



DĀNESH Newsletter

Volume 17, No.3
Fall 2013

2013 DĀNESH CONFERENCE

Iranian and Other Immigrant Women in the United States: Issues and Resolutions

This conference will provide a unique opportunity to explore a wide range of experience, perspectives, and contributions of Iranian and other women living abroad. Some of the topics to be addressed include women's roles inside and outside of the home, cross- and intra-cultural differences, equality of women, resiliency of women, and women's contributions to the United States.

Scheduled for November 8, the conference features **Homa Sarshar** as its keynote speaker. She is a published author and award-winning journalist. Discussant of the keynote address will be **Dr. Sholeh Shahrokhi**, Butler University. Chaired by **Dr. Nahid Shahnava**, a panel presentation entitled "The Life Trajectory of Immigrant Women" will follow. Next will be screening of "The Iranian American" DVD followed by a commentary by **Dr. Jamshid Choksy**, Indiana University-Bloomington, and a discussion led by him.

This conference is being held in cooperation with the Indiana University School of Social Work. Additional support for the conference is being provided by the IUPUI Office for Women. Members of the conference planning committee include **Sara Allaei**, **Cyrus Behroozi**, **Kathleen Grove**, **Irene Queiro-Tajalli** (Chair), and **Nahid Shahnava**.

2014 CONFERENCE PLANNING

Titled "Iranian and Other Middle Eastern Immigrants: Their Contributions to American Society," The 2014 conference is scheduled for October 17 and 18, at the University of Chicago. The Conference is being planned with cooperation of that university's Center for Middle Eastern Studies. Chaired by **Dr. Frank Lewis**, the conference planning committee includes **Drs. Cyrus Behroozi**, **Yahya Kamalipour**, **Irene Quero-Tajalli**, and **Reza Varjavand**. Further information will be published as the planning progresses.

MESSAGE FROM DĀNESH PRESIDENT

Heartfelt welcome to all our readers for the fall issue of the DĀNESH Institute Newsletter. Our annual membership recruitment is progressing well, and I would like to ask your help to encourage other colleagues to join DĀNESH. Today, more than ever before, we need to highlight the extensive and diverse scholarly work of our community and its contributions to society. The membership form is posted on our website, <http://www.daneshinstitute.org/index.html>.

A Publication of DĀNESH Institute, Inc., c/o Indiana University School of Social Work
902 W. New York Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202-5154
Please send your comments about the Newsletter to Cyrus S. Behroozi at CSBehroozi@aol.com.

In the same vein and as part of our commitment to explore issues and construct knowledge about Iranians living abroad, our 2013 conference will focus on *Iranian and Other Immigrant Women in the United States: Issues and Solutions*, and will be held in Indianapolis on Friday, November 8. While it feels like yesterday when we held our 2012 conference in Chicago on *Second Generation Iranian-Americans and Other Immigrants: Experience, Expectations, and Challenges*, we are ready to take on the challenge of holding another conference. Indeed the conference committee is hard at work. Finally, I would like to invite you to browse our website.

I send warmest regards from the Board of Directors, and we hope to see you at the conference.

Irene Queiro-Tajalli

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES OF MEMBERS

In February 2013, **Sara Kurtz Allaei**, DĀNESH Institute Treasurer, served as chair and presenter for a session titled "In Pursuit of Academic Diplomacy in Iran: Challenges and Opportunities," at the Association of International Education Administrators 2013 Annual Conference, New Orleans, LA. Also presenting was Gregory Sullivan, Senior Advisor for Strategic Communications on Iran in the Near Eastern Affairs office of the U.S. Department of State.

Dr. Mary Elaine Hegland's book, *Days of Revolution: Political Unrest in an Iranian Village*, will be available from Stanford University Press on November 20, 2013. For the August 5-10 International Union of Anthropological and Ethnographic Sciences conference in Manchester, England, she organized a double session panel on "Family, Kin and Community in Iran and among Iranians Abroad." She also presented a paper on "The Women's Section of an Iranian Hoseiniyeh in

Hyderabad, India: A Migrant Community."* For the Association for the Study of Persianate Societies conference in Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herz September 2-6, she presented a paper on "Kinship-based Factional Conflict (*Taifeh-keshi*) in Village Iran: Historical Influences".

