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IMES

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ABOUT MESA

The Middle East Studies Association (MESA) is a private, non-profit, learned society that brings together scholars, educators and those interested in the study of the region from all over the world. From its inception in 1966 with 51 founding members, MESA has increased its membership into the thousands and now serves as an umbrella organization for dozens of institutional members and affiliated organizations. The association is a constituent society of the American Council of Learned Societies, the National Council of Area Studies Associations, and a member of the National Humanities Alliance.

As part of its goal to advance learning, facilitate communication and promote cooperation, MESA sponsors an annual meeting that is a leading international forum for scholarship, intellectual exchange and pedagogical innovation. It is responsible for the International Journal of Middle East Studies, the premiere journal on the region, the MESA Review of Middle East Studies and Issues in Middle East Studies, a biannual newsletter. An awards program recognizes scholarly achievement, service to the profession, undergraduate education, and exemplary student mentoring. MESA is governed by a nine-member Board of Directors elected by the membership.

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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

A New Issue in Middle East Studies

As the spring semester comes to a close, Issues in Middle East Studies provides us with an opportunity to document the incredible amount of work that MESA has undertaken this past academic year—and in an updated form, as we undertake a visual redesign.

I said much the same in my last column, but it bears repeating: I am so grateful, above all, for my hardworking staff and for the courage and leadership of MESA’s elected officers.

MESA 2023 in Montréal was unbelievably challenging. While I am hard pressed to think of an Annual Meeting over the past seven years (since 2016) that was not exceptional in one way or another, meeting in Canada always brings a whole set of additional logistical challenges for our US-based staff, as does meeting at a convention center rather than a conference hotel. Then, the war took things to an entirely different level.

In Montréal, then-President Eve Troutt Powell and incoming-President Aslı Bâli were the ideal team to work with us at the Secretariat. Eve and Ash were flexible and decisive, listening and responding to concerns, and changing plans and programs as events demanded. I cannot thank them both enough for modeling true leadership, despite the many challenges and threats that we faced. I also must thank the MESA Board of Directors, in full, for their responsiveness and willingness to contribute to our decision-making under pressure, as well as the entire Secretariat staff, for meeting the moment amid a flood of problems and requests. Sara Palmer, Calliandra Hermanson, Mimi Kirk, and Emily TahaBurt all stepped up in meaningful ways around the Annual Meeting.

In the same way that Eve Troutt Powell was the ideal president for MESA at the time of her election in 2021, I cannot think of a better president to meet the unique demands and challenges of governing MESA in 2024 than Aslı Bâli. In this issue, on pages 4-7, she provides an excellent overview of the many public ways that MESA has engaged with the threats to our members and to academic freedom over the past six months. It has truly been a whirlwind, and Aslı has remained steadfast throughout the storm. It is an honor to work alongside her, and to support her and the elected members of our Board of Directors in fulfilling our mission and not only speaking out against the wave of repression, but also trying our best to counteract it in many ways.

This issue therefore contains a record of our statements (pages 8-11), and the additional resources we have generated in response, in particular from our Committee on Academic Freedom (pages 14-15).

I would like to draw special attention to our new initiative to expand the MESA Global Academy with a special focus on Palestine. MESA’s Development Committee, in collaboration with the MESA Global Academy, has launched a fundraising campaign to support scholars who have been forcibly displaced from Palestine. Our current donors may be found on page 21, and more on the new Global Academy-Palestine initiative can be found on page 13. In addition to continuing to support fellows from the rest of the MENA region (as broadly defined as possible), with particular focus on other recent conflict zones such as Sudan, we are aiming to expand this initiative in order to support five to 10 additional scholars from Palestine in the coming years.

Amidst all of this, we bid farewell to our wonderful colleagues at the Institute for Middle East Studies at George Washington University, and moved MESA’s headquarters across town to the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies at Georgetown University (see page 19) over the winter break.

We look forward to our first intentional virtual meeting this fall, and to meeting again in person next year in 2025. Given our limited staff and time, it is in many ways quite fortunate that we are meeting virtually this year, as it has freed up some resources to support our greatly expanded advocacy work, among other new initiatives. But we do still intend to host a day of in-person activities this fall (see pages 23-24), and to return to our traditional format next year. More on both soon.
When I was elected MESA President in the fall of 2022, I had some sense of what was in store for me — MESA is a robust scholarly association with an engaged membership. I knew the work of the organization would keep me busy year-round. The organizing and convening of the annual meeting, with all of the ongoing pandemic-related and other challenges, is always a feat that demands enormous work and attention. In addition, there is the continuous work of the Committee on Academic Freedom (CAF) and the Global Academy Committee, and the slow and steady business of other committees—including the Publications Committee, the Committee for Undergraduate Middle East Studies (CUMES), and the nominating and prize committees. I knew there would be many opportunities to collaborate with colleagues and work to advance the mission of the Association. What I could not have imagined, however, was becoming President during the 2023 annual meeting in Montréal just weeks into an Israeli war on the Palestinians that has now dragged on for over seven months.

Let me begin this, my first president’s letter, with a note of profound gratitude to the tireless MESA staff and the incredible team of volunteers from our membership who have worked at break-neck speed all year to ensure that we meet this moment with all of the (limited) resources we have. In doing so I would like to take this opportunity to offer an overview and a record for the membership of why I am so proud and so grateful to be a part of the work of MESA together with our colleagues.

Well before the annual meeting in Montréal, and just over one week after the 7 October attacks, the Board issued its first statement. The position we took on 16 October 2023 bears repeating for its continued relevance all these months later:

We reaffirm that there can be no compromise of the right and ability of students, faculty and staff at universities across North America (and elsewhere) to express their viewpoints free of harassment, intimidation and threats to their livelihoods and safety. We also believe that there is no military solution, and we remain steadfast in our view that the only path forward on the ground is one premised on the equal rights of Palestinians and Israelis to living in dignity and safety.

At our members’ business meeting in Montréal some two weeks later, the membership called upon the Board to issue two statements: one to the U.S. government calling, among other things, for it to demand an immediate and permanent ceasefire, and the second to university and college presidents across the country, calling on them to defend academic freedom for all members of their campus communities. The Board welcomed these resolutions from the business meeting and issued two forceful statements, one to the Biden administration and the other to university and college administrators. Those statements were issued in November and December respectively. Since December 2023, the Board has issued three more statements, jointly with CAF (see pages 9-12), on cultural genocide and scholasticide in Gaza and two concerning the repression of campus protests against ongoing Israeli state violence against Palestinians and U.S. government support for it. For those who have read these statements, you will know that
they reflect not only our positions of principle as an Association but also rigorous research documenting genocidal violence in Gaza, escalating violence against Palestinians in the West Bank, and repression targeting Palestinian citizens of Israel, all enabled by the unwavering support for Israel by the U.S. government. We have similarly used Board statements to produce a well-researched overview of the repression being visited on protesters across U.S. campuses. CAF Chair Laurie Brand has partnered with the Board on drafting our joint statements, even as she has shouldered expanded responsibilities as the work of the committee she leads has grown suddenly and dramatically. We all owe Laurie an enormous debt of gratitude for her exceptional leadership and dedication to all aspects of MESA’s advocacy in support of academic freedom.

Beyond the joint letters by CAF and the Board, MESA has produced an extensive and valuable archive concerning the repression of academic freedom in the U.S. through the indefatigable work of the wing of the Committee on Academic Freedom focused on violations occurring in North America (CAF-NA). In the words of CAF-NA’s Chair, Zachary Lockman, the volunteers drawn from our membership researching and drafting CAF-NA’s advocacy letters have “set a standard for defending academic freedom and free speech.” Zach, too, deserves special mention for the remarkable leadership he has shown as CAF-NA has tackled an increase by orders of magnitude of its work. Regrettably, only a handful of other academic associations have been willing to raise their voices or join our efforts. The result is that the thirty-four (34) letters (and counting) that CAF-NA has produced often stand nearly alone in offering tangible support to, and expressing solidarity with, our colleagues and students facing repression across the country. I invite all MESA members to visit the “advocacy” section of the MESA website to take stock of the remarkable work of the Association in defense of academic freedom at a time when the scale of repression on American campuses is nearly unprecedented.

At the same time, the Middle East and North Africa wing of CAF (CAF-MENA) has risen to the occasion not only in documenting the egregious violations of academic freedom by Israeli authorities and university administrators at Israeli universities and in the West Bank, but also in helping to document the unfathomable scale of eliminationist violence visited upon the infrastructure of higher education in Gaza, killing untold numbers of faculty and students and destroying all of the universi-
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Spring 2024

puses have repressed speech, events and most recently anti-war protesters critical of Israeli policies. That said, as an Association we are very conscious of other contexts in which horrific abuses are ongoing, ranging from the repression of academics and researchers in Iran to the brutal violence in Sudan. For this reason, I am especially thankful that the CAF-MENA Iran research team compiled and published a remarkable database of Iranian academics who have been arbitrarily dismissed from their university positions on suspicion of their support for the Woman, Life, Freedom movement. I also deeply appreciate the letter drafted by CAF-MENA researchers to Sudanese authorities on 5 April, expressing our dismay at the devastation of the education sector in Sudan. I am grateful to Miriam and the excellent CAF-MENA research teams for their incredible work over the last seven months, on these and many other cases.

