



A Social History of Iranian Cinema, Volume 2: The Industrializing Years, 1941–1978

Hamid Naficy

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Hamid Naficy is one of the world's leading authorities on Iranian film, and *A Social History of Iranian Cinema* is his magnum opus. Covering the late nineteenth century to the early twenty-first and addressing documentaries, popular genres, and art films, it explains Iran's peculiar cinematic production modes, as well as the role of cinema and media in shaping modernity and a modern national identity in Iran. This comprehensive social history unfolds across four volumes, each of which can be appreciated on its own.

Volume 2 spans the period of Mohammad Reza Shah's rule, from 1941 until 1978. During this time Iranian cinema flourished and became industrialized, at its height producing more than ninety films each year. The state was instrumental in building the infrastructures of the cinema and television industries, and it instituted a vast apparatus of censorship and patronage. During the Second World War the Allied powers competed to control the movies shown in Iran. In the following decades, two distinct indigenous cinemas emerged. The more popular, traditional, and commercial *filmfarsi* movies included tough-guy films and the "stewpot" genre of melodrama, with plots reflecting the rapid changes in Iranian society. The new-wave cinema was a smaller but more influential cinema of dissent, made mostly by foreign-trained filmmakers and modernist writers opposed to the regime. Ironically, the state both funded and censored much of the new-wave cinema, which grew bolder in its criticism as state authoritarianism consolidated. A vital documentary cinema also developed in the prerevolutionary era.

A Social History of Iranian Cinema

Volume 1: The Artisanal Era, 1897–1941

Volume 2: The Industrializing Years, 1941–1978

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