.

In addition, this year the Graduate Program piloted a new academic activity. Each quarter the graduate program hosted the visiting New Directions in MENA speaker for a special breakfast meeting with grad students. MENA provided copies of the visiting scholar's book in advance of the visit, and students had the opportunity to meet, discuss scholarship, and network with the visiting professor in a less formal setting.

Of course, many advanced MENA graduate students spent the year abroad doing dissertation research. We profile one of our students here. For a complete list of MENA graduate students, see page 27.



MENA students enjoying an end-of-year barbecue.





## PROFILE OF A MENA GRADUATE STUDENT: BETH DERDERIAN

Beth Derderian spent the 2015-2016 academic year on a Fulbright grant, conducting her dissertation fieldwork in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Preliminary fieldwork took her to Abu Dhabi to analyze the development of Saadiyat Island, a major project including the building of a Louvre and Guggenheim Abu Dhabi. However, given construction and other delays, the museums' opening has been postponed and Derderian shifted her project to explore the flourishing of contemporary arts practice that has begun in anticipation of the major museums. Many artists and cultural practitioners work and reside in Dubai, so Derderian's field site also shifted. While her research questions initially focused on the role museums play in creating or transforming citizens, she learned that the question of citizenship is key for artists as well: for non-citizens, the issue of how to be in the country legally, and how to earn a living from one's work, are particularly fraught given the UAE's restrictive immigration policies. Emirati nationals also shared differing opinions on initiatives supporting art production for citizens only, or quotas for inclusion of Emirati citizens' representation in arts exhibitions.

# MENA STUDENTS ABROAD

An integral part of any MENA student's experience of their education is their time spent abroad. A requirement of the undergraduate major in MENA is study abroad somewhere in the region, and we have been thrilled to watch our students develop their language skills in countries from the Maghreb to the Levant and in the Gulf, while gaining first-hand research experience and developing projects that often become senior honors theses or the basis of future graduate degrees. For our PhD students, of course, research abroad is at the core of their dissertations themselves, and the place where discoveries are the center of their work toward an advanced degree.

We asked three MENA majors to give us accounts of their experiences abroad.

## JOE BAKA, WCAS '16



"The MENA program was an integral part of my undergraduate experience. Thanks to MENA, I was able to include a phenomenal study abroad experience in Morocco in my undergraduate curriculum, during which I immersed myself in foreign culture for the first time, honed my language skills, and completed an independent research project. I also had the privilege to work with excellent professors and advisors at Northwestern, who personally encouraged me to embark on a senior thesis, which allowed me to research a multitude of subjects I am interested in, namely Saudi politics, Islamism, terrorism, and American foreign policy. As part of my thesis,

"Implausible Deniability: The Grand Mosque Seizure as a Forbear of Terrorism Against the United States," I consulted primary U.S. Government documents as well as a multitude of secondary sources to offer a critique of U.S. policy in the wake of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Discovering MENA was one of the most influential aspects of my Northwestern experience; had I not ultimately enrolled as a MENA major, I would not have discovered the career and research interests that I am passionate about today."

## COLLEEN CASSINGHAM, WCAS '16

"I graduated in June 2016 with a MENA major and a film minor. I spent my junior year abroad in Amman studying Arabic language, in Rabat studying human rights and multiculturalism, and in Tunis studying the Arab Spring, youth, and social movements. I also got the opportunity to make a short creative documentary challenging the Orientalist myth in Morocco, and a longer documentary about the emotional and economic effects of the Tunisian revolution four years later.



This summer I'm back in Morocco – Tangier, this time! – on an Arabic-intensive Critical Language Scholarship through the State Department. I hope to break into a career in documentary filmmaking, and will seize any chance to stay in the Middle East and North Africa!"

## AMEER AL-KHUDARI, WCAS '17

"During the summer break, I enrolled in an Arabic program at the American University of Beirut (I previously studied at Qasid Institute in Amman). I worked as a research assistant for Professor Wendy Pearlman, and used my language skills on a number of research projects, including my History Capstone project on the Tele-Salafism of Adnan Al-Arour with Professor Henri Lauzière. I was awarded a FLAS scholarship, and traveled to Istanbul after being selected for the Alice Kaplan Global Humanities Lab taught by Professor Jessica Winegar. During my year, I interned at The Chicago Council on Global Affairs, CAIR-Chicago and the Syrian Community Network. This year, I am writing a senior thesis on the politics of satire, authenticity and identity in Syrian Diaspora social media."





