

FaresNews

The latest news about The Fares Center activities

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The Fares Center

as part of The Fletcher School

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THE FLETCHER
SCHOOL

TUFTS UNIVERSITY



Message from the Director:

As summer is around the corner, I want to thank all of you that engaged with us this spring. We had a remarkable semester with great participation despite many of our activities being virtual. We are particularly happy about the turnout in the numerous events we organized these past few months. One of our goals is to be a hub for all those interested in the Middle East at Fletcher, Tufts and beyond, and thanks to your engagement we feel we have truly become one.

Nadim N. Rouhana, Director

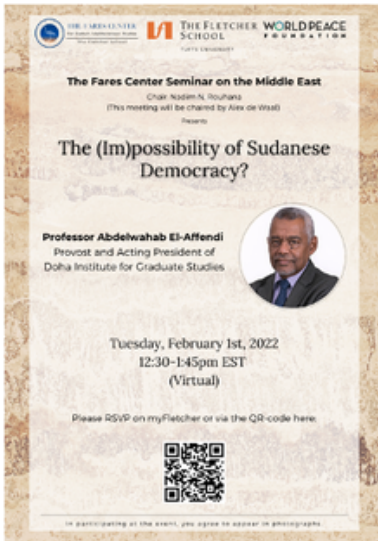


THE FARES CENTER

For Eastern Mediterranean Studies

The Fletcher School

Seminar Series



The (Im)possibility of Sudanese Democracy? with Professor Abdelwahab El-Affendi

Dr. Abdelwahab El-Affendi, Acting President of the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies, inaugurated the Spring 2022 Speaker Series with a lecture about the current situation in Sudan and the prospects for democracy in light of most recent events. Dr. El-Affendi focused of the main domestic political figures in the country as well as the increasing influence of external actors.



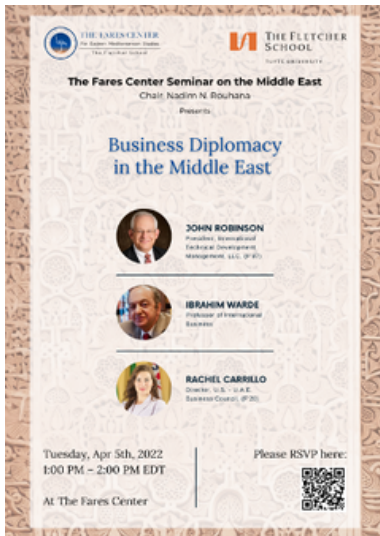
Reimagining Israel/Palestine: Israeli Discourses about the Future with Lev Grinberg and Orly Noy

The first event of the Reimagining Israel/Palestine series focused on the current state of Israeli political discourse. Grinberg noted the limited range of views among the key political players as well as the dramatic move towards the Right in the last few years. Noy emphasized the colonial origins of Israel and the impact its founding has on current day politics. She emphasized the need to reimagine a joint future between Israelis and Palestinians away from those colonial structures.



Reimagining Israel/Palestine: Palestinian Discourses about the Future with Honaida Ghanim and Mudar Kassis

The second event of the Reimagining Israel/Palestine series focused on the current state of the Palestinian political discourse. Professor Mudar Kassis lamented the lack of imagination when contemplating future opportunities among West Bank political actors and underscored the importance of enriching the mainstream political debate with new lines of thinking. Honaida Ghanim provided an in-depth overview of the current political discourses among Palestinian citizens of Israel, emphasizing the important role this group of Palestinians can play in reimagining the future of the region.



Business Diplomacy in the Middle East with Ibrahim Warde, John Robinson and Rachel Carrillo

Fletcher alumnus John Robinson spoke about his extensive experience in business diplomacy and stressed the importance of being familiar with the culture, language and customs of the countries one engages in business with. Professor Ibrahim Warde complemented Robinson’s talk by providing a thorough overview of the world and relevance of business diplomacy in the Middle East. Fletcher alumna Rachel Carrillo presented the newly founded Robinson fellowship, which will fund one Fletcher student to specialize in business diplomacy in the Middle East, or in the United States but focusing on the Middle East.



