Women's Worlds in Qajar Iran: A Digital Archive and Website

A. Significance

The reign of the Qajar dynasty in Iran (1796 – 1925) is recognized as a period of dynamic political, economic, and cultural transformations. Founded in the late 1700s, the Qajars ruled for the next century and a half.

Perhaps most notably, the Qajars presided over a series of deep cultural and political changes, many of which continue to resonate in the Iran of today. For example, at least two major cities, Tehran and Tabriz, owe their current urban significance and almost all their old quarters and buildings to the Qajar era. The last decades of the dynasty's rule were also marked by Iran's first twentieth-century revolution, the Constitutional Revolution of 1906, which resulted in the formation of an elected parliament and the drafting of a national constitution, both of which still comprise the backbone of Iran's government. Given the lasting consequences of these and other Qajar-era developments, the consensus among modern scholars and policy-makers alike is that any understanding of Iran's current culture and politics must be rooted in a more historically-attuned analysis that takes us back to the events of the nation's long 19th century.

In the past two decades, a growing scholarly literature has contributed to our understanding of both the political transformations and cultural and art-historical changes of Qajar Iran. Yet, a glaring gap remains in both bodies of literature: Strikingly few existing works map out the lives and contributions of *women* during this tremendously significant era.

This break in the scholarly record is all the more troubling in light of the fact that many Qajar-era women lived culturally rich and active lives. Several court women were skilled writers and poets, calligraphers and painters; a few had their own private libraries and patronized women artists. Women educated in religious sciences, usually by their fathers or brothers but at times by their learned mothers, often left behind manuscripts and a legacy of public religious leadership. A few travelogues that have emerged have provided first-person descriptions of women's pilgrimages to Mecca and/or internal travels, and, from the end of the nineteenth century, we also have a few examples of treatises of social critique. Finally, as the beginning decades of the twentieth century heralded a new era of constitutional fervor and change, we know that a full-fledged flourishing of women's press and published writings accompanied urban women's participation in the Constitutional Revolution and their active pursuance of education and legal reform on their own behalf.

These fragments of women's worlds in Qajar Iran have provided us with small but important glimpses of women's lives during this critical period. Nonetheless, the nineteenth century in Iran remains a patchy landscape that has yet to be fully sketched out. Given the longstanding dearth of primary-source materials related to women in the Qajar era, it is not surprising that, to date, the vast majority of Qajar social histories have focused almost exclusively on the struggles, achievements, and day-to-day realities of the men of that period. Without making such materials available to scholars, it will be impossible to ever gain a fuller picture of Iran's rich and complicated past.

The Women's Worlds in Qajar Iran (WWQI) project is an innovative resource at Harvard University that seeks to use digital and online technology to overcome the decades-long limitations that have to date circumscribed scholarship related to the Qajar period in Iran.

The Qajar period in general is known for a flourishing of all forms of artistic expression; for a diversity of religious beliefs and practices; and for a new opening of Iran to other nations and cultures, particularly

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those of the West. Thus, the WWQI project has implications for expanded scholarship across myriad disciplines beyond Iranian cultural and social history, including: art and art history; religion; comparative literature; and languages (to name just a few areas that stand to benefit from such a resource). Finally, in addition to being of exceptional scholarly merit in its own right, it's important to note that the WWQI project fits well with *'The Muslim World and the Humanities'* focus of NEH's *'Bridging Cultures Initiative,'* which endeavors to shed light on and bring to the attention of the American public the *'multifaceted history of centuries of Islamic intellectual, political, and cultural traditions that have influenced civilizations throughout the world.'*

B. History, Scope, and Duration

HISTORY OF THE PROJECT
The Women's Worlds in Qajar Iran (WWQI) project began in 2009 with a grant of $346,733 from the NEH's *Preservation and Access: Humanities Collections and Reference Resources* program. The project was initiated in response to a then-new willingness among descendants of the families that ruled Iran during the Qajar era to make public primary source documents related to the lives of the women members of these families that they had previously been kept guarded for decades. At the same time, the WWQI Project Director was also energetically building connections with officials at various Iranian institutions whose holdings had important implications for scholarship on women during the Qajar era. Almost without exception, these officials indicated a strong interest in (beyond current political tensions) establishing robust working relationships with academic and art institutions outside of Iran's borders – presenting a second unprecedented opportunity to make a vast swath of materials long inaccessible to all but the tiniest minority of scholars available worldwide.

WWQI, in its initial planning stages, thus broke new ground on multiple levels. To our knowledge, never before had an archive sought to use digital technology to simultaneously overcome the barriers of geography, ownership, and politics that, until then, had combined to keep most primary source evidence of women's contributions to Iranian history out of the scholarly record. Clearly, the goals for the project were ambitious -- but the obstacles that would need to be overcome in order to achieve them were also formidable. Most notably:

- The descendants of the original Qajar rulers now number well into the thousands and are scattered amidst a vast network of 'Qajar families' that stretches from Tehran to cities across Europe and around the globe. Thus, simply the coordination and travel involved in performing an initial assessment of the materials on offer for inclusion in the archive presented a challenge.

- Although a great deal of thought and planning had gone into the methodologies by which items selected for inclusion would be digitized, the WWQI team had yet to gain substantial experience in actually putting these methodologies into practice. Thus, the level of time and resources required to digitize a wide variety of materials in varying stages of preservation and in disparate settings (the most challenging being private homes in foreign countries) to archival quality standards was largely an unknown at the outset of the endeavor.

- Although we had assembled a large team of experts in digital archiving techniques and best practices, web design, and subject matter (to name just a few of the areas of work critical to this project) to guide us in our efforts, the 'legwork' in terms of discussing possible acquisitions with families and institutions, assessing the materials on offer, and arranging for the actual digitizing of all items selected for inclusion was primarily the responsibility of one small group, comprised of the Principle Investigator and three additional scholars. Especially given that each member of this group also had

to juggle other commitments in regards to teaching and research, we recognized that limited human resources on the 'frontlines' of the project would be one of our major difficulties.

With all of that in mind, great care was taken to present realistic estimates of digitization activity per scholar per year in the original NEH application. Early indications had suggested that we could reasonably expect to achieve the following annual digitization targets per scholar over the course of the grant's two-year timeframe:

- Portraits – up to 10
- Photographs – up to 100
- Private letters – 200 or more
- Examples of calligraphy and poetry – 10-20
- Title deeds to land/property; reports of household expenses – up to 10
- Marriage contracts – up to 10

Based on those estimates, the stated goal was to digitize and integrate into the archive <u>close to 3,000 primary source images</u> by the close of the project's two-year grant.

