



THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR IRANIAN STUDIES

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ISIS Newsletter | Volume 34, Number 3 | June 2014

EDITOR'S NOTE

Dear ISIS Members,

We hope you will enjoy the new edition of the ISIS newsletter. Apart from a preview of the upcoming ISIS conference in Montreal, it contains a research report on contemporary women calligraphers, an article on the Cambridge University Persian Poem Project, obituaries, and news of various awards, announcements, and conferences.

The newsletter will also be posted at <http://iranianstudies.com/about/newsletters>, where you will find the entire archive of ISIS newsletters published to date throughout the years.

Thank you to all those who contributed. The next newsletter shall appear in October 2014, and we once again look forward to your contributions to the next issue.

Mirjam Künkler, Princeton University

PRESIDENT'S NOTE:

Our upcoming conference in Montreal promises to be the largest to date. We expect over 440 scholars from over 22 countries to take part. My colleagues and I have been working hard to attend to all issues, big and small, pertaining to the conference. In Montreal, you will have over 100 panels and side events (book launches, concerts, receptions, and literary readings) to choose from. In addition, some ten academic and commercial publishers (Brill, Cambridge, Harrassowitz, I.B. Tauris, Routledge, Syracuse, etc.) will present books for sale. The draft conference schedule has been posted on the ISIS website.

Please make sure to attend our general membership meeting on August 7 at 5:30 pm, followed by the awards ceremony at 7 pm where we celebrate the careers and accomplishments of senior colleagues and graduate students.

Meanwhile, our organization is continuing to grow. Individual and institutional memberships are up (we welcome the Alliance Center for Iranian Studies at Tel Aviv University, Farhang Foundation, the International Research & Exchanges Board, Omid for Iran, and the University of Southern California's Middle East Studies Program as our newest institutional members), new partnerships are being forged, the latest issue of the *Iranian Studies* journal, focused on Iran and the Cold War, has been released, and there is a lot of activity on the ISIS Facebook page.

I look forward to seeing each and every one of you in August in Montreal, an international city that has a great deal to offer.

Mehrzad Boroujerdi, Syracuse University

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MEMBER NEWS

Roksana Bahramitash has published *Gender and Entrepreneurship in Iran: Microenterprise and the Informal Sector*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan Lt., December 2013; and the two articles “Women and Children Pay the Price of Smart Sanctions: What is Next?” *Turkish Review* Vol.3, No.2, pp.: 148-152, 2013; and “Women in Iran” *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Islam and Women*, 2013. Her article “Choice, Constraint and Power: Women From Low Income Households in Iran,” is also forthcoming in the *International Journal of Feminist Economics* (Special Issue on Women in the Muslim World), 2014.

Mehrzad Boroujerdi was promoted to full professor and endowed with the title of O’Hanley Faculty Scholar by Syracuse University’s Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs.

Rasmus Christian Elling has published *Minorities in Iran: Nationalism and Ethnicity after Khomeini*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.

Willem Floor has published two books: *A Man of Two Worlds: Pedros Bedik in Iran 1670-1675*, translated from Latin by Colette Ouahes and Willem Floor (Washington DC: Mage, 2013); and *The Hula Arabs of the Shibkuh Coast of Iran* (Washington DC: Mage, 2014). He has also published “Trade in and position of slaves in southern Iran, 1825-1925” *Studia Iranica* 41/2 (2012), pp. 255-94; “Johannes Lodewijk Schlimmer. The creator of Persian medical terminology,” *Studia Iranica* 42 (2013), pp. 249-74; and “Who were the Candle Extinguishers or Cheraghkoshan?” *ZDMG* 2014, pp. 109-24.

Erika Friedl published *Folktales and Storytellers of Tribal Iran: Culture, Ethos and Identity*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2014.

Ghassem Ghassemi has published *Criminal Policy in Iran Following the Revolution of 1979*, (Berlin: Duncker and Humboldt, 2013).

Hamid Koroos has published his translation of Hadi Seif’s *Persian Painted Tile Work from the 18th and 19th Centuries: The Shiraz School* (Stuttgart: Arnoldsche Art Publishers, 2014).

Eric Lob presented papers on the Construction Jihad at the Association for the Study of Persianate Societies (ASPS) conference in Sarajevo in September 2013, and at the Afro-Middle East Centre (AMEC) conference in Pretoria, South Africa, in November 2013. He also gave a talk on Rouhani’s election victory and the US-Iran nuclear negotiations at Harvard’s Center for Middle East Studies (CMES) in October 2013.

