

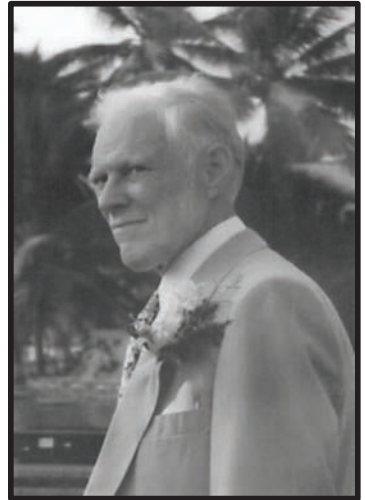
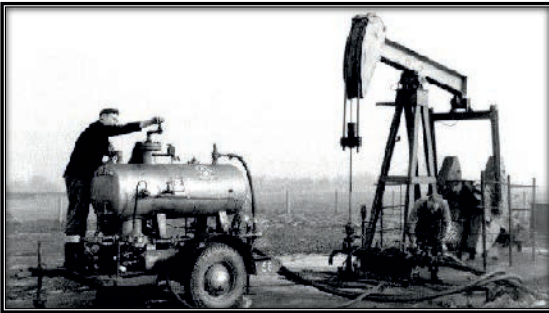
The British Institute of Persian Studies



مؤسسه ایرانشناسی بریتانیا

Annual Report

April 2016 to March 2017



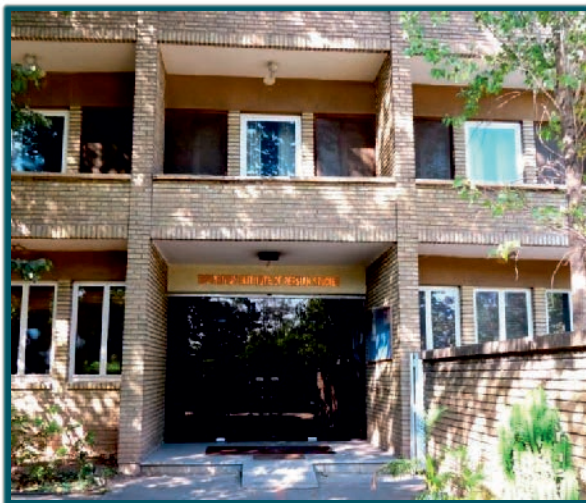
ABOUT THE INSTITUTE

Celebrating its fiftieth anniversary in 2011, the British Institute of Persian Studies is the UK's foremost learned society dedicated to the study and research of Iran's heritage and culture, including its languages, literature, arts, peoples and archaeology. Sponsored by the British Academy, the Institute is a self-governing Fellowship of distinguished scholars drawn from all areas of the humanities and social sciences within Iranian studies. Our fundamental purpose is to promote and support excellence in research on Iran and the Persianate world. Since its foundation in 1961, the Institute has played an important role in sustaining the academic vitality and increasing the visibility of the field, promoting greater public understanding and knowledge of Iran and campaigning for greater provision for its study in institutions of higher learning.

The Institute has approximately 300 members from around the world including Iran. Its remit is Iran and the wider Persianate world, prioritizing those territories that have been historically associated with Persian and Iranian culture and language: Iran, Afghanistan, Central Asia, Transcaucasia, Iraq, the Persian Gulf littoral, and South Asia. In terms of subject coverage, BIPS concentrates on research projects drawn from disciplines in the humanities and social sciences, including but not limited to: Anthropology, Archaeology, Art, Classics, Cultural Studies, History, Language, Linguistics, Politics, Religious Studies, and Sociology.

The Institute's activities are varied and numerous: they include the biannual awarding of publication subventions and grants for study, research and travel; the organizing of fellowships for Iranian scholars as well as university exchanges and study days, and residential and evening Persian language courses. The Institute arranges an extensive programme of seminars, lectures and symposia, as well as exclusive Members' events, recitals and celebrations in the UK. It publishes a journal, IRAN, and a specialised publication series.

The Institute occupies purpose-built premises in northern Tehran which were designed by Reza Khazeni in 1976. The building houses an extensive library that now exceeds 40,000 English and Persian language volumes, journals and periodicals as well as epigraphic material, maps, photographic and fieldwork archives, a unique resource that is open to Iranian students, scholars and members of the general public. The Institute and its facilities remains one of the few Western Institutes to continue to operate in Iran. The library contains the largest collection of English language books anywhere in the country and is considered a major asset by Iranian scholars.



ANNUAL REPORT *April 2016 to March 2017*

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Professor Ali Ansari FRAS FRSE FBIPS

We have continued in 2016 to build upon the reforms and changes we embarked on in 2014/15, shifting our focus from the administration in London to the hostel in Tehran with a view to completing the refurbishment of the facilities and moving as swiftly as possible towards a fully operational status. To this end our staff in Tehran, under the supervision of our non-resident Hon. Director, Dr Vesta Sarkhosh Curtis, have worked tirelessly to improve the facilities and make them available to scholars more frequently throughout the working week. Moreover, we have successfully reached Memoranda of Understanding with several Iranian institutions, including the Cultural Heritage Organisation. Progress is slower than we might all like, but progress is being made.

Changes continue to be made in London with the ongoing digitization of our administration, with a new website and membership facilities. The most obvious difference has been a change in nomenclature with respect to our relationship with the British Academy. We are no longer part of BASIS – British Academy Sponsored Institute and Societies, which has been replaced by BIRI – British International Research Institutes. The nature of the relationship itself, remains close and constructive, although in terms of funding the BA is keen to move towards a position in which our core funding will be incrementally reduced to be replaced by additional funds that can be bid for by all the schools and Institutes. This will introduce an element of competitiveness and greater accountability for the BA and ultimately for its own reporting to BEIS. But these changes will be modest and be rolled out over several years.

By the end of 2016 we finally transitioned to Taylor and Francis for the production of our journal *IRAN*, which will now be available online to members as well as in hardcopy. This has been a major move for us and my thanks go to the editorial team, especially Dr Lloyd Ridgeon and Dr Cameron Petrie for all their hard work in managing this process through to a successful completion.

The most significant change we will face as we head into 2017 will be the retirement of our brilliant (and occasionally stoic) secretary Jane Gillespie. It is a testament to Jane's overhaul of the administration that when she broke her wrist and had to be signed off work, her replacement was able to steer the ship with the minimum of fuss and little disruption to our activities. I had mentioned to Jane that had she knocked her head rather than her wrist I may have been able to persuade her to postpone her liberation from the travails of work. Sadly (for us), she remained in firm retention of all her faculties and my attempts failed pitifully. I know I speak on behalf of the entire Council when I offer Jane heartfelt thanks for all her hard work on behalf of BIPS and wish her the very best for the future.

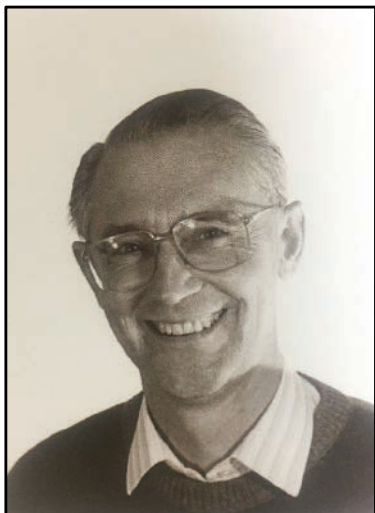


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OBITUARY

Michael Harverson

Professor David Morgan, BIPS Honorary Vice President, writes



Michael Harverson, a member of BIPS for many years, died on 2 March 2017. He was born in 1937, and spent his official career as a schoolteacher. For some time in the 1960s, he taught at the CMS School in Isfahan. Then, in 1967, he joined the staff of Watford Boys’ Grammar School as a teacher of French, where he remained until retirement, eventually becoming Deputy Headmaster. But his great enthusiasm was the vernacular buildings of Iran and other countries in the region, especially those of mud-brick, and, most especially of all, mills. On these subjects he became a leading authority – his expertise founded to a considerable extent on travel and fieldwork - and he published extensively in that area. He is perhaps best known as the author, with Elizabeth Beazley, of *Living with the Desert. Working Buildings of the Iranian Plateau* (1982). Ronald Cookson of the Mills Archive (of which Michael was one of the original trustees) says of him, “universally respected as a kind and gentle man, he was a gentleman and a scholar”, and David Stronach, the first Director of BIPS, writes of his work that “his detailed contributions to the study of Iran’s vernacular mud-brick architecture were keenly observed and widely appreciated.” He will be greatly missed by his colleagues, his family, and many others: not least by the writer of this note, to whom he was an immensely valued friend for fifty years.

ACTIVITIES REPORT April 2016 to March 2017

RESEARCH

Dr Lloyd Ridgeon (University of Glasgow) is the BIPS Research Director and co-ordinates our research and publication programme. We have three research Programme Directors to oversee our three “umbrella” programmes. Dr Cameron Petrie (University of Cambridge) manages the Ancient Iran programme and its theme, “*Ancient Iran and its neighbours in pre- and early history*”. Professor Alan Williams (University of Manchester) is the Programme Director for the Medieval Iran programme, “*Interactions of Muslim intellectuals and institutions with other faiths in the medieval Persianate world: religion, philosophy, literature, culture and society*”. Professor Andrew Newman (University of Edinburgh) directs the Modern Iran programme, with its theme, “*Recovering ‘lost voices’: the role and depiction of Iranian / Persianate subalterns from the 13th century to the modern period*”.

Reports from Programme Directors

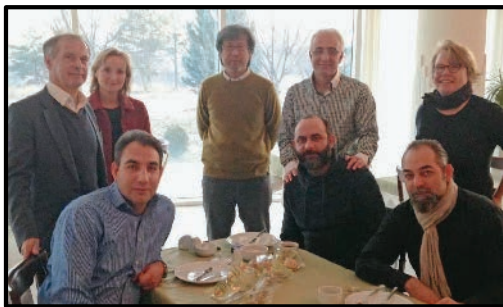
Ancient Programme: Dr Cameron Petrie (University of Cambridge)

Under the auspices of the British Institute for Persian Studies’ Ancient Iran and Its Neighbours Programme a workshop entitled “Innovation, interaction and interconnection in the Taurus-Zagros arc and beyond, 10,000-5000BC” was held on December 10-11, 2016 at Middle East Technical University (METU) in Ankara. This event was an innovative collaboration between the director of the BIPS Ancient Programme, Dr Cameron Petrie, representatives of the three other British schools and institutes that focus on Western Asia: Professor Douglas Baird (representing BIAA), Professor Bill Finlayson (CBRL) and Professor Roger Matthews (ex-BISI), and Dr Mehmet Somel from METU.

The Iranian Plateau is the key geographical link between Western Asia, the South Asian subcontinent, and the various regions of Central Asia, and throughout pre- and early-history it was an important geographical hub whose populations were deeply involved with the generation and transmission of technological innovations and cultural influences that shaped human history.

Report on BIPS/BIAA/BISI/CBRL co-funded workshop “Innovation, interaction and interconnection in the Taurus-Zagros arc and beyond, 10,000-5000BC”, METU, Ankara, December 10-11, 2016.

As a whole, the *Ancient Iran and Its Neighbours in Pre- and Early-History* programme is focusing on the investigation of themes related to the role played by the Iranian Plateau in major phases of human cultural development. This programme provides opportunities for scholars to explore the processes of human cultural development, and the communication and interaction dynamics that operated between the populations that lived on the Iranian Plateau and those living in the neighbouring regions. For this event, we were particularly interested in exploring the dynamics with the regions to the west (greater Mesopotamian plains and Anatolia), north (Central Asian plains and oases), and to some extent the east (Indus plains).



This event was designed to be a focused research workshop that would bring together the resources and collaborative opportunities that are made possible through the involvement of all four of the British Institutes engaged with research in Western Asia: the BIPS, the BIAA, the BISI, and the CBRL. The importance of cooperation is heightened by the current political situation across Western Asia, which means that opportunities for colleagues to collaborate and interact are extremely limited.

