The Department of Religions and Philosophies
in association with The World Zoroastrian Organisation

Presents the Nineteenth
Dastur Dr Sohrab Hormasji Kutar Memorial Lecture
to be given by

Professor François de Blois
(AHRC Research Fellow, UCL)
on

“The Concept of Iran in Zoroastrian
and Other Traditions”

Thursday, 21 April 2016
6:00 p.m.
Khalili Lecture Theatre
SOAS, Russell Square, London
(Nearest Underground Station: Russell Square)
The lecture is followed by refreshments
All welcome
**Abstract:** People calling themselves Iranians (Avestan *airiia-*), Old Persian *ariya-*, Middle Persian *ēr*), and their country *Ērānšahr*, play a prominent role in religious and secular texts from the Avesta onwards. The content of these terms changes in the course of the centuries, having at times a more Zoroastrian religious content, before emerging as political and geographic concepts. The changing implications of these terms for the political and religious self-definition of Zoroastrians, and of others, is discussed in this paper.

**Biography:** François de Blois is a specialist for Iranian and Semitic languages and for the history of religions in the Near East and Central Asia in pre-modern times. From 2002 to 2003 he served a Professor for Iranian studies at Hamburg University. Currently he is a Senior Research Associate at University College London, where he is working on an ERC-funded major project on Calendars in Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages.