SIS
THE SOCIETY FOR IRANIAN STUDIES
NEWSLETTER

Vol. I, No. 2
October 7, 1969

Dear Society Member:

For most of you living in the north, summer has already come to an end. Here in Florida, however, the illusion of summer persists and although this is still the monsoon season, I am told that from October on we shall have one long stretch of warm and pleasant sunshine until April, when the inferno heat is turned on. So, if you are planning to visit these parts, the coming months will be the most enticing.

The warmth of the sun and the sea, the excitements of a new and challonging job at New College (which is a literally new and experimental college of liberal arts modelled after Oxford's New College), and my declining sense of Calvinist guilt (which I had inherited from my years in New England) have all led to a delay in the publication of this issue of the Newsletter. I apologize for the delay and hope that we will have a more frequent publication in the future.

There are a few items of the Society's business which require your urgent attention. The following are of most immediate concern:

The Society's Annual Business Meeting

The first and foremost problem we have to deal with at the beginning of this year is the problem of our Annual Business Meeting. Now that the Society's membership has stretched all across the North American continent, we are faced with the problem of choosing a site most convenient to

all. Since most of us are probably also members of the Middle East Studies Association of North America (MESA) plan to attend the Association's Third Annual Meeting on November 14-15, the Executive Council has recommended [illegible] for our meeting place sometime during the MESA conference. Would you therefore kindly let us know immediately [illegible] attached form if you could come to Toronto? If you are planning to come and wish to participate in the MESA Conference also, please write to Professor R.M. Savory, Department of Islamic Studies, University of Toronto, Toronto 5, Canada for your registration.

As soon as we hear from you positively, we will mail [illegible] an agenda for the SIS Meeting, including its time [illegible]. In case you plan to come, we also urge you to make your [illegible] reservations as soon as possible with the [illegible] Hotel, Toronto 1, Ontario, Canada, where most of [illegible] Conference participants will be staying.

Report of the Meeting of the Executive Council

The Executive Council met on June 11, 1969, in New Haven, Connecticut, for a general review of the Society's activities. In a report on the financial situation of the Society, Ali Banuazizi concluded that the Society has so far maintained its solvency through membership dues, subscription fees and contributions, but for any future extension of its activities we will have to draw from other possible sources of financial support such as the research foundations, advertising, and an enlarged membership and subscription list.

In respect to the position of the Society in the general field of Middle Eastern Studies, Richard Bulliet pointed out that the Society should expand its translation of Persian articles and other scholarly works published in Iran. He felt that such an endeavor would serve two important purposes. In the first place, it would help establish the identity of Iranian Studies as a legitimate field of inquiry distinct from Middle Eastern Studies. Secondly, it would serve as a significant bridge between the Iranian scholars in Iran and those abroad.

Banuazizi, the editor of Iranian Studies, reported on the Bulletin's progress and outlined its future prospects. The following suggestions were then entertained:

1. Devotion of one issue of the Bulletin exclusively to reviewing the Cambridge History of Iran.
2. Inclusion of articles on the state of Iranian studies in different countries.
3. Formation of an Advisory Editorial Board for the Bulletin.
4. Inclusion of a chronology of events in Iran in every issue of the Bulletin.
5. Expansion of the book review section to include books published in Iran.

The following decisions were also reached by the Executive Council:

1. A committee of four (three non-Council and one Council member) was elected to nominate the Society's officers for the coming year. Those elected were: Amin Banani (UCLA), Ali Banuazizi (USC), James Bill (University of Texas) and Richard Cottam (University of Pittsburgh). The Council felt that the most feasible election procedure is by balloting through the mail.

2. All members, and especially the editor of the Bulletin, were urged to try to get library subscriptions for the Iranian Studies.

3. Banuazizi and Kazemi were directed to contact Iranian scholars during their visits to Iran in the summer and report to the Council on possible ways of furthering communication and cooperation among them and those engaged in research outside of Iran.

4. Kazemi was directed to look into the possibility of obtaining advertisements from publishing companies for the Bulletin.

5. Kazemi was directed to assess the feasibility of a chronology of events in Iran as a regular feature of the Bulletin.

6. The Council decided to include in the Bulletin, whenever possible, abstracts of papers given at various Iranian Studies-related conferences. It was felt that the abstracts

of papers given at the UCLA, Oxford and OPEC summer conference would be especially appropriate for this purpose.

7. Tehranian and Bulliet were directed to write brief reports for the Bulletin on OPEC and Oxford conferences respectively.

8. Bulliet was directed to arrange a meeting at UCLA during the conference on behalf of the Society to discuss some general problems of the Society.