Yet, within just the first year of the grant, the WWQI project far surpassed those aims in every respect. Progress accomplished to date is as follows:

- <u>20,000 images</u>, total, have been digitized
- As of June 17, 2011, <u>a total of 10,839 of those images</u> were available online (According to current work plans, the total number of images available online will <u>exceed 15,000</u> by the end of July 2011).
- A total of <u>100 audio-clips</u> related to these images are also available online. Those audio-clips include 8 long-length oral histories.
- <u>Six items have been fully transcribed and translated from Persian to English</u> and are available online. Included in these items is the important text *Ma'ayib al-rijal* [Vices of Men], which was written by Bibi Khanum Astrarabadi in 1894 in response to *Ta'dib al-niswan* [Disciplining Women], a male-centered text written in the mid-1880s in the tradition of satirical advice books to men about how to treat their wives and train their daughters.

Specific types and approximate numbers of primary source documents represented include:

- Photographs – 500
- Manuscripts/lithographs – 120
- Letters – 1,000
- Legal and financial documents – 600 (including 50 marriage certificates)
- Artwork and artifacts – 300

All in all, approximately 12,000 of these images were acquired from 30 private individuals and families located in Tehran, Los Angeles, Geneva, Houston, Boston, San Francisco, and Toronto. The remaining 8,000 images were contributed by six major archival institutions, including: Majlis Library and Document Center (Tehran), Malek Library and Museum (Tehran), Mossadegh Foundation (Geneva), International Institute for Social History (Amsterdam), The Center for Iranian Jewish Oral History (Beverly Hills), and the National Library and Archives of the Islamic Republic of Iran (Tehran). Harvard College Library also provided a small number of images.

Every image acquired by the WWQI project will become part of Harvard College Library's (HCL) digital collections, regardless of the ownership of the original text or photograph. Harvard College Library, a central unit within the broader Harvard library system, comprises nine major libraries and several special

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units and holds more than 10 million of the over 15 million volumes in the Harvard libraries. Its collections are the product of more than three centuries of decisions encompassing every imaginable thematic interest. They are intended to serve three broad purposes: 1) provide exhaustive, comprehensive support for programs of teaching and study within the Faculty of Arts and Sciences; 2) aspire to comprehensive coverage of the record of scholarship, from all countries and in all relevant fields; and 3) selectively capture the overall record of human expression, across time and also across formats and media.

HCL's decision to assume responsibility for the permanent upkeep of the digitized documents that would comprise the WWQI archive was based primarily upon the benefits these materials could offer for expanded scholarship across multiple disciplines, especially given the difficulties currently associated with travel to Iran. There was also a perception within the library's Middle Eastern Division that much 19th century primary-source material related to Iran is presently in danger of 'being lost,' either because it is stored in private holdings and/or has been poorly preserved, often due to limited budgets at Iranian libraries and archives. (HCL by default regards materials in private family holdings being "at risk." Loss or deterioration can result from improper storage conditions and/or changes in interests across generations. Moreover, materials in private hands are simply not accessible to any broader community, scholarly or otherwise). Finally, in the original planning for the WWQI project, the point had been made that the WWQI materials would fit well with other collections in HCL's offerings and thus would serve as a natural extension of the library's archival efforts related to Iran and to the Middle East in general.

All of these justifications have since been proved valid. To offer but just one example of the new archival holdings and expanded opportunities for scholarship that have come into being as a direct result of WWQI project activities: A family that for generations had held documents, papers, and manuscripts related to the Azali movement in Iran learned of the project and not only gave permission for all these materials to be digitized for inclusion in the WWQI archive, but also donated the entirety of their holdings in physical form to Widener Library, the largest library within the HCL system. Their decision in turn encouraged a second family associated with the Azali movement to make their own family papers available to the WWQI project, albeit exclusively in digital form. Together, these two collections have made the WWQI archive the premier source for scholarship on the Azalis, a dissident religious sect known for women's leadership within its ranks, for its members' involvement in secular reform efforts (including the Constitutional Revolution), and for the practice of *taqiyya* (dissimulation), which made it difficult for outsiders to determine whether or not a particular individual within Iranian politics was an Azali. They have also opened the way for increased and better scholarship on this little-understood aspect of Iran's social, political, and religious history.

Other Project Accomplishments:
Our description of the history of the WWQI project would be incomplete were we not to mention two other critical features of the endeavor:

- The innovative WWQI website that was included in the original funding request
- The WWQI project's pivotal contributions to the digital humanities overall

These two aspects of the WWQI project and the accomplishments related to them are described briefly below:

WWQI Project Website: The fourth and newest version (1.0) of the WWQI project's richly annotated public website, currently available at http://www.qajarwomen.org, was released in March 2011. Since this release, the number of new visitors to the site has spiked sharply, with an average of 3,000+ new visitors accessing the WWQI website each month. Average use statistics since June 2010 (per Google analytics) are as follows:

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- Approx. 25,000 visits overall (with a big upsurge between March 2011 and June 2011, accounting for about 12,000 visits)
- Approx. 15,000 unique visitors
- A total of 208,555 page visits
- Most users will look at about 8 pages per visit to the website
- About half of the website users come from the US/Canada and a quarter from Iran and Europe each

The strong sense during early planning for the WWQI project was that an innovatively designed website would be important to opening a door to new humanities scholarship across multiple fields. The belief at that time was that the complexity and uniqueness of the materials to be assembled within the digital archive would demand an approach that was more contextual than the standard library catalog searching and browsing interface. In more traditional archives, for example, relevant historical figures, subject headings, and major titles are likely to be well known and therefore easily encapsulated in a finding aid. The private nature of the preponderance of materials in the WWQI collection, however, meant that this would simply never be the case for these holdings. Additionally, there was a strong agreement among all involved in the initial WWQI project discussions that, to truly have the hoped-for impact on scholarship in the humanities, the interface to the emerging collections should be Persian-English bilingual, at minimum.

Tremendous strides in the design and implementation of the WWQI project website were made during the two-year life of the original NEH grant. In particular, the website's bilingual interface (a capability not offered by Harvard University catalog interfaces) has proved invaluable to securing the participation of Qajar-era families in ongoing collection acquisitions and to facilitating the development of strong and collegial partnerships with archival organizations in Iran. Moreover, even at the first public presentation of a beta-version of the website in May 2010, several librarians and archivists noted that its innovative ideas and features will likely make it a model for dissemination of a wide range of virtual archive projects yet to come.

Contributions to the Digital Humanities: Last but certainly not least: In addition to serving scholars as a resource in its own right, we believed at the outset that the WWQI project represented an important leap forward in the evolution of the use of technology for humanities scholarship overall. After decades of digitization and improved public access to existing physical collections, the work proposed in the original NEH application took the unique step of using *digital facsimiles* to bridge a significant gap in the historical record. Such a strategy had the capacity to at long last render available sources whose ownership, intimacy, and non-traditional (not political, not male) nature had for decades kept them out of libraries and archives. Beyond the WWQI project alone, then, our sense was that the sort of international virtual archive we were endeavoring to create had the potential to solve a whole swath of problems that scholars had faced for decades in studying an enormous range of subjects.

