

**MEL3212017141670**

**Forugh Farrokhzâd and Her Poetry**

Spring 2017, UT Austin

MEL 321 (41670), MES 342 (41925), CL 323 (33700), WGS 340 (46975)

TTh 11 am-12:15 pm, CAL 323

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In recent years the popularity of poet Forugh Farrokhzad (1935-1967) has burgeoned in Iran to the point where she stands as a cult or even national hero for some people and as the most discussed female figure in the 1,100-year history of Persian literature. This **Forugh Farrokhzâd and Her Poetry** course, offered on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the poet's death at 32 years of age in 1967, examines the factors in her remarkable popularity in Iran and abroad through a study of her life, an appreciative reading of her major poems, and an examination of the social and cultural context in which she lived and which transformed from the Pahlavi monarchy (1921/5-1979) into the Islamic Republic of Iran (1979- ).

The first woman in the 1,100-year history of Persian literature to present recognizably individuated feminine speakers in her verse, Farrokhzad is a leading figure among the modernist Iranian poets whose works challenged traditional(ist) Persian poetry in the second half of the 20th century, prominent among them Nima Yushij (1895-1960), Ahmad Shamlu (1925-2000), Nader Naderpur (1929-2000), Mehdi Akhavan-e Sales (1928-1990), and Sohrab Sepehri (1928-1980). In fact, Farrokhzad's arguably autobiographical verse may make her the most modernist of the leading poets of her era.

As for cultural, social, and political factors in Farrokhzâd's popularity, her life and poetry stand as dramatic testimony to one individualistic, modern woman's response to the inequities that Iranian women faced in the later Pahlavi Era (1921-1979). In this regard, the course aims to characterize both Farrokhzâd's poetry *qua* poetry and to lead students to an appreciation of relevant literature and society issues, e.g.: Farrokhzad's relationship (and challenge) to the literary traditions in which she wrote; her distinctive female/feminine point of view, focus, and subject matter in writing; and her use of poetry as a vehicle for self-revelation and self-realization. Such self-revelation has particular significance both because of its cultural unexpectedness in the Persian/Iranian tradition and because of consequent and often negative mainstream reaction to it.

Required course texts are: *A Lonely Woman: Forugh Farrokhzad and Her Poetry* and an anthology of Farrokhzad poems in translation called *Sounds and a Voice That Remain* by Michael Craig Hillmann (both available online at [www.utexas.Academia.edu/MichaelHillmann](http://www.utexas.Academia.edu/MichaelHillmann) and in the course Dropbox folder); an English summary outline of *Forugh Farrokhzâd: Zendegi'nâme-yê Adabi* [Forugh Farrokhzâd: A Literary Autobiography] by Farzaneh Milani (in the course Dropbox folder); *A Room of One's Own* by Virginia Woolf (in the course Dropbox folder); a packet of photocopied materials, including critical essays and the course bibliography (in the course Dropbox folder); and *How to Suppress Women's Writing* (1983) by Joanna Russ.

In addition to regular class sessions, course participants will attend a half-day **Forugh Farrokhzad Fifty Years Later Seminar** on Saturday, 4 February 2017, from 2 to 8 pm, featuring these presentations: "Images of Forugh Farrokhzad" by Michael Craig Hillmann; "Teaching Farrokhzad's Poems" by Blake

Atwood; “Truth Was Those Two Hands: Forugh Farrokhzad's Legacy in the Arts and Literature of the Iranian Diaspora” by Jasmin Darznik; “The Role and Effects of Forugh’s Poetry in the History of Persian Literature” (in Persian) by Maryam Sadeghi; “Pivotal Issues in *Forugh Farrokhzad: A Literary Autobiography* (in Persian) by Farzaneh Milani; and Farrokhzad's Poems–Readings (in Persian, with screen projection of translations) by Maryam Sadeghi with *setar* musical accompaniment by Alireza Haydari.

Course grades are based on: class participation (10% of the course grade); eight two-page papers, each analyzing a specific, assigned poem (4% of the course grade each), a book report on a study of Iranian women chosen from a list in the course bibliography (18% of the course grade), and a final essay examination (40% of the course grade). The grading scale is: A (93-100), A- (90-92), B+ (87-89), B (83-86), B- (80-82), C+ (77-79), C (73-76), C- (70-72), D+ (67-69), D (63-66), D- (60-62), and F (0-59). Students who miss a class or a recitation or an oral report to observe a religious holy day will have the opportunity to complete the missed work.

Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities at 471-6259 (voice) or 232-2937 (video phone) or <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd>.

