



مؤسسة الدراسات العربية
Arab Studies Institute

Summary Report on 2017 Lebanon Dissertation Summer Institute*

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*The institute is convened under the auspices of the Arab Studies Institute (ASI) in partnership with AUB's Center for Arab and Middle Eastern Studies and AUB's Asfari Institute for Civil Society and Citizenship.

Introduction

The following summary report of the 2017 Lebanon Summer Dissertation Institute highlights key elements in the conceptualization, implementation, and evaluation of the summer institute. While some of the information is available from the summer institute, most of what is contained herein represents insights shared by the co-directors in the process of designing, running, and evaluating the program as manifested this past summer. In addition to this report, a complete and finalized budget and evaluation document will be presented once completed (expected 15 August 2017).

In addition to the contents of this report, readers are encouraged to visit the dissertation institute website, which contains information on previous years' participants and program, as well as an in-development resource page.

URL: <http://lebanondissertation.weebly.com>

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This annual doctoral dissertation summer institute aims to provide a framework for facilitating and advancing critical doctoral dissertation research on Lebanon, in line with the overall objectives and thrust of the Arab Studies Institute's Lebanon Project. Over the past several years, academic scholarship in general and doctoral dissertation projects in particular have increasingly sought to focus on Lebanon as a primary case study and arena of academic inquiry. This includes researchers based in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, the United States, Canada, and Europe, and spans several disciplines including history, anthropology, political science, and economics. One impetus for this increasing emphasis on researching Lebanon within MENA studies has been the real or perceived inaccessibility of other regional states for research purposes in the wake of intensifying foreign intervention, domestic repression, and other forms of violence. Another impetus has been the substantial development of the scholarly literature on Lebanon over the past two decades, coupled with a number of important research-advancing initiatives that have been inaugurated in the country over the past several years. Consequently, the number of PhD students and aspiring scholars seeking to conduct fieldwork and academic research on Lebanon continues to increase.

Yet at the same time, graduate-level pedagogical approaches to Lebanon largely isolate knowledge production on the country's territories, their inhabitants, and both their historical and contemporary dynamics. For those PhD students based at institutions of higher education outside of Lebanon, literature on the country is seldom fully integrated into the graduate coursework. Furthermore, such students very rarely find themselves at institutions with access to a scholar of Lebanon to fulfill the role of course professor, academic advisor, field examiner, or dissertation committee member. This is to nothing of the too little contact they have with other PhD students researching Lebanon. For those PhD students based at institutions of higher education inside Lebanon, literature on the country rarely engages with a comparative regional framework. These dynamics are particularly important to take into account given the frequent and problematic ways that historical and contemporary political, economic, social, and cultural dynamics in Lebanon are exceptionalized vis-à-vis the comparative study of societies in general and the Middle East and North Africa region in particular.

By bringing together PhD students of various disciplinary training and topical foci, this institute creates a space to interrogate, modify, and develop critical approaches to the study of Lebanon, its territories, inhabitants, histories, and contemporary dynamics. Central to this process will be increasing students' familiarity with the contours of knowledge production on Lebanon as well as of field research in Lebanon.

Goals of the Doctoral Dissertation Institute

- Deepen participants' theoretical and empirical foundations for the study of Lebanon.
- Introduce applicants to the main questions and methods of various disciplines re Lebanon.
- Facilitate logistical preparation for archival and other forms of research fieldwork.
- Contribute to the development of a doctoral dissertation research and writing community.
- Expand critical knowledge production on Lebanon.

A group of 10-15 PhD students, representing an array of disciplines, research agendas, and institutional affiliations will come together to participate in the summer workshop each year. In doing so, they will both advance their academic training and initiate (or build on) their fieldwork.

Co-Conveners and Co-Directors

Ziad Abu-Rish and Nadya Sbaiti first conceptualized this dissertation institute as a function of their own research and publication experience vis-à-vis Lebanon, and their varied interactions with senior colleagues, peers, and graduate students. Their own experience in conducting dissertation and monograph-related research in Lebanon, soliciting and reviewing Lebanon-related content for peer-reviewed and other publications, and other roles in the field of MENA studies, combined with their affiliation with the Arab Studies Institute (ASI) led them to initiate a number of preliminary meetings and inquiries that formed the basis of the current program. Once initial funding was secured by ASI for the dissertation institute, they were tasked with designing and implementing the program, including participant recruitment and selection as well as logistical arrangements. Biographies of Abu-Rish and Sbaiti are available in the Annex.

