

# MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

NEWSLETTER | 2011-2012





## LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

**Kristen Brustad**  
Chair, Department of  
Middle Eastern Studies



This promises to be another exciting year for Middle Eastern Studies (MES), with continued successes and new initiatives.

One year into our intensive language initiative, I am proud to report that the program has been extremely successful, and we are seeing notable enrollment increases in Hebrew, Persian, and Turkish, along with the continued strong enrollment in Arabic. Student achievements in these classes are right on target, with Intermediate proficiency being reached by nearly all who complete the year-long intensive sequence. In the spring of 2012, we will be adding Kurdish to our language offerings, with a new curriculum being developed by graduate student Mardin Aminpour.

This coming summer, we will be undertaking our first faculty-led study abroad program in several years, under the supervision of MES's Jeannette Okur. This program, hosted by TOBB University of Economics and Technology (TOBB-ETU) in Ankara, Turkey, is open to all University of Texas undergraduate and graduate students. For nine weeks, students will study the Turkish language and comparative literatures and cultures, the latter with Turkish classmates in a joint, team-taught course that will provide an opportunity for in-depth conversations across the two cultures.

Despite the hard economic times, we are fortunate to be able to add a new faculty position specializing in Hebrew Bible/Second Temple. This new position will complement our existing faculty strengths and expand offerings by filling a gap in our undergraduate and graduate programs. In addition, we are introducing a new brown bag series that seeks to address Israel in its regional and historical context, not just as a modern nation but also as an ancient land and the home for an indigenous Middle Eastern culture. This series, open to the public, will invite UT faculty members from around the university to present their research and engage with one another across disciplines.

We are deeply appreciative of our community partnerships that have helped us to grow our programs at a time when departments around us are being forced to make cuts. The Raindrop Turkish House has been an invaluable partner in helping our Turkish Studies program grow and expand, and we are extremely grateful

to them for their support. A grant from PARSA Community Foundation has enabled us to support the development of "Persian of Iran: A Multimedia Textbook and Curriculum for Modern Persian" by Anousha Shahsavari and Blake Atwood. This revolutionary new method and curriculum for teaching Persian as a second language is currently in use at UT, the University of Pennsylvania, and the University of Maryland.

Last but certainly not least, we are thrilled that four students graduated from the Department of Middle Eastern Studies with PhDs in the past several months and are now teaching at top universities around the country, with four others scheduled to graduate this year.

### RECENT GRADUATES:

**Peter Glanville (Arabic)**

*Assistant Professor of Arabic  
University of Maryland*

**Zeina Halabi (Arabic)**

*Assistant Professor of Arabic  
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*

**Shon Hopkin (Hebrew)**

*Assistant Professor of Ancient Scripture  
Brigham Young University*

**Farkhondeh Shayesteh (Persian)**

*U.S. Military Academy (West Point)*

### EXPECTED TO GRADUATE THIS YEAR:

**Blake Atwood (Persian)**

*Lecturer  
University of Pennsylvania*

**Kevin Burnham (Arabic)**

*Lecturer  
Portland State University*

**Greg Ebner (Arabic)**

*Arabic Instructor and Deputy Department Head  
U.S. Military Academy (West Point)*

**Martin Isleem (Arabic)**

*Visiting Assistant Professor of Arabic  
Bucknell University* 🌸

# The Times They Are a-Changin'

## Views of the Arab Spring

Like many of our colleagues around the world, those of us at MES spent a lot of time in front of the television earlier this year, watching the latest developments in the so-called Arab Spring unfold. With the fall of three of the Arab world's longest-ruling dictators (Tunisia's Ben Ali, Egypt's Mubarak, and Libya's Qaddafi), political unrest in Syria and Yemen that has those respective regimes tottering, political reforms underway in Jordan and Morocco, and a new strategic regional role for Turkey, we wanted to pause for a moment to consider how the events of 2011 may impact the fields related to Middle Eastern studies.

