Critical Discourses on Islamophobia: 
Symbols, Images and Representations 
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Booth Auditorium 
UC Berkeley Boalt Law School

conference presenter bios

Hishaam Aidi received his PhD in political science from Columbia University, and has taught at Columbia's School of International and Public Affairs, and at the Driskell Center for the Study of the African Diaspora at the University of Maryland, College Park. He is the author of Redeploying the State (Palgrave 2008) a comparative study of privatization and labor movements in Latin America and the Arab world. He is also the editor with Manning Marable of an edited volume titled Black Routes to Islam (Palgrave 2009). As a journalist, he has written for various outlets including Al Jazeera, The New African, ColorLines, Souls and Middle East Report. Dr. Aidi was named a Carnegie Scholar in 2009. He is currently a Lecturer at Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs, and a Global Fellow at the Open Society Foundation.

Hishaam Aidi's research interests include the politics of globalization, North-South relations, and social movements. He is currently researching immigration and youth movements in Europe. He received his PhD in political science from Columbia University, and has taught at Columbia's School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA), and the David C. Driskell Center for the Study of the African Diaspora at the University of Maryland. He has also worked as a consultant on UNDP's Human Development Report. At SIPA, he teaches in the MIA Core course, "Conceptual Foundations of International Politics."

Yaser Ali is a J.D. Candidate at U.C. Berkeley School of Law Berkeley, California Law Practice. Ali was also a summer associate at Sanford Wittels & Heisler LLP and at Public Advocates. Her educational institutions include University of California, Berkeley - School of Law; Harvard University Graduate School of Education; and the University of Florida.

Sumbul Ali-Karamali grew up in Southern California, answering questions about Islam. She holds a B.A. from Stanford University, a J.D from the University of California at Davis, and a graduate degree in Islamic law from the University of London's School of Oriental and African Studies. She has served as a teaching assistant in Islamic Law at SOAS and a research associate at the Centre of Islamic and Middle Eastern Law in London. Her book, "The Muslim Next Door: the Qur'an, the Media, and that Veil Thing," is an academically reliable introduction to what Muslims believe and practice, but one written in the personal, anecdotal, everyday context of growing up Muslim in America.http://www.muslimnextdoor.com

Ayesha AlRifai is an Affiliated Scholar at UC Berkeley, Dean of Education Sciences Faculty and Principal of Ramallah Women Training Center at the United Nations Relief and Works Agency in Ramallah- West Bank where she manages and plans for more than twenty four degree awarding programs and courses offered in a 1000 capacity college solely serving
the young refugee women of Palestine. She earned her doctorate from City University of London-UK in 2005 and worked as an assistant professor at the Public Health Faculty at AlQuds University and guest lecturer at Birzait and Bethlehem Universities in Palestine. Alongside her academic works in the area of public health policy, planning and evaluation AlRifai served as a national consultant in the areas of Gender, Reproductive Health, Policy Research, and Programs Evaluation for UN agencies, national and international, governmental and nongovernmental organizations working in humanitarian, aid and development in Palestine. AlRifai is the author of several academic works, including Palestinian Refugee Women and their Access to Health Care: Gender Perspective. In: Nobody Can Imagine our Longing: Refugees and Immigrants in the Mediterranean, Mintoff Bland ed. (Austin: Plain View Press, 1997) and Palestine: Contexts in Health Policy Discourse (Saarbrücken: VDM Verlag, 2009). This is in addition to numerous smaller pieces in her area of expertise in peer reviewed journals and UN publications. AlRifai is an affiliated member in many professional and activism bodies such as the Association of Women of the Mediterranean Region, International Federation of University Women, and International Union for the Scientific Study of Population.

Sahar F. Aziz joined the faculty of Texas Wesleyan University School of Law in 2011 as an associate professor of law. Prior to joining Texas Wesleyan University School of Law, Professor Aziz was an adjunct professor at the Georgetown University Law Center where she taught national security and civil rights law. Professor Aziz served as a senior policy advisor for the Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) where she worked on law and policy at the intersection of national security and civil rights. Prior to joining DHS, Professor Aziz was an associate at Cohen Milstein Sellers and Toll PLLP in Washington, D.C. where she litigated class action civil rights lawsuits alleging a nationwide pattern and practice of gender discrimination in pay and promotion.

