

ISIS NEWS

Newsletter of the International Society for Iranian Studies

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Established in 1967

Winter-Fall 2004

**Special
Triple Issue**

The Sixth Biennial Conference on Iranian Studies to Be Held in London in Summer of 2006

The Sixth Biennial Conference on Iranian Studies will be held by The International Society for Iranian Studies (ISIS), Iran Heritage Foundation (IHF) and the London Middle East Institute at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London from August 3rd through 5th, 2006.

The conference will take place immediately after the Centenary Conference on the Iranian Constitutional Revolution, which will be organized by the Iran Heritage Foundation and the University of Oxford and held from July 30th through August 2nd, 2006 at Oxford.

The conference will be held at SOAS, and participants should

contact the Iran Heritage Foundation (info@iranheritage.org) if they require an invitation in order to obtain a visa for entry into the United Kingdom or if they wish to make arrangements for accommodation at student halls of the University of London.

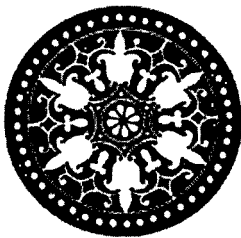
Scholars are invited to propose papers in all fields of Iranian studies, especially new areas of investigation and/or novel approaches to traditional fields. The primary language of the conference will be English and scholars are strongly encouraged to use that language, but proposals for papers in Persian will be considered as well.

Scholars wishing to present a paper on the topic of Constitutional Revolution are encouraged to visit the IHF website at www.iranheritage.org for information on how to propose papers for the earlier conference. Up-to-date information on the Sixth Biennial Conference will be available at:

www.iranianstudies.net and at www.iranheritage.org.

The deadline for the submission of proposals is October 1, 2005. Abstracts must be limited to 250-300 words, and must present a succinct outline of the

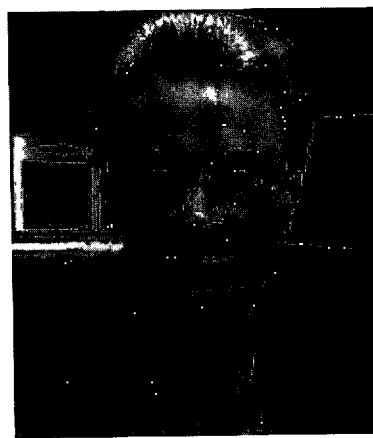
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Dr. Akbar Ghahary A Patron of Iranian Studies

The International Society for Iranian Studies has benefitted from the generosity of a number of people and institutions in organizing its various activities. ISIS would like to introduce another one of its patrons to its members.

Dr. Akbar Ghahary, an Iranian-born American, has been an active member of the Iranian-American community for the last twenty-six years. His commitment to serving cultural and humanitarian projects has involved him in extensive charitable work with various cultural organizations. He has been a former president of the Persian Cultural and Humanitarian Association, trea-



surer and a trustee of the Encyclopædia Iranica Foundation, IAPAC treasurer and a member of its Board of Trustees, and is the co-founder and

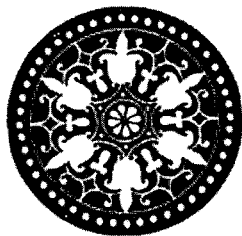
president of the Persian Cultural Foundation.

Dr. Ghahary, an executive in the manufacturing sector, is the CEO and Chairman of the Board of Safas Corporation, an equity partner with General Electric Capital Corporation.

A member of the American Chemical Society and Society of Plastic Engineers, Dr. Ghahary owns several international patents, including eight U. S. patents, mostly in polymers and advanced composites.

The International Society for Iranian Studies is grateful for the generosity of Dr. Ghahary in regard to the Fifth Biennial Conference on Iranian Studies.

Message from the Departing Executive Director



Established 1967

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- Past President:** Ahmad Karimi-Hakkak
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Northwestern University
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- Mohamad Tavakoli-Targhi
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*California State University,
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- Pamela Z. Karimi
*Massachusetts Institute of
Technology*
- Leili Kashani
New York University
- Evangelos Venetis
The University of Edinburgh

Dear Friends,

The academic year 2003-2004 was one of many changes and milestones for your society.

Most obvious was the change of the name to better reflect its current status. At the suggestion of the officers and by majority vote, the word "International" was prefaced to the name of the Society for Iranian Studies.

As the Society has developed, the scope of its activities has increased, and the charter, drafted at the time of its founding, needed updating. This was brought to the attention of the members, who approved the proposed changes by a large margin.

Another change that was also approved by popular vote was the extension of the term of the president from one year to two years. The officers believed that the President of the Society would be more efficient if (s)he could carry out her/his responsibilities for a longer period.

A milestone in the history of this Society was the election of Dr. Janet Afary as President, the first woman to hold this post. Dr. Afary had served ISIS in different capacities for a number of years. She is also the first ISIS President to serve for two years.

Dr. Robert McChesney, editor of *Iranian Studies* for a number of years, stepped down, and, after an extensive search, was replaced by Dr. Homa Katouzian. Dr. Katouzian is based at St Antony's College in Oxford and his proximity to our publisher, Taylor & Francis, has proven quite beneficial for us. The officers of the society are confident that *Iranian Studies* remains in capable hands.

In May 2004, ISIS held its fifth biennial conference, once again in Bethesda, MD. If your letters, messages and congratulations are any indication, this was our most successful conference. Much work had gone into the planning and we are indebted to many who worked behind the scenes,

In Bethesda, it was decided that the next conference will be held outside of the United States for the first time. This was done for a number of reasons. One, because many scholars from Iran had difficulty getting visas and missed the last three conferences. We

Ali Banuazizi Elected President of MESA

Ali Banuazizi, current member of the ISIS Council, has been elected President of the Middle East Studies Association, the largest society for Middle East scholars in North America.

Banuazizi, Professor of Cultural Psychology and Co-director of the Program in Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies at Boston College since 1986, is one of the founders of The Society for Iranian Studies (now The International Society for Iranian Studies). He has served more than once as Council member of ISIS and was its President in 1998. He also edited *Iranian Studies* from 1968 to 1982.

Prof. Banuazizi received his B.S. from the University of Michigan, his M.A. from New School for Social Research and his Ph. D. from Yale University in 1968. In addition to Boston College, he has taught at numerous universities, among them Princeton, the University of Tehran and Yale.

In addition to his academic positions, Banuazizi has held appointments at the Council for Foreign Relations, Institute on Religion and World Affairs, Int'l Society for Political Psychology, Social Science Research Council, and UNESCO, among others. He is currently on the editorial boards of *Iran-Nameh* and *Iranian Studies*.

Prof. Banuazizi is the editor and author of numerous books and articles, including *The Politics of Social Transformation in Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan*, co edited with M. Weiner (1994); *Social Stratification in the Middle East and North Africa: A Bibliographic Survey*, with A. Ashraf (1984), "Iran's Tortuous Path Toward 'Islamic Liberalism'" *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society*, with A. Ashraf (2001); "Faltering Legitimacy: The ruling Clerics and Civil Society in Contemporary Iran", *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society* (1988), among others.

ISIS congratulates Dr. Banuazizi on his election.

Remember to inform ISIS of any
change of address or e-mail.

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Message from... cont' d

thought as a society that serves Iranian studies, the presence of scholars from Iran is essential. Holding the conference outside of the United States would eliminate the visa problem for many of them. The second reason was that in view of the international status of the Society, it would be a good gesture to make the conference more accessible to scholars from other countries. The third reason was the coinciding of our sixth biennial conference in 2006 with the Iran Heritage Foundation's conference on the Centenary of the Constitutional Revolution. These two conferences combined will give scholars, students and others interested in Iran an unprecedented opportunity to hear about the latest research on subjects related to Iran. We hope to see you all in London.

The past two years have been ones of learning and great satisfaction for me. I enjoyed meeting with members and acting as liaison between them and the Society, as well as working with the officers and preparing this newsletter. The responsibilities were great and it is my hope that I have executed them to everyone's satisfaction. It is now time for me to leave ISIS in the hands of a new and capable Executive Director, Dr. Hamid Akbari. I know that he will discharge the duties of this office successfully and help keep ISIS in the forefront of Iranian studies.

And now, my friends, it is time for me to say to you good bye, good luck and Godspeed.