We polled academics, alumni, and friends who focus on the region for their reactions to the following prompt: *How will the popular uprisings and regime changes affect the broader fields in Middle Eastern studies (not only MES, but Islamic studies, history, language studies, etc.)? How will this change the paradigms and frameworks in which we work? What effects do you hope the political changes in the Arab world will have, even if it's too early to tell whether those hopes will become reality?*

*Here's what they said:*

*The Arab Spring protests have given those of us who work to undermine widely held stereotypes a new tool to create a deeper understanding of questions around Middle Eastern politics, religion, and culture. The fact that the protests have largely not been religiously motivated; the demographic trends and economic issues underlying the social tensions in each of these countries; the differing paths and degree of success of the various revolts; the sophisticated use of social media and the reflection of protest demands and values in music and other cultural forms—all of these give us new and striking talking points against common arguments asserting the incompatibility of Islam and democracy, for example, or the “backwardness” of Middle Eastern culture, or assumptions that the Middle East is monolithic, and that everything about life in the region is motivated by adherence to extreme and often violent versions of Islam.*

*The Arab Spring highlighted a Middle East that is global and interconnected. Before, I had been asked earnest questions about whether Egyptians rode camels everywhere. Now, it's common knowledge that Egyptians have access to the Internet, and that they communicate with Facebook and Twitter. Granted, they may still think that Egyptians ride camels everywhere, but they now know they're texting while driving!*

*The Arab Spring will create better readers of our academic work. Whatever we write, it will be read by a lay public ten times more sophisticated than the most knowledgeable readers of 2009—which, in turn, makes it easier for us to justify our work as academics.*

*I would say the Arab Spring has made it easier to dispel Orientalist notions (which have been much more universal since 9/11) where students are concerned. The very first week of classes this semester coincided with the week after the tenth anniversary of September 11. I had assigned some readings on Orientalism (Said and Bernard Lewis) to my Intro to Islam students. At the end of that week, the whole idea was brought home by asking what an Orientalist could/would say of Islamic culture as stagnant and static after the Arab Spring and Summer. We could compare and contrast these hypothetical responses with those given by current Orientalists.*

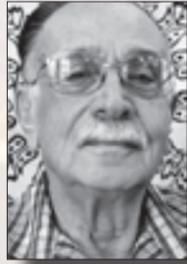
*I hope we'll put the Middle East into more of a global context—by looking at universal reasons for agitation vs. reasons specific to a particular locality.*

*For example, the London riots vs. the Cairo protests—the recent protest in front of the Israeli embassy in Cairo seemed to echo what happened in London more than the protests of Tahrir, in my book. What are the interests of the various groups involved, and why are they clashing? Where might they coincide?*

*“Arab nationalism” means common political goals, not unification. We will finally lay to rest this colonial-era concept of the region as divided into nation-states which are in some way intrinsically “different.” It is clear to even the most hardened that political dynamics cross borders without a proposal for unity.*

*Just as there was a significant increase in interest in Middle Eastern studies after 9/11 as a critical security need, I suspect the Arab Spring will also increase interest. Only this time, the interest will come from civically engaged persons all over the world trying to improve their societies through participation in democratic movements. 🌸*

## PETER ABBOD



Throughout his fifty years of teaching, research, and service, Dr. Peter Abboud has been a true pioneer, founding the nationally renowned Arabic program at the University of Texas at Austin and helping to shape the field of Arabic studies in the U.S. His remarkable contributions in the areas of Arabic linguistics, curriculum development, and program building have revolutionized the field of Arabic and helped it achieve national prominence.

A true Longhorn, Dr. Abboud set out to change the world of Arabic, and he has realized this goal with great success. Together with his wife, the late Dr. Victorine Abboud, Dr. Abboud took the innovative step of introducing technology to the Arabic classroom at UT in the early 1980s and ushered in a new era not only for Arabic but also for language education in general. His leadership of the team that developed the famous *EMSA* and *IMSA* Arabic textbooks in the early 1970s resulted in revolutionary instructional materials that trained generations of students. These materials continue to be used today, and Dr. Abboud is still active in revising them as well as in assisting in the production of “*AMSA*,” the third book in the series. And when he was selected to be the founding father of the Arabic School at Middlebury College in 1982, he helped transform Arabic from a “textual” language into a “living” language and served as a leading force in incorporating principles of proficiency and communicative language teaching into the Arabic curriculum and classroom. Middlebury’s Arabic School, under his

leadership, set national standards of excellence and trained scores of teachers of Arabic worldwide that continue to shape the teaching of the language today.

