



## The Sultan Program in Arab Studies

*at the Center for Middle Eastern Studies (CMES), University of California, Berkeley*

### The First Decade

The Sultan Program in Arab Studies Program was established in 1999 through a generous endowment from the Sultan bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud Charity Foundation. It supports teaching, research, and public outreach on topics related to the Arab and Arab-Islamic world, with the overarching goal of promoting a deeper understanding of the Middle East on the UC Berkeley campus and beyond. The program's themes encompass the social sciences, humanities, and professional fields, with special emphasis on integrating insights into the Arab world from the following disciplines: anthropology, architecture, history, literature, political science, sociology, and urban studies.

The endowment supports graduate and undergraduate fellowships as well as research and programming grants for faculty. Its centerpiece, however, is the post-doctoral fellowship. Each year, the CMES holds an international competition to identify a Sultan Post-Doctoral Fellow. The successful applicant comes to UC Berkeley for a semester or a year to engage in research and participate in the monthly meetings of the Sultan Working Group and in wider campus activities. His/her presence on campus results in a mutually-beneficial intellectual synergy. Partly as a result of their UC Berkeley experiences, many Sultan Post-Doctoral Scholars have gone on to hold major positions in the academic world and publish some of the field's most important works.

The CMES is proud to recognize more than a decade of outstanding scholarship in Arab Studies through the Sultan Program.

## Sultan Post-Doctoral Fellows, 2001-2012

### Dr. Mandana Limbert, 2001-2001



Mandana Limbert received her Ph.D. in Anthropology and Near Eastern Studies from the University of Michigan in 2002. Her research while at the CMES concerned Arab Identity in Oman.

Dr. Limbert is now an associate professor of Anthropology at The Graduate Center and Queens College of the City University of New York. In addition to numerous articles, Dr. Limbert co-edited *Timely Assets: The Politics of Resources and their Temporalities* (Sante Fe: School for Advanced Research Press, 2008). Her book, *In the Time of Oil: Piety, Memory, and Social Life in an Omani Town* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2010), examines shifting notions and practices of sociality and religion in a dramatically transformed petro-state. With support from the American Council of Learned Societies and fellowships from the City University of New York, Dr. Limbert has begun writing her next book, *Oman, Zanzibar, and the Politics of Becoming Arab*, which deals with changing notions of Arabness in Oman and Zanzibar over the course of the twentieth century.

**Dr. Marwa Elshakry, 2002-2003**



Marwa Elshakry received her Ph.D. from Princeton University in History and Philosophy of Science. Her research project while at the CMES, titled “Between Faith and Reason,” examined the cultural and intellectual history of the modern Middle East and the history of modern science in Western and non-Western contexts.

Dr. Elshakry is now an associate professor in the Department of History at Columbia University. Among her many publications are “When Science became Western: Historiographical Reflections,” *Isis*, 101:1 (March 2010), “Science, Race and Imperialism,” (Victorian Literature and Science series: vol. 6), and "The Exegesis of Science in Twentieth Century Arabic Interpretations of the Qur'an," in *Interpreting Nature and Scripture: History of a Dialogue* (Leiden: Brill, 2009).

## Dr. Tamir Moustafa, 2002-2003



Tamir Moustafa received his Ph.D. from the University of Washington in Political Science with a focus on Egyptian politics. His dissertation was titled, "Law Versus the State: The Expansion of Constitutional Power in Egypt." Dr. Moustafa's research while at the CMES focused on the politics of the Egyptian Constitutional Court, a surprisingly independent court that was established to address a series of economic and administrative pathologies that lay at the heart of Egypt's authoritarian political system. He found that although the Court helped to institutionalize state functions, it simultaneously opened avenues through which rights advocates could challenge the regime. During his time at UC Berkeley, Dr. Moustafa examined the dynamics of legal mobilization in this most unlikely political environment.

Dr. Moustafa is currently associate professor and Stephen Jarislowsky Chair at Simon Fraser University's School for International Studies. He has published many book chapters and articles. His two books are *Rule by Law: The Politics of Courts in Authoritarian Regimes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008) and *The Struggle for Constitutional Power: Law, Politics, and Economic Development in Egypt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

### Dr. Jessica Winegar, 2002-2003



Jessica Winegar received her Ph.D. in Anthropology from New York University. Her dissertation was titled, "Claiming Egypt: The Cultural Politics of Artistic Practice in a Postcolonial Society." Dr. Winegar's CMES-sponsored research took a critical look at Egyptian artists' conflicting and competing understandings of nationalism and western influence. In that work and in her new projects, she is primarily concerned with the multiple ways that culture projects create social hierarchies and modern subjects while frequently hiding the mechanisms of these processes, thereby contributing to their durability. Her first book, *Creative Reckonings: The Politics of Art and Culture in Contemporary Egypt* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2006), focused on these processes in the realm of the visual arts and was based on the dissertation she revised as a Post-Doctoral Fellow at the CMES.

