

NEHAL AHDI AMER

May 2026
Center for Urban and Global Studies
Trinity College
300 Summit Street
Hartford, CT 06106

nehal.amer@trincoll.edu
[Website](#)

EDUCATION

The Graduate Center, City University of New York – New York, NY
Spring 2026

Doctor of Philosophy in Anthropology
Dissertation Title:
Speculative Urbanism: Real Estate, Capital, and Subjectivity in Egypt's Desert Frontiers
Committee: Setha Low (Chair), Mandana Limbert, Sarah Muir, Jessica Winegar (External Reader)

January 2022 *Master of Philosophy in Anthropology*

University of Michigan – Ann Arbor, MI

May 2015 *Master of Arts in Modern Middle Eastern and North African Studies*
Thesis Title: Independent Labor Activism and the State: The Battle for Trade Union Freedoms in Egypt's Transitional Period
Thesis Advisor: Juan Cole

American University in Cairo – Cairo, Egypt
December 2014

Michigan State University, James Madison College – East Lansing, MI

May 2012 Bachelor of Arts in International Relations & Comparative Cultures
Minor in Spanish, Specializations in Muslim Studies & International Development

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

2026 – present Postdoctoral Fellow in Urban Studies
Trinity College

2025 - 2026 Marina Fernando Guest Lecturer in International and Global Studies
City College, City University of New York

TEACHING

Areas of Teaching Competence

Introduction to sociocultural anthropology
Introduction to four subfields of anthropology
Urban Anthropology
Geography and political economy
Middle Eastern cultures and societies
Anthropology of space and place
International perspectives on human rights
Women's rights in a global perspective
Introduction to international studies

Courses Taught – City College, City University of New York

Introduction to the Four Subfields of Anthropology (Fall 2020)
Anthropology of Women and Human Rights (Fall 2024)
Cross-Cultural Perspectives (Fall 2021, Spring 2022)
Geography and Political Economy (Fall 2025)
Introduction to International Studies (Spring 2026)

Courses Taught- University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

Introduction to Arab Cultures (Spring 2015)

Courses Developed or Redesigned

Geography and Political Economy
Anthropology of Women and Human Rights

Pedagogical Training

2021 Online Teaching Essentials Workshop (CUNY)

PUBLICATIONS

Peer-Reviewed Articles and Chapters

- n.d. The Corporation as City: Urban Futurity and the Real Estate Firm at the World Urban Forum in Cairo in preparation for submission to *City & Society*.
- n.d. Cities Yet To Come: Crisis, Speculation, and Middle-Class Investments in Egypt's Urban Future in preparation for submission to *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies*.

Editor-Reviewed Publications

2023 Reflections on the Egyptian Musalsal Through Time: Class, Consumption, and Urban Space In *The World Is Watching Musalsalat*. Edinburgh: Akkadia Press

Public Scholarship and Non Peer-Reviewed Publications

- 2020 How Margaret Mead and Other Maverick Intellectuals Remade Cultural Anthropology, *Book Review of Gods of The Upper Air* in *The Carnegie Reporter*
- 2017 Notes on the Labor Movement: Egypt in 2016, *Muftah*

2014 Egypt's Battle for Worker's Rights in Upcoming Legislation, *Informed Comment*

FELLOWSHIPS, GRANTS, AWARDS

- 2026 Student Mentorship Award, Department of Anthropology and Interdisciplinary Studies, City College of New York
- 2025 [Critical Urban Anthropology Association Award \(CUAA\) for Best Panel Presented by Ph.D. Students and Recent Ph.Ds](#)
- 2024-2025 Research Residency, Vartan Gregorian Center for Research in the Humanities, New York Public Library
- 2024-2025 Graduate Center Dissertation Fellowship Award
- 2021-2022 [Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Award](#)
(awarded, not undertaken)
- 2021 Political Economy Summer Research Institute Fellow, Arab Studies Institute
- 2020 Graduate Center Doctoral Student Research Grant
- 2014 Rackham Graduate Student Research Grant
- 2014- 2015 FLAS Fellowship (U.S. Department of Education)
(awarded, declined)
- 2012 Dr. John S. Habib Muslim Studies Scholarship (Spring 2012)
- 2008 Michigan Promise Scholarship (Spring 2008)

