

University of Toronto
Persian Cultural Foundation,
Toronto Initiative for Iranian Studies
in collaboration with
Department of Historical Studies-UTM,
Faculty of Humanities at McMaster University
Persian Circle
present

An International Symposium on The Life and Poetry of Simin Behbahani

<http://iranianstudies.ca/behbahani>

Saturday, 10 June 2006, 9:00a.m.-9:00 p.m.
Earth Sciences Centre, 5 Bancroft Avenue, Room 1050

Conveners: Mohamad Tavakoli & Reza Moini

OPENING REMARKS

Mohamad Tavakoli, University of Toronto
Akbar Ghahary, Persian Cultural Foundation

10:00-12:00, PANEL I: TEMPOS AND TIMES (IN PERSIAN)

Chair: Nasrin Rahimieh, McMaster University

- **Ahmad Aboomahbub, University of Tehran**
 - Behbahani's Poetic Journeys
- **Saeed Yousef, University of Chicago**
 - A Difficult Step Towards Simplicity: The Limits of Simplicity in Contemporary Ghazal
- **Fereshteh Molavi, Yale University**
 - From Passion to Maternity: From Ghazal to Narrative
- **Mohammad Este'lami, McGill University**
 - The People in Simin Behbahani's Poetry
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12:00-1:30 LUNCH

1:30-3:30, PANEL II: BODIES AND LIVES

Chair: Marta Simidchieva, University of Toronto

- **Rivanne Sandler, University of Toronto**
 - Simin Behbahani's 'Conversation' in the Context of her Times
- **Mahdi Tourage, University of Toronto**
 - Textual Bodies in the Poetry of Simin Bihbahani
- **Shadab Vajdi, University of London**
 - Immortality in Poetry
- **Dominic Brookshaw, McGill University**
 - Innovative neoclassicism: detecting the old and the new in the poetry of Simin Behbahani

3:30-4:00 REFRESHMENTS

4:00-6:00, PANEL III: POETICS AND POLITICS

Chair: Maria Subtelny, University of Toronto

- **M. R. Gahnoonparvar, University of Texas at Austin**
 - The Life and Fiction of Simin Behbahani
- **Kamran Talattof, University of Arizona**
 - Simin Behbahani's Work and Sociopolitical Discourse: A Poet for All Times"
- **Hura Yavari, Columbia University**
 - [TBA]
- **Reza Baraheni, University of Toronto**
 - "The Poetics of Simin Behbahani's New Ghazals"

7:00-9:00 Poetry Reading

Simin Behbahani

Biographies

1. Ahmad Aboomahbub, University of Tehran

Ahmad Aboomahbub was born in Tehran in 1955. After completing his education in Tehran, he was employed by the Ministry of Education in 1977. He received his Ph.D. in Persian Language and Literature and currently he is teaching Persian Language and literature at Tehran University. He has published numerous articles and pamphlets on Translation and Literary Criticism.

2. Reza Baraheni, University of Toronto

"The Poetics of Simin Behbahani's New Ghazals."

The last quarter of the twentieth century witnessed a transformation in Iranian literature which was unprecedented in its earlier periods. For the first time the element of time, almost a revolutionary time, was thrust to the foreground, turning itself into a determining factor in the destiny of Persian literature. Poetry had always been considered to be the symbolic archetype of the Iranian psyche. The social transformation pushed poetry to the background, giving narrative forms an unprecedented dominance and variety. The re-making of history led to the prominence of fiction over poetry. In order to survive, poetry had to go through a tortuous transformation, a linguistic and formal transgression in the frameworks of both the modernist Nimaie poetry and the classical sonnet. The paper, outlining briefly the nature of these transgressions, will concentrate solely on the dynamics of change, brought about by Simin Behbahani's voluminous production of the sonnet form. Generically, her sonnet transgressed the literary devices of the classical formatting by making internal changes in the beyt (1). It revolutionized the element of content by upholding thematic progression from the beginning of the sonnet to its end, as against the fragmentariness of the theme in the classical ghazal (2). It made the sonnet a political, social and feminist testimonial, an outcry against the horrors of war, oppression and the diabolical rule of masculine history (3).

