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Annual Report, 2015

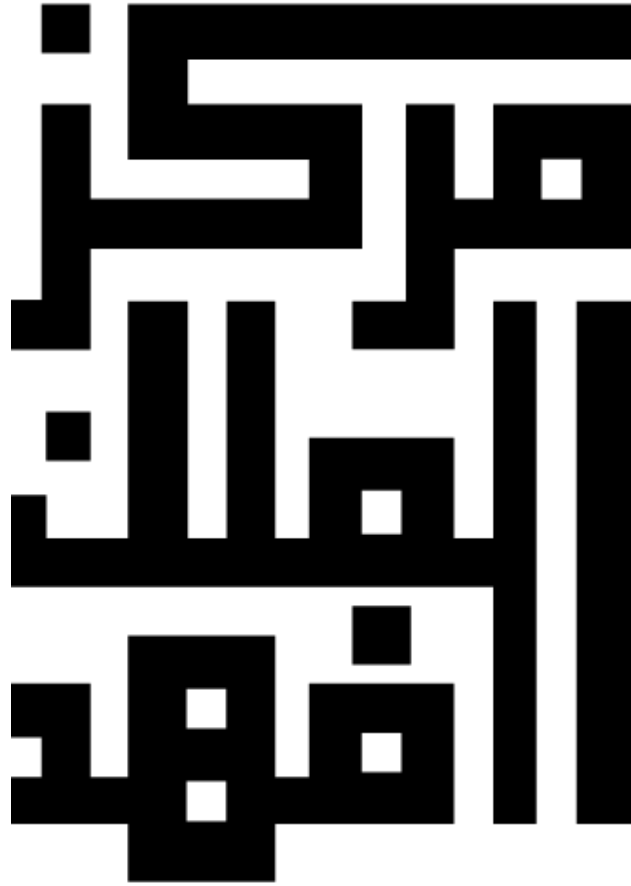
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**KING FAHD CENTER FOR MIDDLE EAST STUDIES
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS**

**MIDDLE EAST STUDIES PROGRAM
ANNUAL REPORT, 2014-2015**

Submitted by
Joel Gordon, Director of Middle East Studies
July 2015

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OVERVIEW

The King Fahd Center for Middle East Studies is an interdisciplinary program in the Fulbright College of Arts and Sciences, dedicated to the study of the Middle East and the geo-cultural area in which Islamic civilization prospered, and continues to shape world history.

Faculty members associated with the Center are rooted in degree-granting departments in Fulbright College and the broader University of Arkansas. We specialize in history and politics, literature and popular culture, religious and secular practice and interpretation, human engagement with the environment and ecosystem in contemporary times and antiquity. We work in diverse media: poetry and fiction, public archives, film and music, television and oratory, curricular instruction and cartography, the detritus of the past and the cultural production, classical and colloquial, artistic and vulgar, of the present.

The Center offers an undergraduate co-major linked to regional language study and supports the best of our students with scholarships. Many of our undergraduates go on to graduate study in area studies programs, and related professional work in public and private spheres. At the graduate level the Center supports students working in key disciplines towards the MA and PhD. Our graduate students have received highly competitive fellowships to support research and foreign language study, and have presented their work at annual professional meetings and specialized academic conferences. Many are now teaching at academic institutions here and abroad and are affiliated with research institutes or government agencies.

The past academic year was marked by an unprecedented series of challenges confronted by all Middle East Studies Centers and Programs. Our world is shrinking as military and civil conflicts limit those areas we can visit and/or send our students to for language study and research. We have continued to monitor the situation carefully, but at the same time advocate for those of us – faculty and senior students – who have made a professional commitment to Middle East and Islamic World studies. We need to return to our field with frequency – and by doing so we are more able to assess the situation on the ground, not only academically, but also politically. We will need to choose our ‘battles’ in terms of advocating for students and field sites; concurrently we will resolutely need to remind others that our program is rooted in overseas travel and immersion.

At home the MEST program underwent a long overdue ADHE assessment. The process allowed us to both rethink priorities and – hopefully – advocate our agenda to higher administration. Our report is available on the Center website. Amongst our primary aims are bolstering the Arabic program which, given enrollments over the past five-plus years, is sorely in need of faculty enhancement. The promotion of Paula Haydar from Instructor to Clinical Assistant Professor, beginning officially in August 2015, is a step in this direction, and one that will hopefully clarify the division of labor in the Arabic program and provide a clearer lens for future growth. We would like to add another tenure-track line in Arabic and a regular instructorship, with an eye towards supporting an Arabic major track in WLLC that would both enhance and be enhanced by the MEST major. We continue to lobby for the abrogation of

King Fahd Center support for 2 faculty members – supported without precedent or just cause by a prior Dean of Fulbright College – who are not specialists in our geo-cultural areas of study.

The highlights of the ‘season’ were the visit to campus of Azzah Fatimah, a New York based actress, who filled Giffels Auditorium for a performance of her one-woman show *Dirty Paki Lingerie*, and the convocation of a major gathering of scholars to assess the threat to cultural heritage in the Middle East. Fatimah met with faculty and students before her show and appeared on local Public Radio. The Cultural Heritage conference featured 10 leading scholars of North African and Near Eastern antiquity, who assessed – and compared notes on – the threats to cultural heritage posed by war, civil conflict, the environment and a growing, often unregulated market in ancient artifacts. With a public keynote – well attended by 100+ people – and smaller semi-private sessions the following day, the conference set a strong model for future convocations. It also cemented the position of the King Fahd Center, the Center for Advanced Spatial Technologies, and the U of A as a center for academic excellence in Near Eastern archaeology.

In addition the King Fahd Center welcomed the visit of HE Prince Turki b. Faisal al-Saud and a delegation of faculty and students from the King Abdul Aziz University in Jiddah, further enhancing our visibility in Saudi Arabia, the wellspring of our center and program.

On a curricular level, the Center continued to sponsor new courses on South Asian Islamic history, Islamic Orthodoxy and Heresy, and the emergent literary form of the graphic novel. Plans are in the works for a course on War and Peace in Islam and the World of Islam.

The King Fahd Center maintained its vigorous program of guest speakers across disciplines and Center faculty took their expertise off campus to local, regional, national, and international forums, as well as participated in forums on campus. With the ongoing global impact of events in the Middle East, South and Central Asia, and the broader Islamic world, King Fahd Center faculty continue to assume an ever larger role in public outreach – in addition to teaching and ongoing research agendas. Our national and international standing was underscored by the publications and frequent speaking engagements at American and international universities and research institutes by faculty members, and the increased visibility of Center faculty and graduate students who have received funding from leading agencies. This year 3 King Fahd Center -funded graduate students won Sturgis International Fellowships (3 of 9 fellows from the inaugural ‘class’) to carry out research abroad. And, again, a large number of undergraduate MEST majors had paper abstracts accepted by regional conferences and several travelled to present with Center sponsorship. Other undergraduate MEST majors took the initiative to help sponsor a candlelight vigil in memory of 3 University of North Carolina students murdered in an apparent hate crime in Durham, NC. We applaud their initiative in broadening their education beyond the classroom to address pressing social issues linked to cultural, ethnic and religious identity.

All of this will be detailed in the text that follows.

CURRICULUM

MEST Core Faculty

Core MEST Faculty members are full-time tenured/tenure-track faculty members whose salaries are paid in full or in part by the King Fahd Center, plus several full-time tenured/tenure-track faculty members and a full-time instructor who make substantial contributions to the MEST curriculum/program through teaching and mentoring students.

Nikolay Antov (Assistant Professor of History): Pre-Modern/Classical Middle East/Islamic History, Ottoman History

Jesse Casana (Professor of Anthropology): Archaeology of the Ancient Orient and Medieval Near East, Cultural Heritage Preservation

Mounir Farah (Professor of Curriculum and Instruction): Pedagogy and Curriculum Development, Educational Reform, Social Sciences, US-Middle East Relations

Najib Ghadbian (Associate Professor of Political Science): Arab World Politics and International Relations, Islamic Movements

Joel Gordon (Professor of History, Director of the King Fahd Center): History of the Modern Middle East, Popular Culture, Film and Media

Adnan Haydar (Professor of World Languages and Literature): Arabic Language Pedagogy, Comparative Literature, Middle East Literature, Arab Poetics, Theory of Translation

Paula Haydar (Instructor of Arabic): Arabic Language Pedagogy, Comparative Literature, Translation Theory, Modern Arabic Literature

Mohja Kahf (Professor of English): Comparative Literature, Pre-modern Islamic Literature, Modern Arab/Islamic/Diaspora Literature

Thomas Paradise (Professor of Geography): Cultural and Physical Geography of the Middle East and North Africa, Cartography, Natural/Cultural Resource and Architectural Management/Preservation

Jerome Rose (Professor of Anthropology): Biological Anthropology, Bioarchaeology, Forensic Archaeology

Ted Swedenburg (Professor of Anthropology): Cultural Anthropology of the Middle East/Islamic World, Popular Culture, Social and Critical Theory

MEST Affiliated Faculty

Sarwar Alam has a PhD in Public Policy from the University of Arkansas (2006) and held a 3-year post-doctoral position in Religious Studies (2007-10) at Emory University. He has specializations in Sufism and women's issues in Islamic society with a research focus on South Asia. He has offered MEST 2003 (Introduction to Islam) regularly since Spring 2012 and advanced courses on Islamic Mystical Traditions (MEST 410V) and a colloquium on Orthodoxy and Heresy in Islam (MEST 4003). This spring he offered Gender and Public Policy in the Middle East (PLSC 400V).

Daniel Brown is an Instructor in Political Science. He received his MA in Political Science from the U of A in Political Science and is currently pursuing his PhD at the University of Oklahoma. In addition to Comparative Politics, he offered Politics of the Middle East (PLSC 3523) during Spring 2015 semester.

Robert Brubaker, Instructor History, has a PhD in Anthropological Archaeology from the University of Michigan and is a specialist in early South Asia up to the Islamic period. For the past three years he has been offering special topics courses (HIST 3983) on religious traditions in early South Asia. For Spring 2015 semester he developed a course on Islam in Early South Asia.

MEST Staff

Mahfuza Akhtar (Administrative Support Supervisor) has a BS with Honors and an MS in Biology from Rajshahi University in Bangladesh. She passed the Civil Service exam and worked for Ministry of Education and then taught at Badrunessa Government College from 1984-96. She has worked for the King Fahd Center since 2002 and was promoted to administrative support supervisor in 2009.

Nani Verzon (Program Coordinator), a transplant from Hawaii, completed her Honors BA in 2007 in Middle East Studies/International Relations and Geography at the U of A as a four-year MEST undergraduate scholarship recipient. She is currently working toward her MA in Geography on seismic risk perception in Pakistan. She joined the King Fahd Center staff in August 2012.

Major/Minor Requirements and Courses

MEST co-majors are required to complete 30 hours of course work. This includes MEST 2013 and MEST 4003, 9 hours of MEST core courses in 1 discipline, 9 hours of additional MEST core courses in 1 or more other disciplines, plus 6 hours of Arabic beyond ARAB 2016.

MEST minors are required to complete 18 hours of course work. This includes MEST 2013 and MEST 4003, 6 hours of MEST core courses and 6 hours of Arabic beyond ARAB 2016.

MEST Core Courses

ANTH 3123 Anthropology of Religion*
ANTH 3033 Egyptology
ANTH 4123 Ancient Middle East
ANTH 4256 Archeological Field Session
ANTH 4513 African Religions*
ANTH 4533 Middle East Cultures
ANTH 4913 Topics in the Middle East
ARAB 1016 Intensive I**
ARAB 2016 Intensive II**
ARAB 3016 Intensive III**
ARAB 4016 Intensive IV**
ARAB 4023 Advanced I**
ARAB 4033 Advanced II**
ARAB 4053 Readings**
ARAB 470V Special Topics**
GEOG 2003 World Regional Geography*
GEOS 4033 Geography of the Middle East
GEOG 410V Special Problems in Geography:
Middle East/North Africa
HIST 3033 Islamic Civilization
HIST 3043 History of the Modern Middle East
HIST 3473 Palestine and Israel in Modern Times
HIST 3923H Honors Colloquium (approved selected
topics)
HIST 4353 Middle East 600-1250
HIST 4373 Mongol and Mamluk 1250-1520
HIST 4363 Middle East since 1914
HIST 4393 Early Modern Islamic Empires, 1300-
1750
HIST 4413 New Women in the Middle East
HIST 4433 Social and Cultural History of the
Modern Middle East
HIST 4443 Modern Islamic Thought**
HUMN 2213 Introduction to World Religions*
HUMN 425V Colloquium (approved selected
topics)*
MEST 2003 Intro to Islam
MEST 2013 Introduction to Middle East Studies
MEST 310V Special Topics in Middle East Studies**
MEST 4003 Middle East Studies Colloquium

MEST 4003H Honors Middle East Studies
Colloquium
MEST 410V Special Topics in Middle East Studies**
PLSC 3523 Politics of the Middle East
PLSC 3813 International Law*
PLSC 4583 Political Economy of the Middle East**
PLSC 4593 Islam and Politics
PLSC 4843 Middle East in World Affairs
WLIT 3523 The Quran as Literature**
WLIT 3713 Literature of Spain, 711-1615**
WLIT 3723 Classical Arabic Literature**
WLIT 3743 Arab American Literature**
WLIT 3983/603V Special Studies: (approved
selected topics)

*Currently listed in the catalog under the current program,
now no longer offered/to be removed from the program
during the next update

**Currently accepted for MEST credit but NOT listed in the
catalog under the current program, to be added to the
program during the next update

Notes

1) MEST 2013 (Introduction to Middle East Studies) is offered by faculty members on rotation and occasionally by advanced graduate students who are particularly well versed in interdisciplinary approaches to area studies. Due to increased demand, this course was offered during both semesters of AY 2014-15. This will be continued during the coming AY.

2) MEST 4003 (Middle East Studies Colloquium), designed as a capstone colloquium for all undergraduate majors, is offered every Spring semester, taught by a member of the MEST faculty who offers a topics course that matches area/research specialization. In Fall 2014 a course on Orthodoxy and Heterodoxy in Islam was offered, followed by a course on Middle East Graphic Novel in Spring 2015. Courses on Sufism and Iranian Film and Literature will both count toward colloquium credit for Fall 2015.

3) Arabic Program: The relationship between the King Fahd Center and the Arabic program housed in the World Languages, Literatures and Cultures department remains critical at both undergraduate and graduate levels. Arabic courses are currently taught by two faculty members: **Adnan Haydar**, Professor of World Languages and Literature, and **Paula Haydar**, Instructor of Arabic, who is hired by the Center. Adnan Haydar teaches 9 credit hours per semester. Paula Haydar teaches 12 hours per semester. Graduating MFA student **Clayton Clark** was brought on to teach a section of Intensive Arabic II during Adnan Haydar's Spring 2015 sabbatical.

4) Enhanced Offerings/New Courses: The King Fahd Center has in recent years undertaken an initiative to promote special topics and Middle East survey courses offered by advanced graduate students and instructors who have related research interests and teaching ability. During AY 2014-15 **Rob Brubaker** (HIST Instructor) offered reprises of Introduction to Early South Asia and Islam in Early South Asia; **Sarwar Alam** (MEST Instructor) taught an advanced course on Sufism in addition to Gender & Policy in the Middle East; and **Kaveh Bassiri** (ABD CLCS) offered a course on Middle East Graphic Novel.

Courses Taught AY 2014-15

Faculty members are currently able to teach approximately fifteen undergraduate and combined undergraduate/graduate courses across the core disciplines per semester. Summer course offerings have been minimal, although on occasion we have offered colloquial Arabic and Middle East history. Increased numbers from recent years reflect the addition of **Nikolay Antov** (HIST) and the courses taught by **Sarwar Alam** (MEST) and affiliate instructors **Rob Brubaker** (HIST) and **Daniel Brown** (PLSC). The number of MEST courses offered has also been supplemented by a more creative approach to utilizing advanced graduate students, who accounted for an additional five courses per term, allowing faculty greater leeway to teach at the graduate level.

The following courses were offered between Summer 2014 and Summer 2015:

Summer 2014:

HIST 3043 (Parnell)

Fall 2014:

ANTH 3033 (Morey)

ANTH 4533 (Swedenburg)

ARAB 1016 (A/P Haydar – 2 sections)

ARAB 3016 (P Haydar)

ARAB 4023 (A Haydar)

ARAB 470V (A Haydar)

GEOG 4033/H (Paradise)

HIST 3033 (Parnell)

HIST 3043 (Parnell)

HIST 3983/ANTH 3903 (Religion in Early S Asia – Brubaker)

HIST 4363 (Gordon)

HIST 4393 (Antov)

MEST 2003 (Alam)

MEST 2013 (Kahf)

MEST 4003 (Orthodoxy and Heresy in Islam – Alam)

PLSC 3523 (Ghadbian)

WLIT 3723 (Kahf)

Spring 2015:

ANTH 3033 (Morey)

ANTH 4913 (Swedenburg)

ARAB 2016 (P Haydar/Clark – 2 sections)

ARAB 4016 (P Haydar)

ENGL4583 (Kahf)

HIST 3033 (Parnell)

HIST 3043 (Parnell)

HIST 3983/ANTH 3903 (Islam in Early S Asia – Brubaker)

HIST 4413 (Gordon)

MEST 2003 (Alam)

MEST 2013 (Angel)

MEST 4003/WLIT 3983 (Middle East Graphic Novel – Bassiri)

PLSC 3523 (Ghadbian)

PLSC 400V (Gender and Public Policy – Alam)

PLSC 4843 (Ghadbian)

Summer 2015:

HIST 3033 (Parnell)

KING FAHD CENTER ACTIVITIES – AY 2014-15

ADHE Program Review

Much of the early part of AY 2014-15 was focused on preparing a report prior to the visit of an outside evaluator for ADHE program review. That report focused primarily upon the MEST undergraduate program, although the symbiotic relationship to the broader King Fahd Center profile, and especially the graduate program, drew natural attention. The report, submitted in August 2014, may be found on the Center website (http://cavern.uark.edu/rd_arsc/mest/MEST_Program_Review.pdf). The report summarized much of the material presented in recent annual reports in terms of student enrollment, scholarship opportunities, study abroad, curricular development, and faculty research and outreach. It highlighted strategic goals and initiatives: enhancing Arabic (and eventually broader language) study, supporting a major track in Arabic in WLLC, considering a stand-alone MEST major and an eventual MA in Middle East Studies. The report, following a set of parameters issued by the university, also outlined key constraints, as articulated by the faculty. These include the ongoing financial burden of supporting several faculty lines for non-Middle East/Islamic world area specialists in Creative Writing/Translation and a general sense that much more could be done, given the Center's resources, with greater physical space, commensurate with some other area programs.