Haideh Sahim

2006 Conference... cont' d

central theme and main argument of the paper. Proposals should be sent by e-mail to: isislondon@hotmail.com. Confirmation will be sent by e-mail. Please also send a paper copy of the abstract to:

Professor H. E. Chehabi
 Program Committee Chairman
 Department of Int'l Relations
 Boston University
 152 Bay State Road
 Boston, MA 02215, USA

Election Results

ISIS members were asked to vote on whether or not the term of the President of ISIS should be extended to two years to give the serving president continuity and time to serve better. The results were overwhelmingly in favor of the extension. As of 2005 the President of ISIS, currently Prof. Janet Afary, will serve for two years. You will be sent ballots to vote for the next president soon.

The result of the election is as follows: Profs. Sheila Blair and Sholeh Quinn will replace the outgoing Council Members, Ms. Elaine Sciolino and Dean Nasrine Rahimieh. In the past two years ISIS and all its officers have greatly benefited from the cooperation of these Council members. We thank them and hope to have their cooperation again in the future.

This year we had unusual results with the ballots received for the election of Student Council Members. Both candidates, Leili Kashani and Evangelos Venetis, received the same number of votes. The Executive Committee and the Council decided to make an exception and accept both candidates as members and for the next two years only we shall have three Student Council Members, instead of the usual two. The officers of ISIS welcome all the new elected members.

Saidi-Sirjani Book Award Winners

Saidi-Sirjani Book Award winners were announced at the Fifth Biennial Conference on Iranian Studies by Ali Banuazizi, the Saidi-Sirjani Book Award Committee Chairman. The winner for 2004 is Maria Subtelny's *Le monde est un jardin* (The World is a Garden) about horticulture, agriculture and gardening and the concept of gardening in Iranian culture and literature, which was originally presented for the Ehsan and Latifeh Yarshater Lecture Series and later published as a monograph.

The honorable mentions were Katherine Babayan's *Mystics Monarchs and Messiahs on the Cultural Landscape of Early Modern Iran* (2nd prize) and Franklin Lewis' *Rumi: Past, Present, East and West* (3rd prize). Congratulations to all winners.

Donations Received

ISIS is grateful to the following members for their generous donations to the Society. Every dollar will help improve our cause and our future programs.

To ISIS:
 Latifeh Hagigi
 Guity Nashat
 Marta Simidchieva
 Morteza Elyaderani

To Saidi-Sirjani Book Award:
 Latifeh Hagigi
 Rudi Matthee
 Mariana S. Simpson

Important Notice

Please make a note of the new address for ISIS. Letters sent to the old address may not be received and/or responded to in a timely manner. All correspondence should be sent to:

Dr. Hamid Akbari
 Executive Director
 Department of Management
 and Marketing
 Northeastern Illinois University
 5500 N. St. Louis Ave.
 Chicago, IL 60625

Erasmus Prize 2004 Awarded to Abdulkarim Soroush

The Patron, H.R.H. Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands, and the Board of the Praemium Erasmianum Foundation, awarded the Erasmus Prize 2004 jointly to Sadik Jalal Al-Azm (Syria), Fatema Mernissi (Morocco) and Abdulkarim Soroush (Iran).

The 150,000 Guilders Erasmus Prize is awarded annually to a person or institution that has made an exceptionally important contribution to European culture, society or social science.

"Religion and Modernity" was the subject of the Erasmus Prize 2004. Recent global developments in the political and social sphere have given new impetus to the debate on the relationship between religion and modernity. At present it is especially modernization processes in relation to Islam, which attract attention worldwide. In Western Europe, the public debate about Islam and modernity at the same time also leads to self-reflection, and the Western Enlightenment is critically being re-examined.

Abdulkarim Soroush (pseud. of Hossein Dabbagh) was born in Tehran

in 1945. After being trained in Tehran as a pharmacologist and philosopher, he left for the United Kingdom where he studied history and philosophy of science. During the months preceding the Islamic Revolution of Iran, Soroush had a large share in the gatherings of young Muslims, opponents of the Shah's regime, in London. His book, *Dialectical Antagonism*, is a compilation of his lectures there. In 1979, he returned to Iran and in the spring of 1980 was appointed a member of the Council for Cultural Revolution. In 1982 he left this Council for good and never again accepted any governmental offices. Soroush became member of Iran's Academy of Sciences in 1990. However, he became gradually more critical of the political role played by the Iranian clergy, and thus became subject to harassment and censorship, and was forced to leave the country for England and Canada in 1996.

From the year 2000 onwards Abdulkarim Soroush has taught at Harvard, Yale and Princeton.

Tehran Conference

Washington, DC

May 27, 2004

A conference on the city of Tehran was initiated and organized by Dr. Mina Marefat, Program Director of the Islamic Cities Project and former Rockefeller Scholar. The conference was held at the Library of Congress on May 27, 2004, in conjunction with the ISIS Fifth Biennial conference.

The conference brought together an international panel of scholars, architects and planners to discuss the cultural, social and political evolution of the city. A century ago Tehran had a population of less than 300,000 and today it is one of the largest cities in the world with a population of over 10 million, a figure that represented the entire population of the country only a century ago. While it was once a city bounded by walls and gateways, today it sprawls from the mountains in the north to the salt deserts in the south.

The list of participants at the conference, in addition to Dr. Marefat herself, who spoke on *Space, Time and Tehran*, included Richard Frye (Emeritus Harvard University), *Persian Culture and I*; Homa Katouzian (Oxford University), *Political and Social Context*; Fereshteh Bekhrad, *Tehran Master Plan*; Theodore Liebman, *The Harvard Plan for Tehran*, Bernhard Hourcade (CNRS, Paris), *Territorial Dynamics of Tehran*; Iradj Kalantari, *Oil Industry Headquarters*; Yahya Fiuzi, *Cultural Centers in Tehran*; Keyvan Khosravani, who was to present a paper on *Preservation of Oudlajan*, could not attend.

The conference traced the transformation of the city from an inward-looking Islamic village, when it was chosen as the capital of the newly-established Qajar dynasty over 200 years ago, to a modern, formerly Western and now Islamic metropolis. The participants explored the relationship between public and private realms in the city and the problematic interaction between urban masses and governing bodies in a city that is a microcosm of the country itself.

Scholar Rescue Fund Fellowships

The Institute of International Education's Scholar Rescue Fund provides fellowships for scholars whose lives and work are threatened in their home countries. These fellowships permit scholars to find temporary refuge at universities and colleges anywhere in the world to continue to share their knowledge with students, colleagues, and the community at large. When conditions improve, these scholars will return home to help rebuild universities and societies ravaged by fear, conflict and repression.

Academics, researchers and independent scholars from any country, field or discipline may qualify. Preference is given to scholars with a Ph.D. or higher degree in their field, who demonstrate superior academic accomplishment or promise. Applications from female

scholars and under-represented groups are strongly encouraged.

Universities, colleges and research centers in any country may apply to serve as hosts.

Fellowships from three months to one calendar year will be considered with up to 25 fellowships awarded annually. The maximum award is US \$20,000.

You are invited to nominate suitable candidates, especially those still facing threats in their home country/region who may not be aware of the program. Particularly welcome is participation from universities and colleges that might be willing to host fellowship recipients, especially universities and colleges outside of the US, and French, Spanish and Russian language institutions.

For further information, check <www.iie.org/SRF>

A Profile of Gulf/2000

In the summer of 2005, as a new president was inaugurated in Iran and the political situation in Iraq deteriorated, many scholars and others with a professional interest in the region kept up to date by following the latest news and discussions among members of the Gulf/2000 Project.

The Project, based at Columbia University, maintains a public website (<http://gulf2000.columbia.edu>), which provides a wealth of research information, data on current affairs, and Internet links that receives around 20,000 hits a week. A private site for members only also includes a discussion forum and indexed archive stretching back over a decade, and receives around 500 visits a day. A large number of current news "threads" (presently about 50) are maintained for members on many topics of possible interest. Aside from the latest news from a wide variety of world media, recent topics under discussion by leading scholars, government figures and journalists ranged from the Iranian nuclear stand-off, U.S. policy toward Iraq, the Saudi succession, correctly measuring oil reserves, to defining Islamic government. Whenever conflict comes to the region, Gulf/2000 provides for free the most informed opinion available anywhere, every day, around the clock.

