

ASPS NEWSLETTER

ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF
PERSIANATE SOCIETIES

No. 20, Spring 2008.



انجمن مطالعات
جوامع فارسی‌زبان

President's Message and News of the Association

At the meeting of the ASPS Board of Directors on November 17, 2007 in Montreal, I had the pleasure of welcoming five new members to the Board—the largest influx in one year: Shahzad Bashir, Houchang Chehabi (Travel Fellowship Program, *Ex Officio*), Mirjam Künkler, Parvaneh Pourshariati and Sunil Sharma. The most important decision taken at the meeting was to hold our next biennial convention in Lahore at the end of February 2009. Shahzad Bashir will be in charge of the organization of the Lahore Convention. Mirjam Künkler agreed to take over the Editorship of the *Newsletter* from Rosemary Stanfield-Johnson. Parvaneh Pourshariati will chair the Organization and Programs Committee.

The Editorial Board of the *Journal of Persianate Studies* held its first meeting in Montreal on November 18, 2007. Two representatives from our new publisher, Brill, joined the meeting, and we had a useful discussion of the editorial policy as well as some technical issues. The Soudavar Memorial Foundation has graciously renewed its grant to support the publication of the journal, and the inaugural issue is in press and scheduled to appear at the end of June 2008. As you know, the *JPS* replaces our annual publication, *Studies on Persianate Societies*, the last (3rd) volume of which appeared last fall. (If your membership is current, you should have received your copy. If you did not, please let me know.)

JPS, 1.1 (2008) contains the following articles:

- From the Editor: Defining Persianate Studies
Saïd Amir Arjomand
- The Salience of Political Ethic in the Spread of Persianate Islam
Saïd Amir Arjomand
- To Forge a Book in the Medieval Age: Neẓām al-Molk's *Siyar al-Moluk* (*Siyāsāt-Nāma*)
Alexey A. Khismatulin
- Central Organisation, *Tabarrokat* and Succession among the Early Cheshtis in India
Ishtiyāq Ahmad Zilli
- Flowers of Persian Song and Music: Davud Pirniyā and the Genesis of the *Golhā* Programs
Jane Lewisohn
- Persian Rap: The Voice of Contemporary Iran's Youth
Sholeh Johnston

A generous grant from Mr. Simon Adamiyatt of Bear, Stearns & Co. has enabled us to launch the joint publication of a monograph series of previously unpublished primary texts, jointly with the Miras-e Maktub Institute in Tehran, under the series title: *Sources on Persianate Civilization*. The books will be made available to the members of ASPS and affiliated associations such as MESA at a discount price, and distributed to libraries in the region through our Regional Offices. ASPS Secretary-Treasurer Habib Borjian signed the contract on behalf of the ASPS in Tehran. The first issue will be a history of Herat written during the Saljuq period and edited by Iraj Afshar.

ASPS jointly sponsored a symposium with the Stony Brook Institute of Global Studies on November 15, 2007, 2:00-6:30PM at Stony Brook-Manhattan. It was chaired by Houchang Chehabi, Boston University, and included the following papers:

- "The Challenge of the Rule of Law in Iran"
Ardechir Amir-Arjomand, UNESCO Chair of Human Rights, Shahid Beheshti University, Tehran
- "Survival through Dispossession: Privatizations of Public Goods in the Islamic Republic"
Kaveh Ehsani, *Goft-o-gu* Editor, Tehran, and the University of Illinois, Chicago
- "In the Name of *Maslaha*: The *de facto* Secularization of Legislation in the Islamic Republic"
Mirjam Künkler, Princeton University
- "The Dilemma of Democratization without Social Mobilization: the Missing link between Social Resistance and Political Activism in Iran"
Ali Rezaei, Calgary University

Ardechir Amir-Arjomand unfortunately could not attend because of visa difficulties, but sent his paper which I read in translation.

The first of the two Thematic Conversation sessions, "Building Linkages between Civil Society and Constitutionalism in Iran," organized by Mirjam Künkler and chaired by Mehrzad Boroujerdi, took place at the MESA Convention on Monday, November 19, 2007, and was a great success. The Thematic Conversation will be continued at the 2008 MESA Convention, this time comparing constitutionalism and the rule of law in Iran and Egypt. Participants of the thematic conversation will be Mehrzad Boroujerdi, Farideh Farhi, Mehrangiz Kar, Atef Said, Samer Shehata, and Joshua Stacher.

Unlike last year, ASPS did not sponsor any regular sessions at the MESA 2007 Convention. This is a pity because the ASPS-sponsored sessions were very successful in the past, and we would like to continue them in order to maintain the ASPS presence at MESA. Parvaneh Pourshariati has kindly agreed to chair the Organization and Programs Committee. Please send her proposals at pourshariati.1@osu.edu for sessions at MESA, ISIS and other professional conventions.

Our Central Eurasia Research Fund (CERF) has been replenished by a generous private donation and continues to be directed by Jo-Ann Gross.

