

A Workplace Conversations Event

**ARAB AMERICANS AND THE STRUGGLE AGAINST
RACISM IN THE UNITED STATES**

Thursday, April 29, 2021 | Noon - 1:30 pm CDT | Virtual

MODERATOR



Abdel Razzaq Takriti

Director, Arab-American Educational Foundation Center for Arab Studies,
AAEF Chair in Modern Arab History, University of Houston

PRESENTERS



Moustafa Bayoumi

Professor of English Brooklyn College,
New York



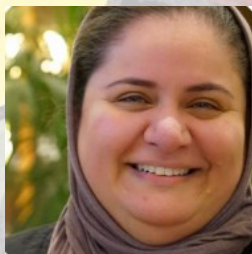
Loubna Qutami

Assistant Professor in the Department of Asian
American Studies, University of California, Los Angeles



Fady Joudah, MD

Palestinian-American poet,
translator, and physician



Mezna Qato

Margaret Anstee Centre Research Fellow,
University of Cambridge



Neama Alamri

Cotsen Postdoctoral Fellow in Race and Ethnicity Studies in the
Society of Fellows and Lecturer in the Council of the
Humanities and History, Princeton University

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Abdel Razzaq Takriti

Director, Arab-American Educational
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Moderator

Abdel Razzaq Takriti is Founding Director of the Arab-American Educational Foundation Center for Arab Studies, inaugural holder of the Arab-American Educational Foundation Chair in Modern Arab History, and Associate Professor at the Department of History, University of Houston. He holds a D.Phil. in History from St Antony's College, Oxford and was formerly a Junior Research Fellow in Political History at St Edmund Hall, Oxford. He is the author of *Monsoon Revolution: Republicans, Sultans, and Empires in Oman* (Oxford University Press, 2013; paperback edition, 2016), and the co-author (with Professor Karma Nabulsi) of the digital humanities project *The Palestinian Revolution* (Department of Politics and International Relations, University of Oxford, 2016). His work has received several awards including the 2011 Middle East Studies Association of North America (MESA) Malcolm Kerr Prize for best doctoral dissertation in the humanities, the 2011 British Society for Middle Eastern Studies (BRISMES) Leigh Douglas Memorial Prize for best doctoral dissertation in the social sciences or the humanities. He was also awarded an honorable mention in 2014 from the University of Cambridge British-Kuwaiti Friendship Society's best book in Middle Eastern studies prize and was a finalist for the 2014 Royal Historical Society Gladstone Prize for best debut book in non-British history. In 2019, he received the MESA Undergraduate Education Award in recognition of his pedagogical contributions to the field. Professor Takriti's articles and chapters have been published in a range of scholarly venues including *The Radical History Review* and *The American Historical Review*.

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Moustafa Bayoumi
Professor of English
Brooklyn College, New York

Moustafa Bayoumi is the author of the critically acclaimed *How Does It Feel To Be a Problem?: Being Young and Arab in America* (Penguin), which won an American Book Award and the Arab American Book Award for Non-Fiction. It has also been translated into Arabic by Arab Scientific Publishers. His latest book, *This Muslim American Life: Dispatches from the War on Terror* (NYU Press), was chosen as a Best Book of 2015 by *The Progressive* magazine and was also awarded the Arab American Book Award for Non-Fiction. An anniversary edition of *How Does It Feel To Be a Problem?*, which included a new afterword, was published in 2018.

An accomplished journalist, Bayoumi is also a columnist for *The Guardian*, and his writing has appeared in *The New York Times*, *New York Magazine*, *The Daily Beast*, *The Nation*, *CNN.com*, *The London Review of Books*, *The National*, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, *The Progressive*, and other places. His essay “Disco Inferno” was included in the collection *Best Music Writing of 2006* (Da Capo). Bayoumi is also the co-editor (with Andrew Rubin) of *The Edward Said Reader* (Vintage), which has been reissued in an expanded edition as *The Selected Works of Edward Said (1966-2006)*. He also edited *Midnight on the Mavi Marmara: the Attack on the Gaza Freedom Flotilla and How It Changed the Course of the Israel/Palestine Conflict* (O/R Books & Haymarket Books). With Lizzy Ratner, Bayoumi co-edited a special issue of *The Nation* magazine on Islamophobia (July 2-9, 2012). In 2017, he guest edited a special edition of the arts magazine *Mizna*, titled *Surviving*.

