

Indigenous Feminism: Afghan and Iranian Women's Lives Under the Theocratic State
New University in Exile Consortium Spring 2024

Seminar leaders:

Dr. Naima Mohammadi is a visiting scholar at the Sexuality, Gender, and Women Studies Center (SGWS) at the University of Pittsburgh. Her studies focus on Muslim women issues in non-Muslim majority environments.

Dr. Sahraa Karimi is an [Afghan](#) film director and teacher currently based in Italy, who was notably the first female chairperson of the [Afghan Film Organization](#) (Afghan Film). She has directed 30 short films, 3 documentary films, and one fiction film [Hava, Maryam, Ayesha](#) which had the world premiere at the 76th Venice Film Festival. Before the [fall of Kabul](#) to the Taliban, she was the first and the only woman to direct Afghanistan's film entity

Seminar Description:

This 10-week online seminar will provide participants with a deeper understanding of indigenous feminism and the forms of oppression, marginalization, and misrecognition that they are designed to oppose. Focusing on Indigenous women as well as members of sexual minorities, participants will examine the resources offered by intersectional and de-colonial feminist approaches as they are formulated and practiced in Iran and Afghanistan.

Participants will also study various emerging indigenous social movements and explore ways of producing emancipatory knowledge in the service of decolonization and indigenous sovereignty. In each session, co-leaders will open a dialogue to identify, compare, and analyze the situation of Iranian and Afghan women under a patriarchal culture and the dominance of theocratic states. Finally, this seminar will investigate the capacity of civil society, public opinion, and social media to provoke and sustain social resistance in each context.

Weekly Readings

Week 1: Seminar Overview

An Introduction to Iran and Afghanistan: Indigenous Research Methodologies

Week 2: Indigenous Feminism: Making Space for Indigenous Feminism

Readings:

- Chapter 1. Taking Account of Aboriginal Feminism - Joyce Green

Films:

- *Worth of a Girl: Hope and Survival of Child Brides*
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J6wzZsEvY84>
- *Thousands Of Afghan Women Jailed For 'Moral Crime'*
 - <https://youtu.be/xfltt3-Zig?si=PIVqML6avAa2u4ly>
- *Divorce in Sharia Style:*
 - <https://youtu.be/Nos1V9Rf1U?si=s4HX20tOT1QZrcn9>

Week 3: Women's Lives under Sharia Law in Iran and Afghanistan

Readings:

- Mir-Hosseini, Z. (2006). Muslim women's quest for equality: Between Islamic law and feminism. *Critical Inquiry*, 32(4), 629-645.

Films:

- *Afghan Women Behind the Wheel*
 - <https://alefjo.com/films/afganske-zeny-za-volantom-2/>
 - <https://vimeo.com/153122208>
 - **password:** moteshakkeram

Week 4: Dress Code in Iran and Afghanistan

Readings:

- "Mohammadi, N., & Hazeri, A. M. (2021). Two different narratives of Hijab in Iran: Burqa and Niqab. *Sexuality & Culture*, 25(2), 680-699.

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Films:

- *Life Behind the Burqa in Afghanistan:*
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=otN8QMPrgIs&t=29s>
- *Half Value Life by Alka Sadat*
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UwY-BDYOk8>

Week 5: Social Resistance in Iran and Afghanistan

Readings:

- Chapter 7: Practicing Indigenous Feminism Resistance to Imperialism- Makere Stewart-Harawira

Films:

- *Parlika*
 - <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt11136348/>
 - <https://vimeo.com/187211440>
 - password: suraya2021\

Optional:

- *Bread and Roses:*
 - <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt27599265/reference/>

Week 6: Women on Social Media

Readings:

- Akhavan, Niki (2015). "Social Media and the Islamic Republic." In *Social Media in Iran Politics and Society after 2009* (213-230), David M. Faris, Babak Rahimi (Eds). Albany: State University of New York Press.
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Films:

- *Love Crimes of Kabul*
 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X_Bc2n4PByY

Optional:

- *A Thousand Girls Like Me*
 - <https://www.kanopy.com/en/product/thousand-girls-me>

Week 7: Women and Education in Iran and Afghanistan

Readings:

- Hoodfar, H. (2007). Women, religion and the 'Afghan Education Movement in Iran. *The Journal of Development Studies*, 43(2), 265-293.

Films:

- *An Afghan girl's dream for education*
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U9hkBqnWvA8&t=22s>
- *What women in Afghanistan want you to know*
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o95Mt48xVgM>
- *SOLA: Daring to educate Afghanistan's girls*
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jk00DGehXvo>
- *How has life changed for Afghan Women since the Taliban took power*
 - <https://youtu.be/it-TgEfxUaQ?si=ndeDMfctfkXa7TuS>

Week 8: Afghan Women Refugees in Iran

Readings:

- Hoodfar, H. (2004). Families on the Move: the Changing Role of Afghan Refugee Women in Iran. *Hawwa*, 2(2), 141-171.

Films:

- *Sonita*
 - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sonita_\(film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sonita_(film))

Week 9: The role of Global Feminism to improve indigenous Feminism in Iran and Afghanistan

Readings:

- Ranjoo Seodu Herr; Reclaiming Third World Feminism: or Why Transnational Feminism Needs Third World Feminism. *Meridians* 1 March 2014; 12 (1): 1–30. doi: <https://doi.org/10.2979/meridians.12.1.1>

Films:

- *Hava, Maryam, Ayesha*
 - <https://vimeo.com/347890784>
 - Password: hava_8585434

Week 10: Conclusion: Features and future of the women in Iran and Afghanistan