Gulf/2000 was founded in 1993 by Gary Sick, a professor at Columbia University, with the support of the W. Alton Jones Foundation (later joined by the Rockefeller, MacArthur, Ford and Soros foundations). Dr. Sick (ggs2@columbia.edu) is Executive Director; the Deputy Director is Lawrence Potter (lgp5@columbia.edu). The initial goals were to establish a network of specialists from every Persian Gulf country to maintain contact with each other on important issues; to organize a series of meetings where participants could become accustomed to an exchange of views on a Gulf-wide basis; to establish and maintain an electronic library, research facility and bulletin board on the Internet; to commission a series of research papers to ex-

amine long-term trends affecting the future stability and security of the Persian Gulf region; to consider policy alternatives that would promote regional security, stability and non-proliferation, and to communicate those proposals to the Persian Gulf states and influential external powers.

To date, ten major international conferences have been held involving over 100 experts, the vast majority from the region itself. After five conferences focusing broadly on security concerns in the Gulf as a whole, and one devoted to the issue of confidence-building, two dealt with individual states, Iran (in 1999) and Iraq (in 2000). A meeting in 2001 in Bellagio, Italy, focused on the legacy of the Iran-Iraq War, and the most recent meeting in Cyprus in October 2004 led to a re-examination of "The Persian Gulf in History." In addition to these conferences, Gulf/2000 has held a series of small workshops, mostly at Columbia University, on Iranian energy and nuclear policy.

To share the results of its research, so far three edited volumes of papers have been published: *The Persian Gulf at the Millennium: Essays in Politics,*

Economy, Security and Religion (St. Martin's Press, 1997); *Security in the Persian Gulf: Origins, Obstacles and the Search for Consensus* (Palgrave, 2002); and *Iran, Iraq and the Legacies of War* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2004). Another volume on the history of the Persian Gulf is under preparation.

Gulf/2000 is a membership organization of individuals (over 1,000 at present) with professional association with Persian Gulf affairs. Normally this does not include students. Gulf/2000 does not accept institutional memberships, but members of academic and commercial organizations may join on an individual basis. There is no charge for membership.

There is no regular schedule of meetings or publications, which are planned as circumstances and finances permit. At present, Gulf/2000 has a number of projects in preparation and expects to continue its policy of collaborating with host institutions in the Persian Gulf states and Europe for future conferences.

Lawrence G. Potter
Columbia University

The World of Achaemenid Persia Conference

A conference on Achaemenid Persia will be held by the British Museum and the Iran Heritage Foundation at the British Museum, London, from September 29th through October 1st, 2005.

This conference is organized in conjunction with the *Forgotten Empire: The World of Ancient Persia* exhibition at the British Museum. This is the largest exhibition on Achaemenid Persia ever assembled and will include some of the most famous and iconic pieces from that period. On exhibit will be about 80 objects from Iran and important material from the Louvre and the British Museum's own collection. The exhibition will run from 8th September 2005 – 8th January 2006.

Papers presented at the conference will cover various topics, including *Problems with Achaemenid History, Kingship; Administration; Gender, Society and Ethnicity; Religion; Army; Art and Material Culture; Interface between Persia and Greece, Power and Politics, and Legacy*. The organizers intend to publish the papers presented at the conference.

Registration fees are 100.00 GBP (80.00 GBP concessions, 40.00 GBP for full-time students). Registration forms can be downloaded from the website of the Iran Heritage Foundation. For further information contact Iran Heritage Foundation, (tel) 44 20 75846949; (fax) 44 20 75846709 or farhad@iranheritage.org.

Shirin Ebady, Nobel Laureate

Keynote Speaker at the Fifth Biennial Conference on Iranian Studies

On Friday, May 28th Mrs. Shirin Ebady, the 2003 Nobel Peace Prize winner, spoke as the keynote speaker at the Fifth Biennial Conference on Iranian Studies. Mrs. Ebady is the first Iranian ever to win the prestigious prize and the first woman from the region to be so distinguished. Her speech was attended by some 700 people. The audience included both participants of the conference and interested people from the area.

Shirin Ebady was accompanied by Mr. Abdolkarim Lahiji, a fellow activist and lawyer, who introduced her through an interpreter. He gave a short description of her judicial and political activities. Ebady was one of the first women to serve as a judge. After the revolution, when female judges were dismissed she continued to serve as court secretary. After nearly 15 years of service in the judiciary, she was forced to resign. She then applied for a license to practice law, but since the Bar Association is controlled by the government, this request was turned down for seven years. During this period she spent her time doing research, the result of which were two outstanding works, one on the rights of the child and the other on the history of human rights in Iran. She later wrote a book on the rights of women, whose English translation will soon be published.

Ebady's attempts to establish the first human rights organization in Iran, The Society for the Support of the Rights of the Child, was delayed for four years. While Ebady and four other lawyers waited for a year to establish the Society for Human Rights Advocates in Iran for the defense of political prisoners, they defended 70 cases. The day she received her Nobel Prize in Oslo, her colleague, Abolfattah Soltani, received an award on behalf of the Society from the prime minister of France. Last December in Ecuador, the Society became a member of the International Federation

of Human Rights and thus gained international legitimacy.

She has defended the human rights of all those who have fought for freedom of conscience and human rights.

While aware that her name was on the list of those who may be assassinated (the serial killings) by Said Emami she accepted the case of Arash and Parastoo Forouhar. She also took the case of Zahra Kazemi, the journalist who was arrested and killed.

She has been present on the international scene in many countries.

After this introduction, Shirin Ebady took the podium and said:

Dear Friends, distinguished participants, ladies and gentlemen *salam*. I am very happy to be here tonight with you, particularly because the focus of your activity is Iranian studies. The field of Iranian studies serves as a cultural ambassador for Iran abroad. In the era of globalization, when boundaries disappear, it is cultures that remain. We shall continue to exist through our culture, our language and our art. Therefore, it is

incumbent upon each and every one of us to support the departments of Iranian Studies in every university, and, where one does not exist, to help set it up.

Tonight I would like to speak about democracy and its impact on peace. We all share the belief that we must live in peace and the right to live in peace constitutes fundamental human rights for the fulfillment of our needs and aspirations and the pursuit of our hopes. History teaches us that viable peace is achievable when it is rooted in democracy. At times undemocratic governments may succeed in making their people submissive, either through prisons or executions. However, sooner or later they are forced to stop as they confront serious social crises. The former Soviet Union was able for seventy years to implement a distorted vision of order that it had in mind. However, as a result of upheavals, it finally had to surrender. I maintain that the disintegration of undemocratic systems from within is only a matter of time. These systems must not be coerced or threatened externally, for

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Forgotten Empire: The World of Ancient Persia

The British Museum, London

Sep. 9, 2005-Jan. 8, 2006

Between 550 BC and 330 BC the Persians ruled an Empire that stretched from North Africa to the Indus Valley and from Central Asia to the Arabian Sea, from capital cities such as Susa, Pasargadae and Persepolis, arguably the most magnificent site in the whole of the ancient world. The Western World tends to know about the Persians through their wars with the Greeks, suggesting that the Persians were a despotic and ruthless people, but this is a western and ethnocentric view that is corrected in the exhibition which relies on oriental sources rather than classical texts for information about the Persians. Finally, the exhibition explores the contribution of the Persians to western civilization.

Included in the exhibition will be substantial loans from the National Museum in Tehran, the Persepolis Museum, and the Louvre in Paris. These will supplement the British Museum's own significant holdings in this area. This will be the first time that many of the objects from Tehran have been outside Iran, and some of the more precious gold and silver items have never been shown in Tehran.

Announcements

New Asian Studies Newsletter

Taylor and Francis are pleased to announce the launch of their Asian Studies Newsletter. Our aim is to keep you as informed as possible about special offers/ information on new journals and books/ conferences as well as offering free online access for a limited period to some of our most popular articles. We are very keen to hear your views and include a feedback form in our mailing. To sign up for our newsletter, please visit our Asian Studies Arena at www.asianstudiesarena.com and fill in your email address when you click on "Add Me". We hope that you find this publication useful.

The Edinburgh Graduate Workshop in Iranian Studies Aspects of History and Culture in Pre-Modern Iran

5-6 March, 2005

Department of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies
University of Edinburgh

The Research Students' Workshop in Iranian Studies aims to provide a forum for graduate students in the many disparate fields of Iranian Studies to present their work in progress. Postgraduate students from the University of Edinburgh were hosting this event so as to foster the development of Iranian studies, facilitate interaction between graduate students and faculty from various institutions, provide a forum for the exchange of ideas, and contribute to the professional and academic development of graduate students. Papers from various fields, including history, art history, archaeology and literature were presented by graduate students from British universities.

This workshop was convened by Mr. Evangelos Venetis and Mrs. Yuka Kadoi and was sponsored by The Iran Heritage Foundation, the University of Edinburgh and the Royal Museum of Scotland.