Another facet of MESA’s ongoing work between meetings is the Global Academy, our project to express our solidarity with colleagues who have been displaced from the MENA region, broadly defined, as a consequence of repression and war. The Global Academy is now completing its fifth year, and has supported some fifty scholars from countries including Afghanistan, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Kurdistan, Lebanon, Palestine, Syria, Turkey, and Yemen. In light of the wars in Gaza and Sudan, we anticipate expanding the Global Academy project in a number of ways in the coming year, both to support a larger cohort of displaced scholars and to expand the forms of support we are able to offer. In particular, due to the direct targeting of Gaza’s higher education sector and the destruction of all of its universities, we are developing a project specifically geared to supporting forcibly displaced Gazan scholars. Please look out for more information about MESA Global Academy–Palestine in the coming weeks and months. I extend my deepest gratitude to Beth Baron for chairing the Global Academy Committee and to Mimi Kirk, Program Manager for the Global Academy, for her incredible work supporting our fellows, sustaining the program, and now assisting with the planned expansion. I am so pleased that Suad Joseph and Judith Tucker have agreed to join me in organizing a development effort to support the envisioned expansion of our work with displaced scholars.

Finally, I want to highlight the reactivation of the MESA Task Force on Civil and Human Rights. The Task Force (TF) was first established in the wake of the 2016 presidential election and did important work during the Trump presidency, most notably in joining litigation challenging the so-called Muslim Travel Ban. With the pandemic and the election of the Biden administration, the Task Force was in abeyance for the last three years, but in light of the Gaza war’s impact on North American campuses and impending U.S. elections later this year, I am grateful to Marc Lynch for agreeing to chair the revived Task Force. The TF is focused on policy guidance and advocacy around issues that affect the field of Middle East studies and our colleagues. Since 2017, the TF has documented, provided primers and engaged in policy interventions on such topics as: changes in U.S. policies on immigration and travel, the conduct of research in countries affected by U.S. sanctions (and OFAC compliance rules), the abusive and pretextual use of public records act requests and, most recently, broad shifts in campus climate in North America. I look forward to working with Marc and the other TF members as we develop new advocacy initiatives to address the challenges of this moment.

In the midst of the turmoil and grief we have all experienced this year, many of our volunteers have continued to staff the committees that take care of the daily business of the Association, and they deserve enormous praise for sustaining MESA in this turbulent time. This includes the work of the Publications Committee, under Senem Aslan’s leadership, which is admirably helming the search process for new editors for both of our flagship scholarly publications, the International Journal of Middle East Studies and the Review of Middle East Studies. Likewise, the Secretariat, in partnership with yet more volunteers from our membership, has done an exemplary job overseeing the logistics and program for our 2024 annual meeting, establishing this year’s prize committees,
and now beginning the process to nominate new candidates for MESA’s Presidency and Board. Meanwhile, in the midst of it all, Executive Director Jeff Reger, and our staff in Washington DC — including Calliandra Hermanson, Mimi Kirk and Emily TahaBurt — successfully completed the transition of MESA’s headquarters to our new institutional home at Georgetown University. Together with Sara Palmer, who continues to hold down our Arizona satellite office as MESA Programs Manager, and under Jeff’s leadership, the Secretariat has performed heroically given an ever-increasing workload in a time of crisis. Jeff has been my constant partner in all of the work we have taken on to proactively address the many impacts of the Gaza war on our membership, our broader intellectual communities and, indeed, on the conditions of possibility for academic freedom, integrity and excellence in teaching and scholarship in Middle East studies. I am incredibly thankful for his support and the dedication of our staff members.

The role of MESA President during this period has entailed challenges I could not have imagined when I was first elected in the fall of 2022. That said, I am so grateful to the MESA membership for having placed trust in me to serve as a voice for the Association. It is an immense honor and privilege to serve this membership and the field of Middle East studies at this time. I was deeply inspired by the membership’s resolve at the annual meeting in calling on MESA to raise its voice in opposition to genocidal violence and in opposition to the chilling of speech and academic freedom. Meeting in person, in Montréal, with my colleagues on the Board and the many volunteers across all of MESA’s committees whose efforts make the work of the Association possible, reminded me of how fortunate I am to be a member of this intellectual community. No tribute is enough to convey my appreciation for all whose volunteer work with this Association has demanded so much more at a time when we all have less. The spirit of solidarity that suffused the meeting has remained with me over these months, as demands on all of us have grown and conditions have worsened.

I hope you feel that as an Association we have risen to meet the challenge of sustaining that sense of solidarity. As an intellectual and scholarly community, we are especially well placed to offer our expertise to understanding the catastrophic developments in Gaza and beyond and to providing analyses that might contribute to slowing or stopping the escalating destruction. Our goal, at MESA, is to offer an associational home that helps sustain, build and protect this intellectual and scholarly community so that it, too, can meet the moment.

A turbulent electoral year in the United States brings many concerns for us all as we face the coming summer and fall of 2024, and beyond. Whatever happens, MESA is an Association of its members and will work alongside each of you to preserve our capacity to do the scholarly and academic work that we hold dear while standing in solidarity with all of our colleagues and students facing repression and, worse, violence and displacement.
Recent Statements and Letters from MESA’s Board of Directors

The MESA Board has released several statements and co-signed others in recent months. Members are sent email announcements when a statement or letter is released. We provide the full text of each statement here.

OPEN LETTER
to U.S. and Canadian College and University Presidents

18 December 2023—We write on behalf of the Middle East Studies Association of North America (MESA) and its Committee on Academic Freedom to urge you to uphold academic freedom on your campuses. The Palestine-Israel conflict has long been a source of passionate debate and clashing scholarship and views, but never have we witnessed the extent of threats to faculty, students and staff that we have since 7 October. During this fraught time, we call upon you to redouble efforts to protect the free speech rights and defend the academic freedom of all members of your campus community.

MESA was founded in 1966 to promote scholarship and teaching on the Middle East and North Africa. The preeminent organization in the field, the Association publishes the prestigious International Journal of Middle East Studies and has nearly 2,800 members worldwide. MESA is committed to ensuring academic freedom and freedom of expression, both within the region and in connection with the study of the region in North America and outside of North America.

Free speech is essential for any democratic polity, and this country’s institutions of higher education should be places in which even the most controversial and unpopular views can be expressed, debated and criticized. At the same time, all students deserve equal access to education, free from harassment and discrimination. Unfortunately, we are witnessing a dramatic increase in antisemitic, anti-Palestinian, anti-Arab and anti-Muslim harassment and discrimination on our campuses. North American institutions of higher education must confront this surge and vigorously combat all forms of racism and hate speech as well as threats, violence, harassment and intimidation directed against members of our campus communities.

We also share the concern expressed by defenders of civil liberties nationally that “ideologically motivated efforts to police speech on campus destroy the foundations on which academic communities are built.” We note that the environment on North American campuses resembles that of the period following the attacks of 11 September 2001, when students and faculty who criticized U.S. government actions or sought to provide historical context for the attacks were subject to harassment and assault. The current attempts to police acceptable speech, suppress certain phrases and perspectives, and punish (or even criminalize) political expression are also reminiscent of the McCarthy/“Red Scare” period of this country’s history. College and university campuses must remain vibrant spaces in which the free exchange of ideas is promoted and protected, including criticisms of Israeli policies or actions and advocacy on behalf of Palestinian rights to freedom and equality. We call on you to reject baseless demands to investigate, discipline or punish members of your campus community for exercising their constitutional right to freely express their views.

As university leaders, you have a heightened responsibility during fraught times to protect the freedom of expression, academic freedom and physical safety of all members of your campus. Undergraduate and graduate students, and untenured instructors and faculty, are especially vulnerable at a time when actors within and outside of the university increasingly resort to intimidation, harassment, threats and defamation to silence and punish those with whom they disagree. When university leaders fail to speak out in defense of faculty members, students and staff, they thereby abdicate their professional and academic responsibility and, intentionally or not, send the message that they countenance silencing, defamation and harassment. Such an abdication also emboldens individuals and organizations with a political agenda to weaponize their claims in order to disparage and silence those whose views they dislike. We note in particular the dangerous conflation of criticism of Israeli actions and policies, and of Zionism as a political ideology, with antisemitism. In our letter dated 7 December 2023 to members of Congress, we underscored how this conflation has been deployed to silence legitimate political speech and intimidate those who seek to learn about the current conflict through candid discussion and debate on our campuses. The worry that senior administrators may pay a steep price for defending campus speech codes and the rights of all campus communities has had its own chilling effect across the country. As university leaders, we urge you to resist such external pressure and counteract this atmosphere of retribution and suspicion by reinforcing a culture of free speech and critical inquiry on your campuses.

