

ADAM ABDELHAMID SABRA

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Goleta, CA 93117

Department of History
University of California
Santa Barbara, CA 93106
asabra@history.ucsb.edu

EDUCATION

Princeton University, Princeton, NJ

Ph. D., Near Eastern Studies, June 1998

Dissertation: "Poverty and Charity in Mamluk Cairo (1250-1517)"

M. A., Near Eastern Studies, 1994

Harvard University, Cambridge, MA

A. B., Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, 1990

Specialization in Islamic Studies

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

University of California, Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara, CA

Professor of History, 2012-

King Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud Chair in Islamic Studies, 2012-

Director, Center for Middle East Studies, 2015-

University of Georgia, Athens, GA

Associate Professor of History (with tenure), 2008-12

Assistant Professor of History, 2006-8

Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI

Assistant Professor of History, 2002-6

University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI

Visiting Assistant Professor of Medieval Islamic History, 2000-1

Sarah Lawrence College, Bronxville, NY

Guest Faculty in Islamic History, 1999-2000

Drew University, Madison, NJ

Visiting Assistant Professor of Religious Studies, 1998-99

Acting Director of Middle East Studies, 1998-99

Princeton University, Princeton, NJ

Assistant Instructor, Fall 1997:

An Introduction to the Middle East

Assistant Instructor, Spring 1993:

History of the Near East and North Africa in the 20th Century

PUBLICATIONS

Books:

Aristocracy and Empire: A Family History of Ottoman Egypt (1517-1800). In preparation.

Poverty and Charity in Medieval Islam: Mamluk Egypt, 1250-1517.
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000 (paperback edition, 2006).

al-Faqr wa al-ihsan fi Misr `asr salatin al-mamalik 1250-1517. Cairo: Supreme Council for Culture, 2003 [Arabic translation of *Poverty and Charity in Medieval Islam*].

Text Editions:

Shams al-Din Muhammad al-Bakri, *Diwan* (collected poetry). Co-edited with Mustafa Mughazy. Complete draft.

The Merits of the Bakri Lords/Manāqib al-Sāda al-Bakrīya. Five seventeenth-century texts dealing with the Egyptian Bakri dynasty. Co-edited with Mustafa Mughazy. Beirut: Dar al-Machreq, 2015.

‘Abd al-Wahhab al-Sha‘rani, *Irshad al-mughaffalin min al-fuqaha’ wal-fuqara’ ila shurut suhbat al-umara’* and *Mukhtasar Irshad al-mughaffalin*. Cairo: Institut français d’archéologie orientale, 2013.

Translation:

‘Abd al-Wahhab al-Sha‘rani, *Advice for Callow Jurists and Gullible Mendicants to Befriending Emirs*. Translation of texts from *Irshad al-mughaffalin min al-fuqaha’ wal-fuqara’ ila shurut suhbat al-umara’* and *Mukhtasar Irshad al-mughaffalin*. In press with Yale University Press, World Literature in Translation Series. January 2017 (available in page proofs).

Edited Volumes:

With Roxani Eleni Margariti and Petra M. Sijpesteijn (eds.), *Histories of the Middle East: Studies in Middle Eastern Society, Economy and Law in Honor of A. L. Udovitch*. Leiden: Brill, 2010.

With Richard J. McGregor (eds.), *Le développement du soufisme en Égypte à l’époque mamlouke*. Cairo: Institut français d’archéologie orientale, 2006.

Articles:

“The Age of the Fathers: Gender and Spiritual Authority in Late Medieval Egypt,” *Annales Islamologiques* 47 (2013), pp. 133-150.

“Autobiography and Family History in Seventeenth-Century Egypt: Ahmad ibn Zayn al-‘Abidin’s *Qala’id al-minan wa fara’id al-zaman*” in Nasser Ahmed Ibrahim (ed.), *Objectivity and Subjectivity in the Historiography of Egypt: In Honour of Nelly Hanna*. Cairo: General Egyptian Book Association, 2012, pp. 46-72.

“Charity and Hagiography: The Akhbar Abi l-‘Abbas al-Sabti of Ibn al-Zayyat al-Tadili,” in *Estudios onomásticos-biográficos de al-Ándalus XVI* (2011), pp. 207-229.

“‘The Second Ottoman Conquest of Egypt’: Rhetoric and Politics in Seventeenth-Century Egyptian Historiography,” in Asad Q. Ahmed, Behnam Sadeghi and Michael Bonner (eds.), *The Islamic Scholarly Tradition: Studies in History, Law, and Thought in Honor of Professor Michael Allan Cook*. Leiden: Brill, 2011, pp. 149-178.

