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We are also grateful for the support of Fig Mediterranean Delicatessen.

Conference Organizers:
Faculty:
Dr. Marcus Milwright, Department of History of Art and Visual Studies
Dr. Martin Bunton, Department of History
Thanks also to Basma Majerbi, Paul Bramadat, and Peyman Vahabzadeh.

Students:
Atri Hatef Naiemi, PhD candidate in the Department of Art and Visual Studies
Seyedhamed Yeganehfarzand, PhD candidate in the Department of Art and Visual Studies

Thanks also to committee members Nova Garside, Dana Harold, Munazzah Akhtar, Michael Carpenter, Mark Hill, and the many other student members for their help in organizing the event.

About MEICON-BC
The Middle East and Islamic Consortium of British Columbia (MEICON-BC) was founded in 2008 as a collaborative project of Simon Fraser University, the University of Victoria, and the University of British Columbia with the participation of other British Columbian universities and colleges. It is hosted by the Centre for the Comparative Study of Muslim Societies and Cultures at Simon Fraser University. The purpose of MEICON-BC is to provide an organizational basis for communication and cooperation among all British Columbian academics interested in the study of the Middle East and Muslim societies and cultures.
PANEL 7:
Sara Naderi, snaderi@uvic.ca
Sara Naderi is a PhD candidate in the department of Sociology at the University of Victoria. Her research interests include women's studies, post-colonial and cultural studies, and the sociology of epistemology and religion. Sara's main research interest is interrogating and critiquing modern subjectivity, and she is interested in seeking alternative and critical subjectivities. Her dissertation tackles these questions in the Iranian context, and examines how Iranian women's subjectivity arises from their marginalized position as women in a "third world country" in the modern world.

Rojeh Jahani, rjahania@sfu.ca
Rojeh Jahani is an undergraduate student at Simon Fraser University in the departments of Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies, and History. Her interests include the intersections between privilege, race, sexuality, class, gender, ability and age intersect, and the way in which these shape the experiences of individuals, as well as the power asymmetries between individuals and institutions. Rojeh is also involved in organizations advocating for social justice and equality, inspired by her own experiences as an Iranian Kurd. Her family fled persecution in Iran and she immigrated to Canada with them at the age of five.

Soheyla Tabai, soheylatabai12@gmail.com
Soheyla Tabai holds a Bachelor of Science in Pharmacy from the University of British Columbia, and is currently working as a pharmacist at Vancouver General Hospital. She is currently applying for graduate studies in the department of Gender, Sexuality, and Women’s Studies at Simon Fraser University. She is an avid social activist within the Iranian community in Vancouver. Her research interests include women’s and Human Rights issues, inspired by her imprisonment in Iran for political activism. Soheyla was born in Esfahan, Iran and immigrated to Canada in 1990.

PANEL 8:
Josh MacKenzie, jrm4@sfu.ca
Josh MacKenzie holds a Master’s degree in the department of History from Simon Fraser University. The principal focus of his research is the social and cultural history of the modern Middle East, refugees, subaltern studies, nationalism, and identity. His thesis focused on how the soccer club, al-Wehdat, plays a role in creating and establishing identity and nationalism for Palestinians in Jordan. Josh is currently collaborating on a new project which will highlight refugees who have remained in the restaurant industry to support themselves after they have resettled or been locally integrated into a host population.

Aaron Clift, aaron.clift@yahoo.com
Aaron Clift is a 4th year double major undergraduate student in the departments of Political Science and History at the University of Victoria. His research interests include the history of national identity in the Middle East, the contemporary political ramifications of that history, and the relationship of different national identities. He is particularly interested in how these intersect with religion, as well as the ways in which they are represented in political discourse inside and outside of the region.

Broderick McDonald, brodymcdonald@gmail.com
Broderick McDonald is an undergraduate student in the department of Political Science with a focus on International Relations at the University of Victoria. His research interests include countering violent extremism (CVE) and genocide prevention. He previously served as a policy advisor to the Government of Canada, and has assisted the All-Party Parliamentary Group for the Prevention of Genocide and Other Crimes Against Humanity (GPG). Before that, he served as a Junior Research Fellow with the NATO Council of Canada, and acted as executive editor of On Politics. Brody has represented Canada at the United Nations, the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, and Shaping Davos. He was named a Global Shaper in 2014 by the World Economic Forum.
Welcome Message

Welcome to the eighth annual Middle East and Islamic Studies Consortium of BC (MEICON) student conference. The student and faculty organizing committee at the University of Victoria is delighted to be able to host this event in the Faculty of Fine Arts, and we thank all who have made the journey today to be in Victoria for this exciting meeting. The conflicts in the Middle East and the ongoing refugee crisis dominate the international news. These disturbing events necessitate the search for practical political and economic solutions, but we must also recognize that conflicts have deeper roots, reaching back decades or even centuries. Scholars of Islam, modern Middle East Studies, Islamic history, art history, archaeology, and related disciplines have important roles to play understanding these issues, providing interpretations of contemporary actions and identifying the wider historical and cultural contexts. Furthermore, scholars can bring the immensely rich cultural heritage – such as the visual art, architecture, literature, music, and philosophy – of the Islamic world to greater public attention. The papers to be presented at this conference demonstrates well the disciplinary range of student research supported by MEICON.

Dr. Marcus Milwright
Department of Art History and Visual Studies,
University of Victoria

Panel 5:

Ranjodh Gill, ranjodhg@sfu.ca
Ranjodh Gill is an Honours undergraduate student at Simon Fraser University in the School for International Studies. His research interests include international security and conflict analysis, nuclear security, and resource based economies. He is particularly interested in the dynamics and role of power in international relations. Born in India, Ranjodh is currently an international student studying in Vancouver, and plans to pursue Graduate studies in International strategy and diplomacy. He is currently on the Dean's list for academic excellence at SFU.

Sophia Larson-Wickman, larson65@students.wwu.edu
Sophia Larson-Wickman is in her 3rd year of undergraduate studies at Western Washington University, where she is a student at Fairhaven College of Interdisciplinary Studies completing a self-designated major in Comparative Literature and Politics of France and North Africa. Her research interests include identity and representations in film and literature about Palestine and the Middle East.

Nasser Jahani Asl, nasserj@uvic.ca
Nasser Jahani Asl is a PhD candidate in the department of Sociology at the University of Victoria. His research interests include social movements, ethnic relations, and education. His current research examines the Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan (PDKI) as the oldest and most influential social movement organization, whose politics affect the Iranian Kurdish society, as well as the rest of the country. In 2007, Nasser received his MA in Education at Simon Fraser University. He also holds a BA in Anthropology and Sociology. Nasser was born in the city of Mahabad, Kurdistan, Iran. He immigrated to Canada in 1996 and currently resides in Vancouver.