INVITED TALKS AND PRESENTATIONS

- 2026 Speculating on World-Class Urbanism: Real Estate and the Politics of Crisis in Egypt,
invited public lecture, City College at the City University of New York (New York, NY)

CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION

- 2025 The Specter of "El-Sha'b: Political Hauntings, Classed Fear, and the Great Escape from Cairo—Politics of Spatial Absence: Ghosts and 'Places Out of Joint' (Idil Onen, Organizer), American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting (New Orleans, Louisiana)
- 2025 Hedging Against Crisis: Real Estate Investment and the Temporal Politics of Speculation in Egypt— Anxiety/Aspiration: The Makings of Neoliberal Subjectivities and the Desiring Subject in Global Perspective (Nehal Amer, organizer), American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting (New Orleans, Louisiana)
- 2025 Social Science Research in the Middle East and North Africa:

Guidelines for the Conduct of Responsible, Ethical and Constructive Social Inquiry (Lisa Anderson, organizer), Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting (Washington, D.C)

- 2024 [Sensing the City: Understanding Social Stratification and Changing Gender Norms Through Participant Observation in Cairo's Cafes](#)— Sensing the City: New ways of understanding public space through photography, mapping, soundscapes, emotional attachment, and feeling (Setha Low, organizer), World Urban Forum 12 (Cairo, Egypt)
- 2021 Temporal Politics of Spacemaking & Desert Imaginaries, American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting (Baltimore, MD)
- 2020 Tourism Imaginaries and Place-Making in Egypt's Coastal Deserts, Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting (Virtual)
- 2015 Labor and the State: The Battle for Trade Union Freedoms in Egypt's Post-Transitional Period University of Michigan Graduate Student Symposium (Ann Arbor, MI)
- 2014 Imagining the Nation in Mahmoud Darwish's Poetry
University of Michigan Arabic Poetry Colloquium (Ann Arbor, MI)

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Areas of Research

Neoliberalism, class projects, urban space
Critical political economy, social reproduction
Crisis, moral and economic obligation, temporality
Infrastructure, violence, securitization
Speculation, affect, subjectivity
Media, aesthetics, distinction
Development, globalization, corporations
Debt, financialization, housing
Environmental, spatial, historical imaginaries
Labor contestation, movement politics, authoritarianism

Research Projects

2024 – Present Violent Infrastructures: Speed, Modernity, and Spatial Rupture in Cairo
2024 – Present Credit Lines: Financial Technologies and the Reconfiguration of Class in Egypt
2020- 2024 Speculative Urbanism: Real Estate, Capital, and Subjectivity in Egypt's Desert Frontiers
2020-2021 Urban Imaginaries on Screen: Class and Space in Egyptian Television Serials
2018 – 2019 Encountering Egypt: Tourism, Modernity, and the Production of the Exotic
2013 – 2015 Independent Labor Activism and the State: The Battle for Trade Union Freedoms in Egypt's Transitional Period

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

CUNY Graduate Center Service

- Chair, Arab Crossroads (2020–2026)
- Doctoral Student Elections Committee, CUNY Anthropology Department (2022–2023)

Disciplinary Service

- Research Ethics in the Middle East and North Africa (2023- present)

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- American Anthropological Association (2021–present)
- Critical Urban Anthropology Association (2024–present)
- Middle East Studies Association (2019–present)

SKILLS & LANGUAGES

Languages: Arabic (fluent), Spanish (intermediate), Turkish (beginner)

Other Skills: Grant Writing, Creative Writing

REFERENCES

Setha Low, slow@gc.cuny.edu

Distinguished Professor, Psychology, Anthropology, Earth and Environmental Sciences, Women's and Gender Studies, CUNY Graduate Center

Mandana Limbert, Mandana.Limbert@qc.cuny.edu

Associate Professor of Anthropology, CUNY Graduate Center

Sarah Muir, smuir@ccny.cuny.edu

Associate Professor of Anthropology, CUNY Graduate Center

NON-ACADEMIC PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

August 2015 – August 2024

Program Analyst, Arab Region Research & Scholarship
Program

Carnegie Corporation of New York