

Winter 2020/2021

History 87/187

The Islamic Republics: Politics and Society in Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan

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Office Hours: Fridays,
1:00-3:00 pm PST

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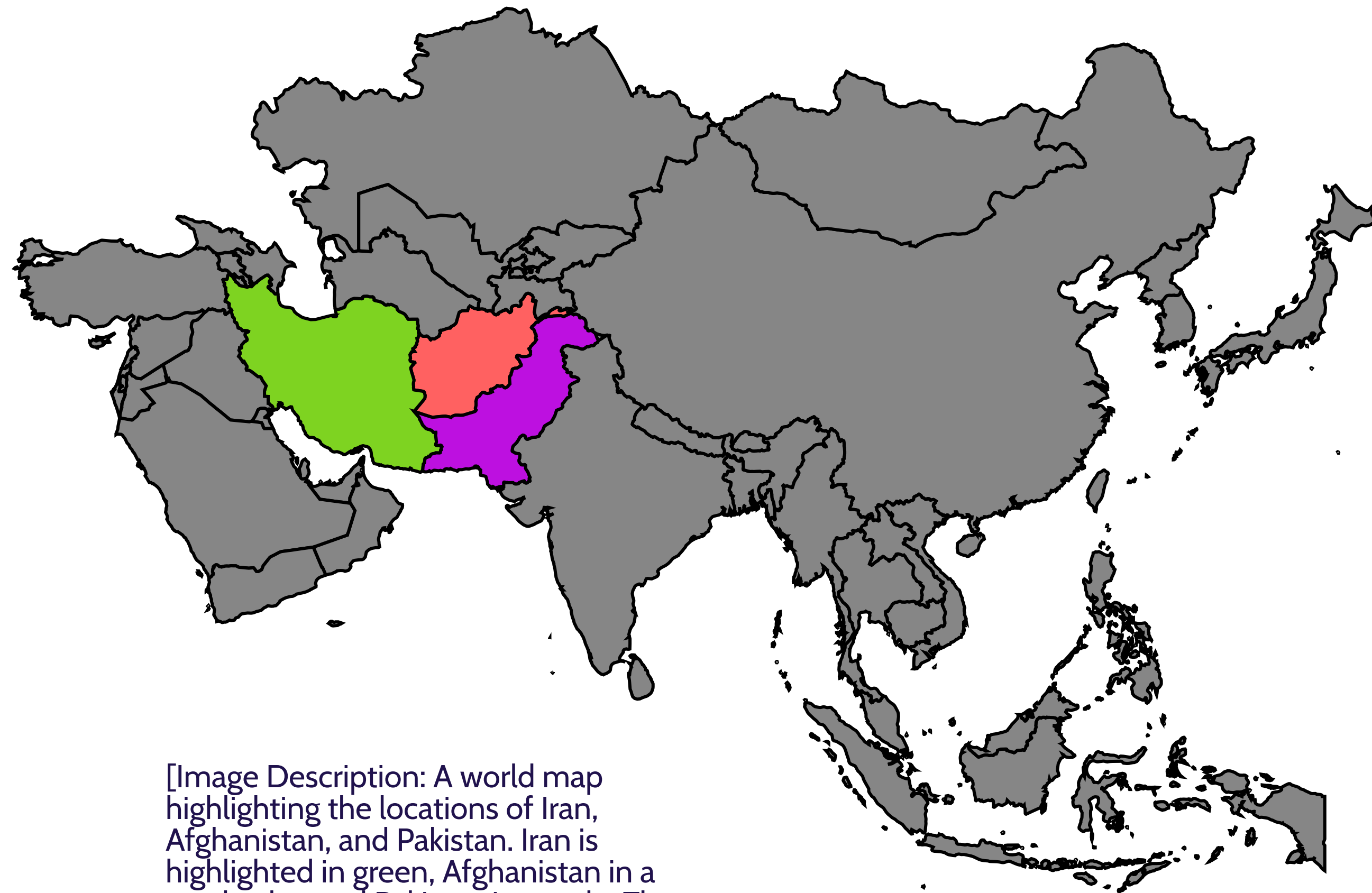
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9:30 am-11:30 am PST

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10:00 am-12:00 pm PST



[Image Description: A world map highlighting the locations of Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. Iran is highlighted in green, Afghanistan in a coral color, and Pakistan in purple. The surrounding countries are gray.]

What does it mean to live in an “Islamic Republic”? How have the more than 300 million citizens of these states reconciled demands for popular sovereignty and the application of God’s law?



[Image Description: A photograph of Tehran, Iran with the snow-covered Alborz Mountains in the background.]

Our Themes



Revolution

The Iranian Revolution, the Afghan jihad, and Islamist militancy



Islamic Law

Controversy, debate, resistance



Ethnic Diversity, Nationalism, and Sectarianism

Who belongs to 'the nation', and who rules in the name of which Islam'?



Democracy, Secularism, Populism

Divine law and the ballot box



Gender and Sexuality

The politics of femininity, masculinity and gay, trans-, and non-binary sexualities



Geopolitics

War, terror, occupation, narcopolitics

Learning Goals



[Image Description: A photograph of a mosque complex in Isfahan, Iran. The mosque is decorated by tiles with designs that are blue and gold colored. The photograph shows a view of the mosque as if you are looking up at it from the ground, and a view of the sky with many white clouds takes up much of the photo.]

