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A Message from Outgoing Director Adam Sabra

It has been an eventful three years and it is hard to believe that my time as director of CMES is coming to an end. Since I arrived at UCSB five years ago, the faculty in Middle East studies has grown significantly, with new hires in History, Film & Media Studies, Art History, English, and a new Middle East librarian. Thanks to these new hires, the efforts of our existing faculty, and additional funding from our donors, we have been able to expand our course offerings and organize an even more diverse range of lectures, conferences, symposia, film showings, and cultural events of all kinds. We have also offered travel and research support to graduate students in many disciplines, including most of the social sciences and humanities.

I would like to extend my thanks to everyone who served on the CMES Executive Committee over the past three years and to every faculty member who proposed and helped organize an event. We have developed a collaborative model of governance for our program that I think has been very successful, diverse, and inclusive. I hope that interested faculty will continue to participate in any way they find meaningful.

I am heading to Bonn, Germany to spend a year working on a long-delayed book. It will be nice to concentrate on my own work, but I will miss the excitement of directing a vibrant program. I am sure CMES will be in good hands, and I look forward to seeing the new directions it will take under new leadership.

Adam Sabra, Outgoing Director of CMES
On Sunday, April 29, 2018, **Magda Campo** organized an All Gauchos Reunion for the Arabic Language Alumni and students of Arabic language. Five of her alumni gave presentations and three alumni were present at the event. The goal of this reunion was not only to make students aware of the benefits of learning Arabic, but how the language they are learning can play a vital role in their future work. Therefore five alumni presenters, who are using Arabic in their careers, offered to speak.

The presentations were given by Professor **Heather Keaney**, Associate Professor of Middle East History, in the Department of History at Westmont College, in Santa Barbara. Professor Keaney, a graduate of the History Department, told students how learning Arabic allowed her to live in Egypt for a long period of time, teaching at the American University in Cairo, and perfecting both her Egyptian colloquial, and her Modern Standard Arabic during her time there. She also reported that she took her students to Egypt for the month of February where they enjoyed their time there learning about the culture, its history and the Arabic language. She also mentioned that her students enjoyed their experience so much that they would like to continue learning Arabic during the fall semester at Westmont College.

**Alexandria Ware De Wolfe**, Science Data Center Manager is a Professional Research Associate at the Laboratory for Atmospheric and Space Physics. She is the Manager of the Data Centers (S.D.C) for the Emirates Mars Mission (in development) and NASA’s Maevent Mission to Mars. Alexandria was an Astronomy major and decided to learn Arabic and major in Middle East Studies. She then went back to Astronomy. She thinks that the reason why she obtained the managerial post for the new Mission to Mars program for the Emirates is because she knew Arabic. This was a great example of mixing the sciences and Arabic even if they are opposite.

**Madeline Atchison**, Concentric Advisors Global Intelligence Analyst in San Jose, California. She utilizes business intelligence sources, internal and external assets, and open-source media to identify threats. She also collects, analyzes, and monitors viable hazards to employees, operations, global assets, and the brand. She also assists the executive leadership team via protective intelligence practices. In 2016 she was in Amman, Jordan working as the English Media Coordinator for Baderi Campaign which encourages Jordanian women’s economic participation in order to overcome obstacles to female entrepreneurship in the Middle East. Learning Arabic lead her to both of these jobs, also during the fall of 2015 she worked with immigrants in need of medical treatment and legal representation in Rabat, Morocco. The documentation consisted of both French and Arabic home interview with at-risk refugees in the outskirts of Rabat.

**Allegra O’ Donoghue**, manages CET’s intensive Arabic and continued on pg. 9
Another Successful Year for UCSB Model Arab League

Over the weekend of April 13-15, 2018, students from a number of California universities met at Santa Rosa Junior College to participate in the Northern California Model Arab League Competition. UCSB’s team represented Yemen, Jordan and Morocco this year. Graduate advisors Caleb McCarthy and Tomi Pulkkinen advised the team, which spent the winter quarter researching historical and current issues shaping policies in and around these countries. Eleven students competed for UCSB, including Catherine Anz, Maddie Burgess, Maribelle Boutrous, Logan Clement, Nathaniel Frydel, Nathan Hodge, Jacob Hoffman, Claire Messina, and Cameron Richey. In particular, we are pleased to recognize Kirsten Bejarano (Jordan), who received an Outstanding Delegate award and Peri Propper (Morocco), who received a Distinguished Delegate award. UCSB was once again well represented by this fine group of students.

