

ALUMNI NEWS

QUEENS COLLEGE • DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY



A Message from the Chair



Elena Frangakis-Syrett

Let me introduce myself: I am the Acting History Department Chair while Joel Allen is on a well-deserved sabbatical to complete his book. We wish him well and promise that we will look after the department to the best of our abilities until his return.

The new academic year has started with a very full program of activities, a lot of enthusiasm, and lively interaction between students and faculty. We cannot wait to tell you about them as well as to say how proud we are of our alumni, because none of this would have been possible without your support. Equally important is your confidence and belief in us, for ultimately this is what enables us to make our vision into a reality!

Last semester we had two highly successful events. The first was an evening lecture by Karen Avrigh about her completion of her late father's final book; Paul Avrigh was respected and loved by so many of us, alumni and faculty alike, and the reception that followed the lecture allowed everyone to intermingle and relish what was indeed an unforgettable evening! The second event was part of the college's Year of South Africa: History's own Loucas Tsilas—who teaches a very successful colloquium on 20th-century political and diplomatic history—gave an electrifying talk on his experiences in South Africa, where he served as Ambassador for Greece, and described his friendship with Nelson Mandela.

During this year's Homecoming event on October 18, I spoke on the Greek debt during a roundtable discussion on municipal debt and public finance organized by our new Dean of the Social Sciences Division, **Michael Wolfe**, who we proudly claim as a Professor of History and specialist on 16th-century French military and religious history. The next day we co-sponsored with the Center for Byzantine & Modern Greek Studies a lunchtime talk on Greek universities, which elicited interest among the broad student community, in part due to an article in the college's newspaper, *Knight News*.

As part of its dedication to embracing and understanding the complexity and vitality of our world, Queens College has launched this year's installment in its "Year of" series. For the 2015–2016 academic year, we are focused on the Silk Roads, routes that linked the civilizations of China, Central Asia, West Asia, and, to a lesser extent, Europe (think Marco Polo!) for much of premodern history, as early as 100 BCE, if not earlier. Their cultural significance can hardly be overstated, and their political influence has received much attention (<http://silkroads.qc.cuny.edu/>).

We started this semester with plans for a major student event and co-sponsorship to celebrate Silk Roads. On November 9 we organized a lunchtime event, held at the Godwin-Ternbach Museum, co-sponsored by a number of other programs. Our guest speaker was Interns Program Director Omar Eaton-Martinez of the Smithsonian Museum, Washington, DC, who gave an inspirational lecture about how to apply for internships and write successful CVs, as well as how to approach professional goals and aspirations. From the notes the students were busy taking and the standing room only audience, the History Department can justly say it was a huge success.

It is now our goal and dream to be able to help our students become interns in DC, NY, or Queens. We see this as an important conduit to make them more competitive in their careers after graduation. We have students who thirst for such opportunities. Please help us make this possible! We also have made progress with our Alumni Lounge and would love to have you visit it! And as always we would love to hear from you either by phone, email, or in person. The department is ready to welcome you.

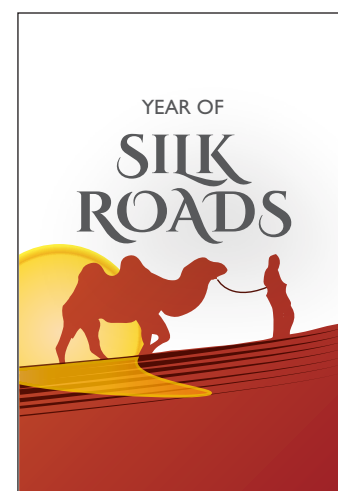
With all good wishes
Elena Frangakis-Syrett
Professor and Acting Chair



Yes! I will support the Fund for Queens College.

