

**Fall 2016**  
**Culture and Contexts: Modern Iran**  
**CORE-UA 533**

Instructor: Mikiya Koyagi  
Email: [mk5694@nyu.edu](mailto:mk5694@nyu.edu)  
Class Time: MW 9:30-10:45 (Recitation Sections on Tuesdays)  
Classroom (Lecture): SILV207  
Office Hours: TBA  
Office Location: King Juan Carlos Center 519

Recitation Instructors: Yue Du  
Ilker Hepkaner  
Hazem Jamjoum

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### **Course Description:**

This course will examine major political, economic, social, and cultural issues that shaped Iran since the nineteenth century. We will be asking a number of interrelated questions throughout the semester. How did Iran's social structure change in the last two centuries? How did gender relations change during the same period? How did the discovery of oil impact Iranian economy and society? Why did the 1979 Islamic Revolution happen? What role did ordinary people play in these historical processes? Why did they act in the way they did? Thinking about these questions requires us to study many kinds of primary texts and other cultural artifacts, including government documents, newspaper articles, short stories, films, songs, cartoons, posters, and so forth. By using these sources, we aim to explore how diverse groups of people experienced Iran's rapid transformation since 1800 and how domestic, regional, and global factors affected the processes of transformation. More generally, our aim is to learn to think of ourselves as citizens of a larger world by gaining the ability to comprehend how people remote from ourselves both chronologically and geographically understand, experience, and imagine their lives.

### **Textbooks:**

- Ervand Abrahamian. *A History of Modern Iran*. Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- Other readings are available on NYU Classes.

It is crucial that you finish the assigned readings **prior** to class. Although I will be lecturing in almost all class sessions, you will also have frequent discussions and in-class writing activities based on the

assigned readings. If you come unprepared, you will not only miss a great learning opportunity for yourself but also hinder your classmates' learning process. Please be considerate to your classmates and come prepared.

## **Assignments:**

You can earn a total of 100 points during the semester. Below is the distribution of the points:

Participation:	15
Quizzes:	15
Museum Report:	5
Paper 1 (role play):	10
Paper 2(media analysis):	15
Paper 3 (primary source):	15
Final Exam:	25

- No email submission is accepted without my prior consent. You need to be present in class and submit the papers.

### Participation:

This is not an attendance grade. Your participation grade is based on your regular contribution to class discussions.

### Unannounced Quizzes:

To encourage your regular preparation for the course, the recitation instructors and I will occasionally ask you to write a brief response to the assigned readings and/or lectures during class. Your response should be up to a few sentences. Each quiz is worth no more than 1 point.

### Museum Report (2 pages, due on September 21):

1. In this assignment, you are required to visit the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Admission is by donation. Please attach a ticket or receipt from your visit to your assignment.
2. Please submit a two-page response (printed, not emailed) analyzing how some of the European artwork at this museum displays Orientalist views of the "East" according to Said's definition of Orientalism. If you can find an artwork that deals with Iran/Persia, that is great. However, you can think of the "East" more broadly to include the Islamic world for this assignment.
3. Some helpful tips:
  - You may want to focus on the European Paintings section on the 2nd floor or the European Sculpture and Decorative Arts section on the 1st floor.
  - This link is a useful resource: [http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/euor/hd\\_euor.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/euor/hd_euor.htm)
  - Look for representations of some of the attributes Said mentioned as being applied by Europeans to the "East": passive, sensual, decadent, corrupt, effeminate, ruled by despotism, mystical, spiritual, decaying, sexual, barbaric.

Paper 1-Role Play (4 pages including footnotes, due on October 24):

Your task in this assignment is to reconstruct the experiences of ordinary people in Iran during a period of rapid political, social, economic, and cultural change under the rule of Reza Shah Pahlavi. Before you submit the paper, you have a role play exercise in your recitation on October 18<sup>th</sup>, when your recitation instructor will play the role of a journalist who interviews you immediately after the death of Reza Shah in 1944. The journalist will ask you for your opinions regarding specific issues that occurred during the reign of Reza Shah (the issues to be discussed will be announced before the recitation.) You are expected to answer his/her questions NOT as a college student in New York but as one of the following historical actors who lived in the era.

- A former-constitutionalist newspaper editor
- A low-ranking member of the ulama in Isfahan
- A mojtahed in Qom
- An opium merchant in Kerman
- A rank-and-file member of the Khamseh tribe

After the role play in recitation sections, you are going to write a four-page evaluation of Reza Shah's policies between his rise in 1921 and his forced abdication in 1941 as the same historical actor. I will post a more detailed instruction on NYU Classes.

Paper 2-Media Analysis (5 pages excluding footnotes, due on November 7):

How did the American press represent Mohammad Mosaddeq and Iran's oil nationalization movement leading to the 1953 coup? What factors do you think contributed to the ways in which Mosaddeq and the oil nationalization movement were represented in the United States? Study at least two of the following magazines and/or newspapers: LIFE, TIME, The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal. The back issues of LIFE are available on google books. Other publications are available through the NYU library website. Read at least 20 articles about Mosaddeq and the movement. At the end of your paper, include endnotes and a list of articles you referred to. Note that the media erroneously spelled Mosaddeq's name Mossadegh, so use the latter spelling when you search articles online.

