Greetings from the Chair!

Welcome to the 2014–15 academic year! In this, my first “Greetings” for the Near Eastern Studies Newsletter, I would like to welcome the many new members of the Department, Program, and Transregional Institute, whose biographies and photographs are featured in this issue, and wish everyone a productive and successful year!

Muhammad Qasim Zaman

New Members of NES Faculty

Jonathan Marc Gribetz

Jonathan Marc Gribetz joins the Department of Near Eastern Studies and the Program in Judaic Studies as an assistant professor. He teaches about the history of Zionism, Palestine, Israel, Jerusalem, and the Arab-Jewish encounter. His first book, *Defining Neighbors: Religion, Race, and the Early Zionist-Arab Encounter* (Princeton University Press, 2014), investigated the mutual perceptions of Zionists and Arabs in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, showing the prominent place of religious and racial categories in the ways in which these communities imagined and related to one another. His current research focuses on post-1967 Palestinian nationalist interpretations of Judaism and Zionism. Before joining the Princeton faculty, Gribetz was an assistant professor of Jewish Studies and History at Rutgers University, a Starr Fellow in Judaica at Harvard University, a Wolfe Fellow in Jewish Studies at the University of Toronto, and an Amado Fellow at the Center for Advanced Judaic Studies at the University of Pennsylvania. Gribetz earned a Ph.D. in History from Columbia University, an M.St. in Modern Jewish Studies from Oxford University, and an A.B. in Social Studies from Harvard University.

Anna Grinfeld

Anna Grinfeld joins the department as a lecturer in Hebrew. Her interests encompass intellectual history, history of political thought, historiography, and the many interfaces between history and literature in Europe, Russia, and Israel, in the first half of the 20th century. In parallel to her interest in the migration, reception, and “translation” of ideas across linguistic and cultural zones, she is also interested in the theory and practice of literary translation. These complementary interests come into play and sustain her Hebrew language teaching, as she believe that language is a gateway—if not THE gateway—into many, interconnected spheres of activity and intellectual worlds. Grinfeld previously taught at B.U., Tufts, Harvard, and Wellesley College. She earned her B.A. (History and Sociology) and M.A. (History) from Hebrew University, Jerusalem, and her Ph.D. (Russian Studies) from Universite de Paris VIII.

Nilüfer Hatemi

After a year and a half in the department as the Ertegün Visiting Assistant Professor, Nilüfer Hatemi has become the lecturer in Turkish. Hatemi received her Ph.D. (“Unfolding a Life: Marshal Fevzi Çakmak’s Diaries”) in Near Eastern Studies from Princeton University in 2000 and worked as an assistant professor at Yeditepe and Kadir Has Universi-
ties, Istanbul, Turkey. At Princeton, she has taught courses on Turkish and Ottoman language and literature. Her articles have appeared in the International Journal of Turkish Studies, Journal of Turkish Studies, and in various conference publications. Hatemi’s most recent article is “Çakmak, Fevzi” in The Encyclopaedia of Islam, Third Edition, Part 2013-4, and she recently presented a paper titled “Growing up in Istanbul during the Great War” at the “Perspectives on the Great War: World War One International Conference,” 1–4 August 2014, Queen Mary University of London.

Thomas Hefter
Thomas Hefter joins the department as a lecturer in Arabic. He became interested in Arabic while living in Cairo for four years serving as a volunteer English teacher in a program run by the Coptic Church. Returning to the US, he entered the Ph.D. program in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, University of Chicago, where he wrote a dissertation on the ninth-century CE theologian and polymath, ‘Amr ibn Bahr al-Jahiz. His book based upon the dissertation, The Reader in al-Jahiz: The Epistolary Rhetoric of an Arabic Prose Master, appeared this year with Edinburgh University Press. Before coming to Princeton he spent five years at the University of Oklahoma as an assistant professor of Arabic. He had previously taught at the College of William and Mary, the University of Illinois Chicago, and the American University in Cairo. He is very excited about working with his colleagues in the Arabic program here at Princeton.

Anita Husen
Anita Husen joins the department as a lecturer in Arabic. She earned her B.A. in Middle Eastern and South Asian Studies with a minor in Arabic at Emory University and then spent time in a rural mountain community in Morocco as a Peace Corps Volunteer. During a fellowship with the Center for Arabic Studies Abroad, she developed an interest in translation, resulting in the publication of her translation of Walid Taher’s A Bit of Air by The University of Texas Press. For her M.A. in Arabic Studies at UT Austin, she focused on strategies for Arabic acquisition. Her preliminary research on religious heritage learners continues to develop, and she has presented its findings at the MESA annual meeting and the annual conference of the American Association of Applied Linguistics. Her research interests include sociolinguistics, heritage language learning, dialectology, and new genres of Arabic literature. She is honored to be part of the esteemed Arabic teaching team at Princeton.