Annual Lecture with the Center for Humanities at Tufts with Jokha Alharthi

The second edition of the Annual Lecture with the Center for the Humanities at Tufts was Omani writer and scholar, Jokha Alharthi, who won the Man Booker International Prize in 2019 for her novel *Celestial Bodies*. This is the first work by an Arabic-language writer to be awarded the Man Booker International Prize. Alharthi spoke about her literary work, her upbringing and life experiences that inform her writing and the current state of the Arabic novel.

Student Testimonial



The Fares Center Seminar Series allowed me to challenge my assumptions and knowledge about a wide range of topics. It provided me with novel and fascinating perspectives and information about the Middle East, increasing my interest and understanding of the region. Listening to the hands-on experience of the speakers also provided an extra edge to gain valuable insights throughout the series.



- Simran -



Co-sponsored Events

Revolution from Afar film screening

WORLD PEACE FOUNDATION **THE FARES CENTER**
For Eastern Mediterranean Studies
THE TIRMOCHI SCHOOL **CENTER FOR THE HUMANITIES AT SUFS**

FILMSCREENING

"Revolution From Afar" with
director Bentley Brown

April 12th, 2022
5:30pm EST

At The Fares Center

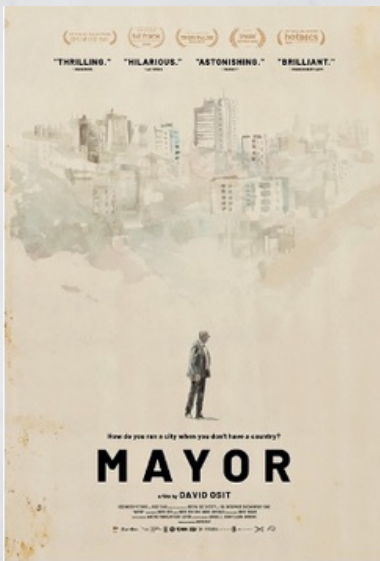


Bentley Brown
FILM DIRECTOR AND
PHD, CRITICAL MEDIA
PRACTICES AT UC
COLORADO BOULDER

REGISTRATION
Please scan the QR code or check
<https://cglink.me/2dk/s31827>



Cultural Event Series



MAYOR (2020) Film Screening

MAYOR is a real-life political saga following Musa Hadid, the Christian mayor of Ramallah, during his second term in office. His immediate goals are to repave the sidewalks, attract more tourism, and plan the city's Christmas celebrations. His ultimate mission: to end the occupation of Palestine. Rich with detailed observations and a surprising amount of humor, MAYOR offers a portrait of dignity amidst the madness and absurdity of endless occupation while posing a question: how do you run a city when you don't have a country?



Apples From the Desert (2014) Film Screening

Rebecca Abarnabel, a single daughter born into an Orthodox Jewish family, is tired of the lifestyle that her father, Reuven, has forced upon her. She and her mother, Victoria, go on a life-changing journey between worlds. The film provides a glimpse into modern Israeli life that would otherwise require a plane ticket and observing people who probably wouldn't appreciate the attention of curious strangers.



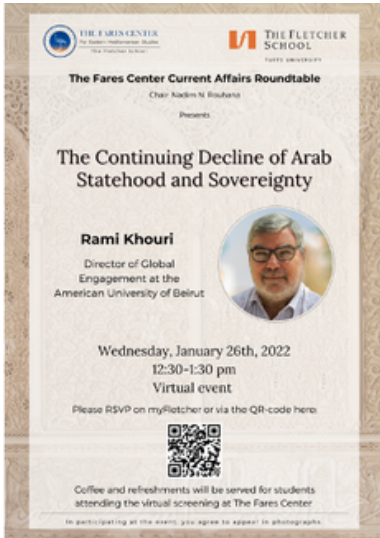
Palestinian short film screening with Amahl Bishara

The Fares Center hosted a Palestinian short film screening with Professor Amahl Bishara. The two short films shown were Take My Pictures For Me (Amahl Bishara, 2016) and The Present (Farah Nabulsi, 2020), nominated for an Academy Award in 2021. It also won the BAFTA Award for Best Short Film. The screening was followed by a discussion with Professor Bishara and students.