Rudi Matthee has published, with Willem Floor and Patrick Clawson, *The Monetary History of Iran: From the Safavids to the Qajars* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2013). He also published “Die Beziehungen des Irans zu Europa in der Safawidenzeit: Diplomaten, Missionare, Kaufleute und Reisen,” in *Sehnsucht Persien. Austausch und Rezeption in der Kunst Persiens und Europas im 17. Jahrhundert & Gegenwartskunst aus Teheran* (Zurich: Rietberg Museum, 2013), 6-39; also available as “Iran’s Relations with Europe in the Safavid Period: Diplomats, Missionaries, Merchants and Travel,” in *The Fascination of Persia: Persian-European Dialogue in Seventeenth-Century Art & Contemporary Art of Teheran* (Zurich: Rietberg Museum, 2013), pp. 6-39; and “Loyalty, Betrayal, and Retribution: Biktash Khan, Ya’qub Khan, and Shah `Abbas I’s Strategy in Establishing Control over Kirman, Yazd and Fars,” in R. Hillenbrand, A.C.S. Peacock and F.I. Abdullaeva, eds., *Ferdowsi, the Mongols and the History of Iran: Art, Literature and Culture from Early Islam to Qajar Persia* (London: I.B. Tauris), pp. 184-200.

Dan Potts’ new book *Nomadism in Iran. From Antiquity to the Modern Era* was published by Oxford University Press, 2014.

Simin Redjali has published *A Symphony of Life: Triumph of Education over Adversity* (Xlibris Corporation, 2013).

Faegheh Shirazi published “Death the Great Equalizer: Memorializing Martyred (Shahid) Women, in the Islamic Republic of Iran,” in the *Journal of Visual Anthropology* vol. 25 (2012), pp. 98-119; “The Islamic Veil in Civil Societies,” in the *Kufa Review* vol. 1, no. 1 (Fall 2012), pp. 19-40; and with **Elizabeth Bucar**, “The “Invention” of Lesbian Acts in Iran: Interpretative Moves, Hidden Assumptions, and Emerging Categories of Sexuality,” in the *Journal of Lesbian Studies*, vol. 16, no. 4 (2012), pp. 416-434.

David N. Yaghoubian’s book *Ethnicity, Identity, and the Development of Nationalism in Iran* has been published by Syracuse University Press, 2014.

Reza Zia-Ebrahimi was appointed to a lectureship in Twentieth-Century Middle Eastern History at King’s College, London. His Ph.D. thesis (*The Emergence of Iranian Nationalism: Modernity and the Politics of Dislocation 1860-1940*) received an honorary mention of the Leigh Douglas Memorial Prize for the best Ph.D. dissertation on a Middle Eastern topic in the Social Sciences or Humanities. He was interviewed by Eskandar Sadeghi-Boroujerdi for Iranwire.

Iranian Studies, volume 47, number 3, 2014 has been published:
<http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/cist20/current>

This issue and the Iranian Studies Journal archives are available to ISIS members by logging into their account on the ISIS website www.iranianstudies.com

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PERSIAN POEM PROJECT GIVEN £1.2M DONATION

Written by ELEANOR DICKINSON

A Cambridge University project translating a 50,000 verse Persian poem has been given a funding boost of \$2 million by an Iranian-American philanthropist.

Former Silicon Valley luminary Bitā Daryabari gave the donation, worth £1.2 million, to fund the Cambridge Shahnameh project.

Set up by Professor Charles Melville, a fellow Pembroke College and Persian studies expert, the project aims to study and translate the 1000-year-old Persian epic, known as the Book of Kings.

Ms Daryabari, who fled Iran as a child during the war with Iraq, set up the endowment as part of an ongoing project to promote Iranian heritage and culture.

She said: “Shahnameh is a holy book for all Persians because it was written in pure Persian during a time when the language was being influenced by Arabic. This literary masterpiece reflects Iran’s history, cultural values, its ancient religions, and its profound sense of nationhood. I feel it is my duty to ensure that future generations have the chance to hear these poems and stories that teach our children to take pride in their heritage and ancestry. Professor Melville has been the guardian of the Shahnameh and Persian literature in recent decades, and I want to thank him for keeping our poetry and literature alive.”

Professor Melville started the project in 1999. The funding provided by Ms Daryabari’s donation will be used to continue staffing the Shahnameh Centre, which is based at Pembroke. It would also support travel for research and attending conferences and help maintain a reference library of scholarship on Persian literary and artistic cultures.

“This magnificent endowment is important for several reasons”, said Professor Melville said. “Firstly, it ensures that the Shahnameh Project can continue to develop and extend its ambitious aims to provide a rich and accessible resource for all those interested in Persian miniature painting and the arts of the book, as particularly exemplified in the outstanding tradition of Shahnameh manuscript production.” He added: “For the foreseeable future, the sustainability and growth of this project is assured, with all its potential for educational purposes and fostering awareness of Iran’s cultural heritage and its relevance today.”

