



TABLE OF CONTENTS:

- 1 Director's Note
- 2 Event Highlights
- 4 Student Updates
- 8 Readings in Islamic Studies
- 10 Announcements

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION:

Robert Crews
Director

Burçak Keskin-Kozat
Associate Director

Orit Mohamed
Program Coordinator

Mark Rapacz
Communications Coordinator

Sherif Ibrahim
Student Assistant

**The Sohaib and Sara Abbasi
Program in Islamic Studies**
Stanford University
Stanford Global Studies Division
417 Galvez Mall
Encina Hall West, Room 214
Stanford, CA 94305-6045

<http://islamicstudies.stanford.edu>
email: abbasiprogram@stanford.edu



DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Robert Crews

Associate Professor, Department of History

In 1776, Thomas Jefferson voiced support for the idea that Muslims could become full-fledged American citizens. As Denise Spellberg, the inaugural speaker in our 2014-2015 "Islam in America Lecture Series," explains in *Thomas Jefferson's Qur'an: Islam and the Founders* (Knopf, 2013), Jefferson backed the inclusion of Muslims—alongside Jews and Catholics—in a political order that would eventually accept Muslim immigrants as citizens. Paradoxically, slave-owners such as George Washington were unaware that their plantations were already inhabited by Muslim slaves. Originally captured in West Africa, these Muslims had been since the seventeenth century a crucial part of American life - and a fundamental cornerstone of the young nation's wealth.

This kind of scholarship matters. At a moment when various political movements aggressively challenge the citizenship of American Muslims, and when headlines about ISIS, Boko Haram, Al-Shabaab, and the Taliban scream to us from the news media, our need to seek deeply informed and contextualized knowledge of Islam and Muslim societies could not be greater. In sponsoring public events and conferences on these themes, the Abbasi Program has worked to shed light on the crises that have been so important for global politics over the past year. But turmoil and militancy are not the only keys to understanding our increasingly interconnected world. Reflecting our strong commitment to studying Islamic cultures and societies in diverse contexts, we were also delighted to host the celebrated novelist Mohsin Hamid and the remarkable Qawwali musician Asif Ali Khan. In the new year our attention turns to Islam and the Arts in Indonesia, and our "Islam in America Lecture Series" continues to explore the past and present of the Muslim communities in the U.S.

It is a pleasure to draw attention to three special features of this newsletter that highlight the Abbasi Program's role in promoting research in Islamic studies at Stanford and in serving as a resource for the broader public. We invite you to read about our students who received grants from the program to conduct fieldwork and pursue language study around the globe (pp. 4-7). Also, we have asked our affiliates to share with us reading recommendations that will take us beyond the headlines to offer a more nuanced understanding of the great complexity and sophistication of Islam and Muslim societies in our world today (pp. 8-9). Finally, we are delighted to introduce *Kaleidoscope: Reflections on Islam*, an on-demand radio show hosted by Umbreen Bhatti (p. 11). The first episode of the podcast offers a revealing portrait of Jefferson and the rich history of Muslims in America.

Many thanks for your support of Islamic Studies at Stanford.



AN EVENING WITH AWARD WINNING AUTHOR MOHSIN HAMID

In March 2014, we hosted Mohsin Hamid, the internationally acclaimed author of *Moth Smoke*, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, and *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia*. His award-winning fiction has been featured on bestseller lists, adapted for the cinema, shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize, and translated into over 30 languages. His essays and short stories have appeared in many national and international outlets, including *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, and *The New Yorker*. His visit was supported by the Center for South Asia, the Stanford Initiative for Religious and Ethnic Understanding and Coexistence, the President's Fund, the Center for the Comparative Study of Race and Ethnicity, the Department of Religious Studies, and the Taube Center for Jewish Studies. A recording of the event is available at <http://vimeo.com/96105627>.



BEYOND THE PUBLIC SPHERE IN AFRICA

In April 2014, our annual conference featured innovative approaches to the study of Islam in Africa, a field that is generating excitement among scholars working on Islam and Muslim societies around the globe. Co-sponsored by the Center for African Studies, the program convened scholars from Africa, North America, and Europe to examine the multiple contexts in which African men and women have imagined varied avenues of political engagement and religious activism over the past hundred years. Through close readings of photography, poetry, women's reformist tracts, memoirs, the writings of clerics, and other sources, the participants explored the utility of the concept of a "public sphere" in illuminating the complexity and sophistication of Muslim politics in Africa in the modern era. Papers abstracts are available on our website (<http://goo.gl/oHV5sl>).

