

The Fares Center Newsletter



Fall 2023

Director's Remarks

The Fares Center organized and carried out a particularly busy program in the fall of 2023. In addition to our regular program, we responded to the Fletcher community's active search for understanding the roots and context of Israel's war on Gaza that started with the Hamas attack on southern Israel on October 7, 2023. We hosted several events and cooperated with other centers at Fletcher in organizing panels on these issues for the whole community. We plan to continue these efforts in spring of 2024 with the goal of deepening understanding of the conflict in Israel and Palestine and thinking of a future that provides just peace and full equality to all those involved.

The Fares Center has been taking serious steps toward becoming the home base of all students and faculty at Fletcher who are interested in the Eastern Mediterranean region. We are also collaborating with colleagues at other schools at Tufts to promote interest in the Middle East and the understanding of its peoples, cultures, politics, and yearning for democracy and real independence. We have supported our students and faculty to pursue their interest in all these areas. Our support will continue for the foreseeable future.



In the fall of 2023, we also introduced the Fares Fellowship, hosting our first Fares Center fellow for the fall semester. Fares Center fellows serve as a resource for students and faculty and contribute to our ongoing Fares Center activities.

In the Spring of 2024, in addition to our regular program and the special events related to the war on Gaza, we will hold a major international conference titled, "The US in the Middle East and the Middle East in the US" scheduled for April 18–19. Please check our website for details.

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Events

The Fares Center Seminar on the Middle East
Chair: Nadim N. Rouhana



Presents
Decolonization's discontents and contested colonial pasts: History, memory and identity politics in France and Algeria
with Claire Eldridge

Wednesday, September 20, 2023
12:15 pm - 1:15 pm | The Fares Center



Claire Eldridge is an Associate Professor of European History at the University of Leeds, UK.


Her work centres on the interplay between empire, memory and migration in the context of the historical relationship between France and Algeria.

RSVP on MyFletcher

The Fares Center Seminar on the Middle East
Chair: Nadim N. Rouhana


Presents
"The October/Yom Kippur War 50 years later: An Arab revisionist account"
with Professor Khaled Fahmy



Khaled Fahmy is a historian and the Edward Keller Professor of North Africa and the Middle East at Tufts University.

Professor Salim Tamari, Fares Visiting Fellow, will be the discussant.

October 5th | 5:30 - 6:30 p.m.
The Fares Center



The Fares Center Seminar on the Middle East
Chair: Nadim N. Rouhana

Presents
The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict:
How did we get here and the path forward

Thursday, October 19 at 5:30- 7:00 PM | ASEAN Auditorium
160 Packard Ave, Medford, MA 02155



Rami Khouri
Speaker
AUB Distinguished Public Policy Fellow, book author, and columnist



Sima Samar
Moderator
Visiting Scholar, The Fletcher School at Tufts University



Charles Dunne
Speaker
Adjunct Professor, The Elliott School of International Affairs at The George Washington University




Derek Penslar
Speaker
William Lee Frost Professor of Jewish History and Director of the Center for Jewish Studies at Harvard University




The Fares Center Seminar on the Middle East
and The Murrow Center

Present
"Israel-Hamas War":
Tackling the root causes from an international law perspective


October 31 | 12:15-1:30 p.m. | Cabot 702




Tom Dannenbaum
Associate Professor of International Law at the Fletcher School of Law & Diplomacy



Francesca Albanese
UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian Territory occupied since 1967



Ambassador Donald L. Heflin
Executive Director of The Edward R. Murrow Center and Senior Fellow at The Fletcher School.



The Fares Center Seminar on the Middle East
Chair: Nadim N. Rouhana

Presents
"Colonialism and its Legacies in the Middle East"
with Professors Leila Fawaz and Elisabeth Leake



Elisabeth Leake is the Lee E. Dirks Professor in Diplomatic History and Associate Professor of History at the Fletcher School.




Leila Fawaz, Issam M. Fares Chair in Lebanese and Eastern Mediterranean Studies at the Fletcher School.