Dr. Winegar is now an associate professor at Northwestern University in the Department of Anthropology and is currently working on two new books. The first, tentatively titled *Culturing Youth: Democracy, Creativity, and Development in the Middle East*, charts the meteoric rise, successes, and challenges of state and NGO cultural development programs directed toward poor and working class youth in Egypt. Dr. Winegar is also writing, with Lara Deeb, a book entitled *Anthropology's Politics: Discipline and Region through the Lens of the Middle East* (under contract with Stanford University Press). This book examines how social life in the post-Cold War Middle East, as well as developments in academic thought and the structure of the American academy, have challenged traditional culturalist anthropological approaches at the

same time that “culture” has become a key device to explain the Middle East outside of academia, particularly in government projects.

## Dr. Persis Berlekamp, 2003-2004



Persis Berlekamp earned her Ph.D. from the Department of History of Art and Architecture, with an Islamic Concentration, from Harvard University. While a Sultan Post-Doctoral scholar, she pursued research concerning the transformation of the Arab scientific painting tradition in the wake of the Mongol conquest. Her more recent research has focused on the art of the book in Arab and Persian cultures, Neoplatonic cosmography and the imaging of natural history, alchemy and astrology; and the application of medieval Islamic traditions of medical illustration to Chinese medicine. In her ongoing explorations of the relationship between art history and intellectual history in late medieval Islamic art, she is researching Seljuk sculpture, and how theoretical understandings of talismans relate to their visual forms.

Dr. Berlekamp is now an associate professor of Art History and Islamic Art at The University of Chicago, where she teaches courses on a wide range of topics in the history of Islamic art and architecture. Her many publications include *Wonder, Image, and Cosmos in Medieval Islam* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), "The Limits of Artistic Exchange in Fourteenth-Century Tabriz: The Paradox of Rashid Al-Din's Book on Chinese Medicine, Part I," in *Muqarnas* (2010), and "From Iraq to Fars: Tracking Cultural Transformations in the 1322 Qazwini 'Aja'ib Manuscript," in *Arab Painting: Text and Image in Illustrated Arabic Manuscripts* (Leiden: Brill, 2007).



## Dr. Rochelle Davis, 2003-2004



Rochelle Davis received Ph.D.s in Arabic Literature and in Anthropology, both from the University of Michigan. Her project while a Sultan Post-Doctoral Fellow at the CMES was titled, "History and Memory: Palestinian Recollections of Life Before 1948." It explored how we narrate the past in an effort to understand history. Her CMES Post-Doctoral Fellowship was the first step in her work on Palestinian village memorial books, which resulted in the publication of her book *Palestinian Village Histories: Geographies of the Displaced*, (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2011). This book was co-winner of the Middle East Studies Association's Albert Hourani Book Award to recognize outstanding publishing in Middle East studies. Her other publications include "Language and Loss, Or How to Bark like a Dog and Other Lessons from al-Jahriz," *Critique* Spring (2004) and "Commemorating Education: Recollections of the Arab College in Jerusalem, 1918-1948," in *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 23.1 & 2 (2003).

Dr. Davis is currently an associate professor of Arab Studies at the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies in the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University. Dr. Davis' current research focuses on the role of culture in the U.S. military in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.



## Dr. John Tofik Karam, 2004-2005



John Tofik Karam received his Ph.D. in Anthropology from Syracuse University. While a Sultan Post-Doctoral Fellow at UC Berkeley, Dr. Karam completed the manuscript, “Ethnic Entitlement: The Arab Project in Neoliberal Brazil.” Based on his dissertation, this work inquires into how Arabness has attained a marked presence in Brazil today.

