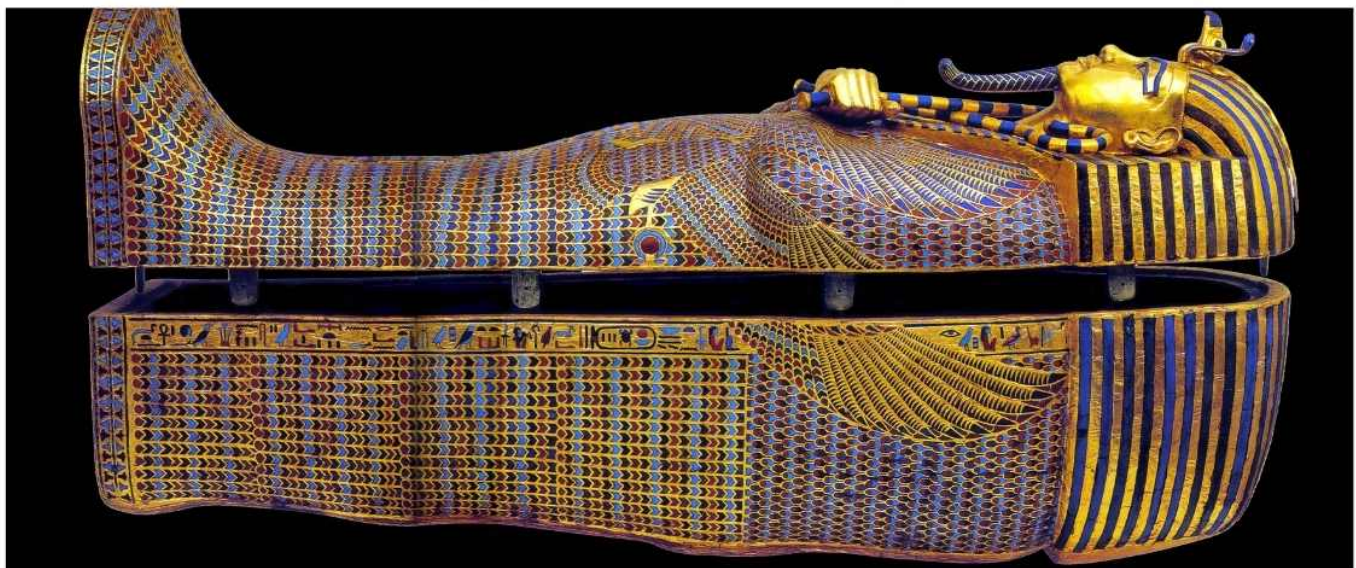
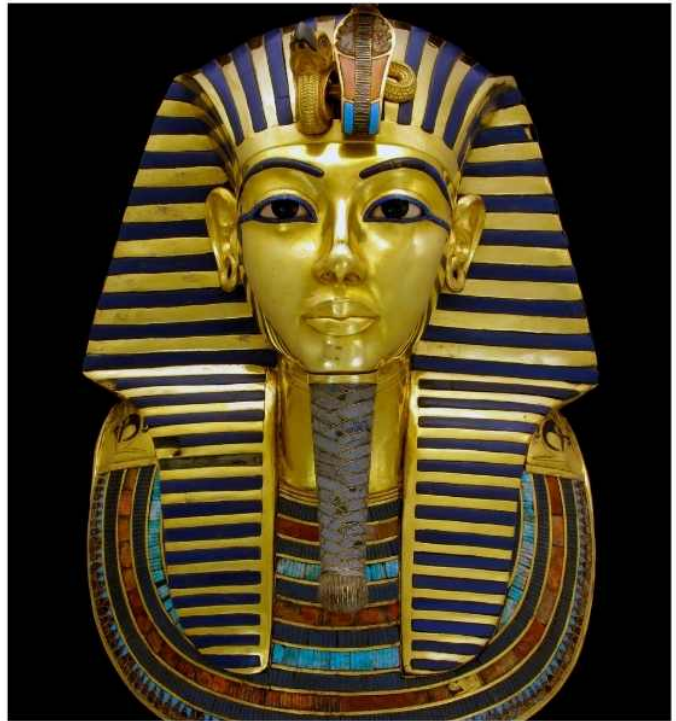


HISTORY HAPPENINGS

A newsletter published by the Department of History at the University of Memphis

Editors: Guiomar Duenas-Vargas and Caroline Peyton



In November 2022, as part of the Centennial Celebration of the discovery of Tutankhamen's tomb, Dr. Peter Brand gave a talk at UM, entitled: "Tutankhamun's Golden Journey to the Afterlife."



Letter from the Chair

by Dr. Daniel Unowsky

The Fall 2022 newsletter offers a wonderful opportunity to consider the long history of our department, to recognize some of our many faculty accomplishments, and to welcome new colleagues.

The first feature highlights the career of Professor Charles Crawford. This year marks his 60th year on our faculty. Professor Crawford came to (then) Memphis State in 1962. In the course of his decades of service, he has mentored scores of PhD and MA students, taught thousands of undergraduates, and offered his experience and wisdom to generations of new scholars and teachers. His publications on Tennessee and Memphis history are numerous and groundbreaking.

As the director of the Oral History Research Project since 1967, Professor Crawford and teams of students and scholars have recorded thousands of Memphis residents who served in the military, contributed to the civil rights movement, and helped shape our city and region. Professor Crawford's still-expanding-legacy is an inspiration. He is currently writing his memoirs, which are sure to offer unique insights into the tremendous changes he has witnessed and helped bring to our campus and city.

