

# Chihab El Khachab

Address: Faculty of Asian & Middle Eastern Studies, University of Cambridge, Sidgwick Avenue, Cambridge, CB3 9DA, United Kingdom

Email: [cee37@cam.ac.uk](mailto:cee37@cam.ac.uk)

---

## Academic Positions

- 2020-2023: British Academy Postdoctoral Fellow, Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies (FAMES), University of Cambridge
- 2016-2020: Junior Research Fellow in Anthropology, Christ Church, University of Oxford

## Education

- 2012-2017: D.Phil. in Anthropology, Wolfson College, University of Oxford
- 2008-2012: Joint Honors B.A. in Anthropology and Sociology, awarded *summa cum laude*, University of Ottawa

## Book

- (Forthcoming March 2021): [\*Making Film in Egypt: How Labor, Technology and Mediation Shape the Industry\*](#). Cairo & New York: American University in Cairo Press

## Publications (Peer-reviewed)

- (Accepted): “A Brief History of the Future of Culture in Egypt”, *Journal of the African Literatures Association* (Special issue titled “Egypt in Focus: Creativity in Adversarial Contexts”, edited by Nevine Nossery and Shereen Abouelnaga)
- (Accepted): “Describing the Future: Predictability, Uncertainty and Imponderability” in D. Gellner & D. Martinez. (eds). *Sociality, Matter, and the Imagination: Re-Creating Anthropology (ASA 2018 Conference)*. London: Bloomsbury
- (Forthcoming 2021): “The Reification of Concrete Work in Egyptian Film Production”, *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 27 (3)
- (Forthcoming 2021): “Being a (Muslim) Worker in the Egyptian Film Industry” in K. Petersen (ed.) *New Approaches to Islam in Film*. London: Routledge
- (2020): “‘Est-ce que ça ne vaut pas mieux que d’être comme la Syrie et l’Irak?’ Les caractères nationaux vus par la caricature numérique égyptienne sur Facebook” in R. Jacquemond & F. Lagrange (éds.) [\*Culture Pop en Égypte : Entre mainstream commercial et contestation\*](#). Paris : Éditions Riveneuve
- 2019: “[The Sobky Recipe and the Struggle over ‘the Popular’ in Egypt](#)”, *Arab Studies Journal*, 27 (1): 34-61
- 2017: “[Compressing Scales: Characters and Situations in Egyptian Internet Humor](#)”, *Middle East Critique*, 26 (4): 331-353
- 2017: “[State Control over Film Production in Egypt](#)”, *Arab Media & Society*, 23 (Winter/Spring)
- 2016: “[‘What Does it Look Like?’: On the Use of Intermediary Images in Egyptian Film Production](#)”, *Visual Anthropology Review*, 32 (2): 167-179
- 2016: “[Living in Darkness: Internet Humour and the Politics of Egypt’s Electricity Infrastructure](#)”, *Anthropology Today*, 32 (4): 21-24
- 2016: “[Secular Preachers: Watching Television Pundits in Post-Revolutionary Egypt](#)”, *Anthropology Now*, 8 (1): 117-124
- 2013: “[The Logical ‘Goodness’ of Abduction in C. S. Peirce’s Thought](#)”, *Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society*, 49 (2): 157-177

- 2013: “[What Becomes of Bodies on Film?](#)”, *Quarterly Review of Film and Video*, 30 (2): 173-189