Professor Aziz began her legal career as an associate at WilmerHale in Washington, D.C. where she conducted internal white collar crime investigations and an independent investigation on child trafficking in the Persian Gulf. Professor Aziz clerked for the Honorable Andre M. Davis on the United States District Court for the District of Maryland.

Professor Aziz’s scholarship focuses on the intersection of national security and civil rights law with a focus on the post-9/11 era. Professor Aziz incorporates critical race theory, feminist theory, and constitutional law into her examination of the disparate impact of post-9/11 laws and public policy on ethnic, racial, and religious minority groups in the United States. Professor Aziz’s analyzes these issues in various contexts including immigration, counterterrorism, criminal justice, and civil rights litigation. Professor Aziz applies her scholarship in the American context towards her scholarship on rule of law and democracy promotion in post-revolution Egypt.

Professor Aziz has been featured on CSPAN and Al Jazeera English and published numerous commentaries on national security and civil rights issues issues on CNN.com, the Houston Chronicle, the Huffington Post, Truthout.com, altmuslim.com, the American Constitution Society’s blog, JURIST.com and The Guardian. Professor Aziz has presented her work in various forums including at U.S. Congressional Briefings, the Aspen Institute, the National Endowment for Democracy, the American Bar Association, the National Employment Lawyers Association and the Texas Bar Association.

Professor Aziz earned her J.D. and M.A. in Middle Eastern Studies from the University of Texas. She received her B.S. from the University of Texas in Arlington. She is a board member of the Egyptian American Rule of Law Association.

Publications


"Sticks and Stones, Words That Hurt: Entrenched Stereotypes Eight Years After 9/11," *New York City Law Review* (September 2010). [Hein] [Westlaw] [SSRN]


Courses: National Security, Civil Rights Litigation, National Security & Race in a Post-9/11 America, Torts, Advanced Torts

In 2011-2012, **Dr. Hatem Bazian** was named in the Category for Social Justice as one of The Muslim 500; The World’s Most Influential Muslims by The Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Center. Dr. Hatem Bazian, received his Ph.D. in Philosophy and Islamic Studies from the University of California, Berkeley. Currently, Bazian is a senior lecturer in the Departments of Near Eastern and Ethnic Studies. Dr. Bazian between 2002-2007, also served as an adjunct professor of law at Boalt Hall School of Law at the University of California, Berkeley. He teaches courses on Islamic Law and Society, Islam in America: Communities and Institutions, De-Constructing Islamophobia and Othering of Islam, Religious Studies, and Middle Eastern Studies. In addition to Berkeley, Dr. Bazian is a visiting Professor in Religious Studies at Saint Mary's College of California and adviser to the Religion, Politics and Globalization Center at UC Berkeley as well as Academic Affairs Chair at Zaytuna College of California. In Spring 2009, Dr. Bazian founded at Berkeley the Center for the Study and Documentation of Islamophobia, a research unit dedicated to the systematic study of Othering Islam and Muslims.

Dr. Bazian is known for being an organic intellectual, a term used for academics directly connecting their research to the people; rather than looking down from the ivory tower. Dr. Bazian’s published book, Jerusalem in Islamic Consciousness, is a reflection of his desire to contribute to a better understanding of Muslim attachment and informed political attitudes toward the Sacred City and Palestine in general. Currently, Dr. Bazian is working on two books, Silicon Rush: Documenting Muslim Communities in the the Silicon Valley; and Virtual Internment: Muslims and the War on Terrorism. Bazian most recent publication is a chapter contribution in French on Islamophobia and an entry to Oxford's Human Rights Encyclopedia covering the HR under the Palestinian Authority.

As an activist, Dr. Bazian has played a significant role almost in every human and civil rights movement in the Bay Area, nationally and internationally including the defense of Affirmative Action in California, American With Disabilities Act, Anti-Apartheid, Anti-Globalization Movement, and Central American Solidarity struggles.

Dr. Bazian worked as Editor in Chief of Discourse Magazine, a monthly progressive publication in SF and post 9-11, co-hosted “Islam Today,” a 94.1 KPFA, KBFB in Berkeley and KCF in Fresno weekly radio magazine show covering Islam and its diverse people around the world. Since September 11, he has appeared in many TV and Radio interviews, offered frequent commentary on current affairs and is a regular consultant for the San Francisco Chronicle on stories relating to Palestine, the Arab world, Islam, Muslims and world politics.

