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EMPLOYMENT AND AFFILIATIONS

Associate Professor, Department of History, University of Utah, July 2025-Present.

[Prince Mohammed Al Faisal Chair for the History of Technology and Innovation in the Kingdom](#) at the King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies, 2026-2028.

Director, Middle East Center and Middle East Studies Program, University of Utah, July 2023-present.

Assistant Professor, Department of History, University of Utah, July 2022-June 2025.

Senior Humanities Research Fellowship for the Study of the Arab World, New York University Abu Dhabi, 2020-2021.

Assistant Professor, Department of History, Iowa State University, 2015-2022.

Visiting Instructor, Department of History, Georgia State University, 2007-2008.

EDUCATION

Ph.D., Department of History, Columbia University, 2015.

M.Phil. with Distinction, Department of History, Columbia University, 2012.

M.A., Department of History, Columbia University, 2010.

M.A., Department of History, Georgia State University, 2007.

B.S., Secondary Social Science Education, University of West Georgia, 2001.

PUBLICATIONS

Monographs

Saltwater Kingdoms: Fossil-Fueled Water and Climate Change in Arabia, under contract to University of California Press, 2 January 2024. I plan to deliver the full manuscript by Fall 2026.

[*Imperial Mecca: Ottoman Arabia and the Indian Ocean Hajj*](#), Columbia University Press, Columbia Studies in International and Global History, 2020. 416 pages. Available in hardback, paperback, and e-book formats.

Winner: [Albert Hourani Book Award, Middle East Studies Association, 2021](#).

Shortlisted and Commended: [British-Kuwait Friendship Society Book Prize, 2021.](#)

Translations of *Imperial Mecca*

[إدارة الحج إلى مكة: موضوع تجاذب بين السلطنة العثمانية والاستعمار الأوروبي](#). Arabic translation of *Imperial Mecca: Ottoman Arabia and the Indian Ocean Hajj* by Rabi' Hindi. Beirut: Arab Scientific Publishers, 2022. 470 pages. Available in paperback and e-book formats.

[İmparatorluk Mekke'si: Osmanlı Hicaz'ı ve Hint Okyanusunda Hac](#). Turkish translation of *Imperial Mecca: Ottoman Arabia and the Indian Ocean Hajj* by Yunus Babacan. Istanbul: Telemak Kitap, 2023. 464 pages. Available in paperback.

Edited Volumes

Zozan Pehlivan and **Michael Christopher Low**, eds., *Bloomsbury Handbook on Middle East Environmental Histories*, Bloomsbury, under contract, projected to be completed by 2028.

Natalie Koch and **Michael Christopher Low**, eds., *Global Deserts: Transregional ties binding the US West and the Middle East*, in progress for submission to the University of New Mexico Press, projected to be completed by 2027.

Having received the Advanced Seminar award from the School for Advanced Research in Santa Fe, New Mexico, Natalie Koch (Syracuse) and I will bring together a group of 10 scholars for a workshop held from 12-18 December 2026. With support from the School for Advanced Research, we are slated to produce an edited volume. SAR's preference is that the volume be produced by the University of New Mexico Press.

Lâle Can, **Michael Christopher Low**, Kent F. Schull, and Robert Zens, eds., [The Subjects of Ottoman International Law](#), Indiana University Press, 2020. 272 pages. Available in paperback and e-book formats.

Journal Articles

"Gulf Desalination and the Two Wars for the Future," *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs*, solicited article in progress for the journal's 28th edition on the theme of "Polycrisis," scheduled for June 2027.

Ahmed AlMaazmi, Fahad Bishara, Tamara Fernando, Mandana Limbert, **Michael Christopher Low**, and Nancy Um, "[Oceanic Arabia: A Roundtable](#)" *Monsoon: Journal of the Indian Ocean Rim* 3, no. 2 (November 2025): 125-137.

"[The Water Prince: Mohammed AlFaisal's Legacy](#)," *Dirasat* (King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies) 77 (Rabi I 1447/September 2025): 1-44.

Arabic translation of "The Water Prince: Mohammed AlFaisal's Legacy" by Karim Muhammad: "أمير الماء: محمد الفيصل" *دراسات* ٧٧ (ربيع الأول ١٤٤٧ هـ): ١-٤٢.

"[Desert Dreams of Drinking the Sea, Consumed by the Cold War: Transnational Flows of Energy and Desalination from the Pacific to the Persian Gulf](#)," *Environment and History* 26, no. 2 (2020): 145-174.

Lâle Can and **Michael Christopher Low**, "[The 'Subjects' of Ottoman International Law](#)," *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association* 3, no. 2 (2016): 223-234.

"[Unfurling the Flag of Extraterritoriality: Autonomy, Foreign Muslims, and the Capitulations in the Ottoman Hijaz](#)," *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association* 3, no. 2 (2016): 299-323.

"[Ottoman Infrastructures of the Saudi Hydro-State: The Technopolitics of Pilgrimage and Potable Water in the Hijaz](#)," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 57, no. 4 (October 2015): 942-974.

Winner: [Alice Hamilton Prize, American Society for Environmental History, 2016.](#)

Winner: [CIEPO Article Prize, Comité International des Études Pré-ottomanes et Ottomanes, 2016.](#)

"[The Indian Ocean and Other Middle Easts](#)," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 34, no. 3 (2014): 549-555.

"[Empire and the Hajj: Pilgrims, Plagues, and Pan-Islam under British Surveillance, 1865-1908](#)," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 40, no. 2 (2008): 269-290.

Edited Special Issues

Co-Guest Editor, Special Issue, Lâle Can and **Michael Christopher Low**, "[The 'Subjects' of Ottoman International Law](#)," in the *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association* 3, no. 2 (2016): 223-376.

Guest Editor, Special Section, "[The Indian Ocean and Other Middle Easts](#)," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 34, no. 3 (2014): 549-598.

Book Chapters and Contributions

"Afterword: Escaping the Frontier: Istanbul's Curious Absence in Ottoman Environmental History," in Mehmet Kentel and Onur İnal, eds., *Istanbul Unbound: Environmental Histories of the City* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, in press/forthcoming in early 2027), 233-242.

"[Deadly Journeys: Public Health and Mobility Regulation in the Age of Steam](#)," in Qaisra Khan with Nahla Nassar, eds., *Hajj and the Arts of Pilgrimage: Essays in Honour of Nasser David Khalili*, vol. 2 (London and Chicago: Gingko Library and the University of Chicago Press, 2024), 217-237.

Lâle Can and **Michael Christopher Low**, "[Introduction](#)," in Lâle Can, **Michael Christopher Low**, Kent F. Schull, and Robert Zens, eds., *The Subjects of Ottoman International Law* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2020), 1-16.

"[Unfurling the Flag of Extraterritoriality: Autonomy, Foreign Muslims, and the Capitulations in the Ottoman Hijaz](#)," in Lâle Can, **Michael Christopher Low**, Kent F. Schull, and Robert Zens, eds., *The Subjects of Ottoman International Law* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2020), 76-98.

"[The Infidel Piloting the True Believer: Thomas Cook and the Business of the Colonial Hajj](#)," in Umar Ryad, ed., *The Hajj and Europe in the Age of Empires* (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 47-80.

“[Mecca: Pilgrimage and the Making of the Islamic World, 400-1500](#),” in Aran MacKinnon and Elaine MacKinnon, eds., *Places of Encounter: Time, Place and Connectivity in World History*, vol. 1 (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2012), 127-144.

Contributing author in Dona J. Stewart, [The Middle East Today: Political, Geographical, and Cultural Perspectives](#) (London and New York: Routledge, 2009).