Co-Sponsorships

This institute is co-convened and co-directed by Ziad Abu-Rish and Nadya Sbaiti under the auspices of the Arab Studies Institute (ASI) in partnership with the Center for Arab and Middle Eastern Studies (CAMES) and the Asfari Institute for Civil Society and Citizenship, both at the American University of Beirut. It is made possible due to a grant received by the Arab Studies Institute (ASI) and George Mason University (GMU), along with additional funding by CAMES and the Asfari Institute. The ASI-GMU grant is run by Bassam Haddad, Director of the ASI and the Middle East and Islamic Studies Program at George Mason University, and aims at enhancing publicly engaged scholarship in the Arab world.

Application Procedure and Applicant Pool Profile

This dissertation institutes seeks to maximize its effectiveness and efficiency in both advancing overall critical knowledge production on Lebanon and complimenting participant training at this universities. Consequently, individuals must fulfill the following criteria in order to be considered for participation in the dissertation institute:

1. Currently be enrolled in an accredited doctoral program of any university around the world (including those residing in Lebanon, or enrolled at a university in Lebanon).
2. Advanced to candidacy or ABD (i.e., have formally defended their dissertation research proposal and passed their general and/or qualifying exams) by no later than 1 June 2017.
3. Possess advanced Arabic proficiency in reading and speaking and at least intermediate Arabic proficiency in writing.
4. Applicants can be based in humanities or social science divisions of their academic institutions, and can be seeking a discipline-specific or interdisciplinary degree.

The 2017 call for applications (CFP) was issued on 1 February 2017 with a 5 March 2017 deadline. All applicants are required to submit the following items by the deadline in order to be given full consideration:

1. Cover Letter (must include reasons for applying to the workshop; summary of research agenda; description of academic preparation; and mention of prior experience in the region and/or Lebanon).
2. Current Curriculum Vitae (CV).
3. Letter of Recommendation from Primary Advisor and/or Dissertation Chair.
4. Copy of Research Prospectus Approved by Home University (15-page limit).
5. Completed Academic and Language Training Form (See Appendix).

The CFP was initially disseminated via ASI's web, social media, and email networks. In addition, it was disseminated via the relevant list serves and social media accounts of the following organizations: H-Net, Middle East Studies Association, and CAMES-AUB.

The text of the CFP is included in the Annex.

Profile of Applicant Pool

By the 5 March 2017 deadline, the dissertation institute email account had received twenty-five (25) applications. Five (5) of these applications were incomplete or did not meet eligibility requirements, and thus were not considered beyond the preliminary screening phase. In addition, another five (5) applications that were received after the deadline were also not advanced passed the preliminary screening.

Of the twenty (20) applications that were reviewed in full, the following can be noted:

- Fourteen (14) out of twenty (20) were women.
- Eighteen (18) universities were represented, spanning eight (8) countries.
- US universities were the most represented among the reviewed applications, with seven (7) applicants from the United States. This was followed by the United Kingdom (4), Germany (2), and one (1) for each of Belgium, Ireland, Italy, Singapore, and Lebanon.
- A total of nineteen (19) distinct departments/disciplines were represented, with those identifying as Oriental Studies or Middle East Studies representing the largest share (5). This was followed by History (3), Anthropology (2), Education (2), and one (1) for each of Geography, Sociology, Urban Planning, Public Policy, Psychology, Transitional Justice, and American Studies. In addition, one applicant was identified as being a PhD student in a Humanities Department.

Selections were made on the basis of averaging the numerical score assigned to each application by members of the selection committee, in combination with deliberations over the strengths and weaknesses of each application as well as how the dissertation institute could benefit their academic training and dissertation projects.

Out of the twenty (20) reviewed applications, eleven (11) acceptance offers were extended. A further six (6) students were designated as alternates, and three (3) were rejected. Of the 11 students who received acceptances, all confirmed participation. However, as the start date approached, one of those 11 selected participants withdrew from the program due to personal reasons.

Sample communications regarding application status notification is included in the Annex.

Profile of the Participants

Out of the twenty (20) reviewed applications, eleven (11) acceptance offers were extended. A further six (6) students were designated as alternatives, and three (3) were rejected. Of the 11 students who received acceptances, all confirmed participation. However, as the start date approached, one of those 11 selected participants withdrew from the program due to personal reasons.