The Arabic program at UT and the Arabic teaching profession owe Dr. Peter Abboud a great debt of gratitude for his enormous contributions throughout his fifty years of outstanding service. His legacy will live on through his vision, publications, and students. We will be forever grateful for all that he has given us. We send him a heartfelt *alf shukr* and wish him an enjoyable and active retirement.

*Mahmoud Al-Batal, Director  
Arabic Flagship Program*

## AARON BAR-ADON



After some fifty years of dedicated teaching, Aaron Bar-Adon is leaving UT, planning to resume his research work and begin his life as an active retiree. An honorary member of the Academy of the Hebrew Language as of 2009, he is currently preparing the keynote address for a plenary meeting of the academy, to be held in Jerusalem this fall.

Professor Bar-Adon received his PhD in linguistics from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in 1959, where he studied Hebrew and Semitic linguistics and Hebrew and Arabic language, literature, and culture. After teaching at the University of Wisconsin and Wayne State University, he joined the faculty of the University of Texas at Austin as an associate professor in 1963, and was promoted to full professor in 1966. His research focuses on the language of Israeli children, the Galilean dialect of Hebrew, the revival of the Hebrew

language, and the works of Israel’s literature Nobel laureate, S.Y. Agnon. Among Bar-Adon’s scholarly works are the monographs *S.Y. Agnon and the Revival of Modern Hebrew* (1977) and *The Rise and Decline of a Dialect: A Study in the Revival of Modern Hebrew* (1975), and the dissertation “The Spoken Language of Children in Israel” (1959).

With strong support from Winfred Lehmann, the founding director of UT’s Center for Middle Eastern Studies and chairman of the Departments of Germanic Studies and Linguistics, Professor Bar-Adon built up the Hebrew Studies program at UT Austin during the 1960s, bringing it to its enrollment peak in the early 1970s with close to five hundred students in Hebrew studies courses and a similar number in Jewish studies courses. Generations of undergraduate and graduate students found in Professor Bar-Adon’s classes the inspiration and motivation to delve deep into Jewish culture, sociolinguistics, and, in recent years, the unique features of Biblical Hebrew poetry and the styles of individual books in the Hebrew Bible. Professor Bar-Adon has a very loyal following among his students, who inquire after him with great fondness and are likely to identify with the words of a student who wrote to the Dean of Liberal Arts over twenty years ago to commend Professor Bar-Adon, “whose driving zest for excellence whetted my appetite for scholarship, and challenged me with new horizons. His charming wit and understanding smile will never be forgotten.”

Thank you, our dear Aaron, for your service to the university and its students. We send you our warmest wishes—we look forward to hearing about your work here and in Israel!

*Esther Raizen, Associate Dean  
College of Liberal Arts*

## CLEMENT MOORE HENRY

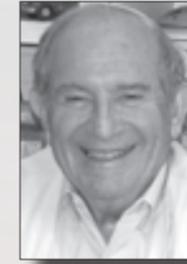


Professor Clement Moore Henry joined the Department of Government and the Center for Middle Eastern Studies in 1987. Prior to his coming to the University of Texas, Professor

Henry taught at several other institutions, among them UC Berkeley, the American University in Cairo, the University of Michigan, the American University of Beirut, UCLA, and the Institut d’Études Politiques de Paris. His teaching and research interests have included the politics of international oil, Middle Eastern responses to globalization, banking systems in Islamic Mediterranean countries, Islamic banking, and the development of civil societies in the Arab world, and cover the entire Islamic world and the Middle East from South Asia to North Africa and beyond. A most dedicated and talented teacher and a prolific scholar, Professor Henry enhanced the quality of Middle Eastern studies scholarship at the university for over two decades and has always been admired as a truly stimulating and intellectual voice by his students and colleagues. Despite his retirement from the University of Texas, Professor Henry will continue his valuable teaching and scholarly contributions to the field. For the 2011–2012 academic year, he has been appointed as chair of the Department of Political Science at the American University in Cairo, where he will also conduct research on his current and forthcoming projects, focusing once again on North Africa, especially Algeria. He will be missed by the students, faculty, and staff of the Department of and Center for Middle Eastern Studies, and we all wish him bon voyage and further success in his future endeavors.