The author of more than fifty books of poetry, fiction and literary theory, Reza Baraheni is currently Professor of Comparative Literature at the University of Toronto. He has taught in the University of Tehran, Iran, the University of Texas, Austin, Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana, the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, the University of Toronto, and York University. He has also been a Fellow at the University of Iowa, Iowa City, and a Fellow at Oxford University, England. From 1982, the year he was fired from the University of Tehran for his advocacy of equal rights for Iranian women, to 1996, the year of his forced departure from Iran, he taught courses in creative writing and literary theory, first at the homes of friends, and later at the basement of his own apartment. A former prisoner of both the Shah's regime and the Islamic Republic of Iran, an original writer and signatory of the "Text of 134" Iranian Writers and the Charter of the Writers Association of Iran, Baraheni has been in the forefront of the struggle for democracy and human rights in Iran for more than four decades. He is a founding member of the Writers Association of Iran, a member of the International PEN, and was President of PEN Canada from June 2001-June 2003.

Baraheni has won numerous honours and awards, among them: The Sepass Award in Canada, for Life-long Achievement in Literature (2005), A Canada Arts Council Grant (2005) The Yalda Life-long Achievement Award (2003); The Iranian Critics and Journalists Award (2000); Scholars at Risk Program Award of Massey College, University of Toronto (1999); an award from The International Freedom to Publish Committee of the Association of American Publishers (2000); and The Overseas Press Club of America Award (1977). His fiction has been anthologized along with works by Vladimir Nabokov and Gabriel Garcia Marquez; his poetry along with the poetry of Anna Akhmatova, Jorge Luis Borges, Paule Eluard, Nazim Hekmat, Osip Mandelstam, Pablo Neruda, Octavio Paz and Wislawa Symborska (*Approaching Literature in the 21st Century*, ed. Peter Schakel and Jack Ridl, Bedford/St. Martin's, Boston, New York, 2005; *God's Spies*, ed. Alberto Manguel, Macfarlane, Walter & Ross, Toronto, 1999; *The Prison where I Live*, ed., Siobhan Dowd, Forward by Joseph Brodsky, Cassell, London, 1996; *Voices of Conscience, Poetry from Oppression*, ed. Cronyn, McKane and Watts, Iron Press, Great Britain, 1995) and many other anthologies. His works have been translated into a dozen languages, among them: Arabic, Dutch, English, French, German, Russian, Spanish, Swedish and Turkish. He has also written poetry and prose, originally in English, among them: *The Crowned Cannibals* (Random House, Vintage, New York, 1977, introduction by E. L. Doctorow); the long poem, "Exile Poem of the Gallery," in *Making Meaning* (Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, 2000); and the long poem,

"Death of a Greek Woman in Seattle," in *Exile Writes Back* (Massey College, Toronto, 2001). His poetry and translations of his poetry by himself and others have appeared in the *Time Magazine*, *City Lights Anthology*, *The New York Review of Books*, *The American Poetry Review*, Magazine of the International PEN and many other prestigious periodicals. There have been numerous and laudatory reviews of his books in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Le Monde*, *Le Figaro Litteraire*, *Figaro Magazine*, *Liberation* and other world press. The publication of the French translation of his long suppressed novel in Iran, *Les Saisons en enfer du jeune Ayyaz* (Pauvert, Fayard, Paris, 2000), and two recent novels, *Sheherazade et son Romancier* (Fayard, Paris, 2002), and *Elias a New York* (Fayard, Paris, 2004) have gained him comparisons with Georges Bataille, Jean Genet and many other French and world authors. Two plays of his, *Enfer* and *Queskes*, directed by Thierry Bedard, the outstanding modernist director in the main section of the Avignon International Festival in July, 2004, were widely reviewed by the major press in France and other parts of Europe. A recent novel of his, *Exilith*, adapted for the stage by Bedard, has been performed in all major festivals of France.

3. Dominic Brookshaw, McGill University

Innovative neoclassicism: detecting the old and the new in the poetry of Simin Behbahani

Although considered a "modern" poet, unlike most of her contemporaries and close friends (e.g. Mehdi Akhavan-e Sales, Nader Naderpour), Simin Behbahani, has, on the whole, avoided the free verse forms of *shi'r-i nu*, and has chosen instead to use the most popular classical form of Persian lyric poetry, the *ghazal*, as the main vehicle for her poetic expression. It is commonly known that Simin Behbahani, especially from the mid-1970s onwards, has used many innovative and revolutionary metric schemes in her *ghazals*; she is perhaps one of the first Persian poets since the late medieval period to do so with such success. In this paper, however, I will examine how new or traditional the imagery, language and structure of Simin Behbahani's *ghazals* are. How close is her language to the colloquial, and how much does it draw on the archaic language of medieval Persian poetry? There is a tangible tension between the old and the new in Behbahani's poetry which has yet to be fully explored. For this paper, I will focus my comments on the *ghazals* published in the 1973 collection *Rastakhiz* ("Resurrection").

