Ahmad Shboul, *AM*

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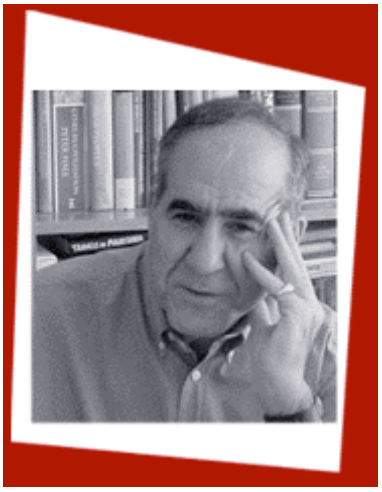

Honours: Member of the Order of Australia (AM), 1988

TEACHING

Postgraduate Coursework units of study: Issues in Arab political culture; Islamic world view; Islamic law in the modern world; Crisis of democracy in the Islamic world; histories of the Arab-Israeli conflict

Undergraduate units of study:
Arab world, Islam and the Middle East: Arabs, Islam & Middle East; Arab-Islamic Civilization; Islam in World History; Islam and Modernity Challenges; Society and politics in the Middle East; Issues & debates in Arab culture today.

(See Arab World, Islam and the Middle East (ARIS); Arabic Language and Literature).

(See also research supervision)

RESEARCH

Areas of research interests

- **Intellectual history and historiography of the Arab-Islamic world**
- **Arab-Greek (especially Byzantine) cultural relations and mutual perceptions**
- **Cities, human geography and cultural dynamics in Arab & Islamic history**
- **Islam, society and politics in the contemporary Middle East**
- **Aesthetics of place in creative Arabic literature (poetry and the novel).**

Research positions (former)

Research Fellow, Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities, University of Edinburgh; Senior Research Fellow, Dumbarton Oaks, Harvard University; Research Fellow, Humanities Research Centre, ANU; Visiting research scholar, Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, Cairo.

PUBLICATIONS (Selection):

Books and book-chapters:

1. *Al-Mas'udi and his World: A Muslim Humanist and His interest in non-Muslims*, London, Ithaca, 1979, 366pp.

2. *History of Arab Islamic Civilisation* (in Arabic), 12th edition, Amman, Jordan, 1993 (co-author: A. Khleifat), 238pp.

3. Islamic Radicalism in the Arab World. *The Middle East: Prospect for Peace and Settlement* (Canberra, ANU, 1995, 29-68

4. Christians and Muslims in Syria and upper Mesopotamia in the Early Islamic Period: Cultural Change and Continuity, in *Religious Change, Conversion and Culture*, Sydney, 1996 (Sydney Studies in Society and Culture),

5. Arab-Islamic Perception of Byzantine Religion and Culture. *Muslim Perceptions of Other Religions: A historical Survey*, ed. Jacques Waardenburg, New York, Oxford University press, 1999

6. Byzantium and the Arabs: the Image of the Byzantines as mirrored in Arabic Literature. *Arab-Byzantine Relations in Early Islamic Times*, ed. Michael Bonner, New York, Ashgate, 2004 (Formation of the Classical Islamic World Series, vol. 8)

7. Islam and Globalisation: Arab World Perspectives. *Islamic Perspectives on the New Millennium*, ed. Virginia Hooker, Singapore, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2004, reprint 2006

8. 'Between Rhetoric and Reality: Islam and Politics in the Arab World', in *Islam and Politics in the Modern World*, ed. A. Johns and N, Lahoud, London & New York, Routledge, 2005, 170-191

9. Arab attitudes Towards Byzantium: Official, Learned, Popular. ΚΑΘΗΓΗΤΡΙΑ: Essays Presented to Joan Hussey for her 8th Birthday, Camberley, England, Porphyrogenitus, 1988, 111-128

10. Prospects for Peace and Stability. *After the Gulf War*, ed. StJohn Kettle & Stephanie Dawrick, Sydney, Pluto, 1991, 7-25

