

REF 2014

Our research has been rated as world-leading or internationally excellent in the Research Excellence Framework (REF).

IAIS at Exeter ranked 2nd in the UK for world-leading research

Across all the 23 submissions in Area Studies, IAIS at Exeter ranks:

- 2nd in terms of 4* research
- 3rd in research rating average
- 4th in terms of its research environment.

These are the strongest REF2014 results of any Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies department in the UK submitted to the Area Studies Panel, and they establish Exeter as the leader in the field in terms of research quality, impact and environment

IAIS achieved a 100% score at 4* ("world-leading") in the Impact category, a measure of the benefit of a department's research to society beyond academia. This is one of only 2 such scores in the Area Studies Panel, and places IAIS in the top 2% for Impact nationally across all subject areas.

The results reflect a highly effective research strategy, implemented since the last assessment exercise in 2008. Middle Eastern Studies at Exeter has expanded, been enhanced, and its leading international position in the field confirmed.

The results are evidence of the strengths of the "Area Studies" model. The region is studied, through an analysis of politics, language, culture, religion and history. This interdisciplinary approach creates a more nuanced and sophisticated understanding of the Middle East than limited disciplinary approaches. IAIS's Area Studies model enables society generally, and policy makers in particular, to be better informed about developments in the Middle East.

The results are the assessment of the research submitted by Exeter's Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies (IAIS) to the REF Area Studies panel (Sub-panel 27), and reflect the excellent research carried out in IAIS since 2008.

^ Research Excellence Framework 2014 based on the percentage of research categorised as 4*. Arab and Islamic Studies is returned to the Area Studies Unit of Assessment.

Research grant awards

ESRC: Professor Gareth Stansfield has been awarded a three-year grant by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) for a project entitled 'Understanding and managing intra-state territorial contestation: Iraq's disputed territories in comparative perspective'. The grant, of £930,000, is held in conjunction with Professor Stefan Wolff of the University of Birmingham and will include extensive fieldwork trips to Iraq to investigate the politics of Iraq's disputed territories and the contestation between the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government. The research will also investigate the many destabilizing issues that have developed in this region since the rise of the Islamic State.

Prizes

2014 Annual BRISMES Award

At a ceremony in London on 28th October 2014 Professor Ian Richard Netton (Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies) received the 2014 Annual BRISMES Award for Services to Middle Eastern Studies. The citation on the presentation certificate reads: "The BRISMES Award for Services to Middle Eastern Studies awarded to Professor Ian Richard Netton in recognition of his outstanding contribution to Middle Eastern Studies in the United Kingdom over many years". Previous recipients of the Award have included HH Shaikh Sultan, Professor Montgomery Watt, Baroness Haleh Afshar, Sir Harold Walker and Professor Edmund Bosworth FBA.

Appointment

The Doha Institute for Graduate Studies awarded **James Onley** a fully-funded Visiting Professorship for 2015-16. James will use his time off to complete his next book, *India and the Persian Gulf: Trade, Society, and Empire across the Indian Ocean, 1507-1947* (under contract with Cambridge University Press).

Talks

James Onley gave the keynote address at the launch of the Qatar Digital Library, held at the British Library on 22 October 2014. A video about the launch can be viewed at www.bl.uk/qatar.

PhD awards

Hassan Beloushi, *The theory of Maqasid al-shari'ah in Shii jurisprudence: Muhammad Taqi al-Mudarrisi as a model* – Supervised by Robert Gleave

Seevan Saeed, *The Kurdish National Movement in Turkey: From the PKK to the KCK* – supervised by Jonathan Githens-Mazer

Exhibitions



Transhumances Kurdes

15 January – March 2015

Pictures of pastoral life in Kurdish Turkey and Iraq by **Michaël Thevenin**.

Conferences, seminars, workshops

Forthcoming events

Reformers and Intellectual Reformulation in Contemporary Islam: 29-30 January 2015.

A two-day symposium on the patterns of reformulation in contemporary Muslim theology, law, exegesis, mysticism and political thought to be held at SOAS and QMU London. The symposium will include a public lecture at SOAS by Professor Muhammad Qasim Zaman (Princeton University) on the evening of 29 January 2015.

Past events

Reforming Islamic Legal Thought Workshop – 25 November 2014. A one-day workshop for both early career and established researchers examining the legal reform programmes of influential contemporary Muslim thinkers. Professor Rainer Brunner (CNRS) gave a public lecture as part of the workshop entitled "Between authoritarianism and intellectualism: Some Recent Controversies on the Role of Hadith in Sunnite Islam".

Lake Manzala, Egypt – the Archaeology of a Medieval Landscape: one-day workshop led by Dr John Cooper held on 29 November 2014.