POLITICAL CRISIS IN THE SAHEL

In November 2013, we hosted a panel discussion, in collaboration with the Center for African Studies, on the contemporary political scene in Mali and West Africa. Jeremy Keenan (University of London) and Greg Mann (Columbia University) examined the origins of turmoil in the region, highlighting the ways that states have used charges of "terrorism" and demonized marginal groups (principally the Tuareg) to exert political control over a vast space that was further destabilized by the European- and U.S.-backed overthrow of Muammar Qaddafi in Libya in 2011.



photos by Orit Mohamed and Kimberly Ambayec



Qawwali Music with the Asif Ali Khan Ensemble



Denise Spellberg, "Thomas Jefferson's Qur'an: Islam and the Founders"



"Crisis in the Middle East"



Robert Crews, "Globalizing the Afghan Shia"



Autumn 2014 Welcome Reception



Spring 2014 End of the Year Reception



Sameer Ali, "Ethics and Philosophy in the Nuzhat-nama-i 'Ala'i"

RELIGION, ETHNICITY AND PROTESTS IN ETHIOPIA

The purpose of my fieldwork in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia was to interview people and collect relevant data on the recent surge of Muslim protests in the country. I also initiated a collaborative project with a local university to uncover how the Muslim protests compare with others in the country (including those led by students or ethnic activists), and to interrogate why some protests turned deadly while others remained non-violent, and to understand the motives and ethnic composition of the protestors. We also sought to uncover why the spatial distribution of the protests were concentrated in specific localities, and finally, why the protests did not occur in some cities with historically large Muslim populations.

My interviews were also extremely informative as they provided me with an in-depth understanding of the symbolic meaning this movement had for all those it affected, above and beyond what observational data could tell me. Due to the fact that ethnicity is the primary and most salient identity of individuals in Ethiopia, it was surprising that people were able to mobilize and protest under a collective and united Muslim identity that transcended any ethnic tensions. These protests not only symbolized the disenfranchisement and marginalization of the Muslim community: they also suggest the need to revisit our understanding of Christian-Muslim relations in Ethiopia.

The Abbasi grant has allowed me to gain the skills necessary not only to build my quantitative and qualitative skills in the field but also to cultivate the interpersonal skills I need to conduct fieldwork in developing countries. I was confronted with different personalities and diverse life-histories. This funding allowed me not only to have conversations with these people but also to engage with them over time in order to build working relationships. In this sense, this experience also contributed to my professional development. These skills will be transferable to my future fieldwork abroad and the connections I was able to make in the country will also aid me in my future research.



MARLETTE JACKSON

PhD Candidate

Department of Political Science

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS 2015–16 POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP ISLAM IN AFRICA

We invite applications for a one-year postdoctoral position for a scholar working on Islam in Africa in any time-period and region and in any discipline. The fellow will teach one course in the Department of History, pursue his/her own research, participate in the activities of Stanford Center for African Studies and Stanford Global Studies Division, and contribute to the intellectual life on campus. Visit our website for more details (<http://goo.gl/pcLlff>).



NISRIN ELAMIN ABDELRAHMAN

PhD Candidate
Department of Anthropology

SUFI SHAYKHS AND LAND DISPUTES IN SUDAN

With the generous support of the Abbasi Program, I spent seven weeks conducting fieldwork in Sudan on a project that examines the roles played by Sufi shaykhs in mediating land disputes. My dissertation explores how recent acquisitions of large tracts of Sudan's most fertile, cultivated land by foreigners - including Saudi, Gulf Arab and Turkish agribusiness investors - are reshaping social relations. In particular, I am interested in how different understandings of Islam, notions of belonging and the law are invoked, reconfigured and contested through land disputes. How are these claim-making processes reconfiguring social relations among government officials, Muslim investors, absentee landowners, smallholder farmers and landless workers across gender and ethnic lines? Building on this fieldwork, I hope to contribute to a growing literature on foreign land grabs by understanding this new, yet old, phenomenon, not merely as resource extraction imposed by Western investors on poor, African nations, but as a set of historically situated interactions, practices and contestations.

We live in an era in which a sensationalist media discourse continuously draws our attention toward sectarian religious conflict in Muslim societies. I therefore feel honored and grateful to have received the program's invaluable support to develop a dissertation project that explores Sufi Muslim mediations and practices that foster critical alliances for resolving conflicts over land and for building the foundations of a sustainable peace in war-torn Sudan.