Read more:
<http://www.cambridge-news.co.uk/Education/Universities/Cambridge-University-Persian-poem-project-given-12m-donation-20131022112154.htm#ixzz2ilXg0Bb0>



Bitā Daryabari and Charles Melville

King's Parade, showing the Senate House in the centre with King's College chapel on the left and St. John's tower in the background.

Shahnameh

WOMEN CALLIGRAPHERS IN CONTEMPORARY IRAN

Anna Vanzan, University of Milano (Italy)

In Iran, as well as in many other Muslim countries, calligraphy is back in business. As it happens in many other artistic fields, women's presence is astonishing in calligraphy, too, and at present we find hundreds of women calligraphers active in the Islamic Republic of Iran. I interviewed some of them during a research trip in the summer of 2013.



The seat of the *Anjoman-e Khoshnevisan*, Tehran.

Maryam Javanbakht,
پایت بگذار تا ببوسم
Let me kiss Your feet (Sa'di)
watercolors and ink on paper



One of the first places I visited was the *Anjoman-e Khoshnevisan* hosted in a beautiful palace located in northern Tehran. The *anjomans* play a very important role as they are qualified to release the certificate required by anyone who wants to be an official calligrapher. There I met Malieh Saburi, a master calligrapher who shared with me some interesting data. As many other calligraphers I spoke to, Ms. Saburi combines calligraphy (*khatnevisi* or *khoshnevisi*) with other artistic activities. In her case, she is a poet, a musician, and a singer. She considers herself a professional calligrapher as she has obtained her diploma after a four-year-course at an officially recognized *anjoman* and because, to my surprise, she lives off of it. As a matter of fact, Malieh Saburi, who became a widow when her two children were very young, managed to maintain herself and to raise the two kids only thanks to her artistic activity. This means that calligraphy can also become a woman's profession, as it was for many men in the past. And, as in the bygone days when scribes had to comply with a precise set of rules that included the respect of their physical well being in order to give the best performance, so do women calligraphers seem to stick to a disciplined way of life; so much so that many of them practice regular physical activities. Ms. Saburi, for example, wakes up every morning at 5.30 in order to perform her yoga exercises.

Actually, yoga and meditation appear frequently in the artists' routines; other calligraphers I spoke with regularly practice aerobics and/or go to meditation class. During the conversations I had with the calligraphers, their need for spirituality would often come to the fore. Most of them acknowledge their adherence to some form of Sufism not as an organized movement (in *tariqas* etc.), but rather as a manifestation of religion lived as a personal matter, to be identified with the inner spiritual life. This internal need flows into a blend of elements coming from various mystic experiences that nicely intertwine in the artists' works.

It is well known that a broad understanding of Sufism is present in many contemporary Iranian artists; and quite a few women calligraphers openly declared to be mainly inspired by Rumi. Some of them told me that they were drawn into calligraphy by the great Sufi Master's poetry and by the desire to express and illustrate the meaning of his lyrics through the graphic rendition of his words.

I met both "conventional" calligraphers (i.e., the ones who mainly follow the patterns established in the past) and more innovative artists who combine different techniques and materials, but whose main means of expression remain the letters of the alphabet. Many artists shuffle from one style to the other. I was quite happy to hear from these ladies that the increasing favor enjoyed by calligraphy in Iran, as well as by other traditional activities such as music, poetry, handicrafts and the like, is due to Iranians' rediscovery of their roots. Other artists have confirmed this trend too and they all referred to a strong feeling of "Iranianness" which permeates their activities. Their opinion is another good counterargument to the widespread notion that "*gharbzadehgi*" is (still) a major current in Iran.

ANNOUNCEMENT: NEW ISIS HONORARY MEMBER

The International Society for Iranian Studies proudly announces its decision to bestow upon Professor Gilbert Lazard the designation of “Honorary Member.” An Honorary Member is the highest recognition that ISIS as a professional association can bestow on the most distinguished scholars in our field.