My contributions to this textbook came in the form of brief articles and pull-out sections scattered throughout the volume. Collectively, I am the named, sole author of articles accounting for 22 out of approximately 200 pages of text or more than 10% of the volume. See below for a complete list of the articles:

“Shirin Ebadi: An Islamic Feminist’s Struggle for Human Rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran,” 4-5.

“Edward Said and Orientalism,” 6-8.

“Delving Deeper: Re-Examining the ‘Roots’ of the ‘Clash of Civilizations’,” 10-11.

“Talking Back to Terrorism: A View from Amman, 12-13.

“Redrawing the Map: What is the Islamic Word,” 19-20.

“The Description de l’Egypte: Imperialism, Egyptology and the Orientalist Rediscovery of the Middle East,” 36-37.

“The Five Pillars of Islam,” 65-66.

“Shiism: The Other Islam,” 68-69.

“Ibn Battuta: The Muslim Marco Polo or the Greatest Traveler in World History?,” 71-72.

“Shia Holy Sites in Iraq: Karbala and Najaf,” 79.

“The Taj Mahal and the Mughal Empire,” 83.

“Key Concepts in Islamist Thought,” 127-128.

Short Essays and Journalism

“[Iran’s Water Weapon Against the Gulf](#),” *Project Syndicate*, 28 March 2026. Translations available in Dutch, French, German, Portuguese, and Spanish. Also syndicated to *De Groene Amsterdammer*, *Eco-Business*, *El Economista*, and *The Korea Times*.

“[Persian Gulf desalination could become military targets in regional war](#),” *The Conversation*, 5 March 2026. Also syndicated to *The Straits Times*.

“[Voices: Why Utah needs Middle East studies—and experts—now more than ever](#),” *The Salt Lake Tribune*, 30 August 2024.

[“Opinion: As university faculty and administrators, we should be mentoring—not vilifying—student protestors,”](#) *The Salt Lake Tribune*, 3 May 2024.

[“Parallel Pilgrimage: Reflections on the Space/Time of Shrines, with Bruce Grant, A. Azfar Moin, Catherine Wanner, Wei-ping Lin, Ismail Fajrie Alatas, and Michael Christopher Low,”](#) *In Dialogue*, Roundtable hosted by *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 22 July 2022.

[“Haji in a time of Cholera: Remembering India’s colonial past and Yemen’s tragic present,”](#) *World Is One News* (New Delhi, India-based cable television and digital news group, a subsidiary of Essel Group/Zee Media conglomerate), 4 September 2017.

Patrick Adamiak, Jeffery Dyer, and **Michael Christopher Low**, [“The End of an Era: The Less Than Grand Opening of the New Ottoman Archives,”](#) *Jadaliyya*, 25 April 2013. Also featured in *Kamil Pasha*.

[“Global Public Health and the Ghosts of Pilgrimages Past,”](#) *Jadaliyya*, 22 October 2012.

Book Reviews

[Laura Frances Goffman, *Disorder and Diagnosis: Health and the Politics of Everyday Life in Arabia* \(Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2024\),](#) *Die Welt des Islams* (2026), published online ahead of print version.

[On Barak, *Heat, a History: Lessons from the Middle East for a Warming Planet* \(Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2024\),](#) *Environmental History* 30, no. 4 (October 2025): 751-753.

[Natalie Koch, *Arid Empire: The Entangled Fates of Arizona and Arabia* \(London and New York: Verso, 2023\),](#) *Journal of Arabian Studies* 14, no. 2 (2025): 408-410.

[On Barak, *Powering Empire: How Coal Made the Middle East and Sparked Global Carbonization* \(Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2020\),](#) *American Historical Review* 129, no. 2 (2024): 848-849.

[Alan Mikhail, *Under Osman's Tree: The Ottoman Empire, Egypt & Environmental History* \(Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017\),](#) *Environmental History* 23, no. 3 (2018): 641-643.

[Patrick Cockburn, *The Age of Jihad: Islamic State and the Great War for the Middle East* \(London: Verso, 2016\),](#) *The Middle East Journal* 71, no. 2 (2017): 329-331.
[John Slight, *The British Empire and the Hajj, 1865-1956* \(Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015\),](#) *Journal of British Studies* 56, no. 2 (2017): 445-446.

[James Gelvin and Nile Green, *Global Muslims in the Age of Steam and Print* \(Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014\),](#) *Arab Studies Journal* 23, no. 1 (2015): 408-412.

[Birsan Bulmuş, *Plague, Quarantines and Geopolitics in the Ottoman Empire* \(Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012\),](#) *Review of Middle East Studies* 48, nos. 1-2 (2014): 71-73.

[Thomas Kuehn, *Empire, Islam, and the Politics of Difference: Ottoman Rule in Yemen, 1849-1919* \(Leiden: Brill, 2011\),](#) *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 46, no. 1 (2014): 196-198.

[Sugata Bose, *A Hundred Horizons: The Indian Ocean in the Age of Global Empire* \(Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006\),](#) *World History Connected* 5, no. 1 (2007).

[Brian Fagan, *Famines, Floods, and Emperors: El Niño and the Fate of Civilizations* \(New York: Basic Books, 1999\)](#), *World History Connected* 3, no. 3 (2006).

Encyclopedia Entries

“Hajj,” in David Buisseret, ed., *The Oxford Companion to World Exploration*, vol. 1 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 365-366.

“Al-Razi,” in William H. McNeill, ed., *Berkshire Encyclopedia of World History*, 5 vols. (Great Barrington, MA: Berkshire Publishing, 2004), 80-82.

“Ibn Khaldun,” in William H. McNeill, ed., *Berkshire Encyclopedia of World History*, 5 vols. (Great Barrington, MA: Berkshire Publishing, 2004), 949-951.

“Mansa Musa,” in William H. McNeill, ed., *Berkshire Encyclopedia of World History*, 5 vols. (Great Barrington, MA: Berkshire Publishing, 2004), 1185-1186.

EXTERNAL AWARDS, FELLOWSHIPS, AND GRANTS

Natalie Koch and **Michael Christopher Low**, “Global Deserts: Transregional ties binding the US West and the Middle East,” Advanced Seminar, School for Advanced Research, Santa Fe, New Mexico, 2026-2027.

Albert Hourani Book Award, Middle East Studies Association, 2021.

Shortlisted and Commended for the British-Kuwait Friendship Society Book Prize, 2021.

New York University Abu Dhabi Senior Humanities Research Fellowship for the Study of the Arab World, New York University Abu Dhabi Research Institute, 2020-2021.

Visiting Research Fellowship, University of Glasgow Library, William Lind Foundation, Summer 2019.

Partner Scholar and Collaborator with the Indian Ocean World Centre, McGill University (Project Director, Gwyn Campbell), Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), Partnership Grant, “[Appraising Risk, Past and Present: Interrogating Historical Data to Enhance Understanding of Environmental Crises in the Indian Ocean World](#),” 2018-2025.

This Partnership Grant is the SSHRC’s largest grant award. Our 20-institution team raised over 5 million Canadian dollars in funding in addition to the 2.5 million awarded directly from the SSHRC. In my capacity as the director of Iowa State University’s participation as a Partner institution, I oversaw \$304,000 (USD) of funding awarded through Iowa State’s Office of the Vice President of Research, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and the Department of History. I also oversaw an additional \$32,000 (USD) in research funds directed to my PhD students as part of the cost-sharing provided by McGill University.

CIEPO Article Prize (awarded biannually for the best article in Ottoman or pre-Ottoman studies published by an early-career scholar), Comité International des Études Pré-ottomanes et Ottomanes, 2016.

Alice Hamilton Prize, American Society for Environmental History (awarded annually for the best article published outside the journal *Environmental History*), 2016.

Senior Visiting Fellowship, Koç University (Istanbul), Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations, May-June 2016.

New York University Abu Dhabi Humanities Research Fellowship, New York University Abu Dhabi Research Institute, 2015-2016 (declined).