Dominic Parviz Brookshaw teaches Persian language as well as medieval and modern Persian literature at the Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University. Before moving to McGill, he taught Persian language and medieval Persian literature at the Oriental Institute, University of Oxford from 2002 to 2005. He is the Assistant Editor for *Iranian Studies* and his research interests include medieval Persian and Arabic lyric poetry (in particular *ghazal* poetry), modern and medieval Persian prose writing, and women in the Qajar period (in particular the daughters of Fath-'Ali Shah Qajar). His recent publications include, "Odes of a poet-princess: the *ghazals* of Jahan-Malik Khatun", *Iran* XLIII (2005), 173-195; and, "Palaces, Pavilions and Pleasure-gardens: the context and setting of the medieval *majlis*", *Middle Eastern Literatures*, vol. 6, no. 2 (July 2003), 199-223.

4. Mohammad Este'lami, McGill University

5. M.R. Gahanoonpavar, University of Texas at Austin

"The Life and Fiction of Simin Behbahani"

This paper addresses an important, usually neglected aspect of the work of Simin Behbahani, namely her prose and fictional, mostly autobiographical, writings, which should be indispensable for an understanding of her poetry. With an examination of *An Mard*, *Mard-e Hamraham* [That Man, My Companion], *Ba Qalb-e Khod Cheh Kharidam* [What I Bought with My Heart], and *Kelid-o Khanjar* [Key and Dagger], it will explore the link between her poetry and fictional prose, especially in terms of her life story.

M. R. Gahanoonparvar is Professor of Persian and Comparative Literature at the University of Texas at Austin. He has taught at the University of Isfahan, the University of Virginia, and the University of Arizona and was a Rockefeller Fellow at the University of Michigan. He is the author of *Prophets of Doom: Literature as a Socio-Political Phenomenon in Modern Iran* (1984), *In a Persian Mirror: Images of the West and Westerners in Iranian Fiction* (1993), *Translating the Garden* (2001), and *Reading Chubak* (2005). His translations include Jalal Al-e Ahmad's *By the Pen*, Sadeq Chubak's *The Patient Stone*, Simin Daneshvar's *Savushun*, and Sadeq Hedayat's

The Myth of Creation and his edited volumes include *Iranian Drama: An Anthology*, *In Transition: Essays on Culture and Identity in Middle Eastern Societies*, Gholamhoseyn Sa'edi's *Othello in Wonderland* and *Mirror-Polishing Storytellers*, and Moniru Ravanipur's *Satan Stones* and *Kanizu*. His forthcoming book is *The Neighbor Says: The Letters of Nima Yushij*.

6. Freshtah Molavi, Yale University

Az aasheghaaneh ta maadaraaneh: az ghazal ta ravaayat.

The paper will briefly discuss the poetry of Simin Behbahani, as one of the three most famous Iranian women poets along with Parvin Etessami and Forugh Farrokhzad. It will begin with the author's impression of the mentioned poets and will continue to explain it. After a short historical background of the modern Persian poetry with respect to female poets, the author will focus on those characteristics of Simin's poetry that, in her opinion, lead her to be a "poet of people."

She'll conclude that Simin, in her artistic progress as a poet, has moved from passionate love poems towards poetry enriched by a motherly affection for all humans; and as such, has approached the narrative as an appropriate form for her poetical expression.

Fereshteh Molavi is a Persian Specialist in the Near East Collection at Yale Sterling Memorial Library. She is an Iranian native with a Masters Degree in Library Science from Tehran University, and has worked as a bibliographer and scholar, as well as a freelance editor and translator. In 1998 she immigrated to Canada and worked for some years in Toronto as a cataloger and Persian language instructor. While still living in Iran, she published several articles and books, among them, a novel, *The House of Cloud and Wind* (1991), and a collection of short stories, *The Sunny Fairy* (1991). *Listen to the Reed*, a chapbook published by PEN Canada in 2005, is based on her dialogue with Karen Connelly, the award winner Canadian writer. Molavi has been included in *Afsaneh: Short Stories by Iranian Women* (London: Saqi, 2005) and *Speaking in Tongues: PEN Canada Writers in Exile* (The Banff Centre Press, 2005). Her stories and essays have been published in various Persian magazines and anthologies. She has had readings in Sweden and Canada. Her new collection of short stories in Persian will be released soon in Tehran. She spoke on the contemporary Iranian women writers at PIERs 2005 Summer Institute on Arts and Action in the Middle East.