In the view of both the organisers and the attendees, the event was highly successful, particularly in terms of providing an ideal opportunity to build institutional links through the contexts of discussion of the interactive dynamics of the Neolithic.

A total of 18 papers were presented, and in addressing the three “I’s” of the conference (“Innovation, interaction and interconnection”), topics ranged in geographical space from the Aegean coast to the Caucasus and the northern and southern arms of the Iranian Plateau, and in thematic scope from the origins of corporate behaviour, genomics, experimental archaeology, craft production, sedentism, and adaptability. Details of the presenters, topics and abstracts are included in the attached programme and abstract booklet.

Described by one attendee as “visionary”, the event was very much a collaboration between the *BIPS*, the *BIAA*, the *BISI*, and the *CBRL*, with each providing intellectual input, logistical support, and funding, with the latter being used to bring presenters from various countries, and to host them at METU. The co-organisers of the workshop would specifically like to thank Mehmet Somel from METU, Gökhan Mustafaoğlu from Bülent Ecevit University, Zonguldak, and Lutgarde Vandeput, Gülgün Girdivan and Işıl Gürsu from BIAA, who all provided essential logistical and administrative support.



As hoped, this event has laid the groundwork for further events in coming years, and arrangements are in train to publish some or even all of the papers presented. The success of the event is also highlighted by the fact that it contributed directly to the creation of a bid for Global Challenges Research Fund support entitled “Agri-Cultural Origins Network (ACORN); Community Archaeology in the Middle East”, which has now been submitted through Reading University (PI Prof. R. Matthews). This initiative intends to incorporate all of the core team involved in the organization of the Ankara event. It will also engage with the same four British Institutes, and collaborate with METU and many of the scholars that presented papers at the workshop.

Medieval Programme: Professor Alan Williams (University of Manchester)

The principal theme of the Medieval Research Programme, ‘Interactions of Muslim intellectuals and Institutions with those of other faiths in the Medieval Persianate World’, three annual workshops are scheduled. The first took place on Wednesday September 7, 2016 at the British Academy in London. The speakers and the abstracts of their papers appear below:

PROFESSOR ALBERT DE JONG, University of Leiden

No holds barred: the Zoroastrian attack on the Qur’an and Islam in the Dēnkard.

In his important translation of the third book of the *Dēnkard*, the most intellectually ambitious Zoroastrian text to have survived, J.P. de Menasce has highlighted the presence in that text of a surprisingly large number of chapters that debate, and reject, key Islamic beliefs, including passages from the Qur’an.



These chapters are interesting in themselves, but they are especially interesting in foregrounding an atmosphere of intellectual exchange and debate between Zoroastrians and Muslims. This paper discussed a select number of these chapters and attempt to interpret them both with regard to their content and with an eye to the question what the frankness of this polemical exchange can reveal about the interactions between the two dominant religions in the Iranian world in the ninth century.

DR SARAH STEWART, SOAS University of London

When and how did Zoroastrians begin to engage with Persian literature and poetry?

This offering is very much notes on questions prompted by my current work on contemporary Zoroastrianism in Iran, a project that encompasses the remaining Zoroastrian communities in 6 main centres: Tehran, Kerman, Yazd and villages, Shiraz, Esfahan and Ahwaz. The purpose of that study is to look at what has happened to the religious beliefs and practices of Zoroastrians since the Revolution – in other words an update on the in-depth studies carried out by Boyce and by Fischer in the 60s and 70s. Today my question is when did Zoroastrians become as devoted as their fellow Iranians to the poets Rudaki (858 - c. 941), Ferdowsi (b. 940), Bābā Ṭāher (d. 1019?), Rumi (b. 1207), Sa'di (b. c. 1210), Ḥāfez (b. 1315) among others? Scholars of Zoroastrianism tend to dwell on the persecution and marginalisation of Zoroastrians through the centuries from the time of the Arab conquest through to the Pahlavi period. The 9th century books are, in the main, treatises *against* Islam, aimed in part at least in stemming the tide of conversion away from Zoroastrianism. So what persuaded Zoroastrians to embrace the literature of Muslim authors, who appropriated their ancient narratives for themselves, often distorting or at least reorienting them, and how did this come about?

DR ERICA C. D. HUNTER, SOAS, University of London

Church of the East dioceses in Iran (5th–11th Centuries)

The Church of the East maintained dioceses in the Iranian-speaking world already from the fifth century. These were under the patriarchate in Seleucia-Ctesiphon and later Baghdad, but were an important conduit for the transfer of Christianity throughout the Sassanid Empire and beyond its borders into Central Asia and China. The paper focussed on the dioceses that were established in Khorasan, notably at the city of Marv (which assumed a particular prominence), but also addressed the Christian presence at Nishapur and Tus.

DR RENATE SMITHUIS, University of Manchester

Donning borrowed clothes: Judah Halevi and Shi'i theology

The celebrated Hebrew poet from Andalusia Judah Halevi (d. 1141 CE) also composed an intriguing and highly influential theological defence of Judaism in Judeo-Arabic – *Kitāb al-radd wa'l-dalīl fi'l-dīn al-dhalīl* (*The Book of Refutation and Proof on the Despised Faith*), known as the *Kuzāri* for short. Since the turn of the century, his poetry and thought have been subjected to some particularly fine and subtle analyses, most notably by Raymond Scheindlin (2007) and Diana Lobel (2000). Recently, Ehud Krinis (2014) has joined their ranks with an in-depth study of Halevi's indebtedness to Shi'i terminology and doctrine. In this short paper Dr Smithuis introduced the audience to some of Halevi's leading ideas in close conversation with Shi'i thought. How puzzling or unusual is his recourse to the latter?

MS SEHRISH JAVID, SOAS, University of London

Cultural interactions in the Ghaznavid era and the Perso-Islamic legacy in India

The Ghaznavid era (998-1040) is one in which interactions between cultures occurred on the frontiers of the expanding state. This paper will consider the work of Mas'ud-e Sa'd-e Salmān (1046-1121) in combining local Hindu and Vedic influences with an established Persianate poetic tradition. In doing so it is hoped that themes of interaction, assimilation and the ever-changing nature of culture through contact can be explored. Works such as Mas'ud's Persian *barahmasa* (*Mahha-ye Farsi*) is an example of the combination of cultures and influences. However, his work also provides detail on an individual level as to the poet's concept of identity and themes surrounding belonging especially in his *ḥabsiyyat* works. This paper aimed to look very briefly at some historic contextual aspects and attitudes of notable figures such as Al-Biruni (973-1048) and Maḥmud (998-1030) in relation to the indigenous Hindu population. It is hoped this helped to avoid the tendency to generalise the attitudes a period based on an analysis of one figure.

MR STEPHEN HIRTENSTEIN, University of Oxford

The religion of love: Ibn al-'Arabī on the nature of otherness, diversity and tolerance

The much-quoted poem by the Andalusian master Ibn al-'Arabī (1165-1240) stating 'I follow the religion of love', as well as his teachings on unity and plurality, have often been taken as a basis for ecumenism within the Abrahamic traditions as well as a wider ecumenism that would embrace all religions. But what exactly did Ibn al-'Arabī mean by 'the religion of love'? Is there any evidence to suggest that he or any of his companions and students had specific contact with other traditions? What part did other theologies play in his teaching and what elements did he incorporate into his mystical world-view? And what insights did he bring to the nature of tolerance and the acceptance of the other? This paper investigated the evidence that might help us answer such questions.

DR LEONARD LEWISOHN, University of Exeter

Esoteric Christianity in Rumi's Divān-e Shams-i Tabrizi

Rumi's Sufi attitude towards Christianity in the Mašnavi generally eschews sectarian partisanship. His view of Christian priests and monks in the poem wavers between semiparochial exclusivism and ecumenical understanding, on the one hand, and on the other apprehending that ultimately all differences between Christians, Muslims and Jews ecumenically dissolve when they turn to face the one God. Preliminary research indicates that in both Rumi's

Mašnavi and in the lyrical poetry of the *Divān-e Shams-e Tabrizi*, the poetic imagery and references to Christ and Christianity mostly belong within an Islamic and Qur'anic context and that terms such as 'Jesus', the 'Messiah' and 'Christ' in his mystical lexicon are nominally Muslim rather than denominationally Christian. Although most of the 156 references to Jesus in the *Divān-e Shams* relate to Christological imagery and symbolism of Qur'anic derivation that were the stock-in-trade of every classical Persian poet, in this paper Dr Lewisohn aimed to assess whether the type of ecumenical 'esoteric Christianity' typical of Akbarian Persian Sufi poets such as Shabistari (d. after 1340) is also in evidence in Rumi's lyrical poetry.

MR RODERICK GRIERSON, Rumi Institute

'Queen of Islam': Christian and Muslim Identities in the Sultanate of Rum

In his history of the Seljuk Sultanate of Rum, Ibn Bibi bestows the title 'Queen of Islam' on the princess Tamar, the daughter of the Georgian queen Rusudan. Her father was a Seljuk prince who became Christian in order to marry her mother. Although raised as a Christian herself, Tamar married the Seljuk sultan Ghiyāth al-Din Kaykhusraw II, arriving in Konya with a retinue of Orthodox clergy and a marriage contract stipulating that she would retain her faith. After the sultan died in 1246, she married Mo'in al-Din Parvāne, who governed the Sultanate for the Ilkhans. She therefore lived at the centre of two Muslim political establishments. According to Shamsoddin Aḥmad Afīāki, whose *Manāqeb al-Ārefin* is the most important source for the life of Rumi and the early years of the Mevlevi *tariqə*, she was also very close to the centre of an emerging spiritual establishment that would be of immense importance throughout the Ottoman Empire. And yet, despite conversion being a subject that Afīāki discusses throughout the *Manāqeb al-Ārefin*, he never refers to the conversion of Tamar. The circumstances of her life raise a number of intriguing questions about how the disparate and often contradictory sources written in Persian, Arabic, Syriac, Georgian, and other languages should be understood. In particular, as a follower of Jalāloddin Rumi and as the wife and mother of Seljuk sultans, did she remain Christian or did she embrace Islam? The famous 'Green Dome' beneath which the body of Rumi lies in its sarcophagus was built with money that she provided. Can this be taken as proof of her conversion? Did other Christian women provide patronage of a similar sort and did they endow Muslim monuments without converting to Islam? Were the lines of demarcation between Islam and Christianity, or at least between the Islamic and Christian communities of Anatolia, drawn in a different way during the thirteenth century than we might expect in the twenty-first century? If they were different, can we explain why were they different and what might this mean for our understanding of the history of both communities?

PROFESSOR ASGHAR SEYED GOHRAB, University of Leiden

Texts as Social Beings: Dialogues between Medieval Persian and European Romances

Europe has a long history of cultural interaction with the Near East, especially with Persia. One domain of cultural exchange is literature in which we can see an exchange of motifs, metaphors and stories. In this paper, I will hypothesize that texts are social beings, adapting themselves to time, place, and the audience. A study of common origin of a text, however, tantalizing, is less important than analyzing the ways a text behaves itself in a specific literary culture. Professor Gohrab explored the similarities and differences between Persian and early European romances, examining how a wide range of common literary motifs connect these stories.

PROFESSOR EMERITUS ROKUS DE GROOT, University of Amsterdam

Composing an opera on Layli and Majnun: the theme of the night in Nizami and John of the Cross

The libretto for the opera Layli and Majnun by Rokus de Groot is composed out of two main text sources: Nizami's epos (in translations by Gelpke/Mattin & Hill and Seyed-Gohrab) for the unfolding of the story, and John of the Cross's *En una noche oscura* ('In a dark night') for the choruses. The presentation discussed this polyphonic composition of texts as engendering a dialogue about the symbol of the night as 'a meeting place of unknowing' between lover and Beloved. Also, the role of the opera's music was involved in the discussion as the provider of polyphonic sensitivity.

