THIS ISSUE: Youth • The Arab uprisings, the economy and the labour market • The GCC employment policy dilemmas • Beyond the saga of the ‘Trojan horse’ • Salafism and young women in London • Bombed into (temporary) silence • Singing playgrounds of the Middle East • PLUS Reviews and events in London
The Middle East in London

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EDITORIAL

This is the first time that MEL has focussed on the young – as students, employees, Muslims, creative artists and victims of war. Our articles take both top-down and grass-roots perspectives.

Two contributions discuss aspects of ‘Arab youth’ from demographic and macro-economic standpoints. In this issue’s Insight, Zafiris Tzannatos examines the implications of the so-called ‘youth bulge’ in the Arab World. He questions whether the high proportion of young people (aged 15-24) in the region was at the root of the recent Arab uprisings, and challenges common assumptions about low levels of education, skills and employment among the youth of Arab countries. Hassan Hakimian and Abdulla Abdulaal examine the multi-faceted ‘segmentation’ of the labour markets in the GCC states and argue that addressing youth unemployment in these states will need long-term vision and imaginative policies. Both articles emphasise the importance of the critical evaluation of demographic, economic and social contexts for policy-making.

At this time of heightened public anxiety about British Muslims, the articles by Farid Panjwani and Anabel Inge could not be more timely. Both consider different aspects of the acquisition of knowledge about Islam in the UK. In the wake of the recent ‘Trojan horse’ crisis in the Birmingham education system, Panjwani criticises the essentialist way in which the Muslim religion is taught in secular schools, and advocates a historical and anthropological approach which focusses more on the adherents of Islam and on the diversity of its cultural manifestations and social contexts.

Inge’s piece is based on intensive, long-term field research in London, and provides a unique insight into why young women from mainstream Muslim and Christian backgrounds are attracted to Salafism, the scripturalist, highly conservative version of Islam, despite its demanding precepts and practices including heavy veiling. She emphasises its intellectual attractions, including its strict, text-based teaching methods and comprehensive rules for everyday living. Her portrayal of her subjects as thoughtful people struggling to improve themselves and find a purpose in life contrasts with the common stereotype of female passivity and oppression.

Randa Safieh writes poignantly about the rappers of Gaza, vividly evoking the artistic energy and musical endeavours of Palestinian youths, and their resourcefulness and resolve in the face of tragedy. She describes how their Hip-hop and breakdancing sessions were severely disrupted by power cuts and fear of bombardment during the recent Israeli offensive, in which a quarter of victims were children, but is confident that they will resume their creative activities with the ceasefire.

Dan Jones’s charming piece on Middle Eastern children’s games and rhymes reveals interesting cross-cultural similarities in narrative themes, and in the acquisition of mental and physical skills through play. It also reminds us that small children everywhere have their own pithy ways of commenting on events and the adult world while getting on with the main business of having fun. At a time when all who care about the Middle East feel deep despair, it’s good to have some light relief.

Sarah Stewart, Shelagh Weir, MEL Editorial Board

Dear Reader

‘Nasra’, Medinat Nasr, Cairo, Egypt (September 2012)
At the risk of some oversimplification, the recent Arab uprisings have been commonly characterised in terms of three basic, but inter-related, propositions: ‘too many youth, poorly educated with few skills, leading to too many being unemployed’. Given the near universal acceptance of this thesis in common explanations of the Arab Spring – not to mention its policy implications in the post-uprising period – time is now right for a critical examination of each of these three propositions.

First, were there ‘too many youth?’ This is a basic but very good question which begs further the question what ‘too many’ means. On one hand, ‘too many’ young people (aged 15-24) is a blessing: they are more educated than their parents, have typically more drive for work and stamina, and can at least numerically support their elderly relatives (‘too many youth’ by definition means ‘too few old people and pensioners’).

Leaving value judgments aside, the proposition has to be examined factually: were there really ‘too many’ youth in 2010? A close look at demographic data suggests that the answer is an emphatic ‘no’. Fertility in the Arab region started to decline as far back as the 1960s leading the share of the youth in the adult population to decline in the Maghreb since the 1980s and in the Mashreq since the 1990s.

Second, were the youth ‘poorly educated with few skills?’ This is another myth. It is true that the learning achievements of Arab students are among the lowest in the world. But in terms of labour market outcomes what matters is whether their (admittedly) low achievement is below what employers need.

In economic terms, the Arab youth are, if anything, ‘over-educated’ compared to production techniques and requirements. This is supported by three simple diagnostics: (i) the Arab region has one of the highest skilled emigration rates in the world – this suggests that Arab job seekers have skills that are globally appreciated and above what is required in their local, mainly low productivity, economies; (ii) when the educated youth (especially university graduates) stay at home, they have high unemployment rates; and (iii) if employed locally, they are not paid much more than the less educated ones.

The problem in the Arab region is not the employability of the youth but the lack of high skill, high productivity, high wage and high quality jobs in general.
Most Arab workers, young and old, women and men, are facing slim employment prospects and, when employed, low quality jobs

Third, were ‘too many [youth] unemployed?’ Again, it is true that the Arab region has the highest youth unemployment rate in the world (25 per cent compared to a world average of half that), but it has also the highest adult unemployment rate (12 per cent compared to 6 per cent). This suggests that the problem in the Arab region is not the employability of the youth but the lack of jobs in general as well as a dearth of high skill, high productivity, high wage and overall high quality jobs.

But what are the policy implications of dropping the ‘youth bulge’ thesis and searching for alternative explanations? The first implication of the ‘too many’ hypothesis is inevitably a sense of resignation by policymakers who are often too quick to proclaim that ‘little can be done in the short term.’ A more serious – if not sinister – external version of the same position has been to blame too readily the cultures and religions of the region to the point of ignoring the fact that many non-Muslim countries have fertility rates that exceed those in the Arab region.

Coming to terms with the fact that the numbers of youth have declined fast (relatively to adults and especially the elderly) requires policymakers to recognise that there is a demographic time bomb at play as there will be fewer workers to support pensioners in the future. In fact, the ‘demographic window of opportunity’ (having relatively many young and educated workers supporting few non-working people) opened in the mid-1990s but is expected to close around 2045 throughout the region. This natural process cannot be denied nor can it be addressed forever by increasing the number of immigrants. Instead, time is now ripe for more and more productive jobs to be created by (a) establishing a level and transparent playing field in the private sector that would enable the youth to harness their knowledge, talents and potential and (b) having governments that would be guardians of national interests, not the interests of a small circle of insiders.

Professor Zafiris Tzannatos is a Senior International Consultant for strategy and policy based in Lebanon. He is a former Chair of the Economics Department at the American University of Beirut and Senior Advisor to the ILO and Manager at the World Bank on Arab issues.
The GCC states boast high per capita incomes and a voracious appetite for showcase construction projects, which have come to symbolise their drive to transform finite oil resources into modern economies. What is perhaps not so well known about these states is that they also host the highest youth unemployment rates in the world along with very low female labour force participation rates. And herein lies their dilemma in how to translate an ambition to grow fast into the provision of decent and productive jobs for their youthful populations.

Part of today’s problems, of course, lies in the past. The GCC population grew by 50 per cent between 2004 and 2014 to reach almost 50 million people. This remarkable demographic boom was driven by a rapid natural growth in the number of increasingly affluent national population on one hand, and large waves of in-migration on the other. Over the years, a youth bulge has developed hand-in-hand with an ever rising pool of foreign labour.

Although the foreign proportion differs from one country to another, the general trend has continued unchecked. Saudi Arabia is the largest GCC state with 40 per cent of the region’s total population. Here, foreigners signify approximately one-third of the population and as high as one-half of the workforce. In smaller states, the ratios are even more striking. In Qatar migrants make up a staggering 94 per cent of the workforce and 87 per cent of the population. In the UAE, the proportions are similarly in the 80-85 per cent range.

The extent of such labour market ‘segmentation’ is perhaps more vividly brought home by the age composition of the migrant population. Male migrants in the age range 30-44 outnumber their local Emirati counterparts by a factor of nearly 20 to 1 (for females this is lower but still as high as 5 to 1).

Given such reliance on the foreign workforce, it is not surprising that much of the policy discourse has focused along nationality dichotomies – foreign versus local – and policy remedies have stressed the need for the ‘nationalisation’ of the labour force. But this is only a partial story as segmentation runs deeper in the structure of the labour markets in the region. Where migrants work is a second aspect of such duality.

Foreigners consist principally of working-age males concentrated in low-skilled jobs for the young? The GCC employment policy dilemmas

The GCC states host the highest youth unemployment rates in the world along with very low female labour force participation rates
jobs in construction and retail sectors but increasingly in professional services and manufacturing too. The largest social group in the foreign workforce is made of Asians particularly from the Indian subcontinent. Many have little or no education; they are pushed out by poor economic conditions at home and pulled in with the promise of lucrative jobs in the GCC. In reality, the mirage often dissipates quickly as they find themselves trapped in harsh working conditions controlled by unscrupulous employers.

By contrast, the small national population has traditionally been employed almost exclusively in the public sector. Working for the government is attractive due to relatively high wages, low working hours, comfortable working conditions, generous pensions and other benefits. Public sector employment is an important channel of rent distribution; this even shapes incentives in attaining an education in social science or public administration to help ‘queue up’ for the right lifetime government job.

A third aspect of market segmentation or duality runs along gender lines. Although in several countries females’ entry into universities comfortably exceeds that of males, female participation rates in general are very low (as low as 12 per cent in Saudi Arabia), and females suffer from much higher unemployment rates (estimated at 71 per cent in Saudi Arabia in 2009 and 52 per cent in the UAE against 31 and 18 per cent respectively for males).

The employment paradox could not be starker: the GCC countries have a massive foreign workforce, yet they face double-digit unemployment. According to the International Labour Organisation, Saudi Arabia’s national unemployment rate was 11 per cent in 2009. Its youth unemployment rate was even higher at around 40 per cent. Two principal mechanisms can address this situation: (new) job creation and job reallocation. High economic growth rates are necessary but not sufficient as the GCC economies generate thousands of jobs each year, although these are mainly in the private sector and are mostly taken up by foreigners. In reaction, governments have resorted to nationalisation policies focused on increasing the employment of nationals but most such measures have been short-term with limited success.

A variety of measures have been adopted to reduce the supply of or demand for foreign workers: imposing quotas, raising costs of hiring foreigners, visa restrictions and even taxing foreign jobs. Other measures have been introduced to improve the position of the nationals: subsidising wages, providing training, developing strategic sectors and rewarding complicit firms with contracts.

There is only so much administrative measures can achieve as they only address the symptoms and not the causes. Some employers have circumvented the system by hiring family members on paper and asking them to stay at home, while others have resorted to illegal workers. The bottom line is that the private sector seems to prefer cheaper, more skilled workers no matter where they come from and this is where nationals continue to be at a disadvantage despite the raft of policies tinkering at the margins to make them more ‘employable’.

The labour market duality is embedded in deeper structural, social and institutional settings. Appropriate remedies necessitate long-term reforms to develop the national labour force and to take it closer to meeting market requirements. The quality of nationals can be improved by much needed education reforms, vocational training and career development efforts to enable them to compete more effectively and efficiently with others for jobs.

The focus on ‘nationalising’ the workforce also requires imaginative solutions. This, in turn, entails recognising that part of the duality relates to the poorer, more exploitative conditions under which foreigners are deployed in the GCC economies. Improving their wages, working conditions and labour laws will have to be part of the equation that can redress the imbalances between private and public sector jobs that mask the foreign versus local divide.

