

**TOPICS IN MODERN PERSIAN LITERATURE AND IRANIAN CULTURE**

**PRS 496B AND PRS 596B | Fall 2008 | Department of Near Eastern Studies**

**CONTEMPORARY PERSIAN LITERATURE**

**Wednesday 4 PM-6:30 PM, CHVEZ 302**

**Course Description:** This graduate / upper-undergraduate course will study modern Persian literature in translation from the late nineteenth century to the present. It will engage in a theoretical analysis of these literary texts to understand the literary products of any one period of modern Persian literature especially in regard to their ideological representation of socio-political issues. Readings (select novellas, short stories, and poetry in English translation) will be discussed within nationalist, Marxist, feminist, and Islamic paradigms to provide a comparative theoretical context, generate class discussion, and provide a better comprehension of modern Persian literature. In addition to these literary analyses, we also read the texts in their historical, social, and political contexts to gain a thorough understanding of the modern history of Iran and the way culture is produced. Readings include the fiction and poetry major authors. In addition to class participation, students will write a research paper based on the literary and theoretical readings.

**Requirements and Evaluation:**

- 1- A paper (10 pages for undergraduate students and 15 for graduate students) due the last day of classes (60%)
- 2- Reading reports (20%)
- 3- Regular attendance and participation (20%)
- 4- Graduate Students are encouraged to give a presentation, preferably on the topic of their paper

**Readings:** The reading materials are available on D2L and at the University Bookstore. Additional handouts will be distributed in class.

**PRS 496B/596B  
CONTEMPORARY PERSIAN LITERATURE  
Schedule of Readings**

WEEK	AUTHOR	TITLE	INFO
Week 1, 8/27	Introduction	1. Syllabus Readings	D2L
	Lecture	2. An Old Literary Tradition	Lecture
	E. Abrahamian	3. <i>A History of Modern Iran</i>	Book
Week 2, 9/3	E. Abrahamian	4. <i>A History of Modern Iran</i>	Book
	K. Talattof	5. <i>Politics of Writing; Introduction</i>	Book
Week 3, 9/10	K. Talattof	6. <i>Politics of Writing; Introduction</i>	Book
	M.A Jamalzadeh	A.1. Persian is Sugar	Handout
	K. Talattof	A.2. <i>World Literature Its Times</i>	D2L
Week 4, 9/17	S. Hedayat	A.3. <i>The Blind Owl</i>	D2L
	S. Hedayat	A.4. Three Drops of Blood	D2L
	S. Hedayat	A.5. The Stray Dog	D2L
	S. Hedayat	A.6. Story with a Moral	Handout
Week 5, 9/24	E. Abrahamian	B.1. <i>A History of Modern Iran</i>	Book
	K. Talattof	B.2. <i>Politics of Writing; Committed Literature</i>	Book
	Handout/Theory	T.1. Marxist Literary Theory	Miscellaneous
Week 6, 10/1	Sadeq Chubak	B.3. The Hubcap Thief	D2L
	M. Farzan	B.4. The Plane Reservation	Handout
	J. Al-e Ahmad	B.5. The Pilgrimage	Handout
Week 7, 10/8	S. Daneshvar	B.6. To Whom?	D2L
	S. Daneshvar	B.7. The Accident	D2L
	S. Bihurangi	B.8. The Little Black Fish	D2L
	S. Bihurangi	B.9. Sugar Beet Vendor	D2L
	H. Golshiri	B.10. My China Doll	D2L
Week 8, 10/15	A. Shamlu	B.11.a Poems	D2L
	A. Shamlu	B.11.b Poems	Handout
	I. Khoi	B.12. <i>Outlanida</i>	Handout
	M. Ateshi:	B.13. "Daggers, Kisses, Promises"	
Week 9, 10/22	F. Farrukhzad	B.14. Poems	D2L
	S. Bihbihani	B.15. <i>A Cup of Sin</i>	Book
Week 10, 10/29	S. Sepehri	C.1. The Sound of Water's Footsteps	D2L
	I. Pizishkzad	C.2. <i>My Uncle Napoleon</i>	Book
Week 11,	K. Talattof	D.1. <i>Politics of Writing; Islamic lit</i>	Book

11/5	T. Safarzadeh A. Garmarudi M. Sarshar Handout/Theory	D.2. Poems D.3. Poems D.4. Whirlpool (Long Story) T.2. Islamic Fundamentalism	Handout Handout Handout Miscellaneous
Week 12, 11/12	K. Talattof Hanout/Theory S. Behbahani/kt S. Parsipur	E.1. <i>Politics of Writing; Feminist Discourse</i> T.3. Feminist Literary Theory E.2. The Broken Cup and E.3. <i>Touba and the Meaning of Night</i>	Book Miscellaneous D2L Book
Week 13, 11/19	K. Talattof M. Ravanipur/KT M. Ravanipur Hejazi & Sari	E.4. About <i>Touba</i> E.5. The Sad Story Love E.6. Three Pictures E.7. Poems: Sorrow of Being Woman/Moment	D2L D2L D2L D2L
Week 14, 11/26		Discussion, Presentations	
Week 15, 12/3	Behbahani/K.T K. Talattof	E.8. I will rebuild you E.9. Behbahani's Work and Sociopolitical	Book D2L
Week 16, 12/10	K. Talattof Javadi	F.1. Politics of Writing: Conclusion F.2. The Morning After	Book Handout/Lecture

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Additional Recommended Sources:

Shahrnush Parsipur, *Women Without Men* translated by K. Talattof and J. Sharlet (New York: Feminist Press at the City University, 2004).

Farzaneh Milani. *Veils and Words: The Emerging Voice of Iranian Women Writers*. Syracuse: Syracuse U P, 1992.

Ehsan Yarshatir, *Persian Literature* (New York: Bibliotheca Press, 1988).

Ahmad Karimi-Hakkak. *Recasting Persian Poetry: Scenarios of Poetic Modernity in Iran* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1995).

Kamran Talattof. "Iranian Women's Literature: From Pre-revolutionary Social Discourse to Postrevolutionary Feminism," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 29, no. 4, (November, 1997), 531-558.

Mahnaz Afkhami. *In the Eye of the Storm*. (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1994)

Simin Danishvar. *Playhouse*. (Washington, D.C., Mage Publication, 1989)

Muniru Ravanipur. *Satan's Stones*, Austin, Texas University Press, 1996. and "The Sad Story of Love."

Schaub, Diana J., *Erotic Liberalism: Women and Revolution in Montesquieu's Persian Letters*. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 1995.  
*Stories by Iranian Women Since the Revolution*. Austin, Tex.: Center for Middle Eastern Studies, The University of Texas at Austin, 1991