

Citing Corruption and Incompetence at Oxford University, American Art Historian Refuses Doctorate

A once devoted Anglophile, American museologist and producer [Homa Nasab](#) began her doctoral research at the Oriental Institute, University of Oxford (UK), with three post-graduate degrees, in 2004. Today, Nasab is told that she needs a human rights lawyer to deal with that institution.

On January 2, 2012, Emanuele Ottolenghi wrote in *The Weekly Standard*, “Oxford University’s Wolfson College, which the late Sir Isaiah Berlin helped establish, is now the academic home of 42-year-old Mehdi Hashemi Bahramani Rafsanjani, the fourth child of former Iranian president [Ayatollah] Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani. These days, Rafsanjani the elder styles himself a champion of Iran’s reformists. But having tied the family fortune and its connections to the cause of challenging current president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad does not make Rafsanjani a liberal democrat. In addition to the violence and repression he is responsible for inside Iran, he has also been one of the Islamic Republic’s chief exporters of terrorism. As president, Rafsanjani dispatched Iranian hitmen to kill Iranian exiles across Europe.¹ There is an arrest warrant against him from Argentinian prosecutors for the 1994 bombing of a Jewish (AMIA)² cultural center in Buenos Aires that killed 85 people.”³

One example of Ayatollah Rafsanjani’s foreign policy includes, “*The Jews (that migrate to Israel) should expect the ‘exodus in reverse’ to occur, since one day the tumor will be cut out of the body of the Islamic world and then millions of Jews that have migrated to Israel will once again be stateless. And when will this happen? On a very special day, a day when, without fail, the Islamic world will be equipped with the weapons that Israel now has at its disposal. The imperialist strategy will be stopped dead in its tracks because the use of just one atomic bomb inside Israel will wipe it from the face of the earth, but (such a bomb) would do harm to the Islamic world only. It is not irrational to consider this possibility...*”⁴

In Ottolenghi’s words, “The son it seems has followed in his father’s path.” It turns out that this new addition (Mehdi Rafsanjani) to Oxford University’s student body also has “a judgement brought against him by the Ontario Superior Court of Justice in August [2011] for ordering the torture of a [Canadian-] Iranian businessman who refused to surrender control of his oil consultancy to Rafsanjani and pay a demanded \$50 million. In the judgement made against the 42-year-old, ...the judge described how Mr Houshang Bouzari suffered ‘unspeakably outrageous torture at the hands of the defendant or at his instigation.’ The judgement – made because Rafsanjani failed to respond to the initial case made in 2005 – ordered the son of Iran’s former ruler to pay £7.8 million to Mr Bouzari and his family in compensation.”⁵

In addition, in May 2011, Professor Emeritus A.R. Sheikholeslami at Oxford University swore an affidavit that “Professor [Edmund] Herzig, the current Professor of Persian Studies, ‘ordered’ [a] student to help prepare Rafsanjani’s application and doctoral thesis proposal.” Herzig’s student (Mohammad Javad Ardalan), whom he had ordered to help Rafsanjani, had completed a four-year course of studies at

¹ One of the events to which Ottolenghi refers is “The 1992 assassinations of four Iranian Kurdish leaders at a restaurant called Mykonos [in Berlin which] led to a trial that took nearly four years and culminated in a verdict, 10 years ago today, that implicated the Iranian leadership [the president at the time, Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani] as the masterminds of the crime.” <http://www.spiegel.de/international/0,1518,476369,00.html> & Lord Avebury, British Parliament Business, October 28, 1996, <http://yourdemocracy.newstatesman.com/parliament/address-in-reply-to-her-majestys-most-gracious-speech/HAN10702340>

² Asociación Mutual Israelita Argentina - AMIA

³ http://www.weeklystandard.com/articles/phd-torture_614773.html

⁴ www.peaceandtolerance.org/docs/nismanindict.pdf PDF file: The Office of Criminal Investigations, Argentina: The AMIA Case, page 172.