The Workshop Committee consisted of Prof. Robert Hillenbrand, Prof. Carole Hillenbrand, Dr. Andrew J. Newman and Dr. Ulrike al-Khamis.

For further information, please contact Evangelos Venetis, Dept. of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies <E.Venetis@sms.ed.ac.uk> or Yuka Kadoi, Dept. of History of Art <ykadoi@hotmail.com> or <Y.Kadoi@sms.ed.ac.uk>

Special Interest Group for Music of Iran and Central Asia

This is to announce the formation of the Special Interest Group for Music of Iran and Central Asia (SIGMICA) within the Society For Ethnomusicology (SEM).

SIGMICA began its work in November of 2003 at a meeting held during the 48th annual conference of the Society for Ethnomusicology in Florida. Participants at that meeting voted unanimously in favor of forming a new SEM special interest group titled "Study Group for Music of Iran and Central Asia."

It was decided that the objective of this new special interest group should be to "promote and support the study of the music" of Iran and Central Asia and to foster and facilitate scholarly exchange and contact among members of the region." SIGMICA was officially approved by the SEM board in the August of 2003.

In November of 2004 SIGMICA held its first official meeting during the SEM conference. Additionally, SIGMICA organized a SEM panel on Iranian music. The panel, titled "New Directions in Iranian Popular Music and Dance" and chaired by Martin Stokes (University of Chicago), included the following papers: Niloofar Mina (New Jersey City University) "New Directions in Iranian Popular Music," Wendy S. DeBano (University of California, Santa Barbara) "Bodily Memory and the Body Re-members: Locating Iranian American Pop on the Dance Floor," Farzaneh Hemmasi (Columbia University) "Moving Bodies, Moving Images: Khordadian and Exile Dance and Music in Iran."

Those interested in being on the list can subscribe to SIGMICA's discussion list by sending a blank email to the following address: <sigmica-subscribe@yahoogroups.com>. For further information contact the Co-chairs,

Wendy DeBano wdebano@yahoo.com or

Niloofar Mina Niloomina@aol.com>

Knowledge Diffusion Network

Every year, many Iranian scholars go to Iran for family visits without having an opportunity to interact with the universities there. With the objective of promoting collaboration of Iranian academics living abroad with the scientific community in Iran, a group of academics in the US have recently established a non-profit organization, Knowledge Diffusion Network. For more information about this organization, check: <http://www.knowdiff.net>

The Network's current project is the Visiting Lecturer Program, in which they try to facilitate the connection between the visitors and the universities in Iran by organizing lectures and workshops for academics who visit.

Senior graduate students, post-doctoral fellows or faculty members who plan to visit Iran and are interested in giving a lecture related to their area of research can visit their website:

<http://www.knowdiff.net/index.php?p=22>
and fill out the form.

Announcements... cont'd**Iranian Alliances Across Borders**

Iranian Alliances Across Borders (IAAB) is a non-profit, non-partisan organization that seeks to address issues related to the Iranian diaspora community. IAAB was created in 2003 by students at Wellesley College and Tufts University in Boston, Massachusetts to address these issues by facilitating community building, developing ways to better understand what it means to be part of a diaspora community, and helping members of the Iranian diaspora community to enhance connections with their new communities as well as maintain connections with their root community.

Their first conference, held in April 2004, explored issues related to the Iranian diaspora and had tremendous feedback and success. Since many of their organizers graduated from college, or will do so shortly, the founders realized that the best way for them to continue their work was to create a sustainable organization. Thus, IAAB was officially incorporated as a non-profit, non-governmental organization in the Commonwealth of Virginia during the summer of 2004.

A second annual conference is currently being planned to be held in April 2005 in Washington DC. A Call for Papers for this conference will be announced in November. For further information visit: <http://www.iranianalliances.org>

**Foundation for Iranian Studies
Announcement of the Recipient of Award for
The Best Ph.D. Dissertation on a Topic of Iranian Studies**

The Foundation for Iranian Studies is pleased to announce that the Committee on the Selection of the Best Dissertation of the Year on a Topic of Iranian Studies has chosen Cyrus Schayegh's dissertation, "Science, Medicine and Class in the Formation of Semi-Colonial Iran in the 1900's-1940's," submitted to the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences of Columbia University, as the recipient of the Foundation's annual Ph.D. dissertation award for the academic year 2003-2004.

In making its decision, the Committee, following the criteria established by the Foundation Board, noted, in part, an "exceptional contribution to the field of Iranian Studies by bringing together an extraordinary array of primary and secondary sources to support an original conceptualization of modernization in Iran and by extension in developing societies...by stating clearly the study's problematic and theoretical framework...by maintaining objectivity using method judiciously to ground theory in fact and rigorously to support innovative interpretations of state-society interaction...by reformulating the framework for analyzing center-periphery relations in colonial and semi-colonial settings using modern medical science as fact and metaphor to theorize and to contextualize the Iranian professional's role in creating institutions by translating the non-traditional idiom to local culture reciprocally and interactively...by calibrating signification and nuance in Persian, French, German, and English languages to relate meaning to time and space...by paying attention to detail... by excellent organization of the work."

The Committee also cited Andrew Peacock's dissertation, "Abu 'Ali Bal'ami's Translation of Al-Tabari's History," submitted to the University of Cambridge, and Matthew Canepa's dissertation "The Two Eyes of the Earth: Competition and Exchange in the Art and Ritual of Kingship between Rome and Sasanian Iran," submitted to the Faculty of the Division of the Humanities of the University of Chicago, with honorable mention for high scholarship, originality, clarity, and significant contribution to the field of Iranian studies.

**Constitutional Revolution
Conference
at Tehran University**

Tehran University plans to hold a large conference on the Iranian Constitutional Revolution in February 2005. This conference is approved and partially funded by Mr. Khatami, the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Those who wish to participate should contact Dr. Gholam R. Vatandoust at the Department of History, Shiraz University, Shiraz, Iran.

Tel: 98-711-6247868, fax: 98-711-6255926, e-mail: <vatan@rose.shirazu.ac.ir> for further information.

**CIJOH Archives Open to
Researchers and Public**

The Centre for Iranian Jewish Oral History (CIJOH), established in 1995 in Los Angeles, was created to gather information and interview people in various fields of Iranian Jewish history, culture, literature, social life, etc. The objective was to reconcile the current absence of documented Jewish Iranian oral history in the existing body of oral history projects around the world.

After a decade of collecting over 1500 photographs and 500 documents pertaining to 19th and 20th century Iranian Jewry and conducting more than 100 interviews, CIJOH has deposited its archives in two different locations, Jewish and Middle Eastern Libraray at UCLA and Center for Iranian Studies, at Tel Aviv University, which will be available to the public.

Persian Gulf... cont'd

up conferences will delve deeper into aspects that deserve fuller treatment.

One aim of the conference was to begin to establish a community of Gulf historians. The papers are currently being edited for publication by Palgrave Macmillan in 2006.

Any comments or questions may be directed to Larry Potter, Deputy Director of Gulf/2000, at lgp5@columbia.edu.

Conferences Held

The Third International Conference on Human Rights: Identity, Difference and Human Rights was convened by Mofid University's Center for Human Rights Studies in Qom in May 2005. It was organized with the cooperation of the UN in Iran, Iranian National Commission for UNESCO, Iranian Ministry of Science, Research & Technology, International, Center for Dialog among Civilizations, and Center for Women's Participation. Issues of identity and the role of culture and community in one's sense of identity was the focus of reflection. The conference addressed questions such as: What sort of individual and cultural differences are to be protected by human rights? How can the apparent conflict between respect for cultural and individual diversity and the universality of human rights be solved? For more information visit www.Mofidu.ac.ir or contact CHRSMU@hotmail.com.

The First International Congress of Knowledge, Procreation, Renaissance, Reform and Freedom of Thought was held by the Islamic Azad (Free) University of Tehran on April 13-14, 2005. For further information visit WWW.yrc-ir.org or contact info@yre-ir-org.

The Second International Congress on Mulla Sadra was held in Tehran May 19-21, 2004 in Tehran. Over 300 papers were presented by Iranian and international scholars on different aspects of Sadr al-Din Shirazi and other topics related to Islamic philosophy, hadith, and Qur'anic commentaries. The articles will be published soon.

World Zoroastrian Congress was held in London from June 24 to July 1, 2005. The key speakers included Jamsheed Choksey, Farhang Mehr, Almut Hintze and John Hinnells, among others. They discussed a wide range of subjects related to Zoroastrians in Iran and India and social issues of Zoroastrian youth growing up in the West.

