Self as Nation
Contemporary Hebrew Autobiography
By Tamar Hess

Theorists of autobiography tend to emphasize the centrality of the individual against the community. By contrast, in her reading of Hebrew autobiography, Tamar Hess identifies the textual presence and function of the collective and its interplay with the Israeli self. What characterizes the ten writers she examines is the idea of a national self, an individual whose life story takes on meaning from his or her relation to the collective history and ethos of the nation. Her second and related argument is that this self-individually and collectively-must be understood in the context of waves of immigration to Israel's shores. Hess convincingly shows that autobiography is a transnational genre deeply influenced by the nation's literary as well as cultural history.

This book makes an additional contribution to the history of autobiography and contemporary autobiography theory by analyzing the strategies of fragmentation that many of the writers Hess studies have adopted as ways of dealing with the conflicts between the self and the nation, between who they feel they are and what they are expected to be. Hess contrasts the predominantly masculine tradition of Hebrew autobiography with writings by women, and offers a fresh understanding of the Israeli soul and the Hebrew literary canon.

A systematic review of contemporary Hebrew autobiography, this study raises fundamental questions essential to the debates about identity at the heart of Israeli culture today. It will interest scholars and students of contemporary Israeli culture, as well as those intrigued by the literary genre of autobiography.

About the Author:
Tamar Hess is Sidney and Betty Sarah Berg Senior Lecturer in Hebrew Language in the Department of Hebrew Literature at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.
The 1820 Russian Survey of the Khanate of Shirvan
A Primary Source on the Demography and Economy of an Iranian Province prior to its Annexation by Russia
By George A. Bournoutian

Key Features:
- Features a rare Russian document which illuminates an obscure 19th century khanate

Shirvan, today mainly part of Azerbaijan, existed as an autonomous khanate, under Iranian influence, until 1820, when under pressure from Russia, the khan fled to Iran, and Shirvan was immediately annexed along with two neighbouring khanates. Thus the last independent region in the South Caucasus was now incorporated in Russian territory. In order to enumerate the population and especially to ascertain revenues, a survey was ordered to be conducted. The survey, titled The Description of the Shirvan Province, compiled in 1820, was eventually published in 1867. The number of copies printed was very few, and only a handful of copies now exist. The present work is a translation of the original survey. It details the Christian and Muslim population and the revenues collected from each district and village. Bournoutian's extensive annotations and explanatory notes provide an accurate picture of the demography and economic conditions of a former Iranian province prior to its incorporation into the Russian Empire.

About the Author:
George Bournoutian is Senior Professor of History, Iona College, New York. He has studied the history of Armenia, Iran and the Caucuses for several decades, and has written many books and articles on the subject.
ILA Arabic Certificate Training Tests
With Audio CD - A2 Level
*By Hochine Benchina and Nadia Rocchetti*

ILA project offers for the first time tests and preparation materials for the Certificate Exam in Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), the language used in international context and the one in which Arabic speakers identify themselves from a cultural perspective. ILA project interpreted criteria and standards established and recognized by the EU through CEFR, a suitable tool to certify languages on its territory. This book is part of the project first step and focuses on oral skills, which imply the ability to organize linguistic means at a higher level than the one necessary for writing skills.

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Christians and Others in the Umayyad State
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Key Features:
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The papers in this first volume of the new Oriental Institute series LAMINE are derived from a conference entitled "Christians, Jews, and Zoroastrians in the Umayyad State," held at the University of Chicago on June 17–18, 2011. The goal of the conference was to address a simple question: Just what role did non-Muslims play in the operations of the Umayyad state? It has always been clear that the Umayyad family (r. 41–132/661–750) governed populations in the rapidly expanding empire that were overwhelmingly composed of non-Muslims - mainly Christians, Jews, and Zoroastrians - and the status of those non-Muslim communities under Umayyad rule, and more broadly in early Islam, has been discussed continuously for more than a century. The role of non-Muslims within the Umayyad state has been, however, largely neglected. The eight papers in this volume thus focus on non-Muslims who participated actively in the workings of the Umayyad government.

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