⁵ <http://oxfordstudent.com/2011/11/17/the-torturer-oxford-bent-over-backwards-to-admit/>

an Islamic seminary in Shiraz (Iran) before pursuing a doctorate at Oxford,⁶ Ardalan's research is focused on *religio-educational renaissance in hawzah [Islamic seminaries]*.⁷

Professor Sheikholeslami also stated that Rafsanjani's admission was "highly discriminatory" and "smacking of favouritism." In addition, he had told the University that Rafsanjani's "academic referees were 'of no value' as they were 'without exception [written by] underlings working for his father's institute' who bore 'no relation to the candidate's academic background.'" And still, the younger Rafsanjani does "not have the minimum requisite level of English mandated at Oxford."⁸ Lastly, the Master's degree that Rafsanjani received in 2009 prior to applying to Oxford was for a training course *equivalent* to an MA which he had allegedly completed in 2006.⁹

It appears that Mehdi Rafsanjani has *shifted* his 'scholarly' interest to Iranian constitutional history under Edmund Herzig at the Oriental Institute. Rafsanjani's application was reviewed and approved by Mohammad Ali (aka Homa) Katouzian of St. Anthony's College, University of Oxford.¹⁰

Edmund Herzig, also an employee of consulting firm Oxford Analytica, has been affiliated with the privately owned Islamic Azad University Oxford, located just 4.8 miles outside the city of Oxford.¹¹ Prof. Herzig's new doctoral student, Mehdi Rafsanjani has been an 'inspector of external branches' of Islamic Azad University - an institution that was co-founded by his father Ayatollah Rafsanjani - at various international locations, including Oxford, since at least autumn 2009.¹²

Founded in 2004, Islamic Azad University Oxford is part of the larger Islamic Azad University which, according to PBS.org, is "the largest private university chain in Iran - and possibly the world. With an enrollment of 1.3 million students, 351 campuses, and more than \$200 billion in known assets, there are few institutions in its league. By comparison, Harvard University's assets are estimated at \$43.8 billion, the University of California system's, \$60 billion."¹³ Established in 1982, IAU's founding governing board includes, 1) Ahmed Khomeini (the son of the founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ayatollah Khomeini); 2) Iran's present day 'supreme leader,' Ayatollah Khamenei; and 3) Ayatollah Rafsanjani.¹⁴

⁶ <http://aschkel.over-blog.com/article-oxford-la-nouvelle-revelation-sur-l-affaire-du-fils-de-l-ancien-president-iranien-74152943.html>

⁷ http://www.thehawzaproject.net/events_files/category-workshop.html

⁸ http://www.weeklystandard.com/articles/phd-torture_614773.html?page=2

⁹ "[Mehdi] Rafsanjani has a Master's degree in Energy Systems Engineering from Sharif Industrial University. His certificate details how [he] has successfully finished a training course *equivalent* to master degree in Energy Systems Engineering,' issued in 2009 for a degree completed in 2006. The qualification was awarded in accordance 'between Sharif Industrial University (Department of Energy Systems) and State organization for optimization of fuel consumption' - where Mehdi Hashemi had had an executive post, and held a postal address in 2005." Dr. Kaveh Moussavi, an associate fellow at the centre for socio-legal studies at Oxford has gone on record stating that Mehdi Rafsanjani's 'academic' qualifications are not adequate for Humanities DPhil study. <http://oxfordstudent.com/2011/11/17/the-torturer-oxford-bent-over-backwards-to-admit/>

¹⁰ <http://oxfordstudent.com/2011/11/17/the-torturer-oxford-bent-over-backwards-to-admit/>

¹¹ One example of Herzig's involvement with Islamic Azad University in Oxford includes his "plans for an exchange of scholars and resources between the two universities." <http://www.intl.iau.ir/vol14.pdf>

¹² "On December 5, in a meeting with the members of the Student Islamic Society, Ayatollah Rafsanjani explained, "Mehdi would like to return to the country, but I've advised him to get his Ph.D." When asked why his son had not yet returned to the country, Rafsanjani stated, "Mehdi will not return to Iran after inaugurating the London branch of Azad University [at Kingston University]. He is now in Lebanon and from there he will travel to Dubai, Armenia, and Tajikistan to inaugurate the Azad University branches there." <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/tehranbureau/2010/05/mehdi-hashemi-and-the-british-devil.html#ixzz1o2tMdcbs>

