Gender and sexuality in modern Iran is frequently examined through the prism of nationalist symbols and religious discourse from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In this book, Kristin Soraya Batmanghelichi takes a different approach, by interrogating how normative ideas of women’s bodies in state, religious, and public health discourses have resulted in the female body being deemed as immodest and taboo. Through a diverse blend of sources—a popular cultural women's journal, a red-light district, cases studies of temporary marriages, iconic public statues, and an HIV-AIDS advocacy organization in Tehran—this work argues that conceptions of gender and sexuality have been mediated in public discourse and experienced and modified by women themselves over the past thirty years of the Islamic Republic. Expanding upon existing philosophical theory, technological research and scholarship on gender and sexuality in Iran, this book focuses much needed attention on under-studied, marginalized communities, such as widows living with HIV. This work interrogates how bodily technologies are constructed discursively and socially in Iran and the values and perspectives which are incorporated in them. Indispensable for understanding the recent conflicts in
Iran, Religion and Politics in Contemporary Iran provides a political history of the fluctuating relationships between the Islamic clergy and Iranian government since 1925. How different factions of the clergy, or ulama first lost and then regained a powerful position in Iran is the subject of this book. Akhavi analyzes how various factions within the clergy have responded to the government's efforts to encourage modernization and secularization, giving particular attention to the changes in the madrasahs, or theological colleges. He examines the main themes of the Ayatullah Khomayni's book, Islamic Government, and concludes by examining the alignments among the clergy in the past that indicate how they may develop in the future.

This detailed examination of contemporary Iran addresses the most important current social, political, and economic issues facing the nation and the way it is perceived by the outside world. The volume brings together some of the most important scholars and researchers in the field, working in such diverse disciplines as anthropology, economics, history, international relations, philosophy, political science, and sociology, to offer a broad range of perspectives on the significance of three decades of changes for Iran’s current and near-term-future domestic and international politics. Drawing upon a wealth of original field research, the authors challenge conventional wisdom and simplistic media stereotypes about the Islamic Republic. The chapters reach beyond traditional images of the country to show that, as a consequence of thirty years of economic and social changes, the reality, or ‘essence’,
of contemporary Iran is more complex and nuanced than is often portrayed in the international media. Offering valuable insights into Iran’s economic and social policies, as well as its politics, since the Islamic Revolution, this book will be of great interest to students and scholars of political science, sociology, and Iranian studies.

Can Islamic societies embrace democracy? In Democracy in Modern Iran, Ali Mirsepassi maintains that it is possible, demonstrating that Islam is not inherently hostile to the idea of democracy. Rather, he provides new perspective on how such a political and social transformation could take place, arguing that the key to understanding the integration of Islam and democracy lies in concrete social institutions rather than pre-conceived ideas, the every day experiences rather than abstract theories. Mirsepassi, an Iranian native, provides a rare inside look into the country, offering a deep understanding of how Islamic countries like Iran and Iraq can and will embrace democracy. Democracy in Modern Iran challenges readers to think about Islam and democracy critically and in a far more nuanced way than is done in black-and-white dichotomies of Islam vs. Democracy, or Iran vs. the West. This essential volume contributes important insights to current discussions, creating a more complex conception of modernity in the Eastern world and, with it, Mirsepassi offers to a broad Western audience a more accurate, less clichéd vision of Iran’s political reality.