“From Artisan to Courtier: Sufism and Social Mobility in Fifteenth-Century Egypt,” in Roxani Margariti, Adam Sabra and Petra Sijpesteijn, *Histories of the Middle East: Studies in Middle Eastern Society, Economy and Law in Honor of A. L. Udovitch*. Leiden: Brill, 2010, pp. 213-232.

“Household Sufism in Sixteenth-Century Egypt: The Rise of al-Sâda al-Bakrîya,” in Rachida Chih and Catherine Mayeur – Jaouen, *Le soufisme à l’époque ottoman xvie-xviiiè siècle, Sufism in the Ottoman Era 16th-18th century*. Cairo: Institut français d’archéologie orientale, 2010, pp. 101-118.

“Ibn Hazm’s Literalism: A Critique of Islamic Legal Theory,” in *al-Qantara*, XXVIII/1 (enero-junio 2007), pp. 7-40, XXVIII/2 (julio-diciembre 2007), pp. 307-348.

“Illiterate Sufis and Learned Artisans: the Circle of `Abd al-Wahhab al-Sha`rani,” in Richard J. McGregor and Adam Sabra (eds.), *Le développement du soufisme en Égypte à l’époque mamlouke*. Cairo: Institut français d’archéologie orientale, 2006, pp.153-168.

“Public Policy or Private Charity: the Ambivalent Character of Islamic Charitable Endowments,” in Michael Borgolte (ed.), *Stiftungen in Christentum, Judentum und Islam vor der Moderne. Auf der Suche nach ihren Gemeinsamkeiten und Unterschieden in religiösen Grundlagen, praktischen Zwecken und historischen Transformationen* [Foundations in Christianity, Judaism and Islam before the modern age: The search for their similarities and differences in religious fundamentals, practical purposes and historical transformations]. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2005, pp. 95-108.

“The Rise of a New Class? Land Tenure in Fifteenth Century Egypt,” *Mamluk Studies Review* VIII/2 (2004), pp. 203-210.

“Prices are in God’s Hands’: the Theory and Practice of Price Control in the Medieval Islamic World”, in Michael Bonner, Mine Ener, and Amy Singer (eds.), *Poverty and Charity in Middle Eastern Contexts*. Albany: SUNY Press, 2003, pp. 73-91.

Book Reviews:

Review of: Nathan Hofer *The Popularisation of Sufism in Ayyubid and Mamluk Egypt, 1173–1325*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015. *Journal of Islamic Studies* (forthcoming).

Review of: Guy Burak. *The Second Formation of Islamic Law: The Ḥanafî School in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire*. (Cambridge Studies in Islamic

Civilization.) New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015. *American Historical Review* (October 2016).

Review of: Konrad Hirschler, *The Written Word in the Medieval Arabic Lands: A Social and Cultural History of Reading Practices*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012. *Journal of Islamic Studies* 27/1 (2016), pp. 70-73.

Review of: Nimrod Luz. *The Mamluk City in the Middle East: History, Culture, and the Urban Landscape*. (Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization.) New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014. *American Historical Review* Vol. 120, No. 5 (December 2015), p. 1996.

Review of: Benjamin Lellouch and Nicolas Michel (eds.), *Conquête ottomane de l'Égypte (1517), Arrière-plan, impact, échos*. Leiden, 2012. *Al-Abhath* 60-61 (2012-13), pp. 199-201.

Review of: Paulina B. Lewicka, *Food and Foodways of Medieval Cairenes: Aspects of Life in an Islamic Metropolis of the Eastern Mediterranean*. Leiden, 2011. *Journal of Islamic Studies* 24/3 (Sept. 2013), pp. 369-371.

Review of: Shahzad Bashir, *Sufi Bodies: Religion and Society in Medieval Islam*. New York, 2011. *Journal of World History* 24/2 (June 2013), pp. 424-425.

Review of: Julien Dubouloz and Alice Ingold eds., *Faire la Preuve de la Propriété: Droits et Savoirs en Méditerranée* (Antiquité-Temps Modernes). Rome, 2012. *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 56 (2013), pp. 543-545.

Review of: Ahmad Ghabin, *Hisba, Arts and Craft in Islam*. Wiesbaden, 2009. *Journal of Islamic Studies* 22/2 (2011) pp. 252-4.

Review of: Yossef Rapoport, *Marriage, Money and Divorce in Medieval Islamic Society*, *Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization*. Cambridge, 2005. In *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Volume 39, Issue 01 (February 2007), pp 148-149.

