THIS ISSUE: Endangered Languages

- Losing our language diversity
- The death of Zoroastrian Dari in Kerman
- The Modern South Arabian languages
- Korandje from the 12th to the 21st century
- The case of Siwi
- The language of the ‘Middle Eastern Gypsies’
- What if, 100 years on, school is not enough?

PLUS Reviews and events in London
The Middle East in London

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# Contents

## EDITORIAL

### 4

## INSIGHT

### 5

**Losing our language diversity**

*Mandana Seyfeddinipur*

## ENDANGERED LANGUAGES

### 7

**The death of Zoroastrian Dari in Kerman**

*Saloumeh Gholami*

### 9

**The Modern South Arabian languages**

*Janet Watson and Miranda Morris*

### 11

**Gaining a language, losing a language: Korandje from the 12th to the 21st century**

*Lameen Souag*

### 13

**A gender-based language disparity in a conservative society? The case of Siwi**

*Valentina Schiattarella*

### 15

**Domari: the language of the ‘Middle Eastern Gypsies’**

*Bruno Herin*

## REVIEWS

### 17

**What if, 100 years on, school is not enough?**

*Anke al-Bataineh*

### 19

**BOOKS**

**A Critical Introduction to Khomeini**

*Bijan Hakimian*

### 20

**BOOKS IN BRIEF**

### 23

**EVENTS IN LONDON**
Rough estimates indicate that only around 300 distinct languages remain in all of Europe and the Middle East. But the reality is that we simply don’t know exactly how many languages are still spoken today – aside from the major ones – because of a lack of reliable information.

The Middle East has been an important historic centre, but the languages and dialects developed over centuries are vanishing day by day with speakers dying and communities being displaced. Aside from some notes, mentions here and there, and some specialist articles we do not have a record of these fading aspects of our linguistic and cultural memory: instead knowledge remains locked inside the languages, dialects and variants that have evolved in many areas and in diaspora communities.

This issue of The Middle East in London endeavours to raise awareness and shed light on how the developments in the Middle East are affecting the world’s cultural heritage and how we are running against time to preserve the knowledge encoded in the languages we are losing. The articles in this issue offer a kaleidoscope of different circumstances and histories of the speakers and communities that scholars are working with. They offer a snapshot of the rich knowledge of these speakers and the complexity of the languages we are trying to preserve.

The Insight piece provides the larger frame for the issue and lays out how speakers are affected by globalisation, what this means for our understanding of linguistic diversity and the language ideologies we can observe today.

Saloumeh Gholami’s piece looks at the dismal situation of Zoroastrian Dari in Kerman (Iran) and discusses how and why the dialect is still going strong in Yazd. Janet Watson and Miranda Morris describe six endangered languages spoken in eastern Yemen, southern Oman, Jiddat al-Harasis, the island of Soqotra, and southern and eastern portions of Saudi Arabia. Lameen Souag reports about Korandje, a language spoken by a Berber community in south-western Algeria that survived for centuries… until the establishment of centralised schooling. Siwi is a Berber language spoken in the Siwa oasis in Egypt. In the oasis women live isolated from men and converse mostly amongst each other. In her piece Valentina Schiattarella investigates the differences in speaking between the genders to see if women preserve more traditional forms of the language. Bruno Herin shows us how it is possible to trace the migration of the Dom, an Indo-Aryan ethnic group, via an analysis of their language. And finally, Anke al-Bataineh sheds light on how Armenian diaspora communities in Lebanon are trying to ensure that their language survives by establishing Armenian schools. But what if school is not enough?

For the past 13 years SOAS and the Endangered Languages Documentation Project have been working to give communities a voice, to preserve their stories and their myths. This issue of the magazine is an attempt to put a small selection of these languages on the map, to raise awareness about them and to hopefully disrupt the silence.
Today there are about 7,000 languages spoken worldwide, and we estimate that half of these will have fallen silent by the end of this century. Our linguistic diversity is vanishing in front of our eyes. Globalisation, climate change, political pressure and displacement affect people all over the world. In many areas of the world, speakers leave their traditional ways of life behind, moving to new locations with dreams of building a better life. Once they have arrived they make sure their children speak the ‘more prestigious’, dominant language that will allow them to succeed.

Speakers adapt their languages all the time, and language change is the beauty of this living medium, but what we are observing today is language shift at an unprecedented speed. The speed at which we are losing the world’s languages has increased dramatically over the past few decades. Some compare it to the 5th mass extinction, when the dinosaurs died out.

The Middle East is experiencing dramatic political changes, and the onslaught on its cultural heritage is affecting its communities dramatically. And when people are displaced, take refuge or escape they will most likely adapt to the majority language, which will allow them to have social and economic mobility or just simply make a living to survive. These people are the carriers of a unique cultural history encoded in the languages they speak, in the languages that will fall silent because their children do not learn them anymore.

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The Tower of Babel is an ancient Near Eastern legend of the building of a tower. The Bible states that God, perceiving the unity of mankind, caused confusion in their speech, and it was for this reason that the world was divided into a number of languages, spoken to this day. This is the origin of the phrase “As Babylonian as the Tower of Babel”, used in modern English to refer to things that are confusing or incomprehensible. 

Losing our language diversity

Mandana Seyfeddinipur discusses the dramatic, global decline in linguistic diversity and outlines the preservation efforts of SOAS and the Endangered Languages Documentation Programme.

Taleshi speaker Rustaa Capazaad in Iran. Photograph by Gerardo de Caro
Babel metaphor telling us that it is a curse to have these many languages? So let’s make a choice. How about a Turkic language, which expresses whether you have directly witnessed/experienced an event or only heard about it second-hand? Or what about Rotokas, which is made up of only 12 sounds? Or Chinese, of course, where the meaning of a word can change if it is spoken in a higher tone? Choosing is not easy: when faced with giving up our own languages we come to realise how at home we are in the unique languages we are able to speak.

Ask a multilingual about words they cannot translate and you will get a lot of beautiful examples like the Japanese word Komorebi: the sort of scattered light effect that happens when light shines through trees. Why would we want to give this up? Here is another question to think about: why does it have to be one or the other? Aren’t multilingual speakers the key to being ready for the challenges to come in a globalised, highly mobile and at the same time fragmented world? Being multilingual, being able to express oneself and think in different ways makes us highly agile in responding to the challenges we are facing. It is diversity that makes a system robust, and in many places around the globe we can observe multilingual agility being a response to challenges in the environment.

What makes this language loss even more dramatic is that many of these disappearing languages have never been described or recorded. The richness of human linguistic diversity is disappearing without a trace. This is happening while millions of tourists are visiting the British Museum to admire and learn about the treasures of our cultural heritage that are preserved there. How can we make sure we are not losing what we have today so that in the future our children and their children can learn about our linguistic heritage?

For a start and given the urgency, we should document these languages. Archaeologists now try to take at least 3-D pictures of monumental ruins, which are the remains of cultural centres of the ancient world. In the same way, we can record these languages, preserve the recordings and make them available to the world. About 20 years ago, the outcry from linguists led to the establishment of many initiatives around the world focussed on preserving vanishing languages. Archives, funding initiatives and language centres were set up and began their work. Most of these initiatives have now ended, and we are left with the ongoing loss.

SOAS, University of London set up the Endangered Languages Documentation Programme, the Endangered Languages Archive and an academic programme with a generous donation from the Arcadia Fund. These programmes support people around the world who document these disappearing languages and bring the audio and video recordings and the translations and analysis back to preserve them in the Endangered Languages Archive. The school is creating a lasting record of our linguistic diversity and is building capacity by training scholars and students worldwide in language documentation. We also bring this knowledge and expertise into the places where the languages are disappearing and the areas where disappearing languages are still being spoken: Ghana, Ethiopia and Cameroon or in Siberia and Yunnan.

Our digital archive – ELAR – at the SOAS library not only preserves these collections of language recordings, but also gives the speakers of these languages a voice. It allows them and their communities to relay their past and their present to the world. The archive makes the collections publicly accessible, allowing scholars around the world to draw on these materials and helping them to add a locally informed perspective to their work – a perspective which is often lacking in academic discourse.

We were able to support the documentation of a few languages in the Middle East like the project on Taleshi, a language spoken in the North of Iran. The project started in Iran but was jeopardised when the researcher could not go back for political reasons. He found a speaker here in London who could become a major contributor in documenting his disappearing language while living in exile. But we only have scratched the surface. Many minority languages in the Middle East are under threat: some have only a handful of elderly speakers left. We are racing against time to record the invaluable knowledge these speakers hold and to preserve these treasures of our cultural heritage.

For more info visit www.eldp.net

Mandana Seyfeddinipur is a linguist and the Director of the Endangered Languages Documentation Programme at SOAS, University of London
Dari (also known as Behdini, Gavri or Gavruni) is an Iranian language spoken by the religious minority of Zoroastrians, who live mostly in the cities of Yazd and the surrounding areas, and in Kerman and Tehran. After the coming of Islam, the Zoroastrian community was under considerable pressure to convert to Islam. For this reason, between the 8th and 10th centuries, some of the followers of Zoroastrianism left Iran for India, where today the largest and most important Zoroastrian community in the world is found.

Before the Mongol invasion of Iran in 1219-1224 CE, there were Zoroastrian communities in different regions of Iran, especially in Khorasan and Sistan. But by the 16th century the location of these communities was gradually reduced to two regions, Kerman and Yazd, with their surrounding areas. During the period between 1879 and 2011, the number of Zoroastrians in Kerman and Yazd declined dramatically, while it increased by more than 5,745 per cent in Tehran during the same period. This change in numbers is evidence of the mass migration of Zoroastrians to Tehran. Most of the migrants who came to Tehran were either looking for jobs or continuing their education. In recent years, a large number of Zoroastrians have migrated to other countries, mostly to the USA, Canada and France. The younger generations of Zoroastrians naturally gravitate towards the new culture in those countries, leaving their culture behind. They have stopped following their heritage of religious and cultural practices and are becoming assimilated, because they find the dominant culture of the new society more prestigious, useful and widespread.

The survival of Zoroastrian Dari, the language of the Zoroastrians in Iran, is under threat. Many Zoroastrian parents speak only Persian with their children, and the intergenerational transmission of Dari has thus ceased, especially in the communities in Tehran and Kerman. As a consequence, it is imaginable that in the future there will no longer be any speakers who use Dari as a first or even as a second language. Dari has gradually been losing significant communicative functions as it falls under the shadow of Persian, the dominant and official language of the country.

In the locations where Dari has kept such functions in daily activities the language has been better preserved.
The community in Kerman has not preserved the observance of many rituals nor maintained the use of their dialect to the degree to which the Zoroastrians in Yazd have. Dari, because it is the dialect of the priests and their families. Malati is generally treated as a dialect with high prestige, and it is the language of both business and religion. As it possesses a large number of terms in every semantic field, it can be used in all kinds of social and linguistic contexts. Such factors contribute to its high degree of preservation.

