

# Muslim Studies

MICHIGAN STATE  
UNIVERSITY

Newsletter of the MSU Muslim Studies Program

Fall 2025

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## Message from the Director



As we enter our 19th year, the Muslim Studies Program remains as active as ever. Our fall events include presentations by writer, producer, and educator, Zara Chowdhary (Sept. 25-26); a screening of the documentary film, *Gaza: Doctors under Attack* (Sept. 16); a webinar on a coalition of NGOs offering life-saving services in the Middle East (Sept. 18); public historian Asad Dandia's "Virtual Tour of Arab, South Asian, and Muslim NYC and the Mayoral Elections" (Oct. 23); and Rachel Winter's in-person tour of the Diana Al-Hadid exhibition *unbecoming* (Nov. 12). We are also hosting three book talks: Shayan Rajani's *Leaving Legacies: The Individual in Early Modern South Asia* (Cambridge University Press) (Oct. 28), Nareman Amin's *Is God for*

*Revolution? Affect, Youth, and Islam in Post-2011 Egypt* (Oxford University Press) (Nov. 19); and Younus Mirza's *The Islamic Mary: Maryam through the Centuries* (Fortress Press) (Dec. 5).

Our dear colleague Jyotsna Singh has established an endowment in "Early Modern Studies, 1400-1800." This endowment includes an MSU Special Collections gallery exhibition (Sept. 16-Jan. 31) and an inaugural lecture by cultural historian João Vicente Melo on "*Portuguese Encounters with the Indo-Persian Islamicate World: The Mughals and Safavids*" (Oct. 16). Please see the newsletter insert for details.

Looking ahead to Spring 2026, you don't want to miss our 19th annual conference: "Does Islam Have a Liberation Theology?" (March 26-27). And on January 21, we will host Yusef Salaam of the Exonerated Five (also known as the Central Park Five). He will be the featured speaker of our 5th Annual Malcolm X Muslim Studies Community Forum.

Mohammad Hassan Khalil, Director

## Save the Dates

- ♦ **Sept. 19, 11am, 201**  
International Center: MSP Core Faculty Meeting
- ♦ **Sept. 26, 3pm, 303**  
International Center: 5th Annual Malcolm & Ann Kerr Lecture by Zara Chowdhary
- ♦ **Jan. 21, 2026, 7pm,**  
Erickson Kiva: 5th Annual Malcolm X Muslim Studies Community Forum with Yusef Salaam
- ♦ **March 26-27, 2026,**  
Webinar: 19th Annual Muslim Studies Program Conference: "Does Islam Have a Liberation Theology?"

## Student Spotlight: Farzaneh Holasu Ebrahimzadeh

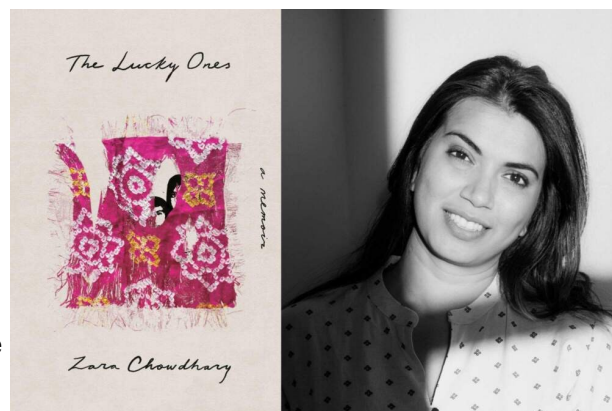
Farzaneh Ebrahimzadeh Holasu is a Ph.D. candidate in Film Studies with Digital Humanities and Women/Gender studies specialization at MSU. Her research is centered on global cinema, feminist film historiography, and film/media archives. She is the assistant book review editor of the journal *Screen*, a member of the research team for *Cinema Iranica*, a graduate representative of SCMS (Society for Cinema and Media Studies) Gender and Feminisms Caucus, and a member of the editorial collective of *Synoptique*. Her work has been published in *JCMS*, *Film Quarterly*, and *Screen*. Her 2024 essay, which received the Muslim Studies Program's Best Student Paper award, will be published in *ReFocus: The Films of Shirin Neshat* (Edinburgh University Press) in 2026.



## Muslim Journeys Book and Art Events, 2025-26

Deborah Margolis, Middle East and Religious Studies Librarian

This year's Muslim Journeys series kicks off on Thursday, September 25, 7pm at the MSU Main Library with a special book discussion led by its author, Zara Chowdhary. Dr. Chowdhary's memoir, *The Lucky Ones* (2024), recounts surviving the 2002 massacres at Ahmedabad, India, and delves into the history of her multigenerational Muslim family. The book is widely available through MelCat and also available as a library ebook for MSU affiliates. This program is brought to you by a partnership with MSU's Creative Writing Program; many thanks to Dr. Divya Victor. Note that Dr. Chowdhary will also be giving the Kerr lecture the next day, Friday, September 26. Please join us for both events if you are able!



Building on last fall's eye-opening tour of the Samia Halaby exhibition, on November 12, curator Dr. Rachel Winter will lead us through *unbecoming*, an exhibition of paintings and sculptures by Diana al-Hadid. This exhibition explores questions of womanhood and femininity in the works of the Syrian-American artist Al-Hadid. Both Chowdhary's memoir and Al-Hadid's works weave and unravel ideals of gender. Come to the MSU Broad Art Museum at 6pm to view the works on your own, and meet us for the curator's tour beginning at 6:30.

On January 21, writer, activist, and politician Yusef Salaam will be our featured speaker at the Malcolm X Community Forum. Salaam is one of the Exonerated Five (also known as the Central Park Five), wrongly accused and convicted when he was a teenager. With Muslim Journeys, we'll read and discuss one of his books or possibly view one of the filmic versions of this true story of injustice.

Please join us in 25-26 for events that aim to bring our communities and societies closer to understanding, justice, and peace. Thank you to our Muslim Journeys team: Mohammad Khalil, Rachel Winter, Leila Tarakji, Nareman Amin, Madiha Ghous, Janette Nuñez and Zoë McLaughlin.

## Faculty Accomplishments (2024-25) (Select)

**Shireen Al-Adeimi** (Education) received the 2025 MSU Teacher-Scholar Award.

**Nareman Amin** (Religious Studies) published a book chapter in *Oxford Intersections: Social Media in Society and Culture* (Oxford University Press).

**Brahim Chakrani** (LiLaC) was appointed Executive Director of the American Association of Teachers of Arabic (AATA).

**Elizabeth Drexler** (Anthropology) published two journal articles, one in *Indonesia and the Malay World*, another in *Forum for World Literature Studies*.

**Emine Evered** (History) was promoted to full professor, received a

Fulbright Award for research in Turkey, and published a book entitled *Prohibition in Turkey: Alcohol and the Politics of Identity* (University of Texas Press).

**Nazita Lajevardi** (Political Science) published three journal articles, one in *Review of Religious Research*, another in *PS: Political Science & Politics*, and a third in *Electoral Studies*.

**Mara Leichtman** (Anthropology) published a journal article in *Middle East Critique*.

**Shayan Rajani** (History) published a book entitled *Leaving Legacies: The Individual in Early Modern South Asia* (Cambridge University Press).

**Noreen Naseem Rodriguez** (Education) was promoted to associate professor.

**Chantal Tetreault** (Anthropology) published a book chapter in *Language and Social Justice: A Global Perspective* (Bloomsbury Press).

**Rachel Winter** (Broad Art Museum) published a journal article in *Woman's Art Journal*; her co-edited volume *Samia Halaby: Centers of Energy* was named Outstanding Monograph by the Midwest Art History Society; and she and **Salah Hassan** (English) receive an NEH Collaborative Research grant for the "Aesthetics of Solidarity" symposium (the 18th annual Muslim Studies Program conference).