In a statement dated 16 October 2023, MESA’s Board of Directors declared that it is “acutely concerned with and heartbroken by the loss of Israeli and Palestinian lives....There can be no justification for the targeting of civilians. Many of our members have been directly affected and we join them in grieving. We also join all those who are committed to a political solution that offers safety, dignity, and equal rights for Palestinians and Israelis.” The same statement went on: “We call on university leaders and administrations to affirmatively assert and protect the right to academic freedom and freedom of speech on their campuses. We re-affirm that there can be no compromise of the right and ability of students, faculty, and staff at universities across North America (and elsewhere) to express their viewpoints free of harassment, intimidation, and threats to their livelihoods and safety.” Some two months later, our grief at the ongoing violence has grown as has our conviction that protection of rights of speech and association on campuses across the country is all the more essential.

We draw your attention once more to our Association’s call to protect all of your universities' students, faculty and staff in the exercise of their right to freedom of speech and of association, without fear of threat, harassment or intimidation. We also urge you to reiterate forcefully and clearly your commitment to resolutely defend the principles of academic freedom, which are essential to the intellectual and educational missions of institutions of higher education and to preserving a democratic society.

Sincerely,
Ash Ü. Bâli, MESA President
Professor, Yale Law School

Laurie Brand
Chair, Committee on Academic Freedom
Professor Emerita, University of Southern California

Aslı Ü. Bâli, MESA President
Perhaps the most devastating example is the near-total destruction of the Palestinian population in Gaza. The horrors inflicted on civilians and the educational sector in Gaza (21 November 2023, 25 January 2024) the West Bank (22 November 2023), Jerusalem (9 November 2023) and Israel (20 November 2023, 28 November 2023, 23 January 2024). We feel compelled to write once more to address not only the accelerating scale of genocide being inflicted on the Palestinian population of Gaza, but also the concomitant cultural genocide that is the result of the wanton destruction of the built environment and civilian infrastructure of the Gaza Strip.

The horrific human toll of the massive military assault on Gaza, now having surpassed its 155th day, has proceeded hand in glove with the deliberate destruction of the historical landscape of the territory. The very notion of a Palestinian people is itself under attack through Israel’s policy of destroying Gaza’s archaeological, religious, and cultural heritage. As a scholarly community, we are aghast and foremost at the unfathomable and indiscriminate violence threatening the lives of 2.3 million people. Alongside the magnitude of the atrocities committed against the Palestinian population, we must also bear witness to the decimation of thousands of years of historical material culture that constitute a part of our shared world heritage.

The current multipronged attacks against Gaza appear calculated to achieve nothing less than the total erasure of the Palestinians and their history from this small coastal strip. Horrendous in its nature and scope, this war is also just the most recent, if also most deadly, episode of a hundred-year-long policy, actively abetted and openly supported by the United States, along with a succession of other Western powers, to facilitate the expulsion of the Palestinians from their homeland, erase their material and cultural claims to it, and by extension their historical memory, and indeed deny their existence as a people. In short, Israel is engaging in cultural genocide against the Palestinian people with the active support of its American and European allies.

This support from the United States and the European Union has taken many forms. Perhaps the most devastating example is the record of systematic vetoes cast by the United States against United Nations Security Council resolutions to date calling for a ceasefire in Gaza. In the most recent of the three vetoes cast by the U.S., on 20 February 2024, the country was alone on the 15-member Council in opposing the call for an immediate ceasefire. The United Kingdom abstained. The United States has also continued to supply weapons to Israel, with President Biden going so far as to invoke extraordinary powers to bypass the usual procedures for such transfers in December 2023. Similarly, European powers have also supplied vital weapons to Israel in the midst of its attacks on Gaza. Even as United Nations experts call for an arms embargo on Israel with some Europeans also calling for a halt in arms exports, the U.S. continues to plan for additional military aid to Israel.

Since the beginning of the current war, estimates of the extent and depth of the destruction are devastating. According to the 9 January 2024 statement of the Arab Regional Group at the International Council of Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) “more than 200 of the 325 registered sites in Gaza considered of national or global historic, archaeological, natural, religious and humanitarian importance have been destroyed or severely damaged by the Israeli military.” These sites include, among many others:

- archaeological and cultural heritage sites stretching back 4,000 years, including remains from the myriad empires that conquered and settled Gaza;
- mosques and churches, some among the oldest in the world;
- archives rich with historical documents and municipal records;
- museums large and small filled with holdings from across the centuries and representing both Gaza’s long history and its rich popular culture and traditions;
- community centers, serving as gathering places and venues for art shows, musical events, and poetry readings; and
- libraries, some in mosques and universities, others smaller and local, rich with resources and open to provide books and literacy to all.

Even community graveyards, the most tangible and personal evidence of affective ties to place and heritage have been bulldozed or bombed. A full accounting of the cultural destruction in Gaza can be made only once there is a lasting ceasefire and it becomes possible for international and Palestinian investigators to undertake comprehensive documentation. In the meantime, we provide in the annex to this document what can only be a partial, and most certainly already – given the continuing bombing and shelling – out-of-date list of sites that have been completely or partially destroyed.

These institutions and resources, which underpin the sense of community and shared history and identity of the Palestinians of Gaza (as well as the West Bank and the diaspora), have been and continue to be deliberately destroyed as part of an intentional policy, voiced clearly by multiple Israeli politicians and military figures since early in this conflict, of completely destroying Gaza and precluding any possibility of a meaningful “return” and rebuilding by its forcibly displaced and decimated population.

This deliberate destruction of Gaza’s human and cultural heritage constitutes war crimes and clear breaches of several international conventions including the Fourth Geneva Convention,[2] the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property,[3] the International Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage,[4] and the protections of customary international humanitarian law.[5] These war crimes are in addition to the violations of the laws of war and the prohibition on genocide that are the subject of current investigations before the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court.

The Board of Directors and the Committee on Academic Freedom of the Middle East Studies Association therefore:

- Condemn the ongoing genocidal violence against the Palestinian people and their cultural heritage and call for an immediate and permanent ceasefire;
- Call for the urgent and durable protection of the Palestinian people, land, and heritage and the immediate provision of all necessary humanitarian supplies together with unfettered access of all relevant international humanitarian agencies to come to the assistance of the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip;
- Call on the United States government to desist from any further arms transfers or military assistance to Israel and to support United Nations Security Council resolutions demanding an immediate ceasefire and unimpeded humanitarian assistance.
- Call upon the relevant United Nations and other international agencies to send investigative teams and assessment missions to Gaza to work with Palestinian specialists to survey and fully document the destruction, and to determine next steps in the process of recovery, reconstruction, and preservation of what remains.
- Call upon the international donor community to urgently and swiftly provide the funds needed to undertake the herculean tasks of documenting the destruction of Palestinian heritage in the Gaza Strip and beginning the rebuilding and rehabilitation of the cultural heritage sites and sector, along with the civilian infrastructure of the territory.
This annex represents a compilation as of 1 March 2024 of available documentation concerning Palestinian archives, cultural heritage, libraries, and museums destroyed during the ongoing attack on Gaza by the Israeli military. The destruction is catalogued by category of heritage: libraries, archives, and publishing houses; cultural and social centers; media and artistic production companies; museums; churches; mosques; archaeological sites; cemeteries and monuments; traditional houses and markets; and natural heritage.

Public Libraries and Archives
Gaza Municipal Library
Central Archives of Gaza City
Palace of Justice
Rashad al-Shawa Cultural Center
Diana Tamari Sablough Library

University Libraries
Islamic University of Gaza Library, Gaza City
Al-Quds University Library and National Museum
Al-Quds Open University Library, Gaza City
Jawaharlal Nehru Library, Al-Azhar
Al-Quds Open University Library, Gaza City

Publishing Houses and Smaller Libraries
Al-Shorouq Al-Daem Library and Exhibition
Sami Mansour Bookshop and Library in Gaza City
Enaim Library
Al-Nahda Library
Lubbud Library
Al-Nur Cultural Center’s library

Cultural and Social Centers
Arab Orthodox Cultural and Social Center
Dar Al-Shabab Cultural and Development Authority
The General Union of Cultural Centers
The Sununu Foundation for Arts and Culture
Our Children Society for Development
Gaza Center for Culture and Arts
The Hakawi Association for Culture and Arts
The Palestinian Association for Development and Heritage Protection
Shahabik Professionals

Village of Arts and Crafts, Gaza Municipality
Widad Theater and Widad Association for Community Development
Rafida Suhaili Artist Studio
Esad Child Cultural Center
Bayader Theatre and Arts Association
Ilhagi Gallery for Contemporary Visual Arts
Kanaan Educational Development Institute
Ataa Library, International Board on Books for Young People Children in Crisis Library (Beit Hanoun)
Yasser Arafat University, Al-Gaza City

Museums
Rafah Museum
Al-Qarara Cultural Museum (also known as the Khan Younis Museum)
Qasr al-Basha (Pasha’s Palace Museum, also known as Radwan castle)
Mathaf al-Funduq (Museum Hotel)
Al-Aqqud Cultural Center of Heritage Archaeology and Museum
Shahwan Museum
Khaduri Museum
Ibrahim Abu Shaar Heritage Diwan
Deir al-Balah museum
Cultural Karameh Museum

