



Nouvelles *NOUVELLES*

Center for Medieval
and
Renaissance Studies

The
Ohio State University
January 2010



Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies

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Greetings

Greetings,

The New Year is a time to look forward, and already, only three lectures into our “Mementoes, Tokens, and Keepsakes” series, we are beginning to think about next year’s offerings. 2110 will mark the four-hundredth anniversary of the publication of the King James Version of the Bible and plans are already under way in the English department to mark this event with an international conference. Our mandate in CMRS takes us far beyond Jacobean England, of course, but in order to provide a wider context for this important anniversary we are planning a series, tentatively entitled “Translating Piety,” which will consider the translation of holy books of all kinds, not only into other languages, but also into other cultures and other media as well.

One exciting development that has come out of this attempt to coordinate two scholarly initiatives is the realization that we can establish mutually beneficial arrangements with several other groups on campus when planning our lecture series. If all goes according to plan three of our lectures next year will do double duty as plenary sessions in other conferences. The precise details of our cooperation with the King James Bible conference have still to be worked out, but on October 1, John Van Engen of the University of Notre Dame will be speaking in our series and at the same time delivering a keynote address to the annual meeting of the Midwest Medieval History Conference that is being held here, and in the Spring of 2011 Peredur Lynch of Bangor University will give us a lecture on Biblical influences on notions of national identity in Wales during the medieval and early modern periods—a talk which will also function as a keynote address for a meeting of the Celtic Studies Association

of North America to be held at OSU. Professor Van Engen's talk offers a particularly appropriate opportunity for such collaboration since his lecture will be given in memory of Joe Lynch, a former Director of CMRS and one of our most staunch supporters. It is entirely appropriate that an interdisciplinary center like CMRS should lend its active support to other interdisciplinary initiatives; these collaborations pool scarce resources and enlarge audiences to the benefit of both parties, and I really hope that we will see more of them in the future.

In the meantime we still have plenty to savor in our current series: shortly after this goes to print Professor Joyce Coleman of the University of Oklahoma will be speaking on the Chaucer portrait in the Corpus MS of *Troilus and Criseyde* (on February 5), and before our next issue Nancy Wicker of the University of Mississippi will be here to talk to us about Scandinavian runic amulets (on February 19).

In our final issue of 2009 I was bemoaning the slowing pace of our Howe Fund donations, so I'm delighted to report that two very generous gifts from long-time supporters of the Center, Barbara Hanawalt and Predrag Matejic, have put us right back on track. We still have a long way to go, but reaching the new figure of just over \$10,000 by the end of 2011 no longer seems quite such a daunting obstacle. My thanks are due, not only to these two exemplary academic citizens, but to all of you who over the last three years have expressed your support for the Center and its work in this particularly tangible form.

Best wishes,

Richard Firth Green, Director
Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies



Just Around

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DICK DAVIS
IN THE ORIGINAL AND IN TRANSLATION:
INTERVIEW WITH
PROFESSOR RICHARD DAVIS

*Author, translator; now their voices switch.
Ventriloquist and doll; but which is which?*
Dick Davis, "Author, Translator..."
A Trick of Sunlight, 2006

Dr. Dick Davis is a pre-eminent translator of medieval Persian poetry, a leading British poet, and (lucky us!) an outstanding professor of Persian literature at The Ohio State. A beautiful Persian rug on the floor of his office, ornate decorations of colorful volumes, and an inexhaustible supply of stories efficiently transport you into the enchanted world of sacred gardens, confined princesses, and evil viziers. Once the story is told, however, the harsh daylight coming from a huge, single pane window brings you back to the reality of Hagerty's third floor, the territory reserved for the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures. And then you begin to wonder: what does all of this translate into?

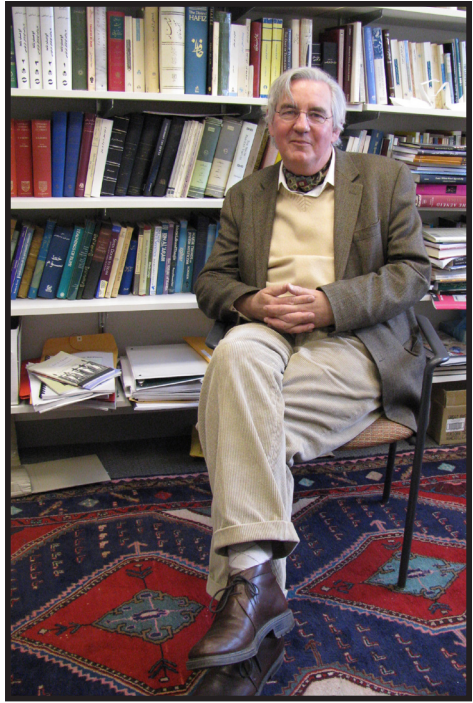
Davis' fascination with Persian culture was quite "devious" to begin with. Coming from humble origins, he landed a spot at King's College, Cambridge. There he read English, specifically Medieval English and, at the same time, got vaguely interested in Persian literature, largely under the influence of Edward Fitzgerald's translation of *The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*. But the pivotal moment that, eventually, determined his life-long interest in Persian culture was his getting to know the famous novelist E.M. Forster who often explored in his writing the complexity of the relationship between the East and the West (most famously in *A Passage to India* (1924)). It was only much later in life that Davis realized to what extent his interest in the Muslim Middle East was,

in fact, inspired by Forster's interest in Muslim India.

Davis' interest in translation developed while he was still in college where he began to doubt the orthodox approach to literary studies with its idea of "national literature" as an expression of a national soul. Nor could he agree to view it as a cultural phenomenon *sui generis* represented by a metaphorical tree of literature rooted in its native soil. Instead, he embraced the unorthodox opinion of the 18th century British poet, Thomas Gray, who claimed that a history of English Literature could be written, beginning with Chaucer, that showed how each generation had drawn alternately on French and Italian

models for its literary innovations. According to Gray, no national literature was possible without translation. Davis came to the same conclusion while translating from Persian – he realized that Persian literature was no different from European literatures in terms of its interaction and interdependence with other literatures. Persian literature turned out to be "an amalgam, a fusion of indigenous literature and the literature of the Arab invader."

