



## Encyclopaedia Islamica, Volume 3 (Adab–al-Bāb al-Ḥādī‘ashar)

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To cite this article: Mohammed Rustom (2016) Encyclopaedia Islamica, Volume 3 (Adab–al-Bāb al-Ḥādī‘ashar), *Iranian Studies*, 49:6, 1103-1105, DOI: [10.1080/00210862.2016.1241630](https://doi.org/10.1080/00210862.2016.1241630)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00210862.2016.1241630>



Published online: 07 Dec 2016.



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challenge myths of ethnic and religious inclusiveness and national unity during the Pahlavi period while at the same time problematizing notions of difference and otherness under the Islamic Republic. Throughout the chapter, Rahimieh revisits her own memories of attending an Armenian school as a Muslim in her hometown of Anzali. After learning that she and Pirzad attended the same school for one year but with neither having any recollection of the other, Rahimieh comes to reflect on the “subjective and selective nature of memory” and its role in identity formation (p. 139).

Taken individually, each chapter offers a coherent reading of a particular text or body of work. With this in mind, the chapters on *Maxx*, Modarressi, or Pirzad would serve especially well for advanced undergraduate or graduate seminars as they could be read in conjunction with their primary sources, which are widely available in translation. Likewise, students of Persian language and culture will no doubt appreciate the chapter on Googoosh for the way it demonstrates that close readings can be applied to popular forms like song and music videos. Scholars in cultural studies will do even better, though, to take the book as a whole for its thought-provoking insights into questions of what the study of Iranian identity involves and whom such studies serve. At a time when the survival and proliferation of Iranian Studies, at least in North America, seems to depend largely on private donations and community support, Rahimieh’s insights could not be timelier.

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00210862.2016.1241629>

**Encyclopaedia Islamica, Volume 3 (Adab–al-Bāb al-Ḥādī<sup>c</sup>ashar).** Wilferd Madelung and Farhad Daftary (eds.), Leiden: Brill in association with The Institute of Ismaili Studies, ISBN 978-9004191655, 2011, xviii + 1004 pp.

When its sixteen projected volumes are completed, the *Encyclopaedia Islamica* (*EI*s, 2008–) will present to English readers an abridged translation of the on-going *Dā'irat-i Ma'ārif-i Buzurg-i Islāmī* (*DMBI*; editor-in-chief, Kazem Musavi Bojnurdi). The latter is a monumental Persian-language academic reference work published by the Tehran-based Center for the Great Islamic Encyclopedia. Some of the best-known names in Iranian academia, such as Ahmad Pakatchi and Najib Mayel Heravi, have contributions in the original Persian encyclopedia, and these findings are on full display in the *EI*s.

One of the characteristic features of the articles in the *DMBI* is the unparalleled use of primary texts in a variety of Islamic languages, and a very broad approach to Islamic learning which gives greater coverage to Shī'ī source materials and classical Persian literature. Yet the *EI*s is not only an abridged translation of the *DMBI*. For one thing,

entirely new articles are written for the *EIs* when merited. With respect to the Persian originals, the *EIs* improves upon these articles by augmenting their data, adding sections where necessary, bringing the facts and figures up to date with the latest findings, and supplementing the bibliography with further reference to European-language scholarship. In addition to the skillful translators employed in rendering the articles (such as Matthew Melvin-Koushki, Farzin Negahban, and Muhammad Isa Waley), the *EIs* is guided by a team of distinguished coordinating and consulting editors, the steady hand of the managing editor Reza Shah-Kazemi, and the discerning eyes of two of the foremost senior scholars of Islamic studies, the editors-in-chief Wilferd Madelung and Farhad Daftary.

The particular tome of the *EIs* under review is in many ways the “flagship” volume of the entire *EIs*. Such an assertion is in this reviewer’s opinion fully justified by virtue of one entry in particular, that of ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (d. 40/661). This entry runs to over one hundred double-columned pages, and is written by eleven different scholars. Its comprehensive scope and size completely dwarfs entries on ‘Alī in other encyclopedias, and in many ways it can even function as a stand-alone text for use in courses. Written specifically for the *EIs* (the Persian edition not yet having reached the letter ‘*ayn*), the article covers all the essential dimensions of ‘Alī’s seminal role in Islamic civilization, such as his relationship to the Quran and Hadith, influence over theological and philosophical thought, juridical rulings, and place in Persian literature and folk imagination. It also includes a rounded, non-partisan view of ‘Alī’s life up to and including the succession controversy written by Shah-Kazemi, and an insightful overview of ‘Alī’s decisive presence in Islamic mysticism written by Mohammad Reza Jozi and Shah-Kazemi.