As the Executive Director for the CAIR San Francisco Bay Area (CAIR-SFBA) chapter, **Zahra Billoo** strives to promote justice and understanding at local and national levels. In 2009, Zahra joined CAIR-SFBA and immediately embraced her roles as community organizer and civil rights advocate. She frequently provides trainings at local mosques and universities as part of CAIR’s efforts to empower the community, while building bridges with allies on key civil rights issues. Zahra also represents victims of discrimination and advocates for positive policy changes that uphold civil rights for all. In March
2011, at her direction, CAIR-SFBA filed a lawsuit against the Department of Justice challenging their warrantless use of GPS tracking devices to target American Muslims. Her work with CAIR-SFBA has been highlighted in local and national media outlets including KTVU, NBC, CNN, MSNBC, the Christian Science Monitor, and NPR. Most notably, she made waves when she appeared on FOX News’ O'Reilly Factor in Fall 2010 to discuss invasive TSA practices. A 2010 recipient of the San Francisco Minority Bar Coalition’s Unity Award and a 2011 recipient of the South Asian Bar Association of Northern California’s Public Interest Attorney of the Year Award, Zahra has been a devoted labor rights advocate for several years. While in college, she worked with the California Faculty Association on issues including faculty salaries and the defunding of public higher education. While in law school, Zahra was awarded the Peggy Browning Fund Fellowship to work with the National Employment Law Project. Zahra graduated Cum Laude from California State University, Long Beach with degrees in Human Resources Management and Political Science. She earned her J.D. from the University of California, Hastings College of Law, and was admitted to the California Bar in 2009.

Houria Bouteldja is the spokeswoman for the political party in France called Les Indigenes de la Republique. In this interview she talks about issues such as Islamophobia, decolonial feminism, the privilege of solidarity and BDS.

Yasmeen Daifallah is a PhD Candidate at the Political Science department at UC Berkeley. She is also a lecturer at the Faculty of Economics and Political Science at Cairo University. Yasmeen is currently working on a dissertation about contemporary Arab political thought that examines representations of the political subject in the corpus of Mohamed Abed al-Jabiri, Hassan Hanafi, and Abdullah Laroui.

A Kashmiri Muslim woman born in Pakistan, Huma Dar’s first college years were in Beijing, China. From there to Berkeley, with fieldwork and research in India and France, and a postdoc at UBC, Dar locates the center of her work in intellectual and political activism for social justice. Huma Dar’s Ph.D. dissertation is titled: Projecting Desires, Screening Muslims: The Racialized Politics and Poetics of Indian Cinematic Discourses, in the Department of South & South East Asian Studies at the University of California at Berkeley, with Designated Emphases in Women, Gender & Sexuality, and in Film Studies. Dar’s work is focused on the intersections and co-formations of race, religion, class, caste, gender, sexuality, and national politics of South Asia. Dar has also taught and written about South Asian literature and cinema; critical theories of race, gender and sexuality; Muslim femininities and masculinities; Islamophobia, racialization and war; post-colonialism and visuality; transnational feminisms; cultural studies; and critical theory. She is currently a Lecturer in the Asian American & Asian Diasporas Studies Program of Ethnic Studies at UC Berkeley, and in the Film & Digital Media Studies Department at UCSC. Dar is a feature writer at PulseMedia.org, a collaborative political, activist, and academic weblog. She is a founding member and main organizer of the Townsend Center working group on "Muslim Identities & Cultures," 2002-2010, and organized the feminist conference, Boundaries in Question on the theme of Women and War, both at UC Berkeley. Dar has been active in the anti Domestic Violence movement and in student parents’ rights, and was a member of the Executive Board of Directors of Narika, 2001-2006. Dar’s publications include “Cinematic Strategies for a Porno-tropic Kashmir and Some Counter-Archives” in the Journal of Contemporary Theory (Winter 2007) and a book chapter titled “Can a Muslim be an Indian and not a Traitor or a Terrorist?” in Pemberton & Nijhawan (eds.), Shared Idioms, Sacred Symbols: Process, Power, and the Articulation of Identities in South Asia (2009).

Sohail Daulatzai is the co-editor (with Michael Eric Dyson) of Born To Use Mics: Readings Nas’s Illmatic, and is the author of the forthcoming Black Star Crescent Moon: The Muslim International and Black Freedom Beyond America (Minnesota, 2012). He has published in numerous anthologies and journals such as Basketball Jones, The Vinyl Ain’t Final, Souls, Amer-Asia, SAMAR, and Spectator, as well as having written the DVD liner notes to the award-winning documentary Freestyle:
The Art of Rhyme, and the centerpiece for the exhibit catalog Movement: Hip-Hop in L.A., 1980-Now. He teaches in the Department of Film and Media Studies and the Program in African American Studies at the University of California, Irvine.