Of the ten (10) participants that attended the dissertation institute, the following can be noted:

- Six (6) out of ten (10) were women.
- Ten (10) universities were represented, spanning three (3) countries.
- US universities were most represented among the participants, with five (5) participants from the United States. This was followed by the United Kingdom (4) and Ireland (1).
- A total of six (6) distinct departments/disciplines were represented: Oriental Studies or Middle East Studies (3); History (3); Anthropology (1); Education (1); Transitional Justice (1); American Studies (1).

A complete list of the 2017 participants is included in the Annex.

Program

The 2017 dissertation institute was held 12-23 June 2017.

The institute's program comprises eleven working days and one day off. Each working day begins at 9am and concluding by approximately 5:30pm, with coffee, lunch, and other breaks included. Each working day is typically comprised of three components: a site visit to research institutions or a public tour, a state-of-the-field lecture, and a seminar discussion. The order will vary depending on the day, and in rare circumstances there might be two of the same component in one day to accommodate institutional schedules.

The dissertation institute activities are closed to the public due to space limitations. Some of the information shared and developed in the course of the dissertation institute will be made available to the public with the consent of relevant participants and presenters. There was also a dissertation institute-sponsored public event on "Alternative Research Terrains in Lebanon" featuring researchers working on different projects.

State-of-the-Field Lectures are designed to highlight the current state of academic literature on Lebanon in a given discipline or topic. The speakers represent an array of renowned scholars and researchers who have actively contributed to shaping the academic literature on Lebanon. For the 2017 installment of the institute, lectures were scheduled on the following topics:

1. Ottoman Lebanon;
2. Colonial Lebanon;
3. Post-Colonial Lebanon;
4. Anthropology of Lebanon;
5. Literature of Lebanon;
6. Political Economy of Lebanon.

Site Visits include archives, libraries, and research centers, as well as walking tours and public events. They are designed to enhance participants' understanding of institutional resources for researching Lebanon, as well as to complicate neighborhoods, towns, cities, and the country as a lived experience. For the 2017 installment of the institute, sites visits were scheduled as follows:

1. Arab Image Foundation
2. AUB's Nami Jafet Library, Archives and Special Collections
3. Holy Spirit University in Kaslik, Phoenic Center and University Library
4. Orient Institute of Beirut, Library
5. Sursuq Museum, Library
6. Tour: Beirut's Coast (Dictaphone Group Sound Installation)
7. Tour: Topographies of Descent (Dictaphone Group Live Performance)
8. Tour: Tripoli City Tour (Bassam Nahhas)

Seminar Discussions meet once a day, facilitated by Ziad Abu-Rish and Nadya Sbaiti. The aim here is to discuss specific texts from the workshop reader, debrief on the day's events, and/or participate in other reflective exercises.

An Institute Reader forms a central component of the program. The reading list is meant to both deepen participants' collective knowledge of the history of Lebanon, but also to expose them to some of the major works/approaches/questions in the interdisciplinary study of Lebanon. This reader is not meant to be a definitive bibliography for the study of Lebanon, but rather one that will enhance the collective experience, and deepen conversations, during the institute. Some readings will be discussed during lectures, others will be discussed during the seminar portion.

Reading Materials

Below is a listing of the readings that makeup the 2017 institute reader. They are grouped by topic, and in the order participants were expected to read them. Please note that in some cases the readings are designed to familiarize participants with the empirical history of modern Lebanon. In other cases, they are designed to provide participants with a sampling of the literature on a particular period, topic, or discipline. Participants are expected to complete the reading list prior to the start of the workshop since there is little time for lengthy reading during the workshop. This reader is designed to serve as a basis of discussion in the workshop seminar series and to supplement the information presented in the lecture series.

[Please note that this reading list is specific to the 2017 institute and is subject to change for future institutes. Participants will be informed of the most recent version of the reading list once they are notified of their acceptance and confirm their participation.]

Ottoman Background

- Ussama Makdisi, "Religion as the Site of the Colonial Encounter," "Reinventing Mount Lebanon," and "Epilogue," *The Culture of Sectarianism: Community, History, and Violence in Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Lebanon* (Berkeley: University of California, 2000).
- Akram Khater, "A Departure from the Ordinary," and "Factory Girls," *Inventing Home: Emigration, Gender, and the Middle Class in Lebanon, 1870-1920* (Berkeley: University of California, 2000).
- Jens Hanssen, "Introduction" and "The Struggle for Self-Determination," *Fin de Siecle Beirut: The Making of an Ottoman Provincial Capital* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).
- Ilham Khuri-Makdisi, "Introduction" and "The Late Nineteenth-century World and the Emergence of a Global Radical Culture," *The Eastern Mediterranean and the Making of Global Radicalism, 1860-1914* (Berkeley: University of California, 2010).