The Travel Fellowship Program continues with the full support of the Open Society Institute. It made seven awards in 2007, five of which were taken up as follows:

- Ali-Akbar Jafari (for his presentation at the European Conference of the Association for Consumer Research at Bocconi University in Milan, July 2007)
- Ishtiaq Ahmad Zilli (for participation at the ASPS Convention in Tblisi, June 2007)
- Kaveh Ehsani (for his presentations at the Stony Brook Institute of Global Studies, 11/15/07, and Middle East Studies Association Convention, 11/18/07)
- Fateme Sadeghi (for her presentation at Middle East Studies Association Convention, November 17-20, 2007) &
- Abdolali Rezaei (for his presentations at the Stony Brook Institute of Global Studies, 11/15/07, and Middle East Studies Association Convention, 11/18/07)

Finally, following this *Newsletter*, we will have an interim election for the vacant position of the Graduate Student member on the Board of Directors. There are three candidates whose biographies you can read further below.

Saïd Amir Arjomand
ASPS President

Call for Papers
Fourth ASPS Convention
Lahore, Pakistan, Feb 26 - March 2, 2009

Call for Paper and Panel Proposals
Deadline: September 30, 2008

We are pleased to announce the ASPS Fourth Biennial Convention, which will take place from February 27-March 1, 2009 in Lahore, Pakistan. Local excursions on March 2, 2009 will be optional.

Lahore is the cultural center of Pakistan and the Mughal ruler Jahangir's capital in the 17th century. The city boasts some of the wonders of Islamic architecture, in-

cluding Shahi Qila (the Lahore Fort), Badshahi Mosque, Shalimar Gardens, and the buildings of the old, walled city. Not far away from Lahore is the prehistoric site of Harappa, the ancient city of the Indus Valley Civilization.

We look forward to an exciting fourth convention. Our first biennial convention took place in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, in September 2002, with the cooperation of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Tajikistan, the Rudaki Institute of Language and Literature, and the National Commission of UNESCO, Tajikistan. The Dushanbe Conference brought together over 80 scholars from thirteen countries. ASPS's second biennial convention, on "Society, History and Culture in the Persianate World," in Yerevan, Armenia in 2004, brought together 90 scholars from 18 countries. During the third conference in Tblisi, Georgia in June 2007 at the Iv. Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University and the Tsereteli Institute of Oriental Studies, the ASPS opened its new branch office at the Institute of Oriental Studies.

The conferences have provided a rare and valued opportunity for scholars from West, Central and South Asia, Europe and North America to participate in an interdisciplinary dialogue. The interchange of ideas has also found its place in our publication, *Journal of Persianate Societies*.

Tentative Program

Thursday, Feb 26:

Registration: 9:00- 16:00
Presidential Address: 16:30-18:00
Reception: 18:00- 20:00

Friday- Sunday, Feb 27- March 1: 24 Regular Sessions at 2-hour intervals, beginning at 9:00AM, with coffee and lunch breaks, two concurrent sessions in each two-hour period.

Sunday, March 1: Banquet

Monday, March 2: Excursions (Optional)

All submissions in humanities and social sciences related to Persianate Societies are welcome. We encourage pre-organized panels, but also welcome individual papers.

Submissions for pre-organized panels must include a panel abstract of no more than 300 words plus individual abstracts of no more than 300 words for each of five panelists. Panels must be limited to a minimum of three panelists and a maximum of five. Panels and individual abstracts must contain a clearly stated thesis.

Paper and panel proposals should be sent to:

Dr. Shahzad Bashir
sbashir@stanford.edu

In addition, proposals from Iran should be sent to Dr. Habib Borjian at hb146@columbia.edu

Elections for the Student Member of the ASPS Board

Ballots for the election of one student member to the ASPS board of directors will be sent out electronically at the end of March. Below are the biographies of candidates who kindly agreed to serve if elected:

Roja Fazaeli is a doctoral candidate in International Human Rights Law at the Irish Centre for Human Rights, National University of Ireland, Galway. Her thesis is a study of women's rights in Iran, comparing and critiquing International human rights law and Islamic law. Roja is the recipient of the Government of Ireland scholarship for Humanities and Social Sciences. She has been a visiting scholar to the Feminist Legal Theory Project at the Emory School of Law, Atlanta, GA, and the Institute for the Study of Women and Gender (IRWaG) at Columbia University, New York. In 2006, Roja served as the human rights trainer for Amnesty International, Irish Section. She has also worked as a consultant to Frontline (Defenders of Human Rights Defenders) and several NGOs in Iran. Roja was the chair of South-West Asia Millennium Development Goals Youth Leadership Initiative with the United Nations. She is a member of the executive committee of UNIFEM Ireland and the former secretary. She is also one of the co-founders and was the vice-president of the Iranian Society of Ireland.