The Zoroastrian community in Kerman differs in several ways from that in Yazd. In Kerman, the community has been more open to the non-Zoroastrian society around it. It has been strongly influenced in many cultural and linguistic respects by the predominant Persian culture and language. The community in Kerman has not preserved the observance of many rituals nor maintained the use of their dialect to the degree to which the Zoroastrians in Yazd have. In Kerman, there are no longer any people who speak this language as either a first or second language, and thus the language is no longer used. The last context for using this dialect was for ritual purposes in the religious ceremonies. The best speakers of Kermani Dari used to be three elderly ladies, but after they passed away only three other speakers have remained, and they do not actively use the language at all. In my research project I have been documenting Zoroastrian Dari in Kerman. Unfortunately, one of my best informants has become ill and has lost her ability to recall the language. Through my project, I was able to record about two hours of her speech. These recorded materials represent the very last traces of her language, Zoroastrian Dari in Kerman.

Saloumeh Gholami is a Lecturer in Iranian languages and Academic Researcher at the Institute of Empirical Linguistics at the Goethe University in Frankfurt. She directs three international projects focusing on various aspects of the Zoroastrian language and culture.
The Modern South Arabian languages

The Modern South Arabian languages are six endangered Semitic languages spoken in the southern extremities of the Arabian Peninsula: eastern Yemen, southern Oman, Jiddat al-Harasis, the island of Soqotra and southern and eastern portions of Saudi Arabia. These are: Mehri, spoken over the largest area, spanning eastern Yemen, southern Oman and reaching into southern and eastern Saudi Arabia; Shahri (also known as Jibbali), spoken in the mountains and coastal regions of Dhofar; Hobyot, spoken in a small area spanning the Yemen–Oman border; Harsusi, spoken in Jiddat al-Harasis; the few Bathari speakers based around the coast of eastern Dhofar; and Soqotri, spoken on the island of Soqotra. Mehri, Soqotri, Hobyot and Shahri/Jibbali exhibit a number of distinct dialects.

Traditionally, the Mahrah and Harasis were nomadic camel and goat herders; the mountain and coastal-based Jibbali/Shahri speakers led a more settled existence, built temporary shelters and herded cows and goats in the mountains, and fished on the coast; the Batahirah kept goats and camels and lived predominantly from fishing; Hobyot speakers on the coast practised fishing and in the mountains herded cows, camels and goats. Multilingualism between the communities has always been common, at least in terms of comprehension. This is particularly so among Hobyot speakers, who understand Mehri and Jibbali/Shahri. The languages vary in endangerment from critical to moderate. In terms of speaker numbers they range from 12 to 20 for Bathari to c. 180,000 for Mehri. The precise number of speakers is, however, impossible to ascertain: there are no census figures relating to MSAL speakers specifically, and many members of the language communities no longer speak the languages fluently or at all.

The languages have no traditional script, which means any script-based education or communication is conducted through Arabic. Since the 1970s, the spread of Arabic has meant that the MSAL have increasingly fallen into disuse. This has been hastened by rapid social change and the collapse of traditional cultural activities. Until the 1970s, there were no schools or hospitals in the region, transport was by foot, water was collected by foot from natural sources, and people lived in caves and brushwood or stone huts they constructed themselves. Today the region enjoys all the trappings of the modern age. Younger generations no longer require, have or understand the extensive knowledge and practical skills of their elders and much earlier expertise has been lost or is disregarded, with imported alternatives replacing locally manufactured items. Traditional methods of natural resource and water management are no longer passed to the next generation, and significant degradation of the environment has occurred, with overgrazing and mismanagement of increasingly scarce water supplies accompanied by severe overfishing. One result is that plants and animals that once played a significant role in everyday life are now extinct or rare.

Language and culture are intrinsically linked, and the loss of traditional knowledge, skills and habitat is one of the key factors in language endangerment in the region.

Janet Watson and Miranda Morris work with native speakers to document and preserve the MSAL.

Miranda Morris and Ali al-Mahri in Raysut, Dhofar
The project aims to promote language revitalisation by encouraging speakers to speak their language and to write it. In a push to document and revive interest in the languages, we are conducting a community-based project funded by the Leverhulme Trust 2013-2016. The principal aim is to provide audio, audio-visual, photographic and textual documentation of five of the six endangered Modern South Arabian languages (MSAL) spoken in Oman and mainland Yemen: Mehri, Shahri/Jibbali, Harsusi, Hobyot and Bathari. In our plans to document and revitalise the MSAL, we recognise that success can only occur with the direct contribution and interest of community members. The UK investigators see themselves as part of a catalyst, decreasing their direct involvement as community members become more involved. To date the project has recruited over 100 speakers, several data collectors according to language and dialect, local transcribers and translators for work into Arabic, data interpreters, and a principal local researcher who has been part of the project since its inception.

Training

The majority of our older data collectors and speakers have had very little, if any, formal schooling. Nevertheless we have trained several community members to explain the purpose of the project to their communities, to obtain informed ethical consent from speakers, to record with digital recorders, label recordings, save and backup data and upload material into Dropbox folders. Community participants now train others in the use of digital recorders. The project has also developed a new Arabic-based script for the languages, which is being used by community members associated with the project. The local research assistant, Saeed al-Mahri, trains data collectors in ethical methods and use of digital recorders and trains community members to transcribe in the new script and translate from the languages into Arabic. He is also developing his own research profile and has also produced an article on water in Dhofar.

Language revitalisation

The project aims to promote language revitalisation by encouraging speakers to speak their language and to write it, with the hopes that they, in turn, will encourage their children to speak their own language as well as Arabic and will teach them to write it. The aim is to raise the profile and status of the languages not only amongst speakers themselves but also in the wider Arab community. This attempt to raise the status of the languages has already had a marked effect on the small Bathari community. A formerly disadvantaged people of low status, with feelings of shame about their former poverty and lowly position, they had been quick to embrace Arabic and adopt new skills. The small number of men and women who still speak Bathari, all illiterate and elderly, were initially unenthusiastic about the project, and early recordings were stiff and lacking in fluency. However over a period of two years, this attitude has changed markedly. They now speak with some pride of how they managed in earlier times, and younger family members are increasingly present at recording sessions, interested in learning something of their past and to wonder at the ingenuity and survival skills of their forebears. The enthusiasm of the Bathari data collector for this language continues to grow, and to date over 2,000 sound files have been recorded of ever increasing fluency and interest.

Community-based dissemination

The project has delivered over 20 presentations about the project to academic institutions, schools and public groups. Several have been presented with one or more community members, including lectures and workshops held in Paris, Erlangen, Frankfurt, Muscat, Salford, Jeddah, Newcastle, Roehampton, Leeds and London. Presentations with community members raise the value of the project in the eyes of both audiences and local participants. This initiative has led to our co-presenters discussing the project with community members throughout Dhofar and with academics and interested people outside Oman, and gaining respect and academic credibility.

Details of the project are available at http://www.leeds.ac.uk/arts/homepage/462/modern_south_arabian_languages

Janet Watson studied Arabic and Islamic Studies at the University of Exeter, and completed a PhD on Yemeni Arabic dialects at SOAS, London. She has worked at the universities of Edinburgh, Durham, Salford and Leeds, and currently holds the Leadership Chair of Language at Leeds. She was elected Fellow of the British Academy in 2013; Miranda Morris, St Andrew’s University, has worked on many projects in southern Arabia, and has published and carried out research on the ethnography and non-Arabic languages of the area.
In the small desert town of Tabelbala in south-western Algeria, a language is falling silent. It's easy for a casual visitor to miss its presence entirely: wander through the market or visit the school and what you'll hear, by and large, is dialectal Arabic. It's rude to speak anything else in front of a stranger.

Get to know some people better, though, and you might notice them speaking between themselves in a language that sounds completely different. Ask them about it, and they'll tell you it's called Shilha – which is what they call any non-Arabic local language. Press them, and they might add that it's nothing like the Shilha of other towns and also has a more specific name – Korandje. If they're feeling expansive, they might summarise its vocabulary with the traditional ditty: 'Couscous is ṭazu, water is iri, ground is gandza and sky is bini.' If they're in a less good mood, they might respond with a contemptuous rhymed proverb that everyone seems to know: 'Shilha is no more speech than oil is animal fat.'

If you're lucky enough to get invited to their homes or palm groves, you'll hear them shout to their children to go and get tea for the guests and notice that the words are in Arabic. This is no coincidence: hardly any families still speak to their children in Korandje. Looking it up when you get back, you realise with surprise that Korandje is a language in its own right, profoundly different from anything else in North Africa, and belongs to a language family spoken much further south – Songhay. How did it happen that a little-known oasis in the middle of nowhere has its own unique language? And why is it disappearing, after having lasted so many centuries?

Few North African oases are as isolated as Tabelbala. The nearest town is a trying four-hour ride away, while to the south stretch over 1,000 kilometres of barren sand. It might seem only appropriate, given this isolation, that some 3,000 of its inhabitants still speak a language used nowhere else on earth. Yet, on closer examination, the very

Korandje is profoundly different from anything else in North Africa, and belongs to a language family spoken much further south – Songhay
existence of Korandje reflects long-distance ties formed when Tabelbala was part of a trade network spanning the Sahara, and its name was familiar to Spanish mystics and Italian bankers.

The core of Korandje – its basic grammar and most frequent vocabulary – derives from Northern Songhay, spoken nearly 1,700 km away in Mali and Niger. It’s always been hard to imagine how it ended up so far from home. Recent research, however, suggests a scenario reminiscent of the Gulf today. It was probably brought in around the 12th century by workers imported to tend gardens – making a new caravan route between southern Morocco and Mali easier – and to work the nearby copper mines, satisfying a huge demand in West Africa. This seems to have been a planned infrastructural investment by the group that formed the order was established, reinforced by the maraboutic ideology that had become dominant throughout the wider region: the idea that saints’ power extended beyond the grave. The safety bought by tribute was thus reinforced by the perceived sanctity of the tombs of Tabelbala’s holy men: Sidi Zekri, who named Tabelbala for the tree under which his camel stopped; Sidi Larbi, pious ancestor of one of the larger families; the mysterious Seven Men, who came only to die and told no one their names; even ancient giants, whose superhuman height is proved by the length of their graves. During this period the language took on a number of borrowings from Moroccan Berber, such as as ‘marabout’ or tsafallas ‘chick.’

Arabic influence was already substantial by 1905-1910, when the French conquered Tabelbala; a 1907 wordlist includes such basic Arabic borrowings as ilha ‘back’ and ṭaḥha ‘four’. Before the end of the 20th century, this influence would become overwhelming. By now, practically all families in Tabelbala have stopped speaking Korandje with their children. Yet influence from other languages was nothing new in Tabelbala. What made the difference this time?

