



The Carolina Center for the Study of the Middle East and Muslim Civilizations, established at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 2003, promotes understanding of the Middle East through teaching, research, and community outreach. The Center offers a unique combination of regional and cross-regional approaches to Middle East studies, including the region's non-Muslim peoples and civilizations, as well as a broader focus on Muslim communities and civilizations outside the region.

In collaboration with the Duke University Middle East Studies Center, the Carolina Center is part of the Duke-UNC Consortium for Middle East Studies. As the recipient of a Title VI Middle East Studies grant from the U.S. Department of Education, the Consortium is a National Resource Center.

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Notable Events: 2016-2017

Year-long: "Turkey Today" Lecture Series

The year-long "Turkey Today" lecture series brought in multiple Turkish scholars and public figures to shed light on the current complexities found in Turkey. The series was coordinated in collaboration with the UNC Center for European Studies. Events ranged from large lectures by guest scholars, to smaller seminars featuring graduate student research.



The flag of Turkey

The series began on August 30 with a lecture by former member of the Turkish Parliament, Dr. Aykan Erdemir, who spoke about the future of pluralist democracy in Turkey.

On October 18, Reşat Kasaba provided an overview of the political upheaval of this summer and put it in the context of modern Turkish history and politics, and on November 2, Turkish sociologist Melike Eğilmezler Boylan spoke about the role of humor in Turkish society.

The first lecture in the spring series on January 31, "Politics and Journalism in Turkey: Between the EU and Middle East" featured prominent Turkish journalist, Cüneyt Özdemir. His experience as one of the founders of CNN Turk gives him a nuanced and extensive perspective on the current political and social climate of Turkey.

The final event in the series, "'Feeling' the State: Alternative States and Territories of the Turkish-Muslim Diaspora in Germany" was presented by PhD student, Devran Koray Oçal on March 1. Oçal has completed his research through a faculty-graduate student joint research award from the Center for European Studies with his advisor, Dr. Banu Gökarıksel. This talk focused on the Sunni Muslim Turkish community and their identity in Germany. Throughout the year, this series successfully sparked campus dialogue about current events in Turkey.

*Notable Events continued...***October 6, 2016: An Evening of Sufi Music Dr. Oruç Güvenç**

On October 6, 2016 the Center brought renowned Turkish Sufi musician and clinical psychologist, Dr. Güvenç to performed his unique, yet traditional, therapeutic Sufi music in Gerrard Hall.



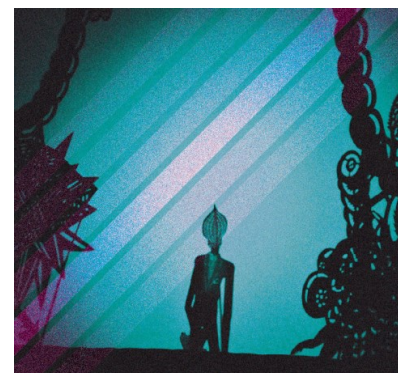
Dr. Güvenç performs at Duke University

Oruç Güvenç incorporates traditional Sufi music with his experience as a psychologist to create a unique form of music therapy. At this event, Dr. Güvenç presented a variety of musical textures using vocals, saz, ney, oud, and rebab. Cem Aydogdu provided percussion and vocal accompaniment for the performance. Mr. Aydogdu also served as a translator for the performance. During the event, Dr. Güvenç provided commentary about his music and therapy work, as well as stories of Mevlana Celaleddin Rumi.

October 14-16, 2016: "Islam and Religious Identity: The Limits of Definition" | Annual Duke-UNC Consortium for Middle East Studies Conference

As part of the "Sacred/Secular: A Sufi Journey" festival, the Duke-UNC Consortium for Middle East Studies held its annual conference, "Islam and Religious Identity: The Limits of Definition". The conference emphasized the variation and nuance found within the confines of Islam. The conference brought together eight speakers to present on their research, followed by a response of the same duration, and ending with question and answer sessions. The conference culminated with a public performance by Issa Boulos, Palestinian oud player.