Elham Seyedsayamdoust is a PhD student in Political Science currently at the Graduate Center, City University of New York, and from September 2008 on will be Political Science PhD student at Columbia University. She is the recipient of an ERP-Scholarship awarded to outstanding young scholars by the German National Academic Foundation and German Ministry of Economy and Technology to pursue her graduate studies in the United States. Elham's research interests include social movements and democratization processes, comparative politics of authoritarian regimes, and state-society relations. Before embarking on her doctoral studies and after having received a Master degree of International Affairs at SIPA of Columbia University, Elham worked at the United Nations on poverty reduction and public health policies in New York and Nepal. She also worked in the Middle East and North Africa division of the World Bank focusing on gender and economic policy. In addition, Elham has volunteered in the Middle East Division of Human Rights Watch in New York and at Amnesty International in Cape Town. She holds a BA in International Relations and International Economics from the American University of Paris.

Rudy Jaafar is a Lebanese-Canadian PhD candidate at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University, where he is researching Iranian-Saudi relations and the international politics of the Persian Gulf region.

Rudy's interests in Iran, its history, and politics began following an extended visit to the country in 2001. Rudy has since returned to Iran to pursue language studies and conduct research. Rudy was a lecturer at the Department of Political Studies and Public Administration at the American University of Beirut in 2005-2006. Additionally, Rudy is co-founder and currently serves on the board of Nahwa al-Muwatiniya (Towards Citizenship), one of Lebanon's most active civil society organizations working to promote greater transparency, accountability, and reform in government.

Journal of Persianate Studies

ASPS welcomes papers from members and other scholars for the *Journal of Persianate Studies*. Please send your submissions to:

Said Amir Arjomand, Editor-in-Chief
said.arjomand@stonybrook.edu

The journal publishes articles on the culture and civilization of the geographical area where Persian has historically been the dominant language or a major cultural force, encompassing Iran, Afghanistan and Tajikistan, as well as the Caucasus, Central Asia, the Indian Subcontinent, and parts of the former Ottoman Empire. Its focus on the linguistic, cultural and historical role and influence of Persian culture and Iranian civilization in this area is based on a recognition that knowledge flows from pre-existing facts but is also constructed and thus helps shape the present reality of the Persianate world. Such knowledge can mitigate the leveling effects of globalization as well as counteract the distortions of the area's common historical memory and civilizational continuity by the divisive forces of modern nationalism and imperialism.

For details on the current issue, please see the president's address above.

Editorial Board

- Iraj Afshar, Tehran
- Oleg Akimushkin, Institute of Oriental Studies, St. Petersburg
- Sajida Alvi, McGill University
- Muzaffar Alam, The University of Chicago
- Garnik Asatrian, Yerevan State University
- Grigol Beradze, Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University
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- Houchang Chehabi, Boston University
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- Bert Fagner, Austrian Academy of Sciences
- Jo-Ann Gross, The College of New Jersey
- Edmund Herzig, Oxford University
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- Charles P. Melville, Cambridge University
- Sheldon Pollock, Columbia University
- Hasan Rezaei Baghbidi, University of Tehran
- Sunil Sharma, Boston University
- Asom Urunbaev, Academy of Sciences of the Republic Uzbekistan
- Ishtiyag Ahmad Zilli, Aligarh Muslim University

**ASPS at MESA 2007:
Building Linkages between
Civil Society and Constitutionalism**

The ASPS sponsored a thematic conversation at the 41st annual meeting of the Middle East Studies Association held in Montreal (November 17-20, 2007). The panel, organized by Mirjam Künkler (Princeton University), was titled "Building Linkages between Civil Society and Constitutionalism in Iran," and featured Ardechir Amir-Arjomand (Shahid Beheshti University), Kaveh Ehsani (University of Illinois at Chicago), Ali Rezaei (University of Calgary), Fatemeh Sadeghi (University of Tehran) as participants and Mehrzad Boroujerdi (Syracuse University) as conversation leader.

In his paper titled "The Challenge of the Rule of Law in Iran," Dr. Amir-Arjomand argued that the true challenge facing Iran in the 21st century is the re-building, reconstruction and renovation of the legal order on the basis of the rule of law and human rights. The paper went on to point out how the unclear nature of the hierarchy of legal norms and the ineffective implementation of the principal of judicial review has undermined the power of the Iranian legal system.

Dr. Ehsani provided an account of the history and problems of privatization in post-revolutionary Iran in a paper titled "Survival through Dispossession: Privatization of Public Goods in the Islamic Republic". He argued that the confusion between what is considered "public property" and what is "state property" has enabled the state to sell off "public properties" as part of its privatization drive. However, far from being the golden key that can solve Iran's monumental economic problems, Ehsani maintained that § 44 of the Constitution that lays out the contours of the privatization policy will bring about neither social justice nor result in the proclaimed "economic revolution."

Dr. Sadeghi critically entertained the idea of "civil society," which became the most important slogan of the Iranian reformist discourse under President Khatami. In a paper titled "The Iranian 'Civil Society by Proxy' in Impasse," she argued that the reformist government's attitude towards civil society organizations was very "supervisory" as it expected them to be docile apparatuses at the service of an inefficient government bureaucracy. Dr.