1 To develop a global historical framework for understanding change in Muslim societies

2 To grasp the dynamic interplay of Islamic interpretation and political authority

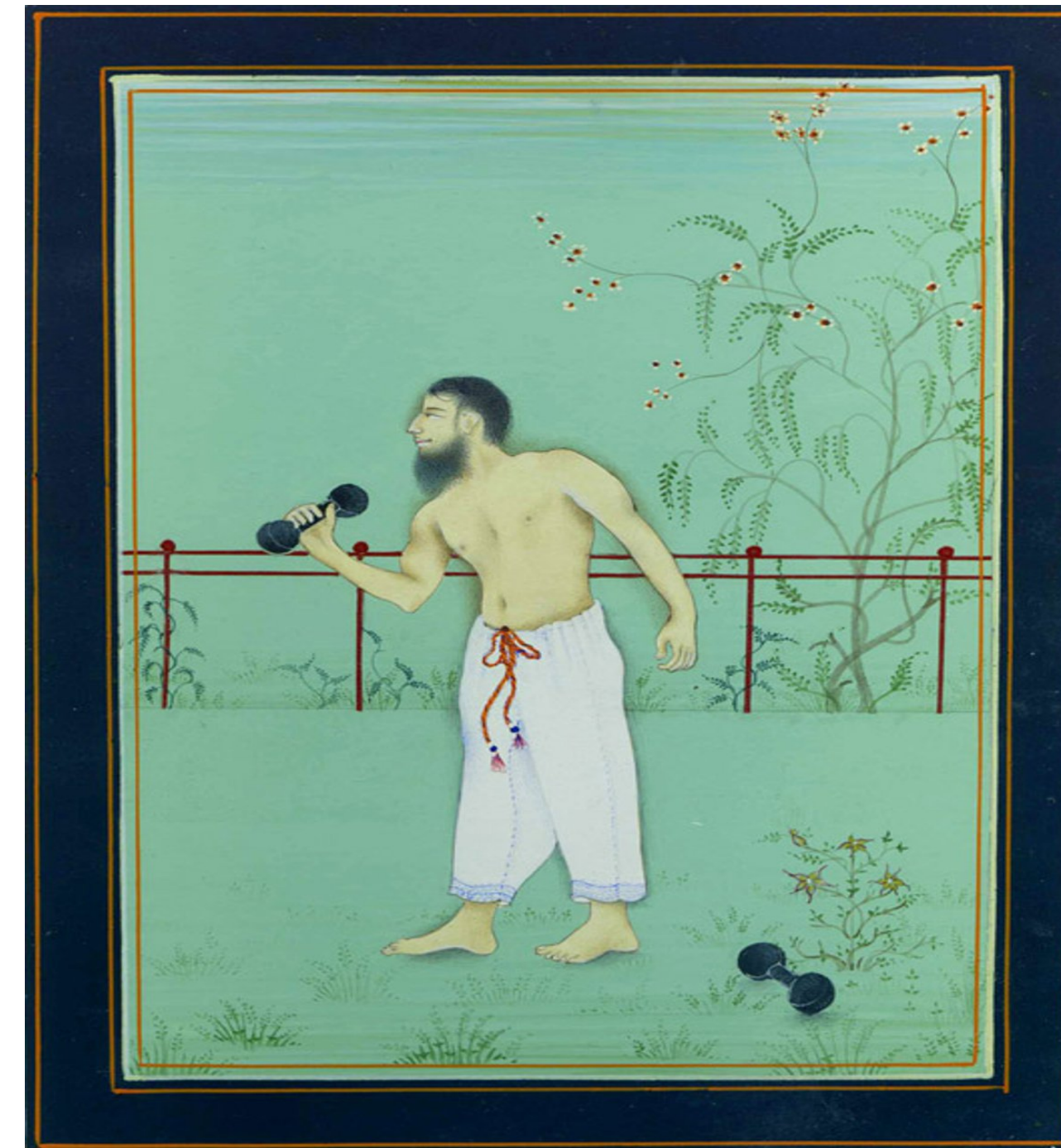
3 To understand how ethnic, linguistic, and religious heterogeneity within each of these states has shaped their politics

4 To appreciate how various actors have placed diverse religious, class, and gender identities at the center of controversies about Islam and democracy within the context of revolutionary violence and great power intervention

Course Description



[Image Description: Taliban Self-Portrait (Kandahar, late 1990s). An image of two Taliban members with bright colored clothing, one in light blue and the other in light green, in front of a bright blue background. They are looking directly at the camera with soft gazes.]



[Image Description: A modern art piece modeled on a Persian miniature. The image features a man that is a weight-lifter, and he is wearing loose-fitting white pants and is lifting one weight in his hand. The background is a jade green color and has some plants.]

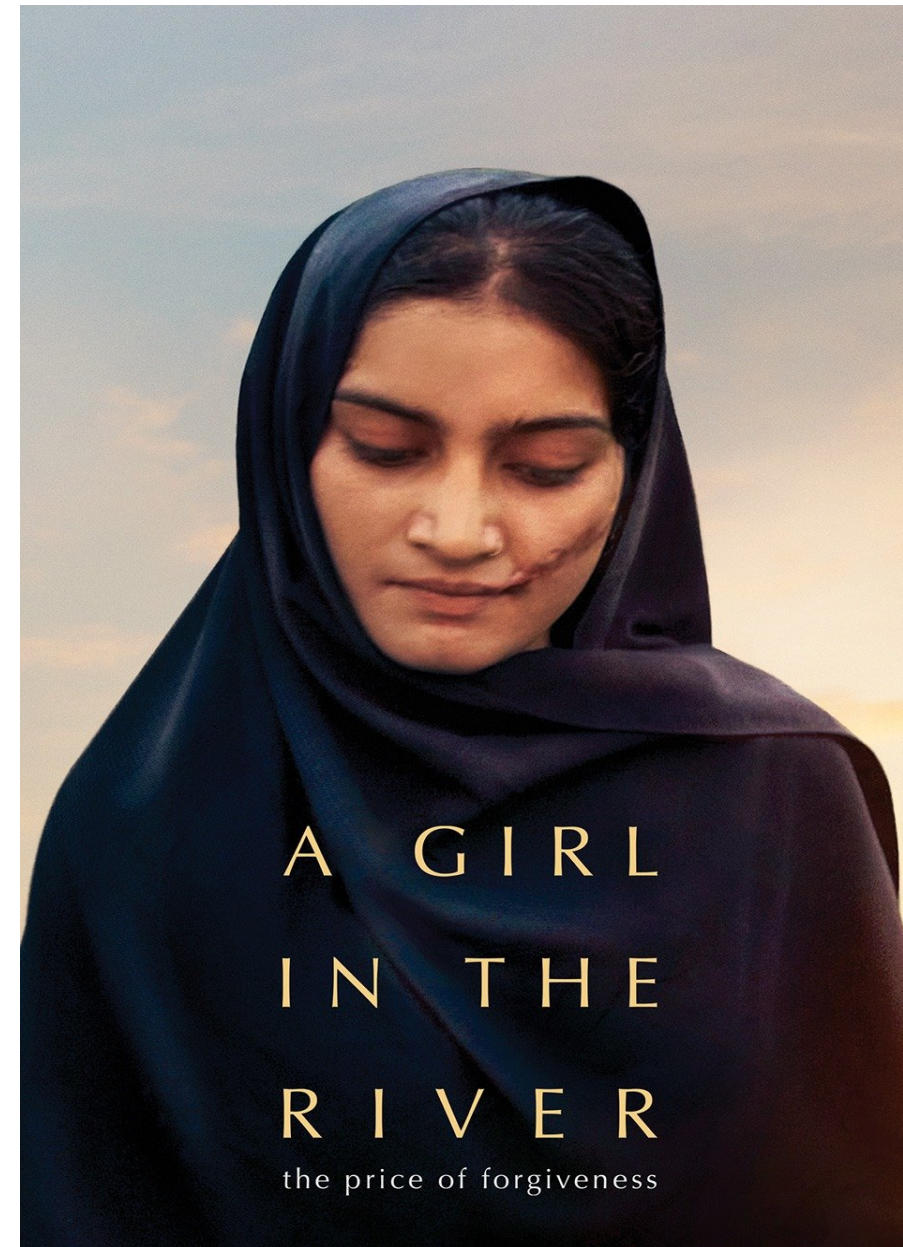
This course explores the contested politics of Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan from the early twentieth century to the present. Working with a variety of primary and secondary sources, students will investigate the history of controversies surrounding Islamic law and state-building, ethics, religious authority, morality and gender norms, ethnic and national identities, the arts, science, militancy, and geopolitics. Major themes include the emergence of the “Islamic state,” debates over aesthetic production, the Cold War, Khomeinism, the Afghan jihad, sectarianism, nationalist movements, struggles over the veil and women’s rights, sexual diversity and gender normativity, the construction of ethnic difference, social deviancy, drugs, the “Islamic bomb,” secular and militant political challenges, and the global politics of the Middle East and South Asia.