Junior Scholar Fellowship, Crown Center for Middle East Studies, Brandeis University, 2015-2016 (declined).

American Institute for Yemeni Studies Fellowship, Dissertation Research in Turkey, 2012-2013.

Institute of Turkish Studies (ITS), Summer Language Study Grant, Ottoman Turkish Paleography, Yıldız Teknik University, Summer 2012.

ITS, Summer Language Study Grant, Intermediate Turkish, Boğaziçi University, Summer 2010.

National Security Education Program David L. Boren Graduate Fellowship, Institute of International Education, Advanced Arabic and Persian training at Georgia State University, Emory University, and the Yemen Language Center in Sana'a, Yemen, Fall 2006-Summer 2007.

American Institute for Yemeni Studies Fellowship, Pre-doctoral research and Intermediate Arabic training at the Yemen Language Center in Sana'a, Yemen, Summer 2006.

Fulbright-Hays Group Project Abroad in West Africa: "From the Atlantic to the Sahara," Ghana and Mali, U.S. Department of Education Grant, Kennesaw State University, Summer 2004.

Best Graduate Student Essay, Phi Alpha Theta Georgia Conference, March 2004.

INTERNAL AWARDS, FELLOWSHIPS, AND GRANTS

University of Utah (2022-Present)

Asia Center Research Travel Award, University of Utah, 2025-2026.

Environmental Humanities Research Professorship, University of Utah, 2023-2025.

ESRR Environmental History Research Grant, Department of History, University of Utah, 2022-2023.

Asia Center Research Travel Award, University of Utah, 2022-2023.

Iowa State University (2015-2022)

Junior Nominee (University-wide nomination), Andrew Carnegie Fellows Program, Iowa State University, 2022 (unsuccessful).

[Dean's Emerging Faculty Leaders Award](#), College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Iowa State University, 2020 (\$25,000, major donor award).

Iowa State University Publication Subvention Grant, Office of the Vice President for Research, Iowa State University, 2020.

LAS Faculty Research and Travel Grant, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Iowa State University, FY 2020.

LAS Small Grant, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Iowa State University, FY 2017.

Center for Excellence in the Arts and Humanities Research Grant (Course Release), Iowa State University, 2016-2017.

Junior Nominee (University-wide nomination), Andrew Carnegie Fellows Program, Iowa State University, 2016 (unsuccessful).

LAS Small Grant, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Iowa State University, FY 2016.

Columbia University (2008-2015)

Kluge Graduate Fellowship, Columbia University, 2013-2015.

Institute for Religion, Culture, and Public Life Research Fellowship, Columbia University, 2012.

Columbia-London School of Economic Ph.D. Exchange Fellowship, Fall 2012.

Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowship, Ottoman Turkish Paleography, Yıldız Teknik University, Summer 2012.

FLAS Fellowship in Turkish, Columbia University, Intermediate Turkish, Boğaziçi University, Summer 2010.

FLAS Fellowship in Turkish, Columbia University, Academic Year 2009-2010.

Richard Hofstadter Faculty Fellow, Department of History, Columbia University, 2008-2013.

Georgia State University (2003-2007)

John A. Alexander Memorial Award, Department of History, Georgia State University, 2006.

INVITED LECTURES AND TALKS

“Red Sea Rising: Infrastructural Resilience and Strategic Depth,” King Faisal Center for Islamic Studies, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 30 November 2026.

Inaugural Lecture, Prince Mohammed Al Faisal Chair for the History of Technology and Innovation at the King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies, “A Century of Pioneers: Re-Imagining Saudi Histories of Technology, Innovation, and Resilience,” King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 29 November 2026.

“A Pilgrim’s Progress to Pandemics Past: Makkah and the Hajj under Quarantine,” Red Sea Museum, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, 31 January 2026.

Roundtable discussion with Chelsea Haines, Natalie Koch, and Tali Keren, “Water Power: Water Politics and Environmental Histories from Arizona to Arabia,” Global Water Futures Institute and Humanities Institute, Arizona State University, 24 October 2025.

“Saltwater Kingdoms: Fossil-Fueled Water and Climate Change in Arabia,” Middle Eastern and North African Colloquium Series, University of Arizona, 22 October 2025.

“The Water Prince: Mohammed AlFaisal’s Legacy,” AlFaisal University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 8 October 2025.

“The Water Prince: Mohammed AlFaisal’s Legacy,” King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 6 October 2025.

“Existential Enemies: Israel, Iran, and America’s Middle East,” Salt Lake City Rotary Club, 1 July 2025.

“Saltwater Kingdoms: Fossil-Fueled Water and Climate Change in Arabia,” Middle East Studies Center, Duke University, 25 March 2025.

Discussant for Thomas Kuehn, “War, Governance, and the Environment in Ottoman Yemen, 1870-1924: Revisiting the History of the Late Ottoman Frontier,” Leiden Yemeni Studies Lectures Series, Leiden University, 27 January 2025.

“The Water Prince and the Saltwater Kingdom: Muhammad bin Faisal and the Saudi Desalination Revolution,” Near Eastern Studies Seminar Series, Department of Near Eastern Studies, Princeton University, 18 November 2024.

“From Empires of Coal and Steam to the Petro-States and Saltwater Kingdoms: The Indian Ocean Roots of Fossil-Fueled Water in the Arabian Peninsula and Gulf, 1850-210,” Indian Ocean in the Age of Empire lecture series, hosted by the Global History of Capitalism Project at the Oxford Global History Centre, University of Oxford, 30 October 2023.

“The Global Crisis of Cholera and the Traumatic Birth of the Modern Infrastructures of the Hajj,” “Accommodations: A Touring Exhibition from the Saudi Pavilion at the 17th International Architecture Exhibition (La Biennale di Venezia),” hosted in conjunction with the Saudi Ministry of Culture’s Diriyah Islamic Arts Biennale, January-April 2023, Hayy Jameel Art Gallery, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, 18 March 2023.

“Awwal Bait: A Journey Home,” A Public Conversation with Sumayya Vally, Artistic Director and Co-Curator of the Islamic Arts Biennale, Islamic Arts Biennale, Western Hajj Terminal, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, 17 March 2023.

“Imperial Mecca: Ottoman Arabia and the Indian Ocean Hajj,” Paul A. and Marie Castelfranco Lecture, Department of Religious Studies, University of California-Davis, 23 February 2023.

Book Talk, *Imperial Mecca: Ottoman Arabia and the Indian Ocean Hajj*, UMASS Lowell, 28 April 2022.

“Moving Beyond Bedouins and Broken Pipes: Writing the Water Infrastructures of Anthropocene Arabia,” Eurasian Empires Workshop, Stanford Humanities Center, Stanford University, 18 April 2022.

“The Well and the Water Machine: Liquid Histories of the Arabian Peninsula from Cholera to Climate Change,” Department of History, University of Utah, 21 January 2022.

“A Pilgrim’s Passport to Pandemics Past: Mecca and the Hajj under Quarantine from Cholera to COVID-19, Iowa State University, Fall 2021 Lecture Series, 2 November 2021.

“The Well and the Water Machine: The History of Desalination and Fossil-Fueled Water in the Long Shadow of Arabia’s Climate-Altered Future,” Center for Middle East and Islamic Studies, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 18 October 2021.

“Ottoman Arabia, the Indian Ocean Hajj, and the Global Crisis of Cholera,” “Public Health and Pandemics across the MENA: A Multidisciplinary Exhibition,” Center for Middle Eastern and North African Studies, University of Michigan, 6 October 2021.

Roundtable Discussion, “Elements of Border and Infrastructure: Water,” Hagop Kevorkian Center for Near Eastern Studies, New York University, 29 September 2021.

