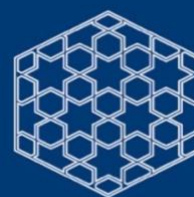




GABR FELLOWS MEETING WITH CHAIRMAN SHAFIK GABR IN CAIRO, JULY 2021



The
SHAFIK GABR
Foundation

The Gabr Fellowship Newsletter

August 2021, Issue 49

IN THIS ISSUE

Wrights Are Never Wrong

Life is a journey and those with a solid vision at a young age are blessed with a leg up.

Part of my generational inheritance is the love of books. My grandfather and father were insightful and meticulous readers. I have always had a fire to acquire knowledge from DC and Marvel comics to Shakespeare, Camus, Christie and Tolkien. My belief is that happiness consists of moments and one of them is being a visitor to Waterstones, Barnes&Noble, Daunt Books or receiving Amazon book deliveries.

A book I came across is *The Wright Brothers* by David McCullough (a double Pulitzer Prize winner). 262 pages of the history of the legend of the pioneers of flight. As a person who believes in efficiency and the importance of human interaction, I always found that a key component of success is an entanglement of both. This required swift, creative, substantial and immense dedication.

As I sit in the warmth of Cairo, I always recognize the ingenuity of the late Willis Haviland Carrier who invented the air conditioner in 1902. A second invention of no less global impact and interestingly, of a similar date of birth, is the "flyer" - the Wright brothers' invention of the flying machine.

The Wrights' flying machine was born from an unbelievable amount of dedication, commitment and a complete refusal of failure. In the face of endless hurdles, obstacles and challenges, Wilbur and Orville Wright began their dream in their bicycle shop in Dayton, Ohio and began their adventure in Kitty Hawk in the year 1900. Their first flyer consisted of two fixed wings and weighed less than 50 pounds.

The Wright brothers displayed a patient perseverance, a calm faith and a no-nonsense approach to the task and objective they placed for themselves. Nothing would steer them from this target even when an awful crash took place in September 1908. The Wrights endured eight crashes and yet they never gave up.

At this point in history (unlike today), global cooperation thrived, and so the Wrights took their "flyer" to England, France, Germany, Italy and Spain, displaying their aeronautical skills and inaugurating a new world of flight. Kings and royalty across the world visited and watched in awe.

The Wrights were never discouraged in the world of suspicion, criticism and jealousy that was launched against them and they proved that they were a hundred percent right. In July 1909, US president Taft finally gave the Wrights the recognition they deserved as they contributed to a world-changing "flyer." His words speak volumes: "Perhaps at a delayed hour... It is not true that a prophet is not without honour save in his own country." Finally it was recognized that the Wrights were right.

The Wright brothers showed that with modesty, ingenuity and courage they could achieve greatness and change the world, giving credence to Edison's statement that genius is 10 percent inspiration and 90 percent perspiration.

M. Shafik Gabr

In Brief...

-Article: The Mulberry Tree, By **Claudette Ayoub Habesch**

-Article: The Two-State Solution Imperative, by **James Jones**

-Article: America may pay dearly for defeat in Afghanistan

-**Alexis Taylor** Launches Pandemic Recovery Plan

-**Beth Cartier** Becomes Director of Information Security

-**Dalia Younis** Wins Bibliotheca Alexandrina's Competition

-**Erika Witt** Becomes Member of Member of the Krewe of Nefertiti

-**Murray Abeles** Secures \$15 million Scholarship Investment

-**Question of the Month: A Pulse of the Gabr Fellowship Community**

- Gabr Foundation **Reading Corner**

Beth Cartier Becomes Director of Information Security



2013 Gabr Fellow Beth Cartier has a new position as Director of Information Security at Headspace, a digital service that provides guided meditation sessions and mindfulness training.

Prior to this, Beth was senior manager in EY's Cybersecurity practice, and the director for global security architecture at Sony Corporation of America. Before working at Sony, Beth responded to cyber incident crises for many companies across industries and regions with PwC.

Dalia Younis Wins Bibliotheca Alexandrina's Competition



2017 Gabr Fellow Dalia Younis's project Klaxics won first prize in Bibliotheca Alexandrina's Summer Festival competition.

Among four other competitors from Alexandria, Klaxics was the only Cairo-based ensemble joining. The jury's head, Egyptian renowned soprano Nevenn Allouba, praised Dalia's work (which includes vocal arrangement and training) and the overall performance.