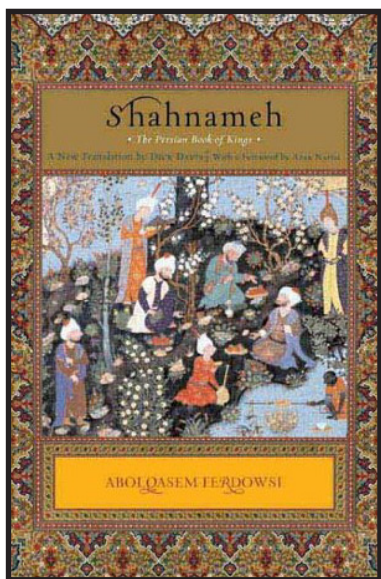
Davis' work as a translator also allowed him to trace almost every technical innovation in British verse to the translation of a particular work of literature, whether it is blank verse whose form was an adaptation of an Italian form that had been used to translate Virgil's Latin, couplets from French literature, etc. Like Gray before him, Davis became firmly convinced that no literature exists in isolation and that it is translation that fosters fusion. "Translators are the post-horses of civilization," says Davis, supporting his argument with a quote by a Russian poet Alexander Pushkin.



**Professor Richard Davis in his office,
Hagerty Hall 300-G**

Davis also likes to say, “All literatures are the same, and yet all literatures are different.” They are similar in that they deal with humanity and they are different in the way they do it. It was this very tension between sameness and difference that drew him to Persian literature. It has the same themes as Medieval European literature, the same genres, the same way of writing about things, the same underlying humanity; it also has pilgrimage texts, romance texts, and similar metaphors. At the same time there is a sensibility that is entirely different, and it is the challenge of balancing this sameness and difference during the process of translation that has always excited Dr. Davis, and still does.

At the same time Davis is well aware of the metaphysical problem translation poses. Is it possible to translate at all? As Davis



**Hakim Ferdowsi. Shahnameh:
The Persian Book of Kings.
Translated by Dick Davis.**

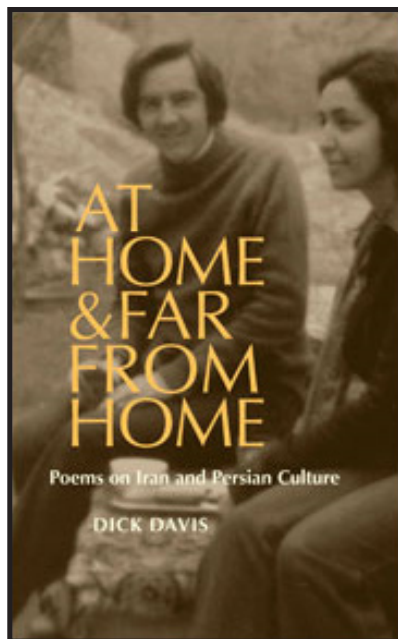
says, “it’s possible in the sense that failure is always possible.” No translation is going to reproduce the original – that is impossible just because of the language difference. According to a German theorist of translation, Friedrich Schleiermacher, a translator always makes a choice, “either to take the text to the reader, or the reader to the text.” Schleiermacher himself insists that the reader should always be brought to the text; however, many translators do not do that. They feel that if they overemphasize the cultural otherness of the text, they might make it incomprehensible to the reader and, thus, drive potential readers away. Such translation will only attract scholars and not those who are looking for literary or aesthetic pleasure. On the other hand, if

translators “domesticate” the text completely and make it accessible to the culture for which they translate it, then they “betray” the original.

According to Davis, all translators should negotiate between these two poles, taking the text to the reader and bringing the reader

to the text. Being a good translator means performing this negotiation for both cultures as skillfully, subtly, and respectfully as possible. One of his own best “deals” was a highly praised translation of the great epic of ancient Persia, *Shahnameh: The Persian Book of Kings* (“Book of the Year” by The Washington Post in 2006). The epic covers all of the pre-Islamic history of Persia, opening with the creation of the universe and closing with the Arab conquest of the country in the 7th century. If Davis followed his poetic principle of translating verse by verse, it would have taken him at least thirty years to translate Ferdowsi’s 45,000 couplets, the equivalent of 90,000 lines of English poetry. Instead, he opted for a format of prosimetrum, a mixture of prose and poetry, which made the text more accessible to the reader while remaining poetic. The work still took him seven years to complete but resulted in a significant breakthrough for Persian culture in the English-speaking world.

“A good translator is rarer than a good poet,” says Davis, paraphrasing a famous quote of Dr. Johnson. Not only does one have to be a very good reader but a good writer, too – the beauty of a poem should be rendered with as much precision as possible. Davis himself, inspired by the great Anglo-American poet W.H. Auden, did his best to achieve the mastery needed to approach the technical complexity of medieval Persian verse. As for the “reading part,” here Davis got lucky – his knowledge of Persian culture was not a dull “colonialist” study of foreign customs and traditions; his was the direct encounter with people embodying this culture. Answering insistent pleas of an archaeologist friend to come and see the fascinating country, Davis came to Iran to teach English in Tehran University. He planned to stay for a year and then go back home or wherever else his wanderlust might take him. Life, however, had another plan for him.



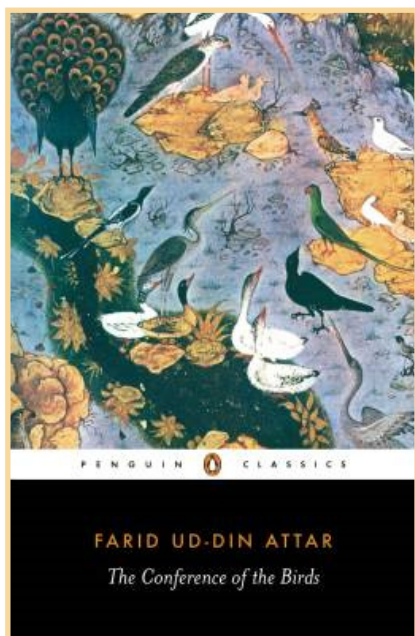
Dick Davis and his wife, Afkham Darbandi on the cover of Davis’ 2009 book of poems dedicated to her and to Iran.

During his first year in Iran he fell gravely ill and within a couple of months was on the verge of dying. Unconscious, he was taken to the hospital and would have died there were it not for a young nurse, Afkham Darbandi, who, in the absence of a doctor to authorize the procedure, took on herself the responsibility of giving him the blood transfusion which saved his life. Struck by this serendipity, Davis could resist fate no longer – he fell in love: with Afkham, her culture, and the best of what that culture could offer – its great literary tradition. As he later wrote in a poem dedicated to his wife,

I wanted otherness
And met your gaze, in which the world shone unproved;
You were the world itself,
The uninterpretable strangeness to be loved.