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Faculty News



Morris Rossabi

On October 14 & 15 Distinguished Professor of History **Morris Rossabi**, renowned specialist of the rich cultural history of the Silk Roads, gave a presentation entitled *Silk Roads: Fantasy or Reality? An Introduction to Silk Roads*. He discussed the extraordinary cultural, religious, artistic, and scientific significance of the Silk Roads in Eurasian History. Prof. Rossabi teaches Chinese and East Asian History courses on a regular basis, and advanced courses on the Silk Roads and the History of the Mongols as frequently as possible. He conducts research on traditional Chinese foreign relations during the Yuan and Ming dynasties, the history of Central Asia, the Mongols, and Chinese and Mongolian art and culture. He is the author or editor of over 20 books, including *Khubilai Khan*, *China among Equals*, and *Modern Mongolia*.

Please join us by welcoming our newest colleague, Assistant Professor **Kara Schlichting**, to the department. Kara earned her PhD from Rutgers University in 2014. Her work in late-19th- and 20th-century American history sits at the intersection of urban, environmental, and political history, with a particular focus on property regimes and regional planning in greater New York City. Her teaching interests range from the history of New York City, the 1960s in America, and the city in American history to environmental history, including an interdisciplinary class on water. She is currently working on a project on tideland property development to investigate how legal theory, coastal resiliency planning, and land politics shape American waterfronts. She has been awarded a Mellon Fellowship in urban landscape studies at the Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection in Washington, DC, for Spring 2016 for her new project on "The Nature of Urban Coastal Resiliency: Twentieth-Century Governance, Environmental Management, and Design."

While earning her graduate degree, Kara spent a semester at the Smithsonian Museum of American History in the Department of Domesticity and Home Life. As a Research Intern she performed archival research for a newly acquired collection, produced a research portfolio, maintained the collection in the museum database, worked with artifacts in restoration, and also assisted with curatorial projects.



Kara Schlichting

"It is wonderful to get to know Queens College and teach courses in New York City here—as a historian who focuses on the outer boroughs, I write about the construction of urban infrastructure in Queens in the 1930s, and get to move through the same places on my way to campus!"

—Kara Schlichting

Student News

Our History Club has been very active. **Marina Nebro '16**, past History Club President, reported that the club took a new direction from previous years. She created a community of students, faculty, and senior auditors who all love history, to come together and enjoy educational events. Professors from the department as well as visiting speakers come to teach about various aspects of history ranging from ancient to current events.

After their successful organization of a Town Hall meeting in which department faculty were invited to discuss their special areas of research and teaching with History majors and other interested students, they followed it by inviting QC President Matos Rodríguez, who is an inspiration and delight to hear, to speak on his intellectual journey on becoming a historian. All these events have some costs attached to them, and only contributions from our alumni can make them possible!

Marina Nebro is one of two Apprentice Museum Educators at the Rubin Museum. She is working closely with the Family and School Programs branch of the Education Department, and also helping out Adult and Academic Programs, as well as the Programming Department in setup, event work, and planning for a future speakers series. She will be constructing her own thematic tour, as well as leading school groups in hands-on workshops.

Sara Dorfman went to DC after the first informal visit of Mr. Omar Eaton-Martinez to QC last year. This year she spoke as a former intern at the November 9 event, after spending Summer 2015 working at the Archives Center at the Smithsonian National Museum of American History. This opportunity exposed her to the world of archiving, where she learned the tasks of the profession, such as oral interview techniques, archival programming literacy, how to create funding aids, as well as methods for cataloguing materials. It also gave her the opportunity to make valuable connections in the industry, not only with established archivists within the field, but also with fellow interns.



Left: In forefront, Dean of Social Sciences Michael Wolfe, with student Sara Dorfman behind him. Over 50 students attended this very successful event held at the Godwin-Ternbach Museum. Right: Sara Dorfman, history major, with Professor Deidre Cooper Owens.

"The opportunity to listen to Mr. Omar Eaton-Martinez [in an event held here at Queens College] speaking about the internships available for students at the Smithsonian Institute was unlike any other that I have experienced. He imparted a vast wealth of wisdom as well as information on a once-in-a-lifetime experience in a way that effortlessly commanded the attention of the crowd. I consider the tips, advice, and information that I learned during this presentation to be invaluable assets that will no doubt help me in the future."

—Paul Papantoniou, QC History Major