Our department has benefitted greatly from the creative and dedicated work of Dr. Chrystal Goudsouzian. Dr. Goudsouzian earned her PhD in Ancient Egyptian History from our department and oversees our undergraduate advising, internships, the HERC and much more. Dr. Goudsouzian now brings her excellent reputation as a teacher, advisor, and administrator to her new position as Interim Director of the Women's and Gender Studies Program. We are grateful for her service and delighted that she will continue her work in our department even as she takes on this new role.

Andrei Znamenski is one of our most prolific scholars—his newest book, *Socialism as a Secular Creed: A Modern Global History*, was published in 2021. Since then, he has worked hard to maintain his parallel reputation as one of our most well-traveled faculty colleagues. Professor Znamenski writes about his summer 2022 journey across eastern Europe, focusing on ruins, monuments, and memory in post-socialist countries.

Our faculty's many scholarly publications contributed to the University of Memphis's attainment of the prestigious Research 1 Carnegie classification. Beverly Tsacoyianis's new book, *Disturbing Spirits: Mental Illness, Trauma, and Treatment in Modern Syria and Lebanon*, published in 2021 by Notre Dame University Press, is just one example of the important research published by our faculty members.

This fall, we welcomed four new faculty members. Every colleague brings their energy to our department. To have four arrive at one time immediately creates a new dynamic and new possibilities for our course offerings and our programs. Each of the four is profiled: Eron Ackerman, Yaowen Dong, Selina Makana, and Elton Weaver.

Even as we celebrate our department's current successes, we also maintain our connections with alumni and our retired faculty. It is with great sadness that we said goodbye to one of our longest-serving colleagues. Maurice Crouse came to Memphis in 1962 and taught in our department for 53 years. He passed away on September 2, 2022. Professor Crouse had a powerful impact on thousands of students as a teacher and advisor. He will be remembered by all of his colleagues for his generosity, his web knowledge, his banjo playing, and his mastery of Roberts Rules of Order. We send our condolences to his family and his friends.

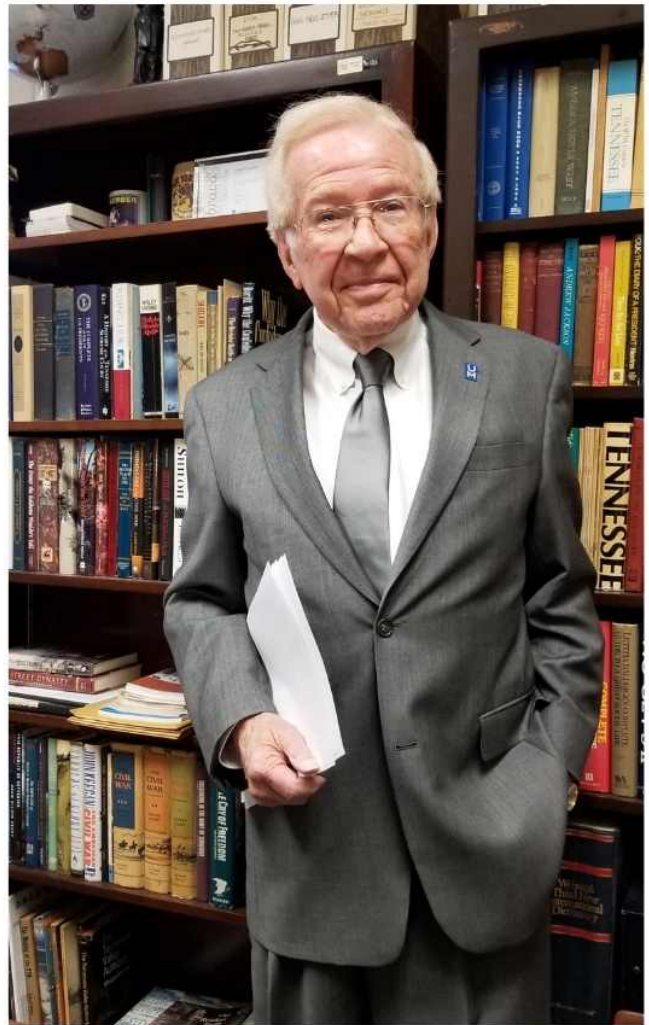


A Mark of Distinction: Professor Charles Crawford and Sixty Years of Service

By Caroline Peyton

In the spring of 1973, Professor Charles Crawford was five years into his role as the director of the Memphis State University Oral History Research Office [OHRO], which he had been appointed to lead in 1967 by then U of M President, Cecil C. Humphreys. At that moment, the OHRO was busy with a massive undertaking, collecting oral histories of various figures associated with the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA). Reflecting upon the project in *The Columns*, Memphis State University's Alumni Association magazine, Crawford concluded that in the process of personally conducting, at that point, 170 interviews, he had learned a thing or two along the way. Looking back in 1973, Crawford remarked: "I learned how people work, how they succeed and fail and what life—toward the close has meant and what it has been worth. I have developed more respect for people and for human capacity."

Fast forward to 2022, Professor Charles Crawford has achieved another remarkable milestone in a career filled with achievements. Hired by the university in 1962, Crawford has devoted sixty years of his life and his career to the University of Memphis. Over the course of six decades, Crawford has led the monumental project of the OHRO, directed thirty-seven doctoral dissertations and sixty-eight masters' thesis, served as the president of the Oral History Association, and published countless books and articles, among them, his landmark Tennessee history textbook, *Tennessee: Land, History, and Government* (1984).