### Publications (Essays)

- 2020: “[The Government of Culture](#)”. *Past & Present blog*, October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020.
- 2020: “[When Did Afghan Cinema Begin? A History of Kabul’s Filmic Pasts](#)”. *Ajam Media Collective*, July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2020.
  - Translated by Jalil Pazhwak as “[The Beginnings of Afghan Film: A Look into the History of Afghan Cinema](#)” in the Afghan daily *Etilaatroz*, July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020.
- 2020: “[Collective Consciousness, Real and Imagined](#)”. *Topline*, June 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020.
- 2018: “[The Underbelly of Capital in Cairo](#)”. *Jadaliyya*, June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2018
  - An abridged version was published under the title “[A World without Hope and without Despair](#)”. *Al-Ahram Weekly*, November 25<sup>th</sup>, 2018
  - A French version was republished under the title “Un monde sans espoir ni désespoir”. *Al-Ahram Hebdo*, December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2018
  - The original version appeared in Spanish under the title “[‘Rosas venenosas’ en las curtidurías de El Cairo](#)”. *El País (Africa no es un país blog)*, May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2018
- 2018: “[Two Questions to Marxist Anthropology](#)”, *TripleC: Communication, Capitalism & Critique*, 16 (2): 656-665
- 2018: “[Current Trends in the Anthropology of Bureaucracy – A Report](#)”, *Allegra Lab*
- 2017: “[El Khachab’s Technology, Labor, and Mediation in the Egyptian Film Industry](#)”, *CaMP Anthropology*.
- 2017: “[Books without ending](#)”, *Christ Church Matters* (alumni magazine of Christ Church, University of Oxford), no. 40, p. 24
- 2013: “[That’s the Revolution??](#)”, *Romulus: Wolfson College magazine*
- 2013: “[Some Thoughts about OLR #3](#)”, *Oxford Left Review*, no. 9, pp. 29-32
- 2013: Charles Carrier-Plante, “[An Insight into the Repression of the Québécois Student Movement](#)” (Translation), *Oxford Left Review*, no. 9
- 2012: “[Representing Tahrir Square](#)”, *Oxford Left Review*, no. 8, pp. 11-13

### Publications (Essays in Arabic)

- 2019-: “[Mawsu‘at al-Malal](#)” (*The Encyclopedia of Boredom*), biweekly column on philosophical concepts in Arabic, published by the literary blog *Boring Books* (**37 articles**)
- 2020: “[Awraq Gududna: Min Agl Tarikh Gadid](#)” (“Our Ancestors’ Papers: For a New History”) published by the heritage magazine *Bab Masr*, December 30<sup>th</sup>
  - Republished as “Awraq Gududna” (“Our Ancestors’ Papers”) IN *Bab Masr: Hikayat ‘an al-Thaqafa wal-Turath wal-Fann*, p. 36.
- 2020: “[Al-Tarjama wal-Tanwir](#)” (*Translation and the Enlightenment*), published by the weekly literary magazine *Akhbar al-Adab*, 26<sup>th</sup> July 2020, p. 18; published online by the literary website *Al-Ketaba*, 27<sup>th</sup> July 2020
- 2020: “[Al-Azma](#)” (*Crisis*), published by Mada Masr, 27<sup>th</sup> April 2020.
- 2019: “Al-Mu‘jam al-Uruppi fil-‘Amiyya al-Misriyya” (*The European Lexicon in Egyptian Colloquial Arabic*), published by the weekly literary magazine *Akhbar al-Adab*, 14<sup>th</sup> July 2019, pp. 34-35
- 2016-2018: “[Al-Fahhama](#)” (*The Explanation Machine*), weekly column on philosophical concepts in Arabic, published by the online daily newspaper *Tahrir News* (**91 articles**)
- 2018: “[Ward Masmum... aw al-sinima fi makan moftares](#)” (*Poisonous Roses... or Cinema in a Savage Place*), published by online magazine *Medina Portal*, November 25<sup>th</sup>, 2018

- 2018: “Bela Hodud” (*Unlimited*), published by Egyptian film magazine *El Film* (special commemorative issue on Youssef Chahine), 15
- 2018: “Eshme‘na henak w-mesh hena” (*Why there and not here?*), published by Egyptian film magazine *El Film*, 14
- 2018: “Mat‘allemtesh haga fil-Ma‘had” (*I Didn’t Learn Anything at the High Cinema Institute*), published by Egyptian film magazine *El-Film*, 13: 29-31
- 2017: “Nahj al-Matahif fi Nashr al-Ma‘arif” (*The Method of Museums in Disseminating Knowledge*), published by Egyptian cultural magazine *Ibdaa’*, 4<sup>th</sup> series, vol. 2 (November-December 2017)
- 2017: “[Al-Sha‘b al-Misri sha‘b wasati](#)” (*The Egyptian people are a moderate people*), published by *Tahrir News*, July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2017
- 2017: “[Al-Se‘r lillah wal-Watan lil-Jami’](#)” (*Prices belong to God, the nation belongs to all*), published by *Tahrir News*, June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2017
- 2017: “[Dar el-Salaam](#)”, published by *Tahrir News*, May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2017