History 87/187 is certified to satisfy Social Inquiry (SI) and Engaging Diversity (ED) Ways of Thinking/Ways of Doing requirements.

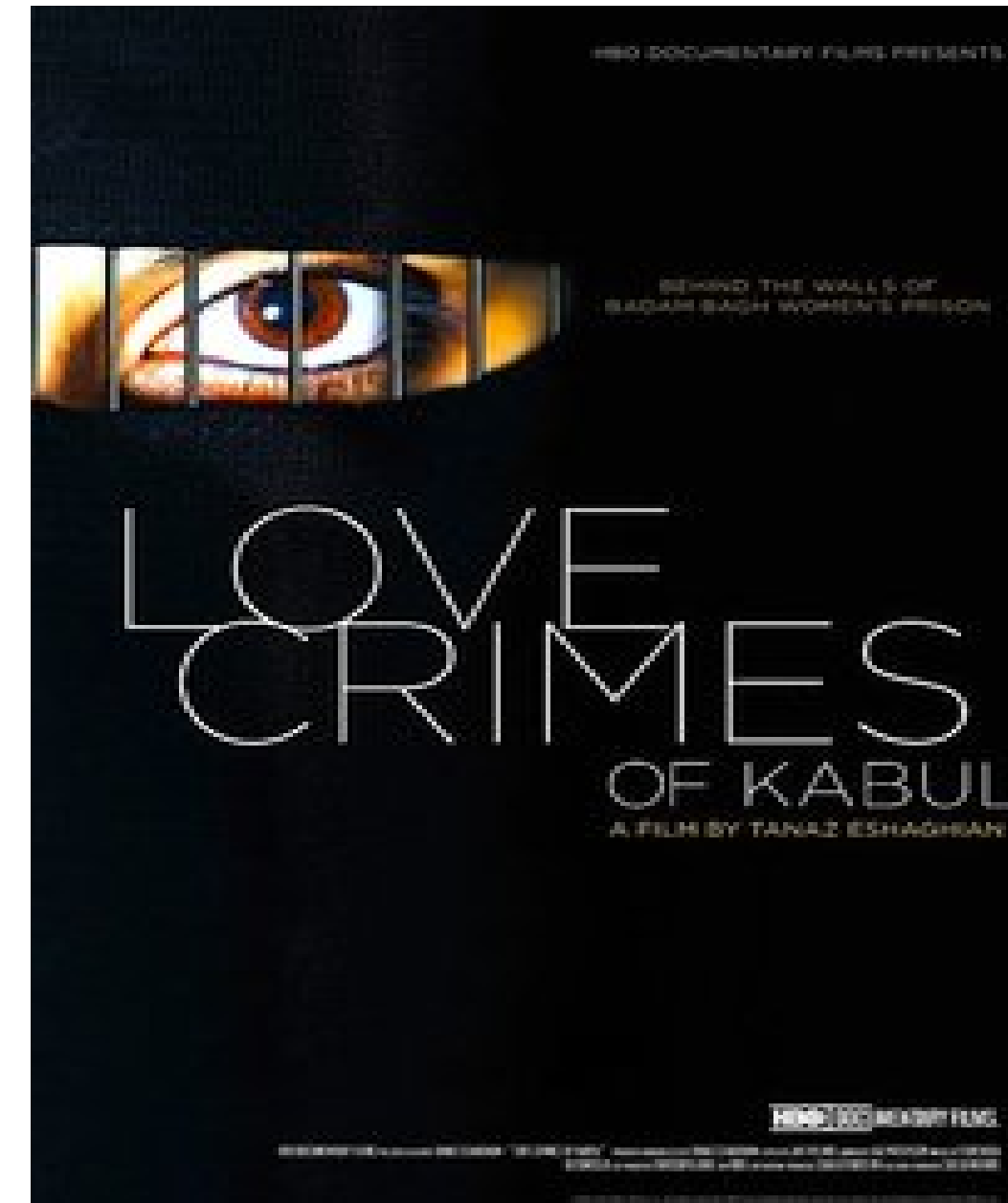
The Documentary Lens



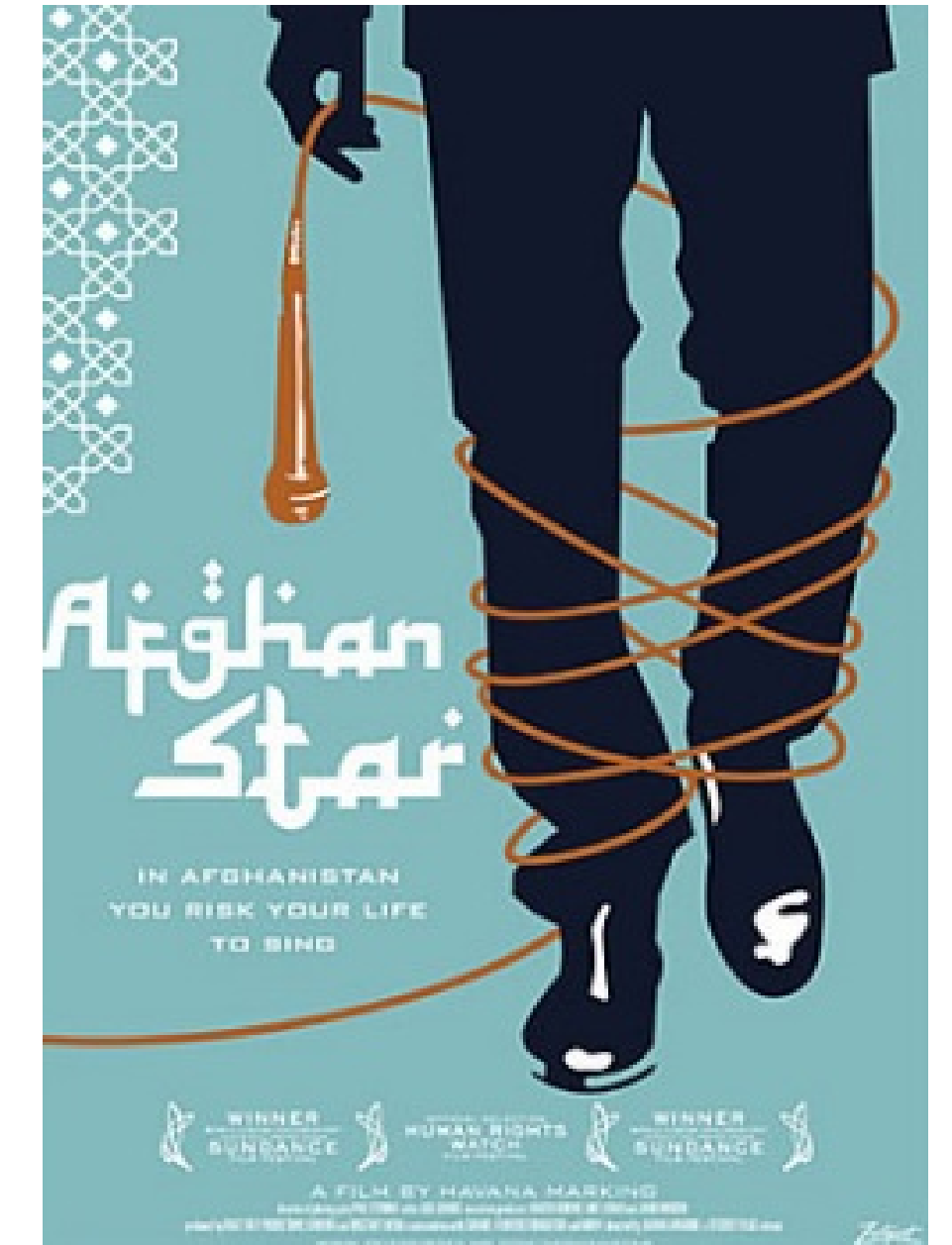
[Image Description: A movie poster for *How Gay is Pakistan?* The poster shows a person outdoors in a crowded area and crossing their arms while looking at the viewer.]