(Dick Davis. "Afkham"

Devices and Desires: New and Selected Poems 1967-1987)



Farid Attar. The Conference of the Birds. Translated by Afkham Darbandi and Dick Davis.

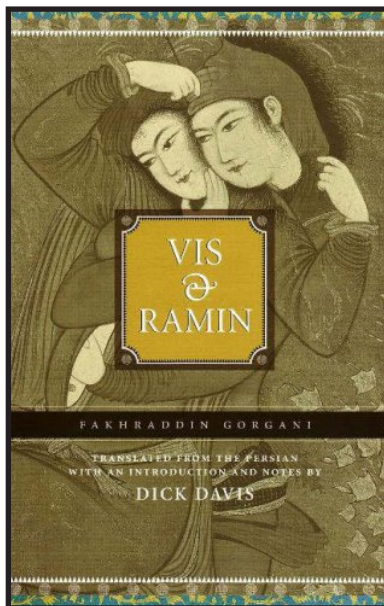
Symbolically, Davis' first "step inside" Persian culture was the fruit of their truly "epic" love – the co-translation of Attar's *The Conference of the Birds*, a Sufi allegory about thirty birds trying to attain Enlightenment. In 2001 The American Institute of Iranian Studies awarded both Davis and Afkham Darbandi a translation prize for this book. Though only one in the mass of prizes and awards received by Davis for his translations, this must have felt special, for, as Davis acknowledged in his other interview, "there is as much of Afkham in that as me."

So, what is it, besides Davis' outstanding technical mastery and knowledge of Persian culture and history that makes him one of the greatest translators

of our time? Can it be that Davis is, in fact, an example of Isaiah Berlin proverbial hedgehog writer, the kind that “has one trick, but a good one”, and that Love is his leading technique? Love, literally, permeates Davis’ existence – Davis loves what he does. He does not *work with* British, Persian, and Italian literature, he *loves* them. Omar Khayyam, Hafez, Ferdowsi – they are his friends. He talks to them, he sees them in his dreams and nightmares, and they mark the stages of his life. Each new translation he perceives as a “labor of love,” and more often than not that is exactly what they are about.

Davis also has a love affair with OSU. He’s found his time here extremely gratifying and stimulating, thanks especially to the uniqueness of OSU’s intellectual milieu. According to Dr. Davis, “in whatever obscure things I might be interested, at OSU I will always find two other people interested in the same thing. In other places, it was common for me to be the only one. Also, the OSU administration has always encouraged my projects and I always felt free to do whatever interested me most. Finally, my colleagues are wonderful to work with and that is not at all a polite lie, it is the truth.”

Ultimately, the last decade proved to be one of the most productive in Dr. Davis’ life: he finished the translation of all the three volumes of the Ferdowsi’s *Shahnameh: The Persian Book of Kings* (2000, 2004, 2006), published a new book of poems *Belonging* (2002), a scholarly book *Panthea’s Children: Hellenistic Novels and Medieval Persian Romances* (2002), one of his most successful book of poems *A Trick of Sunlight* (2006), and finally, finished his four-year long “labor of love” – a verse translation of an 11th century Persian romance *Vis and Ramin* (2009), one of the greatest love poems in world literature. In addition, he has performed the duties of the Chair of the Department for six years. At this moment he is working on



Fakhreddin Gorgani.

Vis and Ramin.

Translated by Dick Davis.

a stage adaptation of the *Shahnameh* to be performed by one of the major theater companies in the UK. His new book *The Faces of Love: Hafez and the Poets of Shiraz* is forthcoming.

This attempt at an analysis of Davis and his work has just touched upon some of the major milestones along his path as a translator. Davis the poet would require another interview. The most appropriate place to stop might be Davis' own translation of his favorite poet, Hafez. In the best tradition of Sufic ambiguity the poet encourages us to drink wine and we can never know whether this wine is Divine love or merely an intoxicating fluid.

Drink wine down by the glass-full, and you'll tear
Out of your heart the roots of your despair -

Keep your heart open, like your glass, not sealed up
Like a flagon, stoppered, and doctrinaire;

Drink down the wine of self-forgetfulness,
You'll boast less once you're not so self-aware.

Be stone-like in your steps, not like a cloud
That shifts its colors, gadding everywhere;

Rise, struggle like Hafez! And may you find
Your love, and fling yourself before her there.

(From Hafez. Translated by Dick Davis)

Or might it be that this wine is the poetry that Davis pours into our hearts making us forget the headlines that decry a different Persia from the one that speaks of love, the one that Davis loves, the one which through his translation we cannot help but love ourselves? And in this Davis assumes his role again as the translator, the guide, the vessel through which the wine of poetry can be shared with people of a different time and space.

“Translated” for *Nouvelles Nouvelles*
by CMRS special correspondent, Daria Safronova

CMRS Film Series

Winter 2010

CMRS Film Series (WI 2010)

presents:



Jan 12

**The Arabian Nights (Pt 1)
(USA, 2000)**

Jan 26

**The Arabian Nights (Pt. 2)
(USA, 2000)**

Feb 9

**The Golden Voyage of Sinbad
(UK, 1974)**

Feb 23

**Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves
(France, 1954)**

**All movies at
7:30 p.m. in
University Hall
Room 038**

**Pizza and pop
will be served**

**EVERYONE
WELCOME**

CMRS Film Series

Winter 2010

In Memoriam



Keith Mixter
(1943-2008)

Professor Emeritus
School of Music

Sometimes it is good to be reminded of the people and works that make Ohio State's School of Music the strong and vibrant place that it is today. Sometimes, as now, the memories come with the sadness of the passing of a beloved professor. Certainly, Dr. Keith Mixter, who died on Friday, October 23, 2009, was beloved by colleagues, students, family and friends, and he was admired and respected in many areas of musical endeavor. Keith Mixter was a violinist, trombonist, pianist, and organist, but he was known most widely as a scholar.

