

EMORY

# MESAS Guest Lecture

*Department of Middle Eastern and South Asian Studies ~ MESAS*



## Dr. Ami Ayalon

Professor

Department of Middle Eastern and African History  
Tel Aviv University

### *The Emergence of Mass Reading in the Middle East*

Thursday, February 9, 2012

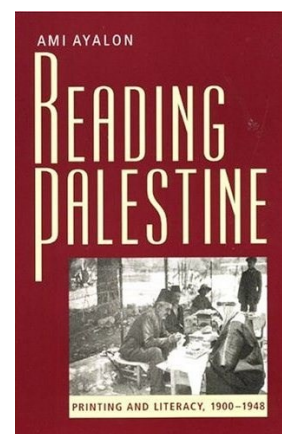
5:30pm

Callaway Center S-319

Emory University

One mark of the many changes affecting the Middle East after the mid-nineteenth century was the growing ubiquity of written and printed texts of every kind—from books and journals to street signs and handbills—in quantities and variety hitherto unknown to its societies. Despite their time-honored tradition of reverence for books and writing, such wide-ranging developments represented a profound historic shift for these societies. Mass production of texts was coupled with an equally dynamic emergence of mass reading. Both altered the society's life routine in countless ways.

The talk will examine this transformation in the Arab Middle East during its formative stage, the half-century before World War I. It will focus primarily on the process of reading becoming a mass practice, its causes, characteristics and major implications.



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