

Laetitia Nanquette. *Iranian Literature after the Islamic Revolution: Production and Circulation in Iran and the World*

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REFERENCES

Laetitia Nanquette. *Iranian Literature after the Islamic Revolution: Production and Circulation in Iran and the World*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2021, 312 p.

- 1 Written mainly for English-speaking audience based in western countries, the volume aims to profile the post-revolutionary Iranian literary field “in all its complexity, its variations, its disjuncture, by insisting on its polyvocality” (2). It focuses on prose fiction, except for its study of poetry on Instagram. A study in the sociology of the literary field, it does not offer close reading of texts. It consists of an introductory chapter, followed by nine chapters, an afterword, references, and an index.
- 2 The first part of the volume studies post-revolutionary Iranian literature produced within Iran. Chapter One defines the genres existing in contemporary Persian literature today, including romance and politico-religious genres specific to Iran, and explains the scarcity of science-fiction, horror, fantasy or crime fiction. The next chapter explains the forms literature takes in new media in digital age, including literary blogs. Examining the polarization of the independent and government sectors, Chapter Three analyses two institutions to show the struggle for cultural power and the overlapping of cultural institutions. It also covers censorship and the grey and black markets. Based on data obtained from the Iran Book House, Chapter Four analyses the production and distribution of literary texts within Iran since the 1979 revolution. Highlighting the role of *Kanun*, Chapter Five studies children’s literature and compares it to Iranian cinema, which has been supported by the state and recognized internationally.

- 3 The second part studies the diaspora literature and the circulation of contemporary Iranian literature globally. Chapter Six elaborates on the divide between Iranian literary practitioners inside Iran and those in diaspora. There are no literary transnational exchanges on a large scale due to distrust between the diaspora and Iran, as well as heavy sanctions and restrictions on cultural exchange (178). Chapter Seven studies translations of Persian texts into English in the US and texts by French-Iranian writers in France and recognizes a development that started at the early 2010s, with “more varied texts coming to the fore” (206). The next chapter analyses Iranian-Australian literature, which evolved due to the demands of the Australian readers, particularly their interest in refuge writing. Discussing the place of literature in the Persian cultural system, Chapter Nine argues that “Persian literature, including its cherished form of poetry, is being replaced and more interlinked to visual arts” (253). One reason behind such a change is that Iranian literature lacks the state support that Iranian cinema enjoys. Afterword considers “diversity of diasporic literature as a sign of Iranians’ deep commitment to their new homes” (257).
 - 4 The first part of the volume on literature within Iran and the second part on global circulation complement each other. Covering such a wide range of materials as children’s literature, romance, and politico-religious “propagandist” literature, as well as diaspora literature, it offers a rather comprehensive picture of post-1979 literary field. Furthermore, the combination of quantitative and qualitative data resulted in a thorough analysis. For instance, based on quantitative data, it contradicts the common idea that governmental publishers publish a higher quantity of texts compared to independent ones. This volume will appeal to those in the field of modern Persian literature, more particularly those interested in the sociology of the literary field.
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