Historian James Silver described Crawford in 1966 as having "everything...his mind is exceptional...he is indefatigable...he has always been the kind who assumed leadership in various projects, many of them beyond the call of duty." Silver's apt characterization has remained true, as Crawford—after sixty years at U of M, continues to set the bar with his generous spirit and his relentless dedication to the university, to the historical profession, and to the city of Memphis.

In October 2022, I had the immense privilege of interviewing Professor Crawford about his career and his time at the University of Memphis. I grew up in a household with his Tennessee history textbook and another one of his publications, *Yesterday's Memphis* (1976), because Professor Crawford taught my father Tennessee history in the 1980s. Little did I know that one day I would work alongside Professor Crawford, who former Vice President Al Gore once described as the "greatest Tennessee historian in the world."

What follows is our conversation, edited for concision and clarity.

Caroline Peyton: First, I would like to hear a little bit more about growing up in Arkansas. How did it shape you as a historian and as a person?

Charles Crawford: I was born in Arkansas on a farm. My family, I believe, was the sixth generation; they came there in the 1820s. They came and stayed since then...We did not travel a lot when I was growing up. Memphis was our town. It was over one hundred miles, by train, by road, we could get here [Memphis]. I really grew up in the country. The house is still there. The old home.



DEDICATION OF HISTORICAL MARKER 4E 67 FOR CHURCH PARK ATTENDED BY (L TO R) AN UNIDENTIFIED MAN, RON WALTER, DR. CHARLES CRAWFORD, UM HISTORY DEPARTMENT, ROBERTA CHURCH AND RICHARD HACKETT, MAYOR OF MEMPHIS. "CHURCH PARK DEDICATION" (2021). CHURCH FAMILY PAPERS IMAGES. 83.

[HTTPS://DIGITALCOMMONS.MEMPHIS.EDU/SPECCOLL-0071-CHURCH-GALLERY1/83](https://digitalcommons.memphis.edu/speccoll-0071-church-gallery1/83)

Charles Crawford (cont): It was sort of the center of things. It was out in the country; there was not another house in sight. We had horses, cattle, pigs, chickens, things like that – that you find in rural areas. My brother and I both attended a local school, our dad was a member of the local school board, and the teachers were family friends, so it was a good learning situation, and I became addicted, fairly early, to reading, and I had found out you know that if you read magazines you could respond very often to advertisements you would get something; get something to read, or we would order books or something like that. So, we did have lots of books, and I did learn to love reading, so I was gaining an education in a way...My brother and I did a great deal of work. He milked the cow, and I cut the firewood. So, I grew up in that situation, and then I wanted to go to college to learn more, so I did.

Our family was acquainted with the president of a small college, Harding College, in Searcy. My brother and I both went there; he's two years younger but we both went there, and I went on then to the University of Arkansas. Of course I had to take time out as people did in that era for military service, but I did not give up my ideas about education. As soon as I completed my term of service headquarters in United States Army in Europe, which was an education in itself, in fact...

I did go to Lewisville, Arkansas out in the SW corner and taught there until I...was ready to go back to school, and got a good offer from the man who was put in charge of the history department at the University of Mississippi in Oxford, and he offered me a fellowship to go there, so I did. When that was finally finished, you can see I was close to Memphis already, and I had grown up knowing about the big city cause you know when you're out in the country you don't see any big cities; it's just a different world...

But at any rate, Jim Silver recommended me here (UM), and Enoch Mitchell who was the chairman of Social Studies...What building are we in now? [Question to the interviewer]

CP: Mitchell Hall [laughs]—there you go.

CC: Absolutely. He was the one.

CP: I'm learning.



The rail lines leading from Arkansas to Memphis, c. 1904

Charles Crawford (cont): He adored Jim Silver, and he would have hired anyone...if Jim Silver had recommended it, but it did bring me here, and I liked this place. I toured the campus. They introduced me to President Cecil Humphreys who was a history major himself at the University of Tennessee quite a few years before, and I had good relations with him, with Enoch Mitchell; the buildings that we have now were not here. We were, [the Department of] History, along with virtually everything else was in the Administration Building—hard to believe, but it was true.

Dr. Humphreys needed people, and well, so did the whole school, and Enoch Mitchell, we all had a very good relationship, and another thing I liked was the proximity to air travel...I hoped that I would be going places that involved that and it was only a few hours drive, with even the way the roads were then, from the farm in Arkansas down to here, so this was just a natural place. We moved to Memphis, I feel in love with the place...It turned out to be good in so many ways because this was a time of the beginning of fantastic growth, and we were adding people new people...every year and the Department of History was growing; the whole institution was growing...

CP: So, when you were appointed to take charge of the oral history project was this something that you had familiarity with beforehand, or was this an appointment where you had to, in some ways, learn as you went?

CC: Caroline, it was a learn as you go. President Humphreys learned about it, read about it...He did want to establish one here, and he asked me to do it, and I agreed to do it, and he agreed to reduce my teaching load by fifty percent, so it was fifty percent administrative running that program, fifty percent teaching. Of course, I didn't cut my graduate duties in half, I went ahead in full with that...They sent me to several places, one, New Orleans, there was an oral history program there...Another one in Washington, I flew up there and talked with them, then went to New York to check on the one at Columbia. That's the way they were doing things then. They called a meeting. I believe...it might have been '68.