At the most basic and important level, we have proved that what we set out to accomplish is indeed possible. This is no small achievement. To the best of our knowledge, no other digital archive yet exists that has integrated images from so many geographically dispersed, private sources into a single holding in so short a period of time. Along the way, we have come up with strategies to overcome not only the difficulties we anticipated at the outset, but also the great many additional obstacles we stumbled across along the way. These have already provided, if not a model, then certainly a toolbox of useful experiences and approaches that other scholars embarking on similar endeavors can draw upon. The WWQI project has already informed the design of a DoE-funded initiative of the Harvard African Languages Program that aims to digitize African scripts dispersed across Somalia. Anecdotal feedback we have received from scholars who have been present at conferences and workshops at which we

presented the project suggests that many others have been inspired by our work to persist in their own endeavors and are putting our 'lessons learned' to good use.

PROJECT GOALS

Now, building on these two important years of progress made and obstacles overcome, the WWQI project is poised to move ahead at an unprecedented pace on every front.

This proposal to the *NEH Humanities Collections and Reference Resources* program focuses primarily on work that will increase the volume and diversity of the materials available via the WWQI project within an established two-year time period. A concerted effort has been made to identify major tasks with known 'start and end points' that, if accomplished, will take the WWQI project to the next level in terms of the depth, diversity, and usefulness of the materials it offers to scholars – and, in so doing, significantly increase the value of NEH's original investment in the endeavor. Two important new website features are also included in this request.

More broadly, it is worth noting that the WWQI project has taken on the proverbial 'life of its own' in terms of the enthusiasm that has been generated among the expanded network of 'Qajar families' and other institutions/individuals with materials to contribute to the archive. We do not expect this flood of interest to dissipate any time in the near future. Thus, in an effort to keep up with all the valuable holdings that are certain to emerge as word continues to spread, we are embarking upon an energetic fundraising plan that primarily targets individuals and smaller foundations capable of supporting a few small collections or upgrades at a time.

Main goals for NEH funding follow. Please note that each one of the private family and institutional holdings identified below have already been assessed and prioritized by the WWQI project.

- **Highest Priority Family Collections.** Holdings from the following families are particularly relevant to the WWQI collections and are thus prioritized for digitization, cataloging, and integration into the WWQI project website:
  - (b) (6)
  - (b) (6)
  - (b) (6)

- **Other Family Collections.** The following families have also agreed to make all or a portion of their Qajar-related holdings available to the WWQI project. These collections comprise the main portion of the additional private family holdings that will be digitized, cataloged, and integrated into the WWQI website under the auspices of the NEH grant. (Newly identified private family holdings may supersede one or more of these collections if they are evaluated as having a higher priority based on the selection criteria outlined in the next section).
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- **Institutional Collections.** Holdings from the following institutions will be digitized, cataloged, and integrated into the WWQI website:
    - Institute for Contemporary Iranian History (Tehran, Iran)
    - Baha'i National Archives (Wilmette, Illinois)
    - Research Center for the Great Encyclopedia of Islam (Tehran, Iran)
    - International Institute for Social History (Amsterdam, The Netherlands)
      (Ongoing acquisition of digital images as this collection continues to expand).
    - Shangri La: Center for Islamic Arts and Culture, Qajar Collection (Honolulu, Hawaii)
    - Marashi Library (Qom, Iran)
    - Mossadegh Foundation (Geneva, Switzerland)
      (Completion of digitization and cataloging of these collections)

- **WWQI Website Features**. The following two new website features will greatly enhance the ability of scholars and others interested in the WWQI project's collections to navigate the WWQI archive:
    - <u>Interactive Map</u>. This will be a map of Iran with major cultural centers and provincial boundaries, plus visual indicators of the magnitude of collection materials related to a particular location, displayed. Archival resources will be able to be previewed on the map or directly accessed by selecting one of the localities
    - <u>Interactive Genealogy</u>. This will be a simple 'family tree' of selected Qajar-era families, accompanied by a visual flag that indicates when related archive materials are available

The WWQI project was successful in obtaining funding over and above the NEH grant during the first phase of this endeavor: Grants were awarded by the Flora Family Foundation and the Ilex Foundation. Expanded fundraising efforts will be launched over the next two years to support additional goals outlined for the project. Primary among these are the following:

- **Private Family Collections**
    - The WWQI project will seek to assess the relevance and value of new private family holdings as they emerge. These will be prioritized for digitization, cataloging, and integration into the WWQI website based on the selection criteria outlined in the next section.

- **Institutional Holdings**
    - Most Iranian institutions readily embraced collaboration with the WWQI project; however, agreements with the Golestan Palace and the Central Library of Tehran University, each of which is of primary relevance to the archive, have been delayed due to politically-charged changes in their leadership. The WWQI project will prioritize the digitization, cataloging, and integration into the website of these holdings once these leadership issues have been settled and agreements can be reached.
    - The British Library recently received a grant from the Iran Heritage Foundation to digitize all its Persian manuscripts. Harvard College Library has a pre-standing agreement with the British Library regarding the sharing of collections, and the WWQI project will link with the digitized manuscripts under the auspices of that agreement. *(External funding not required).*

- **Translation Projects**
    - The WWQI website interface is fully Persian-English bilingual. Currently, in terms of the archival materials themselves, one important manuscript and several letters are available on the WWQI website in English translation. The translation of another manuscript – a travelogue written a woman whose journey in 1892-94 took her from

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Kirman through Indian ports to Mecca and back to Kirman through present-day Iraq and Tehran – will be completed by the end of summer 2011. Translation of additional materials into English is an important component of all non-NEH funding applications, as we believe that this increases the value of the WWQI archive for non-Persian speakers by many factors. (Please note that 'translation' is not funded under the *NEH Humanities Collections and Reference Resources* program; however, we consider translation of archived materials to be critical to achieving the goals of our project).

THE COLLECTIONS

This section provides an overview of the various types of Qajar-era texts, documents, and other materials that comprise the preponderance of the WWQI archive. A description of the selection criteria and process to be employed in the second phase of the WWQI project is also included, as are more details on some of highest priority collections to be digitized, cataloged and integrated into the WWQI website under the auspices of a second NEH grant.

Overview of Qajar-era Archival Materials
The materials that form the exciting heart of the WWQI project can be broadly categorized as follows:
- Unpublished poetry, essays, and treatises, which have enormous relevance for social, literary, and political histories.
- Travelogues, which became an increasingly important genre towards the end of the nineteenth century.
- Private letters: a very large number, perhaps into the several thousands collectively over the long term. Written by women to other family members, often brothers and fathers but also to other female friends and relatives, these letters contain invaluable information about domestic lives, family ties and quarrels, and financial disputes.
- Marriage contracts, which were elaborate, vibrantly colored, sometimes poster-sized documents crafted of ornate materials. Aside from their value to art historians, they give us valuable information about the social and economic status of families through the detailing of dowries that brides took to a husband's home and the wedding gifts received. Additionally, they enable scholars to substantively examine the oft-noted similarities (aesthetic and textual) of Jewish and Muslim wedding contract documents; scholarship to date has left the question of these similarities unaddressed due to scholars' lack of access to substantial numbers of such documents
- Artistic reproductions, most notably calligraphies (individual pieces, as well as full texts such as Ziya' al-Saltanah's copy of the Qur'an).
- Title deeds to land and other properties, endowment documents, documents pertaining to construction and finance of public works (such as schools, hospitals, and mosques), plus a wide array of correspondence, both official and private.
- Photos and portrait paintings: hundreds of photographs of both formal events such as state visits and private settings (andaruni) with wives, female family members, and servants.