# FACULTY NEWS

In December, **BRIAN EDWARDS** published his new book, *After the American Century: The Ends of U.S. Culture in the Middle East* (Columbia UP, 2016). Over the course of the year, he gave a number of invited lectures, talks, and readings associated with the book, including in Minneapolis, Iowa City, Wisconsin, Berkeley, Los Angeles, Santa Monica, and New York, and outside the US in Morocco and Qatar. Closer to home, he also spoke about the book at the Chicago Council on Global Affairs, the Seminary Co-Op Bookstore, Evanston Public Library, and a keynote at a conference at DePaul University. Edwards published several articles linked to the book, most notably a pair of essays in *Salon*, and gave radio interviews. This year, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences named him to an 18-member Commission on Language Learning, formed in response to a bipartisan request by US Congress, which is examining the current state of language education in the U.S. and preparing recommendations for ways to meet the needs of the future.

**HANNAH FELDMAN** was on academic leave for the 2015-2016 academic year on a Mellon New Directions Fellowship.

**KATHERINE HOFFMAN** delivered lectures across three continents in the 2015-2016 academic year, including a paper on “The Conversion of *Kafala* Islamic Guardianships to Adoptions in Europe” at the Italian Society for Middle Eastern Studies Meeting, a paper on “Nostalgia: Yearning, Memory, Pain” at Boston College, and a presentation on “Amazigh Studies in the United States” in Tiznit, Morocco. She published an article entitled “Judicial Practices and Language Ideologies in an Unofficially Multilingual Court” (in French) in the journal *Anthropologies et Sociétés* and has another article in press, “Navigating the Border: Amazigh Minorities from Libya in Tunisia during the 2011-2012 Revolts.” She accepted a Senior Fellowship from Collegium Lyon’s Institute for the Advanced Study for the 2016-2017 year. She also was offered a Fulbright France-Alsace Faculty Fellowship for Strasbourg, which she declined. She continues to serve as an editorial board member for the *Oxford Bibliographies in Anthropology*, a program expert for the European Institutes for Advanced Study (EURIAS) Fellowship Programme, and is a member of research groups on Global Capitalism and Law as well as Global Politics and Religion at Northwestern.

**ELIZABETH SHAKMAN HURD** saw two books published in the past year, *Beyond Religious Freedom: The New Global Politics of Religion* (Princeton University Press, 2015), and *Politics of Religious Freedom* (University of Chicago Press, 2015), co-edited with Winnifred Fallers Sullivan, Saba Mahmood, and Peter G. Danchin. In late 2015 Hurd was awarded, with Winnifred Sullivan, a 3-year research grant by the Luce Foundation for a new project on “The Politics of Religion at Home and Abroad.” She wrote articles for a wide

number of publications and gave lectures at over a dozen venues across four continents. Her editorials appeared in *Al Jazeera America*, *The Boston Review*, *The Huffington Post*, and other venues. She continues to direct the Faculty Research Group on Global Politics and Religion at the Buffett Institute.

**BRANNON INGRAM** joined the MENA Program as a core faculty member in the past year. He co-edited a volume with J. Barton Scott and SherAli K. Tareen, *Imagining the Public in Modern South Asia* (Routledge, 2016), and published three journal articles: "Public Islam in Post-Apartheid South Africa: The Radio Islam Controversy" in *Critical Research and Religion*, "Crises of the Public in Muslim India: Critiquing 'Custom' at Aligarh and Deoband," and "What is a Public? Notes from South Asia," with J. Barton Scott, both in *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies*. He received a Kaplan Faculty Fellowship for the upcoming year.

**REBECCA JOHNSON** was appointed the Crown Junior Chair in Middle East Studies and won the Weinberg College Distinguished Teaching Award. Her work appeared in *The Encyclopedia of Islam and Novel: A Forum on Fiction*, and she presented work at the annual meeting of the American Comparative Literature Association as well as at the Alice Kaplan Institute for the Humanities. She was on leave for the 2015-2016 academic year.

**HENRI LAUZIÈRE'S** first book, *The Making of Salafism: Islamic Reform in the Twentieth Century* (Columbia University Press, 2016) was published to wide acclaim. He led a workshop on Salafism at Harvard University in March 2016. He published two articles, "Islamic Nationalism Through the Airwaves: Taqi al-Din al-Hilali's Encounter with Shortwave Radio, 1937-1939" and "What We Mean Versus What They Meant by 'Salafi': A Reply to Frank Griffel", both in *Die Welt Des Islams*. He was also promoted to Associate Professor of History.



Henri Lauzière, Carl Petry, and Alli Divine.