The crucial factor seems to have been schooling. This began slightly before Algeria’s independence in 1962 but expanded massively following independence as the new government channelled Algeria’s oil revenues into development. The children of Tabelbala could now not only access free education but aspire to find salaried jobs if they did well enough, rather than depending on their unreliable harvests. The teachers, for their part, simplistically saw Korandje as a major obstacle in the way of their education and were quick to tell the parents so. They listened: around 1980, one village council decreed that all parents should henceforth speak only Arabic to their children. Others followed suit over the following decades.

The fate of Korandje is not yet sealed. As they hit their teens, children often start using it as a mark of adulthood, picking it up piecemeal by listening in on adult conversations. Their fluency is noticeably limited, however, and this alone is unlikely to secure the language’s future. If a language is not spoken in the home with children, even massive efforts to teach it usually fail – and in Tabelbala, Korandje has no place in school at all. Unless people’s attitudes change profoundly and quickly, Korandje will probably be extinct within a century. What the people of Tabelbala lose and gain by this is for them to say; the rest of us will lose a key body of evidence on Saharan history and a reminder of the trans-national links that once bridged the Sahara.

Teachers simplistically saw Korandje as a major obstacle in the way of their education and were quick to tell the parents so. They listened.

Belbalis lined up to greet returning pilgrims, 2008

Lameen Souag is a researcher at LACITO (CNRS) in France, studying historical linguistics in northern Africa. His first book is Berber and Arabic in Siwa (Egypt): A Study in Linguistic Contact.
Siwi is a Berber language (Afro-asiatic phylum) spoken in the Siwa oasis, Egypt. The population consists of about 25,000 Siwis and 5,000 foreigners (coming mainly from other Egyptian cities). Siwi is also spoken in another small oasis – 130 km far from Siwa – called El Gara.

Because of long-standing contact with Arabic, Siwi has lost many Berber linguistic features. Arab interaction with Siwa has a long history: according to the geographer Al Idrisi, there have been Arabs living within the Berber population in the oasis since the 12th century. Nowadays, many workers (mainly from Upper Egypt) live in Siwa and many Siwis go to Libya or other Egyptian cities to study or work.

From a socio-cultural perspective, Siwa is a highly conservative, gender-segregated society. After marrying very young, women are not allowed to have contact with men outside their family. Instead they spend all their time caring for family members, rarely going outside their home.

Given the rapid loss of the unique attributes of their traditional society and the endangerment of the language, does it make sense to talk about language disparity between men and women? The following observations are mainly based on linguistic research focusing on women of different ages, married with Siwi or Arabic speakers.

The level of endangerment of the language

While Siwi is the language used everywhere in Siwa – and it is still passed on from generation to generation – Arabic is used in official contexts, at school and in communicating with Arabic-speaking foreigners. With the exception of children under school age and some very old people, almost the entire population of Siwa is bilingual.

UNESCO’s Atlas of the World’s Languages in Danger and Ethnologue, tools that collect mainly information about the degree of endangerment of a
language and the size of its population, give conflicting data. Ethnologue classifies Siwi as ‘vigorous’: meaning that it is still used in communication among all ages. UNESCO’s Atlas of the World’s Languages in Danger says that it is ‘definitely endangered’ and not learned as a mother tongue at home anymore by children. The truth is somewhere in between: Siwi is used by Siwis of all ages in everyday communication, but there are important reasons why the language should now legitimately be considered endangered.

The facts that, to different extents, indicate that the threat to the language is very high include: (1) Siwa was made part of Egypt in 1820 by Muhammad Ali. The only officially recognised language of Egypt is Arabic; (2) a first Arabic-only school was established in the oasis in 1928; (3) travel and contact with foreigners has significantly increased in the last 30 years; (4) the first road connecting Siwa to the coastal city of Marsa Matruh was built in the 1980s; (5) electricity and subsequently television arrived in the 1980s; (6) intermarriage between Arabic speakers and Siwi speakers has become very common in the last few years.

The last point seems to be the most relevant when explaining the endangerment of the language. Intermarriage (in this case between Siwi and Arabic speakers) is a critical factor. It impacts a key to the survival of any language: its transmission from parents to children. If a Siwi woman marries an Arabic-speaking man, Arabic becomes the language used at home and with children. When a Siwi man marries an Arabic-speaking woman, Siwi is used but to a much lesser extent, especially if the couple emigrate to a city where this language is not spoken at all – such as Marsa Matruh on the Egyptian Mediterranean coast or other Egyptian or Libyan cities.

**Is there really a gender-based language disparity in a conservative society?**

Siwi’s endangerment is obviously linked to contact with Arabic, the predominant major language. But it should be clear that, in general, language contact does not necessarily lead to the endangerment of a language. Unless there are very strong forces acting from the top, what is often crucial is the attitude of speakers toward their language (for example, to what degree they consider it prestigious or useful) and/or the sum of several factors, like the ones listed previously for Siwi.

Given the conservatism of the society and the fact that Siwi-speaking women are not exposed to the same number of Arabic speakers as Siwi-speaking men, it seems reasonable to wonder if socio-cultural factors could lead to a gender-based language disparity.

Investigation indicated that there is no real difference linguistically between the language spoken by men and that spoken by women. Indeed, the language of women is not more ‘conservative’ than that used by men, and it was somewhat disappointing to discover that some aspects of the language, clearly induced by the contact with Arabic, were found more frequently in women’s speech while men sometimes retained more conservative ones.

This generalisation has not been statistically validated, but it does show that, even in a very conservative society, all members can be exposed to the same influence from the predominant language.

Taking a closer look at the factors of endangerment listed above, it is clear that, with the exception of travel and contact with foreigners (because in general women do not travel unless they have to move with their husband and do not have contact with foreigners who are not family members), all the other factors influence women as much as men – especially schooling, television and intermarriage.

Nevertheless, differences must clearly be noted elsewhere: women and men sometimes differ in the vocabulary they use (there are specific parts of the lexicon that are more likely to be found among women than among men and vice versa) and the type of production can also differ: the transmission of tales (i.e. storytelling) is, for example, a domain that generally belongs to Berber women. But this is not a language-specific phenomenon and reflects more social and behavioural attitudes than real linguistic differences.

Documenting data from Siwi-speaking women was important because it created an opportunity to understand at what point all the dynamics that affect the vitality of a language are stronger than its conservatism. It gave the opportunity to research whether there are strong contact-induced influences on the language spoken by women and to observe the main factors that lead to the endangerment of the language, such as the choice not to use Siwi in communication between mother and child in mixed couples. Moreover, collecting folktales became an occasion, for some women, to gather all the children together and revive the practice of storytelling which has for the most part disappeared because of television. In general, the data documented is testimony to a language that still feels alive to its speakers – even if it is facing strong threats to its vitality.

Valentina Schiattarella has a PhD in Linguistics (EPHE, Paris) with a thesis on the Siwi language. She was awarded a small grant from ELDP for a project entitled: ‘Linguistic Documentation of the variety of Berber spoken in the Siwa Oasis of Egypt’
The Dom (or the ‘Gypsies of the Middle-East’) have recently received increasing media coverage. Most of it deals with social issues such as marginalisation, poverty and exclusion. Language is a key issue when trying to apprehend minority groups. ‘Gypsy’ is a cover-term and as such doesn’t mean much. It probably comes from the distortion of the adjective ‘Egyptian’, used in the late Middle Ages to refer to what were in all likelihood the ancestors of the Roma. While the term is oft en used in a derogatory way, it is also associated with a wide range of romantic stereotypes such as freedom, mobility and sensuality. Many other terms often collocate with ‘Gypsy’ such as Travellers, Bohemian, Roma, Sinti-Manouche, Romanichal, etc. Let’s leave these names and what they may refer to aside and travel back through time and space to the Indian subcontinent during late Antiquity/early Middle Ages.

India is famous for the existence of a strong caste system. Amongst these castes, one finds the Domba. The members of this caste are typically commercial nomads who specialise in niche economies ranging from entertainment to the production of highly specific goods. At some point in history, probably between the 4th and 6th centuries CE, some Domba communities started migrating from Central India to the north, before venturing further to the west. These communities were speakers of Indo-Aryan languages.

Indo-Aryan is a branch of the Indo-European linguistic family. Historical traces the journey of the Dom through time and space via their language

Bruno Herin

Dom man crafting a tabbeliya (musical instrument)

When leaving India, what used to refer to a caste (Domba) was later reinterpreted as an ethnonym (the name of an ethnic group)
There are no written records of the history of the Domba outside India. This makes the language itself the most important source of knowledge we have about the history of the Dom.

The Dom, who speak Domari, are thus in some way the descendants of a particular group of Domba who left India probably in the beginning of the Middle Indo-Aryan period. The language itself tells us that its speakers moved into Dardic lands in northwestern India, before moving westward into Persian speaking areas until they reached Anatolia. In the current state of knowledge, it is believed that a group stayed in Anatolia while another moved southwards to Arabic speaking zones, probably as far as Sudan. From the group(s) that remained in Anatolia, one subsequently branched off and migrated to the northern Levant (Syria and Lebanon). At present, dialects of Domari are known to be spoken in Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine and Jordan. It was probably also spoken in western Iran and Iraq but no recent account can confirm that it is still spoken in these two countries.

At least two things make Domari fascinating for linguists. The first is the fact it remained surprisingly archaic compared to Central Indo-Aryan languages spoken in India. Archaic means that Domari kept linguistic features found in the idioms of the early Middle Indo-Aryan period that have been lost or severely eroded in present-day languages such as Hindi. Compare the number three (in a simplified transcription) in Sanskrit (Old Indo-Aryan), Domari and Hindi: trini, tren, tin. This simple example shows that Domari kept the initial cluster ‘tr’ found in Old Indo-Aryan. In New Indo-Aryan ‘tr’ was reduced to ‘t’, suggesting that Domari went its own way very early in history. Secondly, speakers of Domari have always been at least bilingual: Domari and the language(s) of the host society. This has led to the incorporation of many words from previous and current contact languages – Persian, Kurdish, Turkish and Arabic – into the lexicon of Domari. If one wants to express a simple sentence such as ‘open the door’ in Syrian or Lebanese Domari, one should say lwa ka qapy-is. In this example, only ka and -is are Indo-Aryan. The verb lwa k- ‘open’ is derived from Kurdish va kirin and qapi ‘door’ is derived from Turkish kapı.

There are no written records of the history of the Domba outside India and these different layers of borrowings enable linguists to trace back their migrations. This makes the language itself the most important source of knowledge we have about the history of the Dom.