And at any rate, this was at Columbia University conference center...they announced the hope and intention of organizing an oral history association: OHA...We were at the University of Memphis; we were sort of the new kid on the block. But it was really a situation where no one knew anything about it. So in the organizational meeting a strange thing happened...the new oral history association called an organizational meeting; there were people from all over the country, and they started having trouble with order and motions when he [a professor at Columbia] finally threw up his hands in exasperation: "Does anyone here know anything about parliamentary law and procedure?" You cannot tell a lie, so I held my hand up and they made me parliamentarian, and I was therefore a member of the board of the Oral History Association, and a few years later, Vice President, and then President, the first president from a southern institution, and so forth. We were developing our own program then, and were collecting a lot of things. It was a very active thing; we did have the funding for maybe our first big oral history project, and that was a history of Tennessee Valley Authority.

Charles Crawford (cont): It made so much sense you know to recover the lives in their own voices, who had been alive, who had done these things, and that was what oral history was doing that gave them an opportunity being mortal – they knew they would not be here forever...It was exciting and I took a very active part in it, professionally it was good, but I had to be gone a lot because I was teaching, and I got appointed to a lot of boards and things like that...Once and about four weekends out of every month, there was a board meeting, so it might be New Orleans or San Francisco, somewhere I'd have to go to, but it was a very heavy load of things. Then, I made a change basically...let's say about '85 when my father died, and it left my mother alone to take care of the farm. Of course I had my family here, but I started getting out of things that had me tied up professionally so much...

CP: So you've devoted decades to this oral history project. Are there any interviews that stand out?

CC: [On interviewing Al Gore Jr.] I did one on him [Gore], well, after he was elected. Al, I may have told you some of this, he took my class in Tennessee history because they had a deprived curriculum at Harvard; you know, he was at Harvard where they didn't have one, so he had to go to a higher institution where they had one.

CP: Naturally.

CC: That's where we got acquainted. I had been on the election committee with his father; I knew when I saw his name on the roll in the summer class, that he was the one, and of course, he was...I encouraged his political career enough that it had the slightest difference, I'm sure...but for a while, he was fairly new, I would reserve cars for him when he was coming into town or I would drive him myself.



Professor Crawford with Mayor Jim Strickland

(CC, cont) I remember at one reception he attended at the conference center over the railroad track...When he was in town, I went with him to various places, and I was just standing there listening, and we had sort of an objectionably tempered vice president who then cornered Al, and said I understand that you took a course here. What were you doing? Al told him, well, this is an important place and an important subject. He [the VP] said well why here they give it at other institutions in Tennessee too – Tennessee State and other places like that, and Al Gore, very surprisingly said, well, because you have the greatest Tennessee historian in the world right here—Charles Crawford. I didn't coach him either.

CP: Why do you think oral history is especially important for understanding southern history, and the history of Memphis and the Mid-South? What is it about oral history that's—special?

CC: I think perhaps the greatest value of it is that individuals of a specific sort and specific sources can be targeted for information—Sort of a person who gets to the top, being Governor, or Chief of Staff – there are a lot of details along the way, experiences, names of people, events, disasters, failures, the whole thing that when the books are written are awfully good to have...

CP: Looking back after teaching Tennessee History for decades, what have you learned from that?

CC: Let me tell you a story. I'm telling a lot of stories...I didn't know anything about Tennessee history when I started teaching here. All of my work had been, today, people may not believe this, but my work had been in European history. I thought that's what I wanted to teach. That's what I did when I came here. Enoch Mitchell, our great leader for whom this building is named, died at the Christmas season [on Dec. 27, 1965]. I remember being over at his home, and his family was there, and the President came in, President Humphreys, and he asked me there with the family, we can't leave Dr. Mitchell, Professor Mitchell's students out. Will you take over his classes? When the president asks that, if I had been a sensible person, I would have said, sir, with all due respect, I had never had a course in Tennessee history; I know nothing about it; someone else will have to do this. Sorry, sir! However, that wasn't, of course, what I said. I said, "Yes, sir." That's what I told him. That's what I told people when I worked for them in the military. I worked for a while there with a major general and you didn't tell him things like that. I had great respect for Cecil Humphreys. I said yes sir.

I had a week or two to learn all about it—from zero. I immediately started accumulating a pile of books under great pressure and learning everything by the time we assembled after Christmas break I had my first lecture prepared. The next time, I had the next one. It was not too bad. I still have the notes. Like some other professors, I understand it happens quite a lot—some dog eared, worn out notes because you've used them all your life. That was sort of the way it was...I found out you can learn. If you study something intensely – when you really want to. You may not know much about it when you start, but you can learn a lot in a hurry. And, you know, life is a matter of learning anyway.

Envisioning the Future of Women and Gender Studies

by Caroline Peyton

In 2022, when UM's Women and Gender Studies Program needed a new director, Dr. Chrystal Goudsouzian, our department's ever popular Director of Advising and Assistant Professor of Teaching, answered the call. Now the Interim Director for the Women and Gender Studies Program, Dr. Chrystal Goudsouzian brings years of experience forged in advising, teaching, interdisciplinary research, and studying women and gender in the ancient world, to the program.

