



JAMALZADEH, MOHAMMAD-ALI



Figure 1. Mohammad-Ali Jamalzadeh.

JAMALZADEH, MOHAMMAD-ALI (محمد علی جمالزاده) (Moḥammad-‘Ali Jamālzāda), a prominent Iranian intellectual and a pioneer of modern Persian prose fiction, and of the genre of the short story (b. Isfahan, 1892; d. Geneva, 1997; [Figure 1](#)). Jamalzadeh’s long and productive life spanned over a century in a vital period in modern Iranian history, from the Constitutional Revolution



of 1906, to the Islamic Revolution of 1979 and beyond. The publication in 1921 of his collection of short stories *Yeki bud yeki nabud* (Once Upon a Time), notable for its direct, colloquial language, remarkable use of Persian idiom, and immense sociological, political, and critical insight, signaled a major turning point in the development of modern fiction in Iran. Yet, Jamalzadeh's contributions to Persian culture go beyond the genre of the short story. In the span of his long life (1892-1997), Jamalzadeh published novels, short stories, political and social essays, scholarly research articles, literary reviews and criticism, and autobiographical and biographical essays. His world view, reflected in almost all of his writings, is informed by his unique experience as a "product of two worlds" (Moayyad, 1985, p. 1; Cuypers, 1998, p. 68), the world of the Persian language, culture, history and customs, including the memories of his experiences in Iran during a period of upheaval, revolution, and turmoil, and the world he inhabited in the West as a product of a Western education, acquaintance with European languages and research methods, and as an advocate of the European Enlightenment and modernity. His lifelong dedication, discernible from his stories, essays, interviews and letters, was to bridge these two worlds and to combine the best of both in the advancement of modern education as the main weapon in the struggle against ignorance, poverty, oppression, and injustice for the people of Iran (Yarshater, 1985, p. x). This entry is divided into the following sections:

i. Life.

ii. Work.

iii. Bibliography.