Domari has, until now, been transmitted from generation to generation since the Dom left India. Like other minority languages, intergenerational transmission is nowadays severely challenged in many communities. In the case of Lebanon, transmission has ceased: virtually no children are able to speak Domari. Syria was until recently the country where the Dom seemed to have better preserved the use of Domari, but most have left because of the civil war and sought refuge in neighbouring countries. Many of them live in miserable conditions in refugee camps in Lebanon, Turkey and Jordan with limited access to basic facilities. This puts heavy pressure on language transmission because families are often scattered across different locations. The future of the language is therefore very uncertain; hence the need to document Domari while it still has speakers, both for scholarly purposes and the Dom themselves.

Bruno Herin is a lecturer at INALCO (Paris). His research is on Arabic dialects and minority languages of the Middle East.

© Bruno Herin

Shareefeh, 83 yrs old. The oldest speaker in the community.
Western Armenian is a distinct dialect of Armenian (an Indo-European language) that is spoken by survivors of the 1915 genocide in the Ottoman Empire and their descendants. Lebanon and Syria, specifically Beirut and Aleppo, have been centres of the Armenian diaspora for the past century. The Armenian communities in these cities are large, dense and socially cohesive; in fact, most Armenian families worldwide have had members living in these communities at some point, and most diasporic cultural institutions are tied to central organisations located in Beirut and Aleppo. These communities serve as models: the ways of speaking and attitudes about preserving language and culture that circulate within are translated abroad and held up as norms for Western Armenian speakers globally.

It is rare that a minority language benefits from many centuries of literature, its own alphabet and a long history of community-run schools. In this regard, Western Armenian is a frontrunner in a movement for language maintenance and diversity that is growing on a global scale, and the experiences of Armenian schools in Lebanon, particularly, shed light on possibilities and challenges that other minority language schooling initiatives may do well to anticipate.

In the Lebanese Armenian community, knowing, actively speaking and passing the language on to children, as well as participating in Armenian institutions and especially the school, are measures used to define one’s membership in the community. The role of the school is unique and twofold. First, it offers particular types and levels of language acquisition. Second, enrolment in the school grants entry to social networks and institutional affiliations that enable active community participation. On both of these points, concerns are increasing in Lebanon, particularly given its central role internationally. Teachers and parents increasingly question whether students are fully competent in ‘proper Armenian’ when they graduate, and enrolment has fallen since the 1970s, causing many school closures and chronic problems such as staffing quality and facilities upkeep. Schools keep their tuition comparatively low and offer large numbers of scholarships, as they are private and many families cannot afford tuition. Thus, it is a particular source of frustration that many middle and upper-class families choose to enrol their children in more expensive, non-Armenian private schools.

What if, 100 years on, school is not enough?

A sign marks a main street in Beirut’s Bourj Hammoud, a neighbourhood built and historically dominated by Armenian refugees from Anatolia. The neighbourhood is a working-class one and its composition has changed significantly in recent decades.
In the Lebanese Armenian community, knowing, actively speaking and passing the language on to children are measures used to define one’s membership in the community.

of frustration that many middle and upper-class families choose to enrol their children in more expensive, non-Armenian private schools.

When discussing why families choose or do not choose an Armenian school, we can speak generally about two groups of parents who are largely talking past one another. Enrolled families tend to describe non-enrolled families as devaluing or even being ashamed of their Armenian heritage. Instead they are seen as seeking social advancement through schools with elite clientele and high tuition costs. Enrolled families assert that a true Armenian identity cannot be instilled in a child without immersion in an Armenian environment and formal history and language classes. Importantly, they also tend to assert that while Armenian schools may not be the cream of the crop, they are perfectly good schools with large numbers of successful alumni, and the higher tuition of other private schools is largely an effort to generate prestige. Many non-enrolled families, on the other hand, strongly defend their Armenian identity and insist that weekly language courses or private history lessons fulfill the same function as the school. Often, these families state that the calibre of education is inferior in Armenian schools: a student-centred pedagogy is often cited as a missing element, as Armenian schools depend more on lecturing, testing and memorisation than on group work, projects or independent exploration.

A certain discursive stalemate occurs with regard to the future of the schools because, on the one hand, the schools do not confront the challenge of modernising their teaching in ways that meaningfully refocus the student experience and address the learning styles of contemporary students. On the other hand, non-enrolled parents do not directly confront the inevitable limitations on language acquisition and socialisation that result from leaving the Armenian school. It is a decision, it must be noted, that is almost never reversed, neither in present nor subsequent generations.

Furthermore, the Lebanese linguistic context is uniquely complicated since Armenian, Arabic, French and English are all widely used, and each exhibits its own pull in terms of either prestige or social access, sometimes both. Habits of mixing and hybridising languages are ubiquitous and often positively viewed in ‘polite society’. Efforts made in Armenian schools to correct and stigmatisate the mixing of languages are thus at odds with many people’s idea of what it means to be or to ‘speak’ Lebanese. This creates a rift between members of the ‘core’ community, who see correcting one another’s mixing as a supportive act that protects Armenian’s vitality, and more ‘peripheral’ members who may not have attended Armenian schools and may use Armenian in a highly mixed fashion at home. Being corrected can cause feelings of rejection or exclusion and can reinforce the idea that the ‘core’ community is old-fashioned, conservative and segregated from mainstream society.

As Lebanon’s Armenian schools close and consolidate they face the same challenge that Armenian schools elsewhere in the diaspora have been struggling to surmount for several decades: what to do about students who have not acquired Armenian as a primary language in the family? In more monolingual countries, even students with two Armenian-speaking parents become more confident speakers of the dominant language (English, French, etc.) before the end of primary school, and the traditional, teacher-centred model of education does not provide them with enough speaking practice to maintain Armenian in their daily life. Without a more effective approach to language transmission, the school unwittingly becomes a transitional institution, ensuring receptive competence in the language of parents and grandparents but not creating a community of Armenian-speaking peers.

The challenges that this poses for notions of identity, marketing of the school to families and language pedagogy are the same that must be faced if Lebanese schools hope to revive enrolment by including students from mixed families or families who have left the Armenian school.

For endangered languages around the world, many of which are still developing the instructional materials and programmes that Armenian already had to draw on a century ago, two challenges are worth considering at the design stage of vitality interventions as they will undoubtedly be encountered further along: who is the possible clientele of the school and what are their measures for desirability in a school? How will language change and the hybrid practices that result from language contact be approached in the discourse of the school? The Armenian schools in Lebanon boast longevity and a multidimensional importance in the community and provide examples of language and identity discourses that encourage language maintenance. But their own future depends on innovation in response to changing educational and linguistic landscapes.

Anke al-Bataineh is a PhD candidate at INALCO, Paris who is based in Beirut, Lebanon. Her research combines language change and contact, pragmatics and language learning, and alternative models of education.

A very popular verse attributed to Armenian-American William Saroyan is displayed on the door of a closed Beirut shop on 24 April. Saroyan did not write in Armenian, but this verse can be found displayed across the global Armenian diaspora.
At a time when Iran and the United States have reached an agreement of historic significance over the former's nuclear programme, an exploration of Ayatollah Khomeini's life and legacy would seem especially pertinent. The founder of the Islamic Republic in 1979, Khomeini's vision continually influences the politics of contemporary Iran. Adib-Moghaddam's edited collection, *A Critical Introduction to Khomeini*, unpacks in greater detail one of the 20th century’s ‘giants of history’, who has somewhat surprisingly been under-researched from an academic perspective.

Comprising 13 articles that address various facets of Khomeini’s life, this volume is a welcome addition to the field of Middle Eastern studies. Khomeini is assessed through both a historical and philosophical lens, ensuring that the Ayatollah is dealt with in a comprehensive and conceptually rich manner. Any scholar interested in exploring in greater detail the Ayatollah’s life, whether set in historical context or through an examination of his political philosophy, is well served by Adib-Moghaddam’s collection. At the same time, however, the non-academic reader may also profit from this volume, as the writing is accessible to the non-specialist. For if we are to gain a firm introduction to Ayatollah Khomeini, surely we must first need an even more robust understanding of 20th century Iran and the prevailing conditions which allowed such a character to emerge. Anyone approaching Iran for the first time via this volume may therefore be trying to run before he/she can walk, one suspects, in analysing the Ayatollah without an understanding of the much broader historical backdrop of Iranian politics.

This is a minor issue however, as each article’s individual context setting does go some way to informing the reader. The rest of the analysis offered is thought-provoking, dynamic and clearly of high interest in both academic and non-academic contexts. As Political Islam maintains its monopoly on the public imagination of the Middle East, this volume goes a long way in addressing where the original Islamic revolutionary fits in this picture.

Bijan Hakimian graduated from SOAS in 2014 and recently completed a Master’s Degree in Political Thought and Intellectual History from the University of Cambridge, specialising in Iranian Political Thought. He is now working in the public sector.
Beginning 8 July 2014, Israel launched air strikes and a ground invasion of Gaza that lasted 51 days, leaving over 2,000 people dead, the vast majority of whom were civilians. During the assault, at least 10,000 homes were destroyed and, according to the United Nations, nearly 300,000 Palestinians were displaced. Max Blumenthal was on the ground during what he argues was an entirely avoidable catastrophe. In this book Blumenthal reveals the harrowing conditions and cynical deceptions that led to the ruinous war.

*The 51 Day War: Ruin and Resistance in Gaza*

By Max Blumenthal

*July 2015, Verso Books £14.99*

Having grown up in Britain following her family’s exile from Palestine, doctor, author and academic Ghada Karmi leaves her adoptive home on a quest to return to her homeland. She starts work with the Palestinian Authority and gets a first-hand understanding of its bizarre bureaucracy under Israel’s occupation. In this book she takes the reader on a journey into the heart of one of the world’s most intractable conflict zones. Visiting places she has not seen since childhood, her insights reveal a militarised and barely recognisable homeland. Her encounters with politicians, fellow Palestinians and Israeli soldiers cause her to question what role exiles like her have in the future of their country and whether return is truly possible.

*Return: A Palestinian Memoir*

By Ghada Karmi

*April 2015, Verso Books £16.99*

The uprisings which spread across the Middle East and North Africa in late 2010 and 2011 irrevocably altered the way in which the region is now perceived. But in spite of the numerous similarities in these protests, from Tunisia and Egypt to Yemen and Bahrain, their broader political effects display important differences. This book analyses these popular uprisings, as well as other forms of protest, and the impact they had on each state. Why were Mubarak and Bin Ali ousted relatively peacefully in Egypt and Tunisia, while Qaddafi in Libya and Saleh in Yemen fought violent battles against their opponents? Why do political transformations differ in countries that were able to shed their autocratic presidents? And why have other regimes, including Morocco and Saudi Arabia, experienced only limited protests or managed to repress and circumvent them? Looking at the aftermath and transitional processes across the region, this book is a retrospective examination of the uprisings and how they can be understood in the light of state formation and governmental dynamics.

