

“Astronomy” would seem more appropriate), Arts and Crafts, Linguistics, and Literature (subdivided into Poetry, Anthologies, Prose, *Inshāʿ*). Within each category the entries are presented chronologically according to the dates of the author of the main work and in the case of multiple copies for a given work by date of transcription.

The volume concludes with a bibliography and a selection of incredibly useful indexes covering titles, authors, copyists, owners, dated manuscripts (in order by date), place names, call numbers (shelf-marks), and a list of titles in collected volumes (*majmūʿahʿhā*). The list of dated manuscripts is especially valuable for textual, paleographical and codicological studies and the list of shelf-marks is essential for navigating across indexes and entries in the catalogue. Also beneficial is the index for the binders of various manuscripts who are identified in epigraphic stamps ornamenting their work. This list appears immediately following the index of copyists but is not mentioned in the table of contents. Interestingly, the cover of manuscript Perza O. 047 appears to carry epigraphic stamps with the binder’s signature, but has been omitted from the index of binders.

Overall, in its rich introduction, extensive indexes, and careful descriptive entries, the volume provides an accessible overview of another intriguing collection of Persian manuscripts. It is certainly recommended for perusal by anyone working on the transmission, circulation, and reception of classical Persian texts and the various manuscript cultures and craft practices in which they are embodied.

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<https://doi.org/10.1080/00210862.2019.1647743>

Iranian Film and Persian Fiction, M. R. Ghanoonparvar, Costa Mesa, CA: Mazda Publishers, 2016, ISBN 978-1568593418; paperback, xvi + 246 pp.

While a variety of scholarly studies has focused either on fictional writing or on film in Iran, M. R. Ghanoonparvar’s study looks at the relationship, similarities, differences and co-dependencies between these two modes of storytelling. The result is a remarkably well-written, well-organized and orderly book that can well serve as an effective textbook in our educational institutions. Professor Ghanoonparvar’s approach to the subject matter is methodical and systematic. The book consists of an Introduction, six chapters and a Conclusion, together with a Bibliography and a Filmography. Each chapter fits well within a comprehensive narrative on Iran’s film and fiction as Persian-language storytelling in the printed words or in sound and image. Chapters 1 and 2 are dedicated, respectively, to surveys of the twentieth century, modern Persian novel, and the development of cinema in Iran. These two chapters provide

the reader with adequate basic information on the evolving art of storytelling in the framework of the two mediums of fiction and film, subjects that are discussed at length in the remaining chapters.

In chapter 1, modern storytelling through the written word is studied and the writers' fictional narrative strategies and forms of narration are reviewed and their experimentations with different literary techniques are examined. The survey views the linear narrative techniques employed by early twentieth century prose writers to be merely following the conventional formats of traditional oral storytelling, hence lacking in the sophisticated narrative strategies, style, language, character and plot developments, techniques that characterize the works of the later generations. Here Ghanoonparvar cites several examples of the complex prose styles of contemporary Iranian writers of fiction who use such techniques as stream of consciousness, symbolism, multiple voices, enigmatic references (perhaps a ploy to escape ever-present censorship on literature), among others. The art of fictional storytelling through the written word, Ghanoonparvar reminds us, has thus arrived at a level of depth and sophistication matching the expectations and demands of its literary readership today.

Chapter 2 follows with an overview of Iranian cinema. By the mid-twentieth century, increased public interest in moving pictures and the making of Iranian fiction feature films had slowly resulted in a growing industry with some promise. While the early films were often made with the socio-political goal of showing progress in the country with regard to the modernization measures taken by the Pahlavi regime, the indigenous film industry gradually moved in the direction of making films for entertainment purposes. Such films repeatedly presented linear, predictable plots, and low-budget action scenes copied from Hollywood pictures, including popular cabaret scenes with knife or fist fights and highlighted music and unveiled dancing women. These were popular among certain viewers, brought in revenues and set in motion a rather large volume of Iranian commercial feature films that came to be called "filmfarsi" ("luti" or "tough guy" films, slapstick comedies, romance, car-chase scenes, or melodrama tear-jerkers). This genre of Iranian cinema, popular as it was domestically, appealed mostly to the lower classes and uneducated viewers and was generally considered as lacking in artistic merit among the educated urban public who watched foreign films (usually dubbed into Persian).

A rising number of trained filmmakers began to look at the works of their contemporary fiction writers for inspiration in making films that were artistic. In the 1960s, with the rise of the New Wave Iranian cinema, the attention of filmmakers turned to modern Persian novels. Ghanoonparvar observes that whereas the storytelling narrative of several of these filmmakers basically reflected a version of the written word translated into a narrative made of picture and sound, the artistic merit of the New Wave films was gradually enhanced, leading to the first internationally recognized Iranian film, *The Cow*. This film was an adaptation of a contemporary story by an Iranian writer who collaborated with the film director to produce the screenplay. Inspired by the success of *The Cow*, and with increasing approval among Iranian audiences, other filmmakers began producing filmic adaptations and/or their own interpretations based on modern fiction.