Associated Faculty
Sabine Schmidtke
Sabine Schmidtke (D.Phil. University of Oxford) is Professor of Islamic Intellectual History at the Institute for Advanced Study and Lecturer with the Rank of Professor in the Department of Near Eastern Studies. Schmidtke is currently working on the history of Islamic thought in the post-classical period (13th to 19th centuries), with a focus on reconstructing the textual heritage and the intellectual import of the Islamic intellectual world, from Iran and Central Asia to Turkey and Spain, and has published extensively on Islamic and Jewish intellectual history. Her works include Theologie, Philosophie und Mystik im zwölffterschützten Islam des 9./15. Jahrhunderts. Die Gedankenwelt des Ibn Abī Jumhūr al-Aḥsāʾī (um 838/1434-35 - nach 906/1501) (Leiden 2000), and, together with Reza Pourjavady, A Jewish Philosopher of Baghdad. ‘Izz al-Dawla Ibn Kammūna and his Writings (Leiden 2006). Previous to joining the Institute for Advance Study, Schmidtke was Professor of Islamic Studies at the Freie Universität, Berlin.

Postdoctoral Research Fellow
William Smiley
Will Smiley studies early modern and modern Middle Eastern and Eurasian history, with particular interests in Russo-Ottoman relations and legal history. He received his Ph.D. in Middle Eastern Studies from the University of Cambridge, where he was a Gates Scholar, and his J.D. from Yale University. During his time at Princeton, he will be writing a book, based on his dissertation, using the changing law, practice, and experience of Ottoman captivity to reframe transformations in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century society and politics. Tentatively titled “When Peace is Made, You Will Again Be Free”: Law, Slavery, and ‘Prisoners of War’ in the Ottoman Empire, 1699–1878, the project draws on Ottoman, Rus-
sian, Austrian, and British archival sources to show how the Ottoman and Russian empires worked out a body of treaty and customary law differentiating “prisoners of war” from “slaves.” His publications have appeared in the International Journal of Middle East Studies, International History Review, Journal of Ottoman Studies, and Yale Journal of International Law.

Visiting Faculty and Fellows

Sadik al-Azm (TRI)

Sadik al-Azm was born in Damascus, Syria, in 1934 and educated at the American University of Beirut, where he received a B.A. in Philosophy (1957). He continued his education at Yale in Modern European Philosophy, receiving his Ph.D. in 1961. Emeritus Professor of the History of Modern European Philosophy at Damascus University, he also taught philosophy at Yale, Hunter College, and the American University of Beirut. He has been Visiting Professor of Contemporary Arab Social and Political Thought at various universities around the world, including Princeton, Hamburg, Humboldt, Leipzig, Antwerp, Central European University (Budapest), and Tohoku University (Sendai, Japan). He has published, both in Arabic and English, on modern European philosophy and intervened, through books, articles, and pamphlets, in the major social, political, religious, and ideological debates raging in the Arab World since the early sixties to the present. Al-Azm has received a Dr. Honoris Causa from Hamburg University, the Erasmus Prize presented by the Praemium Erasmianum Foundation, and the Leopold Lucas Prize awarded by the Faculty of Protestant Theology of the University of Tubingen.

Sara Pursley (SOF)

Sara Pursley is Lecturer in the Council of the Humanities and Near Eastern Studies and Cotsen Postdoctoral Fellow in the Society of Fellows in the Liberal Arts, Council of the Humanities. She received her Ph.D. in history in 2012 from the Graduate Center of CUNY. She works on the cultural and social history of the modern Middle East, especially around questions of subject formation, gender, economic development and modernization theory, conceptions of time and space, histories of psychology and selfhood, and the expansion of American influence in the region. She is working on her first book manuscript, Familiar Futures: Time, Selfhood, and Sovereignty in Iraq, 1932–63 (Stanford University Press). It looks at how various notions of time and selfhood shaped pedagogical interventions in the family, the school system, and the law, especially in the context of decolonization, the dawn of the global “age of development,” and the 1958 Iraqi revolution. She is the author of several articles, and from 2009–14 she served as associate editor of the International Journal of Middle East Studies. In 2016, Pursley will join the department of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies at NYU as assistant professor of modern Middle East history.

Zeki Sarigil

Zeki Sarigil is an Assistant Professor of Political Science at Bilkent University, Ankara, Turkey. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Pittsburgh in 2007. His research interests include ethnonationalism, civil-military relations, institutional theory, and Turkish politics. He has published and has forthcoming articles in such journals as European Political Science Review, European Journal of International Relations, Nations and Nationalism, Ethnic and Racial Studies, Armed Forces & Society, Critical Policy Studies, Meditteranean Politics and Turkish Studies. He has received scholarships, grants and awards from various institutions, such as Fulbright and TUBITAK. During his time at Princeton, he will be working on a book project about Kurdish ethnonationalism.

First-year Ph.D. Students

Thomas Benfey

Thomas Benfey earned his B.A in Classics from Yale and his M.A. in Religion from the School of Oriental and African Studies. His research interests focus on Central Asia and Iran during late antiquity and the early Islamic period.
Edith Chen

Edith Chen is interested in the religious, social, and political history of the late medieval period (1250 until 1500). Previously she obtained her B.A. from Duke University (Public Policy and a Certificate in Islamic Studies), and her A.M. from Harvard University in Middle Eastern Studies.