DĀNESH Board member **Patricia Higgins** presented a paper on Iranians in diaspora at the August 2013 International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences conference held in Manchester, England. Her paper, entitled "Reconstructing the Family in a New Setting: Iranians in Northern California," was based on research she carried out in Santa Clara County, California, in 1990. Dr. Higgins' paper was part of a panel organized by Dr. Hegland on "Iranian Family, Kinship and Community Evolving and Emerging in a Changing World" and sponsored by the IUAES Commission on the Middle East, headed by Dr. Soheila Shahshahani of Shahid Behesti University in Iran. The panel included other papers on family in Iran.

In May, 2013, **Dr. Bruno Nettl** published a book, *Becoming an Ethnomusicologist: A Miscellany of Influences*, (Lanham MD: Scarecrow Press). It is about people who influenced him importantly in his studies from childhood on. The book includes a section (pp. 114-120), titled "The Nightingale Does Not Repeat Itself," about his principal teacher of Persian music in Iran, Dr. Nour-Ali Boroumand and his visit, in 1967, to the University of Illinois. Much of the book touches on IU at Bloomington. Almost half of it is about Dr. Nettl's parents, both of whom taught there; and much is about his teachers of ethnomusicology, anthropology, and folklore in Bloomington.

Dr. Nettl also has received the Charles Homer Haskins award of the American Council of Learned Societies and will give the annual Haskins Lecture in Philadelphia on May 9, 2014.

*Please see a summary of this paper on Pages 3 and 4.

The lecture is generically titled "A Lifetime of Learning," but he will devote a portion of it to his study of Persian music, and play a short recording of an *avaz*.

During the last academic year, **Dr. Sholeh Shahrokhi** carried out a range of professional duties in her role as the interim Anthropology Program Director, as well as continued service to the Muslim Student Association, Anthropology Student Club at Butler University.

Dr. Shahrokhi also had the unique and memorable opportunity to teach an intensive course last February in Paris, France to a group of 20 Butler students enrolled in her Social World course. Entitled "Political Islam in Paris," this course was specifically designed for teaching on sites in Paris. In addition, she has been invited once again as a respondent to this year's CFV's Religion and Global Civilization seminar. The center will host prolific scholars from several universities.

Dr. Irene Queiro-Tajalli is the guest editor of the 2013 special issue of the Journal *Advances in Social Work* on "The Impact of Socio-Economic, Cultural, Political, and International Factors on Latinos/Latinas in the United States." The issue features 16 articles that address the assets, challenges, and opportunities of Latinas/os in this country and the impact that the relationship between the United States and Latin America has on this population.

Dr. Reza Varjavand has made several book reviews, including Taking Religion's Lessons to Form "Religion of Humanity;" SouthtownStar, Book Review, *Religion for Atheists* by Alian de Botton, June 22, 2013; Time for the U.S. President to Go to Tehran, Book Review, "Going to Tehran" written by Flynt and Hillary Leverett, OpEdNews Op Eds; *Is America Retreating From the World?* Book Review, *The Dispensable Nation* by Vali Nasr, OpEdNews Op Eds; and *Rising Economic Inequality in America: Its Causes and Consequences*, Book Review, "OpEdNews Op Eds 2/22/2013. Dr. Varjavand's other publications have included "Looking Back

to Move Forward: Resuscitating the Ailing U.S. Economy," *Journal of Management Policy and Practice*, Volume 14(2), 2013; and a column about America's role in the world that appeared on OpEdNews on April 29. A variant of this article was translated into Farsi and published on the BBC's Farsi website.

SPECIAL REPORTS

The Naming of Dr. Mossadegh Hall at NEIU. Years of dedicated efforts by **Dr. Hamid Akbari** and Northeast Illinois University (NEIU) came to fruition on October 5, 2013 by the naming of a hall there in honor of Dr. Mohammad Mossadegh, the legendary premier of Iran. Dr. Mossadegh's leadership to nationalize the Iranian oil industry has inspired many nations in the Middle East for democracy and freedom from colonialism.

A member of DĀNESH, Dr. Akbari is a Distinguished Professor of Management at NEIU. With a sense of pride, we congratulate Dr. Akbari for his lasting historical accomplishment.