## Snapshots of Spring 2025

18th annual conference ("Aesthetics of Solidarity")



7th Annual MSP Student Research Showcase



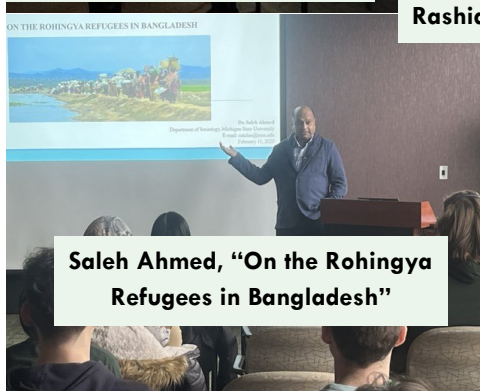
Ilyasah Shabazz visits Mason High School before delivering the 4th annual Malcolm X keynote to a packed Erickson Kiva



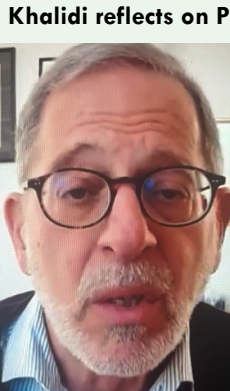
Muslim Journeys with John Aerni-Flessner at the East Lansing Public Library



Camelia Suleiman discusses "Orientalism without Empire"



Rashid Khalidi reflects on Palestine



Atiya Husain explores race and Islam in the US



Saleh Ahmed, "On the Rohingya Refugees in Bangladesh"

Check out our YouTube channel: MSU Muslim Studies Program, <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCYOZ94QYGrp7J1xbQ27h5A>.

## AWARDS (2024-25)

**Undergraduate Student Award—Charles A. and Marjorie A. Gliozzo Scholarship**

**William Castanier and Eleanor Pugh**

**Undergraduate Student Paper Prize (awarded at the MSP Student Research Showcase in April 2025)**

**William Castanier**

**Graduate Student Paper Prize (awarded at the MSP Student Research Showcase in April 2025)**

**Farzaneh Ebrahimzadeh Holasu**

**Faculty Conference Travel Award**

**Shireen Al-Adeimi (Education), Brahim Chakrani (LiLaC), Samira Fathi (AAHD), Najib Hourani (Anthropology), Nazita Lajevardi (Political Science), Riyadh Shahjahan (Education), and Camelia Suleiman (LiLaC)**

**Faculty Course Buyout Award**

**Waseem El-Reyes (James Madison College) and Emine Evered (History)**

**MSP 2025-26 faculty award announcements will be circulated by September, with a deadline of Jan. 9.**

## **MUSLIM STUDIES PROGRAM HISTORY AND MISSION**



Established at MSU in 2006 and housed in International Studies and Programs, the Muslim Studies Program coordinates research, teaching, and outreach about Muslims and Muslim-majority societies and states.

Additionally, it organizes lectures, workshops, and conferences on a wide range of topics that reflect the rich diversity of Muslims and Muslim communities around the world. The MSP is unique in the sense that instead of a regional focus, it has a global view of Muslims and Muslim-majority societies and states. It is an interdepartmental and interdisciplinary center whose faculty has appointments in various disciplines at MSU.



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Sign up for the e-newsletter at <http://eepurl.com/ci08p1>.

### **Muslim Studies Minor for Undergraduate Students**

The Minor in Muslim Studies, administered by James Madison College, is available as an elective to students who are enrolled in bachelor's degree programs at Michigan State University. The minor provides students with the opportunity for sustained study of Muslim societies and Islam in a range of disciplines and topics.

With the approval of the department that administers the student's degree program, courses that are

used to satisfy the requirements of the minor may also be used to satisfy the requirements for the bachelor's degree.

The student's program of study must be approved by the Muslim Studies Minor Coordinator, Professor Waseem El-Rayes ([elrayes@msu.edu](mailto:elrayes@msu.edu)) prior to enrollment in any course. For more information, please visit:

<https://muslimstudies.isp.msu.edu/students/msp-student-resources>.

If you would like to support the MSU Muslim Studies Program through a financial contribution, please visit <https://givingto.msu.edu/gift>, or send a check to: MSU University Advancement, Spartan Way, 535 Chestnut Rd., Room 300, East Lansing, MI 48824. Please make checks payable to "Michigan State University," with Muslim Studies on the memo line of your check. Thank you for considering a gift.