Panel 6:

Alfira Askar, alffiraaskar@gmail.com
Alfira Askar is a 4th year undergraduate student in the Business Commerce program at the Gustavson School of Business at the University of Victoria. As the sole Uyghur student in program, she has a strong interested in sustainable business development in the Islamic world, particularly within Central Asian Muslim communities. Recently, she has been researching ways in which various cultural differences with Muslim societies can be overcome, and working to develop a general economic empowerment model for Muslim women, particularly through small business and entrepreneurship.

Michelle Hagman, mhagman@sfu.ca
Michelle Hagman is a Master's student at Simon Fraser University in the department of Sociology and Anthropology. Prior to studying at SFU she completed a Liberal Arts and Science degree at Utrecht University in the Netherlands. There she completed a double major in Anthropology and Political Science, and a minor in Religious Studies. Her MA thesis is about initiatives by Muslim youth to counter Islamophobia, focusing in particular on events in British Columbia. Her research interests include secularism, multiculturalism, Islam, as well as the intersections between religion and migration, and religion and identity. She is a recipient of the Victory in Europe Scholarship, awarded to Dutch students studying in B.C.

Dr. Naghmeh Babaee, naghmeh_um@yahoo.ca
Dr. Naghmeh Babae received her PhD in Second Language Education from the University of Manitoba. She has taught English for fifteen years in Iran and Canada, and is currently an adjunct faculty in the General Education department at the Art Institute of Vancouver. Dr. Babaee's research interests include issues of immigrant students' education, identity, bilingual development, and heritage language maintenance, and she is extensively published in these domains.
Dana Harold, dharold@uvic.ca

Dana Harold is a Master’s student in the Art History and Visual Studies department at the University of Victoria, researching the functionality of Cairene graffiti during the Egyptian uprising. She holds a BA in Art History and Visual Studies from the University of British Columbia Okanagan Campus. The majority of her academic career has focused on Islamic art, researching diverse areas such as Umayyad Syria and Spain to gender in Islamic art, and the history of the Arab Spring. At the University of Victoria, she presently holds a research assistant position for the creation of the graduate student association website; is a founding member of the Art History and Visual Studies Graduate Association; and sits on the editorial board for the graduate student journal ARTiculate.

PANEL 3:

Joyti Birk, joytib_25@hotmail.com

Joyti Birk is currently completing her Bachelor of Arts Degree with a Major in History and a Minor in English at the University of Victoria. Later, she plans to attend law school to pursue a career in international law. Her research interests focus on politics and religion in the Middle East. Joyti also has a particular interest in how politics, propaganda, and religion affect people's views on the Middle East and internationally.

Scott Bryce Aubrey, bryce.aubrey@shaw.ca

Scott Bryce Aubrey is an Honours undergraduate student in the departments of Political Science and History at the University of Victoria. His research interests include international relations and foreign policy, in particular interstate asymmetry in the Middle East and North Africa region. Aubrey has been published in the journals Canadian Naval Review and On Politics. He is currently executive editor of On Politics and President of the International Relations and Diplomacy Club at the University of Victoria.

Ibrahim Gemeah, igemeah@uw.edu

Ibrahim Gemeah is a Fulbright Scholar and a Master’s student in the department of Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Washington. He is also a faculty member at al-Azhar University in Egypt, in the department of Islamic Studies. His research interests include Islamic political thought, Islamic reformation, and the relationship between state and religious institutions. He is currently examining the rise of ISIS and jihadi ideology from a synthesis of classical and modernist perspectives.

PANEL 4:

Mariana Gallegos Dupuis, mariana.gallegos21@gmail.com

Mariana Gallegos Dupuis is an undergraduate Honours major student in the departments of History, and she is also pursuing a minor in Applied Ethics (Philosophy) at the University of Victoria. Her research interests include foreign policy and diplomacy in the Middle East, as well as Human Rights issues. Mariana has been published in the journal, Corvette. As an executive member of the History Undergraduate Society, has been involved in volunteering with the History Refugee Committee’s efforts to sponsor a Syrian refugee family. In July of 2015, she also volunteered at the Iranian Social Justice Conference.

Dessa Marie Meehan, meehand21@students.wwu.edu

Michael Carpenter, mjcarpenter78@gmail.com

Michael Carpenter is a PhD candidate in Political Science and a Graduate Student Fellow at the Centre for Global Studies, at the University of Victoria. His background is in International Relations and Political Theory. His research focuses on the theory and practice of civil resistance, particularly Palestinian cases of popular struggle against the Israeli occupation. He has spent 6 months in the region, most recently for three months in early 2014 conducting field research for his dissertation.
Fahimeh Ghorbani began studying Iranian classical music and playing the instrument Setar, twenty years ago, under instruction of renowned Iranian musicians, including maestro Professor Dariush Safvat. She later began learning Iranian classical singing under the supervision of the famous Iranian Diva, Parissa. Fahimeh has both taught and performed for over fourteen years. Since then, she has given many performances and recitals both as part of ensembles and as a soloist. She holds MAs from both Tehran University of Art and the University of Victoria.

Kamran Bashir is a doctoral candidate in the Department of History and the Winnifred Lonsdale fellow at the Centre for the Study of Religion and Society at the University of Victoria. Prior to joining UVic, he earned his MA in Islamic Studies from the University of London. His doctoral research is focused on the history of Qur’an commentaries written in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in British India. It investigates the continuity, change and creativity in modern Qur’an exegesis by situating the texts in their historical contexts.

Zahra S. Kazani is a PhD candidate in the department of Art History and Visual Studies at the University of Victoria. She holds a Master’s in History of Islamic art from the School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London, as well as a Master’s in Islamic Studies from the University of Victoria. Dr. Lewis has worked extensively with several museums including the Royal Ontario Museum, the British Museum, and as a curatorial assistant for the Aga Khan Museum.

Atri Hatef Naiemi is a PhD candidate in the department of Art History and Visual Studies at the University of Victoria. Her research interests include the history of the Ottoman Empire, focusing on the cultivation of persona, dissemination and contestation of public image, and personification of empire. While his central focus lies in the Ottoman world (circa 1300-1922), his work is concentrated more generally on the relationships between institutional development, cultural production, and the creation of “official” constructions of kingship and legitimacy as abstract objects of consumption. His current research is an exploration of late Ottoman “cultures of monarchy” that seeks to expand the scope of the study of the Ottoman dynasty to include its presence in social and cultural time and space.