Gilbert Lazard, former professor of Persian language and literature at the Sorbonne is the founding father of modern Persian studies in France and also a major scholar in theoretical linguistics. Born in 1920, he was a student when he joined the French Resistance during World War II and was deported to a concentration camp in Germany. After the war he completed his studies in linguistics with Émile Benveniste, was introduced to Iranian studies by Henri Massé and went to Tehran in 1947 as the first research fellow of the new French institute of Iranian studies founded by Henry Corbin. While in Iran, he prepared his doctorate, “La langue des plus anciens monuments de la prose persane” and his famous “Grammar of Modern Persian” (translated into English in 1986 and completely revised in 2001). He published the first comprehensive studies on the origins of the Persian language and literature from Khorasan. Lazard was also a very good and renowned translator into French of such major Persian poets as Ferdowsi, Hafez, and Khayyam. Since 1950 Dr. Lazard has been the main organizer and leading figure of Persian literature and linguistics in France and Europe. He founded (with Émile Benveniste), the Institute of Iranian Studies of the Sorbonne. As professor of Persian at the School of Oriental Languages (Langues ‘O’) for more than 20 years, he introduced to Iranian studies a generation of French scholars, and became in 1969 the first full professor of Persian at the Sorbonne, in charge of the Master and Ph.D. programs. At the same time he taught theoretical linguistics, Iranian linguistics and ancient Iranian languages at the École Pratique de Hautes Etudes. He founded the journal *Studia Iranica*, and the European Society of Iranian Studies (Societas Iranologica Europaea). This brilliant academic career was concluded by becoming a member of the Academie de Inscriptions et Belles Lettres. Lazard still publishes articles, participates in academic meetings and gives respected advice to younger students and scholars.

In 2012, Professor Lazard received the ISIS Lifetime Achievement Award.

ANNOUNCING THE RECIPIENTS OF THE 2013 FARHANG HERITAGE AND LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

The Farhang Foundation has recognized the contributions of the remarkable painter, scholar, and architect, Houshang Seyhoun, and the culinary «guru» Najmieh Batmanglij with the annual Farhang Lifetime Achievement and Heritage awards.

The 2013 Farhang Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to Professor Houshang Seyhoun in recognition of his celebrated and lasting contributions to the modernization of Iranian traditional architecture and his mentorship of generations of aspiring Iranian architects and fine arts students.

Mrs. Najmieh Batmanglij was recognized with the 2013 Farhang Heritage Award in honor of her passionate dedication and relentless commitment to excellence in promoting Persian culture through its rich, ancient and deep rooted culinary art.

“We are honored to recognize the lasting legacies of these two great individuals who have shared their talents with the world and as a result made it a much brighter place,” said Dr. Hooshang Pak, trustee and Chair of the Farhang Award Committee. “The efforts of Houshang Seyhoun and Najmieh Batmanglij, each a master in his and her own craft, have not only contributed to the advancement of Iranian culture, but have enriched the lives of people across the globe.”

Since 2009, Farhang Foundation has presented the Farhang Heritage and Lifetime Achievement Awards to talented and renowned individuals in recognition of their unparalleled contributions to Iranian studies and culture. Past recipients have included Professor Ehsan Yarshater, Professor Richard Nelson Frye, Professor Amin Banani, poet Simin Behbahani, scholar Iraj Afshar, Professor Hossein Ziai, Professor Abbas Milani, and filmmaker Bahram Beyzaie.



AWARDS AND HONORS

Michael Barry was awarded the 2013 Le Prix du Cercle Montherlant and the 2014 Book of the Year on Persian Civilization by the National Iranian Academy.

Michael Barry, Lecturer in Near Eastern Studies at Princeton University, was awarded Le Prix du Cercle Montherlant for Literature on Art in the French language by the Académie des Beaux-Arts for his *Cantique des Oiseaux d'Attâr illustré par la peinture en Islam d'Orient* (Paris: Éditions Diane de Selliers, 2012). Containing a French translation of Attar's *Manṭiq al-Ṭayr* by Leili Anvar, *Cantique des Oiseaux* presents 207 Persian, Turkish, Afghani, and Indo-Pakistani miniatures from the fourteenth to seventeenth centuries with expert commentary on the paintings by Barry. The book has also been awarded the 2014 Book of the Year on Persian Civilization by the National Iranian Academy. An English version, *The Canticle of the Birds: Illustrated Through Persian and Eastern Islamic Art*, with a translation into English of *Manṭiq al-Ṭayr* by Dick Davis, appeared earlier this year.

Dr. Mohammed Rustom, Associate Professor at the College of the Humanities, Carleton University, has been awarded the 21st International Book of the Year Prize in Iran for his *The Triumph of Mercy: Philosophy and Scripture in Mulla Sadra* (SUNY, 2012). More info at www.mohammedrustom.com.

Rudi Mathee's book, *Persia in Crisis: The Decline of the Safavids and the Fall of Isfahan* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2012), was awarded the *Jayezeh-ye jahani-ye ketab* in the category of Iranian History, by the Iranian Ministry of Culture.

Ata Anzali has been awarded the 2013 prize for the best dissertation by the Foundation for Iranian Studies

The Foundation for Iranian Studies is pleased to announce that the Committee on Selection of the Best Dissertation of the Year on a Topic of Iranian Studies of the Foundation for Iranian Studies has chosen Dr. Ata Anzali's dissertation "Safavid Shi'ism, the Eclipse of Sufism and the Emergence of 'Irfan" submitted to the Faculty of Religious Studies at Rice University as the recipient of the Foundation's annual Ph.D. dissertation award for the academic year 2012-2013.