For further information check: www.ztfe.com/Congress005.

The International Qajar Studies Association (IQSA) in conjunction with the Philosophy, History, and Political Science departments co-sponsored a conference on: "**Harem: Perception and Reality of Life in Ottoman and Qajar Courts**" July 23-24, 2004 at the Fé Bland Forum at Santa Barbara City College in Santa Barbara, California.

The conference covered many aspects of the world of women of the period. The keynote speaker was Princess Nadine Sultana d'Osman Han, who is a granddaughter of Zill al-Sultan and Sultan Abd al-Hamid. The Princess described life in the Qajar and Ottoman harems, as she had heard from her parents. For further information, check the web site of the International Qajar Studies Association (IQSA) at:

<http://www.qajarstudies.org/IQSAEvents.html>

War and Peace in Qajar Persia: Implications Past and Present was a two-day conference, held on July 15-16,

2005 at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. This conference was organized by the International Qajar Studies Association (IQSA), in conjunction with the Cambridge Security Programme, with the help of Roxane Farmanfarman, editor of the Cambridge Security Review. The conference covered topics from history to contemporary issues. Panels included Redrawing Frontiers (Afghanistan, Ottoman, Russian); Treaties, Alliances and Diplomacy; Conflicts over Resources; Internal Security: Costs and Consequences.

Papers were presented by an international body of scholars. For further information, please check the IQSA site, www.qajarstudies.org or www.cambridgesecurity.net

For information on the upcoming conference of the **Teachers of Persian Language and Literature** visit <http://www.persian-language.org/>

The Iranian Constitutional Revolution Centenary Conference

Oxford, 30 July - 2 August 2006

Organised by

Iran Heritage Foundation and University of Oxford

It is a hundred years since the Iranian Constitutional Revolution of 1906, the first event of its kind in the Middle East. The Revolution opened the way for cataclysmic change in Iran, heralding the modern era. It created new opportunities and opened up seemingly boundless possibilities for Iran's future. The old order, which Naser al-Din Shah Qajar had struggled for so long to sustain, finally passed away, to be replaced by new institutions, new forms of expression, and a new social and political order. The Constitutional Revolution was bound up with imperialism and Iran's role as a buffer state between the British and Russian Empires, with the encroachments of the world economy, and with the introduction of modern technology. It had global reverberations from the Ottoman Empire to South East Asia.

Iran Heritage Foundation and University of Oxford have organized a conference to be held in Oxford in conjunction with the ISIS conference in 2006. The Conference organizes panels on numerous subjects, including pre-constitutional ideologies, the ideologies and identities of the Revolution, organizations and institutions, the bazaar, the religious institutions, the political parties, the press and the new technology, women, the religious minorities and their contribution, religious ideological groups, the regions, and the subsequent impact of the revolution.

The papers presented in the conference will be published in a volume of proceedings.

For further information contact:

Iran Heritage Foundation, 5 Stanhope Gate, London W1K 1AH. 44 20 (tel) 75846949, (fax) 44 20 75846709, farhad@iranheritage.org.

Anthropological Perspectives on Iran: The New Millennium And Beyond

Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität, Frankfurt/Main

30 September – 2 October, 2004

Convened by: **Shahnaz Nadjmabadi**, Institut Für Historische Ethnologie, Frankfurt

This conference was the first of its kind to be organized in twenty five years and was intended as an opportunity for Iranian and foreign anthropologists to meet and enter in open, collegial discussions. The purpose of the meeting was to look at the history of anthropological research in Iran, to try to get a sum of assessments on present research activities in order to find potential directions for the future. The meeting was convened at the Institut für Historische Ethnologie, Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität, Frankfurt/Main, and was funded by the German Volkswagen Foundation. Fifteen anthropologists from Iran, the USA and Europe were invited to contribute to the meeting. All of them were actively involved in long-term research in Iran before, during and after the 1978/79 Revolution. The three-day conference was open to the public and 20-30 participants attended.

On the first day, papers focused on the history of the discipline, the country's political development, and how the field was shaped by Iranian and foreign anthropologists. Discussions on the second day opened with the way anthropological knowledge was institutionalized at Iranian universities and at other governmental organizations. It was pointed out that today the most crucial problem at universities is the need of qualified academics with advanced training; the isolation of Iranian scientists and scholars from recent international scientific research; and the lack of cooperation among Iranian anthropologists, as well as between Iranian anthropological institutions and foreign universities. Other subjects touched on were the position and role of Iranian women in anthropological research and teaching, in particular their exclusion from positions of real influence; the special concerns, consciousness and engagement of "native/

indigenous" anthropologists and the understanding and distinction of anthropology as it is related to other disciplines such as folklore studies and sociology. Finally the question was raised whether it was feasible to have a critical self-reflexive anthropology in Iran, given the field's precarious institutional position. There was also considerable concern regarding the ethical aspects of field research, particularly the problem of anonymization, research "taboos" and the compatibility between anthropology's intellectual mission (as a field of critical enquiry) and the ideology of the Islamic state. The last day was dedicated to anthropology as a practice, particularly as applied research and for developmental purposes.

Through the discussions it became quite clear that, in spite of a break in scholarly activity during the last twenty years, Iranian anthropology is alive and topical, with challenging new research work being done as is evident in quite a number of recent publications and in the growing interest both in and outside Iran to engage in future research projects as well as exchange programs.

With regard to the historical dimension of anthropology there was a heated debate on what really constituted Iranian anthropology in the past, on who among Iranian intellectuals could be regarded as "ancestors" in the field, and to what extent they could, strictly speaking, be considered anthropologists at all, as well as how to construct an anthropology that contributes to understanding Iran as a dynamic, historical and emerging reality.

There was general agreement that communication and cooperation among Iranian anthropologists inside Iran at university level and foreign academic institutions have urgently to be improved and intensified in the interests of better coordinating the field's diverse activi-

ties and to better utilize the financial resources available. Moreover, it was agreed that research activities should focus more on contemporary issues having policy relevance and making contributions to public debates. This would greatly help improve anthropology's image among the general public and institutional decision-makers, and enforce the field's legitimacy in the public sphere.

There was also a desire that Iranian and foreign anthropologists find appropriate arrangements conducive to institutional cooperation that would develop specific projects for joint research and provide exchange programs from which both groups could profit. Cooperation should be extended to neighboring disciplines giving interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research a high priority.

The following proposals were presented in the final discussion:

1- The final version of the papers presented to the conference will be revised and edited for publication.

2- A follow-up meeting will be convened in Paris in spring 2006.

3- Since the Frankfurt conference had generated a number of proposals that required follow-up, particularly with respect to facilitating institutional cooperation between Iranian and foreign institutions, it was proposed that the next meeting would establish an international association of anthropologists researching on Iran to coordinate and bring these endeavors to fruition. In the meantime, a working group has been charged with formulating the goals, aims and specific conditions of this new association.

Short abstracts and the full program may be found at:
<http://web.uni-frankfurt.de/fb08/IHE/index.htm>

From Pen to Print: New and Noteworthy

The editor welcomes information on recently published books and articles related to Iranian studies and news about dissertations in progress or completed. However, all such material is expected to be in proper bibliographic format, which must include author, title, place and date of publication and page numbers. In case of dissertations, university and date of completion must be included. Every effort has been made to provide complete bibliographic information.