Fahimeh Ghorbani obtained her first MA degree in Iranian Traditional Arts and Handicrafts from Tehran University of Art, Iran. She obtained her second Master’s in Art History and Visual Studies, from the University of Victoria. Her field of interest and study is Islamic-Iranian arts, focusing on the Medieval and Early Modern periods. She has a number of publications and has given presentations on various aspects of Iranian arts, crafts, and music. Fahimeh is also the recipient of numerous awards and fellowships from various research institutes, including the Tehran University of Art, the Tehran Academy of Arts, and the University of Victoria.

Registration and Refreshments
9:00 am - 9:20 am
Fine Arts Building (lobby)

Welcome Message
Dr. Susan Lewis (Dean of Fine Arts, University of Victoria)
9:20am – 9:40am
Room: 103

Concurrent Panels 1 and 2

PANEL 1: Islamic Manuscripts and Interpretations of the Qur’an
9:45 am - 11:00 am
Room: 103
Chair: Dr. Derryl MacLean (History, SFU)

Presenters:
Kamran Bashir (UVic), “The Role of Tradition in Modernist Thought: A Study of Farahi School in South Asia”
Zahra S. Kazani (UVic), “Tracing the Life of an Object: Unveiling Transcultural Narratives of a Qur’an Manuscript”
Arlen Wiesenthal (SUf), “Contesting The ‘Hamidian Image’: Representations of Sultan Abdülmid li in the British Media (1876-1908)”

PANEL 2: Musical Influences and the Role of Graffiti in the Arab Uprisings
9:45 am - 11:00 am
Room: 124
Chair: Dr. Neilesh Bose (History, UVic)

Presenters:
Atri Hatef Naiemi (UVic), “Art on the Walls: Street Graffiti of the Egyptian Uprising”
Fahimeh Ghorbani (UVic), “The Therapeutic Properties of Iranian Classical Music; as Appeared in Three Treatises from Safavid Era”
Dana Harold (UVic), “Graffiti or Street Art? The Importance of Terminology when Classifying Graffiti and Street Art in Cairo, Egypt”

Coffee Break
11:00 am - 11:15 am
Fine Arts Building (lobby)
Concurrent Panels 3, 4 and 5

PANEL 3: Foreign Policy and Extremism in the Middle East
11:30 am – 12:45 pm Room: 103
Chair: Dr. Gregory Blue (History, UVic)

Presenters:
Joyti Birk (UVic), “The Great Gap: The Emergence of Islamic Extremism”
Scott Bryce Aubrey (UVic), “Strategic Depth to Strategic Participation: Turkish Foreign Policy under the New Civil-Military Relationship”
Ibrahim Gemeah (UWashington), “Modern Egyptian Salafism: Origins and Structure”

PANEL 4: Histories of Resistance and Imperialism in Palestine
11:30 am – 12:45 pm Room: 103
Chair: Dr. Andrew Wender (Political Science and History, UVic)

Presenters:
Mariana Gallegos Dupuis (UVic), “The Visit: How Sadat’s Visit to Jerusalem Changed the Israeli-Egyptian Conflict”
Dessa Marie Meehan (WesternWashingtonU), “British Ambiguity Regarding Palestine (1915-1922)”
Michael Carpenter (UVic), “Nabi Saleh: Popular Struggle and Global Citizenship from Palestine”

PANEL 5: Democracy, Nationalism, and Historical Narratives
11:30 am – 12:45 pm Room: 124
Chair: Dr. Amir Mifakhraie (Sociology, KPU)

Presenters:
Ranjodh Gill (SFU), “The Detrimental Effects of Oil on Democracy: The Case of Saudi Arabia”
Sophia Larson-Wickman (WesternWashingtonU), “Confronting Barriers and Establishing Identity in the Palestinian Road Film: Annemarie Jacir’s Salt of This Sea”
Nasser Jahani Asl (UVic), “Controversial Perspectives on Simko’s Movement in Eastern Kurdistan (Iran)”

Complimentary Lunch
12:45 pm - 1:45 pm
Fine Arts Building (lobby)

Conference Program

Resilience in Contemporary Arab Identity, Nationalism, and Fragmentation
Broderick McDonald (University of Victoria)

How should we understand the overlapping ethnic, linguistic, and religious identities that have often come in conflict with each other during the turbulent period following the Arab uprisings that began in 2011? As a logical point of entry, this paper will engage in a historical analysis of the nationalisms found in those Arab states where significant civil conflict has arisen to better understand what has caused differing sects and communities to fight after centuries of peaceful coexistence. This paper will then move to demonstrate the surprising and remarkable resilience of these Middle Eastern states in the face of such profound social transformation and upheaval. Recent scholarship on the contemporary Middle East has often become invested in one-dimensional theories that modern Arab states are doomed to inevitably disintegrate or fragment into smaller statelets with the rise of inter-communal violence, which has inflamed longstanding ethnic, linguistic, and sectarian differences. This paper will refute these seemingly intuitive claims and will prove that authentic and genuine concepts of nationalism have developed over the limited history of the contemporary Arab states, despite their remarkably artificial origins in the post-Ottoman period brought about by direct European colonization.

Conference Abstracts
Panel 8: Identity and Nationalism in the Middle East

“Allah! Wehdat! Al-Quds Arabiya!”: Football, Nationalism and the chants of Palestinian Resistance in Jordan
Josh MacKenzie (Simon Fraser University)

After the Jordanian Civil War in 1970—which saw the Jordanian army defeat Palestinian guerrillas, and resulted in deaths of thousands of Palestinians living in Jordan, and the exile of Palestinian political organizations and leaders from refugee camps—Palestinians in Jordan became politically and socially marginalized. Despite these marginalizations, Palestinians in Jordan always had access to sport. This thesis will examine how the football club, al-Wehdat, plays a role in creating and establishing identity and nationalism for Palestinians in Jordan. By using oral history, I move beyond the narrative of a homogenous Palestinian identity and demonstrate the complexities of Palestinian identities. Moreover, utilizing oral history in my thesis challenges the notion of football being cathartic, and demonstrates how al-Wehdat fans are able to: a) manoeuvre within the stadium, despite being under constant surveillance, b) to continue to use al-Wehdat as a political platform, predominantly through their chants, and c) to develop Palestinian identity and nationalism in Jordan.