Book Talk, *Imperial Mecca: Ottoman Arabia and the Indian Ocean Hajj*, Middle East Institute New Delhi, MEI Speaks no. 43, 28 April 2021.

Panel Discussion, “Ottoman Environments,” Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association, 21 April 2021.

“Pandemic and the Pilgrimage: Ottoman Arabia in the Shadow of British India’s Ecological Fallout,” Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies, University of Oxford, 3 March 2021.

“When the ‘Water Prince’ Brought an Iceberg to Iowa: Muhammad bin Faisal Al Saud’s Frozen Fantasies of Antarctic Arabia,” RedSeaNet, Fall 2020 Webinar Series, “Climate Change, Political Economy, and Connectivity in the Red Sea Region,” Supported by the Social Science Research Council’s Transregional Collaboratory on the Indian Ocean, hosted by NYU Abu Dhabi, 24 November 2020.

Book Talk, *Imperial Mecca: Ottoman Arabia and the Indian Ocean Hajj*, The Howell Speaker Series, University of Virginia, 30 October 2020.

The Loiy Hammad Memorial Lecture, “Imperial Mecca: Ottoman Arabia and the Indian Ocean Hajj,” hosted by the Indian Ocean Working Group, Georgetown University in Qatar, 27 October 2020.

Book Talk, *Imperial Mecca: Ottoman Arabia and the Indian Ocean Hajj*, “New Frontiers of Global History Book Launch and Lecture Series 2020,” hosted by Tsinghua University and East China Normal University, 8 October 2020.

“Think and Drink” Roundtable on “Pandemics in Historical Perspective,” Wyoming Institute for Humanities Research, University of Wyoming, 7 May 2020.

Book Talk, *Imperial Mecca: Ottoman Arabia and the Indian Ocean Hajj*, Gulf University of Science and Technology, Kuwait, 18 March 2020 (Canceled, COVID-19).

“The Circle of Jihad: Western Empire and the Islamic State,” Iowa State University Retirees Association,” Iowa State University Alumni Center, 26 April 2018.

“Desert Dreams of Drinking the Sea: Technopolitical Flows of Desalination and Energy from the Pacific to the Persian Gulf,” University of Missouri, 12 April 2018.

“Desert Dreams of Drinking the Sea: Technopolitical Flows of Desalination and Energy from the Pacific to the Persian Gulf,” Vanderbilt History Seminar, Vanderbilt University, 19 February 2018.

“The Well and the Water Machine: Technopolitical Flows of Pilgrimage, Potable Water, and Petroleum in Arabia,” Department of History, Michigan State University, 2 February 2018.

“When the Water Prince Brought an Iceberg to Iowa: Muhammad bin Faisal’s Frozen Fantasies of Antarctic Arabia,” ReACT Gallery for the Christian Petersen Art Museum at Morrill Hall, Iowa State University, 15 November 2017.

“Microbial Mecca and the Ecologies of Empire: Indian Ocean Cholera and the Limits of the Ottoman Sanitary State,” Indian Ocean World Centre, McGill University, Montréal, 30 March 2017.

“Drinking the Sea: The Technopolitics of Pilgrimage, Potable Water, and Petroleum in Arabia,” Department of History, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, 6 February 2017.

“Ottoman Infrastructures of the Saudi Hydro-State: Pilgrimage, Potable Water, and Petroleum in Arabia,” Koç University, Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations, Istanbul, 9 June 2016.

“The Technopolitics of Pilgrimage and Water in the Late Ottoman Hijaz,” Cambridge Middle East History Group, St. John’s College, University of Cambridge, 10 May 2016.

Dean’s Distinguished Lecture, “Enemies Near and Far: ISIS, Jihadist Violence, and the Quest for an Idealized Islamic State,” College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Iowa State University, 6 April 2016.

“Drinking the Sea: The Technopolitics of Pilgrimage, Potable Water, and Petroleum in Arabia,” Center for Middle East Studies, University of Arizona, 22 February 2016.

Invited Lecturer/Guest Trainer for Yemen, Department of Homeland Security, United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, Asylum Office, San Francisco, 11 February 2016. Other Agencies in Attendance: Federal Bureau of Investigation, National Counter-Terrorism Center, and Northern California Regional Intelligence Center.

“Unfurling the Flag of Extraterritoriality: Foreign Muslims, Muslim Consular Agents, and the Evolution of the Capitulations in the Indian Ocean Hijaz,” Temple University, 17 April 2015.

“The Ottoman Roots of Saudi Environmentalism: The Technopolitics of Pilgrimage, Potable Water, and Petroleum in Arabia,” Department of History and Politics, Drexel University, 15 December 2014.

“The Ottoman Roots of Saudi Environmentalism: The Technopolitics of Pilgrimage, Potable Water, and Petroleum in Arabia,” Department of History, Iowa State University, 11 December 2014.

“Like Oil and Water: An Ottoman Pre-History of Saudi Hydro-Centralization,” Rutgers Center for Historical Analysis, 8 October 2013.

CONFERENCES AND WORKSHOPS

Organizer, “Re-evaluating Strategic Depth and Sustainability in the Wake of the War,” King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 30 November 2026.

Workshop participant, “From Donkeys and Dhows to Desalination: Iraq, the Gulf, and the Flow of Kuwaiti History,” “Arabia and the Sea: Histories from Below,” Magdalen College, University of Oxford, 13-14 April 2026.

Roundtable Participant, “Toynbee Prize Foundation Roundtable: Reflecting on 20 Years of the *Journal of Global History*,” American Historical Association, Chicago, 8 January 2026.

Discussant, “Sense-Making and Making Sense during Environmental Crises: Consumers, Peasants, and Intellectuals in the 19th & 20th Centuries,” Middle East Studies Association, Washington, D.C., 24 November 2025.

Roundtable participant, “Water as Witness: Rethinking Historical Water Infrastructures in the Age of Climate Uncertainty,” European Society for Environmental History Conference, Uppsala, Sweden, 19 August 2025.

Panel Participant, “Tracing Histories of Water Futures,” Rethinking Water West, Water Institute, Arizona State University, 20 March 2025.

Roundtable Participant, “Oceanic Arabia: Promises and Pitfalls in a New Paradigm,” Middle East Studies Association, 11-16 November 2024.

Discussant for the launch of Nadia Christidi’s “Liquid Dreams: Envisioning Water Futures in the UAE,” Jameel Arts Centre, Dubai, 21 June 2024.

Chair, “Technology, Invention, and Infrastructure: From Millstones to Outer Space and Back Again,” American Society for Environmental History, Denver, 5 April 2024.

“The Petro-State and the Saltwater Kingdom: Desalination, Extraction, and Climate Risk in Anthropocene Arabia,” American Society for Environmental History, Denver, 4 April 2024.

“Copying California: The Water Prince and the Cold War Roots of Saudi Mega Projects,” Middle East Studies Association, Montréal, 3 November 2023.

Discussant, “Environmental Crisis and Political Movements in MENA and the Indian Ocean World,” Middle East Studies Association, Montréal, 2 November 2023.

Chair, “Climate, Water, and Ecology,” Middle East Studies Association, Denver, 4 December 2022.
Co-Organizer, Appraising Risk Summer School Workshop, Indian Ocean World Centre, McGill University, 24-26 May 2022.

“Liquid Histories of Climate Risk and Adaptation in Anthropocene Arabia, Appraising Risk Summer School Workshop, Indian Ocean World Centre, McGill University, 24 May 2022.

“From Steamship Empire to Saltwater Kingdoms: The Indian Ocean Routes of Fossil-Fueled Water in the Arabian Peninsula, 1800-2100,” Adaptation and Resilience to Climatic and Environmental Changes in the Indian Ocean World, Past to Present, Indian Ocean World Centre, McGill University, 25 May 2022.