Here, the history of those countries that have benefited from large-scale migration in the past can be instructive. Recognising the long-term contribution of migrants to their societies, they have adopted measures to integrate them into their ‘national’ population. The GCC states’ rigid and archaic naturalisation policies demarcating the nationals and foreigners are badly in need of reform. Only through more meaningful integration policies – giving migrants the right to long-term settlement and citizenship – can the dilemmas of the labour market in these states be ultimately addressed.

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The bottom line is that the private sector seems to prefer cheaper, more skilled workers no matter where they come from.
The juxtaposition of Islam, schools and extremism grabbed headlines in summer 2014 as stakeholders wrestled with the so-called Trojan horse affair in several Birmingham schools. The allegation about a systematic attempt to infiltrate and Islamicise secular schools agitated many, alienated others and left pedagogical and social scars on the political and communal psyche. Now that several reports on this issue are out, we are in a better position to move forward, restore trust and implement the required changes. The reports by Ofsted, Birmingham City Council and the Department for Education show that the reform of the school governance process needs to be a central element of the changes. Balancing concerns about community cohesion and carrying out oversight of schools also requires attention. Now that several reports on this issue are out, we are in a better position to move forward, restore trust and implement the required changes.

An area that has received insufficient attention in the above mentioned reports and other public discourse, and which raises the broader question of religion in education, is the analysis of syllabuses and textbooks used to teach about religions. This question is pertinent for teaching about all religions, but I will here focus only on Islam. Schools are among the most important sites teaching about Islam and, for many students (Muslims and non-Muslims), the only places to gain a systematic and scholarly introduction to this important religion. Though textbooks are important in all subjects, their importance is heightened in the case of teaching about Islam. This is partly because many teachers of Islam in schools have limited knowledge of the subject and partly because of the sensitivities involved. It is important, therefore, that teaching materials are routinely explored and evaluated.

The few studies that have carried out such analyses show that the curriculum about Islam needs significant changes (Thobani, 2010; Revell, 2009; Panjwani, 2005). Among the shortcomings identified are: the lack of historicity in discussing norms, institutions and practice – for instance, the *sharia* is rarely discussed through a historical lens; neglect of intra-Muslim diversity, particularly the doctrinal diversity among Muslims; and the oversimplified presentation of the role and appropriation of foundational Islamic texts such as the *Qur'an*.

Limited space obliges me to focus on just one of the shortcomings – religiofication of the cultures of Muslims. Religiofication, as originally used by Eric Hoffer in his book *The True Believer*, means a process of turning practical everyday matters into Holy causes. I am using the term to refer to a tendency in textbooks about Islam to define Muslim cultures primarily in religious terms. Surveying the syllabuses and textbooks on Islam one gets the impression that Islam dominates the lives of its followers, providing them with identities, practices, moral sense and values. Being a Muslim thus can only mean being a religious person whose entire life, from rituals to politics, is shaped by Islam.

### Beyond the saga of the ‘Trojan horse’: some reflections on teaching about Islam in schools

The Middle East in London

**Farid Panjwani** stresses the need to rethink how Islam is taught in secular educational contexts

Schools are among the most important sites teaching about Islam and, for many students, the only place to gain a systematic and scholarly introduction to this important religion.
Muslim cultures become primarily or exclusively cultures defined by religion. As Jonker and Thobani (2009) have noted, this portrayal of Muslims as primarily religious beings has a long pedigree in European educational history and serves to portray Islam as Europe’s other. If Europe is secular, Muslim cultures are religious. Religiofication functions as the perpetrator of an unhelpful alterity.

It is important here to note that there are indeed many Muslims who would agree with religiofication of themselves and their cultures. The point, however, is that Muslim societies are not populated only, or even mostly, by such Muslims. Rather, Muslim cultures, like most cultures in our times, are a mix of religious and secular attitudes, approaches, orientations, desires and trends. Muslims too live in what Martin Marty calls ‘our Religio-Secular world’. Secularity, in terms of separating religion from many aspects of social life is highly visible in politics, media, social relations and education in Muslim societies. Religiofication of Muslim people and their cultures is thus a serious misrepresentation and harmful to mutual understanding across people from different cultures.

Why is it that the curriculum does not bring out the contemporary realities of Muslims? This is partly because of the manner in which the subject is ontologically shaped in the school curriculum. The aim is to study a religion, Islam, in this case. Once we seek to study Islam, we are easily led to think in terms of an essentialised trans-historical object which needs to be presented to the students. We must consider a move away from trying to teach Islam and towards teaching about people who hold this religion and cultures of which it is a part. It is through this historical and anthropological engagement that the complex religio-secular characteristics of cultures of Muslims would become apparent.

Pedagogically, literature is one of the best means of bringing out the religio-secular nature of cultures of Muslims. Both rooted in and transcending social realities, literature can take the reader into the inner lives of the characters, giving insights into the consciousness of a people. As Nussbaum (1997) notes, literature can create a capacity for sympathetic imagination that will enable us to comprehend the motives and choices of people different from ourselves, seeing them not as forbiddingly alien and other, but as sharing many problems and possibilities with us’ (85). In works of writers and poets such as Taufiq al-Hakim, Naguib Mahfouz, Orhan Pamuk, Qurat al-Ayn Haider, Simin Daneshvar, Adonis, Faiz Ahmed Faiz, Saadat Hasan Manto, Mahmoud Darwish and many others, students can find the complex intersection of the secular and the religious in public and private lives. Further, given the political context in many Muslim majority societies, literature is often a vehicle of social analysis and critique. Many symbols and narratives challenging manipulation, exclusion and invisibility as well as displaying yearning for freedom, justice and equality, are to be found in literature from Muslim societies. Engaging with the writings from Muslim societies can help students realise the universality of human sufferings, aspirations and the quest for justice, challenging the unhelpful alterity that the current representation of Muslims creates.

The Trojan horse affair has caused rifts and alienation. It has damaged trust. But if the healing process is done well, we may look back at it as a turning point in the better teaching of Muslim cultures in schools.

Farid Panjwani is a Senior Lecturer at the Institute of Education, University of London. His latest publication – entitled Faith schools and the religious other: The case of Muslim schools – can be found in The International Handbook on Learning, Teaching and Leading in Faith-Based Schools (Springer, 2014)
Salafis (or ‘Wahhabis’ as they are often known) are commonly associated with a Saudi-inspired ‘hardline’ ideology. Their scripturalist and literalist version of Islam has aroused much controversy due to its conservative tenets and practices. These include strict female dress codes (the all-concealing veil, niqab, and gown, jilbab), and heavy restrictions on women’s travel, education and employment opportunities. Salafis maintain that the rules they observe derive directly from the Qur’an and sunna of the Prophet Muhammad, which they strive to follow precisely.

Although its precepts and practices are strict and demanding, Salafism has attracted increasing numbers of young British women since the early 1990s when it started to have a significant presence, particularly in London and Birmingham. These new adherents have a variety of ethnicities, and the vast majority have non-Salafi or even non-Muslim backgrounds.

In London, Salafism particularly attracts Afro-Caribbean converts from Christianity, and young Somalis whose (usually more liberal) parents sought refuge here after the 1991 outbreak of the Somali Civil War. These young women have adopted an identity based on neither their parents’ religious orientation nor that of the liberal, secular society in which they grew up.

I spoke to many such women during my doctoral fieldwork in London between 2010 and 2012, including 23 women aged 19-29 whom I interviewed in depth. They had stumbled upon Salafism as teenagers or twenty-somethings, they said, at a time when they were seeking certainty in religion and a group that would help them practise Islam ‘correctly’.

The women in my interview sample comprised 11 Somalis and five converts (four Africans, one Afro-Caribbean), a mix of other Africans and one South Asian. All had been exposed to various Islamic interpretations, including the culturally infused Islam of their parents and versions propagated by various religious groups and sheikhs that were followed by Muslim friends and boyfriends. Many of the women had been involved with other Islamic groups – ranging from Sufism to the now banned Al-Muhajiroun – before becoming Salafis.

All had eventually decided that Salafism offered the most convincing and practical answer to the question: ‘What is the “true” Islam?’ The niqab and other practices, they came to believe, represented ‘pure’ Islam as enshrined in the Qur’an and sunna. The women’s trajectories into Salafism were varied and complex, but the following were the most significant factors in their thinking.

First, there was the fundamental issue of sacred authority. Ordinary believers learn about Salafism primarily through Salafi friends, local teachers (for example, imams) and the writings and lectures of Salafi scholars abroad (many of which are accessible online). To the women, the credibility of these sources was enhanced by their distinctive diligence in supporting their teachings with the Qur’an and sunna – whose authority most Muslims would not dispute – while minimising any references to personal opinion, sentiment, politics or culture.

For example, soon after her conversion to Islam, Humayrah was approached by both a Shi’a and a Salafi at college. She rejected the Shi’a girl’s arguments in favour of the Salafi’s because the latter had seemed knowledgeable, gave proofs from the Qur’an...
and sunna, and never said ‘I think’ when explaining Islam.

Maryam, of Nigerian background, had previously been involved with a West African ‘cultural’ mosque, as she put it. But she switched to a Salafi one when she met a teacher who constantly referenced the twin ‘pure’ sources. As Maryam explained: ‘When you hear the Qur’an and sunna, you don’t wanna reject it because this is the command of Allah.’

For Somali Shukri, it took one lesson on the staple Salafi text, The Prophet’s Prayer Described, by Sheikh Muhammad Nasiruddin Al-Albani (1914-1999), to convince her. Why? Because, she said, all of the points on how to pray were backed up with evidence from the practice of no less than the Messenger of God.

Most of the major Salafi scholars, such as Al-Albani, have the added advantage – in the women’s eyes – of being associated with Saudi Arabia. For many, the Kingdom had an aura of ‘authentic Islam’ as the land of the two holy cities in which the Prophet had dwelled. They were also aware that Salafi scholars often study for many years at the feet of established and famous scholars in Saudi Arabia.

The women all felt that they could trust these scholars’ interpretations because of their distinguished reputations and their interconnectedness in a ‘chain of authenticity’. As Afro-Caribbean convert Hayah said: ‘Salafi teachings all go back to very well-known scholars, seekers of knowledge, you know, those people. So you can follow, follow, follow the chain back.’

Also appealing was that the lower-ranking teachers at local Salafi centres in London created a serious, studious atmosphere at their lessons. These tended to focus on painstakingly coaching Muslims through the basics of their religion, such as the five pillars and tawhid (Islamic monotheism). The teachers also encouraged regular attendance, note-taking, independent reading, memorisation and homework.

This back-to-basics approach contrasted favourably with the women’s previous experiences of learning about Islam. Even women with Muslim backgrounds had never been taught in detail the meaning of the shahada, Islam’s first and most important pillar, or of the prayers that they had been encouraged to utter daily. Nearly all had attended madrasas as children, but had only learned to recite the Qur’an in Arabic, without translation.

Other Islamic groups some women had tried had emphasised such matters as politics and learning Arabic. Hannah, a convert of North African origin, said: ‘If you compare them to other Muslims, [Salafs] constantly seek knowledge… Other [mosques]… they’ll go there on a Friday, but they just like literally pray and they learn Arabic so they can read the Qur’an – but they don’t actually study, they don’t study Islam in depth.’

The women were therefore relieved to find somewhere they could learn about Islam comprehensively, with supporting evidence from scripture in English. Fowsiya, a Somali who had previously followed a politically oriented Islamic group, said: ‘When I went [to a Salafi lesson], I felt like… I was actually learning with a book and a pen, and I was learning the fundamentals of the din [religion] and proofs.’

Such instruction is part of the practical aspect of Salafism’s appeal. Salafi teachings address everything from major doctrinal issues to the mundane and everyday – from the meaning of tawhid to lavatory etiquette and the permissibility of mortgages.

Seven women spoke of the comfort of having clear-cut guidelines on just about everything, in contrast to the hazy rules of conduct they had learned either at church, at madrasa or while trying out other Islamic groups.