7. Rivanne Sandler, University of Toronto

"Simin Behbahani's 'Conversation' in the Context of her Times"

In the first half of the twentieth century, a confluence of social and cultural factors led a growing number of Iranian women to compose poetry. Most crucial for the development of poetry by women, some of the early poets initiated poetic conventions that were especially pertinent to women's experience. One of the most intriguing of these conventions is a poetic conversation that is at one and the same time, very public and very private. The poetry of Simin Behbahani exhibits this emblematic poetic habit. The paper examines the manner in which Behbahani's poetry weaves interactively, the social and the personal for a compelling poetic statement.

Rivanne Sandler began the study of the Middle East at the graduate level, in the Islamic Studies department of the University of Toronto. She majored in Political Science and Sociology as an undergraduate at the U. of T. A three year Master's degree was linguistic, historical and cultural preparation for doctoral work. Although Arabic was the primary language of study, Persian quickly became her language of academic choice. Middle East Studies at the University of Toronto in the 1960s, focused on the medieval historical period and the classical literary tradition. However, the writers and poets of the 1960s became of special interest to her, especially as their works became accessible outside Iran. Three visits to Iran in the early 1970s followed the completion of her doctorate. Her publications focus on the poetry and prose of the 1950s-1970s, with women's literature and the effects of censorship, of particular interest. She has taught undergraduate and graduate courses on the twentieth century Iranian culture and society, and modern Persian literature in the original language and in translation. She is presently a Professor Emerita in the Department of Near & Middle East Civilizations and teaches graduate courses on Iranian women's literature and writing by Iranians in the Diaspora.

8. Marta Simidchieva, University of Toronto at Mississauga

Marta Simidchieva received a Ph.D. in Iranian Studies (1989), Institute of Oriental Studies, Soviet Academy of Sciences, Moscow. Dissertation: *Persian Didactic Prose of the 11th-12th c. CE*: The Qabus-name, Siyasat-name, Chahar maqale. Persian Studies, Graduate Program (1976/77), Department for Foreign Students, University of Tehran, Iran (Completed eleven credit courses in Persian language, literature, history). BA, English Literature (1976, *summa cum laude*), Faculty of Literature and the Humanities, University of Tehran, Iran.

9. Kamran Talattof, University of Arizona

Simin Behbahani's Work and Sociopolitical Discourse: A Poet for All Times

It is perhaps the professional desire of most literary critics to see poetry as an autonomous genre and to get involved in structural and semiotic analyses. However, Persian poetry from its inception has always reflected the social and political issues of its times, and critics have always had that quality in mind as they contextualized these works. In contemporary times poetry as well as other literary genres have more than ever showed close affinity with the sociopolitical discourse of their time. Nevertheless, there are writers whose works gain a sense of perpetuity as they reflect the broader question of humanity. The work of Simin Behbahani is certainly an exemplary case. Three broad discourses can be distinguished in her literary works, and in each one of them, she seems to be among the most active in contributing to the dominant discourse. However, because of her innovative approach to poetics, her deep understanding of humanism, and her outspoken style, she remains highly ranked among Iran's contemporary poets whose works will stand the test of time. The focus of this paper is the discursive as well as structural analysis of recent works of Behbahani such as *Kelid va Khanjar* and *Tarannum-e Ghazal*. The paper will also benefit from the existing scholarly works on the works of Simin Behbahani including the most recent works of literary critics in Iran such as Ali Dihbashi, Ahmad Abu Mahbub, Nusrat Allah Nuh.