“When the ‘Water Prince’ Brought an Iceberg to Iowa: Muhammad bin Faisal Al Saud’s Frozen Fantasies of Antarctic Arabia,” American Society for Environmental History, Eugene, Oregon, 24 March 2022.

“Infrastructure and Water in the Arabian Peninsula: Rethinking Histories of Desalination, Energy, and Petro-State Development in the Shadow of Climate Change,” American Historical Association, New Orleans, 7 January 2022.

With Mustafa Emre Günaydı, Zozan Pehlivan, Luka Miro, and Kareem Hammami, “Microbial Mapping: Toward a Digital Cartography of Ottoman Cholera and Plague,” Environmental Crises in the Indian Ocean World since 1800,” Indian Ocean World Centre, McGill University, 29 May 2021.

Discussant, “Water, Sewage, and Horses: The Infrastructure of Istanbul,” Voices of Emerging Scholars Webinar Series, Columbia University, Columbia Global Centers: Istanbul, 24 February 2021.

Chair, Environment Roundtable, Indian Ocean World 2021, University of Virginia, 30 January 2021.

Roundtable Participant, “Infrastructure Studies in the Middle East,” Middle East Studies Association, 6 October 2020.

Roundtable Participant, “Fluid Frontiers of the Middle East: Connecting Narratives of the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf,” Middle East Studies Association, 15 October 2020.

“The Floating Ka‘ba: Measuring the Floods of Ottoman Mecca,” Drought, Floods, and Rainfall Anomalies in the Indian Ocean World, Indian Ocean World Centre, McGill University, Montréal, Canada, 4-5 May 2020 (Canceled, COVID-19).

John F. Richards Prize Discussion of Faiz Ahmed’s *Afghanistan Rising: Islamic Law and Statecraft between the Ottoman and British Empires*, Invited Roundtable Participant, American Historical Association, 5 January 2020.

“Desert Dreams of Drinking the Sea, Consumed by the Cold War: Transnational Flows of Desalination and Energy from the Pacific to the Persian Gulf,” How International, Transnational, and Global History Conquered the Globe, Columbia University, 30 November-1 December 2018.

Panel Co-Organizer with Zozan Pehlivan, “Ecological Spillover: Climate and Environmental Risks from the Indian Ocean to the Middle East,” Middle East Studies Association, San Antonio, 17 November 2018.

“Microbial Mecca: Indian Ocean Cholera and the Ecologies of Empire, 1865-1914,” Middle East Studies Association, San Antonio, 17 November 2018.

“Microbial Mecca and the Global Crisis of Cholera,” Centre for the Comparative Study of Muslim Societies and Cultures, Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, Canada, 18-21 October 2018.

Panel Co-Organizer with Zozan Pehlivan, “The Middle East’s Global Ecologies: From the Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean World,” American Society for Environmental History, Riverside, California, 14-18 March 2018.

“Petrol for the *Padişah* or Power Outage?: Toward an Ottoman History of Oil and Energy,” American Society for Environmental History, Riverside, California, 14-18 March 2018.

“‘Distilling Empire’ in the Gulf: The Indian Ocean Origins and Post-Imperial Legacies of Desalination in the Arabian Peninsula,” Beyond Bedouin and Bania: Arabia-South Asia Relations, Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore, 7-8 December 2017.

Chair, “Histories of Infrastructure and Techno-politics,” Middle East Studies Association, Washington D.C., 20 November 2017.

Chair, “Labour, Disease, and Medicine in the Indian Ocean World,” Labour, Working Animals, and the Environment in the Indian Ocean World, Indian Ocean World Centre, McGill University, Montréal, 4-5 May 2017.

“The Steamship of the Desert: Camel Labor, Pilgrimage Transport, and Bedouin Resistance in the Age of Steam,” Labour, Working Animals, and the Environment in the Indian Ocean World, Indian Ocean World Centre, McGill University, Montréal, 4-5 May 2017.

“Drinking the Sea: The United States, the Middle East, and the Globalization of Desalination Technology,” Invited Program Committee Panel, New Perspectives in Environmental History: Drought and Deluge in History, American Historical Association, Denver, 6 January 2017.

Thematic Conversation Co-Organizer with Lâle Can, “International Law, Sovereignty, and Subjecthood in the Late Ottoman Empire,” Middle East Studies Association, 20 November 2016.

“The Petro-State and the ‘Saltwater Kingdom’: Empire, Expertise and the Origins of Desalination Technology in Saudi Arabia, Middle East Studies Association, Boston, 18 November 2016.

“Unfurling the Flag of Extraterritoriality: Foreign Muslims, Muslim Consular Agents, and the Evolution of the Capitulations in the Indian Ocean Hijaz,” Social Science Research Council, Inter-Asian Connections V, Seoul National University Asia Center, 27-30 April 2016.

Thematic Conversation Co-Organizer with Lâle Can, “International Law, Sovereignty, and Subjecthood in the Late Ottoman Empire,” Middle East Studies Association, Denver, 23 November 2015.

“Pauper Pilgrims, Passports, and the Failed Regulation of Indian Ocean Mobilities,” Middle East Studies Association, Denver, 21 November 2015.

Workshop Co-Organizer with Lâle Can, “The ‘Subjects’ of Ottoman International Law: Autonomy, Extraterritoriality, and the Making of Ottoman Citizens,” CUNY Graduate Center, 7 January 2015.

“Pauper Pilgrims, Passports, and the Failed Regulation of Indian Ocean Mobilities,” “The ‘Subjects’ of Ottoman International Law: Autonomy, Extraterritoriality, and the Making of Ottoman Citizens,” CUNY Graduate Center, 7 January 2015.

“The Fifth Column: Foreign Muslims, Extraterritoriality, and the Autonomy of the Ottoman Hijaz,” American Historical Association, New York, 4 January 2015.

“‘Hot Provinces’: Osman Nuri Paşa and the Articulation of the Hamidian Colonial Experiment on the Arab Frontier, Middle East Studies Association, Washington D.C., November 2014.

Panel Organizer, “After the Imperial Turn: Arab Nation-States and the Ottoman Past,” Middle East Studies Association, New Orleans, October 2013.

“Like Oil and Water: An Ottoman Pre-History of Saudi Hydro-Centralization, 1878-1960,” Middle East Studies Association, New Orleans, October 2013.

“Hydropolitics and the Hajj: An Ottoman Pre-History of Saudi Geological Imperialism,” *Empire and Hajj in the Age of Empires: Muslim Pilgrimage prior to the Influx of Muslim Migration in the West*, Leiden University in cooperation with the King Abdulaziz Foundation for Research and Archives, Leiden, Netherlands, May 2013.

“‘A Mob of Beggars and a Naked and Needy Gang of the Infirm’: Cholera, Colonial Shari‘a, and the Anglo Ottoman Debate on Pauper Pilgrims,” 1. Uluslararası Osmanlı Dünyası: Esasi Biraradlıklar Konferansı (First International Ottoman World: Foundational Coexistences Conference, Karabük Üniversitesi), Turkey, September 2012.

“From Pilgrimage to Plantation: Indentured Labor, Muslim Capital, and the Making of the Colonial Hajj, 1860-1900,” Social Science Research Council, Inter-Asian Connections III, Hong Kong, June 2012.

“From Pilgrimage to Plantation: Southeast Asia and the Making of the Colonial Hajj, 1860-1900,” World History Association, Southeast Asia in World History Symposium, Pannasastra University of Cambodia, Siem Reap, Cambodia, January 2012.

“Cholera and Quarantine through Ottoman Eyes: Istanbul’s Response to the 1866 International Sanitary Conference,” European Social Science History Conference, Ghent, Belgium, April 2010.