Many mentioned their ‘inner peace’ or ‘tranquillity’ at having finally identified an approach that generated ‘correct’ answers to every question. Saidah, for instance, said she had found a ‘manual’, a complete set of instructions to life that, if meticulously followed, would guarantee the optimal result – God’s pleasure and, ultimately, Paradise. And Maryam said: ‘I feel more tranquil [now], in the sense that I am trying my utmost… to implement the religion, because I have evidence to support me.’

Having such a clear sense of purpose in life strongly appealed to the women, even if they often struggled to practise Salafism’s strict teachings in a secular, liberal society.

Dr Anabel Inge recently completed her AHRC-funded PhD – focusing on the conversion and commitment of Salafi women in London – at the Department of Theology & Religious Studies, King’s College London. She was Coordinating Editor of The Middle East in London (2008-11)
How can artists in Gaza operate and reach their audience when the relentless and inhumane Israeli bombardment of Gaza has isolated them from the rest of the world with only sparse electricity sources and intermittent Internet access and mobile phone networks? The Hip-hop scene in Gaza is also part of the ‘collateral damage’ of the war on Gaza. Much like their American counterpart, Hip-hop mogul Jay-Z, they got 99 problems, and access to their audience is one.

War and politics have long been intertwined with the arts in Palestinian culture. Since the late-1990s, Hip-hop has functioned as a global soundtrack for pro-democracy movements all over the world. Despite its appeal to young Palestinians, Palestinian Hip-hop did not emerge without a struggle. The Palestinian economy has been paralysed by years of border closures and Israeli restrictions on imports and exports and a government financial crisis triggered by a freeze on foreign aid following the Hamas election victory in 2006. Travel restrictions, the closing of cinemas, cafes and other public venues combined with curfews and road blocks following the collapse of the peace process, signed in 1993, and the emergence of the Al-Aqsa Intifada (2000) gave Palestinian youth additional frustrations to transform into rap. When invited to perform outside of the borders of Gaza, obtaining a travel visa can seem like mission impossible.

The Palestinian Hip-hop communities operate as much in Gaza as in the West Bank and pre-1948 Palestine. DAM, a three-piece collective from Lydd who started rapping in 1998, can be said to be the original pioneers and heavyweights of the Palestinian Hip-hop movement and have been credited with launching Palestinian Hip-hop into the international arena. Their emergence gave birth to a rising tide of interest in the genre and DAM have inspired a multiplication of Palestinian Hip-hop artists throughout Palestine. Among them are Camps Breakerz Crew, The DARG Team, Palestinian Rapperz, MC Gaza, Black Unit and Street Band Rappers.

The Palestinian Hip-hop scene has a strong community spirit, which became very apparent during the assault on Gaza. Mohammed Ghraiz, better know as Bboy Funk, founder and director of the Camps Breakerz Crew Hip-hop breakdancing collective explained: ‘We have been trying to contact each other; it’s very hard. Most of us are out of phone networks and electricity. We are worrying about each other. Bboy Hanson lives in Gaza City in a camp called Al-Shate. Ja-rule and Shaark are living together in one house, which is above our dance centre. Bboy Dark lives in a different area in our refugee camp, Nuseirat. Bboy Kevin, who is fifteen years old, and

The Hip-hop scene in Gaza is also part of the ‘collateral damage’ of the war on Gaza
Bboy Chino are living in our camp too. Unfortunately, we can't reach each other to know if we are all okay or not. We are scared to move freely too. We really can't wait for this awful war to end so we can meet up again and start dancing for Gaza children and youth.

Most artists have tried to stay in touch with one another and the outside world during the siege. In other messages I received during the siege, Funk, Shaark, also of the Camps Breakerz Crew, and Mothafar Allassar express their despair about the sparsity of the means of communication and the threat to their lives: Shaark – ‘I don't have power; I can't do anything right now, I'm sorry.’ And most poignantly, Mothafar Allassar of Street Band Rappers – ‘I will try to answer all of your questions asap if I stay alive.’

Funk shares his music online to humanise the distorted image of the people of Gaza: ‘We are very peaceful people who reflect peace and love through our art, we are doing this [Hip-hop] to live and survive. Sometimes we dance in darkness or with candles. We had to get a big battery that you can charge for four hours, so we turn it on when we want to practice or teach.’

Rap and breakdancing is a growing trend in Gaza, often part of rehabilitation efforts for young children. The Gazan rapping and breakdancing collective, Camps Breakerz Crew, whose eight members were still under bombardment in Nuseirat Refugee Camp while this article was being written, believe that by teaching children Hip-hop they can help rehabilitate and support their mental health, giving them an outlet for their sadness, tragedy and frustration, and attempting to restore a piece of their lost childhood. They host summer schools and workshops on breakdancing as volunteers at the UNRWA school and their dance centre located in their camp which has received funds from the international community. For the time being however, both the school and the dance centre are currently sheltering refugees displaced by Israel's assault, and they have not been able to dance nor teach. This illustrates the urgency of survival as a more immediate concern for them, yet again, than their musical output. This a direct parallel with Maslow's 1943 theory of the Hierarchy of Needs, explaining the pattern of human motivations – basic survival and needs being the fundamental and first preoccupation, with self-actualisation and creativity only being possible once the former is achieved. How can the people of Gaza focus on creativity when they are forced to focus on survival?

In the aftermath of the assault on Gaza, where a quarter of the victims are children, Hip-hop will certainly continue to be part of the efforts to deal with their trauma. The informative networking of the artists has proved itself very valuable in the battle of information; communication during the conflict will undoubtedly also increase in the weeks to come, as will their artistic output once peace is restored.

The best art may not be produced during the immediacy of a violent conflict from within bomb shelters and refugee camps. But the intriguing question remains why, contrary to what happened during the Arab Spring revolts, few new songs have managed to galvanise anyone beyond the occupied territories? Is it out of respect for the victims and not wanting to exploit the tragedy? Or is it creative impotence when faced with tragic images of deceased children and babies? Perhaps this is why Palestinian Hip-hop artists in the diaspora have mainly communicated the tragedy of their situation through social networking rather than transform their experience into Hip-hop, until now.

After the guns fall silent, will there be a defiant and increased output from Palestinian artists to try to express the horror of their experience? Will there be hope again? Or will they have lost their admirable ethos of positivity as a collective cry for freedom out of captivity and bondage?

Randa Safieh is an ethnomusicologist and secondary school music teacher. Her research on Palestinian Hip-hop has recently been published in the book Palestinian Music and Song: Expression and Resistance Since 1900, and she has appeared on BBC World News and Voice of America.
Dan Jones describes children’s games from the Middle East that have migrated to London, and others he found in Morocco, Israel and Lebanon

Singing playgrounds of the Middle East

I have been collecting and recording children’s playground games and songs in London and around the world for many years. Children’s games have provided delight and fun for millennia. A 4,500-year-old picture from a tomb in Beni Hassan, Egypt shows four girls juggling 9 balls in an intricate ball game.

Some games are passed from child to child down generations, and across countries and cultures, and may change on their journeys. But they often retain their sounds, humour, rhythms, tunes and structures. Most games emerge brand new one day, last for a while, mutate, flourish, then disappear from children’s repertoires as mysteriously as they started.

Children’s games provide a framework within which the players – particularly girls – develop astonishing physical and mental skills: dexterity, vocabulary, memory, cunning, calculation, wit, melody, rhyme and rhythm.

Reem, Saad and Jamal showed me Faa faa iye, a Syrian circle game where a ‘shepherd’ rides round a ring of ‘sheep’ secretly dropping a hankie at the word ‘Maa’ behind someone who then has to catch him or face becoming a shepherd in the next round.

I’m on my horse rounding up my sheep
And the sheep say ‘Maa’ (Repeat THIS LINE x3)

‘Dips’ are used to choose the catcher for a chasing game. Children form a ring and chant the dip as someone points to each player in turn, word by word round the circle. Whoever the last word lands on is eliminated. A Kurdish refugee girl recorded the dip, Ateh mata heyleri, from northern Iraq:

Ateh, on her way to Arbil
 Wants two rats
 One for you, one for me.
 Cat’s face, your backside

Shadi and her dad Farshid sang and explained this Iranian dip. Children sit in a line with their legs sticking out. Someone taps each leg in time with the dip’s rhythm. The leg touched at the end of each dip is folded underneath its owner. The game continues until only one player’s leg is left sticking out. Its owner becomes chaser in a game of ‘he’, or must undertake some horrible forfeit decided by the other players, like touching their toes five times without bending knees, or squatting and hopping about like a frog.

Atal matal tootleh
How is Hassan’s cow?
She has no milk, she has no udders
Her milk has gone to India
Take a Kurdish wife
Call her Am-qezi!
There is a red band round her hat
Hachin o wachin

Patricia Sen recorded this old Armenian dip, Hapu hapu, where the children finally find food, drink, escape and survival. It refers to the Armenian genocide in Turkey 1915-20.

Food, food
Stone, food
What will happen?
What Turks?
Mary, Sarkis
Eat seeds
Drink water
Open the door
You can get out

Hannah recorded en den dino (1, 2, 3 in Hebrew), an Israeli chant for the worldwide children’s finger duel: Rock, Scissors, Paper:

Rock (clenched fist) blunts and defeats
Scissors (two fingers),
Scissors cuts and defeats Paper (flat hand)
Paper wraps and defeats Rock.
One, two three
Rock paper scissors
Who’s the winner of us two?
Elik belik bom (nonsense)

In Iraqi Kurdistan children form a circle and chant this nonsense rhyme as they play another forecasting hand game. On the last word, everyone points their hands towards the middle of the circle with both palms facing up or down. The majority (up or down) win, the minority leave the circle. The eliminations continue until all the hands face the same way.

Fee klan ko
Shala mala do

Some games are passed from child to child down generations, and across countries and cultures, and may change on their journeys.

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Children’s games provide a framework within which the players develop astonishing physical and mental skills

Le paki ke  (Make it clean)  Le pesssee ke  (Make it dirty)  Fee klan ko

Games in which children run or dance under an arch of raised arms that might collapse have echoes of ‘London Bridge is falling down’. Hiba and friends from Nazareth formed a line and ran under their arch of arms – the Golden Bridge – singing:

Bridge, O bridge, bridge of gold
Everyone crosses, everyone crosses
1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th...
But the 10th gets caught
(Bridge falls. Whoever is below is eliminated)
The game repeats until only one kid is left.

Niven Bdewi and Palestinian children from Tyre, Lebanon, danced under a falling arch of arms as they sang this wonderful amalgam of French, Italian, American and Nonsense

Do many zo zima  (nonsense?)
O ma way  (on my way)
Ciao ciao  (Italian greeting)
Mister T  (the wrestling A Team star B.A. Baracus)

Ciao Ciao
Mister T
Un Deux Terwa  (French 1, 2, 3)
Captives choose which side of the arch to join. The game ends in a tug of war.

Israeli children dance under an arch of arms singing ‘Yesh lanu tayish’ – ‘We have a goat’, and everyone gets to be the arch. This one doesn’t collapse.

We have a goat.
The goat has a beard.
He has 4 legs
And a small tail.
He has two horns
To butt with.
He has hooves
To kick and run away.
La la la la la

Subhi and his friends in Nazareth sang and clapped to this comic Palestinian song:

Everybody has a car, but my Grandpa has a donkey
We all ride behind him and he takes us on a trip
The policeman beeps and waves his hand at the cars
And all the cars go ‘Beep! Beep! Beep! Beep!’

