



# DĀNESH Newsletter

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Fall 2009

## DĀNESH Conference October 23, 2009

This year's conference is entitled First and Second Generation Iranian-Americans: The Significance of Mutual Understanding and Support. The conference will be held on the campus of Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis (IUPUI). Presenters at the conference include Ali Akbar Mahdi, Ohio Wesleyan University; and Reza Varjavand and Mitra Fallahi, Saint Xavier University. To discuss mutual understanding and support, there will be a panel of first and second generation Iranian-Americans, and a discussion session involving the conference participants. The conference will conclude with a summary and conclusions session.

Chaired by Irene Queiro-Tajalli, the Conference Planning Committee includes Sara Allaei, Cyrus Behroozi, Shayda Bradley, Mary Hegland, Patricia Higgins, Yahya Kamalipour, and John Walbridge. Further information about the conference is forthcoming.

### PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION IN IRAN

As our readers are aware, the DĀNESH Institute is a nonpolitical organization and, as such, does not take any particular political position. However, in relation to the events following the June 12 presidential election in Iran, we do share concerns of Iranian-Americans for the safety and well being of their families and friends in that country.

### MESSAGE FROM DĀNESH PRESIDENT

Greetings on behalf of the Board of Directors. This issue of the newsletter brings the excitement of announcing our national conference on October 23rd and with that the hope of seeing many of you as well as attracting non-members who are interested on the subject matter. Its focus on *First and Second Generation Iranian-Americans*:

*The Significance of Mutual Understanding and Support* is one that our membership has wanted to be discussed by DĀNESH for some time. This

contemporary subject is of great relevance for our Iranian community as well as other immigrant groups.

While we did not intend it this way, the conference theme complements our Modules on Aging Project, discussed in previous issues. In reality this project has two interrelated parts. One is its original intent of developing modules/teaching materials to bring understanding among human service providers about the joys and struggles of Iranian older adults. The other component is an emerging framework to guide the understanding of the immigrant experience of Iranian older adults. As it relates to the former, I have conducted interviews with older adults living on the East coast and who arrived in this country after 1979. These interviews will continue in other parts of the country as resources allow.

I want to end my comments on this project with a passage from Exile Memories. Stories of Iranian Diaspora by Zohreh Sullivan, which is short but says so much:

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902 W. New York Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202-5154  
Please send your comments about the Newsletter to Cyrus S. Behroozi at [CSBehroozi@aol.com](mailto:CSBehroozi@aol.com).

*“Having lived away from Iran for the last twenty years, I find my imaginary wanderings to “home” and back taking more and more the shape of letters. ... Letters arrive bearing heavy stamps, images with unfamiliar referents. ...”*

I invite you now to read the professional activities and accomplishments of our members since our last newsletter as well as other topics we are eager to share with all of you.

Irene Queiro-Tajalli

## PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES OF MEMBERS

Cyrus Bina and **Chuck Davis** have authored Contingent Labor and Omnipotent Capital: The Open Secret of Political Economy, in Political Economy Quarterly, Vol. 4, No. 15, 2008. Published in Tehran, the journal is a leading Persian quarterly with an interdisciplinary focus on new political economy. The article was printed in English.

**Patricia J. Higgins**, SUNY Distinguished Service Professor of Anthropology, has been appointed Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs at SUNY Plattsburgh. In that position, she is responsible for enrollment management and admissions and for the divisions of Arts and Science, Education, Health, and Human Services, the School of Business and Economics, and Library and Information Services. Dr. Higgins is also responsible for several other units including international programs and exchanges. She served as Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs for the previous 11 years.

In 2009, **Yahya Kamalipour** co-edited The Right to Communication: Historical Hopes, Global Debates and Future Premises. He also authored The World and Media: From Pigeon Carriers to the Digitally Equipped Pigeons, in Ayeneh-e-Jahan (Persian), May-June 2009. In addition, Dr. Kamalipour made several presentations this year.

These included Mass Media, Perception, and Stereotyping, at the IE University, Madrid, Spain; The Future of Academic Publishing: Digital vs. Print, at The John Paul II Catholic University, Lubin, Poland; Publishing in the Digital Age: Global Media Journal, at Purdue University Calumet; and Internal and External Broadcast Services and Regulations in Iran, at University of Pennsylvania.

