

Iran in Motion: Mobility, Space, and the Trans-Iranian Railway. By Mikiya Koyagi. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2021. 296 pp. Hardcover, \$65.00. ISBN: 978-1-5036-131-33.

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Reviewed by Elisabeth Köll

Railroads played an essential role in the transformation of economies, societies, and political structures across the globe, especially from the late nineteenth century to the beginning of World War II. Rail infrastructure became part of various colonial projects in Asia and Africa, developed under semicolonial conditions with the help of foreign syndicates in China and the Ottoman Empire, while railroad corporations accompanied the rise of managerial capitalism in the United States and Europe. Offering a comprehensive analysis of the history of the Trans-Iranian Railway as a project evolving during the Pahlavi state, Mikiya Koyagi's study gives Iran and the Middle East much-needed pride of place in the global infrastructure and mobility development against the background of changing political regimes and economic and social trends.

Informed by the methodological approach of mobility studies, the book sets out to explore imaginations and practices of mobilities as experienced by different individuals and groups involved in the construction, administration, and operation of the Trans-Iranian Railway. According to the author's definition, mobility "carries spatial and qualitative meanings, tied together but also differentiated by factors such as form, purpose, direction, speed, and scale of movement" (p. 7). Koyagi admits that this approach results in a decentralized narrative as it combines the analyses of physical, institutional, managerial, and social aspects of the Trans-Iranian Railway in the political context of the Pahlavi state. However, conceptually this broad definition of mobility does not lend itself to a tightly structured analytical approach. It also remains unclear how the concept of "imaginations" relates to practices of mobilities and contributes to a new interpretation of the history of mobility. In terms of engagement with existing studies on the contested nature of mobilities in Pahlavi Iran, the author considers the "stories of ordinary people's mobilities" and their day-to-day experiences the major contribution to the discourse (p. 14).

The structure of the book is loosely chronological. The first chapter introduces the ambitions and strategic interests of the Russian and British Empires and their officials' efforts to protect commercial and political interests. With its expansive rail and steamship infrastructure north of the Iranian border, Russia dominated the trade with Iran until World War I, which led to British strategic and commercial concerns about Britain's own infrastructure and maritime networks

extending out of colonial India. As Koyagi shows, British plans not only promoted the economic agenda but also used railroad proposals as a tool of promoting modernization and civilizational advancement in the interest of the empire. Chapter 2 discusses the Iranian population's ideas and visions related to railroad construction, presenting a diverse spectrum of opinions related to spatial reorganization, the role of the state, and the integration of existing, traditional modes of transport into the discourse. As the following chapter shows, the construction of the Trans-Iranian Railway as a nation-building project under the Pahlavi state (started in 1927 and completed in 1938) centered on the agenda and expectation to move people, goods, and ideas according to the New Civilization aspirations of the time. The outcome of the construction efforts and impact on mobilities of different social groups are discussed in chapter 4, which explores the displacement of certain communities among the rural population owing to acquisitioned land and the evolution of new labor regimes along the rail corridor's construction sites.

The technocratic and administrative side of the railroad's operation and the practice of regulation and standardization required to run the line efficiently as an infrastructural operation are discussed in chapter 5, while the following chapter explores how railway workers and their identities were shaped by the postwar professional, social, and political contexts. Here the author presents the emergence of a highly differentiated workforce, differentiated by both new work hierarchies and local origins. Apart from issues related to technocratic knowledge and social engineering, Koyagi's discussion of the evolution of "railway men" under the Iranian Railway Organization (IRO) during the Allied occupation and the immediate postwar period are particularly interesting and offer insights regarding new expressions of political mass participation in the 1940s. The final chapter focuses on passengers and their travel experiences in the railroad space, which created new attitudes toward travel and new roles for middle-class Iranians exposed to new mobilities.

Based on expansive, detailed research in various national archives and languages, *Iran in Motion* offers a kaleidoscope of fascinating stories that introduce the reader to the development of rail infrastructure and changing mobilities as imagined, practiced, and experienced in Iran. As Koyagi shows, in the beginning, public discourse about rail development in newspapers and cartoons pointed to Iran's lacking development compared with Europe in the absence of railroads. At the same time, however, knowledge about rail projects abroad informed Iranians' view and expectations of a Trans-Iranian Railway. Although Koyagi does not engage in transnational comparisons with similar reactions, patterns, and practices characterizing rail construction and operations in other national contexts, he reminds us that the evolving mobility

networks in Iran carried local, national, and even transnational dimensions. Similar to other railroad projects undertaken as nation-building projects across the globe, the Trans-Iranian Railway as transportation and communication infrastructure “created multiple traveling publics” with multiple identities depending on the specific context (p. 189). For example, new access to rail travel for the purpose of conducting transnational pilgrimages or establishing transnational political networks that linked communists from Iran, Iraq, and Moscow via rail created new mobility networks during the 1940s. With its decentralized narrative informed by the broad concept of mobility, *Iran in Motion* succeeds in showcasing the complex transformation of people who built, worked for, and traveled on the Trans-Iranian Railway across the twentieth century.

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Tata: The Global Corporation That Built Indian Capitalism. *By Mircea Raianu.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2021. 304 pp. Photographs, appendix, notes, index. Hardcover, \$39.95. ISBN: 978-0-67498-451-6.

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Reviewed by Chinmay Tumbe

The Tata Central Archives in the city of Pune in India holds a large collection of books written on various aspects of the Tata family, mostly by people associated with the family and Parsis of the Zoroastrian faith, to whom the Tata family members belong. Mircea Raianu's book—one of the few written on the subject by a professional historian—provides a masterful critical reading of archives spread across three continents and tells a compelling narrative of India's famous business house and its persistent global linkages. The narrative begins in the late nineteenth century and ends in the 1970s via six chapters. A brief epilogue summarizes the key events of the past five decades, when the Tatas globalized like never before. Of all the group companies, the Tata Iron and Steel Company (TISCO, now Tata Steel) hogs most of the attention in the book. Raianu skillfully highlights the relationships between labor and capital, company and state, and nationalism and globalization. This is his first book, built on his doctoral dissertation at Harvard University. Interestingly, it follows closely on the heels of Dinyar Patel's 2020