

Cole M. Bunzel
Curriculum Vitae
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ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

2019- Hoover Fellow, Hoover Institution, Stanford University
2018-2019 Research Fellow in Islamic Law and Civilization, Yale Law School

EDUCATION

2018 Ph.D., Princeton University, Department of Near Eastern Studies
Dissertation title: “Manifest Enmity: The Origins, Development, and Persistence of Classical Wahhābism (1153-1351/1741-1932)”
Adviser: Bernard Haykel
2015 A.M., Princeton University, Department of Near Eastern Studies
2012 M.A., Johns Hopkins University, School of Advanced International Studies
2008 A.B., Princeton University, Department of Near Eastern Studies (*summa cum laude*, Phi Beta Kappa)

PUBLICATIONS

Book

2023 *Wahhabism: The History of a Militant Islamic Movement*, Princeton University Press, May.

Peer-reviewed articles and book chapters

2023 “Al-Qaida’s Failure in the Fertile Crescent,” in *The Struggle to Shape a New Middle East Regional Order*, ed. Samer Shehata, Edinburgh University Press.
“Toward the Seizure of the Grand Mosque in Mecca: The Writings and Ideology of Juhaymān al-‘Utaybī and the Ikhwān,” *Die Welt des Islams*, March.
“‘God’s Righteous Allies’ or ‘Apostate Unbelievers’: The Taliban in the Eyes of the Jihādīs,” *The Journal of the Middle East and North Africa*, March.
2019 “Ideological Infighting in the Islamic State,” *Perspectives on Terrorism*, February.

- 2018 “Wahhabism, Saudi Arabia, and the Islamic State: ‘Abdallah ibn Jibrin and Turki al-Bin‘ali,” in *Salman’s Legacy: The Dilemmas of a New Era in Saudi Arabia*, ed. Madawi Al-Rasheed, Hurst and Oxford University Press.
- 2017 “The Kingdom and the Caliphate: Saudi Arabia and the Islamic State,” in *Beyond Sunni and Shia: The Roots of Sectarianism in a Changing Middle East*, ed. Frederic Wehrey, Hurst and Oxford University Press.

Non-peer-reviewed publications

- 2021 “The Future of Islamic Insurgencies: Have They Passed Their Peak?” *Strategic Survey 2021*, International Institute for Strategic Studies, October.
- 2020 “The Islamic State’s Ideology: History of a Rift,” George Washington University Program on Extremism, July.
- 2018 “The Islamic State’s Mufti on Trial: The Saga of the ‘Silsila ‘Ilmiyya,’ *CTC Sentinel*, October.
- 2017 “Jihadism on Its Own Terms: Understanding a Movement,” Hoover Institution, May.
- 2016 “The Kingdom and the Caliphate: Duel of the Islamic States,” Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, February (also published in Arabic).
- 2015 “From Paper State to Caliphate: The Ideology of the Islamic State,” Brookings Institution, March (also published in Arabic).

Book reviews

- 2022 *The Bin Laden Papers: How the Abbottabad Raid Revealed the Truth About al-Qaeda, Its Leader, and His Family*, by Nelly Lahoud, Yale University Press, 2022, *Foreign Policy*.
- 2019 *Compulsion in Religion: Saddam Hussein, Islam, and the Roots of Insurgencies in Iraq*, by Samuel Helfont, Oxford University Press, 2018, *Orbis* 63, no. 2.
- 2016 *Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab*, by Michael Crawford, London: Oneworld, 2014, *Journal of Arabian Studies* 6, no. 1.