Caleb McCarthy, MAL Advisor

The Nature and People in California:
Seyit Deniz Yilmaz, Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant, 2017-2018

One of the most surprising observations I have made in California life is the amazing nature and, more surprisingly, how the people of California appreciate it. They are so aware of its beauty and perhaps there is a reason: the nice and warm climate. The spectacular national forests and beaches are so legendary and very-well protected by the State of California. The government takes any advantage to make people be in touch with nature and learn about it. The national forests such as Yosemite, Sequoia, or Death Valley are full of hiking paths, observatory points, and natural museums. It is possible to visit a museum related to local sea-life by the eye-catching beaches from San Diego to San Francisco. One of the common weekend activities is to visit California wineries and taste local wines which are exported to all around the world and have become world-famous. You can find nice hiking paths or camping areas even in the desert areas around Los Angeles. It can be one of the most exciting or peaceful nights in someone’s life in the middle of a desert looking up at the sky so full of stars. One can also easily understand why there are so many opportunities to discover nature in California just by strolling in a supermarket which sells a lot of camping and hiking-related products. Additionally, there are many fund-raising or volunteering organizations devoting themselves to protect nature. Also, the local companies are investing in technological devices or vehicles which can work with recyclable energy. These efforts show how people are deeply interested in the nature around themselves and appreciative of it, which is unfortunately not much salient or common in Turkey. Establishing facilities and activities for public use in nature, and encouraging people to engage in them would definitely make us more sensitive to not only nature but also ourselves and each other.

Seyit Deniz Yilmaz, Turkish FLTA, UCSB
Spring 2018 marked fifteen years since the 2003 US-led invasion of Iraq and the fall of the Ba’ath party. Yet, overwhelmingly, Iraqis’ voices are only occasionally, if ever, heard in the United States as whispers in media reporting on and forgotten footnotes in a history of the ever-present “war on terror.” In order to foreground Iraqis’ voices at a critical moment, a collective of UCSB faculty organized the “Iraq Front & Center” symposium in May 2018 to engage our campus community in an active consideration of what is at stake for Iraq and Iraqis today.

The symposium featured four distinguished guest speakers whose own work crosses the boundaries and borders of disciplinary thinking and writing: Sinan Antoon, a novelist, translator, poet and filmmaker, Sara Pursley, a historian and scholar of gender and sexuality, Leila Fadel, a radio correspondent and print journalist, and Omar Dewachi, a medical doctor and anthropologist. The two-day symposium featured two interdisciplinary panels, one film screening and post-film panel, and a faculty and graduate student roundtable.

“How do you write about a country that is disintegrating?” In an interview from 2015, Sinan Antoon, posed this difficult question, which was at the heart of this symposium, which opened a space to think about this and related questions: How do you cope with everyday life in cities where a good day is one where less than ten people are killed? How do you hope in a place where the powerful are not held accountable for their crimes? How do you persist, dream, create, live and love in the face of the unmaking of your country, your community, your home, your family, your body?

On Thursday May 10, Sherene Seikaly (History) moderated a panel featuring Sara Pursley (NYU) and Sinan Antoon (NYU) who offered deep textual analyses of Jawad Salim’s sculpture and Sargon Boulus’ poetry as memorializing practices that in one regard narrate how Iraqis live with death, dying and the dead. The panel was sponsored by the IHC’s Crossings + Boundaries series. That evening, following a screening of Kasim Abid’s documentary Life After the Fall at the Pollock Theatre, Mona Damluji (Film and Media Studies) moderated a panel featuring Leila Fadel (National Public Radio) and Sinan Antoon about storytelling from Iraq after 2003. This event was co-sponsored by the Carsey-Wolf Center and the Arab Film and Media Institute.

On Friday May 11, Paul Amar (Global Studies) moderated a panel featuring presentations by Omar Dewachi (American University of Beirut) and Leila Fadel who discussed many of the unobserved consequences of the sanctions, military occupation and structural violence in Iraq grounded in their professional practices in medicine and journalism. The closing roundtable, moderated by Lisa Hajjar (Sociology), invited the four speakers to join UCSB faculty and graduate students for an extended conversation on the question of how scholars and others can support and foster research and reporting initiatives going forward that better address the lacuna of Iraqi voices in shaping knowledge production. Moreover, the presentations and conversations fostered by the symposium illuminated fuller under-

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Lisa Hajjar Returns to Guantanamo

In May, Lisa Hajjar made her ninth trip to Guantanamo since 2010 to observe military commission hearings. These trips are connected to her research for a book, *The War in Court*, which focuses on the legal and political consequences of the US torture program in the “war on terror” and its aftermath—which is on vivid display in the military commissions. Because people cannot go to Guantanamo as “scholars” or “concerned citizens,” Hajjar goes as a journalist. She has published numerous articles about the proceedings in the commissions in *Middle East Report*, *Jadaliyya*, and *The Nation*.

