

agenda, which Woolf encourages his reader to challenge.

The printed book is published on poor quality paper and includes a limited number of low-resolution images (figures and maps), but this makes the hardback affordable at £25.00.

Overall, this book represents a robust scholarly achievement and is recommended for anyone interested in the evolution and decline/demise of ancient cities in the Mediterranean. It melds old and new scholarship and approaches, and consequently presents a full survey of research into the ancient Mediterranean city.

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Leila Papoli-Yazdi and Maryam Dezhmakhoo. *Homogenization, Gender, and Everyday Life in Pre- and Trans-modern Iran: An Archaeological Reading* (Münster & New York: Waxmann, 2021, 188pp., 18figs, pbk, ISBN 978-3-8309-4350-1)

This is the first comprehensive attempt to sketch the changes in gender system in Iran from the reign of the Qajar dynasty (1789–1925) to the Pahlavi dynasty (1925–1979). The authors, Papoli-Yazdi and Dezhmakhoo, investigate rich archival material consisting of primarily visual sources, such as photographs, and written sources, such as newspaper articles, police reports, literary and legal documents, but also interviews with contemporary witnesses

(p. 7). Although not investigating objects of everyday life *per se*, they understand their project as archaeological because they focus on things attested in the visual and written sources they study. This allows them to recognise the role of everyday objects in the constitution of gender norms, ranging from clothes to cameras, photographs, spaces, and architecture. The ‘archaeology’ of this project can also be understood as Foucauldian archaeology, a

research strategy focusing on discursive traces and orders from the past in order to re-write the history of the present (Foucault, 1972). The authors follow Foucault's methods when they use historiography to compare different sex/gender systems in Iran and when they search for a radically different Iranian sex/gender system in the past in order to deconstruct, de-naturalize, and politicize the modern sex/gender system.

The fact that both authors are from Iran makes this study even more important. There are several reasons for this. Firstly, and most importantly, such a study, written by two women could not have been published in Iran. Their academic and social position is explained by S. Moraw already in the Preface (pp. 7–9) and by the authors themselves in the introduction (p. 13). In Iran, gender archaeology is a 'politically sensitive topic' and together with studies of the roles of bodies and sexuality in society, gender studies form a field not approved by the Islamic Republic of Iran (p. 7). This should serve as a reminder to Western academia that the freedom to research and produce knowledge on gender should not be taken for granted (see the 2020 Statement on Archaeology and Gender of the European Association of Archaeologists, https://www.e-a-a.org/EAA/Navigation_News/2020_Statement_on_Archaeology_and_Gender.aspx). This history of feminist thought and struggle teaches us that such freedom must be won. Although the first departments of women's studies were established in Tehran in 2001, only a decade later they were reviewed on the pretence that 'Western Women's Studies' seriously contradict Islam (p. 13). Secondly, the authors are native speakers of Farsi and have access to both primary sources and secondary literature published in this language and usually not considered by non-Farsi speaking scholars due to the language

barrier. Thirdly, in the current political climate, it is important to demonstrate the embeddedness of gender systems in the politics of the state of Iran, both in the past and in the present, and consequently to think about the embeddedness of gender systems in other modern states, including those of Europe (e.g., homophobia in the service of a nation state in Serbia, the anti-gender movement in Hungary, the recent near-total abortion ban in Poland).

Papoli-Yazdi and Dezhankhooy take a Foucauldian approach (Foucault, 1978) to the history of gender in Iran as explained in the chapter 'Introduction: Politics of Gender and Sexuality in Contemporary Iran' (pp. 15–16). This means that they focus on disciplinary practices of everyday life through which subjects are formed and citizens are produced by self-regulations of their bodies and actions. They use the term homogenization to refer to 'the policies of the Pahlavi government, as the first centralized state of Iran, and its highly desired social conformity' (p. 16). They stress the role of colonialism in the process, as, since Iran had been colonized at least on paper in 1907, Western European gender norms of dress and behaviour became attractive for the Pahlavi dynasty. European heterosexuality was encouraged (p. 17).

