We’ve had a good start to the 2017-18 academic year at CMES. Among the events which we sponsored in Fall were Thomas Abowd’s (Tufts University) October 10 lecture “Jerusalem, On the Moving Edge of Israeli Colonialism.” A week later, Daanish Faruqi (Duke University) spoke on his recent co-edited book *Egypt and the Contradictions of Liberalism*. On October 24, Hamed Qawasmeh of the Hebron International Resource Network gave a very well-attended talk on “The Two-State Solution for the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict: Is it Still Viable?” Finally, CMES also hosted “This Vast Earth: Ibn ‘Arabi’s Ecology of Consciousness” the Annual Conference of the Muhyiddin Ibn ‘Arabi Society on November 10 and 11 (see below for details).


As usual, CMES awarded travel funding to a number of graduate students who will present their work at conferences. Congratulations to Miguel Fuentes Carreno, Jesilyn Faust, and Esra Tunc! We will send out a call for a second round of conference travel grants in the Winter, followed by a call for summer research and language learning grants in the Spring.

There are a number of events coming up, including the visit of this year’s R. Stephen Humphreys Distinguished Visiting Scholar Gülru Necipoğlu on April 16-17, the “Iraq Front and Center: Fifteen Years On” symposium on May 10-11, and the “Histories of Economy in the Middle East” workshop on May 19-20, to name a few. Further details will be forthcoming via email and on our website (http://www.cmes.ucsb.edu/).

I wish everyone a happy and productive 2018!

Adam Sabra, Director CMES
This year’s MESA Mentoring Award was given to Professor Nancy E. Gallagher in honor of her exceptional contributions to the training of others:

With wide-ranging erudition and passionate commitment, she encourages students to discover and venture into intellectual terrains they might not have imagined all the while instilling in them, no matter how ardent their personal beliefs, a respect for professional standards of inquiry in their research and in their teaching. With quiet persistence and little fanfare, she guides and pushes her students to excellence.

A few congratulatory messages from former students:

Nancy has shown me how to responsibly contribute to the betterment of society through academia. It is an honor to be a student of a woman who helped forge the field of modern Middle East and North African history during a time when few women were in academia, let alone studying non-western civilizations. She is also a historian whose value of human rights is reflected in all the topics she chooses to research.

~ Heidi Morrison

Professor Nancy Gallagher is a true inspiration to anyone who has been fortunate enough to cross paths with her. She influenced the course of my life radically, both professionally but also personally. Professor Gallagher, never, for a moment, doubts her students’ ability to prevail and accomplish and be their best selves. As a mentor, she was always calm and containing, and somehow, like a soft much needed breeze in the midst of storms, amazingly able to carry everyone away safely to their shore. She is a carrier of a flame and gave us all, her students, from her light. That eternal light that keeps on giving, never getting dark. I am so grateful and proud to have been her student and I congratulate her for the much deserved MESA Mentoring award this year, and every year.

~ Nadia Nader

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Over the summer Dwight Reynolds gave a keynote address in Paris at a conference on Arab music titled, “Evolutions or revolutions? Contemporary Middle Eastern and North African Music – Traditions and New Tendencies.” After which he went seeking Arabic influences in Iceland – and found some!! In 1627 Barbary Coast corsairs raided several villages in Iceland, eventually seizing some 400 captives, many of whom were sold into slavery in Morocco and Algeria. One Icelandic minister was released with the hope that he would raise money to ransom the remaining captives, but when he finally made it to Copenhagen to plead his case before the King of Denmark, the king replied that due to needs of his army, then fighting in the Thirty Years’ War, he had no funds to ransom the Icelandic captives, despite the fact that they were his loyal subjects. Eventually some 27 Icelanders managed to find their way home to their seaside villages in Iceland, leaving various accounts of their captivity in North Africa. The autobiography of the Icelandic minister, in particular, makes fascinating reading – Arabs seen through 17th-century Icelandic eyes!

Next on the agenda was a workshop on Arabic philology hosted by St. Andrews University, but held on the Scottish Highland estate of Bamff, owned by the Ramsay family since 1232. Discussions of medieval Arabic philology were interspersed with tramping around the estate’s beaver ponds in big rubber “Wellies.” The European beaver has been extinct in Scotland for 150 years, but the current Ramseys have made it their life’s work to reintroduce it. Castors and medieval Arabic philology made a surprising good pair (but then again, it may have been the Scottish whiskey).

A more recent lecture/performance was in October at the Villa I Tatti on the outskirts of Florence where the topic was “Ariosto and the Arabs,” a mixture of Ariosto, Jorge Luis Borges, and Arabic epic poetry, topped off with an amazing performance of half-lifesize Sicilian Puppi operated by traditional puppet-masters.


Professor Reynolds will be on leave from UCSB during Winter and Spring quarters 2018 while in residence at New York University Abu Dhabi, where he will be working on a book-length translation of selected biographies from the tenth-century Kitab al-Aghani for the Library of Arabic Literature (New York University Press). He will return to UCSB in Fall 2018.
The following day, there were a series of lectures and breakout sessions and discussion groups. These included Hany Ibrahim (University of Calgary) on “Ibn ‘Arabi’s Metaphysics of Love,” Angela Jaffray on “Worshiping in Three Dimensions: Emigrating in God’s Vast Earth,” Erik Winkel on “Abu Madyan’s child, per singular momenta, and the skull suture: understanding Ibn Arabi’s Futuhat,” and Atif Khalil (University of Lethbridge) on “Ibn al-‘Arabi on The Grammar of Gratitude and the Shirk of Shukr.”