Translation: two book-chapters

11. Muhammad ibn Mankali, On Naval Warfare in the Mediterranean

    1. al-adilla al-rasmiyya fi'l-ta'abi al-harbiyya (Official instructions for military mobilization)

    2. Al-ahkam al-mulukiyya wa'l-dawabit al-namusiyya (Book of royal rules), translated by Ahmad Shboul. Published in *The Age of the Dhromon: The Byzantine Navy ca 500-1204*, John Pryor & Elizabeth M. Jeffreys, Leiden, Brill 2006.

Articles in scholarly journals

12. Having in Arabic. *Zeirtschrift für Arabische Lingustik* (*Journal of Arabic Linguistics*, Germany, 1983),

13. Islam and the Australian Media: the implications of distorting Mirrors, *Australian religion Studies Review*, Volume 2, 1990

14. Arab Society and Culture', *Voices*, Canberra, National Library of Australia, Winter 1993,

15. Change and Continuity in Early Islamic Damascus', *ARAM*, Oxford-Leuven, Volume 6, 1994

16. Identity and Self-image in Syria-Palestine in the Transition from Byzantine to Early Islamic Rule' (joint author: Alan G. Walmsley), *Mediterranean Archaeology*, volume 11, 1998,

17. The Arab Poet and the City: Modernity and Alienation, in *Aesthetics & Literature*, Sydney, Volume 15 (December 2005).

18. Different journeys: Place, Self and Imagination in the Classical Arabic Poetic Tradition' in *Literature & Aesthetics*, Sydney, Volume 16 (December 2006)

19. Gendered Space and dynamics in Saudi Arabian Cities: Riyadh and Dammam in Turki al-Hamad's Trilogy', *Literature & Aesthetics*, Sydney, Volume 17 (July 2007).

Articles in International Reference works

20. Article 'Sadr' in the *Oxford Encyclopaedia of the Modern Islamic World*, ed. John Esposito, New York, Oxford University Press, 1995

21. Article 'Taqwa', in the same Encyclopaedia

22. -43 Twenty articles in the *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, ed. Alexander Kazhdan, New York, Oxford University Press, 1991

Other essays - community-oriented:

44. Beyond Dialogue: Towards Mutual Acceptance and Sharing the Spirit of Living and Working Together', in *Inter-faith Dialogue is a Sacred Mission*: proceedings of forums held by the Australian Christian-Muslim Friendship Society, Sydney 2007, pp.50-61

45. Muhammad Haneef Case: Australia between Fear of terrorism and fear of curbing freedom. *AlHayat* Newspaper London, 21 July 2007 (commissioned article – in Arabic) (also published in E*l-Telegraph* and in *al-Anwar*, Sydney).

Current research projects in preparation for publication

1. Cultural moments in the history and historiography of Damascus and greater Syria, 7th-11th centuries CE. (major work based on an ARC research project)

2. Islamic themes and motifs in Nikos Kazantzakis. (based on a seminar presented in December 2005)

3. Displaying and 'covering' Byzantium abroad: Arab Islamic appraisals of Byzantine civilization. (based on a conference paper, 2006)

4. Greek Destinies in the Arab World: Prominent Muslims of Greek Background in the Classical Islamic period. (Paper presented at the Annual Modern Greek Studies Conference, Sydney, 4 December 2006)

5. Views of Classical Muslim intellectuals on Art, Calligraphy and Aesthetics (based on a research paper presented at the International Conference on Islamic Art, Isfahan, Iran , 30 December 2006)

6. Damascus to Geneva: the Poetics of Cosmopolitanism, Love and Exile in the work of Nizar Qabbani. (Paper presented at the 'Modernity and the City' workshop, Sydney, 15 June .2007)

7. Hellenic motifs in the poetry of Mahmud Darwish (paper for forthcoming Annual Modern Greek Studies Conference La Trobe, late 2008)