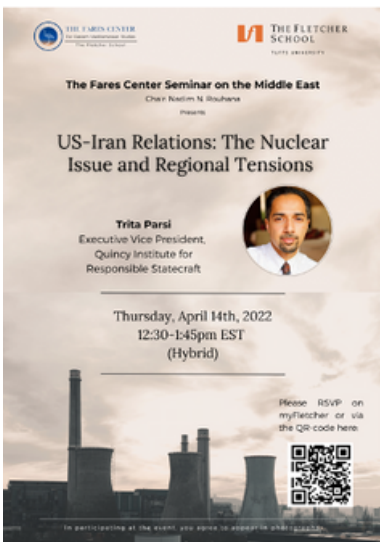
Current Affairs Roundtable

This spring semester, we launched the Fares Center Current Affairs Roundtable, an initiative that aims to provide a space for Fletcher students to discuss current affairs in the Middle East and North Africa. These events are intended for a small number of students who can engage in conversation with experts on the topic. This semester we hosted two roundtables, but we hope to make this a monthly occurrence during the next academic year.



The Continuing Decline of Arab Statehood and Sovereignty with Rami Khouri

Rami Khoury centered his talk around the issue of statehood and sovereignty, arguing that for the most part the majority of Arab states have never taken hold of their sovereignty. They rely heavily on foreign governments for weapons, intelligence and protection (diplomatic protection). Khoury and the attendees discussed the role played by this semi-sovereignty in some of the most recent events in the region as well as possibilities for the future.



US-Iran Relation: The Nuclear Issue and Regional Tensions with Trita Parsi

Trita Parsi provided a thorough overview of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA, also known as the Iran Nuclear Deal), explaining the main features of the plan, the reasons behind the U.S. government's withdrawal from the Deal as well as an in-depth analysis of the position of the Biden administration on ongoing negotiations to re-enter the JCPOA. His presentation was followed by a lively debate with students.

Language Tables

Language Tables are led by native speakers and meet weekly. They present an opportunity for students to practice these languages and connect with others who share an interest in the language or region. This semester we were delighted to include Persian among the languages we offer to Fletcher students.

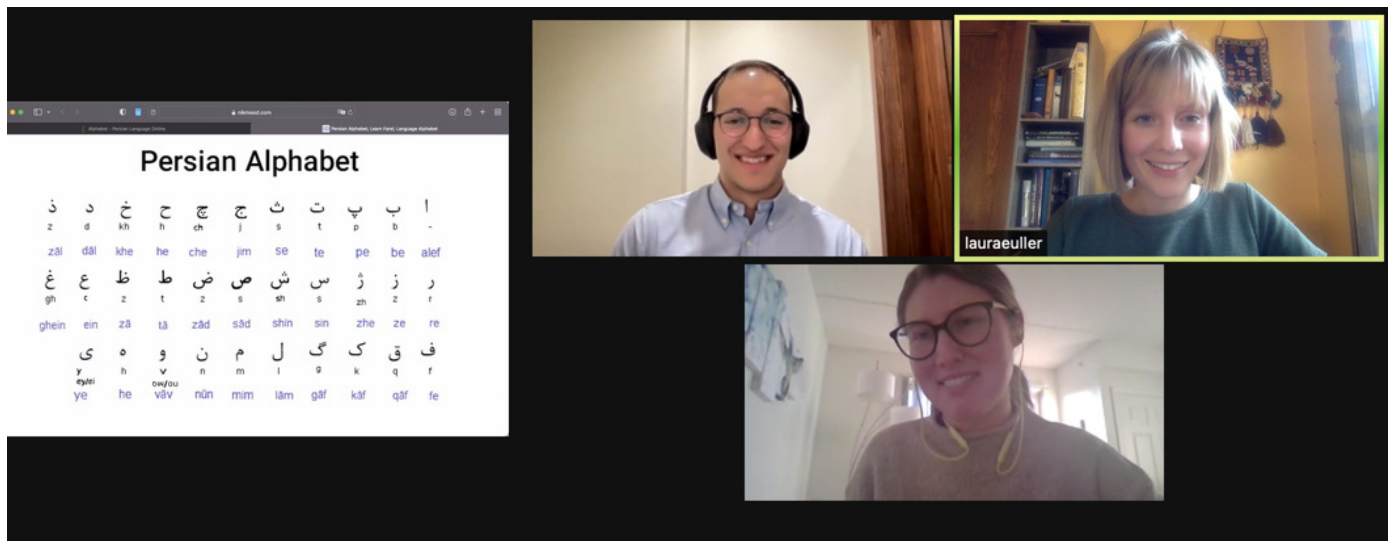
Arabic: The Fares Center runs three Arabic tables: beginner, intermediate and advanced.

