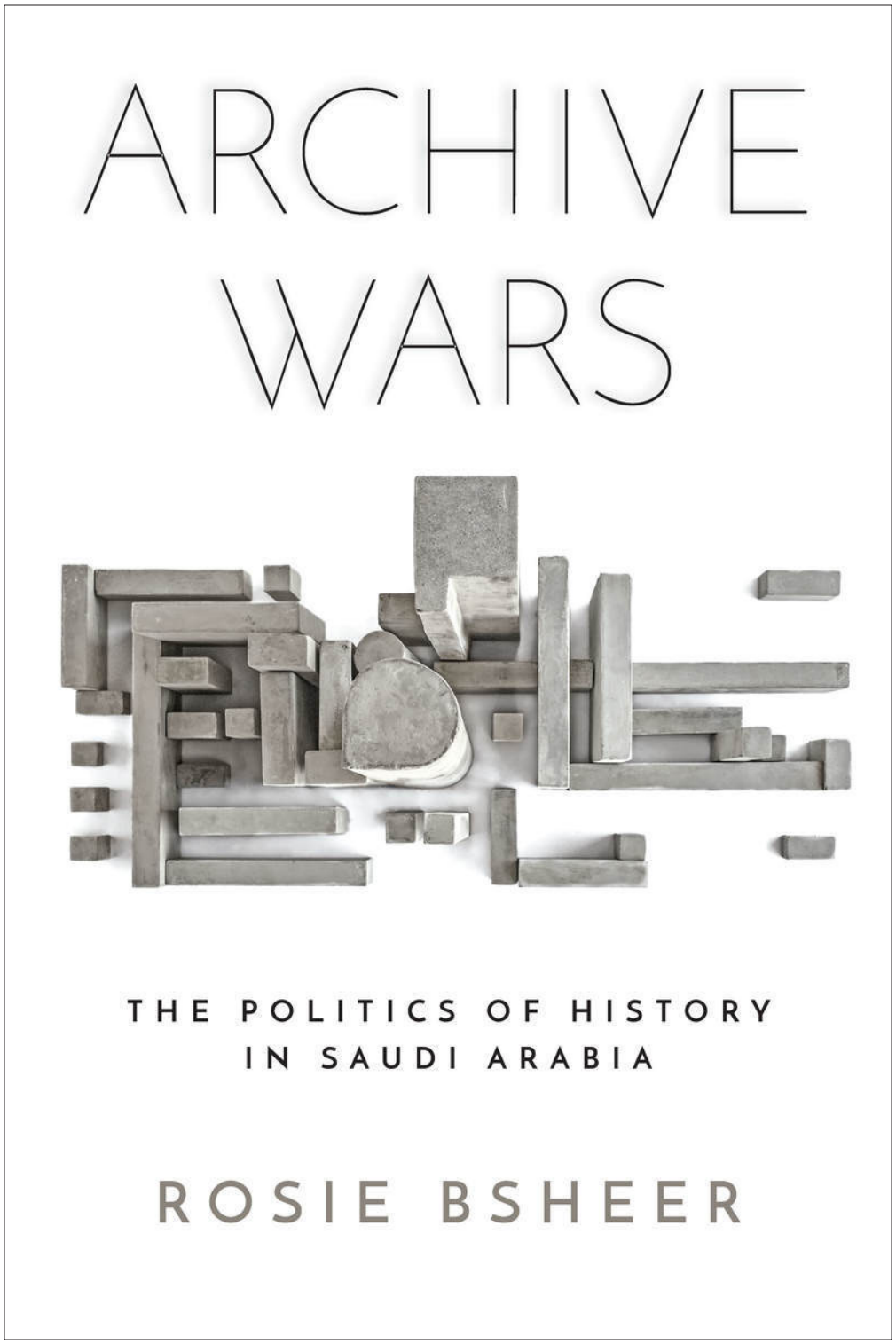



CMES & THE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

*present a discussion of*

# ARCHIVE WARS
## THE POLITICS OF HISTORY IN SAUDI ARABIA

by **Rosie Bsheer**
*Assistant Professor of History, Harvard University*

The production of history is premised on the selective erasure of certain pasts and the artifacts that stand witness to them. From the elision of archival documents to the demolition of sacred and secular spaces, each act of destruction is also an act of state building. Following the 1991 Gulf War, political elites in Saudi Arabia pursued these dual projects of historical commemoration and state formation with greater fervor to enforce their postwar vision for state, nation, and economy. Seeing Islamist movements as the leading threat to state power, they sought to de-center religion from educational, cultural, and spatial policies.

In *Archive Wars: The Politics of History in Saudi Arabia* (Stanford, 2020), Rosie Bsheer explores the increasing secularization of the postwar Saudi state and how it manifested in assembling a national archive and reordering urban space in Riyadh and Mecca.

*Discussants:*

Beshara Doumani, *Mahmoud Darwish Professor of Palestinian Studies, Professor of History, Brown University*

Eve M. Trout-Powell, *Christopher H. Browne Distinguished Professor of History, University of Pennsylvania*

Kirsten A. Weld, *Professor History, Harvard University*

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2020 || 12:00–1:30pm**
Online webinar; see CMES Events calendar to register.

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Harvard University Department of History