



NORTHWESTERN  
UNIVERSITY

PROGRAM IN MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICAN STUDIES

# THE FIRST TWO YEARS

2013-15

ANNUAL



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# DIRECTOR'S NOTE

This is an exciting time to study the Middle East and North Africa—and Northwestern is an especially dynamic place to do so. Here, we are pursuing new directions in thinking, teaching, and writing about a diverse region that has shown the world that the standard ways for understanding it are fast disappearing.

Our award-winning faculty is drawn from the disciplines of anthropology, art history, comparative literature, history, political science, religion, film and media studies, among others. It is comprised of teachers and scholars who study and write about this region from a variety of perspectives, with a particular focus on the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries.

The origins of Northwestern's Program in Middle East and North African Studies—or MENA as it is known on the Evanston campus—can be traced to the winter of 2006 when WCAS Dean Daniel Linzer (since 2007, Northwestern Provost) appointed a faculty committee to make recommendations on how to build in this field. Substantial university resources were in turn dedicated to the project, and a number of national faculty searches were launched to bring scholars of anthropology, history, political science, and literature to Northwestern. In 2007, just as the first wave of hiring began, those faculty already here formed a working group to discuss the state of Middle East studies, and how we might craft a dynamic program that reflected the 21st century state of the field.

That working group, which kept growing as new faculty were hired, was the basis for the MENA program today. Together we hosted a sequence of symposia on new directions in the field. In spring 2010, with a now expanded faculty, we proposed the creation of academic program, and by late fall of the same year, MENA was created. From 2010 until fall 2013, dedicated faculty and staff worked to create everything from new courses and a new major to program bylaws and a detailed administrative structure, and move it all through various university approval processes.

The full MENA program formally launched in September 2013, with a new undergraduate major and minor, plus a graduate (Ph.D.) certificate, and a structure that showed off Northwestern's new strengths in this area of study.

Now, after two academic years as a full-fledged program, we pause to report on some highlights. Much of what is contained in this report focuses on our programming and public events, in part because MENA has been dedicated to education on a variety of levels, including community engagement, and in part because of the ways our programming enhances the experience of students.

Our curriculum is enhanced by weekly events—open to the entire community—which feature both scholars based at Northwestern and eminent visitors from a range of disciplines. These lunchtime events, known as MENA Mondays, give a sense of the dynamism of the field and the diversity of the region itself. In early 2015, thanks to the generosity of a major gift, we have been able to forge a partnership with the Evanston Public Library to expand this successful program beyond the campus and bring public programming about the MENA region to the general public.

This evening series held in downtown Evanston represents one aspect of our community outreach and our commitment to helping foster dialogue around the complex, frequently misunderstood, and ever fascinating region we study and teach about.

I hope you will join us in this exploration, whether to attend a lecture or cultural event, or for students to take a course or two or embark upon a major, a minor, or a graduate certificate. Please join our mailing list, follow us on our Facebook page or on Twitter, and feel very welcome to learn more about our program and the rich and beautiful region of the world to which we dedicate ourselves.



## Brian T. Edwards

MENA Director, Crown Professor in Middle East Studies  
Associate Professor of English and Comparative Literary Studies

Photo credit: Ashley Wood

# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

## MENA MONDAYS



Professor  
Orit Bashkin,  
University of Chicago, addresses a MENA  
Monday audience on Iraqi Jews.

MENA Mondays play a defining role creating a community and in reaching out across department lines. At the start of every week, barring exam weeks and university holidays, MENA hosts a noontime event where speakers present new work. These events feature outside experts, Northwestern faculty, and graduate students.

At least one event per quarter focuses on Modern Turkey (in collaboration with the Keyman Modern Turkish Studies Program), one focuses on Iran, and one event per quarter highlights the languages of the Middle East. *Halaqa* events, named after the Arabic word for “circle,” invite the program’s Arabic, Persian, and Turkish language faculty to expand the MENA’s cultural and linguistic awareness, often featuring music or film. Graduate Student Colloquia offer an opportunity for young scholars-in-training at the university to present their developing research. Brown Bag events, organized once per quarter by the MENA graduate students, function as roundtable discussions about current events in the Middle East and North Africa, allowing an open forum for spirited, informed dialogue on the region today. A highlight of each quarter is a lecture in our ongoing “New Directions in Middle East and North African Studies” series, wherein an especially accomplished younger scholar selected by the MENA Faculty is invited to the Evanston campus to present his or her most recent work

The weekly nature of these events, and the recurring time and location, means that MENA Mondays also offer the program’s community a time to gather together, eat, and enjoy one another’s company. Lunch from local Middle Eastern restaurants is always provided, and all lectures are open to the general public. Audiences throughout the 2013-2014 year consistently numbered in the dozens, incorporating students, scholars, and members of the community at large. In 2014-2015, MENA Mondays saw a 200% rise in attendance, with the room frequently filled to capacity. Furthermore, every lecture is followed by a Q&A session, promoting broader discussion and engaged dialogue between the speaker and the audience. Whether program community members come to hear a scholar present new and often unpublished research on the Middle East and North Africa, or to enjoy the warm and enriching atmosphere of friends and peers, MENA Mondays offer them an indispensable addition to their relationship with Northwestern University and the field of Middle East and North African studies as a whole.

For a comprehensive list of 2013-2015 MENA Mondays, see pages 7-10.