LEARNING ARABIC IN JORDAN

With my Abbasi Program grant, I traveled to Jordan for intensive Arabic language study. During my three weeks in Jordan's capital of Amman, my plans were structured around studying Arabic and gaining direct exposure to the history, culture, and modern politics of the Middle East. In my coursework, I focused on the intricacies of the Levantine dialect and Jordanian colloquial Arabic, while practicing reading and writing media in Modern Standard Arabic.

As an Egyptian-Palestinian born and raised in Chicago, Arabic is predominantly spoken in my home, and trips to Cairo to visit relatives have ensured that my family's native tongue and culture were integral to my upbringing. But prior to this grant, my heritage-acquired Arabic had been limited to the Egyptian dialect. Unable to read and write, or converse in the universal Modern Standard Arabic, my limited exposure to other dialects challenged my Arabic studies. Arabic emersion in an Islamic-country where 'ammiyya'- colloquial, or non-Standard Arabic—is not my familiar Egyptian, allowed me to fine-tune my ears to the differences in dialect, and to diversify my comprehension and communication skills to other variations of the language. My expanding ability to communicate with people from throughout the Arab world, and my developing ability to read, write and discuss formal Arabic have provided me the foundation to build my future professional Arabic studies. I look forward to continuing to build upon this foundation: to engage in Arabic scholarship and to participate in research on Islamic studies and politics. I sincerely thank the Abbasi Program in Islamic Studies for the invaluable experiences and opportunities provided to me.



LINA IBRAHIM

Junior
Department of Mechanical Engineering



Madihah Akhter
(Ph.D. Student, History)
Fieldwork, United Kingdom



Alexa Andaya
(Sophomore, Political Science)
Intensive Arabic training, Morocco



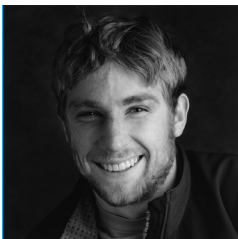
Alexandra Crerend
(Sophomore)
Intensive Arabic training, Oman



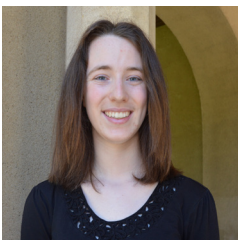
Nisrin Elamin
(Ph.D. Student, Anthropology)
Fieldwork, Sudan



