

Stanford | Hamid and Christina Moghadam Program in Iranian Studies



**2020 - 2021
YEAR IN REVIEW**

Director's Letter

As we close the 2020-2021 academic year, we reflect on a year with many daunting challenges and delightful encouragements. The ravages of a global pandemic were no match for the resilience of our students and our colleagues.

We offered our full array of classes, organized as many lectures as any past year, arranged our sponsored concerts, and organized more conferences in one year than ever before—all online—with an increasingly large audience, attending from all corners of the world.

A key part of our lecture series was the ongoing discussions with some of Iran's most prominent women artists, activists, and scholars.

Upon the passing of Maestro Mohammad Reza Shajarian, a past winner of the Bitá Prize, we organized an international celebration of his life and work. Helped by Maestro Shahram Nazeri, we were able to gather some of Iran's most celebrated classical musicians and musicologists to participate and perform in that program. Hundreds of thousands from all around the world have since watched the tribute.

On the same occasion, we put on digital display in the Green Library a draft of a constitution for Iran to transition to a secular government that Maestro Shajarian had entrusted to us and directed me to unseal either upon his direction or death.

We also organized an international conference to commemorate the donation of the collected papers and work of Shahrokh Meskoob to Stanford the previous year. We hope to publish this collection of conference papers along with a selection from the archive in conjunction with Stanford's Green Library.



Finally, in July we organized yet another international conference to celebrate the 10th anniversary of Professor Beyzaie's productive work in our program. As a part of the conference, we asked the acclaimed filmmaker, Amir Naderi, to not only give the keynote lecture but to prepare a film tribute to Beyzaie's cinema. In conjunction with the conference, we are supporting the publication of a collection of six of Professor Beyzaie's hitherto unpublished plays. The collection will be called *Beyzaie at Stanford*; five have already been staged at Stanford, under his direction, and we hope to stage the sixth later this year. These plays have all been staged through the generous annual support of Bitá Daryabari, Shidan and Mehran Taslimi, Azi Hariri, and of course Hamid and Christina Moghadam.

With the ongoing support of Hamid and Christina Moghadam, we continued the work of the Stanford Iran 2040 Project. In addition to a new publication on the ideological map of Persian Twitter, an updated and edited collection of the full body of research to date will be published by Stanford University Press next year.

As the university prepares to return to normal operations, we too are making plans to expand our on-campus activities while hoping to preserve some of our online programs for the many eager participants from around the globe. We particularly look forward to hosting our first Zahedi Family Fellow—made possible by an endowment that was substantially increased this year with another donation by Ambassador Ardeshir Zahedi.

As Iran enters a particularly perilous period of its history, as more and more students are interested in studying Iran, we—as a program dedicated to the study of modern Iran and culture—know our tasks and challenges are many. We are heartened by the firm belief that with your continued support and guidance we will continue to grow.



Abbas Milani
Hamid & Christina Moghadam
Director of Iranian Studies

Table of Contents

2	Director's Letter
4	Event Highlights
7	Stanford Festival of Iranian Arts
10	Student Highlights
13	Stanford Iran 2040 Project
14	News & Publications

Administration

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Event Highlights

The 2020-2021 academic year brought unprecedented changes and challenges. However, the rapid shift to virtual event programming brought the unexpected joys of a new audience able to tune in from all corners of the globe to watch weekly programming. Furthering the program's educational mission, Iranian Studies material reached 11,679 viewers through 30 events. Topics included Iranian literature and arts, human rights, international relations and economics, and the Iranian Women's Movement, among others. Event collaborations with the Center for Human Rights and International Justice, France-Stanford Center for Interdisciplinary Studies, Stanford Libraries, and the Taube Center for Jewish Studies added to the diversity of audience and subjects.