National Identities in Iraq and Syria: Past, Present, Future
Aaron Clift (University of Victoria)

In light of the rise of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, many journalists, policy-makers, and scholars have suggested the partition of those two states as a solution to the ongoing civil wars in both countries. This assumes the artificiality of the Iraqi and Syrian nation-states, arguing for a redrawing of boundaries that reflect supposedly more “real” identities such as ethnicity and religious denomination. By examining the historical development of national identity in Syria and Iraq, and its interrelationship with other identities, this project challenges these assumptions. It is argued that, despite the colonially-contrived nature of these states, viable senses of national identity have developed in Syria and Iraq over their nearly one hundred years of existence as distinct political entities (first as League of Nations Mandates under French and British rule, respectively, then as independent states), deriving from common experiences of colonial rule and the struggle for independence, as well as active nation-building policies during the colonial and post-independence periods. Furthermore, this paper argues that other identities are not necessarily more “real”, as they were also influenced by the policies of the colonial powers. Finally, based on an examination of contemporary political discourse in Syria and Iraq, this paper contends that most Syrian and Iraqi citizens continue to feel a sense of loyalty to their states, rejecting arguments for partition and undermining “sectarian” narratives of the conflicts in these countries. It is argued that the prevalence of these narratives derives more from their usage to advance the political agendas of foreign and domestic actors, rather than an understanding of the complex reality in Syria and Iraq, where citizens adhere to a multiplicity of identities without contradiction.

Musical Performance
Fahimeh Ghorbani (UVic)
1:45pm - 2:00pm
Fine Arts Building, Room 103

Keynote Speaker
Dr. Khaled Fahmy (American University in Cairo and visiting professor at Harvard University)
2:00 pm - 3:15 pm
Fine Arts Building, Room 103

Concurrent Panels 6, 7 and 8

Panel 6: Preserving Culture and Heritage in Multicultural Societies

Presidents:
Alfira Askar (UVic), “An Ancient Muslim Nation in Far Western China”
Michelle Hagman (SFU), “Muslim Youths: Everyday Life in Multicultural Canada”
Dr. Naghmeh Babaee (Art Institute of Vancouver), “Middle-Eastern Immigrants on the Periphery: Language Maintenance Stories in Canada”

Panel 7: Feminism and the Politics of Gender in Iran

Presidents:
Sara Naderi (UVic), “A Genealogy of the Veiling Discourse in Post-Revolutionary Iran”
Rojeh Jahani (SFU), “Iran’s Queer Identities and The Enforcement of Gender Binarism”
Soheyla Tabai (UBC), “An Analysis of Emergence of ‘Islamic Feminism’ in Iran”

Panel 8: Identity and Nationalism in the Middle East

Presidents:
Aaron Clift (UVic), “National Identities in Iraq and Syria: Past, Present, Future”
Broderick McDonald (UVic), “Resilience in Contemporary Arab Identity, Nationalism, and Fragmentation”
PANEL 1: Islamic Manuscripts and Interpretations of the Qu’ran

The Role of Tradition in Modernist Thought: A Study of Farahi School in South Asia
Kamran Bashir (University of Victoria)

The academic discourse on contemporary Islam frequently employs typologies such as “traditionalist”, “fundamentalist”, and “modernist” in order to characterize and understand religious schools of thought. A closer examination of different intellectual movements in Muslim communities, however, exposes the limits and drawbacks of such typologies. The proposed paper aims to focus on one particular school of thought in South Asia that has carved out a special place in the modern history of Islamic scholarship. Farahi School, named after Hamid al-Din Farahi (1863-1930), through its influential work on the Qur’an in India and Pakistan has attracted a great deal of attention in the western academic world. The contemporary academic discourse on modern Islam places the key scholars of this school in the category of modernists. Moreover, many so-called traditionalist Muslim scholars vociferously ascribe its proponents as modernists. However, a detailed look at their work problematizes the use and value of these typologies or categories. The paper contends that Muslim scholarly tradition that is regarded as the treasured prerogative of the traditionalist schools only is in fact, a part and parcel of these so-called modernist movements. It is time to dismiss these typologies and move beyond these categories in order to understand the contemporary Islamic world.

Tracing the Life of an Object: Unveiling Transcultural Narratives of a Qur’an Manuscript
Zahra S. Kazani (University of Victoria)

The paper examines an Indian Qur’an manuscript currently housed in the British Library. The peculiar bihari calligraphic script and the illumination point to its likely fifteenth-century origins in Jaunpur. The multiplicity of cultural interactions in northern India is manifested in the art of the time, revealing a confluence of aesthetic sensibilities, including Persian and Egyptian influences as well as the local Hindu and Jain repertoire (Brac de la Perrière 2007). It is through this hybridity of cultures, that the north Indian aesthetic identity emerges, despite the volatile political climate. In addition to the bihari calligraphic script and its contemporary Persian interlinear translations, the first 20 folios of the manuscript also incorporate eighteenth-century English translations and margin annotations. The manuscript sheds light on its owner, Charles Hamilton, an Irish military officer with the East India Company, and his articulation of Islam and its laws, which he translated from Persian to English. The annotations on the manuscript indicate its possible interaction with Elizabeth Hamilton, the owner’s sister, who may have used the object in augmenting her ‘oriental’ narratives in England. This paper aims to examine objects and material culture evidence as a foray into articulating cultures and society. The historical significance along with the many contemporary experiences of the object—its functions, additions, manipulations and restoration—present myriad narratives, leading to a richer understanding of the object, its identity and its agency as it moves between cultures.

An Analysis of the Emergence of ‘Islamic Feminism’ in Iran
Soheyla Tabai (University of British Columbia)

Islamic feminists in Iran with their new method of interpretation of Islamic sources have begun reconstructing the Islamic laws from a feminist approach. Islamic feminists employ the “accidental of history” and “expansion of Prophetic experience” approaches from Soroush, an Iranian professor of philosophy, in their arguments. With this new way of reasoning, Islamic feminists have been disputing the gender philosophy in Islam, challenging fundamentalists to create a more women-friendly and gender egalitarian Islam, openly revealing their affiliation with western feminism, and working toward the formation of coalition with global feminism. Two conflicting perspectives have evolved from the debates regarding ‘Islamic feminism’. The first group supports the idea of ‘Islamic feminism’ and views it as a new space for dialogue between Islamic women activists and secular feminists. The other group is taking an opposing view and finds the term ‘Islamic feminism’ an ‘oxymoron’. This paper argues that Islamic feminists’ interpretation of sacred texts is a dialogue in formation. In this respect, the triumph of their endeavor depends on the result of the conflict between reformists and hardliners in the Iranian government, and their attainment in forming the alliance with global feminism in general and secular feminism in particular. Even though the future of ‘Islamic feminism’ is uncertain, the secular feminists’ formation of an alliance with Islamic feminists may significantly radicalize their perspective. In this regard, ‘Islamic feminism’ should also, be identified and treated as one of the feminist family. For this research, I have conducted a literature review and content analysis of various feminist perspectives.
Panel 7: Feminism and the Politics of Gender in Iran