Alexis Taylor Launches Pandemic Recovery Plan



2016 Gabr Fellow Alexis Taylor's Davos Lab youth pandemic recovery plan launched on International Youth Day, August 12th.

Alexis also accepted an offer to become Indeed's first ESG Strategy Lead, where she starts in mid-September.

You can find a preview on the Davos Lab recovery report here:

<https://spark.adobe.com/page/QZAf2eucfblxd/>

Sponsor a 2022 Gabr Fellow



Sponsoring a Gabr Fellow for the 2022 Fellowship Program helps build bridges of cross-cultural understanding between the East and the West.

The sponsorship package costs \$35,000 which includes the sponsoring of a Fellow who can carry the name of the individual, organization or corporation making the contribution. Sponsors will be recognized in all Foundation publications, marketing materials, and events. Contributions of any amount, big or small, are encouraged and welcomed with sincere gratitude. More information can be found here:

eastwestdialogue.org/fellowship/how-to-support

Murray Abeles Secures \$15 million Scholarship Investment



NYC
KIDS
RISE

2015 Gabr Fellow Murray Abeles serves as Chief of Administration in Finance for a nonprofit called NYC Kids Rise. They provide a universal scholarship and savings program for public school students in New York City.

After a successful pilot program in one school district for about 3,200 students per year, the city announced an annual investment of \$15 million to expand the program citywide. It means that 80,000 kindergartners per year will be given an initial scholarship towards higher education or career training. In Murray's words: "It's been a lot of work to secure the commitment and even more now to scale the operations!"

Read more about it here: <https://gothamist.com/news/nyc-create-college-savings-accounts-every-public-school-kindergartener-2022>

Erika Witt Becomes Member of Member of the Krewe of Nefertiti



2014 Gabr Fellow Erika Witt is now a member of the New Orleans Mardi Gras Krewe of Nefertiti.

The Krewe of Nefertiti was established in 2018 as an all-female social aid club. The women believe in "cultivating the community through volunteer service, fundraising and celebration."

The Krewe is named after the ancient Egyptian Queen Nefertiti who some believe ruled for a time after the death of her husband and before King Tut took the throne.

Find out more about it here: <https://www.mardigrasneworleans.com/parades/nefertiti>

In addition, Erika is participating in a Belly Dance Shimmy Cabaret show with the Shimmy Shakti Belly Dance Troupe in New Orleans on August 21st.

Gabr Fellows Meetings



Even in the summer, the Gabr Fellows meetings are still in full swing. These meetings provide a unique opportunity for the Fellows from different cohorts to meet, exchange their news, their views on current topics and explore mutual areas of interest.

On 5th July, Mr Gabr met with the Fellows in his home in Washington, DC. Present were Zeyad Kelani (2014 Gabr Fellow), Nathan Thomas (2014 Gabr Fellow), Katherine Tan (2016 Gabr Fellow), and Bryan Griffin (2017 Gabr Fellow).

Following that, on 18th July, a meeting was held in Cairo in ARTOC HQ, attended by Bassma Fahim (2015 Gabr Fellow), Mohamed Attar (2016 Gabr Fellow), Youssef El-Toukhy (2016 Gabr Fellow), Sarah Badr (2017 Gabr Fellow), Ibrahim Hammouda (2017 Gabr Fellow), Soaad Hossam (2018 Gabr Fellow), Ahmed Mostafa (2018 Gabr Fellow), Marwa Abdalla (2018 Gabr Fellow), and Muhammad El Hawary (2018 Gabr Fellow).

Gabr Foundation Reading Corner

**MICHAEL
MANDELBAUM**

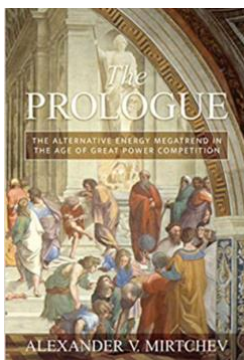


MISSION FAILURE

America and the World in
the Post-Cold War Era

The Foundation Reading Corner encourages Fellows to critique the books that have been recommended to them in each issue. For this issue, Mr. Gabr recommends *Mission Failure: America and the World in the Post-Cold War Era* by Michel Mandelbaum and *The Prologue: The Alternative Energy Megatrend in the Age of Great Power Competition* by Alexander Mirtchev.