HAMED QAWASMEH:
The Two-State Solution for the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict: Is it Still Viable?

On Tuesday, October 24, Hamed Qawasmeh, the director of the grassroots organization, the Hebron International Resources Network (HIRN), gave a thorough and powerful talk on the death of the two-state solution to a fully-packed room at UCSB. Drawing on the resources of OCHA, Qawasmeh drew the intricate map of settlements, checkpoints, bypass roads, and areas A, B, C that have bifurcated Palestinian space, time, and land since the Oslo negotiations began in 1993. This bifurcation has rendered a two-state solution an impossibility.
NANCY GALLAGHER
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Nancy was instrumental in helping me succeed in graduate school. She always challenged my thinking and supported my interests in ways that made me grow as a scholar. She also helped me with all of the details of my very first conference, from putting together the paper to navigating the social activities. Nancy is an exceptional mentor because she welcomes all questions, big and small. As a first-generation college student, that made an especially big difference to me. Congratulations on the well-deserved award, Nancy! Thank you!
~ Silvia Ferreira

My heartiest congratulations to Nancy Gallagher for this tremendous achievement. Well-deserved! This is clearly a testament to her tireless efforts in promoting Middle East Studies in the past several decades. As a graduate student in the History Department at UCSB in the 1990s, I was one of the fortunate students to take several of her courses (also one of the pioneer students in “Post-Modernism” studies in the History Department) in Modern Middle East. Her courses provided me with a wealth of knowledge about the “Arab-Israeli Conflict.” Indeed, the title of my first book (“The First Sudanese Civil War: Africans, Arabs, and Israelis in the Southern Sudan, 1955-1972,” Palgrave Macmillan, 2009) is a testimony to her excellent mentorship to me, and other graduate students at UCSB.
~ Scopas S. Poggo

Prof. Gallagher was my Ph.D. mentor, and I cannot imagine a better person to guide a student. She is not only incredibly intelligent and knowledgeable, but more importantly, she is a supportive educator who helps you achieve your goals by modeling the very best professional standards. She’s an outstanding teacher and scholar, and her activism illustrates that she “walks the talk” so common in academic discourse about human rights and social justice. She has deserved this accolade from MESA for many years; I am so glad that she has been recognized to be the fantastic mentor she is!
~ Nancy L. Stockdale

Brandon Shamoun comes to UCSB from Metro Detroit, recently graduating from Grand Valley State University in Allendale, MI with a Masters of Education in College Student Affairs Leadership. One of his goals with being the Coordinator of the Middle Eastern Resource Center is to really understand, address, and deliver the needs of the students using the space, socially and academically, by partnering with student clubs/organizations, faculty/staff, and the overall Middle Eastern community. One of his interests is travelling, and between undergraduate and graduate school, he lived in Seville, Spain teaching English at an elementary school. Prior to UCSB, Brandon held the role of Assistant Living Center Director in the International House and Gender Justice House in Housing and Residence Life. He earned his dual bachelor’s degrees in Secondary Education (focusing in Spanish with a minor in English as a Second Language) and Romance Languages (focusing in Spanish) from Wayne State University in Detroit, MI.

Brandon joined the UCSB Gaucho and EOP family on July 5, 2017.
Tuesday, February 6th, 5:00pm, HSSB 4020 - Jeremy Johns  
“Documenting Multiculturalism in Norman Sicily”

Thursday, February 8th, 6:00pm, HSSB 4080 - Khalid Zahri  
“Rare Manuscripts of the Moroccan Royal Library: An Introduction and Overview”

Thursday, March 13th - Hala Alyan

Monday, April 9th - Asad Q. Ahmad  
“The Last Prophet and the Fate of Rationalist Disciplines in Post-Classical Islam”

Tuesday, April 17th, 4:00pm, HSSB 6020 - Gulru Necipoglu  
R. Stephen Humphreys Distinguished Visiting Scholar

Monday, April 23rd – Ian Coller  
“The French Revolution and the Rights of Muslims”

Thursday and Friday, May 10th and 11th - Conference  
Iraq Front and Center

Friday and Saturday, May 18th & 19th - Conference  
Histories of Economy in the Middle East
Jonathan Sciarcon’s book, *Educational Oases in the Desert: The Alliance Israélite Universelle’s Girls’ Schools in Ottoman Iraq, 1895-1915*, was published by SUNY Press in August 2017. Additionally Jonathan was recently awarded tenure at the University of Denver and promoted to Associate Professor of History and Judaic Studies as of September 1, 2017. Finally, Jonathan and his wife Laura are pleased to announce the birth of their daughter, Phoebe Luna Sciarcon, who entered the world on September 10, 2017.

Magda Campo was invited to Romania on October 12, 2017 to deliver a talk entitled: “Arab Culture Around the World: Cuisine and Coffee” at the Universitatea Crestină Dimitrie Cantemir.

On Saturday, October 21 she also presented a lecture at St Mark’s Church in Isla Vista, entitled: “Religion of Egypt: An Insider Perspective.”

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