October 24th from 12:15-1:15pm EST
at the Fares Center




The Fares Center Seminar on the Middle East
Chair: Nadim N. Rouhana

Presents
Popular Religiosity and the Demise of the Arab Jew:
The Festival of Simon the Just




Professor Salim Tamari
Fares Visiting Fellow




Scan the QR code to register on MyFletcher

Tuesday, November 28th | 12-1:15pm | The Fares Center





Mother of Strangers:
Memoirs of Jaffa,
a vanquished city

Tuesday, December 12th
4pm EST
The Fares Center



A novel by Suad Amiry, author of the highly-acclaimed Sharon and My Mother-in-Law, which has been translated into 17 languages and was awarded the prestigious 2004 Viareggio Prize.

ISRAEL, HAMAS AND THE WORLD

Examining the Geopolitical, Legal, and Human Security impacts of the Conflict



Center for Strategic Studies
Henry J. Leir Center for Migration & Human Security
Russia & Eurasia Program
Fares Center for Eastern Mediterranean Studies
Center for International Law & Governance

Decolonization's discontents and contested colonial pasts: History, memory and identity politics in France and Algeria with Claire Eldridge

On Wednesday, September 20, Professor Claire Eldridge, Lecturer in Modern European History at the University of Leeds, delivered an engaging and informative presentation on the topic of discontents of decolonization and its discourses on identity in France and Algeria. The event was attended by several faculty members and over 40 students from the university.

Professor Eldridge began her talk by providing a historical and social background of the French colonization of Algeria and its eventual withdrawal from the country in 1962. While doing so, she introduced the audience to several yet distinct communities, like Pied-Noirs, who were residing in Algeria during the colonial rule.

The presentation alluded on how Pied-Noir associations provided a model of collective mobilization and way of framing questions about memory and history— that other groups borrowed from and or reacted against, as they sought to advance their own strategic meaning to the colonial past.

The presentation highlighted a larger point of how communities develop a version of past to justify their present position and validate their world view.



The October/Yom Kippur War 50 years later: An Arab revisionist account, with Professor Khaled Fahmy

On Thursday, October 5, Khaled Fahmy, Professor of History at Tufts University, provided an overview of the October War based on Egyptian sources. Namely, the memoirs of Saad el-Shazly, Chief of Staff; Abd al-Ghani al-Gamasy, Chief of Operations; Ahmed Ismail, Minister of war and Commander in Chief (he did not write a memoir but gave many interviews); and Anwar Sadat, President of Egypt at the time. Their accounts serve to tell the story of the years leading up to 1973 as well as the development of the War itself.

While 50 years have passed since the October War, in all these decades the primary historical source of the War has been Israel. Egypt continues to keep the official documents related to the War confidential, and thus, Egyptian and Arab historians have to rely on foreign records when writing about it. He emphasized the importance of exploring Egyptian sources through social history methods to bring to light decisions and key pieces of information, and also to learn from the past to deduce the right lessons for the present time.

Professor Salim Tamari, Fares Visiting Fellow, was the discussant. The event gained a lot of interest from the Fletcher and Tufts community as well as the broader academic community in Boston. It was attended by over 70 people, who actively engaged with the speaker during the discussion section.



The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: How did we get here and the path forward

On Thursday, October 19th, the Fares Center hosted an event titled “The Israeli-Palestinian conflict: How did we get here and the path forward.” This event was organized in response to the events that had been taking place in Israel-Palestine since October 7th. Given the interest in the ongoing developments in the region, the event was attended by close to 200 people, including Fletcher students, faculty as well as members of the broader Tufts and Boston communities.

The panel was composed of three speakers: Rami Khouri, Public Policy Fellow of the American University of Beirut; Derek Penslar, Professor of Jewish History and Director of the Center for Jewish Studies at Harvard University; and Charles Dunne, Professor at The Elliott School of International Affairs. The panel was moderated by Sima Samar, a visiting scholar at The Fletcher School.