The end of the Cold War led to a dramatic and fundamental change in the foreign policy of the United States. In *Mission Failure*, Michael Mandelbaum, one of America's leading foreign-policy thinkers, provides an original, provocative, and definitive account of the ambitious but deeply flawed post-Cold War efforts to promote American values and American institutions throughout the world.



Alexander Mirtchev's *The Prologue* is a comprehensive study of the geopolitical, security, economic, and environmental future of a major game-changing phenomenon—the alternative energy megatrend. *The Prologue* identifies and charts this ascent of alternative energy as a 21st century megatrend.

The Mulberry Tree

By Claudette Ayoub Habesch

Thisweekinpalestine.com, August 2021

This is my story and that of my family. It is also a shared narrative of thousands of other Palestinian families who experienced dispossession and as result became refugees in 1948.

I am from the neighborhood of Talbiyeh in West Jerusalem, and today I am a refugee and internally displaced in my own city.

At that time, I was too young to understand the calamities that were hiding just around the corner. I could not explain the silent glances between my father and mother. Those haunting looks clouded the otherwise happy, content, and hardworking household.

All I knew was that my parents took us to our winter home in Jericho for our security, a word I did not grasp then, as I had all the safety I needed provided by my family. You see, our home was the second building next to Saint Antonio Convent, which was at that time the headquarters of the British army. One day, my parents were away at a wedding in Jaffa and I was not able to join them because I was ill. But as a consolation they allowed me to sleep in their own bed, under the care of my grandparents. That night, a bomb planted in our garden exploded, shattering and breaking all the windows. I remember being terrified, covered in glass, and my uncle wrapping me in a blanket and running outside.

When I was older, my parents told me the full story according to the British investigation. The Haganah planted the bomb as a warning to the British to conduct a thorough search. My family rented a studio to a Jewish student who apparently belonged to the Irgun. His mission was to detonate a bomb, which was found under his bed and which was huge enough to destroy our home and the nearby house and convent.

While taking refuge in Jericho, my father started to repair the damage so that we could return. One day, soon afterwards, we learned that we would not be allowed to go back. Through it all I cried nonstop. I wanted my only doll that was left behind in Talbiyeh. I could not comprehend why my father, my rock, the symbol of strength and power, who never denied me anything, could not grant me my simple wish. Through shattered lives and shattered dreams, I will always wonder who hugged my doll and slept in the comfort of my bed.

It pains me till today to remember how my parents had to rebuild their lives, how hard they worked, and the sacrifices they made to make us feel safe and secure.

A few months after the war of June 1967, my mother-in-law, Jamileh Calis Habesch, also a refugee from Talbiyeh, called me one afternoon to ask me to pick her up early the next day. Without asking, I assumed she wanted a ride to one of her volunteer activities that were much needed after the devastation of another war. I arrived at her house only to find her elegantly dressed and looking majestic. She entered the car with a very solemn face and

in a gentle yet demanding voice, she said, "Drive. We are going home." In a voice that betrayed my emotions, I told her

that I didn't know the way. She gave the initial directions, but once we arrived at the King David Hotel, I was overwhelmed with memories, with images, even with familiar smells of my childhood unjustly robbed from me. The fountain in my garden, the sound of the water, our afternoon snack known as asrouneh in Arabic, and thousands of other details

made my heart beat stronger and my eyesight blur with tears. I was amazed at how my mother-in-law remained composed, but I did not need her to show me the way. I, too, was going home, but as a stranger! Driving up towards Salameh Square, the Habesch home came into full view. Taking a deep breath, my mother-in-law uttered triumphantly in Arabic, "Thank God, thank God." My brash response was, "Why, because the stones are there?" Her answer was "You'd better shut up."

And thus begins our story of the Mulberry Tree.

On the day that my late husband Issa was born, June 19, 1932, his father Tewfic Habesch planted a mulberry tree in the garden of his Talbiyeh home as a symbol of gratitude. He nurtured both his son and the tree. Many gatherings were held with family and friends under the shade of the mulberry tree, especially in the early summer to enjoy its succulent fruit. That tree became a symbol to the family and a living hope of return as the tree continued to bear fruit in abundance. It was exactly what my mother-in-law wanted to see.