    A handful of sample materials are provided in Appendix D. Please note that this selection of images is meant to serve as a visual example of the types of materials that are found in private holdings, _only_. They are not intended to offer an exhaustive representation of all the various categories of writings, images, and other texts and material objects that are and will be included in the WWQI archive.

    Selection Criteria:
The overriding concern at the outset of the WWQI project was locating materials created by or specific to Qajar-era women and then gaining permission to digitize those materials for the WWQI archive. As a result, our main focus during the earlier NEH grant period was promoting the endeavor among 'Qajar-era families' and forging strong relationships with relevant museums and archives, particularly those in Iran.

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We were quite pleasantly surprised by the degree to which most families and institutions embraced working with us, and we have by now amassed such a wealth of connections that a more defined process is required for prioritizing the integration of relevant holdings into the WWQI archive and website.

In terms of selection criteria, the guiding priority over the next period will be the diversification of the WWQI archive's holdings in terms of religious diversity, socio-ethnic diversity, and geographical expansion. Other considerations that will impact selection and prioritization decisions include the relative importance of the family and/or holdings in terms of understanding Iran's history and culture and the types of materials that comprise a particular holding. (For example, wedding contracts will continue to be a high priority).   Any private family collection or institutional holding located in Iran will be highly prioritized for inclusion in the archive due to the difficulty that travel to Iran presents for most scholars. Finally, the digitization of materials currently or until very recently sequestered in private hands will remain a primary concern of the WWQI project.

The private family and institutional holdings categorized as 'highest priority' for NEH funding were selected for the following reasons:

- **Private Family Collections**
  - (b) (6)

    This extensive collection is extremely valuable in its own right, but also represents a key geographical expansion beyond the city of Tehran. Qazvin, a former capital of Iran, has been an important cultural center throughout history and played a major role during the Qajar era.
  - (b) (6)   . These holdings include a unique collection of Qajar-era wedding contracts and albums of Qajar-era photographs.
  - (b) (6)   These holdings include many documents related to and/or written by Fakhr al-Dawlah, a daughter of Nasir al-Din Shah (r. 1848-1896). Her descendents include prime minister 'Ali Amini and several other 20th-century statesmen.

- **Institutional Collections**
  - Baha'i National Archive. The Baha'i National Archives is a primary source of significant material related to the Baha'i faith, which was founded in 19th century Persia and comprises an important religious minority in Iran. These collections are a high priority due to our commitment to reflect the religious diversity of Qajar-era Iranian society.
  - International Institute for Social History (IISH). Families first began to send materials to the IISH in 2009; many more have since entered into formal commitments to contribute all or a portion of their holdings to the Institute in the future. Thus, the IISH's Qajar collections are comprised primarily of the types of private family holdings, previously hidden from public and scholarly view, that are at the center of the WWQI archive. (Please see Appendix G for more background on IISH's new Qajar Studies and Documentation Center).
  - Institute for Contemporary Iranian History (ICIH). This archive was formed in the aftermath of the 1979 revolution in order to bring under one directorship the private family holdings that various committees and individuals had expropriated during the first months of revolutionary upheavals. It thus holds extremely valuable documents and photographs that date back to the Qajar era, the preponderance of which originate from the types of private family collections with which the archive is most concerned. Moreover, the ICIH is located in Iran, putting its collections out of the reach of the vast majority of scholars.

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- o Research Center for the Great Encyclopedia of Islam (CGEI). The Research Center of the Great Encyclopedia of Islam (CGEI), a major respected non-governmental library formed in 1984, is a magnet for attracting library collections donated by prominent Iranian scholars. Most notably, CGEI includes the holdings of the late Iraj Afshar, the renowned Iranian historian and bibliographer, who had over four decades collected private papers from families and published important edited tomes. The CGEI is also located in Iran, effectively rendering its holdings inaccessible to all but a minority of scholars.

In regards to diversity, the WWQI archive already includes large holdings from Iranian Jewish and Azali families, and the digitization of three Armenian families' holdings has just been completed in Iran. (Integration of holdings from additional Armenian families is also planned for the near future). One glaring gap specific to religious diversity so far is the inclusion of documents from Zoroastrian families. Family and private archival collections that fill this need have already been identified and will be approached on the Principal Investigator's next trip to Iran. Overall, the WWQI project is committed to continually assessing the materials that have been acquired and pro-actively seeking out the holdings still needed to make the WWQI archive as representative of Qajar-era Iranian society and major events as possible.

Selection Process
Finally, the wealth of potentially relevant materials that has become available to the WWQI project demands not only better defined selection and prioritization criteria, but also a more robust process for making selection and prioritization decisions. In the earliest stages of the project, the inclusion of materials in the WWQI archive primarily reflected the judgment of one or more of the original 'Team of Scholars' as to the temporal and topical 'fit' of potential holdings with the archive's purpose (i.e., were the materials created by or related to women during the Qajar period?). Now, as the WWQI project moves into its next stages, a new WWQI Advisory Board will be convened to offer diverse perspectives on the selection and prioritization of potential additions to the archive.

The primary aim in bringing together such a group is to ensure that the WWQI project develops in a way that is most useful for the broadest community of scholars and most reflective of the Qajar era itself. To that end, the WWQI Advisory Board will be comprised of thirty distinguished scholars in Qajar studies; education, library, and media professionals will also be key members of the group, with a view to facilitating the project's continued contributions to these disciplines. A complete list of the Board members who will commence two-year terms on August 1, 2011 is provided in the 'Staffing' section of the proposal. Scholarly domains represented among the membership include history, literature, comparative literature, art history, and international relations, and the scholars themselves are drawn primarily from institutions in the US, UK, and Iran.

WWQI Advisory Board members will be responsible for the examination and assessment of potential archival materials related to their area of expertise; for making recommendations for the improvement and future growth of the project; and for suggesting appropriate items and/or collections to be added to the archive. In this way, the selection and prioritization of materials from among the growing range and number of potentially relevant collections now available to the WWQI project will take place via a process that closely resembles 'peer review.' The contents of the WWQI project will, as a result, come to reflect the insights and decision-making of the academic community's leading experts on the Qajar era, inclusive of all the scholarly disciplines that this rich and vibrant era touches.

[Please note that the WWQI Advisory Board will also play a critical role in moving forward the digitization work of the WWQI project over the next two years, as described in more detail in the 'Staffing' section of the proposal narrative].

