



Project Updates: Publications, Event Summaries, & More

Publications



Drone strike on oil facilities in the Saudi capital of Riyadh claimed by the Yemeni Ansarallah movement (Fars News).

From Detente to Containment: The Emergence of Iran's New Saudi Strategy *(International Affairs)*

Payam Mohseni, the Project Director of Shi'ism and Global Affairs, and Hassan Ahmadian, an Associate of the Project, recently published an academic, peer-reviewed article in the journal of *International Affairs*, entitled "From Detente to Containment: The Emergence of Iran's New Saudi Strategy."

As the abstract explains: "Iran's strategy with respect to Saudi Arabia is a key factor in the complex balance of power of the Middle East as the Iranian-Saudi rivalry impacts the dynamics of peace and conflict across the region from Yemen to Syria, Lebanon, Iraq and Bahrain. What is Iranian strategic thinking on Saudi Arabia? And what have been the key factors driving the evolution of Iranian strategy towards the Kingdom? In what marks a substantive shift from its previous detente policy, [the authors] argue that Tehran has developed a new containment strategy in response to the perceived threat posed by an increasingly pro-active Saudi Arabia in the post-Arab Spring period."

[Read Article Here](#)

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Primer on Current Iran-Israel Tensions in the Middle East

While general rivalry between Iran and Israel has been on the rise in recent years, the past few weeks have seen heightened direct military confrontations and covert operations between the two states as the United States seeks to potentially re-enter the nuclear deal and indirect Iran-U.S. negotiations have resumed in Vienna. For a background understanding and primer on these recent escalations between Israel and Iran in the Middle East, see the two publications below by affiliates of the Project on Shi'ism and Global Affairs explaining Iran's forward deterrence posture in "Iran's Syria Strategy: The Evolution of Deterrence" (*International Affairs*) and the changing geopolitical landscape of the region with the strengthening of Iran and its allies in "Iran's Axis of Resistance Rises" (*Foreign Affairs*).



Iran's Syria Strategy: The Evolution of Deterrence.

Hassan Ahmadian and Payam Mohseni, *International Affairs*

[Read](#)



Iran's Axis of Resistance Rises: How It's Forging a New Middle East

Payam Mohseni and Hussein Kalout, *Foreign Affairs*

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Event Recap

Book Launch - The Prophet's Heir: The Life of Ali ibn Abi Talib

In February, **Hassan Abbas**, Senior Adviser at the Project on Shi'ism and Global Affairs and Distinguished Professor of International Relations at the Near East South Asia Strategic Studies Centre (NESA), provided a nuanced, compelling portrait of Ali ibn Abi Talib and the origins of sectarian division within Islam. Abbas's book reveals how, after Mohammad, Ali assumed the spiritual mantle of Islam to spearhead the movement that the Prophet had led. While Ali's teachings about wisdom, justice, and selflessness continue to be cherished by both Shia and Sunni Muslims, his pluralist ideas have been buried under sectarian agendas and power politics.

