

31 May 2000

Dear Margaret,

I am writing on behalf of the Center for Islamic Research, which publishes Encyclopaedia of Islam. Your journal ISIS is an entry in this Encyclopaedia but we do not have enough information about ISIS's past and present developments to finish the entry (just 400 words). Therefore I am approaching to you to request the following.

1. You may write the entry or suggest a name to us to whom we may commission the writing of the entry.
2. If you are not able to do so, you may send us as much information as possible about ISIS, or inform us about other useful sources.

We believe that inclusion of ISIS as an entry in the Encyclopaedia will promote your journal.

I look forward to hearing from you soon as urgently need to know if we can gather enough information for your journal.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Talip Küçükcan

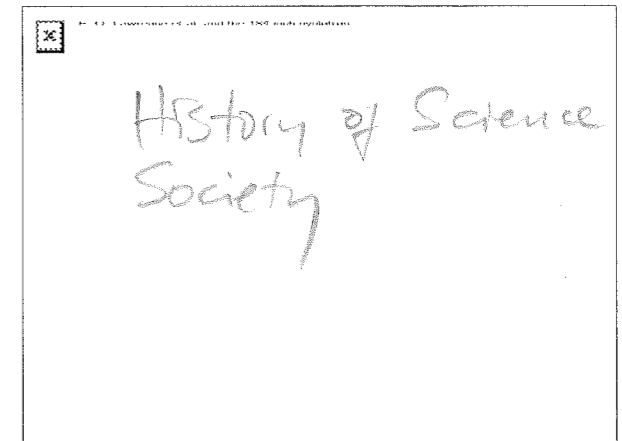
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e mail olarak 31. Mayıs 2000  
tarihinde isis @ cornell . edu 'ya  
gönderildi.

T.K.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE SOCIETY

The History of Science Society is the world's largest society dedicated to understanding science, technology, medicine, and their interactions with society in their historical context. Founded over sixty-five years ago, it is the oldest such society. Through its publications and other activities, the Society provides scholars, decision makers and the public with historical perspectives on science policy and on the potentials, achievements, and the limitations of basic and applied science.



Anyone may join the History of Science Society. It has members in university, college, and high-school, departments of history and science, in museums of science and technology, in government agencies, in archives, libraries, and foundations, in the medical, scientific, and engineering professions, and among interested amateurs. In recent years the Society has grown at the healthy rate of 10 percent a year, and today it is both a learned society and a professional association serving over 4,000 individual members and institutions around the world.

Publications enable the Society to carry out its primary role of advancing research and teaching in the history of science. The Society was incorporated in 1924 to secure the future of *Isis*, the international review that George Sarton (1884-1956) founded in Belgium in 1912. The four quarterly issues of *Isis* each year contain editorials, scholarly articles, essay reviews, book reviews, research notes, documents, discussions, and news of the profession. The fifth number of each volume, the *Isis Current Bibliography*, lists over 3,500 publications in all aspects of the history of science. The *Guide to the History of Science* is issued periodically to all members of HSS. Since 1971, the Society has also circulated a quarterly Newsletter, which provides not only news of the Society, but also information on professional meetings, announcements of fellowships, prizes, and awards, a list of books received by *Isis*, and notices of employment opportunities. In 1985, the Society revived its research journal *Osiris*. Founded by George Sarton in 1936 as a companion to *Isis*, *Osiris* is now devoted to the thematic volumes on topics of wide interest to the history of science community. The Society also publishes or sponsors other research and teaching tools in the field such as the *Isis Cumulative Bibliography*, the *Dictionary of Scientific Bibliography*, and *Teaching in the History of Science*.