In making its decision, the Committee, following the criteria established by the Foundation's Board of Directors, noted that Ata Anzali has made an "exceptional contribution to the field of Iranian Studies" by, among other achievements, "stating clearly the study's problematic... constructing an adequate and efficient theoretical framework...developing and using successfully a rigorous methodology to bring together a significant array of primary and secondary sources, including several hitherto unknown or unpublished sources, to support an innovative approach to the study of the effects of the rise of Shi'a hierocracy under the Safavids on Iran's subsequent political, social, and cultural evolution ... adducing convincingly and delineating meticulously the reasons why and the methods by which the Shi'a hierocracy was enabled to sway the court and the people to force the demise of Sufism in order to curtail religious choice, and how, ironically, the success of the project led in time to the emergence of 'irfan, a mystical mode of thought oriented to individual choice and tuned to universalist values, suggesting an abiding tension between freedom and authority in Iran even before the advent of modernity... exemplifying successfully the continuing tension between authority and freedom in the Islamic Republic of Iran by identifying 'irfan as a salient point of conflict between the clerical quest for control and the contemporary youth's propensity to self-expression ... arguing cogently that modernization, though influenced by Western experience, is a function of a people's history and culture evolving through time, behooving analytical approaches that shun Western or Eastern ghettoization ... excellent organization of the work."

The Committee also cited Dr. Justine Landau's dissertation "De Rythme et de raison: lecture croisée de deux traités de poétique persane du XIIIe siècle" submitted to the Faculty of the School of Languages, Civilizations and Oriental Societies at the Sorbonne Nouvelle Paris 3, and Dr. Manata Hashemi's dissertation "Social Mobility among Poor Youth in Iran" submitted to the Graduate Division of the University of California at Berkeley, with **honorable mention** for superior scholarship, originality, clarity, and significant contribution to Iranian Studies.

Gholam Reza Afkhami

Chair

Ph.D. Dissertation Awards Committee

Foundation for Iranian Studies

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE AWARD, SELECTION CRITERIA,
AND PREVIOUS WINNERS

CONSULT THE FOUNDATION'S WEBSITE AT WWW.FIS-IRAN.ORG,
PROGRAMS, DISSERTATION AWARDS. INQUIRIES SHOULD BE EMAILED
TO FIS@FIS-IRAN.ORG.

CALLS FOR NOMINATION

DISSERTATION AWARD

The best Ph.D. dissertation on a theme of Iranian Studies is chosen based on several criteria, including imagination, novelty of approach, clarity in stating the problematic, theoretical foundation, methodological rigor, efficient and intelligent use of primary source material, and quality of fieldwork, among others.

The Foundation may also recognize up to two runner-up dissertations with honorable mention and subject to budgetary considerations and the decision of an advisory board of readers, may also help towards the publication of outstanding dissertations.

Each year the award is granted to a dissertation approved during that academic year and announced in October/November of the year for which it is granted. Dissertations must be nominated by the author's advisor and be accompanied by the Dissertation Committee's letter of acceptance. A digitized copy of the dissertation must be submitted by **August 15** either on a disk to:

Secretary
Foundation for Iranian Studies
Suite 200, 4343 Montgomery Avenue
Bethesda, MD 20814

or emailed to
fis@fis-iran.org or
gafkhami@fis-iran.org

CONFERENCES

The Central Asia Research Center of the Ferdowsi University of Mashhad and the Khorasan Razavi's Culture and Islamic Relations Organization are convening an International Congress on the Thought, Achievements and Contributions of Amir Ali Shir Navai.

More information about the event can be found here: <http://amiralishir.um.ac.ir/index.php?&newlang=eng>

CONFERENCE

The Iranian Studies Program at the University of Oklahoma convened the conference "After the Persianate: Cultural Heritage and National Transformation in Modern Iran and India" on March 7 and 8, 2014.

Iran and India have a long history of cultural contact and interaction. From the classical periods of the Avestan, Vedic, and Sanskrit civilizations, to the medieval and early modern heritage of Islam and the Persian literary tradition, the Indo-Iranian territorial zone—encompassing large parts of the Iranian plateau, Central Asia, and the Subcontinent — can be understood as a cultural universe sharing a broadly interconnected literary, religious, and aesthetic imagination. Despite this interconnected cultural heritage, the nineteenth and twentieth centuries initiated significant cultural transformations to the Indo-Iranian world that both reinforced and challenged this shared history.

