

Moaaz Lafi

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Education

The American University in Cairo, School of Humanities and Social Sciences (2024 – May 2026)

- Master of Arts in History of Islamic Art and Architecture
Master's Thesis: Marginality as Lens: Abu Hamid al-Qudsi's Writings and Mamluk Urbanism

Cairo University, Faculty of Archaeology (2014 – 2018)

- Bachelor of Arts in Islamic Archaeology
Senior Project: Military Architecture in the Almoravid Period in al-Andalus

Research Interests

- Urban history of medieval cities
- Socio-cultural dynamics of Islamic urbanism and its intersection with authority and society
- Urban transformation in Mamluk cities
- Seljuk architecture and its influence on Mamluk traditions
- Lasting impact of Mamluk presence in Cairo on art and architecture
- Urban history and transformations of the Prophet's Mosque

Professional Experience

Nadim Foundation – Researcher in Islamic Art (2018 – 2019)

- Translated and analyzed the Arabic Committee Files related to Islamic heritage.

Sira al-Qahira – Director (2020 – 2021)

- Led initiatives to preserve Cairo's heritage, including community engagement and awareness campaigns.

Egypt Exploration Society (EES) – Manager, al-Ashraf Khalil Documentation Project (2021 – 2022)

- Oversaw the documentation of al-Ashraf Khalil's Dome, ensuring accurate recording of its architectural and historical significance.

Tawasul Foundation – Manager, Egypt Description Project (2021 – Jan 2023)

- Directed a comprehensive study of historical documentation related to Egypt's heritage.

Megawra Foundation – Researcher in Islamic Architecture (2022)

- Conducted a historical analysis of Yahia al-Shabih Mausoleum, contributing to preservation and academic studies.

Tawasul Foundation – Researcher in Islamic Architecture (2023)

- Explored and documented the historical significance of Muhammad Ali Gabakhana.

The American University in Cairo – Teaching Assistant (2024 – Present)

- Assisted in Islamic Art History courses, led field visits, and supported undergraduate students.

Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights – Researcher in Urbanism and Housing (2025 – Present)

- Working on fair housing rights in Egypt.

Publications

- Lafi, Moaaz. “The Legal Debate Behind Mamluk Urbanism: Abū Ḥāmid al-Qudsī and the Streets of Cairo.” *Mamluk Studies Review*, forthcoming Vol. 30, 2027.
- Lafi, Moaaz. *Abū Ḥāmid al-Qudsī wa-Tamaththulāt al-Madīna al-Islāmiyya* (Abū Ḥāmid al-Qudsī and Representations of the Islamic City). Cairo: Dār al-Maḥrūsa, forthcoming (mid-2026).
- Lafi, Moaaz. “Review of *Taqī al-Dīn al-Maqrīzī, Tarīkh al-Wijdan al-Miṣrī* (History of the Egyptian Collective Consciousness).” *Murāja‘āt, Madārāt*, no. 1 (January 2026): 43–50.
- Lafi, Moaaz. “The Concept of the Arab–Islamic City in Arabic Writings: From Orientalism to the Jurisprudence of Urbanism.” *Murāja‘āt, Madārāt*, no. 2 (January 2026): 123–154.
- Rowaq Arabi. (2024). The New Administrative Capital: Authority and the erosion of rights in the Egyptian city. *Rowaq Arabi*, 29(2), 201–220. (Published under the journal’s authorship)
- Lafi, Moaaz. (2024). Cairo between representation of authority and society. *International Association for the Study of Traditional Environments, Working Paper Series*.
- **(In Arabic)** Lafi, Moaaz. (2023). al-Qahira al-Othmaniya Bayin Manzelyin. In Nezar, al-Sayyad (Ed.), *al-Qahirah Mu’arrakhab* (pp. 215-238). Cairo: Dar al-Ain.

Online Articles

- “كيف عبر المماليك عن أنفسهم في القاهرة” (How the Mamluks Expressed Themselves in Cairo), Jadaliyya, [Link to the article](#), published on Jadaliyya, [2024].
- “تقي الدين المقرئ... كيف أثر له الرباط؟” (Taqi al-Din al-Maqrizi: "How did Rabbat document al-Maqrizi?"), Jadaliyya, [Link to this article](#), Published on Jadaliyya, [2024].
- “المسجد النبوي: بين نزاع المذاهب وسلطة السياسة!” (The Prophet’s Mosque: Between Doctrinal Disputes and Political Power!), Muwatin, [Link to the article](#), published on Muwatin, [2024].
- “مقبرة الخالدين في القاهرة ... واجهة وطنية” (The Cemetery of the Immortals” in Cairo: A National Front and Wasting the History of al-Qarafa), Daraj, [Link to the article](#), published on Daraj, [2023].

