



INSTITUTE FOR IRANIAN PHILOLOGY II. HISTORY

ii. HISTORY

After its foundation in 1961, the Institut for Iransk Filologi was an independent institution until 1981. Professor Kaj Barr (q.v.) was the first head of the institute (1961-67) and was succeeded by Professor Jes P. Asmussen (1968-81). From 1981 to 1983 the Institute of Iranian Philology was administratively united with Det Centralasiatiske Institut (the Institute of Central Asian Studies), Institut for Indisk Filologi (the Institute of Indian Philology), and Institut for Semitisk Filologi (the Institute of Semitic Philology). In 1983 these four institutes were gathered in one new institute, Institut for Orientalisk Filologi (the Institute of Oriental Philology), which existed until the academic year 1991-92. Professor Jes P. Asmussen was the head of the institute during 1989-90. In 1992 the Institute of Oriental Philology merged with Carsten Niebuhr Instituttet, which before 1992 consisted of the departments of Assyriology, Egyptology, and Near Eastern Archaeology; the new name of the institute became Carsten Niebuhr Instituttet for nærorientalske studier (The Carsten Niebuhr Institute of Near Eastern Studies). In 2003 and 2004 a new, much bigger institute will be created in which the Carsten Niebuhr Institute will merge with Asian Studies, the Institute of Eskimology, the East European Institute, and the Institute of the History of Religion.

As can be seen from the above, Iranian Philology ceased to be an independent



institute in 1983 and thereafter was a department. From 1968 to 1998 there were two positions within the field of Iranian studies, a professor (Jes P. Asmussen 1967-98) and an associate professor (Dr. Fereyduh Vahman 1968-2001). When Professor Asmussen retired, the positions were reduced to one (the associate professorship), which was filled by Dr. Claus V. Pedersen in 2004, after he had served as assistant professor from 2000 to 2003.

In the last 40 years Iranian Studies at the University of Copenhagen has witnessed a change in focus from pre-Islamic philological studies to studies of modern Persian language and literature; and because of the mergers between institutes there has been an increase in interdisciplinary research and teaching, especially among the departments of Arabic, Hebrew, Iranian, and Turkish studies (this last reopened in 1997) in the fields of modern language and literature. For examples of these developments, see the list of selected monographs in the bibliography; these were published under the aegis of the institutes of which Iranian studies has been a part.

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