Sadeghi maintained that by encouraging some elements of civil society activism while silencing others (i.e., social movements, non-elitist organizations, unions, and syndicates), the reformist discourse of civil society unintentionally created the potential spaces for the opponents of that very discourse to undermine it. Finally, in "Politics without Social Representation,"

Dr. Rezaei argued that while in the early 1990s the concept of civil society, was used by both secular and religious pro-democracy intellectuals as a theoretical tool of analyzing state-society relations, and as a weapon in political mobilization, during the reform period it was glorified in media discourses as an 'ideal' future state that has to be 'created' through reformed behaviour of the formal political actors, i.e. the state, its coercive organs and, to a lesser degree, formal political parties. This glorification and idealization redirected the gaze from the real realm of everyday-life situations- where people experience injustice and repression to the realm of formal politics and media campaigns. This type of discourse and its corresponding politics in turn turned more and more into a contestation among elite groups present at the formal polity level, their media outlets and (mainly) their proxies in universities and within the coercive organs of the state. The panel drew a good crowd and was nicely received.

- Mehrzad Boroujerdi

**ASPS at ISIS 2008:
Vistas of Iranian Oikoumene in the Late
Antique and Medieval Period**

The ASPS is sponsoring a panel at ISIS 2008, titled "Vistas of Iranian Oikoumene in the Late Antique and Medieval Period".

Panel Abstract: Under the rubric of Vistas of the Iranian Oikoumene from Late Antiquity to the Medieval Period, this panel highlights the dynamic and widespread nature of Iranian culture. From an examination of the Iranian apocalyptic world views in their diachronic context, to the continued influence of Iranian cultural traditions on Armenian mystical texts; to the role of the Iranian aristocracy in the Eastern Syriac hagiographical literature, the syncretistic dimensions of the coinage of Fars in the Umayyad period, and the role of the Parthian aristocracy in the Arab conquest of Iran, the papers in this panel provide evidence for a broader and more deeply influential Persianate culture throughout the region than is commonly acknowledged in current research.

Panelists include Parvaneh Pourshariati (OSU), Dan D.Y. Shapira (Bar Ilan University), Richard Payne (Princeton University), Rika Gyselen (CMRS), James Russell (Harvard University). Carlo Cereti will be functioning as the discussant to the panel.

Travel Fellowship Program

Our Travel Fellowship Program is supported by a generous grant from the Open Society Institute through 2008. We are currently accepting applications for travel fellowships.

Qualifications: Applicants from Iran, Afghanistan, and Tajikistan who are engaged in teaching or research in the humanities or social sciences, and have a formal invitation or acceptance of a paper from an academic institution or sponsors of a conference in the United States, may submit (1) a letter explaining the research, the title of the paper, and details of the conference; (2) a letter of acceptance from the conference, and; (3) a *curriculum vitae* to:

Houchang Esfandiari Chehabi
Professor of International Relations and History
Department of International Relations
Boston University
154 Bay State Road #401
Boston, Massachusetts 02215
chehabi@bu.edu

Please Note: The Travel Fellowship Program will reimburse only against original receipts for expenses including travel, lodging, meals, and conference registration. The limit is \$3,000. Those who receive travel fellowships agree to write a report of their travel and to submit a copy of the paper delivered.

The Central Eurasia Research Fund (CERF)

ASPS is happy to announce that we are again accepting CERF grant applications. The deadlines for receipt of electronic submissions are June 15, 2008 and January 15, 2009. The dates of the announcement of awards are August 1, 2008 and March 1, 2009. The award period is for one year.

CERF grants support research and publications concerning Persianate culture by individual scholars from Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Northwest China.

Eligibility: a minimum degree equivalent to a B.A. Grantees may only reapply for a CERF Grant after five years from the receipt of a previous CERF award.

Grants *do not exceed US \$1500* and provide funding for the following:

- Book or monograph publication costs (includes translations from English)
- Technical equipment necessary for specific research projects, such as computers, printers, scanners, voice recorders, or digital cameras

- Travel expenses for archival research that will result in a scholarly publication

Selection: Awards made twice a year. An ASPS evaluation committee reviews applications. Every effort is made to provide regional balance in the distribution of grants based on:

- Importance of the topic
- Academic merit of the proposed project
- Demonstrated career commitment to the field
- Feasibility of the project
- Potential impact of the research
- Adequate academic and professional experience of the candidate

CERF candidates must submit an electronic application in MS Word format to the Director of the CERF program, Dr. Jo-Ann Gross, at gross@tcnj.edu with the following required information:

1. Name and address, email address, fax number
2. Place and date of birth
3. Citizenship
4. Institutional name and address
5. Research field or discipline
6. Highest degree obtained
7. Title and description of research proposal (1-2 pages) that includes objectives and potential impact of research and/or publication
8. Budget (included detailed account of specific expenses)

Please keep a copy of the application requirements for your records and check off each category prior to application submission. Incomplete applications will be invalidated.

