

Muslim Studies

MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

Newsletter of the MSU Muslim Studies Program

Fall 2023

Volume 11, Issue 1

Inside this issue:

Muslim Journeys, 2023-2024	2
Faculty Accomplishments	2
Snapshots of Spring 2023	3
Awards	3
History and Mission	4
Undergraduate Minor	4

Message from the Director



The Muslim Studies Program is preparing for an eventful fall (please see the newsletter insert for details). In September alone, we will have our 3rd Annual Malcolm and Ann Kerr lecture (Sept. 19) featuring humanitarian Najah Bazzy, one of the 2023 *USA Today* Women of the Year; and a lecture (Sept. 29) by former MSU faculty member, Zakia Salime (Rutgers), entitled “Decolonizing the Race Debate in North Africa: Questions of Ethics.” We’re also cosponsoring a WKAR screening and discussion (Sept. 14) of the new documentary film, *American Jedi: The Salman Hamdani Story*.

In October, we will have, among other things, a Muslim Studies Program faculty research panel (Oct. 6) and cosponsored lectures by peacebuilding leader, Najeeba Syeed (Oct. 10) and Anthropology professor, M. Jamil Hanifi (Oct. 13). This will be followed by our first *Muslim Journeys* session (Oct. 25) featuring Rachel Winter of the Broad Art Museum

(please see page 2 for more details).

In November, we will have a lecture (Nov. 1) by Darnell Karim on his experiences working in Black American Muslim educational institutions. We will also have a lecture (Nov. 10) by Sunera Thobani (Univ. of British Columbia) entitled “Contesting Islam, Constructing Race and Sexuality: The Inordinate Desire of the West.” And in December, we are cosponsoring a symposium (Dec. 1) for Jyotsna Singh.

Throughout the semester, we are co-organizing an MSU Conversations series on combatting antisemitism and Islamophobia (please see the newsletter insert for details).

Looking ahead, you don’t want to miss our 17th annual conference, the theme of which is “Researching Muslim America” (Feb. 8-9, 2024). The conference theme was proposed by Nazita Lajevardi (Political Science). And just before then, in late January (tentatively, Jan. 24), we will host the activist and former professional basketball player, Mahmoud Abdul-Rauf. He will be the featured speaker of our 3rd Annual Malcolm X Muslim Studies Community Forum.

Mohammad Hassan Khalil, Director

Save the Dates

- ◆ **Sept. 19, 6:30pm, 115 International Center: 3rd Annual Malcolm & Ann Kerr Muslim Studies Community Lecture with Najah Bazzy (see the newsletter insert for details and a partial list of our fall events)**
- ◆ **Sept. 22, 11am, 302 International Center: MSP Core Faculty Meeting**
- ◆ **Jan. 24 (tentative): 3rd Annual Malcolm X Muslim Studies Community Forum with Mahmoud Abdul-Rauf**
- ◆ **Feb. 8-9, 2024: 17th Annual Conference: “Researching Muslim America”**

MSP Receives 2nd Templeton Religion Trust Grant

This past spring, James Madison College and the Muslim Studies Program applied for and received a second Templeton Religion Trust grant, this one worth over \$1 million. Like the first TRT grant, which was housed in the Muslim Studies Program, this new grant will fund various projects throughout the world that explore the intersection of Islamic architecture and interreligious relations. Stay tuned for a press release!