A graduate of our department's history program, receiving her PhD in 2012 with a specialization in Egyptology, Dr. Goudsouzian continues to conduct cutting-edge research outside the classroom and carries those insights back to her students in both programs. Currently, she is actively working with a team of researchers at Washington University and the Missouri Botanical Garden in St. Louis in a fascinating study about the reproductive lives of ancient women. At the center of this project, the researchers have focused on one form of an ancient pregnancy test involving different kinds of grains. I, for one, eagerly anticipate the completion of her book project, which is tantalizingly named, *Birthing the Sun: Becoming and Mother in Ancient Egypt*, which seems all the more relevant and intriguing, as we seek to understand how pregnancy, childbirth, and maternal health have been approached throughout human history. Undoubtedly, Dr. Goudsouzian's expertise has provided the preparation necessary for her new role as Interim Director of Women and Gender Studies.



In October 2022, I spoke with Dr. Gousouzian about her new position and what she envisions for the program. What follows is part of our conversation, edited for clarity and concision.

Caroline Peyton: Tell me a little bit about your background. What brought you to study women in the context of ancient Egypt?

Chrystal Goudsouzian: I would definitely say it starts out at home. Growing up, my parents had a really traditional relationship; my dad worked, and my mom stayed home...My mom definitely had a feminist consciousness, but she didn't really know what to do with it. She poured that into me. What she taught was so different from what I saw at home. My dad was a doctor...he was so interested in people, he was always reading religion, philosophy and history. So we would have these wonderful conversations, often about gendered labor. That's how it started.

CG (cont): When I got to college, I was interested in gendered labor, but also women's bodies because my dad had been a doctor. There was a lot of medical talk in the home; my parents were liberal; it was California. I was attracted to women's history classes. I knew that I wanted to study the ancient world. I was interested in how people across time and space grapple with the same sorts of feelings and questions, and answer them in different ways based on their culture.

CP: What is about the reproductive lives of ancient women that you find particularly interesting?

CG: The first full-length books on women's lives in ancient Egypt came out just a few years before I started college. In the 90s and early 2000s, there was still a good bit of work to do to find what women "did" in ancient Egypt. And, everything I read suggested that women spent their reproductive years in a constant cycle of pregnancy, birth, and nursing, yet our textual sources from the realm of the living had little to say about puberty rites, menstruation, conception, pregnancy, birth, and the postpartum period.

The lack of evidence, coupled with the reality of women's mortality rates (if a woman survived childhood, she was likely to live into her mid-30s; women also died at a rate of 2:1 to men in their reproductive years), struck me. I wanted to figure out what we could say about ancient Egyptian reproductive experiences.

CP: What drew you to the program of Women and Gender Studies?

CG: When I started...our chair at the time, Dr. Sherman said, we need someone to do Women's History Month, and you are the person who is going to do Women's History Month. It got assigned to me as a task, but I was on the executive committee for Women's History Month for five years....It grew as we continued the work on it, but it became this huge month long series of events...I saw the need that students had to learn women and gender history particularly.

CP: How our students responding to the classes offered by Women and Gender Studies? These are topics that students, now more than ever, seem really engaged in. Why does this resonate?

CG: My perception is that there was a dip. Some of that excitement had waned...One of things that I thought when I took over the program was maybe we need to think about a name change. Let's be Gender and Sexuality Studies, and I do think adding "Sexuality" is important, and it's one of the things I'll pursue. It turns out, in this program, we still need "Women's History" [in the name of the program]...Our students are seeking that knowledge....We offer four sections of the "Intro to Women and Gender Studies," and all four filled to the brim. They are showing us with their registration that these are classes they want to take at the intro level....I would love to see more scholarship opportunities [in the program] and build that community—those alumni connections.

Different Approaches to Mental Illness in Countries Engulfed in War

By Guiomar Duenas-Vargas

This is an interview with Professor Beverly A. Tsacoyanis a propose of her book: *Disturbing Spirits: Mental Illness, Trauma, and Treatment in Modern Syria and Lebanon* (Notre Dame, 2021), which won the Choice Outstanding Academic Title for 2022, awarded annually for: "excellence in presentation and scholarship, the significance of their contribution to the field, their originality and value as an essential treatment of their subject, and significance in building undergraduate collections."

This book is a fascinating read. It brings to light issues that are not usually on the radar of historians, such as mental illness, suffering, disability and all sort of 'spiritual' maladies, and places them squarely in the historical narrative of countries that have experienced traumatic wars, destruction, and displacements.

Guiomar Duenas-Vargas: A line that runs throughout the book is the dividing conceptions of mental illness and its treatment between modern science, psychiatry, and health institutions from the West and the local elites, and the traditional healers in the Middle East, specifically Syria and Lebanon. Can you elaborate on this?

Beverly Tsacoyanis: There are multiple meanings to my book's title *Disturbing Spirits*. Illness and treatment can connect to ideas about spirits (jinn, beings of smokeless fire mentioned in the Qur'an who are not necessarily malevolent, as well as other spirits like ghouls and ifrits)... that can harm people and other animals; the supernatural and natural worlds can affect each other.



Similar ideas exist in Islam, Christianity, and Judaism as well as other religions. Another meaning of *Disturbing Spirits* connects to trauma theory. We can experience a traumatic moment and that may leave lasting damage physically, psychologically, and emotionally. Examples include conscription in the Ottoman army for the Balkan wars just before World War I, and of course WWI and WWII. There are generational traumas, like the Armenian genocide of 1916, where some survivors made it to Lebanon and Syria.