- “قراءة في مستقبل المدينة العمراني... ما الذي ينتظر القاهرة؟” (A Reading into the Future of Urban Cities... What Lies Ahead for Cairo?), Daraj, [Link to the article](#), published on Daraj, [2023].
- “هل تنجح خطة المملكة في “أنسنة” مدينة الرياض؟” (Will the Kingdom’s Plan to “Humanize” Riyadh Succeed?), Muwatin, [Link to the article](#), published on Muwatin, [2024].
- “عن الصعيد... أي بداية؟” (About Upper Egypt... Which Beginning?), Bab Masr, [Link to the article](#), published on Bab Masr, [2024].
- “القاهرتان... في نقد المفهوم” (The Two Cairos: A Critique of the Concept), Romman Magazine, [Link to the article](#), published on Romman Magazine, [2024].
- “بين الواقع والتصور النظري... هل حدّد الفقه فعلاً شكل المدينة الإسلامية” (Between Reality and Theoretical Conception: Did Islamic Jurisprudence Truly Define the Form of the Islamic City?), Alpheratz Magazine, [Link to the article](#), published on Alpheratz Magazine, [2025].

Conference Presentations

- Lafi, Moaaz. *Quiet Spaces of Power: Reinscribing Shi'i Funerary Presence in a Sunni Urban Landscape*. Third Biennial Graduate Symposium on Islamic Art and Architecture, Yale University, New Haven, CT, March 26–27, 2026.
- Lafi, Moaaz. (2025). *The Legal Debate Behind Mamluk Urbanism: Abū Ḥamid al-Qudsī and the Streets of Cairo*. Presented at the School of Mamluk Studies Conference, Queen Mary University, London, UK, May 2025.
- Lafi, Moaaz. (2024). *The dynamism of tradition: Cairo between representations of authority and society*. Presented at the IASTE 2024 Conference, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, January 2024.

Honors and Awards

- **2024 – 2026** Full Graduate Scholarship from the American University in Cairo (AUC) to pursue a Master's degree.
- **2023 – 2025** Barakat Trust Fellowship for graduate research.
- **2021** Grant from the Egypt Exploration Society (EES) for the architectural documentation of the Mausoleum of al-Ashraf Khalil.

Academic Memberships

- Registered Researcher, Directorate of Ottoman Archives, Istanbul, Turkey (Granted official access to primary Ottoman archival documents for academic research purposes), **2025 – Present**.
- Member, International Center of Medieval Art (ICMA) (Promotes the study of medieval art and architecture across all regions and periods within the Middle Ages), **2025 – Present**.
- Member, Ernst Herzfeld Society for Studies in Islamic Art and Archaeology (An academic society dedicated to research on Islamic art, architecture, and archaeology), **2025 – Present**.
- Member, Historians of Islamic Art Association (HIAA) (An international organization promoting the study and teaching of Islamic art history), **2024 – Present**.

- Member, American Research Center in Egypt (ARCE) (Supports research and scholarly exchange on Egypt's history and cultural heritage), **2023 – Present.**

Courses and Workshops

- **2025** Workshop on Handling Manuscripts, organized by the American University in Cairo at the National Library and Archives of Egypt.
- **2025** Intensive Course on Islamic Law, Queen Mary University of London.
- **2018** Workshop on Methodologies of Textual Criticism, Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale (IFAO), Cairo.
- **2016** Workshop on Manuscript Editing, Institute of Manuscripts, Arab League, Cairo.
- **2015** Museum Practices Workshop, Museum of Islamic Art, Cairo.

Languages

- Arabic (Native)
- English (Fluent)
- Persian – Basic reading and writing proficiency (one-semester academic course)
- Spanish (A2)

Computer Skills

- **Research:**
Zotero (Full proficiency)
Microsoft Office (Full proficiency)
- **Design and Modeling:**
AutoCAD (Full proficiency)
Photoshop (Intermediate proficiency)
- **Teaching:**
Canvas, Blackboard