Born in Michigan, he was educated at Michigan State University; the University of Basel, Switzerland; the University of Chicago; and the University of North Carolina. He served for a time as music librarian at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. His teaching career took him to Michigan State University, the University of Wisconsin, and the University of Colorado, as well as The Ohio State University (where he joined the faculty in 1961).

In his early years here he published course guides for OSU music bibliography courses, compiled bibliographical lists published in *Musica Disciplina*, and completed the first edition of his *General Bibliography for Music Research* (the third edition of which appeared in 1996). He also finished his edition of the complete works of the 15th century composer Johannes Brassart, published in two volumes of the respected series *Corpus Mensurabilis Musicae* (1965 and 1971). Of special significance to the OSU Libraries was his study titled "A Newly Discovered Medieval Polyphonic Sequence" (*Musica Disciplina*, vol. 44, 1990), which describes music manuscript leaves used in the binding of a 15th century book owned by OSU. This study demonstrates his skills as a scholar and sleuth, as well as his ability to craft a fascinating narrative about manuscript characteristics, provenance, and musical content!

Among his other publications and presentations are studies concerning topics ranging from lute tablature, isorhythmic motets, and early music manuscripts, to music and texts associated with Dracula (see, for example, *Musica Antiqua* VII, 1985)! He wrote numerous articles for *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, the 1980 edition of the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, and the *Handwörterbuch der musikalisichen Terminologie*.

Dr. Mixer was an active member of numerous professional societies, including the *American Musicological Society* (National Council member, 1978-81), the *International Musicological Society*, the *International Association of Music Libraries* (secretary of the International Committee of Research Libraries, 1964-65), and the *Music Library Association* (Program Committee, 1958-60; Executive Board, 1961-63) for whose journal he wrote many reviews. At OSU, he worked closely with the founders of the Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies helping to shape the interdisciplinary programs for which that Center is known and respected.

Following his retirement from teaching he continued his service to the OSU Music/Dance Library volunteering to do detailed cataloging of microfilms of medieval musical manuscripts purchased with grants awarded to Prof. Charles Atkinson. His knowledge of manuscripts, liturgy, medieval rubrics and abbreviations, and habits of medieval copyists gave his cataloging detail and accuracy unavailable in many microfilm listings and made OSU's collection especially useful to graduate students and scholars here.

Dr. Mixer was married to Beatrice Ruf Mixer for 59 years. Keith was devoted to all in his family (his three sons, his daughter, and five grandchildren), and to his church, his profession, and his country (serving in the US Army in the European Theater of Operations during WWII). With his love of family, music, scholarship, libraries, sailing, and travel, he was always ready to share stories, experiences, and his gentle good humor with students, colleagues, and friends.

By Margaret (Gretchen) Atkinson
Scores Cataloger, Music and Dance Library
The Ohio State University



Teaching the Middle Ages

By Barbara Hanawalt

Barbara Hanawalt retired from OSU History Department as the King George III Professor of British History Emerita on December 31, 2009. She has an National Endowment for the Humanities Grant for the calendar year of 2010 which she is taking at the Newberry Library. Her project is *Civic Ceremonial and the Development of a Civic Culture in Medieval London*. The survey of 2009 was done for the last undergraduate class that she taught at The Ohio State University. It was *Medieval History of England*, 508.03, or what she called, "Knights, Peasants, and Bandits in Medieval England."



**Barbara Hanawalt, King George III
Professor of British History Emerita**

Have you wondered about where your students get their ideas about the Middle Ages and what you might usefully reference when you teach? Do our students take courses from other members of the Center faculty and bring this knowledge to class? I puzzled about this throughout my teaching career and did two surveys. I regret that I didn't do more, but what I offer is suggestive.

In 1985-86, when I was teaching at Indiana University, I had a grant from the Lilly Foundation for undergraduate teaching. Part of grant was to do a questionnaire that would tell me what background my students had in history and what their

perceptions of the Middle Ages were prior to taking a class in medieval history. The original questionnaire was perhaps too complex, but it did give me a lot of information about the students. Student comments indicated that they appreciated my interest in them on the first day of class. In the autumn of 2009 I decided to do a modified survey to have some idea of the ways in which the student body had changed. The two surveys are not completely compatible, but I indicate where the information is available and where it is not. Although the survey was done for history classes, the information is generally useful for all our medieval studies classes.

In 1986 I had 71 responses and I had 58 to the second one in 2009. The spread of majors was about the same for the years. The chief difference between the two student bodies was that in 2009 I taught an evening class that had more mature students in it. In '86 I asked a number of questions about student's perception of history as well as about the Middle Ages. Students in 1986 defined history in a variety of ways, but three definitions were particularly popular: "a study of how people and social classes related to each other," "the study of cultural developments," and "a series of stepping stones to our progressive modern era." In response to questions about their expectations for a history course, 90 percent agreed or strongly agreed that they expected a history course to provide "an understanding of the way things were," with "personal enrichment," and "an understanding of patterns of human behavior" also popular responses. Nearly 80 percent expected to come away with a better understanding of what is happening today. Only 47 percent thought that they would be expected to "memorize dates and facts."

Students' perceptions of the Middle Ages in '86 and '09 showed marked similarities. In 1986 students ranked first "Religion was the most important aspect of the Middle Ages." In 2009 40 percent did likewise. The second and third choices were also very similar with "The Middle Ages emphasized chivalry and heroism" and "The Middle Ages had a mysterious, mystical quality very different from our lives today" running neck and neck at 22 and 21 percent respectively. Next in rank in both years was "The Middle Ages were bleak, grim and monotonous" at 16 percent. Asked to make a second choice in 2009, religion dropped to 29 percent, while chivalry rose to 28 percent but the bleak, grim and monotonous rose to 24 percent.

The sources of student perceptions about the Middle Ages have changed somewhat over the decades. One of the most interesting is that more of our students now have travelled to Europe. In 1986 only 32 percent said that travel abroad had influenced their perceptions, while in 2009, 55 percent said that travel in Europe had been influential. In 1986 72 percent said that lectures and documentaries were influential, while currently 85 percent responded positively. The History and Discovery Channels seem to be a major source according to student comments. Fictional films and television showed an increase from 58 percent to 66 percent. "Brave Heart" and the Monty Python films were mentioned. Another change is the influence of modern fiction with only 49 percent saying it was important in 1986 but 87 saying that it was currently. A similar pattern was true of modern nonfiction (44 percent compared to 76 percent in 2009). Fortunately, medieval authors are still taught and read. The number citing these in '86 was only 49 percent while currently it is 73 percent. I find that a number of students have read parts of all of *The Canterbury Tales*. Video games and Creative Anachronism were not significant. But one of the most heartening results was that 75 percent of our current students have taken courses in the Middle Ages compared to only 36 percent in 1986.

I also asked what students wanted to know more about when they studied the Middle Ages. In both 1986 and 2009 students ranked learning about society and the way people lived first (96/98 percent). Religion ranked high in 1986 at 93 percent and 94 percent in 2009. Medieval culture including arts, music, and literature were favored by 86 percent in 1986 and 88 percent in 2009. Some of the interests remained fairly constant in the two samples. Military history, philosophy, and politics all ranked in the eighties. Economics was the least popular subject in both surveys coming in at 58 percent in 1986 but only 32 percent in 2009.

The results show a lot of consistency in our student bodies. But the increased travel in Europe is notable and the importance of documentaries, films, and modern medieval fiction indicates a greater presence of the Middle Ages in our general culture. For the Center, the great number of students who had a course in the Middle Ages and came back for more shows that our undergraduate teaching program is strong.

Upcoming Lectures

FRIDAY, 5 FEBRUARY 2010
SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING LIBRARY, ROOM 090
2:30 PM



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
CENTER FOR MEDIEVAL AND RENAISSANCE STUDIES

PRESENTS

A LECTURE BY
JOYCE COLEMAN
UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

**“Remembering
Geoffrey:**

**Troilus and Criseyde
Frontispiece**

AS

**Chaucer
Memento”**

FRIDAY, 5 FEBRUARY 2010
SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING LIBRARY, ROOM 090
2:30 PM

Among Us



Barbara Becker-Cantarino (Graduate Chair and Research Professor, Spanish and Portuguese) reviewed *Selbstbestimmtes Leben um 1800* by Julia di Bartolo in *Monatshefte* 101,3 (Fall 2009), and *The Travel Journals of Sophie von La Roche* by Erdmut Jost in *Das Achtzehnte Jahrhundert* 33, 2 (2009). She also presented a lecture “The ‘Science’ of Witchcraft in Early Modern Germany” at the annual meeting of the Modern Language Association in Philadelphia, 28 December 2009.

Lúcia Helena Costigan’s (Associate Professor, Spanish and Portuguese) book *Through Cracks in the Wall: Modern Inquisitions and the New Christian Letrados in the Iberian Atlantic World* has been published by the series “The Atlantic World” of Brill Academic Publishers (Leiden/Boston, 2010).

David Cressy (Distinguished Professor of History, Humanities) published *Dangerous Talk: Scandalous, Seditious and Treasonable Speech in Pre-Modern England* (Oxford University Press, 2010).

Hannibal Hamlin (Associate Professor, English) published an article “Piety and Poetry: English Psalms from Miles Coverdale to Mary Sidney” in *The Oxford Handbook to Tudor Literature*, Michael Pincombe and Cathy Shrank, eds. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009. He also published “‘The Highest Matter in the Noblest Form’: The Influence of the Sidney Psalms.” *Sidney Journal* 23 (2005): 133-57. Reprinted in *Ashgate Critical Essays on Women Writers in England, 1550-1700: Volume 2: Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke*, ed. Margaret P. Hannay. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009.



Sarah-Grace Heller (Associate Professor, French and Italian) published an article, "Fictions of Consumption: the Nascent Fashion System in Partonopeus de Blois," in a special issue on "New Directions in French Medieval Studies," ed. Sharon Kinoshita, of the *Australian Journal of French Studies*, vol. 46, no. 3 (2009) pp. 191-205.

Scott Levi (Assistant Professor, History) coedited with Ron Sela *Islamic Central Asia: An Anthology of Historical Sources* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010).



Erin McCarthy (Ph.D. Candidate, English) has been awarded the Graduate Student Travel Award from the Shakespeare Association of America to help offset costs for travel to this year's conference in Chicago, Illinois.

Tamar Rudavsky (Professor, Philosophy) presented a paper "Science, demonstration and the Art of Hermeneutics in Spinoza and Galileo" at the conference "Galileo and Spinoza" held at the Sorbonne December 12, 2009

Georges Tamer (Professor, M.S. Sophia Chair in Arabic Studies, Near Eastern Languages and Cultures) published two books: *Zeit und Gott: Hellenistische Zeitvorstellungen in der altarabischen Dichtung und im Koran / Time and God: Hellenistic Concepts of Time in Old Arabic Poetry and in Qur'an*, Berlin, New York: Walter De Gruyter 2008 and *Humor in der arabischen Kultur / Humor in Arabic Culture* (Editor), Berlin, New York: Walter De Gruyter 2009. He also wrote an introduction to *Humor in der arabischen Kultur / Humor in Arabic Culture* and contributed a chapter "The Qur'an and humor," to *Humor in der arabischen Kultur / Humor in Arabic Culture* (Ed. Georges Tamer), Berlin, New York: Walter De Gruyter 2009: 3-28. He also published an article "Faith and Knowledge Revisited," in: *Rosenzweig Jahrbuch 4: Paulus und die Politik* (2009): 156-175.



Upcoming Courses

CMRS Courses:

Medieval 212: Culture of a City-State in the Renaissance (Venice) | 26464 | TH 1030-118 | UH 0151 - Bob Davis

The study of an Italian Renaissance city-state with attention to its political, social, and economic structure; its religious, intellectual, and artistic activity. 5 cl. GEC arts and hums cultures and ideas course.

Medieval 504: Arthurian Legends | 26463 | TH 330-518 | ML 0175 - Karen Winstead

The medieval tales of King Arthur's court and the Knights of the Round Table in history, myth, literature, art, and music. Prereq: 10 cr hrs in literature. Not open to students with credit for Comp Stds 504 or 510.

Medieval 631: Survey of Latin Literature: Medieval and Renaissance | 26723 | MW 400-548 | UH 0066 - Frank Coulson

Survey of selected authors representative of the medieval and renaissance periods of Latin literature with discussion of historical background and critical approaches. Prereq: Latin 104 or equiv.