(BT—cont.) I argue Syrian and Lebanese history are shaped by both ideas of “disturbing spirits” because jinn belief shaped certain treatment modalities and political conflict shattered communities. A third meaning to the title connects medical and social models of disability: psychiatrists treated some people in ultimately destructive ways. Researchers have been working on this all over the world, not just in the Middle East, on what it means to heal, or to fit in, in a community, and there is in some ways a trauma to surviving “healing” in and of itself. That means working with lots of primary sources, including religious and cultural artifacts used by the people who lived or died in these spaces, not just the hospital records left behind by doctors working to try to subdue people, or do what they thought would lead to improving their patient’s quality of life but sometimes led to other kinds of suffering.

GDV: Your description of vernacular healing, the role played by religious authorities, the large variety of ‘spiritual-based’ ideas of illness, reminded me of the ways peasant communities in Latin America, have coped with mental illness throughout history. Would you want to talk about the persistence of folk ways to treat mental diseases? Why the distrust on psychiatry? the lack of faith on modern medicine?

BT: One of the most fascinating aspects of medical history to me is the way these concepts get defined by different groups. One medical historian may label as “traditional” a healing system that developed in popular practice among ordinary people rather than in the framework of “modern” biomedical approaches, with contemporary applications of ideas in biology, neurology and so on, but there is no perfect binary between “modern medicine” and “spiritual-based” because those categories do not line up exactly with people’s healing practices. Clinical spaces like hospitals and educational spaces like schools of medicine have thousands of years of recorded history, whether our primary sources are Mayan stelae, Atzec codices, Ashokan rock edicts, or written records and illuminated manuscripts from the medieval Arab Islamic world, or from the Ayurvedic or Traditional Chinese Medical systems, which each produced records describing medicinal herbs, ailments, and treatments that connected notions about balance in the body with balance in our spiritual health, the cosmos, and relationships with family and potentially intercessors, such as ancestors or saints.

Some of the biggest reasons I came across in Syrian and Lebanese material for the persistence of local practices was that psychiatric help was not easily available, or was deeply stigmatized, or didn’t “work” even when it was available. Effective treatment needed to be seen as effective to the patients and their families, and for much of the twentieth century, that was not always the case. So, it made sense to families to seek help elsewhere.

GDV: Your book encompasses a period of extraordinary political/military events that directly affected the peoples of those Middle Eastern countries. Events such as the start of the First World War, the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, the French Mandates of Syria and Lebanon. Most health policies on those year targeted people with mental disabilities. Your balance of this long period in relation to medical facilities for mentally ill patients is not too positive. Why?

BT: Sometimes the questions a medical doctor asks patients or the treatment a doctor recommends for patients tells you more about the doctor's ideas about the patient's community than it does about the patients themselves. Barely two years after World War I, when the French had snatched up Lebanon and Syria as "mandates" to further the French "civilizing missions" in the Middle East, there were British, American, and French academics and officials, including physicians and psychiatrists, digging into studies and surveys about "the Arab mind" and "the Moslem woman" and "the backward Eastern Christians" and illiterate peasants and so on, and so looking back on this data a century later, we need to keep in mind that there was a politics of inclusion and a politics of exclusion here, that there were foreigners in these lands who, to put it in the way Angela Saini does in her book *Superior: The Return of Race Science*, "gave themselves the right to take things." In the late Ottoman and French occupations of Lebanon and Syria, some elites supported nationalist movements that brought a focus on strengthening the national body. This focus can mirror in some ways the same tragedies of the colonial period, whether with surveillance on the lower classes, targeting for discrimination certain ethnic minorities or sects, policing of behavior – all of these can be framed as threats to social order that weaken the national body.

Physicians and psychiatrists in the early twentieth century who sought to medicalize mental illness saw this as evidence of a modern outlook or worldview. They saw disease etiology rooted in other ideas, like spirit possession, or the evil eye, as unscientific. But much of the approaches in mental hospitals (in the US, Europe, and elsewhere like the Middle East) prior to chemical restraints like Chlorpromazine (Thorazine, Largactil) and other anti-psychotics in the 1950s were physical restraints, so there wasn't much therapeutic benefit in those hospitals anyway. An asylum, and later a mental hospital, could end up simply a carceral space, rather than therapeutic or eventually rehabilitative.

GDV: A fascinating aspect of your book is the contrasting interpretations of origin and treatment of mental afflictions. Doctors, the advocates of modern conceptions of health, wanted to eradicate the 'supernatural' conception of mental disabilities among the traditional peoples. Folk communities didn't trust modern methods of doctors that didn't belong to their communities. It seems the contrasting interpretation remained throughout the horrific civil war. I want your thoughts of the role of the hospital IBN SINA in this critical period.



BT: While nineteenth-century medical schools in Cairo, Beirut, and Istanbul did have some European advisors and (for two schools in Beirut) Protestant and Roman Catholic medical missionaries interested in proselytizing while teaching their version of modern medicine, there were local Turkish, Arab, and other elites who advocated such medical approaches as well. The disconnect lays mainly between popular and biomedical systems, rather than local and foreign. Even if we just look at the foreign medical missionaries in Beirut, there wasn't a clear border between medical and religious healing. Medical missionary documents about the healing power of accepting Christ, for example. There are no clear boundaries between medical practices that are purely physical and medical practices that move beyond that, to emotional or psychological well-being. These can be weaved together to create a stronger fabric for a patient to wrap themselves in. It's amazing how much we don't understand about why someone might start to feel better when someone else doesn't.