C. Methodology and Standards

CENTRAL LIBRARY INFRASTRUCTURE
Although the primary means of access to the digitized materials will be through the WWQI project website, all digital images, texts, and audio materials collected for this archive will also be available and preserved through the Harvard Library (HL) central infrastructure. The HL systems include a suite of independent but cooperating services that together provide a comprehensive foundation for preservation, storage, and digital content management, as well as for online discovery and delivery. Key services leveraged for this project include the following:

Digital Repository Service (DRS) -- The DRS is a repository for both preservation and access that provides professionally managed services to ensure the usability of stored digital objects over time. DRS services and facilities include: 1) An electronic storage facility within which objects created, purchased, or otherwise owned by Harvard agencies reside; 2) Management of administrative and structural data associated with stored objects; and 3) Preservation policies and procedures to ensure the continued usability of stored objects and delivery of an object to a registered or known software application (e.g., an online catalog). All objects managed in the DRS receive the highest level of preservation service consistent with the object's characteristics and the current technical capabilities of the DRS and its staff. *All digital materials gathered for this project will be stored in the DRS.*

Visual Information Access (VIA) system – VIA is a publicly available union catalog of visual resources at Harvard. VIA includes information about slides, photographs, objects, and artifacts in the university's libraries, museums, and archives, and provides a web-based interface for searching and viewing visual image cataloging and related thumbnail images. Records in VIA are contributed to the system from a variety of local cataloging systems at participating libraries, archives, and museums. *All still image material gathered for this project will be cataloged at item-level and delivered through VIA.*

OLIVIA – OLIVIA is a centrally-supported cataloging system for visual materials, designed to provide data to the VIA union catalog. OLIVIA provides a cataloging environment specifically designed for images, based on the latest thinking in and on developing standards in the visual resources community. As a client/servers application, OLIVIA is available to any Harvard repository that wants to contribute image cataloging to VIA but does not already have a collection management or cataloging system in-house. *Catalog records for all visual images collected for this project will be created in the OLIVIA catalog.*

Page Delivery Service (PDS) – PDS delivers to a web browser scanned page images of books, diaries, reports, journals, and other multi-page documents from the collections of the Harvard libraries. Documents delivered by PDS can be used in ways similar to their print counterparts; for example, browsed through a table of contents or viewed page-by-page. PDS also offers: tools to manipulate pages (zoom, rotate, pan); a full-text keyword search of document contents; and an option for printing. *Manuscript and other text material collected for this project that require a page-turning treatment, as well as some bound visual material, will be delivered through the PDS.*

HOLLIS Catalog – The HOLLIS Catalog of the Harvard University Libraries, the main bibliographic catalog at Harvard, is a database containing over 9 million records for more than 15 million books, journals, manuscripts, government documents, maps, microforms, music scores, sound recordings, visual materials, and data files. The database is updated continually as material is ordered, received, and cataloged. *A description of the collection developed for this project as a whole, with a link to the project's website, will be provided through HOLLIS. Published materials digitized in this project will also have HOLLIS records.*

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OASIS - (Online Archival Search Information System) provides centralized access to a growing percentage of finding aids for archival and manuscript collections at Harvard. These finding aids are detailed descriptions of collections that contain a wide variety of materials, including letters, diaries, photographs, drawings, printed material, and objects. Many finding aids contain links to digitized materials delivered through the PDS. *This system is also being used to describe manuscript collections acquired in digital format only. A finding aid will be created to provide an additional point of access to manuscript materials digitized in this project.*

METHODOLOGIES AND SPECIFICATIONS
Methodologies and specifications relevant to each source of materials to be archived are as follows:

Private Family Holdings
Digitization - Three methods of digitization have been utilized for the acquisition of family and private collections.
- The owner lends materials to Harvard for digitization in Cambridge.
- The owner lends materials to a local vendor selected by the WWQI project for digitization.
- Local vendors and/or WWQI project staff digitize materials on-site (i.e. in the owner's private home).

The three methods outlined above provide flexibility in responding to the complexities of acquiring the variety of materials encountered in private family collections. We found, for example, that many families were reluctant to open their private collections to the WWQI project unless digitization was done on-site. For all three methods, the technical standards of digital capture have been approved by the Imaging Services Department of the Harvard College Library, ensuring the highest level of quality, regardless of the method of digitization.

To facilitate the digitization of materials on-site, the WWQI project has identified and obtained cost estimates from vendors near locations where we have or expect to acquire materials, as outlined in the budget narrative section of the proposal. These include: FNAC and BHV in Paris; Mikrosave, which is close to Geneva; and the National Archives and its affiliates in the UK. In Houston, we have worked with MFA-affiliated photgrapher Tom DuBrock, and in Tehran, we have successfully utilized the services of Rahnama Graphics, a digitization company, and Saeed Behrouzi, one of Iran's leading photographers with extensive museum and digital archive experience.

Finally, WWQI project members have also been equipped with and trained to operate portable scanners to carry out digitization projects in order to accommodate the small number of cases in which only a project member has been granted permission to digitize materials on-site or the small number of items in the collection does not make it cost effective to hire a local vendor.

Specifications for Digitization – The best technical specifications for the creation of digitized reproductions of photographs and documents should be informed by the following three considerations:
- The physical condition of the source material, e.g.: size, location, and arrangement of component parts, handling requirements.
- The source material's information content, e.g.: size, location, and arrangement of the source material's information-bearing characteristics.
- The use-needs and expectations of the targeted community of scholars for whom the collection is to be digitized. (The HCL standard is accurate reproduction of original materials).

In regards to scanning specifications, the capture resolution of the source material should support the rendering and accurate interpretation of all of the information content in the source material. Resolution

is most often conveyed, crudely and inaccurately, in terms of DPI: dots per inch. In fact, DPI is only a measure of the number of digital values, or samples, collected by the scanning device relative to the size of the source material. DPI does not indicate how much of the original item's detail will be revealed in the captured image; nor does it measure or control the quality of the image focus. It also fails to describe whether the source material was properly illuminated and neglects to address the extent to which the digital image data was produced by electrical noise emanating from the imaging device in addition to that formed purely from the visible features of the source material.

The sample rate (DPI) and formats provided below thus represent a starting place, only. The images produced should ultimately be measured against the more general goals, criteria, and considerations described above.
- Capture sampling rate: 600 dpi
- Color (8 bits per RGB channel: 24 bit): Grayscale 8-bit
- Image file format:
  Best: uncompressed TIFF
  Second choice: JPEG, high quality setting (e.g. Photoshop JPEG compression level 10)

File naming format:
        Examples: doc1234_0001.tif; doc1234_0002.tif… doc1234_9999.tif

Archival Institutional Holdings
We have used two digitization options in work with institutions. In the overwhelming majority of such cases, institutions have their own digitizing facilities. We have thus submitted requests for our selection and, in most instances, covered the cost of digitization. The quality of the documents we have received has been largely of the same high quality as what we have digitized at Harvard or by professionals in private settings. Only occasionally, the quality of scanning done by institutions is not up to our standard, though still accurate and acceptable for the needs of our archives. When possible, we have reached agreement with institutions that give us the option of bringing our own selected professional photographers to carry out the digitization on-site.