Hebrew: The Fares Center runs one Hebrew table.

Turkish: The Fares Center runs one Turkish table.

Persian: The Fares Center ran one Persian table this semester.

Persian Language Table Virtual Meeting:



Student Testimonial



I have been leading the Turkish Language Table for the last two semesters and it gives me such a joy of sharing. It's also a common ground that Fletcherites from different backgrounds exposed to some degree of Turkish language and culture share their experiences. And it's always a good idea to take a break from the excruciating cycle of the semester and get together to share something new, practice and brush up your Turkish!

- Nezihe -



Student Working Groups

These groups are focused on a country, area, or theme related to the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) and may engage in several academic activities, including but not limited to conducting research, organizing speaker events, preparing publications, and creating a podcast. The Fares Center supported the work of eight Student Working Groups during Spring 2022.

1. Blockades, Bots, and the Future of Gulf Unity

Caroline Hayes (MALD '22), Juliana Rordorf (MALD '22), Will Crass (MALD '22)

Using the 2017-2021 Qatar blockade as a historical backdrop, the group is analyzing the extent to which Gulf states' increased technological capacity to monitor and control public dissent shaped, and are shaping, public discourse around Gulf unity in the post-blockade landscape.

2. Examining Emirati Foreign Policy Interests in the Horn of Africa

Kyrre Berland (MALD '22), Chris Brew (MALD '22), Delia Burns (MALD '22)

The students are working on a series of white papers on Emirati policy interests in the Horn of Africa. The series will explore how Emirati geopolitical strategy influences political dynamics within and between Somalia, Ethiopia, and Sudan.

3. TwentyTwenty Podcast Series

Elizabeth Dykstra-McCarthy (MALD '21), Max Klaver (A'19, MALD '21), Mario Zampaglione (MALD '21)

This project seeks to utilize the TwentyTwenty platform to continue the question of what global trends have been accelerated by the events of 2020, through a MENA-specific lens. In doing so, the series will look at current trends that are affecting the region and explore the potential paths the COVID-19 pandemic might send it down. The group has produced four podcasts, focusing on Iraq, Turkey, Saudi and Lebanon. The podcasts will soon be available on the Fares Center's website.

4. Umbrellas in the Desert Podcast

Majed Fitaihi (MALD '22), Waleed Al Mutawa (MIB '23)

This is an interactive podcast focused on Gulf culture, sustainability, and economic development. The students have guests on the podcast episodes who are able to provide insights on the region. One of the main objectives of Umbrellas in the Desert is to create an interactive platform where listeners can ask questions to the guests before the episodes. Majed and Waleed hope to have an identity built on the promotion of sustainability and innovation in the region.

