

[NICHOLAS J. ABBOTT](#)

8010 Batten Arts & Letters | Norfolk, VA 23529 | [nabbott@odu.edu](mailto:nabbott@odu.edu)

---

## EMPLOYMENT

### Current

- 2017– Assistant Professor of History, Old Dominion University  
2019–20 Research Fellow, The Newberry Library  
Honorary Fellow, Department of History, University of Wisconsin–Madison

### Previous

- 2016–17 Teaching Assistant, University of Wisconsin–Madison  
2015–16 Research Fellow, Center for Historical Research, The Ohio State University

---

## EDUCATION

- 2017 Ph.D., Department of History, University of Wisconsin–Madison  
Dissertation: “Household, Family, and State: Negotiating Sovereignty and *Sarkār* in the Awadh *Nawābī*, c.1775–1840” (Advisor: André Wink)  
2009 M.A., Department of History, University of Wisconsin–Madison  
2005 B.A., Department of History, Lindenwood University, *magna cum laude*

---

## PUBLICATIONS

### Monographs

*Sarkars into States: Language, Family, and Politics in Early Colonial India*  
[In progress]

### Journal Articles

- “Eunuchs and the politics of masculinity in early colonial North India,” *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* [Forthcoming, Jan. 2020]  
“It all comes from me”: Bahu Begum, proprietary sovereignty, and the remaking of the Awadh *nawabi*” [Under review]  
“A *mulk* of one’s own: Languages of sovereignty, statehood, and dominion in the eighteenth-century ‘Empire of Hindustan’” [Under review]

### Book Chapters

- “Bringing the *Sarkar* Back In: Translating Patrimonialism and the State in Early Modern and Early Colonial India,” in J. Brooke, J. Strauss and G. Anderson, eds., [State Formations: Global Histories and Cultures of Statehood](#) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018)  
“Slavery in the Medieval Islamic Armies,” in Kaushik Roy and Dennis Showalter, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Warfare in Asia* [Under review]

### Book Reviews

Review of Ian Copland, Ian Mabbett, Asim Roy, Kate Brittlebank, and Adam Bowles. *A History of State and Religion in India*. New York: Routledge (2012), in *The Journal of Global and International Studies* (April 2013).

## **FELLOWSHIPS, GRANTS, AND AWARDS**

---

- 2019–20 National Endowment for the Humanities Research Fellowship, Newberry Library
- 2019 Summer Research Fellowship, ODU Research Foundation, Old Dominion University
- 2018 Summer Research Grant, College of Arts and Letters, Old Dominion University
- 2017 Nominee, University of Wisconsin–Madison Graduate School, Council of Graduate Schools & ProQuest Distinguished Dissertation Awards in the Humanities & Fine Arts
- 2015–16 Dissertation Fellowship, Center for Historical Research, The Ohio State University
- 2015 Adams Fellowship, Department of History, UW–Madison
- 2015 Mellon-Wisconsin Summer Fellowship, Graduate School, UW–Madison
- 2013–14 Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad (DDRA) Fellowship
- 2012–13 Academic-Year Language Fellowship (Urdu), American Institute of Indian Studies
- 2012 Genevieve Gorst Herfurth Fellowship, Department of History, UW–Madison
- 2011 Vilas Research Travel Award, Graduate School, UW–Madison
- 2011 International Travel Grant, Department of History, UW–Madison
- 2010–11 Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Academic-Year Fellowship (Persian), Center for South Asia, UW–Madison
- 2010 Pre-Dissertation Travel Grant, Center for South Asia, UW–Madison
- 2009–10 Academic-Year Language Fellowship (Urdu), American Institute of Indian Studies
- 2009 Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Summer Fellowship (Urdu), Center for South Asia, UW–Madison
- 2008–9 Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Academic-Year Fellowship (Persian), Center for South Asia, UW–Madison

## **INVITED LECTURES**

---

- 2016 “‘An Integral Part of the State’: Women, Sovereignty, and Political Authority in Early Colonial India,” Center for International Studies, Lindenwood University
- 2016 “Household or State? Debating Sovereignty and *Sarkar* in Early Colonial North India,” South Asia Program Seminar Series, Cornell University

## **CAMPUS LECTURES**

---

- 2016 “States, *Sarkars*, and Sovereignty: Political Ideology and the Limits of the Family in Early Colonial North India,” Center for Historical Research, The Ohio State University
- 2016 “‘A Gift from My Husband’: Rethinking State, Sovereignty and the Begums of Awadh, 1775–1837,” South Asia Brownbag Series, The Ohio State University
- 2015 “From Bahu to Badshah: The Begums of Awadh and Political Ideology in Early Colonial North India,” Fall Lecture Series, Center for South Asia, University of Wisconsin–Madison

## CONFERENCE ACTIVITY

---

### Conferences and Panels Organized and Co-Organized

- [2019] “Rethinking India’s Eighteenth Century,” University of Pittsburgh
- 2019 “Commercialization, Domestic Economies, and the State in Early Modern and Colonial South Asia,” Association of Asian Studies Annual Conference, Denver
- 2017 “Problems with Persian: The Limits of the Persianate in Colonial India and Beyond,” 46th Annual Conference on South Asia, Center for South Asia, University of Wisconsin–Madison
- 2016 “Documentary Decay and Evidentiary Uncertainty in Mughal and Early Colonial India,” 45th Annual Conference on South Asia, Center for South Asia, University of Wisconsin–Madison