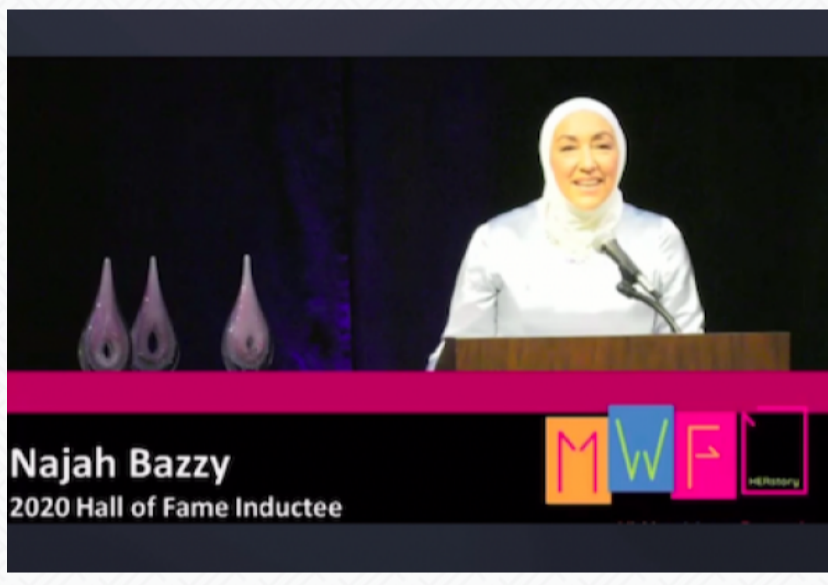


[View Full Event Video](#)

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News



Najah Bazy
2020 Hall of Fame Inductee

Zaman International Founder Najah Bazy Inducted into Michigan Women's Hall of Fame

The Michigan Women's Hall of Fame inducted Zaman International founder & CEO, and Project Associate, Najah Bazy. She joins other accomplished figures whose contributions to Michigan's history inspire the women and girls of today and tomorrow.

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Podcast of Interest: Giving Voice To Silenced Islams

In an engaging interview, Project Faculty Co-Chair **All Asani** speaks about his journey as a scholar, the importance of expanding perspectives in the field of Islamic Studies, and his interest in studying Islam.

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Panel Video - Regional Vision of the Gulf States: Iran

Project Associate **Hassan Ahmadian** contributed to a panel discussion on US-Iran relations and Iran's current geopolitical position.

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Pope Francis Meets Ayatollah Sistani, Iraq's Globally Revered Shi'a Leader

Mohammad Sagha, an Associate and Research Director for history and identity with the Project on Shi'ism and Global Affairs, stated in an interview that Grand Ayatollah Sistani's hosting of the Pope during his four day visit in Iraq represented the importance of Muslim-Christian relations and ecumenical exchange for the Shi'a Muslim clergy and demonstrated religious tolerance and the strong global front against extremism wherever it may be.

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Visions



Political Mobilization in Bahrain: A Historical Overview and Future Prospects

By **Will Crass** and **Juliana Rordorf**

Will Crass and **Juliana Rordorf** analyze Bahrain's unique position in the Persian Gulf, positing that it offers an interesting case study of how political mobilization is possible for citizens who live under strict minority rule.

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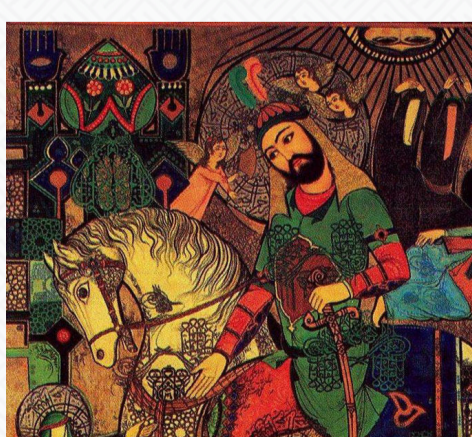
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Research

The Project on Shi'ism & Global Affairs pursues advanced research on four inter-disciplinary studies in an effort to re-focus scholarly attention on the strategic transformations happening across the Shi'a worlds on both a socio-political level as well as the cultural values and ideology that drive these larger phenomena.

[See Our Research](#)



Visions

Visions, the online publication platform of the Project on Shi'ism and Global Affairs, provides an educational platform that bridges the dispersed field of Shi'a studies—from historical hagiography and philosophy to contemporary geopolitics and world affairs—into a leading source on the latest analysis on Shi'ism from an academic and scholarly perspective.

[Read Our Blog](#)

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For more on our project and research, visit shiism.wcfia.harvard.edu and follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#). If you are interested in contributing or getting involved with this initiative, please email Project Director Payam Mohseni at pmohseni@fas.harvard.edu, or click the button below.

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