

JEW AND THE PERSIANATE WORLD: POLITICS, CULTURE, AND HISTORICAL TIES

GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY, WASHINGTON, D.C.



Monday, September 29, 2025

09:00-9:30 Guests' Arrival & Registration

09:30-10:00 **Opening Session**

Welcoming Remarks by **Professor ORI Z. SOLTES**, Teaching Professor at the Center for Jewish Civilization of Georgetown University.

Introductory Remarks by **Dr Davood Moradian**, Director of Afghan Institute for Strategic Studies (AISS).

Special Opening remarks by **Mr. Jack Abraham**, Past President of Congregation Anshei Shalom, Chairman of Afghan Jewish Heritage Committee, Member of Mashadi Heritage Committee & Member of Bukharian Jewish Congress.

10:00-11:30 **Panel I: Ancient Wisdom & Mutuality: Jewish-Persian Relations in Antiquity**

Moderator: **Dr. Omar Sharifi**, Assistant Professor of Social Sciences and Humanities, American University of Afghanistan (AUAF) / Country Director, American Institute of Afghanistan Studies.

Panelists:

- **Dr. Parvaneh Pourshariati**, Associate Professor of History, NYC College of Technology.
- **Dr. Gad Barnea**, Lecturer, Department of Jewish History & Biblical Studies, University of Haifa, Israel & Fellow of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain & Ireland.
- **Dr. Michael Rubin**, Senior Fellow, the American Enterprise Institute.

Open Discussion

11:30-11:45 **Tea Break**

11:45-13:00 **Panel II: The Triangle: Islam, Judaism & the Persianate World**

Moderator: **Dr. Omar Sadr**, Founder & Editor in-chief, Negotiating Ideas Society &. Research Fellow at AISS.

Panelists:

- **Professor Imanuel Rybakov**, Professor of Jewish Studies, Queens College of New York.
- **Dr. Mustafa Akyol**, Senior Fellow, the Cato Institute's Center for Global Liberty & Prosperity.
- **Mr. Alan Niku**, Filmmaker, Writer & Scholar of Mizrahi Culture.

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- **Mr. Mansour Aaron Karimzadeh**, Chairman, History & Heritage Committee, United Mashadi Jewish Community.

Open Discussion

13:00-13:30 **Lunch**

13:30-15:15 **Panel III: Israel & the I. R. Iran: Unpacking the Implications of the 12 Day War**

Moderator: **Ms. Zainab Al Suwajj**, Co-founder & Executive Director, The American Islamic Congress (AIC).

Panelists:

- **Ambassador Dennis Ross**, the Dermont Family Distinguished Professor of the Practice at Georgetown's Center for Jewish Civilization.
- **Mr. Alex Vatanka**, Senior Fellow, the Middle East Institute.
- **Dr. Sadiq Ziba Kalam**, Retired Professor of Political Science, Tehran University. (Online)
- **Lieutenant Colonel Sarit Zehavi**, Founder & Director, the Alma Research & Education Center. (Recorded)
- **Dr. Arash Azizi**, Author, Historian & Postdoctoral Associate & lecturer, Yale University.

Open Discussion

15:15-15:30 **Tea Break**

15:30-16:45 **Panel IV: Dawn of Khorasan: Reclaiming & Reimagining the Future**

Moderator: **Mr. Kalid Loul**, Managing Director & co-founder of the Muslim-American Leadership Alliance (MALA)

Panelists:

- **Mr. Jason Guberman**, Executive Director, the American Sephardi Federation.
- **Ambassador Sayed Tayeb Jawad**, Chairman, American University of Afghanistan/AISS.
- **Ms. Roya Hakakian**, Author, Lecturer & Journalist.

Open Discussion

16:45-17:00 Concluding Remarks by **Professor ORI Z. SOLTES**, Teaching Professor at the Center for Jewish Civilization of Georgetown University.