

CURRICULUM VITAE

Dana Sajdi

Boston College
History Department
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Employment

Current:

Assistant Professor of Islamic and Middle Eastern History
History Department
Boston College

2006-2007. Post-Doctoral Fellow, Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin

Program: Europe in the Middle East-Middle East in Europe

Theme: "Cities Compared: Cosmopolitanism in the Mediterranean and Adjacent Regions."

Project: "The City Possessed: Civic Identity and the Narrations of Damascus 12th-20th Centuries."

2005-2006. Post-Doctoral Fellow, Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin

Program: Islam and Modernity

Theme: "Circulating Genres: Literature, History and the Politics of Translation."

Project: "The Barber of Damascus: Nouveau Literacy in the 18th Century Middle East."

2004-2005. Visiting Research Associate, Department of Near Eastern Studies, Princeton University, Princeton.

2002- 2005. Assistant Professor of Middle East History, History Department, Concordia University, Montreal (On leave of absence, 2004-2005).

1992-1998. Teaching Assistant, Columbia University, New York City.

1991-1992. Assistant Director and Artistic Director, Department of English and Comparative Literature and Theatre, American University in Cairo, Cairo

Education

Ph.D. 2002

Department of Middle Eastern and Asian Languages and Cultures, **Columbia University**

Dissertation Title: “Peripheral Visions: The Worlds and Worldviews of Commoner
Chroniclers in the 18th Century Ottoman Levant”

Adviser: Richard W. Bulliet
Ph.D. awarded with Distinction

M.Phil. 1997

Department of Middle Eastern and Asian Languages and Cultures, **Columbia University**
Major: History of the Middle East 1000-1500
Minor: Islamic Law
Language requirements: Arabic, Persian, French, German.

M.A. 1994

Department of Middle Eastern and Asian Languages and Cultures, **Columbia University**
Major: Islamic History 550-800
M.A. Dissertation Title: “The Role of Inter-School Polemics in the Formation of Early
Islamic Law: A Comparative Study of a Case in the
Mudawwana of Sahnun and the *Kitab al-hujja `ala ahl al-*
Madina of al-Shaybani.” (Adviser: Jeanette Wakin).

B.A. (Honours). 1991

American University in Cairo

Majors: Sociology and Theatre.

The first student to graduate from the American University in Cairo with a double major,
and the first student to major in Theatre

RESEARCH

Publications

Edited Volumes:

2008: *Ottoman Tulips, Ottoman Coffee: Leisure and Lifestyles in the Eighteenth Century*.
London: IB Tauris, 2008.

[Proceedings of Conference “Rethinking Culture in the Ottoman 18th Century,” Princeton
University, 15-16 January, 2005].

2008: with Marle Hammond, eds., “*Transforming Loss into Beauty*”: *Essays on Arabic
Literature and Culture in Memory of Magda Al-Nowaihi*. Cairo: American University in
Cairo Press, 2008.

Articles and Encyclopedia Entries:

Forthcoming: “The Dead and the City: The Limits of Hospitality in the Early Modern
Levant” in *Interreligious Hospitality*, edited by Richard Kearney.

Forthcoming: Reprint of “Re-visiting Layla’s al-Akhyaliyya’s Trespass,” in *Early Islamic Poetry and Poetics*, the Formation of the Classical Islamic World Series, edited by Suzanne Pinckney Stetkevych (Ashgate Publishing).

