

Nader Afshar-Naderi

Nominated by Nina Khamsy, M.Sc. Social Anthropology candidate



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Nader Afshar-Naderi (1926-1979) is considered the father of Iranian anthropology. Dr. Afshar-Naderi took the pioneering step to travel to France for his anthropological training in the second half of the 1950s. After receiving his PhD in anthropology from the Sorbonne, he returned to Iran, his home country, to be the first Iranian professional anthropologist. He carried out research from the 1960s until the end of his life. He was the first director of the Institute for Peasant and Rural Studies, established in Tehran in 1976. Formerly, he was associated with Tehran University's Institute of Social Studies and Research at She Rah-i Jaleh.

He devoted himself to the study of his country's rural population, especially Kuhgilu-ye pastoralists. He devoted his life to improving the social conditions of the nomadic tribes. He believed that anthropologists should use their profession for the future welfare of people and in particular, of tribal people. He notably spent many years studying the customs and migration patterns of pastoralists in Iran and published 'The settlement of nomads and its social and economic implications' in 1971, where he calculated their numbers, offering the first census of tribally organized nomadic population. He also produced films about tribal life, most notably the film "Balut" (1966) in the Kuhgilu-ye region of the Zagros Mountains. In the last fifteen years of his life, he was involved in academic administration, and profoundly influenced Iranian scholarship. He was instrumental in building the Institute for Social Studies and Research in Tehran into a first-rate research centre for anthropological studies.



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