Online articles and commentary

- 2023 “The Islamic State’s Pivot to Africa,” *The Caravan*, June 6.
 “The Jihadis and the Turkish Elections,” *Jihadica*, June 5.
 “Will Saudi Arabia Normalize Relations with Israel?” *The Caravan*, March 7 (with Bernard Haykel)
- 2022 “The Islamic State, HTS, and the U.S. Role in Syria,” *The Caravan*, September 6.
 “‘Dissolve al-Qaida’: The Advice of Abu Mariya al-Qahtani,” *Jihadica*, August 24.
 “Al Qaeda’s Next Move,” *Foreign Affairs*, August 3.
 “Explainer: Rival Islamists in 2022,” Wilson Center, July 7.
 “The Biden Administration’s Saudi Climbdow: The Failure of Recalibration,” *The Caravan*, June 21.

- “The Islamic State vs. the Jewish State: How the Caliphate Views Israel,”
Jihadica, April 15.
- 2021 “Explainer: The Islamic State in 2021,” Wilson Center, December 10.
“Al Qaeda Versus ISIS,” *Foreign Affairs*, September 14.
“ Hamas and the Jihadis,” *Jihadica*, June 24.
“Is Ayman al-Zawahiri Dead?” *Jihadica*, March 17.
“Partner or Pariah? Saudi Arabia, the Biden Administration, and Human Rights,”
The Caravan, March 9.
- 2020 “Why Are al-Qaida Leaders in Iran?” *Foreign Affairs*, February 11.
“Jihadi Reactions to the U.S.-Taliban Deal and Afghan Peace Talks,” *Jihadica*,
September 23.
“Introduction to *Crosswinds: The Way of Saudi Arabia*,” *The Caravan*, October
29.
- 2019 “Rehabilitating the Bin‘aliyya: al-Maqdisi and the Scholarly Remnant of the
Islamic State,” *Jihadica*, December 11.
“Caliph Incognito: The Ridicule of Abu Ibrahim al-Hashimi,” *Jihadica*,
November 14.
“Mourning Morsi: The Death of an Islamist and Jihadi Divisions,” *Jihadica*,
September 27.
“Divine Test or Divine Punishment? Explaining Islamic State Losses,” *Jihadica*,
March 11.
“Messages to Arabia: Al-Qaida Attacks MBS and the Saudi Monarchy,” *Jihadica*,
January 24 (with Bernard Haykel).
“Death of a Mufti: The Execution of the Islamic State’s Abu Ya‘qub al-Maqdisi,”
Jihadica, January 4.
- 2018 “Abu Qatada al-Filastini: ‘I am not a Jihadi, or a Salafi,’” *Jihadica*, October 26.
“Social Reform in the Kingdom: Between ‘Westernizers’ and ‘Guardians of
Virtue,’” *The Caravan*, Hoover Institution, June 19.
“A House Divided: Origins and Persistence of the Islamic State’s Ideological
Divide,” *Jihadica*, June 5.
- 2017 “Caliphate in Disarray: Theological Turmoil in the Islamic State,” *Jihadica*,
October 3.
“The Islamic State Will Survive,” *Foreign Policy*, July 10.
“Abandoning al-Qaida: Tahrir al-Sham and the Concerns of Sami al-‘Uraydi,”
Jihadica, May 12.
“Diluting Jihad: Tahrir al-Sham and the Concerns of Abu Muhammad al-
Maqdisi,” March 29.
- 2016 “Allah Wants ISIS to Retreat,” *Foreign Policy*, October 25.
“Jabhat al-Nusra’s Rebranding in the Eyes of the Islamic State,” *Jihadica*,
September 22.
“‘Come Back to Twitter’: A Jihadi Warning against Telegram,” *Jihadica*, July
18.
“The Islamic State of Decline: Anticipating the Paper Caliphate,” *Jihadica*, June
15.
- 2015 “Has al-Maqdisi Softened on the Islamic State?” *Jihadica*, May 11.
“Bin‘ali Leaks: Revelations of the Silent Mufti,” *Jihadica*, June 15.