This event was part of two conferences to be held in conjunction with the 2016-2017 season of Carolina Performing Arts (CPA). The second conference, "Zikr: Locating Sufi Performance: Critical Perspectives on Music, Ritual, and Remembrance" will take place in Dakar, Senegal, June 5-7, 2017.



Eko Nugroho, Indonesian artist

January 28, 2017: Global Careers Workshop

On Saturday, January 28, 2017, the UNC-Chapel Hill area studies centers hosted the first annual Global Careers Workshop in the FedEx Global Education Center.

David Patton, executive vice president of the American Councils for International Education, opened the morning with a speech on how an international education can help students find a job. After Patton's talk, students split into breakout sessions led by UNC alumni according to world region: Africa, Asia, Western Europe, Slavic, Eurasian, and Eastern Europe, Latin America, and Middle East. In the breakout sessions, regional experts elaborated on Patton's guidance with area specific advice. Some advice was practical, while others focused on providing moral support and reminding students to look at the big picture. The Middle East panel consisted of: Sonya Khattak, analyst at Rock Creek Global Advisors LLC.; Caroline Zullo, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace junior fellow; and Margo Balboni, Research Associate at the Center for Strategic & International Studies (CSIS).

Coffee and pastries were provided in the morning, as well as a pizza lunch in the afternoon. These mealtimes were meant to serve as a chance for students to network with each other as well as the speakers. This event helped to prepare UNC students for an increasingly global workforce.

Notable Events continued...

Spring 2017: Panels in Persian Studies

UNC Persian Studies held two panels this spring focusing on the literary expression of women writers and veterans of the Iran-Iraq War. In January, the event, "Middle Eastern Women Writers and Their Impacts," brought in two panelists to speak about their experience. Dr. Nesreen Akhtarkhavari, DePaul University, spoke on Jordanian women writers and their influence in local and regional literary spheres. Professor Nasrin Rahimeih, University of California Irvine, spoke on the female experience in Iran after the 1979 revolution expressed through literature. The panel was moderated by Professor Nadia Yaqub, UNC Department of Asian Studies.

In February, organized a second panel, "War and Veterans: A Panel Discussion" also brought in two panelists. The first, Amir Khadem, PhD candidate in Comparative Literature at the University of Alberta, spoke on the nuances of the Sacred Defense Literature genre, and how it can reflect ideas of pacifism and chauvinism. Mateo Farzaneh, Northeastern University, spoke on the under-acknowledged involvement of women in the Iran-Iraq War. The panel was moderated by Dr. Brian Gibbs, Assistant Professor of Education at UNC, who conducts research on wars, veterans, and the education of veterans' children. Both panels were organized by the newest addition to the Persian Faculty, Dr. Claudia Yaghoobi. In July 2016, Yaghoobi was named Roshan Institute Assistant Professor in Persian Studies in the UNC College of Arts and Sciences.

Carnegie Fellowships in Support of Arab Region Social Science

During the fall semester, the Center hosted Jordanian scholar, Abdel-Baset Athamneh, as part of the Carnegie Fellowships in support of Arab Region Social Sciences. With generous support of the Carnegie Corporation of New York, advanced doctoral or post-doctoral candidates are invited to work with a faculty mentor at UNC-Chapel Hill, participate in ongoing research groups, and audit graduate seminars through the Carnegie Fellows

Program. This program works to provide scholars with methodological training and academic experience to help further their research.



Athamneh presents his research at a Carolina Seminars event.

Athamneh's research focuses on the differentiated experiences of Palestinian women in the attainment of education, training, and employment. Niklaus Steiner, Director of the Center for Global Initiatives, served as Athamneh's faculty mentor. Athamneh presented his work, "Gender Differences in Unemployment and Poverty at Palestinian Refugee Camps in Jordan," to faculty and students on December 5, 2016.

Grants Awarded to UNC Faculty

With support from the Title VI program of the U.S. Department of Education, the Duke-UNC Consortium for Middle East Studies is pleased to offer small grants to faculty. Congratulations to our UNC faculty for receiving grants to work on the following projects:

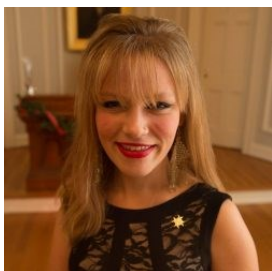
Language Pedagogy Training: Farida Badr, for traveling to the 2016 ACTFL Annual Convention and World Languages Expo in Boston, MA.