Taken as a whole, the entry on ‘Alī in *EIs* leaves very little room for improvement. We walk away with an understanding of the figure of ‘Alī in all of his complexity—his inspirational sermons, archetypal chivalry, sacred function in Imamology, status in the transmission of spiritual authority in Sufism, “image” in later Islamic literature and material culture, and the dignified manner in which he responded to all manner of political schism.

Another entry in the *EIs* of particular interest to this reviewer was the one devoted to the great Persian Sufi martyr ‘Ayn al-Quḍāt Hamadānī (d. 525/1131) by Alireza Zekavati Gharagozlou. In a span of several pages, we are given a comprehensive characterization of ‘Ayn al-Quḍāt which in more ways than one is distinguished in modern scholarship on this pivotal figure. Some degree of simplification is necessary, and this is perhaps the reason for Zekavati Gharagozlou’s rather circumspect discussion of ‘Ayn al-Quḍāt’s wide-ranging treatment of the Quranic “detached letters” (*al-ḥurūf al-muqatta‘a*). And the author’s discussion of “doubt” in ‘Ayn al-Quḍāt is in need of much qualification (*shakk* is not, as the author suggests, a major theme in ‘Ayn al-Quḍāt—if it were, its relationship to what we normally understand as “doubt” would require sufficient problematizing at any rate). What Zekavati Gharagozlou seems to be getting at is ‘Ayn al-Quḍāt’s biting irony and well-placed criticism against “habit-worship,” chiefly represented by the religious formalists who only see the outward form of religion. On the whole, the entry on ‘Ayn al-Quḍāt is excel-

lent—we not only get an idea of the central themes of his writings (doctrine of love, view of different religions, Satanology, etc.), but also a good sampling of his own words in translation.

It would be an understatement to say that the *EIs* should be within easy access for every modern researcher. Since it envisions academia on a truly global scale, and does so in a very thorough and thoughtful manner, the *EIs* embodies the best of scholarly ideals. It is hoped that this noble project will come to full fruition and be something of a catalyst for similar endeavors in some major sub-fields of the study of Islam, such as Quranic studies. With reference to Persian-language scholarship in this sub-field alone, there is a major encyclopedia waiting to be widely read outside of Iran, let alone translated into English. The referent here, of course, is the excellent two-volume work edited by Baha' al-Din Khurramshahi, *Dānīsh-nāma-yi Qur'ān wa-Qur'ān pazhūhī*.

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00210862.2016.1241630>

**Bindenschild und Sonnenlöwe. Die Geschichte der österreichisch-iranischen Beziehungen bis zur Gegenwart.** Neuausgabe herausgegeben von Bert G. Fragner, [Barred Shield and Sun Lion. The History of Austrian-Iranian Relations up to the Present. New Edition, Ed. Bert G. Fragner], Helmut Slaby, Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2010 (Veröffentlichungen zur Iranistik 42), ISBN 978-3-7001-3794-8

With regard to the fact that during the last 200 years the fate of Iran for better or worse has depended on its relations with the great powers, and that there already exist voluminous studies on British-Iranian, Russian-Iranian and American-Iranian relations, it seems a little bit odd that someone would dedicate a book of almost 400 pages to the history of relations between Iran and Austria—a country nowadays generally associated with winter sport, pastry and famous, but dead musicians—and that this book is also just the unabridged re-edition of the first edition, published more than three decades ago.

These, however, become moot questions after the reading of this study, in which the author, a long-time resident of Iran and for one decade director of the Austrian cultural center in Tehran, shows that for almost 200 years Iran and Austria have maintained close relations, which in fact had a deep impact on the emergence of the modern Iranian state. Slaby's own interest in this history may stem from the instance that the Austrians and Iranians share a common perspective on the history of their respective countries. Due to the fact that by now their demise lies back almost a century, Qajar Iran and Hapsburg Austria have in a comparable