

KATHRYN BABAYAN

*Department of
History
&
Middle East Studies
4012 South Thayer Building
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
babayan@umich.edu*

EDUCATION

Ph.D. 1993 Princeton University
M.A. 1987 Princeton University
M.A. 1983 Georgetown University
B.A. 1981 Wellesley College

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2020- Professor, History/Middle East Studies, University of Michigan

2018- Affiliate, Comparative Literature & Program in History & Anthropology,
University of Michigan

2002-2020 Associate Professor, Department of Middle East Studies/History,
University of Michigan

Spring 2005 Visiting Associate Professor, Department of History, Harvard University

1996–2002 Assistant Professor, Department of Middle East Studies

1992–1995 Assistant Professor, Department of History, University of North Texas

AWARDS AND FELLOWSHIPS [recent]

2024-25 National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH/Mellon) Fellowship
2022-23 Fellow, Eisenberg Institute for Historical Studies, University of
Michigan

2022 Honorable Mention, Fatma Mernissi Book Award, Middle Eastern Studies
Association for my book, *The City as Anthology*

2022 LSA Research funding in the Humanities for *Isfahan Anthology Project*
2022 LSA Humanities Collaborative 5 x 5 Incubator Grant for *Digital Family
Archives*

2018 Richard Hudson Research Professorship Award, Department of History,
University of Michigan

LANGUAGES

Persian, Arabic, Turkish, French, Russian, Speaking knowledge of Armenian

PUBLICATIONS - *Books*

Mystics, Monarchs and Messiahs: Cultural Landscapes of Early Modern Iran (Cambridge: Harvard Middle Eastern Monographs, 2002), Reprint 2017.

Slaves of the Shah: New Elites of Safavi Iran. Joint monograph with Sussan Babaie, Ina Baghdiantz-McCabe, and Massumeh Farhad (London: I. B. Tauris, 2004,) Paperback 2017.

Islamicate Sexualities: Translations Across Temporal Geographies of Desire. Co-editor with Afsaneh Najmabadi (Cambridge: Harvard Middle Eastern Monographs, 2008).

An Armenian Mediterranean: Words and Worlds in Motion. Co-editor with Michael Pifer (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, Mediterranean Perspectives, 2018).

The City as Anthology: Eroticism and Urbanity in Early Modern Isfahan (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2021).

PUBLICATIONS – *Selected Journals and Book Chapters*

“The Safavi Synthesis: From Qizilbash Islam to Imamite Shi'ism,” *Iranian Studies* 27 (1994)

“Sufis, Darvishes, and Mullas: The Controversy Over Spiritual and Temporal Dominion in 17th Century Safavi Iran,” *Safavi Persia*, ed. Charles Melville (London: I.B. Tauris, 1996)

“The ‘Aqa’id al-Nisa’: A Glimpse at Safavi Women in Local Isfahani Culture,” *Women in the Medieval Islamic World*, ed. Gavin Hambly (London: St. Martin's Press, 1998)

“The Safavid Household Reconfigured: Concubines, Eunuchs, and Military Slaves,” *Slaves of the Shah: New Elites of Safavi Iran*, Joint monograph with Sussan Babaie, Ina Baghdiantz-McCabe, and Massumeh Farhad (London: I. B. Tauris, 2004)

“The Ever-Tempting Return to an Iranian Past in the Islamic Present: Does Lotman’s Binarism Help?” *Lotman and Cultural Studies: Encounters and Extensions*, eds. Andreas Schönle (Madison: Wisconsin University Press, 2006)

“In Spirit We Ate of Each Other’s Sorrow:” Female Companionship in Seventeenth Century Safavi Iran, *Islamicate Sexualities: Translations Across Temporal Geographies of Desire*, eds. Babayan & Najmabadi (Cambridge: Harvard Middle Eastern Monographs, 2008)

“The Cosmological Order of Things in Early Modern Safavi Iran,” *Book of Omens: The Falnama*, ed. Massumeh Farhad (Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Exhibition Catalogue, 2009).