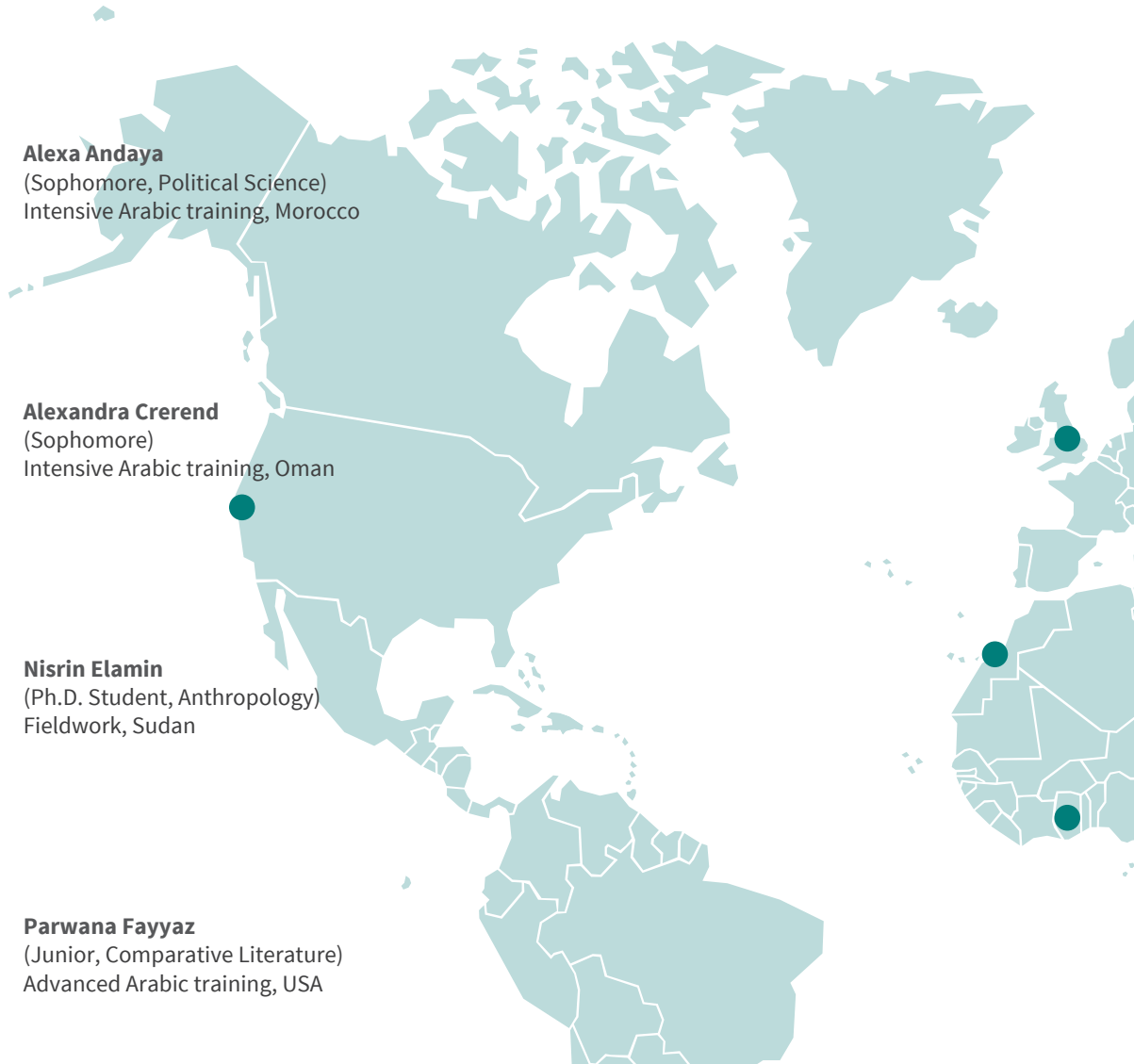
Parwana Fayyaz
(Junior, Comparative Literature)
Advanced Arabic training, USA



David Gilbert
(Ph.D. Student, Anthropology)
Fieldwork, Indonesia



Rebecca Gruskin
(Ph.D. Student, History)
Fieldwork, Tunisia



KEEP TABS ON THE ABBASI PROGRAM



Find us on Facebook:

<http://facebook.com/abbasiprogram>



Follow us on Twitter:

<http://twitter.com/abbasiprogram>



Watch us on Vimeo:

