

S.I.S. newsletter

The Society for Iranian Studies

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Address all communications to the Secretary of the Society for Iranian Studies, History Department, Dartmouth College, Hanover, N.H. 03755, United States of America.

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE SOCIETY FOR IRANIAN STUDIES

The Society's Twelfth Annual Meeting will be held November 9-12, 1977 in New York at the Statler Hilton Hotel, in conjunction with the Eleventh Annual Meeting of the Middle Eastern Studies Association of North America (MESA). The Society's business meeting is tentatively scheduled for late afternoon Wednesday, 9 November, 6:00 p.m., Dartmouth Room.

SIS PANELS

Professor Mary-Jo DelVecchio Good, Department of Psychiatry, UC at Davis, and Program Director for SIS has organized two panels:

I. "City, Town, and Society in Iranian History" Thursday, 10 November; 9:30-12:30 (jointly sponsored by SIS and MESA).

Chairperson: Richard Bulliet, Columbia

Participants: Ali Banuazizi, Boston College, and Ahmad Ashraf, Plan & Budget Organization (Tihran), "The Urban Elite of Shiraz in the Nineteenth Century".

Richard Bulliet, "Urbanization and Social Change in Three Periods of Iranian History".

Michael Bonine, University of Arizona, "Alleys and Jubs: The Morphogenesis of Iranian Cities".

Mary-Jo DelVecchio Good, "The Provincial City and Its Landed Nobility".

Renata Holod, University of Pennsylvania, "The Isfahan Urban History Project--Summary".

Lisa Golombek, Royal Ontario Museum, "The Isfahan Urban History Project--Data Processing".

Discussant: Charles Issawi, Princeton

II. "Human Sexuality in Iran" (date and time to be announced).
(Sponsored by SIS)

Chairperson: Marvin Zonis, University of Chicago

Participants: Kaveh Safa-Isfahani, University of Chicago, "The
Female Centered World View: Symbolic Representations
and Dramatic Games in Iran".

Nikki Keddie, UCLA, "Studying Sex and Society in Iran:
Problems and Prospects".

ABSTRACTS

Panel I, "City, Town, and Society in Iranian History".

Banuazizi & Ashraf--"Urban Elite . . ."

The purpose of this paper is twofold. First, it describes and analyzes the composition and social characteristics of the urban elite and notables (and, to a lesser extent, the other social strata) of Shiraz in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Second, it attempts to examine the distribution of the elite within the city, thereby developing a socially stratified map of the different city quarters. A subsidiary goal of the paper is to analyze the relationship between the distribution of the elite and the location and use of such urban spaces as the bazaar, mosques, religious schools, public and governmental buildings, gardens and residential quarters.

Bulliet--"Urbanization . . ."

My paper will attempt a comparison of three periods of urbanization in Iranian history: 9-10th century, 16th century, and 20th century. My emphasis will be upon the first of these periods and upon the importance of religious conversion and rural-urban migration as contributors to a largely unplanned organic pattern of urban growth. By comparison, the second period appears to have a much stronger element of centralized planning, and the urban expansion is more localized than earlier. That is, the earlier period of urbanization arises from a major shift in the social, religious, and economic organization of the country while the second period is more a planned rearrangement of the existing patterns of organization. Twentieth century urbanization exhibits characteristics of both of the earlier periods. Conversion--to modernism rather than to a new religion--and associated rural-urban migration make the modern period of urbanization like that of the early Islamic period and betoken fundamental structural changes in the country's social, political, and economic order. But there is also a strong element of centralized planning and unbalanced growth from one area to another. This is characteristic of the second period. In conclusion, I will suggest that these three different periods of urbanization produced cities of markedly different type because of the factors mentioned above.

Bonine--"Alleys & Jubs . . ."

The Islamic City evolved from the formulations of Orientalists in which Islam is considered an all-encompassing value system which determines not only behavioral patterns and social organization but even the physical morphology of settlements. One characteristic of this stereotyped city is a maze of irregular, twisting streets. This paper analyzes the street patterns of Iranian cities in this context and shows that the Islamic city model is erroneous for these settlements. An irregular grid system oriented in one specific direction is found within Iranian cities. The influence of the layout of the mosques, the orientation of Iranian houses for seasonal usage, and the significance of water channels are investigated. It is postulated that the basic morphology or street layout of traditional Iranian cities was created by an original and small settlement expanding into adjacent cultivated fields and orchards. The irrigation system was laid out in a grid system maximizing the slope characteristics and passageways existed with these channels to reach the various plots of land. As houses were built outside the core settlement they spread along the existing streets and water channels, filling in the orchards and cultivated fields. Cities generally expanded upslope and social gradients were created with the wealthier inhabitants living in larger houses at higher elevations; although the pattern is complicated by the building of large city walls and the growth process itself. Yet, the street patterns in the Iranian city follow a rational, logical development. There is no need to find explanations in the ideals of Islam or the concomitant lack of civic authority.