## MENA SPRING FILM SERIES

In each of its first two years, MENA has hosted a major film director from the Middle East and North Africa on the Evanston campus. Partnering with Block Cinema, these festival-like events pair the screening of works by these artists with post-screening discussions. Filmmakers are in residence at MENA for a week or more during which they visit undergraduate classrooms, speak at MENA Mondays, and meet individually with students and faculty.

This focus on the arts allows members of both Northwestern and the greater community to experience a richer aspect of the region than media and news accounts generally provide, and puts talented artists in dialogue with students and the community.

## Moroccan Chronicles: The Films of Moumen Smihi

In April 2014, Moumen Smihi visited Northwestern. Over two weeks, Block Cinema screened seven feature-length films he directed, in new prints and with new subtitling. While on the Evanston campus Smihi gave a number of talk and was interviewed in a post-screening discussion by Brian Edwards and Peter Limbrick of UC Santa Cruz, an expert on Smihi's work. During his visit Smihi and Edwards also gave a joint interview on *Worldview with Jerome McDonnell* on WBEZ Public Radio. Smihi's film screenings and his lectures were especially well attended, bringing in both members of the Northwestern community as well as outside visitors from Evanston, Chicago, and elsewhere. Crain's Chicago listed the screenings as one of that week's Top Ten Things to Do in Chicago.

Smihi's visit was organized by the MENA Program, with generous funding and support from the Buffett Center for International and Comparative Studies, the Alice Kaplan Institute for the Humanities, the Harris Lecture Fund, and the Center for Global Culture and Communication. Additional sponsorship was provided by the Department of French and Italian, the French Interdisciplinary Group, the Department of Radio, Television, Video, and Film, the Center for Screen Cultures, and the Postcolonial Film Project.



Brian Edwards, Peter Limbrick, and Moumen Smihi before a screening at Block Cinema



Edwards and Smihi recording a conversation with Jerome McDonnell and Milos Stehlik for WBEZ Radio

MENA SPRING FILM SERIES

## Pouran Derakhshandeh: Women and the Making of Iranian Social Cinema



From left to right: Alex Hobson, Brian Edwards, Austin O'Malley, Pouran Derakhshandeh, Katie Rashid, and Carl Petry

One of Iran's leading filmmakers, Pouran Derakhshandeh, visited the Northwestern Evanston campus for a weeklong residency in April 2015 as a guest of the MENA Program. Two of her films – *Hiss! Dokhtarha Faryad Neminzanand!* (*Hush! Girls Don't Scream*), which Derakhshandeh directed, and *Bist (Twenty)*, which she produced, were

screened at Block Cinema to audiences of 200 people, both of which were followed by interviews and Q&A sessions. She also visited both film and Persian classes and met with a number of students and faculty during her visit, and gave a public interview with MENA Professor Hamid Naficy.

Iran boasts one of the most celebrated film industries in the world. Iranian women's influence in filmmaking has increased dramatically in the decades since the 1979 Iranian Revolution, often through a daring critique of modern Iranian society. Derakhshandeh holds a special place in the history of filmography in Iran: her film *Mute Contact* was the first feature film directed by a woman released in Iran after the 1979 Revolution. She has gone on to direct twelve feature films and eleven documentaries, winning numerous national and international awards.

From left to right: Paymon Safavi, Brian Edwards, Hamid Naficy, Pouran Derakhshandeh, and Narimon Safavi



Derakhshandeh's visit was a collaboration between the Program in Middle East and North African Studies (MENA) and Block Cinema. Generous support was provided by the from the Edith Kreeger Wolf Endowment, which brings scholars and public figures to campus with the goal of highlighting women's successes in scholarship, the arts, and public service.



## COLLABORATION WITH NU-Q

In September 2012, eight MENA faculty traveled to Doha to participate in a symposium with colleagues from Northwestern University in Qatar (NU-Q). The resulting papers were collected, expanded upon, and published in 2013 under the title *On the Ground: New Directions in Middle East and North African Studies*, edited by MENA director Brian Edwards. The topics of the chapters range from women's social and digital mobility in modern-day Egypt to a case study of how the 2011 uprising in Libya affected Libyan and Tunisian Berbers, and represent a number of disciplines, including anthropology, communication studies, history, and political science.

The text is freely available at <http://ontheground.qatar.northwestern.edu/>.



## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

In January 2015, MENA established a partnership with Evanston Public Library as one of its new initiatives in community outreach made possible by a generous gift from the GPD Charitable Trust. This collaboration is built around a series of lectures and public events, all of which are aimed at improving the public's understanding of the MENA region and allowing the space for questions and discussion. Turnout at these events has been phenomenal, with the April evening lecture bringing over 120 community members together to hear a panel of MENA faculty speakers. The events provide a way for community members to interact with nationally-acclaimed experts on the part of the world that stretches from Morocco to the Arab Gulf states and Iran and from the Mediterranean into the Sahara and beyond.