¹³ <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/tehranbureau/2010/07/a-schooling-in-power-politics.html>

¹⁴ <http://www.crethiplethi.com/iran-in-another-blow-to-his-status-rafsanjani-loses-control-of-iran-s-largest-university/islamic-countries/iran-islamic-countries/2012/>

American art historian, museologist and producer, Homa Nasab who had been a doctoral candidate at the Oriental Institute, University of Oxford, since 2004, read about the Rafsanjani-Katouzian-Herzig affair in an online British newspaper (*The Guardian*), in December 2011. Having moved back home to the United States in the summer of 2008, Nasab was completely unaware of developments and scandals that took place at the University of Oxford.

Indeed, at this point Nasab also realized that Edmund Herzig (the Chair of Graduate Studies at the OI to whom she had been addressing her complaints for at least TWENTY months) and Mohammad Ali Katouzian (one of her final thesis Examiners) were reading, and in the process of approving (by January 2010), the convicted torturer's application during the very period that they were rejecting her doctoral thesis, in December 2009.

When first questioned by the media, Katouzian had "strenuously denied that he was influenced by [Mehdi] Hashemi [Rafsanjani]'s background in recommending his proposal."¹⁵ Katouzian had also claimed that the synopsis of Rafsanjani's thesis "read well, but he did not realise that the application had come from Rafsanjani's son because it had been written using his alternative name Bahramani."¹⁶ When contacted by Dr. Kaveh Moussavi (University of Oxford) about this case, Edmund Herzig had expressed his "acute surprise" at Katouzian's claim that he did not know the identity of Rafsanjani. Dr. Moussavi said, "Herzig not only said he was surprised at this comment made by Dr. Katouzian but confirmed that he had been intimately involved and very supportive of the admission of Mr Hashemi." When contacted by Dr. Moussavi to ask if Mehdi Rafsanjani had the credentials to read for a D.Phil at Oxford University, Katouzian had replied, "I suppose so."¹⁷

In late December 2011, after eight macabre years of tolerating the most bizarre series of incompetent actions by a motley crew of so-called academics at the Oriental Institute, and following twenty-four months of complaints against her Viva (final doctoral) Examiners to Oxford, Nasab finally realized just what she had been up against. *What had seemed like a grotesque case of academic incompetence and petty egotistical maneuvering turned out to be a crude case of politically charged favoritism and corruption.*

Since 2006, affiliates and tenured members of the Oriental Institute had gone out of their way to deeply problematize Nasab's academic career. Note that the topic of Nasab's doctoral thesis is *The Foundational History of Museums in Iran, c. 1870's-1940*. Her research focuses on the foundations of arts and cultural institutions that were established during the reign of the founder of the Pahlavi dynasty (1921-79), Reza Shah Pahlavi (r. 1921-41). An examination of the American museologist's curriculum vitae and curatorial history clearly reveals that Nasab's approach to her work has been purely aesthetic/academic and that at no point in her career (or indeed private life) has she ever overtly or covertly belonged to, or promoted, any political entity.

One of the most explicit documents [see *attachment 2*] that reveals the stunning depth and breadth of incompetence and outright sabotage of Nasab's scholarly work at the Oriental Institute is a Joint Report that her Viva Examiners had presented to the Oriental Institute, in February 2010. This official document was approved as the basis upon which Oxford University had rejected her thesis, in December 2009.

Mohammad Ali Katouzian and Tim Stanley (Victoria & Albert Museum) had produced an outline that was designed to prove that Nasab's thesis fell below Oxford's standards. Nasab who holds three post-graduate degrees from Harvard University (Extension - Museum Studies), Courtauld Institute of Art

¹⁵ www.cherwell.org/news/uk/2011/04/03/ex-iranian-president-s-son-faces-university-investigation

¹⁶ www.guardian.co.uk/education/2011/mar/27/oxford-university-inquiry-rafsanjani-son?INTCMP=SRCH

¹⁷ <http://oxfordstudent.com/2011/11/17/the-torturer-oxford-bent-over-backwards-to-admit/>

(French & British Art & Institutional Histories), and University of Oxford (Department of History of Art and Architecture - History of Collecting) calls the document “a grotesque pile of mockery.”