“Empire of the Hajj: Pilgrims, Plagues, and Pan-Islam under British Surveillance, 1865-1924,” Middle East Studies Association, November 2006.

“Thomas Cook and the Colonization of the Hajj: Tourism as Pilgrimage Reform in British India, 1882-1888,” Annual Conference on South Asia, University of Wisconsin-Madison, October 2006.

“The Twin Infection: Pilgrims, Plagues, and Pan-Islam under British Surveillance, 1865-1924,” Columbia University Center for International History, March 2006.

IN THE MEDIA: COMMENTARY, INTERVIEWS, CONSULTING, AND MENTIONS

Television interview, “[University of Utah hosting a Gulf States Summit](#),” *KUTV CBS 2*, Salt Lake City, 14 September 2026.

Quoted in Laura Paddison, “‘[Extremely rare event](#)’: Miles-long microalgae bloom knocks out most of [Israel’s desalination plants](#),” *CNN*, 4 September 2026.

Television interview, “[Why does the Iran, U.S. War keep going back and forth?](#),” *KUTV CBS 2*, Salt Lake City, 31 July 2026.

Feature interview with Jackie Flynn Mogensen, “[War in Iran spotlights the risk to drinking water for millions in the Persian Gulf](#),” *Scientific American*, 28 April 2026.

Television interview, “[Will the Strait of Hormuz ever return to pre-war status?](#),” *KUTV CBS 2*, Salt Lake City, 27 April 2026.

Feature interview with Olivia Tempest, “[Water as a military asset: when infrastructure becomes a target](#),” *Smart Water Magazine*, 24 April 2026.

Quoted in Jon Michael Raasch, “[Catastrophic truth behind Trump’s latest Iran threat revealed by experts: ‘War crimes, Day Zero and millions dead’](#),” *Daily Mail*, 6 April 2026.

Quoted in Janie Gosselin, “[L’eau dans la ligne de mire du conflit](#),” *La Presse* (Canada), 4 April 2026.

Television interview, “[‘Strategy of ecological terror. Desalination as a weapon of war’ in the Middle East](#),” *France 24*, 1 April 2026.

Quoted in Annika Hammerschlag, “[Trump threatens to destroy Iran’s desalination plants. Here’s what that could mean for the Mideast](#),” *Associated Press*, 30 March 2026. Also syndicated to *The Times of Israel*, *The Washington Post*, and *US News & World Report*.

Quoted in Phil McKenna, “[Middle East Desalination Plant Attacks Highlight Risks of Relying on ‘Fossil Fuel Water’](#),” *Mother Jones*, 16 March 2026.

Quoted in “[تصعيد لا يمكن تصوره.. مخاوف من استخدام سلاح المياه الفتاك](#),” *Al Qahera News* (Egypt), 15 March 2026.

Quoted in “[محطات التحلية في الخليج.. بنية حيوية تحت مظلة الحماية](#),” *Okaz* (Saudi Arabia), 14 March 2026.

Quoted in Alberto Magnani, “[La «guerra contro l’acqua» l’altra grande paura dei Paesi del Golfo](#),” *Il Sole 24 Ore* (Italy), 11 March 2026.

Quoted in Phil McKenna, “[Attacks on Middle East Desalination Plants Highlights the Risks of Near-Total Dependence on ‘Fossil Fuel Water’](#),” *Inside Climate News*, 11 March 2026.

Quoted in Angela Symons, Annika Hammerschlag, Seth Borenstein, and Jennifer McDermott, “[‘Serious water crisis’ on horizon as Middle East’s desalination plants hit and acid rain falls](#),” *Euronews*, 10 March 2026.

Quoted in Gabriele Malvisi, “[Are water desalination plants the Gulf’s Achilles’ in the latest Middle East conflict?](#),” *Arab News* (Saudi Arabia), 10 March 2026.

Feature interview, Baptiste Langlois, “[Guerre en Iran: S’en prendre à une usine de dessalement équivaut à sortir l’arme nucléaire](#),” *L’Express* (France), 10 March 2026.

Quoted in Anna Skinner, “[Drinking Water Warning Issued for Millions as Iran War Threatens Water Supply](#),” *Newsweek*, 9 March 2026.

Quoted in Perkin Amalaraj, “[Fears Iran could cut off Gulf’s water: Drones hit Bahrain’s desalination plant vital for purifying water - with experts warning similar attacks elsewhere could force major cities such as Riyadh to evacuate](#),” *Daily Mail*, 9 March 2026.

Quoted in Annika Hammerschlag, “[Oil built the Persian Gulf. Desalinated water keeps it alive. War could threaten both](#),” *Associated Press*, 8 March 2026. Also syndicated to *ABC News*, *Los Angeles Times*, *South China Morning Post*, and *The Straits Times*.

Quoted in Annika Hammerschlag, “[The Persian Gulf’s ‘saltwater kingdoms’ rely so much on desalination that damage to the infrastructure could force evacuations](#),” *Fortune*, 8 March 2026.

Television interview, “[US-Iran War: Growing concern for Gulf nation’s water supply](#),” *Global News* (Canada), 8 March 2026.

Quoted in Robert F. Worth, “[The Gulf Countries Can’t Take Much More](#),” *The Atlantic*, 6 March 2026.

Television interview, Abigail Jones and Bayan Wang, “[U.S.-Iran Conflict: What Comes next? Utah experts weigh in](#),” *ABC 4 Utah*, 2 March 2026.

Television interview, “[Will peace deal between Israel and Hamas last?](#),” *ARC Salt Lake, KUTV CBS 2*, Salt Lake City, 15 October 2025.

News coverage of lecture at the King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies, “[Prince Mohammed Al-Faisal, the visionary behind Saudi Arabia’s desalination revolution](#),” *Arab News* (Saudi Arabia), 6 October 2025. Arabic versions of the *Arab News* story were picked up by numerous Arabic-language outlets, including: *Al-Jazirah*, *Al-Kifah*, *Al-Madar 24*, *Al-Riyadh*, *Eunwann*, and *Sada Al-Arab*.

Television interview, “[Contexto: Histórico: Resumen del Conflicto Irán-Israel](#),” *Telemundo Utah*, Salt Lake City, 25 June 2025.

Television interview, “[In Depth: Middle East tensions rise after Israel issues evacuation orders for over 300k residents](#),” *KUTV CBS 2*, Salt Lake City, 17 June 2025.

Quoted in Ryan Quinn, “[U of Utah Partners With Institution in Occupied West Bank Draws Opposition](#),” *Inside Higher Ed*, 11 June 2025.

Television interview, Commentary on Syria and the fall of Bashar al-Assad, *ARC Salt Lake, KUTV CBS 2*, Salt Lake City, 11 December 2024.

Television interview, “[Update on violence in the Middle East: Dir. of U of U Middle East Center explains](#),” *ARC Salt Lake, KUTV CBS 2*, Salt Lake City, 2 October 2024.

Television interview, “[Understanding Current Events in the Middle East: University of Utah expert weighs in](#),” *ARC Salt Lake, KUTV CBS 2*, Salt Lake City, 26 September 2024.

Quoted in Marjorie Cortez, “[What’s the best path forward forward for higher ed in Utah after pro-Palestinian protests?](#),” *Deseret News*, 7 May 2024.

Podcast Interview, “[Cholera Changed Mecca Forever](#),” *The Afikra Podcast*, 7 May 2024.

Television interview, “[Israel and Palestine have long, complicated history, University of Utah professor says](#)” *Fox 13*, Salt Lake City, 13 October 2023.

Interview on Hamas incursions in southern Israel for *KSL News Radio*, Salt Lake City, 9 October 2023.