Medieval 694: Nature in Middle Ages | 27590 | MW 130-318 | DH 0047 - Lisa Kiser

This course will explore the various ways in which late medieval European literary culture reflected on the natural environment. We will read some theological and scientific materials, followed by a number of romances, allegories, saints' lives, lyrics, and fables to examine how different medieval communities constructed humanity's relationship to the natural world. Social practices such as hunting, gardening, and animal domestication will be scrutinized, as well as the use of bestiaries, folklore, herbals, and forms of landscape analysis. We will also track changes in how humans thought about their responsibilities to act as stewards of the land and the animals living upon it.



For other course info, please check <http://cmrs.osu.edu/courses>



Medieval and Renaissance Studies 694 **Nature in the Middle Ages**

Professor Lisa Kiser
(*Department of English*)

Spring Quarter 2010

MW 1:30- 3:18

Derby Hall 047

UG 5 credit hours



This course will explore the various ways in which late medieval European literary culture reflected on the natural environment. We will read some theological and scientific materials, followed by a number of romances, allegories, saints' lives, lyrics, and fables to examine how different medieval communities constructed humanity's relationship to the natural world. Social practices such as hunting, gardening, and animal domestication will be scrutinized, as well as the use of bestiaries, folklore, changes in how humans thought about their responsibilities to act as stewards of the land and the animals living upon it.



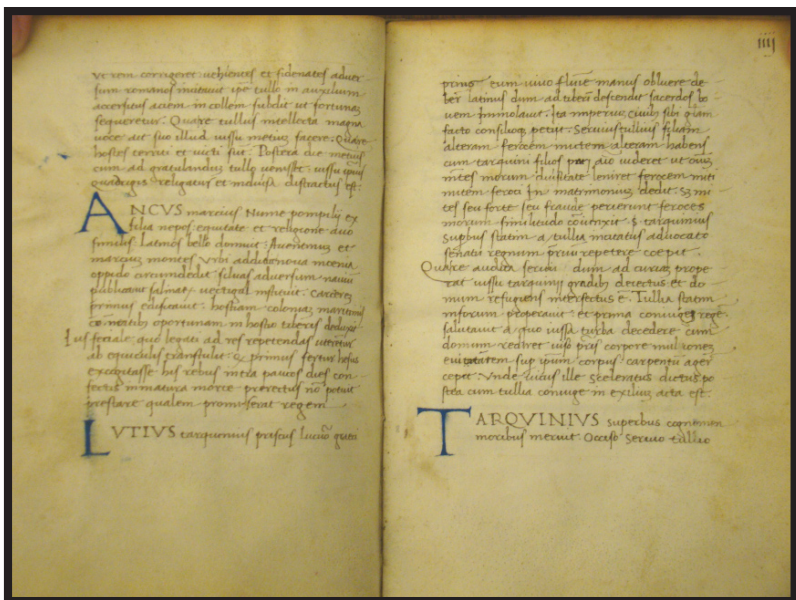
At the Library

*New Acquisitions to
The Rare Books and Manuscripts Library
Introduced by Eric Johnson
Associate Curator, Rare Books and Manuscripts*



It's not every day that I have the pleasure of announcing that the Rare Books and Manuscripts Library has acquired an original medieval codex, and I'm pleased to say that today isn't one of those days either. Pleased, you might ask? Yes, because today I happily announce that we have just added three medieval books to our collection! These acquisitions mark the first complete medieval manuscript additions to RBMS's collection in over twenty years. All three manuscripts were acquired based on a range of criteria: content, script, codicological context, uniqueness and, most importantly, their ability to serve as valuable foundations for individualized and classroom teaching and ongoing research. Each manuscript is distinct and includes qualities that previously had not been available in OSU's manuscript collections.

Our first new addition is Pseudo-Sextus Aurelius Victor's *De viris illustribus Romae*, a historical work that includes seventy-six summaries of the lives of famous Romans. Although a sixteenth-century inscription in our copy attributes the work to Suetonius and one recent scholarly opinion credits Pliny the Elder as its original author, the true authorship of this text has been contested for years. Produced in Italy in the late-fifteenth century (ca. 1450-1475), OSU's copy (one of an estimated five examples in North America) is written in a fine humanistic script. Adding further flavor to the item is its binding: a leaf from a late-twelfth century decorated Italian Lectionary. Taken together, the book's text and the binding's late Carolingian script offer students a wonderful opportunity to see side-by-side Italian humanistic script and the original scriptural style upon which it was modeled. The manuscript also provides interesting codicological fodder, giving readers a chance to see a fifteenth-century binding error and a number of later inscriptions and paratextual additions.



Pseudo-Sextus Aurelius Victor's *De viris illustribus Romae*, (ca. 1450-1475)

An early-fifteenth century noted Cistercian *Processional* in Latin (with some rubrics in Dutch) is our second new manuscript. The manuscript includes an array of text and music used during processions for important liturgical feasts and celebrations such as the Purification of the Virgin, Palm Sunday, Corpus Christi, and others. Also included are the antiphons sung to celebrate the washing of the feet on Maundy Thursday. The text is written in formal gothic bookhand in brown ink and red rubrications. The manuscript is particularly valuable from a codicological standpoint, surviving, as it does, in its original leather-covered pasteboard binding. Pasteboard bindings were not common prior to the



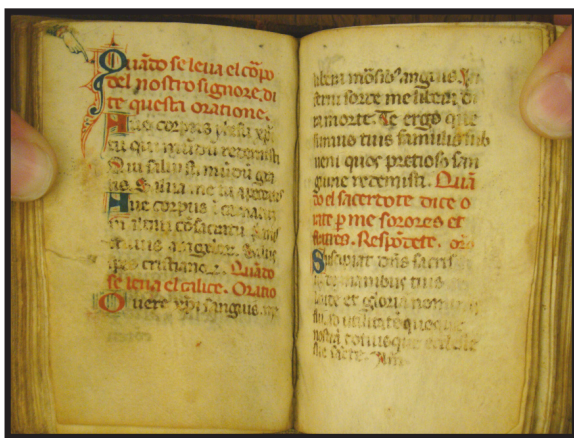
Cistercian *Processional*

early-sixteenth century, a fact that makes OSU's volume extremely interesting not just because of its early date, but also because the pasteboard is made from sheets of vellum—rather than paper—that are glued together. Although OSU has several

examples of medieval musical manuscripts in its collection of disjunct leaves, this volume is the first musical medieval codex to come to the University.