Of Nasab’s Examiners’ points, more than seventy percent were either mistakes or filler sentences which bore extremely marginal, if any, relevance to her thesis. Examples abound of Nasab’s Examiners’ bizarre and, unfortunately, terribly hilarious ‘criticisms’ of the American art historian’s scholarly production. Random examples include:

Stanley & Katouzian - Mas’uddiya Palace had been presented by Mas’ud Mirza Zel al-Soltan to Reza Khan as a means of protecting himself.

Nasab - Reza Khan came to power following a *coup d’etat* in 1921 and was crowned King in 1926. Mas’ud Mirza Zel al-Soltan, the son of Naser al-Din Shah Qajar, had DIED in 1918. Do my Examiners mean that he needed “To protect himself from the GRAVE”?¹⁸ Once again, I am afraid that I cannot allow Iranian-style paranoid conspiracy theories (bereft of ANY logical or historical proof) to infect my doctoral dissertation.

Stanley & Katouzian - Check dates: Galustian was born in 1869 and graduated in 1887?

Nasab – WHO is Galustian? *Let me get this straight:* half a dozen ‘experts’ in middle eastern studies have read this report TWICE and NO ONE has asked WHO is Galustian? Could they mean Calouste Sarkis Gulbenkian whose Foundation happens to have endowed the Chair of Armenian Studies at the Oriental Institute, University of Oxford?

And, the answer is YES. According to Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Calouste Gulbenkian was born in 1869 and graduated from the King’s College, in London, in 1887.

Stanley & Katouzian – ‘The National Museum of Iran’ was called ‘Museum of Ancient Iran’ until the revolution of 1979.

Nasab - I refer to this institution as *Muze-ye Iran-e Bastan* (which **means** the Museum of Ancient Iran) on FIFTY-NINE separate occasions throughout my thesis. In addition, I am afraid that my Examiners are wrong: the institution was referred to both as The National Museum of Iran and the Museum of Ancient Iran (*Muze-ye Iran-e Bastan*).

Stanley & Katouzian - The English text often falls below the standard expected. The word ‘museologue’ does not exist in English. We find ‘Eur-Asian’ for ‘Eurasian,’ and ‘four-partite’ for ‘quadripartite’ or ‘fourfold.’ Such failings are not acceptable.

Nasab - *I am very sympathetic toward Tenured Grammarians’ sensitivities to technical issues only when they are right.*

[One random contemporary example – not from my thesis:] Philip Leopold Martin, was a taxidermist and *museologue* who was the author of a number of scientific and *museology* books. (Source: *Popular Science Magazine*, November 1885.) Another recent example, see: Professor Norman Davies (Oxon ‘62), *Europe: A History – A Panorama of Europe, East and West...*, Harper Collins, 1989, p. 5.

AND

My uses of the term ‘Eur-Asia’ are in a series of QUOTATIONS by British art historian Sir David Talbot-Rice (Commander of the British Empire) in “The Third International Congress and Exhibition of Iranian Art at Leningrad,” *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs*, December 1935.

AND

I have been using ‘four-partite’ since I began the outline of my thesis well over 5 years ago. Throughout its various stages, the text has been read by more than a dozen different scholars on two continents (US & Europe) and NO ONE has ever criticized me for it. Had my Examiners even bothered to Google the term they would have come across several thousand references in (purely) scientific journals.

Stanley & Katouzian – In 1935 Foroughi was dismissed and disgraced because he had pleaded with the Shah to spare Asadi’s life.

¹⁸ The OI Faculty who had read Nasab’s Examiners’ Report included Edmund Herzig who had written his doctoral dissertation on *The Armenian Merchants of New Julfa, Isfahan* [Iran, 1991].

Nasab - What does it mean when I write, “*One of Asadi’s daughters was married to Mohamad Ali Foruqi*”¹⁹ who fell out of favour with Reza Shah when he tried to save his father in law’s life [footnote, 744, p. 259].” My SOURCE? Mohammad Ali (aka Homa) Katouzian, “State and Society under Reza Shah,” in Atabaki & Zürcher, *Men of Order: authoritarian modernization under Ataturk and Reza Shah*, p. 33!