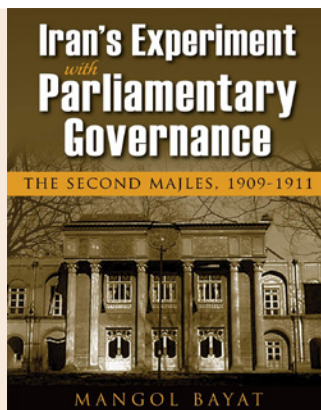
**Mohammad Reza Farzanegan:
The Economic Cost
of the Islamic
Revolution and
War for Iran**



**Mohammad Mosaed: Exposing
Economic
Corruption in Iran:
A Journalist's
Odyssey into Exile**



**Mangol Bayat:
Iran's Experiment
with Parliamentary
Government**



**Ali Ansari:
Iran, Islam and
Democracy:
The Politics of
Managing Change**



**Shaul Bakhash:
Britain and the
Abdication of
Reza Shah**



**John Ghazvinian:
America and Iran:
A History, 1720 to
the Present**



Women's Rights Movement in Iran

The Women's movement conversations continued with a series of events throughout the academic year, with topics ranging from political leadership and human rights to literature.



Shahla Haeri:
Muslim
Women and
Political
Leadership



**Shahrnush
Parsipur:**
Blue Logos
and Women's
Wisdom



**Negar
Djavadi:**
Disoriental



Homa Sarshar:
Iranian
Women, the
Achilles Heel of
the Islamic
Republic



**Kian
Katouzian:**
The Iranian
Women's
Movement



**Farzaneh
Milani:**
The Nonviolent
Revolution of
Iranian Women
Writers

NASRIN

Nasrin Sotoudeh, hailed as the Nelson Mandela of Iran, is a human rights lawyer and activist, imprisoned in Iran. Nasrin fought for the rights of women, children, LGBTQ prisoners, religious minorities, journalists and artists, and those facing death penalty. She was arrested in 2018 and sentenced to 38 years in prison and 148 lashes. In prison, she continues to challenge authorities and protest for the rights of her fellow prisoners.

As a part of the women's movement series, in October of 2020, the Iranian Studies Program screened the documentary NASRIN detailing her journey and the ongoing fight for women's rights in Iran. The panel discussion following the screening featured filmmaker Jeff Kauffman, her husband and activist Reza Khandan, Nobel Peace Prize laureate Shirin Ebadi, Iranian Studies director Abbas Milani, and former member of European Parliament and current Stanford scholar, Marietje Schaake.

The Iranian Studies Program also collaborated with the award-winning Kronos Quartet and musician Sahba Aminikia on a piece titled "Nasrin's Dream," that was performed as a part of the "Voices of Hope" series with Carnegie Hall.

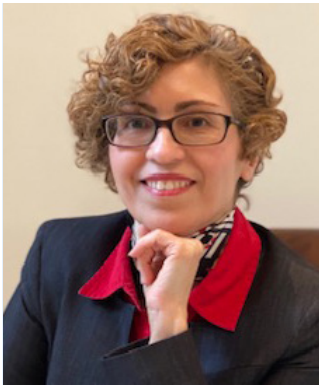


Conference: The Life and Work of Shahrokh Meskoob



The papers of Shahrokh Meskoob, one of modern Iran's most respected and acclaimed public intellectuals, were donated to Stanford's Green Library last year. In October of 2020, the Iranian Studies Program and the Green Library hosted a conference to celebrate the arrival of the collection, which includes hundreds of letters from some of Iran's most prominent intellectuals, thousands of pages of notes, and first drafts of many of Meskoob's manuscripts. The discussion of Meskoob's life and work included papers by Ali Banuazizi, Bahram Beyzaie, Reza Farokhfal, M.R. Ghanoonparvar, Sorour Kasmai, Hassan Kamshad, Ahmad Meskoob, and Abbas Milani, and was chaired by C. Ryan Perkins.

Stanford Festival of Iranian Arts



Akram Pedramnia:
Translating
Ulysses into
Persian: A Century
of Censorship

Amir Ahmadi
Arian: Then the
Fish Swallowed
Him

Book talk



Salar Abdoh: Out
of Mesopotamia

Book talk



Dalia Sofer: Man
of My Time

Book talk



Farzaneh
Omidvarnia:
Song Sparrow

Film screening &
discussion



Ala Mohseni:
“Ayyar e Tanha”