Bayoumi has been featured in *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Chicago Sun-Times*, and on CNN, FOX News, Book TV, National Public Radio, and many other media outlets from around the world. Panel discussions on *How Does It Feel To be Problem?* have been convened at The Museum of the City of New York, PEN American Center, Drexel Law School, and the Lower East Side Tenement Museum, and the book has been chosen as the common reading for incoming freshmen at universities across the country. Bayoumi is Professor of English at Brooklyn College, City University of New York, and is the recipient of two excellence in teaching awards. He also received a 2011 Culture and Achievement Award from the Network of Arab American Professionals and 2016 Pathmaker to Peace Award from the organization Brooklyn for Peace. In 2015, he was awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Humane Letters by Southern Vermont College. He lives in Brooklyn, New York.

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Loubna Qutami

Assistant Professor in the
Department of Asian American
Studies, University of California,
Los Angeles

Loubna Qutami is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Asian American Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles. Qutami is a former President's Postdoctoral Fellow from the Department of Ethnic Studies at the University of California, Berkeley (2018-2020) and received her PhD from the Department of Ethnic Studies at the University of California, Riverside (2018).

Qutami's research examines transnational Palestinian youth movements after the 1993 Oslo Accords through the 2011 Arab Uprisings. Her work is based on scholar-activist ethnographic research methods. Qutami's broader scholarly interests include Palestine, critical refugee studies, the racialization of Arab/Muslim communities in the U.S., settler-colonialism, youth movements, transnationalism and indigenous and Third World Feminism.

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Fady Joudah, MD
Palestinian-American poet,
translator, and physician

Fady Joudah is a Palestinian American physician, poet, and translator. He was born in Austin, Texas, and grew up in Libya and Saudi Arabia. He was educated at the University of Georgia, the Medical College of Georgia, and the University of Texas Health Sciences in Houston where he completed his studies in internal medicine. In 2002 and 2005 he worked with Doctors Without Borders in Zambia and Sudan, respectively.

Joudah's debut collection of poetry, *The Earth in the Attic* (2008), won the 2007 Yale Series of Younger Poets competition, chosen by Louise Glück. Joudah followed his second book of poetry, *Alight* (2013) with *Textu* (2014), a collection of poems written on a cell phone wherein each piece is exactly 160 characters long. His fourth collection is *Footnotes in the Order of Disappearance* (2018). Joudah's fifth and most recent collection is *Tethered to Stars: Poems* (2021). In 2014, Joudah was a Guggenheim Fellow in poetry.

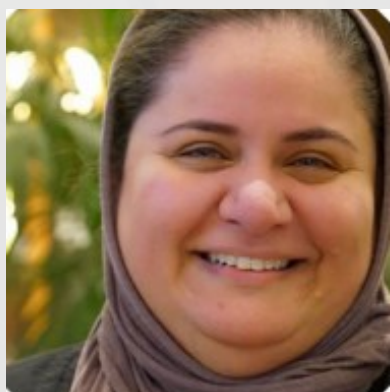
Joudah has translated several collections of Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish's work in *The Butterfly's Burden* (2006), which won the Banipal prize from the UK and was a finalist for the PEN Award for Poetry in Translation; and in *If I Were Another*, which won a PEN USA award in 2010. His translation of Ghassan Zaqtan's *Like a Straw Bird It Follows Me* (2012) won the Griffin International Poetry Prize in 2013. His other translations include Amjad Nasser's *Petra: The Concealed Rose* (2014) and *A Map of Signs and Scents* (2016).

Joudah lives with his family in Houston, where he works as a physician of internal medicine.

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Mezna Qato

Margaret Anstee Centre Research
Fellow, University of Cambridge

Dr Mezna Qato is historian of the modern Middle East, and in particular of migration, development, and social histories of Palestinian refugee and exile communities. She was previously a Spencer Fellow at the National Academy of Education, and Junior Research Fellow at King's College, Cambridge. She is currently completing a book on the history of education for Palestinians. Her research and teaching interests centre on histories and theories of social, economic and political transformation amongst refugee and stateless communities, the politics and practice of archives, and global micro-histories of movements and collectivities in the Middle East.

She also co-convenes the Archives of the Disappeared Research Network at the Margaret Anstee Centre and the Centre for Research in Arts, Social Sciences, and Humanities.