Ussama Makdisi addresses sectarianism in the Modern Middle East, March 2015

## MENA Monday Nights 2015

January 26

*Diplomacy on the Front Lines in the Middle East*

Nabeel Khoury, Northwestern University

March 2

*The Rise of Sectarianism in the Middle East in an Age of Western Hegemony: 1860-2014*

Ussama Makdisi, Rice University

April 13

*Four Myths about the Middle East*

Brian Edwards, Henri Lauzière, Wendy Pearlman, Jessica Winegar, Northwestern MENA Faculty

May 11

*The History of Iranian Photography*

Ali Behdad, University of California, Los Angeles

# PROGRAMMING CALENDAR

2013-14

## October

October 7  
*Currents in Syrian Theater*  
Riad Ismat, Northwestern University

October 14  
*Precious Loneliness: The Rise and Fall of the Turkish Model*  
Kerem Öktem, Oxford University

October 21  
*Halaqa Series: "Slingshot Hip-Hop" Film Screening*  
MENA Language Faculty

October 23  
*Phonological Outcomes of Language Contact in Palestine*  
Uri Horesh, Northwestern University

October 28  
*Graduate Student Colloquium: The Difference that Affiliation Makes: Religion Under Law in Egypt*  
Mona Oraby, Political Science

## November

November 1  
*North Africa: Comics, Cinema, and the Democratic Frame*  
Brian Edwards, English

November 4  
*Halaqa: The Arabic Dialect of Gaza City*  
William Cotter

November 11  
*Graduate Student Colloquium: The Cinema of Abbas Kiarostami: Women between Two Regimes of Gaze*  
Maziyar Faridi, Comparative Literary Studies

November 25  
*New Directions: Consequences of Writing Literature in Alexandria: an Ethnography in Progress*  
Samuli Schielke, Zentrum Moderner Orient, Berlin

## December

December 2  
*Brown Bag Buzz: The Situation in Egypt after Morsi's Ouster*  
MENA Graduate Students

## January

January 13  
*Graduate Student Colloquium: "Everyone Wants to Stand Out in Life": New Forms of Self-Expression among Lower Class Youth in Turkey*  
Aydın Özipek, Anthropology

January 18  
*"The Square": Special Screening*  
Jehane Noujaim, Director  
Jessica Winegar, Northwestern University

January 27  
*On the Margins of the State: Mapping, Constructing and Experiencing a Borderscape in Early Republican Elazığ*  
Zeynep Kezer, Newcastle University

COSPONSORED BY THE BUFFETT CENTER AND THE KEYMAN  
MODERN TURKISH STUDIES PROGRAM

January 29  
*Social Protest Documentaries from Iran*  
Kamran Shirdel, Director  
Hamid Naficy, Northwestern University

A typical MENA  
Monday  
audience





## February

February 3

*New Directions: "Hashtag Raid Led by the Forces of Darkness": An Arab Spring Tale*

Tarek El-Ariss, University of Texas at Austin

COSPONSORED BY THE COMPARATIVE LITERARY STUDIES PROGRAM

February 6

*Launch Party for On the Ground*

Everette E. Dennis, Dean, NU-Q

Brian Edwards, Northwestern University

February 10

*Why Syria Matters*

Nader Hashemi, University of Denver

February 17

*Halaqa Series: "As the Poet Said" Film Screening*

MENA Language Faculty

February 24

*Graduate Student Colloquium: Shooting the Guerrilla: Photography and Comrade Leila Khaled as the Face of the Revolution*

Rory Sykes, Art History

February 26

*Development without Democracy in Africa: Responding to the Revisionist Paradigm*

Richard Joseph, Northwestern University

COSPONSORED BY THE PROGRAM OF AFRICAN STUDIES

## March

March 3

*Brown Bag Buzz: Roundtable Discussion on the Conflict in Syria*

MENA Graduate Students

March 10

*Graduate Student Colloquium: Building (a) Cultural Capital: the Mechanics of Cultural Production on Saadiyat Island, UAE*

Elizabeth Harrington, Anthropology

March 15

*The View from Kasımpaşa*

Vasif Kortun, SALT, Istanbul

COSPONSORED BY THE BLOCK MUSEUM OF ART AND THE BUFFETT CENTER

March 31

*Graduate Student Colloquium: Shahi al-Huriya: Militant Optimism and Freedom Tea*

Leila Tayeb, Performance Studies

March 31

*The Origins of Voluntary Compliance: Attitudes towards Taxation in Urban Nigeria*

Adrienne Labas, American University

COSPONSORED BY THE PROGRAM OF AFRICAN STUDIES



CO-SPONSORSHIPS LISTED ABOVE

## April

April 7

*War and Peace in Islam*

Makram Abbès, École Normal Supérieure-Lettres & Sciences Humaines- Lyon

COSPONSORED BY THE FRENCH INTERDISCIPLINARY GROUP

April 10

*Moroccan Chronicles Film Screenings: Opening Night: "Si Moh, The Unlucky Man" and "El Chergui" (The East Wind)*

Moumen Smihi, Director

COSPONSORED BY THE BUFFETT CENTER, THE KAPLAN INSTITUTE, THE CENTER FOR GLOBAL CULTURE AND COMMUNICATION, WITH ADDITIONAL SPONSORSHIP FROM OTHER GROUPS

April 11

*Moroccan Chronicles Film Screenings: "44, or Tales of the Night"*

Moumen Smihi, Director

CO-SPONSORSHIPS LISTED ABOVE

April 14

*Moumen Smihi in Discussion*

Moumen Smihi, Film Director

CO-SPONSORSHIPS LISTED ABOVE

April 15

*De la Révolution Française au Structuralisme: un Monde arabe fascine: importance de Taha Hussein*

Moumen Smihi, Film Director

Nader Hashemi speaks about the Syrian crisis at a MENA Monday in February 2014

April 17

*Moroccan Chronicles Film Screenings: "Moroccan Chronicles" and "A Muslim Childhood"*