9. Toronto was recommended by the Council as a possible site for the coming Annual Business Meeting of the Society.

UCLA Conference on Iran

Under the joint auspices of the Near Eastern Center and the SIS, the Society's first scholarly conference on Iran was successfully held this June at the University of California in Los Angeles. Altogether, 14 papers on different aspects of "The Structure of Power in Islamic Iran" were presented to the conference. The papers were generally of a high quality and also represented some fresh contributions to the field by younger scholars. A critical review of the conference will appear in the coming issue of the Iranian Studies. The following is merely a list of authors and titles of the papers; copies of the papers may be obtained from the Near Eastern Center, UCLA, Los Angeles, California 90024:

C.E. Bosworth, The Heritage of Rulership in Early Islamic Iran and the Search for Dynastic Connections with the Past

R.W. Bulliet, Local Politics under the Ghaznavids and Seljuks

R.M. Savory, Emergence of the Modern Persian State Under the Safavids

J.M. Smith, Turanian Nomadism and Iranian Politics

A.R. Garthwaite, Pastoral Nomadism and Tribal Power

M. Zonis, The Search for a Political Elite: Reputational Analysis and the Occupational Bases of Power

J. Bill, The Plasticity of Informal Politics: The Case of Iran

N.R. Keddie, The Iranian Power Structure and Social Change 1800-1969: An Overview

R.W. Cottam, The United States, Iran and the Cold War

A. Banuazizi, Social Psychological Perspectives on National Development of Iran

M. Tehranian, Iran: Oil and the Struggle for National Power

E. Abrahamian, The Failure of Iranian Aristocracy, 1941-1953

H. Algar, The Ulama in Twentieth Century Iran: Some Considerations, Historical and Contemporary

A. Banani, Epilogue

Subsequent to the conference, a meeting of the panelists and the Society's Executive Committee was held in which the future plans of the SIS were discussed at some length. Since the Society plans to hold at least one conference a year in cooperation with the universities which share the Society's aim in the encouragement of research in Iranian Studies, we would be very happy to hear from any one of you who is in a position to plan for our future conferences.

Membership Dues, Subscription Fees and Contributions

Since the Society is still primarily dependent on membership dues and subscription fees for its financial solvency, we should like to urge those of you who have failed to pay your share for 1969 to do so immediately. We have unfortunately no funds to spend on reminders. Needless to say, advance payments for 1970 will be much appreciated also.

We will also soon incorporate the Society as a non-profit organization, making it eligible to receive tax-deductible contributions. In the meantime, however, we would not refuse whatever contribution you could make! Members of the Executive Council have each pledged between 20 to 50 dollars as their annual contribution to the Society until solvency is assured.

The Loss of Al-Ahmad

Following the recent loss of Forough Farrokhzad, Khahlil Maleki and Hassan Arsanjani, the sudden death of Jalal Al-Ahmad on September 9th is another sad blow to modern Iranian literature and social criticism. Al-Ahmad was only 49 years old when he died of a heart attack; he was the leading figure

among a group of younger poets, writers and social critics who have established the tenor of contemporary Persian arts and letters. The group, which is now formally organized into the Congress of Iranian Writers, belongs to a generation of Iranian intellectuals who have emerged from three decades of political-literary activism, disillusionment and regeneration.

Al-Ahmad's life was symbolic of the intellectual and emotional ordeals of this generation. He was a Tudeh Party activist in the forties; he split from the Tudeh leadership with his friend and fellow-socialist Khahlil Maleki in 1946 and later established the Third Force (socialist) Party while supporting Dr. Mosaddeq's nationalist government; after the coup d'etat of 1953, he joined many other young intellectuals in a period of political alienation and literary pessimism, followed by a burst of artistic and intellectual regeneration in the sixties.

As a writer, Al-Ahmad was quite prolific. He has produced many volumes of novels, short stories, essays in social criticism and anthropologic monographs. Modir-e Madresseh (The School Principal), a short novel he wrote a few years ago, is probably his best literary work, while his Gharb Zadegi (literally, "struck by the West", but meaning a kind of "Westomania" or excess in the imitation of the West) constitutes his most popular work of social criticism. For a while, the latter work was the constant talk of Iran's literary-political underground.

In personal relations, Al-Ahmad was generous and loyal. He wrote and talked in a telegraphic style; was blunt, caustic and sincere. He was loved by his friends and respected by his enemies, while attracting a band of like-spirited intellectuals around his own charismatic personality. He is survived by his wife, Professor Simeen Daneshvar of the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Tehran. We wish to extend our sincere condolences to his wife, his friends and his admirers.

Next Issue of Iranian Studies

I am informed that the next issue of Iranian Studies is expected to come out by mid-November. Please let Professor A.

Bamuazizi, Department of Psychology, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, California, know of any change in your address.

Please make this Newsletter your own by sending us whatever news items of common interest you have with other Iranologists. News of your current research, conferences on Iran and visiting scholars from Iran would be of special value to others.

Sincerely yours,

Majid Tehranian
Secretary to the Society

Address all your communications to:

M. Tehranian, Division of Social Sciences, New College, Sarasota, Florida 33578

To: Mr. Tehranian
Division of Social Sciences
New College
Sarasota, Florida 33578

_____ Yes, I will attend the Society's Annual
ing to be held in Toronto on November [illegible]

_____ No, I cannot attend the [illegible]
I propose that the meeting [illegible]
on _____.

_____ I enclose a check for $_____ as my [illegible]
_____1969
_____1970*

(Make your checks payable to: the Socie[illegible]

* A circle around either year indicates that y[illegible]
payable for that year. Annual membership dues [illegible]
single memberships and an additional $2 for fo[illegible]