In September 2014 the King Fahd Center hosted the visit of Professor William Granara (Director, Center for Middle East Studies, Harvard University). Granara met with faculty, undergraduate and graduate students, and the Chair of WLLC. In his report to the Dean of Fulbright College and U of A Provost, he underscored the academic (scholarly and teaching) achievements of the King Fahd Center. He seconded most strongly our goals towards language enhancement and suggested other directions for future growth.

Consortium of Area and International Studies (CAIS)

Following up on a discussion with the Dean and Associate Deans of Fulbright College, the directors of area studies on campus met in December 2014 and proposed a Consortium of Area and International Studies centers (suggested acronym: CAIS). The purpose of this consortium would be to enhance collaborative efforts among area studies centers and better promote each other's activities. The foundation of this consortium is envisioned to be a shared, collaborative web page (a rough skeleton for which was designed by Program Coordinator **Nani Verzon**) to be managed by Fulbright College and to which each area studies program could provide news of and links to activities, study abroad options, funding opportunities, and cross-disciplinary course offerings, both regional and thematic. Fulfilling this project remains a goal for the future. One tangible manifestation of this will be the collaboration towards bringing a speaker from Scholars-at-Risk to campus in November 2015 in conjunction with International Studies Week.

Visiting Speakers and Related Special Events

The following lectures and screenings were held in Northwest Arkansas, both on campus and at community venues. Further details and promotional information may be accessed on the Center website:

September 19: Public lecture by David Romano – ‘The Empire Strikes Back (Episode 3): ISIS, Iraq, Kurdistan and the U.S.’

Dr. David Romano is the Thomas G. Strong Professor of Middle East Politics at Missouri State University, and has also taught at Rhodes College in Memphis. He teaches courses in politics and government of the Middle East, international relations theories, foreign policies of Middle East States, and political violence and terrorism. Romano is the author of *The Kurdish Nationalist Movement: Opportunity, Mobilization and Identity* (Oxford University Press 2006) and is a leading expert on Kurdish politics and political movements across the Middle East. He last visited the U of A in September 2007 and spoke about the recent elections in Turkey in a talk entitled ‘Is Turkey Still Secular? Explaining the Latest Elections’ sponsored by the King Fahd Center.

November 5: Public play performance by Aizzah Fatima – ‘Dirty Paki Lingerie’

Aizzah Fatima is a writer/actress who has appeared in numerous theatre productions and the hit Pakistani TV series *Mata-e-jaan*. Other U.S. TV credits include: *The Good Wife* on CBS, *Patrice O’Neil’s Guide to White People* on Comedy Central and, *Food Detectives with Ted Allen* on the Food Network. Her one-woman play, *Dirty Paki Lingerie*, transcends boundaries of culture, religion, and gender, moving and entertaining audiences with its unique and universal appeal, and has played to sold-out houses in NYC, Toronto, Pakistan, and beyond.

Set in post 9/11 America, *Dirty Paki Lingerie* depicts the stories of six Pakistani-American Muslim women ranging in age from a six year old girl to a sixty-five year old woman at the chaotic juncture of two different cultures. Cross-cultural sparks fly and preconceptions about Muslim women, sex, and politics are hilariously shattered in the show *The Wall Street Journal* says “Breaks down stereotypes of Muslim women in America” and that reviewers call a “must-see” production. Playing to sold-out houses in NYC, Toronto, Pakistan, and Edinburgh Fringe Festival, *Dirty Paki Lingerie* transcends boundaries of culture, religion, and gender, moving and entertaining audiences with its unique and universal appeal. The show has been described as ‘a rich, sexy, and infectiously entertaining mosaic of the sublime, the comic, the poetic, and the political.’

November 6: Public workshop with Aizzah Fatima - ‘On The Road with Dirty Paki Lingerie (co-sponsored by the Office for International Students and Scholars)

‘On The Road with Dirty Paki Lingerie’ furthered the discussion on religious, gender and ethnic stereotypes in America, and the difficulties and opportunities in taking a show like *Dirty Paki Lingerie* to audiences in Pakistan and Central Asia.

January 23: Public lecture by Jeffrey VanDenBurg – ‘In Through the Out Door: Regionalism and National Politics in Tunisia and Morocco after the Uprisings’

Jeffrey VanDenBerg is Professor of Political Science and Director of Middle East Studies at Drury University. His research interests focus on Arab politics and international relations in the Middle East. He has conducted research and published work on Jordan and is currently looking at trends in North Africa. He is a founding member of the Middle East Studies Association’s Committee on Undergraduate Education, and his publications include ‘King Hussein and Black September’ and ‘Generational Leadership Change in the Arab World’ in *History in Dispute: The Middle East Since 1945*; ‘Teaching and Learning in Middle East Studies’ in *Issues in Middle East Studies* and ‘Alignment Theory and Interrelated Threats: Jordan and the Persian Gulf Crisis’ (co-author) in *Security Studies*.

February 27: Public piano performance by Annie Balabanian (co-sponsored by the Fulbright College Piano Performance Program)

Award-winning Lebanese maestro Annie Balabanian performed a solo piano recital featuring works by Armenian composers. Her concert, sponsored by the Fulbright College Piano Performance Program in partnership with the King Fahd Center for Middle East Studies, included works by Aram Khachaturian, Boghos Gelalian, Edvard Mirzoyan and other notable Armenian composers who adapted local and regional folk tunes and melodies into Western classical composition. Born in Beirut, Ms. Balabanian began piano studies at the age of five. Praised by the *Agenda Culturel* for demonstrating the ‘exciting temperament of a magnificent concert pianist,’ Balabanian has captured numerous prizes and awards, including the First Prize at the Margot Babikian Chamber Music Competition (Beirut 2010) and second prize at the Schubert Piano Competition (Beirut 1997), and has participated in international music festivals and workshops. A sought-after chamber musician, Balabanian performs frequently with chamber groups and currently teaches piano at the National Higher Conservatory of Music in Beirut, Lebanon.

March 2: Public lecture by Annie Balabanian – ‘West Meets East: Classical Music and Culture in Lebanon’ (co-sponsored by the Fulbright College Piano Performance Program)

Annie Balabanian (see above) spoke on classical music education and the arts scene in Lebanon and provided biographical and historical context for the composers she played in her Friday night recital.

March 5: Keynote lecture for ‘Cultural Heritage Crisis in the Middle East Symposium’ by MacGuire Gibson – ‘Attempting to Protect Cultural Heritage in the Middle East’

McGuire Gibson is a Professor in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at the University of Chicago, and is one of the world’s leading authorities on ancient Mesopotamia. Over his long career, he has directed fieldwork in Iraq, Syria, Yemen and Saudi Arabia, including at the well-known city of Nippur, the religious center of ancient Mesopotamia. Following the first Gulf War in 1991, he began working to bring attention to the problem of looting in Iraq, and in 2003 served on a National Geographic delegation in Iraq to inspect archaeological sites damaged and looted in the wake of the US-led invasion. Since that time, he has remained one of the most vocal advocates for the protection of

cultural heritage in Iraq and the broader Middle East. The 'Cultural Heritage Crisis in the Middle East Symposium' is discussed in greater detail below.

Local/On-Campus Events

August 27: Public current events forum – 'Assessing the Worst Summer in the Middle East'

King Fahd Center faculty members **Nikolay Antov**, **Mounir Farah**, **Joel Gordon**, **Adnan Haydar**, and **Ted Swedenburg** discussed the waves of political violence -- civil war, holy war, insurrection, invasion and occupation, the destruction of civil society and failure to conclude elections, and the erasure of traditional borders and alliances -- that swept the Middle East and adjacent regions, from Libya to Afghanistan during the summer months of 2014.

November 3: The Racial Politics of Ebola (co-sponsored by the African and African American Studies and International Relations/International Studies programs)

The African and African American Studies program hosted a discussion panel examining "The Racial Politics of Ebola" in conjunction with the King Fahd Center for Middle Eastern Studies and International Relations/International Studies programs. Panelists Caree Banton (HIST), Benjamin Grob-Fitzgibbon (HIST), **Joel Gordon** (HIST), Timothy Landry (VAP HIST), and Calvin White, Jr. (HIST) discussed sensationalized media coverage of Ebola, generalizations of Africa and misinformation about how the disease is transmitted.

April 14: Public film screening and Q&A – 'Petra: Lost City of Stone' (co-sponsored by Geography Honors Society Gamma Theta Upsilon and the Department of Geosciences)

Tom Paradise (GEOS) was part of a team that worked with carvers and masons to sculpt a full-scale tomb into a cliff face to discover how the ancient Nabateans built Petra, the rock-carved city in Jordan made famous by Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade. The project was filmed and produced by Providence Pictures as a three-part series for NOVA, a science documentary series on PBS. Petra is featured along with the Roman Coliseum in Rome, Italy, and Hagia Sophia in Istanbul, Turkey, in *Building the Wonders of the World*.

Local/On-Campus Social Events

August 18: Visit by Saudi Students and Professors from al-Imam University

Center Director **Joel Gordon** and staff hosted a group of students and faculty from the College of Computer and Information Sciences at al-Imam Muhammad b. Saud Islamic University in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Heading the delegation were Dr. Ali Saad al-Ali, Vice Dean for Administrative and Student Affairs, and Dr. Ahmed Asad Abu Halimeh, Assistant Professor and UALR alumnus. They were in Arkansas for a workshop and UALR. Afterwards the group traveled to Atlanta before heading back to Riyadh.

Fall 2014: Arabian Knights Indoor Soccer

The King Fahd Center undertook sponsorship of the Arabian Knights, an indoor soccer team made up of Arab students from the U of A and Spring International Language Center and captained by Michael Samour, a U of A Engineering graduate student. The team competed as part of the Jones Center Futsal League during the fall, and made it to the league finals.

September 24: Middle East Studies & ACCESS Mixer (co-sponsored by the Spring International Language Center)

King Fahd Center faculty and students shared pizza and stories with a group of approximately 20 visiting English teachers from the Middle East and North Africa who were in Fayetteville to participate in a two-week training seminar at Spring International Language Center (SILC). The visitors, who were affiliated with the English Access Micro-scholarship Program (Access) and funded by the US Department of State, teach economically disadvantaged youth in their home countries.

November 15: Visit of Prince Turki al-Faisal b. al-Saud

In November 2014 the King Fahd Center hosted a visit by HE Prince Turki bin Faisal al-Saud, the former Saudi Ambassador to the United States and Saudi Director of General Intelligence, to the University of Arkansas. Prince Turki was welcomed to campus by U of A Chancellor G. David Gearhart, Todd Shields, Dean of Fulbright College, and King Fahd Center Director **Joel Gordon**. He visited the Center offices in Old Main and met with Middle East Studies faculty and graduate students, as well as a delegation of Saudi students who are sponsored at the U of A by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

In his welcoming comments, Director **Joel Gordon** noted the Center's mission 'to promote knowledge of the shared histories, cultures, religions, struggles and human achievements of the peoples of the Middle East, to explain social, economic, historical, and environmental complexities, to explore cultural creativity in the face of civil and political conflict [and] above all, to keep lines of communication open through study and research abroad – often at times of trouble – and by opening our doors to international students.'

Graduate students **Matt Parnell** (HIST), **Chris Angel** (ENDY) and **Nicole Fares** (CLCS) described their research and spoke to their experience at U of A. Afterwards, everyone gathered for photos by the statue of Senator Fulbright and the Fulbright Peace Fountain.

February 19: Candlelight Vigil in Memory of Chapel Hill Students

King Fahd Center undergraduate students partnered with the Muslim Students Association RSO to organize a candlelight vigil in remembrance of Deah Barakat, Yusor Abu-Salha, and Razan Abu-Salha, the three UNC students who were murdered on February 10th. Approximately 200 people from the university and broader community turned out on a chilly February evening to pay respects to the victims and listen to a series of speakers. Student organizers of the vigil, including MEST scholarship recipient **Bailey Cox** (IREL/MEST 2014), spoke to the local press about raising awareness of the problems Muslims and many other minorities face across the country each day.

March 5-6: Cultural Heritage Crisis in the Middle East Symposium

The King Fahd Center hosted an academic conference on the Cultural Heritage Crisis in the Middle East that brought together – and to Fayetteville – 10 leading authorities on the archaeological heritage of the region and the threats posted by civil conflict, intra-state warfare, government negligence, urbanization, tourism, and the international market in illegal antiquities. Organized in conjunction with Professor **Jesse Casana** (ANTH), the conference featured a keynote address by MacGuire Gibson, Professor of Archaeology at the University of Chicago and a leading authority on ancient Mesopotamia (see above). Presenters were Jesse Casana (Syria); Michael Danti, Boston University (Syria); Susan Kane, Oberlin College (Libya); Morag Kersel, DePaul University (Jordan/Palestine); Sarah Parcak, University of Alabama-Birmingham (Egypt); Gil Stein, University of Chicago (Afghanistan); Elizabeth Stone, Stony Brook University (Southern Iraq); and Jason Ur, Harvard University (Iraqi Kurdistan). Andrew Vaughn of the American Schools of Oriental Research presented concluding comments and kicked off a lively panel discussion. Visiting scholars also met with the staff of the Center for Advanced Spatial Technologies and toured CAST facilities.

April 10: Arabic Poetry Night

King Fahd Center students **Malek Zuraikat**, **Abdulhalim Alshehri**, and **Nawaf Alshammari** read their original poetry at a reading sponsored by the Saudi Students Organization.

April 29: Undergraduate Islamic Studies Symposium

On April 30, select students from **Sarwar Alam**'s courses (MEST 2003 and PLSC 400V) who have submitted research papers to regional conferences presented their papers at a second annual forum on 'Islamic Studies: Belief, Expression, Journey, Debate' sponsored by the King Fahd Center. Participants were:

Nathaniel Bailey, 'Brother Whom I Love: Alternative Sexual Relations in Turkey'

Abram Greenbaum, 'Desecration of the Body: Tattoos in Middle Eastern Culture'

William Harris, 'In Order That He May Rest in Peace'

Austin Keefer, "'Glory be to God, I Have Killed My Daughter': The Tradition of Honor Killing in Jordan'

Viktoria Lawler, 'Getting Freedom Back in Cadillacs: Women, Religion, and the State in Saudi Arabia'

Christian McCall, 'To Sin or Not to Sin: Mankind's Intentions and Inclinations'

ACTIVITIES/PROJECTS -- ONGOING

Arabic Program

During AY 2014-15, 166 students took Arabic at various levels. Enrollments have been steady in recent years, after a jump in 2009-10 (200 students in AY 2013-14, 177 students in AY 2012-13, 172 students in AY 2011-12, 179 students in AY 2010-11, 173 students in AY 2009-10). As noted in the ADHE Assessment Report, these numbers are straining existing faculty and overcrowded language classes may in fact discourage some students.

Together, **Adnan Haydar** and **Paula Haydar** advise students on study abroad options and have been increasingly successful in preparing both graduate and undergraduates to compete successfully for outside funding for Arabic study, especially for the Critical Language Scholarship Program sponsored by the US State Department. They also organize an annual Arabic Speech Contest held in conjunction with other language programs at the University of Arkansas, an event the King Fahd Center co-sponsors.

Haki bi Lubnani, a Lebanese dialect online companion volume and website to *al-Kitab*, was published by Georgetown University Press in November 2014. Produced in conjunction with Nadine Sinno of Virginia Tech University (U of A PhD/CLCS 2009), *Haki bil-Libnani* provides students of Arabic with an opportunity to acquire substantial and systematic proficiency in Lebanese dialect and culture, and is designed to work either on its own or alongside the bestselling Arabic-language textbook *Al-Kitab Part One, Third Edition*. This fully online textbook and interactive website features two video story components, designed to foster proficiency as students work through each lesson while practicing vocabulary, cultural expressions, and short dialogues. The Arabic program has been incorporating Lebanese dialect into classroom instruction while these materials were being developed, along with the latest addition of *al-Kitab*.

The many achievements of Arabic language students will be noted below in the Graduate and Undergraduate Student sections of this report.

Arabic Conversation Table

The King Fahd Center helped organize, in conjunction with Arabic professors **Adnan** and **Paula Haydar**, late afternoon gatherings of Arabic students to pursue guided informal discussion. Meetings were held in the Arkansas Union and led by **Delilah Clark** (Tuesdays) and **Clayton Clark** (Wednesdays). The King Fahd Center provided funds for light refreshments.

Arabic Speech Contest

The Center helps to sponsor the annual WLLC Speech Contest, which is part of the Fulbright College Language Festival and held every April. Due to **Adnan Haydar's** Spring 2015 sabbatical, the Speech Contest was cancelled for 2015 and will resume in Spring 2016.

Archaeology Field Expeditions

The King Fahd Center supports financially the operation of a bioarchaeological field school in Egypt supervised by **Jerome Rose** (ANTH) and an archaeological expedition led by **Jesse Casana** (ANTH). Professor Casana's field school in northern Syria has been inoperative since AY 2010-11 due to civil conflict).

Amarna – Egypt

Professor Rose had to cancel his Bioarchaeology Field School at Amarna in Upper Egypt in 2011 due to concerns about safety and access to field sites. When the situation in Egypt stabilized, he was able to lead a field expedition of faculty and advanced graduate students to analyze bones collected during the prior year's digging season. In AY 2012-13 the King Fahd Center helped underwrite the travel and expenses of two teams of international scholars that traveled to Amarna to undertake two seasons of fieldwork (28 October-20 December 2012 and 30 March 30-1 May 2013) to prepare for Summer 2013 analysis. In May 2014 Professor Rose's team included faculty colleagues and 2 U of A graduate students.