5. Analysis of the water crisis in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

Harshad Vaswani, Rachael Lew, Raunaq Chandrasheka

Through their research the group aims to analyze the potential causes, as well as the social, political, and economic implications of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan's water crisis, between 2010 and 2021. The students will produce a series of three articles, a final report, and an interactive map. These will be published on the Fares Center's website, and the group will also aim to publish these articles on other academic journals focused on environmental sciences, economics, water policy, and regionally focused on the Middle East.

Student Testimonial

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At the Fares Center, Waleed Al Mutawa and I launched an interactive podcast, Umbrellas in the Desert, highlighting the various cultural identities in the Gulf by welcoming guests to provide different insights across the region. We really enjoyed illustrating Middle Eastern cultural themes to help educate Fletcher students focusing on regional foreign policy, economics, and development.

- Majed -



6. Examining the democratic transition in Sudan since the 2019 revolution

Nani Detti (MALD 2023), Shane Goetz (MALD 2023), Asa Cooper (MALD 2022)

The group aims to examine the struggle between the Sudanese people calling for a fully civilian government and military leaders while analyzing their respective interests, as well as the involvement of global and regional actors, in determining how political power is distributed in Sudan. The students will also identify the primary political actors within Sudan and how they are shaping the political direction of the country.

7. Understanding the role of female Islamic religious guides in Morocco

Maggie Fischer, Saumya Sampath, Arya Thapa

This project focuses on the Murchadite program, the first state-sponsored female-focused religious training program in the Islamic world. The group will research the ecosystem in which these female Islamic religious guides operate, including in-person and online spaces. While the project has been envisioned for the Moroccan context, the group might bring in references to the Turkish and Egyptian programs as well, to better understand the role of female religious guides in the Middle East and North Africa region. The findings of the research will be presented in the form of videos, interviews, photo essays and blog posts on an interactive website, to make the information more accessible and interesting to a wide and diverse range of people.

8. Examining student-led activism and activities at universities in the Middle East and North Africa

Alexander Kochenburger (MALD '23), Dana Duffis (MALD '23), and Mohsen Al-Ateeqi (MALD '23)

This project seeks to analyze the ideologies of students from different universities in the region (and the United States) and their calls for change. The research will compare one American-style university and one national university in Morocco and Egypt, and one American-style university in Kuwait and the Kuwaiti community in an American university, to examine the parallels in student-led activities and their efforts to promote social change. In addition to the findings, the group will also organize student-led panels.

Student Testimonial



Over my two years at Fletcher, support from the Fares Center has afforded me opportunities to pursue independent research deep dives. Using the case study of Afghanistan, my research has looked at anti-corruption initiatives in fragile and conflict-affected contexts, exploring current recommendations for how anti-corruption should better be adjusted to these complex contexts, as well as the potential risks of unintentionally exacerbating conflict and fragility. I am very grateful for the support from the Fares Center.



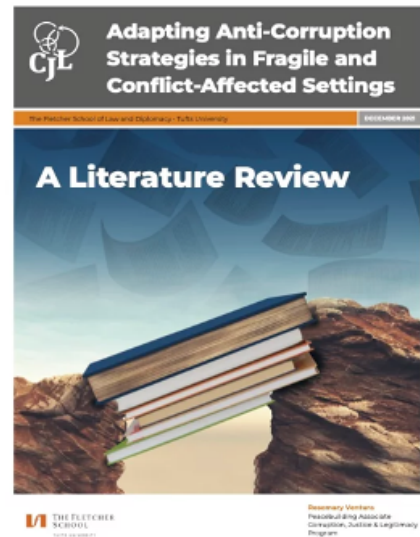
- Rosemary -

Research Assistants Initiative

The Research Assistants Initiative pairs Fletcher faculty with qualified Fletcher students who assist them with conducting research on a topic related to the Middle East. Many students have expressed their desire to work more closely with faculty, and last year's RAs indicated that being a Fares Research Assistant increased their interaction with professors and was overall a significant benefit to their Fletcher experience.

