

Summer 2015

The Institute Letter

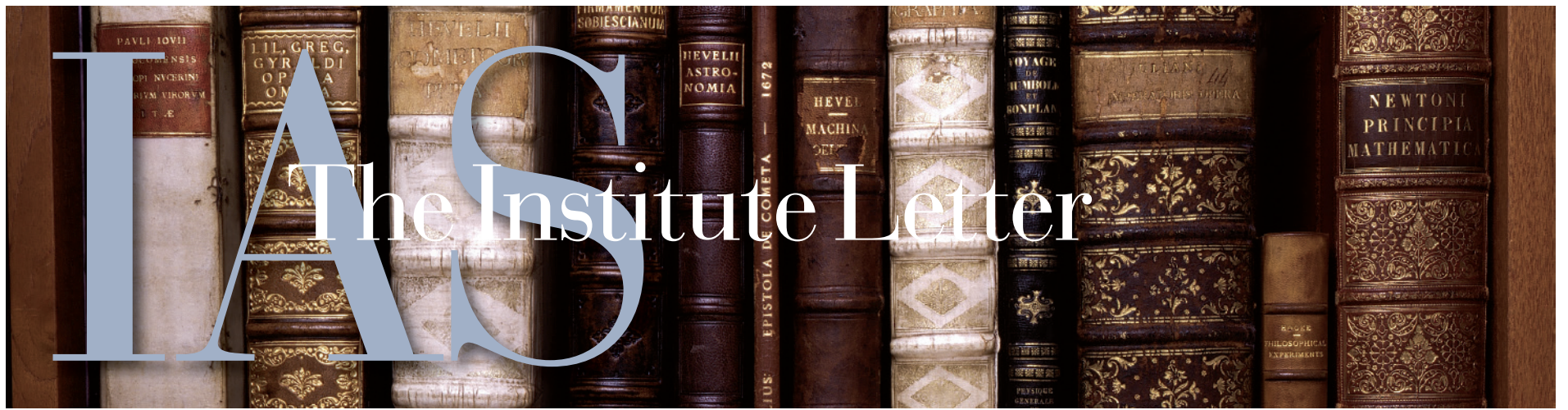


Imagination, Knowledge,
and a Record-Setting
Campaign

MICHAEL HANCHARD
A Larger Pattern of
Institutional Racism

ANGELOS CHANIOTIS
Studying Graffiti in an
Ancient City

DANIEL S. FREED
How Topology Detects
Certain Phases of Matter



Institute for Advanced Study

Summer 2015

Jonathan Haslam Appointed to Faculty

Studying contemporary phenomena in international relations



Jonathan Haslam

Jonathan Haslam, one of the world's most distinguished scholars on the history of thought in international relations, has been appointed George F. Kennan Professor in the School of Historical Studies. Haslam, a Member (1998) of the School, was most recently Professor of the History of International Relations at the University of Cambridge. He officially began his six-year appointment at the Institute on July 1.

The endowed Kennan Chair, established in 1995 to honor the diplomat, scholar, and Institute Faculty member George F. Kennan, was previously held by Avishai Margalit (2006–11), José Cutileiro (2001–04), and Jack F. Matlock, Jr. (1996–2001). The Kennan Chair is designed to bring to the Institute outstanding scholars whose

work bears on the understanding of the contemporary world.

Haslam has made significant contributions to our understanding of contemporary phenomena in international relations through critical and prescient examinations of the role of ideology. Haslam's studies of Soviet foreign policy are expansive in their quality and range, demonstrating his keen originality of thought, supported by insightful and comprehensive archival research. This work solidified his reputation

(Continued on page 19)

A Larger Pattern of Institutional Racism

The multiple dimensions of state-sanctioned violence against black and brown youth

BY MICHAEL HANCHARD

I first met Emery Robinson at Albert Leonard Junior High School in New Rochelle, New York. He was two grades behind me, a seventh grader when I was in the ninth grade. He was known as a manchild, not only in terms of size, because he was much bigger than most ninth graders even then, but because he had the physicality and presence of a young man. He could have easily passed for seventeen or eighteen years old when, by my recollection, he could not have been much more than eleven or twelve.

His face, however, betrayed his youth; cherubic, at times shy, an easy laugh and mischievous smile, he was what one would refer to as "not a bad kid," to indicate someone who was a bit mischievous but not malicious. Because of his size he made the basketball team, though it did not seem as if he had a great interest in

(Continued on page 17)



Protesting in Ferguson, Missouri, following the shooting death of teenager Michael Brown in 2014

Patricia Crone 1945–2015

The influential, pioneering scholar and her indelible mark on Islamic studies and the Institute

Patricia Crone, whose pioneering and innovative approach to the history of Islam brought about lasting change in the field, died at the age of 70 on July 11 in Princeton, New Jersey, after a courageous fight against cancer. She was Professor Emerita in the School of Historical Studies, where she served as the Andrew W. Mellon Professor since 1997, before retiring in 2014.

