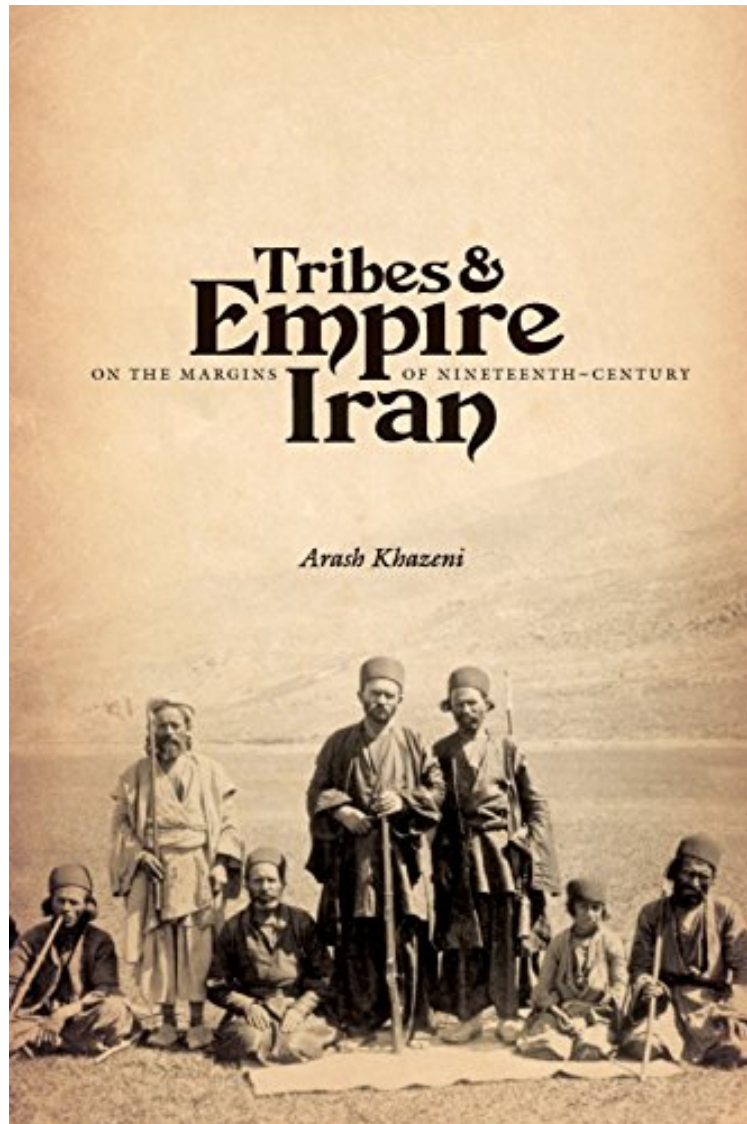


Tribes and Empire on the Margins of Nineteenth-Century Iran (Publications on the Near East)

Arash Khazeni

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Tribes and Empire on the Margins of Nineteenth-Century Iran traces the history of the Bakhtiyari tribal confederacy of the Zagros Mountains through momentous times that saw the opening of their territory to the outside world. As the Qajar dynasty sought to integrate the peoples on its margins into the state, the British Empire made commercial inroads into the once inaccessible mountains on the frontier between Iran and Iraq. The distance between the state and the tribes was narrowed through imperial projects that included the building of a road through the mountains, the gathering of geographical and ethnographic information, and the exploration for oil, which culminated during the Iranian Constitutional Revolution. These modern projects assimilated autonomous pastoral nomadic tribes on the peripheries of Qajar Iran into a wider imperial territory and the world economy. Tribal subjects did not remain passive amidst these changes in environment and society, however, and projects of empire in the hinterlands of Iran were always mediated through encounters, accommodation, and engagement with the tribes. In contrast to the range of literature on the urban classes and political center in Qajar Iran, Arash Khazeni adopts a view from the Bakhtiyari tents on the periphery. Drawing upon Persian chronicles, tribal histories, and archival sources from London, Tehran, and Isfahan, this book opens new ground by approaching nineteenth-century Iran from its edge and placing the tribal periphery at the heart of a tale about empire and assimilation in the modern Middle East.

"Arash Khazeni accomplishes what many promise but few do: he writes peoples of the margins into history. . . . This lucidly written, nuanced monograph . . . will be a valuable resource in advanced undergraduate and graduate classrooms." Samri Ates, *American Historical*, October 2011 "In taking the view from below, as it were, from the level of Bakhtiyari people and their leaders, Dr. Khazeni introduces here an entirely new historical perspective on the much romanticized Zagros peoples; incorporating ethnographic data and attending to environmental conditions he broadens the historical perspective to its fullest and allows an appreciation of the circumstances of life that transcends other historical accounts of conditions of the Zagros tribes; and in his extensive and thorough use of documents and illustrations of all kinds that pertain to Bakhtiyari history, his treatment of sources as a historian is flawless. Altogether, this exemplary book fully fits the scope and spirit of the Pourshariati Award." Middle East Studies Association "This book is the most detailed and vivid account of tribes in nineteenth century Iran yet to be written and sheds new light on Iranian social and cultural history." Afshin Marashi, California State University at Sacramento "Arash Khazeni's book fills an important gap in our understanding of tribes and center-periphery relations in the Qajar period, placing the Bakhtiyari tribes involvement in the Constitutional Revolution within the context of broader trends in Bakhtiyari politics and history." Kamran Scot Aghaie, University of Texas at Austin *From the Inside Flap* *Traces the history of the Bakhtiyari, a confederacy of tribes in the rugged Zagros Mountains of Iran, as roads brought the Qajar government into closer contact and the British began to pursue their own projects in the region. The book approaches the history of early modern Iran from its edges and places tribal history at the heart of a complex story about imperialism and transformation in a region that lies directly between Tehran and Baghdad.* --Arash Khazeni is assistant professor of history at Claremont-McKenna College.