Film screening &
discussion



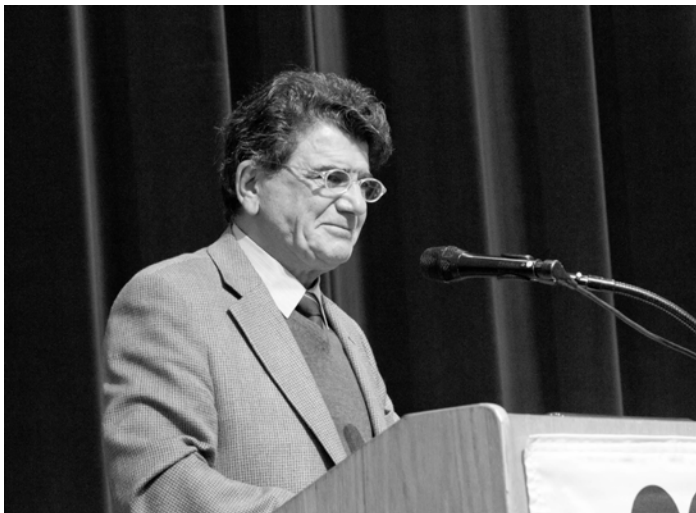
Domenico Ingenito:
Beholding Beauty:
Sa’di of Shiraz and
the Aesthetics of
Desire in Medieval
Persian Poetry





Clockwise from left: Maestros Rambod Sodeif, Shahram Nazeri, Hossein Alizadeh, Dariush Talai, Mohammadreza Darvishi, Ali Akbar Moradi, Fariba Davoodi.

Tribute Maestro Mohammad Reza Shajarian



Master vocalist Mohammad Reza Shajarian (1940-2020) captured the heart and soul of two generations of Iranians with his tender and thunderous voice (considered one of the 50 best voices of our time). A scholar, a master musician, and a subtly but powerful protest artist, he is known far beyond the borders of Iran. Born into a religious family in Meshed, he was not only a brilliant singer and song writer, but also a calligrapher and carpenter. His remarkable command of Persian

poetry—both classical and modern—allowed him to turn the lyrics of his songs into the voice of the voiceless, and a map for the trials and tribulation of a nation pressured by discordant forces of despotism, democracy, dogmatism and freedom. For Iranian music, he was a relentless guardian of tradition and a refreshing force for innovation and change. He combined genius and talent with dedication, discipline, and erudition. The result was a body of work singular in its depth, beauty, creativity, and unflinching in its dedication to justice and freedom.

In 2010, Maestro Shajarian was awarded the Bitá Prize for Persian Arts. In December of 2020, Iranian Studies celebrated his life and work with a tribute event. Several of the foremost masters of classical Iranian music who collaborated with Maestro Shajarian or were his student, joined the event to discuss his legacy and perform a piece of music in his memory; they included Maestros Rambod Sodeif, Shahram Nazeri, Hossein Alizadeh, Dariush Talai, Mohammadreza Darvishi, Ali Akbar Moradi, and Ms. Fariba Davoodi.

Conference: In Celebration of Bahram Beyzaie at Stanford



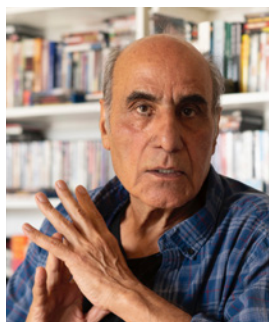
A conference in celebration of Bahram Beyzaie's 10-year anniversary at Stanford, brought scholars together (virtually) from around the world—including several from inside Iran—to discuss and reflect on Professor Beyzaie's remarkable work and

profound impact on the world of cinema and theater. Prof. Beyzaie provided recorded concluding remarks to finish the event. Over a thousand viewers from across five continents watched the conference.