Original medieval vernacular manuscripts can be hard to come by, but occasionally a fine example appears on the market. Our third manuscript addition is a lovely little volume of prayers, masses, and a sermon likely produced in northern Italy between 1375 and 1425. The first twenty-three folios include an array of prayers and masses in both Latin and Italian, but the book's final 128 folios feature a macaronic

sermon written mostly in Italian, but with occasional Latin additions. Luke 14:16 (“Homo quidem fecit cenam magnam”) is the sermon’s main theme, but other subjects such as the two natures of Christ, the influence of the heavens and planets on everyday life, Purgatory, Hell’s punishments, and the glories of Paradise are also discussed.



A volume of prayers, masses, and a sermon

Unfortunately the text’s original binding doesn’t survive, so we’re deprived of any inscriptions or marks of ownership that might have helped us piece together its provenance. Given its small size (93 x 66 mm) and the fact that most of it is in the vernacular, this book could well have been intended for personal rather than institutional use.

All three manuscripts are welcome additions to the Rare Books and Manuscripts Library’s growing collection of original medieval documents and will prove to be popular, highly useful teaching and research tools. One ambitious and gifted student has already begun historical and codicological research on the Cistercian Processional, and work toward producing an edition and translation of the Italian prayer and sermon manuscript is also underway. Students from the French department have also conducted in-depth, hands-on analysis of one of the manuscripts during a class session at the Library late last Fall. Although the manuscripts are amongst the Library’s oldest holdings, it’s clear that they are already finding ways to speak to today’s students and scholars.

MES

The Middle East Studies Collection

The Middle East Studies (MES) collection at Ohio State contains over 100,000 books on the history and culture of the Middle East, North Africa and Central Asia from the 7th century A.D. to the present; on the religion of Islam throughout the world; and on Arabic, Persian and Turkic languages and literatures. The bulk of this collection is at the newly remodeled Thompson library but the Middle East Studies office is responsible for the Middle East portion of collections in Fine Arts, Business and other libraries on campus.

Ohio State began building the Middle East Studies Collection in earnest in the 1970s with the establishment of the Near Eastern Languages program at Ohio State and the growth of the

Arabic and Islamic Subject Specialists Dr. Ali Hassan and Mr. Patrick Visel in MES Reference Collection (3d floor) of Thompson Library with the Atlas of Islamic History.



program in the History Department. The first full-time Middle East Librarian was hired at this time. The strength of the language and history programs has meant that the bulk of the collection has been focused in the areas of history and literature. The formation of the Middle East Center at the University to support and coordinate these programs and to administer the Federal Government Title 6 pro-

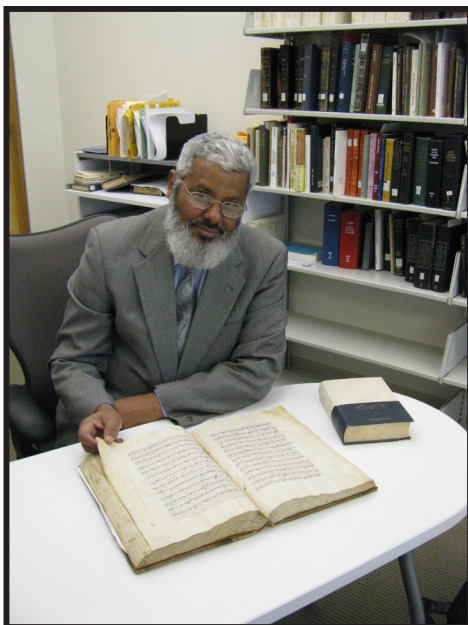
grams greatly increased the budget available for the Middle East Collection. The first doctorate in History on the Middle East was granted to Dr Joseph Roberts in 1986 and dealt with the Medieval period "Early Islamic Historiography: Ideology And Methodology." This 'early start' in collecting means Ohio State has been building its collection longer than most state Universities. Middle Eastern Studies

as a discipline is still very young in the US; except for a few of the Ivy League Universities, most US programs are Post-World War II. The Ohio State Library had the luck and foresight to acquire complete runs of 19th century British and French 'Orientalist' journals when developing its Middle East Collection.

MES has a non-circulating reference collection in the International Studies area on the third floor of the Thompson Library. This is just a small part of the total Middle East collection. This reference collection contains the specialized encyclopedias, dictionaries and bibliographic tools in Western and vernacular languages necessary for the study of Islam, the Middle East, and its languages and cultures. Small group study rooms and general study areas are

available on this floor. This collection also contains academic and popular journals from and about the Middle East. Only the most recent issues are in MES; consult OSCAR for the location of older issues.

The MES office (355 Thompson) manages the Middle East collection. They provide bibliographic assistance for researchers in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish as well as in western languages. The staff, Dr Ali Hassan (Arabic and Islamic Studies), Dr Dona Straley (Persian and Turkish Studies) and Mr. Patrick Visel provide bibliographic assistance as well as teach Bibliography courses in the Near Eastern Languages and Cultures Department. The office provides a Table of Contents service for currently received journals and publishes New Books lists on their web site: <http://library.osu.edu/sites/mes/>



Head of Middle East Studies Section Dr. Ali Hassan with one of the treasures of the collection - a Qur'an Manuscript (ca. late 14th-early 15th century Egypt or Syria) with the inter-linear translation in Persian. Writing material could be deerskin. Manuscript was donated to the Library by a former OSU faculty Dr. Frederick Cadora.

New Acquisitions from MSE Collection

List compiled by

Patrick Visel, Arabic and Islamic Subject Specialist

Alrushaidat, Khaled Abdul-Rahman. *The golden age of Arab-Islamic sciences : the impact of Arabic on the west*. Edited and translated by Rebecca Buchanan Salti and Laila Numan Irshaidat. [Lebanon?] : Raidy Printing Group S.A.L., 2007. [DS36.77 .A47 2007](#)

Amri, Nelly. *La sainte de Tunis : presentation et traduction de l'hagiographie de Aisha al-Mannubiyya* (m. 665/1267). [Paris] : Sindbad ; Arles : Actes sud, c2008. [BP80.S3488 A47 2008](#)

Asafi Dal Mehmed Celebi. *Seca'atname : Ozdemiroglu Osman Pasa'nin Sark seferleri* (1578-1585). Istanbul: Camlica basim yayin, 2007. [DR523 .A72 2007](#)

Asutay-Effenberger, Neslihan and Rehm, Ulrich. *Sultan Mehmet II : Eroberer Konstantinopels, Patron der Kunste*. Koln : Bohlau, 2009. [DR501 .S85 2009](#)

Azinfar, Fatemeh Chehregosha. *Atheism in the medieval Islamic and European world : the influence of Persian and Arabic ideas of doubt and skepticism on medieval European literary thought*. Bethesda, Md. : Ibex Publishers, c2008. [PN879.A7 A95 2008](#).