Fieldwork at the North Tombs Cemetery conducted March through May 2015 produced 115 individual skeletons that will be studied by the Field School students. The excavation is directed by Dr. Anna Stevens (British Museum) with NEH funding provided to Dr. Gretchen Dabbs (Southern Illinois University-Carbondale), a U of A PhD (ANTH 2009) who received partial funding from MEST) and Anna Stevens.

The bioarchaeological field school in Amarna (17 May – 17 June 2015) is directed by Dr. Jerry Rose and Dr. Gretchen Dabbs with funding support from the King Fahd Center (including 2 teaching assistantships) and tuition that is managed by the Office of Study Abroad. He will be accompanied by U of A students **Heidi Davis** (PhD), **Leah Morse** (BA), and **Ashley Shidner** (PhD)

This year 10 students are enrolled in the field school from 7 universities. There are 3 U of A students (2 with Center funding), 2 from Southern Illinois University, 1 from Macquarie University (Australia), 1 from the Universidad Autonoma Barcelona (Spain), 1 from University of Liverpool (UK), 1 from University of Copenhagen (Denmark), and 1 from the Ministry of Antiquities (Egypt) with a full scholarship from the program.

3 papers were presented at the North American Paleopathology Association Annual Meeting in St. Louis, MO in April 2015:

Heidi Davis, 'Degenerative joint disease and trauma at Tell el-Amarna'

Jerry Rose and Nicole Smith, 'The Hittite Plague of 1322 BCE: A Multidisciplinary Diagnosis.'

Ashley Shidner, 'Subadult Mortality and health at Tell el-Amarna'

4 publications appeared:

Nicole, Smith, 'Cribra orbitalia in the ancient Nile Valley and its connection to malaria' *International Journal of Paleopathology* 10 (2014):1-12.

Gretchen R. Dabbs, Jerome C. Rose and Melissa Zabecki, 'The Bioarchaeology of Akhetaten: Unexpected Results from a 43Capital City,' in: S. Ikram, J. Kaiser & R. Walker (eds) *Egyptian Bioarchaeology: Humans, Animals, and the Environment* (Leiden: Sidestone Press, 2015).

Gretchen R. Dabbs and Melissa Zabecki, 'Abandoned Memories: A cemetery of forgotten souls,' in Benjamin Porter and Alexis Boutin (eds.), *Remembering and Commemorating the Dead: Recent Contributions in Bioarchaeology and Mortuary Analysis from the Ancient Near East* (Boulder: University of Colorado Press, 2015).

Upper Diyala River Valley – Iraqi Kurdistan

In 2013 Professor Casana began scouting sites in the Upper Diyala River Valley in Iraqi Kurdistan with an eye towards future excavation projects. In May 2013, supported by King Fahd Center funding, he led a team of 5, including his recent U of A PhD student **Tuna Kalayci** (ANTH 2013), PhD student **Mitra Panahipour**, an Iraqi Kurdish student and a government representative on a survey of the region. In Summer 2014 he returned to the area with a team of 4 PhD students (**Mitra Panahipour**, **Chris Fletcher**, **Autumn Cool**, and **Eric Jensen**), all supported by a combination of King Fahd Center Summer Travel Grants and general Center support funds. This summer, due to unrest in the region, as well as Professor Casana's imminent relocation, the expedition will not be held. Professor Casana's graduate students will pursue other research opportunities (as noted below).

Arkansas Arabic Translation Award

This prestigious award, announced in conjunction with the Annual Meeting of the Middle East Studies Association every November/December, carries a \$5000 prize for both the translator and author (if living). Submissions are solicited for works of fiction, poetry or prose, and non-fiction works in the literary tradition. The winning translation is published by Syracuse University Press (with full reference to the King Fahd Center), one of the leading academic publishers of Arabic fiction in the world. By contractual agreement with SUP the Center underwrites part of the cost of publication of the winner and, in return, receives a portion of royalties.

Over the course of the past four years the award winners have included acclaimed works by contemporary authors from Lebanon, Egypt, and Iraq. The 2013 winner was a translation of Qassim Haddad's *Chronicles of Majnun Layla and Other Poems* by Ferial Ghazoul and John Verlenden of the American University in Cairo. The Arkansas Award for *Majnun Layla* follows a \$100,000 translation grant the pair received from the National Endowment for the Humanities to 'create a comprehensive edition of Haddad's work in English.'

The co-winners for the 2014 prize are *All Faces but Mine: The Poetry of Samih al-Qassim*, translated by Abdulwahid Lulua, and *The Perception of Meaning*, by Hisham Bustani, translated by Thoraya El-Rayyes.

Samih al-Qassim, a major literary figure and Palestinian 'resistance' poet, died this past August at age 75. He published more than thirty books of poetry, in addition to several novels and plays, essays and literary criticism. Only one prior collection of his, *Sadder than Water* (2006), has been published in

English translation. The new prize-winning volume will be an anthology that includes some of his earliest as well as his most recent work. Abdulwahid Lulua, the translator, is a distinguished Iraqi writer, professor of literature and literary translator who currently lives in Cambridge, UK.

Hisham Bustani, who lives in Jordan, has more recently burst onto the literary scene and been acclaimed for his avant-garde style. In 2013 the UK-based webzine *The Culture Trip* listed him as one of the best six contemporary Jordanian writers. *The Perception of Meaning* is the third of four published collections of short fiction and will be the first complete work by him to be published in English. It is also his most experimental venture into the genre of ‘flash fiction’ – narrative chapters that run from several pages to a single line. Translated stories have appeared in *The Literary Review*, *World Literature Today*, *Banipal*, *CutBank*, and *The Mahalat Review*. Thoraya El-Rayyes, a Palestinian-Canadian writer and literary translator based in Amman, Jordan, has had works published in *World Literature Today*, *The Outpost*, *The Literary Review* and *Sukoon*, and has been a frequent collaborator with Bustani.

Etel Adnan Poetry Award

The King Fahd Center has partnered with the University of Arkansas Press and the Radius of Arab-American Writers Incorporated (RAWI) to co-sponsor an annual award for the best volume of poetry by an Arab-American writer. The competition will be administered by RAWI. The winner will receive from RAWI a \$1000 prize and U of A Press will publish the winning submission with Center support. The prize is named for acclaimed Lebanese-American writer (poet/novelist) and artist Etel Adnan. The collaboration on this project between the King Fahd Center and the U of A Press represents a true merging of common interests – for the Press it reflects a long-term specialization in American poetry, as well as a continuation of a successful series of edited volumes on Afghani-American, Arab-American, Iranian-American, and South Asian-American poetry and prose; for the Center an ongoing interest in pushing the traditional boundaries and borders of the Middle East and Islamic world, as well as the focus of numerous faculty members on literature, poetry, and popular cultural expression.

Journal of Islamic Law and Culture

JILC has been an ongoing venture operating out of the U of A Law School under the supervision of Professor Steven Sheppard, a specialist in international law. The journal, published by Taylor & Francis, was to be transferred to the auspices of the Law School, to be published as an online journal under the present editorial board based at DePaul University. However, with Professor Sheppard’s departure after AY 2013-14, the project has been put on hold.

Language Study and Research Abroad

King Fahd Center graduate and undergraduate students are increasingly participating in national and international programs to further their Arabic or academic training, or undertaking field work with the support of the Center, the University of Arkansas, or major funding agencies.

During Summer 2014, 2 graduate students studied Arabic at major US university programs: **Baris Basturk** (PhD HIST) attended the institute at Indiana University with Center support; **Sanket Desai** (PhD

HIST) attended the institute at the University of Wisconsin with a Foreign Language Area Studies (FLAS) fellowship.

Heidi Davis (PhD ANTH) and **Ashley Shidner** (PhD ANTH) attended the U of A Bioarchaeology Field School in Amarna, Egypt with Professor **Jerry Rose**; students **Autumn Cool** (MA ANTH), **Christopher Fletcher** (MA ANTH), and **Mitra Panahipour** (PhD ANTH) travelled with Professor Jesse Casana on a U of A Archaeological Expedition in Northern Iraq, all with support from the King Fahd Center. **Charles Davidson** (MA ANTH) undertook research for his thesis among Syrian refugee camps in Jordan and **Keith Whitmire** (PhD ANTH) performed preliminary groundwork in Morocco for upcoming dissertation research, both with support from the King Fahd Center.

5 undergraduate students attended programs in Jordan with support from the King Fahd Center and/or other U of A scholarships: **Sean Bryant** (IREL/MEST) and **Daniel Ince** (IREL/HIST; MEST minor) – Project GO; **Brian Hughes** (IREL/MEST) and **Parker Belden** (BSIB) – SIT Study Abroad; **Robert Peiser** (IREL/MEST) – AMIDEAST. **Zachary Schwermann** (IREL/MEST) attended an API Study Abroad program in Sharjah, United Arab Emirates. **Caleb Ward** (ANTH) participated in an archaeological field school in Turkey, and **Sara Kouchehbagh** (IREL/MEST) worked as an intern in the US Embassy in Bahrain. Recently graduated MEST major **Jessica Jayakaran** (IREL/MEST) won a Critical Language Scholarship (CLS) to study in Morocco.

During the 2014-2015 AY, undergraduates **Chelsea del Grande** (IREL/MEST, GEOG) and **Andrew Billingsley** (IREL/MEST; ARAB minor) attended semester-long ISA Study Abroad Programs in Meknes, Morocco. **Madeline Upson** (IREL/MEST) attended a year-long ISA program in the same location, spending all of AY 2014-2015 abroad.

Ethan Morton-Jerome (PhD ANTH) continued dissertation fieldwork in the Palestinian Authority, supported by a fellowship from the Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC). **Aaron Shew** (PhD ENDY) undertook language training at the national Hindi Language Program Immersion and Research Center in Rajasthan, India. **Kaelin Groom** (PhD ENDY) co-led a 10-student winter study abroad program to Morocco through the University of Colorado at Denver during Winter 2014, and **Dhia Ben Ali** (PhD PUPB) presented a co-authored paper (with Professor Jeffrey VanDenBerg of Drury University) at the Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy-Tunisia's 4th Annual Conference in Tunis, Tunisia in March 2015.

This summer 3 undergraduate students will attend programs in Jordan: **Kaelynn Barlow** (IREL; MEST minor) – Project GO; **Isaac Hood** (IREL) – AMIDEAST; and **Amanda Want** (IREL/MEST) - SIT. Also in Amman, Jordan, **Luke Burton** (BSIB) will study Colloquial Arabic through the Shababik Program and undertake an internship. **Leah Morse** (ANTH) will attend the U of A Bioarchaeology Field School in Amarna, Egypt with King Fahd Center support. **Joseph Largent** (GEOG/MEST), who was awarded alternate status for CLS, will volunteer at Mashjar Juthour, an arboretum/eco-park just north of Ramallah in the Palestine Authority. He will be planting trees, building stone walls, helping with environmental workshops -- and practicing his Arabic.

Graduate student **Delilah Clark** (PhD CLCS) will travel to Manah, Oman to take part in the Sultan Qaboos College for Teaching Arabic Language to Nonnative Speakers program. **Erika Morey** (PhD ANTH) will attend the U of A Bioarchaeology Field School in Amarna, Egypt supported by the King Fahd Center, along with **Heidi Davis** (PhD ANTH) and **Ashley Shidner** (PhD ANTH). **Mitra Panahipour** (PhD ANTH) will travel to Iran to work in collections in the National Museum and to Georgia for fieldwork; **Nicole Fares** (PhD CLCS) will travel to Lebanon to begin research on her dissertation; **Sanket Desai** (PhD HIST) will travel to perform archival research at the US National Archives and British Public Records Office, supported in part by the King Fahd Center.

Middle East Studies Graduate Association (MESGA)

MESGA is a Registered Student Organization (RSO) that aims to promote Middle East Studies. In addition to social events, MESGA has hosted speakers, provided forums for students to present their work (including test runs of conference papers), and to discuss academic work of mutual interest. MESGA members have begun to collaborate with other related RSOs in order to cost share for funded events, and have begun to discuss ways to redefine themselves as a broader collective of graduate students working in Middle East Studies and MEST undergraduates. AY 2014-15 officers were: **Nicole Fares** (PhD CLCS), president, and **Charles Davidson** (MA ANTH), treasurer.

Mullins Library

The King Fahd Center has over the years allocated up to \$20,000 per year for library expenditures, including books, journal subscriptions, and audiovisual materials. Faculty are encouraged to purchase materials that will further the general collection, reflecting the type of broad-based holdings that would support student and faculty research by purchasing in the following general areas: Middle East and Islamic History; Middle East Politics and International Relations; Culture and Society; Religion; Literature, Art and Criticism; Human and Cultural Geography/Landscape.

In recent years the Center has focused on boosting holdings related to Ottoman and early modern Islamic history, classical and modern Persian literature and Lebanese oral poetry (*zajal*). The *zajal* initiative brings together volumes of poetry – and related literary studies – that have not been previously available in this country as a discrete library collection. Professor **Nikolay Antov** (HIST) has been purchasing Ottoman and Turkish history texts from Istanbul for the library.

Mullins Library also boasts the **Kenneth L Brown** collection, which is in the last stages of cataloging. Ken Brown, twice a visiting scholar with the King Fahd Center, is Professor Emeritus of Social Anthropology from the University of Manchester, UK and the founding editor of the journal *Mediterraneans*. The collection contains his personal library, including rare works in Classical and Moroccan Colloquial Arabic, Darija, French, and Hebrew related to North African and Levantine history, culture, society and the arts. With the exception of certain rare or fragile volumes, these books are all available in the Library's main shelved collection.

The King Fahd Center has received 2 gifts recently on behalf of the Mullins collection, a series of 14 books written by Kuwaiti scholar Shaykh Saeed Abu al-Makarim (donated by his son, Ali Abu al-

Makaram), and some 30 volumes of Arabic books donated by Professor Raouf Halaby, Professor of English at Ouachita Baptist University.

The King Fahd Center has sponsored CLCS PhD student **Nicole Fares** to work in Mullins helping with Arabic cataloging and will do so again this coming Summer 2015.

Nadi Cinema

Nadi Cinema, the Middle East Film Club, screens films from across the Middle East and beyond. All films – classics, cult favorites, recent hits, comedies, tragedies, political thrillers, social commentaries, and romances, in black-white and living color – are subtitled in English. Screenings are free and open to the public. The series is hosted by Professor **Joel Gordon** (HIST) and generally meets bi-weekly.

Near East Antiquities – The Ann Rhea Collection

In the summer of 2005, the Center was offered a large donation (worth approximately \$100,000.00) of Near Eastern antiquities from Mrs. Ann Rhea of Atlanta, Georgia. The gift was formalized and the materials were handed over to University of Arkansas representatives in September. The Ann Rhea collection consists of over 1500 artifacts including dozens of whole ceramic vessels, potsherds, and hundreds of ancient coins, as well as metal objects, glass fragments, stone tools, and jewelry, dating from the Paleolithic period (c. 18,000 BCE) through the Medieval Period. Mrs. Rhea lived in Saudi Arabia from 1960-1972, during where developed a deep interest in the archaeology and history of the region. Unlike most private collections of ancient artifacts, which usually come from the antiquities market, Ms. Rhea gathered these materials herself from archaeological projects on which she participated. These sites were in Saudi Arabia, Iran, Bahrain, Jordan, and Lebanon, making the collection a significant and scientifically valuable assemblage.

Processing of the artifacts is ongoing. The collection has been cataloged, but the catalog entries need refinement. Several of the large storage jars are open for public viewing by classes and visitors that tour the Collections facility. Installation of an exhibit of Middle Eastern ceramics will begin at the beginning of June, and several of the intact vessels will be included in an exhibit to be installed at the Old State House Museum this coming September.

Organizational Affiliations

The King Fahd Center maintains active involvement in a variety of international scholarly organizations and supports others through annual subscription/membership dues. Affiliation is vital to the ongoing endeavors of these research centers and institutes, and nets the Center valuable information pertaining to research funding opportunities for faculty and advanced students, advisory roles on governing boards, participation at annual meetings, and important journals for the University of Arkansas library collection.

Currently the Center maintains membership in the following organizations:

American Research Center in Egypt (ARCE)
American Research Institute in Turkey (ARIT)
American School of Oriental Research (ASOR)
Center for Arabic Study Abroad (CASA)
International Society for Iranian Studies (ISIS)
Middle East Studies Association (MESA)
Palestine American Research Center (PARC)
The American Academic Research Institute in Iraq (TAARII)

Public Relations

New Releases/U of A Daily Headlines

The King Fahd Center continues to post major news related to faculty and student achievements and upcoming events on the U of A Daily Headlines. Postings for AY 2014-15 included **Paula Haydar's** commendation for her translation of Jabbour Douahiy's *June Rain* (Banipal Prize for Arabic Literary Translation), **Clayton Clark's** (MFA-Translation) fellowship award by the Center for Arabic Study Abroad, and the winning translators for the Arkansas Arabic Translation Prize.

Ozarks at Large/NPR (KUAF)

The King Fahd Center regularly informs KUAF, the U of A affiliated National Public Radio channel, of visiting scholars and artists who are available for interviews on the daily broadcast Ozarks at Large, a compendium of local events and stories of interest. This year performers Aizzah Fatima and Annie Balabanian were interviewed, and U of A Professors Caree Banton, **Joel Gordon**, and Calvin White Jr. spoke about the Racial Politics of Ebola. Broadcast interviews are archived on the Center website as well as at KUAF.

Social Media

In May 2011 the King Fahd Center unveiled a new website, the culmination of a long-standing and long-delayed project. The site, managed by Program Coordinator **Nani Verzon**, presents up-to-date data on Center students, faculty, policies, opportunities, news and events, as well as crucial links to academic resources. The website will be an ongoing project, reflecting the changing nature of Center activities and the achievements of faculty, students, and alumni. Prior year annual reports are also posted on the website. King Fahd Center Events are also posted on Facebook and Twitter.

Akhbar al-Ahadith (News and Happenings), the King Fahd Center's newsletter, was launched in April 2013 and is currently in its sixth issue. Designed and edited by Nani Verzon, the newsletter emphasizes program achievements, events, and student, faculty and alumni activities. It is distributed digitally to all MEST students and faculty members, as well as to program partners and U of A administrative offices. Newsletters are available in hardcopy in the MEST Office, and are accessible online on the Center website and Issuu.

