

MICHAEL B. SIMS

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EMPLOYMENT

JULY 2023-PRESENT

STRATEGIES ANALYST

WASHINGTON STATE, DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES
DIVISION OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

EDUCATION

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| 2023 | University of Washington
Interdisciplinary PhD in Near and Middle Eastern Studies
Dissertation: <i>"Without a Purpose, Misfortune Will Befall Our Land":
Discourses of Nation in Late Ottoman Kurdistan</i>
Dissertation Awarded with Distinction
Chair: Resat Kasaba
Completed Exam Fields: History of the Late Ottoman Empire and Early
Turkish Republic (Resat Kasaba), History of Christianity in the Middle
East (Joel Walker), Islamic Studies (Hamza Zafer) |
| 2013 | Georgetown University
MALS, Religious Studies
Thesis: <i>Congregationalist and Anglican Missionaries Amongst the
Syriac Christians of the Ottoman Hakkari and Tur Abdin</i> |
| 2009 | Virginia Commonwealth University
BA, History, Religious Studies
Summa Cum Laude |

SELECTED AWARDS

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| 2020-2021 | Institute of Turkish Studies (ITS) Dissertation Writing Fellowship |
| 2018-2019 | American Research Institute in Turkey, Dissertation Research Fellowship |
| 2018-2019 | Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad |
| 2017-2018 | SSRC International Dissertation Research Fellowship |
| 2017-2018 | Fulbright IIE US Student Fellowship, Turkey (Declined) |
| 2017-2018 | Maurice and Lois Schwartz Fellowship, UW NELC |
| 2015, 2017 | UW Near and Middle Eastern Studies, Professional Development Grant |
| 2016 | Heckman Stipend, Hill Museum & Manuscript Library |
| 2016 | Foreign Language Area Studies Fellowship, Summer, Arabic |
| 2015-2016 | Foreign Language Area Studies Fellowship, Academic Year, Arabic |
| 2015 | Foreign Language Area Studies Fellowship, Summer, Arabic |
| 2014-2015 | Foreign Language Area Studies Fellowship, Academic Year, Arabic |
| 2014 | Critical Languages Scholarship, Arabic, Rabat, Morocco |
| 2013-2014 | Foreign Language Area Studies Fellowship, Academic Year, Arabic |

2011	Critical Languages Scholarship Development Grant, Turkish
2008-2009	Virginia Commonwealth University, Craig Kennedy Scholarship
2008-2009	David L. Boren Scholarship, Turkey
2007	Critical Languages Scholarship, Turkish, Ankara, Turkey

PUBLICATIONS

Published

Sims, Michael. "Claiming the Ezidis (Yezidis): Ezidi Religious and Ethnic Identity in Assyrian, Arab and Kurdish Sources," *International Journal of Contemporary Iraqi Studies*, 2020.

Sims, Michael. "Serving the Nation: Metropolitan Hanna Dolabani's Work in Publishing and Education, 1913-1914." in *Hanna Dolabani*, Ed. Mihayel Akyuz: Mardin Artuklu University Press. December, 2020.

Sims, Michael. "Late Ottoman Suryani Identity, Communal Boundaries and Educational Aspirations" *Suryani Identity*. Ed. Kutlu Akalin. Mardin: Mardin Artuklu University Press.

PRESENTATIONS AND INVITED TALKS

June 2022	"Tribal Confederations and Late Ottoman Syriac Christian Identity Discourses: The Case of the Heverkan and Deksuri," Symposium Syriacum, 2022
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Oct. 2020	"Syriac Patriarchate Records as a Resource for Kurdish Studies," <i>Roundtable on New Sources and Approaches to the Study of Iraq</i> , Middle East Studies Association, 2020.
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Nov. 2019	"Serving the Nation: Metropolitan Hanna Dolabani's Work in Publishing and Education" International Workshop on Hanna Dolabani on the 50 th Anniversary of His Death, Mardin Artuklu University, Mardin, Turkey
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Aug. 2019	"Communal Boundary-Making in the Late Ottoman Syriac Orthodox Community" Breaking and Creating Boundaries in the Middle East, Nordic Conference on Middle Eastern Studies, Helsinki, Finland
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May 2018	"Defining Past and Imagining Future: The Syriac Community of the Late Ottoman Empire" Syriac Studies Workshop, Department of History, University of Washington
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Nov. 2017	"The Yezidis: Intercommunal Relations, Identity and the State" Narratives of Coexistence and Pluralism in Northern Iraq MESA Pre-Event Panel, TAARII
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- May 2017 “Religious Minorities Affected by ISIS”
Teaching Religion to Policymakers Workshop
US Department of State, USAID and the University of Washington
- Mar. 2017 “Education and the Shaping of National Mission in Kurdish and Syriac Christian Nationalism”
Pacific Northwest Ottomanist Workshop Annual Meeting
Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, Canada
- Mar. 2017 “Education in Kurdish and Syriac Christian Periodicals of the Late Ottoman Empire,” Rethinking Late Ottoman Civilization, UT Austin
- Nov. 2016 Table Co-Chair, Middle East, Student Conference on U.S. Affairs
United States Military Academy, West Point, NY
- May 2016 “The Future of Kurdistan,” Great Discussions, Shoreline Community College, Seattle, WA
- Oct. 2015 “Inter-Christian Polemics and the Foundations of Yezidi Studies”
Paper Presented at Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting
Denver, CO
- Oct. 2015 Guest Lecture, “History of the Yezidis”
Course title “The Kurds: History, Culture, Politics”
Instructor: Dr. Nicole Watts
UC Berkeley
- May 2015 “Yezidi Identity in the Neighbor’s Gaze: Syriac Orthodox Perceptions”
11th Great Lakes Ottomanist Workshop, SUNY Oswego
- Mar. 2013 “Missionaries and Misconceptions of Interfaith Relations: Asahel Grant, the Lost Tribes and the Assyrians of Hakkari”
Paper Presented at Borderlands and Indigeneity in Conversation, Columbia University
- May 2012 “Syncretism” and the Challenges of Religious Pluralism”
Paper Presented at Understanding Religious Pluralism Conference
Georgetown University
- April 2012 “Religious ‘Syncretism’ and Yezidism”
Paper Presented at Graduate Liberal Studies Conference
East Tennessee State University, April, 2012