Churches
The Church of Saint Porphyrius
Ruins of the Monastery of St. Hilarion, part of the Tell Umum Amer site in Nuseirat
Byzantine Church located in the Jabaliya refugee camp
Holy Family Church

Mosques and other Muslim Religious Sites
At least 114 mosques have been destroyed and 200 others have been damaged in Gaza
The Grand Omari Mosque
Othman Bin Qasghar Mosque
Mosque of Sayyid Hashim
Katif al-Wilayah Mosque
Al-Zafar Dmari Mosque and Center for Manuscripts and Ancient Documents (Shuja‘iyya)
Sheikh Shabban Mosque
Mosque of Ibn Othman, Gaza City
Maqam Khalil Al-Rahman (Abasan)
Maqam Al-Khadr (Deir al-Balah)
Maqam al-Nabi Yusuf (Bani Suheila)

Archaeological Sites
Tell al-Ajul
Tel al-Mansatar (Gaza)
Tel al-Sakan (Al-Zahra)
Tell 86 (Al-Qarara)
Tell Rafah (also known as Tell Zara’ib)
Anhedon Harbor
Roman necropolis (Ard-al-Moharbeen) in northern Gaza
Qalat Burqqu

Cemeteries and Monuments
At least 16 cemeteries have been desecrated during the ground offensive in Gaza
English Cemetery (Gaza)
English Cemetery (Zuwa‘idah)
Unknown Soldier Monument

Historic or Traditional Houses and Markets
Old City of Gaza City
Al-Stqua House (Shuja‘iyya)
Tirizi House (Rimal)
Hamman al-Sammara (the Sammara Bath)

Al-Fawakhir district
Al-Zawiyah market, historical extension of the Al-Qaysariyya market, also destroyed.
Mazan Market (East Khan Younis)

Jeremy Diamond, et al, “At least 16 cemeteries in Gaza have been desecrated by Israeli forces, satellite imagery and videos reveal,” CNN, 20 January 2024.

Maha Hussaini, “Israel’s war erases Gaza’s religious and cultural heritage,” Middle East Eye, 12 January 2024.

Indlibe Farazi Saber, “A cultural genocide: Which of Gaza’s heritage sites have been destroyed?,” Al Jazeera English, 14 January 2024.


Emmanuel Fabian, “Footage shows IDF demolishing main Hamas courthouse in Gaza,” The Times of Israel, 4 December 2023.


Sarvy Gennayeh, “Bombing of Gaza has damaged or destroyed more than 100 heritage sites, NGO report reveals,” The Art Newspaper, 28 November 2023.


MESA Board Joint Statement with CAF concerning escalating repression of protest on campuses

Endorsed by the Society of Architectural Historians (May 18, 2024).

24 April 2024—The Board of Directors of the Middle East Studies Association and its Committee on Academic Freedom view with increasing alarm the growing number of attempts to intimidate, repress, and criminalize campus protests against the ongoing Israeli state violence against Palestinians and the US diplomatic, military, and economic support for it. Federal, state and local government officials—from the president, to congressional members, to governors and mayors—have exacerbated the threats on campuses by encouraging university administrators to violate basic commitments to freedom of expression, while casually smearing overwhelmingly peaceful protesters with unsubstantiated claims of violence or discriminatory speech. University leaders should constitute the first line of defense for students and faculty in the face of forces seeking to vilify, harass, and silence them. Instead, we regret that several university boards of trustees, presidents, and their administrations have acquiesced in the ugliest of campaigns targeting their students and faculty for engaging in what have been peaceful protests, joined by a wide cross-section of their campus community.

As Palestine solidarity and anti-war demonstrations have proliferated and intensified, sweeping characterizations of them as violent, dangerous, and antisemitic have been deployed as part of a campaign that has weaponized the language of “safety” to delegitimize, intimidate, and forebodingly disperse legal, peaceful dissent. University administrations, most egregiously at Columbia, New York University, and Yale have—in some cases, in violation of their own university policies—called in the police to break up protests and arrest tens of students, some of whom have been summarily suspended and evicted from university housing. At NYU, faculty, too, were arrested. The University of Southern California cancelled the valedictorian’s commencement address after a slanderous hate campaign was launched against her for her pro-Palestinian views; the University of Pennsylvania revoked Penn Against the Occupation’s status as a registered student group; Harvard has now banned that university’s Palestine Solidarity Committee. Given the developments of the past several weeks, we are extremely concerned about what these disturbing events portend as commencement season approaches.

Attempts by universities to limit or suppress Gaza war-related speech and protest have been all too common since shortly after the 7 October attack. But the growing securitization and outright repression on campuses have reached levels not seen since the 1960s. We are witnessing a situation in which, in the name of security, it is university leaders themselves who have become the primary threat to the rights and safety of members of the campus community. The appeasement of malign forces seeking to destroy academic freedom, faculty governance, and curricular diversity, in which Columbia’s president Nemat Shafik so willingly participated during her 17 April congressional hearing, must not be allowed to metastasize. Today the goal is to suppress speech on Palestine, but the battle over free speech and academic freedom on our campuses did not begin, nor does it end, there.

We therefore call upon college and university boards of trustees, presidents, and administrations across the country immediately to clearly and forcefully recommit themselves to the freedom of inquiry, expression, and protest on campus that have been pillars of the US academy for decades. As the massive killing and destruction in Gaza continue, we also demand that you fulfill your responsibility to your profession and your campus community to defend peaceful protesters, uphold academic freedom, and reject all pressures seeking to criminalize peaceful encampments and demonstrations against this horrendous war—and our government’s complicity in it.

6 May 2024—The Board of Directors of the Middle East Studies Association and its Committee on Academic Freedom deplore in the strongest of terms the growing number of cases of colleges and universities calling on local police, often anti-riot squads using brutal force, to repress and disperse what have overwhelmingly been peaceful student protests calling for an end to the ongoing genocide in Gaza and for university divestment from companies profiting from or contributing to the Israeli military assault on Palestine. We also deplore actions and statements from national, state and local officials that seek to delegitimize student and faculty activists and their criticism of the war as chaotic, dangerous, or antisemitic.

Since our statement of 24 April, protests and encampments have continued to grow on campuses, public and private, across the US, as have attempts to intimidate, repress, and criminalize such protests. Even more concerning is the growing propensity of university leaderships to call upon not only campus security, but also city and state police forces, often in riot gear, to disperse peaceful protesters and uproot student encampments.

Further, there have been troubling instances in which student journalists have reportedly been censored or targeted for their reporting, while some police departments have released doctored footage and provided a distorted account of campus protests, amplified by mainstream media.

As of this writing, there have reportedly been nearly 2,500 arrests nationwide of student protesters, largely for “trespass,” as their universities impose time, manner, and place restrictions on protest that effectively turn students into trespassers on their own campuses and thereby criminalize them.

The basic demands of these Palestine solidarity protests have been and remain an end to the genocide in Gaza, a permanent ceasefire and divestment from the Israeli military campaign. Yet media coverage and commentary have both marginalized the central political issues driving the protests and adopted two false narratives which have put the protesters in peril: first, that they are chaotic and dangerous, and second, that they are antisemitic in comportment and demands. In fact, reports from inside these encampments are replete with examples of peaceful operation and organization, and it is clear that there are many Jewish students and faculty among the protesters.

Further contributing to the framings that put students and faculty in real danger have been statements from and actions by members of the US government. Statements from local and national officials and recent Congressional action are not intended to promote campus security or academic freedom. Rather, they
are intended to diminish academic freedom, undermine faculty governance, and terminate curricular diversity. It is likely no coincidence that UCLA Chancellor Gene Block declared the peaceful protest encampment on that campus “unlawful” on the same day that it was reported he had been called to testify before the House Committee on Education and the Workforce for the next in the series of inquisitorial hearings of university presidents begun in December. These hearings need to be seen, not as part of a serious campaign to combat antisemitism in the US, but as part of an ongoing campaign to demonize pro-Palestinian mobilization on campuses, itself part of a longer-standing and broader strategy to discredit and undermine the US’s leading institutions of higher education, and with them, the US academy, academic freedom, indeed, free speech more broadly.

We therefore reiterate what is an increasingly urgent call to college and university boards of trustees, presidents, and administrations immediately to clearly and forcefully recommit themselves to the freedom of inquiry, freedom of expression, and peaceful protest on campus that have been pillars of the US academy for decades. As the massive killing and destruction in Gaza continue, college and university leaders must fulfill their responsibility to their profession and their campus community by defending peaceful protesters, seeking non-securitized solutions to addressing protest encampments, upholding the safety and academic freedom of all of their students, faculty and staff, and rejecting pressures seeking to criminalize peaceful encampments and demonstrations against this horrendous war.

While the first example of such a militarized response of which we are aware took place at Pomona College on 5 April, the most prominent example to date came on the night of 30 April when Columbia University called on the NYPD to break up the student encampment, in the course of which some 300 protesters, a majority of them students, were arrested. The university has also requested that the NYPD remain on the campus until 17 May. On 24 April, the University of Southern California’s leadership sent in not only the campus police, but the LAPD and its anti-riot wing, LAPD metro, to break up a protest, arresting 93, the majority of whom were students, along with 3 faculty, who had remained to protect the students and document the arrests. Students then established an encampment, but shortly after 4am on 5 May the university again sent in the LAPD metro to clear all the tents and protesters.