Specifications for Descriptive and Structural Metadata
Metadata needs will vary, depending on whether the materials are visual images, manuscripts, or published works, and on whether the document is a single image or contains multiple images (e.g. multiple page manuscript). Detailed descriptive information will be gathered for all digitized materials.

For all visual image materials (marriage contracts, photographs and portrait paintings, and artistic reproductions), the information gathered will allow for the creation of catalogs records according to VIA metadata standards. This local standard is informed by existing guidelines and standards, including Cataloging Cultural Objects (CCO) and VRA Core.

For all manuscript materials (unpublished poetry, essays, treatises, travelogues, private letters, and other documents), information gathered will allow for the creation of a finding aid describing the materials. For published materials, information will be used to create MARC records in the HOLLIS catalog. For multi-page objects, descriptive and structural information will also be gathered to allow for the creation of the METS file necessary to deliver the object through the PDS.

For both visual image and manuscript material descriptions, transliteration and translations will also be provided. Acquisition information excel sheets for the capture of all data have been created at the start of the project and used in the field for gathering the information necessary for complete catalog records in HUL systems.

Packaging and Delivery of Images and Metadata – Digital image and corresponding metadata will be written to DVD and delivered to the Imaging Services Department of HCL.

Creation of Catalog Records and Deposit and Storage of Digital Objects – The descriptive metadata gathered in the project and used on the WWQI website will be used to create records for the digital objects in the discovery systems of the Harvard Library. Digital images will be deposited into the DRS (as individual images or page turned objects). Following quality control review, links to the digital objects will be added to the catalog records.

Intellectual Property Rights – It is anticipated that, because the vast majority of the primary source documents to be digitized were created in Iran between 1750 and early-twentieth century, most materials relevant to this archive will simply be too old to be covered by copyright laws. Moreover, Iran is not a party to the Berne convention or any other international copyright treaty; neither the United States nor other countries enforce the copyright laws of a country that is not a party to international treaties.

Nonetheless, the WWQI project chose to obtain written permission from all individuals or entities holding materials that are included in the digital archive. This permission enables Harvard to create digital images of these documents, photographs and objects, and then make those images widely available for research and educational purposes.   Standard permission forms have been created via consultation with and approved by Harvard's Office of General Counsel, both in English and in Persian; a copy of these documents is included in Appendix E.

D. Sustainability of Project Outcomes and Digital Context

As noted above, all images of primary source materials gathered for the WWQI project will become part of the Harvard College Library's (HCL) digital collections, regardless of the ownership of the original text, photograph, or material object.   HCL has thus agreed to maintain every image in the WWQI project's digital archive in perpetuity, a commitment that extends to each and every item in the HCL holdings, some of which date back to over two centuries.

Again, the WWQI archival collection is viewed as a natural extension of HCL's efforts related to Iran and to the Middle East in general. Among the most notable of these is the NEH- supported Iranian Oral History project, which provides scholars studying the contemporary political history of Iran with 900 hours of tape and 18,000 pages of transcript of first person accounts from individuals closely associated with Iranian political events from the 1920s to the 1970s. The Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture, which contains more than 150,000 slides documenting Islamic art and architecture, is also an important part of HCL's holdings.

E. Dissemination

The richly-annotated public WWQI project website, briefly described earlier in the proposal narrative, is the project's primary means of ensuring the widest possible access to the materials gathered for the WWQI archive. All materials in the WWQI archive will also be publicly available via Harvard University's digital collections program and multiple catalogs system, and the WWQI website can now be accessed through Harvard's library catalog and as a library e-Resource (see: http://eresearch.lib.harvard.edu). However, the WWQI project website is designed specifically with a view to rendering these unique and complex collections more accessible and valuable to scholars in the United States and abroad.

Most notably, the WWQI project website provides an interface that is rich in descriptive commentary and context and fully Persian-English bilingual. Another distinguishing feature of the website is the fact that it contains a wider range of 'search options' than is typical of a standard university catalog system. Again, the broad array of search options developed and planned for the WWQI project website is premised on the recognition that relevant historical figures, subject headings, and major titles are likely to be less well-known in the case of the WWQI archive than for archives whose holdings or subject matter have been part of the public domain for a longer period; an added range of more contextual search options will ultimately render the WWQI archive's holdings more transparent and easier to navigate, especially for scholars whose primary focus is not Iranian studies. Finally, as noted above, a stated priority of the WWQI project is the translation of key archival documents from Persian to English -- a goal which, if achieved, will vastly improve the value that the WWQI project collections hold for non-Persian speaking scholars.

The WWQI project website currently includes the following features:
- Complete Persian and English versions with right-left and left-right design variants; the interface and the content has been translated to provide an entirely parallel experience for each language group;
- 'Smart' navigation browser with multiple filter controls for major categories, like genre, collection, people, subject, place and period, that allows users to drill down into the archive and cumulatively narrow results.
- Detail view of each object with additional descriptive content, popular social network links, and multiple viewing and delivery options, including: 'quick' view for slow connection speeds, a zoom-enabled image viewer for online image manipulation, PDF and JPEG downloads, and a citation e-mail export.
- 'Collections' section featuring a sortable list of groups of objects related to a single source repository or important individuals, and a corresponding detail page with appropriate collection level metadata information (scope and content, acquisition notes, related materials) and links to finding aids.
- 'My Selections' feature that allows users to gather items and batch citation records during a session.
- Streaming audio clips for over 100 objects, created from interviews conducted by the WWQI project with contributors.
- 'Advanced search' feature with ability to limit searching to multiple fields or categories.
- Index pages for major categories (genre, people, subject and place).
- Alphabetical and chronological sorting options on search results pages.
- Password-protected administrative back-end that allows the WWQI project contributors (distributed worldwide) to make edits to the content through a web browser.

The addition of the Interactive Map and Interactive Genealogy features represent a significant leap forward in terms of enhancing scholars' ability to nimbly navigate the WWQI project's collections. In the coming years, the WWQI project also intends to draw upon the expertise of art historians and other scholars on the WWQI Advisory Board to launch a series of 'curated feature exhibitions' on the website. These 'e-exhibitions' will be similar to curated exhibitions in museums and non-virtual archival collections. Not only will they serve to highlight selected collections within the WWQI archive; as envisioned, they will also contribute to a richer understanding of various aspects of the Qajar era overall.

Plans to Publicize the WWQI Archive and Website
The WWQI website is designed to render the WWQI archival collections as broadly accessible as possible. To further achieve the aim of broad accessibility, the WWQI project also makes concerted ongoing efforts to promote the WWQI archive and website to the various audiences who can benefit the most from them.