**HAMID NAFICY** saw two book chapters published, "The Politics and Poetics of Iranian Art-House Cinema" in *Inside the Islamic Republic: Social Change in Post-Khomeini Iran* and "Lured by the East: Ethnographic and Expedition Films about Nomadic Tribes: the Case of Grass (1924)" in *The Documentary Film Reader: History Theory, Criticism*. A lecture of his in Amsterdam, *Iranian Postrevolution Cinema: A Rising Global Cinema*, was also published in book form. Throughout the year he delivered lectures at venues in Canada, Germany, Greece, and at seven universities across the

United States. He also appeared in several segments on BBC Persian TV, and, alongside MENA, Keyman Modern Turkish Studies and the Block Museum, he participated in organizing the visit of the Turkish filmmaker Kutlug Ataman. He co-taught a two-week intensive graduate course at Summer Institute Cologne in 2015, and in April 2016, at the annual Society for Cinema and Media Studies Conference, he received the “Alumnus of the Year” award from the Department of Film, Television and Digital Media at UCLA. The Persian translation of Naficy’s *A Social History of Iranian Cinema: Volume 1: The Artisanal Era* won the “best translation” cinema book award at the Annual Cinema Book Awards in Tehran, Iran.



Hamid Naficy.

**WENDY PEARLMAN** continues to carry out research on displaced Syrians in Lebanon, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates. She published four articles: “Puzzles, Time, and Ethnographic Sensibilities: Research Methods after the Arab Spring,” “From Palestine to Syria: Three Intifadas and Lessons for Popular Struggles” in *Middle East Law and Governance*, “Narratives of Fear in Syria” in *Perspectives on Politics*, and “Moral Identity and Protest Cascades in Syria” in *The British Journal of Political Science* (forthcoming). In addition, her chapter “Palestinians and the Arab Spring” appeared in the recently published *Civil Resistance in the Arab Spring: Triumphs and Disasters*. She

was selected as one of four recipients in the inaugural cohort of Buffett Institute Faculty Fellows. She received an Alexander von Humboldt grant to continue her field research in Germany, and was awarded a book contract from Harper Collins for a Syrian oral history, to be published in 2017.



Ayça Alemdaroğlu and Carl Petry.

**CARL PETRY’S** monograph, *The Criminal Underworld in a Medieval Islamic Society* (University of Chicago Press, 2012) sold out its first run and is scheduled for a second printing. His articles on Egypt to the Ottoman Period and the Mamluk



sultan Al-Malik Al-Nasir Faraj b. Barquq were published in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 3rd edition, and he delivered the 27th Ulrich Haarmann Memorial Lecture: “Gendered Nuances in Historiographical Discourses of the Mamluk Period: Muted Praise? Veiled Trivialization? Enigmatic Transgressions?” at the Annemarie Schimmel Kolleg of Mamluk Studies at the University of Bonn. He continues to serve on the editorial board of *Mamluk Studies Review*, a peer-reviewed journal of the Middle East Documentation Center, University of Chicago. He is currently preparing a chapter on crime in medieval Egypt and Syria for *A Cultural History of Crime and Punishment*, vol. 3: The Renaissance (1450-1650), to be published by Bloomsbury Press in 2017.

**JESSICA WINEGAR** was named the Harold H. and Virginia Anderson Chair in Anthropology and published *Anthropology's Politics: Disciplining the Middle East* (Stanford University Press, 2015), co-authored with Lara Deeb, a book that examines the political and economic pressures that shape how U.S. scholars research and teach about the Middle East. She also contributed an essay, “Islam at the Art School: Religious Young Artists in Egypt,” for the recently published *Islam and Popular Culture* (University of Texas Press). She received a Public Voices Fellowship from the Op-Ed Project for the year, and several of her op-eds were published in media outlets including *The Hill*, *Scientific American*, and *TruthOut*. She presented at the Middle East Studies Association (MESA) annual meeting and at the American Anthropological Association (AAA) meeting, and delivered book talks at Berkeley, Scripps, Townson State University, Tufts, UCLA, and Yale. She continues to serve on Middle East Report’s Editorial Committee.



Jessica Winegar, Malika Benabdelali, and Roxane Farmanfarmaian.

**IPEK YOSMAOĞLU** was awarded a Lise Meitner Fellowship by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF) as well as a Fulbright Fellowship, which she declined. She taught courses on World War I in the Middle East, The Ottoman Empire, and nations and nation states in the Middle East, and will be spending next year on sabbatical in Graz, Austria.

# FACULTY ROSTER

## Core Faculty

BRIAN EDWARDS

Crown Professor in Middle East Studies and Professor of English and Comparative Literary Studies

HANNAH FELDMAN

Associate Professor of Art History

KATHERINE HOFFMAN

Associate Professor of Anthropology

ELIZABETH SHAKMAN HURD

Associate Professor of Political Science

BRANNON INGRAM

Assistant Professor of Religion

REBECCA JOHNSON

Crown Junior Chair in Middle East Studies and Assistant Professor of English and the Humanities

HENRI LAUZIÈRE

Assistant Professor of History

HAMID NAFICY

Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani Professor in Communication and Professor of Radio/Television/Film

WENDY PEARLMAN

Associate Professor of Political Science and Martin and Patricia Koldyke Outstanding Teaching Professor