**Khadija Khaja** presented with **Irene Queiro-Tajalli** and other colleagues on The Lived Experiences of Muslims in Selected Western Countries Post 9/11, at the CSWE 2008 Annual Program Meeting.

**Ali Akbar Mahdi** has recently reviewed two books. Published in the July 2009 issue of Choice Magazine, these reviews include Islam and Social Work: Debating Values, Transforming Practice, by Sara A. Crabtree, Fatima Husain, and Basia Spalek; and Displaced Allegories: Post-Revolutionary Iranian Cinema, by Negar Mottahedeh. This year, Dr. Mahdi's lectures included Political Implications of the 10th Presidential Election for the Democratic Movement in Iran, at Society for Democracy for Iran. He also gave a number of radio and television interviews in the United States and elsewhere, including an interview on the Iranian election, BBC Radio, London, June 17, 2009.

Just published has been Musical Improvisation: Art, Education, and Society, edited by Gabriel Solis and **Bruno Nettl**. Dr. Bruno's several other publications were recently translated into Persian and published in Iran. These included several articles and a book entitled The Radif of Persian Music: Studies in Structure and Cultural Context. Also, as a native of Czechoslovakia, in June 2009, he was awarded by the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, the Jan Patočka Memorial Medal, for his contributions to musicology and ethnomusicology.

**Irene Queiro-Tajalli** was recognized in the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) website as one of the outstanding Hispanics in the profession. She also received two prestigious

awards in the spring, the *Joseph T. Taylor Award for Excellence in Diversity* given by the Office of the Chancellor at IUPUI, and a *Torchbearer Award* by the Indiana Commission for Women. In addition, Dr. Queiro-Tajalli recently made several presentations. With Dr. Bill Mello, she presented *Social Work and the Labor Movement: A Most Needed Partnership*, at the NASW Indiana Chapter Statewide Conference. Dr. Queiro-Tajalli and **Dr. Khaja** had a round table presentation on *Emerging Teaching Issues in Higher Education: Are we ready for the Millennials?* at the Annual Program Meeting, Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). Both also made a presentation on *Older Iranians in the Diaspora: Constructing a Multicultural Aging Curriculum*, at the Annual Program Meeting of the Association of Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors.

**Frances Trix** has just had an article, *Contesting Immigrant Voice in Istanbul*, accepted for publication. It is based on Fulbright research she conducted in the Balkan Muslim immigrant community in Istanbul, 2007-2008. Her book, *The Sufi Journey of Baba Rexheb*, was published in March 2009. It is an ethnographic biography of a 20th century Albanian Bektashi leader, whom she studied with for many years, and who was fluent in Persian and knew and loved many Persian Sufi texts. Most recently, Dr. Trix had an IREX grant to compare local civil society organizations in the central Balkans, and immigrant associations of Balkan Muslims in Istanbul, with international organizations that descended upon the central Balkans after 2000.

**Reza Varjavand**, with Seymour Patterson, has authored *Oil Price Volatility and Its Effects on Government Expenditures: The Case of Iran*, *International Journal of Business Research*, December 2008. In addition, Dr. Varjavand's latest book, *From Misery Alley to Missouri Valley*, was just published. (Please see a report of the book in this issue.)

**John Walbridge** has completed a research leave in Turkey with fellowships from the Fulbright

Program and the Guggenheim Foundation. During this time, he completed an edition and translation of three Late Antique commentaries on works of Galen that survive in Arabic. Dr. Walbridge also completed a book on the rationalist tradition in Islamic intellectual life entitled *The Caliphate of Reason*, which is to be published soon. He is presently working on a bibliographical study of the works and manuscripts of the Illuminationist philosopher Suhrawardi and the early members of his school.