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- Carl Ernst (University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill) is the recipient of the 2004 Bashrahil Prize for Outstanding Cultural Creativity, Distinguished Prize in the Humanities, for his book *Following Muhammad: Rethinking Islam in the Contemporary*

Members' News

- World* (UNC Press, 2003). This prize has been established by a private literary and cultural foundation based in Egypt and it is funded by members of an Arab family from Mecca, in memory of their father, a noted philanthropist. The Bashrahil Prizes were presented for the first time in Cairo on July 4, 2004, in two categories: 4 Juried Prizes of \$25,000 each in different fields of Arabic literature, and 4 Distinguished Prizes of \$30,000 each in the fields of politics, poetry, Palestinian literature, and the humanities. Carl Ernst's book is now being translated into Indonesian, Korean, French, Turkish, Persian, and Arabic.
- Masoud Naderi has completed his Master of Science in anthropology. His thesis was based on his fieldwork in Iran on medical pluralism and Iran's nomadic pastoralist ethnic minorities. He started medical school last fall at Ross University.
- Afsaneh Najmabadi co-organized a one-day workshop, "Studies of Sexualities in and about the Middle East", with Professor Steven Caton and Susan Kahn, Assistant Director of CMES, at Harvard University, in May 2004. This workshop was sponsored by the CMES and the Committee on Degrees in Studies of Women, Gender, and Sexuality. She also presented "Authority and Agency: Re-visiting Women's Activism during Riza Shah's Period," and "The Triumphs and Travails of Authoritarian Modernization in Turkey and Iran: Twentieth-Century Turkish and Iranian Histories from Below" at the International Institute of Social History Conference, organized by Touraj Atabaki in Amsterdam in September 2003.
- Evangelos Venetis has presented the following papers: "Alexander-Sikandar: Christian and Muslim Perspectives of a Hero in Legend," presented at the Lectures Series of the Edinburgh Center for Christian and Muslim Studies, December 4, 2003 and "Iranian Studies in Greece" presented at the Department of Literature, University of Shiraz, Iran, April 2004. He was the Convenor of the Research Students Workshop in Iranian Studies: "Aspects of History and Culture in pre-Modern Iran", held at the University of Edinburgh, UK, February 26-27, 2005 (for more information, see p. 7).
- Dr. Azar Gholizadeh presented a paper entitled "Tahavvulat-i akhir-i khanivada va irtibat-i khanivadagi-yi Iran" (The recent developments of family and the family relations in Iran), at Seminar-e ruz-e melli-ye khanevade, organized by Sazeman-e Amuzesh va Parvaresh-e Ostan-e Esfahan, in 1382/2003.
- Some Iranian students associations' websites in the US and Canada*
<http://web.mit.edu/isg/> (MIT)

Some Useful Websites

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|--|---|---|
| http://www.nupersianclub.neu.edu/index.html (North Eastern University) | http://www.columbia.edu/cu/iran/ (Columbia University) | (University of California, Davis) |
| http://clubs.asua.arizona.edu/~iranian/ (University of Arizona) | http://usa.uc.iupui.edu/ViewRep.asp?USA_ID=11 (Purdue University) | http://www.iranonline.com/ICC-UCI/ (University of California, Irvine) |
| http://www.yorku.ca/yisa/ (York University, Canada) | http://www.parsian.ca/ (Concordia University, Canada) | Also check: |
| http://www.ncsu.edu/stud_orgs/isa/ (North Carolina State University) | http://www.stanford.edu/group/psa/ (Stanford University) | http://www.farsinet.com/isao/ |
| http://www-scf.usc.edu/~igsa/ (University of Southern California) | http://isco.berkeley.edu/ (University of California, Berkeley) | http://www.Kargah.com (Iranian art) |
| http://www.rpi.edu/dept/union/iransa/ (Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute) | http://asucd.ucdavis.edu/organizations/cultural/iscao/ | Iranian students' online journals:
http://www.Freethoughts.org (MIT)
http://agglutinations.com (Columbia)
http://www.kargah.com/links.php (An online architecture forum) |

Richard N. Frye Honored in Iran *with the Dr. Afshar Literature and History Prize*

In June 2004, at a ceremony at the garden in Tehran endowed by Dr. Mahmoud Afshar-Yazdi, Richard Nelson Frye, Aga Khan Professor of Iranian emeritus at Harvard University, was honored for his decades of studies on Iran. A Na'in carpet, on which was written "The History-Literature Prize of Dr. Mahmoud Afshar to Richard Frye", was presented to him.

At the beginning of this ceremony, Dr. Mostafa Mohaghegh praised Dr. Afshar for having endowed the garden and his house for the benefit of history, geography and literature. He continued that the Afshar prize had so far been presented to 12 dignitaries in Iran and abroad. This year it would be given to Richard Frye, a person who loves Iran and who has been named "Irandoost" by Dehkhoda. (Prof. Frye actually uses this moniker after his name on his card.) Dr. Mohaghegh added that for six decades Frye has walked the roads, bazaars, streets and mountains of Iran and knows Iran better than many Iranians.

Later Dr. Seyyed Sadegh Sajjadi, the Deputy Director for Research and head of the Department of History of the Great Islamic Encyclopaedia, read the proclamation for the 13th Dr. Afshar Prize. The proclamation stated that this prize was presented to Prof. Frye for sixty years of research and work on different aspects of Iranian studies, and that his lectures, books and articles have benefited scholars and Iranologists in both Iran and abroad. It noted that Frye went to Iran in his youth and has since traveled to all parts of the Iranian world and has studied various aspects of its history, literature, languages and culture, from India and Afghanistan to Mesopotamia and from Transcaucasia and the outskirts of Mt. Ararat to the Black Sea. He has carried out detailed studies of the story of Iranians from the time of the Median Empire through the time of the Timurids; he has studied the ancient languages and the inscriptions on mountains and in fire temples; he has

looked at the mutual issues of Iran and its neighbors and has written in depth on Soghdian culture and Iran's relationship with the Byzantines and the Armenians and Georgians. Dr. Sajjadi pointed to Frye's studies on the Persian language and its expansion and influence during the Samanid era from China to Anatolia and to his writings on cities such as Nishapur and Bukhara. He also mentioned Frye's studies on Ibn Fazlan and the History of Nakhshab. A translation of Frye's book, *The Heritage of Central Asia*, will be published by the Dr. Afshar Endowment. He continued that it was for his many achievements that this gathering was held and a carpet

was to be presented to him as a souvenir of this session.

Several other scholars also spoke about Prof. Frye and his contributions to Iranian studies.

At the end of the program, Prof. Frye spoke passionately in Persian and said that the fact that Iran had remained for thousands of years while Mesopotamia was forgotten was because of its culture and art, because the spirit of Iran is culture. Iranians always have an Iranian style. He ended his speech with "zende-bad Iran" (Long live Iran).

(Prof. Frye, a past President of ISIS, has recently published his memoirs, *Greater Iran: A 20th Century Odyssey*.)

Nikki Keddie Receives 2004 Balzan Prize

Nikki Keddie, Professor Emerita of the History of the Middle East at the University of California at Los Angeles, has been announced Balzan Prize Winner 2004 for the Islamic world from the end of the 19th to the end of the 20th century. The prize has been given to her in view of her brilliant academic career, the great diversity of interests and skills, and her numerous works, which have earned her a pre-eminent place in the world of Middle Eastern studies.

She worked with Professor von Grunebaum in the development of Middle Eastern studies, both at Los Angeles and throughout the United States. She has guided the research of a great number of students with authority and competence, enlivened teams of researchers, and trained historians of the Middle East whose renown is steadily increasing. In her doctoral thesis, she analyzed the impact of the West on modern Iranian social history. During the past four decades her scholarly work has concentrated especially on Iran. The reaction of the Muslim world to imperialism is another problem on which she has concentrated, stressing the role of Islam as an ingredient in the opposition to im-

perialism. Since her first works, she has reflected on the effects of the encounter between Islam and the West, Islam and domination.

Among her publications are *Religion and Rebellion in Iran: The Tobacco Protest of 1891-1892* (1966), *An Islamic Response to Imperialism* (1968), the classic *Roots of Revolution: An Interpretive History of Modern Iran* (1981), which was revised and updated as *Modern Iran: Roots and Results of Revolution* (2003).

The Balzan Foundation was established in Lugano in 1956, funded by Angela Balzan from her inheritance from her father, Eugenio Balzan, long-time editor of *Corriere della Sera*, who left Italy in 1933 because of opposition from a fascist regime hostile to an independent newspaper. He returned to Italy in 1950 and died in Lugano, Switzerland in 1953. The Foundation chiefly gives prizes, which have "the aim to promote, throughout the world, culture, science, and the most meritorious initiatives in the cause of humanity, peace and brotherhood among peoples... This aim is attained through the annual award of four prizes" in the Humanities and Sciences.