CARL PETRY

Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani Chair in Middle East Studies and Professor of History

JESSICA WINEGAR

Harold H. and Virginia Anderson Chair and Associate Professor of Anthropology

İPEK YOSMAOĞLU

Associate Professor of History

## Visiting Faculty

SAEID GOLKAR

Lecturer

## Language Instructors

FADIA ANTABLI

Assistant Professor of Instruction, Arabic

AMJAD DAJANI

Lecturer, Arabic

FATIMA KHAN

MENA Language Coordinator and Assistant Professor of Instruction, Arabic

RAGY MIKHAEEL

Assistant Professor of Instruction, Arabic

AUSTIN O'MALLEY

Lecturer, Persian

OYA TOPÇUOĞLU

Lecturer, Turkish

## Affiliated Faculty - Evanston

AYÇA ALEMDAROĞLU

Associate Director of the Keyman Modern Turkish Studies Program and Lecturer in Sociology

ANN GUNTER

Professor of Art History and Bertha and Max Dressler Professor in the Humanities

RAJEEV KINRA

Associate Professor of History

INNA NARODITSKAYA

Professor of Ethnomusicology

NASRIN QADER

Associate Professor of French

ELIE REKHESS

Crown Visiting Professor in Israel Studies

SHAYNA SILVERSTEIN

Assistant Professor of Performance Studies

## Affiliated Faculty – Qatar (NU-Q)

KAVEH ASKARI

Associate Professor in Residence, Communication Program

SAMI HERMEZ

Assistant Professor in Residence, Liberal Arts Program

KHALED AL-HROUB

Professor in Residence, Liberal Arts Program

JOE KHALIL

Associate Professor in Residence, Communication Program

JOCELYN MITCHELL

Assistant Professor in Residence, Liberal Arts Program

ZACHARY WRIGHT

Associate Professor in Residence, Liberal Arts Program

# GRADUATE STUDENT ROSTER

SALMA AL-SHAMI, Political Science  
LAILA BALLOUT, History  
TAREK ADAM BENCHOUIA, Performance Studies  
KARIMA BORNİ, Anthropology  
MAGDA BOUTROS, Sociology  
MATTHEW BRAUER, French and Italian  
ARIF SAMET CAMOGLU, English  
EMMA CHUBB, Art History  
ELIZABETH DERDERIAN, Anthropology  
GÖZDE ERDENİZ, Political Science  
CEYDA ERTEN, Political Science  
FOROOGH FARHANG, Anthropology  
MAZIYAR FARIDI, Comparative Literary Studies  
RACHEL GRIMM, French and Italian

ALEX HOBSON, History  
RANA KHOURY, Political Science  
SEAN LEE, Political Science  
NORAN MOHAMED, French and Italian  
MARJAN MOHAMMADI, Comparative Literary Studies  
MONA ORABY, Political Science  
AYDIN OZİPEK, Anthropology  
NAZLI ÖZKAN, Anthropology  
TAYMAZ POUR MOHAMMAD, Comparative Literary Studies  
JAMES PROSZEK, Rhetoric and Public Culture  
AZADEH SAFAEIAN, Anthropology  
RORY SYKES, Art History  
LEILA TAYEB, Performance Studies

## STAFF

TIM GARRETT, Project Coordinator

LEXY GORE, Program Assistant

## COLLABORATIONS

ALICE KAPLAN INSTITUTE FOR THE HUMANITIES  
BUFFETT INSTITUTE FOR GLOBAL STUDIES  
BUFFETT INSTITUTE FRENCH AND THE GLOBAL HUMANITIES WORKING GROUP  
BUFFETT INSTITUTE GLOBAL POLITICS AND RELIGION RESEARCH GROUP  
CENTER FOR GLOBAL CULTURE AND COMMUNICATION  
CENTER FOR THE WRITING ARTS  
COMPARATIVE LITERARY STUDIES PROGRAM  
CROWN FAMILY CENTER FOR JEWISH AND ISRAEL STUDIES  
DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY  
DEPARTMENT OF PERFORMANCE STUDIES

DEPARTMENT OF RADIO/TELEVISION/FILM  
DEPARTMENT OF THEATER  
EVANSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY  
GENDER AND SEXUALITY STUDIES PROGRAM  
HICHAM ALAOUİ FOUNDATION  
INTERNATIONAL STUDIES PROGRAM  
KEYMAN MODERN TURKISH STUDIES PROGRAM  
MARY AND LEIGH BLOCK MUSEUM OF ART  
NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY IN QATAR  
POSTCOLONIAL FILM PROJECT  
SCREEN CULTURES PROGRAM  
SEXUALITIES PROJECT AT NORTHWESTERN (SPAN)





# Northwestern

WEINBERG COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES

## Program in Middle East and North African Studies

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