At Washington University, during protests on 27 April longtime MESA member Steve Tamari, a faculty member from Southern Illinois University Edwardsville who was visiting the encampment, was badly beaten by police. Six faculty members from Washington University have since been placed on leave pending an investigation of their involvement with the encampment on that campus, though the faculty in question have described their involvement as “minimal or nonexistent.” At Indiana University, which has called in campus security, local police, and the Indiana State Police to disperse the protests, professors and students were arrested for “criminal trespass”; at Emory University the president called in the campus police, the Atlanta Police, and the Georgia State Patrol which then used tear gas, zip ties, and stun guns to clear an encampment and make arrests; and at the University of Texas, Austin there have been two major police interventions on campus, resulting in tens of arrests. At Dartmouth University, a 65-year old professor was among the 90 people arrested, zip-tied, and charged with criminal trespass on 1 May when the university president called in police to clear an encampment within hours of its appearance.

At UCLA, just before dawn on 2 May, the LAPD, California Highway Patrol and campus security, which had deployed to the UCLA campus over the previous ten hours, uprooted the protest encampment there, arresting more than 130 people. Notably this protest had been peaceful until the night of 30 April-1 May when a group of vigilante counter-protesters violently attacked the encampment; in this case some three hours passed before the LAPD was called to “restore order.” Despite clear and contemporaneous evidence that the UCLA encampment was not only overwhelmingly peaceful but had also resisted earlier attempts at provocation by counter-protesters, the university issued an ambiguous statement failing to clearly identify those responsible for the violence. Moreover, despite belated statements by Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass suggesting the attackers would be investigated and prosecuted, the only arrests to date have been of over 200 of the peaceful protesters. Peaceful protests have been broken up through coercion and police action at other campuses across the country as well.

The campus radio stations at both Columbia University and University of California, Los Angeles, were reportedly barred from access to their offices at various moments when police raids were occurring on their campuses. Student journalists from the UCLA campus paper, the Daily Bruin, also reported being threatened with arrest by the Los Angeles Police Department during the police raid on their campus on 2 May. Any threats against or restrictions on the work of student journalists are unacceptable and constitute an especially worrying development at a time when many student journalists have garnered widespread praise for doing a better job of objective and rigorous reporting on campus protests than the mainstream media.

President Biden spoke for the first time at any length on the pro-Palestinian protests on 2 May. While he affirmed the right to free speech and freedom of assembly and rejected the suggestion by some that the National Guard be called in to put an end to the protests, he also stated there is no “right to cause chaos,” thereby adopting the framing of protesters as security threats. Biden went on to say that “there should be no place on any campus, no place in America for antisemitism, or threats of violence against Jewish students.” We agree with this statement. Yet in the context of overwhelmingly peaceful protests that include many Jewish protesters, the statement is misleading because it falsely insinuates that the protests are violent and conflates anti-war activism with antisemitism.

On the congressional level, on 24 April Speaker of the House Mike Johnson, surrounded by other members of Congress, spoke at Columbia University and called for President Nenat Shafik’s resignation if she proved unable to contain the protests. He expressed concern, not for the security of all students and faculty on campus, but only for Jewish students’ safety, promised to punish colleges and universities if they failed to contain the protests, and called for a possible deployment of the National Guard. On 30 April House Republicans announced an investigation into federal funding for universities where there have been protests against the Gaza war. The following day the US House of Representatives passed HR 6090, essentially incorporating into federal law the widely criticized IHRA definition of antisemitism.

In some instances, local officials have also been responsible for disseminating misinformation about the protests in terms that echo the worst forms of anti-Palestinian, anti-Arab and anti-Muslim racism. The mayor of New York City, Eric Adams, was especially egregious and irresponsible in justifying the deployment of a massive, militarized anti-riot force against protesters on Columbia’s campus. Adams publicly and falsely claimed that the police had to intervene to stop “outside agitators,” including those associated with individuals “convicted for terrorism,” from “radicalizing our children.” These smears go beyond mischaracterizing protests as violent or chaotic. Adams serves as the mayor of a city whose police department had to pay a landmark settlement to Muslim communities — including campus student associations — for unlawful surveillance based on their religious and ethnic identities as part of its long history of targeting and abusing people of color. His attempt to link campus protests to support for terrorism is a fresh example of the racist and bigoted strategy of weaponizing terrorism designations and laws against pro-Palestinian activists.

[1] While the first example of such a militarized response of which we are aware took place at Pomona College on 5 April, the most prominent example to date came on the night of 30 April when Columbia University called on the NYPD to break up the student encampment, in the course of which some 300 protesters, a majority of them students, were arrested. The university has also requested that the NYPD remain on the campus until 17 May. On 24 April, the University of Southern California’s leadership sent in not only the campus police, but the LAPD and its anti-riot wing, LAPD metro, to break up a protest, arresting 93, the majority of whom were students, along with 3 faculty, who had remained to protect the students and document the arrests. Students then established an encampment, but shortly after 4am on 5 May the university again sent in the LAPD metro to clear all the tents and protesters.

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[3] President Biden spoke for the first time at any length on the pro-Palestinian protests on 2
MESA has consistently been a strong advocate for academic freedom, freedom of expression and the rights of our members to research and teach without interference. MESA has also consistently sought to express and enact solidarity with colleagues in the MENA region facing repression of their rights to academic freedom and freedom of expression. Current events have produced unmet needs in the academy and MESA is seeking to fill this gap by addressing the need to support Palestinian scholars being displaced.

MESA has embarked on a major fundraising effort to support our Palestinian colleagues. We first turned to MESA’s elected officers and board members, past and present, to make contributions. We have so far raised nearly $68,000, thanks to the generosity of our donors (see page 21). MESA will also contribute an additional $50,000 from its President’s Fund, bringing the current total to $118,000.

With these internal funds as leverage, we are now beginning to approach external donors and foundations to seek to raise a total of just under $2 million dollars to fund the GA-P for two years. We very much welcome any additional support, as we strive to launch the Global Academy-Palestine by the fall semester of 2024.

Since October 7, 2023, the destruction of Palestinian institutions of higher education and the killing of Palestinian scholars in Gaza and the West Bank has risen to a level that has led analysts to describe Israeli targeting of the educational sector as “scholasticide” or cultural genocide. MESA proposes to address this historic crisis facing Palestinian scholars and academics by developing a program specifically for Palestinian scholars, within MESA’s existing Global Academy. The goal of this program is to create opportunities for Palestinian scholars and their scholarship during a crisis that threatens to erase much of their critical work, their institutions, and even erase them.

The Global Academy-Palestine (GA-P) will support between seven to ten displaced Palestinian scholars with the goal of providing full funding for two years. The Global Academy-Palestine (GA-P) will support between seven to ten displaced Palestinian scholars. Our goal is to provide full funding to these displaced scholars for two years and to assist them with appropriate institutional placements from among our partner universities. Some of the scholars will be drawn from among those who have found their way to the United States or Canada following displacement from Gaza or the West Bank. Others might be in neighboring countries in the region seeking positions at American universities in the Middle East. The total number of fellows per year will vary according to the amount of co-funding the GA-P can raise from sponsoring universities. During the program’s first year (2024-2025), additional grants, donations, and funding will be sought to institutionalize Global Academy-Palestine.

The vision of the Global Academy-Palestine is to develop a sustainable program, collaborating with donors, foundations, and university partners, to support and mentor the work of Palestinian scholars for the coming period. The risk of losing these critical scholars and their invaluable scholarship is urgent and immediate.

For further information, email secretariat@mesana.org.

DONATING TO THE MESA GLOBAL ACADEMY-PALESTINE FUND

The best way to contribute is by logging into myMESA and selecting the Global Academy-Palestine fund under Contributions. You may also contribute directly by using PayPal here.
COMMITTEE NEWS

Recent Activity from MESA’s Committee on Academic Freedom

CAF comprises two sub-committees: MENA (Middle East and North Africa) and NA (North America). The mission of CAF is to address violations by protesting them at the highest government and diplomatic levels of the country where the violation occurs. If you learn of human rights or academic freedom violations please email the committee at caf@mesana.org.

Below are summaries of letters sent to heads of state, other high-ranking officials, or educational officials in response to an issue of academic freedom. The country listed represents the country receiving the letter. To view the full content of the letter, please see MESA’s website (mesana.org).

13 December 2023 (US)
Letter to Albany Law School regarding Professor Nina Farnia

18 December 2023 (US)
Letter to California State University, San Bernadino, regarding Professor Ahlam Muhtaseb

3 January 2024 (US)
Letter to New York University regarding recent actions that threaten free speech and academic freedom

16 January 2024 (US)
Letter to Indiana University regarding academic freedom violations against Professor Abdelkader Sinno and artist Samia Halaby

23 January 2024 (Palestine/Israel)
Letter condemning punitive measures against Palestinian students in Israeli universities

25 January 2024 (Palestine/Israel)
Letter condemning the devastating military campaign in Gaza

15 February 2024 (Iran)
Letter protesting dismissals of university professors

16 February 2024 (Canada)
Letter to the president and provost of York University regarding police disruption of a lecture on campus

29 February 2024 (US)
Letter to the Chair and Ranking Member of the Senate Judiciary Committee regarding the Center for Security, Race and Rights at Rutgers University-Newark Law School

7 March 2024 (Qatar)
Letter expressing concern about the closure of the Texas A&M University campus in Qatar as a detrimental move against academic freedom, influenced by geopolitical and external pressures, and calling for a re-evaluation of the decision based on transparency and adherence to academic values.