Student/Alumni Outreach

This King Fahd Center has begun a new initiative to increase student engagement with the Middle East Studies program, and has launched an Exit Interview to be completed by all graduating MEST undergraduates. Questions are answered anonymously and allow students to offer feedback on their experiences as MEST students, including categories like financial aid, programming and application to future study/career. All collected data will be taken into account in future updates and amendments to the MEST program, as well as serve as a forum to conversations initiated during the ADHE program review in Fall 2014, where student focus groups met with reviewer Bill Granara to provide constructive feedback regarding their positive and negative experiences with the program.

Efforts to reestablish a closer connection to alumni of the King Fahd Center have amplified this year, with increased efforts to retain contact once student leave the U of A system. This ties in with the newly established Exit Interview process as students are now solicited for alternate contact information systematically, as well as with the steady production of the MEST newsletter, providing a venue for MEST alums to share their career successes. To facilitate this connection, the Center maintains both a Twitter and a Facebook account, in addition to its website. Plans to establish a LinkedIn presence are set for Summer 2015 to further solidify the alumni community and provide a means of networking between former and current students.

Writing Tutor

For AY 2014-15 the King Fahd Center will be supporting a tutor for writing support, with a special, although not exclusive aim, of helping second-language students. **Shane Elder** (PhD CLCS), who will be on a 50% appointment, has extensive experience working for the English Department-sponsored Quality Writing Center and has special expertise in Arabic and Spanish. He will be located in Duncan House and will have regular hours.

GRADUATE STUDENT SUPPORT

During AY 2014-15 the Center funded 18 students (11 PhD/7 MA):

Kaveh Bassiri (PhD CLCS)

Baris Basturk (PhD HIST)

Sanket Desai (PhD HIST)

Blake Duffield (PhD HIST)

Nicole Fares (PhD CLCS)

Mehreen Humayun (PhD HIST)

Erika Morey (PhD ANTH)

Mitra Panahipour (PhD ANTH)

Keith Whitmire (PhD ANTH)

Wawan Yulianto (PhD CLCS)

Malek Zuraikat (PhD CLCS)

Dhia Ben-Ali (MA PLSC)

Clayton Clark (MFA TRNS)

Charles Davidson (MA ANTH)

Kathleen Doody (MA PSLC)

Steven Meizler (MA GEOG)

Michelle Moody (MA GEOG)

Peter von Groote (MA GEOG)

Of this group, 3 MA students (**Ben-Ali, Clark, and Davidson**) completed their degrees and graduated (**Ben-Ali** moved into the PhD program in Public Policy); 1 PhD student (**Bassiri**) passed his comprehensive examinations and prospectus defense and moved into candidacy.

During the coming AY 2015-16 the Center will fund 18 students (14 PhD/4 MA):

Ayah Bashir (PhD CLCS)

Kaveh Bassiri (PhD CLCS)

Baris Basturk (PhD HIST)

Dhia Ben-Ali (PhD PUBP)

Sanket Desai (PhD HIST)

Blake Duffield (PhD HIST)

Nicole Fares (PhD CLCS)

Mehreen Humayun (PhD HIST)

Mona Malkawi (PhD CLCS) – ½ year

Erika Morey (PhD ANTH)

Mitra Panahipour (PhD ANTH)

Keith Whitmire (PhD ANTH)

Wawan Yulianto (PhD CLCS)

Malek Zuraikat (PhD CLCS)

Stephanie DeMora (MA PLSC)

Kathleen Doody (MA PSLC)

Steven Meizler (MA GEOG)

Joshua Moore (MFA TRNS)

Of this group there will be 4 newly funded students (2 PhD/2 MA) and 1 Fall 2014 MA graduate who began a PhD program in Spring 2015.

Graduate assistantships are spread among affiliated departments as follows: Anthropology (3), Comparative Literature/Cultural Studies/Translation (6); Environmental Dynamics/Geosciences (1); History (4); Political Science/Public Policy (3).

The graduate student pool is, of course, much larger. Not all MEST-affiliated students are funded through the King Fahd Center. Some are funded by their home departments and/or through faculty research grants; some international students are funded through their governments or bi-national Fulbright foundations in their home country. MEST graduate students are increasingly scoring prestigious national and international grants (Fulbright, IREX, ACCELS, CAORC, ASOR, AAUW, PARC) to fund study abroad and/or thesis write-up. Academic departments with graduate students working on Middle East topics have been supportive in providing instructorships to advanced students who have completed their funding cycle through MEST.

There are currently approximately 40 graduate students working on Middle East-related topics under MEST faculty guidance. The King Fahd Center provided support in the form of graduate assistantships and/or study and research awards to many of these students.

Graduate Student Research/Study Awards – Summer 2014

Baris Basturk (PhD HIST) – \$3300 to support Arabic language study at Indiana University

Clayton Clark (MFA TRNS) -- \$2600 to support a translation project with Professor Adnan Haydar

Autumn Cool (MA ANTH) – \$2500 to support MA field research in Northern Iraq

Charles Davidson (MA ANTH) – \$1700 to support MA research on refugee culture in Jordan

Mitra Panahipour (PhD ANTH) – \$2500 to support PhD field research in Northern Iraq

Keith Whitmire (PhD ANTH) – \$3000 to support language study and preliminary PhD research on café culture in Morocco

Graduate Student Conference Travel – AY 2014-5

Kaveh Bassiri (PhD CLCS) – \$750, Association of Writers & Writing Programs Annual Meeting, Minneapolis, MN

Dhia Ben Ali (PhD PUBP) – \$105.03, Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy 4th Annual Conference, Tunis

Charles Davidson (MA ANTH) – \$500, Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting, Washington, DC

Sanket Desai (PhD HIST) – \$353.75, British Scholar Society Britain and the World Conference, Austin, TX

Christopher Fletcher (MA ANTH) -- \$700, American Society for Oriental Research Annual Meeting, San Diego, CA

Matt Parnell (PhD HIST) – \$377.82, British Scholar Society Britain and the World Conference, Austin, TX

Malek Zuraikat (PhD CLCS) - \$300, St. Louis University Annual Symposium on Medieval and Renaissance Studies

Graduate Student Research/Study Awards – AY 2014-2015

Sanket Desai (PhD HIST) - \$2500 to support PhD archival research in London, UK

Steven Meizler (MA GEOG) - \$2200 to support MA field research in Haifa and Acre, Israel

Erika Morey (PhD ANTH) - \$3000 to support PhD field research in Egypt with Professor Jerry Rose

Ethan Morton-Jerome (PhD ANTH) - \$2000 to support PhD library study in Arkansas

Mitra Panahipour (PhD ANTH) - \$2000 to support PhD field research in Iran and Georgia

Ashley Shidner (PhD ANTH) -- \$2000 to support library/collection research at Macmaster University, Hamilton, ON

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT SUPPORT

During AY 2014-15 the MEST program counted approximately 70 undergraduate co-majors and 15 minors (students continue to register on a rolling basis throughout the semester and some have recently graduated). In 2013-14 the numbers were 68/12; in 2012-13 the numbers were 43/13; in 2011-12 they were 45/10; in 2010-11 they were 44/18; in 2009-10 they were 50/13; in 2008-09 they were 38/15. This represents a steady climb from the years before. In 2007-08 there were 36 majors and 12 minors; in 2006-07 the numbers were 28/10.

During AY 2014-15 the Center supported 4 students with full scholarships and 6 students with half scholarships (either 1-semester awards for students who will graduate in December 2014 or partial awards to supplement other U of A scholarships).

2014-15 Full Scholarships:

Baily Cox (IREL/MEST/Honors)
Chelsea Del Grande (IREL/MEST/GEOG; SUST/ARAB minors)
Mary Goodwin (IREL/MEST/Honors; ARAB minor)
Macyn Hunn (COMM/MEST)

2014-15 Partial Scholarship:

Khalid Ahmadzai (IREL/MEST/Honors)
Elizabeth Heckman (IREL/MEST/Honors)
Robert Peiser (IREL/MEST)
David Sommi (IREL/MEST; ARAB minor)
Brendan Sparks (IREL/MEST; ARAB minor)
Madeline Upson (IREL/MEST/Honors; ARAB minor)

During AY 2015-16 the King Fahd Center will support 4 full scholarship students and 6 partial scholarships.

2015-16 Full Scholarship:

Christopher Cowan (IREL/MEST; ARAB minor)
Shellie Daniel (IREL/MEST; ARAB minor)
Mary Goodwin (IREL/MEST/Honors; ARAB minor)
Abram Greenbaum (PLSC/MEST)
Macyn Hunn (COMM/MEST)
Joseph Largent (GEOG/MEST; ARAB, ANTH, HIST minors)
David Sommi (IREL/MEST; ARAB minor)

2015-16 Partial Scholarship:

Meghan Austen (IREL/MEST/Honors; ARAB minor)

Elizabeth Heckman (IREL/MEST/Honors)

Madeline Upson (IREL/MEST/Honors; ARAB minor)

The King Fahd Center supported 1 undergraduate student's study abroad during Summer 2014, and 3 students during Summer 2015.

Students funded for Summer Study 2014:

Brian Hughes (IR/MEST/PLSC) SIT, Jordan (\$500)

Students funded for Summer Study 2015:

Bailey Cox (IREL/MEST) – SALAM, Oman (\$750/declined)

Macyn Hunn (COMM/MEST) – AMIDEAST, Jordan (\$1000/deferred until Fall 2015)

Leah Morse (ANTH) – 2015 Bioarchaeological Field School Egypt (\$1400)

Student Conference Travel Awards:

Brendan Sparks (IREL/MEST) was selected to participate in the first Middle East Studies Undergraduate Research Workshop, held in conjunction with the MESA Annual Meeting in Washington, DC in November 2014 (\$500)

Khalid Ahmadzai (IREL/MEST; HIST minor) was supported for travel to MESA in Washington, DC (\$528.70)

FACULTY NEWS

Sarwar Alam (Instructor)

Professor Alam's essay, 'Sufism Without Boundaries: Pluralism, Coexistence, and Interfaith Dialogue in Modern Bangladesh,' is forthcoming in *Journal of Comparative Islamic Studies*. He is co-editing (with Clinton Bennett of SUNY-New Paltz) a volume on *Sufism, Pluralism and Democracy* (Equinox) that will include his essay, 'In Search of God and Humanity: Vilayat-e-Mutlaka of Hazrat Delaor Husayn Maizbhandari', forthcoming December 2015. He is currently revising his book manuscript (based on his U of A dissertation), *Jewels of Honor: The Perception of Power, Powerlessness, and Gender Among Rural Muslim Women of Bangladesh*.

He presented 'In Search of God, In Search of Humanity: *Vilayat-e-Mutlaqa* of Hazrat Delaor Husayn Maizbhandari' at the South-East Regional Middle East and Islamic Studies Seminar in Valle Crucis, NC in October 2014.

In Fall 2013 Professor Alam began an initiative to encourage undergraduate scholarship through facilitating paper presentation at regional religious studies meetings. In AY 2014-2015, 5 of his students had paper abstracts accepted for presentation; 1 student has already presented at a conference in March 2015, and 2 more will present at conferences later in the year.

In addition to Introduction to Islam (MEST 2003), he taught the MEST colloquium (MEST 4003) on Orthodoxy and Heresy in Islam in Fall 2014 and Gender and Public Policy (PLSC 400V) in Spring 2015. He is also a member of the Board of Editors of the *Journal of South Asian Studies*.

Nikolay Antov (Assistant Professor of History)

Professor Antov was on leave during Spring 2015 to continue work on his book, 'Imperial Expansion, Colonization, and Conversion to Islam in the Islamic World's "Wild West": The Formation of the Muslim Community in Ottoman Deliorman'.

He presented 'Crusading in the Fifteenth Century and Its Influence on Ottoman Dynastic Legitimacy and Consolidation of Authority' at a conference entitled 'The Crusade in the Fifteenth Century: Converging and Competing Cultures' held in London in September 2014. The conference, fully funded by the Leverhulme Trust, was hosted by Norman Housley (University of Leicester), one of the leading scholars in the study of the later crusades. Only 12 scholars participated on the personal invitation of Professor Housley.

Professor Antov had 2 papers accepted for publication: 1) 'Emergence and Historical Development of Muslim Communities in the Ottoman Balkans: Turcoman Colonization, Conversion to Islam and the "Indigenization of Islam" in the Balkan Peninsula (late 14th – 18th cc.)' in Theodora Dragostinova and Yana Hashamova (eds.), *Beyond Mosque, Church, and State: Negotiating Religious and Ethno-National Identities in the Balkans* (Central European University Press, forthcoming 2015); and 2) 'Crusading in the Fifteenth Century and Its Relation to the Development of Ottoman Dynastic Legitimacy, Self-Image, and

the Ottoman Consolidation of Authority' in Norman Housely (ed.), *The Crusade in the Fifteenth Century: Converging and Competing Cultures* (Ashgate Crusades: Subsidia series, forthcoming, 2015).

He is also working on a chapter of translated primary sources (mainly translations of Ottoman fatwas) with commentary for Hani Khafipour (ed.), *Empires of The Near East and India: Sources for the Study of the Safavid, Ottoman, and Mughal Societies* (Columbia University Press, forthcoming). His chapter focuses on the treatment of non-Muslims in the Ottoman Empire and conversion to Islam.

He is currently directing 2 Phd students and 1 MA student.

Dan Brown (Instructor of Political Science)

Professor Brown published (co-authored with Ariel Ahram) 'Jordan and the United Arab Emirates: Arab Partners in Afghanistan' in Gale Mattox and Steve Grenier (eds.), *The War in Afghanistan: Commitments, Capabilities, and Coalition* (Stanford University Press, 2015). He currently has 2 articles under review.

Robert Brubaker (Instructor of History)

Professor Brubaker published his book, *Vijayangara: Warfare and the Archaeology of Defence* (New Delhi: Manohar/American Institute of Indian Studies, 2015). He also developed and taught a new History Special Topics course (HIST 3983) on Islam in Early South Asia that traced the emergence of Islam from the 7th Century AD through the Mughal era.

Jesse Casana (Professor of Anthropology)

Professor Casana published 'New Approaches to Spatial Archaeometry: Applications from the Near East' in *Near Eastern Archaeology* 77:3 (2014); 'Regional Scale Archaeological Remote Sensing in the Age of Big Data: Automated Site Discovery vs. Brute Force' in *Advances in Archaeological Practice* (August 2014), 222-33; 'Satellite Based Monitoring of Looting and Damage to Archaeological Sites in Syria' (with Mitra Panahipour) in *Journal of Eastern Mediterranean Archaeological and Heritage Studies* 2:2 (2014), 128-51; 'Archaeological Aerial Thermography: A Case Study at the Chaco-era Blue J Community, New Mexico' (co-authored w/ J Kantner, A Wiewel and J Cothren) in *Journal of Archaeological Science* 45 (2014), 207-19; 'The Late Roman Landscape of the Northern Levant: A View from Tell Qarqur and the Lower Orontes River Valley' in *Oxford Journal of World Archaeology* 33:2 (2014), 193-219; and 'A Landscape Context for Paleoethnobotany: The Contribution of Aerial and Remote Sensing' in John M. Marston, Jade d'Alpoim Guedes and Christina Warinner (eds.), *Theory and Method in Paleoethnobotany* (University Press of Colorado, 2014).

An article (co-authored with Andrew Clark), 'A New Use for Old Photos: Archaeological Landscape Reconstruction in the Big Bend' is forthcoming in *Plains Anthropologist*. He presented 'Archaeological Aerial Thermography in Theory and Practice' at the Society for American Anthropology Annual Meeting in San Francisco in April 2015

Professor Casana directs the Upper Diyala Regional Survey Project, Iraqi Kurdistan: In May 2013 he co-directed a new regional archaeological survey in the previously undocumented upper Diyala River Valley

in Iraqi Kurdistan and in May 2014 returned with graduate students Autumn Cool, Eric Jensen, Christopher Fletcher and Mitra Panahipour.

He also currently directs a NASA-funded project that aims to map all archaeological sites and related cultural features that are visible in CORONA satellite imagery across a large study area in the Middle East. He continues work on a 3-year NEH grant to expand his CORONA satellite imagery of the Middle East to other regions of the world, including China, South Asia, Eastern Europe and the African Sahel. In 2013, with a grant from the DigitalGlobe Foundation, he began a new project to monitor looting and other war-related damage to archaeological sites in Syria. A related talk at the AIA conference in Chicago was the subject of a LiveScience story in January 2014.

Professor Casana and senior members of the excavation team at Tell Qarqur, Syria have prepared a lengthy report, currently under review at the *American Journal of Archaeology* to assess the state of the dig, given the dim prospects for resumption of work in the near future. Over the past year he has also begun working with Emirati and US-based colleagues to bring results of their regional survey of Dubai and excavation at Saruq al-Hadid to final publication.

Professor Casana serves as Chair of the Damascus Committee of the American Schools for Oriental Research. He organized the King Fahd Center -sponsored symposium on The Cultural Heritage Crisis in the Middle East (March 5-6, 2015) and will edit a special volume of *Near Eastern Archaeology* based upon papers presented at U of A.

Mounir Farah (Professor of Curriculum and Instruction)

Professor Farah, who will be retiring in December 2015 – and who will become the first King Fahd Center emeritus faculty member – completed and submitted for review his book manuscript on the *Dawn of US-Syrian Relations*, a study based on archival research for the 19th Century, with a conclusion that carries through until the early 1920s and establishment of the French mandate.

He completed his last taught class in December 2014, and while on research leave continued to advise Middle Eastern graduate students in the College of Education working on research projects related to education in the Middle East. He chaired 1 dissertation committee and serves on committees for students from Palestine, Saudi Arabia and Libya.

He serves on the Board of Directors of the Arkansas Geographic Alliance. He is a member of the Syrian Studies Association and Middle East Outreach Council and attended their organizational meetings at the Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting in Washington, DC in November 2014.