“The Safavi Chapter in Iranian History,” *Iranian Civilization, from Antiquity to Present*, ed. Touraj Daryaee (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012)

“Topographies of Travel in Early Modern Persianate Landscapes,” in Elio Brancaforte, Sonja Brentjes, *EXHIBITION CATALOGUE. From Rhubarb to Rubies: European Travels to Safavid Iran (1550-1700)*; Houghton Library, Harvard College Library; The Lands of the Sophi: Iran in Early Modern ... *Library Bulletin* (Cambridge, MA, 2012)

“Shah Isma’il,” *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Islamic Political Thought*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013)

Special Iran Issue, *Michigan Quarterly Review*, Guest Editor, Spring 2019

“The Isfahan Anthology Project,” forthcoming in *Iranian Studies*, Archive Report.

“Transgressions of Gender in an Early Modern Epistolary Rant,” in *Intimate letters and public affairs in early modern Isfahan*, Ed. José María Pérez Fernández & Ida Caiazza, *A Material Web of Sentiments. Paper, Letter Writing and Gender in the Early Modern Mediterranean*, special issue of *MLQ*, forthcoming.

In Progress:

Digital Archive: With fellow historian Nozhat Ahmadi, at the University of Isfahan, we have begun to collect and generate tables of contents for numerous *majmu’a* (anthology) that are housed in the capital’s most prominent public libraries of Majlis, Malik, Milli and Tehran University. Indexing the various genres of texts that comprise each *majmu’a*, we have taken account of the content and organization of these miscellanies, and plan to create a Safavi blog where scholars across the world may have access freely to these Persianate-world sources.

CONSULTANCY

Historian-consultant for exhibition on the *Book of Omens: The Falname*, Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Washington, D.C., October 2009

PAPERS and COLLOQUIA [Recent]

“**The Bakhtiari Rant: A 17th century letter written by the wife of Mawlana Bakhtiari to her husband,**” University of Chicago, Heshmat Moayyad Lecture Series, February 28, 2024.

“**Anthologizing the City of Isfahan: Family Archives and Urban Knowledge,**” lecture at the Department of History, University of California, Santa Barbara, February 1, 2023

“**The Eros of Female Friendship in Seventeenth-century Isfahan,**” lecture for the OUTing the Past: Festival of LGBTQIA+ History 2022 at The Chester Beatty Museum in Dublin, 6 April 2022.

Masterclass on *majmu’a* (anthologies) for The Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies Center, University of Pittsburgh, February 25, 2022, and March 4, 2022.

“**Loving Letters to the Friend in Early Modern Isfahan,**” lecture at the Department of Middle Eastern Studies’ Public Talks seminar series, Cambridge University, UK, March 3, 2022.

“Desiring Isfahan: On Seeing, Reading, and Writing the Early Modern City,” lecture at Boğaziçi University's Nafi Baba Center for Research in Sufism, History and Cultural Heritage, December 15, 2021.

“Isfahan, the city of Homoerotic Delight,” lecture at The Chester Beatty Museum in Dublin, part of the exhibition: *Meeting in Isfahan: Vision and Exchange in Safavid Iran*, December 13, 2021.

“Fraternal Communities of Learning: Masculinity & the Arts in Seventeenth Century Isfahan,” lecture at The Metropolitan Museum of Art series on “Islamic Art in Solitude,” November 11, 2021.

Co-organizer of webinar series, *Dialogues in Iranian Studies: Exchange between scholars in Iran & the U.S.*; a joint initiative of the University of Chicago and the University of Michigan, March-May 2021.

Panelist, *EIHS Symposium: Thinking with the Country and the City: Revisiting the Raymond Williams classic*, University of Michigan, January 29, 2021.

Organizer and Moderator of Roundtable on **Race, Sexuality, and Ethnicity in ME Studies**, Middle East Studies Department, December 7, 2020.

Panelist on the discussion of *Persianate Selves: Memories of Place and Origin Before Nationalism* by Mana Kia, The Society of Fellows and Heyman Center for the Humanities, Columbia University, October 2, 2020.

“The small gap equivalent to the width of the Safavi domain,” India and the Early Modern World, Symposium on Sanjay Subrahmanyam’s latest books: *Europe’s India* and *Empires Between Islam and Christianity*, UCLA, October 29, 2018.

