

Summer 2022 Newsletter

Dear Insaniyyat Community,

We are glad to report that Insaniyyat's activities, committees, and projects continue to forge our anthropological community even as reporting on Palestine and studying in its universities ever face the deadliness of occupation. While occupation's darkness continually slides toward banality, Insaniyyat insists that the world remain wider.

Despite our dispersal, disconnected geographies, and exacting workloads, coming together has helped us find our way to the renewal that Palestine never fails to offer. We strive to keep hoping, believing, and working toward a better future. In that spirit, nourished by the convergence of hope and despair, we are deeply gratified to bring you the latest news from Insaniyyat:

Call for Action: Joining members of our anthropological community at Birzeit University, in May, Insaniyyat issued a "Call to Action: Speak Out Against Israel's Further Destruction of Palestinian Academic Freedom." To read and further circulate this bold and incisive call to expose and oppose attacks on Palestinian institutions of higher education, please visit [this link](#).

Anthropology in the Community Committee: The Insaniyyat-based Souq Stories team curated a new incarnation of its initial June 2021 exhibition, titled: "Souq Stories: Reclaiming the Commons." Held at McGill University, the exhibit is co-sponsored by McGill's Research Group on Democracy Space and Technology at the Yan P. Lin Centre, the Peter Guo-hua Fu School of Architecture, and McGill's Refugee Research Group. [Read more](#).

For the exhibit's opening, renowned scholar Helga Tawil Souri gave a keynote lecture about the anthropological and historical significance of photography in Palestinian public spaces, titled, "Infrastructures in/of Commons." The keynote and subsequent discussion are available to watch [here](#). The project is supported by Ta'awon for Youth Foundation, the DROSOS Foundation, Yan P. Lin Centre, and the Nakba Archive at McGill University.

Fundraising Committee: Since January 2022, the five dedicated members of the fundraising committee have focused on locating sustainable and long-term funding in addition to project-based funding. This approach is aimed at designing and implementing longer-term and recurring projects and at strengthening Insaniyyat's institutional sustainability. The fundraising committee welcomes ideas for project-based and sustainable funding. Please write to them at: mail@insaniyyat.org

Outreach Committee: As part of its growing network and joint projects with organizations around the world, Insaniyyat co-sponsored a webinar on Grant Proposal Writing for and with the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research, titled, "Applying for an Engaged Research Grant" and held with CART (Communication Access Real-time Translation) captioning and Arabic translation. Leading the webinar, WG President Danilyn Rutherford described the program's objectives, reviewed evaluation criteria, and offered tips on writing a winning proposal for a project that matters to the people researched no less than to the researcher. You can view it on [Vimeo](#).

Anthropological Knowledge in Arabic Committee: The Anthropology in Arabic (AIA) committee is pursuing a joint project with Fa3iloon (Algerian Center for Anthropological Research) to identify and translate anthropological texts from Western languages into Arabic. Please suggest candidate texts by writing to: mail@insaniyyat.org

Insaniyyat's Talk Series recently held two events. On June 15th, Brinkley M. Messick (Columbia University) presented his fascinating work on "Sharī'a Genres and their Writers in Imamic Yemen," which used arresting ethnographic photography to survey the relation between the main roles in shari'a governance and the main types of writing as manifest in textual formations during the Imamic period in Yemen. The talk was followed by a discussion led by scholar of Islamic law and Yemeni history Eirik Hovden (University of Bergen).

On July 5th, a stimulating panel titled "Memory of Resistance," focusing on Syria, Algeria, and Palestine and cosponsored by Fa3iloon, featured Houriyah Djilali (From the Center of Research in Social and Cultural Anthropology, CRASC, in Algeria), Munir Fakher Eldin (Birzeit University), Moulod Qarin (University of Medea) and 'Ala al-'Azzah (Birzeit University), and led by Dr Djilali El Mestari from Fa3iloon (Algerian Center for Anthropological and Social Research). The four talks were followed by a discussion with interested participants from Algeria, Palestine and other countries.

Insaniyyat's Haifa Reading Group: The "big bang" of Insaniyyat celebrated its 7th year by examining the theme of tragedy. Authors on the reading list included George Steiner, Friedrich Nietzsche, 'Abbas Mahmoud al-'Aqqad, David Scott, Basit Kareem Iqbal, and Raymond Williams, among others. This group continues to meet as tradition has it, every third Friday at 5pm Palestine time (now on zoom), with the purpose of promoting anthropological conversations in Arabic! All are welcome to join and to suggest themes and readings. Contact: mail@insaniyyat.org

Kudos to Authors: On behalf of Insaniyyat's community entire, we congratulate Rema Hammami for publishing her much-awaited Palestinian wildflower field guide, *From Crown Anemone to Bushy Bean Caper* (A. M. Qattan Foundation, 2022) and Amahl Bishara for publishing a book that in some sense tells the story of Insaniyyat: *Crossing a Line: Laws, Violence, and Roadblocks to Palestinian Political Expression* (Stanford, 2022). Mabrouk to Rema and to Amahl for these wonderful books about what blossoms and withers in Palestine!

Call for Volunteering: Insaniyyat's work is made possible thanks to the dedicated efforts of its volunteers. If you want to experience an academically-engaged Palestinian community coming together, crossing lines and fields at multiple registers, disclosing Palestine as not only a place to think about, but also with and through, then please consider volunteering with Insaniyyat, Contact: mail@insaniyyat.org

Yours,

Khaled Furani

President, Executive Board

on behalf of the Executive Board: Rema Hammami (Vice President); Dina Zbeidat (Treasurer); Thayer Hastings (Student Representative), Aamer Ibraheem (General Secretary); Laura Adwan; Rhoda Kannaneh, Nadeem Karkabi, Aseel Sawalha, and 'Ala al-'Azzah