## BOOK REPORT

*From Misery Alley to Missouri Valley: My Life Stories and More*, by Reza Varjavand, 2009

This book is a collection of informative and witty stories mostly related to the author's early upbringing in Iran. The author utilizes the power of storytelling and humor to address a wide variety of issues ranging from Iranian culture to American culture, relationships, parenting, stereotyping, discrimination, and transitioning from culture to culture. The book narrates heartwarming and touching events on how a poor Iranian boy with illiterate parents defies the odds by becoming a college professor in Chicago. From humble beginnings as a farmer's son to an idealistic college student at Tehran University and to working odd jobs in the US to support his education, he tells his readers what it means to struggle and prevail.

## NEWS FROM THE FIELD

**NIAC Survey.** Following the June 12 election in Iran, NIAC (National Iranian-American Council) surveyed its members about, given reactions to the election, the relation between the United States and Iran. Major conclusions of the survey are (1) diplomacy instead of war should be pursued to resolve U.S.-Iran conflicts; (2) only targeted sanctions that would not affect Iranian people should be explored; and (3) advances for

human rights should be considered in any U.S.-Iran diplomacy. For further information, contact Michelle Moghtader at [mmoghtader@niacouncil.org](mailto:mmoghtader@niacouncil.org).

**Project Zendegi.** This project is a study of Iranian-American and Iranian-Canadian youth between the ages of 18-25. The purpose of the study is to gain a better understanding of the youth and of their experiences. For further information, contact the project at [projectzendegi@gmail.com](mailto:projectzendegi@gmail.com).

**Persian Books and Journals for Afghanistan.** The American University of Afghanistan is in the process of increasing its library collections. If you have professional books and journals that you wish to donate, please send a list of such materials with a note to Mike Hanson at [mhanson@auaf.edu.af](mailto:mhanson@auaf.edu.af).

**Funny in Farsi.** The spring 2009 issue of Persian Heritage reports that Funny in Farsi by Firoozeh Dumas is being considered by ABC for a possible television series.

**The First Iranian Citizen of the United States.** In its March 2009 issue, Khaneh, Chicago's Iranian Community Publication, included a story about the first Iranian to become an American citizen. Accordingly, Hajj Sayyah arrived in the United States in 1867, became a citizen in 1875, and returned to Iran in 1877.

## RECENT BOOKS OF INTEREST

Janet Afari. Sexual Politics in Modern Iran, 2009.

Wali Ahmadi. Modern Persian Literature in Afghanistan, 2009.

Camron M. Amin: Global Iran, 2009.

Kaveh Basmenji. Tehran Blues: Youth Culture in Iran (Paperback), 2007.

Fereshteh Davaran. Continuity in Iranian Identity, 2009.

Ali Gheissari. Contemporary Iran: Economy, Society, and Politics, 2009.

Nathan Gonzales. Engaging Iran: The Rise of a Middle East Powerhouse and American Strategic Choice, 2009.

Homa Katouzian and Hossein Shahidi. Iran in the 21st Century, 2007.

Gholam Khiahany. Iranian Media: The Paradox of Modernity, 2009.

Shahram Khosravi. Young and Defiant in Tehran (Paperback), 2008.

Pardis Mahdavi. Passionate Uprising: Iran's Sexual Revolution, 2008.

Abbas Milani. Eminent Persians: The Men and Women Who Made Modern Iran, 1941-1979, 2009.

Taghi Modarressi, Translated by Nasrin Rahimieh. The Virgin of Solitude, 2009.

Negar Mottahedeh. Representing the Unrepresentable: Historical Images of National Reform from the Qajars to the Islamic Republic, 2009.

Arzoo Osanloo. The Politics of Women's Rights in Iran, 2009.

Nasrin Rahimieh. Missing Persians: Discovering Voices in Iranian Cultural History, 2001.

Lloyd Ridgeon. Iranian Intellectuals, 2009.

Mehdi Semati (Ed.). Media, Culture and Society in Iran: Living with Globalization and the Islamic State, 2009.

Mahbod Seraji. Rooftops of Tehran, 2008.

Roy Takeyh. Guardians of the Revolution: Iran and World in the Age of the Ayatollah, 2009.

Roxanne Vaziri. Warring Souls: Youth, Media, and Martyrdom in Post-Revolution Iran (Paperback), 2006.

Robin Wright. Dreams and Shadows: The Future of the Middle East, 2009.