Bayazid. *Tarikh-i Humayun* [microform].

Crone, Patricia. *From Arabian tribes to Islamic empire : army, state and society in the Near East c.600-850*. Aldershot [England] ; Burlington, VT : Ashgate, c2008. [DS38.1 .C75 2008](#)

Dankoff, Robert. *From Mahmud Kasgari to Evliya Celebi : studies in Middle Turkic and Ottoman literatures*. Istanbul : Isis Press, 2008. [PL205 .D365 2008](#)

Epistles of the Brethren of Purity: the Ikhwan al-Safa' and their Rasa'il : an introduction. Edited by Nader El-Bizri. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. [B746 .I353 2008](#).

The Expansion of the Early Islamic state. Edited by Fred M. Donner. Aldershot [England]; Burlington, VT : Ashgate/Variorum, c2008. [DS38.1 .E97 2008](#).

Forsey, Alicia McNary. *Queen Isabella Sforza Szapolyai of Transylvania and Sultan Suleyman of the Ottoman empire : a case of sixteenth-century Muslim-Christian collaboration.* With an introduction by Mustafa Hakki Ertan. Lewiston, N.Y. : Edwin Mellen Press, c2009. [DB932.2.I83 F67 2009](#)

Harvey, L. P. (Leonard Patrick). *Ibn Battuta.* London ; New York : I.B. Tauris/Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies; New York : Distributed in the USA by Palgrave Macmillan, 2007. [G93.I24 H37 2007](#)

Ibn Taymiyah, Ahmad ibn Abd al-Halim. *Muslims under non-Muslim rule: Ibn Taymiyya on fleeing from sin; kinds of emigration; the status of Mardin; domain of peace/war; domain composite; the conditions for challenging power.* Texts translated, annotated and presented in relation to six modern readings of the Mardin fatwa by Yahya Michot; foreword by James Piscatori. Oxford: Interface Publications, c2006. [BP52.5 .I268 2006](#).

Imber, Colin. *The Ottoman Empire, 1300-1650 : the structure of power.* Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire ; New York : Palgrave Macmillan, 2009. [DR486 .I63 2009](#)

Khaleghi-Motlagh, Djalal. *Yaddashtha-yi Shahnamah.* New York: Persian Heritage Foundation, Bibliotheca Persica Press; Winona Lake, Ind. : Eisenbrauns [Distributor], 2001-. [PK6458 .K48 2001](#)

Linehan, Peter. *Spain, 1157-1300 : a partible inheritance.* Malden, MA ; Oxford : Blackwell Pub., 2008. [DP99 .L66 2008](#)

The Ottoman geographers Kemal Reis (d. 917/1511), Piri Reis (d. 961/1554) and Sidi Ali (d. (970/1562): texts and studies. Collected and reprinted by Fuat Sezgin in collaboration with Carl Ehrig-Eggert, Eckhard Neubauer. Frankfurt am Main : Institute for the History of Arabic-Islamic Science at the Johann Wolfgang Goethe University, 2008. [DR451 .O88 2009](#). [DR451 .O88 2009](#)

Safavi, Seyed Ghahreman. *Rumi's mystical design : reading the Mathnawi, book one.* Foreword by Seyyed Hossein Nasr. Albany : SUNY Press, c2009. [PK6481.M9 S228 2009](#)

Shahrastani, Muhammad ibn Abd al-Karim. *Keys to the Arcana: Shahrastani's esoteric commentary on the Quran: a translation of the commentary on Surat al-Fatiha from Muhammad b. Abd al-Karim al-Shahrastani's Mafatih al-asrar wa masabih al-abrar.* By Toby Mayer; with the Arabic text reproduced from the edition by M.A. Adharshab. Oxford ; New York : Oxford University Press; London : in association with the Institute of Ismaili Studies, 2009. [BP130.4 .S516 2009](#)

La Vaissiere, Etienne de. *Samarcande et Samarra : elites d'Asie centrale dans l'empire abbasside.* Paris : Association pour l'avancement des etudes iraniennes, 2007. [DS38.6 .L38 2007](#)

Walker, Paul Ernest. *Orations of the Fatimid caliphs : festival sermons of the Ismaili imams: an edition of the Arabic texts and English translation of Fatimid khutbas.* London; New York: I.B. Tauris; London: In association with The Institute of Ismaili Studies; New York: Distributed in the U.S.A. by Palgrave Macmillan, 2009. [BP194.3 .W35 2009](#)



Nicholas G. Howe Memorial Fund



As we approach the \$40,000 mark, the Howe fund is well on its way to reaching its endowment target of \$50,000. Nevertheless, with just over a year to go, we cannot afford to be complacent; however with the CMRS membership displaying the same kind of generosity and good will that typified Nick himself, I'm very confident we can make it.

If you wish to contribute to the *Nicholas G. Howe Memorial Fund* yourself, you can do so in three ways:

You can donate online at <https://www.giveto.osu.edu/igive> (the fund number is #480256); or you can send a check to

either

The Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies
The Ohio State University
308 Dulles Hall
230 W. 17th Ave.
Columbus, Ohio 43210-1361

or

M.J. Wolanin
Director of Development
020 Mershon Center
1505 Neil Ave.
Columbus, Ohio 43210-2602

With most sincere thanks,

Richard Green



Persian Winter

FROM VIS AND RAMIN, AN ANCIENT PERSIAN LOVE EPIC
COMPOSED IN PERSIAN BY ASAD GORGANI AND
TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH BY DICK DAVIS

And while Ramin described his miseries

His horse was sunk in mud up to its knees.

Ramin's eyes rained down tears all night, all night

As if white camphor fell, his horse turned white.

The horse was soaked, his rider's wretched state

Was even more distressed and desolate -

All night snows soaked his head, while round his breast

The cold winds whipped, and would not let him rest;

His clothes, his cloak, his boots and breeches froze

As hard as iron beneath the swirling snows.



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2009-2010**

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