Participation in International conferences

Numerous research papers presented at international conferences and symposia: in Australia, Cyprus, Denmark, Germany, India, Iran, Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Switzerland, the UK and the USA**.**

Visiting & Guest lectures

India: **Aligarh Muslim University; Jordan: University of Jordan and Yarmouk University;**

Switzerland: **Berne; Freiburg; Lausanne**

USA: **Harvard; Michigan; New York University; Princeton; State University of New York at Binghamton; University of California, Los Angeles**

UK: **Edinburgh University; Warburg institute, University of London**

RESEARCH SUPERVISION AT THE DOCTORAL LEVEL

Range of topics supervised (Selection of completed PhD theses since 1990):

Women and fundamentalism in Islam and Catholicism: Negotiating modernity in a Globalised World (Patricia Madigan, 2007)

Australian Short Stories translated into Arabic with critical introductions (A. A. Samman, 2004)

Clans, parties and clerics: Lebanese Shi'a Political Development 1920-2000 (Rodger Shanahan, 2003)

Butrus al-Bustani (1819-1883): A Study of his Achievements and ideas (Pierre Raffoul, 2001)

Al-Waqidi as Historian (A. N. Shamsin, 2000)

Responsibility of States for Expropriation of Alien Property: A new perspective with reference top Islamic law and the state practice of Iran (Seyed Abbas Hashemi, 2000) – Jointly with the faculty of law

The Umma below the Winds: Mecca, Cairo, reformist Islam and a conceptualization of Indonesia (Michael Francis Laffan, 2000) - jointly with Southeast Asian studies

The Madrasas of Iran: the Evolution of an Islamic Educational Community Place (Parvin Alsadat Sadjadi-Ghaemmaghami, 1996)- jointly with Architecture

Palestinian attitudes and reactions towards the policies of the British Mandate and Zionist activities in the 1920s as reflected in the contemporary Palestinian Arabic press, with special emphasis on Filas īn newspaper (Jamal Muhammad Ibrahim, 1994)

*The personality of the Imām Jafar al-Sādiq (d.148 AH/765 A.D.) as a scholar and political activist, as reflected in Imāmī Shiā sources (*Ahmed Abdul Magid Hammoud, 1994)

Political and Social Thought of Ameen Rihani (Nijmeh S. Hajjar, 1991)

The Sacred Pattern of Traditional Islamic Architecture According to Sufi Doctrine : a Study in Architectural Symbolism (Samer Akkach, 1990) (jointly with Architecture)

Current PhD supervision

The life, works and intellectual contribution of Shaykh 'Abd al--Samad al-Falembānī (Muhammad Hussain Ahmad, 2005-)

Islamic Reformism and modernity (Syed Safdar Ahmed – 2005-)

Dynamics and perceptions of social movements in Egypt and Iran (Tara Mariam Povey - 2008)

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Recent public seminars and lectures based on research expertise (selection)

- Presentation and poetry reading to celebrate the life and achievement of the Palestinian Arab poet Mahmoud Darwish (1941-2008), Sidetrack Theatre, Marrickville, 17 August 2008

- Presentation on Libya for CURTAS, Sydney March 2008

- Hosted a **Sydney Ideas** event (University of Sydney, Seymour Centre - October 2007 International speaker: Ghada Karmi on 'Israel's Dilemma: the search for peace'

- 'Reflections on the Danish Cartoons Controversy': presentation at a special day-seminar on the theme of 'Bliss, Blasphemy and Belief: Art and spirituality in a world of conflict', organised by the National Art School on the occasion of the 2007 Blake Prize, 15 September 2007. My topic was.