Professor Williams had planned to hold his next workshop in June 2017, but was now considering to roll his last two workshops into one in order to be able to bring together attendees from further afield and maximise notice for the workshop. This would probably be held in London at the Academy around Easter 2018.

Modern Programme: Professor Andrew Newman (University of Edinburgh)



The first workshop focussed on the pre-Safavid period. Full details on the programme, attendees, abstracts of papers, etc can be accessed at:

The second workshop of the three-year Modern Programme project ‘Recovering “Lost Voices”: The Role and Depiction of Iranian/Persianate Subalterns from the 13th century to the Modern Period’ will take place in Edinburgh over the weekend of 19-21 May, 2017. The presentations will be videoed and uploaded onto Youtube. The third and final workshop will cover the Zand and Qajar periods and will be convened in London at the British Academy in 2018, with the Call for Papers going out just after the second workshop. Selected papers from the entire project will be published in 2019. More information about Professor Newman’s project can be found at <http://www.shii-news.imes.ed.ac.uk/the-subalterns-project>.

Grant Awards

The British Institute of Persian Studies awarded the following research and travel grants in the financial year 2016-17:

Research Programme	Type of Award	Award Holder	Topic	Amount
ANCIENT				
Ancient	Research	Dr Piers Baker [British Museum]	Research on BIPS Collection of Nush-i-Jan Pottery	870.00
Ancient	Research	Dr John Cooper [University of Exeter]	3 day workshop for ICHHTO & UNESCO	686.93
Ancient	Research	Professor Roger Matthews [University of Reading]	The Earliest Neolithic of Iran: excavations at Sheikh-e Abad, Kermanshah province	7,820.00
Ancient	Research	Dr Elizabeth Pendleton [British Museum]	Parthian Coin Project - Mithradates II	6,000.00
Ancient	Research	Professor Ian Shaw [University of Liverpool]	Egypto-Achaemenid quadrilingual stone vessels as factors in the socio-economic role of Egypt as a satrapy	1,200.00
Ancient	Research	Dr Helen Taylor [University of Cambridge]	Analysis of Bakun ceramics	610.00
MEDIEVAL				
Medieval	Travel	Ms Bahar Badiee [University of Kent]	Orsi doors and windows as an architectural element of traditional Iranian design	400.00
Medieval	Research	Mr William Hofmann [School of Oriental and African Studies]	Interactions and transmission of knowledge between Persian, Central Asian & Indian musicians	2,000.00
Medieval	Research	Professor Charles Melville [University of Cambridge]	Conference: The Illustration of History in Persian Manuscripts	3,000.00
Medieval	Research	Dr Firouza Melville [University of Cambridge]	Conference to finalize material for planned publication, <i>Literature, Art, Diplomacy & Empire</i> .	2,000.00
Medieval	Research	Ms Shiva Mihan [University of Cambridge]	Persian Manuscript production in the 15th century	1,000.00
Medieval	Research	Dr Ilse Sturkenboom [University of St Andrews]	2 Day Workshop: Art & Patronage at the Court of the Timurid rule Iskandar Sultan	3,000.00
MODERN				
Modern	Research	Dr Pejman Abdolmohammadi [London School of Economics]	The political thoughts of Mirz Aqa Khan Kermani	850.00
Modern	Research	Dr Jane Lewisohn [School of Oriental and African Studies]	Bi-lingual Persian English database for Persian films	2,000.00

Research Programme	Type of Award	Award Holder	Topic	Amount
Modern	Research	Dr Toby Matthiesen [University of Oxford]	Developments that led the Sunni-Shia divide to become a major fault line in the Middle East	1,200.00
Modern	Travel	Professor Andrew Newman [University of Edinburgh]	Research in Mashhad	1,000.00
Modern	Conference	Professor Andrew Newman [University of Edinburgh]	Sunni / Shia Divide Conference - Edinburgh & London	3,000.00
Modern	Travel	Ms Naciem Nikkhah [University of Cambridge]	Text and Image in 16th and 17th century Persian albums	850.00
Modern	Conference	Dr Lloyd Ridgeon [University of Glasgow]	Constructions of Gender in the Persianate World	3,000.00

BIPS Workshop – Edinburgh March 2017

The 2017 British Institute of Persian Studies workshop was held on Saturday 4 March 2016 at the Department of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies, University of Edinburgh. These workshops allow our grant holders to present their research to a peer group audience and to share their research aims and projects.



Professor Luft, Professor Newman, Ignacio Agrimbau, Jane Lewisohn, Professor Williams, Ruth Young, Moujan Matin, Massoumeh Assemi, Saivush Randjbar-Daemi & Dr Ridgeon

Dr Lloyd Ridgeon (Research Director), Professor Paul Luft, Professor Andrew Newman and Professor Alan Williams attended the workshop as representatives of BIPS and its Research Committee. The grant holders were Dr Ignacio Agrimbau, Miss Massoumeh Assemi, Dr Jane Lewisohn, Ms Moujan Matin, Dr Siabush Randjbar-Daemi and Dr Ruth Young.

The programme was as follows:

- 10.00 am **Dr Ignacio Agrimbau [School of Oriental and African Studies]**
How the *santoor* performers living in Tehran conceptualise their practice and represent their aesthetic views and affiliation to different artistic lineages in relation to their social values and experience.
- 10.45 am **Miss Massoumeh Assemi [Courtauld Institute of Art]**
Mobile Architecture: This talk is concerned with Nakhli, a form of mobile architecture, used during the commemoration of battle of Karbala in the month of Muharram, as performed in the towns and villages in the province of Yazd in Iran. Time permitting the talk will also look at mobile architecture in India and Trinidad and Tobago.
- 11.45 am **Dr Jane Lewisohn [School of Oriental and African Studies]**
Collating the archive of Professor Tsuge Gen'ichi (an eminent musicologist from Tokyo).

- 2.00 pm **Ms Moujan Matin [Oxford]**
A technological examination of stonepaste (fritware) ceramics found at the site of Moshküye, Iran.
- 2.45 pm **Dr Siavush Randjbar-Daemi [Manchester]**
Beacon of Diversity: Ayandegan and the Iranian Spring of Freedom of 1979.
- 3.30 pm **Dr Ruth Young [Leicester]**
Exploration of Zoroastrian villages, Yazd, Iran: This historical archaeology project aims to explore a series of abandoned and semi-abandoned Zoroastrian and Muslim villages in order to learn about the ways in which very specific religious practices have shaped domestic and village space, and the impact this has had on material culture.



Workshop Dinner – Friday 3 March – Hotel du Vin Brasserie, Edinburgh

GRANT REPORTS

GRANTS AWARDED 2014-15

Ms Jaime Comstock Skipp (Courtauld Institute of Art) reports on her project, “From the 19th century to the 16th, from Qajar arts to the arts of Khorasan”.

My proposed subject of study that I pitched to the British Institute of Persian Studies was borne of my interest in the monumental arts of the Qajar period. I sought to examine wall paintings and carvings so as to interrogate European attributions to these large-scale Persian art forms. Upon receipt of BIPS funds that allowed me to conduct preliminary research on this topic by enabling first-hand exposure to the country and art objects in Iran, I found myself immersed in Zand, Afsharid, and Qajar art, architecture, and illustrative programs spanning administrative buildings and palaces in Tehran, garden pavilions and mansions in Kashan, and *hammams* in Yazd and Kerman. I intended this visit, my first to Iran,



to be a reconnaissance trip allowing me to locate libraries, museums, and centres that would be beneficial to my future doctoral studies in Qajar arts. But as a result of this visit and perhaps due to an overexposure to remnants of 19th-century Iran, a burgeoning interest in early-modern Iranian history (16th-18th centuries) instead took root.

I organized a personal and private 10-day tour of select cities where I spent time in Ardabil, Tehran, Kashan, Shiraz, Yazd, and Kerman. Upon its completion, I was then free to visit and stay with friends and families so continued my peregrinations (at a more relaxed pace) onwards to eastern Iran, savoring Birjand, Mashhad, and Tus. The broad Khorasan region was particularly fascinating to me due to my studies at The Courtauld, where just the day before

flying out to Tehran I finished my MA dissertation entitled, “Heroes of Legend, Heroes of History: Militant Manuscripts of the Shaybanid Uzbeks in Transoxiana.” In it I examined the book arts of the Shaybanid Uzbeks, long overlooked or essentialized in scholarship as the enemies to the Safavids. More neutrally, the Shaybanid Uzbeks were a Turkic and Mongol tribal confederation that occupied Transoxiana (Turan in literature and poetry) in present-day Central Asia. Khorasan was a contested zone between Safavids and Shaybanids in the 16th century. And I was able to walk around this area, now securely within the confines of Iranian national borders, on my own two feet!

It was at the museum within Ferdowsi’s tomb complex in Tus where I came across a reproduced proclamation written by the Shaybanid leader that I would like to factor into my future studies. I am intrigued by the cultural, artistic, and literary connections across the Persian ecumene with regards to the *Shahnama* epic, a text that straddles Iran and Turan, along with history and legend, and which has been frequently illustrated in the manuscript arts. Questions of national identity, politics, as well as articulations and assertions of self through appropriations of another’s styles and subjects in relation to the arts of Iran and Central Asia are now of key interest to me.

For a long while I had the determination and motivation to visit Iran, and was finally able to do so with the financial backing of the British Institute of Persian Studies. It is with some remorse that I confess to leaving Iran with a far different plan of study than the one I had entering Imam Khomeini Airport, but directly experiencing the country and culture has allowed me to fine-tune my interests as I progress in my academic journey. What is more, my Farsi has improved! I now know significant expressions and concepts, among them “*Paykān*” and “*Gasht-i Irshād*”! I am supremely grateful to BIPS for all it has done for me. It is an honor to have been selected to receive the travel bursary. *Mamnūn!*

Mr Mohammad S. Farhadinia (University of Oxford) reports on his project, “Ecology and Conservation of Persian Leopard in North-eastern Iran”.

Following pioneering works of Hamilton (1976) and Bertram (1984) who started to explore movement patterns of the leopard *Panthera pardus* in eastern Africa, the species spatial ecology has been intensively reported, predominantly from its African range. Also, limited number of field studies tried to understand the Asian leopards’ ranging patterns, all from forested lowland areas. However, the scientific community still suffers from lack of proper knowledge regarding home range size and movement patterns of the leopards in west Asian rugged mountains with lower prey density where the endangered Persian leopard *P.p.saxicolor* persists. Their remote habitat and cryptic nature make them inherently difficult to study and past attempts have provided insufficient information upon which to base effective conservation. In order to address the paucity of basic ecological information on leopards within mountainous ranges and to explore their spatial patterns, the present investigation has been launched in Tandoureh National Park, near Turkmenistan border in north-eastern Iran.

Persian leopards roam across inhospitable and inaccessible terrains of Iran which make application of tracking equipment with ground-based tracking systems, such as VHF or even GSM very difficult, if not impossible. Accordingly, we used Lotek Iridium GPS collar, each supplemented with a drop off buckle with timer only option (working after 52 weeks since deployment) that automatically removes the collar so that re-capture of animals is unnecessary. Given the wide-ranging movements of leopards in Iran, ideally data acquisition would be achieved by Iridium uploads. Collars used weighed 640 g; equivalent to less than 1% of body mass for captured leopards, well below the 3% limit recommended by Kenward (2001).

Wide ranging Persian leopards are almost impossible to approach for free-darting. Therefore, we deployed foot-snares (Frank et al. 2003) and fitted with numerous modifications to minimize the possibility of injury which have been formerly proved to be safe for the leopards. As leopards are known to respond fairly to baits (du Preez et al. 2014), a killed boar was utilized to improve trapping.

Remote monitoring of snares was achieved by fitting a Telonics TBT-500 trap site transmitter (Telonics Inc., Mesa, USA) to snares to signal the triggering of traps which are checked by radio-receiver at short intervals.