Forthcoming: “Muhammad b. Isa Ibn Kannan (d. 1738),” entry in *Historians of the Ottoman Empire*, <http://www.ottomanhistorians.com/> [On the life and work of the 18th – century Damascene historian and geographer, Ibn Kannan]

2009: “Print and its Discontents: A Case for Pre-Print Journalism and Other Sundry Print Matters,” *The Translator*, 15:1, 2009, Special Issue “Nation and Translation in the Middle East” edited by Samah Selim. [Argues against the technological determinism of the “impact of print” historiography and offers a connected history that sees chronicle-writing as a predecessor for print journalism]

2008: with Marle Hammond, “Introduction,” in *“Transforming Loss into Beauty”: Essays on Arabic Literature and Culture in Memory of Magda Al-Nowaihi*, (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2008). [Theorizes the place of the poetic genre of elegy in Arabo-Islamic history and culture]

2008: “Re-visiting Layla’s al-Akhyaliyya’s Trespass,” in *“Transforming Loss into Beauty”: Essays on Arabic Literature and Culture in Memory of Magda Al-Nowaihi*, (Cairo, American University in Cairo Press, 2008). [Examines the historical and cultural context surrounding the poetry and career of the transgressive 8th century female poet, Layla al-Akhyaliyyah]

2008: “‘Decline’ and its Discontents and Ottoman Cultural History: By Way of Introduction,” in *Ottoman Tulips, Ottoman Coffee: Leisure and Lifestyles in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Dana Sajdi. London: IB Tauris, 2008. [Sketches the state of the field of Ottoman studies on the 17th and 18th centuries with a view of the demise of the framework of “Ottoman decline” and the recent emergence of cultural history]

2007: “Shihabaddin Ahmad Ibn Budayr al-Hallaq (fl. 1762),” entry in *Historians of the Ottoman Empire*, <http://www.ottomanhistorians.com/> [On the life and work of the 18th – century Damascene barber-chronicler Shihab al-Din Ahmad Ibn Budayr]

2004: “A Room of His Own: the ‘History’ of the Barber of Damascus (fl. 1762),” *The MIT Electronic Journal of Middle East Studies* 4 (2004), 19-35. [A literary and cultural analysis of the chronicle of the above-mentioned barber. Awarded the Syrian Studies Association Prize for Best Published Article in 2004].

“*Halal-o-Haram*,” entry in the *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, Ed. Ehsan Yarshater, London: Routledge Kegan Paul, 1982-. [On the categories of the “permissible” and the “prohibited” in Islamic law].

2000: "Trespassing the Male Domain: The *qasidah* of Layla al-Akhyaliyyah," *Journal of Arabic Literature* 31.2 (2000), 121-146 [On an 8th century female poet who is the only woman known to have composed a poem in the pre-eminent literary form of the tripartite ode].

Book Reviews:

Forthcoming: Review of Shirine Hamadeh, *The City's Pleasures: Istanbul in the Eighteenth Century* (University of Washington Press: Seattle and London, 2008) [Forthcoming in *New Perspectives on Turkey*]

Forthcoming: Review of James Grehan, *Everyday Life and Consumer Culture in 18th-Century Damascus* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2007) [Forthcoming in *Turkish Studies Review Journal*]

2008: Review of Muhannad Ahmad Salim al-Mubayyidin, *Ahl al-qalam wa dawru-hum fi al-hayah al-thaqafiyya fi madinat Dimashq, 1121/1708-1172/1758* (Men of the Pen and their Role in the Cultural Life of the City of Damascus, 1121/1708-1172/1758)." Damascus: IFPO, 2005), *Syrian Studies Association Newsletter*, Volume XIII: 2 (2008), 12-13.

2008: Review of Heghnar Zeitlian-Watenpaugh, *The Image of the City: Imperial Architecture and the Urban Experience in Aleppo in the 16th and 17th Centuries* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2004), *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 40.1 (2008), 141-142.

2005: Review of Muhammed A. Al-Da`mi, *Arabian Mirrors and Western Soothsayers: Nineteenth-Century Literary Approaches to Arab-Islamic History* (New York: Peter Lang, 2002), *Journal of Islamic Studies* 16.3 (2005), 371-374.

2004: Review of Philip K. Hitti, trans. *An Arab-Syrian Gentleman and Warrior in the Period of the Crusades: Memoirs of Usamah Ibn-Munqidh* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), *Arab Studies Journal* 51.2/52.1 (2003-2004), 189-191.