Dr. Karam is now an associate professor in the Latin American and Latino Studies Program at DePaul University in Chicago. Based in Historical Anthropology, he studies Arab ethnic and diasporic formations in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, and more crucially, their bearing upon the current reordering of Brazil and the Americas. Revealing how Arabness helped to define Brazil’s transition from state-led to free market economics, his first book, *Another Arabesque: Syrian-Lebanese Ethnicity in Neoliberal Brazil* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2007), won awards from the Arab American National Museum and the Brazilian Studies Association. Dr. Karam is now working on his second book, *Redrawing the Americas: The Arab Diaspora at the Tri-Border and the Rise of Brazil*. Focusing on the fifty-year history of Muslim Lebanese and Palestinians at a South American trinational border, this work maps the role of their diaspora in Brazil’s contested emergence as a regional power in relation to Argentina, Paraguay, and U.S.-South American geopolitics.

**Dr. Elizabeth Smith, 2005-2006**



Elizabeth Smith received her Ph.D. in Sociocultural Anthropology from New York University. While a Sultan Post-Doctoral Fellow at the CMES, she studied nineteenth and twentieth century African diaspora writings about Egypt and Nubia.

Dr. Smith is currently an assistant professor at the University of Vermont, in the Department of Anthropology. Her publications include "Place, Class and Race in the Barabra Café: Nubian Urban Spaces and Media Identities," in *Cairo Cosmopolitan: Politics, Culture, and Urban Space in the New Middle East*, eds. Paul Amar and Diane Singerman (Cairo: American University Press, 2006), and, "In His Heart and Soul He's Egyptian, the Nile Flows through His Veins: Bakkar as Egyptian and African," in *Critical Interventions: Journal of African Art History and Visual Culture* (2009): 123-139.

## Dr. Sarah Bowen Savant, 2006-2007



Sarah Bowen Savant earned her Ph.D. at Harvard University with a dissertation co-chaired by faculty in the Study of Religion and in History. While at UC Berkeley, she completed a draft of her original translation of a ninth-century treatise, which is the most important surviving source we have for a major polemical dispute in the third/ninth century, known as the Shu<sup>c</sup>ubiyya controversy, in which Muslims of mostly Iranian origins challenged the high status of Arab ethnicity in Muslim society and made the case for Persian cultural values.

Dr. Savant is now an assistant professor of the History of Religion at Aga Khan University, Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations in London. She has played a major role in setting up the Institute, and currently has oversight responsibilities for its history and language curriculum, and also sits on the AKU's Research Committee.

Her most recent publications include: *The New Muslims of Post-Conquest Iran: Tradition, Memory, and Conversion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), and *Genealogy and Knowledge in Muslim Societies: Understanding the Past*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013). Her translation of Ibn Qutayba's book will be published in 2014 through New York University Press as part of its Library of Arabic Literature, a new series modeled on the Loeb Classics.

## Dr. Manal Jamal, 2006-2007



Manal Jamal received her Ph.D. in Political Science with a specialization in Comparative Politics from McGill University. Dr. Jamal used her time as a Sultan Post-Doctoral Fellow at the CMES to work on two articles, one published in the journal of *Comparative Political Studies* and one forthcoming in the *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, and to begin revisions on her dissertation, "After the 'Peace Processes': Foreign Donor Assistance and the Political Economy of Marginalization in Palestine and El Salvador" for publication. Dr. Jamal's dissertation, which was the co-winner of the best research fieldwork award for the comparative democratization section of the American Political Science Association, explores the circumstances under which foreign donor assistance is more likely to contribute to the strengthening of civil society and the deepening of democracy.

Since her Sultan Post-Doctoral Fellowship, Dr. Jamal has served as a research fellow at the Dubai School of Government and as a visiting scholar at Harvard University's Dubai Initiative at the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs. She is currently an assistant professor of Political Science at James Madison University, and serves as a member of the Middle East Studies Association's Committee for Academic Freedom.

## Dr. Istvan Kristó-Nagy, 2007-2008



Istvan Kristó-Nagy received his Ph.D. in Arabic Studies from Université de Toulouse 2, Le Mirail, (France) and Eötvös Lóránd University (Hungary). István's research as a Sultan Post-Doctoral Fellow focused on the cultural and social history of the formative and classical period of Islam. His book, based on his work there, *La pensée d'Ibn al-Muqaffa<sup>c</sup>. Un « agent double » dans le monde persan et arabe*, Collection *Studia Arabica*, Éditions de Paris, is forthcoming.