A Genealogy of the Veiling Discourse in Post-Revolutionary Iran
Sara Naderi (University of Victoria)

The 1979 Revolution in Iran generated intellectual and political attempts in perusing the new national and religious identity against the Western values that prevailed in pre-revolutionary Iran and during the modernization process of the Shah. As such the veiling of Iranian women emerged as one of the most important symbols of this new, collective Iranian identity and as a symbol of resistance against Western values. In this paper, I aim at a radical questioning of the state-sanctioned veiling as the symbol of this new resistant identity. To be clear, one of the main objectives of this paper is to discover why veiling has been highlighted as a sign of Muslim women’s identity in Iran since 1979 revolution, in spite of women’s resistance against mandatory veiling. I will ask if the importance of veiling as a state policy and a religious duty arise from the importance of veiling in Islamic texts, or alternatively, if the veiling was mainly the reaction to the western narrative of Islamic culture and its role in the Islamic societies during the colonization process. In other words, I want to uncover social, political, and historical contexts that highlighted this religious law in the Islamic texts and made it the most important characteristic of Muslim women in the contemporary readings of Islam. To achieve this objective, I will offer a discourse analysis of the speeches, books, and literature surrounding the veiling debate in Iran. I will employ a postcolonial approach influenced by Frantz Fanon, Edward Said, and Leila Ahmed, and will use their theoretical insights in order to discover the genealogy of the dominant narrative of veiling in post-revolutionary Iran.

Iran’s Queer Identities and The Enforcement of Gender Binarism
Rojeh Jahani (Simon Fraser University)

In 1985 Imam Khomeini, the supreme leader of Iran’s Islamic revolution, made sexual reassignment surgeries (SRS) permissible for transgender people. This paper will examine the repercussions of these state sanctioned medical procedures initially set in place to remedy gender dysphoria. Given Iran’s extremely homophobic social and political climate, this medical operation would be used as a tool to enforce binary gender/sexual identities as well as binary relationships, pathologizing Iran’s diverse queer communities in order to necessitate behavior deemed sexually normal. Gay and lesbian individuals are often pushed into the same category as transsexuals, so that same sex relations can be re-established as opposite sex relations. Maintaining the idea that there are stark and intrinsic differences between men and women is of utmost importance in Iran, making challenges to heteronormativity criminal and perverse. In relation to methodology, this paper will review the literature of other scholars on the topic, conducting a thorough analysis of the content. This paper will examine the laws regarding sexuality and sanctioning SRS, the processes of admittance and lineation, the effect of this standard on queer individuals in Iran, as well as the significance of binarism. Although at face value the state's endorsement of gender affirmation surgery seems progressive, this paper argues that although these policies help some self-identified transgender people by creating a space for them in society, ultimately these policies also hurt a huge segment of Iran’s queer communities by misgendering them and forcing them to undergo a very serious operation with potentially dire physiological and physical consequences for non-binary people.

Contesting The “Hamidian Image”: Representations of Sultan Abdülhamid II in the British Media (1876 -1908)
Arlen Wiesenthal (Simon Fraser University)

Sultan Abdülhamid II (r. 1876-1909) was perhaps the most “image obsessed” of all the Ottoman monarchs. Indeed, the Hamidian regime made it its business to monitor all representations of the sultan, with designated clerks at Yıldız Palace culling any portrayals that carried even the slightest hint of satire. In this connection, the regime saw the management of the “dynastic image” in both foreign and domestic contexts as an integral part of contemporary Ottoman statecraft. As the late Ottoman state found itself increasingly caught between the expansionist policies of the European Great Powers, the continued survival of the empire was partly based on competent political navigation amongst more militarily powerful imperial neighbors. However, there were times when the state could not prevent foreign powers from utilizing print media as a means to deride the sultan and critique the empire’s policies. Indeed, the Armenian Massacres of 1894-97 instigated just such a media furor that gained particular traction in the print cultures of the British Empire, as the massacre of thousands of Ottoman Armenians by state employed irregulars elicited an explosion of inflammatory media coverage specifically directed towards the sultan. Cast as “Abdul the Damned,” and “the Red Sultan,” the British press construed Abdülhamid as barbaric and uncivilized. This study looks at the ways in which Abdülhamid II was represented in influential British newspapers and journals in the wake of the Armenian Massacres of 1894-97. It argues that alongside the discourse of “Turkish tyranny,” which was used to justify European imperial interests in Ottoman affairs, a parallel and overlapping discourse of “Hamidian” despotism constituted an integral part of contemporary British anti-Ottoman rhetoric. Concomitantly, it examines how late Ottoman sovereignty was conceived by the British media at a time when the British government began to move away from its policy of supporting Ottoman territorial integrity.
PANEL 2: Musical Influences and the Role of Graffiti in the Arab Uprisings

Art on the Walls: Street Graffiti of the Egyptian Uprising

Atri Hatef Naemi (University of Victoria)

Graffiti or writings and drawings created on buildings, walls, and other surfaces of urban areas are a universal phenomenon. These various forms of graffiti could be found in different countries across the world. The motivations behind the creation of such artworks are extremely diverse. Graffiti artists are deeply influenced by the socio-political conditions of society. Their art is a mirror of what is happening in their own country or the global community. Urban graffiti art may work as a reaction to injustice and disenfranchisement, as a way to create awareness of socio-political issues or as an expression of hope for the future. They may be created simply as an attempt to beautify the urban environment. The aim is to be seen and recognized by as many people as possible, and thus graffiti artists address a wide variety of audiences from different social groups. During the Arab uprisings, street graffiti was used to “publicize injustice and show support for various political or military brigades, even as a catalyst for attempts to bring down governments”. While graffiti was previously absent from many Arab countries, it was used as one of the most popular and effective forms of art during the revolution. The graffiti artists reflected political circumstances and social changes in their artworks on the walls of public spaces. They mirrored the revolutionary spirit of the movement and propelled it forward. The graffiti messages not only describe the recent events, but also affect the government policies through criticizing ongoing state actions. I will be focusing on graffiti art that was created and flourished during the Arab uprisings. For clarity’s sake, I will confine my argument to Egypt and more specifically downtown Cairo. The key question that will be addressed is how the graffiti art played a crucial role in mobilizing revolutionaries, bringing together different segments and classes of society on the one hand, and informing people about the current events on the other. I will also discuss to what extent the subject matter of the street graffiti changed during different phases of the uprisings, reflecting dissatisfaction, rage, rebellion, disturbance, oppression, opposition, and change (defeat or victory).