King Cyrus Symphonic Suite. On August 10 of this year, Loris Tjeknavorian conducted the San Francisco Philharmonic orchestra in the world premiere of his King Cyrus Symphonic Suite: From Birth to the Proclamation of Human Rights. Born in Iran, maestro Tjeknavorian has conducted orchestras throughout the world, including Iran, Armenia, Europe and Canada. Since, 2000, he has devoted his time primarily to composing.

THE WOMEN'S SECTION OF AN IRANIAN HOSSEINIYYEH IN HYDERABAD, INDIA: A MIGRANT COMMUNITY

By Mary Elaine Hegland

In 2011-12, I was able to spend a month visiting an Iranian Hosseiniyyeh in Hyderabad, talking with the women there, in Persian and sometimes

English, and watching and sometimes participating in the mourning rituals. The migrants, mainly from Yazd, are socially conservative, and females are expected largely to stay at home. When the Shiite mourning months of Moharram and Safar come, women are pleased to have the good religious excuse to spend time away from home and household chores and to be at the Husseiniyyeh to mourn for the Shia martyr Hussein, killed on the plains of Karbala in 680 CE (AD). They visit, eat food they have not cooked, engage in spiritual practices, and consume special drinks and treats. Women are happy for the opportunity to get out of the house and socialize with others. In fact, a poem calls Moharram the “women’s holiday” (*aid-e zanan*). Women visiting from elsewhere, such as Iran, Mumbai, and Gulf Arab countries see old friends, make connections and find a ready-made community away from home. Females appreciate the sense of community with the Holy Ones and other believers, through mutual mourning, chanting, chest beating, eating of food endowed with spiritual blessing, and visiting the various rituals spaces—the *alams* (battle standards) and *sofrehs*—a tablecloth set with candles, incense and fruit in honor of a Holy One, such as Fatima.

Some of the younger females view the Husseiniyyeh and the gatherings there as an arena in which to struggle for change in gender and generational hierarchy. They attempt to initiate their own ritual styles, resist the authority of the older women, and gain support from like-minded friends for more independence. Apparently this religious community holds more significance for females than for males; far more women attend the upstairs rituals than do men in their space on the main floor.

RECENT BOOKS OF INTEREST

Ervand Abrahamian. *The Coup: The CIA and the Roots of Modern U.S.-Iranian Relations*. New Press, 2013.

Noushin Ahmadi Khorasani. *Iranian Women's One Million Signature Campaign for Equality: The Inside Story*. Women's Learning Partnership, 2010.

Abbas Amanat and Farzin Vejdani (Editors). *Iran Facing Others: Identity Boundaries in a Historical Perspective*. Palgrave-MacMillan, 2012.

Anita Amirzamani and Persis Karim (Editors). *Tremors: New Fiction by Iranian-American Writers*. The University of Arkansas Press, 2013.

David Crist. *The Twilight War: The Secret History of America's Thirty-Year Conflict with Iran*. Penguin Press, 2012.

Hamid Dabashi. *Iran, the Green Movement, and the USA: The Fox and Paradox*. Zed Books, 2010.

Flynt Leverett and Hillary Mann Leverett. *Going to Tehran: Why the United States Must Come to Terms with the Islamic Republic*. Metropolitan Books, 2013.

John Limbert. *Negotiating with Iran: Wrestling the Ghosts of History*. United States Institute of Peace Press, 2009.

Farzaneh Milani. *Words, Not Swords: Iranian Women Writers and the Freedom of Movement*. Syracuse university Press, 2011.

Heshmat Moayyed. *An Anthology of Persian Short Fiction from 1921 to 1991*. Mage Publishers, 2013.

Amy Motlagh. *Burying the Beloved: Marriage, Realism, and Reform in Modern Iran*. Stanford University Press, 2010.

Trita Parsi. *A Single Roll of Dice: Obama's Diplomacy with Iran*. Yale University Press, 2012.

Shiva Rahbaran and Nilou Mobasser. *Iranian Writers Uncensored: Freedom, Democracy and the Word in Contemporary Iran*. Dalkey Archive Press, 2012.

Simin Redjoli. *A Symphony of Life*. Xlibris, 2013.

Sholeh Wolpe (Editor). *The Forbidden: Poems from Iran and Its Exiles*. Michigan State University Press, 2012.