CASAR cordially invites you to a lecture entitled:

**Frontiers of Modernity: American Representations of Zionist Modernization after WWII.**

by Asma Al-Naser

Date: Monday February 8 2016  
Time: 5:30 PM  
Place: building 37 (behind the old Lee observatory)

Over the course of the 20th Century, the American Zionist movement worked hard to present Israel as a nation that shared a natural affinity with the United States. By 1948, Americans had inherited a cultural archive of images, films, and texts that positioned Israel as the "frontier" of the Middle East. Once the state was founded, however, this discourse needed to account for the role of the state. In this talk, I analyze Zionist modernization discourse in the U.S., focusing on representations of Israel in American journals in the 1940's and 50's, which revealed a fascination with the Israeli state's "burden" of civilizing its Arab Jewish immigrants. I read this fascination in relation to two distinct contexts: the history of American Zionist mobilization in the first half of the twentieth century, and the development of American theories and policies on modernizing the Arab world in the aftermath of the Second World War.

Asma Al-Naser completed her Ph.D. in Comparative Literature at the University of Pennsylvania. Her current book project, The Redemptive Logic of American Orientalism: Palestine and the American Century, is a comparative study of the imagery of redemption that structured U.S. and Arab representations of Israel and Palestine in the 20th Century. She is currently a Visiting Fellow at the Institute of Islamic Studies at McGill University and teaches in the English department at Vanier College in Montreal, QC.