Shahla, 9, an Iranian girl in Stepney, sang and clapped to this dark Farsi melodrama:

There once was a girl who wanted to eat
But there was no spoon.
She wanted to buy one
A thief came and was picking her pocket
He took one Rial coin. She said nothing
He took 2 Rials. She said nothing
He took 3 Rials. She punched his face.
Blood came out of his ear.
She took him to hospital.
But he was dead.
A dog ate his body
The rubbish man took him away
The man’s wife said: ‘Why is my husband dead?’

Turkish girls in Kings Cross recorded ‘Adin ne? KELOGLAN’ (What’s your name bald boy?), a clapping game looking at the mysteries of love, marriage and separation. A bald man wants to marry a girl. He tells her he has no money. She says ‘Get a job and I’ll marry you.’ He says ‘I haven’t the strength to work.’ She says ‘Then I won’t marry you!!’

© Dan Jones

Palestinian Children’s song ‘My grandpa has three cats’ in English and Arabic. Illustrated by Dan Jones
Swahili, a Bantu language of East Africa, is one of the most widely spoken African languages. Originally spoken along the East African coast from southern Somalia to northern Mozambique, Swahili has an extensive literary tradition, and its written literature spans more than three centuries.

Swahili was originally written in Arabic scripts as evidenced by earlier manuscripts. The first contact between the Arabian Peninsula and the East Africa coast dates back to the 8th century and the first settlement of Arab communities to the islands of Lamu, Pate, Siu, Zanzibar and Kilwa.

The SOAS manuscript collection includes about 450 manuscripts dating from 1790 to the late 20th century. The earliest manuscripts were collected in 19th century Mombasa by the scholar and member of the Church Missionary Society Rev. William E. Taylor, who worked closely with local Islamic experts, and subsequently by scholars, editors and academics that had links with SOAS.

Some of the most prestigious examples of these manuscripts are the religious poems ‘Hamziiyya’ (c. 1792) and ‘Al-Inkisha’ (c. 1853) written in Arabic script and in old Swahili form. The ‘Hamziiyya’ (MS 53823), as it is known among the Swahili, is an ode in praise of the Prophet Muhammed. The first line of each verse is in Arabic and the second line is the Swahili translation of the first. The Arabic part of the poem is known as ‘Ummul-Kura’ and was written by Sheikh Muhammad bin Said, known as Albusiry, a prominent Egyptian poet. The poem used to be recited from memory by professional singers from Pate, Siu and Bajuni.

‘Al-Inkisha’ (MS 256191), a religious poem known as ‘The Soul Awakening’, was composed by Sayyid Abdallah bin Ali bin Nasir, theologian and poet of distinction, and transliterated by Sir Mbarak Ali Hinawy, Liwali of Mombasa in the late 19th century who was also a religious expert and manuscripts collector. The poem is a soliloquy upon mortal defection and written at the close of an era which had seen the once great sultanate of Pate reduced to ruin.

In addition to religious literary material in Arabic scripts, Dr Alice Werner, lecturer in Bantu Languages at SOAS in the 1920s, began collecting and transcribing songs and poems by Fumo Liyongo, (MS 210012), the famous Swahili mythical hero who composed poems and songs that were originally transmitted orally.

While Alice Werner was in East Africa in the late 1920s, she met William Hichens, a colonial administrator who had a great interest in Swahili literature and who began collecting material with her help. His interest was in literary and historical documents and he created one of the first anthologies of Swahili literature, MS 53825.

Subsequent collectors were linguists and Islamic scholars from SOAS. Among them was Professor JWT Allen who, in collaboration with Sir Mbarak Ali Hinawy, collected a large corpus of Islamic religious poems that he deposited at the University of Dar-es-Salaam. Also, Dr Jan Knappert, a Swahili scholar and linguist who taught at SOAS in the 1970s, and Wilfred Whiteley, professor of Bantu languages at SOAS in the 1960s/1970s, both collected manuscripts, deposited them in the SOAS Archives and wrote extensively about them.

Finally, in 2000, the Swahili manuscripts project team at SOAS created the Sheikh Yahya Ali Omar collection. The late Sheikh Yahya Ali Omar was a Swahili scholar from Mombasa, who had been based at SOAS from the 1970s until his death in 2008, with great knowledge of Swahili language, Islamic literature and history and the rare expertise to read the Arabic scripts of the northern Swahili dialects. His extensive collection of Swahili manuscripts was added to the SOAS Archives to form the collection named after him. For more information about the project visit www.swahilimanuscripts.soas.ac.uk

Swahili was originally written in Arabic scripts as evidenced by earlier manuscripts

Angelica Baschiera and Lutz Marten introduce one of the world’s largest collections of Swahili manuscripts at the Archives and Special Collections of SOAS library

Angelica Baschiera is Manager of the Centre of African Studies and former Research Assistant of the Swahili manuscripts project and Professor Lutz Marten is a member of the Linguistics department and the department of the Languages and Cultures of Africa, both at SOAS

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Silver Treasures from the Land of Sheba: Regional Yemeni Jewelry

By Marjorie Ransom

The American University in Cairo Press, May 2014, £35.00

Reviewed by Shelagh Weir

Marjorie Ransom and her late husband David Ransom fell in love with the silver jewellery of the Middle East at the start of their careers in the US diplomatic service in the 1960s. In the markets of Jeddah they found beautiful old pieces being discarded and melted down as gold became increasingly popular and silver became old-fashioned. This fuelled their resolve to collect as many examples as possible before they were lost forever, and during their decades in the region, including Yemen in the 1960s and 1970s (when many of us researchers benefited from their help and hospitality), they amassed a unique collection of over 1900 pieces. As well as preserving the silver, they also displayed it wherever and whenever they could to stimulate interest. They adorned their residences with choice pieces hung on walls or arranged in cabinets; Marjorie invariably attended official functions bedecked in spectacular bracelets, necklaces and pendants; and she has exhibited at the Bead Museum in Washington DC, the Arab-American museum in Dearborn, and museums in New York and California.

After she retired in 2001, Marjorie decided to embark on field research in order to document her collection as best she could, and spent a total of a year in Yemen between 2004 and 2007. She visited most regions of the country by motor vehicle or on foot, except for the province of Sa’dah which was at war. Armed with portfolios of photographs, and helped by her drivers and guides, she hunted for present or former silversmiths and traders and their families, and interviewed older women who had once worn the jewellery (or still did), and could remember the associated customs. The book is partly a travelogue of these intrepid journeys and describes chance encounters along the way, which bring the people and the research to life. I wished for more.

Despite the ambitious geographic scale of this enterprise, the difficulties of travel in the rugged terrain, and the dwindling numbers of knowledgeable informants, Marjorie was able to collect important basic information on the provenances, nomenclature and manufacture of the jewellery. This book features hundreds of pieces from the Ransom collection dating to the 20th century, and focusses mainly on the artifacts. A second planned volume will focus mainly on the silversmiths who made them, and will include illustrations of older pieces.

After forewords by Dr. Abd al-Karim al-Iriani, a prominent Yemeni politician, and anthropologist, Dr Najwa Adra, there follow introductory sections by the author about her background and motivation, the historical and geographical context, the cultural significance of silver jewellery, and the Maria Theresa thaler or dollar – the main source of the silver used. The bulk of the book then discusses and illustrates Yemeni jewellery region by region. The silver of Yemen is widely considered the finest of the Arabian area, but even those
familiar with it will be surprised by the diversity and beauty of the pieces illustrated.

The categories of jewellery described include belts, bracelets, anklets, necklaces of chains, coins and pendants, amulet cases (square, cylindrical and triangular), head ornaments, earrings, and rings for the nose, fingers and toes. Hundreds of choice examples, photographed by Robert Liu, are beautifully illustrated in colour and black and white, including some stunning details which enable us to admire the fine workmanship. These are interspersed with illustrations of embroidered dresses, and photos of landscapes, villages and people – though regrettably few of women wearing jewellery because of cultural sensitivities.

The book provides the Arabic term for each piece illustrated (in too faint captions), and for the different styles and techniques, some of which are widespread, some specific to particular areas. A variety of silver-working techniques were employed including drawn wire work, looped wire work, filigree and granulation. Some of these go back to pre-Islamic times, and will hopefully be described in greater detail in the second volume.

As well as identifying the regional or local provenances of most pieces, the author was occasionally able to attribute them by style, standard of workmanship or signature (for a few have the maker's stamp) to individual craftsmen. In some cases this enabled her to track down the makers or their families to their mutual delight.

Women originally acquired their jewellery as part of their marriage settlements, and this cultural requirement sustained the craft of silver-working throughout the country. Sadly it is now in possibly terminal decline. The majority of silversmiths, and the finest, were formerly Yemeni Jews, and their emigration to Israel in 1949-50 inevitably threatened the survival of the craft. However, as Ransom points out, there were always Muslim men (and some women) who worked silver, and others were taught the craft by their Jewish neighbours before their departure. So the craft continues, albeit on a very reduced scale. It is difficult for silversmiths to compete with the new fashion for gold.

This book glows with the author's love and respect for the country and people of Yemen, and it does them proud. Everyone who shares her fascination with Yemeni culture will want a copy. It will also be an indispensable reference for collectors and museums.

Shelagh Weir is a member of the Editorial Board
Israel and the World Powers: Diplomatic Alliances and International Relations Beyond the Middle East
Edited by Colin Shindler

Israel's relations – or lack of them – with Muslim countries throughout the Middle East and the Islamic world are subject to repeated analysis and scrutiny in both the media and academia. Less examined has been Israel's relationship with the former colonial states of Britain and France, the superpowers of the US and Russia, and the emerging powers of China, India and Brazil. Israel and the World Powers looks at Israel's relations with established and rising world powers, offering analysis which will be useful for researchers of both Middle East studies and International Relations.

July 2014, IB Tauris, £68.00

The Political Aesthetics of Global Protest: The Arab Spring and Beyond
Edited by Pnina Werbner, Martin Webb and Kathryn Spellman-Poots

From Egypt to India, and from Botswana to London, worker, youth and middle class rebellions have taken on the political and bureaucratic status quo and the privilege of small, wealthy and often corrupt elites at a time when the majority can no longer earn a decent wage. A remarkable feature of the protests from the Arab Spring onwards has been the salience of images, songs, videos, humour, satire and dramatic performances. This book explores the central role these artistic expressions played in energising the mass mobilisations of young people, the disaffected, the middle classes and the apolitical silent majority, and in enabling solidarities and alliances among democrats, workers, trade unions, civil rights activists and opposition parties.


Violence, Nonviolence, and the Palestinian National Movement
By Wendy Pearlman

Why do some national movements use violent protest and others nonviolent protest? Wendy Pearlman shows that much of the answer lies inside movements themselves. Nonviolent protest requires coordination and restraint, which only a cohesive movement can provide. When, by contrast, a movement is fragmented, factional competition generates new incentives for violence and authority structures are too weak to constrain escalation. Pearlman demonstrates that nonviolence is not simply a matter of leadership. Nor is violence attributable only to religion, emotions or stark instrumentality. By taking readers on a journey from civil disobedience to suicide bombings, this book offers fresh insight into the dynamics of conflict and mobilisation.

Understanding Shiite Leadership: The Art of the Middle Ground in Iran and Lebanon
By Shaul Mishal and Ori Goldberg

This book describes the political vision and practice of the religious leaderships of Iran and Lebanese Hizballah, arguing that they have adopted a middle ground which shies away from absolutism and extremism. They argue that the religious leaders of Iran and Lebanon have transformed Shiite Islam from a marginalised position in the Muslim world into a highly politicised avant garde of Muslim presence. They have thereby revitalised the practice and causes of political Islam in its struggle for legitimacy and authority and reshaped the politics of the Middle East and the globe in its image. Utilising approaches from social theory, history, theology, and literary criticism, the book presents these leaderships as pragmatic, interpretative entities with the potential to form fruitful relationships between Shiite leadership and the non-Shiite world.