Moumen Smihi, Director

CO-SPONSORSHIPS LISTED ABOVE

April 18

*Moroccan Chronicles Film Screenings: "Girls and Swallows" and "Tanjawi: the Sorrows of a Young Tangerian"*

Moumen Smihi, Director

CO-SPONSORSHIPS LISTED ABOVE

April 21

*The Necessity of Disputation: the Practice of Argumentation among Seminarian Women in Tehran*

Amina Tawasil, Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow, Northwestern University

April 28

*New Directions: Keeping the Hyphen Alive:*  
Emile Habibi and Iraqi Jews in Israel  
Orit Bashkin, University of Chicago

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FAMILY CENTER FOR JEWISH AND ISRAEL STUDIES



MENA  
students at a  
screening of Moumen Smihi's  
films

## May

May 5

*Halaqa Series: Dabke Dance Workshop*  
MENA Language Faculty

May 12

*The Derailing of the Arab Spring: Lessons  
Learned about Democracy and Governance*  
Daniel Brumberg, Georgetown University

COSPONSORED BY THE PROGRAM OF AFRICAN STUDIES  
AND THE BUFFETT CENTER

May 19

*"Resistance Everywhere": Political  
Reverberations of the Gezi Resistance in Turkey*  
Asli Igsiz, New York University  
Mert Arslanalp, Northwestern University

## June

June 2

*Graduate Student Colloquium: Broadcasting  
Violence Against Alevis: Competing Historical  
Narratives of Alevi Marginalization in Turkey*  
Nazli Ozkan, Anthropology

2014-15

## October

October 6

*Changing Perceptions of the US in  
the Middle East: A Diplomat's  
Perspective*  
Nabeel Khoury,  
Northwestern  
University

October 13

*Last Illusions:  
Writing, Myth, and the  
Refashioning of History*  
Poro-chista Khakpour,  
Iranian-American novelist

October 20

*Creative Flow: Music, Genre, and Mobility in the  
Syrian Revolutionary Public Sphere*  
Shayna Silverstein, Northwestern University

October 23

*Gaza and Beyond: Israel, the Palestinians, and  
the Arab World*  
Featuring a panel of professors from  
Northwestern University, Brandeis  
University, and the Chicago Council on  
Global Affairs

CO-SPONSORED WITH THE CROWN FAMILY CENTER FOR  
JEWISH AND ISRAEL STUDIES

October 27

*Colonialism: Energy and Empire Before the Age  
of Oil*  
On Barak, Tel-Aviv University

## November

November 3

*Graduate Student Colloquium: Combating Sexual  
Violence in Cairo's Streets*  
Magda Boutros, Sociology

November 10

*Halaqa: Arabic Sing-Along*  
MENA Language Faculty

November 17

*The Basij and the Continuity of the Islamic  
Republic in Iran*  
Saeid Golkar, Northwestern University

November 24

*Brown Bag Buzz: Interrogating the Concept of  
Democracy in the Middle East*  
MENA Graduate Students

## December

December 1

*Graduate Student Colloquium: Refugee  
Activists and the Struggle for Syria in Jordan*  
Rana Khoury, Political Science

## January

January 5

*The Middle East: 2014 in Review (and What to  
Expect in 2015)*  
Nabeel Khoury, Northwestern University

January 12

*The Howzevi Women in Iran: a Line Made by  
Walking*  
Amina Tawasil, Northwestern University

January 26

*Graduate Student Colloquium: "The Imperial  
Future of Ruins: French Travelers in Morocco  
Before the Protectorate"*  
Matthew Brauer, French and Italian

## February

February 2

*Halaqa: A Celebration of Arab Cinema*  
MENA Language Faculty

February 9

*The Aesthetic Politics of Caliphal Legitimacy:  
ISIS Media, Web 2.0, and Public Diplomacy*  
Amanda Rogers, University of Wisconsin-  
Madison

February 16

*Sexuality Politics in Egypt in the Aftermath of  
the 30th of June*  
Dalia Abd el-Hameed, Egyptian Initiative  
for Personal Rights

CO-SPONSORED BY THE SEXUALITIES PROJECT AT  
NORTHWESTERN (SPAN)



February 23

*Farce and Tragedy: 'New Turkey' on the Verge of Nervous Breakdown*

Kerem Öktem, University of Graz

## March

March 2

*New Directions in Middle East and North African Studies: Writing a History of Sectarianism*

Ussama Makdisi, Rice University

March 16

*Jet Set Frontiers: Tourism, Hijackings, Petrodollars, and the Politics of Aeromobility from Beirut to the Gulf*

Waleed Hazbun, American University of Beirut

March 30

*"Where Have All the Grown-Ups Gone?" The Emergence of Children in the New Turkish Novel*

Meltem Gürle, Boğaziçi University

## April

April 16

*Film Screening: Hiss! Dokhtarha Faryad Nemizanand! (Hush! Girls Don't Scream!)*

Pouran Derakhshandeh, Iranian Filmmaker

CO-SPONSORED BY BLOCK CINEMA

April 17

*Film Screening: Bist (Twenty)*

Pouran Derakhshandeh, Iranian Filmmaker

April 20

*Public Lecture and Discussion*

Pouran Derakhshandeh, Iranian Filmmaker

April 27

*Calculating the Times of Prayer on IslamicFinder.org*

Daniel Stolz, Northwestern University

## May

May 4

*Learn Turkish and Persian in One Hour!*

Oya Topcuoglu and Austin O'Malley, MENA Language Faculty

May 11

*Camera Orientalis*

Ali Behdad, University of California – Los Angeles

May 18,

*Secularism and Islamic Revival in the Palestinian Immigrant Community*  
Loren Lybarger, University of Chicago

## June

June 1

*New Directions in Middle East and North African Studies: Iranian or Not? That Indeed Might Not be the Question*  
Talinn Grigor, Brandeis University



MENA Undergraduates at Commencement, June 2014



Arabic students in Ragy Mikhaeel's class



# UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM

## MENA Alumni

In June 2014, the first class of MENA majors and minors graduated. A second class were awarded degrees the next year. There are currently more than 25 majors and minors following in their footsteps.