*M. R. Ghanoonparvar, Professor  
Middle Eastern Studies*

## HAROLD LIEBOWITZ



Dr. Liebowitz is a wonderful professor. His classes on the archaeology of Israel and the Near East are always popular, and students often take multiple classes from him—a testament to the respect and admiration he has gained. In talking with students about Dr. Liebowitz’s retirement, I’ve heard the following: “He has easily been the most influential professor I have had during my time at UT”; “I am going to miss his jokes and stories”; “I learned far more from him than what was listed on his syllabus.”

For many students, it is Dr. Liebowitz’s teaching style that attracts them to his classes. Rather than walking into a lecture hall and waiting for the lecture to begin we all sit down knowing that history is about to come to life before our eyes. We aren’t going to be lectured to and shown PowerPoint presentations with bullet points and outlines. Instead, the information will be given to us in a manner that will make a lasting impression on our minds.

Yes, he is the only person I know that still uses slides, and I have become somewhat of an expert on how to use the projector, but it is these photos and firsthand accounts of the culture and history of Israel that have given us all a window into what life must have been like in Biblical times.

On behalf of myself and your students, congratulations on this next stage of your life.

*Leslie D. Inman, Graduate Student  
Ancient Near East*

## SETH WOLITZ



Seth Wolitz’s retirement is a great loss for the university but happily not a loss to his friends, intellectual companions, and sparring partners, since at least for more than half of every year he will be in Austin. I have known Seth as a friend and colleague for the better part of thirty years, and he has never failed to push my critical thinking, raise my awareness, and engage me in a wonderfully vivid conversation about most any topic of worth. A polymath as well as an ardent scholar of American and Eastern European Jewry and Yiddish, and an amateur in the original and best sense of the word in the world of music and art, Seth broadens horizons with every encounter. Students will no longer have the privilege of his presence but his friends will, and I am happy about that. More broadly, the university will no longer have the richness of his imagination, seen in action no better than in the great intellectual moments of the Gale Lectures of what is now, alas, the prior century. May retirement give him the time to do what he truly loves most, to take in the best the world has to offer and size it up in conversation and print!

*Robert H. Abzug, Director  
Schusterman Center for Jewish Studies*

MANY THANKS

TO RETIRING

FACULTY FOR THEIR

YEARS OF SERVICE

FACULTY  
TRIBUTES

# PUBLICATIONS

The Center for Middle Eastern Studies publications program continues its tradition of excellence this year with a translation of a volume of Hebrew poetry and a monograph on the development of modern Turkish identity.

Poet, author, dramatist, translator, and literary critic Leah Goldberg (1911–1970) holds a special place in the hearts of many Israelis—perhaps in part because her poems have been set to some four hundred melodies. However, little of her work is currently available in English. Annie Kantar’s lyrical translation of *With This Night*, which serves as the inaugural volume in the Binah Yitzrit Foundation Series in Israel Studies, remedies this situation and is sure to attract an English-speaking audience to the beloved poet’s work.

This last collection published in Goldberg’s lifetime betrays the author’s complicated nature. While seen as a representative figure in Israeli literature, Goldberg never quite felt at home in Israel (she immigrated there when she was twenty-four), nor did she really identify with her native Lithuania. The

poems in *With This Night* reveal her sense of foreignness, but also underscore her hope that she could find her place through poetry.

*How Happy to Call Oneself a Turk: Provincial Newspapers and the Negotiation of Muslim National Identity*, released in May, is the latest publication in the Center’s long-running Modern Middle East Series. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, Turkey’s founding president, and his secular reforms dominate Turkey’s historical narrative and are usually credited with creating a sense of national identity among the people. Gavin Brockett, Associate Professor of Middle East and Islamic History at Wilfrid Laurier University, looks beyond this story of elite nationalism to illustrate how the people of the new Republic of Turkey participated in the process.