Dr. Kristó-Nagy is currently a research fellow in the Legitimate and Illegitimate Violence in Islamic Thought Project at the Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies of the University of Exeter and has recently been appointed as a lecturer of Arabic and Islamic Studies at the same institute. His research interests have expanded to include Arabic wisdom literature and the *adab* in general, the struggle and interaction between dualism and monotheism, the intellectual's and artist's roles in Islamic civilizations along with a comparison with its Western counterpart, and patterns in art reflecting patterns in thought and patterns in society.

**Dr. Maria Paniconi, 2007-2008**



Maria Paniconi completed her Ph.D. at the University Ca' Foscari in Venice, Italy. Her dissertation was titled "Narrating Disenchantment: Narrative Irony in 1980s and 1990s Egyptian Novels." Her research project while a Sultan Post-Doctoral Fellow was titled, "*Bildungsroman* Tradition in Arabic Novel: a Form to Narrate Modernity." She analyzed a corpus of novels dating to the first half of the twentieth century to try to determine how the Arabic *Bildungsroman* realized a form of modern symbolic narration.

Dr. Paniconi is now a researcher at L'Univeristà degli Studi di Macerata, Italy in the Department of Linguistics, Literature and Philology. Her most recent book is, "*Modernità Arabe. Nazione, narrazione, nuovi soggetti nel romanzo Egiziano*" [Arab Modernity: Nation, Narration, and New Subjects in the Egyptian Novel] (Messina: Mesogea, 2012).

## **Dr. Asya El-Meehy, 2008-2009**



Asya El-Meehy earned her Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Toronto. While a Sultan Post-Doctoral Fellow at the CMES, she revised her dissertation, “Egypt’s Politics of Entrenchment: The Case of the Social Fund for Development,” which comparatively analyzed the contemporary politics of social welfare in the semi-rentier authoritarian states of Egypt and Jordan.

Dr. El-Meehy has received several fellowships in addition to the Sultan Post-Doctoral fellowship, including the Ford Foundation Fellowship, International Development Research Center Dissertation Fellowship, Andrew Mellon Post-Doctoral Fellowship at Wesleyan University, and most recently a research grant from the Arab Reform Initiative. She has leadership roles in the American Political Science Association, the Middle East Studies Association, Cambridge University’s Gulf Research Center (UK), and the Center for Strategic Studies in Jordan.

In 2010 Dr. El-Meehy became an assistant professor of Political Science in the New College of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences at Arizona State University. She has written several academic articles since then and is currently working on a book manuscript titled, “Bread, Freedom and Social Justice! Egypt’s Politics of Retrenchment Under Mubarak.” In 2012, she was selected to join the United Nations Secretary General’s staff at the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA).



**Dr. Jennifer E. Jacobs, 2009-2010**



Jennifer Jacobs received her Ph.D. in Linguistic Anthropology from the University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Jacobs' dissertation was titled, "Intangible Cultural Heritage in Jordan: Considerations from the Acoustic Realm," and her work while a Sultan Post-Doctoral Fellow at the CMES traced the material ways that ideas of "tradition," "affect," and "social-personhood" are manifested and shared in the Levantine region of the Middle East. Dr. Jacobs' research is interdisciplinary, combining the study of music, performance, anthropology and linguistics.

Immediately following her tenure as a Sultan Post-Doctoral Scholar, Dr. Jacobs taught the course Language and Culture in Middle Eastern Societies at UC Berkeley.

## **Dr. Zainab Saleh, 2010-2011**



Zainab Saleh holds an M.A., M.Phil, and Ph.D. in Anthropology from Columbia University. Over the course of her academic career, she has received several awards, scholarships, and fellowships, including the Amal Saidi Honor Award from the American University in Beirut, a dissertation fieldwork grant from the Wenner-Gren Foundation, and the School of Arts and Sciences Fellowship from Columbia University, among others. Dr. Saleh has worked for the Institute for Social and Economic Research and Policy, as well as the Barnard Center for Research on Women at Columbia. During her tenure as a Sultan Post-Doctoral Fellow at the CMES, she refined her dissertation, titled, "Iraqi Exiles in the U.K.: Nation Building, Violence, and Identity," for publication.

Dr. Saleh is now a visiting assistant professor in the Department of Anthropology at Haverford College, where in Fall 2012 she taught a course called "Gender & Sexuality in the Middle East." In Spring 2013, she will teach "Memory, History, Anthropology". For 2012-13, she is organizing her Mellon Symposium, "Shades of Occupation: Iraq After 10 Years" to be held Friday, March 29th, 2013.