June 2014, Cambridge University Press, £55.00

Answering the Call: Popular Islamic Activism in Egypt
By Abdullah Al-Arian

When Gamal Abdel Nasser dismantled and suppressed Egypt’s largest social movement organisation during the 1950s, few could have imagined that the Muslim Brotherhood would not only reemerge, but could one day compete for the presidency in the nation’s first ever democratic election. While there is no shortage of analyses of the Muslim Brotherhood’s recent political successes and failures, no study has investigated the organisation’s triumphant return from the dustbin of history. Answering the Call examines the means by which the Muslim Brotherhood was reconstituted during Anwar al-Sadat’s presidency. Through analysis of structural, ideological and social developments during this period, a more accurate picture of the so-called ‘Islamic resurgence’ develops, one that represents the rebirth of an old idea in a new setting.

August 2014, Oxford University Press, £35.99

The Yezidis: The History of a Community, Culture and Religion
By Birgul Acikyildiz

Yezidism is a part of the cultural mosaic of the Middle East. The Yezidi faith emerged for the first time in the 12th century in the Kurdish mountains of northern Iraq. The religion incorporates elements from proto-Indo-European religions, early Iranian faiths like Zoroastrianism and Manichaeanism, Sufism and regional paganism like Mithraism. Birgul Acikyildiz here offers a comprehensive appraisal of Yezidi religion, society and culture. Written without presupposing any prior knowledge about Yezidism, and in an accessible and readable style, the book throws light on the origins of Yezidism and charts its development and changing fortunes – from its beginnings to the present – as part of the general history of the Kurds.

August 2014, IB Tauris, £14.99
IN MEMORIAM

Andrew Mango, a true friend of Turkey
(1926-2014)

Andrew Mango arrived in Britain in 1947 to work with the BBC. That was to earn a living – but his plan was also to enrol at university. He chose SOAS, where he read Persian and Arabic and completed his PhD on The Legend of Iskandar in the Classical Literature of Islamic Persia, with special reference to the work of Firdawsi, Nizâmi and Jâmi – all while working at the BBC. Andrew saw his BBC journalism and his scholarship as complementary, and he remained in close contact with SOAS: from the 1980s he was involved in the Turkish Studies programme.

He was one of many whose careers have involved frequent journeys between SOAS and Bush House, the headquarters until 2012 of the BBC World Service. These two institutions equipped him with the academic and journalistic skills to become Britain’s leading authority on the country of his birth, Turkey.

Andrew was a natural candidate for both Bush House and SOAS. He was born in Istanbul in the early days of the Turkish Republic, when life was difficult for non-Muslims. The Mangos were British subjects, and Andrew’s father, a Lincoln’s Inn barrister who had studied at Trinity College Cambridge, now found professional life very restricted. In Ottoman times he had practised at the British Consulate Court, and his work had expanded during the 1918-22 allied occupation of Istanbul. All that had been swept away: only Turkish citizens qualified in Turkey could now practise in Turkish courts. The Mangos had been wealthy, thanks to the family shipping company. That disappeared in the 1929 crash, and there was little money around during Andrew’s childhood, just the memory of it. He remembered a painting in the family house in Beyoğlu (Pera) by the 19th-century artist Aivazovsky, whose landscapes of Istanbul and its surroundings now fetch prices in the millions of dollars.

In 1999, David Barchard, a close friend of Andrew and Mary Mango, interviewed Andrew and his brother Cyril, the distinguished Byzantinist, for the magazine Cornucopia (vol. 4, issue 19), and painted a fascinating account of the two brothers’ upbringing in Istanbul. That upbringing gave Andrew as first languages English and (from his mother) Russian. French and Greek were also spoken, both at home and in the commercial district where they lived. And of course he spoke Turkish – that was to be reinforced by his SOAS Persian and Arabic studies, essential for the Ottoman Turkish he would need in preparing his biography of Atatürk.

Within the BBC Andrew soon moved to the Turkish Service, which he was to lead from 1958 until he was promoted in 1972. The job made full use of his Turkish language, his journalistic and editorial skills, but also of his personal qualities of charm and generosity towards his colleagues and to the many hundreds of Turkish-speaking visitors to the BBC. He was always immaculately turned out in a navy blue pinstriped suit, but if his dress was formal, his manner was relaxed and welcoming. Humour and a well-developed sense of the ridiculous were deployed to defuse tension; his aim (which he achieved) was to run a successful and happy department. He would counsel, encourage and warn his staff. He was the ideal manager and an effective editor. His reputation soared, particularly before and after the 1960 coup in Turkey, when the Turkish Service became a major source of news.

Andrew’s fame in Turkey, where his friends included a former president, prime ministers and leading politicians and journalists, was to last throughout his life. At his funeral, the Turkish ambassador and two military attachés carried his coffin,
and a large floral display in the form of the Turkish flag proclaimed ‘True Friend of the Turkish Nation’.

 Atatürk (1999), his authoritative biography of the founder of the Turkish Republic, established beyond question Andrew’s international standing as a scholar. He was indeed a sympathetic friend of Turkey – but not an uncritical one. Atatürk is a warts-and-all portrait of a leader who for many decades in Turkey was seen as above criticism. The subsequent volume The Turks Today (2002) is a sometimes acerbic account of the Turkish Republic post- Atatürk up until the 2002 victory of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan’s AK Party. Both books remain essential reading for any serious study of modern Turkey’s political development. His final book From the Sultan to Atatürk (2009) examines the processes which produced the Treaties of Sèvres (1920) and Lausanne (1923).

As a senior editor, Andrew Mango was a passionate defender of the BBC’s commitment to impartiality; he would tell excitable young presenters, reporters and producers that their role was to act not as the mother of opinions, but as midwife. That outlook also informed his academic writing, and as a true friend of Turkey he sometimes had to convey unpalatable truths, as illustrated by his 1994 article ‘Turks and Kurds’ (Middle Eastern Studies, vol. 30, issue 4), which analysed the full range of Turkish and Kurdish opinion. Andrew’s approach did not always appeal to advocates of particular causes. That was the case with the controversy over the fate of the Armenians in 1915. Some believed he was sympathetic to the Turkish nationalist argument, a perception perhaps encouraged by the appearance on the Turkish Foreign Ministry website of the abstract of a 2001 talk in Istanbul, and by his excoriating review (The Times Literary Supplement, 17 September 2004) of Peter Balakian’s The Burning Tigris (2003): ‘It is not a work of historical research, but an advocate’s impassioned plea, relying at times on discredited evidence…’ But Andrew did not acquit the Ottoman government of responsibility: ‘It was a brutal act of ethnic cleansing,’ he wrote in 1999 (Atatürk, 161).

He had no sympathy, though, for the use of terror tactics by the Kurdish PKK or the Armenian gunmen who killed over 40 Turkish diplomats from the 1970s until the 1990s. In 1978, the wife and brother-in-law of his close friend Zeki Kuneralp, then Ambassador in Spain, were gunned down in Madrid. In 2005, Andrew published Turkey and the War on Terror, examining the various terrorism movements that have targeted Turkey and Turks.

He was unimpressed by recent developments in Turkey. In July 2013 he was a signatory of the open letter to Prime Minister (now President) Erdoğan condemning the violence used last year in dispersing the Gezi demonstrations. It appeared in The Times as a paid advertisement. Nevertheless, that did not deter Foreign Minister (now Prime Minister) Ahmet Davutoğlu from acknowledging a year later that Andrew Mango ‘will be remembered as a true intellectual, and his work and contribution will continue to draw respect from generations to come.’

Gamon McLellan teaches a postgraduate course on modern Turkey at SOAS. For 11 years he was Head of the BBC Arabic Service. Previously he was Head of the BBC Turkish Service, when Andrew Mango, then Head of the South European department, was his line manager.
Simin Behbahani was born on 19 July 1927 to Fakhrolozma Arghoon, a poet and early feminist, and Abbas Khalili, a writer and political activist. She was eighty-seven years old when she died in Tehran on 19 August 2014.

Simin grew up in a home that was a meeting place of many prominent and influential Iranian literary figures of the day. Her first poem, penned when she was about fourteen years old, was published in the paper Nowbahar under the name of Simin Khalatbary. In 1946, aged 19, she entered an arranged marriage to Hossein Behbahani. Although the marriage was not a happy one – she later lamented that she and her husband were never soul mates – it was during this time that she began publishing her poetry, first of which was the volume entitled The Broken Setar followed by Ja-ye Pa (Footprints) published in 1955.

Her poetic output during the 1950s till the late 1960s continued to increase, as volume after volume of her modernist ghazals were published and received the highest critical acclaim.

A much sought after lyricist, Simin composed hundreds of memorable songs that were sung by the best of Iran's classical and popular artists such as Delkash, Pouran, Mohammad Reza and Homouyan Shahjian and Dariush and which were immortalised in the Golha radio programme.

After her divorce from Hossein Behbahani, Simin married Manouchehr Houshyar who was to become her most ardent fan and a much trusted and valued critic. Her account of these years were chronicled in her part prose, part poetic tender memoirs entitled An Mard, Mard-e Hamraaham (That Man, My Fellow Companion), a testament to a loving and successful marriage, which ended with his sudden death after a heart attack in 1985.

In 1981, two years after the Iranian revolution, Simin's new collection entitled Khati ze Sor'at o Atash (A Line of Speed and Fire) marked the emergence of a totally new poetic voice, which revealed her innovating experimentations with meter and prosody. The subject matter of her poems changed too as she wrote about revolutions, war, natural disasters, jails and public executions. She mixed the vernacular with the classical to arrive at her own unique language, and unspoilt by sentimentality she reflected on the drabness of lives of the ordinary, on poignant tales of forbidden love punished by stoning, of the alienation of the veterans of the Iran–Iraq War, and all the while she brought to life long forgotten metrical structures to frame compelling pictures of Iranian lives, habits, familial concerns and the frustrated ambitions of simple folk trying to get on with their lives.

In her most productive decades of writing from 1983 to 2003 she published the collections of Dasht-e Arjan, Arjan Plaine, Kaghazin Jameh, Cloth of Paper, Yek Daricheh Azadi, A porthole of Freedom, Shayad keh Masih Ast, Perhaps It's the Messiah and A cup of Sin, a compilation in English translation.

An inexhaustible and active opponent of capital punishment, Simin used every public platform defiantly to voice her condemnation of inhumane treatment of all prisoners. The price of her outspoken demand for respect for human rights, for equal rights for men and women – for which she was aptly named the lioness of Iran – and her active involvement with the Iranian Writer's Association was the periodic loss of freedom to travel outside Iran, as well as often being placed under surveillance in Tehran.

The octogenarian Simin never ceased her eloquent protest nor did she lose her zest for life or her sometimes-mischievous sense of humour. Moreover, her phenomenal memory and her ability to recall and declaim the vast amount of poetry she knew by heart, even in the last year of her life, were quite staggering.

Simin Behbahani was the recipient of numerous Iranian and international awards and prizes both for her poetry and for her promotion of human rights. She was twice nominated for the Nobel Prize for literature and last year she was able to travel to Hungary to receive the prestigious Janus Pannonius International Poetry Prize.

Narguess Farzad is Senior Fellow in Persian at SOAS and a member of the Editorial Board.
My country, I will build you again


My country, I will build you again,  
If need be, with bricks made from my life.  
I will build columns to support your roof,  
If need be, with my bones.  
I will inhale again the perfume of flowers  
Favoured by your youth.  
I will wash again the blood off your body  
With torrents of my tears.  
Once more, the darkness will leave this house.  
I will paint my poems blue with the colour of our sky. 
The resurrector of “old bones” will grant me in his bounty  
a mountains splendour in his testing grounds.  
Old I may be, but given the chance, I will learn.  
I will begin a second youth alongside my progeny.  
I will recite the Hadith of love and country  
With such fervour as to make each word bear life.  
There still burns a fire in my breast  
to keep undiminished the warmth of kinship  
I feel for my people.  
Once more you will grant me strength,  
though my poems have settled in blood.  
Once more I will build you with my life,  
though it be beyond my means.
THE EVENTS and organisations listed below are not necessarily endorsed or supported by The Middle East in London. The accompanying texts and images are based primarily on information provided by the organisers and do not necessarily reflect the views of the compilers or publishers. While every possible effort is made to ascertain the accuracy of these listings, readers are advised to seek confirmation of all events using the contact details provided for each event.