*The Arab Uprisings: Transforming and Challenging State Power*

Edited by Eberhard Kienle and Nadine Sika

*June 2015, IB Tauris, £58.00*
Iran’s Political Economy since the Revolution

By Suzanne Maloney

Over three decades after the Iranian Revolution reconfigured the strategic landscape in the Middle East, scholars are still trying to decipher its aftereffects. Suzanne Maloney provides a comprehensive overview of Iran's political economy since the 1979 revolution and offers detailed examinations of two aspects of the Iranian economy of direct interest to scholars and non-specialist readers of Iran: the energy sector and the role of sanctions. Based on the author’s research as both a scholar and government advisor, the book features interviews with American and Iranian government officials. Moving chronologically from the early years under Khomeini, through the economic deprivations of the 1980s during the Iran–Iraq war, through liberalisation under Khatami to the present, Maloney offers insights into Iran’s domestic politics and how economic policies have affected ideology, leadership priorities and foreign relations.

August 2015, Cambridge University Press, £22.99

The Rise of the Israeli Right: From Odessa to Hebron

By Colin Shindler

The Israeli Right first came to power nearly four decades ago. Its election was described then as ‘an earthquake,’ and its reverberations are still with us. How then did the Right rise to power? What are its origins? Colin Shindler traces this development from the birth of Zionism in cosmopolitan Odessa in the 19th century to today’s Hebron, a centre of radical Jewish nationalism. He looks at central figures such as Vladimir Jabotinsky, an intellectual and founder of the Revisionist movement and Menahem Begin, the single-minded politician who brought the Right to power in 1977. Both accessible and comprehensive, this book explains the political ideas and philosophies that were the Right’s ideological bedrock and the compromises that were made in its journey to government.

August 2015, Cambridge University Press, £22.99

Arab Water Security: Threats and Opportunities in the Gulf States

By Hussein A. Amery

This book explores the national security implications of the Arab Gulf states reliance on desalination plants and their related infrastructure. It provides a systematic and comprehensive discussion of current and future threats to the supply of freshwater from a desalination plant, including actual and virtual attacks by terrorists, mechanical failure, contamination, sabotage by aggrieved workers, attacks relating to regional conflicts, as well as their vulnerability to natural disasters. It also provides a detailed analysis of the effects of a potential disruption to the water supply and proposes possible measures, both political and technological, that can be used to increase resilience to these threats.

July 2015, Cambridge University Press, £64.99
Writing the Ottomans: Turkish History in Early Modern England

By Anders Ingram

Histories of the Turks were a central means through which English authors engaged in intellectual and cultural terms with the Ottoman Empire, its advance into Europe following the capture of Constantinople (1454), and its continuing central European power up to the treaty of Karlowitz (1699). Writing the Ottomans examines historical writing on the Turks in England from 1480-1700. It explores the evolution of this discourse from its continental roots, and its development in response to moments of military crisis such as the Long War of 1593-1606 and the War of the Holy League 1683-1699, as well as Anglo-Ottoman trade and diplomacy throughout the 17th century. From the writing of central authors such as Richard Knolles and Paul Rycaut, to lesser known names, it reads English histories of the Turks in their intellectual, religious, political, economic and print contexts, and analyses their influence on English perceptions of the Ottoman world.

August 2015, Palgrave Macmillan, £55.00

The Political Economy of EU Ties with Iraq and Iran: An Assessment of the Trade–Peace Relationship

By Amir M. Kamel

Using a theoretical and empirical perspective, this book analyses how and why the EU’s plan to maintain peace and prevent conflict in Iraq and Iran through trade has failed. Between 1979 and 2009, EU trade with Iraq and Iran increased before, during and after periods of conflict. The author uses case studies of both countries to demonstrate the effects of the peace-through-trade-policy before and after the implementation of the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy in 1992, and shows how the policy failed. This book adds to the trade-peace theory debate and provides evidence supporting the need to review the EU’s peace-through-trade policy towards Iraq and Iran.

July 2015, Palgrave Macmillan, £75.00

From Deep State to Islamic State: The Arab Counter-Revolution and its Jihadi Legacy

By Jean-Pierre Filiu

In this political history of the 'Deep State' in the Middle East, Jean-Pierre Filiu reveals how the autocracies of Syria, Egypt and Yemen crushed the democratic uprisings of the 'Arab Revolution'. They did so by turning to the shadowy intelligence agencies and internal security arms of the so-called 'Deep State' who had decades of experience in dealing with internal dissent, as well as to street gangs (the Baltaguiyya in Egypt) or death squads (the Shabbiha in Syria) to enforce their will. Alongside intimidation, imprisonment and murder, the Arab counter-revolutionaries released from prison and secretly armed and funded many hardline Islamists, thereby boosting Salafi–Jihadi groups such as Islamic State, in the hope of convincing the Western powers to back their dictatorships. They also succeeded in dividing the opposition forces ranged against them, going so far as to ruthlessly discard politicians and generals from among their own elite in the pursuit of absolute, unfettered, power.

July 2015, Hurst, £15.99
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

OCTOBER EVENTS

Thursday 1 October

4:00 pm | In the Footsteps of a Pioneer Archaeologist in Palestine: One Hundred Years after Duncan Mackenzie at Tel Beth-Shemesh, Israel (Lecture)
Shlomo Bunimovitz and Zvi Lederman, Tel Aviv University. Organised by: Palestine Exploration Fund. In 1911 the Palestine Exploration Fund sent archaeologist Duncan Mackenzie to excavate Beth-Shemesh in order to determine who the mysterious Philistines that migrated to Canaan in the twelfth century BC were. Bunimovitz and Lederman discuss Mackenzie’s finds. Admission free. Pre-registration required T 020 7323 8181 W www.britishmuseum.org BP Lecture Theatre, BM. T 020 7935 5379 E execsec@pef.org.uk W www.pef.org.uk

4:30 pm | Other ‘gentrifications’: remaking Ras Beirut (Seminar)
Fran Tonkiss, LSE and Mona Khechen, AUB. Organised by: LSE Middle East Centre. Based on the culmination of a collaborative research project between LSE and the American University of Beirut the seminar explores the remaking of Ras Beirut from the standpoint of comparative urbanism. Admission free. Pre-registration required. Room 9.04 (TBC), LSE. T 020 7955 6198 E s.sfeir@lse.ac.uk W www.lse.ac.uk/middleEastCentre/

Friday 2 October

1:15 pm | Breaking New Ground in Room 55: Mesopotamia 1500–539 BC (Gallery Talk)

Monday 5 October


Tuesday 6 October

10:00 am | Caesar Photos: Inside the Syrian Authorities’ Prisons + Panel Debate
Organised by: Frontline Club In collaboration with the Syrian Association for Missing and Conscience Detainees and the National Coalition of Syrian Revolution and Opposition Forces. Exhibition opens at 10:00am and ends at 6:00pm with the panel debate starting at 7:00pm. The Caesar Exhibition at the Frontline Club for one day only. Admission free. Pre-registration for the panel debate required. Frontline Club, 13 Norfolk Place, London W2 1QJ. T 020 7479 8940 E events@frontlineclub.com W www.frontlineclub.com

5:45 pm | Hidden Light: A View from Cosmopolitan Kuwait (Lecture) Mai Al-Nakib, Kuwait University. Organised by: London Middle East Institute, SOAS (LMEI) and the Near & Middle East History Seminar. What can fiction do in the context of the fraught Middle East? Join

TUESDAY LECTURE PROGRAMME ON THE CONTEMPORARY MIDDLE EAST AUTUMN 2015

6 October
*Hidden Light: A View from Cosmopolitan Kuwait*
Mai Al-Nakib, Kuwait University
Lecture organised jointly with the Near & Middle East History Seminar

13 October
*Qatar – Small State, Big Politics*
Mehran Kamrava, Center for International and Regional Studies, Georgetown University School of Foreign Service in Qatar

20 October
*Return: A Palestinian Memoir*
Ghada Karmi, University of Exeter
Lecture organised jointly with the Centre for Palestine Studies

27 October
*Islamic State: The Digital Caliphate*
Abdel Bari Atwan, Rai al-Youm

3 November
*Reading Week*

10 November
*The Creative Enterprise and Alternative Spaces of Imagination in Iran Peninsula*
Pamela Karimi, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth and former IHF Visiting Fellow, Centre for Iranian Studies
Lecture organised jointly with the Centre for Iranian Studies

17 November* 5:30pm start
*Title TBC*

24 November
*The Music Culture of the Arabian Peninsula*
Rolf Killius

1 December
*Title TBC*

8 December
*7sides of A Cylinder - 7 shorts by 7 Iranian Filmmakers*
Haleh Anvari
Film Screening organised jointly with the Centre for Iranian Studies

TUESDAYS 5:45 PM
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:
The London Middle East Institute at SOAS, University of London, Thornhaugh Street, Russell Square, London, WC1H 0XG, T: 020 7898 4330; E: lmei@soas.ac.uk, W: www.soas.ac.uk/lmei/
Kuwait writer and academic Mai Al-Nakib for a discussion and reading of her award-winning collection of short stories, The Hidden Light of Objects. Part of the LMEI's Tuesday Evening Lecture Programme on the Contemporary Middle East. Admission free. Khalili Lecture Theatre, SOAS. Tel 020 7898 4330/4490 E vp6@soas.ac.uk W www.soas.ac.uk/lmei/events/ Sunday 11 October

11:00 am | how to: Ari Shavit on Israel. From Negotiations with Iran to Settlements (Talk)
Organised by: How To Academy. Israeli journalist and writer Ari Shavit will talk about some of the challenges and opportunities currently facing Israel, and offer a global insight into the forces shaping the Middle East today. Tickets: £30 Premium (includes a paperback copy of Shavit’s book My Promised Land RRP £14.99)/£20 Standard. The Tabernacle, 35 Powis Square, London W11 2AY. E john.gordon@howtoacademy.com W www.howtoacademy.com

Monday 12 October


7:00 pm | Persian Kingship and Architecture: Strategies of Power from the Achaemenids to the Pahlavis (Lecture) Sussan Babaie, Courtauld Institute. Organised by: The Iran Society. Doors open 6:30pm. 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). Tel 020 7235 5122 E info@iransociety.org W www.iransociety.org / www.therag.co.uk

Tuesday 13 October

5:00 pm | Jet Set Frontiers: Tourism, Hijackings, Petrodollars, and the Politics of Aeromobility from Beirut to the Gulf (Seminar) Waleed Hazbun, American University of Beirut. Organised by: Department of Anthropology and Sociology, SOAS. Part of the Anthropology of Tourism and Travel Seminar Series. Admission free. Room 4426, SOAS. E nl15@soas.ac.uk W www.soas.ac.uk/anthropology/events/