Review of: Randi Deguilhem and Abdelhamid Héni, *Les fondations pieuses (waqf) en Méditerranée : enjeux de société, enjeux de pouvoir*, Safat, Kuwait, 2004. In *MESA Bulletin* Vol. 39, No. 2 (December 2005), pp. 196-7.

Review of: Joseph E. Lowry, Devin J. Stewart and Shawkat M. Toorawa,

Law and Education in Medieval Islam: Studies in Memory of George Makdisi, Cambridge, 2004. In *The Medieval Review* (<http://www.hti.umich.edu/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=tmr;cc=tmr;q1=sabra;rgn=main;view=text;idno=baj9928.0509.017>).

Review of: Michael Winter and Levanoni, Amalia, eds., *The Mamluks in Egyptian and Syrian Politics and Society*. (The Medieval Mediterranean: Peoples, Economies and Cultures, 400-1500, 51.) Leiden and Boston, 2004. In *Speculum* 81/2 (2006), pp. 632-4.

Review of: Jonathan Blair and Sheila Blair, *Islam: A Thousand Years of Faith and Power*. New Haven, 2002. In *MESA Bulletin* 38:1 (June, 2004), pp. 76-8.

Review of: Shawqi Abd al-Qawi 'Uthman, *al-Tijara bayna Misr wa Afriqiya fi 'asr salatin al-mamlik 1250-1515 M, 648-922 H* [*Commerce between Egypt and Africa in the Age of the Mamluk Sultans A. D. 1250-1515, A. H. 648-922.*]. In *Mamluk Studies Review* VII/2 (2003), pp. 255-7.

“What is Wrong with *What Went Wrong?*” *Middle East Report Online* (August 2003) http://www.merip.org/mero/interventions/sabra_interv.html.

Review of: Michael Cooperson, *Classical Arabic Biography: The Heirs of the Prophets in the Age of al-Ma'mun*. Cambridge, 2000. In *MESA Bulletin* 36:2 (Winter 2002), pp. 211-2.

Review of: Roy Mottahedeh, *Loyalty and Leadership in an Early Islamic Society*. London. 2001. In *MESA Bulletin* 36:1 (Summer 2002), pp. 85-6.

Review of: Sherman Jackson, *Islamic Law and the State: The Constitutional Jurisprudence of Shihab al-Din al-Qarafī*, Leiden, 1996. In *Journal of Law and Religion* XV/1-2 (2000-1), pp. 413-6.

Review of: Robert Gleave and Eugenia Kermeli (eds.), *Islamic Law: Theory and Practice*, London, 1997. In *MESA Bulletin* 34:2 (Winter 2000), pp. 25-6.

Review of: Christopher S. Taylor, *In the Vicinity of the Righteous: Ziyara and the Veneration of Muslim Saints in Late Medieval Egypt*, Leiden, 1998. In *al-Abhath*, XLVII (1999), pp. 97-9.

FELLOWSHIPS & AWARDS

Bayard Dodge Distinguished Visiting Professor, American University in Cairo, 2014-15.

Member, School of Historical Studies/National Endowment for the Humanities Fellow, Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, NJ, 2012-13.

American Research Center in Egypt/National Endowment for the Humanities Fellow (2008-9), Scholar – in – Residence.

University of Georgia Foundation Grant, Summer 2007.

National Endowment for the Humanities Fellow, American Research Center in Egypt, Cairo, Egypt, October 2001- July, 2002.

Bayard and Cleveland Dodge Memorial Award, Princeton University 1998
American Research Center in Egypt, Fellowship 1994-5.

Center for Arabic Study Abroad, Cairo, Egypt, Full-Year Fellowship 1990-91.

RESEARCH INTERESTS

The Social History of Islamic Mysticism (C. E. 1000-1800)
Medieval and Early Modern Egypt
Poverty and Charity in the Islamic Middle East
Islamic Legal History

COURSES TAUGHT

Middle East I: 600-1000: “Empires and Identities”
Middle East II: 1000-1500: “Era of Invasions”
Middle East III: 1500-1800: ‘Early Modern Transformations’
Undergraduate Seminar: Family, Gender, and Household in the Pre-Modern Middle East
Graduate Seminar on Middle Eastern History (pre-modern)
Introduction to the Middle East

PRESENTATIONS & CONFERENCES

“Household and State in Ottoman Egypt: The Case of al-Sada al-Bakriya,”
Keynote Lecture, First Inaugural Workshop Dynamics of Transmission: Families,
Authority and Knowledge in the Early Modern Middle East, 15th-17th Centuries,
research program funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG) and
Agence Nationale de la Recherche (ANR). University of Marburg, November 26,
2015 (invited).

Workshop Organizer, “Political Theologies of Medieval and Early Modern Islam:
A Workshop.” University of California, Santa Barbara, October 30-31, 2015.