Submitting entries and updates: please send all updates and submissions for entries related to future events via e-mail to mepub@soas.ac.uk

BM – British Museum, Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3DG

SOAS –SOAS, University of London, Thornhaugh Street, Russell Square, London WC1H 0XG

LSE – London School of Economics and Political Science, Houghton Street, London WC2 2AE

Ehsani, released in 2012, looks at the environmental catastrophe facing Lake Urmia in north-western Iran, the third largest saltwater lake on earth. Admission free - Pre-registration required. Asia House, 63 New Cavendish Street, London W1G 7LP. T 020 3651 2121 E astrid@iranheritage.org W www.iranheritage.org

OCTOBER EVENTS

Wednesday 1 October

6:30 pm | Iran’s Natural Heritage
Organised by: Iran Heritage Foundation. Screening of two documentary films about Iran’s natural heritage: Wildlife in Iran – part of the famous ‘Survival’ documentary series and shot in Iran by John Buxton offers a unique picture of Iranian wildlife in 1974 and Lady Urmia – a documentary by Mohammad Ehsani, released in 2012, looks at the environmental catastrophe facing Lake Urmia in north-western Iran, the third largest saltwater lake on earth. Admission free - Pre-registration required.

Asia House, 63 New Cavendish Street, London W1G 7LP. T 020 3651 2121 E astrid@iranheritage.org W www.iranheritage.org

Thursday 2 October

4:00 pm | The excavations of Machaerus, where John the Baptist was imprisoned and executed (Lecture) Győző Vörös, Hungarian Academy of Arts. Organised by: Palestine Exploration Fund and the BM. Vörös will place the archaeological site of Machaerus in its New Testament context in order to elucidate the blurred scene of a biblical site in the light of up-to-date research. Admission free - Pre-registration required.

6:00 pm | The Political Aesthetics of Global Protest: The Arab Spring and Beyond (Book Launch, Panel Discussion & Exhibition) Event to mark the release of a new AKU-ISMC/Edinburgh University Press publication edited by Pnina Werbner (Keele University), Martin Webb (Goldsmiths College, University of London) and Kathryn Spellman-Poots (AKU-ISMC). Admission free - Pre-registration required.

TRAIN TO TEACH ARABIC

SOAS, University of London, Language Centre is pleased to offer its renowned programme of professional development leading to a post-graduate qualification (Certificate and Diploma levels) in teaching Arabic as a Foreign Language. These awards have contributed substantially to the professionalising of Arabic teaching in the UK and elsewhere and to the recognition of the expertise of teachers of Arabic.

New Arabic Teacher Training Programme Starting Next Year.
12 Jan - 26th June 2015 - Full-Time and Part-Time options.

SOAS, University of London, is the only place that trains teachers of Arabic in the latest communicative methods that enable learners to use the language effectively right from Beginners level. Our fees for these University of London accredited programmes are very reasonable and we have had excellent feedback, both from trainees and from their subsequent employers. For more information contact:

The Programme Convenor, Ilham Salimane
Email: is23@soas.ac.uk
Telephone: +44 (0)20 7898 4870

or

The Programme Officer, Mandy Payne
Email: mp38@soas.ac.uk
Telephone: +44(0)20 7898 4595

or

Follow the link:
http://www.soas.ac.uk/languagecentre/languages/arabic/postgraduate-certificate-diploma-in-teaching-arabic-as-a-foreign-language.html

We also run SOAS accredited Certificate and Diploma courses in Arabic starting January 2015.
http://www.soas.ac.uk/languagecentre/languages/arabic/diploma-in-communicative-arabic/
Monday 6 October

5.15 pm | **Telling the Human Story of Oil before Nationalisation: Workers, Propaganda and Urbanism in Iraq, Kuwait and Bahrain** (Seminar) Nélida Fuccaro, SOAS. Organised by: Department of History, SOAS. Part of the Seminar on the History of the Near and Middle East series. Admission free. B104, Brunei Gallery, SOAS. T 020 7898 4431 E bf7@soas.ac.uk W www.soas.ac.uk/history/events/

7.30 pm | **Border Crossings: Welsh and Exiled Poets Meet** (Reading) Organised by: Exiled Writers Ink. Exiled Lit Cafe. With Poets from the Word Distillery Poets and from Exiled Writers Ink plus Music. Poets include Ali Abdolrezaei (Iran), Fatihieh Saudi (Jordan), and Adnan Al-Sayegh (Iraq). Tickets: £4/£2 (EWI committee members and asylum seekers). Poetry Cafe, 22 Betterton Street, London WC2H 9BX. E jennifer@exiledwriters.fsnet.co.uk W www.exiledwriters.co.uk

Tuesday 7 October

11:00 am | **Oriental Rugs & Carpets** (Auction) Admission free. Christie’s, King Street, 8 King Street, St James’s, London SW1Y 6QT. T 020 7839 9060 W www.christies.com

5:45 pm | **Simin Behbahani: A Career in Poetry** (Lecture) Ahmad Karimi-Hakkak, University of Maryland and SOAS. Organised by: London Middle East Institute, SOAS (LMEI) and the Centre for Iranian Studies, SOAS. Part of the LMEI’s Tuesday Evening Lecture Programme on the Contemporary Middle East, *The Middle East - Changing Economic and Political Landscapes*. As an intimate friend of the Iranian poet Simin Behbahani and a close observer of the history of poetry in the Persian-speaking world, Karimi-Hakkak reflects on the poet and the national spokesperson she turned into in a discussion of her career and the significance of her poetry. Admission free. Khalili Lecture Theatre, SOAS. T 020 7898 4330/4490 E vp6@soas.ac.uk W www.soas.ac.uk/lmei/events/

6:30 pm | **how to: Understand Lawrence of Arabia** (Talk) Anthony Sattin, biographer and travel writer. Organised by: how to: Academy. Who was the mysterious young archaeologist who became known as Lawrence of Arabia? Tickets: £35 (includes signed copy of the book RRP £25). CNCFD (Condé Nast College of Fashion & Design), 16-17 Greek Street, London W1D 4DR. E john.gordon@howtoacademy.com W www.howtoacademy.com/

Wednesday 8 October

Until 19 October | **BFI London Film Festival** 248 films including many from the Middle East across various London venues. W www.bfi.org.uk/lff

Thursday 9 October

10:30 am | **Art of the Islamic and Indian Worlds** (Auction) Admission free. Christie’s, King Street, 8 King Street, St James’s, London SW1Y 6QT. T 020 7839 9060 W www.christies.com

Friday 10 October

10:00 am | **Arts and Textiles of the Islamic and Indian Worlds** (Auction) Also at 2:00pm. Christie’s, South Kensington, 85 Old Brompton Road, London SW7 3LD. T 020 7930 6074 W www.christies.com

7:00 pm | **Alan Hall Inaugural Dinner** Organised by: British Institute at Ankara (BIAA). Three-course Turkish meal and wine and live music from a London-based Turkish band. Tickets: £60/£50 BIAA members (£90/£80 for members including one day event on Saturday 11 October, see listing below). British Academy, 10 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5AH. T 020 7969 5204 E biaa@britac.ac.uk W www.biaa.ac.uk/events

Saturday 11 October

9:30 am | **Alan Hall One Day Event: Turkey Ancient and Modern – a day of exploration** Organised by: British Institute at Ankara. Event showcasing Turkey’s culture and history and the research promoted by the British Institute at Ankara. Tickets: £60/£50 BIAA members/£25 students (£90/£80 for members including dinner on Friday 10 October, see above listing). King’s College London, Strand Campus, London WC2R 2LS. T 020 7969 5204 E biaa@britac.ac.uk W www.biaa.ac.uk/events

Monday 13 October

5.15 pm | **Muslim Encounters with Nazism and the Holocaust: The Ahmadi of Berlin and Jewish Convert to Islam Hugo Marcus** (Seminar) Marc Baer, LSE. Organised by: Department of History, SOAS. Part of the Seminar on the History of the Near and...
Tuesday Lecture Programme on the Contemporary Middle East Autumn 2014

The Middle East - Changing Economic and Political Landscapes

7 October

Simin Behbahani: A Career in Poetry
Ahmad Karimi-Hakkak, University of Maryland and SOAS
Lecture organised jointly with the Centre for Iranian Studies, SOAS

14 October

The Arab Uprisings - Driven by Youth or Adults?
Zafiris Tzannatos, Senior Consultant for Strategy and Policy

21 October

The European Union and Occupied Palestinian Territories: State-Building Without a State
Dimitris Bouris, College of Europe
Lecture organised jointly with the Centre for Palestine Studies, SOAS

28 October

British Policy and Arab Displacement in Palestine, 1915-23: Contingency, Imperialism, and Double-Dealing
William Mathew, University of East Anglia
Lecture organised jointly with the Centre for Palestine Studies, SOAS

4 November

Reading Week

11 November

The Hizbullah Phenomenon: Politics and Communication
Atef Alshaer, University of Westminster, Lina Khatib, Carnegie Middle East Center, Beirut and Dina Matar, Centre for Media Studies, SOAS

18 November

The Persian-Portuguese Encounter in Hormuz
Ghoncheh Tazmini, former Iran Heritage Foundation (IHF) Visiting Fellow, Centre for Iranian Studies
Lecture organised jointly with the Centre for Iranian Studies, SOAS

25 November

Panel on Iranian Economy
Hassan Hakimian, LMEI/SOAS, and Parvin Alizadeh, Boston University Boston University Study Abroad

2 December

Why Yemen matters: Development, Security and the Rhetoric of Unity
Helen Lackner, British-Yemeni Society

TUESDAY 5:45 PM (unless otherwise stated)
KHALILI LECTURE THEATRE, MAIN BUILDING, SOAS

The Lectures are free and open to all. Tea and biscuits are available from 5:15 pm.