The conference panelists included: Sahand Abidi, Hamid Amjad, Jaleh Amouzegar, Abbas Milani, Negar Mottahedeh, Amir Naderi, Amirhossein Siadat, Saeed Talajooy, Mandana Zandian, and Bahram Beyzaie. The

Iranian Studies Program is grateful to Mehran Taslimi and Shidan Taslimi for their support of this conference

Bahram Beyzaie is one of Iran's most acclaimed filmmakers, playwrights, and scholars of the history of Iranian theater, both secular and religious. He was a leader of the generation of filmmakers known as the Iranian New Wave, beginning in the late 1960s, and has since directed more than a dozen prize-winning films. He has also conducted pioneering research into the roots of ancient legends derived from Indo-Iranian mythology and known collectively as A Thousand and One Nights. He is that rare artist who is also an erudite critic and scholar of his myriad crafts. Born in Tehran, Beyzaie was for many years the head of the Theatre Arts Department at Tehran University. His two-volume study of the history of Iranian theater is still considered the authoritative account of this history. For the last ten years, he has been the Bitá Daryabari Lecturer of Iranian Studies at Stanford University, has staged several of his plays, and given workshops on Iranian mythology and cinema. He continues to teach courses on Iranian theater and cinema, as well as write and stage plays at Stanford.



Top row, left to right: Sahand Abidi, Hamid Amjad, Jaleh Amouzegar, Abbas Milani; bottom row, left to right: Negar Mottahedeh, Amir Naderi, Amirhossein Siadat, Saeed Talajooy, Mandana Zandian

Student Highlights

Iranian Studies Minor



Mustafa Tikka ('21) majored in International Relations and chose to pursue a Global Studies Minor in Iranian studies because he wanted to understand the interdisciplinary elements of the field better. He pursued minors in Political Science (concentrating on political economy and development) and History (Global

History) as well. These individual programs built on each other as supporting elements to aid his understanding of International Relations. The Global Studies minor focused him on Iran and the study of Middle Eastern and

South Asian countries. “Besides enlightening, interactive, and immersive lectures by Professor Milani, another best opportunity to learn about Iran during the study has been through the stream of webinars and conferences under Hamid and Christina Moghadam Program in Iranian Studies and the Stanford Festival of Iranian Arts. Scholars from various fields shed light on the cultural, political, social, intellectual, and artistic aspects of Iran and its affairs. Therefore, the entire program has been marked by diversity and attractions.” He plans to continue his research and exploration of Islamic Republics at the University of Chicago. “The minor has reformed my preconceptions of conflict and revealed how it differs everywhere. It has equipped me with the skills, knowledge, and perspectives to explore other conflicts and socio-political conditions of Islamic Republics to assist my future research - and eventual work in policy formation.”

Student Internships

The Iranian Studies Program partners with Stanford Global Studies (SGS) to offer Stanford students an opportunity to extend classroom learning to immersive, cultural and professional experiences through the Global Studies Internship Program. Applications open in fall 2021.

“Through this internship, I was able to engage with a renowned professor and researcher of issues in the Middle East and better understand what it means to pursue research professionally.”

— **Noah Howard**, '22 International Relations, Iranian Studies minor



“My internship has allowed me to gain a deeper understanding of my academic specialization in the Middle East. As an International Relations major, it was a wonderful experience to use my academic expertise outside the classroom.”

— **Siena Fay**, '21 International Relations, Human Rights minor, French minor

Student Research

Alexandria Brown-Hedjazi, a Ph.D. candidate in art history with a certificate in Iranian studies worked with the David Rumsey Map Center at Stanford to curate a virtual exhibit titled “Mapping the Islamic World: The Ottoman, Safavid, & Mughal Empires.” These empires controlled vast territories during the early modern period (ca. 1500-1800). A rich cartographic exchange took place between these three empires and European powers, as maps were used to chart their expansive territories, military



campaigns, and trade routes. Through maps, miniatures, manuscripts, scientific instruments, as well as travel diaries and imperial genealogical charts, the exhibit mapped the sky, the sea, borders, cultures, and the ancient past of the Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal empires.

Quote from Alexandria: “A major highlight was delving deep into Iranian mapping practices that utilized scientific instruments such as the astronomer’s astrolabe. It was fascinating to learn how the astrolabe’s development carries such a deep attachment to Iranian civilization, emerging first in the medieval courts of the Abbasids and then developed further in the Safavid dynasty.”

Cooking Class Highlights

Global 104: Iranian Cuisine

“This class was the highlight of my year, and I am so grateful that I was able to learn and actively make food with you all! I love trying new foods, but the class took it to another level by teaching us how to make it! Being able to listen and ask questions to these amazing chefs was an unbelievable experience, and I took so much away. From the recipes to the readings on the history of Iranian Cuisine and its lasting effects on every corner of the globe, there are so many takeaways that I hold on to.”



