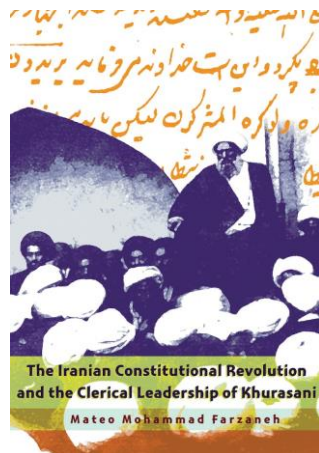


With the Support of the *Jahangir and Eleanor Amuzegar Chair in Iranian Studies* &
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Bilingual Lecture Series on Iran

present

**Shi'ism and Popular Leadership in the Iranian Constitutional Revolution,
1906-1911: The Case of Muhammad Kazim Kurasani**



A book talk (in English) by Mateo M. Farzaneh, Department of History,
Northeastern Illinois University, Chicago

Wednesday, October 28, 2015

3:00 PM

10383 Bunche Hall

Mateo Mohammad Farzaneh has taught world and Middle Eastern history at Santa Barbara City College and California State University, Fullerton before joining the Northeastern Illinois University, Chicago Department of History in 2010.

The Iranian Constitutional Revolution (1906–1911) was the twentieth century's first such political movement in the Middle East. It represented a landmark in Iranian history because of the unlikely support it received from Shi'ite clerics who historically viewed Western concepts with contempt; some claiming constitutionalism to be anti-Islamic. As a leading advocate of constitutionalism, Muhammad Kazim Kurasani, the renowned Shi'ite jurist, scholar, and spiritual leader, conceived of a supportive role for the clergy in a modern Iranian political system.

Drawing on extensive analysis of religious texts, fatwas, and articles written by Kurasani and other pro- and anti-constitutionalists, Farzaneh provides a comprehensive and illuminating interpretation of Kurasani's religious pragmatism. Despite some opposition from his peers, Kurasani used a form of jurisprudential reasoning that considered human intellect just as important as the Quran in the process of making shari'a (ijtihad). That intellectual freedom in turn enabled him to justify his backing of not only parliament but also limiting the political powers of the clerics. Kurasani's push for progressive reforms helped to inaugurate a new era of clerical involvement in constitutionalism in Iran.

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