The book is concerned with one of the most important issues in Persian culture, that is to say a broadly
conceived idea of sacrifice and martyrdom. At present, it is contained in the concept of shahadat, which arouses much controversy in the Western world today. In successive chapters, the author discusses the origin and evolution of this concept in Persian culture, the process of shaping attitudes conducive to the attainment of readiness for shahadat and the role of this concept in propaganda, as well as presenting its modern-day interpretation. The basic research material was provided by political and religious publications of contemporary Iranian authors, including Ali Shari‘ati, Morteza Motahhari, Ruhollah Khomeini and Abdolkarim Soroush, who have exerted a significant influence on the formation of the Iranian consciousness. The book is an interdisciplinary publication. The author refers to philology, literary studies, cultural anthropology, social psychology, and, interestingly, to the psychology of emotions in order to explicate the traditional Persian system of upbringing and shaping the readiness for martyrdom and sacrifice. The book shows the idea of shahadat as part of the Persian cultural paradigm, which, due to religious and literary tradition, has influenced the shaping of Iranian identity over the centuries and, as a result, it has affected social and political attitudes of the Iranian people. The book is mainly directed to Iranologists. Nevertheless, it will also be of interest to anthropologists, psychologists of culture, sociologists and philosophers due to its interdisciplinary character. The Iranian Revolution represented to intellectuals and professionals the potential of spiritual values to triumph over the great power of economic imperialism. Yet out of
this revolution has emerged an identity crisis that touches Islamic ideological heights and reaches down to the very ground of Islamic practice. The contributors to this collection, experts on Iranian cultural and political history, analyze the 'fragmented self' of today's Iranian, refracted through that country's institutions, market forces, and modern thought. Each essay both deepens our understanding of contemporary Iran and adds to the broader discussion of the relationship between Islam and the West.

The New Iranian Cinema is considered by many to be the most fascinating cultural phenomenon produced within the Islamic Republic of Iran. Containing twelve first-hand interviews with the most renowned film-makers living and working in contemporary Iran, this book provides insights into film-making within a society often at odds with its rulers. Reflecting upon the 1979 revolution and its influence on their work, as well as the effect of their films on Iranian audiences, film-makers such as Abbas Kiarostami and Jafar Panahi highlight the key issues surrounding the reception of Iranian cinema in the West and also its role in the development of Iran's global image. Through these conversations Shiva Rahbaran reveals that the seeds of the New Iranian Cinema were sown long before the revolution, and that Iranian film-makers gave rise to a cinema which became a global phenomenon despite censorship, sanctions and political isolation.

The Islamic Republic of Iran came into being in 1979, the result of a radical revolution that overhauled not only the foundations of Iranian society, religion and politics, but
also our understanding of the role of religion in modern government. Here Behrooz Ghamari-Tabrizi takes us on an enlightening journey, showing that contrary to widespread assumptions the Iranian revolution opened up the public sphere to competing interpretations of Islam, with profound consequences for the nature of democratic reform. Ghamari-Tabrizi sheds new light on the contingencies within which the new regime evolved, and traces the steps by which the clerical establishment sought to consolidate power during the immediate postrevolutionary period. Contrary to the received view, he argues that the ruling class failed to institute a theocratic regime, and, more significantly, unintentionally established the grounds for civic challenges to government policies underwritten by official interpretations of Islam. Far from being the exclusive preserve of high-ranking seminarians, interpretations of doctrinal Islam in contemporary Iran now form a contested, varied and negotiated discourse in which lay theologians, intellectuals, lawyers and social activists are active and influential interlocutors. Against the background of this unexpected development, Ghamari-Tabrizi addresses the early and late works of Abdolkarim Soroush, an Iranian philosopher who has become one of the most influential Muslim intellectuals in recent years, a leading force behind Iran's pro-democracy movement and vocal critic of the state. Through a close reading of Soroush's evolving ideas, and of the works of Ali Shari`ati, and by tracing the links between Muslim intellectual critique and the realpolitik of postrevolutionary power struggles, Ghamari-Tabrizi
offers nothing less than a pathbreaking reassessment of the Iranian revolution. In so doing, he demonstrates how democratic transformation in Muslim societies has taken place by means of a public engagement with the teachings of Islam and highlights a most significant, if unintended, consequences of the Iranian revolution - namely the secularization of Islam. Drawing on a wealth of sources and with powerful insights, 'Islam and Dissent' is essential for an understanding of the Muslim world today and of the new relationships between religion, culture and political power visible across the globe.