Obituary

Leonardo Paul Alishan 1951-2005

The untimely death of Leonardo (Nardo) Paul Alishan on January 9, 2005 struck the Iranian Studies community with deep grief. Professor Alishan, who taught at the University of Utah for two decades, was an inspiring teacher, literary critic, poet, and translator who is remembered by his students and colleagues with fondness and affection. He was born to Iranian-Armenian parents, Michael and Annette, in Tehran in 1951. After receiving his Bachelor's degree in Iran, he came to the United States in 1974 to continue his education and received his PhD from the University of Texas at Austin in Comparative Literature in 1980. Although he specialized in modern Persian poetry, he also wrote on classical Persian poetry, including a series of articles on *The Shahnameh* of Ferdowsi. His articles on prominent 20th century Iranian poets including Ahmad Shamlu, Forugh Farrokhzad, and Nader Naderpur were published in major books and journals in the field, including *Iranian Studies*. Alishan also published some of the best translations of the works of modern Persian poets. But above all, he was a poet with a poetic passion and temperament. He wrote poetry in English, Persian, and Armenian, including two books of poetry, *Dancing Barefoot on Broken Glass*, and *Through a Dew-drop*. Alishan's numerous presentations at various scholarly conferences were always innovative, exciting, and thought-provoking and were received enthusiastically by scholars around the world. But despite all these accomplishments, he was perhaps more proud of twice having received the Most Distinguished Professor Award after being nominated by his students at the University of Utah, in whom his legacy shall live for years.

Leonardo Alishan is survived by Nellie, his wife and companion for many years, and his children, Michael, Ara, and Eileen.

The 2005 Iranian-American Community Survey

The MIT Iranian Studies Group is currently conducting a comprehensive national survey of Iranian-American communities. The MIT ISG Iranian-American Community Survey 2005 is an online survey on the social characteristics of the Iranian-American population, and tries to understand the different aspects of the community, including family characteristics, inter-community and intra-community Interactions, cultural affinities, emotional ties to the homeland, and assimilation in the United States.

This is a historical step towards understanding the Iranian community. They would like to ask individuals and families to fill out the survey, and help them distribute the survey to as many Iranian-American community members in the contact groups as possible. This includes all individuals of Iranian ancestry currently considering the U.S. as primary residence, including U.S. citizens, permanent residents, refugees, skilled workers, Iranian students and others of Iranian ancestry. They will be sharing on the resulting reports and aggregate data with all organizations, which support the survey. If you decide to forward the link to the survey in your main mailing lists, they would acknowledge you or your organization as a supporting organization.

Anyone wishing to participate should contact the following web site: <http://web.mit.edu/isg/survey.htm>

Persian Gulf History Conference

Limassol, Cyprus
October 7-10, 2004

Gulf/2000 convened its tenth international conference on the subject of "The Persian Gulf in History" in Limassol, Cyprus, on October 7-10, 2004. This conference was held with the support and cooperation of The Centre for World Dialogue in Nicosia. Some 40 guests attended, many from the region itself, with seven of the eight littoral states represented.

The meeting was intended to offer a very long-term overview of Gulf history, from ancient times to the 21st century. To our knowledge this has not been done before. Until now, an inability to conceptualize the Gulf's history as a whole has resulted in scholarly attention being focused on small pieces of it. The distinguished and diverse guest list included experts in various phases of the history of the region, and an attempt was made to balance different areas and time periods. It was interdisciplinary in nature and participants were drawn from a number of fields.

The first day focused on the history of the Gulf in the pre-Mongol period, with papers on the archaeology of the Gulf, the role of the Sasanians there and the Gulf in the early Islamic period. The second day focused on the role of outsiders, with papers on the role of the Portuguese, the Dutch, the Ottomans and the British in the Gulf. The final series of papers examined Gulf society in transition, with presentations on the literature of the Arab and Persian sides of the Gulf, about the Arabs on the Persian side and highlighting the fluidity of Khaliji society and pervasive ties across Gulf waters.

This conference was conceived as the first in a series of a project that will examine the history of the Gulf, and hopefully lead to a better understanding of the present-day dynamics of the region. The initial conference was meant to describe the broad picture, and follow-

continued on page 8

Some Notes on Research in Contemporary Iran

In March 2004, after receiving a generous Travel Grant from the *British Institute of Persian Studies* (BIPS, London), I had the opportunity to travel for second time to the Islamic Republic of Iran and stay in Tehran, at the BIPS Hostel, for about a month. During my stay, I was able to deal with several research projects in the field of Iranian studies, and mainly to collect up-to-date material for my dissertation on the *Iskandarnama*. For this reason, I visited several academic and research centers in Tehran and Shiraz. By visiting these centers, I was privileged to use their research facilities, to be in touch with researchers and staff and to observe the level of infrastructure regarding several aspects of research process (bibliographical entries, catalogues, microfilms and the like). The aim of this brief note is to inform the readers of this newsletter about research and its infrastructure in Iranian studies in contemporary Iran.

Having in mind the useful experience of my first research trip to Iran in February-April 2001 (Tehran), I was capable of comparing that evidence with the data of my recent trip. The university libraries I visited were mainly located in Tehran and Shiraz. In Tehran, I visited the Central Library of the University of Tehran (Enghelab Avenue), the Departmental library of Literature, Section of Periodicals (University of Tehran, Enghelab Avenue) and in Shiraz the Department of Literature of the University of Shiraz. As for the non-university libraries, I visited the Mujtaba Mino'i Library (Seh Rah Zendan), The National Library (Niavaran, Sie Tir), the Library of the Centre for the Great Islamic Encyclopaedia (Niavaran) and the Library of the Academy of Persian Literature (Farhangestan Zaban-e Farsi). In Shiraz, my visit to the Hafezieh Library, next to the tomb of the Persian poet Hafiz, was really valuable. Regarding the research sections of Museums, the Library of the

National Museum of Iran (Imam Khomeini Avenue) was really useful. Regarding the non-Iranian research centers in Tehran, I had the opportunity to use the French Institute of Iranian Studies (Institut Francaise de Recherche en Iran – IFRI, near Felestin Avenue) and the Library of the British Institute of Persian Studies – BIPS (Dr. Shariati Avenue, Qulhak).

I was also in touch with the National Museum of Iran and several individuals: M. R. Kargar (Director of the Museum), Mr. Sharifi and Mrs. Rouhfar (Islamic Collections), Dr. Akbarzadeh (Department of Inscriptions) and Mrs. Asgari (Department of Coins). Thanks to Dr. Farideh Pourgiv's efforts, I had also the opportunity to give a talk at the University of Shiraz (Department of Literature) about the future development of Iranian studies in Greece. Moreover, I was able to visit the Center for the Great Islamic Encyclopaedia and have beneficial meetings with several members of staff, such as Dr. Hassan Rezaei Baghbidi, Mr. Askar Bahrami and Dr. Behrooz Bakhtiari. Considerable help and advice I received from Prof. Iraj Afshar (University of Tehran), Mr. M. Azimi (Mashhad) as well as Iranian scholars outside Iran such as Prof. Mohammad Reza Ghanoonparvar (University of Texas at Austin), Prof. Feridun Farrokh (Texas A&M International University), Dr. Touraj Daryaei (California State University - Fullerton) and Dr. M. Alinia (University of Ioannina, Greece).

Regarding all the above research units, it must be pointed out that reader's work can be carried out without any delay or obstacles. The staff in every library and research is ready to provide professional help to the visitor. The big libraries have online catalogues along with the traditional written ones informing the reader of the identity of their bibliographical entries. Beyond any doubt the technical infrastructure

(photocopy machines, computers, microfilm machines) in most of the above centers has been much improved in comparison with their infrastructure three years ago. Moreover, important efforts have been made in the last few years in updating the Iranian libraries with a considerable number of recent western bibliographical entries (monographs, new journals, recent volumes of already existing journals).

In general, visiting Iran after three years, someone can see a noteworthy improvement regarding the technical infrastructure of the research centers and the bulk of up-to-date bibliographical entries. This improvement, along with the excellent staff services, enable (foreign) researchers in Iran to carry out their task with comfort and efficiency. Given the long struggle of the Islamic Republic of Iran to strengthen its economy after the end of the disastrous Iraq war (1988), the past ten years have been especially fruitful for the development of research facilities and infrastructure in Iran; this development is quite obvious today.

Evangelos Venetis
Dept. of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies
University of Edinburgh

Important Notice to ISIS Members

If you have not received an e-mail from ISIS lately, it means we do not have your e-mail address. It is very important that you provide us with this information, as members will be informed of new developments by e-mail.

Ebady... cont'd

such coercion in reality only delays their disintegration. As a general rule, when governments feel threatened to fall, they resort to conspiracy theories and create imaginary enemies in order to crack down on any attempt by those who criticize them. National security and the danger of war with an external or foreign enemy is the best tool in the hands of undemocratic governments in order to oppress the people who oppose them.