Non-academic publications:

2009: "Valse avec Bachir et ses victims disparues. Le refoulement et sa therapie," *Contretemps: Revue Critique*, July. (Translated into French by Christian Dubucq) <http://contretemps.eu/culture/valse-bachir-ses-victimes-disparues-refoulement-sa-therapie>

Current Research Projects

1. Writing a monograph entitled *The Barber of Damascus: Nouveau Literacy in the Early Modern Middle East*. A social, cultural, and literary exploration of the phenomenon of

commoner authorship in the 18th century Middle East through the “life and work” of the 18th century Damascene barber, Ahmad Ibn Budayr al-Hallaq (fl. 1762).

2. Researching a project entitled “The City Possessed: Civic Identity and Narrations of Damascus 12th-20th Centuries.” [On the topographical literature about Damascus]

3. Preparing, from a unique and hitherto unknown manuscript, a critical edition of the original text of the chronicle of Ahmad Ibn Budayr al-Hallaq, an 18th century barber from Damascus.

Presentations and Invited Lectures:

2009: “The Dead and the City: The Limits of Hospitality in the Early-Modern Levant”, Conference on Interreligious Hospitality, Boston College, March 13-14, 2009.

2009: “Traveling Women”, a presentation for the inauguration of the exhibition, “The Book as Art: Artists’ Books From The National Museum of Women in the Arts”, McCullen Museum, Boston College, Feb/ 14, 2009.

2008: “The Barber of Damascus: Nouveau Literacy in the Eighteenth-Century Levant.” Bogazici University, Istanbul, June 11.

2007: “Sacred Language and Cultural Decline: Were the Arabs too backward to Print Books?” Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences, Berlin, June 11.

2007: “Damascus in the 18th Century: What Kind of Civic Sphere?” Ottoman Urban Studies Seminar, Zentrum Moderner Orient, Berlin, January 22.

2006: “Authority and History: the Arabic Chronicle until the 18th Century.” Panel on, “Genres of Political and Cultural Expression in the Modern Arab World,” Middle Studies Association Annual Meeting, Boston, November 19.

2006: “Authority and History: the Arabic Chronicle until the 18th Century.” Berliner Seminar, “Europe in the Middle East-the Middle East in Europe”, October 18.

2006: “Is the History of Print Culture in the Middle East a Problem?” Workshop “To Print or Not to Print? Knowledge Diffusion in the 18th and 19th Century Middle East,” Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin, May 6-7.

2005: “Nouveau Literacy in 18th Century Damascus: A Barber among the Scholars,” Berliner Seminar, “Cultural Mobility in Near Eastern Literatures: Circulating Genres/Traveling Traditions,” Working Group Modernity and Islam, 2 November.

2005: “Nouveau Literacy in 18th Century Damascus: A Barber among the Scholars,” panel on “Circulating Genres: Literature, History, and the Politics of Translation,” 12th

Annual Congress of die Deutsche Arbeitsgemeinschaft Voderer Orient, Hamburg, 27-29 October.

2005: "In Other Worlds: The Geographies of Chroniclers in the 18th Century Levant," Representations of Ottoman Imperial Space: Maps, Texts, Historiographies, Center for International and Comparative Studies and Department of History, Northwestern University, 4-5 March.

2004: "An Introduction to the History of the Arab-Israeli Conflict," Dawson College, Montreal, April 13. (For course "Twentieth Century History")

2004: "A Room of His Own: The 'History' of the Barber of Damascus (fl. 1762)," The Montreal Scholars' Circle, January 30, 2004.

2002: "A Room of His Own: The 'History' of the Barber of Damascus (fl. 1762)," Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations, University of Toronto, November 8, 2002.

2000: "Struggling for Tenure in the 18th century Academy: Autobiography in the Chronicle of Muhammad Ibn Kannan of Damascus," Seminar on "Control, Mobility and Self-Fulfillment: Learning and Culture in the Islamic World since the Middle Ages," Department of Arabic Studies and the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, American University in Cairo, 13-15 April.