<http://vimeo.com/channels/236924>



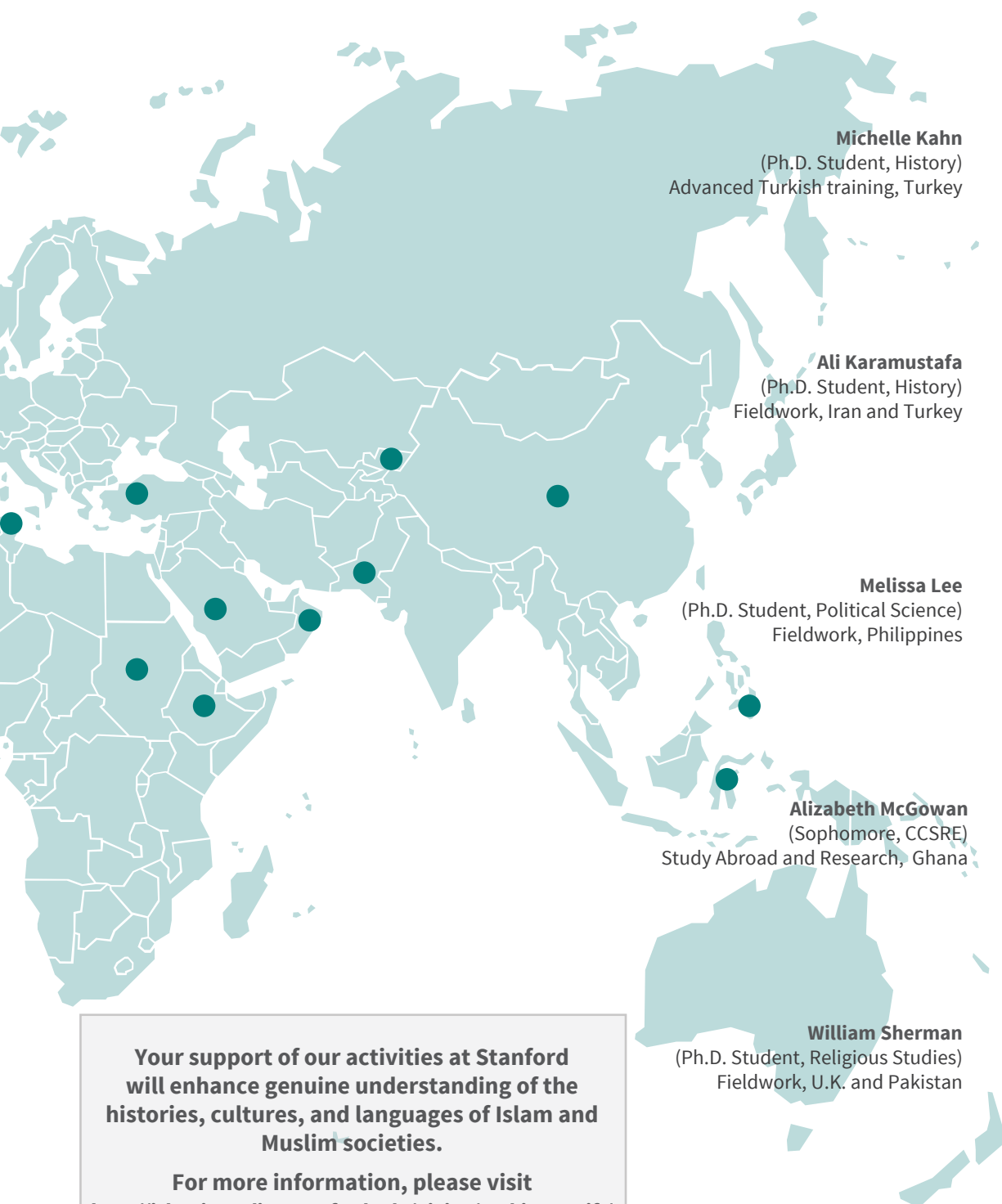
Browse our iTunes U collection:

<http://goo.gl/iR08F>

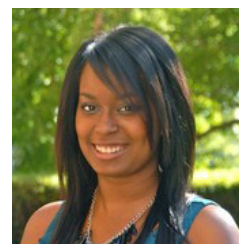


Join our e-mail list:

abbasiprogram@stanford.edu



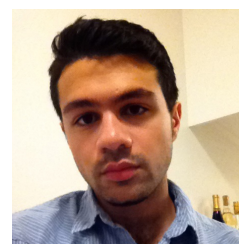
Marlette Jackson
(Ph.D. Student, Political Science)
Fieldwork, Ethiopia



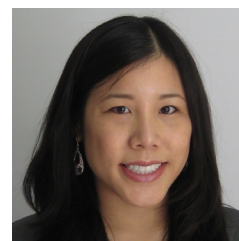
Michelle Kahn
(Ph.D. Student, History)
Advanced Turkish training, Turkey



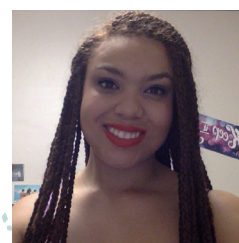
Ali Karamustafa
(Ph.D. Student, History)
Fieldwork, Iran and Turkey



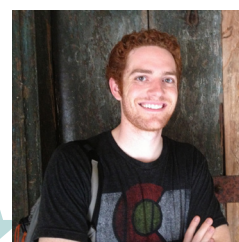
Melissa Lee
(Ph.D. Student, Political Science)
Fieldwork, Philippines



Alizabeth McGowan
(Sophomore, CCSRE)
Study Abroad and Research, Ghana



William Sherman
(Ph.D. Student, Religious Studies)
Fieldwork, U.K. and Pakistan



Grace Zhou
(Ph.D. Student, Anthropology)
Fieldwork, Kyrgyzstan and China



Your support of our activities at Stanford will enhance genuine understanding of the histories, cultures, and languages of Islam and Muslim societies.

For more information, please visit
<http://islamicstudies.stanford.edu/giving/making-a-gift/>

or contact our
Associate Director
Dr. Burçak Keskin-Kozat
(burcak@stanford.edu)

RECOMMENDED READINGS

We have asked faculty and graduate students to help us identify resources that will take readers beyond the headlines and allow a deeper perspective on some of the most pressing topics related to the study of Islam and Muslim societies around the globe today.