Kamran Talattof (Ph.D. Michigan 1996) is an associate professor of Near Eastern Studies at the University of Arizona. He is the author, co-author, or co-editor of: *The Politics of Writing in Iran: A History of Modern Persian Literature* (Syracuse University Press); *Modern Persian: Spoken and Written* (with Don Stilo, and Jerry Clinton, Yale University Press); *The Poetry of Nizami Ganjavi: Knowledge, Love, and Rhetoric* (with Jerry Clinton, Palgrave Macmillan); *Contemporary Debates in Islam: An Anthology of Modernist and Fundamentalist Thought* (with Mansoor Moaddel, St. Martin Press); and *Essays on Nima Yushij: Animating Modernism in Persian Poetry* (with Ahmad Karimi-Hakkak, Brill). He is also the co-translator of *Women Without Men* (with Jocelyn Sharlet, Feminist Press) and *Touba and the Meaning of Night* (with Havva Houshmand, Feminist Press). Many of his articles focus on issues of gender, ideology, culture, and language pedagogy. In addition to his language textbook, he has also produced CD and DVD materials on the instruction of the Persian language.

10. Mohamad Tavakoli-Targhi, University of Toronto

Mohamad Tavakoli-Targhi is Professor of History and Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations at the University of Toronto and the chair of the Department of Historical Studies at University of Toronto-Mississauga. Since 2002 he has served as the Editor of *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, a Duke University Press journal, and serves on the editorial board of *Iranian Studies*, Journal of International Society for Iranian Studies. His areas of specialization encompass Middle Eastern History, Modernity, Nationalism, Gender Studies, Orientalism, and Occidentalism. He is the author of two books, *Refashioning Iran: Orientalism, Occidentalism and Nationalist Historiography* (Palgrave, 2001) and *Tajaddud-i Bumi* [Vernacular Modernity] (in Persian, Nashr-i Tarikh, 2003). He has authored numerous articles, including "The Homeless Texts of Persianate Modernity," in *Iran--Between Tradition and Modernity* (Lexington Books, 2004); "Orientalist Studies and Its Amnesia," in *Antinomies of Modernity* (Duke, 2002), "Eroticizing Europe," in *Society and culture in Qajar Iran*: (Mazda, 2002); "Women of the West Imagined," in *Identity Politics and Women* (Westview Press, 1994); "From Patriotism to Matriotism: A Tropological Study of Iranian Nationalism, 1870-1909," *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* (2002), "Inventing Modernity, Borrowing Modernity, Iran Nameh (2003). Born and raised in the "navel of Tehran," Iran, Professor Tavakoli is the recipient of two Outstanding Teacher awards from Illinois State University (1996 and 2001); a Research Initiative Award (1992); and visiting fellowships at St. Anthony's College, Oxford University (1998); the Center for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India (1992-93); and Harvard University (1991-92). He has initiated numerous conferences and workshops on topical

issues pertaining to the Middle East, and has encouraged the active involvement of student associations in the organization of scholarly events and community outreach programs. He holds a BA in Political Science and an MA in History from the University of Iowa, and a PhD in History from the University of Chicago.

11. Mahdi Tourage, University of Toronto
Textual Bodies in the Poetry of Simin Bihbahani

This paper is an examination of the representations of bodies as the vital site of memory and meaning-production in the poetry of Simin Bihbahani. I will argue that in her poetry textual bodies are foregrounded against the purportedly seamless and coherent system of the (masculine) social body. The material categories of the female bodies are represented as persistent and contested domains that in their variability counter a masculinist discourse of hegemony. By focusing on a few of her poems, this paper argues that in many instances gendered female bodies are re-inscribed with significance. These textual representations of marginalized female bodies upset the contours of the masculinist discourse of order and coherence. Particularly important are the female bodies, like those of prostitutes that function as a symbolic location of resistance. This paper will examine the issues of limits and meanings of female agency in these textual bodies.

Mahdi Tourage was born and raised in Iran. He has been living in Canada since 1986. He finished a BA in Sociology and a Bachelor of Social Work at York University, and his MA and PhD at the University of Toronto. Currently, he is an instructor at the University of Toronto, Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations Department, and the Mississauga campus, Historical Studies Department. He is also the book review editor of the American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences. His areas of specialty are Islamic mysticism (Sufism) and religious thought, classical and modern Persian literature, and Gender and Sexuality. He has taught courses on Islamic religious traditions, Persian language, and Orientalism-Occidentalism.