The Fares Center is currently supporting the research of six faculty members at the Fletcher School through this initiative by providing support to seven students. Some of the students have had the opportunity to publish through their RA work.

For more information check our website:
<https://sites.tufts.edu/farescenter/>

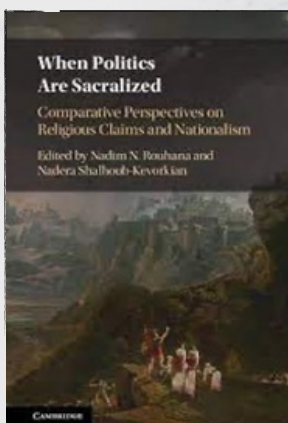


The QR code leads to the website.

The Robinson Fund Fellowship

The Fares Center announced the Robinson Fund Fellowships this semester. The Robinson Fund will grant scholarships on a competitive basis to second-year master's students studying United States-Arab World Commercial Diplomacy at Participating Universities in the fund's U.S. University Consortium and the Arab World University Consortium. Scholarship recipients will be selected from candidates recommended by their home university.

Publications by Faculty

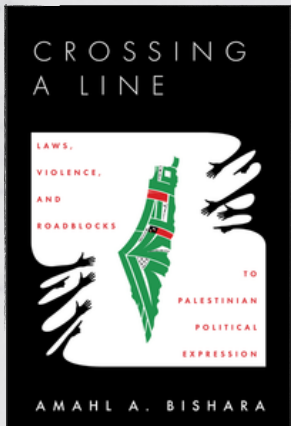


Professor Nadim Rouhana, Director of the Center, co-edited along with Professor Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian, *When Politics are Sacralized: Comparative Perspectives on Religious Claims and Nationalism* (Cambridge University Press, 2021). *When Politics Are Sacralized* interdisciplinarily and comparatively examines the fusion between religious claims and nationalism and studies its political manifestations. Studying Israel, India, the Palestinian National Movement and Hamas, Sri Lanka, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Iran, and Northern Ireland, the thirteen chapters engage with the visibility, performativity, role, and political legitimation of religion and nationalism.

Professor Malik Mufti, member of the Fares Center Academic Committee, published an article in Turkish entitled "Altın Bir Elma? Çağdaş Arapça ve Türkçe Araştırmalarda Leo Strauss Algısı Üzerine" [A Golden Apple? The Reception of Leo Strauss in Contemporary Arabic and Turkish Scholarship], FLSF (Felsefe ve Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi), no. 30 (Autumn 2020): 177-194. An Arabic version of the same article is scheduled to appear any day as "Tuffāḥatun Dhahabiyya? Al-Naẓratu ilā Leo Strauss fī al-Awṣāṭ al-Akādīmiyya al-`Arabiyya wa-l-Turkiyya al-Mu`āşira," in Al-Abḥāth (Journal of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences at the American University of Beirut), (forthcoming).

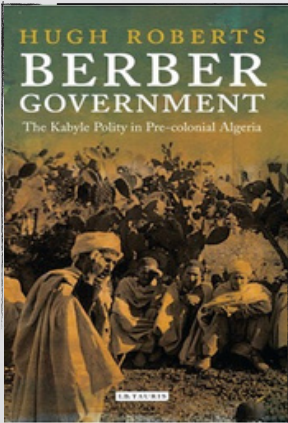


Professor Mufti also published "A Golden Apple? The Reception of Leo Strauss in Contemporary Arabic and Turkish Scholarship." The Turkish version of this article "Altın Bir Elma? Çağdaş Arapça ve Türkçe Araştırmalarda Leo Strauss Algısı Üzerine," was published in FLSF (Felsefe ve Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi), no. 30 (Autumn 2020): 177-194. The Arabic version "Tuffāḥatun Dhahabiyya? Naẓratu al-Awṣāṭ al-Akādīmiyya al-`Arabiyya wa-l-Turkiyya al-Mu`āşira ilā Leo Strauss," in Al-Abḥāth (Journal of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences at the American University of Beirut), vol. 69 (December 2021): 176-189.

