



Negar Mottahedeh

Visiting Professor, Iranian Studies

Bio

BIO

I am a cultural critic and theorist specializing in interdisciplinary contributions to the fields of Middle Eastern Studies and Film & Media Studies. I have published five books on Iranian Cinema, the history of reform, revolution and the uses of various media in protest. My book *"#iranelection: Hashtag Solidarity and the Transformation of Online Life"* (Stanford University Press, 2015) is about one such social media mobilization. *"#iranelection"* follows the protest movement around Iran's fraudulent presidential election in 2009 to investigate how the emerging social media platforms of the era developed as a result of the international solidarity around the hashtag. Just as the world turned to social media platforms to understand the events on the ground, social media platforms adapted and developed to accommodate global activism. *"#iranelection"* reveals the new online ecology of social protest and offers a prehistory, of sorts, to the uses of hashtags and trending topics, of selfies and avatar activism, citizen journalism and YouTube mashups.

My most recent book *Whisper Tapes: Kate Millett in Iran* (Stanford UP, 2019) which was translated into Persian and published by Naakojaa Press in 2026 draws on The Kate Millett papers in the Sallie Bingham Center for Women's History & Culture in the Duke archives to recover the lost history of the women's protests that followed quickly on the heels of Ayatollah Khomeini's ascent to power as the leader of the Iranian Revolution. Less than a month after the Iranian Revolution of 1979, the American feminist Kate Millett traveled to Tehran to join Iranian women in a celebration of International Women's Day. As the celebration turned into six days of demonstrations, Millett's picture appeared in major International newspapers as a participant. She was pictured holding a small tape recorder. These tapes, Millett's "whisper tapes," captured the soundscape of a flickering (and unfettered) moment of revolutionary vitality that spawned imaginative narratives and theories among feminists around the world. As I listened to Millett's audio tapes and in between the often contradictory layering of voices and sounds captured on them, I began writing the *Whisper Tapes* as a playful interpretive guide for Millett in retrospect – a guide to the demands of postrevolutionary Iran in 32 entries following the 32 letters of the Persian alphabet, introducing the reader to the Revolution's slogans, its habits, its instincts, its foods, its monuments, its collectivism, its cast of characters and importantly to the Iranian women's movement—a movement some have claimed Millett herself never quite grasped.

Here's a link to the book in Persian translation:

<https://shorturl.at/1pEBa>

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- Visiting Professor, Iranian Studies

Teaching

COURSES

2026-27

- Iranian Visionary: On 'Abdu'l-Baha's Modernism: GLOBAL 140 (Aut)