For further information contact:
London Middle East Institute, SOAS, University of London, MBl Al Jaber Building, 21 Russell Square, London WC1B 5EA
T: 020 7898 4330 E: lmei@soas.ac.uk W: www.soas.ac.uk/lmei/
Middle East series. Admission free. B104, Brunei Gallery, SOAS. T 020 7898 4431 E bf7@soas.ac.uk W www.soas.ac.uk/history/events/

**Tuesday 14 October**

5:45 pm | **The Arab Uprisings - Driven by Youth or Adults?** (Lecture) Zafiris Tzannatos, Senior Consultant for Strategy and Policy. Organised by: London Middle East Institute, SOAS (LMEI). Part of the LMEI’s Tuesday Evening Lecture Programme on the Contemporary Middle East, *The Middle East - Changing Economic and Political Landscapes*. Lecture by Professor Tzannatos on the demographic and economic dynamics of MENA from the perspective of employment and social policy. Admission free. Khalili Lecture Theatre, SOAS. T 020 7898 4430 E vp6@soas.ac.uk W www.soas.ac.uk/lmei/events/

7:00 pm | **Dunsterforce: the post-World War I military mission to Baku** (Lecture) Angus Hay. Organised by: The Iran Society. The story of the British Expeditionary Force that, in 1918, departing from Baghdad, traversed north-western Persia, crossed the Caspian Sea, entered Baku and, against overwhelming odds, defended it against the Army of Islam of the Ottoman Empire. Admission free for Society members and one guest. Pall Mall Room, The Army & Navy Club, 36-39 Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5JN (Dress code calls for gentlemen to wear jacket and tie). T 020 7235 5122 E info@iransociety.org W www.iransociety.org

7:00 pm | **In the Picture with Kai Wiedenhöfer: Confrontiers** Twenty five years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, border barriers are still being erected in the US, Europe and the Middle East. Photographer Kai Wiedenhöfer presents Confrontier, a comprehensive project that demonstrates his conviction that walls are not solutions, but proof of human weakness and error. Tickets: £12.50. Frontline Club, 13 Norfolk Place, London W2 1QI. T 020 7479 8940 E events@frontlineclub.com W www.frontlineclub.com

**Wednesday 15 October**

7:00 pm | **The Museum of Islamic Art, Cairo: Before and After the Bomb Damage** (Lecture) Mohamed Ahmed Mohamed, Museum of Islamic Art, Cairo. Organised by: Islamic Art Circle at SOAS. Part of the Islamic Art Circle at SOAS Lecture Programme. Admission free. Khalili Lecture Theatre, SOAS. T 0771 408 7480 E rosalindhaddon@gmail.com W www.soas.ac.uk/art/islac/

**Thursday 16 October**

5:45 pm | **Proliferation of Private Media in Post-2011 Yemen and its Legacy** (Lecture) Abubakr Al Shamahi, freelance journalist and formerly MBI Al Jaber Media Institute, Sana’a. Organised by: MBI Al Jaber Foundation. Part of the MBI Al Jaber Foundation Lecture Series. A talk on the proliferation of private media in Yemen post 2011 and the work of the MBI Al Jaber Media Institute in Sana’a. Admission free. MBI Al Jaber Conference Room, London Middle East Institute, SOAS (LMEI), University of London, MBI Al Jaber Building, 21 Russell Square, London WC1B 5EA. E info@mbifoundation.com W www.mbfoundation.com

6:30 pm | **Nixon, Kissinger and the Shah: the United States and Iran in the Cold War** (Lecture) Organised by: LSE Middle East Centre. Roham Alvandi, LSE. Alvandi offers a revisionist account of the Shah’s relationship with the United States in the 1970s. Admission free. Wolfson Theatre, New Academic Building, LSE. T 020 7955 6520 E r.sleiman-haidar@lse.ac.uk W wwwlse.ac.uk/middleEastCentre/

**Sunday 19 October**

7:00 pm | **Docklands Sinfonia:**

**Monday 20 October**

Until 30 November | **Nour Festival of Arts** Organised by: Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea. Annual festival showcasing contemporary arts and culture from the Middle East and North Africa held across various venues. W www.nourfestival.co.uk

**Tuesday 21 October**

5:45 pm | **The European Union and Occupied Palestinian Territories: state-building without a state** (Lecture) Dimitris Bouris, College of Europe. Organised by: London Middle East Institute, SOAS (LMEI) and the Centre for Palestine Studies, SOAS. Part of the LMEI’s Tuesday Evening Lecture Programme on the Contemporary Middle East, *The Middle East - Changing Economic and Political Landscapes*. Lecture by Bouris on the subject of his book *European Union and Occupied Palestinian Territories: state-building without a state* (2014, Routledge) which examines in detail the EU’s role as a state-builder in the case of the Occupied Palestinian Territories following the 1993 Oslo Accords. Admission free. Khalili Lecture Theatre, SOAS. T 020 7898 4330/4490 E www.aias.org.uk

A Hidden Order: Octagon III - Solo Conga - Variation, 2014, giclée print on paper, various sizes available. Courtesy the artist and Kashya Hildebrand, London (See Exhibitions, p. 34)
An intensive five-week programme which includes two courses: an Arabic Language Course (introductory or intermediate) and another on ‘Government and Politics of the Middle East' or "Culture and Society in the Middle East'.

Beginners Arabic (Level 1)
This is an introductory course in Modern Standard Arabic. It teaches students the Arabic script and provides basic grounding in Arabic grammar and syntax. On completing the course, students should be able to read, write, listen to and understand simple Arabic sentences and passages. This course is for complete beginners and does not require any prior knowledge or study of Arabic.

Beginners Arabic (Level 2)
This course is a continuation of Beginners Arabic Level 1. It completes the coverage of the grammar and syntax of Modern Standard Arabic and trains students in reading, comprehending and writing with the help of a dictionary more complex Arabic sentences and passages.

To qualify for entry into this course, students should have already completed at least one introductory course in Arabic.

Government and Politics of the Middle East
This course provides an introduction to the politics of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. It gives on a country by country basis, an overview of the major political issues and developments in the region since the end of the First World War and addresses key themes in the study of contemporary Middle East politics, including: the role of the military, social and economic development, political Islam, and the recent uprisings (the ‘Arab Spring').

Culture and Society in the Middle East
This course examines the major cultural patterns and institutions of the MENA region. It is taught through a study of some lively topics such as religious and ethnic diversity, impact of the West, stereotyping, the role of tradition, education (traditional and modern), family structure and value, gender politics, media, life in city, town and village, labour and labour migration, the Palestinian refugee problem and Arab exile communities, culinary cultures, music and media, etc.

FEES
Session (5 weeks) Programme fee* Accommodation fee**
22 June-23 July 2015 (two courses) £2,500 from £300/week

* An early bird discount of 10% applies to course fees before 15 April 2015.

** Rooms can be booked at the Intercollegiate Halls which are located in the heart of Bloomsbury: www.halls.london.ac.uk.

For more information, please contact Louise Hosking on LH2@soas.ac.uk. Or check our website www.soas.ac.uk/lmei
Wednesday 22 October

5:30 pm | Wings Over Arabia (Talk) Roger Harrison, author. Organised by: Saudi-British Society. Talk by Harrison on the ground breaking expedition by glider over the western region of Saudi Arabia illustrated by some of the photographs he took from the air. Admission free for Society members and their guests. Arab-British Chamber of Commerce, 43 Upper Grosvenor Street, London W1. E ionisthompson@yahoo.co.uk W www.saudibritishsociety.org.uk

Thursday 23 October

4:00 pm | Ten days in the life of Dura-Europos: gods, cults and temples on the Seleucid, Parthian and Roman Euphrates (Lecture) Ted Kaizer, University of Durham. Organised by: Palestine Exploration Fund and the BM. Dura-Europos, a small fortress town situated on a plateau looking out over the Middle Euphrates river, was under first Seleucid, then Parthian, and finally Roman control. Kaizer selects ten snapshots which showcase the variety and development of Dura’s religious life. Admission free - Pre-registration required T 020 7323 8181 W www.britishmuseum.org BP Lecture Theatre, Clore Education Centre, BM. T 020 7935 5379 E execsec@pef.org.uk W www.pef.org.uk

5:00 pm | Wrapped in the Flag of Israel: Mizrahi Single Mothers, Bureaucratic Torture, and the Divinities of State and Chance (Seminar) Smadar Lavie, University of California, Berkeley. Organised by: Centre for Gender Studies, SOAS. Admission free. Venue TBC.

6:00 pm | Youth Activism in Eastern Yemen: Mahra in Transition (Lecture) Elisabeth Kendall. Organised by: The British-Yemeni Society in association with the London Middle East Institute, SOAS (LMEI). Admission free. MBI Al Jaber Conference Room, London Middle East Institute, SOAS, University of London, MBI Al Jaber Building, 21 Russell Square, London WC1B 5EA. T 020 7731 3260 E allfreea@gmail.com W www.al-bab.com/bys/

Tuesday 28 October

3:00 pm | The Role of National Courts in Applying International Humanitarian Law (Lecture) Sharon Weill, Sciences Po, Paris; CERAH, Geneva University; and The Graduate Institute (IHEID). Organised by: Centre for Palestine Studies, SOAS and the London Middle East Institute, SOAS (LMEI). Lecture by Sharon Weill on the relationship between international and domestic law and the judicial enforcement mechanism of international law at a national level in the case of Israel and Palestine (most notably in the Israeli military courts in the Occupied Palestinian Territories). Admission free. MBI Al Jaber Conference Room, London
The Colours of Kurdistan (See November Events, p. 34)

Middle East Institute, SOAS, University of London, MBI Al Jaber Building, 21 Russell Square, London WC1B 5EA. T 020 7898 4330/4490 E vp6@soas.ac.uk W www.soas.ac.uk/lmei-cps/events/

5:45 pm | British Policy and Arab Displacement in Palestine, 1915-23: Contingency, Imperialism, and Double-Dealing (Lecture) William Mathew, University of East Anglia. Organised by: London Middle East Institute, SOAS (LMEI) and the Centre for Palestine Studies, SOAS. Part of the LMEI’s Tuesday Evening Lecture Programme on the Contemporary Middle East, The Middle East - Changing Economic and Political Landscapes. Lecture by Mathew in which he will argue that the historical roots of Arab political displacement in Palestine lie, contextually, and decisively, with British imperial policy in the Levant in the late 1910s and early 1920s. Admission free. Khalili Lecture Theatre, SOAS. T 020 7898 4430/4490 E vp6@soas.ac.uk W www.soas.ac.uk/lmei/events/

Friday 31 October

9:30 am | British Library Persian Manuscripts: Collections and Research (Symposium) Organised by: British Library. One-day symposium on the theme of digitisation and new research on the British Library’s collection of Persian manuscripts, one of the most significant in the world. Tickets: £15/£10 conc. British Library Conference Centre, 96 Euston Road, London NW1 2DB. T 0330 333 1144 W www.bl.uk/whatson/

12:00 pm | Virtue in the marketplace: veiled designer-entrepreneurs in Istanbul (Seminar) Magda Craciun, UCL. Organised by: SOAS Modern Turkish Studies Programme, LMEI. Sponsored by Nurol Bank. Part of the Seminars on Turkey series. Convened by Benjamin Fortna, SOAS. Admission free. Room 116, SOAS. T 020 7898 4431 E bf7@soas.ac.uk W www.soas.ac.uk/lmei/events/

Tuesday 4 November

6:30 pm | High-Risk Activism and Popular Struggle Against the Israeli Occupation of the West Bank (Lecture) Joel Beinin, Stanford University. Organised by: LSE Middle East Centre. Since 2002, local Palestinian popular committees have led a grass roots struggle against the separation barrier Israel has constructed. Beinin explores the history of the struggle and the motivations of Israelis for participating in it. Chair: John Chalcraft, LSE. Admission free. Wolfson Theatre, New Academic Building, LSE. T 020 7955 6520 E r.sleiman-haidar@lse.ac.uk W www.lse.ac.uk/middleEastCentre/

Wednesday 5 November

6:30 pm | The Cosmogenies of oil traffic and visual culture in modern Iran (Lecture) Morad Montazami, Tate Modern. Organised by: Iran Heritage Foundation. Montazami observes how cardinal figures of cinema (Ebrahim Golestan, Parviz Kimiavi) and painting (Bahman Mohasses, Behjat Sadr) reveal the “oil superego” which unconsciously dominates Iranian modern visual culture. Admission free - Pre-registration required. Asia House, 63 New Cavendish Street, London W1G 7LP. T 020 3651 2121 E astrid@iranheritage.org W wwwiranheritage.org

Thursday 6 November

4:00 pm | The Wilderness of Zin – 100 Years on (Lecture) Sam Moorhead, BM, Portable Antiquities Scheme. Organised by: Palestine Exploration Fund and the BM. Admission free - Pre-registration required T 020 7323 8181 W wwwbritishmuseum.org BP Lecture Theatre, Clore Education Centre, BM. T 020 7935 5379 E execsec@pef.org.uk W www.pef.org.uk