In November 2014 he spoke at the Annual Arkansas Curriculum Conference on Geography and Politics in the Middle East. In 2015 he moderated the state Geography Bee and judged the History Day competition for Northwest Arkansas.

Najib Ghabbian (Associate Professor of Political Science)

Professor Ghabbian resumed full teaching duties in Spring 2014 while retaining his position as special representative to the United States from the National Coalition of Syrian Revolution and Opposition Forces.

Joel Gordon (Professor of History and Director, King Fahd Center)

Professor Gordon published 2 articles: 'Stuck with Him: Bassem Youssef and the Egyptian Revolution's Last Laugh' in the *Review of Middle East Studies* 48/1-2 (2014), 34-43; and 'Piety, Youth and Egyptian Cinema: Still Seeking Islamic Space' in Abir Hamdar and Lindsey Moore, *Islamism and Cultural Expression in the Arab World* (Routledge, 2015), 103-20. He is gathering essays for a collection on Gamal Abd al-Nasser that he is editing for Cambridge University Press and serves as a chief consultant for an NEH funded documentary on Nasser that is currently under production by filmmaker Michal Goldman. He submitted a book review to the *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* (SOAS-London).

In October 2014 he participated in a symposium on 'Egypt's Failed Democratic Tradition' sponsored by the Joseph Korbel School of International Studies at Denver University. In November 2014 he presented 'Sleepless Nights/Wasted Time: Seeking Islam in Egypt's Hollywood' at the University of Kentucky. He chaired a panel on 'Dressing and Undressing for the Nation in the Post-World War 1 Middle East' at the 2014 MESA Annual Meeting in Washington, DC that was organized by his former PhD student Ahmet Akturk, currently Assistant Professor of History at Georgia Southern University.

He served on a review panel for the NEH Bridging Cultures through Film program. He currently serves on the Board of Governors of the Center for Arabic Study Abroad and on the Outside Advisory Board for the Prince Salman bin Abdul Aziz Chair for Historical and Civilization Studies at King Saud University in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. He peer reviewed 3 article manuscripts and 2 book manuscripts for academic journals and university presses. He reviewed grant proposals for the Institute for Advanced Study and the Israel Science Foundation, and wrote 2 promotion/tenure reviews for outside institutions.

Professor Gordon currently supervises 2 ABD graduate students working towards the PhD in History and 1 student doing coursework. He currently serves on the PhD committees of 6 History students (4 ABD), 1 ENDY student, and 1 CLCS student; and on the MA committees of 3 GEOG students. He also serves on the PhD committee for a student in Arab Studies from Georgetown University.

Adnan Haydar (Professor of World Languages)

Professor Haydar spent the second semester of AY 2014-15 in Lebanon on sabbatical leave, completing work on his book-length study of 'The Role of Music in Lebanese *Zajal* Poetry: A Radical Alternative to Traditional Metrics.' *Haki bil-Lubnani*, a Lebanese dialect online companion volume and website (co-authored with Paula Haydar and Nadine Sinno), appeared in 2014, published by Georgetown University Press as a companion volume to *al-Kitab*, the leading text for Modern Standard Arabic in this country.

Professor Haydar delivered a keynote address, 'Al-Zajal al-Lubnani: Buhuruha wa Musiqaha' (Lebanese Zajal: Poetic and Musical Meters) in February 2015 at a conference at the Lebanese American University

in Beirut. The lecture, marking the inclusion of Lebanese oral poetry by UNESCO on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, will be published in a forthcoming volume, *Al-Turath al-Lubnani* (LAU, 2015). His 1989 article, 'The Development of Lebanese *Zajal*: Genre, Meter, and Verbal Duel,' *Oral Tradition* 4/1-2, was one of 4 influential articles cited in the Lebanese Ministry of Culture's UNESCO application.

His translation (with Michael Beard) of "Walt Whitman and Me: Notes on a Poetic Education," an essay by Egyptian poet Abdel-Moneim Ramadan was published on at 'words without borders': <http://wordswithoutborder.org/article/walt-whitman-and-me-thoughts-on-a-poetic-education>. He and Beard are currently translating 'Questions in Rose Form,' a 21-page poem by the celebrated Syrian poet Ali Ahmad Said (Adonis) and an article on the 'Influence in Arabic and Western Literature.'

As director of the Arkansas Prize for Arabic Translation, he oversaw the awarding of the 2014 co-winners: Abdulwahid Lulua, for his translation of *All Faces but Mine: The Poetry of Samih al-Qassim*; and Thoraya El-Rayyes for her translation of Hisham Bustani's *The Perception of Meaning* (see above section for details). He continues to serve as co-editor of the Syracuse University Press Middle East Literature in Translation series. This AY he co-edited 5 book manuscripts for the series.

At the University of Arkansas Professor Haydar directs the Arabic program and serves on the Comparative Literature/Cultural Studies committee and the WLLC Executive Committee and Tenure/Promotion Committee.

This past year he supervised 1 Translation MFA student, and 2 CLCS PhD students. He continues to advise numerous undergraduate and graduate students, helping place them in study abroad and overseas and domestic language programs, and advising students on graduate and post-graduate options. He served on 3 college and 3 departmental committees.

Paula Haydar (Instructor of Arabic)

Professor Haydar was promoted to Clinical Assistant Professor of WLLC, recognizing her many years of contributions to the MEST Program and King Fahd Center. The appointment will commence in August 2015.

Her translation of *June Rain* (Bloomsbury Qatar 2014), the acclaimed novel by Jabbour Douahi, was nominated for the Sayf Ghobash Banipal Prize for Arabic Literary Translation and was 'Highly Commended' as 'an astonishing translation which exactly captures the novel's tone and heft.' The translation was listed by *The Daily Star* (Beirut) as one of the 6 Top Middle East Novels of 2014.

Her translation (with U of A Alumnus Nadine Sinno) of Rashid al-Daif's *Who's Afraid of Meryl Streep* (University of Texas Press 2014) also appeared in print.

Haki bi-Lubnani, the online/web-based Lebanese colloquial textbook she co-authored with Adnan Haydar and Nadine Sinno appeared in November 2014. This text is a companion volume to the 3rd edition of *al-Kitab*, published by Georgetown University Press, the leading textbook for Modern

Standard Arabic in this country. She and Adnan Haydar began incorporating the new material during the prior AY 2013-14.

Professor Haydar attended the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) workshop in January 2015 and represented the Arabic Program in the WLLC department initiative to establish proficiency assessment standards for all WLLC languages. She served on the WLLC Japanese instructor search committee.

She continues to advise undergraduate and graduate Arabic students and direct them toward study abroad, graduate school and postgraduate options. She received the 2015 Outstanding Mentor Award from the U of A Office of Nationally Competitive Awards (for working with Marcus Montgomery, alternate for a Boren Award), and was nominated for the ASG-sponsored Outstanding Faculty Member Award for 2015. She served on 1 MFA/Translation committee and 1 honors thesis committee.

Mohja Kahf (Professor of English)

Professor Kahf's essay 'Lord, Make Me Not Obvious: The Things I Want My Daughters to Know' appeared in Iraj Omidvar and Anne R Richards (eds) *Muslims and American Popular Culture, Vol 2: Print Culture and Identity* (Praeger 2014). Her article 'Syrian Revolution, Then and Now,' appeared in *CPER Peace Review* 26/4 (December 2014), 556-63; and her poem 'One Walnut Hemisphere' appeared in *Journal of Feminist Studies and Religion* 31/1 (Spring 2015), 103. Poems 'The Fallen Protester's Song,' and 'How Poetry Stores the Wind' will appear in a forthcoming issue of *Mizna: A Forum for Arab American Arts* (Spring 2015). Also forthcoming are an Italian translation of *E-mails from Scheherazad* (L'officina del Libro) and *Hagar Poems* (University of Arkansas Press).

Professor Kahf delivered lectures on 'Women in Syria's Civilian Resistance: Two Nonviolent Campaigns,' was presented at Fletcher Summer Institute for the Advanced Study of Nonviolent Conflict held at Tufts University in June 2014 and in St. Paul, MN in September 2014; and (via Skype) 'The Syrian Revolution and Nonviolence: Why It Still Matters' in December 2014, sponsored by Friends for a Nonviolent World and the Committee for Solidarity with the Syrian People. She took part in a joint poetry reading and discussion with poet Farid Matuk at the Annual Meeting of the Radius of Arab American Writers in Minneapolis, MN in September 2014. She was also the featured poet/presenter on Arab women's poetry for *Veils and Words: Poetry by Muslim Women*, sponsored by Poets House at the Association of Writers & Writing Programs Annual Meeting in Minneapolis, MN in April 2015.

She presented a guest lecture on 'Muslim Women and the Veil' at Northwest Arkansas Community College, sponsored by the Northwest Arkansas Humanities Honor Department in November 2014). Professor Kahf also represented the Comparative Literature program in the U of A's Inaugural 'Life Raft Debate' in October 2014.

She is currently supervising her former MA student, Wawan Yulianto, who began his PhD studies in Comparative Literature in Fall 2011 and Nicole Fares, who completed her MFA in Literary Translation and entered the PhD program in 2014.

Tom Paradise (Professor of Geosciences)

Professor Paradise published 'Rock Weathering and Stone Conservation' in Melanie Kingsley (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Global Archaeology* (Springer, 2014), 1-9; 'Sandstone Deterioration, Nature, and Tourism: Lessons learned from Petra, Jordan' in S. Fares and G. Chatelard (eds.), *Desert and Man: Volume One* (University of Lorraine, 2014), 372-97; 'Analysis of sandstone deterioration on petroglyphs, architecture, inscriptions, and dressed surfaces across Wadi Rum, Jordan' in S. Fares (ed.), *Desert & Man: Volume Two* (University of Lorraine, 2014); 'Nabataean Stone Dressing and Lithology in Petra, Jordan' appeared in *American Journal of Archaeology* 118/4 (2014); and 'Petra, Architecture, GIS, and the Sun: a landmark discovery in the Valley of the Crescent Moon' (with **Christopher Angel**) appeared in *ESRI ArcUser* (Winter 2015), 16-19.

A number of publications are currently under review or in press: 'Earth-Sun relationships and Architecture in Petra, Jordan: an assessment of principal tombs and structures' (under review for *BASOR: Bulletin of the Schools of Oriental Research*); and 'Petra: Maps, Magic and Science' (forthcoming in *ESRI News*). He also contributed five maps to a forthcoming book, Spencer Allen, *Origins of Christianity* (Harvard University Press).

Ongoing projects relate to architectural deterioration analysis and Nabataean urban morphology and celestial alignment in Petra, Jordan, and seismic risk perception in comparative Muslim and Christian community settings in North Africa and Mediterranean countries. He has submitted grant proposals to: the Department of Defense, Critical Language and Culture Program (along with colleagues from Arkansas State University and the University of Memphis); and Center for International Business Education & Research (CIBER) (along with colleagues from the U of A Sam Walton College of Business).

Professor Paradise is an editor for UNESCO and ICOMOS (UN International Commission on Monuments and Sites) series on the four most important World Heritage sites: Petra, Macchu Picchu, Angkor Wat, and Pompeii. He is a UNESCO consultant in architectural deterioration and conservation for Jordan, Italy, Morocco, and Egypt. He served as on-screen specialist, scriptwriter, and graphics and cartography coordinator for *Petra: Lost City of Stone*, part of the NOVA series *Building the Wonders of the World* that premiered in February 2015.

Professor Paradise is a contributing editor to *Arab World Geographer*, the *Journal of Islamic Law and Culture*, and is a cartographic editor for the University of Arkansas Press. He is editor/consultant for *Annual Editions in Geography* (McGraw-Hill) and an editor of the *Regions of the World* textbook series and *The Middle East* (Harcourt-Brace). He serves as grant reviewer for the National Science Foundation, FEMA-Homeland Security, USAID, USIS-USIA, the US State Department, and the US National Park Service. He also reviewed two international defense proposals in 2014 for the U.S. Civilian Research & Development Foundation (CRDF) with the US Department of State.

On campus he coordinates the program for the Geosciences minor in Historic Preservation. He serves on the executive board of Osher Foundation Lifelong Learning Institute based at the U of A Global Campus. He chairs the GEOS Personnel Committee and is a committee member for the U of A Public Art Commission, U of A Study Abroad Scholarship Committee, U of A Honors College Scholarship

Committee, U of A Prestigious Fellowships Committee, and the U of A College of Education and Health Curriculum and Instruction Committee.

His PhD student Aaron Shew was awarded an NSF grant supporting his PhD work in Environmental Dynamics, and incoming graduate student Bradley Wilson was awarded an NSF grant to support PhD work in Geosciences (see Graduate Student News). He is currently directing 5 PhD and 13 MA students.

Jerome Rose (Professor of Anthropology)

Professor Rose continues to carry out research in Upper Egypt, at Amarna, capital city of the 'heretic pharaoh' Akhenaten (see above section). In May-June 2014 he led a team of 2 faculty colleagues and 2 students. This summer his field school (May 17-June 17, 2015) includes 10 students from 7 universities, including Egypt, Denmark, Spain, Australia and the UK. 3 of Professor Rose's U of A students participated.

3 U of A graduate students presented papers based on research at Amarna at the 2015 North American Paleopathology Association Annual Meeting in April 2015 in St. Louis, MO. Professor Rose co-authored the paper with Nicole Smith, 'The Hittite Plague of 1322 BCE: A Multidisciplinary Diagnosis.'

He also co-authored (with former students Gretchen Dabbs and Melissa Zabecki: 'The Biorarchaeology of Akhetaten: Unexpected Results from a Capital City,' in S. Ikram, J. Kaiser and R. Walker (eds.), *Egyptian Bioarchaeology: Humans, Animals, and the Environment* (Sidestone Press, 2015).

Professor Rose spends considerable energy as program advisor for the U of A Pre-dental Program. As in prior years, the AY he advises some 175+ undergrad pre-dental students, and wrote numerous letters of recommendation for dental school applicants. He also serves as faculty sponsor of the U of A Dental Club.

He currently supervises 4 doctoral students and will add 1 more to this group next AY.

Ted Swedenburg (Professor of Anthropology)

Professor Swedenburg's chapter 'Dana International (Yaron/Sharon Cohen) and Queer/Mizrahi Perspectives' appeared in Nadia Valman and Laurence Roth (eds.), *The Routledge Companion to Contemporary Jewish Cultures* (Routledge, 2014), 236-45. His article 'Beur/Maghrebi Musical Interventions in Contemporary France: Rai and Rap' was published in *Journal of North African Studies* 25/1 (2015), 108-26.

He was invited to lecture on 'Youtube, Scopitone, and Nostalgia' at The Materiality of Affect in North Africa: Politics in Flux Workshop at New York University in October 2014, sponsored by the Department of Performance Studies, NYU, and the Nordic Africa Institute, Uppsala, Sweden. He also was invited by the City University of New York's Anthropology PhD Program to present 'Maghrebi Music in France: From Rap to Rai' in November 2014, and 'Culture, Violence, Palestine: Reem Kelani' at Art in a Time of Violence: Cultural Production in the Contemporary Middle East, during the Annual Conference of the Institute for Middle East Studies at George Washington University in April 2015.

He presented 'The New Social Media Archive of Maghrebi Popular Music (in Particular, Pop-Rai)' at the Middle East Studies Association Annual Meetings, Washington, D.C. in November 2014. He also co-organized and chaired a session on 'Social Media, the Digital Archive, and Scholarly Futures' as well as serving as discussant for a session on 'Ethnographic Perspectives on Poverty in the Middle East'.

Professor Swedenburg serves on the advisory boards of *The Orient Online Academic Journal* and the *Middle East Journal of Culture and Communications*, and on the editorial board of the *International Journal of Middle East Studies*. He co-edits *Public Cultures of the Middle East and North Africa*, an Indiana University Press book series that released 4 volumes over the last year. Two recent publications in the series were award winners: Jonathan Smolin's *Moroccan Noir* (2013) won the 2014 L. Carl Brown American Institute for Maghrib Studies Book Prize, and Emilio Spadola's *The Calls of Islam: Sufis, Islamists, and Mass Mediation in Urban Morocco* (2013) won honorable mention in the 2014 Clifford Geertz Prize, from the Society for the Anthropology of Religion, American Anthropological Association.

His PhD student Ethan Morton-Jerome was awarded a 2014 Mediterranean Regional Research Fellowship from the Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC) to support research for a dissertation on 'Palestinian Labor on West Bank Settlements and Palestinian Authority Efforts to Create Employment Alternatives.' Charles Davidson successfully defended his MA thesis on Syrian refugees in Jordan and will begin a PhD program at the George Mason University School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution with full funding and yearly stipend in Fall 2015 (see Graduate Student News).

FACULTY OUTREACH/PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Faculty members affiliated with the King Fahd Center continue to maintain strong relations with local, national and international media. They are contacted with regularity by journalists, authors, and filmmakers – in addition to colleagues at other institutions, and their undergraduate and graduate students – who seek information and advice regarding ongoing or germinating projects.

They also are very giving of their time to local and campus civic organizations, and educational outreach programs on and off campus. Faculty members regularly review national and international grant applications for Fulbright, the International Institute of Education, NEH, NSF, the Canadian Social Science and Humanities Research Council, the Israel Science Foundation, the National Science Foundation of Switzerland, UNESCO, National Geographic Society and other leading funding agencies. They review manuscripts for leading academic journals and academic/trade publishers, serve on literary and academic prize committees, consult on documentary films and print anthologies, are called upon by American and international colleges and universities to evaluate tenure/promotion cases and serve as outside readers on graduate theses, and serve as expert witnesses in cases related to politics, religion and culture.

Dan Brown appeared on UATV show 'Campus Crossfire' to discuss the spread of ISIS and Islamic extremism on March 6, 2015.

Jesse Casana was featured in Lizzie Wade, 'Aerial Drones Reveal Hidden Archaeology, *AAAS Science* <http://news.sciencemag.org/archaeology/2014/05/aerial-drones-reveal-hidden-archaeology> and Nicholas St Fleur, 'Lost Civilizations, Found by Drones,' *The Atlantic*, March 5, 2015 <http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2015/03/lost-civilizations-found-by-drones/386923/>.