The most recent trip was for hearings in the 9/11 case (KSM II v. United States). In this case, which is grinding slowly in the pre-trial discovery phase, five Guantanamo detainees, including Khalid Sheikh Mohammed (KSM), are on trial for their alleged roles in the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. What has made the discovery process in this case exceptionally contentious by any measure is the fact that the five men were held for years and tortured in CIA black sites prior to their transfer to Guantanamo in September 2006. Most information about the Agency’s Rendition, Detention, and Interrogation (RDI) program—although it was terminated years ago—remains a national security secret. The defense lawyers, all of whom have top security clearance, have spent years filing motions and arguing to gain information about what happened to their clients while they were in CIA custody, and insist that, to do their jobs, this information must be discoverable, not least because the death penalty is on the table. The prosecution disagrees, counter-insisting that the focus of this trial is the defendants’ alleged involvement in the crime of 9/11, not what happened to them afterward.

While most of the open court sessions in May focused on the battles between the five defense teams and the prosecution over discovery about the CIA’s torture of the defendants, there was one session on one topic in which everyone seemed to agree. What they agreed about was that President Donald Trump had made unprecedented (or as Trump might say “unpresidented”) and inappropriate statements about the defendants and this system that could taint the opinions of military officers who might be called in the future to serve as jurors. Who says Trump cannot be a unifying force? For the duration of one briefly argued motion, Trump unified the participants in the 9/11 military commission case against his extremist and ignorant commentary. (You can read my short take on this hearing at http://www.jadaliyya.com/Details/37510/Trump%E2%80%99s-Mouth-and-the-Guantanamo-Military-Commissions.)
Greetings from Fes! I have been in Morocco since June of last year on a Fulbright-Hays Fellowship researching varieties of Sufi practice and organization in contemporary Morocco. The fieldwork has primarily centered on two groups, though it has included numerous Sufi annual and weekly rituals, as well as conferences and public performances of Sufi organizations.

The first group is a newly-established branch of the Shadhili order called the Fawziyya-Karkariyya. Though its central zawiya is based in northern Morocco (Rif), its membership is composed of a transnational network of followers from the Americas, Europe, Africa, Middle East, and Australia. Pictured above is the yearly Mawlid al-Nabawi celebrating the Prophet’s birthday, a central ritual for this group as disciples from across the world come to renew bayā (allegiance) to the sheikh, to take part in the collective hadra, and to perform music or poetry.

The group is most notably distinguished by their multi-colored patched robes, a practice employed both as a symbol of the coexistence of multiple modes of reality (each represented by a specific color), as well as a means for disciplining the self through the evocation of ‘shame’. In addition to the patched robe, the group is well-known for its emphasis on visions and spiritual journeys to the malakut (spiritual dimension) whereupon elite disciples take different forms of knowledge (e.g., science of letters, astrology, alchemy, and language of angels). The disciples also receive inspiration from these journeys, sometimes for music, art or poetry, and other times for performing social acts (e.g., sadaqa). Finally, the group is highly active on the internet, ‘Facebook Living’ their weekly hadra and posting testimonials of visions and experiences from their spiritual retreat, dhikr; hadra, or bayā.

The second group, also loosely affiliated with the Shadhili order, is called the IACSAS, an academic center for Sufi studies headed by Dr. Aziz al-Kobaiti al-Idrissi, based in Fes. While not a tariqa in the traditional sense, this group employs many practices common to Moroccan Sufi groups, though it provides its own inflections on those practices. In addition, the group sponsors many international students through scholarships, many of whom are from Indonesia, while also participating in and hosting Sufi-themed conferences. Most recently, the group hosted a three-day conference entitled “Sufism and the building of the human being,” a topic which emerged out of the previous year’s conference on the role of Sufism in global diplomacy.

The IACSAS therefore sits in a new position in that while it does utilize some of the traditional practices and concepts of Moroccan Sufism, it situates them within a ‘civil society’ organization that relies on different organizational and recruitment strategies. In addition, as an academic center, its position vis-à-vis state policy regarding the formation of religious organizations in civil society reflects the emergence of a particular form of state-sponsored Sufism in which Sufism operates as a means for creating citizens with certain attitudes and dispositions toward religion in the public sphere.