Research Travel: Glaire Anderson, to complete archival research in Florence, Italy, for her second monograph on Ibn Firnas and the early Islamic scientific revolution.

Zeina Halabi, to travel to Berlin, Germany, to frame her current book project *Archeology of the Arab Present: Culture, Power, and the Archive* within recent German scholarship pertaining to archival practices and collective memory.

FLAS Grantee Spotlights

FLAS fellowships fund the study of Less Commonly Taught Languages and area studies coursework by providing academic year and summer fellowships to graduate students and advanced undergraduates. The Center offers FLAS grants for the following priority languages: Arabic, Modern Hebrew, Persian, Turkish, and Urdu.



Undergraduate student Sasha Gombar was awarded a Summer 2016 FLAS to study Arabic in Jordan.

What do you study?

"I am a Global Studies and Peace, War and Defense double major with a minor in English. My area concentration in Global Studies is the Middle East."

What and where did you use your FLAS scholarship?

"I studied at AMIDEAST in Amman, Jordan. I participated in their intensive Arabic program, studying modern standard Arabic and the Jordanian dialect for 8 weeks."

What was the most valuable lesson/experience from your FLAS experience?

"The most important thing that I learned from my FLAS experience is that the best way to learn about a region is simply to get up and go there, because there are certain things that you only understand by going to a place and seeing it for yourself. For example, as a Middle Eastern studies major, I've studied the Israeli-Palestinian conflict ad infinitum. However, no book or lecture or academic article taught me about the conflict quite in the same way as being in Amman and interacting with the large Palestinian population there. Watching my favorite professor gaze wistfully out the window as she talked about the land that her ancestors had in Palestine, or listening to taxi drivers talk about how he could not remember Jerusalem but longed to return because he had heard it was paradise, I felt like I understood the Israeli-Palestinian conflict a much richer way - and one day I hope study in Israel as well, because I think

that if I hear Israelis discuss their personal connection to the conflict, I will understand it even better. I think a lot of people study international relations like it's all about power dynamics and resource flows and very practical things that can be measured and put into paradigms but at the end of the day, it's really about people - so if you want to understand a region of the world, you have to get to the people."

Graduate student Kate Hewitt was awarded a Summer and Academic Year 2016-2017 FLAS to study Persian.

What do you study?

"Currently, I am second-year Global Studies Master's



candidate. My concentration is Global Politics (with a little bit of economics) and my Master's thesis researches a new model for consideration regarding nuclear weapons proliferation motivations - looking at what motivates a country to pursue (and continue) a nuclear weapons program."

What and where did you use your FLAS scholarship?

"I used the scholarship to do an 8-week summer language intensive program known as APTLII (Arabic, Persian, Turkish Language Immersion Institute) at University of Wisconsin - Madison. Currently, I am utilizing my academic year FLAS to study second-year Persian at UNC with the wonderful Dr. Shahla Adel."

Why did you choose to study Persian?

"My career interests include the diplomacy and negotiation of nuclear weapons and weapons-usable materials. The Middle East will always be an integral part of geopolitics, specifically concerning the future of nuclear weapons, and a place where attention should be concentrated. It is my hope that in studying Persian, I will better understand the language, culture, heritage, religion, and politics of Iran - something that will not only benefit my resume, but my personal skills and knowledge of negotiations and diplomacy in this region post-graduate studies."

K-14 Outreach

The Center supports K-12 and community college educators through the outreach program coordinated by the Duke-UNC Consortium for Middle East Studies. We connect with educators through professional development trainings, local study tours, providing access to speakers, creating classroom resources, and more.

This year, the Consortium organized the "Global Islam and the Arts Teacher Fellows Program," an intensive professional development opportunity that features a year-long exploration of Muslim cultures through music, dance, and dramatic performances during the 2016-17 Carolina Performing Arts season, integrated with readings, scholarship, discussion, and pedagogy. This project aims to deepen teachers' understanding of global Islam through a cultural arts perspective while dispelling misconceptions and encouraging culturally responsible teaching in the K-12 classroom.