With the ongoing Syrian civil war, the fact that Ibn Sina hospital is government-run has complicated healing. Some doctors were not supportive of the regime, but snipers attempted to kill them anyway. The two public mental hospitals in Syria were underfunded and understaffed long before the war. The three mental hospitals in Lebanon had some government support but were largely private, yet some patients and staff at Asfuriyeh (near Beirut) were kidnapped by different factions during the Lebanese Civil War. The Syrian regime bombed hospitals, set up snipers, and sent in employees to kill patients and doctors where they suspected doctors were trying to heal people wounded in their struggles against the regime. I am still in touch with a few of the doctors from Ibn Sina, and with other Syrian psychiatrists and psychologists. Most are in Germany, Turkey, or Jordan now, working at mental hospitals and clinics there. Civil war can feel like the world has gone mad all around you. Some people may see overthrowing the system as necessary to heal the national body. But when a regime insists on brutal oppression that sows ever more bitterness as it has in Syria, the human cost is devastating.



People and Ruins: “Archeology” of Modern History in Albania

By Dr. Andrei Znamenski

During my extended journey over Central and Eastern Europe this summer, one of my projects was identifying various ruins and monuments in former so-called socialist countries and exploring their role in current historical memory of local populace. This project became somewhat a follow-up to my recent book *Socialism as a Secular Creed: A Modern Global History* (2021), whose paperback edition Lexington Book is releasing this month. In Czech Republic in Prague, I stayed in a dorm where one Jan Palach lived (Fig 1); he was a student of history and political economy at Charles University who set himself on fire, protesting the Soviet invasion of his country in 1968. I also visited Slovenia, where I explored the villa of the late Yugoslavian dictator Joseph Bros Tito (Fig 2). In Eastern Germany, I found the remains of a local smaller version of the Berlin Wall that separated a small Thuringia village into communist and capitalist parts during the Cold War (Fig 3).



Photos (from top, clockwise) Figure 4, Figure 1, Figure 3

Yet, the most memorable in terms of ruins and adventure was my spontaneous trip to Albania, a country where houses frequently do not have any numbers; I had to locate the building where a friend of mine lived by a drawing on a gate. This is a country where now bazaar and trade atmosphere now are buzzing everywhere, where towns literally hang on cliffs, and where one easily runs across the ruins of the Roman, Byzantine, and Ottoman legacy that are located side by side with the “archaeology” of the recent communist past of that country (Fig 4). The latter ruins are represented by small mushroom looking anti-nuclear family bunkers (Fig 5), bunker tunnels for the former ruling communist elite (Fig 6), monumental sculptures, and mosaics in the socialist realism style.



Photos from top, clockwise: Figure 2, Figure 5, Figure 6

New Faculty Profile: Dr. Eron Ackerman

In the spring I'm teaching a course on drugs in world history. Designing and teaching it will be hard work but also a lot of fun. I get to talk to students about topics like the Opium Wars, alcohol prohibition, and the psychedelic Sixties... for my job! How cool is that?! A love of teaching and researching compelling subjects is why we academics got into this line of work. However, my path to becoming a history teacher-scholar was somewhat circuitous, contingent (as any responsible historian must acknowledge), and altogether unlikely—at least from the vantage point of my high school self.

History never interested me as a youth, an irony that still amuses my dear mother, who used to drag me kicking and screaming through book reports on Columbus and the Alaska Purchase.

In my teens and early twenties, I was discovering psych rock, dub reggae, experimental jazz, and drum 'n' bass and learning about the vibrant drug-inflected subcultures from which they emerged. So, questions about the uses, meanings, and legal status of illicit drugs were beginning to alter my consciousness even if I had little appreciation for their historical salience.

As a PhD student at Stony Brook University in New York, I had the good fortune of working with Jennifer L. Anderson, whose research on the Atlantic mahogany trade exemplified the kind of social and environmental commodity history I wanted to explore.



I also took a research seminar with Paul Gootenberg, a leading expert on the history of Andean cocaine, who introduced me to the field of drug history. When I learned that cannabis was introduced to the Caribbean by indentured workers from India in the 19th century, I wanted to know more and was surprised to discover that the colonial history of ganja in the West Indies had received little attention from scholars. My dissertation, *Ganja Diasporas: Cannabis and Colonialism in the British Caribbean, 1838-1938*, examines how the consumption, prohibition, and trade of ganja in the Caribbean took shape amid British colonial efforts to manage plantation workers of Indian and African descent in the century after abolition.

I am delighted to be teaching courses in world history and in my own areas of specialization at the University of Memphis. I had the opportunity to hone my teaching skills last year as a visiting assistant professor at Albion College in Michigan. Moving to Memphis—with its small-town-city vibe, top-notch BBQ, and rich heritage of blues, soul, and rock 'n' roll—has been a refreshing change of pace. It's been a long, strange trip, but the U of M history faculty, my students, and the friendly people I've met around the city have made me feel at home.

New Faculty Profile: Yaowen Dong

I grew up in Sichuan province of China, which is known for its pandas, spicy food, and excessive gambling. When I was in high school, my Chemistry teacher warned us, in all seriousness and sincerity, if we study humanities, such as history, philosophy, or literature, we would become criminals in the future. Though we might be naïve and have a good heart, the cold reality of life would leave us no choice but to commit crimes. Despite our hopes for evading the laws, we would be arrested. We would then be sent to a labor reform camp. The camp would dispatch us as slave labors to work in a mercury mine. Our health would soon deteriorate rapidly as we would be exposed to mercury every day. Eventually, we would all die of cancer (He had witnessed the horrible conditions in the mercury mine himself when he was doing his fieldwork). My chemistry teacher belongs to the group of “Red Engineers” that attended college during in the 1960s, when Mao claimed that the only colleges that should be allowed to open were colleges of “science and engineering”. Many from that generation viewed humanities, and history in particular, as dangerous, useless, and corruptive. Despite his warning, I went to college at the University of Wisconsin–Madison to study philosophy and political science. I developed an intense interest in Søren Kierkegaard before I decided to become a historian of modern China.