Nadia Fadil (Belgium) is a postdoctoral fellow at the Sociology Department of the Catholic University of Leuven. Her research deals with the religious practice of second generation Maghrebi, as well as the funding and recognition of mosques. As a sociologist and anthropologist, her work focuses on Muslims in Belgium and Europe and questions of subjectivity, embodiment, multiculturalism and secularism viz Foucault’s notion of governmentality.

Nadia is a well-known public intellectual who challenges Islamophobia, racism and sexism in public debate. She was born in Antwerpen, Belgium to Moroccan-Muslim migrants to Belgium in the labour migration of the sixties. As a scholar/activist she has been involved in networks that have mobilized against the headscarf ban. She is a board member of Ella, a feminist interfaith and interethnic women’s organization that challenges liberal and eurocentric feminisms and has been prominent in challenging the headscarf ban. She also works closely with BOEH! (Baas Over Eigen Buik) a platform of Muslim and non-Muslim feminists that was created in 2007 to challenge the headscarf ban in the municipality of Antwerp. She has written for the Belgian daily Le Soir (2009-2010) and Mo Magazine (2010) and is co-author of a book on the multicultural debate in Belgium (Leeuw in een Kooi, 2009, Meulenhoff-Manteau).

Sr. Marianne Farina is a Catholic religious of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Cross, Notre Dame, Indiana. She is an assistant professor at the Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology in Berkeley, California. She received a Master of Arts in Pastoral Theology from Santa Clara University and a Ph.D. in Theological Ethics from Boston College. With more than 20 years of experience in education and pastoral ministry, Sister Marianne has worked in education and social development projects that promote social justice and interfaith dialogue. She has traveled to Africa and Indonesia as a delegate and teacher covering topics such as "Religion and Democracy," "Methods for Cross-Cultural Understanding," "Interfaith Dialogue," and "Human Rights." Her areas of expertise include Catholic Moral Theology, Philosophical Ethics, Islamic Philosophy, and Christian-Muslim Dialogue.

Keith P. Feldman, is Assistant Professor of Ethnic Studies at the University of California, Berkeley. At its core, my current research program is interested in both theorizing and narrating the many connections between U.S. imperial culture and changing geopolitical engagements with West Asia, North Africa, the Arab and Muslim worlds, and Israel/Palestine. Most central to this program is my current book-length manuscript, entitled Special Relationships: Israel, Palestine and U.S. Imperial Culture. Here I analyze a broad archive of texts that have mediated and repeatedly contested the entanglement between the post-civil rights United States and Israel’s post-1967 occupation of Palestinian territory. Taking a transnational approach to this entanglement, the book theorizes and historicizes the mutual constitution of U.S. and Israeli national exceptionalisms and the cultural politics of relation that contested these connections across U.S., North African, and West Asian geographies. It demonstrates how, through novels, poems, memoirs, letters, posters, speeches, performances, and policy prescriptions, heated transnational debates about the meaning and function of genocide, human rights, and decolonization were central to addressing purportedly “domestic” U.S. concerns around race, national belonging, and social justice. In advancing this argument, Special Relationships tracks processes of comparative racialization (of Arabs, Muslims, Palestinians, “terrorism,” Whiteness, Jews, and African Americans) that were both routed through and interrupted by imaginative geographies incommensurate with the nation-state.

I am also pursuing two related research projects. The first addresses the visual culture of a purportedly “post-racial imaginary,” from the public print culture of political iconography in the age of Obama to the scopic regime produced by the drone wars at the borders of U.S. imperial cartography. The second project is a collaboration with several scholars across the United States to theorize the “race/religion/war” nexus as it has been forged transnationally. We ask how race and religion are used to establish war as a strategy of political power, and conversely how the uses of war stabilize the epistemologies of race and religion as intimately linked organizing categories of social life.
In addition, I am pursuing a textual studies project to republish David Graham Du Bois' *...And Bid Him Sing* (1975), an autobiographical novel about the cultural practices of black radicalism in Cairo in the 1960s.