Award and Final Report: Grant recipients must submit a written report and two copies of any publication resulting from the award within two months of the award completion period. The report must include the following:

- Name of project and objectives
- Extent to which the objectives were met
- Impact of project
- Receipts of all expenses

Final reports, including receipts of all expenses, must be remitted at the end of the project period in order for the Research Fund to meet its own internal accounting requirements that ensure the Research Fund's continued operation.

Member News and Announcements

Said Amir Arjomand has edited 'Constitutional Politics in the Middle East,' with special reference to Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan.

This book is the first comparative and interdisciplinary study of constitutional politics and constitution-making in the Middle East. The historical background and setting

are fully explored in two substantial essays by Linda Darling and Saïd Amir Arjomand, placing the contemporary experience in the contexts, respectively, of the ancient Middle Eastern legal and political tradition and of the nineteenth and twentieth century legal codification and political modernization. These are followed by Ann Mayer's general analysis of the treatment of human rights in relation to Islam in Middle Eastern constitutions, and Nathan Brown's comparative scrutiny of the process of constitution-making in Iran, Afghanistan and Iraq with reference to the available constitutional theories which are shown to throw little or no light on it.

The remaining essays are country by country case studies of Turkey, Afghanistan and Iraq, the case of Iran having been covered by Arjomand as the special point of reference. Mehmet Fevzi Bilgin examines the making and subsequent transformation of the Turkish Constitution of 1982 against current theories of constitutional and deliberative democracy, while Hootan Shambayati examines the institutional mechanism for protecting the ideological foundations of the Turkish Republic, most notably the Turkish Constitutional Court, which offers a surprising parallel to the Iranian Council of Guardians. Arjomand's introduction brings together the bumpy experience of the Middle East along the long road to political reconstruction through constitution-making and constitutional reform, drawing some general analytical lessons from it. He also shows the consequences of the fact that the constitutions of Turkey and Iran had their origins in revolutions, and those of Afghanistan and Iraq, in war and foreign invasion.

Hart Publishing Ltd is pleased to offer ASPS members 20% discount on each copy (Discount Reference: ASPS08). The following link will take you to the page for this book:

<http://www.hartpub.co.uk/books/search.asp?s=arjomand&st=1>

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Parvaneh Pourshariati has completed "DECLINE AND FALL OF THE SASANIAN EMPIRE - The Sasanian-Parthian Confederacy and the Arab Conquest of Iran"

Forthcoming from I. B. Tauris, May 2008

<http://www.palgrave-usa.com/catalog/product.aspx?isbn=1845116453>

Decline and Fall of the Sasanian Empire has already been praised as one of the most intellectually exciting books about ancient Persia to have been published for years. It proposes a convincing contemporary answer to an age-old mystery and conundrum: why, in the seventh century CE, did the seemingly powerful and secure Sasanian empire of Persia succumb so quickly and disastrously to the all-conquering Arab armies of Islam? Offering an impressive appraisal of the Sasanians' nemesis at the hands of the Arab forces which scythed all before them, the author suggests a bold solution to the enigma. On the face of it, the collapse of the Sasanians--given their strength and imperial power in the earlier part of the

century--looks startling and inexplicable. But Professor Pourshariati explains their fall in terms of an earlier corrosion and decline, and as a result of their own internal weaknesses. The decentralized dynastic system of the Sasanian empire, whose backbone was a Sasanian-Parthian alliance, contained the seeds of its own destruction. This confederacy soon became unstable, and its degeneration sealed the fate of a doomed dynasty.

* * *

Mehdi Semati has published an edited volume entitled "Media, Culture and Society in Iran: Living with Globalization and the Islamic State" (Routledge, 2008).

<http://www.routledge.com/books/Media-Culture-and-Society-in-Iran-isbn9780415772167>

Table of contents:

Living with globalization and the Islamic state: an introduction to media, culture, and society in Iran (Mehdi Semati) Section I: New and Old Media in Iran 1. The Iranian press, state and civil society (Gholam Khiabany) 2. The politics of the Internet in Iran (Babak Rahimi) 3. Youth, politics, and media habits in Iran (Kavous Seyyed-Emami) 4. The language of rock: Iranian youth, popular music, and national identity (Laudan Nooshin) 5. The politics of satellite television in Iran (Fardin Alikhah) 6. The Iranian moral panic over video: A brief history and a policy analysis (Mahmood Shahabi) 7. Sociolinguistic aspects of Persian advertising in post-revolutionary Iran (Mohammad Amouzadeh, Manoochehr Tavangar) 8. Trends in contemporary Persian poetry (Alireza Anushiravani, Kavous Hassanli) 9. Iranian émigré cinema as a component of Iranian national cinema (Hamid Naficy) 10. Iranian cinema and the critique of absolutism (Zohreh T. Sullivan) Section II: Religion, State, and Culture 11. Fundamentalism, gender, and the discourses of veiling (Hijab) in contemporary Iran (Fatemeh Sadeghi) 12. Religious intellectualism, globalization, and social transformation in Iran (Abbas Varij Kazemi) 13. Secularization in the Iranian society (Yousef Ali Abazari, Abbas Varij Kazemi, Mehdi Faraji) Section III: Epilogue 14. Whither Iran? (Majid Tehranian).

