



2017 GABR FELLOWS AT THE MIDDLE EAST INSTITUTE, WASHINGTON, DC

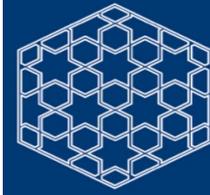
As the Foundation begins its process of selecting the participants for the 2018 Fellowship cohort, I reflect on where the program began. The Fellowship launched in 2012 with the intent to facilitate dialogue and engagement between the East and the West at a time of heightened apprehension, misunderstanding and misperception. Rather than relying on new technologies that were marketed as tools to make the world smaller, the Fellowship takes a more traditional route: face-to-face engagement of young emerging leaders from Egypt and the United States. Through the Fellowship, these young leaders have the chance to learn and converse with peers.

In addition, they network and hear from key leaders in government, business, tech, finance, defense, and more. For the Fellows— who represent a variety of sectors and academic backgrounds— this is the chance to learn more about realities on the ground and gain a realistic understanding of avenues for ongoing dialogue.

The Fellowship does not end, however, once the visits to the United States and Egypt are completed. The exchange is only the beginning of a lifelong journey as intercultural ambassadors. Fellows are tasked with creating teams consisting of Americans and Egyptians to implement an action project that furthers the Fellowship’s mission of cross-cultural dialogue. Fellows are tasked with managing all logistics, implementation, and fundraising. Any money raised is matched by the Foundation, according to organizational guidelines. Over the years these projects have taken many forms and range from bringing baseball to Egypt, culinary diplomacy initiatives, the training of medical professionals and teachers, a series of video interviews that present American and Egyptian perceptions of the other, and opinion pieces published in Egyptian and American news outlets that shed light on the most pressing topics affecting the relationship between the two countries.

As we enter the program’s sixth year, I hope you enjoy these updates and the journeys of all Fellows as they embark on creating a more peaceful and inclusive world for us all.

M. Shafik Gabr



The
SHAFIK GABR
Foundation

The Gabr Fellowship Newsletter

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News and Updates...

Iman Higazy PhD Honored and Published in International Journal



Iman Higazy (2016 Gabr Fellow) was recognized for best PhD thesis in pharmaceutical sciences for 2017 and had her research published in the *European Journal of Pharmaceutical Studies*. Her thesis is entitled "Formulating Lamotrigine in a Sustained Release Dosage Form." In her thesis, she was able to formulate the aforementioned drug in a new way to be more effective, reach more areas of the brain, and increase its impact so the prescribed patient does not have to take the medicine daily, but rather twice per month. This not only makes the medicine more economical, but it also alleviates human error, adjusts formulation production by bringing it up to scale, and reduces negative side effects. Congratulations Iman!

Jack Gordon Hosts Storytelling Presentation and Launches New Film



Jack Gordon (2017 Gabr Fellow) hosted a presentation on Storytelling for International Development with the CORE Group Young Professionals Network. The CORE Group convenes practitioners and public health professionals to share knowledge and best practices to create solutions with real impact. He also launched a film that was created with a non-governmental organization Children Out of Mining to stop children's work in dangerous mining industries. Great work Jack!

Michael Matthiesen Interviewed on Radio



Michael Matthiesen (2017 Gabr Fellow) was interviewed on a two-hour special on WVUM 90.5FM in Florida to celebrate the radio show host's last show. He discussed social constructionism, the importance of understanding the fundamentals of philosophy, the types of everyday philosophy that people engage in, and examined the epistemological side of change and transformation.

Hala Abdel Gawad Publishes Research Paper



Hala Abdel Gawad (2016 Gabr Fellow) recently published a paper in the *Democracy Quarterly* associated with Al-Ahram Association. The paper is entitled "Presidentialization of Politics in Central and Eastern European Countries: The Case of Orban's Hungary." Hala currently serves as an Assistant Lecturer of Political Science at Cairo University and received her Master's degree in Political Sociology from the London School of Economics. Congratulations Hala!

Leah Moschella Finalist for Prestigious Award



Leah Moschella (2016 Gabr Fellow) has been selected from hundreds of nominations as a finalist for the City of Boston SPARK Impact Awards in the category of Activism and Issue Advocacy. The Impact Awards recognize individuals ages 20-34 who are community leaders making a significant difference in the city. Leah was nominated for her advocacy work for women and girls through her organization Boston GLOW. Leah and her fellow finalists will be formally recognized by the mayor and elected officials at a ceremony this summer.

Ibrahim Hammouda Launches Action Project



Ibrahim Hammouda (2017 Gabr Fellow) launched his action project "We Are One." The project aims to increase understanding, dialogue, and engagement between people from the East and West. Through short interviews and social media posts, the project aims to counter misconceptions. **Reham Gamal (2017 Gabr Fellow)** contributed her own short video to the Facebook page. More information about the project can be found here: <https://www.facebook.com/WeAreOne.EG.US/>

Egyptian Fellows Reunite in Cairo



Egyptian Fellows met with **Chairman M. Shafik Gabr** in Cairo to discuss personal and professional updates, action project statuses, as well as current events including Facebook privacy policies, crisis management in Egypt, and city planning in the wake of environmental issues and disasters. They also discussed ways to magnify the Foundation's reach on social media. Chairman Gabr recommended more books for the Fellows to read, including "Rise and Kill First" by Ronan Bergman and "Sapiens" by Yuval Noah Harai.