12. Shadab Vajdi, University of London
Immortality in Poetry

The paper shows that the main characteristic of Simin Behbahani's poetry is that it is a manifestation of love for humanity. It takes the listener on a journey through Simin Behbahani's poetic life by going through different stages and giving examples of her poetry at each stage. It looks at those of her poems that have the form of "ghazal" (lyric) and at her invention of a new rhythm for "ghazal". It explains the fact that Simin Behbahani's poems cannot be placed within the confines of any ideological framework (their scope is wider and they belong to humanity as a whole). The paper also explains the fact that even when Simin Behbahani talks about harsh laws against women, she surrounds this unpalatable fact with a halo of melody and beauty.

Shadab Vajdi was born in Shiraz, Iran. She studied Persian literature and Social Science at the University of Tehran. She taught Persian literature in Tehran for a number of years. Later in her life, she embarked on her linguistic research at the University of London (School of Oriental and African Studies) where she obtained her Ph.D. in linguistics in 1976. She has published six collections of her own poems in Persian and one collection of Jon Milos's Swedish poems in the form of Persian translation. Her own poems have been translated into English, German and Swedish. She has also translated two books into Persian: "Inside the Third World" by Paul Harrison and "Return to China" by Liang Heng and Judy Shapiro. When in Britain, she worked as a producer and broadcaster for BBC World Service and also as a lecturer of Persian literature at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

13. Hura Yavari, Columbia University

Hura Yavari is Senior Research Scholar at the Center for Iranian Studies, Columbia University. She holds a B.A. in English Literature and an M.A. in Psychology from Tehran University, and an M. Ed. from the Bank Street College of Education, New York (1990). She has published extensively on topics in psychoanalysis and Persian literature, including *Psychoanalysis and Literature in Iran: Two Texts, Two Selves, Two Worlds* (Tehran, 1995) and *Living in the Mirror: A Literary Perspective* (Tehran, 2005). Her articles include, "The 'Third Ear' of the Analyst, Critique, Journal of Critical Studies of the Middle East, Fall 1995, Modern Persian Fiction: History and

Development, in Encyclopædia Iranica (1999), Ideal Kingship & Failed Monarchs: Speech-Act Theory and Medieval Persian Historiography, Iranshenasi, Spring 2001, The Autobiographies of Jalal-e Al-e Ahmad: Who is Schizophrenic, the Culture or the Self?, Goft-e Goo(Spring 2002).

14. Saeed Yousef, University of Chicago

“A Difficult Step towards Simplicity: The Limits and Limitations of Simplicity in Contemporary Ghazal”

Saeed Yousef is a Poet and literary critic. He studied Persian, English and German literature in Mashhad, Tehran and Frankfurt am Main. He has a PhD in comparative literature from the University of Toronto. He is the author of numerous articles (mostly in Persian); editor of *Poetry Periodical* (1995-1996); published 9 books in Persian (poetry, translations and literary criticism). His publications include: A translation of *Human Beginnings* by Olivia Vlahos (Tehran: Toos, 1978); *She'r-e jonbesh-e novin [Poetry of the new movement]*, poems (Tehran: Toos, 1979); *Sorudhāye setāyesh [Songs of praise]*, translation of 120 poems by Bertolt Brecht (Paris: Khāvarān, 1985); *Now'i az naqd bar now'i az she'r [A kind of criticism of a kind of poetry]* (Saarbrücken: Navid, 1986); *Ta'ammoli dar rāh [Contemplation on the way]*, selected poems (Tehran: Sedā, 1994) ; *Jān-bākhtegān be bu-ye fardā'i now [Fallen, aspiring to a better tomorrow]*, long poem (Paris: Noghteh, 2003)

About Persian Cultural Foundation (PCF)

The Persian Cultural Foundation (PCF) is a registered 501 (C) (3) non-profit organization. The PCF was established in 1995 in New Jersey to support and promote academic and community projects as well as cultural activities that pay tribute to this heritage.

A central mission of the PCF is to facilitate processes that would encourage the Iranian-American youth and American society at large to enhance their familiarity with Persia's multifaceted historical and contemporary contributions to the world civilization.

The PCF is committed to preserving and advancing the Persian heritage in science and technology, literature and arts, medicine and public health, music and the performing arts. The PCF is further committed to manifesting this rich heritage to future generations.

About Simin Behbahani

Simin Behbahani (Siminbar Khalili) was born in 1927 in Tehran, Iran, of literary parents. Her father, Abbas Khalili, writer and newspaper editor, had dozens of publications to his credit. Her mother, Fakhr Ozma Arghoon (Fakhr Adel Khalatbari), was a noted feminist, teacher, writer, newspaper editor, and poet.