### Papers Presented

- [2019] “*Sarkār and saltanat*: State formation, household-building, and the conceptual terrains of the late-Mughal empire,” University of Pittsburgh, “Rethinking India’s Eighteenth Century”
- 2019 “Proprietary Sovereignty, Familial Finance, and the Making of the Shuja’i Dispensation: Awadh, 1765–75,” Association for Asian Studies Annual Conference, Denver, CO
- 2018 “A late-Mughal Westphalia? Provincial borders, regional sovereignty, and the 1765 treaties of Allahabad,” 47th Annual Conference on South Asia, Center for South Asia, University of Wisconsin–Madison
- 2018 “A *mulk* of one’s own? Sub-imperial sovereignty and territorial statehood in late-Mughal Persianate diplomacy, 1757–1775,” Institute of Iranian Studies, Vienna, “Beyond the Islamicate Chancery”
- 2018 “Cracked Backs and Crooked Waists: Eunuchs, Gender and Verbal Abuse in Early Modern Awadh,” Humboldt University, Berlin, “Servants’ Pasts: 2nd International Conference”
- 2017 “An Enemy of *Our* Family: Family, State, and Domestic Authority in the Awadh *khord mahal*, c. 1780–1815,” Center for Historical Research, The Ohio State University, “Family, Kinship and Households: New Perspectives”
- 2017 “Patronage, Politics, and Persian Historiography in Nineteenth-Century Awadh,” 46th Annual Conference on South Asia, Center for South Asia, University of Wisconsin–Madison
- 2017 “Gifts, Bribes, or the Cost of Doing Business? Regulating *rishvat* in Early Colonial India,” 2017 International Meeting on Law and Society, Mexico City
- 2017 “‘But in this one the *alif* is missing’: Eunuchs and the Politics of Masculinity,” Annual Gender and Women’s Studies Conference, University of Wisconsin–Madison, “Ordinary Space, Extraordinary Living”
- 2016 “Facts Too Well Known: Bahu Begum, the Company and the Case of the Missing *Sanads*,” 45th Annual Conference on South Asia, Center for South Asia, University of Wisconsin–Madison
- 2016 “*Abbu ka bachcha*: Eunuchs, Adoption, and Masculinity at the Awadh Court,” Association for Asian Studies Annual Conference, Seattle

- 2016 “*Sarkars into States: Translating Sovereignty and Governmentality in Eighteenth-Century India*,” InterAsia Initiative, Yale University, “Protectorates and Semicolonialisms in Comparison”
- 2015 “‘It all comes from me:’ Power, Property and the Begums of Awadh, 1775–1801,” 44th Annual Conference on South Asia, Center for South Asia, University of Wisconsin–Madison
- 2014 “Courtly Eunuchs and Elite Masculinity in Nawabi Lucknow, 1776–1856,” International Federation for Theatre Research, University of Warwick, “Theatre and Stratification”
- 2014 “‘Addicted to Dissipation and His Zenanah’: The Sexual Reputation of Shuja-ud-daula and the Writing of Awadh History,” Center for Historical Studies, Northwestern University, “Reputations in History”
- 2014 “Property or Proprietor? Eunuchs, Inheritance, and Sovereignty in Awadh,” University of Chicago, South Asia Graduate Student Conference-XI, “The Self in South Asia”

## **TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

---

### **Old Dominion University**

- 2019 Senior Seminar: The Family, Prehistory to Present
- 2019 Dynasties: Family and Power in World History
- 2018 Making Modern India: The Mughals and the British
- 2017–18 Interpreting the Asian Past
- 2017 Islam in South Asia, c.700–Present

## **PROFESSIONAL SERVICE**

---

- 2019 Peer Reviewer, *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies*

## **INSTITUTIONAL SERVICE**

---

### **Old Dominion University**

- 2018–19 College of Arts and Letters, Technology Committee Member
- 2018–19 Department of History, Advisory Council Member
- 2017–18 Department of History, Library Committee Member

## **RESEARCH LANGUAGES**

---

- Persian Advanced proficiency in reading, proficient in speaking and writing
- Urdu Advanced proficiency in reading, speaking, and writing
- Hindi Advanced proficiency in speaking, proficient in reading and writing

## **PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS**

---

Member, American Historical Association

Member, Association for Asian Studies  
Member, Law and Society Association

## REFERENCES

---

André Wink  
Professor Emeritus of History  
Department of History  
University of Wisconsin–Madison  
4113 Mosse Humanities  
Madison, WI 53706  
[awink@wisc.edu](mailto:awink@wisc.edu)

John Brooke  
Professor of History and  
Director, Center for Historical Research  
The Ohio State University  
273 Dulles Hall  
Columbus, OH 43210  
[brooke.10@osu.edu](mailto:brooke.10@osu.edu)

Mitra Sharafi  
Professor of Law  
University of Wisconsin Law School and  
Legal Studies Program  
University of Wisconsin–Madison  
6112 Law  
Madison, WI 53706  
[mitra.sharafi@wisc.edu](mailto:mitra.sharafi@wisc.edu)

Robert Travers  
Associate Professor of History  
Department of History  
Cornell University  
345 McGraw Hall  
Ithaca, NY 14853  
[trt5@cornell.edu](mailto:trt5@cornell.edu)

Brett Bebber  
Associate Professor and  
Graduate Program Director  
Department of History  
Old Dominion University  
8020 Batten Arts & Letters  
Norfolk, VA 23539  
[bbebber@odu.edu](mailto:bbebber@odu.edu)

Samira Sheikh  
Associate Professor of History  
Department of History  
Vanderbilt University  
223 Benson  
Nashville, TN 37235  
[samira.sheikh@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:samira.sheikh@vanderbilt.edu)