1995: "Inter-School Polemics in the Formation of Early Islamic Law," panel on "Initiatives and Reformulations in Islamic Law and Theology," Annual Meeting of the Middle East Studies Association, Washington, DC, 6-10 December.

1997: "*Tajawuz al-maydan al-dhukuri: qasidat Layla al-Akhyaliyyah*," ("Trespassing the Male Domain: the *qasida* of Layla al-Akhyaliyyah"), Arabic Language Seminar, Department of Near Eastern Studies, Princeton University, March 18, 1997.

1993: "An Introduction to Islam", delivered to senior officers of the New York City Police Department, April 1993.

Discussions and Responses in Academic Meetings:

2008. Discussant in panel, "Renewal and Reform in the 18th Century," Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting, Washington, DC, Nov. 22-26, 2008.

2007. Respondent to Irene Fatsea, "Builders and Craftsmen in the Founding Phase of Modern Athens: the Illuminating Role of the Building Contract," Workshop, "Migration and the Urban Institutions in the Late Ottoman Reform Period," Zentrum Moderner Orient, Berlin, May 10.

2007. Respondent to Tetsuya Sahara, “the Ottoman City Council and the Beginning of the Modernization of Urban Space in the Balkans,” Workshop, “Migration and the Urban Institutions in the Late Ottoman Reform Period,” Zentrum Moderner Orient, Berlin, May 10.

2007. Discussant, translator and simultaneous interpreter, “New Trends in Egyptian Historiography of the Ottoman Period: A German-Egyptian Encounter,” Zentrum Moderner Orient, Berlin, March 14.

2006. Respondent to Uwe Wirth, “Circulating Manuscripts: the Genre of Editorial Fiction,” Berliner Seminar, “Cultural Mobility in Near Eastern Literatures: Circulating Genres/Traveling Traditions,” Working Group Modernity and Islam, April 17.

2004. Respondent to Samuel D. Albert, “And was Jerusalem builded here...,” Centre for Canadian Architecture, Study Centre Seminar Series, Montreal, March 19, 2004.

Conferences Organized

Organized a Mellon-funded conference on “Rethinking Culture in the Ottoman Eighteenth Century”, Princeton University, 15-16 January, 2005.

Workshops Organized

Organized “To Print or Not to Print? Knowledge Diffusion in the 18th and 19th Century Arabic, Turkish, and Persian-Speaking Worlds,” Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin, 5-6 May, 2006.

Lectures Organized

2004. Organized an endowed lecture series “The Saleh Sassoon Mahlab Lecture Series on the History of Jewish-Muslim Relations.” One lecture annually, starting Fall, 2004. Inaugural Lecture by Professor Mark Cohen, Princeton University, “Jews and Muslims in the Middle Ages,” October 5, 2004.

Research Grants

2008-2009. Research Expense Grant, Boston College.

2004-2005. Visiting Research Fellow, Department of Near Eastern Studies, Princeton University, 2004-2005.

2003-2006. Jeune Chercheur, Fonds Québécois de Recherche sur la Société et la Culture (FQRSC). Awarded for proposal on “Public Space and Cultural Production in the Early Modern Levant.”

2002-2003. Concordia University Start-Up Research Grant.

Academic and Teaching Awards

2009. Teacher of the Year Award, Phi Alpha Theta Honors Society.

2009. Faculty Appreciation, an AHANA-GLBT student initiative.

2004. Syrian Studies Association Best Published Article for 2004.

1992-2001. President’s Fellow, Columbia University, (on leave of absence 1999).

Summer 1997. Mellon Summer Language Study Grant, Middle East Institute, Columbia University (attended an intensive course in Turkish at Ankara University TOMER Language Teaching Center, Istanbul).

1990-1991. Cultural Scholarship, American University in Cairo.

