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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Lloyd RIDGEON, <i>Imagining Imam Hosayn in Modern Iran</i> . . . . .	1
Zhinia NOORIAN, <i>Debating Piety: Parvin E<sup>c</sup>tesami's Innovations in the Genre of Munāzara</i> . . . . .	31
Amin GHODRATZADEH, <i>Anti-British Sentiments in Modern Persian Poetry: The Case of Mohammad-Taqi Bahâr's Political Poetry</i> . . . . .	63
Akbar IRANI, <i>A Study on the Philosophical Manuscripts in Iranian Libraries and a Report on Some of the Philosophical Publications of the Written Heritage Research Institute</i> . . . . .	95
Ali OWJABI, <i>A Brief History of the Department of Manuscripts in the National Library of Iran</i> . . . . .	103
Nasrin MARJANI, <i>Short Introduction to the Gulistân Palace</i> . . . . .	107
Alireza KORANGY, <i>A Review of Principles of Progress: Essays on Religion and Modernity by 'Abdul-Bahâ, by Sen McGlinn. Leiden: Leiden University Press (Iranian Studies Series), 2018</i> . . . . .	111

# A STUDY ON THE PHILOSOPHICAL MANUSCRIPTS IN IRANIAN LIBRARIES AND A REPORT ON SOME OF THE PHILOSOPHICAL PUBLICATIONS OF THE WRITTEN HERITAGE RESEARCH INSTITUTE<sup>1</sup>

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Manuscripts are the historical memories of every nation. The grandeur and splendour of every nation can be measured by the quantity and quality of its scientific content and the artistic aesthetics of its works. Based on an estimate which was made by the Al-Furqān Institute in London there are around four million manuscripts extant in the world's libraries that belong to the Muslim nations. Disregarding the manuscripts extant in Europe, the Indian subcontinent, Turkey and central Asian countries, around 400 thousand manuscripts have been catalogued in Iran and the same number are being identified but have not so far been catalogued.

With the investigation and study we performed – based on the Iranian manuscript data-bank called Āqā Buzurg Ṭīhrānī, Short Catalogue of Iranian Manuscripts (DENA) and Union Catalogue of Iran Manuscripts (FANKHA), as well as information from other libraries which have not been mentioned in published sources – we can closely examine the condition of the works; the number of philosophical works; the leanings of the Iranian philosophers; and their efforts in translating, explaining and critiquing Greek philosophy up to the 16<sup>th</sup> century AD, and the in the post-Safavid period. Nonetheless, this article is based on the credible sources published in Iran, enabling the presentation of a relatively accurate index of the condition of the Iranian manuscripts in public and private libraries.

## PART 1: MANUSCRIPTS OF THE WORKS OF THE GREEK PHILOSOPHERS BEFORE THE ISLAMIC PERIOD

The investigation we conducted shows that only Arabic translations of the manuscripts by seven pre-Islamic Greek philosophers have remained in Iran. Of these seven, four have only a single work extant today in my survey, but the three others have more extant works. The evidence shows that Aristotle (384-322 BC) has the highest number of extant

<sup>1</sup> This is a lecture delivered at Leiden University on December 12, 2018.