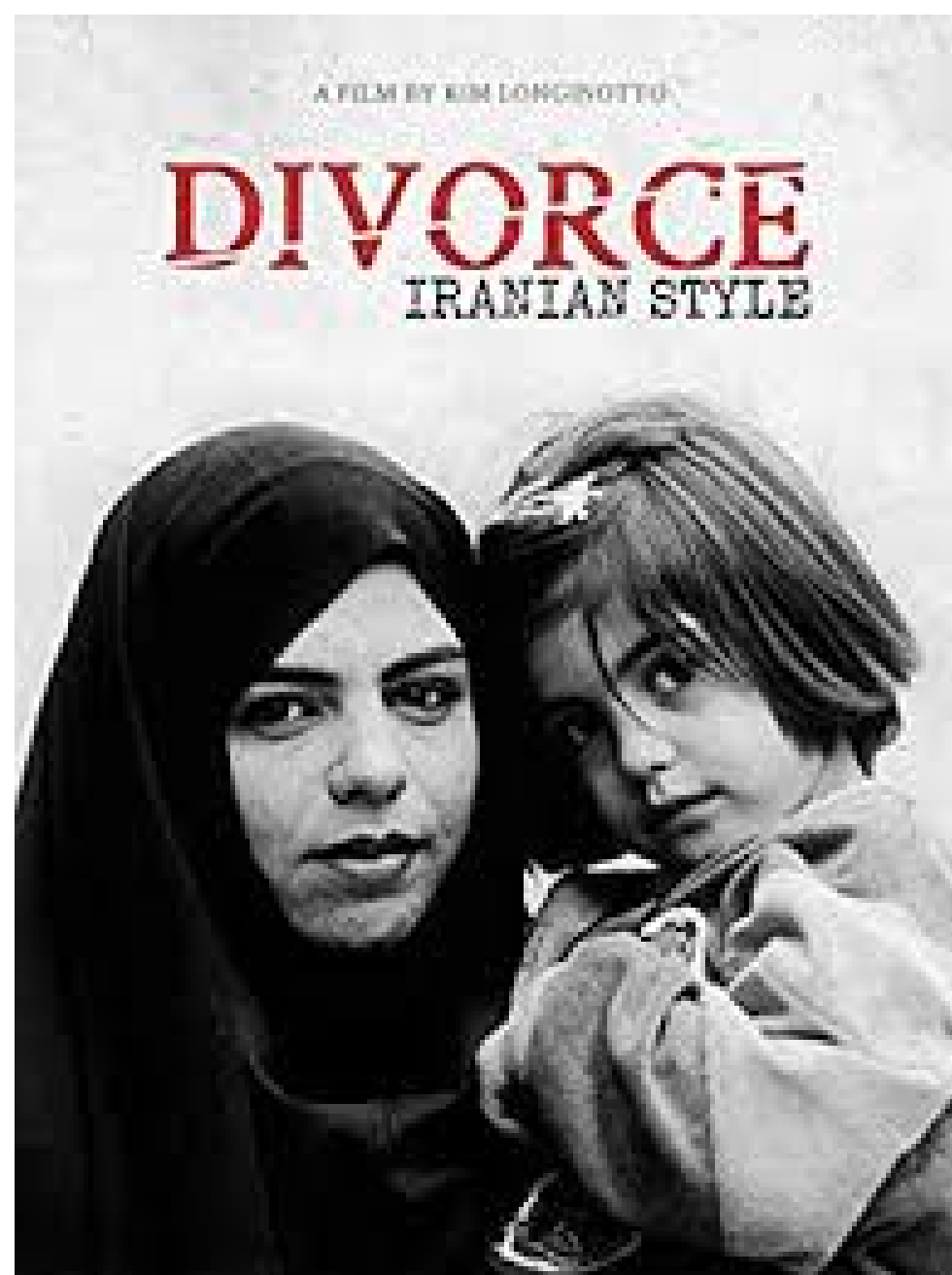
[Image Description: A movie poster for *A Girl in the River*. The poster shows a girl wearing a dark blue hijab and clothes, and looking down with a serious expression.]