The Global Islam and the Arts Teacher Fellows

Through a very competitive application process, 15 teachers were selected to participate. The fellows attended an orientation August 4-5, 2016 where they received an introduction to topics that we are exploring further throughout the year including Islam, Sufism, and Middle Eastern music. The fellows have been attending six specific Sufi Journey performances during the 16-17 season. Immediately prior to each performance, they engage with readings, eat dinner, and meet with a scholar to learn about the culture and themes associated with the performance.

At the culmination of the program, the fellows will create one instruction resources on Islam or Muslim Cultures, to be made available for free to teachers across North Carolina. Outreach Coordinator, Emma Harver presented on this program as an exemplary model for sustained engagement with educators at the Area Studies & Outreach Conference in Washington, D.C. in December, 2016.

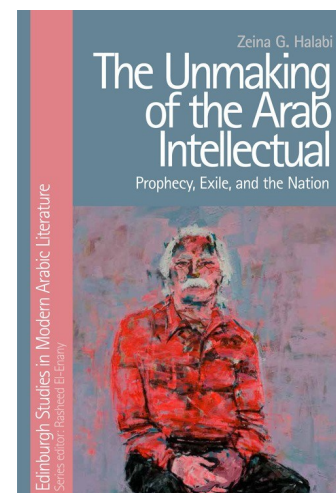
The Consortium also launched the Middle East Explained Series aimed to provide digital teaching tools for middle and high school teachers. The digital pedagogy project plans to provide free, creditable, expert teaching modules with each 5-10 minute video packaged with downloadable guides for both teachers and students. The Middle East Explained premiered its first video, "The Historical Roots of the Syrian Refugee Crisis" on September 7, 2016.



Professor miriam cooke discusses the Syrian Refugee Crisis

New Book by Faculty

In spring 2017, Zeina G. Halabi, Department of Asian Studies, will publish *The Unmaking of the Arab Intellectual: Prophecy, Exile, and the Nation* (Edinburgh University Press). In the book, Halabi examines the unmaking of the intellectual as prophetic figure, national icon, and exile in Arabic literature and film from the 1990s onwards. *The Unmaking of the Arab Intellectual* offers critical tools to understand the evolving relations between aesthetics and politics in the alleged post-political era of Arabic literature and culture. The book is expected to come out May, 2017.



Book cover, Edinburgh Studies in Modern Arabic Literature

Carolina Seminar on Middle East Studies

This newly founded seminar provides a forum for scholars at North Carolina universities and colleges to share current research in multiple disciplines focusing on Middle East Studies.

One of its objectives is to initiate discussions among Mideast center faculty on the future directions of the Mideast center at UNC, particularly since preparations will need to begin in fall 2017 for the next round of title VI applications. Seminar events this year included two meetings with affiliated faculty to discuss current plans and priorities and possible new directions for the Center, as well as two events featuring research by PhD student Devran Koray Öçal and visiting Carnegie Fellow Abdel-Baset Athamneh.

This seminar replaces the long-running Carolina Seminar on Comparative Islamic Studies (2004-2014), and is generously supported by Carolina Seminars.

Regional Spotlight Winner, Carolina Global Photography Competition

Congratulations to Natalie Scott, '17, for her award-winning photo, "The Convergence of Paths" taken in Tangier, Morocco. Center staff were struck by the sky captured in the photo and its representation of Tangier, a truly global city and bridge between the MENA region and Europe. The photo captures a city characterized by the convergence of many different cultures and peoples.



The Convergence of Paths

Upcoming Programs and Opportunities

We are pleased to announce these exciting upcoming programs and opportunities in the summer and fall, more details to come.

- "Connecting the Middle East to the Southeast" Study Tour for K-12 teachers in the Triangle | August 2017
- Trita Parsi, president of the National Iranian American Council, will give a public talk at UNC | October 17, 2017
- Faculty Small Grants Program: With support from the Title VI program, the Center is pleased to offer the following grants this fall, deadline December 9, 2017 (tentative): Course Development Grants, Faculty Research Travel Grants, and Language Instruction Training Grants

This newsletter was written by Madeline Krogh '17, and Emma Harver, Center Program/Outreach Coordinator

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