Tuesday 11 November

5:45 pm | The Hizbullah Phenomenon: Politics and Communication (Panel Discussion) Atef Alshaer, University of Westminster, Lina Khatib, Carnegie Middle East Center, Beirut and Dina Matar, Centre for Media Studies, SOAS. organised by: London Middle East Institute, SOAS (LMEI). Part of the LMEI’s Tuesday Evening Lecture Programme on the Contemporary Middle East, The Middle East - Changing Economic and Political Landscapes. Panel discussion with the authors of The Hizbullah Phenomenon: Politics and Communication (2014, C Hurst & Co Publishers and Oxford University Press) which addresses how Hizbullah uses image, language and its charismatic leader, Hassan Nasrallah, to legitimise its political aims and ideology and appeal to different target groups. Admission free. Khalili Lecture Theatre, SOAS. T 020 7898 4330/4490 E vp6@soas.ac.uk W www.soas.ac.uk/lmei/events/

6:30 pm | The Limits of Transformation from Above: Turkey since 1914 (Lecture) Çağlar Keyder, LSE European Institute and Boğaziçi University. Organised by: LSE. LSE European Institute Inaugural Lecture. Keyder will propose an account of the last hundred years of the “state tradition” in Turkey. Admission
Monday 17 November

6:00 pm | **Calendars and Dating Formulas in Jewish Documents from the Caves of Refuge in the Judean Desert** (Lecture) Helen Jacobus, University College London. Organised by: Anglo Israel Archaeological Society (AIAS) and the Institute of Archaeology, University College London. Admission free. Lecture Theatre G6, Ground Floor, Institute of Archaeology, University College London, 31-34 Gordon Square, London WC1H OPY. T 020 8349 5754 W www.aias.org.uk

Wednesday 19 November


Thursday 13 November

4:00 pm | **Cities of the Levant: the Past for the Future?** (Lecture) Philip Mansel, author of *Levant: Splendour and Catastrophe on the Mediterranean*. Organised by: Palestine Exploration Fund and the BM. Admission free - Pre-registration required T 020 7323 8181 W www.britishmuseum.org BP Lecture Theatre, Clare Education Centre, BM. T 020 7935 5379 E execsec@pef.org.uk W www.pef.org.uk

Tuesday 18 November

5:45 pm | **The Persian-Portuguese Encounter in Hormuz** (Lecture) Ghoncheh Tazmini, former Iran Heritage Foundation (IHF) Visiting Fellow, Centre for Iranian Studies, SOAS. Organised by: London Middle East Institute, SOAS (LMEI) and the Centre for Iranian Studies, SOAS. Part of the LMEI’s Tuesday Evening Lecture Programme on the Contemporary Middle East, *The Middle East - Changing Economic and Political Landscapes*. What was the nature of the Portuguese-Persian encounter in Hormuz in the 16th century? Did the Portuguese come as traders or conquerors? Tazmini explores and qualifies the dynamics of Luso-Persian engagement. Admission free. Khalili Lecture Theatre, SOAS. T 020 7898 4330/4490 E vp6@soas.ac.uk W www.soas.ac.uk/lmei/events/

Wednesday 20 November

6:00 pm | **Back to Babylonia: recent excavations at Tell Khaiber** (Lecture) Jane Moon, Ur Region Archaeology Project (URAP) and University of Manchester. Organised by: British Institute for the Study of Iraq (BISI). Since 2013, the Ur Region Archaeology Project (URAP) has been excavating in Tell Khaiber, an old Babylonian settlement between Larsa and Ur, and has produced new insights into Iraq’s past.

Saturday 22 November

9:00 am | **The Idea of Iran: post-Mongol politics and the reinvention of Iranian identities** (Symposium) Marco Brambilla, architect and Architectural Historian; Olga Davidson, ILEX Foundation; Tofigh Heidarzadeh, University of California, Riverside; Stefan Kamola, Princeton University; George Lane, SOAS; Tomoko Masuya, The University of Tokyo; and Charles Melville, University of Cambridge Organised by: Centre for Iranian Studies, SOAS and The Courtauld Institute of Art. Sponsored by the Soudavar Memorial Foundation. The eleventh programme in *The Idea of Iran* annual series. This symposium explores the cultural complexities of reinventing the idea of Iran, focusing on aspects of cultural longevity and fluid transformations in light of the new post-Mongol pan-Asian configurations. Tickets: £15/£10 conc. & LMEI Affiliates/students free. Brunei Gallery Lecture Theatre, SOAS. T 020 7898 4330/4490 E vp6@soas.ac.uk W www.soas.ac.uk/lmei-cis/events/
Monday 24 November
6:30 pm | The Uprising of the Marginalised: a socio-economic perspective into the collapse of the Ba'ath rule in Syria (Lecture) Shamel Azmeh, LSE and Brooks World Poverty Institute at the University of Manchester. Organised by: LSE Middle East Centre. Three years into the Syrian uprisings, Azmeh will examine the socio-economic formula that underlined the rule of the Ba’ath for four decades. Admission free. Wolfson Theatre, New Academic Building, LSE. T 020 7955 6520 E r.sleiman-haidar@lse.ac.uk W www.lse.ac.uk/middleEastCentre

Tuesday 25 November
5:45 pm | Panel on the Iranian Economy (Lecture) Hassan Hakimian, LMEI/SOAS, Parvin Alizadeh, Boston University Boston University Study Abroad. Organised by: LSE Middle East Institute, SOAS (LMEI) and the Centre for Iranian Studies, SOAS. Part of the LMEI’s Tuesday Evening Lecture Programme on the Contemporary Middle East, The Middle East - Changing Economic and Political Landscapes. In this event to mark the publication of Iran and the Global Economy: Petro Populism, Islam and Economic Sanctions (2014, Routledge) the editors will discuss how in the span of three decades, Iran’s economy has evolved from strong aspirations to develop an ‘independent economy’ to grappling with debilitating international economic sanctions. Admission free. Khalili Lecture Theatre, SOAS. T 020 7898 4330/4490 E vp6@soas.ac.uk W www.soas.ac.uk/lmei/events/

Wednesday 26 November
7:00 pm | Shi’ism in Iran: Theocracy and Democracy (Lecture) Robert Gleave. Organised by: The Iran Society. Admission free for Society members and one guest. Pall Mall Room, The Army & Navy Club, 36-39 Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5JN (Dress code calls for gentlemen to wear jacket and tie). T 020 7235 5122 E info@iransociety.org W www.iransociety.org

Friday 28 November
12:00 pm | The "New Turkey": Davutoğlu’s Justice and Development Party (Seminar) Sinan Ciddi, ITS/Georgetown University. Organised by: SOAS Modern Turkish Studies Programme, LMEI. Sponsored by Nurol Bank. Part of the Seminars on Turkey series. Convened by Benjamin Fortna, SOAS. Admission free. Room 116, SOAS. T 020 7898 4431 E bf7@soas.ac.uk W www.soas.ac.uk/lmei/events/

7:45 pm | The Colours of Kurdistan Organised by: Gulcan in collaboration with the Ismaili Centre and as part of the Nour Festival. An evening of contemporary Kurdish costume, music and dance. As part of the Nour Festival the Ismaili Centre is holding a series of events under the theme of the Silk Road including an exhibition of costumes, maps and photographs from the Middle East. Tickets: £5.50 W www.thelittleboxoffice.com/nour The Ismaili Centre, Cromwell Gardens, South Kensington, London SW7 2SL. T 020 7351 6212 E info@gulcan.org.uk W www.gulcan.org.uk / www.nourfestival.co.uk

EXHIBITIONS

Wednesday 1 October
Until 3 October | Wétiko: Cowboys and Indigenes Exhibition of works by the Egyptian artist-photographer Nermine Hammam in which she looks at the media manipulation of contemporary affairs and how our trust can be subverted by the constant rewriting of narratives. Admission free. Rose Issa Projects, 82 Great Portland Street, London W1 7NW. T 020 7323 1710 E info@roseissa.com W www.roseissa.com

Until 4 October | Voices Photographic and video works that capture the vitality and resilience of Palestinians struggling under a matrix of colonisation and displacement by award-winning British photographic artist, writer and activist Rich Wiles. Admission free. P21 Gallery, 21 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD. T 020 7121 6190 E info@p21.org.uk W www.p21.org.uk

Until 5 October | Whose Gaze Is It Anyway? Exhibition exploring the history of Arab pop culture through printed matter – posters, notebooks, diaries and book covers, as well as through film and video. Tickets: Entry with £1 Day Membership. Fox Reading Room, Institute of Contemporary Arts (ICA), The Mall, London SW1Y 5AH. T 020 7930 3647 W www.ica.org.uk

Until 11 October | A Hidden Order: Sama Mara & Lee Westwood A collaboration between artist and geometer Sama Mara and composer Lee Westwood that brings together art, music and geometry, revealing a unity between the world of traditional Islamic art and Western contemporary composition. Admission free. Kashya Hildebrand, 22 Eastcastle Street, London W1 8DE. T 020 3588 1195 E info@kashyahildebrand.org W www.kashyahildebrand.org

Until 2 November | CRUDIFICATION Group exhibition featuring the work of nine Iraqi and two British artists that explores some of the ways in which oil has been the cause of immense human suffering in today’s world, especially for those living in oil rich countries. Admission free. P21 Gallery, 21 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD. T 020 7121 6190 E info@p21.org.uk W www.p21.org.uk


Tuesday 7 October
Until 7 November | What Remains Group exhibition presented in two parts (What Remains Part I from 7 October to 7 November and Part II, from 11 November to 19 December 2014) about what we remember and the legacy we leave behind; about what is left of lasting value after world leaders and global events have come and gone. Admission free. Rose Issa Projects, 82 Great Portland Street, London W1 7NW. T 020 7323 1710 E info@roseissa.com W www.roseissa.com

Friday 10 October
Until 29 November | The Future Rewound & The Cabinet of Souls First UK solo show by Tunisian artist Nadia Kaabi-Linke. Exhibition inspired by the history of the gallery’s building which served as the domicile for Imre Kiralfy who was responsible for many of the grand exhibitions at Earls Court, White City and Olympia. Admission free. The Mosaic Rooms, A M Qattan Foundation, Tower House, 226 Cromwell Road, London SW5 0SW. E info@mosaicrooms.org W www.mosaicrooms.org

Monday 3 November
Until 14 November | Ghazaleh Avarzamani: Apologie For Understanding Exhibition showcasing the works of emerging Iranian artist Ghazaleh Avarzamani who explores the mutability and intricacy of language through various mediums. Admission free. Asia House, 63 New Cavendish Street, London W1G 7LP. T 020 7307 5454 W http://asiahouse.org/events/
The SOAS Centre for Palestine Studies (CPS) at the London Middle East Institute (LMEI) has announced the launch of the first, and presently the only, university series in Palestine Studies in the English language.

The SOAS Palestine Studies Series will be edited by the CPS and published by I.B. Tauris, the well-known London-based publishing house specialising in Middle East Studies.

The aim is to publish three to five books per year. Manuscripts will be peer-reviewed and selected for publication by the CPS and under its editorial responsibility. Selected authors will get a contract with details on copy-editing and royalties from I.B. Tauris.

The SOAS Palestine Studies Series is open to submissions by academics at various levels of their career, from writings by recognised scholars to monographs derived from PhD theses adapted for publication. Submissions from all countries and from various disciplines are welcome as long as they fall plainly within the category of Palestine Studies.

The aim is to publish the first books in the new series in the autumn of 2015. Only manuscripts at an advanced stage of writing and post-examination theses provided along with the examiners’ reports will be considered.

Submissions should be sent in electronic format to Louise Hosking at LMEI (LH2@soas.ac.uk). For enquiries, you may also contact her on +44-20 7898 4330.
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