The first chapter after the Introduction is titled 'The Definition of Female Body as Sexual Object in Iran's Modern Governments', and it opens with a powerful analysis of the recent debates in the Iranian National Parliament. These debates concerned women's modern outfits and ban on contraceptive methods, punishable by two to five years of imprisonment (p. 22). The state is clearly governing sex and the authors embark on researching the beginnings of such governing. They start by demonstrating a different attitude towards bodies and sex during the Qajar period. Miniatures and pornographic picture books and photographs

clearly indicate this. Changes came with the Pahlavi dynasty (i.e. from 1925), which started controlling the media in Iran early on, so that even today modern government in Iran has total control. Mandatory changes in dress, based on the European model, were imposed on both urban and rural communities. Several riots against these measures took place. The Pahlavi even banned the wearing of the veil, but this sanction was abolished in 1936. Soon, hijab became mandatory and after the 1979 massive protests were organised against this. Nowadays, mandatory hijab is enforced on the pretence of controlling the sexuality of men, but in fact the bodies of women are put under control by denying women of the right to choose if they want to wear hijab or not. The veiled bodies of women contrast with the bodies depicted in different sexual positions in the *Alfiyehh va Shalfiye* picture book by Abubakr Azraghi from the twelve century CE. It seems that during the Qajar rule, sexual behaviour was not considered as a taboo, at least not among the upper classes. The Pahlavi rule produced the idea of a woman as the mother of the nation (men) and the idea of man as the defender of the mother endangered by outsiders (pp. 26–42).

The second chapter, 'Body, Daily Life, and Sexuality in Iran during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century', explores pre-Pahlavi embodiments more closely. The authors stress that previous studies of the body, gender, and sexuality in the Qajar period did not seriously consider the role of material culture. The authors start by stressing that Qajar art followed same criteria for masculine and feminine bodies instead of stressing gender differences. However, they rightly warn that this is based on evidence from the upper-class life (p. 46). Writing and joking about sex was not uncommon (pp. 49–51). Categories outside our modern heteronormative matrix existed. *Amrads* were 'beardless' young men with a

moustache line on their upper lip, who had sexual intercourse with adult men (p. 66). Growing up, an *amrad* could change into *amran-numa*, an adult man who made himself look like an *amrad*. Authors stress that being *amrad* was not related to femininity but being an *amrad-numa* was considered un-masculine. Gender and sexual identity were temporary and changeable (p. 66). Categories were not based on genital sex but on a combination of gender and the ways in which an individual practiced sex (pp. 50–51). Artworks show intercourse between same-sex couples. Beauty ideals for upper class women focused on thickened eyebrows creating an illusion of connected eyebrows, but also on a line painted above the upper lip. Body hair was not removed and women were round-faced and plumped (p. 52). Female sex workers (*favabesh*) and *amrads* offered sex for pay. Sexual relations between adult men and *amrads* were tolerated as long as they were based on consent, and as some representations indicate, it was not taboo to depict this quite explicitly (pp. 54–57). Same-sex intercourse among men and women was common even before the Qajar period in the Safavid era (1501–1736), at least among kings, courtiers, and local governors. Male brothels were also common and in 1922 even five percent of the population of Tehran earned their living with sex and lived in Qaleh Shahr-e Now, then on the outskirts of the city (p. 58). The Pahlavi government ordered that all sex workers be transferred there. All not conforming to the new model inspired by Western heterosexuality were banished from modernized Tehran (p. 59). In 1926, male-male sexual intercourse was defined as sodomy (p. 69). The authors further discuss homo-social spaces, such as separate baths for men and women which were the subjects of *orientalist* fantasies in Europe (pp. 60–65).

Chapter Three, 'Gender and Sexual Politics and the Rise of Body Control in Twentieth Century Iran', closely examines gender transformations after the Qajar era. Under Reza Shah (1878–1944), dressing became a way to control, monitor, and discipline the citizens, but also to simultaneously create modern heterosexual subjects. In 1927, the Clothing Uniformity Act was passed, just two years after Reza Shah came to power. According to the authors under his rule 'the body changed into a political subject' (p. 75) and the tendency was to resemble modern Europe. This was achieved by introducing personal documents such as birth certificates, standardized clothing of Western style (hat, coat, collar, and trousers for men; unveiling for women, often with violence), encouraging activities such as scouting, which demanded formalised and unified dress (uniform), settling of nomads, re-structuring of space, and westernization of architecture (pp. 78–102, 109). In fact, the westernization of masculinity has already been studied by Sivan Balslev (2015), but Papoli-Yazdi and Dezhamkhooy focus on the modernisation of both masculinity and femininity.