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Rosemary Stanfield-Johnson published "Yuzbashi-yi Kurd Bacheh and 'Abd al-Mu'min Khan the Uzbek: A Tale of Revenge in the *Dastan* of Husayn-i Kurd," *Murraqqa'e Sharqi*, Soussie Kerman-Rastegar and Anna Vanzan, (eds), Dogana: AIEP Editore S.r.l., 2007, pp. 165-179. **And** "Discovering India through the Fulbright Experience," in *Beyond Boundaries: Reflections of Indian and U.S. Scholars*, Zeeshan-ul-hassan Usmani and Ghosh, Nibir K. (eds) New York, Lincoln, Shanghai: iUniverse, Inc., April 2007, pp. 473-482.

Conferences and Exhibitions

NYC Exhibition **Wishes and Dreams: Iran's New Generation Emerges.**

New York Academy of Art is hosting a new exhibition of Iranian art which focuses on young, emerging artists currently at work in Iran. Titled **Wishes and Dreams: Iran's New Generation Emerges**, the exhibition features the work of 30 young artists, between the ages of 22 and 40. It includes examples of some of the major trends coming onto the vibrant young art scene in Iran today, including abstraction, portraiture, minimalism, and installation and video art. The many galleries in Tehran are actively introducing the emerging generation in new shows that open weekly.

Much of their art is about dreams of the past or of the future. They seem to look to their own past and to their historic heritage, its symbols and beliefs, wanting to preserve it, while also being concerned and anxious about their individual and collective future. These artists reflect Iran's large young population—the generation of tomorrow—in this country of contradictions and deep-rooted cultural pride.

Wishes and Dreams is on view at the New York Academy of Art, 111 Franklin Street (between Church Street and West Broadway), March 5 – April 2, 2008, daily 2:00-7:00 PM. Closed Easter Sunday. Panel discussion with Iranian-American artists on Tuesday, March 25, 2008, 6:30PM. A catalogue accompanies the exhibit. For more information, please contact Topher Ziobro topher@nyaa.edu, 212-966-0300 x110.

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Intensive Course on Middle Iranian Philology at Princeton University

Over the last few years, the Near Eastern Studies Department at Princeton University has organized a series of short, intensive courses on topics not normally taught on campus: Arabic manuscripts, Islamic coins, and Arabic papyri. In each case, an internationally recognized expert has been brought in to teach the course over a period of five weekdays during the midterm break.

This coming spring we plan to offer such a course on Middle Iranian philology. The instructor will be Professor Nicholas Sims-Williams of the School of Oriental and African Studies in the University of London, and he will teach the course Monday to Friday, March 17-21, 2008.

Middle Iranian is the phase in the development of the Iranian languages that roughly coincides with late antiquity and the early Islamic period. The best-known Middle Iranian literary language is Middle Persian; others are Parthian, Sogdian, Khwarazmian, Bactrian, and Khotanese. Only a few experts have a thorough knowledge of

these languages, but anyone with a serious interest in the history of the eastern Mediterranean world, the Sasanian Empire, the Caliphate, and Central Asia in the centuries before and after the rise of Islam can benefit considerably by knowing something *about* these languages and the texts written in them. Students with a basic knowledge of Persian or another modern Iranian language will be particularly well-placed to benefit from this course.

The course is open to graduate students at Princeton and other universities. As in past years, we hope to be able to extend some assistance to students from out of town with respect to the expenses of travel and accommodation. For more information, please contact Michael Cook, mcook@princeton.edu

* * *

Social Positioning and Every Day Life in Qajar Persia. The Eighth Annual Conference of the International Qajar Studies Association will be held **June 4 – 7, 2008**, in the Netherlands.

Conference Locations: Wednesday June 4, at the [International Institute of Social History](http://www.internationalinstituteofsocialhistory.nl), Cruquiusweg 31, Amsterdam (Tel: + 31 20 6685866). Thursday and Friday, June 5-6, at [Leiden University in the Research School CNWS building](http://www.leidenuniv.nl/researchschool), Nonnensteeg 1-3, Leiden (Tel: +31 (0)71 5272171). Saturday, June 7, Rotterdam (optional). For further information please visit <http://www.qajarstudies.org/IQSAEvents.html>

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CALL FOR PAPERS

International Conference

"Iran and the Caucasus: Unity and Diversity"

June 6 – 8, 2008 Yerevan, Armenia

ARYA International University (Yerevan) and the Caucasian Centre for Iranian Studies (Yerevan), in collaboration with the Armenian Association for Academic Partnership and Support (ARMACAD), are organising an international conference entitled "Iran and the Caucasus: Unity and Diversity" on the problems of Irano-Caucasica.