Siddiq Ather  
2014

Elisabeth Boeck  
2014

Nouha Boundaoui<sup>m</sup>  
2014

Danielle Chung<sup>m</sup>  
2014

Amina Dreessen  
2015

Natalie Gallon  
2014

Arshad Haque  
2014

Keisha James<sup>m</sup>  
2014

Gavriella Keyles  
2014

Hannah Kraus<sup>m</sup>  
2014

Rida Malick<sup>h</sup>  
2014

Hinasahar Muneeruddin  
2014

Zabin Patel  
2014

Lydia Ramsey  
2015

Yomna Waly  
2014

<sup>m</sup> indicates that the student graduated with a minor in MENA Studies. Otherwise, the student majored in MENA.

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





# GRADUATE PROGRAM

The faculty of the Program in Middle East and North African Studies believe that a dual commitment to the rigors of disciplinary training and to the perspectives that interdisciplinarity opens up offers emerging scholars the best possible training upon which their own advanced research may build.

On the graduate level, the MENA Program offers a PhD certificate in Middle East and North African Studies. Graduate students earn this certificate by successfully completing five course credits in MENA and participating in the year-long MENA Graduate Colloquium, plus passing a language requirement.

The MENA Program currently boasts more than 20 graduate students drawn from across nine departments, including anthropology, comparative literature, history, political science, and performance studies. Students pursuing a PhD certificate in MENA are working on topics such as democratization and grassroots organizations in the Middle East, the regulation of religious minorities, arts centers in the Gulf, Turkish media, contemporary dance in Morocco, and Iranian cinema and poetics.

There are many different ways for graduate students to participate in the intellectual life of the MENA graduate program even if they are not pursuing a certificate. The MENA Colloquium is open to all members of the Northwestern community. Graduate-level MENA seminars are available to graduate students across the university. We encourage all students to learn more about our research and activities by participating in our public events and signing up for our listserv.



Left: Professor Ragy Mikhaeel's undergraduate Arabic language class visits an area Middle Eastern restaurant

Above left: Amina Dreessen (WCAS '2015) shakes MENA Director Brian Edwards' hand at Commencement 2015

Right and above right: MENA graduate students holding a workshop on research methods, Winter Quarter 2015



# MENA STUDENTS STUDY ABROAD

MENA students pursue their studies across the region, both while they are enrolled at Northwestern and after. We profile three such MENA students— one a recent graduate and the other two advanced PhD students, to give a sense of the range of interests to be found among our dynamic student community.

## Undergraduate Alumna: Elisabeth Boeck (WCAS '14)

After graduating in June 2014 with a B.A. in MENA, Elisabeth Boeck completed the year-long CASA (Center for Arabic Studies Abroad) Fellowship held in Amman, Jordan. During her year in Jordan, she continued advanced studies of Modern Standard and Jordanian Colloquial Arabic, taking classes held in Arabic on topics such as translation and the Syrian conflict. She also volunteered at an organic farm in the countryside and various farmers' markets around the city. Over the course of the year, she enjoyed returning to Egypt (she had studied abroad during her junior year at the University of Alexandria) several times, including when she worked for six weeks at an organic farm in Nuweiba, where she farmed, conducted research on environmental issues in South Sinai, and translated applications and social media postings for the farm's owner.





## Graduate Student: Sean Lee, Doctoral Candidate in Political Science and MENA

In fall 2014, Sean Lee returned to Evanston from Lebanon, where he had been conducting fieldwork for his dissertation on ethnic and sectarian minority groups in times of conflict. He is currently working on Lebanon and Syria, but the current situation in Syria has rendered travel there impossible since March 2011. As a solution, and in the interim, he has conducted interviews on that conflict in Turkey and Lebanon. His latest trip to Lebanon focused on interviewing members of the Druze community in Syria, predominantly from al-Suweida in the south and the Damascus neighborhood of Jaramana. As there are a lot of connections- familial and otherwise- between the Druze communities of Lebanon and Syria, it has been possible to gain access to interviewees from Syria currently residing in Lebanon, in particular the Chouf Mountain, which is a mixed Druze and Maronite Christian region, and Aley, which is a Druze city outside of Beirut on the way to Damascus. While based in Beirut, he took day trips outside of the city to conduct interviews, the content of which emphasized the important differences between the situations of the Druze communities during the wars in Lebanon and Syria.





## Graduate Student: Nazlı Özkan, Doctoral Candidate in Anthropology and MENA

Nazlı Özkan's dissertation project focuses on how televisual news media emerges as a key arena of political activism for the religious minority of Alevis, a non-Sunni Muslim community excluded by the official hegemony of Sunni Turkey. During preliminary research trips to Istanbul in the summers of 2012 and 2013, she realized that news production practices at Alevi television networks are useful venues to explore both the possibilities and the limits of the group's media activism. Therefore, she is now conducting dissertation fieldwork in Istanbul, working as a correspondent and editor for Alevi television channels.

