



Cultural Revolution in Iran: Contemporary Popular Culture in the Islamic Republic (International Library of Iranian Studies)

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The Islamic Republic of Iran is several decades into its existence and the values and legacy of the Revolution upon which it was founded continue to have profound and contradictory consequences for everyday Iranian life. Despite a powerful system of surveillance and control, an extremely lively cultural milieu exists in the country, utilising many different forms of expression, including film, theatre, music and dance. Cultural Revolution in Iran examines the diverse areas of social and cultural innovation that are driving change and progress, both negotiating and resisting government policies and censorship. While religious conservatism remains the creed of the establishment, this volume uncovers a hidden world of new technologies, social media and entertainment that speaks both to women seeking a greater public role and to a restless younger generation that organises and engages with global trends online. In this volume, Annabelle Sreberny and Massoumeh Torfeh highlight the huge range of cultural activities which allow Iranians to express themselves, voice their coded opinions in between the 'red lines' of censorship and even engage in social and civil disobedience. From film to rock music and from painting to video games, there is a vast array of cultural expression and dissent that often eludes the international observer. For example, film production in Iran is high and women directors, such as Rakhshan Bani-Etemad, Samira Makhmalbaf and Manijeh Hekmat, have come to the fore, making both popular but also prize-winning films. In addition to this, there is a vibrant music scene in Iran where many performances occur literally 'underground', in private basements, as illegal activity. Sometimes an audience has to wait patiently in the auditorium for the start of a public performance – for example, to hear Morteza Shafiei conducting the Isfahan Symphony Orchestra – whilst the organisers debate with the authorities as to whether the performance can go ahead or not. It is these activities and modes of communication and expression that are central to this volume, making Cultural Revolution in Iran essential for those researching the modern Iranian state as well as those looking at everyday life and popular culture under authoritarian governments and women directors, such as Rakhshan Bani-Etemad, Samira Makhmalbaf and Manijeh Hekmat, have come to the fore, making both popular but also

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