When my husband passed away in February of this year and prior to the funeral service, the family took him on his final journey to his home in Talbiyeh, not only to honor his legacy but also to pass on the torch to his children and grandchildren. In a simple ceremony full of symbolism, a big black ribbon was tied around the mulberry tree to bid him a final farewell. On his birthday this year, on June 19, in celebration of his life, the family went to lay flowers next to the mulberry tree, only to find it chopped down. Sadly, the tree did not survive beyond its 89 years as though it were inextricably connected to my husband. I felt that another piece of me had been ripped out, again.

I felt a strange pain in my heart.

I could not cry. The tears did not come. But how could they when I was suffocating with emotion? Was I missing Issa or was I mourning

the loss of a homeland? We wonder as to the reason or reasons for attacking symbols of our collective history and memory. Is a tree with a black ribbon a threat to the existence of the families who live in our homes, which were taken away from us, their rightful owners in 1948? I wonder!

To read the full article, please visit:
<https://thisweekinpalestine.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/008.pdf>

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

The Two-State Solution Imperative

By James Jones

The Jerusalem Strategic Tribune, August 2021

The past two centuries have been witness to many seemingly intractable global problems for which solutions seemed out of reach. Yet, time and again, history proved that “impossible” problems were not insoluble after all.

Therein lies the hope for the Middle East, where the long-raging Israeli–Palestinian conflict remains the region’s keystone issue—one that, if resolved, would unlock solutions to other challenges impeding what could be and should be a bright and prosperous future for the people of the Middle East.

The United States has been at the forefront of this issue since the creation of Israel in 1948. One administration after another has labored, unsuccessfully, in a perpetual “peace process” that has failed to achieve sustainable peace and only sporadically has resembled a functional process. Progress has repeatedly fallen victim to spoilers in both camps, perpetuating a tense and unsustainable status quo that the world has come to regard as an inevitable end state.

During the Obama years, the Israeli prime minister was capable but not willing. His Palestinian counterpart was willing but not capable. The region’s history suggests that opportunity to forge a more promising future arises in the wake of significant political change and public crisis. Such are the conditions today. With the recent change in both the US and Israeli governments, and the aftermath of intense violence engulfing the Gaza Strip, perhaps the conditions are ripe for renewed efforts by all stakeholders for a committed and energetic campaign to solve this strategically critical problem.

One thing is certain; if such an opportunity is to be seized and succeed, the US must play a pivotal leadership role in the process. Such an effort must be informed by the acceptance of two realities by all stakeholders. One, any solution will, once agreed, take considerable time and resources to implement. Two, the Israeli and Palestinian authorities will need to show that their leaders are both capable of and willing to engage in the process and see it through. During the Obama years when I served as his national security advisor, the Israeli prime minister was capable but not willing. His Palestinian counterpart was willing but not capable.

Success will take more than American prodding and encouragement to advance the peace process. Over the years, no amount of American pressure has resulted in anything other than intermittent periods of relative peace, always terminated

by renewed violence, fostered by Iran’s proxies bent on fostering regional conflict.

Relying on either of the parties to table a credible plan has been in vain. In the early days of the Obama administration, several weeks before the newly elected Israeli prime minister’s first official visit to the US, the then defense minister of Israel and former prime minister Ehud Barak, who had joined Netanyahu’s coalition, visited the White House, where I met with him in my role as President Obama’s national security advisor. In the privacy of that office, the defense minister, surprisingly, presented a plan for achieving a two-state solution. So impressive was the presentation that the president agreed to hear the briefing on the spur of the moment, in the national security advisor’s office. The plan he heard was detailed, balanced, and comprehensive.

The defense minister inferred that the plan would be formally presented by the prime minister during his forthcoming visit to Washington. The prospect of an important breakthrough in the quest for a two-state solution fueled anticipation of the prime minister’s visit, which was to occur a few weeks later.

To the US administration’s astonishment, the prime minister never mentioned the plan during his visit to Washington. When asked about the peace plan described by the defense minister, Netanyahu denied any knowledge of it. Nevertheless, he adamantly assured the president that he was the one Israeli leader on whose watch a solution could be achieved. Despite his words to the contrary during many years in power, Prime Minister Netanyahu was never committed to finding a two-state solution. The misrepresentation that such an end state was his strategic objective created the serious strain in US–Israeli relations that lasted the duration of the Obama and Netanyahu administrations. The Trump administration’s four years in office shored up the bilateral relationship between Israel and the US, but did very little toward achieving a two-state solution that remains the best hope of peace.