JOEL BEININ

Department of History

Two retired army officers, Lt. General Daniel Bolger and Colonel Andrew Bacevich, agree that the United States lost both the Afghanistan and Iraq Wars. Bolger believes that the military commanders, with the exception of David Petraeus, were competent and well meaning. Bolger believes the United States lost because the military is not designed to fight those kinds of wars. Bacevich argues a fundamentally mistaken Middle East policy and illusions about what military power can achieve there are more substantial causes of failure.

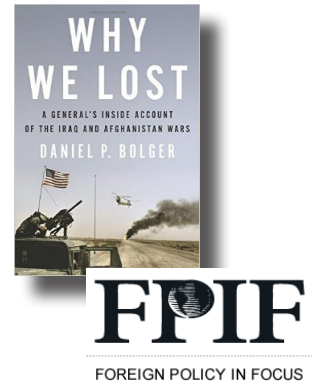
DANIEL P. BOLGER

Why We Lost: A General's Account of the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars
Houghton and Mifflin Harcourt, 2014

and

ANDREW BACEVICH

"Five Lies Washington Tells Itself About the Middle East"
Foreign Policy in Focus (<http://fpif.org/malarkey-potomac/>)



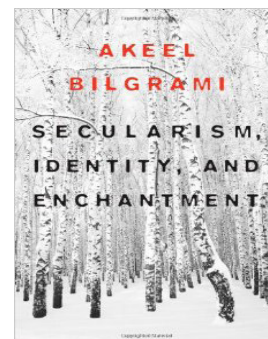
AISHWARY KUMAR

Department of History

A rare work that combines insights from analytic philosophy and intellectual history to assess the moral psychology of religious strife (and tolerance) of our times. Also places the long history of western scientific temperament in dialogue with those currents within Romanticism—using Gandhi and the early Marx—that might together make possible, beyond the dichotomies of Orientalism and Occidentalism, a new understanding of what it means today to be a Muslim.

AKEEL BILGRAMI

Secularism, Identity, and Enchantment
Harvard University Press, 2014



JESSICA CHEN

PhD Candidate, Department of Religious Studies

Thum's book offers a historically nuanced understanding of Uyghurs and their relationship to the Chinese state, while Elias's book addresses the question of art and representation in Islam from a rich historical perspective. I find both authors to be relatively accessible while still addressing the complexity of these issues.

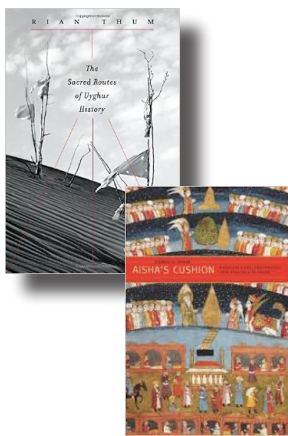
RIAN THUM

The Sacred Routes of Uyghur History
Harvard University Press, 2014

and

JAMAL ELIAS

Aisha's Cushion: Religious Art, Perception and Practice in Islam
Harvard University Press, 2012



ROBERT CREWS

Department of History

Jadaliyya is an essential resource for critical analysis of contemporary events in the Middle East and North Africa. In The Audacious Ascetic, Flagg Miller brilliantly analyzes the audiocassette archive left behind by bin Laden and his associates to raise crucial questions about the movement and its entanglement with Western media and security agencies.

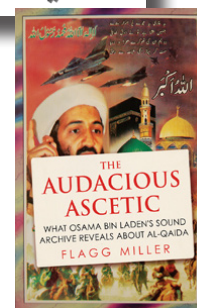
JADALIYYA
JADALIYYA.COM



and

FLAGG MILLER

The Audacious Ascetic: What Osama Bin Laden's Sound Archive Reveals about al-Qaeda
Hurst Publishers, forthcoming



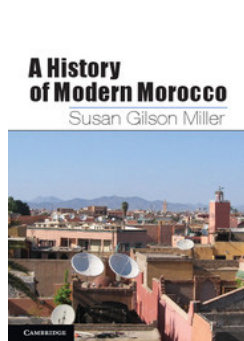
DIANA DAKHLALLAH

PhD Candidate, Department of Sociology

This book engages with historical works both by presenting content as well as by discussing the problems with, and underlying assumptions about, the historiography on Morocco to date. She also highlights what she considers to be the key inhibiting factors that have constrained scholarship on Morocco to date. Highly recommended.

