

# Muslim Studies

## NEWSLETTER OF THE MSU MUSLIM STUDIES PROGRAM

MICHIGAN STATE  
UNIVERSITY

Spring 2014

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### Save the Dates

- ♦ **Feb. 6-7: *Lebanese Civil Wars* Conference:** film showing (*Incendies*) on Feb. 6 at 8pm, in B122 Wells; panels on Feb. 7 in 303 International Center
- ♦ **Feb. 20, 7pm: *Naji Al-Ali: An Artist with Vision* (film),** presented by Saddam Issa, Main Library, North Conference Room, W449
- ♦ **March 20-21: *Journeys of Practice* Conference,** 303 International Center
- ♦ **March 25, 12pm "The Rohingya Muslim Minorities in Burma,"** Cyril Payen, 303 International Center
- ♦ **April 10, 7pm: "The Fate of Non-Muslims in the Afterlife: Contemporary Debates in Islamic Thought,"** M. H. Khalil, Main Library, North Conference Room, W449

## Message from the Interim Director



The previous semester was an eventful one. Among other things, the Muslim Studies Program organized a well-attended panel on the conflict in Syria; launched a Brown Bag lecture series; organized an evening lecture by Professor Mohammed Ayoob on the current state of the Middle East; hosted a "Meet and Greet" for faculty, students, and staff; oversaw the founding of a new student organization, Students for the Advancement of Muslim Studies (SAMS); and sponsored two events at the East Lansing Public Library.

This spring semester promises to be just as eventful, if not more. In addition to our Brown Bag lecture series (see insert flyer for details) and the *Muslim Journeys* program organized by Deborah Margolis

(featured in the previous newsletter), we are organizing two major conferences: (1) *The Lebanese Civil Wars: History, Politics, Memory* (Feb. 6-7), and (2) the 2014 MSP annual conference, *Journeys of Practice* (March 20-21) (see page 2 for details). Furthermore, on February 20, we are co-sponsoring a showing of the documentary *Naji Al-Ali: An Artist with Vision*, which will be presented by Professor Saddam Issa (Linguistics & Languages). (See the *Save the Dates* section below for details.) On March 25, the Muslim Studies Program welcomes French journalist Cyril Payen, who will discuss his work on the Rohingya Muslim minorities in Burma. Then on April 10, I will give an evening lecture on contemporary debates in Islamic thought on the fate of non-Muslims in the afterlife.

All events will be posted on our website: <http://muslimstudies.isp.msu.edu>. And while you're online, check out the thought-provoking, MSP-sponsored *Muslim Subjects* site: <http://www.muslimsubjects.org>.

Mohammad Hassan Khalil

## Student Profile: Meryem Zaman

Meryem Zaman is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Anthropology at Michigan State University. She has been a University Distinguished Fellow, and currently holds the Dissertation Completion Fellowship. Her dissertation, "The Semiotics of the Sacred: Women, Space and Stories in Pakistan's Islamic Revivalist Movements," draws on her interests in the anthropology of religion, South Asia, and Islam to examine women's shaping of revivalist theology, rhetoric, and policy in Pakistan. She will be a presenter at the annual Muslim Studies Conference, *Journeys of Practice* (see p. 2 for details).



## ***The Lebanese Civil Wars: History, Politics, Memory (Feb. 6-7)***

Najib Hourani and Salah Hassan



In February, the Muslim Studies Program will host a two-day conference on the Lebanese civil wars. While the conference will map the current state of knowledge about these wars, we seek to do much more. In drawing together scholars of national and international stature to discuss Lebanese, Palestinian, Israeli experiences of this tragic fifteen year conflict, we seek to break new ground and to reconsider the wars' place within larger scholarly debates on the histories of Lebanon, contemporary Middle East politics and the nature and effects of protracted civil violence.

Confirmed presenters include Maren Milligan (Davidson College), Osamah Khalil (Syracuse University), Claire Launchbury (University of Leeds), Shea McManus (North Carolina State University), Augustus Richard Norton (Boston University), Ziad Abu Rish (UCLA), and certain MSU scholars.

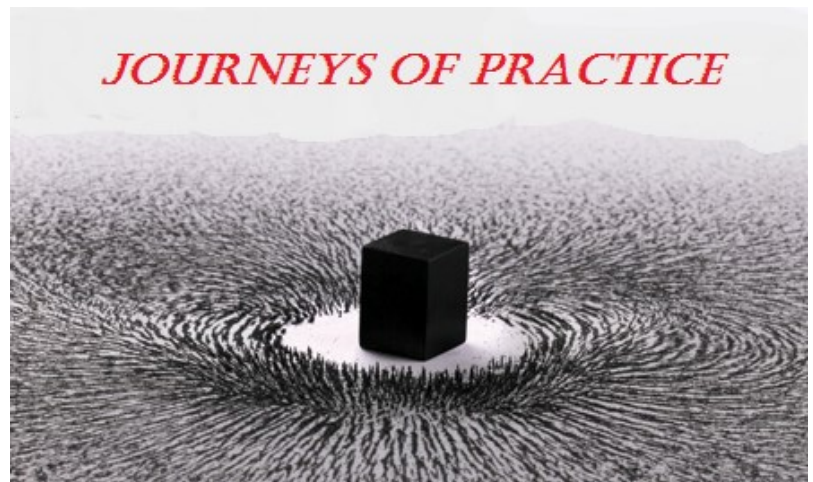
The current list of cosponsors includes the Office for Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives, the Global Urban Studies Program, the College of Social Sciences, the College of Arts and Letters, the Honors College, the Department of Anthropology, Global Studies in the Arts and Humanities, and James Madison College.

## ***Journeys of Practice: The 2014 MSP Annual Conference (March 20-21)***

As a complement to the NEH-sponsored *Journeys of Faith* program (organized by Deborah Margolis of the MSU Libraries), the Michigan State University Muslim Studies Program will host an interdisciplinary conference on March 20-21, 2014, on *Journeys of Practice*. "Practice" here will be defined variously by conference participants, and may include both devotional and non-devotional expressions, customs, and tendencies among Muslims, as well as practices by 'Others' that affect Muslims.

Confirmed presenters include Carla Bellamy (Baruch College), Ahmet Karamustafa (University of Maryland), Fatemeh Keshavarz-Karamustafa (University of Maryland), Kai Kresse (Columbia University), Elisha Renne (University of Michigan), Emilio Spadola (Colgate University), and certain MSU scholars.

The current list of cosponsors includes the African Studies Center, the Asian Studies Center, the College of Arts and Letters, the College of Social Sciences, and the Department of Religious Studies.





## Snapshots of the Fall

### *The Conflict in Syria* (MSP panel)



### *Meet and Greet*



### *Professor Russell Lucas, The Arab Spring in the Monarchies (Brown Bag Lecture Series)*



### *Professor Mohammed Ayoob, Will the Middle East Implode? (evening lecture)*



### *Surviving in Conflict: Life in a War Zone (MSP panel, One Book, One Community program)*

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



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### Muslim Studies Specialization for Undergraduate Students

The Specialization 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 specialization 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 specialization 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 coordinator prior to enrollment in any course.

For more information, please visit:

[muslimstudies.isp.msu.edu/academics/](http://muslimstudies.isp.msu.edu/academics/)

If you would like to support the MSU Muslim Studies Program through a financial contribution, please visit <http://www.giveto.msu.edu/give.html>, or send a check to: University Development, Michigan State University, 300 Spartan Way, East Lansing, MI 48824-1005. Please make checks payable to "Michigan State University," with Muslim Studies on the memo line of your check. Thank you for considering a gift.