To think that the Oriental Institute (Mohammad Ali Katouzian, Edmund Herzig, Tim Stanley & others) were presenting these types of ‘criticisms’ as the basis upon which they rejected Nasab’s doctoral dissertation while giving a convicted torturer an English language waiver is stunning.

Again, it is not exactly news that academia is the very business of nit-picking. However, how can Oxford reasonably(?) justify using these types of factoids to reject a (Nasab’s) 102,000-word, 341-page thesis which includes 868 footnotes in addition to 350 archival images?

Nasab’s supervisor (James W. Allan) and the University of Oxford not only ignored her analysis of her Examiners’ offensively incompetent document but (her supervisor) proceeded to point out “some *outstanding* matters” in her thesis followed by, “One thing about your thesis which still troubles me is the way you use a capital letter for a government department ...as an example, you would put The Ministry of Agriculture in the middle of a sentence with a capital T for The. I am not happy about that. A capital T is fine if it starts a sentence, but it must be a small t elsewhere.”²⁰

How very curious that Nasab’s supervisor would present a list of “outstanding” points in her thesis TWENTY months after she had formally submitted her dissertation and only a few days after she had exposed her Examiners’ astonishing incompetence.

After submitting her complaint to SIX Pro-Vice Chancellors at Oxford, Nasab’s supervisor advised her that she must be “aware of the University’s complaints procedures, in case you feel it appropriate to use that route... [and] that a complaint may be made to the Proctors about the examination process, at any stage.” In Oxford’s words, “You should also be aware that that process [of filing a formal complaint] *does not include complaints about the academic judgement of the examiners.*”²¹

Even unaware of the Rafsanjani-Katouzian-Herzig affair (until Dec 2011), Nasab had spent enough time at Oxford to know that pursuing “a formal complaint” against her Examiners (& the OI) would have been an utter waste of time and energy. NOTE that in November 2011, Oxford University had declared that upon investigating “allegations made about the admission of the postgraduate student [Mehdi Hashemi Rafsanjani, the convicted torturer and the son of the ‘Islamic Republic’s chief exporters of terrorism’²²],” Lord North had “found no basis for the University to institute formal proceedings against the student in relation to these claims. The investigation also found no evidence of impropriety on the part of the admitting tutor [Herzig & Katouzian].”²³

Subsequent to her learning about the Rafsanjani-Katouzian-Herzig affair, Nasab refused to re-sit a second Viva Examination at Oxford which the OI’s Faculty had scheduled for her in January 2012 stating, “It is

¹⁹ This is another example that there is no standardized transliteration system for Persian into English: Katouzian spells Foroughi while Nasab - based on numerous other sources - spells Foruqi.

²⁰ Email communications between Homa Nasab & James Allan, March-April 2011.

²¹ Email communications between Homa Nasab & James Allan, March-April 2011.

²² http://www.weeklystandard.com/articles/phd-torture_614773.html

²³ <http://oxfordstudent.com/2011/11/17/the-torturer-oxford-bent-over-backwards-to-admit/>

despicable that these fools were expecting me, an AMERICAN, to produce a *dodgy dossier*²⁴ for them and their cohorts.”

In turn, pursuing the age-old “*When in doubt follow the money*” adage, Nasab spent the following weeks (January-March 2012) discovering that curiously enough several individuals who were involved in systematically problematizing her academic career had financial affiliations with the most peculiar sources.

One example: Nasab’s two Viva Examiners - Mohammad Ali (aka Homa) Katouzian and Tim “Dr. No” Stanley - have received thousands of pounds worth of funding from a certain Iran Heritage Foundation whose co-Founder and CEO (Vahid Alaghband) was being investigated (2008-2010) by the US State Department throughout the period during which Nasab was being subject to the Oriental Institute - University of Oxford’s abuses.²⁵