“The Cosmic State: Ibn al-‘Arabi's Political Theology,” Political Theologies of
Medieval and Early Modern Islam: A Workshop. University of California, Santa
Barbara, October 30, 2015.

Seminar on the Social History of Mamluk and Ottoman Egypt, American
University in Cairo, March 10, 2015 (Bayard Dodge Seminar).

“Sufism and Political Theory in the Late Middle Ages,” Public Lecture, American
University in Cairo, March 10, 2015 (Bayard Dodge English Lecture).

“Family and State in Ottoman Egypt: the Case of al-Sada al-Bakriya,” Public
Lecture, American University in Cairo, March 10, 2015 (Bayard Dodge Arabic
Lecture).

“The Political Theology of Abd al-Wahhab Al-Sha‘rani,” İstanbul Sabahattin
Zaim Üniversitesi, September 15, 2014 (invited).

“The Perils of Intercession: Spiritual Power and Secular Authority in Sixteenth
Century-Egypt,” Islamicist Seminar, Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton,
March 28, 2014 (invited).

Egypt, Between Revolution and Dictatorship: A Conversation with Adam Sabra.
Islamic Studies Program, the Center for the Study of the Middle East, and the
Department of International Studies, Indiana University, Tuesday, March 25, 2014
(invited).

“The Perils of Intercession: Spiritual Power and Secular Authority in Sixteenth
Century-Egypt,” Indiana University, March 24, 2014 (invited).

“Sufis and Politicians in Sixteenth Century Egypt,” Near Eastern Studies
Department, Princeton University, March 5, 2013 (invited).

“Divine Law, Cosmic Law: An Antinomian Streak in Ibn al-‘Arabi,” Islamicist Seminar, Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, February 27, 2013.

“The Bureaucratization of Succession in Early Modern Egypt,” Early Modern Seminar, Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, February 13, 2013.

“Marriage in an Early Modern Egyptian Noble Family,” School of Historical Studies Lunchtime Colloquia Series, Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, December 17, 2012.

“Domestic Baraka: The Family (Real and Imagined) as a Locus of the Sacred in Late Medieval Egypt,” paper presented at conference entitled, *Repenser la famille dans l'Islam medieval*. University of Montpellier, May 3-4, 2012 (invited).

“‘The Second Ottoman Conquest of Egypt’: Rhetoric and Politics in Seventeenth-Century Egyptian Historiography” presented at conference entitled, *The Islamic Scholarly Tradition: Studies in History, Law, and Thought*, Princeton University Department of Near Eastern Studies, December 3-4, 2010 (invited).

“Moral Agency and Legal Consequences: The Limits of *Taklif* in Shafi‘i *Usul al-Fiqh*” presented at conference entitled, *Usul al-fiqh at the Intersection of Arab Sciences*, Université Saint Joseph and American University in Beirut, Beirut, Lebanon, December 10–11, 2009 (invited).

“Protectors of Widows and Orphans: An Egyptian Family in the Ottoman Probate Court” presented at conference entitled, *New Approaches to Egyptian Legal History*, American University in Cairo, June 4-6, 2009 (invited).

Panel chair, Annual History Seminar: *Between Texts and Margins: Reading and Books in Arab History*, American University in Cairo, March 26-28, 2009.

“From Artisan to Courtier: Sufism and Social Mobility in Fifteenth-Century Egypt,” presented at conference in honor of Abraham L. Udovitch, Princeton University, Near Eastern Studies Department, May 16-18, 2008 (invited).

“In Defense of Individualism: Ibn Hazm’s Polemics against Consensus,” presented at conference entitled, *The Life and Work of Ibn Hazm of Cordoba*, Orient Institut Istanbul, August 26-28, 2008 (invited).

“Manifesting God's blessings: wealth in Egyptian Sufism” presented at conference entitled, *Ottomans and Wealth: a Comparative Perspective*, The Skilliter Centre for Ottoman Studies, Newnham College, Cambridge University, July 4-7, 2007 (invited).

“Household Sufism in Ottoman Egypt: A Family History of al-Bayt al-Bakri,” Presentation, Department of Middle Eastern and South Asian Studies, Emory University, March 7, 2007 (invited).

“Dynastic Sufism in Ottoman Egypt: the Rise of al-Sada al-Bakriya.,” paper presented at conference entitled, Sufism in Egypt and the Islamic World in the Ottoman Era (16th-18th C.): Research Directions, IFAO, Cairo, January, 15-18, 2007 (invited).