Peter Kitlas

Peter Kitlas earned his A.B. in Religious Studies from Dartmouth University and his M.A. in Middle Eastern and North African Studies from the University of Michigan. His current research focuses on the diplomatic and political history of North Africa during the eighteenth century. His interests with this region—Morocco specifically—began after spending two years in the country as a Peace Corps volunteer. While his primary lens is that of the historian, his broader inquiries look at expressions of Islamic identity and religio-political power in Morocco, the Ottoman Empire, and across the Mediterranean. He is involved in a new North African Studies interdisciplinary initiative at Princeton and is a member of the Spain-North Africa Project (SNAP). His forthcoming article, "Al-Miknasi’s Mediterranean Mission: Negotiating Moroccan Temporal and Spiritual Sovereignty in the late eighteenth century," in the Mediterranean Studies Journal special edition on "Mediterranean Voyages" (2015).

Cecilia Palombo

Cecilia Palombo earned her B.A. in History and Religious Studies at the University of Rome - La Sapienza and her M.Phil. in Islamic Studies and History from Oxford. She first became interested in Islamic history through the perspective of Eastern Christian communities, and that observation point has continued to lead her studies over the years. During her M.Phil., she focused on Christian texts from early Islamic Egypt, but she also had the chance to get involved in Qur’ānic studies. Religious minorities, marginalized communities, Arab Christianity, and the relationship between Christian subjects and the Muslim ruling elite in the early Islamic period, are, broadly speaking, her main research interests.

First-year M.A. Students

Kristine Gift

Kristine Gift studied history and religion at Coe College (Iowa). Her primary academic focus is modern Iraq, but she also branches into the mandate era and subsequent twentieth-century history of Iraq’s neighbors, Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon. She has been published twice in the Midwest Journal of Undergraduate Research, both in the fields of religion (“Sarah’s Laughter as her Lasting Legacy,” 2012) and history (“Algiers, Abu Ghraib, and the Persistence of Torture,” 2013). She has also conducted research on Gertrude Bell and the British mandate in Iraq at the Newberry Library in Chicago and presented her research there (2012). She is very excited to begin the M.A. program in NES.

Jordana Palgon

Jordana Palgon graduated from New York University in 2012 with a B.A. in Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies and also spent six months studying at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. She is interested in studying the Arab-Israeli conflict, with a particular focus on Zionist-Palestinian relations and the creation of Israeli national identity. Jordana has experience working in the legal, banking, journalism and non-profit fields. She has studied Hebrew and Arabic and hopes to master those languages sometime within the next hundred years.

Visiting Student Research Collaborators

Hamza Demirel

Hamza Demirel will be spending the 2014–15 academic year as a Visiting Student Research Collaborator in Near Eastern Studies. He is currently a Ph.D. candidate at Old Dominion University where his major field is “Conflict and Cooperation” and his minor field is “Transnationalism, Interdependence, and Power.” In 2010, he earned an M.A. from the Turkish Army War College in “National and International Security Strategy Management and Leadership.” Previously, Demirel had earned his B.A. in Systems En-
Enis Dinç will be a Visiting Student Research Collaborator for the 2014–15 academic year. He is a Ph.D. fellow at the Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis (ASCA), University of Amsterdam. In his dissertation, he examines the historical changes in the images of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, founder of Turkish Republic, and the involvement of visual media in the production of concepts of nation and cultural memory. Before starting his Ph.D. research at the University of Amsterdam, he earned degrees in communication studies at the University of Salzburg (B.A.) and media and cultural studies at SOAS, University of London (M.A.). His article, “On the Limits of Oppositional Humor: The Turkish Political Context,” appeared in the Middle East Journal of Culture and Communication.

Maryam Tiouri
Maryam Tiouri, a 2014–15 Visiting Student Research Collaborator, is a second-year Ph.D. student at the Institute of Islamic Studies, Freie Universität, Berlin. She received her Master's degree from Freie Universität in 2012, specializing in early Islamic theology. Her main research interests include the intellectual history of Islam and speculative theology (kalām), with a focus on a particular Islamic sect called the Karrāmiya that was present in eastern Iran from the ninth to twelfth centuries. In her dissertation, “The Tafsīr of Abū Bakr ʿAtīq b. Muḥammad al-Sūrābādī and the Alleged Arbitration of Muhammad b. al-Hayṣam’s Karrāmite Adherents,” she intends to shed light on this neglected school of thought and its theological development and influences within a community of diverse religious movements. She was granted a scholarship from the Gerda Henkel Foundation for her Ph.D. project.

Class of 2016
The Department of Near Eastern Studies welcomes the following members of the Class of 2016: Danielle Allen; Ines Bedoya-Blume; Ali Cebeci; Samuel Gelman; Andrew Hanna; Sarah Jacobs; Katherine Maffey; Stevie Peacock; Victoria Rinker; Jasmine Robinson; Mark Stein; and Jacob Zucker.