



Com- muniqué

November 28, 2023

The EPHE - PSL Endowment Fund receives a major donation for the creation of the “Sarikhani Centre for Elamite Studies”

Michel Hochmann, newly elected President of the École Pratique des Hautes Études, is delighted with the agreement signed on October 5, 2023 between the Endowment Fund of the École Pratique des Hautes Études, represented by Jean-Michel Verdier, its then President, and the Sarikhani Foundation, represented by Ina Sarikhani, for the creation of the «Sarikhani Center for Elamite Studies».



EPHE - PSL is the logical academic and institutional environment for the Sarikhani Centre for Elamite Studies that will support the study of Elam, Elamite language and Elamite culture.

For more than 150 years, the École Pratique des Hautes Études has addressed major scientific questions, remaining true to the same principle that prevailed when it was founded: training for research through the practice of research. As part of its sponsorship strategy, the École has set up an Endowment Fund to provide long-term support for its activities in the public sphere.

The Sarikhani Foundation

Founded in 2020, The Sarikhani Foundation aims to promote research, exhibitions, conferences, seminars, publications and events on the arts of Iran, from antiquity to the present day. This includes, but is not limited to, work with The Sarikhani Collection, which includes the arts of Iran from prehistory to the 18th century.

EPHE and Elamite studies

EPHE - PSL, with its long-standing investment in under-represented fields of research and its equally long-standing interest in Elamite studies (including in the person of père Vincent Scheil, one of the discipline's founders), is the **logical academic and institutional environment for the Centre**. The Sarikhani Foundation, which has a keen interest in ancient Iranian cultures, as evidenced by the Sarikhani Collection and the various research programs it currently supports, sees the Centre as a means of **creating and disseminating new knowledge**, supporting innovative research programs, fostering dialogue between academic and non-academic circles, and diversifying perceptions of Iran's ancient past.

The “Sarikhani Centre for Elamite Studies”

The aim of the Centre is to support, both in France and abroad, **the study of Elam, Elamite language and Elamite culture** in all their geographical and temporal manifestations, from the fourth millennium BC to the Parthian period, throughout southwestern Iran, from Ilam to Fars.

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EPHE – PSL

Founded in 1868, the École Pratique des Hautes Études occupies a unique place in the landscape of French higher education and research. It stands out for its very high level of scholarship and its pedagogy of research training through research practice.

3 sections

Life sciences
and earth

Historical and philological sciences

Religious sciences

4 Institutes

oriented towards civil society

230

teacher-researchers

2 000

students and listeners
including 630 doctoral students

150 administrative

and research agents

46 laboratories

It focuses on **supporting historical, philological, archaeological and art-historical research**, but also aims to raise awareness of Elamite culture beyond academic discourse, notably by partnering with contemporary artists.

In addition, the Centre will seek to **establish wide-ranging cooperation** with individual researchers in the field of Elamite studies.

Parallel to supporting these research projects, it may organize and/or support the organization of thematic workshops with selected groups of specialists.

More generally, the Centre aims to raise awareness in academic circles, as well as among the general public, of a neglected period and culture within the millennia-old culture of Iran.

The Centre, based at EPHE-PSL, will begin operations in early 2024 for an initial period of five years, with **Wouter F.M. Henkelman** as Director.

For 20 years, The Sarikhani Collection has been a centre of Iranian arts, as a forefront body for education, research, exhibitions, and publications, for the exploration and promotion of the longue durée of the culture of Iran. The groundbreaking exhibitions Epic Iran at The Victoria and Albert Museum in 2021 and Iran: 5000 Years at Art at The Pergamon Museum in 2021-22, have highlighted a misunderstood and neglected tradition of arts. The Sarikhani Foundation, its parent body, is therefore delighted to announce the establishment of The Sarikhani Centre of Elamite Studies at the École Pratique des Hautes Études.

Passionate about culture and convinced of the importance and benefit of collaborative projects, and aiming for the highest academic projects, The Sarikhani Foundation has always sought to find great partners for the creation of new knowledge. In that vein, the Foundation is delighted to collaborate with the École Pratique des Hautes Études in Paris for a groundbreaking project for Elamite studies. The world of Elam, its language, history, culture and geographical existence has been underresearched. The EPHE has a long relationship with the field, including one of its founders, Vincent Scheil, and it continues to be enthusiastic for this discipline. Together we can shed light on Elam and create a new basis for academics, art historians, philologists and historians alike.

The Sarikhani Foundation is extremely grateful to the École Pratique des Hautes Études and its former president Jean-Michel Verdier, and to Wouter Henkelmann, the now Director of the Sarikhani Centre of Elamite Studies. We look forward to many years of collaboration together. May Elam flourish under our stewardship. Thank you.

Ina Sarikhani, director of the Sarikhani Collection, trustee of the Sarikhani Foundation.

THE
SARIKHANI
FOUNDATION