Alexis Taylor Named CEO



Alexis Taylor (2016 Gabr Fellow) was promoted to CEO of 3 Day Startup, which connects university students to experiential and entrepreneurial education. Alexis joined the organization in 2013 after she led a program at Creighton University. During her time at the company Alexis drove international engagement, represented the company at international conferences, and created innovative programming. As CEO she will continue to push forth new and exciting innovations. Congratulations Alexis!

2017 Fellows Start Conflict Transformation Fellowship



Amr Seda, Abdelrahman Amr, Dalia Younis, Ibrahim Hammouda, and Menna Farouk (2017 Gabr Fellows) started a cross-cultural fellowship on interfaith understanding at Drew University's Drew Institute on Religion and Conflict Transformation. They will engage with faith leaders and other stakeholders to continue their journeys as ambassadors for dialogue and engagement. Congratulations Fellows!

2018 Fellowship Interviews Begin



The US and Egyptian Executive Directors began the interview process to select the members of the 2018 Fellowship class. The Executive Directors partnered with teams of past Gabr Fellows to review applications and interview the top candidates from each country. They also provided more insight into the Gabr Fellowship program for applicants and shared their thoughts on how to make the most of the fellowship experience. The next stage of the interview process includes a meeting with each country's Board of Advisors.

Gabr Foundation Reading Corner



The Foundation Reading Corner is encouraging Fellows to critique the books that have been recommended over the past many issues. For this issue, Mr. Gabr recommends *Walking the Nile* by Levison Wood and *The 48 Laws of Power* by Robert Greene.

Question of the Month: Do You Think the talks between North Korea and the United States will Lead to an Actual Change in Relations Between the Two Countries?



On June 12, 2018 for the first time ever a sitting US President met with the President of North Korea. President Donald Trump, in the context of the 2018 North Korea-United States summit in Singapore, met with his counterpart President Kim Jong-un. While a tangible plan has not been made public, only time will tell what the future outcome will be.

As Gabr Fellows continue to hone their leadership skills, they will be confronted with addressing foreign policy decisions that affect regional and global peace and security. The Foundation recently polled Fellows from Egypt and the United regarding their thoughts on the recent talks. We asked them: *Do you think the talk between the two countries will lead to an actual change between the two countries?* Below you will find some responses – many of which vary, highlighting the complex nature of this particular issue:

Egyptian Fellows Responses:

“Not really, based on historical conceptual and cognitive gap between both countries and divergent presidential visions.”

“No, I think that the talks will postpone confrontation between the USA and North Korea, but will not drastically change the nature of the relationship between both countries.”

“Yes. I think that Trump is leading a different style in negotiation than the previous line of chief executives. I believe we will see a positive change, and proof to this is the two parties’ acceptance of the notion to talk.”

“No, I don’t believe that talks between North Korea and the United States will lead to an actual change in relationship, since a real progress will require concessions from both sides, which neither will give at this point.”

“No. Trump’s foreign policy has been unpredictable and his initiative to talk directly with Pyongyang is a step forward, but will not lead to an actual change in the nuclear program of North Korea or its relations with the States.”

“Yes, talks are a step forward. Action in any direction is better than no action at all.”

“Yes. As Winston Churchill said, ‘To jaw jaw is always better than to war war.’”

American Fellow Responses:

“Yes. As far as change, if perception is reality then it has already changed the dynamics.”

“Yes. It will lead to change. Whether it is the change that the US has been wanting or the one that North Korea or China wants is yet to be seen. I support the talks because in general ignoring problems isn’t solving them.”

“Yes. The fact that there are talks is already a change in relations between the two countries. Hopefully the change has a positive impact in the end.”

“No, nothing will change.”

“Yes, I would argue it has already led to a change- not just bilaterally, but between DPRK and the rest of the world.”

“No, I don’t believe this will have any impact, positive or negative for the people or administration of North Korea.”

Stay tuned for next month’s question of the month and the Gabr Fellows’ takes on current events, as our community of future leaders grapple with the most pressing challenges of today and tomorrow.

In Focus...

Trump in the Middle East

Abdelrahman Amr and Michael Matthiesen, 2017 Gabr Fellows

View full article on Egyptian Streets at <https://egyptianstreets.com/2018/06/09/east-west-chitchat-trump-in-the-middle-east/>

Disclaimer: The views presented in this article are the author's alone and do not represent the opinion of the Foundation.

