

# Elias G. Saba

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Curriculum Vitae | November 18, 2024

## Education

- 2017 PhD, Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, University of Pennsylvania. Awarded the *Davidson Fellowship* for the study of Arabic in Damascus, Syria.
- 2013 MA, Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, University of Pennsylvania.
- 2010-11 Center for Arabic Study Abroad (Damascus, Syria).
- 2009 Middlebury College Arabic Summer Language School.
- 2008 BA, Near Eastern Studies, Cornell University.

## Professional Appointments

- 2023- Assistant Professor in the Department of History and the Department of Religious Studies, Grinnell College.
- 2019-2023 Senior Lecturer in the Department of History and the Department of Religious Studies, Grinnell College.
- 2017-19 Lecturer in the Department of Religious Studies, Grinnell College.

## Publications

### Books

*Khalīl al-Kharrāzī, *al-Asfahānī*, 3 vols.* Edited and translated by Matthew L. Keegan and Elias G. Saba. Library of Arabic Literature. New York: New York University Press. Under contract.

2019 : Sd\_a` [I [ ` YE[\_] ^Sd[ f[ V, 3: [ ef adk aX6[ ef [ ` Uf [ a` e >[ f VdSf gdW] : Berlin U>Si De Gruyter, 2019.

#### Journal Articles

2024 “Memories of al-Shaf‘i’s Inquisition,” <agd` S^ aX 3TTSe[ V Ef gv[ published online 24 September 2024.  
<https://doi.org/10.1163/22142371-00802022>

2024 “Canonizing Sa‘id b. al-Din al-Qarfi’s Text on Legal Canons,” Aj XadV <agd` S^ aX >Si S` V DW[ Y[ published online 7 June 2024.  
<https://doi.org/10.1093/ojlr/rwae016>

#### Book Chapters

2020 “Translating Tahrir: From Praxis to Theory with Tahrir Documents,” by Tomas Levi Tompson, Emily Drumsta, and Elias G. Saba in Dagf ^WYW S` V Taa] aX 3dST[ U FdS` e^Sf [ a` edited by Sameh F. Hanna, Hanem El-Farahaty and Abdel Wahab Khalifa. New York: Routledge, pp.176-88.

#### Translations

2024 “Selections from Sa‘id b. al-Zarkash” in ; e^S\_[ U >Si [ ` 5a` f Vj/f, 3 Bd[ \_Sdk EagdUWdVSW Edited by Omar Anchassi and Robert Gleave, 47–57. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.  
<https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009031783.006>

2019 Al- adr al-Shah d, Umar ibn Abdal- Az z, W4aa] aX 5^S[ \_e Xad 4g[ ^V[ ` Yet DaSVe[ S` V I Sf Vdi Ske in 3df [ ` FdS` e^Sf [ 1.3: 265–85.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/17561310.2019.1693235>

2016 “Al-Azhar Draft Constitution of 1979,” translated by Elias G. Saba and Tomas Levi Tompson in 5a` ef [ fgf [ a` S^ [ e\_ ] : g\_ S` D[ YZfet S` V ; e^S\_ S` Vd f ZW3dST.Ebd[ ` Y Edited by Rainer Grote and Tilmann J. Röder; 113–119. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

#### Book Reviews

2024 Review of Youcef L. Souf, Wd[ eWax 5d[ f [ US^ ; e^S\_ f Z` f Z 5Wf gdk >WS^ 6WTSf W in <agd` S^ aX ; e^S\_[ U Ef gv[ published online 24 September 2024.  
<https://doi.org/10.1093/jis/etae045>

- 2019 Review of Baudouin Dupret, *Islamic Law and the State* (June): 214. <https://doi.org/10.1111/rsr.13882>
- 2018 Review of Ahmad Abdal-Baqi, ed., *Islamic Law and the State* (June): 214. <https://doi.org/10.1111/rsr.13882>
- 2017 “Truth-Making in Early Islam,” a review of Shahab Ahmed, *Islamic Law and the State* (June): 214. <https://booksandideas.net/Truth-Making-in-Early-Islam.html>.
- 2017 Review of Sophia Vasalou, *Islamic Law and the State* (September). <https://doi.org/10.1111/rsr.13153>
- 2016 “The Art of Not Punishing” a review of Intisar Rabb, *Islamic Law and the State* (December): 214. <https://www.booksandideas.net/Te-Art-of-Not-Punishing.html>.