It is time for an American administration to take a step the US has been too reluctant to take, one which could make the difference both in bringing peace and restoring US influence in this vital region. That step is to advance an American plan for the establishment of a two-state solution, one that could be and should be supported by the international community as a basis for agreement between the respective Israeli and Palestinian leaderships.

To read the complete article, please visit <https://jstribune.com/debate-james-jones-two-state-solution/>

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

America may pay dearly for defeat in Afghanistan

The Economist, 16 August 2021

Joe Biden may have more foreign-policy experience than any American president in 30 years, but he is haunted by the brutal assessment of his judgment by Robert Gates, who was secretary of defence under the president both men served, Barack Obama. Mr Gates called Mr Biden “a man of integrity” whom it was impossible not to like. Yet, writing in “Duty”, his memoir, he added: “I think he has been wrong on nearly every major foreign-policy and national-security issue over the past four decades.”

It is too soon to know whether history will add Mr Biden’s decision to withdraw from Afghanistan to a list of calls that includes support for the war in Iraq and opposition to the raid to kill Osama bin Laden. But in the short term the abandonment of Afghanistan to Taliban rule after nearly 20 years of American commitment—the images of Afghans clinging to departing jets and then falling to their deaths, the stench of great-power humiliation that recalled the evacuation of Saigon in 1975—mocks Mr Biden’s claims that “America is back”; that conviction in democracy and compassion for the oppressed have a place beside self-interest at the centre of his foreign policy; and that at least, after four years of buffoonery, American leadership is once again competent.

Under withering bipartisan criticism for the first time in his presidency, Mr Biden staunchly defended his decision in an address to the nation on August 16th. Although he said “the buck stops with me”, he reserved plenty of blame for his predecessor, Donald Trump, saying that reneging on a peace deal agreed with the Taliban by Mr Trump would have trapped American soldiers once again in an escalating conflict.

President Biden also blamed Afghan leaders who “gave up and fled” and Afghan security forces who did not fight. The velocity of the collapse, he said, showed he had made the right decision. “American troops cannot, and should not, be fighting in a war, and dying in a war, that Afghan forces are not willing to fight for themselves,” he said. In essence, he argued the Afghans failed their American allies, rather than the other way around. He was the fourth president to preside over this war, he said, and he refused to hand it on to a fifth: “How many more generations of America’s daughters and sons would you have me send to fight Afghanistan’s civil war?”

Mr Biden claimed his team had planned for “every contingency” but acknowledged the collapse came faster than he expected. As recently as on July 8th Mr Biden had dismissed any chance that American diplomats might wind up scrambling for an exit

as they did in Vietnam. “None whatsoever,” he said. “Zero.” He said the possibility of “the Taliban overrunning everything and owning the whole country is highly unlikely”.

Republicans, including Mr Trump, said Mr Biden had botched the exit. Mike Pompeo, Mr Trump’s secretary of state, rejected any suggestion that Mr Trump’s deal was the problem as “pathetic blame-shifting”. Yet, appearing on August 15th on “Fox News Sunday with Chris Wallace”, Mr Pompeo also apportioned blame to the Afghan president, Ashraf Ghani, calling him more interested in accumulating American money than in talking to his own people, and he said the American armed forces had failed across two decades to train Afghan forces. Reporting by the Washington Post and others has shown the armed forces and civilian leaders misled the public throughout the war, insisting on progress that did not exist, including in training Afghan soldiers. In fact, by supplying so much combat experience, America appears to have been more effective in training Taliban fighters. Veterans are stepping forward to say they now feel their sacrifices were for nothing, a conclusion that should help force a reckoning within the armed forces, as after Vietnam.

Americans’ reaction to the disintegration of the 20-year mission in Afghanistan—to the gruesome images on their television screens—is not yet clear. Polling as recently as on August 9th has shown that, if asked to express a view, Americans said they supported Mr Biden’s withdrawal. The left within the Democratic Party wanted America out long ago, and his establishment Democratic critics have no other political home. Mr Trump’s own disdain for America’s involvement in Iraq—he previously criticised Mr Biden for not pulling troops out sooner—has blunted attacks by Republicans, leaving them to attack the manner of the withdrawal rather than the fact it happened. Further, the overnight evaporation of the Afghan security forces, after the commitment of more than \$80bn from America, may lead many Americans to agree with Mr Biden that it was the Afghan leadership that failed. That said, images of Taliban brutality may shift the politics against the administration.