Middle-Eastern Immigrants on the Periphery: Language Maintenance Stories in Canada

Dr. Naghmeh Babaee (Art Institute of Vancouver)

Research shows that many immigrant children in Canada face challenges in maintaining their heritage languages, (i.e. languages other than English and French or Indigenous languages). Public schools might not recognize or promote the use of heritage languages, many schools do not provide heritage language instruction, and in some instances, students and their parents are discouraged from using their heritage language at home. Heritage languages, however, should be maintained to help immigrant students succeed socially and academically and maintain stronger familial bonds, as noted in Chen (2010) and Kouritzin (2006). In light of these challenges and the importance of maintaining heritage languages, this qualitative case study, informed by the work of critical theorists in the field of additional language education such as Norton (2001), attempted to investigate language maintenance in a Farsi school in a major city in Canada. Issues under investigation included Iranian immigrant students’, parents’, and teachers’ perspectives on language maintenance, the availability of language maintenance resources at home, school, and in the first language (L1) community, successes and challenges of the students in maintaining their heritage language at home, school, and in the L1 community, and the parents’ and teachers’ effort in facilitating heritage language learning opportunities for children. Data were collected through in-depth, semi-structured interviews, field-observations, descriptive and reflective field notes, and participants’ journal writing. The emerging themes included: 1) the importance of language maintenance, 2) language maintenance strategies, and 3) language maintenance challenges. Recommendations for family and community members, policy makers, and teacher will be offered at the conclusion of the presentation.
Panel 6: Preserving Cultural Heritage within Multicultural Societies

The Therapeutic Properties of Iranian Classical Music; as Appeared in Three Treatises from the Safavid Era
Fahimeh Ghorbani (University of Victoria)

Iranians have been using music as a means of therapy for many kinds of disorders, from at least the Sassanid Era. Historical evidence suggest that physicians and musicians in pre-Modern Iran were well aware of the therapeutic properties of music, and applied specific methods and directions to put those properties into effect. Significant Iranian scholar-musicians including Farabi, Razi, Avicenna, and Shaykh Bahaei have elaborated on the healing influences of traditional Iranian music on the human body, mind, and soul. In addition to this major body of scholarship, there exist a number of smaller treatises and pamphlets on the subject, both in the realms of medicine and music, written by unknown authors. This presentation introduces and examines the codicological features of a Safavid manuscript that contains three of these treatises. In addition, through textual analysis of the treatises, this study sheds light on some of the healing qualities of Iranian classical music, and the techniques through which those qualities were applied.

The fall of Mubarak’s regime in February 2011 was the first of many changes to take place in Egypt. After Mubarak left office, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) took control of power in Egypt as an interim government until a new president was elected. The SCAF was considered by many Egyptians to be a continuation of the regime, resulting in violent clashes between the SCAF and the opposition. Using various forms of art to express their thoughts and emotions, Egyptians opposed the SCAF’s rule and its continued authoritarian outlook. One of the main modes of protest during this period of upheaval was graffiti and street art. There are numerous studies analyzing the context of Cairene graffiti and street art, but very few that analyze the materiality and function of it. In order to progress to the analysis of how the medium of graffiti and street art was being used and what its purpose was, we first have to discern whether the artworks are graffiti or street art. It is common practice amongst scholars who study these pieces in Cairo to use the terms graffiti and street art interchangeably, when in fact, graffiti and street art have developed into two different art forms. This paper will focus on the differences between graffiti and street art, and the practicability of identifying these works in Cairo. Central to my investigation is the mural painted under the October 6 bridge titled Tank Versus Biker. Tank Versus Biker underwent six alterations by various artists over a one year period, before ultimately being whitewashed in 2013. Using this mural as a case study, I review previous scholarship on graffiti and street art, and deploy visual analysis to discern that Tank Versus Biker can be classified as street art. As I argue, the importance of proper classification as to what qualifies as street art and what does not is central to understanding the syntactics of the piece. Establishing the artwork’s formal properties and identifying what it is at the outset of a study, can further assist the clarity of analysis when transitioning from the syntactic to the pragmatic and semantic components of the artwork.

An Ancient Muslim Nation in Far Western China
Alfira Askar (University of Victoria)

China is an ancient country; Islam in China has existed for more than 1200 years. Islamic culture and influence have played a significant role in Chinese history and society. The Muslim population in China is less than 4% of the total population, and the majority is based in western regions. This presentation will introduce one of the major Muslim communities, Uyghurs, who live in the northwest region of China called Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous. Xinjiang is largest autonomous region in China as well as an important part of the Silk Road. Xinjiang borders eight different countries, rich in natural resources and culture background. There are 13 ethnic groups living in Xinjiang, the majority of whom are Uyghurs. This presentation mainly focuses on Uyghur traditional culture, music, art, demographic location, and modern Uyghur society, as well as the ways in which Uyghurs incorporated Islamic art into their daily lives and architecture. The Uyghurs are an ancient Turk nation; their spoken language is Uyghur, a Turkic language that is distinct from mainstream Chinese languages such as Cantonese and Mandarin. Uyghurs have a rich history of art, music and culture. They began to convert to Islam in 934 A.D. Since then, their culture has adapted some Islamic traditions, combined Uyghur culture and Islamic traditions, which led the Uyghurs to many golden ages. I will draw on Kutadgu Bilig (Wisdom Which Brings Good Fortune), one of the great books from the 11th century, one of the golden eras of the Uyghur Nation, which introduces Muslim Uyghur society in the 11th century and the way in which Islam played an important role in Uyghur life. Since its introduction into Uyghur society, Islam has played and continues to play a very important role in Uyghur’s life. In this presentation, I will illustrate how modernization of society is influencing Uyghurs and their culture, as well as how Middle Eastern Culture is influencing Islamic practices within Uyghur society.

Muslim Youths: Everyday Life in Multicultural Canada
Michelle Hagman (Simon Fraser University)

Youths between the age of 19 and 25 are entering a stage in life where they are allowed to make more decisions for themselves and develop their own opinions, values, and traditions. It is in this stage when they move (further) away from pressures of the community and are allowed to develop their own relationship with their religion. The Western world is currently experiencing a wave of Islamophobia, and although there is an increased number of Muslims living in the West, they are still considered the “Other.” This is also the case in Canada, which prides itself for its multiculturalism (both as a cultural value and as public policy). This Anthropological research paper focuses on initiatives taken by Muslim youths in the Greater Vancouver Area to educate the non-Muslim community about Islam. The participants in this study are aware of the negative opinions towards Islam, which is why they organize these educational events (in particular Islam Awareness Week at Simon Fraser University and A Journey into Islam at the Az-Zahraa Mosque), however they still have a strong Muslim identity. Focusing on what it means to be a Muslim (practically and ideologically) in a Multicultural society, this paper explores the everyday lives and practices of Muslim youths and their identity construction. For this research, I have interviewed members of the Muslim Student Association (MSA) at Simon Fraser University, and conducted participant observation at the annual Islam Awareness Week, an event organized by the MSA. For analysis, the works of authors focusing on Canadian society, such as Himani Bannerji and Jasmin Zine, as well as works that focus on comparable situations in other countries such as Mayanthi Fernando’s The Republic Unsettled (2014) have been used.