### Encyclopedia Entries

- 2018- “Furq,” “al-umayd,” “al-Jz,” “al-Kalwadh n,” “Ab al-Khab b” and “al-Karbs,” “Ab Al al-usayn,” in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Islamic Law*, edited by Kate Fleet, Gudrun Krämer, Denis Matringe, John Nawas, Everett Rowson, et al. Leiden: Brill, 2008-.
- “Wills (7th-16th c.),” in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Islamic Law*, edited by Jo Van Steenberg. New York: Routledge, forthcoming.

## Fellowships and Prizes

### External

- 2024 Life Worth Living Fellowship, Yale Center for Faith & Culture, Yale Divinity School.
- 2018 British Association for Islamic Studies – De Gruyter 2018 Prize in the Study of Islam and the Muslim World.
- 2015 SSRC-Mellon Mays, Preparing for the Professoriate Seminar Grant.
- 2015 Dissertation Completion Grant, SSRC-Mellon Mays.
- 2014 Council of American Overseas Research Centers Fellowship, American Center for Oriental Research.

- 2013 Pre-doctoral Research Development Grant, SSRC-Mellon Mays.
- 2013 SSRC-Mellon Mays Proposal Writing and Dissertation Development Seminar Grant.
- 2012 Graduate Enhancement Grant, SSRC-Mellon Mays.
- 2011 Graduate Enhancement Grant, SSRC-Mellon Mays.
- 2010-11 Center for Arabic Study Abroad, Full-Year Fellowship.

#### Internal

- 2022 Competitive Grant, Committee for the Support of Faculty Scholarship, Grinnell College.
- 2020 Small Grant for Collaboration, Center for the Humanities, Grinnell College.
- 2017 Roger M. A. Allen Dissertation Prize in Arabic and Islamic Studies, Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, University of Pennsylvania.
- 2016 Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations Departmental Fellowship, University of Pennsylvania.
- 2014-15 Communication Within the Curriculum (CWIC) Critical Speaking Fellowship, University of Pennsylvania.
- 2014 Training Grant, Digital Humanities Forum, University of Pennsylvania.
- 2013 Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship Academic Year Fellowship (Arabic) (declined).
- 2012 Janet Lee Stevens Fellowship, University of Pennsylvania.
- 2012 School of Arts & Sciences Travel Grant, University of Pennsylvania.
- 2009 Foreign Language and Area Studies Summer Fellowship (Arabic).
- 2008-13 Benjamin Franklin Fellowship, University of Pennsylvania.
- 2008-09 Foreign Language and Area Studies Academic Year Fellowship (Arabic).

## Presentations

#### Presenter

- 2024 "Cloth, Dress, and Textiles in the Work of Jam l al-D n al-Asnaw ." Tenth Conference of the School of Mamluk Studies, Kuwait City, Kuwait (March 5- 7).
- 2023 "Law and Language in the Writings of Jamal al-Din al-Asnawi" Fif y-Seventh Annual Meeting of the Middle East Studies Association, Montreal, Canada (November 2-5).
- 2023 "Evading the Canon: Al-Qar f and His 8gd c" British Association for Islamic Studies 2023 Conference, London, UK (May 15-16).
- 2022 "I'm not European: Khal l al-Kh r and Arabic Literary Modernism" Fif y-Sixth Annual Meeting of the Middle East Studies Association, Denver, CO (December 1-4).
- 2022 "Memories of al-Sh f 's Inquisition." Fif eenth Conference of the School of Abbasid Studies, Oxford, UK (July 12- 16).