This two-day interdisciplinary conference brought together a group of scholars who are pursuing innovative research strategies to historicize the transformations that took place across the Indo-Iranian world during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. They engaged questions such as: How was the cultural heritage of the classical, medieval, and early-modern periods reimagined during the modern period? What were the cultural erasures and elisions that accompanied the modernist transformations of the Indo-Iranian and Persianate cultural universe? What new forms of cultural interconnection emerged as a result of modernist imaginings? How did modes of knowledge defined by modernity and nationalism come to shape these processes of cultural reconstruction? Finally, in what ways can the examination of this history help us to understand the contemporary challenges facing the nations that today inhabit this cultural zone?

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THE EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGISTS (EASA):

THE FIRST ETHNOGRAPHIC FILM AND MEDIA PROGRAM OF THE MIDDLE EAST AND CENTRAL EURASIA

Tallinn University, Estonia, 31 July and 3 August 2014.

EASA is pleased to announce the first Ethnographic Film and Media Program of the Middle East and Central Eurasia, which will be held annually in conjunction with the Anthropology of the Middle East and Central Eurasia Network of the European Association of Social Anthropologists (EASA).
<http://www.easaonline.org/networks/amce/index.shtml>

The goal of our program is to promote original ethnographic films and visual media not only in the area of anthropology but also in sociology, folklore, religion, material culture and related topics. Our program encompasses all areas of the contemporary Middle East and Central Eurasia (Russia, the Caucasus, Central Asia, China), including topics on minority groups and religious themes.

ISIS is very pleased to welcome the following five new institutional members:

- 1 • Alliance Center for Iranian Studies, Tel Aviv University
<http://humanities.tau.ac.il/iranian/en/>
- 2 • University of Southern California Middle East Studies Program
<http://dornsife.usc.edu/mesp>
- 3 • Farhang Foundation
<http://www.farhang.org/>
- 4 • Omid for Iran
<http://omidforiran.org/>
- 5 • International Research & Exchanges Board
<http://www.irex.org/>

The GENERAL PROGRAM SCHEDULE for the 10th ISIS BIENNIAL CONFERENCE, Montreal, August 6th-10th, 2014

is now posted on the ISIS website: <http://www.iranianstudies.com/>

A reminder:

Special room rates for members of ISIS at the conference hotel Hilton Bonaventure Hotel, Montréal, Québec, Canada, apply until July 6th, 2014
<http://www.iranianstudies.com/conferences/2014/accommodation>

Please consult <http://www.iranianstudies.com/conferences/2014/information> for conference updates.

ISIS cordially thanks Mehrdad Amanat, American Institute of Iranian Studies, Concordia University, Dabiri Foundation, Foundation for Iranian Studies, McGill University, Persian Heritage Foundation, Roshan Cultural Heritage Institute, and Tourisme Montreal for their generous contributions to the 2014 biennial conference.

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[HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/INTERNATIONALSOCIETYFORIRANIANSTUDIES](https://www.facebook.com/internationalsocietyforiranianstudies)

OBITUARY

Mohammad-Ebrahim Bastani Parizi was born on 24th December 1925 in Pariz, a village near Sirjan in Kerman province, and passed away on 25th March 2014 in Tehran. Although his death fell on the Nowrouz holiday when all academic institutions are closed, on 27th March a crowd showed up on the campus of Tehran University to take part in the funeral ceremony. Dr. Bastani Parizi, who earned his Ph.D. in History from Tehran University in 1963, had a knack for introducing Iran's history to the average citizen and encouraging them to read about their own historical adventures and heritage. A good number of his books, articles and conference papers were related to his beloved Kerman. He wrote about the province's local history throughout the ages and even wrote about its geography.

Bastani adopted a special narration style of historiography based on attention-grabbing anecdotes, and drawing socio-political conclusions from historical allegories. He would provide the genealogy of most personalities and events in his narratives to demonstrate how personalities and historical events intermingled with one another. His encyclopedic knowledge of Iranian policymakers and notable families, especially the ruling families of Kerman, was second to none.

Professor Bastani Parizi was interested in the genealogy of everyday life and the rights and roles of women in the annals of Iranian history. Such a historical approach is on display in his book "Woman in the Passageway of History" - زن در گذر - تاریخ. One of his other publications, namely "The Court of the Convent" (بارگاه خانقاه), showed his fondness for mysticism. In fact, after his death it was revealed by the Ne'matollahi mystical tariqat that he had been a Ne'matollahi Gonabadi dervish.