CAPTURE OPERATION PHASE 1:

We initiated our project with two trap sites, both baited in September 2014. In one trap site where the boar meat was hanged from a tree, two snares were deployed to increase the chance of capture, similar to Frank et al. (2003). Also, 1-2 trails leading to the baits were also trapped. During night-time, we established a base camp in higher elevations to spend between 1700 and 0900 to check traps' signals hourly (1 to 3 km distance from the trap sites).



PI and the first leopard, Borna

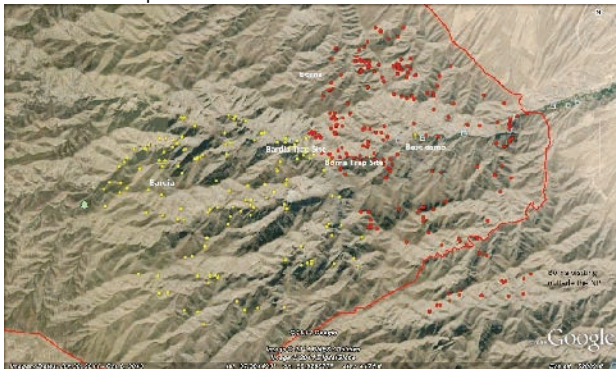
During eight nights of bait trapping at two sites, we had two successful captures of two adult males. Both captured leopards were in healthy situations, based on veterinary investigations and the second leopard (i.e. Bardia) was known for the past three years based on visitors' image database we developed before capturing operation. However, Borna (first leopard) was not known to us formerly in spite of few months camera trapping efforts near the trapping site.

CAPTURE OPERATION PHASE II:

We moved our base camp on 16 October to another place to capture the leopards, far from two previous leopards to avoid re-capturing. We spent 20 nights within the camp, but due to heavy snowfall which could cause serious threats to the team members, we had to leave the area before becoming stuck in the snow. We will re-launch the camp soon with some slight modifications.

PRELIMINARY RESULTS

The two collared leopards show significant avoidance in their movement patterns, never enter each other's range. Borna, the younger male twice left the National Park, approaching the nearby human communities which made us take necessary considerations with local rangers to make sure that the animal would not be poached. The second leopard, Bardia (yellow dots) seems to be limited to his home range within the NP's heart, never approaching the area's boundary. From the map, we might judge that other dominant males limit movements of these two males because they never go beyond their home range. For coming winter, we will try to capture more leopards to obtain a comprehensive snapshot about the leopards' ranging patterns in mountain landscapes of west Asia.



Map showing locations of two leopards during first two weeks

Professor Peter Pormann (The John Rylands Library and Research Institute, University of Manchester) reports:

This project focuses on the cataloguing of the outstanding collection of one thousand Persian manuscripts held at The University of Manchester's John Rylands Library. The collection is one of the finest in the world yet, due to the lack of a scholarly catalogue, its research potential has hitherto not been fully realised. Researchers wishing to study the collection have had to rely on a nineteenth-century printed index, a format wholly inadequate to modern

research needs. It is therefore a key priority of the Library, in conjunction with The John Rylands Research Institute (JRRI), to unlock this valuable research resource, initially by converting an unpublished index into an online, searchable database, through expansion of these records from existing descriptions, and ultimately through the creation of a detailed, scholarly catalogue. The creation of these resources will greatly facilitate the use of the collection for academic and public engagement.

The collection contains almost 1,000 manuscripts, including a number of unique texts. Dating from the thirteenth to nineteenth centuries CE, they cover a wide range of subjects making this collection important for several disciplines including: language, literature, history, art history, religion and theology, philosophy, and the history of science. Secular literature, especially poetry, is well represented within the collection with a number of works of great academic interest, including Divans of some less well-known poets and very early or autograph copies of better-known works. While reviewing the collection at Manchester, Dr Dominic Brookshaw emphasized the collection's high value to classical Persian literature. The collection is one of the top four Persian manuscript collections in the UK; it is also the only major Persian manuscript collection that had never been catalogued. There is therefore huge potential for making new and exciting discoveries.

The ultimate aim of the project is to employ an experienced cataloguer of Persian manuscripts to produce a detailed catalogue, to publish the catalogue online, with high-resolution images of all the manuscripts, and to make it searchable in English and in Persian. Stage 1 of the project, supported by the Iran Heritage Foundation, enabled the conversion of the unpublished index into XML format. Records have been uploaded to FIHRIST, a searchable interface of basic manuscript descriptions and a vital resource-discovery tool for scholars in this field.

Leading scholars in Persian studies, such as Charles Melville and Robert Hillenbrand, have often stressed the priority of a catalogue for the Rylands Persian manuscripts. Through the work undertaken by the Project Team, with the support from the British Institute for Persian Studies, we have enhanced the research potential of the catalogue by expanding over fifty descriptions, and digitising six unique and important Persian manuscripts. The results of this project will not only support academic research, but also enhance awareness of the Persian contributions to the fields of literature, art, history, science, philosophy and religion.



Figure 1: Miniature of bearded man representing the planet Mercury, from Qazwini, 'Aja'ib al- Mukhluqat, 1041AH/1632CE. Persian MS 3, folio 16b.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The John Rylands Library holds nearly 1,000 Persian manuscripts, for which no published catalogue exists. The ultimate aim of the project is to produce a detailed online catalogue linked to high-quality digital reproductions of selected manuscripts. This project, funded by the British Institute for Persian Studies, enabled the team to move forward. The main aims and objectives of the project were:

- To enhance selected TEI manuscript descriptions using data from an unpublished hand-list by Reza Navabpour (59 manuscripts) and published descriptions in B.W. Robinson, *Persian Paintings in the John Rylands Library: a Descriptive Catalogue* (London, 1980) (28 manuscripts);

- To make these enhanced records available via FIHRIST, the on-line catalogue for Islamic manuscripts in the UK;
- To employ Ms Yasmin Faghihi, Head of Near and Middle Eastern Department, Cambridge University Library, in order to achieve the above objectives;
- To digitise five complete Persian manuscripts and make the images available online via the Library's online image collections.



Figure 2: Colophon of the manuscript of Sanā'ī *Ḥadīqat al-ḥaqīqah*, dated 681AH/1282CE. Persian MS 843, page 609.

STANDARDS AND WORKFLOW

The elaborate descriptions include transcriptions of chapter headings and portions of texts from the beginnings and ends of the manuscript, encoded in XML in accordance with TEI guidelines and the FIHRIST schema.

Linked Data elements, such as unique personal name identifiers, if extant in the Virtual International Authority File (VIAF), have been incorporated in the descriptive portions of the TEI document (note and summary fields) as well as in the core structural name fields. Some research into the identification of names has been carried out, in most cases successfully.

The legacy data available has been verified against the manuscript in hand and occasionally corrected. Descriptive information is in English and in transliteration, while all transcriptions are made using original script elements. Transliteration of Persian text agrees with the Library of Congress transliteration rules.

The provenance and acquisition history of the manuscript was recorded as retrievable from the manuscript. If documentation of the acquisition history was available, this was additionally incorporated in the cataloguing record (TEI document).

ACHIEVEMENTS

Through the work undertaken by the Project Team, with the support from the British Institute for Persian Studies, we have enhanced the research potential of the catalogue by expanding over fifty descriptions. We are pleased to report that we have been able to digitise six Persian manuscripts, bringing the total freely available online to eleven complete manuscripts and over 1600 individual images.

TEI descriptions have been created according to the objectives set out above for all 59 of the manuscripts included in Reza Navabpour's draft catalogue. The records will be loaded onto FIHRIST and as development work on the site

will be completed, much of the yet invisible meta-data will displayed on the user interface. In the meantime, researchers can already view the full XML file which is available via FIHRIST.

Digitisation of six significant Persian manuscripts, as follows:

- Persian MS 3 This substantial manuscript of Qazwini's *'Aja'ib al-Mukhluqat* is dated 1041AH/1632CE. It contains 355 miniatures in an exemplary late Isfahan style.
- Persian MS 36 A beautifully illuminated manuscript of Nizami's, *Khamsa*, dated 848AH/1444CE, containing nineteenth miniatures in the Shiraz style.
- Persian MS 68 This translation of *Kalila wa Dimna*, dated 616AH/1219CE, is the earliest dated manuscript in the Rylands collection.
- Persian MS 843 A remarkably complete early complete copy of Sanā'ī's *Ḥadīqat al-ḥaqīqah*, this illuminated manuscript is dated 681AH/1282CE.
- Persian MS 856 Another beautifully illuminated manuscript of Nizami's, *Khamsa*, which contains sixteen miniatures and four rich illuminated headings in the Shiraz style of c 1575.
- Persian MS 908 Noted by Robinson as 'among the finest seventeenth century manuscripts', this copy of Urfi's *Kulliyat* is dated 1038AH/1628CE. It is illuminated throughout and contains two double-page miniatures.



Figure 3: A kind of Antelope with a single horn, from Qazwini, *'Aja'ib al-Mukhluqat*, 1041AH/1632CE. Persian MS 3, folio 233a.

GRANTS AWARDED 2015-16

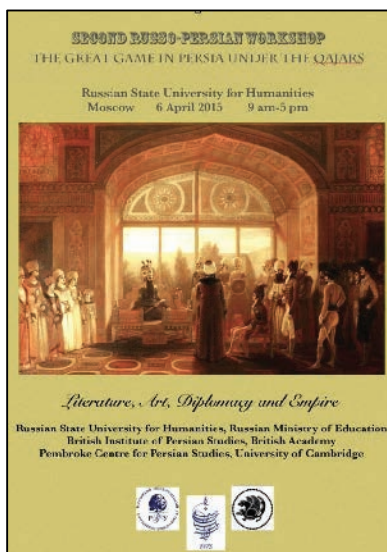
Dr Firuza Abdulaeva (Melville) (University of Cambridge) reports on her project Literature, Art, Diplomacy and Empire.

I received a travel grant from BIPS for my project "Literature, Art, Empire and Diplomacy", which is related to three diplomatic missions: Russian under Alexander Griboedov, British under John MacDonald to Tehran and Persian under Khosrow Mirza to St Petersburg in 1829. This project grew out of my initial interest in the travelogue compiled by the secretary of the Persian delegation and about which I have several publications. Now it is an international project, which has involved colleagues from UK, Iran, Russia, Georgia and the USA.



The BIPS grant enabled me to conduct my research in various archives, libraries and museums in Iran (the Golestan Palace, the Malek Museum, the Museum of the National Bank, the Museum of Crown Jewels, the Foundation of Expropriated Treasures, and Archive of the Iranian Foreign Office), as well as in Russia (The State Archive, Hermitage Museum, Russian Museum), Georgia (National Archive), Azerbaijan (Baku Institute of Manuscripts, Taghiev Memorial Museum). While I was working in Tehran I was staying in the Qolhak compound twice.

Apart from doing my own research I managed to co-organise several workshops and roundtables related to the main subject of my project in Tehran, Moscow, Tbilisi, Columbus, Tartu, and a double-panel session at the SIE conference in St Petersburg and the ISIS conference in Vienna.



During my last stay in Tehran I was invited to give a lecture at the Golestan Palace Museum to speak about my research involving the Museum collections. My lecture was dedicated to the diplomatic gift exchange between Persia, Russia and Britain, with the focus on the collections of European (English and Russian) porcelain. The most important pieces are the Worcester cups with Kerr Porter's portraits of Fath Ali Shah and Abbas Mirza supplied with the gold minai holders (now in the Hermitage Museum). These were sent to the Russian Empress as part of the diplomatic gifts brought to St Petersburg by Khosrow Mirza.