5:45 pm | Qatar – Small State, Big Politics (Lecture) Mehran Kamrava, Center for International and Regional Studies, Georgetown University School of Foreign Service in Qatar. Organised by: London Middle East Institute, SOAS (LMEI). Despite its small size and demographic limitations, over the last two decades or so Qatar has emerged as one of the most consequential, and in many respects influential, actors in the Persian Gulf region and in the larger Middle East. Part of the LMEI’s Tuesday Evening Lecture Programme on the Contemporary Middle East. Admission free. Khalili Lecture Theatre, SOAS. Tel 020 7898 4330/4490 E vp6@soas.ac.uk W www.soas.ac.uk/lmei/events/

Wednesday 14 October

6:00 pm | Pursuing Atrocity Accountability in Syria (Panel Discussion) Chris Engels, Commission for International Justice and Accountability and Toby Cadman, 9 Bedford Row International. Organised by: LSE Middle East Centre. The Commission for International Justice and Accountability (CIJA) will present its work, methodology and findings of the completed case files relating to the large-scale violations of international criminal and humanitarian law taking place in the Syrian conflict. Admission free. Room TBA, LSE. Tel 020 7955 6198 E s.sfeir@lse.ac.uk W www.lse.ac.uk/middleEastCentre/

7:00 pm | Numismatic Evidence from Fustat: A Presentation in Memory of George T Scanlon (Lecture) Jere Bacharach, University of Washington, Seattle. Organised by: Islamic Art Circle at SOAS. Part of the Islamic Art Circle at SOAS Lecture Programme. Chair: Scott Redford, SOAS. Admission free. Venue TBC. SOAS. Tel 0771 408 7480 E rosalindhaddon@gmail.com W www.soas.ac.uk/art/islac/

Thursday 15 October

5:45 pm | Digitising British Imperialism in the Gulf: The British Library - Qatar Foundation Partnership (Lecture) Louis Allday, British Library. Organised by: MBI Al Jaber Foundation and the British Foundation for the Study of Arabia (BFSA). Allday will give a talk on the Qatar Digital Library (www.qdl.qa), a bilingual online portal that provides access to previously un-digitised British Library archive materials related to the history of the Persian Gulf and a selection of the Library’s Arabic scientific manuscripts. Part of the MBI Al Jaber Foundation

Erbil Citadel, Iraqi Kurdistan © Richard Wilding (See November Events Kurdistan: A Dream Suspended on Wednesday 4 November, p. 31)
Lecture Series. Admission free. Pre-registration required E info@mbifoundation.com MBI Al Jaber Conference Room, London Middle East Institute, SOAS (LMEI), University of London, MBI Al Jaber Building, 21 Russell Square, London WC1B 5EA. W www.mbifoundation.com / www.thebfsa.org

Saturday 17 October


Sunday 18 October

9:00 am | Settlers & Citizens: A Critical View of Israeli Society (Two-Day Conference: Saturday 17 - Sunday 18 October) Organised by: SOAS Palestine Society in association with the Centre for Palestine Studies, SOAS. The conference will aim to highlight the continuities in Israeli politics both between different segments of Israeli society as well as between different epochs of the state’s existence. By focusing on specific political behaviours and trends, the conference hopes to uncover longer term, more fundamental logics, which are based on the settler colonial nature of the state. Tickets: £35/£25 conc. Pre-registration required W http://soasunion.org/ents/event/552/Room TBC, SOAS. E soaspssoc.conf2015@gmail.com W www.soas.ac.uk/lmei-cps/events/

1.15 pm | The Pharaoh Amenhotep III’s Life and Monuments (Gallery Talk) George Hart, independent speaker. Organised by: BM. Admission free. Room 55, BM. T 020 7323 8181 W www.britishmuseum.org

Monday 19 October

6:00 pm | Decolonizing Palestinian Political Economy: De-development and Beyond (Book Launch) Mandy Turner, Kenyon Institute (Council for British Research in the Levant) and Omar Shweiki, University of Oxford. Organised by: Centre for Palestine Studies. Event to mark the launch of Decolonizing Palestinian Political Economy: De-development and Beyond (Palgrave, 2014) with the editors Mandy Turner and Omar Shweiki. The book provides political economy analyses of the Palestinian people as a whole and rejects the dominant, conventional approach that has fragmented the Palestinians into separate and distinct groups and reduced those regarded as ‘the Palestinian people’ to only those who reside within the occupied territory. Admission free. G3, SOAS. T 020 7898 4330/4490 E vp6@soas.ac.uk W www.soas.ac.uk/lmei-cps/events/

6:15 pm | Title TBA: on Neo-Babylonian tablets in the Schøyen Collection (Seminar) Cornelia Wunsch, SOAS. Organised by: The London Centre for the Ancient Near East. Ancient Near East Seminar series. Admission free. L67, SOAS. E ag5@soas.ac.uk W http://banealcane.org/lcane/

Tuesday 20 October

Until 8 November | Nour Festival of Arts 2015 The sixth annual Nour Festival of Arts showcasing contemporary arts and culture from across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). Taking place over 20 days, Nour presents 50 events in 18 venues across Kensington and Chelsea. See website for the full programme, ticket and venue details. T 020 7361 3618 E nour@rbkc.gov.uk W www.nourfestival.co.uk

5:15 pm | Between Hegemony and Resistance: Towards a Moral Economy of the Tunisian Revolution (Seminar) Sami Zemni, Middle East and North Africa Research Group. Organised by: LSE Middle East Centre. Part of the Social Movements and Popular Mobilisation in the MENA event series. Zemni presents his paper, co-written with Habib Ayeb, in which he uses a 'moral economy' approach in order to understand the massive mobilizations that led to Ben Ali’s disappearance and the nature of political change in the post-Ben Ali era. Admission free. Pre-registration required. Room 9.04, Tower 2, Clement’s Inn, LSE. T 020 7955 6198 E s.seifir@lse.ac.uk W www.lse.ac.uk/middleEastCentre/
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For further details, please contact:
Dr Adam Hanieh
E: ah92@soas.ac.uk

www.soas.ac.uk
5:45 pm | Return: A Palestinian Memoir (Lecture) Ghada Karmi, University of Exeter. Organised by: London Middle East Institute, SOAS (LMEI) and the Centre for Palestine Studies. Talk by Karmi on her latest book Return: A Palestinian Memoir (Verso 2015) in which she takes the reader on a fascinating journey into the heart of one of the world’s most intractable conflict zones and one of the major issues of our time. Part of the LMEI’s Tuesday Evening Lecture Programme on the Contemporary Middle East. Admission free. Khalili Lecture Theatre, SOAS. T 020 7898 4330/4490 E vp6@soas.ac.uk W www.soas.ac.uk/lmei/events/

Wednesday 21 October

6:00 pm | Algeria’s Belle Epoque: Memories of the 1970s (Lecture) Ed McAllister. Organised by: LSE Middle East Centre and the Society for Algerian Studies. Admission free. Room TBA, LSE. T 020 7955 6198 E s.sfieir@lse.ac.uk W www.lse.ac.uk/middleEastCentre/

Thursday 22 October

7:00 pm | Arab Human Development Report Panel Discussion Organised by: London Middle East Institute, SOAS (LMEI). Event to mark the publication of this year’s Arab Human Development Report which focuses on youth with Nadje Al-Ali, SOAS and Jad Chaaban, American University of Beirut (AUB), who both contributed to the report. Admission free. Khalili Lecture Theatre, SOAS. T 020 7898 4330/4490 E vp6@soas.ac.uk W www.soas.ac.uk/lmei/events/

7:00 pm | Nawal El Saadawi (Talk) Organised by: The Mosaic Rooms. An evening with celebrated Egyptian writer Nawal El Saadawi.

Friday 23 October

1:15 pm | Conserving the British Museum’s Papyri (Gallery Talk) Bridget Leach, BM. Organised by: BM. Explore digital skills used by Museum scientists to uncover the secrets of the ancient Egyptians, and see if you can make your own Museum discovery. Admission free. Room 61, BM. T 020 7323 8181 W www.britishmuseum.org

6:00 pm | Talk on Yemen with HE Edmund Fitton-Brown, British Ambassador to Yemen Organised by: British-Yemeni Society. Drinks from 5:30pm. Tickets: £10/£5 Members. Pre-registration required T 020 7731 3260 E allfreea@gmail.com St Matthew’s Conference Centre, 20 Great Peter Street, London SW1P 2BU. W www.al-bab.com/bys/

Monday 26 October

7:00 pm | Nawal El Saadawi in Conversation with Wendell Steavenson Organised by: Frontline Club. Four and a half years ago, Egypt dominated headlines globally with scenes of hope and change in Tahrir Square, now the country garners attention for a very different reason - the imprisonment of journalists. Nawal El Saadawi reflects on the situation in Egypt and will be joined in conversation with the journalist Wendell Steavenson,
who was in Tahrir four years ago. Tickets: £12.50/£10 conc. Frontline Club, 13 Norfolk Place, London W2 1QJ. T 020 7479 8940 E events@frontlineclub.com W www.frontlineclub.com

Tuesday 27 October

5:45 pm | Islamic State: The Digital Caliphate (Lecture) Abdel Bari Atwan, Rai al-Youm. Organised by: London Middle East Institute, SOAS (LMEI). Based on extensive field research and exclusive interviews with IS insiders, Atwan discusses his latest book *Islamic State: The Digital Caliphate* (Saqi Books, 2015) which offers a comprehensive review of the group's organisational structure and leadership, strategies, tactics and diverse methods of recruitment. Part of the LMEI's Tuesday Evening Lecture Programme on the Contemporary Middle East. Admission free. Khalili Lecture Theatre, SOAS. T 020 7898 4330/4490 E vp6@soas.ac.uk W www.soas.ac.uk/lmei/events/

Wednesday 28 October

3:00 pm | Race, Religion and the Lost Tribes of Israel (Seminar) Yulia Egorova, Durham University. Organised by: Department of Anthropology and Sociology. Anthropology Departmental Seminar Series. Admission free. Room G52, SOAS. E nii15@soas.ac.uk W www.soas.ac.uk/anthropology/events/

6:00 pm | The Other Saudis: Shiism, Dissent and Sectarianism (Book Launch) Toby Matthiesen, University of Cambridge. Organised by: LSE Middle East Centre. Drawing on little-known Arabic sources, extensive fieldwork in Saudi Arabia and interviews with key activists Matthiesen launches his new book titled *The Other Saudis: Shiism, dissent and sectarianism* in which he traces the politics of the Shia in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia from the nineteenth century until the present day. Admission free. Room TBA, LSE. T 020 7955 6198 E s.sfeir@lse.ac.uk W www.lse.ac.uk/middleEastCentre/

7:00 pm | The Trials of Spring (Film Screening/Panel Discussion) Organised by the London Middle East Institute, SOAS (LMEI), the Centre for Gender Studies, SOAS, the Centre for Media Studies, SOAS and Women Living Under Muslim Laws (WLUM). Feature-length documentary and a series of shorts that chronicle the stories of nine women who played central roles in the Arab uprisings and their aftermaths in Egypt, Tunisia, Libya, Syria, Bahrain and Yemen. Followed by a discussion and Q&A. Admission free. Khalili Lecture Theatre, SOAS. T 020 7898 4330/4490 E vp6@soas.ac.uk W www.soas.ac.uk/lmei/events/