Graffiti or Street Art? The Importance of Terminology when Classifying Graffiti and Street Art in Cairo, Egypt
Dana Harold (University of Victoria)

The fall of Mubarak’s regime in February 2011 was the first of many changes to take place in Egypt. After Mubarak left office, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) took control of power in Egypt as an interim government until a new president was elected. The SCAF was considered by many Egyptians to be a continuation of the regime, resulting in violent clashes between the SCAF and the opposition. Using various forms of art to express their thoughts and emotions, Egyptians opposed the SCAF’s rule and its continued authoritarian outlook. One of the main modes of protest during this period of upheaval was graffiti and street art. There are numerous studies analyzing the context of Cairene graffiti and street art, but very few that analyze the materiality and function of it. In order to progress to the analysis of how the medium of graffiti and street art was being used and what its purpose was, we first have to discern whether the artworks are graffiti or street art. It is common practice amongst scholars who study these pieces in Cairo to use the terms graffiti and street art interchangeably, when in fact, graffiti and street art have developed into two different art forms. This paper will focus on the differences between graffiti and street art, and the practicability of identifying these works in Cairo. Central to my investigation is the mural painted under the October 6 bridge titled Tank Versus Biker. Tank Versus Biker underwent six alterations by various artists over a one year period, before ultimately being whitewashed in 2013. Using this mural as a case study, I review previous scholarship on graffiti and street art, and deploy visual analysis to discern that Tank Versus Biker can be classified as street art. As I argue, the importance of proper classification as to what qualifies as street art and what does not is central to understanding the syntactics of the piece. Establishing the artwork’s formal properties and identifying what it is at the outset of a study, can further assist the clarity of analysis when transitioning from the syntactic to the pragmatic and semantic components of the artwork.
The Great Gap: The Emergence of Islamic Extremism

Joyti Birk (University of Victoria)

This article will aim to explore how the Qur'an is manipulated to produce extremists. Recently, radical Islam appears to be the voice that propels Islamic followers to join extremist groups and engage in domestic and international terrorism. Although political despair and anger are obvious reasons for extremism, I would like to explore how religion fits in this void of despair and anger. Khaled Abou El Fadl's novel The Great Theft: Wrestling Islam from the Extremists will be the foundation of this article's argument, as he argues that the primary reason for the conflicted state of modern Islam is that the religion lacks a final authority. However, this novel is brief in defining the reality of Islamic thought as it currently is. My research will examine the Qur'an for incomplete or ambiguous verses that could easily be manipulated by extremists. It will also review radical propaganda to understand the recruitment process and their message. Moreover, followers seek to match their lives to the Prophet Muhammad, by maintaining the five pillars; I would like to explore how this model is manipulated for extremist support because true religious devotion and faith are advertised through mobilization and terror, opposed to the five pillars. Ultimately, I will argue that extremist numbers rise from the manipulation of the Qur'an and the advertisement of radical Islam. There is arguably a connection between Islam and terrorism because those who are carrying out attacks claim to be doing so in the name the Prophet Mohammed. I do not believe that past geopolitical affairs — UN and US embargos, the war for oil, coups and the installment and un-installment of puppet dictators — are the sole cause for extremist support.
Panel 5: Democracy, Nationalism, and Historical Narratives

The Detrimental Effects of Oil on Democracy: The Case of Saudi Arabia
Ranjodh Gill (Simon Fraser University)
Oil and other hydrocarbons have long been the primary feature of the Middle East, where 66 per cent of OPEC oil reserves are located. International hydrocarbon trade benefits even countries without rich natural resources in the region. For example, Egypt and Jordan earn revenues by allowing pipelines to pass through their territory, further increasing the critical importance of hydrocarbons for the region. This study analyzes the influence of this phenomenon on democratization. In line with resource curse theory, it argues that oil is detrimental for democracy, and focuses on the case of Saudi Arabia to examine the processes that hinder democratization in the country. Data for the study comes primarily from the World Bank. The paper will aim to establish a causal relationship between oil capital and democracy. Findings indicate that the rentier and spending effects are at least partially responsible for the democracy gap in Saudi Arabia.

Confronting Barriers and Establishing Identity in the Palestinian Road Film: Annemarie Jacir’s Salt of This Sea
Sophia Larson-Wickman (Western Washington University)
This paper explores the themes of barriers, journeys, and Palestinian identity as they are manifested in prominent Palestinian director Annemarie Jacir’s film Salt of This Sea. Drawing on Nadia Yaqub’s analysis of Palestinian road films in her article Utopia and Dystopia in Palestinian Circular Journeys from Ghassan Kanafani to Contemporary Film to examine protagonist Soraya’s circular journey of return to Palestine from the diaspora, this paper traces her reaction to the boundaries imposed by occupation and their effect on her Palestinian identity. By examining the film through the lens of Yaqub’s conception of the Palestinian road film, I seek to challenge her classification of Salt of This Sea as a “journey of return” rather than a “circular journey” and argue that Jacir’s inaugural film and “love letter to Palestine” is a utopian exhortation paired with a political consciousness, representing a call for the reconstruction of a vividly remembered past through radical assertion of Palestinian identity.

Modern Egyptian Salafism: Origins and Structure
Ibrahim Gemaeah (University of Washington)
Despite having their own Satellite television channels and their rapidly increasing numbers ever since they emerged in Egypt, Salafis did not seem to be an important factor in the Egyptian political equation, until the eruption of the January 25th revolution. Prior to this they were politically isolated. This political isolation, which was accepted by most Salafis, led to the formation of a stereotypical image about them, overlooking their actual diversity and complexity, depicting them as a one homogenous group that did not lend itself to classification or differentiation. These distinctions, despite not being core or fundamental, greatly influence the ideologies of the different subgroups within the movement regarding various modern day issues such as democracy and politics. Through the course of this paper, I will examine the diversity of Salafi subgroups and analyze how the largest of these subgroups regulates and functions with no homogenous or hierarchal structure. Using primary Arabic sources that includes oral history, bibliographies, memoirs, lectures and official statements of different Egyptian Salafi groups I will come to conclude that Salafism, unlike what is generally propagated, is proven to be an ideology shared through different streams and is not a unified Islamic movement or organization like the Muslim Brotherhood or any other Islamist movement. In fact, it is an ideology adopted by different groups that come to agree on the general definition of Salafism and its goals, but disagree on some secondary issues such as democracy, revolution, and elections. I will explain its post-Mubarak hierarchal structure, and the methods they use to regulate and direct their growing masses.