Atatürk’s reforms were meant to remove religion from public life, but as Turkey’s modern political history demonstrates, Islam remains a powerful force. The key to understanding the evolution of Turkey’s modern national identity, Brockett argues, is found in the provincial newspapers of

the mid-twentieth century. As the number of newspapers in Turkey exploded between 1945 and 1953, ordinary people had the opportunity to engage and debate the policies Atatürk put in place, creating a dialogue between secular nationalism and Islam that led to the creation of the modern Turkish national identity.

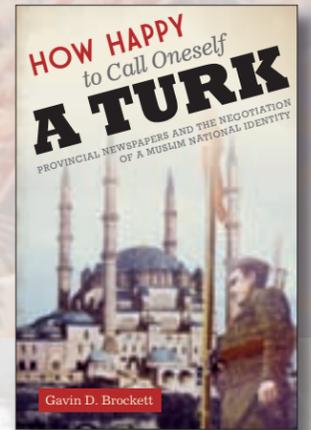
Already 2012 promises to be another productive year for the Center’s publications program. Be on the lookout for a translation of well-known Egyptian poet and illustrator Walid Taher’s *A Bit of Air*, as well as a collection of short stories by Middle Eastern women in honor of Elizabeth Warnock Fernea. And if you haven’t already, be sure to pick up copies of *The Puppet* (2010) and *I Want to Get Married!* (2010), both of which have received considerable positive notice (*I Want to Get Married!* in the blog *Arabic Literature* (in English) and *The Puppet* in *World Literature in Review* and *Banipal*, among others).

To purchase these and other books in our series, please visit: <http://www.utexas.edu/utpress/subjects/cmest.html>. 🌸

*With This Night*  
ISBN: 978-0-292-72647-5  
\$16.00, paperback  
114 pages



*How Happy to Call Oneself a Turk*  
ISBN: 978-0-292-72359-7  
\$55.00, hardcover  
312 pages



## MY SUMMER RESORTS (Excerpt from *With This Night*)

### 1. There Still

Four sparrows  
were singing  
four springs  
in a row.

And summer oozed  
a stifling scent:  
in the garden,  
the tobacco  
bloomed  
four years  
in a row.

That’s over.  
And there?  
There the hammock still hangs  
in the breeze,  
and a pinecone falls beneath the tree.  
There isn’t a single cemetery.  
There’s nothing left to see.  
Today, no one is there  
to say the Mourner’s Prayer.

### 2. Almost Love

It’s very simple:  
wet grass,  
a tree, and a bench.  
That’s all.

The canopy was full, a pine,  
and the grass was wet with rain.  
Three days have nearly passed  
and we have yet to go out again.

—Of all evenings!  
—Why not this one?  
—The woods are drenched,  
entirely.

We can’t stay  
on the bench any longer.  
Let’s go home,  
and that is all.

How uncertain  
and young he is,  
the lights of a bicycle  
on the way to town.

At home, the candles  
make my pallor glow:  
—hadn’t I warned  
that you’d catch cold!

### 3. The Neighbors Have Already Packed Their Bags

Someone came and said:  
The Days of Awe are near.  
Summer has passed.  
And in the garden a pear  
fell in the yellowing grass.

Someone came and said:  
Summer ended fast.  
And spring was shorter still.

At night the candle’s shadow  
stretched along the wall.  
The neighbors have packed their bags.  
We, too, soon will go.

In the city they’re waiting  
for us, and the Days of Awe.

# The Institute for Communication on Media and the Middle East

In April, the University of Texas at Austin hosted a symposium on digital media and political transition in the Middle East. The keynote speaker, Jon Alterman (Director and Senior Fellow, Middle East Program, Center for Strategic & International Studies), presented a talk entitled “The Revolution Will Not Be Televised: Social Media, Broadcasting, and Political Mobilization in the Arab World” and discussed the ways in which protestors in the Arab world used social media to organize protests during the Arab Spring, and how in turn social media interacted with television to produce mass political mobilization.

This event proved quite successful and inspired the Center for Middle Eastern Studies, the Department of Radio-TV-Film, and the School of Journalism to collaborate on the creation of the Institute for Communication on Media and the Middle East (ICOMME).