~Bryant Montas Alexandre



Chef Najmieh Batmanglij (hailed as the “grande dame of Iranian cooking”) taught a session in Global 104: Iranian Cuisine on shirini (sweets). Other guest chefs included Naz Deravian, Hanif Sadr, and Hoss Zare. Global 104 will be offered again in spring 2022.

Alumni Spotlight

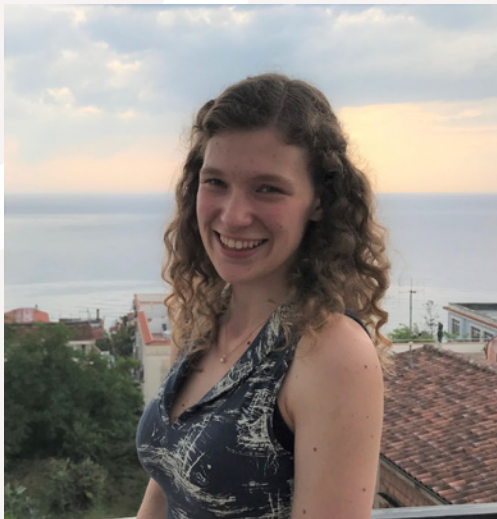


Daniel Khalessi

Daniel is currently a J.D. candidate at Stanford Law School. He graduated from Stanford in 2013 with a B.A. in International Relations with Honors from the Center for International Security and Cooperation (CISAC) and was the first student to receive a Certificate in Iranian Studies. While at Stanford, he interned for the office of Ambassador Susan Rice. He earned an M.A. from Yale's Jackson Institute for Global Affairs and an M.A. in Economics from Peking University in China as a Yenching Scholar. Before returning to Stanford, Daniel co-founded Fireside, a digital town hall, and worked at Harvard's Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs. Most recently, he became the first Iranian-American and first Muslim to be elected president of the Stanford Law Review.

Daniel recently reflected on his undergraduate experience as an Iranian Studies student:

"Fusing history, politics, economics, and cultural analysis, the Hamid and Christina Moghadam Program in Iranian Studies taught me to stretch my imagination to consider ways to have an impact on U.S.-Iran relations and U.S. foreign policy more broadly...The Program was a major centerpiece of my undergraduate career and opened doors that I had not even considered. I am grateful to the program for providing me with an opportunity for deep introspection into my goals, aspirations, and the meaning of being an American of Iranian descent."



Anna Hollingsworth

Anna graduated from Stanford in 2016 with a B.A. in History and was the first student to minor in Iranian Studies. She is currently pursuing a Master of Architecture degree and works as a consultant assistant planner at Group 4 Architecture. Anna found her way to Iranian Studies through her interest in history but continues to find it relevant to work today: "My interest in Iran has continued to inform and inspire my current graduate studies in architecture" and that "Iran's art, architecture, music, and films continue to inspire people around the world."