Thursday 29 October

4:00 pm | Why is Syria so Statist? Revisiting Ideas and Economic Change in Historical Institutionalism (Lecture) Daniel Neep, Georgetown University. Organised by: LSE Middle East Centre. Why did Syria transition from a *laissez-faire* to a statist economy between 1946 and 1954? Neep explains the shift by using a constructivist historical institutionalist approach to emphasise the importance of ideas in producing economic shifts. Admission free. Pre-registration required. Vera Anstey Room, Old Building, LSE. T 020 7955 6198 E s.sfeir@lse.ac.uk W www.lse.ac.uk/middleEastCentre/

Saturday 31 October

9:00 am | The Gaza Strip: History, Future and New Directions for Research (Conference) Organised by the Centre for Palestine Studies. It has been almost eight years since Israel’s military blockade of the Gaza Strip, during this time, repeated aerial and ground invasions have killed thousands of Palestinians. Nonetheless, despite these enormous difficulties, Gaza remains an integral part of future trajectories in Palestine. In this context the conference will aim to address various aspects of academic research related to the Gaza Strip. Tickets: Special Student rate of £25 for both the day conference and evening event. For full price admission book by Friday 9 October for the early-bird rates: £30 Conference/£10 Evening Event/£35.00 Conference and Evening Event. Pre-registration required W www.soas.ac.uk/lmei-cps/events/ Brunei Gallery Lecture Theatre and Brunei Suite, SOAS. T 020 7898 4330/4490 E vp6@soas.ac.uk

**EVENTS OUTSIDE LONDON**

Tuesday 27 October

6:00 pm | Rapping Our Way to Islam (Discussion/Performance) Organised by: Centre of Islamic Studies, University of Cambridge. Christopher Chong presents an informal lecture about his creative process for Amouage, an international perfume house originating from Oman. Part of Cambridge Festival of Ideas. Admission free. Keynes Room, King’s College, King’s Parade, Cambridge CB2 1ST. E cis@cis.cam.ac.uk W www.cis.cam.ac.uk

Wednesday 28 October

5:30 pm | Bridging the Middle East with the Rest of the World through Perfumery (Lecture) Organised by: Centre of Islamic Studies, University of Cambridge. Christopher Chong presents an informal lecture about his creative process for Amouage, an international perfume house originating from Oman. Part of Cambridge Festival of Ideas. Admission free. Keynes Room, Cambridge CB2 1ST. E cis@cis.cam.ac.uk W www.cis.cam.ac.uk
SOAS, University of London, is pleased to announce the availability of several scholarships in its Centre for Iranian Studies (CIS).

The Centre, established in 2010, draws upon the range of academic research and teaching across the disciplines of SOAS, including Languages and Literature, the Study of Religions, History, Economics, Politics, International Relations, Music, Art and Media and Film Studies. It aims to build close relations with likeminded institutions and to showcase and foster the best of contemporary Iranian talent in art and culture.

**MA in Iranian Studies**

In 2012/13 CIS members successfully launched an interdisciplinary MA in Iranian Studies, the first of its kind, which will be offered again in 2015/16.

Thanks to the generosity of the Fereydoun Djam Charitable Trust, a number of Kamran Djam scholarships are available for BA, MA and MPhil/PhD studies.

**For further details, please contact:**

**Scholarships Officer**
E: scholarships@soas.ac.uk
T: +44 (0)20 7074 5091/ 5094
W: www.soas.ac.uk/scholarships

**Centre for Iranian Studies**
Dr Arshin Adib-Moghaddam (Chair)
E: aa106@soas.ac.uk
T: +44 (0)20 7898 4747
W: www.soas.ac.uk/lmei-cis

**MA in Iranian Studies**
Dr Nima Mina (Department of the Languages and Culture of the Middle East)
E: nm46@soas.ac.uk
T: +44 (0)20 7898 4315
W: www.soas.ac.uk/nme/programmes/ma-in-iranian-studies

**Student Recruitment**
T: +44(0)20 7898 4034
E: study@soas.ac.uk
King’s College, King’s Parade, Cambridge CB2 1ST. E cis@cis.cam.ac.uk W www.cis.cam.ac.uk

Saturday 31 October

2:00 pm | Islamophobia: New Findings, New Perspectives (Panel Discussion) Organised by: Centre of Islamic Studies, University of Cambridge. A discussion on Islamophobia in twenty-first century Britain. Current research undertaken by the Centre is presented alongside expert opinion and debate from Chris Allen, University of Birmingham, Daniel Zeichner MP, local community leaders and the Cambridgeshire Constabulary. Part of Cambridge Festival of Ideas. Admission free. Keynes Room, King’s College, King’s Parade, Cambridge CB2 1ST. E cis@cis.cam.ac.uk W www.cis.cam.ac.uk

NOVEMBER EVENTS

Monday 2 November

1:00 pm | Nour Midday Music (Performance) Organised by: Gulan in collaboration with the Ismaili Centre. Until Friday 6 November. Musicians from the Taqasim Music School together with Kurdish musicians Behroz Rahimiyan, Awat Afrooz, and Zana will play contemporary music from the Middle East. Part of the Nour Festival. Admission free. The Foyer, The Ismaili Centre, Cromwell Gardens, South Kensington, London SW7 2SL. E info@gulan.org.uk W www.gulan.org.uk W www.nourfestival.co.uk

Wednesday 4 November

7:30 pm | Writing Out of War and Exile (Reading) Organised by: Exiled Writers Ink. Exiled Lit Cafe. With Shahabi Shah Nala, Yvonne Green, May Al-Issa, Abbas Faiz, and Abdul Sulamal. Tickets: £5/£3 Exiled Writers Ink Members and asylum seekers. Poetry Place, 22 Betterton Street, London WC2H 9BZ. T 020 8458 1910 E jenni@exiledwriters.fsnet.co.uk W www.exiledwriters.co.uk

Tuesday 3 November


7:00 pm | Continuity or Change? Of Military Rule (Lecture) Elisabeth O’Connell, BM. See Exhibitions for details of event. Admission free. Central Bar at The British Museum, Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3DG. T 020 7323 8181 W www.britishmuseum.org

8:15 pm | Kurdistan: A Dream Suspended (Talk) Organised by: Richard Wilding in collaboration with Gulan and the Ismaili Centre. Doors open 7:45pm. Wilding presents his contemporary photography of the heritage and people of the Kurdish region of Iraq, touching on its troubled past and the current refugee crisis. Part of the Nour Festival. Admission free. Pre-registration required E events@iiuk.org The Ismaili Centre, Cromwell Gardens, South Kensington, London SW7 2SL. E info@gulan.org.uk / richard@richardwilding.com W www.gulan.org.uk / www.nourfestival.co.uk / www.richardwilding.com

Thursday 5 November

9:00 am | SOAS-Nohoudh Muslim Integration Conference 2015: Engaging with the Discourse (Two-Day Conference: Thursday 5 - Friday 6 November) Organised by: Centre of Islamic Studies at SOAS and the Nohoudh Endowment for Development Studies. New annual conference series on ‘Muslim Integration in Britain’, the inaugural conference will commence with two crucial questions: what is integration?, and what is meant by Muslim integration in Britain? Convened by: M A S Abdel Haleem, SOAS. Admission free. Pre-registration required. Brunei Gallery Lecture Theatre, SOAS. E muslimintegration@soas.ac.uk W http://www.soas.ac.uk/islamicstudies/conferences/

Saturday 7 November

9:00 am | Chaplin of the Mountains (Film) Organised by: Gulan in collaboration with the Ismaili Centre. Doors open 7:45pm. UK Film Premier. A road trip across the Kurdish landscape, from the plains of the region’s capital to the highest Zagros peaks and ending in the Qandil mountains. Q&A with director Jano Rosebiani. Part of the Nour Festival. Tickets £8/£6 conc. W www.thelittleboxoffice.com/nour2015 The Ismaili Centre, Cromwell Gardens, South Kensington, London SW7 2SL. E info@gulan.org.uk W www.gulan.org.uk / www.nourfestival.co.uk

Friday 6 November

9:00 am | SOAS-Nohoudh Muslim Integration Conference 2015: Engaging with the Discourse (Two-Day Conference: Thursday 5 - Friday 6 November) See event listing above.


5:30 pm | Nadine Khouri Performance by Nadine Khouri, the Lebanese-born singer-songwriter currently based in London whose sound draws on folk, shoegaze, moody soundtracks and spoken word. Admission free. Central Bar at Royal Festival Hall, Southbank Centre, Belvedere Road, London SE1 8XX. T 020 7960 4200 W www.southbankcentre.co.uk

6:30 pm | Egypt: The Frontier of Meaning (Lecture) Karen Armstrong, BM. Organised by: BM. Armstrong explores interreligious relations between Jews, Christians and Muslims in the first millennium AD.
Positioning Egypt as a leader and pioneer in the region, she conveys how its population creatively challenged the frontiers that traditionally separated humanity from the divine. Tickets: £5/£3 BM Members & conc. Pre-registration required T 020 7323 8181 W www.britishmuseum.org BP Lecture Theatre, BM.