As part of dissemination of the results of my project I gave several other papers at various conferences and workshops including those I co-organised during the last several years in Vienna (ISIS conference, July 2016), London (Orientality: Beyond Foreign Affairs, National Portrait Gallery, May 2015), Tartu (Tartu University Islamic manuscript workshop), September 2015), Kazan (Kazan University annual conference on Oriental Studies, May 2015), St Petersburg (SIE 8, September 2015), Khmelita Memorial Museum (Griboedov annual conference, January 2015), Tbilisi (Tsereteli Institute of Oriental Studies conference "Great Game" and Georgia: East-West political, cultural and economic interactions during the first half of the 19th century, October 2015), Moscow (Russian State University for the Humanities conference Russian diplomacy and the great game, April 2015), Columbus (Ohio University Russo-Persian workshop, November 2014), Alushta (Alushta Museum, Simpheropol University and Pushkin House conference 'Griboedov in the Crimea', May 2014).

The best papers given at the conferences and workshops are going to be published in a specially dedicated volume under the auspice of the BIPS Persian Studies series together with the Gingko publishing house.

Dr Jane Lewisohn (SOAS) reports on her project, Collecting & Archiving the archive of Professor Tsuge Gen'ichi (an eminent musicologist from Tokyo) who has rare private recordings of early C20 Persian music.

The purpose of my trip was to collect the archive of Prof. Tsuge Gen'ichi, an eminent musicologist from Tokyo who was the first Non-Iranian student to study music at Tehran University's Department of Music. I first began discussion with Prof. Gen'ichi about collecting and preserving his archive for posterity back in July 2009 when we met at SOAS in London following a lecture that I had given there on my work on archiving the Golha Radio Programmes (on which, see: <http://www.golha.co.uk/>). At that time he explained to me how he had gone to Iran in the 1960s to do research on Persian music. Being the first foreigner to pursue the academic study of Persian music in Iran. While doing his doctoral research in Tehran, he studied under and associated with many of the great virtuosos of Persian music, including the likes of Murtaza Hananeh, Ruhu'llah Khaliqi, Ali-Naqi Vaziri, and Ahmad Ibadi, and even associated with Davud Pirnia, the creator of the famous Golha programmes on Iranian National

Radio . Prof. Gen'ichi and I remained in email contact over the ensuing years, until finally, in January 2016, thanks to a generous grant from the British Institute of Persian Studies, I was able to travel to Tokyo to collect his archive. His archive contained Iranian field recordings made during his research into the rhythmic aspects of classical Persian singing (*Avaz*). His music archive consists of ninety 7.5-inch reel-to-reel tapes and twenty-five 5-inch reel-to-reel tapes, which are accompanied by descriptive notes pertaining to their contents in Persian, English, and Japanese. A brief description of some of the archive's contents based on the descriptive notes on the tape boxes and inserts within the boxes and additional descriptive notes provided by Professor Gen'ichi is as follows:

- The complete *radif* of Musa Ma'rufi performed on the Tar by Sulayman Ruhafza, from recordings made by the Ministry of Arts and Culture in 1959
- Recordings of the *radif* of Abu'l Hasan Saba performed on the Santur by Mahvash Gerami
- A selection of early recordings from the 78-shellac collection of Mujtaba Minovi, as well as from the Radio Iran archive
- Field recordings from Kerman, Rasht, Gilan, Fars, Kermashah and Mashad featuring folksongs, lullabies, Zurkhaneh performances, Naqali performances, Zoroastrian ritual chants and street minstrel performances, as well as private recordings of Iranian virtuosos.

These recordings are in the process of being digitalized. Considering the age and fragility of the magnetic reel-to-reel tapes on which they were recorded, this is a delicate and time-consuming project. Once they are all digitalized, they will be fully indexed and a copy will be deposited in the British Library Sound Archive. They will also be made freely available to the public through the Golistan Project (at www.golistan.org).

Dr Haila Manteghi (University of Exeter) reports on her project, "The Alexander Romance and Chivalry (Javanmardi) Motifs from the Shahnama to Persian Popular Romances".

In November 2015 I was given a generous grant by BIPS to go to Tehran to conduct research in libraries on illustrations to the romance of Alexander the Great in Persian literature, which is the subject of my recently submitted University of Exeter doctoral dissertation (2015) entitled "The *Alexander Romance* in the Persian Tradition: Its Influence on Persian History, Epic and Storytelling." Over the Christmas and new Years' break (2015-16), I managed to travel to Tehran and conduct my research without any problems.

The first institute that I visited was the *Kitabhkhana-ye melli* (National Library of Iran) where I spent several days looking up in the computerized card catalogue for all possible manuscripts relating to Alexander. Unfortunately, it took me two full days of argumentation and discussion to become a member of the library in order to have access to the manuscripts. Finally, after viewing my online academic profile on the University of Exeter, the librarian there granted me a two-week temporary membership, which allowed me to have access to digitalized copies of all manuscripts in the National Library. I immediately found several old manuscripts of the *Shahnama* of Firdawsi, which the librarian download on to their library's computer for me, so that I could search through them for their illustrations. I located over ten different illustrations of the Alexander Romance in various copies of the *Shahnama* there, all of which they allowed me to copy and download on to a CD for only 2,000 rials per folio (approx. 2 pence a folio). As BIPS members may know, Iranian libraries do not charge any copyright fees in general; in order to reproduce folios and illustrations, one can simply cite their source and send them a copy of the publications for their records.

Next, I visited the *Farhangistan-e Adab-e Farsi* (Academy for the Study of Persian Literature) where I met with Dr. Khatibi, a leading expert on the *Shahnama*. He was incredibly kind and helpful to me, generously putting aside many hours of his time to discuss my project and interests in the history and legends of Alexander. He personally gave me digital copies of several rare illustrated manuscripts of the *Shahnama* that he owned and directed me to other institutions in Iran which he thought would help me.

My next stop was the *Kitabhkhana-ye Malek* (Malek Library). On asking to access their manuscripts, I only needed to prove my status as a doctoral candidate to them, and as with the National Library of Iran, it sufficed to simply show them my online academic profile. However, they did not require me to become a member. Here I made a major discovery, which was a rare illustrated manuscript of the *Dhakirat al-Iskandar* (Treasury of Alexander), a hermetic text attributed to Aristotle and handed down to Alexander [ADD DETAILS]. It contained ___ folios, of which there were five illustrations. There were no other interesting manuscripts related to the Alexander Romance in this library.

I then visited the Majles Library, and thanks to my two-week membership of the *Kitabkhana-ye melli* I was allowed to access all their manuscripts as well, and discovered two illustrated manuscripts of the *Shahnama*, which together contained various miniatures of the Alexander Romance. However, I only spent a day there, because their collection proved to be somewhat limited for my purposes.

My next visit was to the *Kitabkhana-y Kakh-e Golestan* (Golestan Palace Library), which by far housed the best collection of illustrated manuscripts concerning Alexander. Unfortunately, their catalogue was not digitalized and their rules and regulations regarding both viewing and making copies of manuscripts make scholarly research prohibitively difficult. For instance, I wanted to view the five illustrated manuscripts of Khameh of Nizami housed in their collection, but they refused to allow me to view the manuscripts, and see the miniatures therein. The librarian offered to send me a copy of two illustrations by email, but both refused to tell me which ones and see them. I still have hope that at least these illustrations (whatever they are) will be sent to me.

After exploring and exhausting the resources in all the various libraries in Tehran, I next turned to the second-hand bookshops in the Khiyaban-e Inqilab district, spending several days combing through their shelves. I stumbled upon a publisher's bookshop called Nashr-e Shahnama (Shahnama Publications) where I found a rare book on the *Iskandar-nama-ye haft-jildi* (Seven Volume Book of Alexander). This rare book was quite expensive but I bought it anyway, since it is an essential source for the motifs of chivalry (*Javanmardi*) relating to the Alexander Romance in Persian Literature. 3

Altogether my trip to Iran was extremely productive, and has actually enabled to obtain all the illustrated material I need for my research project on illustrations of the Alexander Romance in Persian literature, legend and historiography. Without BIPS's support, for which I remain extremely grateful, my research would certainly have not succeeded.

Dr Ruth Young (University of Leicester) reports on her project Zoroastrian Villages Historical Archaeology Project, Iran. (Field season May 2016).

Zoroastrianism is recognised as one of the world's oldest and most influential religions, and has been the subject of considerable scholarship. It has been studied as a world religion through textual analysis, anthropology, and archaeology (e.g. Boyce 1979, 2001; Stausberg 2003). The archaeological studies have focused on temples and other monumental sites, for example the Sasanian fire temple in Vigol in Iran, or the Mele Hairam project in Southern Turkmenistan (Kaim 2002, 2004). This project undertakes the comparative study of a series of abandoned and semi-abandoned Zoroastrian villages and abandoned Muslim villages to learn about the ways in which very specific religious practices have shaped domestic and village space, and the impact this has had on material culture. Methodologically, this project combines ethnography and the recording and analysis of built space and material culture, and standard archaeological excavation, in order to explore the ways in which memory is constructed within this particular social grouping, and the impact of memory on history and heritage.

Drawing together building and spatial analysis, ethnographic interview, and small-scale excavation, this project will explore selected Zoroastrian villages and the lives of the people who occupied it (as opposed to monumental and ritual sites), and also consider the ways in which the memorable past can be exploited for its social and economic value in contemporary heritage developments, and the ways in which memory has impacted on the creation and expression of recent Zoroastrian history and identity. In order to provide meaningful comparison, an abandoned village occupied by Muslims will also be studied in future using the same methodologies. In line with good academic practice, an investigative visit took place (September 2014, funded by BIPS), during which suitable village sites were identified. We have now completed the first of three planned field seasons to carry out building recording and analysis, ethnographic interview, excavation, and analysis of material culture, in order to explore the use of space in shaping social structures such as religion, and how social structures impact on the creation of space.

The heritage element of this project is considered critical, as a way of not only raising awareness of the minority Zoroastrian community still living in Iran, but also in providing a model for developing 'heritage sites' based in archaeological and ethnographic fieldwork. Involving Zoroastrian communities is obviously vital for this, and from the very beginning of our work we are holding informal, open meetings to explain what we are doing and why, and invite community participation. We also believe we have a role as a conduit for information between government bodies and the Zoroastrian communities around possible heritage developments. The enthusiasm of the Institute of Cultural Heritage and Tourism Organisation for developing Zoroastrian tourism beyond visiting fire temples and

external viewings of the towers of silence (dakhma) is currently very high, and we aim to show that there is sufficient potential in these villages to warrant government action – firmly based in the results of fieldwork and community inclusion. Perhaps most importantly, we hope that our work will be of importance to the Zoroastrian communities in terms of recording and remembering their own past, and be a means of allowing individual and group stories and identities to be presented in ways that different community members can relate to.

LOCATION AND TEAM MEMBERS:

This first exploratory field season focused primarily on the village of Mazray Kalantor, near Meybod in the region of Yazd. Although we had initially planned to spend most of the first season at the abandoned village of Asrabad, strong community engagement at Mazray Kalantor was a key driving factor, and as outlined in our research proposal above, community involvement and needs are extremely important in this project. Mazray Kalantor comprises a majority Zoroastrian population still in residence, a very small Muslim population still in residence, and significant abandoned structures, formerly occupied by both Zoroastrian and Muslim households. This extremely interesting and rare current and former demographic, coupled with the keen interest in our work by the Mazray Kalantor community spokespeople and the wider community itself made the decision to begin our project working here an easy one.

In addition to our work at Mazray Kalantor we also began planning at Asrabad and began to make contact with former occupants at both Asrabad and Hosseinabad, which will allow us to move forward with arrangements for ethnographic interviews and site visits in our next field season. We also made strong links with another Zoroastrian community in a second village called Hosseinabad, and carried out interviews with a sample of this community. Further details of work at Asrabad and Hosseinabad are given below.