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Neama Alamri

Cotsen Postdoctoral Fellow in Race and Ethnicity Studies in the Society of Fellows and Lecturer in the Council of the Humanities and History, Princeton University

Neama Alamri is a historian of race, empire, and labor in the Yemeni diaspora. She earned her Ph.D. in Interdisciplinary Humanities from the University of California, Merced. She holds a B.A. in both English and Women's Studies with a minor in Middle East Studies from California State University, Fresno.

At Princeton, Alamri will be working on her first book project, "Long Live the Arab Worker: A Transnational History of Labor and Empire in the Yemeni Diaspora," which examines how Yemeni workers and activists, throughout the 20th century, highlighted the connections between local challenges in the diaspora with global politics of empire. Through an historical exploration of archival sources, oral histories, and works of literature, "Long Live the Arab Worker," interrogates the ways in which Yemeni workers and migrants experienced and resisted politics of empire. It analyzes how labor in the diaspora became an ideological arena in which politics of empire were obscured, accommodated, exposed, and challenged. Her research thus far, which consisted of travels to archives throughout California, Michigan, and England, was generously supported by the Western History Association, UC Humanities Research Institute, and the American Institute for Yemeni Studies.

Alamri has taught courses on race, media studies, and gender and sexuality studies. During her time at Princeton she plans to teach courses on race, labor, empire, Arab American histories, and histories of the Yemeni diaspora in the United States.

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About Arab-American Educational Foundation Center for Arab Studies

The Arab-American Educational Foundation Center for Arab Studies (CAS) is the only academic center in Texas, and one of two in the United States, solely focusing on the Arab region. Based at the University of Houston's College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, CAS houses two major endowed positions: the Arab-American Educational Foundation Chair in Modern Arab History and the Arab-American Educational Foundation Dr. Burhan and Mrs. Misako Ajouz Endowed Professorship in Arab Studies. It is also home to a variety of academic resources, uniquely supported with the help of grassroots fundraising carried out by Houston's Arab American community, offering an exciting model of campus-community partnership. These include the Mahmoud Darwish Fund established to encourage research as well as the Farouk Shami endowment designed to support colloquia and advanced national graduate student training in Arab Studies. Additionally, CAS offers PhD student funding through the Issa Cook Scholarship program, and it is home to two annual distinguished lecture series: the Nijad and Zeina Fares Distinguished Lecture in Arab Studies, and the Paul Kardoush Distinguished Lecture in Arab Studies.

Through its programs, CAS covers a large part of the globe, extending from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean and encompassing the entirety of North Africa and large swaths of Western Asia. This region is home to a dazzling array of contemporary cultural innovations, influencing global intellectual and social trends in significant ways. Its most widely spoken language, Arabic, is one of the six official United Nations languages and its influence is clearly discernible well beyond Arab-majority countries, extending to a host of African, Asian, and European states in addition to sizeable diasporic communities in the Americas and Australasia. The region is also a site of ongoing political formation and re-formation, influenced by contested sovereignties, imperial interventions, colonialism and anti-colonialism, energy politics, and popular and democratic movements.

CAS is a scholarly space that encourages serious engagement with the Arab world, and the histories, cultures, modern realities, concerns, and aspirations of its people. It promotes sustained multidisciplinary research, teaching, publications, community engagement, and media expertise in an atmosphere that is underlined by empathetic inquiry, scholarly rigour, intellectual openness, and academic freedom.

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About UH Staff Council and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (Ad Hoc) Committee

The University of Houston Staff Council is an advisory body to the President of the University and the University administration. Staff Council consists of elected staff members from each division who represent the entire staff body.

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (Ad Hoc) Committee's mission is to recommend and promote diverse, equitable, and inclusive initiatives in alignment with University of Houston's culture and enhance the staff experience. DEI launched a "Workplace Conversations" event series in June 2020 to help build and promote an inclusive work culture that encourages, supports, and celebrates the diversity of experiences, cultural backgrounds, and ideas among our staff.

UH staff and supporters can find campus and external resources on the Staff Council website, https://uh.edu/staff-council/diversity_equity_inclusion/.

Questions about DEI's Celebrating Black History Month virtual event

Information about the 2021 Staff Council Workplace Conversations' event titled "Arab Americans and the Struggle Against Racism in the US" is found on the DEI webpage, https://uh.edu/staff-council/diversity_equity_inclusion/.

For information about Staff Council's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (Ad Hoc) Committee email staffcouncil@uh.edu.



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