With more than half its population under twenty years old, Iran is one of the world's most youthful nations. The Iranian state characterizes its youth population in two ways: as a homogeneous mass, "an army of twenty millions" devoted to the Revolution, and as alienated, inauthentic, Westernized consumers who constitute a threat to the society. Much of the focus of the Islamic regime has been on ways to protect Iranian young people from moral hazards and to prevent them from providing a gateway for cultural invasion from the West. Iranian authorities express their anxieties through campaigns that target the young generation and its lifestyle and have led to the criminalization of many of the behaviors that make up youth culture. In this ethnography of contemporary youth culture in Iran's capital, Shahram Khosravi examines how young Tehranis struggle for identity in the battle over
the right to self-expression. Khosravi looks closely at the strictures confronting Iranian youth and the ways transnational cultural influences penetrate and flourish. Focusing on gathering places such as shopping centers and coffee shops, Khosravi examines the practices of everyday life through which young Tehranis demonstrate defiance against the official culture and parental dominance. In addition to being sites of opposition, Khosravi argues, these alternative spaces serve as creative centers for expression and, above all, imagination. His analysis reveals the transformative power these spaces have and how they enable young Iranians to develop their own culture as well as individual and generational identities. The text is enriched by examples from literature and cinema and by vivid reports from the author's fieldwork.

The Iran-Iraq War (1980–1988) is a cornerstone of the Islamic Republic of Iran’s existence. It entrenched the newly established regime and provided the means for its consolidation of power in the country following the 1979 Revolution. Officially recognized as the "War of Sacred Defense", the Iranian government has been careful to control public discourse and cultural representation concerning the war since the wartime. Nearly 30 years since the war’s end, however, debates around the war and its aftermath are still very much alive in Iran today. This volume uncovers what some
of those debates mean, nearly 30 years since the war's end. The chapters in this volume take a fresh look at the far-reaching legacies of the Iran-Iraq War in Iran today – a war that dominated the first decade of the Islamic Republic’s existence. The chapters examine the political, social and cultural ramifications of the war and the wide range of debates that surround it. The chapters in this book were originally published in Middle East Critique. This first full-length study of the history of Iranian anthropology charts the formation and development of anthropology in Iran in the twentieth century. The text examines how and why anthropology and culture became part of wider socio-political discourses in Iran, and how they were appropriated, and rejected, by the pre- and post-revolutionary regimes. The author highlights the three main phases of Iranian anthropology, corresponding broadly to three periods in the social and political development of Iran: *the period of nationalism: lasting approximately from the constitutional revolution (1906-11) and the end of the Qajar dynasty until the end of Reza Shah’s reign (1941) *the period of Nativism: from the 1950s until the Islamic revolution (1979) *the post-revolutionary period. In addition, the book places Iranian anthropology in an international context by demonstrating how Western anthropological concepts, theories and methodologies affected
epistemological and political discourses on Iranian anthropology.
This book discusses what it means to “perform the State,” what this action means in relation to the country of Iran and how these various performances are represented. The concept of the “State” as a modern phenomenon has had a powerful impact on the formation of the individual and collective, as well as on determining how political entities are perceived in their interactions with one another in the current global arena.
Today’s Iran is rarely out of the headlines. Labelled by George W Bush as a part of his ‘axis of evil’ and perceived as a real nuclear threat by some, Iran is increasingly seen as an enemy of the West. And yet for many Iran remains shrouded in mystery and incomprehensible to Western analysis. Modern Iran offers a comprehensive analysis and explanation of political, social and economic developments in Iran during the 20th century. Since it first published in 2003 Modern Iran has become a staple for students and lecturers wishing to gain a clear understand of the history of this strategically important Middle Eastern Country. The new edition will bring us up to date and will include: an analysis of the successes and failures of the Khatami Presidency; an examination of the effect of 9/11; the rise of the Reform Movement and the efforts to promote Islamic Democracy; the resistance to democratisation
among the hardline elites. The transition from Qajar rule in Iran (c.1789-1925) to that of rule by the Pahlavi dynasty (1925-1979) set in motion a number of shifts in the political, social, and cultural realms. Focusing on masculinity in Iran, this book interweaves ideas and perceptions, laws, political movements, and men's practices to spotlight the role men as gendered subjects played in Iranian history. It shows how men under the reign of Reza Shah dressed, acted, spoke, and thought differently from their late Qajar period counterparts. Furthermore, it highlights how the notion of being a "proper Iranian man" changed over these decades. Demonstrating how an emerging elite of western-educated men constructed and promoted a new model of masculinity as part of their struggle for political, social, and cultural hegemony, Balslev shows how this new model reflects wider developments in Iranian society at the time including the rise of Iranian nationalism and the country's modernisation process. This first systematic study of a wide range of Persian and European archival and primary sources, analyzes how the Muharram rituals changed from being an originally devotional practice to public events of political significance, setting the stage for the emergence of the early modern Iranian public sphere in the Safavid period. "This is fundamentally a book about change and the
politics of managing that change, as successive governments and political elites sought, and continue to seek, to navigate a stable and sustainable route from a perception of tradition to a particular conception of modernity. -- introd.

