25 - 26 February
Knox Hall, Columbia University

Keynote Lecture by Talal Asad
“Thinking About Secularization, Equality, Translation”

SPONSORED BY
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Heyman Center for the Humanities
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GSAS (Graduate School of the Arts and Sciences)
IAS (Institute for African Studies)
MESAAS (The Department of Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies)
The Department of Religion
# PROGRAM OF EVENTS

**Thursday, February 25**

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>9:30 - 10:00 am</td>
<td>Breakfast</td>
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<td>10:00 am - 12:00 pm</td>
<td>Citizenship and its Discontents, with Professor Partha Chatterjee, Knox 208</td>
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<td>10:30 am - 12:30 pm</td>
<td>Reflections on Shahab Ahmed's <em>What is Islam?</em> with Professor Brinkley Messick, Knox 207</td>
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<td>1:00 pm - 2:30 pm</td>
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<td>Beyond Language: Philology, Politics and History, with Professor Sheldon Pollock, Knox 208</td>
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<td>Premodern Muslim Thought, with PhD Candidate Omar Farahat, Knox 207</td>
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<td>4:30 - 5:30 pm</td>
<td>Coffee Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>5:30 - 7:00 pm</td>
<td>Keynote Lecture with Professor Talal Asad, Knox 509</td>
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DETAILED SCHEDULE, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 25

Panel 1: Citizenship and its Discontents,
10 am - 12 pm, Knox 208
Discussant: Partha Chatterjee, Professor, Anthropology and MESAAS
Moderator: Hina Muneeruddin, MA Student, Islamic Studies and Hanine Hassan, PhD Candidate, MESAAS

*Daesh and its Experiment with Curriculum: The Fall of Education, the Emergence of the Model Citizen and the Rise of the “Caliphate”*
Angela Haddad, MA Student, Georgetown University

*Dependent Development: Law and Sovereignty in Sopore, Kashmir*
Amrita Sharma, PhD Candidate, Jawaharlal Nehru University, and Peerzada Raouf, PhD Candidate, University of Delhi

*Mass Partisanship after the ‘Arab Spring’: Evidence from Tunisia*
Daniel Tavana, PhD Candidate, Princeton University

*Al-Bahar: Water, the Sea, and the Illusion of Water Scarcity*
Randa Wahbe, PhD Candidate, Harvard University

Panel 2: Reflections on Shahab Ahmed's What is Islam?
10:30 am - 12:30 pm, Knox 207
Discussant: Brinkley Messick, Professor, Anthropology and MESAAS
Moderator: Sohaib Khan

*Shahab Ahmed, Talal Asad and the Centrality of Orthodoxy*
Emily Goshey, PhD Candidate, Princeton University

*On Desire and the Islamic in the Age of Capital*
Selim Karlitechkin, PhD Candidate, Columbia University

*Representation and Contradiction: Shahab Ahmed's Search for a Coherent Conception of Islam*
Sohaib Khan, PhD Candidate, Columbia University
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 25 (CONTINUED)

Panel 3: Beyond Language: Philology, Politics and History, 2:30 - 4:30 PM, Knox 208
Discussant: Sheldon Pollock, Arvind Raghunathan Professor of South Asian Studies and Department Chair, MESAAS
Moderator: Samyak Ghosh, PhD Candidate, MESAAS

Making Africa Legible: Kiswahili Arabic and Orthographic Romanization in Colonial Zanzibar
Caitlyn Bolton, PhD Candidate, CUNY Graduate Center

Somewhere in Between: Adi Keissar’s Poetry of Alienation and Arabo-Jewish Identity in Modern Hebrew Literature
W. Sasson Chahanovich, PhD Candidate, Harvard University

Dobhāshī, Or the Case of an Obdurate Category: Philology and Politics in 20th century Bengal
Ahona Panda, PhD Candidate, University of Chicago

The Play of Context: The Single Stanza in Tamil Literary History
Kristina Rogahn, PhD Candidate, UC Berkeley

Panel 4: Premodern Muslim Thought, 2:30 - 4:30 pm, Knox 207
Discussant: Omar Farahat, PhD Candidate, MESAAS
Moderator: Aseel Najib, PhD Candidate, MESAAS

Remaking a Text Through Translation: al-Ghazālī’s Maqāsid al-Falāsifa
Ayse Betul Tekin, PhD, Marmara University

Between Theology and Law: Maṣlaḥa in the Baṣrān Muʿtazili Defence of Prophecy and the Shariʿa
Elizabeth Price, PhD Candidate, Yale University

Operating Principles in Islamic Law: Rīḍā in Hanafi Contract Form.
Brian Wright, PhD Candidate, McGill University
MESAAS Graduate Conference 2016
Keynote Lecture

Talal Asad
Distinguished Professor of Anthropology
CUNY Graduate Center

“Thinking About Secularization, Equality, Translation”

Introduction: Joseph Massad
Professor of Modern Arab Politics
and Intellectual History, MESAAS

Thursday, February 25
5:30 - 7:00 pm
Knox 509
DETAILED SCHEDULE, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 26

Panel 5: On Intellectual History, the Life of Discourse and the Span of an Idea
10 am - 12 pm, Knox 208
Discussant: Sudipta Kaviraj, Professor, Indian Politics and Intellectual History, MESAAS
Moderator: Abram Smith, MA Student, MESAAS

*The Order Without and the Order Within: Kingdoms of Kufr in ‘Abd al-Razzaq Samargandi’s Matla’-i sa’dayn*
Catherine Ambler, PhD Candidate, Columbia University