To that end, over the past two years, we have publicized the WWQI project at a variety of professional meetings, including those of the International Society for Iranian Studies (May 2010), the International

Middle Eastern Studies Association (November 2009), and the International Qajar Studies Association (August 2010), as well as via these groups' respective newsletters and in other publications, including the Bulletin of the British Society for Middle East Studies (BRISMES) and the newsletter of the British Institute for Persian Studies (BIPS). Several humanities list-serves, including HNET, were also informed and alerted scholars to this new resource when we first received the NEH grant. All of these groups receive regular updates about the WWQI project's progress, including the launch of successive versions of the WWQI website.

Most recently, the WWQI project has been presented at events at various universities,, including the Digital Humanities Workshop at Harvard University (February 2011), the Annual Harvard Digital Summit (May 2011), and workshops hosted by the History Department at the University of Virginia, and the Center for Near Eastern Studies at UCLA (May 2011).

Finally, beyond the formal scholarly community, the WWQI project was reported in an article in the Harvard Gazette and on Persian programs of Dutch TV and the BBC. It is also promoted via Facebook, Twitter, and links on Harvard University's main and library websites, as well as on the websites of all collaborators in the U.S. and abroad.

F. Plan of Work

The NEH grant requested builds upon two-plus years of planning, work, and accomplishments. Tasks accomplished prior to the start of the new grant period in April 2012 will be critical to realizing the goals outlined in this proposal within the established timeframe. These are noted below as 'pre-grant activities.' The major benchmarks targeted for completion in each year of the project are also identified.

Pre-Grant Activities
Already completed:
• Initial review and assessment of all collections identified in this proposal.
• Digitization agreements reached with all museums, archival institutions, and private individuals/families identified in this proposal.
• Agreements reached with website consultants identified in this proposal.
• Invitations extended to and accepted by WWQI Advisory Board members identified in this proposal.

To be completed (July 2011- April 2012):
• Completion of cataloging and processing of remaining digital images obtained during the first two years of the project.
• Ongoing maintenance of and modest upgrades to the WWQI website, as needed.
• One trip to Iran is planned for December 2011 as part of the Principal Investigator's ongoing research pursuits. This will provide an opportunity for the WWQI project to maintain relationships with museums, archives, and key families, as well as with the Iran-based professionals and graduate students who contribute to digitization work, in preparation for the award of future funding.

Year One (April 2012 – March 2013)
• A major focus of Year One will be the development of the new Interactive Genealogy and Map for the WWQI website. The aim is to launch initial versions by the end of the first project year.
• Digitization (primarily on location in various cities) and cataloging (at Harvard University) of the collections identified above will also be ongoing throughout the year. The goal is to complete as much of the digitization outlined for this grant as possible in Year One so as to allow a significant period of time for cataloging and processing of the images obtained.

Other activities to take place in Year One are as follows:

Presentations
- International Society Iranian Studies Conference in Istanbul, Turkey (August 2012). This will be an important presentation, as Iranians do not need visas for travel to Turkey and thus there will be a strong presence of Iranian scholars at this gathering.

Travel
- The Principal Investigator will make one trip to Iran to review digitization work, maintain relationships with museums, archives, and key families, and pursue further development of the archive per the priorities for expansion and diversification noted above and the guidance of the Advisory Board, as appropriate.
- The Principal Investigator and/or an Advisory Board member will also make two trips to Europe and one trip in the US for the same purposes.

Additional Tasks
- Fundraising for the WWQI project will be ongoing.
- Promotion of the WWQI project via academic publications and more mainstream venues such as television and online media will be ongoing.
- Participation in Harvard's annual digital humanities workshops and in similar events at other academic institutions, per invitation.
- At least one 'e-Exhibition' will be hosted.
- Ongoing coordination of the Advisory Board (to be led by the PI) via annual updates, e-mail exchanges, and one-to-one and small group communications, as needed.

Year Two (April 2013 – March 2014)
- The digitization of all the collections identified in this proposal will be completed by the mid-point of Year Two, at latest.
- Similarly, final versions of the new Interactive Genealogy and Map features for the WWQI website will be complete by the end of Year Two, at latest.
- A preponderance of the time and effort in Year Two will be devoted to completing the full transfer of holdings to the Harvard Libraries (HL) via the preparation of Finding Aids and other functionalities.
- Transcription and English translation of additional texts will begin in Year Two. (Again, these activities are not funded under the *NEH Humanities Collections and Reference Resources* program, but we consider them critical to achieving the goals of our project).
- An estimated two 'e-Exhibitions' will be hosted.
- The WWQI project will be presented at (at least) one major conference, and at smaller workshops focused on the digital humanities, per invitation.
- Please note that travel and digitization activities will be kept to a minimum during Year Two, as the second grant year will focus on ensuring that all collections identified in this proposal have become fully accessible via the WWQI website and the HCL systems by the close of the grant period.

CONSIDERATIONS RELATED TO WORK IN IRAN
We recognize that Iran is currently subject to economic sanctions and country-specific controls related to the export of goods or commodities (including the export or release of technical data or technology) imposed by the U.S. Departments of Commerce, Treasury, and State. We have thus obtained the license from the Department of Treasury's Office of Foreign Access Control (OFAC) that enables us to purchase the services and/or equipment needed to digitize texts and photographs and record oral history interviews within Iran itself. A copy of this license is included in Appendix E.

The Principal Investigator and the majority of Advisory Board members have spent substantial periods of time in Iran and are intimately familiar with the culture, customs, and laws of that country. Although recent years have seen well-publicized detentions of U.S. scholars working in Iran, the risk to this particular group of researchers is minimal. (The scholars who encountered difficulty with the Iranian authorities studied topics related to politics and economics; by contrast, the Iranian government rarely, if ever, views work on 19th century Iranian history as a threat). In the case of medical emergency or a deteriorating security situation, Harvard faculty and staff working on the project have access to Harvard's International SOS Travel Assistance Program, which provides emergency medical and security evacuation services worldwide.

G. Staffing

Staffing for the WWQI project primarily exists on three levels: 1) Harvard-based leadership and management; 2) the WWQI Advisory Board, which contributes subject matter expertise as well as (in some instances) hands-on assistance in moving forward discrete areas of the project's work; and 3) the website design and development consultants, which provide the highly specialized knowledge and skills needed to realize plans for this unique and important aspect of the WWQI endeavor. Each is described in more detail below.

Project Leadership
Afsaneh Najmabadi – Afsaneh Najmabadi, Professor of History and of Women, Gender, and Sexuality at Harvard University, will continue to serve as the Principal Investigator for this project. As such, Professor Najmabadi will provide overall leadership for all aspects of the project. In addition to setting the work's intellectual direction and supervising the activities of the project, she will take the lead role in developing and maintaining relationships with external collaborators (particularly museums and archives in Iran) and will carry out a portion of the work with individual families, primarily those living in Iran. Professor Najmabadi's research and teaching interests center on socio-cultural transformations of gender and sexuality in the modern Middle East and South Asia. Among her recent publications is the *Encyclopedia of Women and Islamic Cultures*, which was completed with support from the Ford Foundation and of which she is Associate Editor. Professor Najmabadi holds U.S., UK, and Iranian citizenship and regularly spends academic breaks in Iran.