In February 2008, the US State Department had contacted its London Embassy requesting “immediate action”²⁶ against Alaghband Brothers.²⁷ Two years later, on February 5, 2010, Alaghband finally pleaded guilty to illegally exporting three Boeing 747 Aircrafts to Iran. The United States Department of Justice fined Alaghband’s Balli Group \$17 million dollars. “The significant fine is a direct consequence of the level of deception used to mislead investigators,” said Thomas Madigan, Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Export Enforcement. “The case agents worked through a complex corporate maze to obtain the facts and bring the violators to justice.”²⁸ *Mahan Airways*, the Iranian company to which the Iran Heritage Foundation’s CEO had sold the 747’s, is widely believed to be owned by Ayatollah Rafsanjani.²⁹ It also happens that Ayatollah Rafsanjani - the father of the convicted torturer, Edmund Herzig’s student - is Iran’s wealthiest man.³⁰

Mohammad Ali Katouzian has been a non-advertised Iran Heritage Foundation Fellow at Oxford since 1996. And, most recently Tim Stanley’s Department of Islamic Middle East at the Victoria & Albert had received a deal from the IHF through the creation of a new curatorial position for the Iranian collections. The announcement for the latter post came some two and a half weeks prior to when Stanley (& Katouzian) rejected Nasab’s doctoral thesis on Dec. 16, 2009.³¹

According to Oxford University’s Student Union newspaper, Katouzian had been asked “to fix up something for a friend, namely Vahid Alaghband, the chair of the board of trustees of the Iran Heritage

²⁴ The Dodgy Dossier was a British governmental briefing that was plagiarized from an Iraqi-American’s graduate thesis that was designed to justify the 2003 War against Iraq. The grad student, Ibrahim al-Marashi, later received his doctorate from Oxford University. Also see: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/defence/6756418/Dodgy-dossier-included-gossip-supplied-by-Iraqi-taxi-driver.html>.

²⁵ Also see articles about IHF’s co-Founder Farhad Hakimzadeh’s arrest: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2008/nov/21/british-library-sues-iranian-academic> & <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/7739953.stm>

²⁶ http://www.bis.doc.gov/news/2008/bis_tdo03212008.html - “In addition, Balli Aviation Ltd. violated a Temporary Denial Order issued by BIS that prohibited the company from conducting any transaction involving any item subject to the Export Administration Regulations. The investigation was conducted by BIS and OFAC.” <http://www.justice.gov/nsd/docs/export-case-fact-sheet.pdf>

²⁷ <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/wikileaks/8299355/WikiLeaks-cables-British-firms-made-millions-from-trading-with-Iranians.html>

²⁸ <http://www.pmdtc.state.gov/compliance/documents/OngoingExportCaseFactSheet.pdf>

²⁹ www.politico.com/blogs/laurarozen/0210/UK_firm_pleads_guilty_to_selling_US_747s_to_Iran.html AND <http://business.highbeam.com/409213/article-1G1-239272218/mahan-air-iranian-airline-sees-europe-and-asia-potential> -

³⁰ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/4104532.stm> and <http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/0,1518,633144-2,00.html> - Ayatollah Rafsanjani is also one of the most powerful men in Iran, indeed, the most powerful member of the Assembly of Experts who elect and remove Iran’s Supreme Leader, presently Ayatollah Khamenei (1999-2012).

³¹ <http://ismailmail.wordpress.com/2009/11/28/dr-moya-carey-iran-heritage-foundation-curator/>

Foundation” by approving the convicted torturer Mehdi Rafsanjani’s application for his studies under Edmund Herzig, at the Oriental Institute.³²

...By this point, it no longer mattered that, in Nasab’s opinion, her Examiners lacked basic qualifications to critique her scholarly production. It no longer mattered that Tim “Dr. No” Stanley not only does not hold a doctorate, there are no references to him even possessing a Masters’ degree. There are also no records of Stanley having authored a single book on his own.³³

Neither did it matter that Mohammad Ali (aka Homa) Katouzian is a self-appointed historian who only two years after receiving his doctorate in *economics* in 1984, retired from teaching at the University of Kent and *shifted his interest* to Persian history and literature at Oxford.³⁴ The Darling of the Islamic Republic of Iran (IRI), Katouzian has been an un-official spokesperson for the IRI in Britain and abroad.³⁵

It appeared to Nasab that since her arrival at the Oriental Institute, University of Oxford, in 2004, the Institute’s mission too seemed to have *shifted*:

Why had Oxford appointed (2009) Tariq Ramadan³⁶ - the grandson of the Founder of the Muslim Brotherhood and the son of that organization’s most prominent figure - a professor of Contemporary Islamic Studies? Since April 2008, Wrongway³⁷ Ramadan has been hired to host a television show for the Islamic Republic of Iran’s English language *Press TV* station.