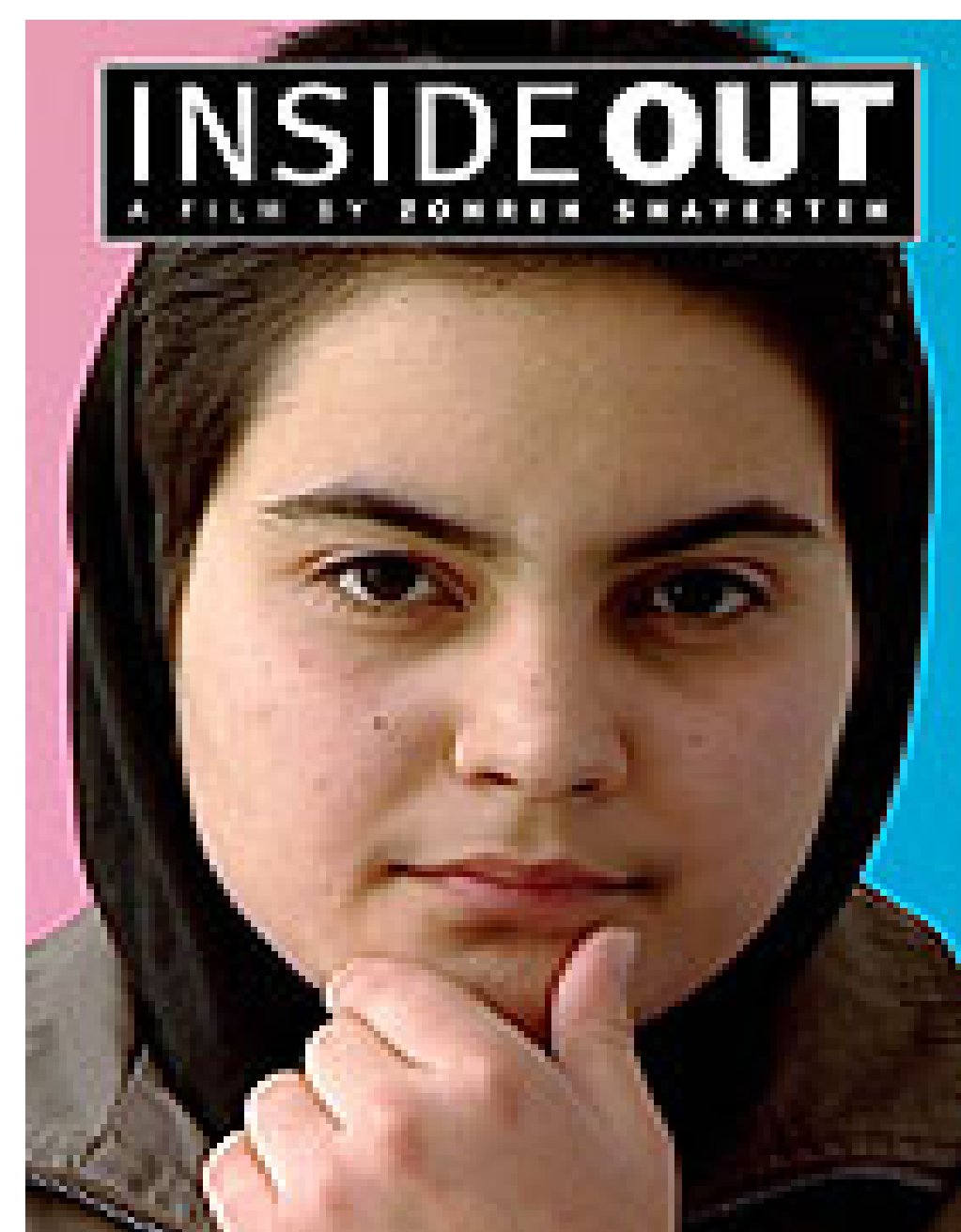
[Image Description: A movie poster for *Loves Crimes of Kabul*. The poster is completely black except for an image of an eye looking directly at the viewer while being behind bars.]



[Image Description: A movie poster for *Afghan Star*. The background of the poster is light blue with a silhouette of the legs a person walking towards the viewer. A gold microphone is wrapped around the legs.]



[Image Description: A movie poster for *Divorce Iranian Style*. The poster shows a black and white photograph of a parent and child looking at the viewer.]

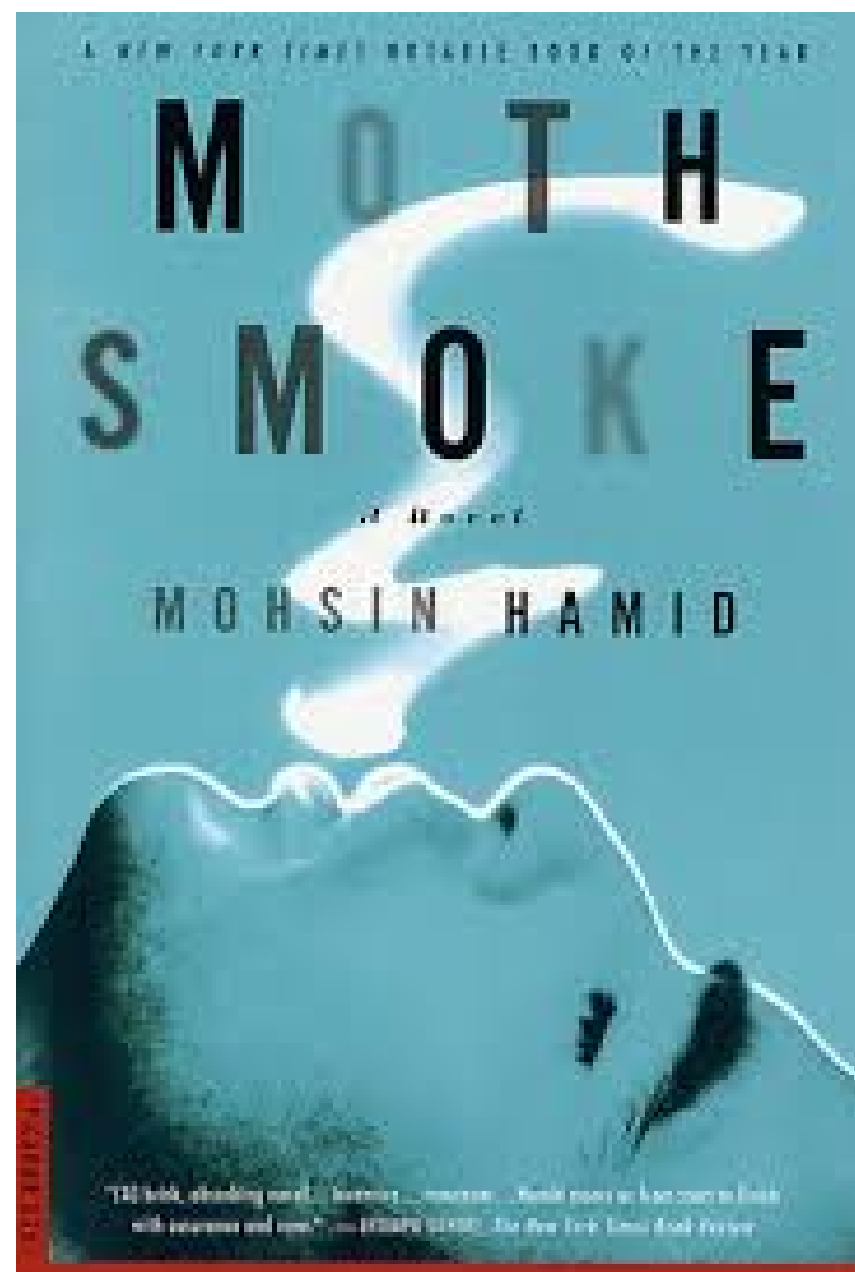


[Image Description: A movie poster for *Inside Out*. The poster's background is split into pink and blue with a person with their hand on their chin looking at the viewer.]