The team was based at the Meybod Free Islamic University and received invaluable support from Dr Taha Hashemi (Deputy V-C, Free Islamic University of Iran) and Dr Islami (V-C of the Free Islamic University of Yazd). The team comprised:

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| • Dr Hassan Fazeli Nashli, University of Tehran, Iran | Co-director |
| • Dr Ruth Young, University of Leicester, UK | Co-director |
| • Dr Hossein Azizi, Deputy of Cultural Heritage, Iranian Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization | Field Director |
| • Two University of Tehran MA students | building planning and analysis |
| • One University of Tehran PhD student | interview, historical background |
| • One University of Tehran PhD student | village planning, aerial photography |
| • One University of Tehran MA student | building planning assistant |
| • One former PhD student, University of Tehran | building analysis |

[due to difficulty obtaining Iranian visas for UK team members, only Young was able to travel to Iran; tasks that would have been assigned to UK team members were therefore shared by the Iranian team and Young].

RESULTS

In Mazray Kalantar we carried out planning of the whole village via aerial drone, producing a series of detailed aerial photographs which have been subsequently rectified to form a village plan showing all structures. These structures include houses, fire temples, shrines, the mosque, guest houses and museum, and cover both the inhabited structures and those that have been abandoned.

A similar mapping process via aerial drone was carried out at Asrabad. In Mazray Kalantar a sample of abandoned buildings were planned and analysed in detail, along with public buildings still in use. The public buildings were the three village shrines, the Fire Temple, and the mosque. The abandoned buildings were two Zoroastrian houses and two Muslim houses. This preliminary investigation has already proved incredibly useful, and we are already beginning to build up an understanding of the material characteristics of Zoroastrian private and public buildings and how these differ from Muslim private and public buildings. Additionally, we were invited into numerous private houses still occupied by Zoroastrian villagers and talked through the architectural and artefactual elements that they considered important in their identity and religious practice.

We interviewed thirteen people in total: three Zoroastrian men, five Zoroastrian women, one Muslim woman and one Muslim man, from Mazray Kalantar; one Zoroastrian male, and two Zoroastrian women from Hosseinabad.

This information has also proved very useful and interesting, and has helped shape our understanding of village social and physical structures.

MEETINGS AND WORKSHOP

In line with this project's key commitment to working with and for the Zoroastrian communities linked to our study area, we have had a lot of contact with individuals and groups, talked through our project aims, taken on board feedback and suggestions from the community, and worked at building up trust and communication. We had meetings with community leaders in both Mazray Kalantar and Hosseinabad, and had open meetings with the community at both. We were also involved in a series of social events and celebrations in both villages, and were taken to Chak Chak shrine as both a study visit and a social event. Any project that is serious about community engagement has to take time to build up both trust and communication, and we are aware that this will take years to achieve; however, we are deeply committed to ensuring that all of those who might be interested in or affected by our study have multiple opportunities and channels to be involved and to share their views with us. This is ongoing work.

Our final day in the field culminated with a workshop held in the community hall of the Fire Temple at Mazray Kalantar. This workshop was attended by over 100 people from Mazray Kalantar, Hosseinabad, Meybod and Yazd, and as well as a strong Zoroastrian contingent, also drew a significant Muslim audience. In addition to Dr Taha Hasemi and Dr Islami, notable attendees included Mr Niknam (Yazd City Councillor), the Governor of Yazd, the Governor of Meybod, representatives from the City Council of Meybod, the V-C of the City Council of Yazd. In terms of raising the profile of the Zoroastrian community in the region, we received extensive positive feedback from attendees, and in terms of raising issues around Zoroastrian heritage, we also received extensive positive feedback from attendees. The local community were particularly supportive and encouraging.

NEXT STEPS

We will write up our methodology, results, etc as a preliminary article and submit it to an appropriate journal for publication. We will communicate with those we have met in the course of this fieldseason to discuss directions of the second fieldseason, and we will apply for further funding.

GRANTS AWARDED 2016-17

Ms Bahar Badiee (University of Kent) reports on her project, "A Traditional Narrative on the Origin, Design and Climatic Imperative of Orsi Windows and Coloured Glass Panels in Persia".

This ongoing PhD research, explores *Orsi* windows and coloured glass panels as architectural and climatic elements of traditional Iranian design. The main objective is to investigate *Orsi* integrated dwellings and to recognize whether or not drivers, such as environmental changes, advancements in building technology, availability of construction material, cultural influences and artistic aspirations, brought about the transformation of traditional and uniform Persian windows into elaborate *Orsis*, from the *Safavid* era forward. This investigation was made possible through detailed exploration of historical events that took place before, during and after the reign of the *Safavid* dynasty; architectural and visual evidence, where available, were also taken into consideration.

My most recent field trip to Iran was made possible through the generosity of the British Institute of Iranian Studies, *BIPS* and the *Iran Society of London*. The trip took place on October 20th, when I travelled to the city of *Isfahan* in order to conduct a number of site specific surveys. The purpose of these surveys was to identify traditional and local building material, construction technologies and local structural requirements of building sites in order to create an analytical narrative with regards to the evolution of Iranian windows into *Orsis* and coloured glass panels.

Upon obtaining a visitor's permit from the *Cultural Heritage, Handcrafts and Tourism Organization* in the city of *Isfahan*, and a second permit from the *Isfahan University of Art*, for the fourteen days of my stay I visited more than sixteen *Safavid* residential dwellings and ten *Safavid* public places including mosques and palaces. A large number of photographs were collected as a result of this visit. In addition to the photographic evidence, I had the opportunity to speak to a number of experts in the field of *Safavid* architecture, including the previous head of the *Cultural Heritage, Handcrafts and Tourism Organization* in the city of *Isfahan*, the university lecturer and the practicing conservator and architect, Mr. Ahmad Montazer, who kindly shared his knowledge of *Safavid*

architecture by accompanying me to five of the remaining *Safavid* dwellings and providing me with a detailed description of the changes and renovations that each building has endured in recent years. Brief conversations with individual owners of several private *Safavid* houses took place using a reference provided by the *Iran Society of London*, which played a crucial role in forming a better understanding of the ownership of historic sites and the individual effort required to protect and promote houses as part of the national heritage.

Travelling to *Isfahan* as an unfamiliar but not unknown destination had its own challenges, some of which were greatly eased through the kindness of researchers and scholars who introduced me to the right people. The trip to *Isfahan* would not have been possible without the generous contribution of *BIPS* and the *Iran Society*, for which I am eternally thankful. My research would have been incomplete without visiting *Isfahan*, the third and most developed capital city of the *Safavid* dynasty and its many architectural treasures. I am looking forward to publishing and sharing my findings with scholars and all those interested in Iranian arts and crafts, in the near future.



CONFERENCES, LECTURES AND OTHER EVENTS

The BIPS Outreach Director, Dr Melanie Gibson, succeeded in organising a full programme of events for BIPS over the past year, ranging from large conferences to small, invitation-only workshops. The regular BIPS lectures remain very popular. As well as offering BIPS members the chance to get together, many new people with a general interest in Iranian/Persian subjects have been introduced to BIPS' work by attending these events.

21-24 April 2016: Conference: The Architecture of the Iranian World 1000-1250

Convenor: Professor Robert Hillenbrand held at University of St Andrews

This conference is the first for more than a generation that has as its focus the architecture of the Iranian world in a golden age that set the parameters for centuries of future development. Classic forms were developed for mosques, minarets, madrasas, mausolea and caravansarais. The definitive choice of brick as the medium of construction and decoration changed the face of Iranian architecture in the Iranian world, leading to the creation of monumental dome chambers, spectacular developments in vaulting technique and an astonishing range of ornaments. New heights were attained in fields as disparate as architectural epigraphy and multi-layered carved stucco. The dimension of colour as a key element in the repertoire of decoration began to be seriously exploited. A building boom in the 12th century fostered the emergence of a series of local styles across the vast area between the Tigris and the Indus, the Persian Gulf and the Aral Sea. This period, then, consolidated the tentative experiments of the previous three centuries and embarked on a series of bold innovations that propelled this region into pole position in the architecture of the contemporary Islamic world.



The speakers were Dr Alireza Anisi [Iranian Centre for Archaeological Research, Tehran]; Mr Warwick Ball [Eastern Approaches Ltd.]; Professor Sheila Blair [Boston College, Massachusetts]; Professor Jonathan Bloom [Boston College, Massachusetts]; Professor Abbas Daneshvari [California State University, Los Angeles]; Dr Eisa Esfanjary [Art University of Isfahan, Isfahan]; Dr Abdullah GHOUCHANI [The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York]; Professor Dr Joachim Gierlich [Qatar National Library, Special Collections & Archives, Doha]; Professor Roberta Giunta [University of Naples]; Professor Robert Hillenbrand [University of St Andrews/ University of Edinburgh]; Professor Mohammad Khazaie [Tarbiat Modares University, Tehran]; Professor Dr Lorenz Korn [University of Bamberg]; Dr Richard McClary [University of Edinburgh]; Professor Marcus Milwright [University of Victoria, Canada]; Professor Bernard O'Kane [Smith College, Massachusetts]; Professor Mahnaz Shayestehfar [Tarbiat Modares University, Tehran]; Dr Paul Wordsworth [University of Oxford]; Mr Mustafa tupev [University of Bamberg].

29 June 2016: Lecture: Professor Touraj Atabaki

The early history of British Petroleum in Iran: a view from below: held at the British Academy

Touraj Atabaki is the Senior Research Fellow at the International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam. At present he is coordinating a research project on Social History of Labour in the Iranian Oil Industry 1908-2008. He is also a participant in the international project, based at the International Institute of Social History, of the Global Collaboratory on the History of Labour Relations 1500-2000.

The extraction of oil in 1908 and the unprecedented expansion of the oil refinery, shipping docks and company towns in southwest Persia/Iran opened a new chapter in the Persian/Iranian labour history. Having enjoyed an absolute monopoly on the extraction, production and marketing of Iran's oil, the Anglo-Persian/Iranian Oil Company (APOC, AIOC, now British Petroleum; BP) emerged as one of the major players in Iranian politics during the first half of the twentieth century.

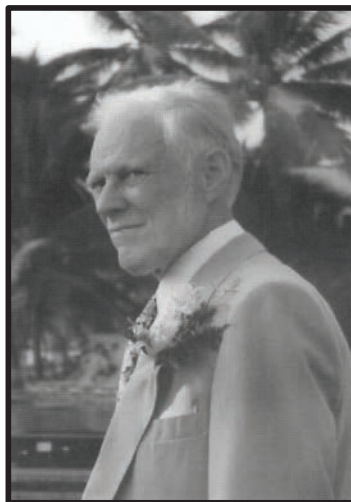


The history of British Petroleum in Iran has been the subject of number of major studies. However, all of these studies are primarily focused on the company history or the state and its relationship with the oil company. My contribution to the history of the oil industry in Iran is distinct, insofar as I attempt to provide a history of the oil company from below, investigating the interactions between oil workers, the oil company and the Iranian state. To this end, I focus on the main elements determining the demographic composition of the labour force (ethnicity, gender, and age), labour formation (recruitment, skills, training and education), labour relations (wages and labour discipline), labour migration, mobility and integration and the oil workers' living conditions inside and outside of the company towns (including housing, nutrition, hygiene, health and leisure). It will aim to provide a comprehensive assessment of the working conditions and material circumstances of the oil labourers, at work and at home, and within their communities. This study is based on a larger research project on the social history of labour in the Iranian oil industry (1908-2008) currently underway at the International Institute of Social History Amsterdam.

16 September 2016: Conference: Celebration of the Academic Achievements of Professor Edmund Bosworth

Organizer: Dr Lloyd Ridgeon held at the British Academy

Professor Clifford Edmund Bosworth died on 28 February 2015, after a long and fruitful career of scholarly research and exceptional service to the field of Iranian and Islamic studies. Edmund was a long-standing member of the BIPS council and, most admirably, editor of the Institute's journal *Iran* for many years, handling all the contributions in the non-archaeological fields.