The comparison of these two groups (along with a few others) revolves around three dimensions that have emerged from my fieldwork: mystical, ethical, and aesthetic. In continued on pg. 9
ALUMNI AND FACULTY UPDATES

Dwight Reynolds spent Winter Quarter 2018 as a research fellow at New York University Abu Dhabi working on a translation of selections from the 10th-century Kitāb al-Aghānī (The Great Book of Songs) for the Library of Arabic Literature. Life in the Emirates was fascinating as an almost futuristic example of extreme cosmopolitanism, where dozens of different cultures meet and mix, but where the “native” culture is almost invisible. In April he spent a month in Paris as a visiting professor at the EHESS (École des Hautes Études de Sciences Sociales) where life was punctuated by transportation strikes, student protests, and a rather violent May Day, as a result of the 50th anniversary of May 1968 coupled with reactions to various new policies of the Macron government. But it wouldn’t be a visit to France without a few grèves and manifs! Professor Reynolds is happy to report, however, that the excellence of French culinary and wine cultures has not been affected by the recent disturbances.

Hassan Almohammed has just been selected as Madeline Haas Russell Visiting Professor for the 2018-2019 academic year at Brandeis University’s Islamic and Middle East Studies Program.

Scopas Poggo recently received the “Excellence in Teaching Award” from Ohio State University for the academic year 2017-2018.

While at UCSB, Scopas worked with Bob Collins, but was much involved with Middle East Studies. He teaches at Ohio State and wrote about the Sudanese Civil War. His book, *The First Sudanese Civil War: Africans, Arabs, and Israelis in the Southern Sudan, 1955-1972*, has received great praise.


Mona Damluji, together with four faculty co-PIs from across campus, was awarded a Mellon Sawyer Seminar Grant for AY 2018-19. The “Energy Justice in Global Perspective” Sawyer Seminar is a collaborative effort to develop critical and creative research practices in energy justice by building on emergent work in the humanities and interpretive social sciences. At the heart of this seminar is conviction that movements, practices and debates among indigenous communities worldwide and societies of the Global South are central and not auxiliary to understanding humanity’s deep embroilment with carbon-based energy.
STORIES CONTINUED

Arabic Alumni Reunion

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Internship Programs in Jordan. She chairs the Green Committee at CET and co-hosts and produces CET’s podcast Abroad Perspective. We skyped her from Amman Jordan where she was working.

Samuel Weaver, Center for Strategic and International Studies Program Coordinator. He provides full administrative support for implementing executive training programs for clients including diplomats and military personnel from Japan to Saudi Arabia.

Our Religious Department Chair, Professor Kathleen Moore, told students how beneficial it was for her to learn Arabic Language. She also talked about her experience living in Egypt while on the CASA program and how it helped her perfect the language. She also talked about the Middle East Studies Major and how students of Arabic can double major, especially that Arabic is a big segment of the Major.

Finally, Professor Juan Campo presented the Arabic component of the Education Abroad Program. He mentioned the two major countries to learn the language and they are Jordan and Morocco.

All presenters were gracious to accept to communicate their experience to the Arabic language students and Magda Campo wants to thank all of them for taking time off their work and families to share their experiences using the language.

Mona Damluji, Film and Media Studies

Arabic Alumni Reunion

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Magda Camp, Religious Studies

Iraq Front and Center

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standings of what remains at stake and how much we have to learn from Iraqis who persist under inhumane conditions and unjust circumstances.

Fifteen years is a significant marker, particularly for those of us who teach on college and university campuses. Our undergraduate students were, on average, four years old in 2003. They are a generation that have come of age under the specter of a war on terror and crisis in Iraq that are seemingly without limits or any perceivable edge. Thus an important objective of this symposium was to draw our attention, as educators and students, to an analysis of the history, unfolding present and ongoing processes that shape our world.

Mona Damluji, Film and Media Studies

Thibdeau Notes

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short, I look at how members of these groups relate and use experiences of travelling to the malakut (i.e., the mystical dimension); how the leaders and students create and deploy a curriculum of guided self-development (i.e., the ethical dimension); and how they produce visual art, music, and poetry both as a means to and as an expression of mystical experiences and ethical cultivation (i.e., the aesthetic dimension).

All of this is situated within the context of multiple “calls of Islam” that permeate, fragment, and contour the field of religious discourse and practice in Morocco.

John Thibdeau, Religious Studies