Paper 3-Primary Source Analysis (6 pages excluding footnotes, due on November 28):

Read *Fatima Is Fatima* by Ali Shari'ati (relevant chapters are posted on NYU Classes) and discuss his vision of womanhood. How was Shari'ati's vision different from other visions of womanhood we have studied so far (e.g. Mohammad Ali Jamalzadeh, Kanun-e Banovan, Mohammad Reza Shah.)

Final Exam:

Scheduled for December 19th. It will consist of short ID questions, a primary source analysis question, and a long essay (at least 3-4 pages.)

**General Policy:**

Classroom behavior:

Cell phones must be on silent mode in class, and texting is strictly prohibited. Also, please limit the use of your laptop to taking notes unless I ask you to find information on the Internet. Please refrain from distracting your classmates and instructors. If you fail to follow these basic rules, you will receive no point for the in-class assignment of the day. Furthermore, your participation grade for the course will be adversely affected.

Attendance:

Attendance is mandatory. We will take attendance in both lecture and recitation by circulating an attendance sheet. It is your responsibility to sign the attendance sheet before you leave the classroom. If you are more than twenty minutes late, you are not allowed to sign the attendance sheet.

If you have an emergency situation (documented illness, serious accidents, funerals) and cannot make it to class, please let us know before class (the professor for lectures and the recitation instructors for sections.) Undocumented illness will be counted as unexcused absences. Doctor's notes that are more than two weeks old are invalid. That said, I understand that we sometimes get too sick to go to the doctor. Therefore, your first three unexcused absences will not impact your final grade. After your third unexcused absence, each unexcused absence will lower your final grade by one letter grade.

If you have an ongoing serious personal issue that might affect your attendance and academic performance, you need to talk to me and your recitation instructor before missing multiple class sessions and failing to submit papers. Please be proactive.

Late work policy:

You must be ready to submit assignments whenever I ask you to during the class session the assignments are due. It can be at the beginning, in the middle or at the end of the session. Anytime after I collect the assignment in class is considered late. I accept only stapled hard copies. No electronic submission is accepted without my prior consent. If you do not have a printer, you can print it out at the library.

Late submissions will be penalized because it is unfair to give some students extra time to complete the assignment while others submit on time. Each day after the due date (including weekends), you will lose ten percent of the grade (a letter grade). For instance, if you make 9.5 for a 10-point assignment but submit it an hour late, 1 late points will be deducted. If you submit it 27 hours late, 2 late points will be deducted, so your grade will be 7.5. In a nutshell, please be punctual.

Make-up Assignments/Exams:

Make-up quizzes are permitted only in case of emergency (documented serious illness and accidents) or observance of a religious holy day. Keep in mind that each quiz is only 1 percent of the final grade. It is your responsibility to talk to me or the recitation instructor within one week of missing the quiz. After one week, you may no longer take the make-up quiz.

Extensions for longer papers require my advanced approval, which is granted only under special circumstances. If you simply need one more day to complete the assignment, weigh the pros and cons of losing ten percent of your grade versus submitting a half-baked essay.

**Academic Integrity:**

All cases of plagiarism will be reported to the Dean. Do not jeopardize your career for one college course. If you are not sure, do not assume. Please ask me or your recitation instructor.

**Students with Disabilities:**

Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities. Please bring me a letter at the beginning of the semester that shows your accommodation. <http://www.nyu.edu/life/safety-health-wellness/students-with-disabilities.html>

## Course Schedule

\*The schedule below is subject to change. It is your responsibility to check emails and NYU Classes regularly. I will also make an announcement in class if I make any changes to the course schedule.

### Week 1 (9/7): Introduction

- Daniel and Mahdi, “Introduction: The Land and the People,” 1-36

### Week 2 (9/12-14): Qajar Iran and Orientalism

- Edward Said, “Introduction,” Orientalism 1-28
- Nikki Keddie, “Continuity and Change under the Qajars,” Modern Iran, 37-57
- Abrahamian, 1-7

Primary Source:

- Lady Sheil, “Glimpses of Life and Manners in Persia”
- Selections of 19<sup>th</sup>-century European art

### Week 3 (9/19-21): Qajar Society and Politics

- Abrahamian, 8-33

Primary Source:

- “A Shi’ite Pilgrimage to Mecca,” xii (map), xxvi-xxxii, map 2, 53-74 (Part Two: From Baku to Batum, up to “Departure from Baku”)
- “The Travel Diaries of Haj Sayyah, 1859-1877,” 57-65, 145-164

### **9/21 (Wed): Museum Report Due**

### Week 4: (9/26-28): The Emergence of Iranian Nationalism

- James Gelvin, “The Introduction and Spread of Nationalism,” 208-214
- Reza Zia-Ebrahimi on Iranian Nationalism and the Myth of Aryan Identity (transcript of an interview): <https://en.iranwire.com/features/2983/>
- Zia-Ebrahimi, “Pre-Islamic Iran and Archaistic Frenzy,” 73-98