Working for a minority network in Turkey with a clear political agenda is not an easy job. Representing the demands and the problems of the community requires a constant struggle in the wider media field that usually renders such issues invisible. As low-budget, small-scale television networks, Alevi media also face serious economic challenges partly because they have almost no share in the advertisement revenues. Through her engagement with these networks, she has learnt the creative ways the reporters find to overcome the various political and economic challenges they encounter in their quests to carve out a space for themselves in the highly controlled and commercialized field of Turkish news media.





# VISITING PROFESSOR

## Nabeel Khoury: From the Front Lines of the Middle East to the Halls of Northwestern

Thanks to a generous gift from the GPD Charitable Trust, Dr. Nabeel Khoury served as the MENA Program's first visiting professor during the 2014-2015 academic year. Dr. Khoury has a long history of direct experience in the MENA region, having served for twenty-five years as a Foreign Service Officer in the State Department, being posted variously in Egypt, Iraq, Morocco, Qatar the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen, among other locations. After serving as the State Department Spokesman for US Central Command during the Iraq War and Director of the Near East South Asia Office of the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research, he came to Chicago and joined the MENA faculty for the year.

While working with the program, he offered two advanced classes for undergraduates: "U.S. Policy in the Middle East" and "The Arab Uprising." He has likewise proven a prolific writer and speaker. As of April 2015, during his time at Northwestern he published over fourteen articles and editorials on the modern Middle East for a variety of venues, including *The New York Times*, *The Huffington Post*, and *The Cairo Review of Global Affairs*. He gave six public lectures across the Evanston and greater Chicagoland area, including the keynote address at the 27th Annual University of Chicago Model United Nations Conference. He also made frequent appearances on a number of television and radio stations, including *BBC News*, *Al-Jazeera*, the *PBS NewsHour*, and *WBEZ Radio*.



# FACULTY NEWS

## CORE FACULTY

**Brian Edwards**, in addition to his role in MENA, completed his new book *After the American Century: The Ends of U.S. Culture in the Middle East*, which will appear from Columbia University Press in November. In 2014, he published “Jumping Publics: Magdy el Shafee’s Cairo Comics” in *NOVEL*, and “Islam” in *Keywords for American Cultural Studies, 2nd Ed.* Looking forward to new projects, he did interviews with young Moroccan writers, filmmakers, and activists in August, and in December he traveled to Istanbul and Ankara to learn more about American Studies in Turkey. Also this winter, he lectured in Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan), American University of Beirut, and Georgetown’s School of Foreign Service in Qatar. Named a Class of 2015 “Emerging Leader” by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs, Brian is working on a project on expanding the teaching of Arabic in Chicago Public Schools and has been meeting with CPS officials. In connection, he has published editorials in the *Chicago Tribune* and *The Chronicle of Higher Education* this spring on why teaching Arabic should be a national priority, in addition to an 18-page policy report published in June 2015 by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs.

**Hannah Feldman** enjoyed a residency with the Canadian Centre for Architecture in Montreal in the spring and summer of 2014, where she conducted research on urban design in Algiers and photography in Tangier. She presented papers across the US, Canada, and the UK, and addressed the CAA Art History Conference in February 2014 with the paper, “What Does Decolonization Look Like?: Transverality and the Recuperation of Revolution, Algiers, 1964.” She was appointed a member of the scientific committee for a conference series associated with the Louvre, the Académie de France in Rome, the University of Bordeaux, and several other institutions. She was very proud to see a number of her advisees complete their PhD’s, and in February, her newest book, *From a Nation Torn: Decolonizing Art and Representation in France, 1945-1962*, was published by Duke University Press.

**Katherine Hoffman** was awarded a EURIAS Senior Fellowship with the Institute for Advanced Study in Nantes. Her research project, “Mirror of the Soul: Customary Law and Islam in the Transformation of the Judiciary in Morocco Since 1930” drew on ethnography, linguistic anthropology, history, and legal studies to document struggles over the relationship between legal practice, religion, gender, and collective identity in pre- and post-Protectorate Morocco. Her article “Les serment, les marabouts et la mosquée dans le droit coutumier berbère au Maroc” was published in 2013. She continues her research on the relationship between expressive culture, ethnicity, law and political economy in historical and contemporary times.



**Elizabeth Shakman Hurd** won the Weber Award for the best paper in religion and politics presented at the 2013 American Political Science Association annual meeting for her paper “‘The Religious Offensive:’ The Politics of Religious Engagement.” She published four academic articles including “Alevis under Law: the Politics of Religious Freedom in Turkey” in the *Journal of Law and Religion* as well as “The International Politics of Religious Freedom” in *IIC Quarterly*. Hurd received several grants, including an EDGS Speaker Series Grant for a series on Religion, Law, & Politics, a Hewlett Course Development Grant for a new course on the politics of religious diversity, and a workshop grant from the Luce Foundation. She actively engaged the national and international media with articles and interviews appearing in such outlets as Al Jazeera America, Marginalia, and the Religion News Service, and lectured at NYU, Columbia University, the London School of Economics, the Institut d’Études Politiques (Sciences Po), among other locations.