The core of Ghanoonparvar's valuable analyses regarding the complex relationship between the artistic narratives in literature and those in film are presented in chapters 3 and 4, titled respectively, "Fiction in Film," and "Film in Fiction." In chapter 3, he discusses in detail the impacts of the printed words of literary artists on the filmmakers' cinematic narration as the latter group looked further beyond the "filmfarsi" genre into more artistic productions in film. Adaptations and fresh interpretations of the literary texts for cinematic productions developed rapidly in the mid-1960s and often involved successful collaborations between the original writer and the filmmaker as they prepared the film script. Several such text-to-film renditions are discussed here. The differences and changes between the two mediums of storytelling are studied closely.

Chapter 4, "Film in Fiction," is a fresh study undertaken by Ghanoonparvar in which he explores the unexpected ways in which writers of fiction have now turned to the screens for innovative storytelling strategies and narrative structure. The new mediums of storytelling, film productions for cinema, television dramas or serials now presented new perceptions for the novelists as they began to bring together the visual and oral aspects of storytelling. While traditional literary narratives in storytelling generally followed linear, chronological patterns and writers in effect "told" us about the characters and their stories, the new medium of expression, the audio-visual filmic narrative, could now "show" us the characters through their actions and behavior. Further, the power and scope of cinematic narrative structure were enhanced through the use of film techniques such as non-linear and fragmented modes of presentation, recurrent flashbacks, shifts in points of view, multiple changes in scene, highlighted emotions and suspense through music, sound effects, lighting and so on. Soon the inevitable growing influence on the psyche of the twentieth century viewers had profound and growing impacts on artists, including fiction writers, who began experimentations in their literary works to include narrative devices, structures and strategies borrowed from the cinema. Prominent writers of novels and short stories improvised with fragmented narrative, reflective streams of consciousness, distortions of reality to present surreal or impressionistic narratives as often seen in artistic films produced in the West. Cinema had changed the perception of how to write and, by extension, how to read stories.

Modernist fiction writing in Iran today has come to depend more and more on the use of cinematic techniques and devices. At the same time, Ghanoonparvar argues, "the use of these techniques has limited the potential size of their readership and ... has displeased traditional literary critics" (p. 136). While he has traced the inter-relationship and interdependence between cinema and written fiction, Ghanoonparvar leaves us with this question: "will fiction writers in the future be able to claim some independence from cinema, as filmmakers have tried to do with some degree of success from written fiction in the recent past?" (p. 137).

Chapters 5 and 6 are reserved exclusively for the representation of the Iran–Iraq war (1980–88) in both fiction and film. "War in Fiction," the focus of chapter 5, revolves around literary reflections on the tragic experiences of the longest war in the twentieth century and its lasting impact on those who fought it and the nation at large. Many of the writers of this genre, themselves veterans of this war, recreated vivid accounts from the frontline while others chose to fictionalize the realities of their experiences. Ghanoon-

parvar goes into detail to review, study, categorize and analyze this large body of published literature in its chronological and literary development. He depicts the varied nuances and layered expressions as the literature produced during and after the war assumed increasing levels of self-reflection, ambivalence and doubts toward this war and wars in general. Such writings presented a counter-discourse to the dominant one promoted officially by the government in its recruiting of young volunteers to fight in the “Sacred Defense.” Some of this literature even went as far as humanizing the enemy soldier, depicting him as yet another patriotic Muslim teenage soldier from a lower working class background—not unlike the Iranian recruit. Two camps evolved among the veterans and their war-related literature, a division that continues. Ghanoonparvar describes them as, “one who still adheres to the political and ideological rhetoric of the wartime ... considering it a sacrilege to question the reasons behind the war,” and the other who tries “to cast another, more sober look at the war and their experiences” (p. 162).

In chapter 6, “War in Films,” Ghanoonparvar continues his study of the wartime movies and documentaries as he emphasizes the fact that films in these years, far more than by reading, were the main source of stories about the ongoing war. Here again, he makes a distinction between “war propaganda” films serving the interests of the military, and those considered “anti-war” movies. The former promote the notions of martyrdom, heroism and self-sacrifice of the true Islamic fighter as outstanding themes. The latter, made in the later years or after the end of the war, shows returning veterans who feel ignored by the people and abandoned by the regime as they are left to deal with major physical and psychological wounds in isolation. In later years more and more films focused on the aftereffects and the dire consequences of war. Ghanoonparvar shares his own ambivalence here as to whether the film and fiction that emerged during and in the aftermath of the Iran–Iraq war may pass the test of time. He projects that these storytelling narratives will gradually “fade away once the impact and consequences of the trauma begin to subside and eventually diminish, the signs of which are already evident” (p. 215).

In his conclusion to the book, Ghanoonparvar refers to the recent increasing number of translations into English of Persian literary works as promising signs for the introduction and recognition of this literature on a larger scale. He expresses celebratory notes of praise for Iranian cinema on the global scene as witnessed in recent years and he predicts a promising future for the international appeal of Persian storytelling. This book stands out as a valuable addition to the existing reading material available separately on Iranian cinema and on Persian-language fiction. It fills a void in the exploration of Persian fiction narratives in the two mediums of film and fiction.

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<https://doi.org/10.1080/00210862.2019.1678326>