*The End of Art at the Beginning of Politics; The Mahatma’s Critique of Aesthetics*
Gautham Shiralagi, MSt Student, Oxford University

*Colonial Discourses of Legitimate Violence and Henry Morton Stanley’s Through the Dark Continent, vol 2 (1878)*
Yayra Sumah, PhD Candidate, Columbia University

Panel 6: On Material History: Transmuting Space, Transforming Society
10:00 am - 12:00 pm, Knox 207
Discussant: Allison Busch, Professor, Hindi Literature, and Director of Graduate Studies, MESAAS
Moderator: Aviroop Sengupta, PhD Candidate, MESAAS

*An Eye in the Sky: Aerial Reconnaissance in the North-West Frontier Province, 1916-1936*
Joppan George, PhD Candidate, Princeton University

*Behind the Aura of the Bayanat of the first Palestinian Intifada – Origins of a Social Life*
Thayer Hastings, MA Student, Georgetown University

*The Journey of a Piece of News: Early Private Press in Nineteenth Century Egypt”*
Olga Verlato, MA Student, NYU

Panel 7: Re-Thinking Secularism, Re-Considering Secularization
1:30 - 3:30 pm, Knox 208
Discussant: Ervand Abrahamian, Distinguished Professor of Iranian and Middle Eastern History and Politics, Baruch College, CUNY
Moderator: Sayori Ghoshal, PhD Candidate, MESAAS

*Determining Noise and the Divine in Modern Turkish Law*
Önder Çelik, PhD Candidate, Johns Hopkins University

*The Lebanon Hospital for the Insane: Scientific Treatment Blessed with Divine Help (1898-1914)*
Hratch Kestenian, PhD Candidate, CUNY Graduate Center

*Transhumanism and Embodied Transcendence: Tantra in the Web of Web 2.0*
Sydni Meyer, MA Student, Columbia University

*(De)Secularization in Modernizing Iran*
Navid Zarrinnal, PhD Candidate, Columbia University
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 26 (CONT.)

Panel 8: The Co-constitution of Cultural Representation & Political Change  
1:30 - 3:30 pm, Knox 207  
Discussant: Muhsin al-Musawi, Professor, Arabic Literature, MESAAS  
Moderator: Max Schmookler, PhD Candidate, MESAAS

Poetic Forms, Daring Allegorizations, and Contrasting Histories: Al-Andalus and The Sephardic in the Poetry of Mahmoud Darwish and Federico Garcia Lorca  
Naser Albreeky, BA Student, Rutgers University

Depicting the Refugee: Understanding Perceptions of Syrian Refugees in Jordan  
Skylar Benedict, MA Student, Georgetown University

Transcending Sectarianism, Becoming Lebanese: Counter-Identity Formations in Post-Civil War Lebanon  
Sophie Chamas, PhD Candidate, Oxford University

Culture and Politics: Representations of the Fallah in Post-Colonial Egypt  
Sarah Mousa, MA Student, Georgetown University

Panel 9: Mobility or Disenfranchisement: The Construction and Deconstruction of Gender and Sexuality in Local Contexts, 4 - 6 pm, Knox 208  
Discussant: Rachel McDermott, Professor, Asian & Middle Eastern Cultures, Barnard College  
Moderator: Rabia Ahsin, MA Student, MESAAS

The Imperial Feminist Project: The Women’s Organization of Iran, 1966-1979  
Samira Damavandi, MPhil Candidate, Oxford University

To Fast or Not to Fast: Alternative Subjectivities Of Pregnant Muslim Women in Turkey Between Religious, Scientific and the State Authorities  
Ferhan Gülöglü, PhD Candidate, George Washington University

Deconstructing the Closet: Sexuality and Mobility in Post-Colonial Epistemology and Ontology  
Alexa Liedke, BA/MA Student, University of Virginia

The Egyptian Babu: Britain’s Systematic Policy of Effeminization of the Native Middle-Class in Colonial India and Egypt  
Zoya Waliany, MA Student, Georgetown University

Panel 10: Representation and Visual Culture in Colonial and Postcolonial South Asia, 4 - 6 pm, Knox 207  
Discussant: Debashree Mukherjee, Assistant Professor, Modern South Asian Studies, MESAAS  
Moderator: Uponita Mukherjee, PhD Candidate, MESAAS

A Note of Suspicion: the Bureaucracy of Marginal Intimacy in Sindh  
Ghazal Asif, PhD Candidate, Johns Hopkins University

Syncretic Sights: Locating the Vernacular on Screen in Pre-Partition Lahore  
Anila Gill, MA Student, NYU

Characterizations of South Asian Islam in British India: Implications of Sufi Lines of Divide  
Mohammad Waqas Sajjad, PhD Candidate, Graduate Theological Union, UC Berkeley
Famine-Relief, Hindu Communalism, and the Movement for Pakistan: The Case of the Great Bengal Famine

Abhijit Sarkar, PhD Candidate, Oxford University

Acknowledgements

The organizing committee of the 2016 MESAAS Graduate Conference would like to thank the following people:

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<td>Rabia Ahsin</td>
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- The Department of Religion
Beyond Boundaries: The 2016 MESAAS Graduate Student Conference was organized by Catherine Ambler, Aseel Najib, Rosa Klein-Baer, Abram Smith, and Athena Trainor. Program art by Coco Vonnegut.