Crone's insightful work, compellingly conveyed in her adventurous and unconventional style, shed important new light on the critical importance of the Near East in historical studies, in particular on the cultural, religious, and intellectual history of Islam. Her influence is strongly felt at the Institute, where, along with Oleg Grabar (1929–2011), Crone helped to establish the Institute as a recognized center for the pursuit of the study of Islamic culture and history. Crone was succeeded in 2014 by Islamic intellectual historian Sabine Schmidtke, who is advancing important scholarship across Islamic culture and history.

Schmidtke noted, "Patricia's professional accomplishments, her publications, and their immense

impact on the field speak to her exceptional value as a scholar. What made her even more exceptional as a person, however, was her caring and skill as a mentor. Patricia never hesitated to respond to a request for help from a fellow scholar, including not only those who were already well on their way in their academic careers, but many who were just starting out and needed access to her writings. Patricia never ignored such requests—and there were many—but handled them all with her characteristic 'Patricia style,' sometimes offering what might be seen as 'tough love,' but always in a quiet and private way, with a directness and honesty that was a turning point for many in their lives and careers. Her skill as a caring mentor is an equally important legacy to all of her other accomplishments."

Nicola Di Cosmo, Luce Foundation Professor in East Asian Studies in the School of Historical Studies, added, "For nearly four decades, Patricia's work on Islam has been a brilliant example of fiercely creative, deeply probing, and unfailingly farsighted research. She pushed the boundaries of historical

knowledge and imagination, and in so doing defied accepted wisdom and opened doors to hidden truths. With her passing we lose a most lucid interpreter of fundamental historical questions."

"Patricia was a marvel of high spirit and determination, and was absolutely fearless, both in her professional and in her personal life—a wonderful inspiration for us all," stated Robbert Dijkgraaf, Director of the Institute and Leon Levy Professor. "She will be greatly missed here at the Institute,

(Continued on page 18)



Patricia Crone

where she leaves an indelible and powerful legacy.”

Born in Kyndeløse, Denmark, on March 28, 1945, Crone studied at the University of Copenhagen before completing both her undergraduate education (1969) and Ph.D. (1974) at the School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London. Upon earning her Ph.D., Crone became Senior Research Fellow at the University of London's Warburg Institute. In 1977, she accepted a position as University Lecturer in Islamic History and Fellow of Jesus College at the University of Oxford, where she taught for thirteen years. Following her time at Oxford, Crone moved to the University of Cambridge and served as Assistant University Lecturer in Islamic Studies and Fellow of Gonville and Caius College from 1990–92, after which she was University Lecturer until 1994. Crone was then University Reader at Cambridge until 1997, when she joined the Faculty of the Institute.

Crone's first book, *Hagarism: The Making of the Islamic World* (Cambridge University Press, 1977), written with Michael Cook, had a profound impact on the study of the early centuries of Islam, probably more than any other contribution to the field. Departing from the earlier studies of Ignaz Goldziher and Joseph Schacht on the traditions about the Prophet Muhammad (ḥadīth), and influenced by the work of John Wansbrough on the history of the

canonization and transmission of the Qur'ān, the authors challenged the prevalent scholarly consensus on the historical value of the Muslim sources pertaining to the early history of Islam and looked instead at archaeological findings and contemporary non-Muslim (e.g., Greek and Syriac) accounts on the origins and formative period of Islam. The book received mixed reviews at the time—harsh criticism as well as praise—but eventually led to a far more refined and sophisticated approach in modern scholarship to the study of early Islamic history. Today it is considered a milestone in the scholarly investigation of the formative period of Islam.

This was followed by work that closely related to her doctoral thesis, resulting in two books—*Slaves on Horses: The Evolution of Islamic Polity* (Cambridge University Press, 1980) and *Roman, Provincial, and Islamic Law* (Cambridge University Press, 1987)—in which Crone deftly explores tribes and tribal culture in early Islam and investigates Roman, provincial, and Islamic law and their connections to Near Eastern legal systems. Crone's groundbreaking *Meccan Trade and the Rise of Islam* (Princeton University Press, 1987) challenged the widely accepted understanding of Mecca as a major trade center and presented a powerful perspective on the beginnings of Islam.

Pre-Industrial Societies: Anatomy of the Pre-Modern World (Oxford University Press, 1989), recently republished in spring 2015, provides a lucid and engaging account of pre-industrial societies, ranging from the Far East to the Indian sub-continent, to the Islamic societies of the Near East and North Africa. The topic grew out of Crone's courses in Islamic history, as she saw a need for clarity on the motivations, differences, and impact of industrialization on diverse cultures and societies.

In *God's Rule: Government and Islam; Six Centuries of Medieval Islamic Political Thought* (Columbia University Press, 2004), which earned the British-Kuwait



Patricia Crone with a Member in 2011

Islam arose with remarkable speed and mystery. Patricia Crone's well-stocked mind, clear prose, and unflinching intellectual honesty were devoted to explaining why. . . . That required both personal and intellectual bravery. The central beliefs of Islam, such as the way the Koran took shape, the life of Muhammad, and Islam's relations with other religions, are sensitive subjects. Outside scrutiny can make tempers flare, especially when the conclusions are expressed in a witty and sardonic style. . . . Crone's steely blue eyes and steelier brain shunned any temptation to turn to safer topics, or to cloak her critiques of Islamic tradition in the jargon used by more cautious scholars. She simply refused to treat the Arabs as an exception to the normal rules of history; and something was badly wrong in Islamic studies, she said, if she had to justify that.