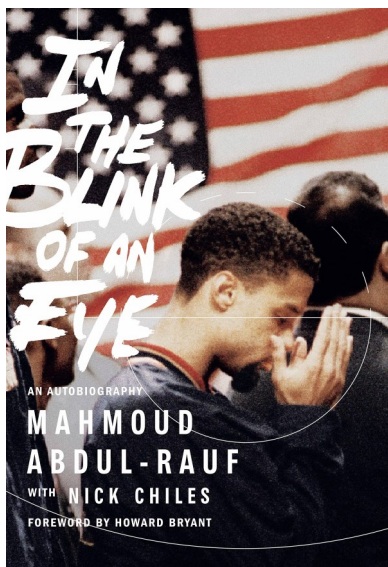


Muslim Journeys Book, Art, and Film Events, 2023-24

Deborah Margolis, MSU Libraries and Muslim Studies Program

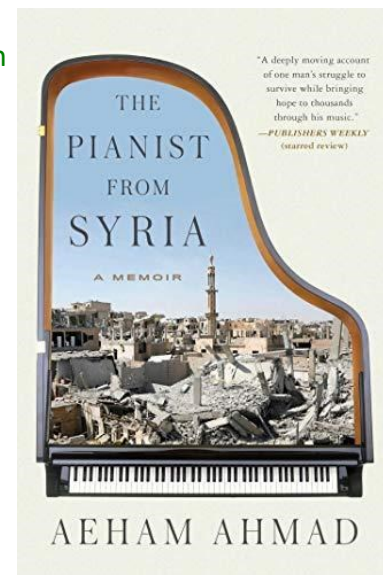
Greetings! This year continues our new partnership with the Broad Art Museum. On October 25th at 7pm at the Main Library (and via Zoom), Muslim Studies faculty member and Assistant Curator Rachel Winter will be presenting *The Pianist from Syria: A Memoir* by Aeham Ahmad, and, at the event, will screen the video *Space Refugee* by Turkish conceptual artist Halil Altindere. You won't want to miss it!

In early 2024, we'll have a film event at the East Lansing Public Library--another wonderful partner-- focused on the visit to campus of the important Muslim-American historical figure, basketball player Mahmoud Abdul-Rauf. We'll screen and discuss Zareena Grewal's documentary *By the Dawn's Early Light: Chris Jackson's Journey to Islam*.



If you'd like to get a head start, read Abdul Rauf's autobiography, *In the Blink of an Eye*, which was recently published by Kaepernick Press. And visit the Broad Art Museum's new exhibit *Resistance Training: Arts, Sports, and Civil Rights*, opening on August 19th and running through February 18, 2024.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions! Thank you to our Muslim Journeys planning committee members, Mohammad Khalil, Zoë McLaughlin, Janette Núñez, Leila Tarakji, and Rachel Winter.



Faculty Accomplishments (2022-23) (Select)

Farha Abbasi (Psychiatry) was elected to the World Psychiatric Association, Executive Section on Religion, Spirituality, and Psychiatry.

Kaveh Askari (Film Studies) was promoted to full professor. His book, *Relaying Cinema in Midcentury Iran: Material Cultures in Transit*, won the 2023 Katherine Singer Kovács Book Award from the Society for Cinema and Media Studies and was longlisted for the Kraszna-Krausz Moving Image Book Award.

Brahim Chakrani (Linguistics, Languages, & Cultures) was selected to lead the Middlebury Arabic School.

Soma Chaudhuri (Sociology) was appointed co-director for global research, outreach and engagement for MSU's Center for Gender in Global Context.

Najib Hourani (Anthropology) was appointed to the Commission on Middle Eastern American Affairs by Governor Whitmer. And he and **Rebecca Karam** (Sociology) were awarded a Creating Inclusive Excellence Grant with a team—

Salah Hassan (English) and **Stephen Gasteyer** (Sociology)—to do a study of Arab-American student, faculty, and staff experiences with inclusion at MSU.

Fayyaz Hussain (Integrative Studies in Social Science) was promoted to full professor. He was also awarded a US Scholars Fellowship, which will allow him to teach and conduct research in Pakistan for four months in 2024.

Sadam Issa (Linguistics, Languages, & Cultures) was promoted to associate professor. And he and **Ayman Mohamed** (Linguistics, Languages, & Cultures) published an article on student attitudes toward hybrid education in the *Journal of the National Council of Less Commonly Taught Languages*.

Mara Leichtman (Anthropology) received an Institute of Advanced Study fellowship at St. Aidan's College, Durham University, where she will be in residence in early 2024 writing her next book and collaborating on a project entitled "An Interdisciplinary Rethinking of the Making of Shi'i Identities beyond the Middle Eastern 'Centre.'" She

also published two journal articles: "Humanitarian Sovereignty, Exceptional Muslims, and the Transnational Making of Kuwaiti Citizens," in *Ethnography Online First*; and "NGO-ization as Legitimization: The 'Engineering' of a Senegalese Shi'i Islamic Development Model," in *Islamic Africa*.