“The Word, the Image, and the City of Isfahan in Seventeenth Century Iran,” Anthropology-History Workshop Series, University of Michigan, April 13, 2018.

“Love and Tragedy in Shi’a Thought and History,” MEDan: Middle East and Arab Network, University of Michigan, November 30, 2017.

“Assembling a Nomadic Archive,” Nomadic Empires Workshop, Rothermere American Institute, Oxford University, October 16, 2017.

“A Social map of the City of Isfahan,” Cities & Urban Life in the Caucasus, Iran and Central Asia Lecture Series, Brasenose College, Oxford University, October 17, 2017.

“Generation 9/11: The Future of Islamic history in America,” EIHS Symposium: *The Future of the Past*, University of Michigan, September 8, 2017.

“Isfahan’s Cityscape: Masculinity and its Desires,” UCLA History Department, April 6, 2017.

“The City as Anthology,” School of Oriental and African Studies, Near and Middle East History Series on Cities, February 27, 2017

SERVICE RECORD

University-Level:

2021-2022 Member, Medieval & Early Modern Studies, Executive Committee
2019- Member, Center for Armenian Studies, Executive Committee
2019- Mentor, Niloofar Sarlati, LSA Collegiate Fellow, Comparative Literature
2018-2019 Member, Yasmin Moll, Department of Anthropology, Launch
2012-2019 Director, Armenian Studies Program
2007-2012 Member, Armenian Studies Program, Executive Committee
2010-2011 Member, Rackham Graduate School, Executive Board
2010-2011 Member, Medieval & Early Modern Studies, Executive Committee
2011-2012 Member, Eisenberg Institute for Historical Studies, Steering Committee
2007-2008 Member, Institute for the Humanities, Executive Committee

Department-Level:

2023-2024 Chair, TRP Cameron Cross (MES)
2023-2024 Member, PRP William Glover (History)
2022-2023 Member, JPR Maya Barzilai (Judaic & MES)
2021-2022 Member, Augmented Exco (History)
2021-2022 Chair, Search Committee, Marie Manoogian Chair for Armenian Literature (MES)
2021-2020 Chair, Lecture Review for Behrad Aghaie & Michael Pifer (MES)
2020-2021 Member, Executive Committee (MES)
2020-2021 Member, PRP Christian De Pee (History)
2019-2021 Director of Graduate Studies (MES)
2019-2021 Member, Colloquium Committee (MES)
2020-2021 Member, Jessie De Grado, Launch Committee (MES)
2019-2020 Member, Third Year Review, Hakem al-Rustom (History)
2018-2019 Chair, Third Year Review, Cameron Cross (MES)
2016-2017 Member, Executive Committee (MES)
2017-2018 Member, Executive Committee (History)
2016-2017 Member, JTP, Erdem Cipa (MES & History)
2014-2015 Member, Executive Committee (MES)
2014-2015 Member, Search Committee, Alex Manoogian Chair of Armenian History (History)
2014-2015 Chair, Third Year Review, Melanie Tanielian (History)
2013-2015 Curriculum Committee (MES)
2014-2015 Chair, Search Committee for Iranian Literature & Culture (MES)
2013-2014 Member, Third Year Review, Erdem Cipa (MES & History)
2012-2013 Member, Third Year Review, Hussein Fancy (History)
2010-2011 Member, Executive Committee (MES)
2007-2008 Chair, Persian Lecturer I Review Committee (MES)
2008-2011 AAPTIS Undergraduate Advisor (MES)
2009-2010 Member, Graduate Program Committee (MES)
2010-2011 Member, Search Committee, Alex Manoogian Chair of Armenian History (History)

National

- 2018-2023 Member, Editorial Board, *Journal of Women's History*
2016- Member, Advisory Board, I.B. Tauris, *Islam and Gender Series*
2009- Member of the Board & Secretary, American Research Institute for
Iranian Studies
2009-2019 Member of the Board, American Institute of the South Caucasus
2015-2018 Member of the Board, Association for the Study of Persianate Studies