**Rebecca Johnson** continued to work on her book manuscript, *A History of the Novel in Translation: Errant Reading in Arabic*, for which she won a 2014-2015 year fellowship from the Alice Kaplan Institute for the Humanities. She also presented her work at the American Comparative Literature Association and finished three articles to be published in *The Encyclopedia of Islam*, *Novel: A Forum on Fiction*, and the edited volume *Inventing World Literature* (NYU Press). She was also privileged to be one of the four MENA faculty to be nominated to the Associated Student Government’s Faculty Honor Roll for excellence in undergraduate teaching.

**Henri Lauzière**, after a year’s leave of absence in Montreal, completed his book manuscript entitled *The Making of Salafism and the Evolution of Islamic Reform in the Twentieth Century* and signed a contract with Columbia University Press. His conceptual, intellectual and political history of Salafism is scheduled to be published in fall 2015. Lauzière also finalized an article on the Moroccan globetrotter Taqi al-Din al-Hilali’s encounter with shortwave radio. The article, now under review, examines the connection between ideology and technology or, more specifically, the connection between the articulation of “Islamic nationalism” and the advent of a new form of communication that transcended political boundaries and could reach both literate and illiterate audiences in real time.

**Hamid Naficy** has been integrally involved in MENA’s film programs. He was a co-organizer of Pouran Derakhshandeh’s visit to Northwestern and spoke on her work at both her MENA Monday and on-stage after the screenings of her films. He also co-organized and co-sponsored Block Cinema’s “The Short Films of Kamran Shirdel,” at Northwestern in January 2014. He served as a juror for the Sixth Farhang Short Film Festival in Los Angeles, and participated in several panels at the Edinburgh International Film Festival. He kept close ties with American and international media, being featured on Al Jazeera, WBEZ Radio, Voice of America, and the Chicago Sun-Times, among others. In addition, he lectured and participated in panels locally at the University of Chicago and the Gene Siskel Film Center as well as internationally in Cologne, Montreal, and Toronto.

**Inna Naroditskaya** has been engaged in a number of activities following the publication of her book *Bewitching Russian Opera: the Tsarina from Stage to Stage*. Throughout 2014 and 2015, she presented at the Music and Iconology Conference in Torino, Italy, delivered a paper at the Society for Ethnomusicology in Pittsburgh, and gave guest lectures at the Peabody Institute of Johns Hopkins University and Kansas University. An article of hers, “Jews, Jazz, and Early Cinema in America and Stalin’s Russia” was published in *Music and Minorities from Around the World* (2015).



Post-screening discussion with Moumen Smihi  
From left to right: Brian Edwards, Moumen Smihi, and Peter Limbrick (UC Santa Cruz)

## Wendy Pearlman

won a Weinberg College Distinguished Teaching Award and was elected to the ASG Faculty Honor Roll. Her article, “Competing for Lebanon’s Diaspora: Transnationalism and Domestic Struggles in a Weak State” (*International Migration Review*) won the 2014 Moise Khayrallah Lebanese Diaspora Studies Prize for article by an established scholar, and her article “Emotions and the Microfoundations of the Arab Uprisings” was named one of *Foreign Policy*’s best journal articles on the Middle East in 2013. Wendy published several popular pieces based on her nearly 200 interviews with Syrian refugees in Jordan and Turkey, including opinion pieces in *Reuters* and *Huffington Post*, and the narrative essay, “Fathers of Revolution” in *Guernica*. Her co-authored book manuscript, *Triadic Deterrence: Israel, Arab States, and Nonstate Actors* (with Boaz Atzili) was awarded an advance contract with Columbia University Press. She gave invited lectures at George Washington, the University of Michigan, and the University of Chicago, presented at four academic conferences, and gave numerous talks at Northwestern and in the Chicago area.

## Carl Petry

had two articles published in the 2013-2014 year: “Crime and Scandal in Foreign Relations of the Mamluk Sultanate: Espionage and Succession Crises Linked to Cyprus,” in *La frontière méditerranéenne du XVe au XVIIe siècle: échanges, circulations et affrontements*, and “Travel Patterns of Medieval Notables in the Near East Reconsidered,” in *Everything is on the Move: the Mamluk Empire in Trans-regional Networks*. He also gave two conference papers, “Imperial Projection Challenged: Espionage and Conspiracy as Criminal Threats Compromising Security in the Mamluk Sultanate” at the Middle East Studies Association, and “Reproducing the State in 15th Century Egypt and Syria” at “Whither the Early Modern State? Fifteenth-Century State Formations Across Eurasia: Connections, Divergences, and Comparisons” at Ghent University.

## Jessica Winegar

published articles in *The Middle East Report*, *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, Northwestern’s *On the Ground: New Directions in Middle East and North African Studies*, as well as in Stanford University Press’s blog. She organized a panel on “Art in North Africa: Contemporary Trends in Recent Scholarship” with the Arts Council of the African Studies Association in which she presented a paper, “A New Islamic Art in Egypt.” She also gave lectures on anthropology’s engagement with the Middle East and on the Egyptian revolution at the American Studies Association, the American Ethnological Association, the American Anthropological Association, and the University of Michigan.

## ipek Yosmaoğlu’s

latest book, *Blood Ties: Religion, Violence, and the Politics of Nationhood in Ottoman Macedonia, 1878-1908*, was published by Cornell University Press. She presented at and participated in a number of conferences, including at Columbia University, Georgetown University, and Yale’s Center for Hellenic Studies. She was also awarded tenure in Northwestern’s history department.