Deborah Margolis (Library) received a Fulbright grant to build on a previous library exchange project with Yarmouk University. This new project will include Bethlehem University in Palestine.

Rajiv Ranjan (Linguistics, Languages, & Cultures) published his second book, *Basic Urdu*, an Open Educational Resource book.

Rachel Winter (Broad Art Museum) recently won the inaugural Salwa Mikdadi Research Award from the Association for Modern + Contemporary Art of the Arab World, Iran + Turkey, which will support research for an exhibition in Spring 2025 about the Lebanese-American painter Nabil Kanso. She also recently published a review of the exhibition "From Palestine with Art" at the 2023 Venice Biennale.

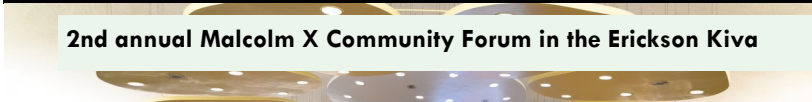
Snapshots of Spring 2023



16th annual conference
("Measuring Muslim
Publics")



MSP Student Research Showcase



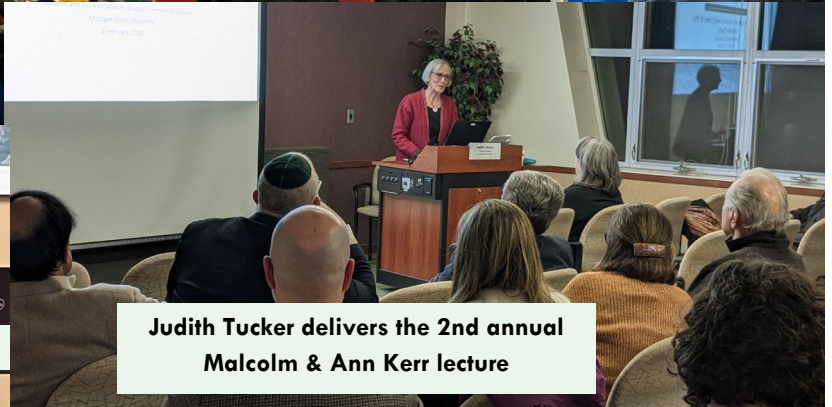
2nd annual Malcolm X Community Forum in the Erickson Kiva



Muslim Journeys with Mona Haydar and Sebastian Robins at the East Lansing Public Library



Aysha Puteri (middle) discusses Indonesian Islamic architecture



Judith Tucker delivers the 2nd annual Malcolm & Ann Kerr lecture

Check out our YouTube channel: MSU Muslim Studies Program, <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCYOZ94QYGrpo7JlxbQ27h5A>.

AWARDS (2022-23)

Undergraduate Student Award—Charles A. and Marjorie A. Gliozzo Scholarship
Max Martus (History) and Elliot Peters (James Madison College)

Undergraduate Student Paper Prize (awarded at the MSP Student Research Showcase in April 2023)
Spencer Good (James Madison College) and Gabriel Sandoval (James Madison College)

Graduate Student Paper Prize (awarded at the MSP Student Research Showcase in April 2023)
Jessica Saba (Social Work)

Faculty Conference Travel Award
Najib Hourani (Anthropology), Nazita Lajevardi (Political Science), Mara Leichtman (Anthropology), and Riyadh Shahjahan (Education)

Faculty Research Travel Award
Najib Hourani (Anthropology) and Kuhu Tanvir (Film Studies)

Faculty Course Buyout Award
Nura Sediqe (Political Science) and Sitara Thobani (RCAH)

MSP 2023-24 faculty award announcements will be circulated in late September, with a deadline of Jan. 2.

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.



Contact information:

Muslim Studies Program
Michigan State University
International Center
427 N. Shaw Lane, Room 304
East Lansing, MI 48824
<http://muslimstudies.isp.msu.edu>

Email: muslimst@msu.edu
Phone: 517-884-6636

Director: Mohammad Khalil
khalilmo@msu.edu
Administrative Lead: Laura Large
largelau@msu.edu

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) prior to enrollment in any course. For more information, please visit:

muslimstudies.isp.msu.edu/students/undergrad-specialization

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

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.