Good--"The Provincial City . . ."

In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the smaller provincial cities of Iran were frequently dominated by elite families who sustained their commercial and political power through several generations. This paper will discuss the changing bases of one notable family's political power and commercial wealth over the last century in Azarbaijan, specifically in the town of Maragheh, including changes in the family's relationship to the royal family, to the town's population, and to the peasant population in the environs of Maragheh. The gradual disintegration of this family's power and autonomy in the province during the reign of the Pahlavi dynasty and the impact of political centralization and land reform on the family's position as provincial notables will be discussed.

Holod--"Isfahan . . . Summary"

My paper will give a summary of the Isfahan Urban History Project and will precede that of L. Golombek. It will describe some of our preliminary findings and will outline several problems of method and procedure. The project has attempted to analyze written, oral and physical types of information on the city and to integrate this data for any given period. Although some mention will be made of the impact of the major programs of urban redevelopment, such as those under the Safavids, closer attention will be paid to the smaller scale patterns of usage and change within the urban fabric. Discussed will be the nature of the communication system, the role of wagf complexes as services, the anatomy and historic reliability of residential blocks, the character of urban and suburban quarters and the role of architectural monuments in urban history.

Golombek--"Isfahan . . . Data Processing"

This paper follows the report of R. Holod describing the nature of the Isfahan Urban History Project and its background. Processing the data gathered from the two field surveys and from written and cartographic sources posed an enormous problem. First, the sheer quantity of the data, if entered on index cards alone, could not be manipulated manually. Without a great deal of cross-referencing, the number of parameters which we could compare would have been very small. Secondly, we were dealing with items which could appear in one or more sources (eg. the field survey and the 17th c. report of Chardin), and these "subfiles," as we came to call them, had to be merged.

It was decided to submit the material to a computer input programme which could also be used for retrieval of information and later, for correlation analysis. This paper will describe the system of recording information, the selection of subfiles, and the choice of parameters for analysis. One of the most challenging parameters to catalogue, but crucial to our study, was the "state of being" of a structure. The possibilities ranged from "non-extant" (i.e. known only from oral report) to "in the process of transformation," with a further category indicating the new function of an older building.

It is hoped that this programme can be adapted to further historical studies of other urban centers in the Islamic world.

Panel II, "Human Sexuality in Iran"

Safa-Isfahani--"Female Centered World View . . ."

This paper argues against the lack and for the necessity of viewing "sexuality" from the perspective of a female centered world view--usually "submerged," "muted," or ignored by the dominant male-centered world view--for a more complex understanding of the subject in Iranian culture. The method it applies is to explore symbolic representations of sentiments, values, and concepts of sexuality in a body of traditional dramatic games played by and for Iranian women. Central oppositions and compromises between the two world views are underlined, stressing the significance in these "culture performances" of symbolic re-interpretations and critiques of "sexuality" as defined by the dominant culture.

Keddie--"Studying Sex and Society . . ."

There have been very few studies by sociologists or anthropologists in Iran and the Middle East that have included questioning about sex, even though such studies as those by Paul Vieille and Nancy Tapper indicate that they are feasible. Scholars in Iran as elsewhere have been reluctant to ask sexual questions, and yet when they do so it is not hard to elicit information, as studies and personal experience indicate.

It is true that answers cannot be checked, but this is also true of much other information elicited by scholars, and the building up of a body of studies will be some check on reliability. Anthropologists are the best placed to do in-depth questioning, and it would be good to work with two anthropologists in each location: one a man and the other a married or divorced woman (who is presumed to know something

about sex). Naturally different groups and classes should be studied when possible to find out something about differences among them. Scholars should note the differences between the findings of anthropologists (and also those who can get data from Iranians who know the subject, like some psychologists, psychiatrists, and doctors) and the ideal or literary picture presented of sex in Iran. Such comparisons could help historians have a basis to judge the ideal literary sources of the past, whose writings are too often taken by scholars like Bouhdiba and Mernissi as representing reality. Historians, in turn, should look for less ideal accounts, such as (legal) court records, travellers' accounts, etc. For both contemporary and past times probable difference between attitudes of different classes, and possibly of different religious communities should be kept in mind.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

SIS Members may be interested in subscribing to two new publications that focus on Iran: The Review of Iranian Political Economy and History and Communication and Development Review. RIPEH may be ordered from P. O. Box 961, Georgetown University, Washington, D.C. 20057. Subscriptions for CDR may be sent to Iran Communication and Development Institute, P. O. Box 33-183, Tadjrish 19, IRAN. The Iran Communication and Development Institute has also published a series of monographs.

