

## ASSEF ASHRAF

Faculty of Asian & Middle Eastern Studies  
Sidgwick Avenue  
Cambridge  
CB3 9DA

Pembroke College  
Trumpington Street  
Cambridge  
CB2 1RF

### PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

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- 2018 – **University of Cambridge**  
Assistant Professor in the Eastern Islamic Lands and Persian-Speaking World  
Faculty of Asian & Middle Eastern Studies
- Pembroke College, Cambridge**  
Fellow, Tutor, and Director of Studies in AMES
- 2016 – 2018 **Bryn Mawr College**  
Post-Doctoral Fellow  
Department of History

### EDUCATION

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- 2016 PhD, History, Yale University  
*From Khan to Shah: State, Society, and Forming the Ties that Made Qajar Iran*  
Honorable Mention, 2018 Mehrdad Mashayekhi Dissertation Award, Association for Iranian Studies
- 2011 MPhil, History, Yale University
- 2010 MA, History, Yale University
- 2005 BA, Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, New York University

### PUBLICATIONS

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#### Books

ed., with Abbas Amanat, *The Persianate World: Rethinking a Shared Sphere* (Leiden: Brill, 2018).

#### Peer-reviewed Journal Articles and Book Chapters

“Safavid Nostalgia in Early Qajar Chronicles,” in *Iran in Transition to a New World Order: Idea of Iran* vol. 11, ed. Charles Melville (forthcoming with I.B. Tauris).

“Copied and Collected: Firmans, Petitions, and the Political History of Qajar Iran,” *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 62, no. 5–6 (November 2019): 963–97.

“A Familial State: Elite Families, Ministerial Offices, and the Formation of Qajar Iran,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 51, no. 01 (February 2019): 43–64.

“Pathways to the Persianate,” in *The Persianate World: Rethinking a Shared Sphere* (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 1–15.

Persian Translation: “Qalamrū-yi Zabān va Farhang-i Fārsī: Bāzandīshī-yi Sipihri-yi Mushtarik” (available online at: <https://www.aasoo.org/fa/books/2155>).

“The Politics of Gift Exchange in Early Qajar Iran, 1785–1834,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 58, no. 2 (April 2016): 550–76.

### Book Reviews

Michael Axworthy, ed., *Crisis, Collapse, Militarism and Civil War: The History and Historiography of 18th Century Iran* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018). *Iranian Studies* 52: 3–4 (2019).

Hooshang Amirahmadi, *The Political Economy of Iran under the Qajars: Society, Politics, Economics and Foreign Relations, 1796–1926* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2012). *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 47: 4 (November 2015).

### Other Writing

“Bahā’iyān va Siyāsāt dar Dawrān-yi Qājār” [Baha’is and Politics during the Qajar Era], in Erfan Sabeti, ed. *Ā’in-i Bahā’ī: Jām’ih va Siyāsāt* (Santa Monica, Calif.: Bunyād-i Taslīmī, 2020), 21–28 (available online at: [https://www.aasoo.org/fa/books/2891?fbclid=IwAR3yjQKBBuaFCeqPSf8oFgAS44rkIYNKPsExr2FsIge\\_fWorYbYlqq1zXxs](https://www.aasoo.org/fa/books/2891?fbclid=IwAR3yjQKBBuaFCeqPSf8oFgAS44rkIYNKPsExr2FsIge_fWorYbYlqq1zXxs)).

### FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

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2018	Mehrdad Mashayekhi Dissertation Award (Honorable Mention)
2014–2015	Roshan Institute Fellowship for Excellence in Persian Studies
2012–2013	Samuel K. Bushnell Fellowship
Summer 2013	John F. Enders Fellowship
2011–2012	MacMillan Center Dissertation Research Grant
2011–2012	International Security Studies, Smith Richardson Foundation Grant
Summer 2010	Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship (Russian)
2008–2009	Yale University Chase Fellowship

2005

Rumi-Biruni Prize for Excellence in Persian Studies, New York University

## PRESENTATIONS

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### Invited Lectures

“Loyalty, Leadership, and the Formation of Qajar Iran.” Middle East History Seminar, Faculty of History. University of Cambridge, February 2019.

“From Khan to Shah: State, Society, and the Formation of Qajar Iran.”

1. Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies. University of Cambridge, February 2018.
2. School of History. University of St Andrews, August 2017.

“Fitting Tributes and Fine Brocades: Gift Giving in Early Qajar Iran.”

1. Department of History. Massachusetts Institute of Technology, February 2016.
2. Department of History and Program in Middle Eastern Studies. Bryn Mawr College, February 2016.
3. Mossavar-Rahmani Center for Iran and Persian Gulf Studies. Princeton University, December 2015.

“From Khan to Shah: The Formation of Qajar Iran, 1750-1834.” Department of Near Eastern Studies. Princeton University, January 2016.

“Frontier Politics in the Caucasus.” Department of History Faculty Research Seminar. Central Connecticut State University, October 2015.

“Fitting Tributes and Fine Brocades: The Politics of Gift Giving in Qajar Iran.” Iran Colloquium. Yale University, December 2014.

“Provincial Players in the Great Game: The Qajars and the British in Bushehr, 1827.” The International Security Studies Colloquium. Yale University, September 2014.

### Presentations at Professional Conferences

“Safavid Nostalgia in Early Qajar Historiography.” The Idea of Iran: Iran in transition to a new world order. Symposium held at SOAS. London, November 2020.

“Loyalty, Leadership, and the Formation of Qajar Iran.” Middle East Studies Association (MESA) Annual Meeting. New Orleans, November 2019.