At that point, Nasab also became curious as to why a former Dean of Imam Sadeq University (in Tehran) whose primary mission is to eliminate “the distance between *Howza* [Islamic seminaries]” and academia,³⁸ has been serving on the OI’s Faculty?³⁹

And, why was a student⁴⁰ of one of her Examiners’ (Mohammad Ali Katouzian) providing material support/ advice to the “The Butcher of Beirut,” Mir Hossein Mousavi? According to *TIME Magazine*,

³² <http://www.defenddemocracy.org/media-hit/a-phd-in-torture/>

³³ The only exception may be *Palace and Mosque: Islamic art from the Middle East* which bears his name but which he co-wrote with Mariam Rosser-Owen and Stephen Veroit. Note that Nasab stands to be corrected on both of these points.

³⁴ <http://www.worldwhoswho.com/public/views/entry.html?id=s12175112> - Mohammad Ali Katouzian had changed his name from “M.A. Katouzian” to “Homa Katouzian” upon (approx) the time of the publication of his first book (*The Political Economy of Modern Iran: Despotism and Pseudo-Modernism, 1926-1979*) as a graduate student. Homa is the female version of the Asian name Homayoun.

³⁵ One example is a keynote speech which Katouzian was invited to deliver at Durham University’s Centre for Iranian Studies - founded by donations from the Islamic Republic of Iran - at a seminar on culture and politics that was funded by the Islamic Republic of Iran on the day that the Islamic Republic of Iran had executed two young Iranian men for belonging to a monarchist group. After canceling his appearance at the event for “fear of controversy,” trusting no one else to replace him, the Iranian Ambassador stepped in to fill Katouzian’s shoes. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2010/feb/10/iranian-funding-durham-university-boycott>

³⁶ <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/02/04/magazine/04ramadan.t.html?pagewanted=all>

³⁷ Ramadan’s wrong-way directional behaviour is reminiscent of Douglas “Wrongway” Corrigan’s 1938 flight EAST (to Ireland) although he had officially filed his papers to fly WEST (to California).

³⁸ <http://www.isu.ac.ir/English/Mission.htm>

³⁹ Hossein Heirani Moghaddam is also Pro Vice-Chancellor of Academic Affairs at Islamic Azad University in Oxford: <http://www.orinst.ox.ac.uk/staff/iw/hmoghaddam.html> & http://www.auox.org.uk/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=50&Itemid=71 - When Heirani-Moghaddam was asked “President Ahmadinejad has been reported as saying he doesn’t believe that Israel has the right to exist and that it should be wiped from the face of the earth. Are we missing something in these statements?”, he responded, “Definitely. It is not the voice of President Ahmadinejad. As you may remember Ayatollah Khomeini at the beginning of the revolution held this position. The political position of Iran was that Israel should not be considered a genuine state, so they did not recognise Israel from the outset. It is not a new idea... Many countries around the world choose to have certain policies towards Israel, and nobody condemns them.” SOURCE: Heirani Moghaddam, Hossein, *Understanding Political Iran*, February 14, 2008, or PDF attachment: http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=%22hossein%20moghaddam%22%20oxford&source=web&cd=11&ved=0CCMQFjAAOAO&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.aiia.asn.au%2Fact-papers%2Fdoc_download%2F177-understanding-political-iran-from-mythology-to-reality-hossein-moghaddam&ei=hBgtT7T7C9HrsGbC86zVDA&usq=AFQjCNG30FIQ4wz4R8rlsr2kxELvGvP31Q -

⁴⁰ <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124476476473408385.html> - Here is Katouzian’s student and Mousavi’s advisor Mohammad Reza Jalileipour (of Oxford University) reciting the Qoran in a professional/ clerical fashion: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M9-ikjrj6r1>

“Three decades ago Mir Hossein Mousavi was waging a terrorist war against the United States that included bloody attacks on the U.S. embassy and Marine Corps barracks in Beirut.”⁴¹

A secular-minded American, Nasab strongly believes that politics and religion have NO place in academia.