**Note:** Course participants with advanced Persian reading skills can participate in a parallel PRS 130D course in which they read selected Farrokhzad course materials in the original Persian as presented in the context of advanced Persian reading lessons in *Classics of Persian Poetry: A Primer for Students* (2017) by Michael Craig Hillmann.

## Forugh Farrokhzad and Her Poetry Course Calendar Spring 2017.....CAL 323.....11:00 am–12:15 pm

1	T	Jan 17	“Images of Forugh Farrokhzad (1935-1967)”–A PowerPoint presentation.	
2	Th	Jan 19	Discussion of course goals, activities, and assignments. Using translations. Iranian culture and Persian poetry from their beginnings to 1900.	Writing Assignment #1 due.
3	T	Jan 24	Iranian culture and Persian poetry from 1900 to 1979. ”By the Riverbank” by Nimâ Yushij and “Winter” by Mehdi Akhavan-e Sâles	
4	Th	Jan 26	Farrokhzad’s “Call to Arms,” “To My Sister,” and “Wedding Band.”	
5	T	Jan 31	Farrokhzad’s “(The) Captive,” “The Wall,” and “Divine Rebellion.”	Writing Assignment #2 due.
6	Sa	Feb 4	<b>Forugh Farrokhzad 50 Years Later Seminar, MEZ 1.306, 2-8 pm,</b>	
7	T	Feb 7	Farrokhzad's life from birth in 1935 to 1958– <i>A Lonely Woman</i> , chapter 1. Farzaneh Milani’s <i>Forugh Farrokhzâd: A Literary Biography</i> (2016) Summary 1.	
8	Th	Feb 9	Farrokhzad's “The Sin,” “The Wall,” and “World of Shadows”	Writing Assignment #3 due.
9	T	Feb 14	“The Personal Is Political” (1969) by Carol Hanisch. Farrokhzad's “Wishes,” “Rebellion,” “A Poem for You,” and “Return.”	
10	Th	Feb 16	<i>How To Suppress Women's Writing</i> by Joanna Russ 1.	
11	T	Feb 21	<i>How To Suppress Women's Writing</i> by Joanna Russ 2.	
12	Th	Feb 23	Farrokhzad's life from 1958 to 1967– <i>A Lonely Woman</i> , chapter 2. Milani’s <i>Forugh Farrokhzâd: A Literary Autobiography</i> Summary 2.	Writing Assignment #4 due.
13	T	Feb 28	Farrokhzad's “Friday,” “The Wind Will Carry Us Away,” and “My Lover.”	
14	Th	Mar 2	Forugh Farrokhzâd Chronology; <i>A Lonely Woman</i> , chapter 3.	
15	T	Mar 7	<i>A Room of One’s Own</i> by Virginia Woolf.	
16	Th	Mar 9	Farrokhzad's “In the Cold Streets of the Night”	Writing Assignment #5 due.
17	T	Mar 21	Farrokhzad's “The Windup Doll” and “Divine Rebellion.”	
18	Th	Mar 23	Farrokhzad's “Conquest of the Garden” and “Green Delusion.”	
19	T	Mar 28	<i>A Lonely Woman</i> , chapter 4; Farrokhzad's “Red Rose,” and “Window.”	
20	Th	Mar 30	Farrokhzad's “Earthy Verses” and “O Jewel-studded Land.”	Writing Assignment #6 due.
21	T	Apr 4	Farrokhzad's “Someone Who Is Not Like Anyone Else.”	
22	Th	Apr 6	Farrokhzad's “Another Birth.”	
23	T	Apr 11	<i>A Lonely Woman</i> , chapter 5. Farrokhzad’s “I Feel Sorry for the Garden.”	
24	Th	Apr 13	Modernist Persian poetry in the later Pahlavi Era, 1953-1979	Writing Assignment #7 due.
25	T	Apr 18	“Forugh Farrokhzad and the Persian Literary Canon” (2017) by Shaahin Pishbin. Milani’s <i>Forugh Farrokhzâd: A Literary Autobiography</i> Summary 3.	
26	Th	Apr 20	Forugh Farrokhzad and Sylvia Plath (1932-1963).	
27	T	Apr 25	Farrokhzad's “Those Days” and “It Is Only Sound That Remains.”	
28	Th	Apr 27	Farrokhzad's “Let Us Believe in the Beginning of the Cold Season.”	Writing Assignment #8 due.
29	T	May 2	“Forough Goes West: The Legacy of Forough Farrokhzad in Iranian Diasporic Art and Literature” (2010) by Jasmin Darznik.	
30	Th	May 4	Poetic self-realization and self-revelation as political actions in Persian poetry. Book Reports due. Final Examination.	

date/time  
to be announced