Quoted in Robbie Corey-Boulet, “[Water-starved Saudi confronts desalination’s heavy toll](#),” *France 24*, 17 September 2023. Also syndicated to *Al-‘Arab*, *Al-Monitor*, *Barron’s*, *Deutsche Welle (DW)*, *The Times of India*, *Voice of America*, and *Yahoo News*.

Fact checking consultation for James Wood (staff writer and book critic), “[Outbreaks and Uprisings in Orhan Pamuk’s “Nights of Plague”](#),” *The New Yorker*, 24 October 2022.

Podcast Interview, “[Imperial Mecca](#),” Project on Middle East Political Science (POEMPS), Season 12, Episode 3, 29 September 2022.

Review/Feature article on *Imperial Mecca*, “[إمبراطورية الحج: حروب البريطانيين والعثمانيين على بئر زمزم](#)” [“Empire of the Hajj: The Wars of the British and the Ottomans over the Well of Zamzam”], *Al-Quds Al-‘Arabi*, 8 July 2022.

Quoted in Matt Maynard, “[Iceberg towing: a bizarre ‘solution’ to the freshwater crisis](#),” *Geographical*, 12 June 2022.

Imperial Mecca featured in “[What Has Southasia Been Reading: 2021 Edition: Book recommendations from our contributors and Southasia’s prominent writers, translators, intellectuals and journalists](#),” *Himāl Southasian*, 13 January 2022.

Photography Credit, “Kamaran Island Quarantine Station, Yemen,” featured in the exhibit, “Accommodations” as part of Saudi Arabia’s pavilion at Venice Architecture Biennale, 22 May-21 November 2021.

Review/Feature Article on *Imperial Mecca*, “[تاريخ الحج من مناطق المحيط الهندي والتنافس على الحجاز بين الإمبراطوريات](#)” [“The History of the Hajj from the Regions of the Indian Ocean and Competition over the Hijaz among the Empires”], *Al-Jazeera* (Arabic), 19 August 2021.

Podcast Interview, “[Ottoman Mecca and the Indian Ocean Hajj](#),” *Ottoman History Podcast*, Episode 501, 7 April 2021.

Interview, [Imperial Mecca: Ottoman Arabia and the Indian Ocean Hajj](#), New Texts Out Now, *Jadaliyya*, 25 February 2021.

Interview, “[Imperial Mecca: An Interview with Prof. Michael Low](#),” *Toynbee Prize Foundation*, 19 February 2021.

Podcast Interview, “[Imperial Mecca](#),” [New Books in the Indian Ocean World](#),” *New Books Network*, 28 January 2021.

Podcast Interview, “[Imperial Mecca](#),” Appraising Risk: A Historical Database of Climatic Crisis in the Indian Ocean World, Indian Ocean World Centre, McGill University, 30 September 2020.

Podcast Interview, “[Imperial Mecca](#),” Ajam Podcast #24, Ajam Media Collective, 28 September 2020.

Expert Appearance on “[الحج في زمن الأوبئة](#)” [“The Hajj in Pandemic Times”], aired on *Al-Jazeera* (Arabic), 30 July 2020.

“Think and Drink” [Roundtable on “Pandemics in Historical Perspective](#),” Wyoming Institute for Humanities Research, University of Wyoming, 7 May 2020, aired on “American History TV,” *C-SPAN3*.

Mentioned in Orhan Pamuk, “[What the Great Pandemic Novels Teach Us](#),” *New York Times*, 23 April 2020.

Expert Consultant for *NPR*’s Islamabad correspondent, Diaa Hadid, on mosque closures in Pakistan and across the Islamic world due to Coronavirus (COVID-19), 20 March 2020.

Interview with *Voice of Islam Radio* (UK)’s *Breakfast Show* on Coronavirus (COVID-19) and the closure of Mecca and Medina to umrah pilgrims, 11 March 2020.

Expert Consultant on the British administration of hajj and international quarantine procedures for “Who Do You Think You Are?,” a production of the BBC and *Wall to Wall* (Warner Bros. Television Production in the United Kingdom), October 2019.

Appearance on the *Trent Rice Show*, 1430 KASI News Talk Radio, Ames, Iowa, 6 April 2016.

Interview featured in Angie Hunt, “[Understanding ISIS, Middle East violence and what the resulting refugee crisis means for the U.S.](#),” *Iowa State University News Service*, 29 March 2016.

Interview featured in Mike Kilen, “[Iowa Muslims: Terror, politics hijack faith](#),” *The Des Moines Register*, 16 January 2016.

Interview featured in Angie Hunt, “[ISU History Professor Examines Environmental Cost of Tapping Alternate Source of Water, Oil](#),” *Iowa State University News Service*, 28 November 2015. Also featured in *Iowa Environmental Focus*, University of Iowa, Center for Global and Regional Environmental Research and *Futurity*.

Consultation featured in Lydia Tomkiw, “[Once Upon a Time on the Road to Mecca](#),” *Foreign Policy*, 12 October 2013.

“[Hydropolitics and the Hajj: An Ottoman Pre-History of Saudi ‘Geological Imperialism’](#),” *Ottoman History Podcast*, No. 101, 12 April 2013. Also featured in *Jadaliyya*.

Interview featured in Elizabeth Dickinson, “[Haj at the heart of global health](#),” *The National*, United Arab Emirates, 15 October 2012.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

University of Utah (2022-present)

HIST 1460/MID E 1456: Middle Eastern History, 1800-Present
 HIST 1510: World History Since 1500
 HIST 3398/MID E 3545: History of the Middle East, 1798-1914
 HIST 3400/MID E 3540: Middle East Since 1914
 HIST 3910: Environmental History of the Middle East
 HIST 3910/MID E 3880: The Ottoman Empire, 1300-1923
 HIST 6920: Special Studies in Middle Eastern History
 HIST 7670: Colloquium in Environmental History/EHUM 6850: Issues in Environmental Humanities
 HIST 7800: Historical Theory and Methods

Graduate Advising at University of Utah

Itamar Toussia Cohen, Faculty of History, University of Oxford, External Examiner, DPhil Viva Examination Committee Member (Thesis defended 5 December 2025).
 Mark Angelos, PhD Committee Member, 2024-Present (Qualifying Exams scheduled for 22 April 2026).
 Artur Nogueira, MA Committee Member, 2024-Present (Portfolio defended 23 July 2025).
 Micah Tucker, MA Committee Member, 2024-Present (Portfolio defended, 19 March 2025).
 Hashem Alrefai, Sociology, University of Pittsburgh, Dissertation Prospectus, Outside Committee Member, 2023 (Prospectus defended, 26 April 2023).
 Mark Angelos, MA Advisor, 2022-2024 (Portfolio defended, 25 March 2024).

Sam Johnson, MA Advisor, 2022-Present (Thesis defended, 24 April 2024).

Mary Lambert, MA Committee, Art History, 2022-Present (Thesis defended, 26 April 2024).

Iowa State University, Assistant Professor (2015-2022)

HIST 255: Introduction to World History, 1500-Present

HIST 331: The Islamic World to 1800

HIST/ENV S 362/471: Global Environmental History

HIST 435: The Modern Middle East

HIST 554C: Graduate Readings Seminar in Global Environmental History

Graduate Advising at Iowa State University

Michael Belding, Comprehensive Examination Committee Member, 2017 (Placement: National Register Coordinator, State of Nebraska).

Zachary Calhoun, MFA in Environment and Creative Writing, Thesis Committee Member, 2022 (Placement: Lecturer, English, Iowa State University).

Yadhav Deepaul, PhD Co-Advisor, 2021-2023 (Placement: Transferred to UW-Madison).

Mustafa Emre Günaydı, PhD Co-Advisor, 2019-2023 (Placement: Transferred to Stanford University).

Andrew Lipp, MA, Political Science, Thesis Committee Member, 2019.