Mounir Farah appeared on two sections for KNWA regarding the history and nature of ISIS in light of recent acts of violence in Iraq and Kurdistan (<http://www.nwahomepage.com/fulltext-news/d/story/what-is-isis-local-veteran-syrian-professor-weigh/16558/FMkhYpPpvU-wEekz-L10lg> and http://www.nwahomepage.com/story/d/story/web-extra-ua-professor-syrian-explains-the-history/72226/xJ_M7sD3KEu33jJ3oTje0g). He is also a regular commentator for Syrian News Wires and Media, El-Ekhbariya. He has commented recently, in broadcasts lasting between 15 and 30 minutes, on Middle East issues and conflicts, US Middle East politics, and American politics, including urban unrest in Baltimore and Ferguson, Missouri.

Najib Ghabbian has appeared with regularity as US Special Representative of the Syrian opposition on numerous satellite TV and channels and radio stations.

Joel Gordon appeared on KNWA TV in September 2014 regarding anti-Islamic web postings by a local mayor (you can read the account and see the interview on <http://www.nwahomepage.com/fulltext-news/d/story/sulphur-springs-mayor-posts-joke-about-muslims/10129/daU9M2It1kiR5SIvkvguGA>). He was also interviewed twice by Paul Crompton of al-Arabiya.net, for retrospective pieces on Winston Churchill and the Magna Carta in the Middle East (see 'Churchill': Mystery Creator of the Mideast, February 17, 2015 <http://english.alarabiya.net/en/special-reports/winston-churchill/2015/02/17/Churchill-the-mystery-creator-of-the-modern-Middle-East.html>; by Gabriela Valente of *Correio Braziliense* on the situation in Yemen; and by al-Ghad TV in Washington, DC. He also

discussed the Egyptian national anthems with Alexander Marshall of *The Guardian* for a book on national anthems. In November 2014 he appeared on Ozarks-at-Large on U of A NPR affiliate KUAF, with History Department colleagues to discuss the politicization of Ebola in Africa.

Paula Haydar gave a PiT Podcast interview in January 2015 to U of A student Bradley Graves on the topic 'Thoughts in Translation' (available on Soundcloud.com). She also gave a phone interview in April 2015 about the art of translation and her translation of Adania Shibli's novella *Touch* (2010) to Karine Larouche, a literature student at McGill University.

Mohja Kahf is responsible for Syrian Freedom Writers Facebook, YouTube and Twitter postings.

Tom Paradise continues to serve as a frequent consultant for Discovery Channel, Animal Planet, The Learning Channel, National Geographic, PBS, NHK (Japan), France 5, and NDR (Germany) networks on aspects of Middle East/North Africa geography, classical and vernacular architecture, and natural and cultural resources across the Mediterranean basin. He was featured prominently in the NOVA *Petra: Lost City of Stone* episode on Petra, Jordan.

Ted Swedenburg was quoted in Jared Malsin's 'Legal battle over Jay Z's sampling on Big Pimpin' comes to head after eight years,' published in *The Guardian* (April 5, 2015). The article is about Jay Z's sampling of a song by Egyptian singer Abdel Halim Hafez.

GRADUATE STUDENT NEWS

Graduate Students supported by the Middle East Center and working on advanced degrees with MEST faculty – along with recent graduates from affiliated departments – have compiled an increasingly impressive list of academic achievements over the past few years. They are presenting their work at the annual meetings of their professional associations. They continue to win major national scholarships and U of A awards. Their publishing record – academic articles, book/film reviews, translations, and creative writing – is impressive. They are involved in organizing cultural and academic activities on campus, in the community, and beyond. And they are moving on to teaching and research positions and/or into prestigious advanced degree programs upon completion of their U of A degrees.

MA/MFA Theses Defended

Clayton Clark (MFA-TRNS/Duval) ‘Why Did the River Stop Talking?’

Charles Davidson (ANTH/Swedenburg) ‘The Temporary Permanence of Syrian Refugees in Jordan’

General News/Achievements

Mohammed Abdalhadi (PhD CIED) completed his comprehensive examinations and began research towards his PhD on ‘The impact of First Language and Culture Interference on English Writing Skill for Arab Students at the Spring International Language Center in Fayetteville.’

Mohammad Alshammari (PhD CLCS) presented ‘Anti Radical Discourse in Saudi Culture’ at the American Comparative Literature Association's Annual Meeting in Seattle, WA in March 2015.

Kaveh Bassiri (PhD CLCS) was awarded a Sturgis International Fellowship to undertake research on Persian poetry in Iran during Spring 2016.

He presented ‘The Scorned Avant Garde: Reconsidering Tundar Kiya and the Emergence of Iranian Postmodern Poetry’ at the Tenth Biennial Iranian Studies Conference in Montreal, Canada in August 2014 and ‘Considering Arabic Prosody when Translating Persian Poetry’ at the American Comparative Literature Associations Annual Meeting in New York in October 2014. He organized and moderated sessions ‘Translating Prosody’ and ‘Poetics Theater: A Textual and Theatrical Performance and Discussion’ at the Association of Writers & Writing Programs Annual Meeting in Minneapolis, MN in April 2015.

His translations of Yushij’s poems ‘Night’ and ‘Phoenix’ were published in the Fall 2014 issue of *Two Lines Online* (Issue 21), and he is a regular contributor to the *Michigan Quarterly Review*. The following postings appeared recently on the *MQR* site: ‘The Middle East through Graphic Novels’ (June 8, 2014); ‘Team Melli and the Iranian Identity’ (June 29, 2014); ‘Iranian Literature Born in Exile’ (July 26, 2014); ‘On Transformative Compassion’ (August 21, 2014); ‘A Conversation with Ghanoonparvar’ (October 2, 2014); ‘Crystal Bridges to Where?’ (October 26, 2014); The Gathering of *The Conference of the Birds*’ (November 28, 2014); ‘Grammar of Touch’ (January 2, 2015); ‘Modern Iranian Poetry in Translation’

(March 27, 2015); and 'The Enduring Disappointments of Orientalism' (April 13, 2015). His translations (with Jean Valentine) of Sohrab Sepehri's poems 'Clarity, I, Flower, Water', 'Time-Oasis' and 'From Green to Green' appeared in the Spring 2015 issue of *Colorado Review* (42.1, pp 152-154).

He taught a course for the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute on the Mystical Dimension of Islam (October 2014). He is an editor for */One/*, a quarterly journal of literature, art, and ideas and is an advisor for Poet Voices of the Muslim World, a project funded by the Bridging Cultures program of the NEH.

Baris Basturk (PhD HIST) received a scholarship from the King Fahd Center to fund his Arabic studies at the Summer Language Workshop at Indiana University in Summer 2014. He presented 'Contending Visions of Imperial Religion: State and Religion in the 15th-Century Ottoman Empire' at the Phi Alpha Theta Arkansas Regional Conference in Fayetteville, AR in February 2015, and was awarded the 2015 George Billingsley Award for the Best Paper on a Middle Eastern or Asian Topic from the U of A Department of History.

Dhia Ben Ali (MA PLSC) graduated in December 2014 with an MA in Political Science, and transitioned into the U of A PhD program in Public Policy in Spring 2015. He presented 'Regional Influences on the Democratization Process in Tunisia' (co-authored with Jeffrey VanDenBerg) at the CSID-Tunisia 4th Annual Conference in Tunis, Tunisia with support from the U of A Graduate School and the King Fahd Center.

Ali Capar (PhD HIST) presented 'The Activities of Protestant Missionaries in Ottoman Syria, 1820-1876' at the Phi Alpha Theta Arkansas Regional Conference in Fayetteville, AR in February 2015. He completed his comprehensive examinations in May 2015 and will carry out PhD research in Turkey between May-December 2015 with support from the Turkish Government and the King Fahd Center.

Clayton Clark (MFA TRANS) received funding from the King Fahd Center to work on a translation of Joseph Abi Daher's '*Al Baraka*' in conjunction with Professor Adnan Haydar during Summer 2014, and led weekly sessions of the Center-sponsored Arabic Conversation Table during AY 2014-15. Clark read from his translations of selected stories from the 1950's and 1970's by acclaimed Syrian author Zakaria Tamer at the U of A Program in Creative Writing and Translation's graduate reading, and successfully defended his thesis translation 'Why Did the River Stop Talking?' in April 2015. He was awarded a fellowship by the Center for Arabic Study Abroad to undertake a year of intensive Arabic language study at the Qasid Arabic Institute in Amman, Jordan, 1 of 22 awardees (deferred).

Delilah Clark (PhD CLCS) was awarded a position in the SALAM summer Arabic program in Manah, Oman, through the Sultan Qaboos Cultural Center. She will be attending classes at the Sultan Qaboos College for Teaching Arabic Language to Nonnative Speakers in Manah, Oman from May 21 to July 3, 2015. She also led weekly sessions of the King Fahd Center -sponsored Arabic Conversation Table.

Autumn Cool (MA ANTH) undertook field research in Northern Iraq along with Professor Jesse Casana, supported by a grant from the King Fahd Center during Summer 2014.

Charles Davidson (MA ANTH) spent Summer 2014 in Jordan undertaking research for his MA thesis on the effects of war on Syrian refugees, supported by a grant from the King Fahd Center. He defended his thesis 'The Temporary Permanence of Syrian Refugees in Jordan' in May 2015 and will begin a PhD program at the George Mason University School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution with full funding and yearly stipend in Fall 2015.

The 2014 Annual Fundraising Gala for ForgottenSong, a non-profit directed by Davidson, featured photography from all over the world and raised \$13K and awareness for the organization. ForgottenSong works in countries that have experienced war within the past 10 years including Iraq, Burundi, and Uganda, striving to empower and restore these communities to a place of sustainability by equipping them with skills and resources to help battle cycles of poverty and violence from its roots.

Heidi Davis (PhD ANTH) accompanied Jerry Rose to Amarna, Egypt during Summer 2014 and Summer 2015 to continue skeletal analysis from prior excavations.

Sanket Desai (PhD HIST) conducted research at the Briscoe Center for American History and the Eisenhower and Truman presidential libraries during Summer 2014, supported by a travel grant from the Truman Library Institute. He presented 'Just Keep the Sheep Thieves Away: Minority Challenges to Iraqi Nation-State Building, 1933-1945' at the 2014 Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting in Washington D.C., and 'Scoundrels and Scallywags: Development Dissonance between the British and Iraqi Frontier, 1933-1945' at the British Scholar Society's Britain and the World Conference in Austin, TX in April 2015 and 'Impact Beyond the Official: Corporations, Aid and Development in Iraq, 1945-1958' at the Society for the Historians of American Foreign Relations (SHAFR) Annual Meeting in June 2015 in Arlington, VA. He was awarded the 2015 Willard B. Gatewood History Graduate Fellowship from the U of A Department of History.

Blake Duffield (PhD HIST) presented 'Seven Days from my Chief: Official Approaches to Empire in Britain's Colonial Civil Service, 1900-1930' at the British Scholar Society's Britain and the World Conference in Austin, TX in April 2015.

Nicole Fares (PhD CLCS) read an excerpt from her translation project 'Jerusalem Stands There Alone', a novel by Palestinian author Mahmoud Shukair at a Fiction, Translation, and Poetry event presented by The Burning Chair Readings in December 2014. Her translation of Sahar Mandour's 32 has been accepted for publication by Syracuse University Press; one excerpt has been published in *World Literature Today*, and another will be included in a forthcoming issue of *Art Amiss*. Fares completed her MFA in AY 2013-14 and began a PhD program in CLCS in Fall 2014. She travelled to Lebanon to undertake preliminary dissertation research during Summer 2015.

Christopher Fletcher (MA ANTH) accompanied Professor Jesse Casana on a field research trip to Northern Iraq in Summer 2014.

Kaelin Groom (PhD ENDY) began a PhD program in Environmental Dynamics beginning Fall 2014. She was awarded a Sturgis International Fellowship to live and research in Petra, Jordan for six months starting this January 2016. She will be researching the impacts of tourism of Petra's landscapes and

working with the Petra National Trust. Groom also co-led a 10-student winter study abroad program to Morocco through the University of Colorado at Denver. Geography by Rail™: Morocco allows students to explore countries via the rail system, travelling through the cities of Tangiers, Marrakech, Rabat, Meknes, Fez, Taza, and Casablanca.

Mehreen Humayun (PhD HIST) has had her paper abstract, 'Images of Women in Egyptian and Pakistani Literature: Two Classic Works by Latifa al-Zayyat and Khadija Mastoor,' accepted for the Middle East Studies Association 2015 Annual Meeting in Denver, CO.

Steven Meizler (MA GEOG), a MEST undergraduate program alumnus, began an MA program in Geography in Fall 2014. He undertook an exploratory research trip to a Baha'i temple in Wilmette, IL in January 2015, and will travel to Israel during Summer 2015 to conduct further research with support from the King Fahd Center.

Ethan Morton-Jerome (PhD ANTH) conducted research for his dissertation, 'Palestinian Labor on West Bank Settlements and Palestinian Authority Efforts to Create Employment Alternatives,' in Palestine supported by a Mediterranean Regional Research Fellowship from the Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC). His initial fieldwork, commencing in January 2013, was supported by a King Fahd Center scholarship and Palestine American Research Center. He will return to Fayetteville to do library research during Summer 2015, supported by the King Fahd Center.

Mitra Panahipour (PhD ANTH) accompanied Professor **Jesse Casana** on a field research trip to Northern Iraq/Kurdistan in Summer 2014, supported by a grant from the King Fahd Center. She is a research member in the grant-awarded project 'ASOR Syrian Heritage Initiative,' funded in August 2014 by US Department of State, geared toward current assessment, global awareness and future restoration needs. She presented a research poster on 'Satellite-Based Monitoring of Looting and Damage to Archaeological Sites in Syria' at the ASOR annual meeting in November 2014 in San Diego and co-authored (with J Casana) 'Satellite Based Monitoring of Looting and Damage to Archaeological Sites in Syria' in *Journal of Eastern Mediterranean Archaeological and Historical Studies* 2:2 (2014), 128-51.

Matthew Parnell (PhD HIST) presented 'Childishness, Manliness, and the 'Egypt Question': The Politics of Gender and Age in the British Discourse on Egypt during the Nineteenth Century' at the British Scholar Society's Britain and the World Conference in Austin, TX in April 2015. He was invited to speak about his experience as a Fulbright Program Fellow at Fulbright College's Fulbright Birthday Celebration in April 2015. He expects to defend his dissertation in Summer 2015 and will be teaching the U of A History Department capstone writing seminar and ME Social/Cultural History in the Fall.

Aaron Shew (PhD ENDY) spent AY 2014-2015 undertaking language study with the national Hindi Language Program Immersion and Research Center in Rajasthan, India. He has received a full NSF grant supporting his PhD work in Environmental Dynamics. Shew will be examining the relationships between crop accessibility, soil fertility, market accessibility, food trends, climate variability, and population demographics (gender, caste, etc) in India.

Ashley Shidner (PhD ANTH) accompanied Professor Jerry Rose as part of his team to Amarna, Egypt in Summer 2014 and Summer 2015 to continue analysis of skeletal remains.

Keith Whitmire (PhD ANTH) was awarded funding from the King Fahd Center during Summer 2014 to support language study and preliminary PhD research on café culture in Morocco.

Bradley Wilson (PhD GEOS) was awarded an NSF grant supporting his PhD work in Geosciences to begin in Fall 2015, focusing on developing a new regional risk index for the Middle East, particularly on the implications of cultural factors on risk.

Wawan Yulianto (PhD CLCS) won the University of Arkansas' 2014 International Education Week essay contest in November for his paper 'The Ruben Moment: How A Dance Taught Me that We Can't Afford to Let Cultural Differences Take Our Eyes off the Prize'. He presented his paper 'Explicitly Heretical, Unconsciously Political: The Unspoken Subversion in "Blasphemous" American Muslim Novels' at the 24th Annual British Commonwealth and Postcolonial Studies Conference in Savannah, Georgia in February 2015, supported by funding from the U of A Graduate School.

Malek Zuraikat (PhD CLCS) presented 'The Future of English Loanwords into Arabic' at the 3rd Annual Student Research Symposium, held at Central Arkansas University in April 2015 and 'Courtly Love in Nabokov's *Lolita*' at the St. Louis University Annual Symposium on Medieval and Renaissance Studies in May 2015. He was awarded a Sturgis International Fellowship to pursue his English-to-Arabic translation of Chaucer's *Troilus and Cressyde* in Jordan.

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT NEWS

Summer 2014 Graduates:

Brian Hughes (IREL/MEST; ARAB and PLSC minors)

Walt Wright (INST; MEST and HIST minors)

Fall 2014 Graduates:

Khalid Ahmadzai (IREL/MEST; HIST minor)

Kathryne Dunlap (IREL/MEST; PLSC and ARAB minors)

Kaitlin Hartness (IREL/MEST; SPAN and ARAB minors)

Brendan Sparks (IREL/MEST; ARAB minor)

Morgan Michel (IREL/MEST; ARAB minor)

Eric Sharp (IREL/MEST)

Christopher Tucker (IREL/MEST)

Spring 2015 Graduates:

Sean Bryant (IREL/MEST; HIST)

Bailey Cox (IREL/MEST; ARAB and PLSC minors)

Mary-Catherine Gerling (IREL/MEST, PLSC; ARAB minor)

Chelsea Del Grande (IREL/MEST, GEOG; ARAB minor)

Anne Marie Grisham (IREL/MEST; RLST minor)

Daniel Ince (IREL, HIST; MEST minor)

Robert Peiser (IREL/MEST)

General News/Achievements

Khalid Ahmadzai (IREL/MEST; HIST minor) published an op-ed piece in the *Arkansas Democrat Gazette*, entitled 'Why should we care? – The Taliban's legacy lives on in ISIS' (August 24, 2014). He was offered an Arkansas Fellowship, which seeks to attract and retain Arkansas's brightest entrepreneurial talent by partnering with the state's leading universities and most ambitious companies (declined). Ahmadzai was accepted to the Clinton School of Public Service in Little Rock, Arkansas and will begin an MA program in Public Service in Fall 2015.