There are very many writings and memories that demonstrate Bastani's humility, but perhaps the best example is the essay entitled "Self Massaging" - خود ماست - which is a self-indictment chronicling his own historical errors and misjudgments. He managed to show that neither his academic nor his lay readers had caught his historical gaffes or cared to bring these problems to his attention. This self-criticism was unprecedented and unique among Iranian historians. It is a testimony to Bastani Parizi's penchant for toleration and fairness that both the Muslim and the Zoroastrian communities showered him with so much respect upon his death.

Professor Bastani also had literary talents as demonstrated in his 1962 collection of poems entitled "Memory and Memorial" - یاد و یادبود - published in 1962. Most remarkable for a traditionalist historian was his translation of Aristotle's Politics, a seminal text in the history of political thought, which also appeared in 1962 with an introduction by Dr. Gholam Hossein Sadiqi.

All of these qualities made Bastani a historian who was both distinguished and different from his colleagues. He was liked by the young and the old, academics and non-academics, politicians as well as common people. Dr. Bastani Parizi was a witty and jolly professor who was very paternal toward his students. Alas, the only thing that made him depressed was his sudden retirement without any prior forewarning in July 2008. He became demonstrably sad after this event.

Hossein Abadian
Department of History
Imam Khomeini International University
Qazvin, Iran

Michel M. Mazzaoui (b. 1926) died peacefully during the night of December 5th 2013, at the home of one of his nephews in Miami, Florida. His friends at the University of Utah, where he taught from 1976 until his retirement in 2009, remember him with deep affection as a loving and loyal friend and as a leading scholar on Safavid Persian history. He came to the University of Utah from the University of Freiburg, Germany, where friends had given him refuge after the outbreak of the civil war in Lebanon. A few years earlier, in 1972, Michel had published a groundbreaking book on the origins of the Safavids. In this book, which grew out of his Ph.D. dissertation at Princeton University, Michel was one of the first scholars to undertake a reconstruction of the early history of the Safavids. This history had been manipulated at the command of Shah Tahmasp (r. 1524-1576) in order to give it a Shi'i bias. It was thanks to Michel's patient philological and historiographic sleuthing that we now have an accurate idea of the prehistory of the Safavids and the expansion of their influence in Iran. Michel's gentle manners, endless generosity, and unwavering kindness will be sorely missed by his many friends.

The Nasser Sharify Foundation has published an anthology of Nasser Sharify's English language poems, "Outcast - An Anthology of English Language Poems with French Translation."

Additional details can be found at <http://www.nassersharify.org/>

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PHD DISSERTATIONS RECENTLY COMPLETED

Khasha Ostovany (Ph.D. in Sociology and the Committee on Historical Studies; The New School for Social Research, 2013) has filed her Ph.D. Dissertation, titled: "Reactionary Revolutionaries: The Radicalization of the Islamic Movement in Iran from *Fadaian-e-Islam* to Ahmadinejad, 1945-2005". (<http://gradworks.umi.com/35/66/3566463.html>).

The dissertation studies the causes, processes and agents of radicalization within the Islamic milieu in modern Iran, both before and after the 1979 Islamic Revolution. Ostovany argues that modernization efforts to rationalize the state bureaucracy, secularize Iranian society, and liberalize sociocultural mores created a backlash among those who were not part of this transformation effort. Not only did this modernization policy lead to the debasing of the Shi'a clerical establishment and its power and status, but the onset of these transformations also radicalized segments of the poor urban working class, as well as the traditionally-rooted rising middle-class, against the state and its policies. This radicalization began in earnest with the emergence of the first coherent Islamist group *Fadaian-e-Islam* in 1945 during the Pahlavi dynasty (1925-1979). Ostovany traces the trajectory of this radicalization in detail and demonstrates the results of the alliance between seminary-based clerics and lay Islamists after 1945 (first as the *Fadaian* and then as their inheritors, the *Mowtalefeh*) and their network of activists that was instrumental in turning the protest movement that emerged in 1978 into an Islamists-led revolution a year later.

A new radicalization emerged a decade into the revolution, in the aftermath of the death of Ayatollah Khomeini in 1989. A major cause of this radicalization, Ostovany argues, were the contradictions inherent in the *Fadaian* vs. Khomeinist versions of an Islamic state. While the latter's vision is what is enshrined in the constitution of the Islamic Republic, the endurance and the weight of the former, whose moral legacy presented itself with the presidency of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in 2005, remains a challenge to the substance, policies, and identity of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Eskandar Sadeghi-Boroujerdi defended his Ph.D. dissertation entitled "Disenchanting Political Theology in Post-revolutionary Iran: Reform, Religious Intellectualism and the Death of Utopia" at the Queen's College, University of Oxford, 2013.