All too often, the popular media present the peoples of the Middle East through a very narrow lens, devoting little time to their cultures and historical contexts. Violent acts are sensationalized and privileged, leaving the viewer or reader with a misinformed view of the region. This skewed perspective only further entrenches stereotypes about the Middle East and fails to promote any sort of

cultural understanding. ICOMME, under the able leadership of Karin Wilkins (Professor, Department of Radio-TV-Film, and Associate Director, Center for Middle Eastern Studies) will work to remedy this situation.

The Institute seeks to facilitate positive change by supporting scholarship, promoting outreach to public and campus communities, and dialoging with media industry professionals. In the coming months and years, ICOMME will hold lectures for the faculty, staff, and students of the University of Texas (award-winning journalist and filmmaker Anthony Shadid will visit in the spring of 2012), as well as for the general public, funding will be made available for those graduate students researching media and the Middle East, events will be held that target K-12 teachers, and an awards ceremony will celebrate news coverage and films that present a holistic view of the region.

As ICOMME and the faculty of the Center for Middle Eastern Studies, the Department of Radio-TV-Film, and the School of Journalism engage with journalists and the community, no doubt the Institute will achieve its goal of creating a more informed public. 🌸

## NEW PARADIGM FOR MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES

### STUDYING MIDDLE EASTERN CULTURES BEYOND BORDERS



Students and faculty with visiting lecturers Hoda Barakat, Samuel Shimon, Khaled Mattawa, and Adonis.

Middle Eastern Studies is instituting significant and exciting changes in both its undergraduate and graduate degree programs. In the past, students could either pursue an interdisciplinary major in MES, an undergraduate major in Islamic Studies, or a language-specific major in Arabic, Hebrew, or Persian, with Turkish available at the undergraduate level. As of the 2012–2013 academic year, the language-specific majors will be replaced by a new, more flexible major in Middle Eastern Languages and Cultures (MELC). This new degree plan will better meet the needs of our students by offering them the opportunity to focus their studies in accordance with their particular interests. In addition to providing more flexibility in designing a course of study, and allowing us to incorporate new language offerings in the future, this new degree plan will also allow those who wish to study more than one Middle Eastern language—a trend on the rise among our students—to do so. Students can also study literature in different traditions, in the original or in translation. The new model will also encourage us all to look beyond the boundaries of language and nation that sometimes obscure our view of the Middle East as a region with a shared past, present, and future.

On the undergraduate level, the new MELC degree emphasizes the acquisition of a Middle Eastern language as well as cultural studies, with particular strengths in literature, material culture, art history, and music. This approach complements the interdisciplinary MES major that requires courses in the separate areas of social science, history, and arts/humanities that take the Middle East as the region of focus. The biggest difference between the two undergraduate majors, though, is that MELC will require two completely new core courses: a lower-division survey course, “Gateway to the Middle East,” and an upper-division capstone course, “Engaging the Middle East.” The first of these, “Gateway to the Middle East,” is structured thematically,

linking various aspects of Middle Eastern cultures through a set of broad themes, and will showcase MES faculty as guest lecturers throughout the semester. “Engaging the Middle East” is a capstone course that will allow MELC majors in the last year of their studies to synthesize and share with each other their knowledge of the Middle East. It will provide students with the opportunity to read and think critically about seminal works, and to design and undertake a major research project that draws on their work in the course as well as on their studies as a whole and their language skills.

This new major constitutes a substantive change for MES’s undergraduate major offerings and, more broadly, reflects the forward-thinking approach our students and faculty take to the study of the Middle East. The MELC major, in acknowledging the diversity of student needs, will allow students to choose between a language/linguistics track or a literature/culture track and thereby tailor their studies to their interests. The MES major remains in place for students who wish to study the Middle East within an interdisciplinary framework that includes the social sciences. In addition to these two majors, MES will continue to offer the Islamic Studies (ISL) major.

At the graduate level, the new MELC configuration gives MA and PhD students much-needed flexibility in choosing areas and languages of study, and allows MES to highlight its strengths, such as comparative Middle Eastern literatures, linguistics, the Ancient Near East, and Islamic Studies, and promote disciplinary study across languages.