Nathaniel Bailey (PLSC) presented 'Brother Whom I Love: Alternative Sexual Relations in Turkey' at the second annual King Fahd Center undergraduate paper symposium entitled 'Islamic Studies: Belief, Expression, Journey, Debate' in April 2015. This paper was also accepted for presentation at the annual meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion/Religious Research Association to be held in Newport Beach, CA in October 2015.

Kalynn Barlow (IREL; MEST, SPAN, ARAB minors) will study in Amman, Jordan in summer, 2015. She was awarded a Project Go scholarship through California State University, San Bernardino.

Andrew Billingsley (IREL/MEST; ARAB minor) attended an ISA Study Abroad program in Morocco during Spring 2015.

Sean Bryant (IREL/MEST, HIST) travelled to Jordan in Summer 2014 for an intensive study abroad language and culture program sponsored by California State San Bernardino University. He will begin a graduate program in Political Science at the U of A in Fall 2015.

Luke Burton (BSIB) will undertake an internship in Amman, Jordan in Summer 2015, and will study Jordanian Dialect through the Shababik Program.

Sydney Cason (PLSC/MEST; ARAB minor) received a Minna Rosenbaum Divers Memorial Scholarship from the U of A Department of Political Science.

Matthew Clothier (DRAM, SPAN) presented 'Pashtunwali and the Last Jew of Kabul' at the Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Jewish Diversity Symposium, sponsored by the U of A Judaic Studies program, on October 1, 2014.

Sarah Cory (ANTH/MEST) will study abroad in Amman, Jordan during Spring 2016 with support from the Honors College Study Abroad Scholarship.

Christopher Cowan (IREL/MEST; ARAB minor) will be working for the British consulate in Houston, Texas, during Summer 2015 as the Cleveland C. Burton Intern.

Chelsea Del Grande (IREL/MEST, GEOG; ARAB minor) spent the Fall 2014 semester abroad attending an ISA Study Abroad program in Meknes, Morocco, partially supported by a King Fahd Center undergraduate scholarship.

Steven Escalante (IREL; GEOG minor) presented 'Inter-faith Cannibalism? The Volatile Relations between the Salafis and the Sufis' at the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion Annual Meeting to in Indianapolis, IN in October 2014.

Jessica Garross (BSIB; ARAB minor) will spend the Fall 2015 studying abroad in Morocco.

Abram Greenbaum (PLSC/MEST) presented a paper, 'The People of Lot: Does God Hate Them?' at the Annual Meeting of the SW Commission on Religious Studies in Irving, TX in March 2015. He also presented 'Desecration of the Body: Tattoos in Middle Eastern Culture' at the second annual King Fahd Center undergraduate paper symposium entitled in April 2015. This paper has also been accepted for presentation at the 2nd Annual Undergraduate Research Workshop at the Middle East Studies Association 2015 Annual Meeting in November 2015.

William Harris (Non-degree seeking) presented 'In Order That He May Rest in Peace' at the second annual King Fahd Center undergraduate paper symposium in April 2015.

Isaac Hood (IREL) will study abroad during Summer 2015 in Amman, Jordan through Northeastern University's in partnership with AMIDEAST.

Brian Hughes (IREL/MEST; ARAB and PLSC minors) was awarded funding by the King Fahd Center to take part in the SIT Summer Intensive Arabic Program in Amman, Jordan during Summer 2014.

Macyn Hunn (COMM/MEST) will study Arabic in Jordan with AMIDEAST during Fall 2015, supported by funding from the King Fahd Center.

Daniel Ince (IREL, HIST; MEST minor) was accepted to participate in the highly competitive 2014 Marquette Project Global Officer (GO) program to take place in Amman, Jordan in Summer 2014, run in conjunction with AMIDEAST and the Qasid Institute. Ince was one of only 16 ROTC students from across the country to be accepted.

Austin Keefer (PLSC/MEST, IREL) presented 'Glory be to God, I Have Killed My Daughter: The Tradition of Honor Killing in Jordan' at the second annual King Fahd Center undergraduate paper symposium in April 2015. His paper was also accepted for presentation at the annual meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion/Religious Research Association to be held in Newport Beach, CA in October 2015.

Sara Kouchehbagh (IREL/MEST; ARAB and PLSC minors) interned with the US State Department at the US Embassy in Manama, Bahrain under the Near Eastern Affairs Bureau for ten weeks during summer 2014.

Joseph Largent (GEOG/MEST; ARAB, ANTH, HIST minors) was selected as a semi-finalist for the US State Department's Critical Language Scholarship program for summer 2015. He will spend part of this coming summer in the Middle East, volunteering at Mashjar Juthour, an arboretum/eco-park just north of Ramallah in the Palestine Authority.

Viktoria Lawler (PLSC) presented 'Getting Freedom Back in Cadillacs: Women, Religion, and the State in Saudi Arabia' at the second annual King Fahd Center undergraduate paper symposium in April 2015.

Deborah Lee's (NURS) paper 'Me, My Nafs, and I: The Journey of Spirituality in Islam' was accepted for presentation at the 2014 Annual Meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion held in Indianapolis in October 2014.

Christian McCall (IREL; MEST minor) presented 'To Sin or Not to Sin: Mankind's Intentions and Inclinations' at the second annual King Fahd Center undergraduate paper symposium in April 2015.

Morgan Michel's (IREL/MEST; ARAB minor) paper 'But God Said She is Free: A Critique of the Methods Used in Islam to Restrict Women's Rights and Movement' was accepted for presentation at the Pacific NW Region AAR/ASOR 2015 annual meeting as well as the 2015 Annual Meeting of the Southwest Commission on Religious Studies.

David Mills (HIST) had papers 'Death Comes Dressed in Black: A Comparative Study of Muslim and Christian Responses to the Black Death' and 'One God, Three Faiths, and a Misinterpretation of the Divine' accepted for presentation at the Twenty-sixth Annual Undergraduate Research Conference at Butler University held in November 2014 in Indianapolis, IN.

Marcus Montgomery (CMJS, PSYC; ARAB and SOCI minors) will spend the Fall 2015 semester abroad in Jordan with a CIEE study abroad program. He was listed as an alternate for the Boren Scholarship through the National Security Education Program (NSEP), and will spend Spring 2016 abroad as well if announced recipient.

Thaddeus Moore (ENGL; MGMT/MKTG minors) travelled to Turkey to visit a college and also to a school in Bethlehem in Summer 2014 to meet with teachers and learn about teaching English abroad.

Jamie Nix (IREL; MEST minor) will spend the Fall 2015 semester studying abroad in Morocco.

Christopher Piro (PLSC) presented 'Blood in the Sand: Why We Fight in the Middle East' at the annual meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion held in Indianapolis, IN in October 2014.

Sydney Ross's (JOUR/GBUS) paper 'Religion: What is the Point?' was accepted for presentation at the Pacific NW Region of the American Academy of Religion, Society of Biblical Literature & The American Schools of Oriental Research 2015 Annual Meeting held in Portland, OR in March 2015.

Zach Schwermann (IREL/MEST; BSIB minor) completed a study abroad program during summer 2014 at the American University of Sharjah, supported by a Sturgis Study Abroad Grant.

Brendan Sparks (IREL/MEST; ARAB minor) presented 'On the Edge of the Binary and Society: Sufism's Role in Social Tolerance of Hijra and transgender Communities in Pakistan' at the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion Annual Convention in Indianapolis, IN in October 2014. This paper was also presented as a poster at the Undergraduate Research Workshop at the Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting in Washington D.C. in November 2014. Sparks was awarded one of just sixteen spots to participate, and travelled to the conference with support from the King Fahd Center.

Madeline Upson (IREL/MEST; ARAB minor) spent the 2014-2015 AY abroad, attending an ISA Study Abroad program in Meknes, Morocco partially supported by a King Fahd Center undergraduate scholarship.

Amanda Want (IREL/MEST) will attend an SIT study abroad program in Jordan during Summer 2015.

Hilary Zedlitz (PLSC/MEST; ARAB and ECON minors) completed an internship with the Department of State's Foreign Service Institute in Washington, D.C. during summer 2014, and wrote a posting entitled 'Staying in the States for State' for the Fulbright Honors College Blog. She was also named a finalist for the 2015 Harry S. Truman Scholarship, and received the Minna Rosenbaum Divers Scholarship from the U of A Department of Political Science.

ALUMNI NEWS

King Fahd Center/Middle East Studies alumni continue to contribute to the field in academic ventures and to carry their expertise into governmental and non-governmental service and organizations.

King Fahd Center PhDs holding Tenure-Track Jobs

Mansoor Abbasi (ENGL 2012), Assistant Professor of Literature, Melikshah University, Turkey

Ahmet Akturk (HIST 2012), Assistant Professor of History, Georgia Southern University

Basri Basri (HIST 2008), Associate Professor of Islamic Studies, State Islamic University of Malang, Indonesia

Gretchen Dabbs (ANTH 2009), Associate Professor of Anthropology, Southern Illinois University

Clea Hupp (HIST 2004), Associate Professor of History, University of Arkansas-Little Rock

Sonia Kapur (PUBP 2014), Assistant Professor of International Studies, University of North Carolina-Ashville

Ali Khwaileh (ANTH 2009), Assistant Professor of Anthropology, Yarmouk University, Jordan

Nawaf al-Madkhli (HIST 2007), Assistant Professor of History, King Fahd University of Petroleum, Saudi Arabia

Manal al-Natour (CLCS 2012), Assistant Professor of Foreign Languages, University of West Virginia

Sanaa Riaz (ANTH 2011), Assistant Professor of Anthropology, Metropolitan State University of Denver

Asaad al-Saleh (CLCS 2010), Assistant Professor of Languages and Literature, Indiana University

Abdulla al-Shorman (ANTH 2002), Professor of Anthropology at Yarmouk University, Jordan

Nadine Sinno (CLCS 2009), Assistant Professor of Arabic, Virginia Tech University

Salem al-Thawaba (ENDY 2005), Assistant Professor of Urban Planning & Geography, Bir Zeit University, Palestine

Teresa Wilson (ANTH 2014), Assistant Professor of Anthropology, Louisiana State University

Ghadir Zannoun (CLCS 2011), Assistant Professor of Modern and Classical Languages, University of Kentucky

Yulia Uryadova (HIST 2012), Assistant Professor of History, Longwood University

King Fahd Center PhDs Teaching in Visiting or Non-tenure Positions:

Sarwar Alam (PUBP 2006), Instructor, King Fahd Center, University of Arkansas

Charles Argo (HIST 2004), Social Science faculty at National Park Community College

Farid al-Salim (HIST 2008), Visiting Assistant Professor of History, University of Qatar

Melissa Zabecki (ANTH 2009) Instructor, University of Arkansas-Fort Smith

King Fahd Center/MEST Program MA/BA Graduates holding Academic Positions:

Daniel Brown (MA PLSC 2010), Instructor of Political Science, University of Arkansas

Mohamed Daadaoui (MA PLSC 2002), Associate Professor of Political Science, Oklahoma City University

Suncem Kocer (MA ANTH 2005), Assistant Professor of in the Department of Public Relations and Information, Kadir Has University, Turkey

Matt Malczykcki (BA HIST 1997), Associate Professor of History, Auburn University

Robert Moore (BA HIST 1996, MA HIST 2002), Assistant Professor of History, John Brown University

Mahmoud Naamneh (MA ANTH 1998), Associate Professor of Anthropology, Yarmouk University, Jordan

John Schaefer (MA ANTH 2000), Assistant Professor of Anthropology, Miami University-Middleton

Kimberly Williams (ANTH 2001), Assistant Professor of Anthropology, Temple University

General News/Achievements

Altaf Abro (PhD PUBP 2009) is Project Director for the International Development & Relief Foundation (IDRF) in Pakistan.

Ahmet Akturk (PhD HIST 2012) presented 'Kurdish Nationalism and Clothing Reform in the Post-Ottoman Empire' at the Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C. in November 2014 at a session on Dressing and Undressing for the Nation in the Post-World War I Middle East he organized, chaired by **Joel Gordon**. His essay on 'The Kurdish Cultural Renaissance in Exile: The Hawar School' is forthcoming in *Zend*, and he is a member of the editorial board of *Kurt Tarihi (Kurdish History)*, published in Turkey.

Emily Bitely (MA ANTH 2012) works in the mapping division at Google.

Cole Bockenfeld (BA IREL/MEST 2008) is Advocacy Director for the Project on Middle East Democracy. He recently co-authored a report (with POMED Executive Director Stephen McInerney), 'The Federal Budget and Appropriations for Fiscal Year 2016: Democracy, Governance, and Human Rights in the Middle East and North Africa' (May 2015). He also co-authored last year's (June 2014) report with the same title.

Ryan Cochran (BA IREL/MEST 2007) works as an Academic Counselor in the Advising Center for Fulbright College.

Travis Curtice (MA PLSC, 2012) has completed his first year of a PhD program in Political Science at Emory University.

Mohamed Daadaoui (MA PLSC 2002) presented 'Of Monarchs and Protest Movements: The Case of the February 20th Movement in Morocco' at the Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C. in November 2014.

Gretchen Dabbs (PhD ANTH 2009) was awarded a grant from the National Endowment for Humanities totaling \$253,817 for her proposal 'The North Tombs Cemeteries at Amarna, an Abandoned City of Ancient Egypt' to fund ongoing archaeological excavations in Amarna, Egypt. She co-authored the chapter 'Abandoned memories: a cemetery of forgotten souls?' in *Remembering and Commemorating the Dead: Recent Contributions in Bioarchaeology and Mortuary Analysis from the Ancient Near East* (University of Colorado Press, October 2014) with fellow alumna **Melissa Zabecki** (PhD ANTH 2009). She also co-authored (with **Jerome Rose** and **Melissa Zabecki**) 'The Bioarchaeology of Akhetaten: Unexpected Results from a Capital City' in S. Ikram, J. Kaiser and R. Walker (eds.), *Egyptian Bioarchaeology: Humans, Animals, the Environment* (Sidestone Press, 2015); and (with **Melissa Zabecki**) 'Abandoned Memories: A Cemetery of Forgotten Souls' in Benjamin Porter and Alexis Boutin (eds.), *Remembering and Commemorating the Dead: Recent Contributions in Bioarchaeology and Mortuary Analysis from the Ancient Near East* (University of Colorado Press, 2015)

Rasha el-Endari (MA ANTH 2012) is in her third year of study in the PhD program in Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at the University of Toronto. She is also an active member of the Computational Research on the Ancient Near East (CRANE) project, in which she has helped facilitate the integration of the Tell Tayinat Archaeological Project's GIS data into the OCHRE database.

Kevin Fisher (Postdoctoral supervisee, 2011-12) who worked under **Jesse Casana** is Assistant Professor of Near Eastern Studies at University of British Columbia.

Bill Gardner (MA ANTH 1999) is director of primetime programming for history and current events at PBS in Washington, DC.

Safiya Ghori (BA IREL/MEST 2002; JD 2005; MA PLSC 2006) works for the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee on South and Central Asia.

Jason Hermann (PhD ENDY 2012) holds a two-year research position at University of Tübingen, Germany.

Clea Hupp (PhD HIST 2004) ran for Arkansas Congress from the 31st District in the 2014 election.

Jessica Jayakaran (BA IREL/MEST 2014) was awarded a U.S. State Department Critical Languages Scholarship for Arabic study in Meknes, Morocco in Summer 2014.

Tuna Kalayci (PhD ANTH 2013) holds a postdoc at the Institute for Mediterranean Studies in Crete. He has co-authored articles forthcoming in *Internet Archaeology* and *ISPRS Journal of Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing*.

Amy Karoll (MA ANTH 2012) is in her third year of study in the PhD program in Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at UCLA.

Suncem Kocer (MA ANTH 2005) presented 'Domestic Ethnography and Documentary Practice at the Intersection of History and Identity: I Flew You Stayed and Grandma's Tattoos' at the 2014 Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association in Washington, DC. Her article 'Social business in online financing: Crowdfunding narratives of independent documentary producers in Turkey' was published in *New Media & Society* 17/2 (2015), 231-48.

Lahmuddin Lahmuddin (PhD HIST 2004) serves as Imam of the Islamic Society of Joplin, MO.

Matt Malczyk (BA HIST 1997) published 'A Page from an Aspiring Muhadith's Personal Notes' in Anne Regourd (ed.), *Documents et histoire Islam VIIe-XVIe siecle* (Paris: Musee du Louver/Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, 2014), 247-67; 2 other essays are forthcoming.

Saba Naseem (BA JOUR MEST; ARAB minor 2013) is currently working as a journalist for the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C.

Tricia Nellessen (PhD ANTH 2013) works for the US Department of State.

Gary Noel (BA GEOG/MEST 2011) was recently promoted to Research Analyst at the UAE Embassy in Washington D.C.

James Redman (MA ANTH 2003) defended his Anthropology dissertation, 'The *Diwaniyya*: Guestroom Sociability and Bureaucratic Brokerage in Kuwait,' at the University of Utah.

Simon Reid (MA GEOG 2013) is a spatial analyst, focusing on the Middle East, with GEOEye (Digital Globe) the world's largest satellite imaging company. Simon assists various countries from Morocco, to the Gulf, the US and various international agencies (UNESCO, UN, WHO, FAO) in using satellite imagery for various purposes including agricultural, conflict, and resource management issues.

Sanaa Riaz (PhD ANTH 2011) published *New Islamic Schools: Tradition, Modernity, and Class in Urban Pakistan* (Palgrave 2014). She presented a paper at the South Asian Muslim Studies Association Pre-Conference at the Annual Conference on South Asia in Madison, WI in October 2014. She also presented 'Technology and Second Language Learning in Pakistani Public Schools' at the Institute for South Asia Studies, University of California-Berkeley conference on 'Fixing Pakistan's Education' in February 2015. She joined the Board of Directors of the South Asian Muslims Studies Association

(SAMSA) and will begin a tenure-track position in Anthropology at Metropolitan State University of Denver in August 2015.

Asaad Al-Saleh (PhD CLCS 2010) presented 'Serving the Regime: Buthaina Shabaan and the Legacy of a Public Intellectual Siding Against the Syrian Revolution' at the Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C. in November 2014. His book, *Voices from the Arab Spring* (Columbia University Press) came out in March 2015. He will begin a tenure-track position in Arabic Literature at Indiana University in August 2015.