By looking at all the presidential elections since the revolution, this book offers a new analysis of politics in Iran. "Exploring the process of Iran's modernization through the double lens of domesticity and consumer culture, Pamela Karimi demonstrates the extent to which the Iranian house has served as the place of encounter with the "other" and of reconsideration of the nation as "home." Domesticity and Consumer Culture in Iran examines the interplay between native aspirations, foreign influences, gender roles, consumer culture and women's education as they intersect with taste, fashion, domestic architecture and interior design in modern Iran. Throughout, ideas of consumer culture and gender are at its core, but other important socio-political subjects are examined in order to view Iran's modernization through the prism of its people's private lives. Presenting a new perspective on the 1979 Iranian revolution, re-read vis-a-vis the opinions of Shiite religious scholars, the Left, and the revolutionary elites, this book demonstrates how Iranians have contested the public-private dichotomy as manifested in the Islamic Republic's texts, images, and actual physical spaces"--

DIVAn ethnography of secular youth culture in Tehran and its resistance to post-Revolutionary Islamist politics./div

In this revised and expanded version of Nikki Keddie's work, Roots of Revolution, the author brings the story of modern Iran to the present day, exploring the political, cultural, and social changes of the past quarter century. Keddie provides insightful commentary on the Iran-Iraq war, the Persian Gulf
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War, and the effects of 9/11 and Iran’s strategic relationship with the US. She also discusses developments in education, health care, the arts and the role of women. Examining contemporary media culture in Iran, this book seeks to overturn some Western stereotypes. It argues that existing perspectives on contemporary Iran have failed to adequately explain its social and political transformations because they have not grasped the significant role of the nation's culture.

In the first comprehensive look at Iranian art and visual culture since the 1979 revolution, Talinn Grigor investigates the official art sponsored by the Islamic Republic, the culture of avant-garde art created in the studio and its display in galleries and museums, and the art of the Iranian diaspora within Western art scenes. Divided into three parts—street, studio, and exile—the book argues that these different areas of artistic production cannot be understood independently, revealing how this art offers a mirror of the sociopolitical turmoil that has marked Iran’s recent history. Exploring the world of galleries, museums, curators, and art critics, Grigor moves between subversive and daring art produced in private to propaganda art, martyrdom paraphernalia, and museum interiors. She examines the cross-pollination of kitsch and avant-garde, the art market, state censorship, the public-private domain, the political implications of art, and artistic identity in exile. Providing an astute analysis of the workings of artistic production in relation to the institutions of power in the Islamic Republic, this beautifully illustrated book is essential reading for anyone interested in Iranian history and contemporary art.

This book is a comprehensive analysis of the domestic and foreign politics of Iran, focusing on its complex nature from political, social and cultural perspectives. It has adopted a multidisciplinary approach, combining comparative politics
and intellectual and modern history with international relations. It analyses the institutional structure of the Islamic Republic, the main political and social actors and alliances, as well as Iranian opposition forces both inside and outside the country. The book tries to simplify the seemingly intractable complexity of the Islamic Republic by demystifying it and using political science methods to prove that it is a peculiar hybrid regime.

The election of Mohammad Khatami as President, the prospect of renewed dialogue between Tehran and Washington, and the display of popular rejoicing that greeted the nation's football team's qualification for the 1998 World Cup have shed light on aspects of everyday life in post-revolutionary Iran which have often been overlooked in the West.