The dissertation delineates the transformation of Iran's so-called post-revolutionary 'religious intellectuals' (*rowshanfekran-e dini*) from ideological legitimators within the political class of the newly-established theocratic-populist regime, to internal critics whose revised vision for the politico-religious order coalesced and converged with the growing disillusionment and frustration of the 'Islamic left': a constellation of political forces within the governing elite of the Islamic Republic, that following the death of Ayatollah Khomeini increasingly felt itself marginalized and on the fringes of power.

The dissertation scrutinizes in detail the historical evolution of this complex, quasi-institutionalized and routinized network, encompassing theologians, jurists, political strategists and journalists, which rose to prominence in the course of the 1990s, and its critical engagement with the ruling political theology of the 'guardianship of the jurist', the supremacy of Islamic jurisprudence, political Islamism and all forms of 'revolutionary' and 'utopian' political and social transformation, are scrutinized in detail. In this vein, the thesis examines the various issues provoked by the *rowshanfekran-e dini's* strategic deployment and translation of the concepts and ideas of a number of Western thinkers, several of whom played a pivotal role in the assault on the ideological foundations of Soviet-style communism in the 1950s and 1960s.

It then goes on to show how this network of intellectuals and politicians following the election of Mohammad Khatami to the presidency in May 1997 sought to disseminate their ideas at the popular level by means of the press and numerous party and political periodicals, and thereby to achieve ideological and political hegemony. The thesis proceeds to demonstrate the intimate connection between the project of 'religious intellectualism' and elite-defined notions of 'democracy', 'electoral participation', 'reform' and 'political development' as part of an effort to accumulate symbolic capital and assert their intellectual and moral leadership of the polity.

NEW IRANIAN STUDIES PROGRAMS & CENTERS

NEW IRANIAN STUDIES CERTIFICATE PROGRAM OFFERED AT CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY IN MONTRÉAL, CANADA

The Centre for Iranian Studies at Concordia University has announced a new Certificate program in Iranian Studies beginning in the winter term of 2015. This is a stand-alone 30-credit program designed for individuals not currently enrolled in a degree program at Concordia who wish to concentrate exclusively on courses in Iranian Studies. Courses can be taken at whatever pace suits the student's needs.

Required courses for the Certificate:

RELI 227 – Introduction to Iranian Civilization

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RELI 306 – Religion and Society in Contemporary Iran

RELI 313 – Zoroastrianism

RELI 317 – Sufism

RELI 318 – Shi'ite Islam

The remaining twelve credits can be fulfilled by taking any of a range of Iran-related courses offered by various departments at Concordia or other Montréal universities. Past course offerings have included such topics as Iranian Mythology, Manichaeism, Pahlavi language, Classical Persian Music, and Introductory Persian.

To apply: <<http://www.concordia.ca/content/dam/concordia/docs/admissions/UGProgramGuide-2014-2015.pdf>>.

Journal of the Anthropology of the Contemporary Middle East and Central Eurasia, Volume 1, Issue 2, Winter 2013

Published in association with, and the financial support of, Groupe Sociétés, Religions, Laïcités, CNRS

ISSN: 2211-5722 • www.st-andrews.ac.uk/anthropologyiran/acme/acmejournal.org

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FARHANG FOUNDATION SPONSORS FREE PERSIAN LANGUAGE LEARNING WEBSITE

The Farhang Foundation has become a sponsor of Persian Language Online <http://www.persianlanguageonline.com/>, a language learning web resource, developed by the UK-based charity Persian Language Foundation (PLF), with contributors from Cambridge University, St. Andrews University in Scotland, and The University of London.

Persian Language Online intends to be a FREE, multimedia public resource that will serve as a language learning tool for non-Persian speakers as well as second- and third-generation Iranians, Afghans, and Tajiks living outside of Iran. Presently, the first phase of the website's development has been completed. While it is a work in progress, the website is a fully functional, free resource that aims to take a learner from zero to a good understanding of basic Persian conversation.

Farhang Foundation's sponsorship of Persian Language Online is one of the many undertakings of the Farhang Community Education Outreach (CEO) Committee, which was recently launched by the foundation as a means to seek and sponsor opportunities that endeavor to inform and educate the public on the many facets of Persian culture.

ABOUT THE FARHANG FOUNDATION

The Farhang Foundation is a non-religious, non-political and not-for-profit foundation established in 2008 to celebrate and promote Iranian art and culture for the benefit of the community at large. The foundation supports a broad range of academic activities in Southern California by funding university programs, publications and conferences.

The foundation also supports diverse cultural programs such as the celebration of Nowruz and Mehregan, theater, dance performances, film screenings and poetry readings in Southern California. And, in cooperation with various cultural and academic institutions, Farhang Foundation funds major programs and exhibitions about Iran and its culture.

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Please contact Kate Reavill at:
Kathryn.Reavill@tandf.co.uk for more information.