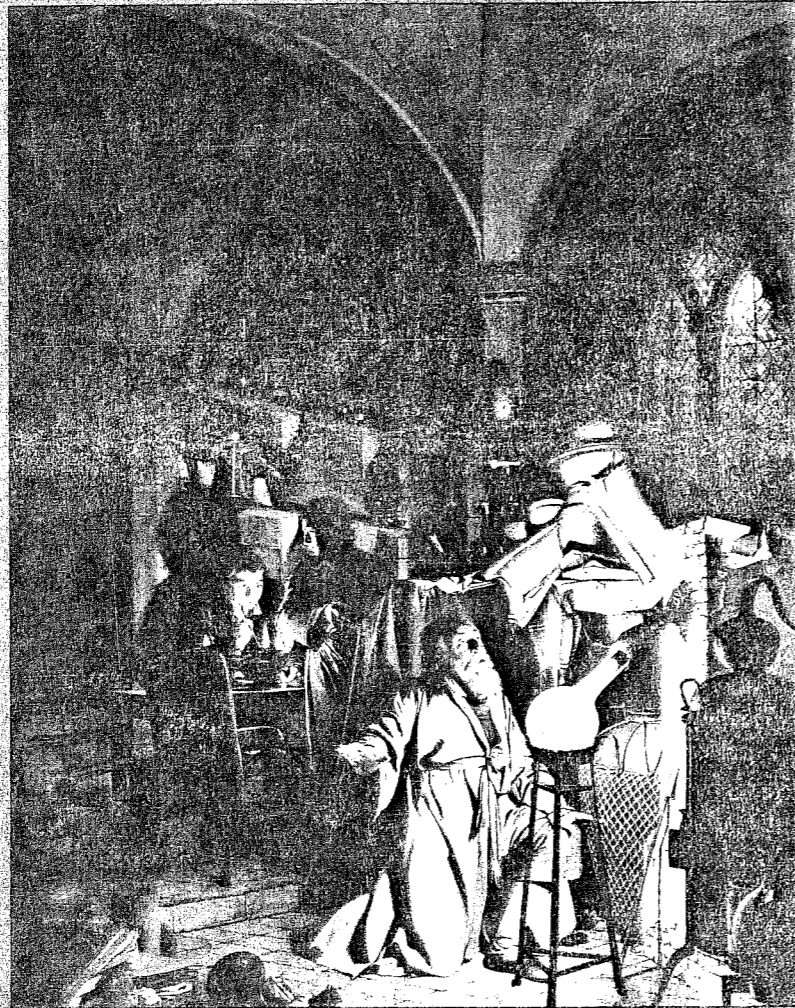
The regular, formal set of communications is complemented by the Society's meetings. In recent years the annual meeting has involved seven concurrent sets of sessions, spread over two and a half days, on topics from ancient times to the present, from the pharmacopoeia of Galen to the politics of space science in the 1980s. The elected Council of the Society holds a regular sessions in conjunction with each annual meeting.

The Society is an international organization with nearly twenty-five percent of its

# ISIS

LIBRARY  
Research Centre for Islamic  
History, Art and Culture  
ISTANBUL

AN INTERNATIONAL REVIEW DEVOTED TO THE  
HISTORY OF SCIENCE AND ITS CULTURAL INFLUENCES



*On phosphorus and the Royal Society: see page 7*

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ISIS

## EDITORIAL

### Farewells and Introductions

LAST YEAR THOUSANDS of readers around the world celebrated the seventy-fifth anniversary of *Isis*, which first made its appearance in March 1913. Although the title continues on occasion to confuse new subscribers and uninitiated librarians, who suspect *Isis* of being an acronym rather than the name of an Egyptian goddess, the day has long passed when editors had to explain the nature of the journal and defend its subject matter, as founding editor George Sarton repeatedly did. Throughout the scholarly world *Isis* has come to be recognized as the flagship journal of the history of science.

This recognition has resulted in large part from the cumulative efforts, at times involving considerable personal sacrifice, of the first six editors of *Isis*:

George Sarton	1913-1952
I. Bernard Cohen	1953-1958
Harry Woolf	1959-1964
Robert P. Multhauf	1964-1978
Arnold Thackray	1979-1985
Charles E. Rosenberg	1986-1988

Under these editors the journal grew steadily in both size and influence, reaching a circulation in excess of 4,200 by December 1988 (see Figure 1). Over a third of this growth has occurred during the last ten years, thanks to the vision and entrepreneurial skill of Arnold Thackray and the steady hand of Charles Rosenberg, whose combined editorial regimes at the University of Pennsylvania spanned the period. The University of Pennsylvania itself provided generous financial assistance to underwrite their efforts, and a large supporting cast, most notably managing editor Frances Coulborn Kohler, contributed to this unprecedented success. Remarkably, Rosenberg, who took over the editorial reins on short notice, not only managed to keep the journal on its progressive course but to complete his magisterial history of American hospitals, *The Care of Strangers* (New York: Basic Books, 1987), one of three finalists for the 1988 Pulitzer Prize in history. It is a tough, but inspirational, act to follow.

If I begin to approach the success of those who have gone before me, it will be owing to the aid and encouragement of my colleagues in the history of science and medicine at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, the new home of *Isis*. In particular, I am pleased to introduce the editorial team I have recruited. The senior member of the staff, John Neu, bibliographer for the history of science at the University of Wisconsin Memorial Library and assistant professor of the history of science, will remain in his capacity as associate editor for the annual *Critical Bibliography*, a position he has held under various titles since 1967.



R. Newell, Ronald L. Numbers, Rima