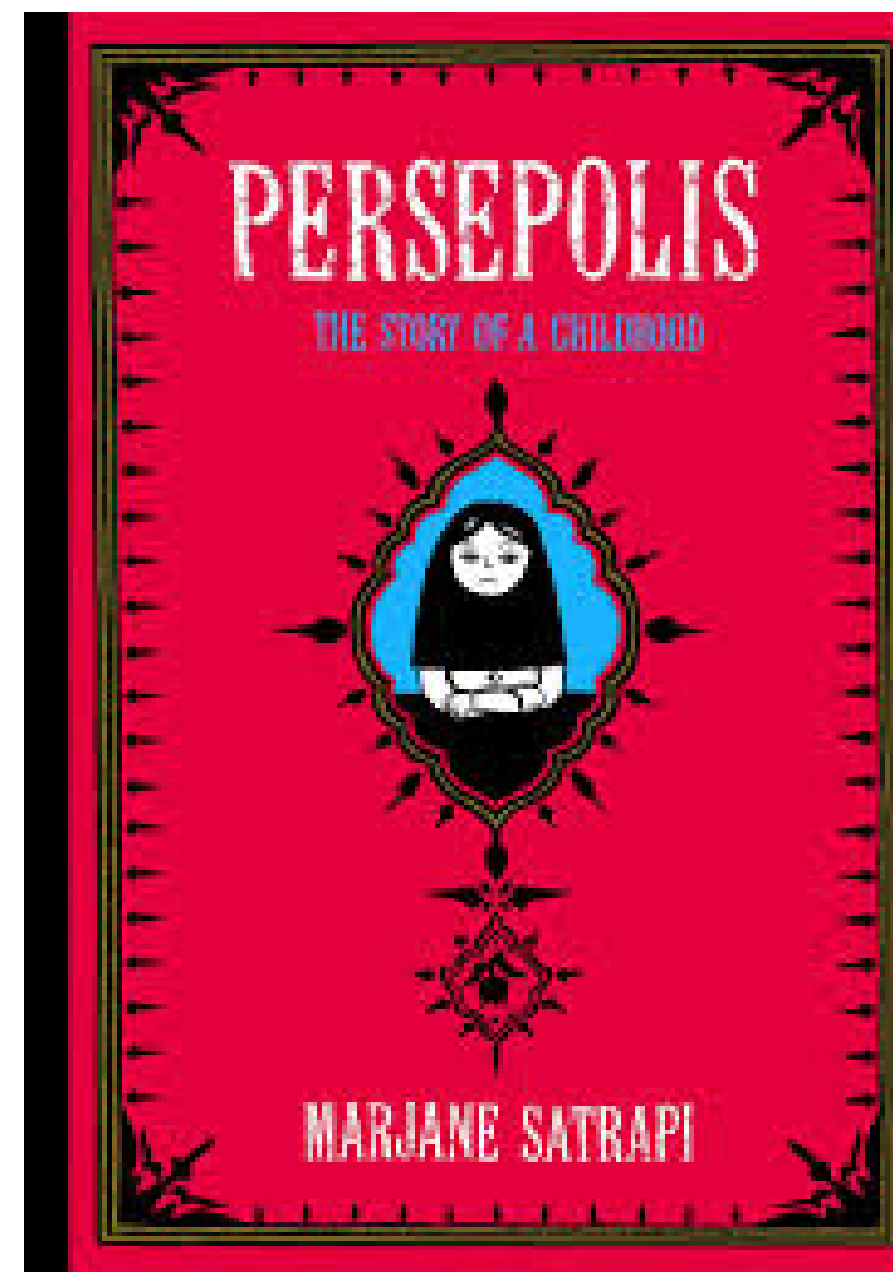


[Image Description: A movie poster for *Tell Spring Not to Come This Year*. The Poster has a beige background and show the back of a person in army uniform carrying a backpack and a gun on their back.]

Narrating the Islamic Republics



[Image Description: A book cover for *Moth Smoke* by Mohsin Hamid. The cover has a light blue background with a profile view of a face of a person laying down and blowing smoke into the air.]



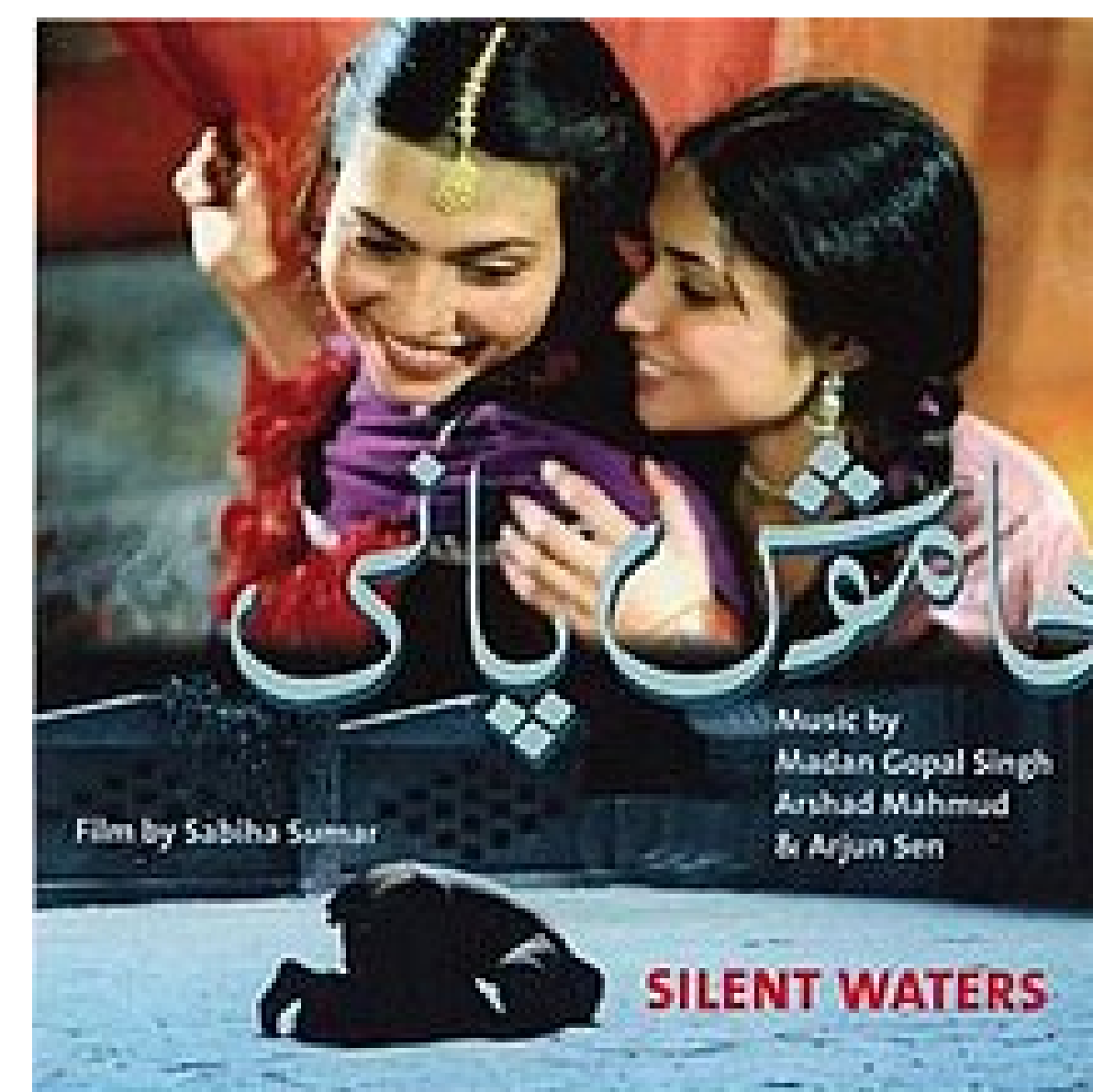
[Image Description: A book cover for *Persepolis* by Marjane Satrapi. The cover is red with a black border and adornments, and a main illustration of a person wearing a black hijab in front of a blue background.]