America's Western and European allies are not getting what they want out of Trump. They wanted America to stay in the Paris Climate Agreement, Trump pulled out. They wanted America to stay in the Iran Deal, Trump pulled out. They advised against Trump against moving the US Embassy to Jerusalem, he did it anyway. Trump has threatened to pull out of NATO and NAFTA. He has ripped up the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). He also has threatened to defund the UN, he has presented the German Chancellor with a bill for NATO, he has had verbal altercations with the Prime Minister of Australia, and he wants to build a wall on the Mexican border.

This is not the America they are accustomed to or the America they want. What's changed?

While Europe is scared that fifty years of Western dominance, which was supposed to sustain itself after the Cold War, may be unraveling, three countries in the Middle East are getting exactly what they want out of Trump: Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Israel. All three countries wanted the US to put pressure on Qatar to stop being so underhanded, and each have separate individual goals which Trump has helped them achieve.

For Israel, it was moving the US Embassy to Jerusalem, check. For Saudi Arabia it is the repealing of a law that was passed allowing American families to sue the Saudi government over terrorist activities. Finally for the UAE, it is about moving one of the largest US military bases in the world out of Qatar and into their borders.

So what are these three countries doing that Europe is not? Well, for starters, they don't expect Trump to maintain the precedent set by his predecessors. Trump looks down on Obama, Bush, and Clinton, so he has no interest in maintaining any of their legacies.

Second, Trump can't tell the difference between domestic politics and foreign policy. It's one reason why he couldn't understand

the Palestinian protests and bloodshed that occurred as he opened the US Embassy in Jerusalem. He thought only about how moving the embassy was a public relations win for his voting base.

While most American presidents are willing to compromise on campaign promises in the interest of national security, Trump sees compromise as a weakness and has every intent on fulfilling his campaign promises, even the bad ones. Leaving the Iran Deal, moving the embassy, and pulling out of the Paris Agreement were all campaign promises.

Saudi Arabia, Israel, and the UAE are doing what they can to make it easier for Trump to keep these promises- in any way they can.

As a result, Europe's mistake is that it continues to think that Trump is going to honor America's previous policies, when in his era, everything is up for negotiation. But how do you negotiate with Trump?

Probably the best way is to appeal to Trump's base. When the President tweets, speaks on TV, or thinks that something is a good idea, he always has his hardcore voter base in mind. This is because he's already thinking about getting re-elected in 2020. Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu understood this which is why he appeared on Fox News when he knows Trump and his base are watching to pitch their ideas. One of the best at this is French President Emmanuel Macron. The bromance that has evolved between Trump and Macron was fostered because Macron understands that Trump loves media opportunities that make him look good. The razzle dazzle of handshakes, public praise, and parades have been Macron's recipe for getting Trump's support. Macron has done so well, that he was the first world leader that Trump invited to a state dinner.

However, not every country has the public appeal with the American people that Israel enjoys. Then, is there another way to negotiate?

Bahrain thinks those negotiations are through the Trump Organization, which Trump still owns, operates, and profits off of while living in the White House. While only alleged at this point, some Gulf State diplomats go to the Trump Hotel in Washington to pay tribute to the President.

The Trump International Washington has received \$270,000 from Saudi Arabia, Bahrain now holds multiple events in Trump's ballrooms, Kuwait moved their annual gala to Trump Washington, and Azerbaijan is now hosting their Annual Hanukkah Party in Trump's hotels as well.

Again, though only alleged at this point, Qatari diplomats seem to find buying properties and services from the Trump Organization effective, but to a point. Qatar's Mission to the UN even bought a \$6.5 million New York City apartment from Trump to stay in good favor with the President. However, when negotiations to buy Jared Kushner's 666 Building in Manhattan went south, Kushner turned around and supported the blockade on Qatar.

So, what does all this mean for Egypt? Egypt's President El-Sisi, the leader of the Arab world's most populous country, is taking a different approach to dealing with Trump's actions. The country that previously led the whole region is now more concerned with its internal affairs, specifically economic and security matters, leaving the Middle East's current direction in the hands of Mohammad bin Salman and the UAE. Through Egypt seems to have joined the anti-Iran coalition of countries with Saudi Arabia and Israel, it's remained a silent force in this coalition.

Egypt is playing its tactical role well given its current situation. The country's leader is presenting his soft support to White House decision in various ways, like permitting the Israeli embassy celebrations for its 70th anniversary in Cairo despite an expected backlash from Arab nations, and he's sustaining the country's position against Iran and its representatives as a threat to the region without being dragged to risky positions. A good example for this was supporting MbS against Houthi militias in Yemen, but not sending ground troops to fight against Saudi Arabia.

To read more, visit <https://egyptianstreets.com/2018/06/09/east-west-chitchat-trump-in-the-middle-east/> and stay tuned for more articles and thoughts from Gabr Fellows in the next newsletter.

The Gabr Fellowship Newsletter

For more information on the Shafik Gabr Foundation and its *East-West: The Art of Dialogue* Initiative, please visit the website <https://eastwestdialogue.org/>.

For earlier itineraries of the US program, please see the previous years' reports at <https://eastwestdialogue.org/fellowship/brochures/>



The Merchant of Oriental Curiosities- Rudolf Weiss

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