ONGOING PROJECTS

- Mar. 2019-Present Cataloger, Digital Humanities Fellow**
Preparing metadata for Syriac Orthodox Patriarchate correspondence archive in conjunction with Beth Mardutho: The Syriac Institute. Cataloging Arabic, Syriac, Ottoman and Kurdish documents to create a database for future researchers. Assisting with Handwritten Text Recognition (HTR) for Syriac/Garshuni.

Jan. 2020-Present**Cataloger**

Developing public database for Late Ottoman Syriac Christian history under guidance of Hanna Bet-Sawoce. Cataloging documents and other dissertation research material from private collections, communications between the Syriac Orthodox Patriarchate and the Ottoman government, transcribing and translating pertinent material from Late Ottoman Syriac Christian periodicals *al-Hikma*, *Kawkab Madnho* and *Murshid-i Athuriyon* to assist future scholarship.

Aug. 2019-June 2021 Language Copy-Editor, Turoyo Folktale Project

Assisting team of linguists in preparing edited collection of Turoyo-language folktales and oral histories collected in Tur Abdin, Turkey. Providing language editing of roughly 80 texts for future publication.

EVENTS ORGANIZED

Jan. 2017

Principal Organizer

“Hawar: My Journey into Genocide,” A Discussion with Duzen Tekkal on the Yezidi Genocide, University of Washington

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Winter, 2023

Instructor, “The Modern Middle East,”
Department of History, University of Washington

Autumn, 2022

Teaching Assistant, “The Origins of the Modern
Global System,” JSIS, University of Washington

Spring, 2022

Teaching Assistant, “Environmental History”
Department of History, University of Washington

Winter, 2022

Instructor: “Nationalism in the Modern Middle East”
Department of History, University of Washington

Autumn, 2021

Teaching Assistant, “The Ancient World”
Department of History, University of Washington
Instructor: Dr. Joel Walker

Spring, 2020

Teaching Assistant, “Islam and Muslims in China”
NELC, University of Washington
Instructor: Dr. Talant Mawkanuli

Winter, 2017

Teaching Assistant, “The Modern Middle East”
Department of History, University of Washington
Instructor: Dr. Arbella Bet-Shlimon

Autumn, 2016

Teaching Assistant, “The Ancient World”
Department of History, University of Washington
Instructor: Dr. Joel Walker

RELATED WORK AND RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

- 2017-2020 **Dissertation Field Research**
Istanbul and Mardin, Turkey
- 2015, 2016 **Language Study, Arabic – Amman, Jordan**
Summer Intensive Advanced Arabic Study
- 2014 **Language Study, Arabic – Rabat, Morocco**
Critical Languages Scholarship, Intermediate Arabic
- 2012 **Language Study, Classical Syriac – Mardin, Turkey**
Mardin Artuklu University
- 2012 **Liaison for Congressional and Religious Minority Affairs**
Kurdistan Regional Government, DC Office: Coordinated and accompanied visits to members of Congress and leaders of religious and human rights groups by delegations from the Kurdistan region of Iraq. Prepared reports on issues related to religious minorities and religious affairs related to Kurdish-populated areas.

MEMBERSHIPS

Middle East Studies Association
Theta Alpha Kappa, National Honors Society for Religious Studies and Theology
Military Order of the Purple Heart
Disabled Veterans of America

LANGUAGES

English – Native Language
Modern Standard Arabic – Full Professional Fluency
Turkish – Full Professional Fluency
Kurmanji (Kurdish) – Full Professional Fluency
Levantine Arabic – Intermediate
Reading Ability: Ottoman Turkish, Sorani (Kurdish), Classical Syriac, Northeast Neo-Aramaic, Turoyo, German