“The Qajars: Kingship, Turco-Mongol Power, and the Ends of the Persianate World.” European Conference of Iranian Studies (ECIS). Berlin, September 2019.

“City, State, Empire: Governing Early-Qajar Bushehr.” Association for Iranian Studies (AIS) Biennial Conference. Irvine, CA, August 2018.

“A Familial State: Ministers, Historians, and the Formation of Qajar Iran.” MESA Annual Meeting. Washington, DC, November 2017.

“Governing the Guarded Domains: Farmans, Petitions, and Documentation in Early Qajar Iran.” Islamic Cultures of Documentation Conference (by invitation). University of Pittsburgh, May 2017.

“Portrait of a Young Scholar: The Diaries of E.G. Browne.” MESA Annual Meeting. Boston, MA, November 2016.

“On the Edge of Empire: Governing the Caucasus in Early Qajar Iran.” Association for Iranian Studies (formerly International Society of Iranian Studies) Biennial Conference. Vienna, August 2016.

“At the Edge of Empire: Frontier Administration and the Formation of Qajar Iran.” MESA Annual Meeting. Denver, CO, November 2015.

“Loyalty, Largesse, and Lucre: Gift-exchange in Early Qajar Iran.” International Society of Iranian Studies Biennial Conference. Montreal, August 2014.

“‘Quenching the Fire of Ferment’: Political Authority and Urban Upheaval in Early Nineteenth Century Bushire.” The Association for the Study of Persianate Studies Biennial Conference. Sarajevo, September 2013.

### **Conference Panel Organizing, Chairing, and Discussing**

Discussant, Graduate Workshop: State of Scholarship. Part of the 2017 Ehsan Yarshater Lecture Series. Yale University, April 2017.

Organizer, “E. G. Browne and his Iranian Interlocutors: Knowledge Production beyond Orientalism.” MESA Annual Meeting. Boston, MA, November 2016.

Chair, “Personnel and Patronage: Getting Ahead in the Ottoman System.” MESA Annual Meeting. Washington, DC, November 2014.

Discussant, “Persianate Communities Abroad.” The Persianate World: A Conceptual Inquiry. Yale University, May 2014.

## **TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

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### **University of Cambridge, 2018 – present**

#### Undergraduate

1. After Tamerlane: Empires of the Persianate World from Timur to the Qajars
2. Formation of the Modern Middle East (co-taught)
3. Introduction to the Contemporary Middle East (co-taught)
4. Introduction to the History and Culture of the Middle East (co-taught)

#### Postgraduate

1. Theory and Method in Middle Eastern Studies (co-taught)
2. Directed readings in the history of Iran and the Persianate world

### **Bryn Mawr College, 2016 – 2018**

#### Undergraduate Seminars

1. Histories of Gender and Sexuality in the Middle East
2. Three Empires of Islam

Undergraduate Lectures

1. Introduction to Middle East History

**Central Connecticut State University**, Visiting Assistant Professor, 2015 – 2016

Undergraduate Seminar

1. Early Modern Muslim Empires and their Legacies

Undergraduate Lecture Courses

1. Modern Iran: Great Game to Great Satan
2. The Modern Middle East
3. Europe: Renaissance to Enlightenment

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**PROFESSIONAL SERVICE**

**Editorial**

Book Review Editor (History), *Iranian Studies*, February 2021 – present.

Senior Managing Editor, *Curator Reviews* (<http://curator.reviews>), January 2016 – May 2017.

Assistant Managing Editor, *Dissertation Reviews* (<http://dissertationreviews.org>), March 2014 – May 2016.

Field Editor, *Iran and Persian Studies Dissertation Reviews*, September 2012 – May 2016.

**Conference Organizing**

with Abbas Amanat. “Persianate Studies: A Conceptual Inquiry.” Yale University, May 2014.

**Administrative and Pastoral Service**

Undergraduate Tutor, Pembroke College. University of Cambridge. October 2021 – Present.

Director of Studies, Pembroke College. University of Cambridge. October 2018 – Present.

Teaching Committee, Pembroke College. University of Cambridge. June 2020 – Present.

Faculty Board, Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies. University of Cambridge. October 2020 – December 2021.

Degree Committee, Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies. University of Cambridge. October 2019 – October 2021.

Research Committee, Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies. University of Cambridge. October 2019 – Present.

Teaching and Learning Committee, Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies. University of Cambridge. October 2019 – October 2021.

Outreach Coordinator, Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies. University of Cambridge. October 2019 – October 2021.

Convenor of the Department of Middle Eastern Studies Public Talks Series, Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies. University of Cambridge. October 2018 – Present.

Middle East Studies, Curriculum Subcommittee. Bryn Mawr College. August 2017 – July 2018.

Middle East Studies, Steering Committee. Bryn Mawr College. September 2016 – July 2018.

“Orals and Prospectus: Demystifying the Process.” Department of History, Yale University, April 2016.

Graduate Student Panel, Campus Visit Day for Admitted Ph.D. Students. Department of History, Yale University, March 2014.

International Society for Iranian Studies, Student Representative on Council, October 2013 – November 2015.

Graduate Employees and Students Organization, History Department Organizing Committee member, Yale University, 2008 – 2014.

## **ACADEMIC AFFILIATIONS**

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Middle East Studies Association

Association for Iranian Studies

American Historical Association

## **OTHER WORK EXPERIENCE**

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**Human Rights Watch**, New York, NY

August 2007 – August 2008

Senior Associate, Middle East and North Africa Division

August 2005 – August 2007

Associate, Middle East and North Africa Division

## **REFERENCES**

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Available upon request.