American art historian and museologist Homa Nasab began her doctoral research at the Oriental Institute, University of Oxford, in 2004. Prior to joining the OI, she had already been awarded three graduate degrees from some of the world’s most prestigious universities, including: Harvard University (Extension), Courtauld Institute of Art and the Department of History of Art at the University of Oxford. The reason for Nasab’s prolonged graduate research (c. 1999-2003) - before starting her D.Phil at the OI - was her research on the (at the time) notoriously hard-to-access [Barnes Foundation](#), in Philadelphia. Before embarking on her graduate studies, Nasab had completed an honor’s thesis on French Impressionism under the tutelage of Prof. Paul Hayes Tucker (UMass Boston).⁴² And, still prior to that, Nasab pursued film and video studies with John Gianvito, the former Curator of the Harvard Film Archive and a recipient of *Chevalier of the Order of Arts and Letters* by the French Ministry of Culture.

Ultimately, however, Nasab became *a devoted Anglophile*, while studying early modern (16th-20th centuries) theater at Stella Adler⁴³ Conservatory (1989-21), in New York City. *Nasab had dreamt of a place where she could indulge in her intellectual, literary and cultural curiosity. Where could have been better than the bastion of British cultural and historical scholarship, University of Oxford?*

As with millions of other Americans, Nasab had believed in the University of Oxford’s claim that, “Academic freedom and independence are core values of the University. Oxford is consistently ranked in the top handful of universities in the world. This would not be achievable if research and teaching were not *rigorous, independent and objective*.”⁴⁴ Today, however, armed with a 120-page written case, 200 pages of emails dating back to 2005, another 100 pages of critical communications, and some 300+ articles and documents supporting her claim, Nasab begs to differ.

After eight macabre years at the Oriental Institute, University of Oxford, Nasab has been advised by a number of academic and legal professionals (friends) that the only way through which she can deal with Oxford is a Human Rights Lawyer. In Nasab’s words, “All I ever wanted to do was to get my doctorate from a respectable university in order to pursue curatorial work... Now, I am told that I need a human rights Lawyer! How perfectly vile.”

After twenty months of resisting pressures from Oxford to re-write her doctoral dissertation to suit her Examiners’ bizarre priorities, Nasab refused (to re-sit for a Viva) doctorate at Oxford University.

Nasab is now writing a screenplay about her experiences in academia called **The Don-Keys**: an ode to the late Right Honourable Alan Clark’s **The Donkeys** (1961). A former minister in Margaret Thatcher’s government, Clark was the son and the brother of eminent art historians Sir Kenneth Clark and T.J. Clark. Drawing on the expression “lions led by donkeys,” *The Donkeys* criticizes the actions of British Army commanders during World War I. Clark’s book inspired a musical and later the movie *Oh! What A Lovely War* (1969). Directed by Lord Richard Attenborough, the movie stars Baron Laurence Olivier, Sir John Gielgud, Sir Ralph Richardson, Sir Michael Redgrave, Dame Maggie Smith, Sir Dirk Bogarde, Sir John

⁴¹ <http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1905477,00.html>

⁴² http://www.umb.edu/academics/cla/faculty/paul_tucker/

⁴³ http://www.jewish-theatre.com/visitor/article_display.aspx?articleID=1928

⁴⁴ www.express.co.uk/posts/view/234204/Dark-forces-telling-our-colleges-what-they-can-teach

Clements, Sir John Mills, Colonel Sir Jack Hawkins, Sir Ian Holmes, and Dame (*declined*) Vanessa Redgrave ...among others.

Refuse “to show or express unwillingness to do or comply with”

Corruption “a departure from the original or from what is pure or correct”

Incompetence “the state or fact of being incompetent - **Incompetent**: inadequate to or unsuitable for a particular purpose”⁴⁵

⁴⁵ Merriam-Webster.com - Accessed March 3, 2012.