Mandate Period

- Elizabeth Thomson, "Political Rights: Women's Suffrage as A Revolutionary Threat" and "The Veil and the Dual Legal System," *Colonial Citizens: Republican Rights, Paternal Privilege, and Gender in French Syria and Lebanon* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000).
- Max Weiss, "Introduction" and "Institutionalizing Personal Status," *In the Shadow of Sectarianism: Law, Shi'ism, and the Making of Modern Lebanon* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010).
- Malek Abisaab, "Shiite Peasants and a New Nation in Colonial Lebanon: The Intifada of Bint Jubayl, 1936," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East* 29, no. 3 (2009).
- Malek Abissab, "Introduction," *Militant Women of a Fragile Nation* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2010).

Post-Colonial Lebanon

- Michael Hudson, "Presidential Power: The Struggle to Dominate" and "Presidential Power: The Attempt to Modernize," *The Precarious Republic: Political Modernization in Lebanon* (New York: Random House, 1968).

- Christopher Stone, "Fairuz and/as the Nation," *Popular Culture and Nationalism in Lebanon: The Fairouz and Rabbani Nation* (London: Routledge, 2007).
- Martha Wenger, "Primer: Lebanon's 15-Year War, 1975-1990," *Middle East Report* (January/February 1990).
- Reinoud Leenders, "The Political Settlement of the Second Republic," *Spoils of Truce: Corruption and State-Building in Postwar Lebanon* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012).

Anthropology of Lebanon

- Lila Abu Lughod, "Zones of Theory in the Anthropology of the Arab World," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 18 (1989).
- Lara Deeb and Jessica Winegar, "Anthropologies of Arab-Majority Societies," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 41 (2012).
- Lara Deeb and Jessica Winegar, "Post-Cold War Politics of Middle East Anthropology: Insights from a Transitional Generation Confronting the War on Terror," in *Anthropology of the Middle East and North Africa: The State of the Art*, edited by Sherene Hafez and Susan Slyomovics (Indiana University Press, 2013).

Political Economy of Lebanon

- Toufic K. Gaspard, "From Crisis to Reconstruction," *A Political Economy of Lebanon, 1948-2002: The Limits of Laissez-faire* (Leiden: Brill, 2003).
- Michael Johnson, "An Incomplete Bourgeois Revolution," *Class & Client in Beirut: The Sunni Muslim Community and the Lebanese State 1840-1985* (London: Ithaca Press, 1985).
- Najib Hourani, "Capitalists in Conflict: The Lebanese Civil War Reconsidered," *Middle East Critique* (3 March 2015).
- Elizabeth Picard, "The Political Economy of Civil War in Lebanon," in *War, Institutions, and Social Change in the Middle East*, edited by Steven Heydemann (Berkeley: University of California, 2000).

Palestinian and Syrian Refugees in Lebanon

- Rosemary Sayigh, "The New Reality" and "The Palestinian Revolution," *Palestinians: From Peasants to Revolutionaries* (London: Zed Press, 1979).
- Diana Allen, "Introduction," *Refugees of the Revolution: Experiences of Palestinian Exile* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013).
- John Chalcraft, "We Were Like Ghosts, Unseen," *The Invisible Cage: Syrian Migrant Workers in Lebanon* (Stanford: Stanford University press, 2008).

Lebanese Literature

- Elias Khoury, "The Unfolding of Arabic Fiction and Modern Memory," *The Journal of the Midwest Modern Language Association* (Spring 1990).
- Michelle Hartman, "Introduction," *Native Tongue, Stranger Talk: The Arabic and French Literary Landscapes of Lebanon* (Syracuse University Press 2014).
- Syrine Hout, "Introduction," *Post-War Anglophone Lebanese Fiction: Home Matters in the Diaspora* (Edinburgh: EUP, 2012).

Urban Studies in Lebanon

- Mona Harb, "Faith-based Organizations as Effective Development Partners."

- Mona Harb, "On Religiousity and Spatiality: Lessons from Hezbollah in Beirut," in *The Fundamental City? Religiosity and the Remaking of Urban Space*, edited by Neza Alsayyad and Mejgan Missoumi (London: Rutledge, 2001).
- Mona Harb and Lara Deeb, "Contesting Urban Modernity: Moral Leisure in South Beirut," *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 16 (2013).