

# Department of Middle Eastern Studies

## Seminar Series

### Michaelmas Term, 2022

## Dror Weil

*University of Cambridge*

### “Persian's Eastern Frontier: Arabo-Persian Texts in Late Imperial China”



Mid-16th century China saw the surprising emergence of a network of local savants who shared an interest in the exploration of Arabic and Persian texts. To that end, they undertook extensive searches for Arabic and Persian manuscripts, forgotten in libraries or newly brought to China along a growing influx of foreign visitors, and meticulously studied their contents. My talk will tell the rather unique story of the hundreds of Arabic and Persian works that circulated throughout late imperial China. It will explore the scholarly practices by which Chinese savants read, interpreted and made sense of Arabo-Persian texts, while bridging the cultural and epistemological gaps. It will shed light on some of the inherent challenges of domesticating a foreign textual archive at the margins of a literary tradition, and the incentives to transform the traditional manuscript-based scholarship into print.

**Thursday, 17 November 2022, 17.15**

Room 10 (the old common room) at the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies.

Refreshments will be served from 17.00.