The longer I stayed in the United States, the more attracted I am to the history and memory of my home country. My recently completed dissertation, which I am revising into a book, discusses the role of traditional Chinese literature and philosophy in Mao's China. My work investigates Mao's effort to incorporate ghost stories, rebellion tales, and Legalist philosophy into China's socialist vision. A new project I am working on examines China's “Internal Reading Program”, which translated a series of political and literary works from the Soviet Union into Chinese, but allowed only an “internal” group of officials and scholars to read them.

I am already a Memphian for some time. I moved here over a year ago after my wife accepted a position at Rhodes College. We have two daughters and a Shiba Inu and are so happy to call Memphis our home!

New Faculty Profile: Dr. Selina Makana

Growing up in a small rural town in the western province of Kenya, I was always fascinated with the great African proverb by the legendary literary scholar, Chinua Achebe: “until the lions have their historians, tales of the hunt shall always glorify the hunter.” Although I never quite grasped the relevance of the proverb, it was not until in my second year of college at Kenyatta University, Nairobi that I fully comprehended its meaning. In this one proverb, I understood not only that knowledge was encoded in different ways, but also how dominant groups inscribed power through historical narrative. This realization was what sparked my interest in African history, particularly histories of women on the continent.

My mother, a primary school teacher, would often tease me about my obsession with African women’s stories, noting: “a historian of women could still be eaten by lions.” The teasing was not meant to mock me in any way. On the contrary, my mother wanted me to be aware of power dynamics embedded in the society I grew up in as well as the challenges involved in seeing African women as makers of history. I spent my undergraduate years connecting with faculty who would help me pursue my career as a women’s studies scholar. To my surprise, I was met with disparagement and discouragement every step of the way. The common advice I received was that I would be far more successful in life pursuing a career in a different industry because “no one cared about history, let alone women’s history.”



After college, I moved to a remote village in Narok, in the heart of Masailand where I taught high school. My experiences in Narok further intensified my curiosity in women’s history and gave me the motivation I needed to pursue my Ph.D.

I moved to back to Nairobi a year later determined to break free from a world I found to be too limiting. In my mid-twenties, restless, and filled with lofty dreams of being an academic, I applied for a Fulbright fellowship. When I was accepted at Stanford, I knew I was on the right path to finally realizing my childhood dreams. After my Fulbright year, I enrolled in a Ph.D. program in the departments of African American & African Diaspora and Gender and Women’s Studies at the University of California, Berkeley.

While I always knew I wanted to be a teacher— inspired by my mother in every way— it was in graduate school that I quickly embraced research as my passion. My research focus was on the history of women and war in modern Angola. My research interest grew not only out of my own vexation with how stories of war and militarism in Africa were represented in the media, but also with the one-dimensional way stories of African women were told and written about. My research interests and the graduate school experience brought me back to the proverb: “until the lions have their historians, tales of the hunt shall always glorify the hunter.” As I scoured through archives and carried out oral interviews in Portugal and Angola, it became clear to me that the neglect and marginalization of African women in the standard texts of history has always been a question of power. In my research, I underscore that it is important for scholars of Africa to take the question of gender seriously in order to avoid contributing to the caricature of African women as mere victims of wars devoid of political agency: a popular and academic stereotype that is unhelpful as an analytical framework.

I am thrilled to be at the University of Memphis, where I will continue to nurture my passion for teaching and research. I am currently working on my manuscript tentatively titled, *Beyond the Battlefield: Women and the Nation in Twentieth Century Angola*. When I am not in the classroom or ensconced somewhere writing, you will find me on a hiking trail or listening and dancing to Afro-music.



New Faculty Profile: Dr. Elton Weaver

My grandmother was a culinarian, and my grandfather was a Baptist preacher, also a Pullman Porter. My grandmother was born into the Church of God in Christ (COGIC). My grandfather was a Baptist preacher, and they married and had children, including my mother. Consequently, I am a descendant of the COGIC and Baptist denominations, and my research investigates those divergent religious roots.

Lexington Books recently published my book *Bishop Charles H. Mason in the Age of Jim Crow: The Struggle for Religious and Moral Uplift*. Bishop Charles H. Mason offers a new interpretation of Charles Harrison Mason's life, which analyzes new historical data and expands upon Drs. David M. Tucker, C. Eric Lincoln, and Lawrence H. Mamiya's earlier analysis of Mason and the Church of God in Christ (COGIC) and Bishop Ithiel C. Clemmons' COGIC denomination-authorized biography and Dr. Anthea D. Butlers' groundbreaking scholarly account of the history of COGIC women.

I appreciate the critical role of faculty in students' lives. I believe that students from every class, gender, and religious background will learn from committed faculty. Many students experience an intellectual conversion while attending college, mainly due to dedicated, mentoring faculty. This conversion process is crucial in bridging cultural gaps and preparing traditional and nontraditional students to meet a diverse world's challenges.



Teaching and mentoring students, especially students of color, have honed my instructional and leadership skills. I seek to unite students from diverse backgrounds and create constructive interchanges between privileged and underrepresented communities. I integrate technology into the classroom experience and have experience teaching online history courses using the Canvas online learning and class management platform.