Simin began writing poetry at the age of fourteen and published her first poem at the same age. She used the "char pareh" style of Nima, a renowned poet of Persian history, and subsequently, turns to "ghazal", a free flowing, and poetic style similar to the Western "sonnet". She contributed to a historic development in the form of the "ghazal", as she added theatrical subjects and daily events and conversations into this style of poetry.

The "ghazals" of Simin Behbahani have a unique style, which defines her as one of a kind and well distinguished in her style of poetry. Simin Behbahani has expanded the range of traditional Persian verse forms and produced some of the most significant works of Persian literature in the twentieth century.

She was nominated for the Nobel Prize in literature in 1997. She was also awarded a Human Rights Watch-Hellman/Hammet grant in 1998, and similarly, in 1999, the Carl von Ossietzky Medal for her struggles for freedom of expression in Iran.

Poetical Works:

- Dubarah misazamat vatan (Los Angeles, CA. : DBF Records, 2003), Sound Recording with Darioush.
- **Yad-i ba`zi nafarat** (Tihran: Nashr-i Alburz, 1999)
- Nigarah-i gulgun :
- kaghazin jamah`ha va afzudah`ha (Los Angeles : Intisharat-i Shirkat-i Kitab, 1998).
- Simin Behbahani :
- dar rah-i gustarish va afarinish-i awzan-i tazah ([S.I.] : Tuka, 1993).
- Kaghazin Jamah (San Jose, Calif. : Nashr-i Zamanah, 1992).
- An mard, mard-i hamraham (Tehran: Zavvar, 1991).
- Chilchiragh : majmu`ah-i shi`r, 1335-1336 (Tehran: Zavvar, 1991).
- Dasht-i arzhan (Tehran: Zavvar, 1991).
- Jay-i pa : majmu`ah-i shi`r, 1325-1335 (Tehran: Zavvar, 1991).
- Khatti zi sur`at va az atash (Tehran: Zavvar, 1991).
- Marmar (Tehran: Zavvar, 1991).
- Rastakhiz: majmu`ah-i shi`r, 1342-1352 (Tehran: Zavvar, 1991).
- Guft va shunudi ba Simin Behbahani, Hamid Musaddiq, ed. Nasir Hariri (Babul : Kitabsara-yi Babul, 1989)
- Marmar (Tehran: Zavvar, 1989).
- Guzinah-i ash`ar (Tehran: Murvarid, 1988).
- Khatti zi sur`at va az atash (Tehran: Zavvar, 1983)
- Rastakhiz: majmu`ah-i shi`r (1342-1352) (Tehran: Kitabfurushi-i Zavvar, 1983).

- Khatti zi sur`at va az atash (Tehran]: Zuvvar, 1981).
- Khatti zi sur`at va az atash (Tehran: Zuvvar, 1981
- Khatti zi sur`at va az atash: majmu`ah-i ghazal, 1360-1352 (Encino, Ca. : Ketap Corp., 1980-1988).
- Darvazah`ha-yi nur: majmu`ah-i shi`r, ed. Zhalah Naziri (Tehran: Zhalah Naziri, 1971)
- Marmar (Tehran, Kitabfurushi-i zavvar 1963)

Works on Simin Behbahani:

1. A cup of sin : selected poems.

Author: Bihbihani, Simin.; Milani, Farzaneh.; Safa, Kaveh.

Publication: Syracuse, NY : Syracuse University Press, 1999

2. Tarannum-i ghazal :

bar`rasi-i zindagi va asar-i Simin Bihbihani.

Author: `Abidi, Kamyar.; Bihbihani, Simin.

Publication: Tihran : Nashr-i Kitab-i Nadir, 2000

3. Zani ba damani shi`r: Jashn`namah-i Simin Bihbihani.

Author: Dihbashi, `Ali.

Publication: Tihran : Mu`assasah-i Intisharat-i Nigah, 2004

4. Darbarah-i hunar va adabiyat: guft va shinudi ba Simin Bihbihani, Hamid Musaddiq.

Author: Bihbihani, Simin.; Musaddiq, Hamid.; Hariri, Nasir.

Publication: Babil : Kitabsara-yi Babil, 1989

5. Gahvarah-i sabz-i afra :

zindagi va shi`r-i Simin Bihbihani.

Author: Abu Mahbub, Ahmad.; Bihbihani, Simin.

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Visual Material : Videorecording : VHS tape