Farzin Vejdani received his BA from McGill University (2001) and his PhD from Yale University (2009). He is currently Assistant Professor of History at Ryerson University. His book, *Making History in Iran: Education, Nationalism, and Print Culture*, was published by Stanford University Press in 2014. He is the co-editor of *Iran Facing Others: Identity Boundaries in a Historical Perspective* (2012). In addition to being the author of two book chapters, he has published articles in the *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, the *Journal of Religious History*, the *Journal of Persianate Studies*, and the *International Journal of Turkish Studies*. His research interests include Iranian nationalism and historiography, transnational Persian print networks, connected histories of the Ottoman Empire and Iran, and everyday urban crime in late Qajar Iran. At Ryerson, he teaches courses on the history of everyday life in Middle Eastern and North African cities, the history of the modern Middle East, and the history of Islamic civilization.

**Writing History in Iran:**

**Education, Nationalism, and Print Culture**

History in Iran was long told through a variety of stories and legends, tribal lore and genealogies, and tales of the prophets. But in the late nineteenth century, new institutions emerged to produce and circulate a coherent history that fundamentally reshaped these fragmented narratives. This paper investigates this transformation to show how educational institutions and a growing public sphere affected the writing of history, and how in turn this writing defined Iranian nationalism. Interactions between the state and a cross-section of Iranian society—scholars, schoolteachers, students, intellectuals, feminists, and poets—were crucial in shaping a new understanding of nation and history. Drawing on previously unexamined primary sources, Vejdani demonstrates how the social locations of historians influenced their interpretations of the past. The relative autonomy of these historians had a direct bearing on whether history upheld the status quo or became an instrument for radical change, and the writing of history became central to debates on social and political reform, the role of women in society, and the criteria for citizenship and nationality.

**Friday, April 10, 12:30 - 1:50 pm**

**Luce 202, 34 Hillhouse Ave.**

*Light lunch will be provided*

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