## VISITING FACULTY

**Saeid Golkar** was awarded a fellowship with the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars for the 2013-2014 year, and in August 2014 was invited to give a lecture on social manipulation in post-revolutionary Iran at Stanford University. Throughout the year, three of his articles were published: “Iran’s Revolutionary Guard: its Views of the United States” in *Middle East Policy*, “University Under Siege: the Case of the Professors’ Basij Organization” in the *Middle East Journal*, and “The Feminization of Control: Iran’s Women Militia and Social Order in Iran” in *Hawwa: Journal of Women of the Middle East and the Islamic World*. In January 2014, he joined the Chicago Council on Global Affairs as a Senior Fellow. His most recent book, *Captive Society: the Basij Militia and Social Control in Iran*, is due to be published by Columbia University Press in June 2015.

**Amina Tawasil** (Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow in MENA, 2013-2015 ) presented a paper entitled “Imam Khomeini Advised Us to Learn English’: Clair de Lune, a Story of Love, and the Howzevi (Seminarian) Women in Tehran,” at University of Michigan’s Center for Middle Eastern and North African Studies and Near Eastern Studies, and at the 113th Annual American Anthropological Association Meeting, Washington, DC. She also presented a paper “The Necessity of Disputation: The Practice of Argumentation Among Seminarian Women in Tehran” at Northwestern University’s MENA Studies Program. In addition, she published a short piece for the *Society of Humanistic Anthropology in the Anthropology News* entitled “Measuring Up: Where Has the ‘I’ Gone in My Writing?” Her dissertation abstract entitled “The Howzevi (Seminarian) Women in Iran: Constituting and Reconstituting Paths”, which she worked on throughout 2014, will be published January 2015 in the *Journal of Middle East Women’s Studies* (JMEWS).



MENA faculty delegation visits Al-Jazeera studios as part of trip to NU-Q, Doha, September 2012  
From left to right: Edwards, Lauzière, Pearlman, Hoffman, Winegar, Stilt, Johnson, Hurd

# FACULTY

## Core Faculty

Brian Edwards  
*Crown Professor in Middle East Studies  
and Associate 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*

Rebecca Johnson  
*Assistant Professor of English and the  
Humanities*

Henri Lauzière  
*Assistant Professor of History*

Hamid Naficy  
*Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani Professor in  
Communication*

Inna Naroditskaya  
*Professor of Ethnomusicology*

Wendy Pearlman  
*Assistant Professor of Political Science and  
Crown Junior Chair in Middle East Studies*

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

Jessica Winegar  
*Associate Professor of Anthropology*

İpek Yosmaoğlu  
*Associate Professor of History*

# GRADUATE STUDENTS

Karima W. Abidine  
*Anthropology*

Magda Boutros  
*Sociology*

Emma Chubb  
*Art History*

Maziyar Faridi  
*Comparative Literary  
Studies*

Salma al-Shami  
*Political Science*

Matthew Brauer  
*French and Italian*

Elizabeth Derderian  
*Anthropology*

Hasheem Hakeem  
*French and Italian*

Laila Ballout  
*History*

Arif Samet Camoğlu  
*English*

Gözde Erdeniz  
*Political Science*

Alex Hobson  
*History*

# STAFF



## Visiting Faculty

Saeid Golkar, *Lecturer, 2014-*

Nabeel Khoury, *Visiting Associate Professor, 2014-15*

Özge Koçak, *Lecturer 2015*

Amina Tawasil, *Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow, 2013-15*

## Language Instructors

Fadia Antabli, *Arabic*

Uri Horesh, *Arabic, 2013-15*

Fatima Khan, *Arabic*

Ragy Mikhaeel, *Arabic*

Austin O'Malley, *Persian*

Oya Topçuoğlu, *Turkish*

## Affiliated Faculty

Ann Gunter  
*Professor of Art History and the Humanities*

Brannon Ingram  
*Assistant Professor of Religious Studies*

Rajeev Kinra  
*Assistant Professor of History*

Nasrin Qader  
*Associate Professor of French*

Elie Rekhess  
*Crown Visiting Professor in Israel Studies*

Shayna Silverstein  
*Assistant Professor of Performance Studies*

Rana Khoury  
*Political Science*

Sean Lee  
*Political Science*

Taymaz Pour Mohammad  
*Comparative Literary  
Studies*

Marjan Mohammadi  
*Comparative Literary  
Studies*

Mona Oraby  
*Political Science*

Aydan Özipek  
*Anthropology*

Nazli Özkan  
*Anthropology*

Rory Sykes  
*Art History*

Leila Tayeb  
*Performance Studies*

Ussama Makdisi speaks  
on the history of sectarianism in the Middle  
East in March 2015

Tim Garrett, *Project Coordinator*  
Lexy Gore, *Program Assistant 2013-14, 2015-*  
Katie Rashid, *Program Assistant 2014-15*



# MENA

Middle East and  
North African Studies

## COLLABORATIONS

Alice Kaplan Institute for the Humanities  
Block Cinema  
Buffett Center for International and  
Comparative Studies  
Center for Global Culture and  
Communication  
Crown Family Center for Jewish and Israel  
Studies  
English Department  
Evanston Public Library

French Interdisciplinary Group  
French and Italian Department  
Keyman Modern Turkish Studies Program  
Program of African Studies  
Program in Comparative Literary Studies  
Radio, Television, Video, and Film  
Department  
Religious Studies Department  
Screen Cultures Program  
Sexualities Project at Northwestern (SPAN)

## The Program in Middle East and North African Studies (MENA)

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Report edited by Tim Garrett  
Designed by Mel Keiser