To read the complete article, please visit <https://www.economist.com/united-states/america-may-pay-dearly-for-defeat-in-afghanistan/21803610>

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

Question of the Month: A Pulse of the Gabr Fellowship Community



As the Gabr Fellows enter into leadership roles—in business, diplomacy, government, finance, and more—they will continue to grapple with significant challenges, magnified by an increased pace in technological advancement, the potential for ramped up global inequalities, and changes in governance and economic structures.

To better understand the pulse of the Gabr Fellowship community and to begin to articulate substantive dialogue, the Foundation polls the Fellows each month on the key issues facing their respective countries and the global community at large.

1. Do you trust the media?

Yes: 37%

No: 63%

2. What news source do you trust the most?

TV: 3%

Newspapers: 50%

Social Media: 10%

None of the above: 37%

3. Is Iran a 'rogue country'?

Yes: 30%

No: 27%

I don't know: 43%

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

HAPPY BIRTHDAY



August 4: Leslie Lang Tsai, 2013 Gabr Fellow, USA



August 4: Nathan Thomas, 2014 Gabr Fellow, USA



August 17: Mike Burgess, 2015 Gabr Fellow, UK



August 22: Mariam Ibrahim, 2013 Gabr Fellow, Egypt



August 23: Ahmed Naguib, 2014 Gabr Fellow, Egypt



August 26: Neveen Mohamed, 2017 Gabr Fellow, Egypt

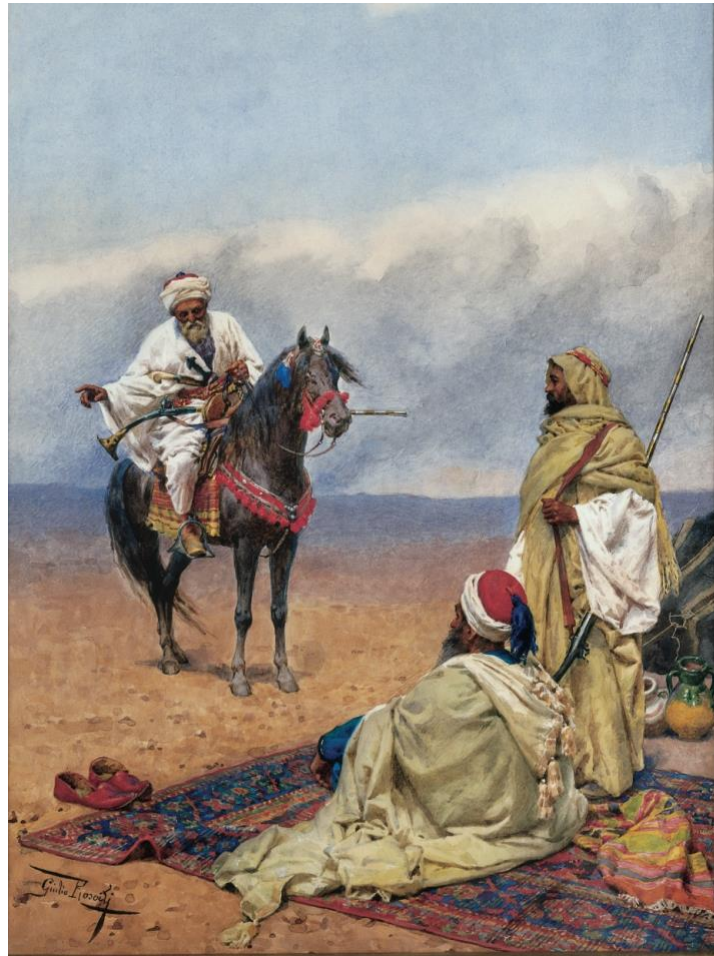


August 26: Katherine Tan, 2016 Gabr Fellow, USA

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



Giulio Rosati, *A Horseman Stopping at a Bedouin Camp*
Watercolour on paper, The Shafik Gabr Collection

Connect with us



<https://eastwestdialogue.org/>

info@shafikgabrfoundation.org

The Shafik Gabr Foundation
444 North Capitol Street NW, Suite 840
Washington, DC 20001

7 Hassan Al-Akbar Street
Cairo, Egypt, 11571