SUSAN GILSON MILLER

A History of Modern Morocco
Cambridge University Press, 2013



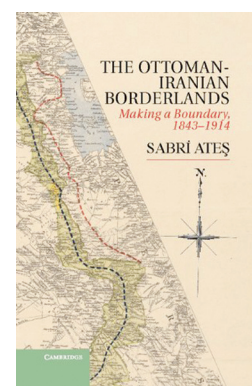
FIRAT BOZÇALI

PhD Candidate, Department of Anthropology

Sabri Ateş delicately unpacks the contingent history of diplomatic and cartographical demarcation of international borders across the Ottoman and Iranian Empires.

SABRI ATEŞ

Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands: Making a Boundary 1843-1914
Cambridge University Press, 2013



WANT TO READ MORE?

Find out what our faculty and graduate students are working on:

<http://islamicstudies.stanford.edu/associated-faculty>

<http://islamicstudies.stanford.edu/graduate-students>

RECENT PUBLICATIONS BY AFFILIATED FACULTY

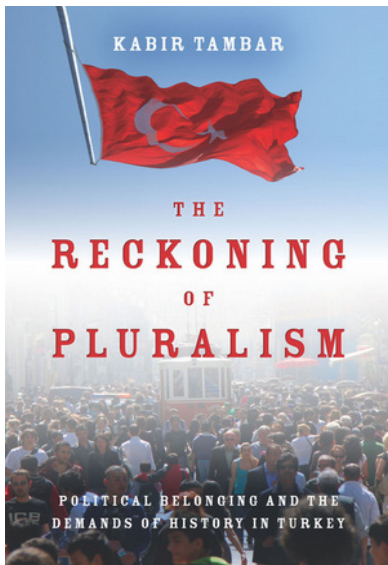
SHAHZAD BASHIR, "On Islamic Time: Rethinking Chronology in the Historiography of Muslim Societies," *History and Theory* 53, no. 4 (December 2014).

LISA BLAYDES, "How Does Islamic Local Governance Affect the Lives of Women? A Comparative Study of Two Cairo Neighborhoods," *Governance* 24 (July 2014).

JOEL BEININ, "Les ouvriers et les soulèvements arabes de 2011," *Le Mouvement Social* no. 245 (2014).

ROBERT D. CREWS, "Moscow and the Mosque: Co-opting Muslims in Putin's Russia," *Foreign Affairs* (March/April 2014).

KABIR TAMBAR, *The Reckoning of Pluralism: Political Belonging and the Demands of History in Turkey* (Stanford University Press, 2014).



KABIR TAMBAR's *The Reckoning of Pluralism* centers on the case of Turkey's Alevi community, a sizeable Muslim minority in a Sunni majority state. Alevi have seen their loyalty to the state questioned and experienced sectarian hostility, and yet their community is also championed by state ideologues as bearers of the nation's folkloric heritage.

NEW STAFF HIGHLIGHT

ORIT MOHAMED, PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Orit received her B.A. in Political Economy from the University of California, Berkeley. Her interest in community organizing took her to the East Bay Alliance for a Sustainable Economy (EBASE), where she researched the working conditions and social impact of a recycling project in Fremont. She worked as the program assistant at UC Berkeley's Center for Latin American Studies, where she helped coordinate many high profile events, maintained online publications, and provided public outreach for two years. Before joining UC Berkeley, Orit was actively involved in De Anza College's Student Body Senate and Black Student Union. She is deeply interested in Islamic Studies, and we are delighted and excited to have her on board.



WELCOMING FOURTEEN NEW GRADUATE STUDENTS

MASHAIL MALIK (Political Science): Contentious Politics, Political Violence, International Security, Democratization, Civil-Military Relations, South Asia

SALMA MOUSA (Political Science): Secularism, Religious Minorities, Democratization, Sectarianism, Egypt

CHRISTIANA PARREIRA (Political Science): Ethnic/Religious Identity Formation, Political Mobilization, International Development, Eastern Mediterranean

MADIHA SHAUKAT (Religious Studies): Islamic Mysticism, Poetry and Poetics, Medieval Persianate World

KEREM USSAKLI (Anthropology): Sociocultural Anthropology, Law & Sovereignty, Literary Studies, Ethics, Kurds

SCOTT WILLIAMSON (Political Science): Regime Transition, Lustration, Political Islam, Egypt, Civil-Military Relations