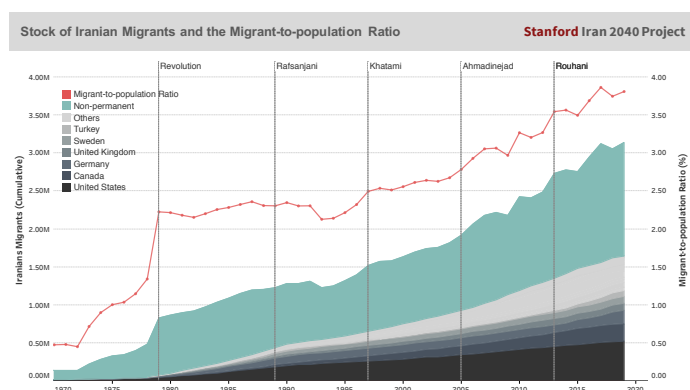
Stanford Iran 2040 Project

Forthcoming Publication by Stanford University Press

The Struggle for Development in Iran

Authors: Pooya Azadi, Mohsen B. Mesgaran, Matin Mirramezani

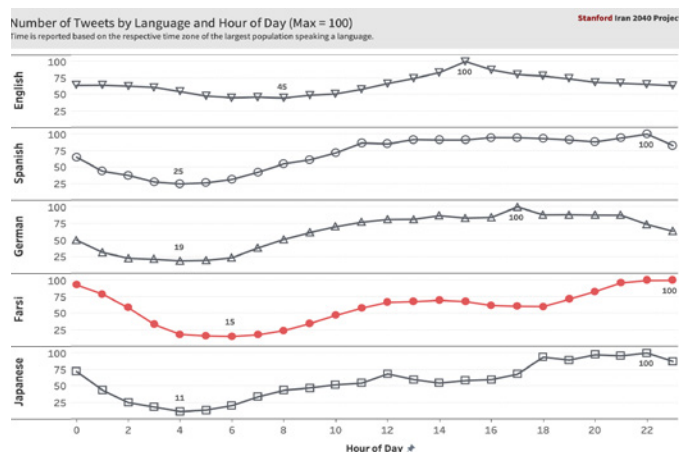
This book offers a multidimensional analysis of Iran's struggle for development over half a century between 1970 and 2020. Much of the content of this book is positive economics and data-driven analysis with a focus on fundamentals, institutions, and long-term trends, covering a wide array of topics such as governance, corruption, macroeconomy, population dynamics, labor force, education, financial system, energy resources, water scarcity, and food security. The text has been written in clear and concise language which makes it accessible to a broad readership. Forthcoming by SUP in 2022.



New Publication

“The Clash of Ideologies on Persian Twitter”

By Pooya Azadi, Mohsen B. Mesgaran, June 2021



Trends in the average number of tweets by language and hour of day in local time.

The recent publication presents a data-driven analysis of the Persian Twittersphere from a political perspective to demonstrate how the balance of power in the battle of ideas and ideologies has evolved over time, both in numeric terms and qualitatively. Users were categorized into three broad political groups: dissidents, neutrals (or nonpolitical), and pro-regime (encompassing the Islamic Republic's officials, reformists, cyberbasij army, and the regime's supporters abroad) by a supervised machine learning model. While there is a wide range of competing or even adversarial ideologies and agendas within each of these groups, the paper describes trends across the fault line of desire for regime change.”



Pooya Azadi



Mohsen B. Mesgaran



Matin Mirramezani

News & Publications

Selection of Recent Faculty Publications

A Scholar for Our Times: A Celebration of the Life and Work of Shahrokh Meskoob, edited by Abbas Milani and C. Ryan Perkins with contributions from Bahram Beyzaie, Ali Banuazizi, Reza Farokhfal, M.R. Ghanoonparvar, Hassan Kamshad, Sorour Kasmai and Abbas Milani, Mage Publishers, November 30, 2021

"The End of the Islamic Republic," Abbas Milani, Project Syndicate, June 22, 2021

"Meskoob and his Reading of Iranian Mythology," Bahram Beyzaie, Bokhara, February 2021

"What Has Gone Wrong Between Iran and the United States?" Abbas Milani, The New York Times, January 22, 2021

"Remember his Name and Cry! In memory of Master Shajarian - a poem," Bahram Beyzaie, Bokhara, December 2020

"The Birth and Modernity of Beyzaie (in Persian)," Abbas Milani, BBC Persian, December 26, 2020

"Rustam and Tahmineh (an epic shadow play)," Bahram Beyzaie, Bokhara, October 2020

"Iran deserves a red card for its human rights abuses," Shirin Ebadi, Abbas Milani, and Hamid Moghadam, The Hill, October 7, 2020

Looking Forward

We welcome the coming year with a gradual return to normal. We look forward to returning to campus, to seeing students and colleagues again, and to engaging with you in person while maintaining a virtual presence for the new international audience that has tuned in each week this past year.

We encourage you to browse our recently re-designed website at iranianstudies.stanford.edu, stay tuned for new audio streaming options including iTunes and Spotify, and follow us across social media.

In the 2021-2022 academic year, plans are underway for the Bitá Prize award ceremony, the staging of a new play by Professor Bahram Beyzaie, our ongoing lecture series, and the addition of several performances.

Thank you for your continued support of the Hamid and Christina Moghadam Program in Iranian Studies at Stanford University.

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