- Public lectures on Islam and Islamic aesthetics at the Art Gallery of NSW in connection with the Arts of Islam Exhibition: 4 lectures during May and one lecture in July 2007

- Lectures on Islam and the Arab world, at the Centre for Strategic Studies, Canberra, July, 2005, July 2006, May 2007

- Presentation on 'Saudi Arabia' for Ericsson, Sydney, June 2007

- Presentation on the United Arab Emirates, for the ICC, Sydney 30 April 2007

- Presentation at the Alliance Française, Sydney, on 'France, Europe and the Arab World: Perspectives on historical contacts and mutual perceptions', 28 March 2007

- Co-organised (jointly with Nijmeh Hajjar) book launch, Jad Elhage, *The Myrtle Tree*, (London, 2007), Gleebooks, contributed a presentation (to be published soon) on 'The Aesthetics of Healing in Jad El Hage's *The Myrtle Tree'*, 12 March Sydney 2007.

- Series of lectures within a day-workshop on 'Islam' for the Catholic Bishops Forum, February 2007 (jointly organised with Nijmeh Hajjar)

- Seminar Panelist on Anthony Lowenstein's book, *My Israel Question* (Melbourne, 2006), Gleebooks, Sydney, 7 September 2006 (with Stuart Rees, Elisabeth Wynhausen and the author): (event recording 1hr 20 minutes.

- Presentation at the Inter-faith Dialogue forum, the Australian Christian-Muslim Friendship Society, Sydney, May 2006

- Presentation on 'Kazantzakis and Islam: an Introduction', at the Nikos Kazantzakis Seminar, Gleebooks, 4 December 2005

MEDIA INTERVIEWS

in Australia, New Zealand, the Arab world and The UK. Frequent interviews ABC and SBS Radio and TV, and community stations across Australia ; interviews on Islamic and Middle Eastern Affairs on Singapore Radio, the BBC, Voice of America, and on Australian Arab relations on Jordan TV, Dubai TV and Aljazeera TV.

Recent examples of Media interviews

Print Media Interviews: *La Presse* , Montreal, extended interview for a big feature article on 'Multiculralisme en Australie', entitled 'Faut-il intégrer ou assimiler?, with André Duchesne (Envoyé spécial), published on 16 September 2007, in *La Presse, Plus Cultures* section, pp. 2-3

Several brief interviews incorporated in articles and features in the *Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Australian*, 2005, 2006, 2007

Electronic Media – recent interviews and panel participation: ABC Radio (including The World Today; 14 November 2005 (on Iraq); Saturday Extra with Geraldine Doogue, 29 April 2006 (on Egypt); ABC Encounter (September, 2007), SBS Radio (Arabic and English: several interviews, once a fortnight on average – on Iraq, Palestine-Israel, Islamic art, the Arab and Islamic communities in Australia); SBS TV: 2005, 2006, 2007 (including one on the Danish Cartoons); Radio Singapore: six interviews during 2005, 2006 and 2007 9on Iraq, Iran, Palestine-Israel, Lebanon); Voice of America, twice 2005, 2006 (on

Iraq, Israel-Palestine); BBC Radio twice, 2005, 2006 (on Islamic education and Muslim preachers in the West); Radio Germany, March, Germany 2008; several interviews during 2008 on SBS Radio, Arabic & English programs: (On Arab world, Islam, Palestinian- Israeli relations, Iraq, Lebanon, Syria,; and most recently on significance of the Palestinian Poet Mahmoud Darwish who passed away on August 11, 2008.

SERVICES TO THE WIDER COMMUNITY

Frequent public lecturer**:** on Islam and politics in the modern world, the current Middle East situation, the Arab World, and cultural issues (to audiences at several Australian academic institutions, schools, government departments, Media organisations, Australian business and industry establishments, NGOs)

Founding Fellow of the Research institute on Asia and the Pacific (RIAP), Sydney

Member of the Advisory Council for Multicultural Affairs, Department of the Prime Minister & Cabinet, (1996-1999)

Member of the Council for Australian-Arab Relations, Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade (2003-6).

Past President of the Australasian Middle East Studies Association