[Image Description: A movie poster for *A Separation*. It features two people, one wearing a hijab with a surprised expression, and another person in the background caught mid-sentence.]



[Image Description: A movie poster for *Lizard*. It shows five different people surrounded by four different colored rectangles and illustrations of lizards.]



[Image Description: A movie poster for *Silent Waters*. It shows two feminine presenting people in close contact juxtaposed with a person kneeling on the snowy ground with their head touching the snow.]

Course Requirements

There are three avenues of engagement:



[Image Description: An Iranian revolutionary poster (c. 1979). It portrays the Iranian Revolution as the mobilization of clerics, soldiers, mothers, and working men.]

Canvas Discussion Board

This is required for all students

Respond to weekly prompts and discuss with your classmates

Weekly TA Sections

This component is synchronous; optional, but highly encouraged

Discuss the course materials in small-group sessions and earn extra credit

Independent Paper/Project

In lieu of/or in addition to Discussion Board postings, you may devise your own research project; please email a one- to two-paragraph proposal to Professor Crews by the end of Week 4 for approval

If you are unable to attend the TA sections or do an independent paper/project, your grade will be based on your engagement with the Discussion Board.

Course Schedule

week 1	<u>Introduction – What is an Islamic Republic?</u>	<p>Abū-L-‘Alā’ Mawdūdī, “Political Theory of Islam,” <i>Oxford Islamic Studies Online</i>.</p> <p>Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, “The Necessity of Islamic Government (1970),” <i>Oxford Islamic Studies Online</i>.</p>
week 2	<u>A State for Muslims, or an Islamic State?</u>	<p>Muhammad Iqbal, “A Separate Muslim State in the Subcontinent,” Oxford Islamic Studies Online.</p> <p>Sa'adat Hasan Manto, “Toba Tek Singh,” in Black margins: Stories (2003), 212-220.</p>
week 3	<u>Islamic Revolution</u>	<p>Marjane Satrapi, <i>Persepolis</i> (2003)</p>
week 4	<u>Living the Revolution</u>	<p>Film: Silent Waters (2003) (95 min.)</p> <p>Deadline for coordinating (optional) independent research project with instructor.</p>

week 5

Radical Politics?

The Taliban Reader: War, Islam and Politics, part one.

week 6

Rule by 'The Mullahs'?

Ayatollah Mahmud Taleqani, "Taleqani's Last Sermon," *Oxford Islamic Studies Online*.

Film: *The Lizard* (2004) (115 min.)

week 7

Gender, Law, and Sexuality

Film: [Divorce Iranian Style](#) (1998) (80 min.)

Film: *Love Crimes of Kabul* (2011) (71 min.)

Film: *A Girl in the River: The Price of Forgiveness* (2015) (40 min.)

week 8

**Islamic Republic,
Islamic Society?**

Film: [Inside Out](#) (2006) (39 min.)

Film: [How Gay is Pakistan?](#) (2015) (51 min.)

Film: [Afghan Star](#) (2009) (93 min.)

week 9

Class and Civil Society

Mohsin Hamid, Moth Smoke (2000).

week 10

War and Peace

Film: *A Separation* (2011) (122 min.)

Film: *Tell Spring Not to Come This Year* (2015) (84 min.).

Akbar Ganji, "Who Is Ali Khamenei? The Worldview of Iran's Supreme Leader," *Foreign Affairs* (September/October 2013).

Submission deadline for independent research project.



[Image Description: A photo of Afghan children all wearing various values of blue and out in the countryside,]



[Image Description: Photo of Wazir Khan Mosque in Lahore, Pakistan. The Mosque is gold colored and has decor in various other colors.]