**Education**

Ph.D., University of Washington, 2008 (with honors)
B.A., Brown University, 2000 (cum laude)

**Research interests**

Comparative Ethnic Studies; Theories of Race and Ethnicity; Cultures of the African, Arab, and Jewish Diasporas; Visual Culture Studies; 19th and 20th century U.S. Popular Culture; U.S. in the World; Postcolonial Theory; Critical Theory; Public Humanities

**Courses**

**Spring 2012**

ES 101B: Humanities Methods in Ethnic Studies

**Prior Courses**

ES 250: Comparativity and the Crisis of Neoliberalism
ES 202: Cultural Texts: Contemporary Theories and Methods
ES 190: Translation and the Dialectic(s) of Diaspora
ES 180: Comparative Racialization in the Era of Permanent War

**Selected publications**

**ARTICLES**


**BOOK CHAPTERS**


**REVIEWS**


**INTERVIEWS**


**Honors & Awards**

2012-2013: Co-Convener, "Critical Prison Studies" Strategic Working Group, Townsend Center for the Humanities
Dr. Jess Ghannam is Clinical Professor of Psychiatry and Global Health Sciences in the School of Medicine at UCSF. His research areas include evaluating the long-term health consequences of war on displaced communities and the psychological and psychiatric effects of armed conflict on children. Dr. Ghannam has developed community health clinics in the Middle East that focus on developing community-based treatment programs for families in crisis.

He is also a consultant with the Center for Constitutional Rights, Reprieve and other international NGO's that work with torture survivors. Locally he works to promote and enhance the health and wellness of refugee, displaced, and immigrant populations from the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia and has established a community-based Mental Health Treatment Programs to support these communities.

At UCSF Dr. Ghannam develops culturally competency training programs for staff, students and faculty working with patients from the Middle East. He serves on the Chancellor’s Council of Campus Climate, Culture and Inclusion and is a member of the UCP, University and Community Partnerships Committee. He works with medical students and residents across disciplines to promote and enhance their clinical and research skills. Dr. Ghannam specializes in working with chronic illness, including chronic pain and cancer. He also works and does research in the area of Global Health and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Dr. Ghannam is also a Qualified Medical Examiner (QME) for the State of California.

Jason (Hamza) van Boom writes and teaches in the San Francisco Bay area. He is a Ph.D. candidate in the history of Christianity at Graduate Theological Union and has recently taught Introduction to Christian History at Pacific School of Religion. He also does cultural programming for Islamic Cultural Center of Northern California, where he hosts “Islam and Authors: Onstage Conversations on New Books” (www.iccnc.org). Jason blogs for Tikkun Daily and is a correspondent for ILLUME, an award-winning news magazine that chronicles the American Muslim experience. He received his M.A. in philosophy at Dominican School of Theology and Philosophy, studied Eastern Orthodox Christianity at St Vladimir’s Orthodox Theological Seminary, and received his B.A. in liberal arts from Thomas Aquinas College.

Summer Hararah is the coordinator for the National Security and Civil Rights Program at the Asian Law Caucus. She works to help combat profiling and discrimination against Arab, Middle Eastern, South Asian and Muslim communities in the U.S. Summer works to identify broad patterns of abuse and systemic civil rights violations and aims to educate and engage impacted communities in defending their rights. Prior to joining ALC, Summer worked with the Arab Resource and Organizing Center as the legal and outreach director for their Arab American Legal Services. Summer graduated from the University of California, Davis in 2008 with a B.A. in Political Science and a minor in Middle East South Asian Studies.

Prof. Sandew Hiro, International Institute of Scientific Studies, Amsterdam
Munir Jiwa is the founding director of the Center for Islamic Studies and Assistant Professor of Islamic Studies at the Graduate Theological Union. He holds a Ph.D. and M.Phil. in Anthropology from Columbia University and an M.T.S. in World Religions from Harvard Divinity School. His research interests include Islam and Muslims in the West, media, aesthetics, religious pluralism and identity. Since 1995 he has worked with Religions for Peace on interfaith programs in Bosnia, Japan, the Middle East, and West Africa. He also worked with the Ford Foundation-funded "Muslims in NYC Project" at Columbia University from 1998-2004. He is currently revising a manuscript for publication tentatively titled Imaging Islam, Mediating Muslims: Aesthetics, Politics and Religion.