Monday 9 November


Tuesday 10 November

5:45 pm | The Creative Enterprise and Alternative Spaces of Imagination in Iran (Lecture) Pamela Karimi, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth and former IHF Fellow, Centre for Iranian Studies. Organised by: London Middle East Institute, SOAS (LMEI) and the Centre for Iranian Studies. Part of the LMEI’s Tuesday Evening Lecture Programme on the Contemporary Middle East. Admission free. Khalili Lecture Theatre, SOAS. T 020 7898 4330/4490 E vp6@soas.ac.uk W www.soas.ac.uk/lmei/events/

Wednesday 11 November

6:00 pm | Rentier Islamism: The Role of the Muslim Brotherhood in the Gulf (Lecture) Courtney Freer, LSE. Organised by: Kuwait Programme, LSE Middle East Centre. Based on findings from field work in Kuwait, Qatar, and the UAE, the lecture examines the historical and current political role of the Ikhwan in states traditionally considered impenetrable to Islamist movements due to their status as wealthy rentier states. Admission free. Room TBA, LSE. T 020 7955 6198 E s.sfeir@lse.ac.uk W www.lse.ac.uk/middleEastCentre/

Thursday 12 November


Friday 13 November

7:00 pm | A Cosmopolitan Journey Around the Mediterranean and Beyond: Melange (Concert) Organised by: Department of Music, SOAS. Formed by cellist Shirley Smart, Melange is a reflection of modern cosmopolitanism and comprises musicians from Greece, Spain, Morocco, Iraq, Italy and the UK. Part of the SOAS Concert Series. Admission free. Brunei Gallery Lecture Theatre, SOAS. T 020 7898 4500 E musicevents@soas.ac.uk W www.soas.ac.uk/music/events/concerts/

Tuesday 17 November

5:30 pm | Title TBC (Lecture) Organised by: London Middle East Institute, SOAS (LMEI). Part of the LMEI’s Tuesday Evening Lecture Programme on the Contemporary Middle East. 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 | Helen of Troy - Goddess, Princess, Seductress (Lecture) Organised by: British Institute at Ankara (BIAA). Following a decade of research Betty Hughes will explore the figure of Helen of Troy in her cultural, literary and historical guises. Tickets: £10/free for BIAA Members. The British Academy, 10 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5AH. T 020 7969 5204 E biaa@britac.ac.uk W http://biaa.ac.uk/events

6:00pm | Gertrude Bell and the ‘Woman Question’ (Lecture) Helen Berry. organised by: The British Institute for the Study of Iraq. Admission free. Pre-registration required W www.bisi.ac.uk The British Academy, 10 Carlton House Terrace, London, SW1Y 5AH. T 020 7969 5274 E bisi@britac.ac.uk

7:00 pm | The Heritage of Javanmardi in Iran (Lecture) Lloyd Ridgeon, Glasgow University. Organised by: The Iran Society. Doors open 6:30pm. Ridgeon will talk about the idea of javanmardi, loosely translated as chivalry, a concept that has permeated Iranian culture for centuries and will focus on how javanmardi has been understood by a range of thinkers, both medieval and modern. 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@iranociety.org W www.iranociety.org / www.thearag.co.uk

7:30 pm | Manu Katché + Ibrahim Maalouf (Performance) Jazz double bill with the drummer Manu Katché and the trumpeter/composer Ibrahim Maalouf. Tickets: £10-£27.50. Hall, Barbican Centre, Silk Street London EC2Y 8DS. T 020 7638 8891 W www.barbican.org.uk

Wednesday 18 November

6:00 pm | Women’s Health in the Occupied Palestinian Territory: Inclusion and Exclusion (Lecture) Tiziana Leone and Ernestina Coast, LSE; Rita Giaacaman and Doaa Hammodi, Institute of Community and Public Health. Organised by: LSE Middle East Centre. Discussion on the findings of a research project between the LSE and Birzeit University which looks at the health-related impacts of conflict in the occupied Palestinian territory focusing specifically on the gender associations of these impacts. Admission free. Room TBA, LSE. T 020 7955 6198 E s.sfeir@lse.ac.uk W www.lse.ac.uk/middleEastCentre/

Thursday 19 November

5:45 pm | The Abraham Path: A Trail of Dignity Across the Middle East (Lecture) Stefan Szepesi, The Abraham Path Initiative. Organised by: MBI Al Jaber Foundation. The Abraham Path Initiative created the first long distance walking trail across the Middle East, Szepesi
will discuss how, in retracing the journey made by Abraham, the project aims to bring socio-economic development to the 115 communities along the way. Part of the MBI Al Jaber Foundation Lecture Series. Admission free. Pre-registration required. 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.mbifoundation.com

Monday 23 November


Tuesday 24 November

Until 29 November | Fringe! Queer Film & Arts Fest Fringe! returns to East London with a programme of films, art, performance, parties and more. This year’s programme includes The Turkish Boat, a documentary on the first Turkish float in Amsterdam’s Gay Pride, and Alex & Ali, which tells the epic love story of an American and Iranian gay couple reunited after a 35 year separation. Tickets: Various. Venues across East London. E hi@fringefilmfest.com W http://fringefilmfest.com/

5:45 pm | Where the Sea Kisses the Desert – Multi-ethnic Musical Impressions from the Arabian Peninsula (Lecture) Rolf Killiús. Organised by: London Middle East Institute, SOAS (LMEI). Ethnomusicologist, filmmaker and museum curator Killius elaborates on the rich traditional music of the Arabian Peninsula. He shows these (mostly young) nations as multi-ethnic societies as reflected in their rich musical culture. Part of the LMEI’s Tuesday Evening Lecture Programme on the Contemporary Middle East. Admission free. Khalili Lecture Theatre, SOAS. T 020 7898 4330/4490 E vp6@soas.ac.uk W www.soas.ac.uk/lmei/events/

Friday 27 November

9.45am | Middle East and Central Asia Music Forum Organised by: Music Department, City University London in conjunction with the Institute of Musical Research. The Forum is open to researchers, students and anyone interested in the music and culture of the region. Admission free. Pre-registration required. Room AG09, College Building, St John Street, London EC1V 4PB. E l.nooshin@city.ac.uk W http://blogs.city.ac.uk/music/

Saturday 28 November

7:30 pm | Mashrou’ Leila (Performance) New material from the band labelled the voice of the Arab Spring – combining traditional Lebanese sounds with off-beat guitars and electronica. Tickets: £20-£25. Hall, Barbican Centre, Silk Street London EC2Y 8DS. T 020 7638 8891 W www.barbican.org.uk

EVENTS OUTSIDE LONDON

Thursday 12 November

5:15 pm | Professor Madawi Al-Rasheed, LSE, Discusses Religion, Politics and State in Saudi Arabia Organised by:
EXHIBITIONS

Thursday 1 October

Until 4 October | A Utopian Stage: Festival of Arts Shiraz-Persepolis Archive display which documents the history of the Festival of Arts Shiraz-Persepolis, an international arts festival held around Shiraz, Iran, every summer from 1967–1977. Admission free. Whitechapel Gallery, 77–82 Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX. T 020 7522 7888 E info@whitechapelgallery.org W www.whitechapelgallery.org

Until 31 October | Autonomy of Self: Rejecting Violence with the Lens in Former Ottoman Territories Autonomy of Self brings together moving image and photography from across the former Ottoman territories to explore how individuals are using the human image to refuse violence and conflict. Includes a symposium with the artists and a series of film screenings and public talks. 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 8 November | From the Figurative to the Abstract: Modern Art from the Arab World Works on paper recently acquired by the BM by eight artists – Shafiq Abboud, Michel Basbous, Safeya Binzagr, Sadik Kwaish Alfraji, Tahar M’Guedmini, Marwan, Nabil Nahas and Rafa Al Nasiri. Born in different countries of the Middle East and North Africa, these artists studied in Europe and elsewhere, absorbing different traditions into their work. Admission free. Room 34, BM. T 020 7323 8181 W www.britishmuseum.org

Until 6 December | Barjeel Art Foundation Collection: Part 1 The first display from the Barjeel Art Foundation collection explores the emergence and development of a modern Arab art aesthetic through drawings and paintings from the early twentieth century to 1967 with works by artists from Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Palestine and elsewhere in the region. Admission free. Whitechapel Gallery, 77–82 Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX. T 020 7522 7888 E info@whitechapelgallery.org W www.whitechapelgallery.org

Wednesday 21 October

Until 29 November | The Guardians (of the Prophet’s Mosque) Photographer Adel Quraishi is the only man to have been permitted to photograph the eight remaining ‘Guardians’ of the Prophet’s Mosque (Al-Masjid al-Nabawi), the last of their generation, with three having since passed away. Once numbered in the hundreds, the Guardians are the keepers of the keys to the Prophet Muhammad’s burial chamber. Part of the Nour Festival. Tickets: £7/£5 conc. (includes entry to Leighton House Museum). Leighton House Museum, 12 Holland Park Road, London W14 8LZ. T 020 7602 3316 E museums@rbkc.gov.uk W www.leightonhouse.co.uk / www.nourfestival.co.uk

Thursday 29 October

Until 7 February | Egypt: Faith after the Pharaohs Tickets: TBC. BM. T 020 7323 8181 W www.britishmuseum.org

Saturday 30 October

Until 7 November | Conflict and Hope: Art in Troubled Times Syrian artist Tareq Razzouk and Kurdish artists Marwan Jalal, Jamal Penjweny, Ali Raza and Rebarwar Saed present a personal response to the on-going conflict in Syria and Iraq. Complementing this is Colouring the Dream, featuring paintings by children in Barike refugee camp, Iraqi Kurdistan, together with British photographer Richard Wilding’s record of daily life in the refugee camps. Curator’s tours daily 2:00pm. Part of the Nour Festival. Admission free. The Ismaili Centre, Cromwell Gardens, South Kensington, London SW7 2SL. E info@gulan.org.uk W www.gulan.org.uk / www.nourfestival.co.uk

Friday 9 October

Until 28 November | Marwan: Not Towards Home, But The Horizon First UK solo exhibition by Syrian artist Marwan, featuring paintings, etchings and works on paper with the main motif always remaining the human head. The exhibition includes his 99 Heads series of etchings which reference Sufism and the 99 names of God. Admission free. The Mosaic Rooms, A.M. Qattan Foundation, Tower House, 226 Cromwell Road, London SW5 0SW. T 020 7370 9990 E info@mosaicrooms.org W http://mosaicrooms.org/


Kadhim Hayder Fatigued Ten Horses Converse with Nothing (The Martyrs Epic) 1965, Oil on canvas, 95 x 330 x 3.5 cm, Barjeel Art Foundation, Sharjah. Barjeel Art Foundation Collection: Part 1 (See Exhibitions, p. 34)
An intensive five-week programme which includes a choice of two courses: a language one (Persian or Arabic, the latter at two levels) and another on the 'Government and Politics of the Middle East' or 'Culture and Society in the Middle East'.

Beginners Persian (Level 1)
This is an introductory course which aims to give the students a reasonable grounding in the basics of Persian grammar and syntax as well as to enable them to understand simple and frequently used expressions related to basic language use. They will be able to hold uncomplicated conversations on topics such as personal and family information, shopping, hobbies, employment as well as simple and direct exchanges of information related to familiar topics. By the end of the course they will also progress to read simple short texts.

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.

Timetable:
Courses are taught Mon-Thu each week. Language courses are taught in the morning (10am-1pm) and the Politics and Culture Courses are taught in two slots in the afternoon (2:00-3:20 and 3:40-5:00pm).

FEES
<table>
<thead>
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<th>Session (5 weeks)</th>
<th>Programme fee*</th>
<th>Accommodation fee**</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>27 June-28 July 2016 (two courses)</td>
<td>£2,500</td>
<td>from £300/week</td>
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</tbody>
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* An early bird discount of 10% applies to course fees before 30 April 2016.
** 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
The Gaza Strip: History, Future and New Directions for Research

All-Day International Conference
31 October 2015
The conference will end with a public meeting
at 6:00pm
Brunei Gallery Lecture Theatre
SOAS, University of London

Pre-registration required (conference & evening event) E: lmei@soas.ac.uk
W: https://www.soas.ac.uk/lmei-cps/

Organised by: Centre for Palestine Studies, London Middle East Institute
SOAS, University of London