- “How Does ISIS Approach Islamic Scripture?” *Markaz* (Brookings Institution blog), March 24.
- “Jihadi Leaders Are Not Billiard Balls,” *Order from Chaos* (Brookings Institution blog), March 15.
- 2014 “32 Islamic State Fatwas,” *Jihadica*, March 2.
- “Battlefield Yemen: The Islamic State’s Challenge to AQAP,” *Jihadica*, December 12.
- “A Jihadi Civil War of Words: The Ghuraba’ Media Foundation and Minbar al-Tawhid wa’l-Jihad,” *Jihadica*, October 21.
- “Al-Qaeda’s Quasi Caliph: The Recasting of Mullah ‘Umar,” *Jihadica*, July 23.
- “A New Caliphate?” *Project Syndicate*, July 10 (with Bernard Haykel).
- “The Caliphate’s Scholar-in-Arms,” *Jihadica*, July 9.
- 2013 “The Islamic State of Disunity: Jihadism Divided,” *Jihadica*, January 30.
- “Caliphate Now: Jihadis Debate the Islamic State,” *Jihadica*, November 25.
- “The Islamic State of Disobedience: al-Baghdadi Triumphant,” *Jihadica*, October 5.
- “Toward an Islamic Spring: Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi’s Prison Production,” *Jihadica*, June 11.
- “Introducing the ‘Islamic State of Iraq and Greater Syria,’” *Jihadica*, April 9.
- “Are the Jihadi Forums Flagging? An Ideologue’s Lament,” *Jihadica*, March 20.
- “Al-Qaeda Advises the Syrian Revolution: Shumukh al-Islam’s ‘Comprehensive Strategy’ for Syria,” *Jihadica*, February 25.
- “Jihadism’s Widening Internal Divide: Intellectual Infighting Heats Up,” *Jihadica*, January 29.
- “Stealth Takfir: The Discreet Excommunication of Muhammad Morsi,” *Jihadica*, January 24.

FELLOWSHIPS & AWARDS

- 2019 Bayard and Cleveland Dodge Memorial Dissertation Prize, Princeton University
- 2017-18 Porter Ogden Jacobus Fellowship, Princeton University
- World Politics and Statecraft Fellowship, Smith Richardson Foundation
- 2015 Visiting scholarship, King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, August-September
- 2013-15 Ladislav Pathy Scholarship Fund, Princeton University
- 2013 Visiting scholarship, King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, June-August
- Summer research grant, Princeton Institute for International and Regional Studies, Princeton University
- 2012-13 Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship, Princeton University
- 2011-12 Paul H. Nitze Fellowship, Johns Hopkins University
- 2011 Harold W. Rosenthal Fellowship in International Relations, Defense Intelligence Agency, June-August
- 2010-12 W.W. Norton & Company 9/11 Commission Report Fellowship, Johns Hopkins University

2008-09 Center for Arabic Study Abroad year-long fellowship, Damascus, Syria
2008 Bayard and Cleveland Dodge Memorial Thesis Prize, Department of Near Eastern Studies, Princeton University