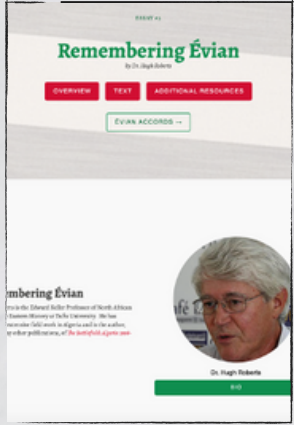


Professor Amahl Bishara, affiliated faculty member, has a new upcoming book: Crossing a Line: Laws, Violence, and Roadblocks to Palestinian Political Expression. Crossing a Line considers how Palestinians on both sides of the Green Line are differently impacted by dispossession, settler colonialism, and militarism. This book will be published by Standford University Press in June 2022.

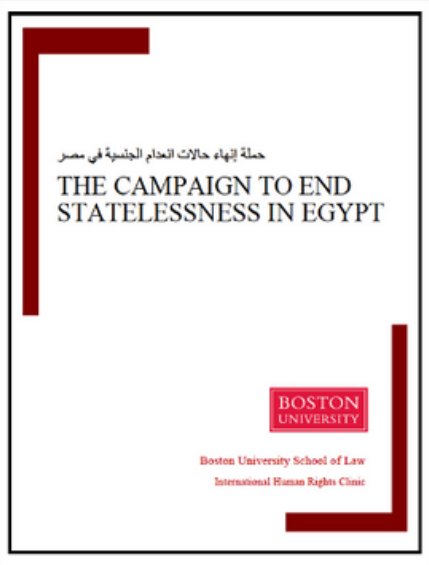
Professor Hugh Roberts, also a member of the Fares Academic Committee, has a new upcoming book: Gouvernement Berbère: la Cité kabyle dans l'Algérie précoloniale (the French translation of his book , I.B. Tauris, 2014; p/b 2017). This book is to be published by Éditions Barzakh, Algiers, in fall 2022. He is also currently working on a new book, Loved Egyptian Night: Investigations of the Arab Spring.



Professor **Roberts** also has a book chapter, 'Hearing Idir in Bouïra', in Nabil Boudraa and Karim Ouaras (eds.), *Idir, Vu des Amériques*, forthcoming (to be published in English and French editions), and an essay, 'Remembering Évian': his contribution to *The Évian Accords Turn 60*, an online collection of essays edited by William B. Quandt, Emeritus Professor of Politics, University of Virginia, published on-line by Just World Books, 18 March 2022.



Professor **Christine Bustany** has recently worked on several reports focusing on statelessness in some MENA countries. Two of the reports, released this spring, map the issue of statelessness in Egypt and Iraq, respectively. She also worked on a country report on Jordan last spring (2021). These reports were done as part of Boston University Law School International Human Rights Clinic's MENA statelessness project, directed by Professor Susan Akram. In connection with the MENA statelessness project, there has also been the launch of a MENA Statelessness Platform initiated and developed by AUB's Issam Fares Institute, BU's International Human Rights Clinic, Hawiati Network, among others, which is meant to serve as a hub for statelessness related research and advocacy in the MENA region.



Summer Fellowships

The Fares Center announced the launch of the Fares Summer Fellowships. The Center will provide up to two fellowships to qualified Fletcher students in the sum of \$2250 each. The fellowships will support Fletcher students who will be doing summer internships in the Middle East or related to the Middle East. These internships can be either research or practice focused, but the central theme of the work or the organization should be the Middle East as a region or a specific country within the region.

Lectures Available Online

In order to make our events and activities more accessible to everyone we decided to start recording and posting both the lectures from the Speaker Event Series and the discussions from the Current Affairs Roundtable on our new Vimeo channel.