The fourth chapter 'Swamp of Oil: An Archaeological Study of Economic Participation and Women's Ownership in Contemporary Iran', is a prime example of an economic analysis through the lens of gender. The authors trace the changes in rights of women to ownership and the gradual weakening of the economic power of traditional social institutions such as dowry, *mehriyeh* (marriage settlement), gift giving, and inheritance, which formed the base of capital for women (pp. 116–26). Monetary economy came in place of payment in land, water, cattle, furniture, or other goods (p. 122). This went hand in hand with a huge demographic growth from 1920 to 1960 and the re-orientation of the country's economy to oil. The

authors summarise this by stating that women's bodies were transformed by the government into 'bodies with agency but without authority' (p. 107). According to statistics from 2015 nearly sixty per cent of urban women are unemployed (p. 113). The occupations of urban and rural women such as craftsmanship, agriculture, animal husbandry, services such as laundry cleaning and working as maids, and musicians slowly but surely lost importance (p. 130). The market system became dominated by men, as there was no export industry in Iran which would boost the need for suitable female labour force (p. 131). After the 1979 revolution, new changes occurred, hijab was not banned anymore but mandatory, women were not allowed to travel without a male companion, *mehriyerh* after divorce is paid in instalments or not paid at all, and as a wife a woman can inherit only an eighth of her husband's property (pp. 142–43).

The 'Epilogue: Thinking as Resistance' closes the book with a note on conservative modern states and their eradication of all those not according to norms of heterosexuality and conservative religious discourse which introduced mandatory veiling (contrary to Pahlavi equally oppressive mandatory unveiling), gender segregation, and limiting the roles of women to domestic space.

The Bibliography includes 331 references, numerous in Farsi, and twelve archival sources in Farsi. However, some important studies on gender in Qajar and Pahlavi Iran were surprisingly not mentioned or consulted (Balslev, 2015; Beck & Nashat, 2004). The book also has an index (pp. 181–85) and a list of figures (pp. 186–87), together with short biographies of both authors at the end (p. 188).

As with all such thought-provoking studies, it is the impression of the reviewer that this book is only the beginning of the

research on gender transformation in Iran. This is because the Qajar sex/gender system also has its history and genealogy (*sensu* Foucault), and the authors are equipped with knowledge and expertise to pursue its formation. Future work on this topic should indeed focus more on things themselves, but not in the ways Michel Foucault or Judith Butler (1990, 1993) dealt with them, namely as mentioned in texts or represented in art. The authors have at their disposal a rich spectre of objects which can be studied as more than being mere discursive traces (e.g. the hijab discussed by the authors in Chapter Four as an object with the agency to express belief and religious devotion, but also as an object with the agency to limit the freedom of choice). Things constitute sex/gender systems because they can allow for the existence of certain embodiments, but they can also restrain them (Jensen, 2009). For example, Papoli-Yazdi and Dezhankhooy continuously stress 'European' dress and (hetero)sexuality as a source of inspiration for the reforms of Pahlavi dynasty. This is, among other elements, what makes this book especially attractive for European archaeologists and historians, especially those dealing with early modern and contemporary archaeology, European imperialism, and colonialism. However, Papoli-Yazdi and Dezhankhooy do not go into much depth here, as they do not investigate the acquisition processes of new clothes or designs to Pahlavi Iran, beyond stating that this is evident. As archaeologists we want to know where exactly new dresses were imported from and why; which exact role models were chosen and why; which materials were locally chosen for the production of the dresses and why; are there any local attempts at mimicry (*sensu* Bhabha, 1994) and how can it be recognized. I believe that Papoli-Yazdi's and Dezhankhooy's work should be a stepping stone for material culture-oriented research.

Combined with their lucid use of complex theoretical concepts of Foucault and Butler, this research could enrich our knowledge of gender transformation processes and open a whole new sphere of inquiry.

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