—The Economist, www.ias.edu/economist-crone

Friendship Prize in 2005, Crone delivered a broad survey of Islamic political thought in the six centuries from the rise of Islam to the Mongol invasions. Her most recent book, *The Nativist Prophets of Early Islamic Iran: Rural Revolt and Local Zoroastrianism* (Cambridge University Press, 2012), explores the Iranian response to the Muslim penetration of the Iranian countryside, the revolts subsequently triggered there, and the religious communities that these revolts revealed. Peter Brown, in *The New York Review of Books*, noted, “[Crone] has given a voice to a hitherto silent land, which had been as distant from the classical world as were the kingdoms of Axum and Himyar.” The highly influential book was recognized with four major awards, including the Albert

Hourani Book Award, which recognizes outstanding publishing in Middle East studies; the Houshang Pourshariati Iranian Studies Book Award, for outstanding publishing in Iranian studies; the Central Eurasian Studies Society Book Award, for important contributions to Central Eurasian studies; and the James Henry Breasted Prize, awarded by the American Historical Society for the best book in English, in any field of history prior to C.E. 1000.

A festschrift, *Islamic Cultures, Islamic Contexts: Essays in Honor of Professor Patricia Crone* (Brill/Leiden, 2014), edited by Behnam Sadeghi, Asad Q. Ahmed,

Adam Silverstein, and Robert Hoyland, examined Crone's strong and uncompromising character as a scholar and her deep and varied impact on Islamic and Iranian studies. Three volumes of Crone's *Collected Studies*, “The Qur'ānic Pagans and Related Matters,” “The Iranian Reception of Islam: The Non-traditionalist Strands,” and “The Ancient Near East and Islam,” are forthcoming from Brill in 2016.

In addition to her book awards, Crone's work has been acknowledged by many honors, including the Giorgio Levi Della Vida Medal for Excellence in Islamic Studies (2013) and the Middle East Medievalists Lifetime Achievement Award (2013), which recognizes scholars who have served the field of medieval Middle Eastern Studies with distinction. She was made an honorary Member of Gonville and Caius College at the University of Cambridge (2013) and received honorary doctorates from the University of Copenhagen (2009), Leiden University (2013), and The Hebrew University of Jerusalem (2014). She was a member of the American Philosophical Society and Corresponding Fellow of the British Academy, as well as founder and editor of the book series *Makers of the Muslim World*, which highlights scholars, artists, politicians, and religious leaders who made the Muslim world what it is today.

Crone is survived by her siblings Camilla Castenskiold, Clarissa Crone, Diana Crone Frank, and Alexander Crone. The documentary *For the Life of Me: Between Science and the Law*, created by Diana Crone Frank, depicts Crone's diagnosis of cancer and follows her quest to research and employ marijuana's potential cancer-fighting properties and to contextualize its longstanding legal prohibition. More details about the film may be found at www.forthelifeofmefilm.com.

There will be an event at the Institute this fall to celebrate Crone's life and work, and details will be shared in the near future.—Christine Ferrara, Director of Communications, cferrara@ias.edu, and Alexandra Altman, Communications Associate, aaltman@ias.edu

A Colloquium in Honor of Patricia Crone

On February 25, a one-day colloquium was organized by Sabine Schmidtke to honor Patricia Crone and her contributions to the study of Islam and Iran.

Talks were given by Hassan Ansari, Member in the School of Historical Studies, Michael Cook of Princeton University, Everett Rowson of New York University, Daniel Sheffield of Princeton University, Sarah Stroumsa of The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and Kevin van Bladel of the Ohio State University. The speakers examined topics including Crone's contributions to the field of Islamic Studies; the reliability of sources on Muhammad's statecraft; the historicity of the mid-ninth-century Cordovan Voluntary Martyrs; Crone's contributions to premodern Iranian studies across the areas of politics, society, and religion; new

insights into theories of the Persian origins of the Arab colonies Marw and Transoxania; and how a sixteenth-century astrologer and his followers' notions of millennialism and cosmology, theurgical practices, and code of conduct influenced a movement popularly portrayed as a forerunner of Indian secularism.

“The contributions that Patricia Crone has made to the study of early Islamic history can hardly be overstated,” Petra Sijpesteijn, Professor of Arabic Language and Culture at Leiden University, noted. “Patricia stands fully in the finest Orientalist tradition of philological exactitude and sheer, exhaustive learning. . . . She has taken Islam, in other words, out of the peninsula and into the wider world of Late Antiquity, where it has remained ever since.”



Patricia Crone (right) with Sabine Schmidtke (center) at the colloquium in February