INVITED TALKS AND CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION

- 2022 “The Controversial Legacy of Abū Qatāda al-Filasṭīnī,” Association for the Study of the Middle East and Africa, November 6.
“The Rise and Fall of al-Qaida in Syria,” Institute for Transregional Study, Princeton University, April 26.
“Jihadi Reflections on the Arab Spring,” Middle East Studies Program International Conference, University of Wisconsin, March 25.
- 2021 “‘God’s Righteous Allies’ or ‘Apostate Unbelievers’? The Taliban in the Eyes of the Jihādīs,” Association for the Study of the Middle East and Africa, November 14.
“After Kabul: The Return of the Taliban and Violent Extremism” (panelist), Center for Excellence in National Security, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University, November 10.
“The Political Consolidation of the Islamic State Movement: Between Baathists, Islamists, and the Taliban” (panelist), International Conference of the German Middle East Studies Association for Contemporary Research and Documentation (DAVO), September 16.
“Jihadism Divided: Between ‘Partial Openness’ and ‘Closedness,’” Danish Institute for International Studies, September 13.
- 2020 “Ideological Conflict in the Islamic State,” Middle East Institute, University of Singapore, January 22.
- 2019 “A Divisive Heritage: Wahhabism and the Sunni Jihadi Movement,” American Philosophical Society, November 7.
“The Evolving Landscape of Sunni Jihadism,” Center for Excellence in National Security, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University, September 16.
“Al-Qaida’s Failure in the Fertile Crescent,” Department of International and Area Studies, University of Oklahoma, April 26.
“Jihadi Salafism and the Decline of ISIS: What’s Next?” Center for Middle East Studies, University of Oklahoma, April 25.
- 2018 “The Fragmentation of Jihadi Salafism,” Department of International Development, University of Oxford, December 7.
“Classical Wahhabism and Its Modern Revival,” Centre for Islamic and Middle East Studies, University of Oslo, October 17.
“The Justifications for Jihad in the Islamic State,” Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies, Exeter University, September 29.
- 2017 “Militant Ideology after the Islamic State,” Pembroke College, University of Oxford, April 12.
- 2016 “Wahhabism, Saudi Arabia, and the Islamic State: ‘Abdallah ibn Jibrin and Turki al-Bin‘ali,” Middle East Institute, University of Singapore, December 12.

- 2015 “Ba‘thism, Islamism, and ISIS” (panelist), Middle East Studies Association, November 18.
- 2015 “The Thought and Influence of Turkī al-Bin‘alī of the Islamic State,” King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies, Riyadh, September 3.
- “From Apocalypse Now to Caliphate Now: Revisiting Juhaymān al-‘Utaybī’s Siege of Mecca in 1979,” Boston University, May 3.
- “The Origins and Strategy of ISIS,” Center for Law and Security, New York University, February 3.
- 2014 “Reading Ibn Taymiyya: A Disputed Treatise on Fighting the Unbelievers and Its Modern Reception,” Middle East Studies Association, November 23.
- “Understanding the Islamic State (ISIS),” University Seminar on the Middle East, Columbia University, November 19.

Other speaking venues include: 9/11 Memorial Museum; Carnegie Endowment for International Peace; Brookings Institution; Washington Institute for Near East Policy; Defense Language Institute; U.S. Air Force Special Operations School; International Crisis Group; University of Pennsylvania Law School; Union League Club of Chicago; Hindustan Times Leadership Summit.

CAMPUS TALKS

- 2022 “Al-Qaida, the Islamic State, and the Future of Jihadism,” Stanford University, Hoover Institution Working Group on the Middle East and the Islamic World, October 6.
- 2017 “ISIS Online Outreach in Arabic and throughout the English-Speaking World,” Princeton University, conference on Enduring Frontiers: Geographical, Political, Cultural? April 8.
- 2016 “Slavery in the Islamic State (ISIS),” Princeton University, conference on Gender, Violence, and Anti-Violence, April 1.
- “Erasing *Shirk*: Salafi Theology and the Islamic State’s Iconoclasm,” Princeton University, conference on ISIS and the Cultural Heritage Crisis of Syria, Iraq, and Yemen, February 12.
- 2015 “Western Muslims in ISIS,” Princeton University, teachers’ workshop on Islam and the West, May 2.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

- 2017-18 “Jihadism in the Modern Middle East,” Princeton University, fall semester (co-instructor with Bernard Haykel)
- 2014-15 “Introduction to the Middle East,” Princeton University, fall semester (assistant instructor)
- 2013-14 “The Politics of Modern Islam,” Princeton University, fall semester (assistant instructor)

SCHOLARLY ASSOCIATIONS

Association for the Study of the Middle East and Africa
Academic Freedom Alliance

MANUSCRIPT REVIEWS

Article manuscripts

International Security
Politics, Religion & Ideology
Perspectives on Terrorism
Terrorism and Political Violence
Journal of Middle East Women's Studies

Book manuscript

University of California Press

LANGUAGES

Arabic, including Syrian dialect (fluent)
Spanish (proficient)
Persian (reading)
French (reading)
German (reading)