- 2022 “Canonizing Saḥīḥ al-Dīn al-Qarḥī’s Text on Legal Canons.” Canon or Code? Standardising and Transmitting Islamic Law, Bergen, Norway (June 16-18).
- 2020 “Author and Genre: A Study of an Unknown Text of Legal Distinctions.” British Association for Islamic Studies 2020 Conference, London, UK (April 6-7; cancelled due to COVID-19).
- 2020 “Jamāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī’s Saḥīḥ al-Dīn al-Qarḥī’s Portrait of Late Mamluk Shīf Law.” 230th Meeting of the American Oriental Society, Boston, MA (March 20-23; cancelled due to COVID-19).
- 2019 “Sufis and Sufism in the Jamāl al-Dīn al-Asnawī’s Biographical Dictionary.” Fifty-Tird Annual Meeting of the Middle East Studies Association, New Orleans, LA (November 14-17).
- 2019 “Islamic Law as Intellectual Refinement in the Writing of Badr al-Dīn al-Zarkash.” Sixth Conference of the School of Mamluk Studies, Tokyo, Japan (June 15-17).
- 2019 “Coherence from Disagreement: Disputations and Distinctions in Early Islamic Law.” British Association for Islamic Studies 2019 Conference, Nottingham, UK (April 15-16).
- 2019 “Legal Distinctions and the Systematization of Islamic Law.” Ninety-Fourth Meeting of the Medieval Academy of America, Philadelphia, PA (March 7-9).
- 2018 “Centering Archives: A Different Approach for Mamluk Studies.” Fifth Conference of the School of Mamluk Studies, Ghent, Belgium (July 5-7).
- 2018 “Games of Law: Islamic Legal Genres in the 14th Century.” Annual Meeting of the American Comparative Literature Association, Los Angeles, CA (March 29-April 1).
- 2018 “God’s Language or Human Language: Lexicography, Synonyms, and Teology in the 4th/10th Century.” 228th Meeting of the American Oriental Society, Pittsburgh, PA (March 16-19).
- 2017 “Te Unlimits of Language: Te Teology of Lexicographical Distinctions.” Philology as Literature – Literature as Philology: Critical and Aesthetical Interactions in Arab Culture and Beyond, Bamf, Scotland (July 9-12).
- 2017 “An Unknown Text of Legal Distinctions: Te Implications of a New Discovery.” 227th Meeting of the American Oriental Society, Los Angeles, CA (March 17-20).
- 2016 “Riddles, Questions, and Performance: A Social Life of Islamic Legal Knowledge.” American Association of Religion, San Antonio, TX (Nov. 19-22).
- 2016 “Forms of Law: Ritual Purity in the Works of Jamāl al-Dīn al-Asnawī.” Tird Conference of the School of Mamluk Studies, Chicago, IL (June 23-25).
- 2016 “Disputation and Objection: Te Rise of Legal Distinctions.” 226th Annual Meeting of the American Oriental Society, Boston, MA (March 18-21).
- 2014 “Evolving Difference: Legal Distinctions in the anaf Tradition.” Forty-Eighth Annual Meeting of the Middle East Studies Association, Washington D.C. (November 22-25).
- 2013 “Illuminating Differences and Creating Differences: Te Shifing Conceptions of

a Legal Distinction (S^Z8Sdc S^Z8[ iZ Rethinking Classical Islamic Law: Can 8[ cZ Be Applied Law? Rabat, Morocco (November 13- 15).