Khouri presented the Palestinian perspective, emphasizing the need to contextualize the ongoing events and understanding that the conflict did not start on October 7th, but rather, that it had a decades-long history. Penslar spoke about the Israeli perspective, the way the October 7th attacks had deeply affected Israelis core sense of safety, and the repercussions this was going to have in terms of support for the War on Gaza. Dunne presented the American perspective, particularly their deep concern about the potential for any significant regional escalation and how their approach was based on providing defensive support to Israel while pressuring all relevant actors to prevent further escalations.



Colonialism and its Legacies in the Middle East, with Professors Leila Fawaz and Elisabeth Leake

On Tuesday, October 24th, the Fares Center hosted a seminar that provided an overview of the impact of colonialism in the Middle East and its legacies in the post-colonial and contemporary eras. This event featured Professor Leake, Lee E. Dirks Professor in Diplomatic History and Associate Professor of History at the Fletcher School, and Professor Fawaz, Issam M. Fares Chair in Lebanese and Eastern Mediterranean Studies at the Fletcher School

Professor Fawaz focused on the history of the relationship between the Middle East and Europe. She explained how colonization in the Middle East started with trade, where European leaders were trying to get into the markets of the Middle East. Then, when the industrial revolution and steam navigation started, Western traders took over the market and its profits. The leaders of the industrial revolution dominated those who used to be powerful.

Professor Leake's talk focused on themes and methods. She posed questions such as: What are the key themes for us to take into consideration when thinking about encounters between the Middle East and imperialism? What are the interconnections within the Middle East, from Algeria to Afghanistan, what connects them? How about the diversity? The peoples? The socio-political structures that existed before imperialism? She emphasized the importance of thinking about these connections and structures when discussing or researching topics connected to the Middle East.



**"Israel-Hamas War": Tackling the root causes from
an international law perspective,
with UN Special Rapporteur Francesca Albanese**

Jointly organized with the Murrow Center

On Tuesday, October 31st, the Fares Center and the Murrow Center hosted Francesca Albanese, the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967. While Albanese was initially planning to speak about the situation of children in the occupied territories, as well as Israel's system of widespread carcerality, the events on the ground compelled her to change the focus to the war between Israel and Hamas, and the general situation in the occupied territory since October 7th. Professor Tom Dannenbaum, Associate Professor of International Law, was the discussant.

Albanese spoke about the indiscriminate killing of civilians in the Gaza Strip, the destruction of homes and property and the mass displacement that have been taking place in the territory. She also spoke about the mass arrest campaign being carried out in the West Bank and the ongoing settler violence, which had caused the forcible transfer of numerous Palestinian communities. She emphasized that the current situation was unsustainable, and that the international community had to use the tools at its disposal to ensure the implementation of international law, not only in the ongoing hostilities, but generally in the decades-long occupation.



Israel, Hamas and the World: Examining the geopolitical, legal and human security impacts of the conflict

On Wednesday, November 15th, the Fares Center participated in a Fletcher School-wide event organized by some of the most prominent research centers. The event was jointly organized by the Center for Strategic Studies, the Henry J. Leir Institute for Migration and Human Security, the Russia and Eurasia Program, the Center for International Law and Governance, and the Fares Center. The panel was composed of a representative from each Center.

Speakers included Nadim Rouhana, Director of the Fares Center; Dyan Mazurana, Professor of Human Security and Research Director of Feinstein International Center; Daniel Drezner, Professor of International Politics; and Tom Dannenbaum, Associate Professor of International Law. Professor Rouhana spoke as an expert on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict—highlighting the importance of placing the current hostilities in the right historical context and framework, Professor Mazurana focused on the human security implications of the War in the region—particularly with regards to gender-based violence and violence against children, Professor Drezner spoke about how the current conflict would impact great power politics—particularly the role of the United States globally, and Professor Dannenbaum provided an international law analysis of the events that had been unfolding in Israel/Palestine.

The event was hosted in the biggest auditorium of the Fletcher School, ASEAN, with over 200 people in attendance. The speaker's remarks were followed by an engaging moderated discussion and an open discussion with the audience members.