Students interested in the Middle East thus have a wide range of options that will permit them to explore the region. We are proud of these innovations and our position at the forefront of Middle Eastern studies. 🌸

# NEW FACULTY PUBLICATIONS

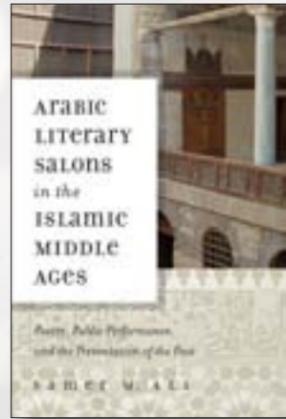
SAMER ALI

BENJAMIN BROWER

KAREN GRUMBERG

ANNOUNCE

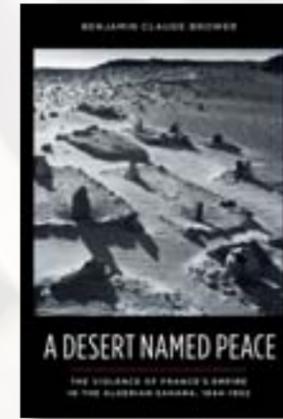
NEW TITLES



***Arabic Literary Salons in the Islamic Middle Ages: Poetry, Public Performance, and the Presentation of the Past***  
By Samer Ali  
University of Notre Dame Press

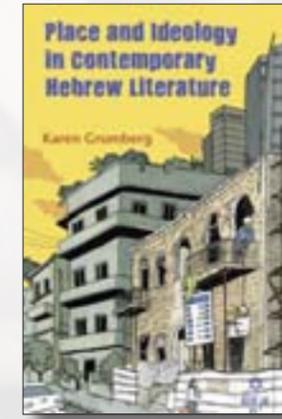
What did middle-class people do for fun in Baghdad in the Middle Ages? In *Arabic Literary Salons*, Samer Ali examines a cultural phenomenon much like our own book clubs. However, in an era before broadcast media and classroom education, these salons played a much more central role in society. Literary salons have existed in the Middle East since the Bronze Age as the plaything of royalty, but in the ninth century they began to shift into a more egalitarian forum. Friends who were relative equals would gather in the evening, be it in homes, courtyards, gardens, mosques, monasteries, or vineyards, to eat, drink, sing poetry, and tell stories. By the tenth century, these salons had flourished, becoming a driving engine of social and literary reform.

Ali examines Arabic manuscripts from archives in Berlin, Rabat, Cairo, and Madrid to think through some of the most fundamental questions about how salons helped educate the young, shaped humanism, and brought about key social changes. 🌸



***A Desert Named Peace: The Violence of France's Empire in the Algerian Sahara, 1844–1902***  
By Benjamin Claude Brower  
Columbia University Press

This book (winner of the Middle East Studies Association's Albert Hourani Book Award and the Society for French Historical Studies' David H. Pinkney Prize) investigates the relationship between imperialism and violence in the Saharan lands that became part of France's Algerian colony. With its title evoking the Roman historian Tacitus, *A Desert Named Peace's* central premise is that the history of French empire needs to be understood in terms of its violence. The book adopts a cautious perspective, however, that emphasizes the need to carefully articulate questions about violence rather than rush to answers or accusations. Thus it stresses that colonial violence cannot be grasped with a single explanation, but that it is best understood by seeking the lessons of multiple stories. *A Desert Named Peace* provides four separate case studies: indigenous slavery and the colonial-era slave trade across the Sahara; devastating French military campaigns in the oases; the socio-ecological crisis faced by Algero-Saharan pastoralists under French rule; and finally, how the cultural struggles of French Romantics infiltrated colonial discourse with dangerous accounts of domination and apocalypse. Telling a single story several times over, this book shows that the violence of the colonial period was not always about the military force of French conquests or the armed uprisings of Algerians fighting oppression, even as it was linked to this basic struggle. In the end, these multiple perspectives reveal the otherwise hidden second plots of violence, marked as they were by the echoes of other dramas not immediately linked to the colonial contest. 🌸



