Zaydi is a small branch of Islam found only in the northern region of Yemen. Despite the heroic publishing efforts of traditional Zaydi scholars over the past decade, many important works remain in manuscript. The largest collection of Zaydi manuscripts outside of Yemen is held by the Biblioteca Ambrosiana in Milan, Italy, and, during the late Cold War, Notre Dame University acquired microfilms of its rich manuscript collections, including its Arabic codices.

Thanks to a CMES Faculty Research Grant, I was able to examine this extraordinary Arabic manuscript collection on microfilm at Notre Dame this past summer. This talk will explore some of the research projects on Zaydism that can be pursued using these manuscripts.