Popular Religiosity and the Demise of the Arab Jew: The Festival of Simon the Just

On Tuesday, November 28, Professor Salim Tamari, Fares Visiting Fellow, gave a talk attended by over 20 members of the Fletcher community. Tamari takes memoirs, photographic evidence and other historical documents to shed light on how these religious practices change over time.

The issue at hand, is one of many shrines that proliferate all over the Middle East. Al-Khader, for example, also known as Saint George, has been buried 72 times in Lebanon, Syria and Palestine. There are 72 different shrines for Al-Khader. Muslim, Christian and Jewish communities have incorporated pre-monotheistic practices in the many parts of the world.

Simon the Just was a festival celebrated by Jews, Muslims and Christians together. In 1948, there were attempts to nationalize it by Israel, but they were unsuccessful. Its nationalization did not happen until the beginning of the 21st century, when the festival was transformed from a festival celebrated by all, into a Zionist symbol and stronghold.

The appropriation of Simon's shrine as an exclusively Jewish site of worship marks a progression of national-religious claims over several sites that used to be shared - as well as celebrated - by multiple religious communities.



Mother of Strangers: Memoirs of Jaffa, a vanquished city with Suad Amiry

On Tuesday, December 12th the Fares Center hosted a talk with acclaimed novelist Suad Amiry, author of six works of nonfiction, including *Sharon and My Mother-in-Law*, which was awarded the Viareggio-Versilia International Prize in 2004, and *Golda Slept Here*, which was awarded the Nonino Risit d’Aur Prize in 2014.

Amiry discussed her latest book, *Mother of Strangers*. Based on the true story of two Jaffa teenagers, *Mother of Strangers* follows the daily lives of Subhi, a fifteen-year-old mechanic, and Shams, the thirteen-year-old student he hopes to marry one day. Once the bombardment of the city begins in April 1948, Jaffa becomes unrecognizable, with neighborhoods flattened, families removed from their homes and separated, and those who remain in constant danger of arrest and incarceration.

She shared with the audience how writing is soothing for her, even though she sometimes deals with difficult topics or memories. One audience member commented on the importance of literature as a path to the political, and the way that humanity and pain are transformed into beauty through her writing.



Academic Activities

Language Tables

The Fares Center ran two Arabic Language Tables this semester, one for beginners and one for students with intermediate language skills. Both Tables were led by Fletcher student Ahmad Al Falasi, from the United Arab Emirates. The groups got the opportunity to learn the Arabic alphabet, useful words and phrases, practice their reading and also everyday conversations.

These Tables will continue during the Spring semester, and the Fares Center also plans to run Language Tables in Farsi, Hebrew and Turkish.



RA initiative

Through the RA Initiative, the Fares Center supports Fletcher faculty by providing them with funding to hire a Research Assistant to support them in any research they are undertaking connected to the Middle East and North Africa. The Initiative also supports students by allowing them to work with Fletcher faculty on topics they are passionate about.

This academic year the Fares Center has supported three different research projects.

The DHP D220 Processes of International Negotiation course faculty team: Eileen Babbitt, Elizabeth McClintock, Naseem Khuri, and Diana Chigas. The research assistant for this project is Vaishnavi Satyavolu, who is supporting the faculty team with an ambitious project of revising a complex multilateral simulation for use in the International Negotiation course. The revision aims to update the simulation and set it in the modern Middle East. Vaishnavi is working on the text, the beta-test the simulation, and writing up a teaching note for the case.



Professor Monica Toft: The research assistant for this project is Zaina Basha. Toft is gathering data to test a theory regarding the connection between changes in the population and a country's strength and stability. She is looking at four countries in particular: Soviet Russia, Qing China and the Taiping revolt, contemporary Syria, and contemporary Israel. These cases will explore the effect of demography on stability and attempt to identify policy tools for governments to better deal with demographic challenges. The RA, Zaina, will support Toft by digging into the literature and preparing cogent summaries.