Critics and academics have generally dismissed the commercial productions of the late Pahlavi era, best known for their songs and melodramatic plots, as shallow, derivative ‘entertainment’. Instead, they have concentrated on the more recent internationally acclaimed art films, claiming that these constitute Iranian ‘national' cinema, despite few Iranians having seen them. Film discourse, and even fan talk, have long attempted to marginalize the mainstream releases of the 1960s and 1970s with the moniker filmfarsi, ironically asserting that such popular favorites were culturally inauthentic. This book challenges the idea that filmfarsi is detached from the past and present of Iranians. Far from being escapist Hollywood fare merely translated into Persian, it claims that the better films of this supposed genre must be taken as both a subject of, and source for, modern Iranian history. It argues that they have an
applies that relies on their ability to rearticulate traditional courtly and religious ideas and forms to problematize in unexpectedly complex and sophisticated ways the modernist agenda that secular nationalist elites wished to impose on their viewers. Taken seriously, these films raise questions about standard treatments of Iran's modern history. By writing popular films into Iranian history, this book advocates both a fresh approach to the study of Iranian cinema, as well as a rethinking of the modernity/tradition binary that has organized the historiography of the recent past. It will appeal to those interested in Iranian cinema, Iranian history and culture, and, more broadly, readers dissatisfied with a dichotomous approach to modernity.

Cultural Revolution in Iran: Contemporary Popular Culture in the Islamic Republic

I.B. Tauris

An inside look at young Iranians navigating poverty and stigma in a time of crisis In Coming of Age in Iran, Manata Hashemi takes readers inside the lives of Iranian youth. Drawing on first-hand accounts, Hashemi shows how the young Iranian men and women known as the “burnt generation”—those between the ages of 15 and 29, who came of age after Iran’s 1979 Islamic Revolution—face their future prospects. With a compassionate eye, Hashemi paints a nuanced portrait of their day-to-day struggles in Iran. Hashemi spent months with these youth, observing them at bazaars, hair salons, parks, and mosques, tutoring them in English and sharing meals in their family homes. Many young Iranian men and women are jobless, living with their parents, and delaying marriage, ultimately failing to
meet what they consider the traditional benchmarks of adulthood. Hashemi follows their stories, one by one, as they try to climb up the proverbial ladder of success.

Coming of Age in Iran sheds light on the inner lives of a new generation of Iranian youth as they struggle in the face of ongoing economic crisis.

A fresh look at Iranian popular culture and women's role within this prior to the 1979 Revolution.

Unravels the explosive complexities of contemporary Iran, studying the role of religion and religious education in the culture and depicting the lives of ordinary citizens.

Presents the historical and ideological context of recent events in Iran.

Examining Iran’s recent history through the double lens of domesticity and consumer culture, Domesticity and Consumer Culture in Iran demonstrates that a significant component of the modernization process in Iran advanced beyond political and public spheres. On the cusp of Iran’s entry into modernity, the rules and tenets that had traditionally defined the Iranian home began to vanish and the influx of new household goods gradually led to the substantial physical expansion of the domestic milieu. Subsequently, architects, designers, and commercial advertisers shifted their attention from commercial and public architecture to the new home and its contents. Domesticity and consumer culture also became topics of interest among politicians, Shiite religious scholars, and the Left, who communicated their respective views via the popular media and numerous other means. In the interim, ordinary Iranian families, who were capable of selectively appropriating aspects of
their immediate surroundings, demonstrated their resistance toward the officially sanctioned transformations. Through analyzing a series of case studies that elucidate such phenomena and appraising a wide range of objects and archival documents—from furnishings, appliances, architectural blueprints, and maps to photographs, films, TV series, novels, artworks, scrapbooks, work-logs, personal letters and reports—this book highlights the significance of private life in social, economic, and political contexts of modern Iran. Tackling the subject of home from a variety of perspectives, Domesticity and Consumer Culture in Iran thus shows the interplay between local aspirations, foreign influences, gender roles, consumer culture and women’s education as they intersect with taste, fashion, domestic architecture and interior design.

A masterfully researched and compelling history of Iran from 1501 to 2009 This history of modern Iran is not a survey in the conventional sense but an ambitious exploration of the story of a nation. It offers a revealing look at how events, people, and institutions are shaped by currents that sometimes reach back hundreds of years. The book covers the complex history of the diverse societies and economies of Iran against the background of dynastic changes, revolutions, civil wars, foreign occupation, and the rise of the Islamic Republic. Abbas Amanat combines chronological and thematic approaches, exploring events with lasting implications for modern Iran and the world. Drawing on diverse historical scholarship and emphasizing the twentieth century, he addresses debates about Iran’s culture and politics.
Political history is the driving narrative force, given impetus by Amanat's decades of research and study. He layers the book with discussions of literature, music, and the arts; ideology and religion; economy and society; and cultural identity and heritage.

