

؛Language Learning Saves Lives!

Persian 403

Modern Persian Literature: *A Survey*

Fall 2020 | Tue. & Thur. 3:30-5:20 | Virtual

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Pronoun: او / he

Office hours: By appointment on [Calendly](#)

Modernism is a catch-all term that refers to vastly diverse experiences, ideas and forms of artistic, cinematic, and literary expression, composed and canonized in the past hundred and fifty years in the context of Persian literature— itself a debatable framework. In *Persian 403*, we will not seek to define what is modern (and what is not). Instead, we will read and discuss a selection of highly-read and inspirational literary works that Persian-speakers have read as modern. Our focus this quarter will be on different types of prose: novels, short stories, memoirs, legal writings, and travelogues. Where relevant, we will also engage cinematic and artistic works that complement our readings. Ultimately, *Persian 403* is an advanced-level *language* course that follows the sequence of second-year Persian at the University of Washington. Therefore, students will not be evaluated on their readings of literature. Instead, they will be assessed only by their comprehension and production of language.

Course Materials: Will be provided in print or PDF format throughout the course.

Prerequisite: Completion of two years of Persian *or* my consent.

Course Objectives:

1. **Consolidate** grammatical foundation and **expand** vocabulary with which to **understand** works of modern literature and **discuss** social, cultural, and political issues represented therein.
2. Gain basic **familiarity** with key cultural and historical turning points embedded in modern Persian prose.
3. **Examine** and **contextualize** thematic concepts in various modern Persian literary forms through the aid of primary readings, in-class discussions, and a final project.
4. **Expand** your notions of **diversity** and inclusivity on the basis of the diverse representations of cultural identities that emerge from some of the key texts of the modern Persian prose canon.

Why is this course good for your life?

We live within a socio-political system that produces difference along racial, linguistic, and religious lines as a mechanism to otherize those who do not possess a certain level of material possession, lack a certain legal status, speak a non-dominant language, and have a dark skin tone. The racialization of the other has been baked into this system; therefore tweaking or reforming it will not do. To reverse its work on an individual level, we must deepen our range of understanding and empathy toward cultures that have been flagged as fundamentally different from our own. Language learning can offer us a chance at expanding our range of empathy and developing anti-racist ideas; it can be a form of collective therapy and defiance against systems that produce difference and justify discriminatory behavior based on such difference.

Grading breakdown:

Participation.....40%

→ I will assess your participation based on two categories: your level of preparation in class (doing the week's readings and speaking in class) and doing post-class discussions and engaging with your peers on Canvas.

Presentations.....20%

→ You will give one presentation during the last week of the course on your final project. See rubric for more information (Canvas → Files → Rubrics & Templates).

Vocabulary list.....10%

→ Each week, you are expected to keep a list of 15-20 new words. To see a template: Go to Canvas → Files → Rubrics & Templates. On December 18, you will turn in your entire vocabulary list for 8 weeks which should be a minimum of 120 words or a maximum of 160.

Final.....30%

→ There will be no final exam, instead you will work toward your final project during the quarter. To see the prompt and deadlines, Go to Canvas → Files → Rubrics & Templates.

Total.....100%

**A = 4.0-3.9 | A- = 3.8-3.5 | B+ = 3.4-3.2 | B = 3.1-2.9 | B- = 2.8-2.5 | C+ = 2.4-2.2
C = 2.1-1.9 | C- = 1.8-1.5 | D+ = 1.4-1.2 | D = 1.1-0.9 | D- = 0.8-0.7 | E = 0.0**

Participation: In a language/literature course, it is vital that you be there and participate. Office hours may not be used to compensate for absences. If you need accommodation for any personal reason, please talk to me.



- **Punctuality:** being on time to class shows respect & commitment. If you need any specific accommodation, please talk to me. Regular tardiness may result in being marked absent: side effects include but are not limited to low participation grade, cranky instructor, and judgy classmates.

- **Etiquette:** we will adhere to *adab* or polite behavior at all times by being respectful in class, supportive of our peers' inquiries and output, and intellectually vulnerable when discussing culturally and personally sensitive issues.

- **Inclusion:** We are a colorful tapestry, like an Afghan kilim. All are welcome in class. By all, I mean whoever may be reading this (or to whomever this sentence may be read or translated).