Once being a part of Eranshahr, the Caucasus with its ethnical, linguistic and cultural diversity and uniqueness still preserves the elements of the Iranian cultural heritage. The Irano-Caucasian geographical domain covers contemporary Iran, Iraq, Armenia, the Republic of Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Northern Caucasus, Eastern Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan and those of the Central Asian countries, which have experienced the strong cultural and political influence of Iran. The conference will address and seek to answer mainly to the following questions: What were the main principles of cultural unity and diversity in this huge area? How and in what capacity the cultural interactions were taking place? How were the literary motifs in the region reflecting on each other? What is the cultural future of the region? What are the modes of peaceful coexistence of different

civilisations and cultures? Scholars and postgraduate students are invited to submit papers and panel proposals relating to all aspects of humanities and social sciences on Irano-Caucasica, including: 1. Peoples and their Identities, Ethnic and National Diversity: Minorities and their Rights; 2. History of the Iranian and Caucasian Peoples (Ancient, Medieval and Modern); 3. Literatures and Languages, Folklore, Textology; 4. Armenia as a Bridge between Iran and the Caucasus; 5. Economic and Political Problems and Challenges, Geopolitics of the Irano-Caucasian Region: Interdisciplinary Approach; 6. History of Religion: Religion, Including Ethno-Confessional Groups (the Yezidies, Alavites, Russian Sectarians, etc.); 7. Archaeology, Anthropology, and Sociology; 8. Caspian Region: Past, Present, Future; 9. The Cultural and Political Future of the Region.

DEADLINE: Abstracts (not exceeding 500 words) are to be emailed by April 1, 2009 to: IranoCaucasica@armacad.org, iranist@yahoo.co.uk (please send to the mentioned two addresses simultaneously). A brief CV including contact details is to be included in the message.

A notification about acceptance of the papers will be sent due to April 15, 2008. Pre-organised panels should be thematically coherent and should include title, abstracts, details of panel chair and participants. The scheduled time for each paper will be 15 minutes plus 5 minutes for discussion. The working language of the Conference is English. The conference papers are planned to be published in a separate volume. For the scholars coming from the region there will be limited funding to cover some travel expenses.

Confirmed speakers thus far include Prof. Dr. Garnik Asatrian (Yerevan), Prof. Dr. Uwe Blaesing (Leiden), Prof. Dr. Aldo Ferrari (Venice), Prof. Dr. Bert Fagner (Vienna), Prof. Dr. Murtazali Gadjiev (Makhachkala), Prof. Dr. Jamshid Giunashvili (Tbilisi), Prof. Dr. Ralph Kauz (Vienna), Prof. Dr. Vladimir A. Livshits (St. Petersburg), Prof. Dr. Hayrapet Margarian (Yerevan), Dr. Mohammad Mousavi (Tehran), Prof. Dr. James Russell (Harvard), Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Schulze (Munich), Prof. Dr. Martin Schwartz (Berkley), Prof. Dr. Giusto Traina (Rouen), Prof. Dr. Fereydu Vahman (Copenhagen), Prof. Dr. Levon Zekiyani (Venice)

For information on Armenian visa please visit: <http://www.armeniaforeignministry.com/consular/visa.html>

Participation fee:

The conference participation fee is 70 Euros and reduced rate of 30 Euros for postgraduate students.

Participants from the Caucasus and Central Asia do not pay any participation fee.

Accommodation and Meals

The Organizing Committee of the conference will try to provide all the participants with accommodation for the days of the conference. More information about this will appear in the next Circulars. Breakfast, lunch and dinner

will be provided for the guests. Two coffee breaks will be possible during the conference days. For the first and the last days of the conference respective banquets will be given for the participants free of charge.

Book Exhibition

Publishers and individuals are invited to present their books during the days of the conference. A special place in the conference building will be provided for this exhibition. For more information please contact the organisers.

Excursions

At the end of each conference day a small excursion will be organised for the participants. It is planned to visit the pagan temple of Garni, the Geghard monastery as well as Ejmiatsin.

Further information on the conference will appear on www.armacad.org For any further information do not hesitate to contact: Dr. Khachik Gevorgyan, Secretary of the Organizing Committee iranist@yahoo.co.uk ARYA International University Shahamiryanneri street, 18/2 Yerevan Armenia Tel: +374 (10) 44-35-85 Fax: +374 (10) 44-23-07 www.arya.am Email: arya@arminco.com

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Visual Representations of Iran University of St Andrews, Scotland June 13-16, 2008

A conference, film season and photographic exhibition that aims to interpret and theorise visual representations of Iran in ethnographic, documentary and feature films, as well as other visual art forms.

www.st-andrews.ac.uk/anthropologyiran

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The **Seventh ISIS Biennial Conference** will be held in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, July 31 - August 3, 2008, at the Park Hyatt Hotel <<http://parktoronto.hyatt.com>>.