11 March 2024 (US)
Letter to Texas Tech University regarding the suspension of Professor Jairo Fúnez-Flores

12 March 2024 (US)
Letter to the University of Arkansas protesting its failure to defend its faculty

19 March 2024 (US)
Letter to the administration of Southern Illinois University Edwardsville concerning the cancellation of a planned event on Gaza

20 March 2024 (Palestine/Israel)
Letter addressing ongoing violations of academic freedom in occupied Palestinian Territories

21 March 2024 (Palestine/Israel)
Letter to the Hebrew University of Jerusalem protesting the suspension of faculty member Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian

1 April 2024 (US)
Letter to Columbia University’s Mailman School of Public Health regarding the treatment of Dr. Kayum Ahmed

2 April 2024 (US)
Letter to Texas Governor Greg Abbott regarding Executive Order GA-44

4 April 2024 (Egypt)
Letter concerning the ongoing deterioration of academic freedom in Egypt

5 April 2024 (Sudan)
Letter regarding the devastation of the education sector in Sudan

8 April 2024 (US)
Letter to Vanderbilt University concerning the suspension of students engaged in peaceful protest

8 April 2024 (US)
Letter to Pomona College concerning the suspension and arrest of peacefully protesting students

9 April 2024 (US)
Letter to Barnard College concerning its administration’s actions suppressing freedom of speech and academic freedom
10 April 2024 (Turkey)
Letter regarding ongoing violations at Bogazici University

11 April 2024 (Iran)
Letter protesting the arrest of Prof. Sedigheh Vasmaghi in Iran

15 April 2024 (US)
Letter to the administration of Columbia University concerning the arbitrary suspension and eviction from university housing of four students

18 April 2024 (US)
Letter to the University of Southern California expressing outrage over its decision to cancel Asna Tabassum’s valedictory address at commencement

22 April 2024 (US)
Letter regarding the decision of the administration of Hobart and William Smith Colleges (HWS) to relieve Dr. Jodi Dean, a tenured professor in the Department of Politics, of her teaching duties.

3 May 2024 (US)
Letter to Senators Schumer and Sanders urging them to oppose H.R. 6090, which codifies the flawed IHRA definition of antisemitism

6 May 2024 (Palestine/Israel)
Letter protesting the arrest and continued questioning of Professor Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian

6 May 2024 (US)
Letter to Indiana University protesting the banning from campus of Professor David McDonald

7 May 2024 (US)
Letter to the chair and ranking member of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce regarding the committee’s investigations of US universities

7 May 2024 (US)
Letter to Washington University in St. Louis regarding severe beating by police of Professor Steve Tamari and the arrest and suspension of faculty and students

Academic Freedom and Campus Climate: Resources and Reporting

Consult the Campus Climate resource page, which was created for MESA members in response to academic freedom-related developments on campuses across North America and beyond. It has been updated regularly as we identify or create additional resources.

MESA has also created a campus questionnaire, which can be found here.

In addition, MESA has established the email address campusclimate@mesana.org for members to send statements by university presidents, faculty, student groups, news reports about events or developments on campus, as well as anonymized summaries of individual experiences. These materials will help MESA and its Committee on Academic Freedom better respond to the ongoing threats to free speech and academic freedom as well as serve as an archive of this terribly difficult time.

Profiles of Dismissed Iranian Academics (2021-2023)

CAF has composed a list of nearly 100 Iranian academics’ profiles who have been dismissed from their university positions since the beginning of the presidency of Ebrahim Raisi in 2021 through the Woman, Life, Freedom nationwide movement in 2022-2023 when Iranian universities emerged as centers of activism. See the full report and dataset here.

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COMMITTEE NEWS

The MESA Global Academy: Responding to Current Crises

The MESA Global Academy supports displaced scholars from MENA. It harnesses the strengths of MESA’s institutional and individual members to bolster the careers of researchers whose academic trajectory has been adversely affected by developments in their home countries.

The MESA Global Academy is pleased to be completing its fifth year of support to displaced scholars from the MENA region and recently completed its call for applications for the 2024–2025 academic year. For this round of applications the Global Academy Committee particularly worked to reach Palestinian and Sudanese scholars due to the current crises and anticipated rising need of these scholars. The Committee will review the applications in the coming month.

This spring, with the help of a professional designer, the Global Academy created a new brochure for prospective applicants and supporters (pictured), and we are now at work on a short video that will feature four alumni fellows speaking about their experiences with the program.

The spring 2024 semester also saw many Global Academy scholars featured in online events, including

- a talk on water and the Blue Humanities hosted by the University of Southern California’s Department of Middle East Studies;
- a lecture on Persian literature in Afghanistan hosted by Princeton University’s Department of Near Eastern Studies and Bijan Mossavar-Rahmani Center for Iran and Persian Gulf Studies;
- a panel on the rule of law and authoritarianism in Afghanistan hosted by the University of Washington’s South Asia Center, Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies, Middle East Center, Center for Global Studies, and Center for Human Rights;
- a talk on gender and Islam in Turkey hosted by UCLA’s Center for Near Eastern Studies, Department of Gender Studies, and Center for the Study of Women;
- a panel on Arabic literature hosted by NYU’s Kevorkian Center for Near Eastern Studies and Georgetown’s Center for Contemporary Arab Studies;
- and two lectures on Yemen hosted by Towson University’s Department of Geography and Georgetown University’s Center for Contemporary Arab Studies and Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies.
Global Academy scholars are beginning work on two roundtables for the Review of Middle East Studies, one on constitutional change and the rule of law and another on gender and revolution/war. Nine scholars have committed to pen a contribution, four for the first and five for the second. The MESA Global Academy also offered two workshops this spring, one on employment-based US visas, which was conducted by an alumni fellow recently successful in obtaining such a visa, and one on book publishing, with Laura Fish, Acquisitions Editor of Syracuse University Press, and Mortimer Sellers, a professor at the University of Baltimore who edits two series on international and comparative law for Cambridge University Press.

Many thanks to our donors and the university programs, centers, and departments, as well as individual faculty and staff, who support the Global Academy with their time and resources. We couldn’t do our work without you!

To join our email list to be kept informed of events, publications, and other news, contact Program Manager Mimi Kirk at mimi@mesana.org.
International Journal of Middle East Studies

A Note from the Editor Joel Gordon

Needless to say, this has been one trying academic year. It seems that just as we were coming out of Covid-19, we crashed into another October War. As editors, trying to push on with our work, we of course recognize that many of us have been distracted (to say the least) by activities and activism on our campuses and in our communities, as well as keeping up with friends, colleagues, and comrades globally, on academic greens and in the killing fields and rubble.

Rounding up reviewers has at times been a struggle. We can only try to remind people, as we pitch what may seem in the immediate sense to be less imperative, that our careers – placement and promotion – are ultimately assessed by our academic writing, and who is better placed than us to convey the lived and living experiences, endeavors and cultural production of the people and region that we know so deeply. We thank you for your continued collaboration and/or readiness to point us towards colleagues who we might approach for such vital work.

Our team has changed slightly for recent issues. We want to introduce several new Book Review Editors: Dana El Kurd (law/policy), Zainab Saleh (anthropology/sociology), Elizabeth Urban (pre-modern history), and Andrew Simon (modern history). To the editorial board, we welcome Shah Mahmoud Hanifi, who will help us widen our gaze across the Hindu Kush toward a geo-cultural zone that may itself not want to be considered part of the MENA region, but in which there is much to explore through a comparative set of lenses.

As most of you must know by now, our term has been extended an additional year. We march on...

IJMES Editor Search
Application Review Begins June 1

MESA invites applications and nominations for the next IJMES editor for a five-year term beginning July 1, 2025. Candidates should be internationally recognized Middle East scholars in either the humanities or the social sciences and be affiliated with an academic institution prepared to contribute space and support to an editorial office. Applications with letter(s) of institutional commitment should be sent to secretariat@mesana.org. Application review will begin in June 2024, and continue until a new editor is identified. [See full listing here.]

Review of Middle East Studies

RoMES Editor Search
Application Review Begins August 1

MESA seeks a new editor for the Review of Middle East Studies (RoMES) to commence July 1, 2025. The editor is responsible to the MESA Board of Directors for preparing two issues per year. The editor receives direction regarding the operation of RoMES, consistent with MESA’s mission statement and with policies established by MESA’s Board of Directors.