SECRETARY'S NOTE

This year's annual meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, 9 November at 6:00 p.m. in the Dartmouth Room of the Statler Hilton. In past years we have met on Thursday but all general meetings held in association with the MESA are scheduled for Wednesday evening this year to avoid a scheduled MESA reception.

My thanks to my predecessors--Farhad Kazemi and Ervand Abrahamian--and to Ali Banuazizi for their values advice and assistance as I move into the role of Executive Secretary.

The October Newsletter consists primarily of announcements for the annual meeting and abstracts for the SIS panels, and the January Newsletter is made up largely of the reports presented at the annual meeting. I propose to devote the May Newsletter to items of special interest to the Society, such as bibliographies.

At the University of Texas Persian Literature Translation Workshop, Austin, 14-15 April 1977, it was suggested that the Newsletter include a continuing bibliography of translations of Persian works of literature, history, etc. in Western languages. This bibliography would include not only titles of published works but manuscripts and works in progress. It would be greatly appreciated if you would send full entries for inclusion to me.

IRANIAN WRITERS ASSOCIATION ISSUES OPEN LETTER

In two open letters to the Prime Minister, released and circulated widely over the summer in Iran and abroad, a distinguished group of Iranian writers and intellectuals has severely criticized Government policies with respect to the freedom of expression. While the range of critical concern raised in the letters is rather broad, covering many facets of governmental policies and operation, three specific demands are made in both letters:

(1) Processing by the Government of the application for official registration of the Writers Association of Iran so that the Association could begin its activities freely under the right guaranteed by the Iranian Constitution;

(2) Removal of obstacles that have prevented the creation of centers for occasional meetings and gatherings of Association members in Tihran and other cities;

(3) Granting of license by the Government for the publication and unhampered distribution of the Association organ.

The first of the two letters was signed by 40 individuals and released on June 13; the second letter carried 98 signatures and was distributed on July 19, 1977. They were both addressed to the then Prime Minister Amir Abbas Hoveyda, and signed by prominent novelists, poets, critics, playwrights, essayists, and a number of leading historians and social scientists. The Iranian Writers Association has received support from a number of international organizations and individuals including several prominent members of the U.S. House of Representatives; the Association of American Publishers; International Freedom to Publish Committee; the president of the American branch of International PEN; and the Committee for Artistic and Intellectual Freedom in Iran.

BOOKS RECEIVED FOR REVIEW IN VOLS. X & XI

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|-------------------------------------|--|
| Shaban--Islamic History . . . | Algar--Mirza Malcolm Khan |
| Attar--Ilahnamah (tr. Boyle) | Long--Persian Gulf . . . |
| Binder (ed.)--Study of Middle East | Reppa--Israel & Iran |
| Hurewitz (ed.)--Oil. . . | Oberling--Qashqa'i Nomads of Fars |
| Welch--Artists for the Shah | Looney--Iran & The End of the Century |
| Adamec--Gazeteer of Iran, v. 1 | Fesharaki--Development of Iranian |
| Behn--Kurds. . .Bibliography | Oil Company |
| Brown & Itzkowitz--Psychological | Wood--Aqqyunlu Clan, Confederation, |
| Dimensions of N.E. Studies | Empire |
| Meier--Abu Saidi Abu Hayr | Steensgaard--Asian Trade Rev. of |
| Irons--Yomut Turkmen | the 17th Century |
| Askeri & Cummings--M.E. Economies | Aresvik--Agricul. Develop. of Iran |
| in the 1970's | Behranghi--Little Black Fish (tr. by |
| Bamdad--From Darkness . . . Women's | E. & A. Hooglund) |
| Emancipation in Iran | Turner--Weber & Islam |
| Hanaway (tr.)--Love & War: Advent. | Krader--Asiatic Mode of Production |
| from Firuz Shahnamah | Cambridge Hist. of Iran, IV (ed. |
| Waghef--Entrepreneurs of Iran | Frye) |
| Shajji--Ministers & Ministries in | Adabiyat: Journal of M.E. Literatures, |
| Iran (in Persian) | I & II (ed. Hanaway) |