***Place and Ideology in Contemporary Hebrew Literature***  
By Karen Grumberg  
Syracuse University Press

Zionist ideology has shaped not only the rural and urban landscapes of Israel but also the way place has been represented in its literature. Until the 1980s, Zionist ideals, whether affirmed or critiqued, constituted the organizing spatial principle of Hebrew novels and stories. Recent fiction, however, increasingly disrupts this privileging of the nation and, by extension, the hegemonic conception of Israeli identity. Karen Grumberg's new book, *Place and Ideology in Contemporary Hebrew Literature*, begins with an analysis of the Zionist ideological conception of place. It then moves to explicate how this conception generates identity crises, finally arriving at alternative discourses of place that offer some relief, if not a solution to these crises. In its exploration of Hebrew literary portrayals of place and space by a diverse group of authors including Amos Oz and Sayed Kashua, *Place and Ideology* focuses on vernacular places—the lived places of everyday experience, such as buses, hotels, and train stations—to expand the Israeli experience of place beyond its normative cultural, territorial, and ethnic boundaries. Vernacular places, Grumberg argues, are penetrated by ideology, but can also empower people to resist it. This configuration of the dynamics between people and place leads to a more inclusive reorientation of Israeli identity. 🌸

# OUTREACH



## HEMISPHERES RECEIVES GRANT FROM THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

We are pleased to report that the Hemispheres outreach consortium has received a grant from the Library of Congress (LOC) for the 2011–2012 program year. Hemispheres, the consortium that consists of the outreach programs of the Center for Middle Eastern Studies (CMES), the Center for European Studies, the Teresa Lozano Long Institute of Latin American Studies, the Center for Russian, East European & Eurasian Studies, and the South Asia Institute, works with K–12 educators and curriculum specialists to provide training and materials for classroom use.

This grant, awarded through the LOC's Teaching with Primary Sources Western Regional Center (TPS), is the first of its kind to focus on world cultures, world history, and world geography; until now TPS has awarded grants that focus on American history, law, economics, and state-specific programs such as Texas history.

The TPS Western Regional Center, based at the Metropolitan State College of Denver, aims to develop a network of educators across fourteen western states that will assist teachers from the pre-service and K–12 levels as well as those at the university level in accessing and using digitized primary source materials housed at the Library of Congress (LOC) and on its affiliated Web sites. TPS

grants provide funding for institutions to select some of these primary source documents—books, journals, manuscripts, maps, prints and photographs, films, and sound recordings—and develop contextualization materials for them. These materials help educators understand the significance of the documents and provide historical context. They also offer suggestions on appropriate classroom usage and align the resources with educational and testing standards.

The grant awarded to Hemispheres focuses primarily on resources housed in the World Digital Library (WDL), a cooperative project of the Library of Congress, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and partner libraries, archives, and educational and cultural institutions from the United States and around the world. The WDL brings together rare and unique documents that tell the story of the world's cultures on a single Web site.

"This is a crucial year for social studies in Texas," says Christopher Rose, Outreach Director at CMES. "Beginning in 2012–2013, high school social studies courses will culminate in a standardized final exam, the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR). Previously, the standardized exam administered

during the tenth grade, when World History is taught, actually focused on U.S. history content. So, in a way, this will be the first time that teachers of ninth-grade World Geography and tenth-grade World History will actually be held accountable for how they teach those subjects, and a lot of them are very nervous about the new exam."

Under this new grant, Hemispheres offered a two-day master teachers' workshop in early August 2011 that brought together a core group of educators and curriculum specialists from around Texas with master trainers from the TPS program to discuss the LOC resources and how to access them. The second day of the workshop involved hands-on work in which the attendees selected resources of particular interest and practiced developing contextualization materials.

The materials that were developed at this training event will be posted on the Hemispheres Web site, and distributed at a series of one-day workshops conducted by the Hemispheres staff at sites around the state of Texas, to familiarize more educators with the available resources and how to use them. Additional training events in Austin, Midland, and Longview/Kilgore are on the schedule for fall 2011, with two more expected for the spring. 🌸



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