Monami Maulik was born in Kolkata, India and grew up in the Bronx. She has been an immigrant and racial justice organizer for over 15 years. After graduating from Cornell University in 1996 with a major in Development Policy and minors in Women's and South Asian Studies, she began organizing in New York City for racial justice, police accountability, youth, and global justice. From 1997-2000, she was an Organizing Committee member of the NY Taxi Workers’ Alliance, and then worked as Director for TICO (Training Institute for Careers in Organizing). Monami has served on various social justice movement organizations and boards including: Coalition to Free Mumia Abu Jamal, Same Boat Coalition (NYC), United for Peace and Justice, Grassroots Global Justice, Racial Justice 911, Third World Within, Movement Rising, and the NYC Organizing Support Center. In 2000, Monami founded DRUM- Desis Rising Up & Moving as one of the first low-income South Asian community-based organizations for social justice in the U.S. Since then, she has served as the Executive Director and leads campaign strategy. She now serves as a board member of National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights and the national Dignity in Schools Campaign, an Advisory Board member of the North Star Fund, and a national Steering Committee member of the United National Anti-War Committee. In 2001, Monami received the Union Square Award as co-founder of DRUM and the Open Society Institute Community Fellowship of the George Soros Foundation. In 2002, Monami received the Jane Bagely Lehman Award from the Tides Foundation “Honoring Post 9/11 Organizing for Immigrant Rights and Civil Liberties.” She is published in Howard Zinn’s book, “Voices of a People’s History.”

Mahan Mirza completed his doctorate in Religious Studies from Yale University in 2010. His dissertation was on the relationship between reason and revelation in the works of the Muslim polymath al-Biruni. Dr. Mirza has edited two special issues of The Muslim World on topics related to Islam in America. He is also assistant editor for the forthcoming Princeton Encyclopedia of Islamic Political Thought (2012). With a master’s degree in the study of Islam and Christian-Muslim relations from Hartford Seminary, work as a university Muslim chaplain, and training in a traditional Muslim setting in Lahore, Dr. Mirza engages in the study of Islam from multiple perspectives. He has taught a range of courses over the years including the Arabic language, survey courses on Islamic religious thought, history of science in Islamic societies, western religious traditions, the life of Muhammad, and the Qur’an. He has taught at Yale (summer 2005-6), the Department of Religious Studies at California State University, Chico (2007-2009), and the University of Notre Dame (2009-2011). At Notre Dame, Dr. Mirza served as assistant professor of Arabic and Islamic studies in the Department of Classics, while concurrently on the faculty in the Program for the History and Philosophy of Science and the Medieval Institute. He was also a fellow at Notre Dame’s Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies. Dr. Mirza joined Zaytuna College in July, 2012 as a member of the academic affairs team. He presently serves as a full-time member of the faculty at Zaytuna as well as visiting scholar at the Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley.

Lenna Odeh, Graduate Student, Department of Literature, UC San Diego.

Som Pourfarzaneh is a Ph.D. Candidate at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, and holds a Master of Arts in Religious Leadership for Social Change from Starr King School for the Ministry, as well as a B.A. in Integrative Biology from UC Berkeley. His research interests include Islam and Muslims in the West, media, cultural production, social networks, and representation.
Junaid Rana is an associate professor of Asian American Studies with appointments in the Department of Anthropology, the Center for South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, and the Unit for Criticism and Interpretive Theory at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. His publications have appeared in *Cultural Dynamics*, *Souls*, and the edited anthologies *Pakistani Diasporas* (OUP, 2009) *State of White Supremacy* (Stanford, 2011), and *Dispatches from Pakistan* (Leftword, 2012). He is the author of the book *Terrifying Muslims: Race and Labor in the South Asian Diaspora* (Duke, 2011).

Abdul Hamid Robinson-Royal is a 4th year PHD student and Presidential Scholars Fellow at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley California. His work at the GTU involves interstitial disciplinary space and as such offers exciting possibilities for Islamic Studies because it interrogates the cultural and historical elements of Islam as an integral part of the American religious imaginary and the larger religious diaspora. His work in the international academic arena began formally with study in France and Al Akhwayn University in Ifrane, Morocco. He was a recipient of the Critical Languages Scholarship to study Arabic in Cairo, Egypt. He was also a recipient of the Henry Luce Fellowship, spending last Spring in Indonesia for research. Having traveled the world as a musician, Abdul Hamid has enjoyed his place as a “global citizen” while acknowledging the importance of ‘belonging somewhere in particular.’

