

# Anthologizing the City of Isfahan: Family Archives and Urban Knowledge

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**FEB**

**1**

**4-5:30PM**

Public Lecture  
**HSSB 4080**

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Kathryn Babayan specializes in the social and cultural history of the early-modern Persianate world, gender studies, and the history of sexuality. She is the author of two award winning books, *Mystics, Monarchs and Messiahs: Cultural Landscapes of Early Modern Iran* (Cambridge M.A.: Harvard University Press, 2003), and *The City as Anthology: Eroticism & Urbanity in Early Modern Isfahan* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2021).

Seventeenth century Isfahan witnessed a craze in the composition of a new kind of book, the *majmu'a*, or anthology. Curated and written in the domestic sphere of the household, anthologies archive city-writings once in circulation; they illustrate the practices of urban knowledge and their valorization by communities who took possession of them. The imaginations that anthologizing generated, and the choices behind the gathering, excerpting, recording, and ordering of texts bound in a manuscript, represent different techniques of interpreting the city: they reveal a place where, among other things, the refined self was crafted on paper and performed in public.

**This event is organized by the King Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud Chair in Islamic Studies, with CMES.**