Project Manager (TBN) – The Project Manager's responsibilities include working closely with the PI to set and manage the work flow of the project; supervising the processing of archive materials from acquisition to delivery; serving as the project's liaison to HCL, Mahimoto, Vermonster, and other consultants and vendors; training additional support staff; maintaining all project documentation; and assisting with communications and problem solving. The original Project Manager, Ramyar Rossoukh served the project for two years; he will continue his involvement as an Advisory Board member focused on media and website development. It is anticipated that a graduate student who has worked closely with the project for the past year will take on the Project Manager role if NEH funding is renewed.

Margaret Hale – Margaret Hale is the Librarian for Collections Digitization at Harvard College Library. In this role, Ms. Hale assists in the shaping of policies, priorities, and strategies for the Harvard College Library's Collections Digitization Program; participates in the development and use of library services; and serves as the primary liaison between collections managers and the many organizational entities collaborating on the creation of digital resources. She also works closely with collections managers to ensure that project plans are well conceived and executed accurately, on time, and on budget. Ms. Hale will serve as this project's primary contact at Harvard College Library. She brings nearly twelve years of experience in digital collections at Harvard, and fifteen years of library experience overall, to these efforts.

Matthew C. Smith -- Matthew C. Smith is the Persian Cataloger at Harvard University's Widener Library, where he oversees a collection of more than forty thousand Persian-language titles gathered from around the globe. In addition to his cataloging duties, Dr. Smith is also responsible for acquisitions, working closely with vendors inside and outside Iran, and for providing research support to students and faculty through special purchase orders and reference help. He received his doctorate in Persian Language and Literature from Harvard University in 2006.

Advisory Board

As noted above, the WWQI Advisory Board will be comprised of distinguished scholars of Qajar studies; education, library, and media professionals will also be key members of the group. The primary purpose of the Advisory Board will be providing expertise as to the assessment of potential archival materials and guidance as to the improvement and growth of the WWQI project overall. Individual members may also step in to curate an 'e-exhibition' on the website related to their area of specialization, write one or more of the descriptive annotations that are one of the website's unique features, or contribute to similar efforts aimed at enhancing the scholarly value and accessibility of the project.

On a more functional level, the Advisory Board will serve as an extended network of 'extra sets of hands' that assist in moving forward the extensive digitization work that must be completed on multiple continents if the WWQI archive is to grow and expand. In the first two years of the project, coordinating the many moving pieces that often must be brought into alignment in order to digitize the materials selected was primarily the responsibility of the Principle Investigator and a small team comprised of three scholars working on a part-time basis. Not surprisingly, especially considering the broadly disparate locations of so many of these materials, this model ultimately proved to be one of the major limitations in terms of how many images could be acquired for the archive and how quickly those acquisitions could proceed.

The WWQI project has covered a lot of ground in terms of establishing strong working relationships with digitization vendors, photographers, graduate students, and other professionals in major centers of project activity such as Tehran, Geneva, Paris, and the UK. Digitization work in the next stage of the project will leverage these relationships and will also make use of the digitization processes refined over the course of the first NEH grant. As new potential archival materials are identified in locations more far afield, however, the WWQI project will be able to call upon Advisory Board members (and each member's own extended network) to assist in completing the often significant amount of legwork required to identify and engage the appropriate digitization resources in those new locations. In some cases, Advisory Board members will also lead/manage the digitization activities for particular collections. In this way, the project's 'staff' will come to cover a geographic scope similar to that of the primary source materials it seeks to digitize and render available worldwide.

WWQI Advisory Board members who will begin a two-year term as of August 1, 2011 are as follows:
- Nuzhat Ahmadi – History, al-Zahra University, Tehran
- Asieh Aleahmad – Historian, Independent Scholar, (b) (6)
- Abbas Amanat – History, Yale University
- Kaveh Bayat – Historian, Independent Scholar, (b) (6)
- Houri Berberian -- History, California State University, Long Beach
- Dominic Parviz Brookshaw* -- Literature, Stanford University
- Houchang Chehabi -- International Relations and History, Boston University
- Mansoureh Ettehadieh -- History, Tehran University
- Manoutchehr M. Eskandari-Qajar* -- President, International Qajar Studies Association
- Simin Fasihi – History, al-Zahra University, Tehran
- Gene Garthwaite – History, Dartmouth College
- Talinn Grigor -- Art History, Brandeis University

- Margaret Hale* – Librarian, Harvard University
- Firoozeh Kashani-Sabet – History, University of Pennsylvania
- Arash Khazeni -- History, Pomona College
- Rudi Matthee – History, University of Delaware
- Ali Miransari – Historian, Research Center for the Great Encyclopedia of Islam, Tehran
- Fatemeh Moezzi – Historian, Independent Scholar, (b) (6)
- Nahid Mozaffari* – History, New York University
- Mehdi Nour Mohammadi – Historian, Independent Scholar, (b) (6)
- Dariush Rahmanian -- History, Tehran University
- Ramyar Rossoukh* -- Independent Scholar, (b) (6)
- Jasamin Rostam-Kolayi -- History, California State University, Fullerton
- Gholamreza Salami – Archivist, Independent Scholar, (b) (6)
- Sunil Sharma -- Comparative Literature, Boston University
- Matthew Smith* -- Librarian, Harvard University
- Naghmeh Sohrabi* -- History, Brandeis University
- Jeffrey Spurr* -- Qajar photography, Independent Scholar, (b) (6)
- Farzin Vejdani -- History, University of Arizona
- Dalia Yasharpour -- Literature, Harvard University
- Roxane Zand -- Historian, Independent Scholar, (b) (6)

*Denotes a member of the WWQI team under the 2009-2011 NEH grant

Website Consultants

The WWQI website will be a collaborative project between Mahimoto, a design firm with an outstanding record of Persian-English website design, and Vermonster, a leading web development and consulting company based in Boston, Massachusetts.

Mahimoto – The artistic design and maintenance of the WWQI website will be the primary responsibility of the web design firm, Mahimoto. Mahimoto was founded by Pendar Yousefi, who for the past seven years has been designing user experiences on multiple platforms, working on user research, design documentation, wireframe prototyping, high-fidelity mockups, user interface design, user testing, and front-end programming. Pendar has two technology and design patents to his name for his work on the Kibboko web application. He has also designed - and currently maintains - websites for several large academic institutions including the International Society for Iranian Studies and the Foundation for Iranian Studies. Mahimoto has worked with the WWQI project for the past two years.

Vermonster – The Boston-based web development consulting firm, Vermonster, will provide architecture, software, development, maintenance, and support for the WWQI website. This includes writing code, developing new features, integration with the Harvard libraries, and providing overall technical advice and direction. Vermonster was founded by Brian Kaney and Jay Powers and has extensive experience in developing multi-lingual web applications with a focus on usability and user experience. In addition, Vermonster specializes in cloud computing and non-relational database models, new trends for application infrastructure and development in digital archive management and design.