After gaining a 1st-class degree in modern history at John's College, Oxford, Edmund later took a second degree in Middle Eastern studies at Edinburgh, where he went on to complete his doctorate, which was the basis for his first and still standard book, *The Ghaznavids, their empire in Afghanistan and Eastern Iran 994:1040* (Edinburgh, 1963). Edmund was Professor of Arabic Studies at Manchester, 1967-1990, but the great bulk of his scholarly output was concerned with Iran, particularly eastern Iran, and the dynastic history of the mediaeval period. He also devoted his energy to the translation of some key texts and source materials, notably volumes from al-Tabari's universal history and more recently, the celebrated histories of Gardizi and Baihaqi, which underpinned much of his own research. In the wider field, his massive input into the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* and the *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, not only as a contributor but also for his tireless editorial work, made him a household name in the field of Islamic history.

BIPS held a one day conference to celebrate the academic achievements of Professor Edmund Bosworth. The speakers have been carefully selected, as they share Professor Bosworth's deep passion and love for medieval Persianate history, which is reflected in the topics of their presentation. Professor Bosworth worked tirelessly for the British Institute of Persian Studies, in particular, he was intimately involved for many years with *IRAN*, our

journal. It is only fitting, therefore, that the presentations will form the core of a special issue of *IRAN*, which will be published in 2018.

The speakers were Professor Carole Hillenbrand, *Some thoughts on the Isma'ili Qiyama event at Alamut*; Professor Robert Hillenbrand, *Rediscovering a lost Masterpiece of Iranian Saljuq Architecture*; Professor Peter Jackson, *The Mongol polity in Central Asia (c. 1227-c. 1400)*; Dr George Malagris, *Sultan Mahmud and Firishta*; Professor Charles Melville, *The Illustration of History in Persian Manuscripts* and Professor Andrew Peacock, *Intellectual exchange between the Islamic East and Anatolia in the Middle Ages*.

30 November 2016: Lecture: Professor Alan Williams

Re-presenting the Masnavi of Rumi as basic reading for Muslims in the 21st century: held at the British Academy



For seven centuries the poetry of Mowlānā Jalāloddin Balkhi Rumi was basic reading for Muslims all over the Islamic world and a central part of their literary and oral canon. His Divān and Masnavi were translated first into Turkish, then Arabic, as well as other Iranian and South Asian languages, especially Urdu, and Central and South East Asian Muslim languages, ‘even unto China’, as the hadith says. In the 20th century, ‘Rumi’ became ever more popular (and popularized) in the West since the 1970s. Ironically, among Muslims, on the other hand, familiarity with his work had already begun to decline, for a number of reasons. This decline can partly be explained by the new anglophone ‘written’ literacy of modernity which no longer committed classical poetry to memory. The demise of the love of the great Sufi poets, and Rumi especially, was also occasioned by the post-colonial spread of Wahhābist-Salafist teachings long hostile to Sufi Islam in the ‘Islamic Heartlands’ of the Hejaz and Maghreb, and further abroad in Pakistan and South-East Asia. In this lecture I argue that the re-presentation of the great text of the Masnavi in faithful, accessible forms, including the Persian language offers an antidote to the exclusivist and ‘law-enforced’ Islam of fundamentalism and all forms of extremism. Whether or not the Masnavi was ever intended to be, as the poet Jami reputedly dubbed it, ‘the Quran in the Persian tongue’, it is indeed the greatest ‘erfāni tafsir of the Quran. Far from dissolving Islam into mere medieval mysticism and detaching it further from the modern world, the Masnavi brings an understanding of love, knowledge, tolerance and mutuality that can bridge the three Abrahamic faiths. Rumi’s psychological wisdom is not confined to Muslims or to the 7th /13th century, as witnessed by his above-mentioned popularity in the West. However it is primarily a text for Muslims, to help them understand the depths of Islam, not merely the surfaces. This is an ‘antidote’ that is not concocted out of Sufi antinomianism, but which springs from the sage poetic vision of the ‘erfāni wisdom tradition that Mowlana Rumi inherited from his Khorasani ancestors. The hundreds of quotations and meditations on Quranic passages and prophets of the

Abrahamic tradition, combined with stories from Rumi's knowledge of folk and literary traditions from far west and far east of his own of Seljuq Rum, make this a text of global stature that Muslims can be proud to own as both fully Islamic and fully human.

Alan Williams is British Academy Wolfson Research Professor and Professor of Iranian Studies at the University of Manchester. He is Programme Director of the BIPS Medieval Research Programme.

29 March 2017: AKS Lambton / BIPS Lecture: Professor Birgitt Hoffmann

Views from inside: how Iranian travellers of the Qajar period perceived and described their own country: held at the British Academy

The Qajar period (1796-1925) saw a remarkable increase in Persian travelogues describing journeys abroad, pilgrimages and domestic trips. So far scholarly attention has concentrated rather on Iranians touring Europe and beyond in the context of the first diplomatic missions, students' delegations, official visits of ruling monarchs and private trips of lesser celebrities. Studies mostly focus on the impression Europe made on these travellers and how they expressed their experiences through the writing of travelogues. In contrast this paper will deal with the more neglected travel accounts written by Iranians who for whatever reason roamed their home country and put their impressions into writing. Systematic perusal and evaluation of these texts will not only contribute to a better assessment of local conditions but also to a better understanding of modes of perception and ways of thinking.



Freer Sackler, Washington, FSA, A.4. 2.12. Up. 40 People and Animals outside a Caravanserai, Sevruguin, Antoin, 1870-1928, 22.3 x 16.7 cm

Dr Melanie Gibson, our Outreach Director, reports:



The Ann Lambton Memorial Lecture has been held for the last seventeen years at the School of Government and International Affairs at Durham University. Last year it was agreed that BIPS would participate in this event so that the venue could alternate between Durham and London. So for the first time, the lecture was held on 29 March at the British Academy.

The speaker, Professor Birgitt Hoffmann, since 2005 has been Director of the Department of Iranian Studies at the Otto-Friedrich-University Bamberg. Although she is best known as an authority on Ilkhanid history and in particular on Rashid al-Din, for this lecture she chose to speak on a hitherto neglected documentary source from the Qajar era. This lecture looked at a series of travel accounts written by Nasir al-Din Shah and three of his officials in the second half of the nineteenth century.

From the time of his accession in 1848 the shah made long journeys to the provinces but it was only in 1867 that he started keeping detailed records. The lecture singled out the accounts he wrote of his seven pilgrimages to the shrine of Fateme-ye ma'sume at Qum, devotional visits that he sometimes combined with hunting trips. The entries in these travel journals described his daily routine during a three-week visit: going to the hammam (possibly with a portable bath), dressing, travelling on horseback or by carriage depending on the condition of the road, eating his meals and watching his servants pitching camp. There are records of his hunts and when he reached the holy city, of his meetings with local notables, religious scholars as well as members of the extended Qajar family.

Nasir ad-Din Shah not only wrote his own diary; he also commissioned officials to write reports of their duty trips. Three accounts were singled out in this fascinating lecture, each of which described a journey launched from the court in Tehran bringing robes, or in one case a sabre embellished with jewels, as gifts to a provincial governor.

2017-18 Events

- 11-12 April 2017: Symposia Iranica, Cambridge
- 19-21 May 2017: BIPS Modern Research Programme: *Recovering Lost Voices* Second Workshop, Edinburgh
- 28 June 2017: BIPS Lecture: Dr Shahrokh Razmjou, *The Mysteries of Median Art*, British Academy
- 6 September 2017: Lecture: Dr Jane Lewisohn, *Archiving and Preserving the 20th-century Persian Performing Arts*, British Academy
- 29 November 2017: Lecture: Professor Ali Ansari, *Persia and the Persian Question*, British Academy



PUBLICATIONS

Two issues of IRAN were published in 2016. The first was a special editor in honour of Iraj Afshar. This edition of IRAN is the last to be published independently by BIPS. The 2017 and future editions will be published and distributed by Taylor & Francis.

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BIPS Persian Studies Series

Professor Charles Melville, Editor of Persian Studies Series, is pleased to report that Houchang Chehabi and Paul Losensky have kindly agreed to join the editorial board, and Ali Ansari, Michele Bernardini, Melanie Gibson, Ahmad Karimi-Hakkak and David Morgan form the Advisory Board.

There are currently two titles in production with a view to publication in 2017. The first a series of papers edited by Dr Lloyd Ridgeon, *Javanmardi: The Persian quest for perfection* and the second from Professor George Lane (ed), *The Phoenix mosque and the Persians of medieval Hangzhou*. There are two further titles proposed for the series.

BIPS Archaeology Monograph Series

Two publications are in production for the BIPS Archaeology Monograph series.



The Caucasian Gates: Gateway and Barrier between Iberia, Persia and the Steppes of Eurasia

Sauer, E.W., Pitskhelauri, K., Priestman, S., Mashkour, M., MacDonald, E., Chologauri, L., Lawrence, D., Naskidashvili, D., Tiliakou, A., Mowat, F., Gabunia, A., Kranioti, E., Pickard, C., Diana, A., Van Bergen Poole, I. *et al.*

Arguably no mountain valley in the ancient or medieval world was more widely known than Dariali Gorge in modern Georgia, featuring under a variety of names (the Caspian, Caucasian or Sarmatian Gates or the Gates of the Alans) in a wide range of Greek, Latin, Georgian, Arabic and Persian sources. The narrow gorge provided the main passageway across the Central Caucasus, Europe's highest mountain range. Joint fieldwork between Ivane Javakishvili Tbilisi State University and the University of Edinburgh from 2013 to 2016 on the key stronghold controlling trans-Caucasian traffic has shed much new light on the history of the world-famous gates and the harsh living conditions of its guardians. Our investigations at the crossroads of Europe, Transcaucasia and the Near East should be of interest to Classicists, late antique and medieval historians and archaeologists, those interested in Sasanian Persia, the Islamic world, Transcaucasia and the steppes of Eurasia.

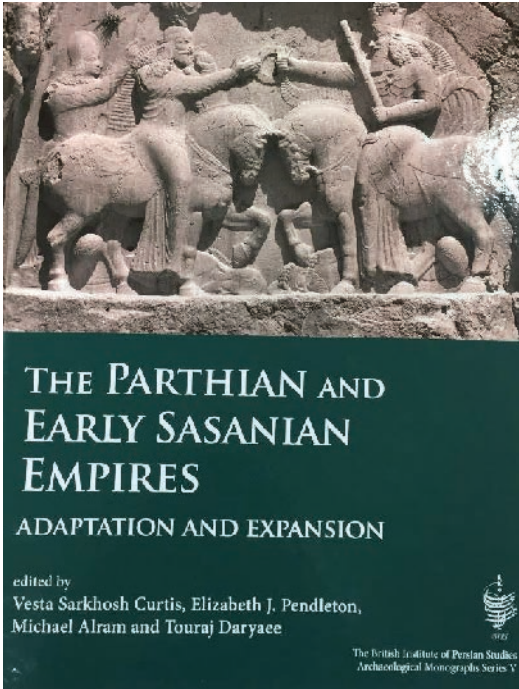
Soldiers and Settlements in Sasanian Iran: Excavations and Surveys on the Great Wall of Gorgan and Hinterland Landscapes (2014-2016)
Eberhard W. Sauer, Jebrael Nokandeh, Hamid Omrani Rekavandi and others



The British Institute of Persian Studies published in 2013 our monograph on Persia's Imperial Power in Late Antiquity, a book which presented our fieldwork on the Great Wall of Gorgan from 2005 to 2009. This new monograph is not just a sequel, presenting our fieldwork from 2014 to 2016, but also

features significant new discoveries and insights into Sasanian history and archaeology. The monograph will significantly advance our knowledge of the Sasanian era, offering major new insights into the design, supply and landscape context of the Gorgan and Tammisheh Walls, on the ancient world's largest military fortresses and how military investment boosted urban growth.

Other BIPS Publications



The Parthian and Early Sasanian Empires: Adaptation and Expansion

Vesta Sarkhosh Curtis, Elizabeth J Pendleton, Michael Alram & Touraj Daryaei (eds).