Revolutionaries in the Shadow of the Cold War: one day workshop led by Dr Marc Valeri held on 6 December 2014.

EU policy towards Palestine: Reassessment of the Two State Solution: one-day workshop led by Professor Ilan Pappé held on 10 January 2015.

Publications

A special book was published in November, in honour of our retired Middle Eastern librarian, **Paul Auchterlonie**. The book included contributions from several members of IAIS staff:

Robert Gleave (ed.) (2014), *Books and Bibliophiles: Studies in Honour of Paul Auchterlonie on the Bio-Bibliography of the Muslim World*, (Oxford: Oxbow Books for the E.J.W.Gibb Memorial Trust)

Ian Richard Netton, "Majlis Readings in the Golden Age of Islam: Text and Intertext"

Cooper, J. P. and Zazzaro, C. (2014), 'The Farasan Islands, Saudi Arabia: towards a chronology of settlement'. *Arabian Archaeology and Epigraphy*, 25.2: 147–174. doi: 10.1111/aae.12046

Leonard Lewisohn (2014) *The Philosophy of Ecstasy: Rumi and the Sufi Tradition*. Edited by Leonard Lewisohn. Bloomington, Indiana: World Wisdom 2014

Leonard Lewisohn (2014) "Sufism's Religion of Love, from Rabi'a to Ibn 'Arabi." In Lloyd Ridgeon (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Sufism* (Cambridge: CUP), pp. 150-80

Leonard Lewisohn (2014) "English Romantics and Persian Sufi Poets: A Wellspring of Inspiration for American Transcendentalists." In Mehdi Aminrazavi (ed.), *Sufism and American Literary Masters* (Albany: SUNY), pp. 15-52.

Maryam Musharraf and **Leonard Lewisohn** (2014) "Sahl Tustari's (d. 283/896) Esoteric Qur'anic

Commentary and Rumi's Mathnawi: Part 1," *Mawlana Rumi Review*, vol. V, pp. 180-203.

James Onley (ed.) (2014) *Journal of Arabian Studies* 4.2 (December), 291 pages. This is a special issue on the Arab Spring in the GCC states.

James Onley (2014) "Indian Communities in the Gulf, c. 1500–1947", in L.G. Potter (ed.), *The Persian Gulf in Modern Times: Ports, Peoples and History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan), pp. 231–66.

Gareth Stansfield (2014) 'The Islamic State, the Kurdistan Region and the Future of Iraq: assessing UK policy options', *International Affairs*, 90(6), November, pp 1329–1350.

Gareth Stansfield (2014) 'Kurds, Persian Nationalism, and Shi'i Rule: Surviving Persian Dominant Nationhood in Iran', in David Romano and Mehmet Gurses (eds.) *Conflict, Democratization, and the Kurds in the Middle East* (London: Palgrave)

Gareth Stansfield (2014) 'The Evolution of the Political System of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq', in Gulistan Gurbey and Sabine Hoffman (eds.) *Politics and Society in Kurdistan-Iraq and Palestine*. (Berlin: LIT Verlag)

Marc Valeri (2014), 'Oman. L'hyper-personnalisation du pouvoir à l'épreuve du « Printemps arabe »', in M. Camau & F. Vairel (eds), *Soulèvements et recompositions politiques dans le monde arabe* (Montreal [Canada]: Presses Universitaires de Montreal), pp.353-70.

Visiting speakers

14 January: Professor Jean-Pierre FILIU (Sciences Po Paris) *The Twelve Israeli Wars on Gaza*

21 January: Professor Mohammad Ali AMIR-MOEZZI (Sorbonne University, Paris) *The Divine Man's Holy Spirit. Some New Remarks Regarding Imamate and Prophecy*

28 January: tbc

4 February: tbc

11 February: Dr Gina BEKKER (Ulster University) Title tbc: topic: *Human rights in North Africa*

18 February: Dr Yossef RAPOPORT (Queen Mary, London) Title tbc: topic: *Relations between State and Peasants in Medieval Egypt*

25 February: Professor Lisa WEDEEN (University of Chicago) Title tbc (probably on contemporary Syria).

4 March: Dr Tariq DANA (Hebron University) Title tbc: topic: *Capitalism and the Capitalist Class in the Occupied Palestinian Territories*

11 March: Dr Guy LARON (Hebrew University of Jerusalem) Title tbc: topic: *Generals at the Helm: A Global History of the 1967 Six-Day War*

18 March: Dr Jonathan WYRTZEN (Yale) Title tbc: topic: *Relationships among European imperial expansion, colonial policies of modernization and state formation, and the rise of Arabo-Islamic nationalism in North Africa in the mid-20th century*

25 March: Professor Simona SHARONI (State University of New York – Plattsburgh) Title tbc: topic: *Gender and Gaza*