Abdul Hamid’s academic interests have led him to use a broad approach to his work informed by transnational studies, gender studies, anthropology, and performance studies. He holds a Bachelor’s Degree in Piano Performance from the Wisconsin Conservatory of Music, a Master of Music Degree from Northwestern University in Conducting, and a Master of Arts Degree from the Claremont School of Theology in Religion with an emphasis on Comparative Theology and Philosophy. His current dissertation and research interests include a performance historiography of African/American Muslim men, the role of masculinities in the formation of religious identities, and the performance of multiple expressions of masculinity as sites for the reclamation of place, power, and purpose.

Professor S Sayyid is the inaugural Director of the International Centre for Muslim and non-Muslim Understanding, based at the Hawke Research Institute. Professor Sayyid has worked in a number of UK universities including Leeds, Salford, Manchester and East London. His research interests encompass the relationship between culture and politics, postcolonial political studies and, in particular, the way in which the analysis of postcolonial conditions inform and affect so-called ‘mainstream’ political and social processes and structures. Professor Sayyid is keen to supervise research students interested in ontological analysis rather than ontic studies, that is, to think how entities come into being. He is also able to supervise research in topics that relate to questions of coloniality, formations of racism and what can be called, not unproblematically, political Islam.


The New York Times describes Imam Zaid Shakir as a “leading intellectual light” and Dr. Cornel West writes “he is one of the towering principle voices not only in contemporary Islam, but in American society.” Imam Zaid Shakir, a gifted scholar, author and lecturer, is fast becoming one of the most influential voices for Islam in the West, as well as a compelling force for the improvement of race relations in America.

Through his writing, speaking and teaching, he pragmatically directs Muslim thought, literature, and practice to enrich, the societies they are part of. The Imam brings clarity of mind and engaging honesty to even the most controversial
issues. Trained in both the academic and religious intellectual traditions, Imam Shakir is uniquely qualified as a commentator on the substantial issues of our time.

Born in Berkeley, California to a family descended from African, Irish and Native American roots, Imam Shakir spent his formative years in housing projects. These early experiences instilled in him a compassionate and realistic work ethic, as well as an unshakeable desire for social change and economic justice. And, as an American who came of age during the civil rights movement, he brings both sensitivity about African-American and poverty issues and scholarly discipline to his faith-based work.

It was while serving in the Air Force that he accepted Islam in 1977, He remained in the military for four years and received an accommodation medal for his dedicated service. His purposeful goal to work for the common good of all, led him to earn a BA in International Relations from the American University in Washington, DC in 1983. A summa cum laude graduate, Imam Shakir went on to receive his Masters in Political Science from Rutgers University where he was also a student leader.

After a sabbatical year in Cairo, Egypt where he studied the Arabic language, Imam Shakir accepted the position of Professor of Political Science and Middle East Studies at Southern Connecticut State University. In Connecticut, he also served as interfaith council Chaplain at Yale University and developed the Chaplaincy Sensitivity Training for physicians at Yale New Haven Hospital. Additionally, Imam Shakir continued his work as a spiritual and community leader. His many selfless projects included spearheading a community revival program and grassroots anti-drug effort, before leaving for further study in the Middle East in 1994.

For seven years in Syria and briefly in Morocco, the Imam immersed himself in the intense study of Arabic, Islamic law, Quranic studies, and spirituality with some of the top traditional Islamic scholars of our age. He was the first American to graduate from Syria’s prestigious Abu Noor University and returned to Connecticut in 2001. Since 2003, Imam Shakir has served as resident scholar and lecturer at the Zaytuna Institute, in Hayward, California. In 2009, he co-founded Zaytuna College, a faculty member and board of trustees. He has continued his spiritual, academic and community work, speaking and writing extensively on religion, socio-political and race issues. Imam Shakir has been invited to lecture at several prominent universities including Stanford, UCLA, Berkeley, Yale, Harvard, Columbia, Rutgers, and Temple University. He is the author of the groundbreaking books Heirs of the Prophets, Scattered Pictures, Treatise for the Seekers of Guidance, Where I’m Coming From, and has written for several notable publications including The New Haven Register, Washington Post, and The San Francisco Chronicle.

Imam Zaid was ranked as “one of America’s most influential Scholars” in the West; by The 500 Most Influential Muslims, edited by John Esposito and Ibrahim Kalin, (2009). In the spirit of the great scholars of the past, the Imam embodies the rationality, spirituality and breadth of traditional knowledge, as well as cutting-edge academic intellect. Imam Shakir leaves a lasting impression; his ability to move hearts and minds enlightens all walks of life.