Although most of the primary information about the Parthian period comes from classical sources and Parthian coins, new research has been undertaken over the past few decades into wider aspects of this historical period and its material culture. Some scholars have attempted to place this important Iranian dynasty into its proper cultural context, but the traditional Greco-Roman influenced approach is still prevalent. Despite a change of ruling dynasty in AD 224, the Parthian and Sasanian empires were closely connected and can not be regarded as totally separate entities. The continuation of Parthian influence, particularly into the early Sasanian period, is indisputable. This volume presents 14 papers covering various aspects of Parthian and early Sasanian history, material culture including coins, linguistics and religion, which demonstrate a rich surviving heritage and provide new insights into ideology, royal genealogy, social organizations, military tactics, linguistic developments and trading contacts from c. 250 BC to AD 450.

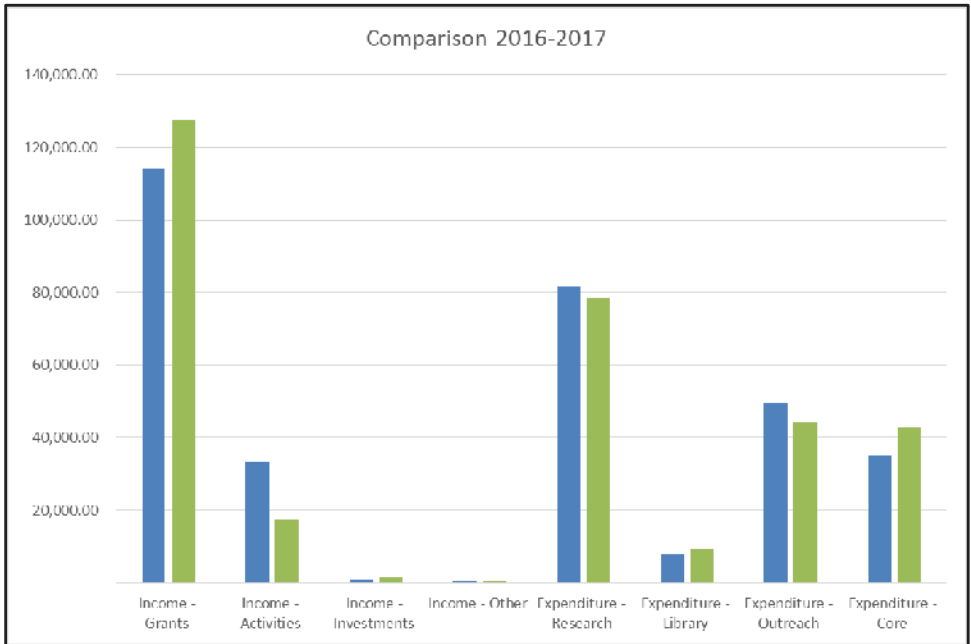
STUDENT MEMBERS' COMMITTEE

New members to the BIPS Student Members' Committee (SMC) were elected in February 2017. The new Officers and Members are Aysha Marty (University of St Andrew's), (Treasurer/Secretary); Anahita Alavi (School of Oriental & African Studies), (Web/Media officer) and Jordan Quill (Courtauld Institute of Art), (Assisting Web Officer).

The SMC plan to increase their activities in 2017-18. Committee members will liaise with *Symposia Iranica* to organize this bi-annual conference. They have planned a Professional Development Workshop to strengthen skills of students of Iranian studies, improve employability, and to integrate them within our community. This is planned for the upcoming academic year. They will continue to build on existing student membership pool through in-person contact at Fresher's week of major universities.

FINANCIAL REPORT

The British Institute of Persian Studies remains financially sound. It continues to receive grant income, mainly from the British Academy, which covers most of its core activities. Income was generated from members' subscription, publication sales and hostel bookings.

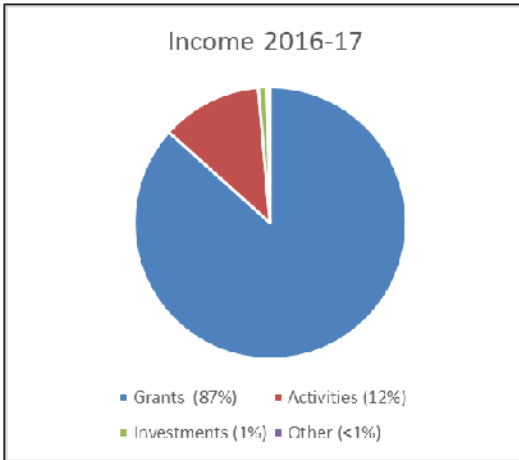


The income from grants was increased from last year to this with the introduction of grants available from the British Academy for business development. These grants are intended to assist the Institute to become more self-financing. The 2016-17 Business Development Fund Grant focussed on exploring whether the institute could develop its Tehran Institute and increase activities there; it was also awarded to allow BIPS to examine whether a part-time, resident Director could be appointed. Income from activities decreased from 2015-16 as BIPS did fewer events with co-sponsors.

Research spending remained steady as the BIPS Grants scheme continued to fund innovative research. Library spending was slightly higher, as the Librarian prepared to open the library three full days a week. The BIPS events programme was varied and attracted good audiences, and so outreach spending was roughly the same as last year. The 2015-16 website redevelopment meant that overall outreach expenditure was reduced. Core and established costs rose slightly to cover much needed improvements to the Tehran hostel's fixtures and fittings.

BIPS used its reserves and designated / restricted funds to cover the expenditure not covered by its income. £50,000 of its reserves were added in its COIF investment fund.

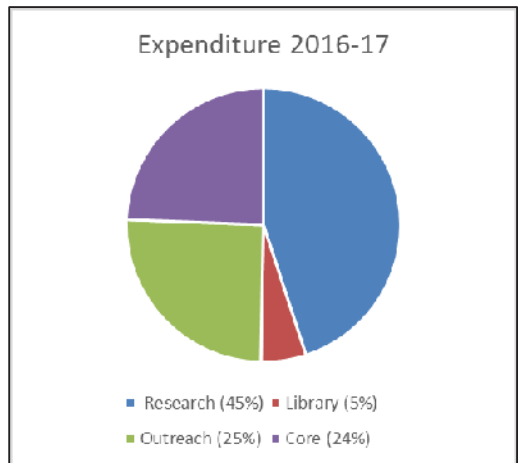
Income



The British Institute of Persian Studies remains dependent to a large extent on grant income. The Institute earned less income in 2016-17 from collaborative events and conferences than in 2015-16. Membership numbers increased with 317 members in 2016 compared with 283 in 2015. Hostel income was slightly increased; the decision to stop grant award holders staying for free will further increase hostel income in the coming financial years. Publication income remained good. There are several publications in the pipeline which will increase this in future financial years. Investment income from our funds remains poor, but bank rates are low and the funds performed as well as could be expected in the current financial climate.

Expenditure

Research continued to be the main area of BIPS expenditure. Its grant scheme, with the three umbrella research themes, awarded all its budgeted funds to post-doctoral, or PhD students in their final year, to facilitate their research into all aspects of Persian studies. There was a good programme of events – conferences, lectures and the annual BIPS workshop for grant holders to present their work. Additionally, the website was redeveloped to make it fresher and easier to maintain, and improve our ability to reach an online audience. The library continues to improve and to attract good numbers of local and international scholars. We continue to look at ways to improve our administrative practices and so to reduce spending on our establishments and non-academic staff.



Financial Review

Unrestricted funds increased by £30,907 (2016: £14,101 decrease) to £220,956 (2016: £190,049). A restricted fund was created in the financial year ended 31 March 2012 in respect of a donation of £4,000 towards funding book publication grants. This fund had a balance of £2,000 (2016: £2,000) as at 31 March 2017. A restricted fund was created in 2013 in respect of a grant of £30,000 for advanced language training. A further grant was received in 2014 for £30,000, and a further £30,000 in 2015. There was a balance of £13,260 on this fund as at 31 March 2017 (2016: £13,260). As a consequence of the exhaustion of the Refurbishment Fund, restricted funds decreased by £5,786 to £15,260 in 2016. The designated funds set aside by the trustees for a new motor vehicle and to facilitate travel grants for research students continued to be carried forward.

The balance sheet remains strong and this, together with the confirmation of future grants from the British Academy over the next 3 years for future research, means the trustees are confident that the Institute can continue to provide a high level of support for students for the foreseeable future.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

(INCORPORATING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2017

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2017 Total £	2016 Total £
INCOME FROM:				
Donations and legacies				
Donations	575	-	575	225
Grants from Government and other public bodies	-	127,001	127,001	133,924
Charitable Activities				
Subscriptions	9,760	-	9,760	10,252
Publication Sales	10,953	-	10,953	2,388
Rent and hostel income	4,862	-	4,862	1,384
Language Lessons	-	-	-	-
Conference Income	50	-	50	1,641
Other				
Gain on exchange	1,675	-	1,675	2,281
Investments				
Bank interest	992	-	992	780
Income from investments	600	-	600	889
TOTAL INCOME	29,467	127,001	156,468	153,764
EXPENDITURE ON:				
Charitable Activities				
Grants	-	40,814	40,814	43,354
Workshops and lectures	-	6,926	6,926	6,653
Book publication grants	-	2,063	2,063	899
Language teaching	-	-	-	-
Tehran Library	-	9,479	9,479	6,841
Tehran Establishment Costs	-	18,208	18,208	32,057
London Office costs	-	16,258	16,258	20,430
Financial Costs	-	480	480	1,183
Journal Expenses	-	8,201	8,201	9,416
Outreach	-	6,418	6,418	744
Student Committee	-	1,569	1,569	1,119
Conferences	-	7,132	7,132	36,304
Research Committee	-	841	841	-
Other				
Examination and accountancy	2,340	-	2,340	2,862
Management	-	8,249	8,249	8,728
Legal Expenses	-	-	-	1,788
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	2,340	126,638	128,978	172,378
NET INCOMING/(OUTGOING) RESOURCES BEFORE RECOGNISED GAINS	27,127	363	27,490	(18,614)
GAINS/(LOSSES) ON INVESTMENTS - UNREALISED	3,780	-	3,780	(1,273)
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS	30,907	363	31,270	(19,887)
TOTAL FUNDS BROUGHT FORWARD	190,049	15,260	205,309	225,196
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	220,956	15,623	236,579	205,309

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses in the year. All incoming resources and resources expended derive from continuing activities.

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2017

	2017		2016	
	£	£	£	£
FIXED ASSETS				
Tangible Assets				
Leasehold Property		-		-
Other Tangible Assets		47,533		47,533
		<hr/>		<hr/>
CURRENT ASSETS				
Debtors	3,357		737	
Investments	38,583		34,803	
Cash in hand and at Bank	190,753		183,739	
	<hr/>		<hr/>	
		232,693		219,279
CREDITORS (amounts falling due within one year)				
Trade Creditors		43,647		61,503
		<hr/>		<hr/>
NET CURRENT ASSETS		189,046		157,776
		<hr/>		<hr/>
NET ASSETS		236,579		205,309
		<hr/>		<hr/>
FINANCED BY:				
Unrestricted Funds:				
General Fund		190,165		159,258
Designated Funds		30,791		30,791
Institute Building		-		-
Restricted Funds:				
Conference Fund		363		-
Bahari Foundation Fund		2,000		2,000
Advanced Language Training Fund		13,260		13,260
		<hr/>		<hr/>
TOTAL FUNDS		236,579		205,309
		<hr/>		<hr/>

Our full accounts and independent examination are published on our website (www.bips.ac.uk). Please apply to the London office (bips@britac.ac.uk) if you would like to be sent a printed copy of the full accounts.

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Professor Almut Hintze <i>[elected 30 November 2016]</i>	
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Dr Lloyd Ridgeon	[Research Director]
Ms Jennifer Scarce	
Professor Alan Williams <i>[elected 30 November 2016]</i>	

STAFF

London

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