Mohammad Salem (PhD ENDY 2011) is Director of GIS & Planning for the City of Ramallah in Palestine.

Farid al-Salim (PhD HIST 2008) published 'Muslim Mothering and Migration' in *Muslim Mothering: Local and Global Histories, Theories, and Practice* (Demeter 2014). His book *Palestine and the Decline of the Ottoman Empire* (I B Taurus) will appear in June 2015.

Nadine Sinno (PhD CLCS 2009) presented 'Lebanon, the Land of Milk and Honey, Tabbouleh, and Coke: Orientalist, Local, and Global Discourses in Alexandra Chreiteh's *Always Coca-Cola*' at the Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C., in November 2015. She authored the chapter 'Empowered Muslim Mothering: Navigating War, Border-Crossing, and Activism in El-Haddad's Gaza Mom' in *Muslim Mothering: Local and Global Histories, Theories, and Practice* (Demeter 2014). Her translation, with **Paula Haydar** of *Who's Afraid of Meryl Streep* by Rashid al-Daif was published in 2014.

Laila Taraghi (MA PLSC 2012, former King Fahd Center Program Coordinator) has been accepted with funding into the Master of Global Policy Studies at the LBJ School of Public Service, University of Texas-Austin, and will begin studies in Fall 2015.

Yulia Uryadova (PhD HIST 2012) presented 'Drugs, Alcohol and Corruption in Early Twentieth Century Central Asia' at the Association for Slavic, East European, & Eurasian Studies meeting in San Antonio, TX, in November 2014.

Anna Weiser (MA ANTH 2012) is in her third year of the Anthropology PhD program at Kansas University.

James Wesolowski (MA ANTH 2012) is in his third year in the PhD program in ENDY at U of A.

Melissa Zabecki (PhD ANTH 2009) co-authored (along with **Jerome Rose** and **Gretchen Dabbs**) 'The Bioarchaeology of Akhetaten: Unexpected Results from a Capital City' in S. Ikram, J. Kaiser and R. Walker (eds.), *Egyptian Bioarchaeology: Humans, Animals, the Environment* (Sidestone Press, 2015); she also co-authored (with **Gretchen Dabbs**) 'Abandoned Memories: A Cemetery of Forgotten Souls' in Benjamin Porter and Alexis Boutin (eds.), *Remembering and Commemorating the Dead: Recent Contributions in Bioarchaeology and Mortuary Analysis from the Ancient Near East* (University of Colorado Press, 2015). She will publish 'Suffering in the City: Skeletal evidence for possible ritualized punishment at Tell el-Amarna' in *International Journal of Paleopathology* co-authored with **Gretchen Dabbs** (PhD/ANTH 2009).

Ghadir Zannoun (PhD CLCS 2011) presented 'The Downfall of Granada and the Reconfiguration of Modern Arab Identity in Radwa Ashour's Granada,' at the 2014 American Comparative Literature Association Annual Meeting in New York in April 2014. Her article 'Resisting Appropriation: Gendered Nationalisms in Zeina Ghandour's *The Honey*,' was accepted for publication *Arab Studies Journal*.

LOOKING AHEAD

Changes are afoot that will mark AY 2015-16 as a transitional year for the King Fahd Center.

Mounir Farah is retiring after 20 years of service to the U of A, the College of Education, and the King Fahd Center. He has been here since 1995 and brought a wealth of experience in Middle East Studies to the MEST program. Professor Farah was a founding member of the Middle East Outreach Council, a vital branch of the Middle East Studies Association and has remained an active participant in their annual meetings. He served the Center as Associate Director, Outreach Director, and Interim Director, and joined the faculty of the College of Education and Health Professions in 1997. He has given that college an unprecedented international presence, both in terms of the students he has worked with, from nearly every Arab country, and in terms of his own work toward curricular reform and development with education ministries and universities, particularly in Syria, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan. He finishes his tenure with a year of research leave which will run through December 2015.

Jesse Casana, who was promoted to Professor this past year, will be leaving U of A for Dartmouth College. During his tenure at U of A Professor Casana established a strong foundation for the study of Near Eastern archaeology. He supervised numerous students at the BA, MA and PhD level. His excavation at Tel Qarqur in northern Syria was a staple of Center summer programming until the outbreak of the Syrian civil war in 2011. Casana relocated for a summer to Cyprus, then turned to the Diyala River basin in Iraqi Kurdistan, where he led two summer expeditions. His work with CAST and his many grants, particularly related to CORONA satellite imagery and work in the Gulf, have been documented in prior King Fahd Center Annual Reports. For the past 2 years he has been working with ASOR and the US State Department to monitor the status of archaeological heritage sites in Syria. His work – and that of his students – was underscored this past March at the Cultural Heritage in Crisis conference sponsored by the Center. It would make infinite sense for the Anthropology Department to seek a replacement who works in our area and who could benefit from the support for expeditions, student assistantships and study/travel opportunities that the King Fahd Center can provide.

In April, Center Director **Joel Gordon** elected not to accept reappointment by the Dean of Fulbright College. A successor, whether interim or long-term, has not yet been designated (at this writing). We hope that the initiatives undertaken in recent years will go forward and that new initiatives follow the lead of Center faculty, who are most in tune with developments in our area and its affiliated disciplines.

The MEST faculty has already begun addressing a number of long and short-term goals that now appear attainable, given our financial footing and our record of achievements. We anticipate playing a key role in an evolving International Studies program on campus. The Center remains open to and eager for collaboration with other academic units and programs, and individual colleagues that touch upon our geo-cultural areas of specialization. Our purview is wide, although we recall less happy times when our endowment appeared to be fair game for anyone with the slightest, most tenuous connections to Middle East studies. We continue to aim to utilize our 'gift' to further – and grow – an academic agenda that is rooted in area expertise and that reflects the many years of study and fieldwork of which our faculty can boast. Current partnerships and collaborations with CAST and U of A Press – in addition to

the collaborations in recent years with Creative Writing, the Law School, African/African-American Studies, International Studies, Judaic Studies, and the Walton Arts Center should be noted as important steps in this direction. The King Fahd Center Director participated in a series of discussions with other area studies directors towards creation of a Consortium of Area and International Studies (CAIS) designed to improve communication between interdisciplinary academic units, something we hope will gain a true foothold in the coming AY.

Last year our report concluded with a note of combined pride in our accomplishments and caution regarding the future. In some respects the situation has become even more daunting, which makes our mission ever more vital.

Events in the Arab/Muslim world have had a profound impact on the direction in which the Center has moved in [recent years]. The pace of events – as well as some of the startling directions, both positive and negative – has enhanced public interest in the area we cover and created openings to explore new avenues of intellectual and artistic as well as political activity. We have monitored the situation closely with a special eye towards locating the best programs for our students. We are proud to see a steady number of students win prestigious travel awards to pursue language study or thesis research. Concurrently we are frustrated when we note the degree to which funding for graduate and postgraduate research abroad has been reduced in the federal budget over recent years. We have been working with the Study Abroad Office to insure that our funding awards are in accordance with U of A Travel Policy and will continue to lobby hard on behalf of projects situated in places in which we feel secure, regardless of official statutes. We have, after all committed ourselves, as graduate students and faculty members, to studying – which often entails living in – parts of the world in which there is often a threat of political violence and civil strife. When we travel to these places we do so with full cognizance of the risks involved, as well as with a sense of reasonable risk grounded in years of experience and study, and mastery of regional languages.

We remain proud of our inter/national profile as a unique center and program, one that sits between the handful of major Middle East centers that compete for federal funding and the centers at institutions comparable to U of A that have far fewer faculty and available resources. We are proud our placement record at the graduate level, both in terms of PhDs competing for academic positions and MA students winning acceptance into major PhD programs (many of whom have then gone on to academic positions, among other careers). Our graduates at all levels are already part of the newest wave of teachers and scholars, filmmakers, journalists, cartographers and spatial analysts working in the field in this country and abroad. Our best undergraduates are going on to graduate programs or related employment opportunities.

We close, as we did last year and the year before, on a cautious but optimistic note. While our endowment is healthier than it had been just five years ago, a product of our own fiscal policies as well as the general economy, the state of area studies continues to face grave threats on a national level. Although the current federal budget allotments for Overseas Area Research Centers have remained stable, this still constitutes a significant drop from earlier years. Title VI, which supports the major Middle East Centers at major research universities, remains in jeopardy and the larger programs remain

handcuffed in terms of faculty and student support, and faculty replacement. Support for research abroad is also greatly diminished and pressures for universities and funding agencies to support particular kinds of research that fit agendas that are not always academically driven remain troublesome.

This gives a university like ours – and a Center like ours, which is privately endowed through a generous gift – an opportunity to make an even greater impact in the near future, through our collaboration with colleagues across the country and internationally, our ability to attract top-flight American and international graduate students, and our on-the-ground projects, archaeological, historical, and cultural – at home and in the Middle East. The Middle East Studies program (that grew into the King Fahd Center) has now been in place for 20 years. We hope to be able to continue, with renewed trust from Fulbright College and University officials, to set our individual scholarly and collaborative curricular agendas as we study and seek to explain a dynamic and changing Middle East.

In short, the King Fahd Center is, first and foremost, an academic center with a mission to train students, undergraduate and graduate, to support faculty research, above all, to share our expertise on local, regional, national and international levels – all with an eye towards greater understanding, exploring complexities, challenging simplistic and/or narrow (and narrow-minded) viewpoints, however comforting or alarming those may be. We are based in a state that has often felt cut off from world affairs. And yet we are housed in a college named for the US senator who did the most to advance international education and cross-cultural study – and travel. Many of our students, especially in recent years, have seen the world not as academic ambassadors, but in military uniform. They represent the challenges explicit in our academic mission: to give life to the historical experiences, the economic struggles and aspirations, the environmental pressures, the cultural expressions of peoples who to most of our students and fellow citizens are foreign – and at times appear to be solely antagonistic. This makes our primary task – to educate global citizens – ever important – and the presence of a Middle East studies center in a state like ours not only logical, at times against all logic, but also vital.

APPENDIX: KING FAHD CENTER BUDGET/EXPENDITURES – AY 2014-15

At the outset of 2014-15 the projected income for both cost centers is \$1,214,399.31 (\$1,104,579.18 + 109,820.13). With surplus carry over estimated at \$67,142.36 this means a total projected budget of \$ 1,281,541.67.

TOTAL EXPENDITURES AY 2014-15: (1)

1. Faculty/Staff Expenditures

- a. Faculty Salaries – \$ 556, 981.00 (2)
- b. Staff Salaries – \$ 58,899.00 (3)
- c. Faculty Benefits – \$ 142,588.11 (4)
- d. Staff Benefits – \$ 15,078.14
- e. Student Wages – \$ 0 (5)
- f. Instructor Salaries – \$ 5750.00 (6)
- g. Faculty/Staff R&D Funds – \$ 48,022.46 (7)

Subtotal: \$ 827,318.71

2. Student Expenditures

- a. Graduate Assistant Stipends – \$ 222,900 (8)
- b. Graduate Student Fringe Benefits -- \$ 8,258.42 (9)
- c. Graduate Conference Travel Awards – \$ 3681.57 (10)
- d. Graduate Research/Travel Awards – \$ 13,700 (11)
- e. Undergraduate Scholarships – \$ 42,000 (12)
- f. Undergraduate Study Abroad – \$ 1400 (13)
- g. Undergraduate Conference Travel – \$ 1028.70 (14)

Subtotal: \$ 292,968.69

3. Program Expenditures – Ongoing

- a. Affiliations – \$ 5700 (15)
- b. Arabic Conversation Table/Speech Contest – \$ 2542.11 (16)
- c. Arabic Translation Prize – \$ 21,973.11 (17)
- d. Amarna Expedition: \$14,000 (18)
- e. Upper Diyala Expedition: \$ 0 (19)
- f. Library Purchases – \$ 9388.73 (20)
- g. Newsletter – \$ 1039.12 (21)
- h. Fulbright College Apartment -- \$ 0 (22)

Subtotal: \$ 54,643.07

4. Program Expenditures – Special Annual

- a. Aizzah Fatima – \$ 5122.97 (23)
- b. Cultural Heritage Symposium – \$ 16,042.64 (24)
- c. Speakers – \$ 1451.56 (25)
- d. Events – \$ 1565.31 (26)

Subtotal: \$ 24,182.48

5. Maintenance/Supplies (27)

- a. Telephone – \$ 2711.28
- b. Supplies (Campus Bookstore) – \$ 1116.79
- c. Postage (USPS and UPS) – \$ 23.25
- d. Special Equipment – \$ 176.67 (28)

Subtotal: \$ 4027.99

Total Expenditures: \$ 1,203,140.94

NOTES

1. In AY 2010-11 the decision was made to simplify Center accounting by reconfiguring the two cost centers. Foundation account 31-000238 is now related to the primary endowment and account 31-000239 is the much smaller account relating to translation and literary endeavors. This has made budgeting expenditures much easier since funds are taken from accounts that most closely approximate academic directions.

At the outset of AY 2012-13 the projected income for both cost centers was \$1,226,354 (\$944,590 + 281,764). With surplus carry over of \$59,158 (\$58,956 + \$20,206), the total projected budget was \$1,285,512.

At the outset of AY 2013-14 the projected income for both cost centers was \$1,116,072.28 (\$1,013,856.19 + 102,207.09). With surplus carry over of \$83,670.49, the total projected budget was \$1,199,742.70.

2. Faculty whose salaries/benefits are paid in part by the King Fahd Center are: Mounir Farah, Najib Ghadbian, Joel Gordon, Adnan Haydar, Mohja Kahf, Tom Paradise, and Ted Swedenburg, plus John Duval and Geoff Brock. The latter two are otherwise not affiliated with the Center or Program. Paula Haydar (100% appointment) and Sarwar Alam (50%) are paid entirely out of Center accounts. \$3500 of Alam's salary for Spring 2015 was covered by PLSC.

3. This covers the full-year salary for Administrative Support Assistant Mahfuza Akhtar and Program Coordinator Nani Verzon.

4. Benefits for faculty split between Center and Departmental cost centers are based on percentages of salary covered.

5. There were no such expenditures during AY 2014-15.

6. This covers salary paid on a per course basis to Chris Angel (1 course: MEST 2013 – Spring 2015) and includes benefits.

7. The 11 MEST program core faculty members and Sarwar Alam each received an annual Research/Development stipend of \$5000. Figures are as of June 1, 2014 and may need subsequent revision for summer spending. Nani Verzon's trip to MESA is also covered under this category.

8. This covers 11 full-year PhD students at \$12,600 + 1 ½ year PhD student at \$6,300 + 6 full-year MA students at \$12,000 + 1 ½ year MA student at \$6000 (the ½ year split refers to Dhia Ben Ali, who completed his PLSC MA in December 2014 and shifted into the PhD program in PUBP).

9. This covers the same numbers as in #8 with figures of \$466.20 for PhD students and \$443.98 for MA students (and calculating the conversion for Ben Ali).

10. This covers travel for 7 graduate students to MESA and other conferences, as outlined in Annual Report narrative.
11. This covers 6 students as outlined in the Annual Report narrative.
12. This covers 4 x \$6000 (full) and 6 x \$3000 (partial) scholarships; details are in the Annual Report narrative.
13. This covers costs for 1 student. Awards were offered to 2 other students, 1 declined and the other deferred until Fall 2015.
14. This covers costs for 2 students; details are in the Annual Report narrative.
15. A list of Organizational Affiliations is provided in Ongoing Projects section.
16. This amount covers costs for light refreshments for 2 weekly Arabic Conversation Table sessions. There was no Arabic Speech Contest during AY 2014-15
17. Costs for AY 2012-13 Arabic Translation Award include: \$15,000 (\$5000 each to 1 winning author and 2 translators for co-winners) + \$1000 (\$500 each to Hisham Bustani and Thoraya El Rayes as an advance to travel to Fayetteville; visit fell through due to visa problems) + \$1000 (to reader) + \$1069.08 (for advertising (Banipal x 2 and MESA Conference Program) + \$5536.06 (paid to Syracuse University Press to support publication) – 1632.03 (in royalties for prior publications).
18. This is the agreed upon amount with Professor Jerome Rose, who traditionally allocates an additional \$1000 from his Faculty Development Fund. Additional costs for the Field School are paid through student tuition and various grants.
19. The expedition did not travel to Northern Iraq this year due to the political situation and Jesse Casana's relocation.
20. The King Fahd Center Library account began AY 2014-15 with a \$662.57 rollover to which was added \$7000. As of June 30 all funds will be allocated for spending. (Note: journal subscriptions currently run \$2875.75). An additional \$1726.16 was refunded to Nikolay Antov for books ordered and shipped from Turkey – when added to the 7662.57 we reach the total listed.
21. This covers 2 annual issues of the King Fahd Center newsletter. The 2nd printing (\$680.56) cost almost double the first (\$358.56) due to larger quantity, and likely represents a more accurate assessment of future printing costs.
22. For AY 2011-12 and 2012-13 the King Fahd Center split costs with Fulbright College for renting and maintaining an apartment, which amounted to roughly \$5000 per AY. Any profits from long-term rentals charged occupants were to be equally divided. This agreement subsequently lapsed and ARSC will maintain the apartment w/o King Fahd Center support

23. This covers cumulative costs of the event including performance fee for Fatima and travel, lodging, accommodation and hospitality for her and her lighting technician (1 night stay over), plus advertising and food/refreshment costs associated with her performance and workshop.
24. This covers honoraria, travel, hospitality, advertising, and publicity for the event. Of the participants, Andrew Vaughn (ASOR) was restricted from receiving an honorarium; 1 scheduled participant was unable to attend due to weather.
25. This covers the cumulative costs of visiting speakers Romano and VanDenBerg including transport, accommodations, honoraria, hospitality, and associated advertising.
26. This covers expenses for MESGA meeting, SILC mixer, Ebola symposium, Paradise NOVA screening, and Arabian Knights sponsorship.
27. Maintenance covers a variety of Center operating costs such as postal services, telephones/faxes, office supplies, and special equipment purchases.
28. Major supply expenditures included purchase of a digital camera to record King Fahd Center sponsored events.