An exceptionally rich conference is planned with many cultural events. It will feature a large selection of scholarly panels, a historic symphonic orchestra performance with Shahnamah-khani and pardah-khani, a dance performance, a film festival, an art exhibition, and a book exhibit. Program Chair: Mohamad Tavakoli-Targhi <<http://mtavakoli.com>>

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The **1st International Conference on Languages and Dialects in Iran** will be held Tuesday, October 28 – 31, 2008, at the University of Sistan and Baluchestan, Zahedan, Iran. <http://www.lingfil.uu.se/info/ldiran08.html>

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Employment

Middle Eastern History. The History Faculty at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology seek applications for a lecturer to teach four Middle Eastern history subjects for the academic year 2008-2009: Islam, the Middle East, and the West; The Middle East in the Twentieth Century; Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict; and Nation, Faith, and Gender in the Modern Middle East. This position is renewable up to three years. Ph.D. is preferred. Teaching experience required. Please submit a letter of application, an official transcript, curriculum vitae, and three letters of recommendation by Friday, March 28, 2008. MIT is an EO/AA employer.

Contact Info:

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Phone: 617-253-9846
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Email: mchin@mit.edu
Website: <http://web.mit.edu/history/www/>

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The Institute for European Studies of the Université Libre de Bruxelles invites applications for a **Chair in the History of Europe and the Muslim World**. The position is initially for a one term period of six months (2008-2009), but framed in the ambition to develop a full-time and tenured position in this field. The teaching consists of four MA courses (History of the Ottoman Empire; History and Culture of the Arab World; Europe and the wider world: historical perspectives; Europe and the wider world: contemporary debates), which can be taught in French or English. Candidates should have a PhD in a related discipline, command of Arabic, Persian and/or Turkish and a recognized record of scholarship in the field. For further particulars, please consult: http://www.ulb.ac.be/docs/greffe/vacances/academique/index_14.html

Or contact the chairman of the search committee Prof. Pieter Lagrou at plagrou@ulb.ac.be

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The School of Humanities and Languages at the University of Western Sydney, Australia, invites applications for the positions of **Professor and Associate Professor of Islamic Studies**. The positions require expertise in Islamic religion and political and social theory. Preference may be given to applicants who also have expertise in globalization, the modern state, youth cultures and/or human rights. The successful applicants will make a significant contribution to the

development of the research programs of The National Centre of Excellence in Islamic Studies within the School of Humanities and Languages and College of Arts.

Applicants for the position of Professor or Associate Professor are required to have a doctoral qualification and to have attained international recognition as an eminent authority with an outstanding track record of high quality publications and funded research projects. The successful applicants will be expected to provide leadership in teaching and research for academic staff across relevant disciplines within the School, and to develop teams and international links for externally funded, collaborative research projects. The successful applicants will make a significant contribution to the recruitment and supervision of Honours and postgraduate research students.

The School of Humanities and Languages is committed to offering students programs of study based on a research-teaching nexus that addresses contemporary challenges in a rapidly changing environment. The School's teaching and research intersects with areas of expertise within the National Centre of Excellence in Islamic Studies.

Information about the positions and the application process can be accessed at: <http://pubapps.uws.edu.au/vacancies/>
Enquiries: Professor Nancy Wright, +61 2 9772 6103
email: nancy.wright@uws.edu.au

Editorial Notes

Membership inquiries, including change of address, should be addressed to:

Said Amir Arjomand
Department of Sociology
SUNY
Stony Brook, New York 11794-4356
said.arjomand@stonybrook.edu

Suggestions for future panels or programs to be sponsored by the ASPS may be sent to the following:

- Dr. Said Amir Arjomand
said.arjomand@stonybrook.edu
- Dr. Parvaneh Pourshariati
pourshariati.1@osu.edu
- Dr. Shahzad Bashir
sbashir@stanford.edu

The deadline for the next issue is **September 15, 2008**. Calls for papers and other time-sensitive news of professional meetings, if submitted promptly, will be posted on the website. Please send your news and all items of professional interest to Mirjam Künkler, kuenkler@princeton.edu.

ASPS Membership Application

Please enroll as a new member or renew your membership by returning the form below to

Professor S.A. Arjomand, ASPS President
Department of Sociology
SUNY,
Stony Brook, NY 11794-4356

Please **renew my membership**

enroll me as a

regular (\$35)

student (\$15)

institutional (\$75)

member of the Association for the Study of Persianate Societies.

Enclosed please find check cash.

(Please type or print all information.)

NAME: _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____

EMAIL: _____

FIELD OF INTEREST (Please mark no more than 2): Anthropology; History;
 Linguistics; Literature; Political Science; Sociology; Other (specify): _____

Check here if you would prefer to receive the semiannual *ASPS Newsletter* by US mail. (If this is not checked, the *ASPS Newsletter* will be sent to you by email.)