DUYGU YILDIRIM (History): Early modern Ottoman history, History of Science in Islam, Intellectual History

TANVIR AHMED (Religious Studies): Sufism, Shi'ism, Pre-Modern Religious Landscapes, Dissent

DEAN CHAHIM (Anthropology): Afghanistan, Political Economy, Development, Science and Technology Studies, Political Ecology

BYRON GRAY (Anthropology): South Asian Islam, Shari'ah as State and Non-State Law, Islamic Feminism, Transnationalism

HANNAH HIGHFILL (Religious Studies): Sufi practice and Intellectual History in Turkic and Persianate societies

SHERIF IBRAHIM (African Studies): Islam, Africa, Postcolonialism, Human Rights, Revolution

MEADE KLINGENSMITH (History): Modern British History, the British Empire in the Middle East, Colonialism, Nationalism

MÉLISANDE GENAT (History): Iraqi history, Kurdish studies, Development Economics, Rural Sociology, Collectivization in Iraq, Rural Land Reform

INTRODUCING KALEIDOSCOPE

How do people engage with Islam today? How do they experience it, interact with it, and think about it? What does it mean to be Muslim? The Abbasi Program in Islamic Studies is exploring the answers to those questions and more in **KALEIDOSCOPE**, our new podcast, hosted by **UMBREEN BHATTI**.

In our first episode, we talked to historian **PROF. DENISE SPELLBERG**, author of *Thomas Jefferson's Quran: Islam and the Founders*, during her November visit to Stanford as a part of the Program's "**ISLAM IN AMERICA LECTURE SERIES**." Prof. Spellberg shared her reflections on where we are on religious tolerance today. In future episodes, we'll be talking with authors, artists, Stanford students, and other guests.

UMBREEN BHATTI is a 2014 John S. Knight Journalism Fellow at Stanford University. Prior to her fellowship, Umbreen co-founded *islawmix*, a nonprofit effort to demystify Islamic law in American news media, and practiced as a civil rights lawyer.



soundcloud.com/kaleidoscope-show



@Kaleido_Show



Kaleidoscope: Reflections on Islam



kaleidoscope@lists.stanford.edu

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WINTER 2015 WORKSHOP SERIES: ISLAM AND THE ARTS IN INDONESIA

Encina Hall West, Room 208, 12:15 pm
616 Serra Mall, Stanford

January 29

LAURIE MARGOT-ROSS (Cornell University)

March 5

ANNE RASMUSSEN (The College of William and Mary)

WINTER 2015: ISLAM IN AMERICA LECTURE SERIES

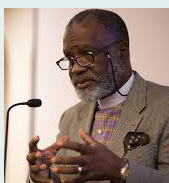


January 20, 7:00 PM

Stanford Humanities Center (424 Santa Teresa)

AMINA WADUD (Virginia Commonwealth University)

“Gender Jihad”



January 29, 7:00 PM

Encina Central, CISAC Conference Room (616 Serra Street)

SHERMAN JACKSON (University of Southern California)

“Shariah and Democracy”



February 10, 6:30 PM

Pigott Hall, Room 113 (Building 260, 450 Serra Mall)

RACHEL GILLUM (Stanford University)

“Muslim-American Attitude Formation Toward U.S. Law Enforcement”

FREE AND OPEN
TO THE PUBLIC

2015 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

THE MIDDLE EAST, NORTH AFRICA AND THE WORLD 1907-2008

February 27, 2015

Encina Hall CISAC Central Conference Room (616 Serra Street)

OPEN ONLY TO STANFORD AFFILIATES

Conference Website: <http://goo.gl/3tYqPn>

This one-day conference will explore the global history of the Middle East and North Africa with a focus on political economy, ideas, institutions, global Palestine, and the circulation of popular cultures.

HISHAM AIDI (Columbia University)

JOEL BEININ (Stanford University)

ROBERT CREWS (Stanford University)

YOAV DI-CAPUA (University of Texas at Austin)

OMNIA EL SHAKRY (University of California, Davis)

ILANA FELDMAN (George Washington University)

TOBY JONES (Rutgers University)

LALEH KHALILI (University of London)

PAUL A. SILVERSTEIN (Reed College)

BRANDON WOLFE-HONNICUTT
(California State University, Stanislaus)

[Co-sponsored by Department of History, Stanford Humanities Center, and CDDRL Program on Arab Reform and Democracy]