Research Languages

Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Ottoman, English, French, German.

Research Internships

1995, September-December. Research Assistant, Department of Islamic Textiles, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.

1992, June-August. Research Assistant to Prof. Sadeddin Ibrahim, Arab Thought Forum (Muntada al-Fikr al-`Arabi), Amman, Jordan.

TEACHING

Boston College 2008-

Lecture Courses:

The History and Historiography of the Arab-Israeli Conflict (HS344)

Islamic Civilization (HS 171/TH174/FA174)

The Study and Writing of History: “The Arabian Nights” from Baghdad to Hollywood. (HS 300-66)

To be taught in Spring 2010.
with Sarah Ross, “Odysseys in the European and Islamic Traditions”.
“The Palestinian-Israeli Conflict through Culture”.

Colloquia:

Spaces and Places in History (HS 832)

The City in the Pre-Modern Eastern Mediterranean (Hs 661)

Reading and Research Courses:

Fall 2009. with Jefferey Dyer, Jenna Larson, and Clayton Trutor

Introduction to Ottoman Provincial History

Fall 2008. with Regan Eby

The Biographical Dictionary in the Islamic Tradition

with William Sadd, Undergraduate

Nationalism and Identity in Georgia (the Caucasus)

Spring 2008. with Austin Mason

Pilgrimage and Shrine Veneration in the Islamic Tradition

Concordia University 2002-2004

Undergraduate Courses:

History of the Middle East to 1500 (HIST 298E); History of the Middle East 1500-Present (HIST 298F); History of the Arab-Israeli Conflict (HIST 398V); and The Twentieth Century: A Global History (HIST/Z 298G)

Graduate/Undergraduate Seminars:

Protest and the City in the Pre-Modern Middle East (HIST 477C/640E/840E)

Tutorials:

Winter 2003. with Alexandra Oliveira and Genevieve Vallerand

History of Islamic Spain

Columbia University 1992-1998

Teaching Assistant in the following undergraduate courses:

Theories of Culture in the Study of the Middle East; Contemporary Asian Civilization; Intermediate Arabic; and Elementary Arabic.

Examinerships

Fall 2003.

Member of Ph.D. Dissertation Committee for Keith Meadowcroft, "The Hindu Mahasabha and All-India Politics, 1915-1952", Department of History, Concordia University.

Other Teaching Experience

1994-1993. Conducted the weekly Arabic Conversation Table for three semesters in the Middle East Institute, School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University.

Summer 1993. Taught a course on "Theatre Movement" in the Drama and Education program, Queen Noor Foundation, Amman, Jordan.

SERVICE

Review and Adjudication Committees

2008. External reviewer for the Social Science Research Council International Dissertation Research Fellowship for the year 2008-2009.

2007. One of five international internal reviewers of proposal to launch the Berlin Graduate School of Muslim Cultures and Societies. Submitted to the "Excellence Initiative" funded by German Federal and State Governments. Grant awarded.

Peer Reviews

2007. External reviewer for *History Compass*.

2005. External reviewer for *Journal of Urban History*.

History Department Committees, Boston College

Undergraduate Elective Committee, and Phi Theta Alpha (History Honors Society) Advisor

History Department Committees, Concordia University

Advisory Chair Search Committee; Graduate Program Committee; World History Curriculum Committee; Search Committee for Tenure-stream Position in Latin American History; Recruitment and Curriculum Committee, and Search Committee for Tenure-stream Position in African History.

Membership of Professional Associations:

Middle East Studies Association, Syrian Studies Association, Middle East Social and Cultural History Association.

Volunteer Work

Summer 1991. Jordan Co-ordinator, Harvard International Study Team examining the effects of the 1991 Gulf War on Iraqi civilians, August-September 1991. Responsible for recruiting a team of about 30 Jordanian professionals, surveyors and translators, and for organizing and co-supervising their 2-week long fieldwork in Iraq.