Professor Ibrahim Warde: The research assistant for this project is Muhammed Anwar. This project focuses on Middle Eastern policy during the Trump presidency, more specifically on the extent to which private interests linked to Donald Trump—family members, business associates, or financial contributors, among others, have shaped policymaking. The project seeks to explain how traditional policymaking institutions such as the State Department came to be sidelined, and to identify the networks of influence that have shaped controversial policies.



Fares Visiting Fellow Course: The Great Transformations in the Contemporary Middle East

Professor Salim Tamari, the 2023 Fares Visiting Fellow, taught a module titled The Great Transformations in the Contemporary Middle East during the second half of the fall semester.

This module examined four great transformations in the contemporary Middle East through biographic trajectories. The modern and early modern urban social history of the Middle East through the prism of biography and autobiographical writings and how it relates to policies and practices in the current context. Participants read and discussed key texts on the structural transformations that engulfed the Middle East: The End of the Ottoman Era and the rise of the colonial states under British and French Mandates; Nationalism and the Nasserist Movement; the Rise of Revolutionary Radicalism; and the Arab Spring and its Aftermath. Readings included several interpretive social science texts, original diaries, memoirs and autobiographies from a number of Middle Eastern countries.



Robinson Fellowship

Leen Hayek

Leen Hayek is the first recipient of the John L. Robinson Educational Fund Fellowship. This fellowship will support Hayek for the 2023-24 academic year.

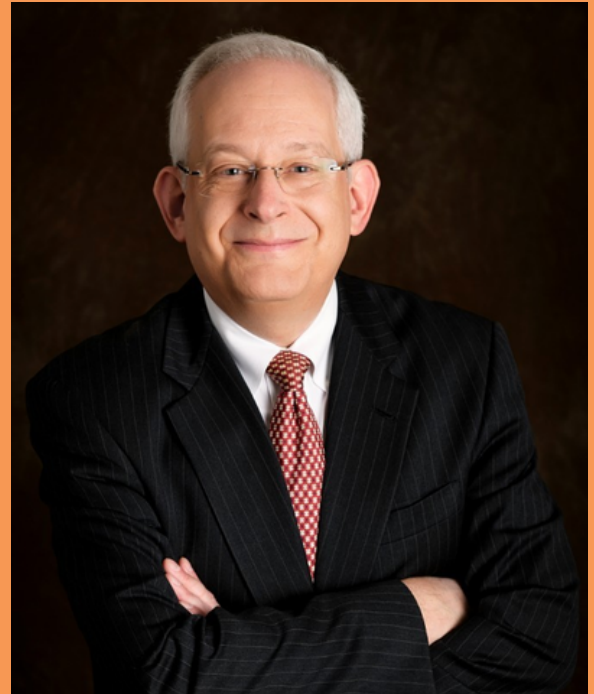
Leen Hayek is a second-year MALD student from Jordan, interested in the intersection of technology and innovation, sustainable development, and global business. With an interdisciplinary engineering background focused on renewable energy, Leen worked as development advisor in the renewable energy and ICT sectors focusing on labor market reform, technical capacity building of vulnerable youth and refugees, and promoting private-public partnerships. In doing so, Leen experienced firsthand the role of business and commercial diplomacy in pushing national innovation ecosystems forward. Leen hopes to investigate cross-sectoral partnerships for green development further at Fletcher and beyond, with the goal of promoting actionable, sustainable change in the MENA region.



The John L. Robinson Educational Fund Fellowship provides a full-tuition scholarship to second-year MALD and MIB students interested in US-Arab World commercial and business diplomacy. Both U.S. and International students are eligible to apply .

John Robinson (MALD '87) is the founder and principal donor of The John L. Robinson Educational Fund.

He is also a Fletcher alumnus with an extensive career in business in the Middle East.



Leen Hayek, 2023-24 John L. Robinson Educational Fund Fellowship Recipient, said "I am incredibly honored to have received this Fellowship and look forward to exploring the often-forgotten topic of business and commercial diplomacy in the MENA region, particularly the role of innovation and tech transfer in developing these economies in a sustainable manner."

Upcoming

Save the Date

FARES CENTER
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

APRIL 18-19, 2024

The Fletcher School at Tufts University