### Publications (Translations)

- 2020: Quijano, Aníbal. “[Al-Kulunaliyya wal-Hadatha al-‘Aqlaniyya](#)”. *Boring Books*, published September 18<sup>th</sup>.
- 2020: Walker, Alice. “[Bahthan ‘an Hada’iq Ummahatina](#)”. *Boring Books*, published July 12<sup>th</sup>.
- 2020: Armbrust, Walter. “[Al-Irhab wal-Kabab: Ru‘ya Caprawiyya li-Misr al-Haditha](#)”. *Boring Books*, published June 1<sup>st</sup>.
- 2020: Esposito, Roberto. “[Al-Ahزاب wal-Virus](#)”. *Boring Books*, published April 29<sup>th</sup>.
- 2020: Rodney, Walter. “[Al-Sulta lil-Sha‘b, la lil-Diktator](#)”. *Boring Books*, published January 22<sup>nd</sup>.
- 2019: Editor and translator of [a special issue on Edwar al-Kharrat](#), *ArabLit.org*. With contributions by Mohamed Shoair, May Telmissany, Montasser al-Kaffash, Ferial Ghazoul, and Gamal Alkassas, published December 2<sup>nd</sup>.

### Publications (Book Reviews)

- 2018: “[Review of Made in Egypt: Gendered Identity and Aspiration on the Globalised Shop Floor, by L. Z. Chakravarti](#)”, *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 24 (1): 209-210
- 2017: “[Review of Far Afield: French anthropology between science and literature, by V. Debaene](#)”, *Journal of the Anthropological Society of Oxford*, 9 (3): 411-413
- 2016: “[Review of Anthropologists and their Traditions across National Borders, edited by Regna Darnell & Frederic W. Gleach](#)”, *Journal of the Anthropological Society of Oxford*, 8 (2): 283-284
- 2014: “[Review of The Anthropology of the Middle East and North Africa, edited by Sherin Hafez & Susan Slyomovics](#)”, *Social Anthropology/Anthropologie Sociale*, 22 (4): 507-508
- 2014: “L’État en lutte”, review of *Soldiers, Spies, and Statesmen* by Hazem Kandil, *Al Ahram Hebdo*, March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2014
- 2013: “[Review of Digital Ethnography, by N. Underberg & E. Zorn](#)”, *Journal of the Anthropological Society of Oxford*, 5 (1): 94-95

### Conferences & Workshops

- 2020: “The Egyptian Film Industry: Labour, Technology, Mediation.” Invited talk to the Film, Media, and Culture Research Group, University of Kent (United Kingdom)

- 2019: “Notes à propos de la difficulté d’étudier les archives de l’État.” CEDEJ Research Seminar, Cairo (Egypt)
- 2019: “A Bureaucracy without Bureaucrats: Inside the Egyptian Governmental Sector.” Workshop titled *Governance and Processes of Bureaucratization*, organized by Prof Ursula Rao and Dr Dominik Müller, University of Leipzig (Germany)
- 2018: “Coordination, Visualization, and Imagined Audiences in Egyptian Film Production.” Cinema-Going in the Arab World, Netherlands-Flemish Institute in Cairo
- 2018: “Reification and Recognition in Egyptian Film Production.” Association of Social Anthropologists of the UK and Commonwealth Annual Conference, University of Oxford (United Kingdom)
- 2018: “What is ‘Egyptian’ about Egyptian Cinema.” British Society for Middle Eastern Studies (BRISMES) Annual Conference, King’s College London
- 2018: “Remediation and Translation in Egyptian Digital Caricatures”, *New Geographies of Visual Satire*, Christ Church, Oxford (United Kingdom)
- 2018: “Methodological challenges in studying the Egyptian film industry”, Society for Cinema and Media Studies (SCMS) Annual Conference, Toronto (Canada)
- 2017: “Les caractères nationaux dans la caricature numérique égyptienne.” Congrès du Groupement d’Intérêt Scientifique (GIS) Moyen-Orient et Monde Méditerranéen. Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales (INALCO), Paris (France)
- 2017: “Technology and Anticipation in Egyptian Film Production.” Canadian Association of Social and Cultural Anthropology (CASCA) and International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences (IUAES) joint meeting, University of Ottawa (Canada)
- 2017: “The Perennial ‘Crisis’ of Egyptian Film Production.” Rethinking Media through the Middle East Conference, American University in Beirut (Lebanon)
- 2016: “Rethinking State Control over Media Production in Egypt.” Middle Eastern Studies Association Annual Meeting, Boston (United States)
- 2016: “Three Meanings of ‘Work’ in the Egyptian Film Industry.” European Association of Social Anthropologists Biennial Conference, Milano (Italy)
- 2016: “Managing Imponderable Problems in Egyptian Film Production.” Association of Social Anthropologists of the UK and Commonwealth Annual Conference, University of Durham (United Kingdom)
- 2016: “*Poisonous Roses*: Interpreting Sibling Love in Contemporary Cairo.” Workshop titled *Finding Siblings in the Anthropology of the Middle East and North Africa*, organized by Dr. Mary Montgomery, London School of Economics
- 2014: “The Incorporation of Peirce in Deleuze’s *Cinema*.” Charles S. Peirce International Centennial Congress, Lowell (United States)
- 2014: “The Double Role of Media Technologies in Egyptian Film Production.” American Ethnological Society (AES) Spring Conference, Boston (United States)
- 2013: “Questioning Heidegger on Modern Technology.” Taller d’Investigacio en Filosofia XV, University of Valencia (Spain)
- 2012: “Questioning Heidegger on Essence, Potential, and Modern Technology.” Oxford Graduate Philosophy Conference, University of Oxford (United Kingdom)