The foundation for democracy or in fact the pre-requisite for democracy is the freedom of speech. If people are not free to express themselves, then how can one conceive of a democratic government? The number of publications and the modes of expressions for media outlets, specifically political news and the treatment of journalists, are all good criteria for the measurement of democracy. Unfortunately in less than two years in Iran more than ninety newspapers and magazines were closed down, a number of journalists were prosecuted — and also persecuted at times — and some still remain in prison. Among them I can name Ganji, Alijani, Saber Rahmani, Yousefi-Eshkevari, Pourzand, Jabbari, Zarafshan and a number of other individuals whose names I will refrain from mentioning now and only pray for their release.

What hurts the freedom of speech is censorship and censorship is of two kinds. One is a clear and discernable form of censorship imposed by a government in which the publication of books or articles can be forbidden, or at times some are published by the request of the government. Unfortunately this form of censorship has persisted in Iran, both prior to the revolution and under the current system. Currently in order to publish a book one needs to apply for a license, and permission from the Ministry of Islamic Cultural Guidance and there are numerous publications that do not get permission to be printed. Even worse is when this Ministry allows the publication, but the [distribution of the] publication is forbidden by the court and the author, publisher, translator and all those involved are persecuted. In other

words, a censorship is created within censorship. I deem it necessary here to recall the efforts of the Iranian Writers' Association, and specifically the efforts of Ms. Simin Behbahani, who has fought against such censorship. And I honor the memories of the martyrs of freedom of speech and conscience, of Mokhtari and Pouyandeh, who have given their lives in this way. And also I honor the memories of many of those who gave up their lives for freedom of speech, Saidi Sirjani, Zalzadeh, Sharif, Pirouz Davani, Zahra Kazemi and many others. And I also honor those who throughout old and recent history prioritized the freedom of the people over their lives, Farrokhi-Yazdi, Karimpour-Shirazi and Dr. Hossein Fatemi.

A second form of censorship, which is specific to western countries, is one that is a hidden but powerful censorship; one that does not have roots in the official system and government. Under this system big media are exclusively in the hands of two or more groups who maintain certain beliefs and by selective publication of issues and news try to guide public opinion. And since anti-trust laws do not apply to the media, small and independent media cannot compete with them and operate and the large media become more and more powerful every day.

Democracy is the rule of the majority of people, but democracy is not without boundaries. That is to say that the majority that achieves power does not achieve the right to act in any manner it pleases and to neglect the rights of the minority. Democracy has a framework that has to be observed and that framework is the principles of human rights. In other words, every government that seeks power with the vote of the majority does not possess the right to behave in whatever manner it pleases, but is also obliged to limit its activity to principles of human rights.

Let us look at the history of human rights in Iran. By doing so, I do not wish to look at what has been achieved in practice, but by law. In 1354 [1975] the Iranian government acceded to two in-

ternational covenants of political and civil rights and one on economic and social rights and pledged to abide by them. But later, in contradiction to [principles incorporated in] these covenants, the government passed laws that violate these principles. For example, in Iranian law there is gender discrimination. According to the Islamic penal code ratified in 1370 the value of the life of a woman is half of that of a man. In the court of law the testimony of one man is equal to that of two women. Polygamy has been recognized under law. A man, even without reasonable justification, can divorce his wife, but divorce for a woman is only possible under rare circumstances. There are many other discriminatory laws. While 63% of the university students [in Iran] are girls, unemployment rates among women are three times that of men. Intellectual women in Iran suffer from these legal discriminations and ask themselves how it is possible to claim [to have] democracy when the rights of half of the population are ignored. Democracy and women's rights are directly linked with each other. In societies where the status of women is fair before the law, democracy, too, is observed, and in societies where discriminatory laws are imposed on women, democracy, too, will undoubtedly suffer.

Another one of the fundamentals of human rights is lack of discrimination because of religion. In Iran, according to the constitution of the Islamic Republic passed in 1358 [1979], the official religion of Iran is Shiite Islam. Other Moslem sects and also Zoroastrians, Christians and Jews are among the recognized religions. However at the same time, the rights of the followers of other beliefs, people such as the Bahais in Iran or people who do not follow a specific religion but choose to follow moral principles rather than divine ones, are overlooked and neglected. Regretfully, the law does not recognize any rights for the followers of these beliefs and religions and this is in contrast to the official ob-

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ligations of the government regarding human rights. There is even a major difference in terms of rights between the followers of the religions recognized in the constitution and Moslems. For example, according to the penal code, the same offense depending on whether it is committed by a Moslem or non-Moslem has different punishments. If a man and an unmarried woman commit adultery the punishment is 100 lashes, but if the woman is Moslem and the man non-Moslem, the punishment will be execution. Most importantly, according to the amendments to the Iranian civil code made after the revolution, it was established that if among the heirs of someone there is one Moslem, he can disinherit others and all the inheritance will be his. For example, if a Zoroastrian man dies and is survived by four sons and one daughter, it is only natural that his property should be divided among his children. But if, for example, the grandchild of the deceased's aunt has converted to Islam, all the inheritance will go to him and the children, because they follow their ancestral religion and are Zoroastrians, will be disinherited. This treatment of non-Moslems in fact ignores the rights of the minorities and it negates all the international obligations in the field of human rights that Iran has pledged to abide by. This also hurts the democratic [process] in Iran because, as I stated earlier, the majority cannot rule any way it wants, but the framework of democracy is human rights.

Since there is talk about human rights and Dr. Lahiji is presiding over this session, I feel it necessary to talk about the human rights advocates in Iran. In 1355 the first non-governmental human rights organization in Iran, by the name of The Iranian Society for the Defense of Human Rights, was established by Mr. Lahiji and a number of freedom-seeking individuals [who were among his colleagues]. Under the previous regime this Society was very active and it was able to bring human rights violations in Iran to the attention of the international community. Also in the two years fol-

lowing the Revolution this Society still remained very active and took serious positions regarding human rights violations in Iran and objected to them. As a result some of its members were arrested. Some like Dr. Lahiji were forced to leave the country and some were forced to become silent. In the 1360's [1980's], when the rightist newspapers wanted to insult someone, they would label him a feminist and human rights advocate. But gradually, because of the resistance of the freedom-seeking individuals, defending human rights turned into a social norm and now everyone claims to be a defender of human rights, even though inherently they do not really believe in it.

The practice of democracy by the people through governments is possible through election and the election of peoples' representatives. According to the [Iranian] election laws, the Guardian Council must pre-qualify the candidates and then people are allowed to elect representatives from among the people who have been approved. In other words, people are free to elect the candidates chosen by the Guardian Council. We observed the actions of the Guardian Council in the elections of the 7th parliament. The blanket rejection of candidates was very questionable. Even 85 sitting members of the 6th parliament were disqualified. Therefore, the amendment of the election law in a manner that allows people to freely vote for whoever they choose is a fundamental step towards the establishment of democracy in Iran.

The most important result of democracy is being accountable to and accepting responsibility towards the people. That means all the institutions of the government should be elected by the vote of the people for a specific period of time and be accountable to people. If a government by resorting to specific acts exempts persons or institutions from accountability and prevents governmental checking, it definitely does not pursue the path of democracy. In Iran the Guardian Council, the Expediency Council, the Voice and Vision of the Is-

lamic Republic, the Council of Experts and many other foundations and institutions are not held accountable and are exempted from people's supervision, that is from the parliament of the Islamic Republic. Democracy means respecting the free will of the people and respect for the character and dignity of human beings. This in any religion and belief is the chosen path. Those who under the pretext of cultural relativism disregard the will of the people are in fact imposing their own personal beliefs on the people in the guise of Islam. Islam is based on consultation with the people. The Prophet, after taking over Mecca, attempted to establish an Islamic government, which he presided over and [in that regard] asked for the *bay'at* of the people [for people to follow him]. *Bay'at* in this regard means to vote. History tells us that there were people who refrained from following him but lived freely in the Islamic lands. And today in the 21st century some Islamic theoreticians maintain that Islam is not compatible with democracy. They maintain that democracy is a Western concept and the Islamic governments possess the right to disregard the will of the people. This wrong belief mars the image of Islam. Democracy cannot be overlooked in the name of Islam.

And finally, democracy is not an accident that occurs overnight. Democracy is not a gift offered to a people. Democracy is a historical process that must mature through its own development. If a country claims – assuming that it is genuine in its claim – that it wants to support democracy in an oppressed country, the only way to go about that is to defend and support freedom-seeking individuals and the democratic institutions of that country, so that democracy can flourish faster and bear fruit. A military invasion, even with the intention of establishing democracy and human rights, not only damages the process of democracy, but it also furthers violence, because every act of aggression will create even more violence. That is why people burn in the fires of war in the name of democracy



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