These essays examine Iran's place in the world--its relations and cultural interactions with its immediate neighbors and with empires and superpowers from the beginning of the Safavid period in 1501 to the present day. The book provides important historical background on recent political and social developments in Iran and on its contemporary foreign relations. The topics explored include Iranian influence abroad on political organization, religion, literature, art, and diplomacy, as well as Iran's absorption of foreign influences in these areas. A special focus is the prevailing political culture of Iran throughout its early modern and contemporary periods.

This book examines gender and the transformation of contemporary Iran. In particular it documents the changes in women's lives, challenging the idea that the revolution put back the clock for women and showing how they have now become agents of social change rather than victims.

Iran and the United States are on a collision course. David Barsamian presents the perspectives of four experts on Iran who discuss the 1953 CIA coup and the rise of the Islamic regime, Iran's internal
Throughout modern Iranian history, culture has served as a means of imposing unity and cohesion onto society. The Pahlavi monarchs used it to project an image of Iran as an ancient civilisation, re-emerging as an equal to Western nations, while the revolutionaries deployed it to remake the country into an Islamic nation. Just as Iranian culture has been continually re-interpreted, the representations and avocations of Iranian identity vary amongst Iranians across the world. Iranian Culture: Representation and Identity demonstrates these fissures and the incompatibilities that refuse to be written out of national culture, analysing works of literature, popular music, graphic art and film, as well as oral narratives. Using works produced before and after the 1979 revolution, created both inside and outside of Iran, this study reveals neglected complexities and contradictions in the field of Iranian cultural production. It considers how contested claims to culture, whether they originated in Iran or the Iranian
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diaspora, shape our understanding of this culture and what spaces they create for new articulations of it, and in doing so offers an important re-examination of our collective concept of culture. This book would be an excellent resource for students and scholars of Middle East Studies and Iranian Studies, specifically Iranian culture including film and contemporary literature and the Iranian diaspora.

This interdisciplinary volume offers a range of studies spanning the various historical, political, legal, and cultural features of social justice in Iran, and proposes that the present-day realities of life in Iran could not be farther from the promises of the Iranian Revolution. The ideals of social justice and participatory democracy that galvanized a resilient nation in 1979 have been abandoned as an avaricious ruling elite has privatized the economy, abandoned social programs and subsidy payments for the poor, and suppressed the struggles of women, workers, students, and minorities for equality. At its core, Iran’s Struggles for Social Justice seeks to educate and to develop a new discourse on social justice in Iran.

Iran is an ancient country, an oil-exporting economy and an Islamic Republic. It experienced two full-scale revolutions in the twentieth century, the latter of which had large and important regional and international consequences, including an eight-year war with Saddam Hussein’s Iraq. And now in the
twenty-first century, it confronts issues and experiences problems which have important implications for its future development and external relations. Featuring outstanding contributions from leading sociologists, social anthropologists, political scientists and economists in the field of Iranian studies, this book is the first to examine Iran and its position in the contemporary world. In developing this argument, topics examined include: social developments in the country including gender relations contemporary politics international relations relations with the US and Israel nuclear weapons and energy programmes oil and the development of the economy.

At a time when Iran is represented in the French media as a rogue state obsessed with its nuclear programme, and when France is portrayed in the Iranian media as a decadent and imperialist country, this book highlights the role of cultural representations and perceptions. Here, Laetitia Nanquette examines the functions, processes and mechanisms of stereotyping and imagining the 'other' that have pervaded the literary traditions of France and Iran when writing about each other. She furthermore analyses Franco-Iranian relations, exploring the literary traditions of this relationship, the ways in which these have affected individual authors and reflect socio-political realities. With themes that feed into popular debates about the
nature of Orientalism and Occidentalism, and how the two interact, this book will be vital for researchers of Middle Eastern literature and its relationship with writings from the West, as well as those working on the cultures of the Middle East.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has entered its fourth decade, and the legacy of the Revolution it was founded upon continue to have a profound consequence on Iranian life. This book draws on the expertise of Iranian and international academics to address diverse areas of social and cultural innovation that are driving change and progress.

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