Although MESA policy has established the focus of RoMES as the state of the craft in all fields of Middle East studies, there is considerable scope for innovation in approach and emphasis. In addition to scholarly and organizational excellence, MESA seeks an editor with a vision for the journal that remains on the cutting edge of research and pedagogy in this interdisciplinary field. Completed applications should be sent to secretariat@mesana.org. Application review will begin August 2024, and continue until a new editor is identified. [See full listing here.]
**MEMBERSHIP NEWS & UPDATES**

**February 21, 2024—**The Middle East Studies Association of North America (MESA), the leading professional membership association for scholars and students of the Middle East and North Africa, has relocated its DC headquarters to the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies (CCAS) in Georgetown University’s (GU) Walsh School of Foreign Service.

“MESA is the preeminent association for Middle East studies,” said Fida Adely, CCAS Director. “Georgetown’s CCAS is an ideal fit as an institutional host, since we share common interests in scholarship, research, programming, and teaching on the broader MENA region, and we represent a similar interdisciplinary combination among our CCAS faculty.”

MESA’s mission is to foster the study of the Middle East, promote high standards of scholarship and teaching, and encourage public understanding of the region and its peoples through programs, publications and services that enhance education, further intellectual exchange, recognize professional distinction, and defend academic freedom. MESA’s principal work is its Annual Meeting, a conference that brings together thousands each fall. MESA also regularly convenes Title VI National Resource Centers like CCAS along with directors of centers, programs, and departments of Middle East studies and related fields from across the continent.

“MESA is a pillar of the field, and a constant advocate for the best in scholarship and teaching, as well as the broader principles of academic freedom, with respect to both study and pedagogy,” said Aslı Bâli, MESA President and Yale Law Professor. “Georgetown is one of the premier institutions for Middle East Studies, thanks to its range of scholars across the university, who represent some of the leading members of MESA — not only, of course, in Arab Studies, which is a clear institutional strength, but also beyond, to encompass the study of the entire region of the Middle East and North Africa.”

“This is a dream match for MESA, and something of a homecoming for me personally as a Georgetown alum,” said Jeffrey Reger, Executive Director of MESA. “We look forward to developing a close working relationship with our new colleagues at Georgetown, many of whom I know well from my years spent in the Intercultural Center, and others I look forward to meeting soon.”

Dr. Reger is also joined by the MESA Secretariat Staff: Programs Manager Sara Palmer, Programs Associate Callian-dra Hermanson, Programs Assistant Emily TahaBurt, and Global Academy Program Manger Mimi Kirk.

Dr. Adely noted that the Center is delighted to welcome them, and also remarked on the strength of the Middle East Studies community and concentration of MESA members in the DC area. “MESA’s move to GU will offer new opportunities for collaboration, particularly given the frequency with which MESA holds its conference in Washington, in addition to expanding cooperation with the consortium of interested universities and research organizations in the area,” she said.
MESA Elections
The 2024 MESA Board election will take place later this summer via MESA’s website. All voting-eligible members will receive an email from the Secretariat, as well as subsequent reminder messages, when the election is live. The Nominating Committee is given the task of choosing the candidates for the incoming President-Elect and two Board Members who will take office after the 2024 annual meeting. We thank the 2024 Nominating Committee for their service.

Mona Atia, George Washington University
Amahl Bishara, Tufts University
Samar Saeed (Student), Georgetown University
Max Weiss, Princeton University
Hala Yousef, Denison University
Aslı Zengin, Rutgers University

Nominating Committee Election Statistics, 2016-2023

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2021</th>
<th>2022</th>
<th>2023</th>
<th>2024</th>
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<tr>
<td># of Full Candidates</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of Student Candidates</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Membership at Election</td>
<td>2356</td>
<td>2032</td>
<td>2505</td>
<td>2445</td>
<td>2443</td>
<td>2168</td>
<td>2379</td>
<td>1461</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eligible Members (F &amp; S)</td>
<td>2304</td>
<td>1955</td>
<td>2417</td>
<td>2394</td>
<td>2375</td>
<td>2117</td>
<td>2309</td>
<td>1371</td>
</tr>
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<td>Valid ballots</td>
<td>365</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>357</td>
<td>388</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>957</td>
<td>448</td>
<td>293</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of voting membership</td>
<td>15.80</td>
<td>16.41</td>
<td>14.77</td>
<td>16.20</td>
<td>18.10</td>
<td>45.20</td>
<td>19.40</td>
<td>21.37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2024 MESA Awards Call for Nominations

See our full list of awards and procedures on our website: [https://mesana.org/awards](https://mesana.org/awards)

**Jere L. Bacharach Service Award June 1, 2024**
This award honors extraordinary service to MESA or the field. The winner receives $1000.

**MESA Mentoring Award June 1, 2024**
This award honors contributions of a retired individual as mentor/teacher.

**Malcolm H. Kerr Dissertation Awards July 1, 2024**
For students completing their dissertations between July 1, 2023 and June 30, 2024, nominations should be from the author’s sponsor or advisor. Winners in each category - Humanities and Social Sciences - receive $1000.

**Graduate Student Paper Prize August 15, 2024**
For graduate students whose research papers consider any aspect of post 600 CE Middle East studies. The author of the winning paper receives $250 and the paper will be submitted for publication to RoMES.
Contributions
For the period December 8, 2023 - May 15, 2024, a total of $103,830 in contributions from individuals was received for MESA funds. We gratefully thank the following donors.

We thank Suad Joseph for endowing the Suad Joseph Graduate Student Travel Award of $500 each to two recipients traveling from the Middle East region in order to present at an in-person MESA Annual Meeting, beginning 2025.

MESA GENERAL FUND
Najwa Al-Qattan
Charles Butterworth
Robert D. Lee
Kenneth Perkins

PRESIDENT’S FUND
Lisa Anderson
Jere Bacharach Estate

JERE BACHARACH SERVICE AWARD FUND
Jere Bacharach Estate
Lara Iglitzin

MESA MENTORING AWARD
Nancy Gallagher

FATEMA MERNISSI BOOK AWARD FUND
Nancy Gallagher

NIKKIE KEDDIE BOOK AWARD FUND
Rudi Matthee

MALCOLM H. KERR DISSERTATION AWARD FUND
Joseph E. Lowry

GRADUATE STUDENT PAPER PRIZE FUND
Anne H. Betteridge

ACSS-MESA COLLABORATION FUND
Anonymous

CHILD CARE FUND
Suad Joseph
Joseph E. Lowry
James Tallon

GLOBAL ACADEMY FUND
Nancy Gallagher

TRAVEL GRANT FUND
Suad Joseph

MESA GLOBAL ACADEMY-PALESTINE FUND
We thank the following who have collectively contributed $67,951 toward establishing the MESA Global Academy-Palestine (see page 13).

Virginia Aksan
Najwa Al-Qattan
Senem Aslan
Aslı Bâli
Beth Baron
Joel Beinin
Juan Cole
Lara Deeb
John Esposito
Ellen Fleischman
Nancy E. Gallagher
Jens Hanssen
Jane Hathaway
Clement Moore Henry
Steven Heydemann
Aslı Z. Igsiz
Resat Kasaba
Firoozeh Kashani-Sabet
Arang Keshavarzian
Rashid I. Khalidi
Dina Rizk Khoury
Paul W.T. Kingston
Zachary Lockman
Donald M. Reid
Jillian M. Schwedler
Ted Swedenburg
Chris Toensing
Judith E. Tucker
John O. Voll
Mary C. Wilson
Anonymous

With a special acknowledgement and thanks to Suad Joseph for her donation of $25,000.

Donations to the MESA Global Academy-Palestine Fund can be made from myMESA or this link.
New Members

MESA welcomes 259 new members (105 fellows, 140 students, 14 associates) for 2024 as of May 15, 2024.

MESA’s Institutional Members

We recognize the following organizations as institutional members of MESA. Our institutional members share with MESA a commitment to recognizing excellence in the field, encouraging the growth and vibrancy of all the different disciplines within Middle East studies, and defending the rights of scholars and academics around the world.