- **To-catch-a-predator:** I assume any work that bears your name is yours truly. *#integrity*. Seeking help from a tutor or a family member is OK only if they're helping you to polish your grammar and restructure your thoughts. Briefly put, the composition is your own work.
- **Final grade** is indeed *final*. No چانه زنی or bargaining in the bazaar of grades, please. I will ignore any such emails.
- **Resources:**
 - Dictionaries
 - Persian-English [dictionaries](#)
 - Persian-Persian dictionaries: [Dehkhoda](#), [Vazhehyab](#) & [Vazheh](#)
 - [Dictionary of Persian expressions](#)
 - Pronunciation
 - [Fovo](#)
 - Translation
 - [Corpus dictionary](#)

DISCLAIMER: THE USE OF GOOGLE "TRANSLATOR" IS DIVINELY FORBIDDEN



Schedule

(In 2020, certainty is worth squat, all dates are therefore tentative)

#	Date	Agenda	Theme	Due
1	Thursday, Oct. 1	Agenda: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meet & Greet - Aria's presentation on humans vs. monuments - Class discussion 	رو در رو با تاریخ: انسان و سازه هایش Facing History: Humans and Their Monuments	- Bring thy enthusiasm
2	Tuesday, Oct. 6	Agenda for Tuesday: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discussing the documentary <i>Coup 1953</i> - Going over syllabus and rubrics - How to use 	کودتای ۲۸ مرداد: بازدید رویدادی سرنوشت ساز Revisiting a Fateful	

2	Thursday, Oct. 8	<p>Persian-Persian dictionaries</p> <p>Agenda for Thursday:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Going over Homa Sarshar's interview with Sha'ban Ja'fari - Class discussion - What does Persian Twitter say? 	Event: Coup 1953	
3	<p>Tuesday, Oct. 13</p> <p>Thursday, Oct. 15</p>	<p>Agenda for Tue.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Going over Sadeq Hedayat's <i>Tup-e Morvari</i> (excerpt) <p>Agenda for Thur.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tbd 	<p>به چالش کشیدن نگاه استعماری</p> <p>Challenging the Colonial Gaze</p>	- Introduces in class 5 guests selected for final project
4	<p>Tuesday, Oct. 20</p> <p>Thursday, Oct. 22</p>	<p>Agenda for Tue.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Going over Samad Behrangi's <i>Mahi-ye siyah-e kuchulu</i> (excerpt) <p>Agenda for Thur.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tbd 	<p>ادبیات کودک و تمثیل های سیاسی</p> <p>Children's Literature and Political Allegories</p>	
5	<p>Tuesday, Oct. 27</p> <p>Thursday, Oct. 29</p>	<p>Agenda for Tue.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Going over Iraj Pezeshkzad's <i>Da'i Jan Napel'on</i> (excerpt) <p>Agenda for Thur.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tbd 	<p>هویت ملی و تاریخ در طنز</p> <p>National Identity and History through Satire</p>	
6	<p>Tuesday, Nov. 3</p> <p>Thursday, Nov. 5</p>	<p>Agenda for Tue.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Going over Shahrnush Parsipur's <i>Zanan bedun-e Mardan</i> (excerpt) <p>Agenda for Thur.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tbd 	<p>کودتای ۲۸ مرداد: یک دریافت ادبی</p> <p>The Coup of 1953: A Literary Take</p>	

7	Tuesday, Nov. 10 Thursday, Nov. 12	<p>Agenda for Tue.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reality check: Is the US still a democracy? <i>Inshallah!</i> - Going over Jalal Al-e Ahmad's text <p>Agenda for Thur.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tbd 	<p>در ولایتی غریب آشنا: سفرنامه اسرائیل</p> <p>In a Foreign (yet) Familiar Land: The Israel Travelogue</p>	
8	Tuesday, Nov. 17 Thursday, Nov. 19	<p>Agenda for Tue.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Going over the text of the Constitution of Afghanistan <p>Agenda for Thur.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tbd 	<p>نوشتن قانون اساسی: مورد افغانستان</p> <p>Drafting the Constitution: The Case of Afghanistan</p>	
9	Tuesday, Nov. 24 Thursday, Nov. 26	<p>Agenda for Tue.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Going over Mohammad Bahman-Beigi's short story <p>Agenda for Thur.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tbd 	<p>آموزش ملی و فرهنگ عشایری و آموزش</p> <p>National Education and Nomadic Culture</p>	
10	Tuesday, Dec. 1 Thursday, Dec. 3	<p>Agenda for Tue.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Going over Zoya Pirzad's short story <p>Agenda for Thur.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tbd 	<p>جمال شناسی زندگی روزمره</p> <p>The Aesthetics of Quotidian Life</p>	
11	Tuesday, Dec. 8 Thursday, Dec. 10	<p>Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student presentations (say what!) 		
*	December 18 by Noon	<p>Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vocabulary List - Final Project 		