Kevin Mason, Dissertation Committee Member, 2020 (Placement: Assistant Professor of History, Waldorf

University; University of Northern Iowa).

Christopher Reed, Comprehensive Examination Committee Member, 2018.

John “Jack” Seitz, Dissertation Committee Member, 2019 (Placement: Assistant Professor of History, Tennessee Wesleyan University).

Michael Scharff, MA Thesis Advisor, 2017.

Katherine Warming, MA Thesis Committee Member, 2018.

Margaret Weber, Dissertation Committee Member, 2018 (Placement: Lecturer, History, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire).

SERVICE AND LEADERSHIP

Series Editorships and Editorial Boards

Series Editor, [*Transregional Middle Easts*](#), University of Utah Press, 2025-Present.

Books published as Series Editor:

K. Mehmet Kentel and Onur İnal, eds., [*Istanbul Unbound: Environmental Histories of the City*](#) (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2027).

Editorial Board Member, *International Journal of Turkish Studies*, University of Wisconsin Press, 2025-Present.

Editorial Board Member, Middle East Environmental History Book Series (Series Editor: Alan Mikhail), Leiden University Press, 2022-Present.

Editorial Board Member, *Journal of Tourism History*, Taylor & Francis, 2020-Present.

Editorial Board Member, *Journal of Global History*, Cambridge University Press, 2019-Present.

Professional Committees and Affiliations

Qatar National Library Fellowship Peer Review Committee, 2025.

OTSA Article Prize Committee, Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association, 2025.

Annual Conference Program Committee, American Society for Environmental History, 2024.

Hal Rothman and J. Donald Hughes Fellowships Committee, American Society for Environmental History, 2022-2025.

Fellowship Committee (Alternate), American Research Institute in Turkey, 2022-2023.

Gwenn Okruhlik Dissertation Award and Graduate Paper Prize Committee, Association for Gulf and Arabian Peninsula Studies, 2020.

Ömer Lütfi Barkan Article Prize Committee, Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association, 2019.

Steering Committee and Middle East Subcommittee, “Appraising Risk, Past and Present: Interrogating Historical Data to Enhance Understanding of Environmental Risk in the Indian Ocean World,” McGill-SSHRC Partnership Grant, 2018-2022.

Honorary Affiliate, Middle East Studies Program, University of Wisconsin, Madison, 2018-2022.

Peer Review

Book Manuscript Reviews and Blurbs

Bloomsbury Press (2017); Columbia University Press (2022); Polity Press (2026); Routledge (2018); Stanford University Press (2021, 2024, 2025); University of California Press (2026); University of Utah Press (2025)

Book Manuscript Workshops

Sahar Mor Bostock, Yale University (2026); Lâle Can, CUNY Graduate Center (2017); Graham Auman Pitts, University of Mississippi (2024)

Article Manuscripts

Arab Studies Journal (2022); *Comparative Studies in Society and History* (2017, 2022); *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* (2020, 2024); *Germinate: Environmental History Review* (2025); *History Compass* (2020); *International History Review* (2019); *International Journal of Middle East Studies* (2020); *Journal of Arabian Studies* (2020); *Journal of Global History* (2020, 2021, 2023, 2024); *Journal of Indian Ocean World Studies* (2018); *Journal of Tourism History* (2021, 2022); *Journal of World History* (2017, 2022); *Mashriq & Mahjar* (2022); *Urban Geography* (2019)

Fellowships and Funding Agencies

European Research Council (2021); International Committee on Monuments and Sites, UNESCO World Heritage List (2026); Israel Science Foundation (2018); National Science Foundation, Science,

Technology, and Society Program (2018); NYU Abu Dhabi Humanities Research Fellowship Program (2021-2022); Social Science Research Council, Mellon International Dissertation Fellow (2017)

University and College Service

University of Utah (2022-Present)

Director, Middle East Center and Middle East Studies Program, University of Utah, 2023-Present.

Affiliate Faculty Member, Environmental Humanities Program, University of Utah, 2023-Present.

Moderator and Co-Organizer with the Office for Global Engagement, “[Gulf States Forum](#)” in honor of His Excellency Jasem Mohamed AlBudaiwi,” 17 September 2026.

“Reversing the Flow of History: Abu Dhabi’s Thirsty Coast and Al-Ain’s Mountain Oasis,” Middle East Center, University of Utah, 27 March 2026.

Feature interview with Brian Maffly, “[Gulf desalination plants in Iran’s crosshairs?](#),” @THEU, University of Utah, 23 March 2026.

“Saltwater Kingdoms: Fossil-Fueled Water and Climate Change in Arabia,” 2025 Area Studies Teaching and Collections Symposium, J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah, 7 May 2025.

“From Donkeys and Dhows to Desalination: Iraq and the Flow of Kuwaiti History,” Middle East Center, University of Utah, 11 April 2025.

Reviewer, Wilkes Seed Grant Program, The Wilkes Center for Climate Science and Policy, University of Utah, 2025.

Arabic Tenure-Track Assistant Professorship Search Committee, Department of World Languages and Cultures, University of Utah, 2024-2025.

Environmental Humanities Research Professorship Committee, Environmental Humanities Program, University of Utah, 2024.

“[Remembering and Reckoning: Hollis Robbins and Chris Low in Conversation](#),” College of Humanities, 7 October 2024.

Arabic Post-Doctoral Fellow Search Committee, Department of World Languages and Cultures, University of Utah, 2024.

Co-Organizer and Presenter, Israel-Gaza Forum, “A Brief History of Hamas, 1987 to the Present,” Student Affairs, University of Utah, 30 November 2023.

Co-Organizer and Presenter, Israel-Gaza Forum, “A Brief History of Hamas, 1987 to the Present,” forum for university leaders co-sponsored by the College of Humanities and Middle East Center, 19 October 2023.

International and Area Studies Faculty Advisory Committee, University of Utah, 2022-Present.

Iowa State University (2015-2022)

Invited Panelist, Dean's Advisory Council, 21 October 2021.

Co-Director, Middle Eastern Studies Minor, Department of World Languages and Cultures, Iowa State University, 2020-2022.

Invited Panelist, Office of the Vice President for Research, New Faculty Orientation, 13 September 2019.

Environmental Studies Program Steering Committee, Iowa State University, 2017-2020.

Islamic Studies Search Committee, Iowa State University, Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, 2016-2017.

Departmental Service

University of Utah (2022-Present)

Intellectual Life Committee, 2026-2027.

Ad Hoc RPT Committee Member, 2025-2026.

Pre-Modern Middle East, North Africa, and Islamic World (600-1400 CE) Search Committee, 2023-2024.

Undergraduate Studies Committee, 2022-2023.

Iowa State University (2015-2022)

"Imperial Mecca: Ottoman Arabia and the Indian Ocean Hajj," Your Historians: Talks by ISU History Faculty for Everyone, Ames Public Library, 24 March 2020 (Canceled, COVID-19).

Graduate Committee, Department of History, Iowa State University, 2018-2020, 2021-2022.

"Microbial Mecca: Cholera, Quarantine, and the Frontiers of the Ottoman Sanitary State," History Department Colloquium, Iowa State University, 6 April 2017.

Social Media Committee, Department of History, Iowa State University, 2016-2017.

Department Chair Search Committee, Department of History, Iowa State University, 2015-2016.

RESEARCH LANGUAGES

Arabic

Persian

Turkish

Ottoman Turkish

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

American Historical Association

American Society for Environmental History

Association for Gulf and Arabian Peninsula Studies

Middle East Studies Association

TRAVEL EXPERIENCE

Research, Language Training, Conference, and Other Professional Travel Experience

Belgium, Canada, Cambodia, Egypt, France, Ghana, China, India, Israel/Palestine, Kuwait, Mali, Morocco, Netherlands, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Korea, Sweden, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, Yemen