Aga Khan University, Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations
American University in Cairo
American University of Beirut, Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs
Arab Center Washington DC (ACW)
Arab Council for the Social Sciences, Lebanon
Boston College
Brown University, Center for Middle East Studies
Columbia University, Middle East Institute
George Washington University, Institute for Middle East Studies
Harvard University, Center for Middle Eastern Studies
ILEX Foundation
McGill University, Institute of Islamic Studies
North Carolina Consortium for Middle East Studies
Northwestern University, Program of Middle East and North African Studies
Ohio State University, Department of Near Eastern and South Asian Languages and Cultures
Ohio State University, Middle East Studies Center
Portland State University, Middle East Studies Center
Stanford University, Sohaib and Sara Abbasi Program in Islamic Studies
Syracuse University, Middle Eastern Studies Program
University of California, Berkeley, Center for Middle Eastern Studies
University of California, Santa Barbara, Center for Middle East Studies
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Center for South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies
University of Maryland, Roshan Institute for Persian Studies
University of Michigan, Center for Middle Eastern & North African Studies
University of Southern California, Department of Middle East Studies
University of Texas at Austin, Center for Middle Eastern Studies
University of Toronto, Department of Near & Middle Eastern Civilizations
University of Utah, Middle East Center
University of Virginia, Department of Middle Eastern & South Asian Languages & Cultures
University of Washington, Middle East Center
Vanderbilt University

To apply for institutional membership, an institution should submit to the Secretariat a letter of interest, a list of directors, and descriptive information about the institution and its programs (e.g. brochures, sample publications). Submit materials to secretariat@mesana.org. Institutional membership annual dues are $1100.
NEW IN MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS PRESS

France and Algeria
A History of Decolonization and Transformation
BY PHILLIP NAYLOR
$55.00 hardcover
REVISED EDITION JUNE 2024

Across the Green Sea
Histories from the Western Indian Ocean, 1440-1640
BY SANJAY SUBRAHMANYAM
$50.00 hardcover

Reading across Borders
Afghans, Iranians, and Literary Nationalism
BY ARIA FANI
$55.00 hardcover

A War of Colors
Graffiti and Street Art in Postwar Beirut
BY NADINE A. SINNO
$55.00 hardcover

Conditionally Accepted
Navigating Higher Education from the Margins
EDITED BY ERIC JOY DENISE & BERTIN M. LOUIS JR.
$34.95 paperback
The **Annual Meeting Program** will offer around 200 sessions in diverse offerings from early to modern, Spain to Pakistan, art history to sociology. A **searchable, preliminary program** will be available on the website in June. You can look up a paper or panel via a number of criteria such as presenter name, country of study, discipline, or key words (contingent upon the person submitting the abstract having identified the proposal as such.) Please check the website for the most current information, as we will have further updates regarding the meeting over the course of the summer.

The **Book Exhibit Gallery** will feature university presses and other publishing houses, plus vendors of interest to our members. Take the opportunity to browse all of the latest publications in the field, mingle virtually with exhibit staff, network with editors, and maybe make a deal for your next publication.

The **FilmFest** will present recent documentary and narrative films from and about the region for a period of time before, during, and after the session dates. This will allow registrants to view films without conflicting with other conference events.

Questions about the annual meeting can be sent to *meeting@mesana.org*.
Volunteer Panel Chairs

Volunteers are invited to chair non-preorganized panels at the MESA 2024 annual meeting. A listing of available panels will be posted by July 1. MESA only assigns chairs to put-together panels, and there are many such panels on the program. If, after consulting the website, you find a panel of interest, please contact the MESA staff at meeting@mesana.org. Please note that MESA membership and annual meeting preregistration are required of all meeting participants on the program, including volunteer panel chairs.

Undergraduate Research Workshop

The Committee on Undergraduate Middle East Studies (CUMES) is sponsoring a virtual undergraduate research workshop. The workshop will be held on Nov. 8 or 9, with precise day/time to be determined after we know all participants’ time zones. This workshop will be valuable for students planning graduate work in Middle East studies.

Eligibility: Students pursuing a bachelor’s program or recent graduates who have not yet begun a graduate degree are eligible. All fields and disciplines are welcome, as are both traditional research and digital projects!

Format: The workshop has 3 components: 1) small panel presentation (15-20 minutes) and discussion; 2) professional development session; 3) digital poster session.

The early acceptance deadline is June 15, 2024 with a second round of acceptances (pending availability) due July 31, 2024.

For more information, please see the listing on the MESA website or contact Dr. Victoria Hightower (victoria.hightower@ung.edu).

Saturday, November 16
In-person & Virtual Events

On November 16, in Washington DC, for local members, MESA is planning to organize some smaller in-person and hybrid events on the Saturday after the main program concludes on Friday.

We will host networking events in the morning, with the aims of connecting junior scholars with mentors, prospective authors with publishers, and center directors with other administrative staff.

The Members Meeting will be held virtually on Zoom in the early afternoon, followed by the Awards Ceremony (which will be livestreamed) and a special presidential panel, which will also be hybrid. The day will conclude with an in-person reception in the early evening.

Some MESA members have asked us about hosting satellite in-person gatherings. We welcome such proposals to reduce our meeting’s carbon footprint this year as much as possible.

Preregistration
Deadline is October 25, 2024.

Registration allows you access to the program, the virtual book exhibit, and the virtual FilmFest, which has extended dates before and following the dates of the annual meeting.

For MESA members facing financial hardship, MESA is offering an additional 50% discount on registration. Simply choose this option when registering through myMESA. The rates listed below do not show this additional discount.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY AND RATES</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MESA fellow/associate</td>
<td>$175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MESA student member</td>
<td>$85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MESA retired member</td>
<td>$85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td>$300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-member student</td>
<td>$150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For additional information on registration, go to the registration page.
Submissions: Process and Statistics

The annual meeting program chair, selected by MESA’s Board of Directors, recommends and invites people to serve on the program committee in order to cover the broadest swath of topics relevant to MESA. To the extent possible, reviewers are matched by discipline and geographic focus, as well as research themes. Each proposal is read “blind” and rated by two committee members according to how, in a maximum of 400 words, the paper or panel will contribute to scholarship or to the field. The purpose of the program committee is to read and evaluate submissions, place high-rated ones on the program, and to assemble papers into cohesive panels.

Acceptance/Rejection Rates, Recent Meetings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Submission Type</th>
<th>2021 (Montreal/virtual)</th>
<th>2022 (Denver)</th>
<th>2023 (Montreal)</th>
<th>2024 (Virtual)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Proposed</td>
<td>Accepted Rejected</td>
<td>Proposed</td>
<td>Accepted Rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Papers</td>
<td>622</td>
<td>434 (70%) 188 (30%)</td>
<td>441</td>
<td>363 (82%) 78 (18%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-organized Panels</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>171 (87%) 26 (13%)</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>112 (98%) 2 (2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roundtables</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>52 (88%) 7 (12%)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Does not include MESA 2021 deferred submissions of 25 panels, 5 roundtables, 1 special session, 61 individual papers
**Does not include MESA 2023 deferred submissions of 4 panels, 1 roundtable, 5 individual papers

Abstract Submissions by Geographical Location

We use mailing address country to identify location; some have left this blank, which is why the total is less than the total number of paper submissions. There is a marked increase in submissions from abroad.

Total = 765

North America = 504
50 Canada
454 United States

South America = 1
1 Brazil

Australasia = 5
4 Australia
1 New Zealand

Asia (excluding MENA/SWANA) = 17
3 China
2 India
9 Japan
1 South Korea
2 Taiwan

Africa (excluding MENA/SWANA) = 1
1 Kenya

Middle East/Southwest Asia = 100
1 Algeria
3 Bahrain
5 Egypt
3 Iran
1 Iraq
13 Israel
1 Jordan
3 Kuwait
5 Lebanon
2 Oman
1 Pakistan
2 Palestinian Territories
13 Qatar
2 Saudi Arabia
1 Tunisia
39 Turkey
5 United Arab Emirates

Europe = 137
3 Austria
1 Belgium
2 Czechia
1 Denmark
4 Finland
6 France
36 Germany
3 Greece
3 Hungary
4 Ireland
7 Italy
1 Luxembourg
9 Netherlands
4 Norway
1 Poland
1 Portugal
2 Romania
2 Spain
1 Sweden
3 Switzerland
43 United Kingdom
Disciplinary Breakdown of Papers

Based upon the number of papers accepted to be on the program for which we have the necessary data. We do not have relative data for 2023 because the discipline field allowed multiple selections.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disciplines</th>
<th>2020 (Washington†)</th>
<th>2021 (Montreal†)</th>
<th>2022 (Denver)</th>
<th>2024 (Virtual)***</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>486</td>
<td>34.69</td>
<td>366</td>
<td>31.99</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anthropology</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>10.92</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>9.88</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pol Sci/Int’l Affrs</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>17.99</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>16.45</td>
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<tr>
<td>Literature</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>9.35</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>10.40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sociology</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>6.57</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>6.12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Art/Art History</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>3.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Religious Stds/Theo</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>3.67</td>
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<tr>
<td>Media Arts</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>3.41</td>
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<tr>
<td>Law</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1.84</td>
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<tr>
<td>Archit/Urban Plng</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1.57</td>
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<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1.49</td>
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<tr>
<td>Language/Linguistics</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1.84</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Philosophy</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1.66</td>
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<tr>
<td>Archaeology</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business/ Public Admin</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journalism</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicine/Health</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library Science</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interdisciplinary</td>
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<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unknown*</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>1.71</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>3.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1401</td>
<td>99.98**</td>
<td>1144</td>
<td>100.11**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

† meeting held virtually
* reflects people in departments/programs that do not fit within the standard list of disciplines
** due to rounding, figure is not 100%
*** reflects accepted, rejected, and deferred

Sessions Accepted or Assembled

- 87 preorganized panels
- 77 assembled panels (from 418 abstracts)
- 22 roundtables
- 3 special sessions

Paper Abstracts Accepted
Total = 770
- 413 individual abstracts
- 357 abstracts on preorganized panels

Abstract Submissions by Type
Total = 814
Members: 726
- 392 Fellows
- 56 Associates
- 278 Students
Exemptions: 88 (42 have a country identified: 15 Europe, 20 Middle East, 2 Southeast Asia, 5 US)