Primary Source:

- “Expressions of Reform, Social Criticism, and Dissent” (Nabavi, 47-55)
- “A Traveler’s Narrative (Mirza Malkum Khan),” 14-36
- (21<sup>st</sup>-century Iranian nationalist) <http://www.iran-heritage.org/interestgroups/islam-article3.htm>

### **Week 5 (10/3-5): The Constitutional Revolution**

- Abrahamian, 34-62
- Yidan Wang, “The Iranian Constitutional Revolution as Reported in the Chinese Press,” *Iran’s Constitutional Revolution*, 369-79

Primary Source:

- “The 1906 Constitution and Its Supplement” (Nabavi, 60-73)
- “Women ‘Going Public’” (Nabavi, 83-90)
- “Contending Views Regarding Constitutionalism” (90-109)

### **Week 6 (10/12): The Rise and Fall of Reza Shah**

#### **10/10 (Mon): Fall Recess**

- Abrahamian, 63-96

Primary Source:

- Mohammad Ali Jamalzadeh, “What’s Sauce for the Goose...”

### **Week 7: (10/17-19): Iranian Society in the Interwar Period**

- Stephanie Cronin, “Reform from Above, Resistance from Below, 1927-29,” in *Soldiers, Shahs and Subalterns in Iran*, 161-200
- Afsaneh Najmabadi, “Authority and Agency: Revisiting Women’s Activism during Reza Shah’s Period,” in *The State and the Subaltern*, 159-177
- “Unveiling and Its Consequences”
- “Years of Increasing Autocracy in the 1930s”

#### **Role Play in Recitation Sections**

### **Week 8 (10/24-26): Asserting National Sovereignty**

### **10/24 (Mon): Role Play Paper Due**

- Abrahamian, 97-122

Primary Source:

- “Mohammad Mosaddeq and the Nationalization of Iranian Oil: Mohammad Mosaddeq’s Testimony at the Hague Tribunal Defending the Nationalization of Oil in Iran” (Nabavi, 139-146)
- Start reading English magazines and newspapers for the media analysis paper (see the “Assignments” section above)

### **Week 9 (10/31-11/2): The Reign of the Last Shah**

- Abrahamian, 123-154
- Keddie, “Royal Dictatorship, 1953-1977,” 132-169

Primary Source:

- Samad Behrangi, “The Little Black Fish”
- “Perspectives on the White Revolution”
- “Excerpts from Gharbzadegi” “Excerpts from On the Service and Betrayal of Intellectuals” (Nabavi, 162-166)

### **Week 10 (11/7-9): Oppositions to the Shah**

#### **11/7 (Mon): Media Analysis Paper Due**

- Negin Nabavi, “The Discourse of ‘Authentic Culture’ in Iran in the 1960s and 1970s,” 91-109
- Mehrzad Boroujerdi, “The Clerical Subculture,” *Iranian Intellectuals and the West*, 77-98

Primary Source:

- Ali Shariati, “Red Shi’ism,” 1-17
- Ruhollah Khomeini, “The Necessity of Islamic Government,” 197-215

### **Week 11 (11/14-16): The Islamic Revolution**

- Abrahamian, 155-182
- Keddie, “The Revolution,” 214-239

Primary Source:



- “Iran and the Colonialism of the Red and the Black”
- Revolutionary Posters

### **Week 12 (11/21): Iranian Holidays**

- Daniel and Mahdi, “Food and Dining,” 149-156, and “Holidays, Festivals, and Annual Events,” 177-188

Primary Source:

- Film: “OK Mister (1978)” by Parviz Kimiavi

### **11/23-27: Thanksgiving Recess**

### **Week 13 (11/28-30): Revolutionary Iran**

#### **11/28 (Mon): Primary Source Analysis Paper Due**

- Abrahamian, 182-195
- Keddie, “Politics and Economics under Khomeini,” 240-262
- Ramazani, “Who Started the Iran-Iraq War?” 287-306
- “Towards An Archive of the Basij: Memories from Iran’s Volunteer Militia”

Primary Source:

- “The Constitution of the Islamic Republic” (Nabavi, 201-219)
- Review “The 1906 Constitution and Its Supplement” (Nabavi, 60-73)

### **Week 14 (12/5-7): Post-Revolutionary Iran**

- Abrahamian, “Why the Islamic Republic Has Survived,” 10-16
- Keddie, “Society, Gender, Culture, and Intellectual Life,” 285-316
- Mehrangiz Kar, “Democracy After the Green Movement,” 69-89

Primary Source:

- Mohammad Khatami, “Dialogue among Civilizations”
- “One Million Signatures Campaign”
- “The Open Letter of Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani to Seyyed Ali Khamene’i”

**Week 15 (12/12-14): Iran today/Conclusion**

Primary Source:

- “Tehran Has No More Pomegranates” by Mas’ud Bakhshi (68 minutes)
- “Eshq-e Sor‘at” by Kiosk (Persian song with subtitles)

**12/19 (Mon), 8:00-9:50 AM: Final Exam**