- 2013 "Explanation or Innovation? An Analysis of the 8Sdc 8[ cZ" Forty-Seventh Annual Meeting of the Middle East Studies Association, New Orleans, LA (October 10-13).
- 2013 "Explaining, Interpreting, and Clarifying the Q'an: Te 'Commentary' on NEP-27." Toward a 'Biography' of a Manuscript: A Copy of the Q'an from 12th c. Iran: A Project in the History of the Book, Philadelphia, PA (February 22- 23).
- 2010 "Heroes, History, and Fiction: Rereading and Rewriting History in Ba'thist Iraq" Graduate Humanities Conference, Penn Humanities Forum, University of Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania, PA (February 19).

Organi zer

- 2023 "Blurring Disciplinary Boundaries: Intellectual History in the Middle East, 1200- 1500" Fifty-Seventh Annual Meeting of the Middle East Studies Association, Montreal, Canada (November 2- 5).
- 2019 "Mamluk Scholarship and the Transmission of Knowledge." Sixth Conference of the School of Mamluk Studies, Tokyo, Japan (June 15- 17).
- 2019 "Legal Systematization among Muslims and Jews in the Medieval Islamicate World" 94th Meeting of the Medieval Academy of America, Philadelphia, PA (March 7- 9).
- 2016 "Aesthetics and Performance of Knowledge: Te Social and Courtly Roles of Scholarship in Mamluk Cairo." Tird Conference of the School of Mamluk Studies, Chicago, IC Meetk13 15).
- 2013 "A Innovatiql anl CHi- Te Hu— thD Re Blction CET o, " Bruar. Forty-Sixt"

- Harvard Law School, Cambridge, MA (December 21) [via videoconference].
- 2021 “Islamicizing Greek Knowledge: Al-Ghazali and Logic,” Series on Islamic Intellectual Traditions, Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT (March 10) [via videoconference].
- 2020 “Harmonizing Similarities,” Program in Islamic Law Book Talk Series, Harvard Law School, Cambridge, MA (November 17) [via videoconference].
- 2019 “On Legal Distinctions: Concept and Genre,” Near Eastern Studies Colloquium, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY (September 23).
- 2018 20 Minutes @ 11, ?S] [ `Y >[ XWH[e[ T^W 3df† 4[a^aYk† S` V H[ egS^[ I Sf[ a`† 8WdgSdk Ž <g` W † , Falconer Gallery, Grinnell, IA (April 24).
- 2016 “Establishing Legal Genres: The Case of Riddles and Distinctions,” Beyond Circulation: Non-Western Universalisms and Global Histories of Science, Graduate Conference, Columbia University, New York, NY (October 7–8).
- 2015 “Tahrir Documents: Reflections on Building a Digital Archive” (with Alexander Winder), University of Pennsylvania, WORD LAB Digital Humanities Discussion Group Philadelphia, PA (March 17).
- 2015 “Systems and Taxonomies in Islamic Legal Thinking: Comments on anaf Distinctions (8gd c) Literature,” Middle Eastern History and Theory Workshop, University of

Concentration.



- 2022- Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship, Director, Grinnell College.  
Chair, Studies in Africa, Middle East, and South Asia Concentration.
- 2023-2025 Institute for Global Engagement Advisory Board, Grinnell College.
- 2024-2025 Fischlowitz Travel Fellowship Selection Committee, Grinnell College.
- 2016-2024 Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship, Associate Director, Grinnell College.
- 2020-2023 Scholarship Selection Committee, Grinnell College.

## Academic Workshops

- 2024 "To What Degree Can Mamluk Artifacts be Interrogated?" led by Bethany Walker, School of Mamluk Studies, Kuwait City, Kuwait (March 2-4).
- 2018 "Uses of the Past in Islamic Legal Thought and Practice" Understanding Shari'a: Perfect Past, Imperfect Present, Leiden, Netherlands (November 11-16).
- 2016 "Reading Fatwas," Annemarie Schimmel Kolleg, Fall School 2016, Bonn, Germany (August 8-12).
- 2016 "Mamluk Numismatics" led by Warren Schultz, School of Mamluk Studies, Chicago, IL (June 20-22).
- 2015 "A Holistic Approach to Manuscript Studies"