“Ibn Khaldun and Sufism,” paper presented at conference entitled, The Sixth Centenary of Scholar Abdel Rahman Ibn Khaldun: “Ibn Khaldun: An International perspective,” Bibliotheca Alexandrina, Alexandria, December 5-7, 2006 (invited).

“Why Give Alms? The Spiritual Economy of Almsgiving in Medieval Islamic Thought,” paper presented at Symposium on Religious Perceptions of Poverty and Welfare Policy, Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, OH, May 7-9, 2005 (invited).

“Islamic Foundations and the Economy of Late Medieval Egypt,” paper presented at 40th International Congress on Medieval Studies, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI, May 5-8, 2005.

Co-organizer (with Cristina de la Puente and Ana Echevarria) of panels entitled, New Perspectives on Islamic Spain I-V at 40th International Congress on Medieval Studies, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI, May 5-8, 2005.

Session Chair, conference “Ibn Taymiyya and his Times,” Princeton University, Princeton, NJ, April 8-10, 2005.

“The Effects of the Late Medieval Economic Crisis on Egypt’s Islamic Endowments,” paper presented at conference, Stiftungskonjunkturen im interkulturellen Vergleich [Foundation Conjunctures in Intercultural Perspective], Humboldt-Universität, Berlin, Germany, October 29-30, 2004 (invited).

“Sufism in late Mamluk and Early Ottoman Egypt,” lecture in Seminar für Arabistik, Free University, Berlin, Germany, October 26, 2004 (invited).

Visiting Professor, Sophia University, Tokyo, Japan, December, 2003
Invited to give two lectures, “Poverty and Charity in Medieval Egypt” and “The Islamic Tradition in the Modern World” (invited).

Co-organizer (with Richard McGregor), conference, Le développement du soufisme en Égypte à l'époque mamlouke, Institut français d'archéologie orientale, Cairo, May 26-9, 2003.

“Illiterate Sufis and Learned Artisans: the Circle of Abd al-Wahhab al-Sha`rani,” paper presented at conference, Le développement du soufisme en Égypte à l'époque mamlouke, Institut français d'archéologie orientale, Cairo, May 26-9, 2003.

“Gifts to God and Charity for the Poor: the Charitable Role of Medieval Islamic Endowments,” paper presented at conference, Foundations in the Big Cultures of Old Europe, Humboldt –Universität, Berlin, June 13-14, 2003 (invited).

“The Rise of a New Class?: Land Tenure in Fifteenth Century Egypt,” paper presented at 38th International Congress on Medieval Studies, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI, May 8-11, 2003.

Commentator, panel “Comparative Approaches to Early Medieval Egypt,” American Historical Association Annual Meeting, Chicago IL, January 2-5, 2003 (invited).

Respondent, conference, Poverty and Charity: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ, May 9-10, 2002 (invited).

“The Cult of the Ruler: Nur al-Din and His Biographers,” paper presented at 37th International Congress on Medieval Studies, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI, May 2-5, 2002 (co-organized panel, “Islam and the Crusades: Nur al-Din as a Paradigmatic Figure”).

“Credit in Abbasid Egypt,” paper presented at conference, Documentary Evidence and the History of Early Islamic Cairo, Cairo, March 23-5, 2002 (also chaired panel at this conference).

“‘Prices are in God’s Hands’: The Theory and Practice of Price-Fixing in the Medieval Islamic World,” paper presented at the conference, Poverty and Charity in Middle Eastern Contexts, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, May 4-7, 2000 (invited).

“Between Society and the State: Charity in Mamluk Cairo,” paper presented at the Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting, San Francisco, CA, Nov. 22-24, 1997.

ACADEMIC SERVICE

Reader, Pearson Education
Reader, Cambridge University Press
Reader, Brill Publishers
Reader, Routledge
Reader, *Islamic Law and Society* (Brill)
Book Review Editor, *Medieval Encounters* (Brill), 2002-3
Review Editor, *The Medieval Review* (On-line), 2004-5
Member, Board of Directors, International Society of Arabic Papyrology, 2001-
Co-Chair, Middle East/North Africa Search Committee, Department of History,
University of California, Santa Barbara, 2013-14
Graduate Admissions Committee, Department of History, University of
California, Santa Barbara, 2013-14
Personnel Committee, Department of History, University of California, Santa
Barbara, 2014-15
Chair, Graduate Financial Aid Committee, Department of History, University of
California, Santa Barbara, 2015-16
Outside tenure reviewer, various institutions

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

American Historical Association
American Research Center in Egypt
International Society for Arabic Papyrology
Middle East Medievalists
Middle East Studies Association of North America

RESEARCH LANGUAGES

Arabic, reading knowledge of French and German, a little Persian