Strategic Depth to Strategic Participation: Turkish Foreign Policy under the New Civil-Military Relationship
Scott Bryce Aubrey (University of Victoria)
This paper employs a combination of civil-military relations and “balance of threat” theory to explain the shift in Turkish Middle Eastern policy from “zero problems with neighbours” to “strategic participation.” Both strategies are attempts to secure Ahmet Davutoğlu’s “strategic depth,” which aims to situate Turkey as an indispensable regional leader. “Zero problems” pursued this by positioning Turkey outside of regional disputes to increase its soft power as a mediator. “Strategic participation” is a term describing Turkey’s current strategy of hard power participation in the ongoing restructuring of the Middle Eastern international system. The paper makes two key arguments: “zero problems” and “strategic participation” were made possible by post-2008 civilian dominance in civil-military relations; and those strategies were respectively prompted by a faltering EU accession process, and the 2011 Arab Uprisings. The 2008 Ergenekon trials broke what Amos Perlmutter calls Turkey’s “praetorian state,” characterized by military intervention in politics, in turn providing the civilian government what Samuel Huntington describes as “Objective Control” over the military. “Objective control” granted the government unprecedented latitude in foreign policy and enabled the implementation of “strategic depth.” The paper then explains the shift in implementation from “zero problems” to “strategic participation” by using Stephen Walt’s “balance of threat” theory. It concludes that “zero problems,” implemented after stalled EU accession talks shifted the balance of threat away from Europe, only changed when the 2011 Arab Uprisings completely derailed the policy. The ensuing breakdown in relations with key regional partners amplified the threat from the Middle East, leading Turkey to adopt the reactive, hard power approach that is “strategic participation.” This strategy indicates a more assertive Turkish foreign policy under the new civil-military relationship, and will likely lead to significantly increased Turkish involvement as a Middle Eastern stakeholder.
Panel 4: Histories of Imperialism and Resistance in Palestine

The Visit: How Sadat’s Visit to Jerusalem Changed the Israeli-Egyptian Conflict

Mariana Gallegos Dupuis (University of Victoria)

After three decades of war following the establishment of the state of Israel, Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin received Egyptian President Muhammad Anwar El Sadat in Jerusalem for what unfolded to be a historic visit. Through a review of the relevant preceding history, a description of the central individuals, the itinerary, and the momentous consequences of the visit, this paper categorizes this historic encounter of leaders of estranged nations and cultures as a standard of hope for peace and diplomacy in the region. Rarely do peace initiatives amount to the significance of President Sadat’s visit to Jerusalem on 19-21 November 1977, at the invitation of Prime Minister Begin. Indeed, these two nations had been at war for three decades. Yet, Sadat’s willingness to visit Jerusalem, and Israel’s hospitality shook the status quo of the Middle East and cracked the impasse in peace negotiation. Most importantly, they created a potential platform for lasting peace between two enemy states by deconstructing the illusions of each other’s populations. A review of the preceding history to the visit illustrates through contrast how revolutionary the visit was: the Khartoum Conference after the 1967 War, Resolution 242, Sadat’s expulsion of Soviet advisers from Egypt in 1972, and the Yom Kippur War in 1973. A background of both of these leaders also illustrates why the world was in utter disbelief at the emergence of this new hope for peace. Furthermore, a close analysis of how the visit unfolded, the invitations, the itinerary, the reaction of the public in both these countries and around the world, and Sadat’s speech in the Knesset demonstrate its significance. Lastly, an examination of its legacy establishes the visit as a vital step towards the Camp David Accords, and a beacon of hope for peace in the Middle East, despite provoking retaliation from the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and unease in the Arab world.

British Ambiguity Regarding Palestine (1915-1922)

Dessa Marie Meehan (Western Washington University)

This paper seeks to demonstrate how British correspondence and documentation was written in vague terminology in order to tighten Britain’s imperialist hold over the Palestinian region during the years 1915-1922. I will explain how the Husayn-McMahon Correspondence, the Balfour Declaration, and the White Paper of 1922 made inexplicit promises to both Arabs and Jews in Palestine in order to attempt to mollify both factions and subsequently protect British interests in the region. Extensive research conducted using primary documents, such as the Husayn-McMahon Correspondence or those found in Doreen Ingrams’ Palestinian Papers, and comparable research papers on British policy during the years 1915-1922 reveal that British policymakers seemingly supported whichever faction at the time furthered British interests. Upon examining these documents, it clearly appears that British policymakers, politicians, and government officials employed vague and confusing terminology in order to maintain British control over Palestine, delay any sort of independence, and keep the region exempt from any firm territorial promises made to any foreign faction. Through examining British documentation in Palestine and the broader Middle East during 1915-1922, this research emphasizes the importance of terminology in governmental policy as a contributing factor of international diplomacy.

Nabi Saleh: Popular Struggle and Global Citizenship from Palestine

Michael Carpenter (University of Victoria)

The small West Bank village called Nabi Saleh is a leader and a microcosm of the grassroots Palestinian movement known loosely as the ‘popular resistance’, or the ‘popular struggle’. The movement practices civil resistance, grassroots participatory organization, and solidarity outreach to the international community, and includes Israeli peace activists and human rights groups. The movement strives to advance models of unarmed and largely nonviolent direct action that could be adopted by larger segments of the population in order to more effectively challenge the Israeli occupation. These methods include weekly Friday demonstrations and diverse other creative direct actions, such as knocking holes in the Israeli separation wall around Jerusalem, blocking settler roads, and building protest camps on threatened land. In Nabi Saleh, as across the West Bank, activists and organizers struggle with relatively low levels of participation. Several factors militate against increased mobilization, including threat of repression and punishment by Israeli forces, structural and logistical barriers, resistance fatigue, and cultural inhibitors. Nevertheless the ‘popular struggle’ movement has achieved a number of impressive results, with signs of growth potential, and, over several years, has been the most prominent movement in the West Bank. For their rejection of armed struggle, their practices of open and community-based organization, and their borders-defying embrace of Israeli and international friends and partners, the ‘popular struggle’ demands attention and support from Western activists, academics, organizations, and institutions. I draw on civil-resistance theorist Gene Sharp to argue that the methods of the movement are viable, and I draw on public philosopher James Tully to argue for expanded practices of global citizenship and civic responsibility.