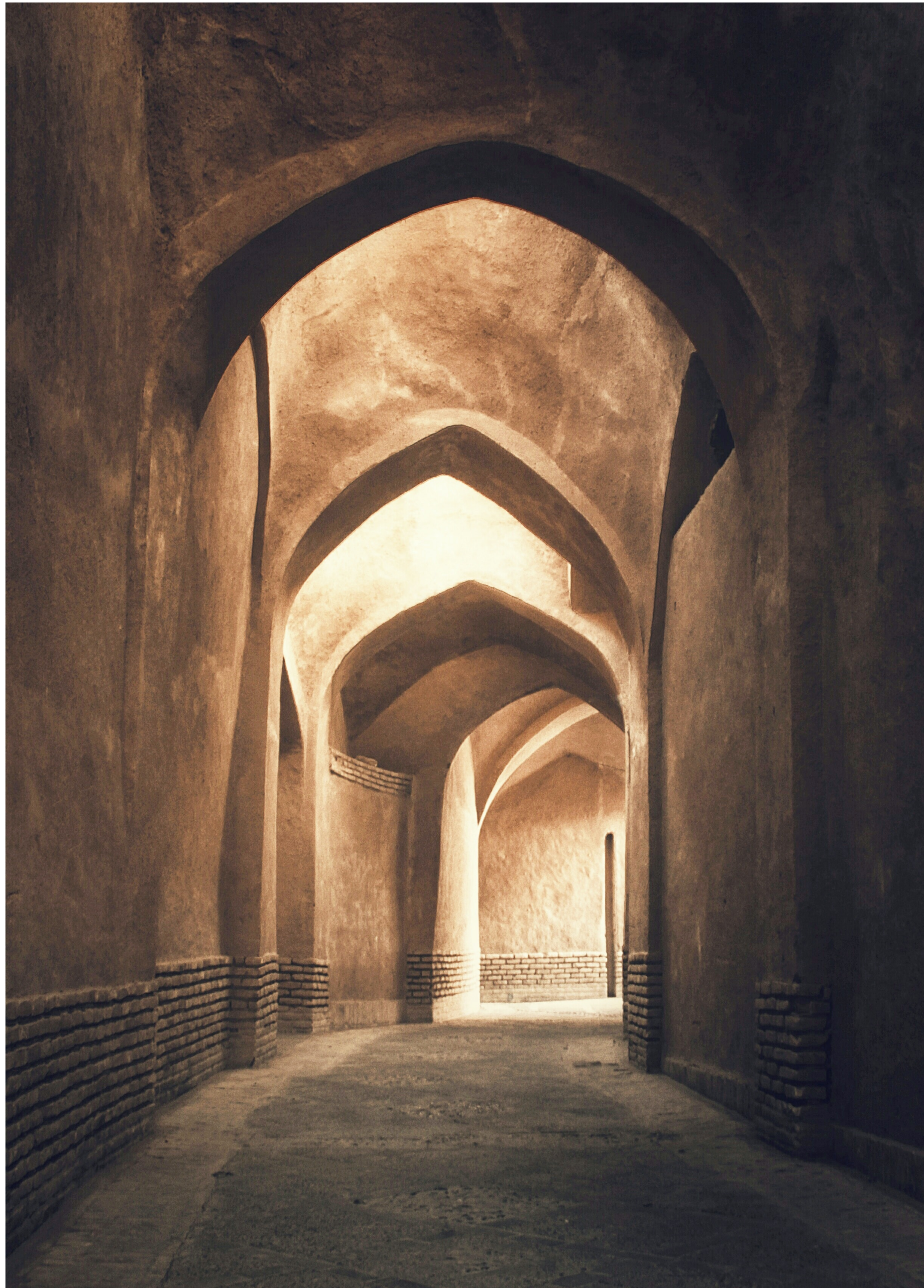
Grading

Engagement with discussion board
or
Independent research project (to be
coordinated with instructor)
+Extra credit for section attendance

100%

100%

100%

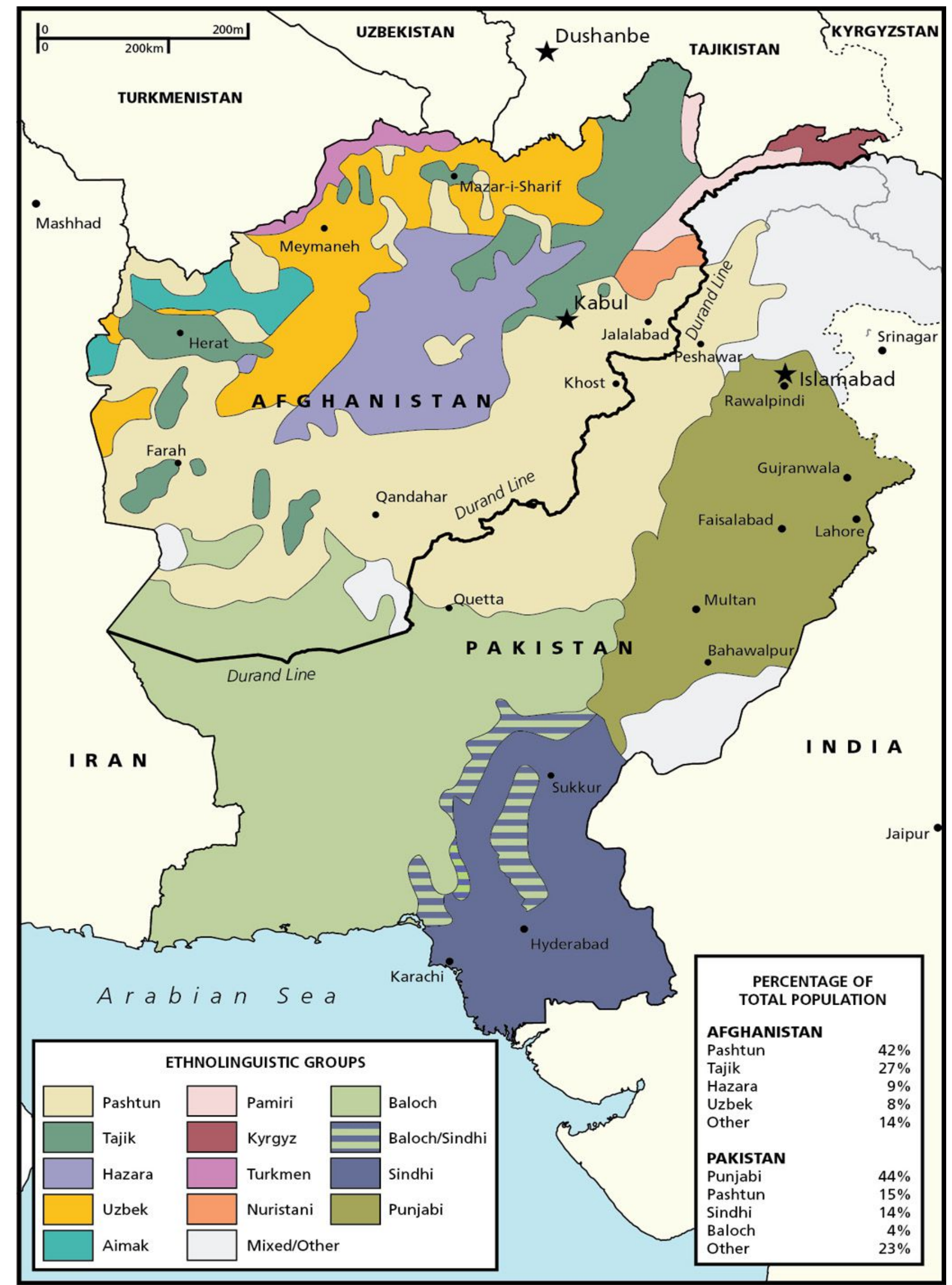


Students with Documented Disabilities: Students who may need an academic accommodation based on the impact of a disability must initiate the request with the Office of Accessible Education (OAE). Professional staff will evaluate the request with required documentation, recommend reasonable accommodations, and prepare an Accommodation Letter for faculty dated in the current quarter in which the request is being made. Students should contact the OAE as soon as possible since timely notice is needed to coordinate accommodations. The OAE is located at 563 Salvatierra Walk (phone: 723-1066, <http://studentaffairs.stanford.edu/oea>).

[Image Description: Photo of Mughal architecture in Pakistan. It shows a hallway with archways all in a tan color with the sun peeking through.]



[Image Description: An ethnographic map of Iran. Different areas are highlighted in different greens and purples, as well as different oranges, yellows and browns.]



[Image Description: An ethnographic map of Afghanistan and Pakistan. Different areas are highlighted in different greens, purples, and reds as well as turquoise and gold and cream colors.]