### Teaching

- 2020: Co-convener (with Dr. Darci Sprengel) of a DPhil/MPhil ethnographic methods seminar titled ‘Ethnographies of Arts and Performance’, Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology, University of Oxford

- 2020: Co-lecturer (with Prof. Walter Armbrust, Dr. Morgan Clarke and Dr. Zuzanna Olszewska) in the MPhil course ‘The Anthropology of the Middle East’, Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology/Middle East Centre, University of Oxford
- 2017-2018: Co-convener (with Dr. Zuzanna Olszewska and Dr. Ann Wand) of a DPhil/MPhil ethnographic methods seminar titled “Ethnographies of Arts and Performance”, Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology, University of Oxford
- 2017: Co-lecturer (with Dr. Walter Armbrust) in the MPhil course “Mass Media in the Middle East”, Middle East Centre, St Antony’s College, University of Oxford
- 2015-17: Tutor in ‘Introduction to Anthropological Theory’, Hertford College & St. Peter’s College, University of Oxford
- 2015-16: Tutor in ‘Cultural Representations, Practices, and Beliefs’, St-Hugh’s College, Harris Manchester College & Hertford College, University of Oxford
- 2016: Teaching supplement to the article titled “[What Does It Look Like?](#)”, published in *Visual Anthropology Review*.

### **Academic Service**

- 2018: Convener of the “Current Trends in the Anthropology of Bureaucracy” seminar series, Christ Church, University of Oxford
- 2017-2018: Member on the Board of Examiners, Archaeology & Anthropology undergraduate degree, University of Oxford
- 2016: Co-convener (with Kåre Poulsgaard) of the “Anthropological Approaches to Technics” seminar series, hosted by the Institute for Science, Innovation, and Society (InSIS), University of Oxford

### **Scholarships, Prizes and Awards**

- 2018: Fieldwork grant for a project entitled “The Cultural State: Bureaucracy and Uncertainty in Post-Revolutionary Egypt”, Christ Church Research Centre, University of Oxford (**5,000£**)
- 2013-2016: Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) Doctoral Award, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (**60,000\$**)
- 2012-2015: School of Anthropology and Museum Ethnography Grant, University of Oxford (**30,000£**)
- 2012: University Gold Medal (awarded for the highest standing in the joint honors bachelor, honors with major and multidisciplinary programs in the Faculty of Social Sciences), University of Ottawa
- 2012: Faculty Plaque in Anthropology (awarded for the highest standing in the honors bachelor in anthropology), University of Ottawa

### **Ethnographic Fieldwork**

- 2018-2019: 13 months of fieldwork at the Ministry of Culture, Cairo, Egypt
- 2013-2015: 18 months of fieldwork in the Egyptian film industry, Cairo, Egypt

### **Languages**

English: Fluent in reading, writing, and speaking

French: Fluent in reading, writing, and speaking

Arabic: Fluent in reading and speaking; Good writing knowledge

Spanish: Good reading and conversation; Basic writing knowledge

Persian: Good reading and conversation; Basic writing knowledge