

Iran in the 20th Century Historiography and Political Culture

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Contents

<i>Acknowledgments</i>	vii
<i>List of Contributors</i>	ix
<i>Note on Transliteration</i>	xiii
1 Historiography of Twentieth Century Iran: Memory, Amnesia and Invention	1
<i>Touraj Atabaki</i>	
2 Historiography and Crafting Iranian National Identity	5
<i>Mohamad Tavakoli-Targhi</i>	
3 Memory and Amnesia in the Historiography of the Constitutional Revolution	23
<i>Abbas Amanat</i>	
4 Disintegrating the 'Discourse of Disintegration': Some Reflections on the Historiography of the Late Qajar Period and Iranian <i>Cultural Memory</i>	55
<i>Oliver Bast</i>	
5 Agency and Subjectivity in Iranian National Historiography	69
<i>Touraj Atabaki</i>	
6 The Nation's Poet: Ferdowsi and the Iranian National Imagination	93
<i>Afshin Marashi</i>	
7 The Pahlavi School of Historiography on the Pahlavi Era	113
<i>Kaveh Bayat</i>	
8 Architectural Historiography 1921–42	121
<i>Kamran Safamanesh</i>	
9 The Paranoid Style in Iranian Historiography	155
<i>Houchang E. Chehabi</i>	

CONTENTS

10	Women, Gender, and Sexuality in Historiography of Modern Iran	177
	<i>Mana Kia, Afsaneh Najmabadi, and Sima Shakhsari</i>	
11	Marxism, Historiography and Historical Consciousness in Modern Iran: A Preliminary Study	199
	<i>Afshin Matin-asgari</i>	
12	Islamist Historiography in Post-Revolutionary Iran	233
	<i>Kamran Scot Aghaie</i>	
	<i>Notes</i>	265
	<i>Index</i>	323

Women, Gender, and Sexuality in Historiography of Modern Iran

Mana Kia, Afsaneh Najmabadi, and Sima Shakhsari

INTRODUCTION

How have the critical, feminist, and queer theoretical and historiographical challenges that have emerged within the broader contours of the discipline of history impacted modern Iranian historiography? If, as we will propose in this chapter, little has changed, what does that mean for how we think about and write history? How is it that our habits of historical thinking have remained largely centered on writing history as stories of great events and great men, within which marginal room is made for exceptional women?

The two major events that have structured historical writing on twentieth-century Iran are the Constitutional Revolution and the Islamic Revolution. The great men of our histories are the heroes and anti-heroes of these two events: nineteenth-century intellectuals and politicians, the two Tehran Sayyids and Shaykh Fazlullah Nuri, and the Qajar kings – some of them at least – followed by the Pahlavi Shahs, and figures of resistance such as Mudarris, Musaddiq, Al-i Ahmad, Shari'ati, and Khomeini.

The dominance of the two major revolutions of twentieth-century Iran over our historical narratives has produced an anticipatory mode of historical emplotment: what happened prior to these events is unproblematically written to anticipate and produce the events themselves. Our point, of course, is not to deny that the Constitutional Revolution and the Islamic Revolution were 'important events.' Nor does it suggest that the men who figured in the stories of these events were not 'great men.' The point is that the dominance of this kind of narrative history has prevented us from asking 'what

makes particular moments in history great events?' Of course, history writing is about something that really happened; it is not 'fiction.' But as one historian has noted, 'The past happened. But what happened, we do not know and cannot find out. We can only try to represent what *may* have happened.'²² Writing history is a cultural labor of remembering occurrences, set within particular narratives. As every remembering requires a great deal of forgetting, writing history is always already an act of shaping history. As an exercise in remembering, history itself reads (as its source) how others have remembered events. History writing is a continuous process of producing memories out of prior memories. It is in that sense that we ask: What constitutes 'the eventness' of these moments? What determines the historical greatness of some men? How is their 'greatness' constituted, and even more provocatively: how is their 'man-ness' constituted?

In other words, the purpose of this critical review of some of the best histories of modern Iran is not to catch authors' blind spots, or find gaps in their texts. It is not an exercise in teasing out the absence of women, gender, and sexuality from their historical subjects and methodologies. That would imply that it is possible to write some sort of total history, when in fact all our narratives are, of necessity, selective and fragmentary. But to accept the impossibility of total history is an act of humility that many historians resist. Acceptance is not a nobler ethical stance. Rather, it encourages us to ask how our fragmentary selectivity of subjects and events affects our selection of sources, the questions we ask, and the reading and writing strategies that we choose. Moreover, depending on the questions we ask (or fail to ask), our selectivity may matter in important ways, in the sense that questions NOT asked, and paths NOT taken, radically shape our historical subjects and our approaches to sources. The scope of history has indeterminate possibilities, but writing history as a totality, or a piece of that totality, creates a subterfuge where the completeness of a given narrative is scrutinized, as opposed to the effect that a narrative frame may have on historical representation. How do we as historians contribute to the shaping of Iranian political culture by whom we include in and exclude from our narratives of Iranian modernity? How do we shape the notion of Iranianness through our forgetfulness and our memorializing?

In this chapter, we suggest that the seeming irrelevance of women as actors and gender/sexuality as an analytic result from the way our historiographies constitute the past. We propose to use the absences of gendered and sexed subjects

in a (self)critical way that addresses some of the challenges facing the historiography and political culture of modern Iran – the subject of this conference.

STATE OF THE FIELD

In her assessment of *Middle East Women's and Gender History*, Marilyn Booth concludes that despite a growing, and at times ground-breaking, body of feminist historiography published over the past decade, 'for the most part, gender-aware historical scholarship remains parallel to, rather than incorporated within or central to the discipline of history in and on the Middle East/North Africa region. There remains among historians of the Middle East a silent resistance to the idea of gender as a socially constructed marker of difference within a field of power relations; too often, "women's history" is still regarded as denoting an "add women and stir" approach.'³

For our present purpose of assessing the contributions of feminist historiography to 'Historiography and Political Culture in Twentieth Century Iran,' we could begin by asking how, if at all, has feminist historiography changed our knowledge of that history? Has it changed the 'mainstream' historiography of modern Iran? Has it shifted either the topics of historical conversation or our sense of what are history's proper subjects?

Despite the productive move from 'women's history' to 'gendering history,' feminist scholarship has remained a topic of 'special interest,' delegated not to those historians who are interested in general history, but to those who specialize in women and gender.⁴ The topic of sexuality is even more marginalized; those who pursue studies of sexuality are often assumed to be motivated by identity politics. This presumed political agenda is seen as a threat to the dispassionate objectivity of proper history which is, Agenda, closely quarantined from political concerns and implications. The proper historians continue to write our general histories.

The program of this conference, for instance, casts the major markers of Iran's history over the last century as 'three major wars; two coups; and two revolutions.' Such a vision for a conference on 'Historiography and Political Culture in Twentieth Century Iran' already defines history and marks the contours of historiography and political culture in particular ways. The critical assessment offered in the conference statement engages Iranian historiography on two levels: first, it focuses on the subjects of/in history, suggesting that, until recently, dominant historiography has been centered on the political elite, thus denying 'the agency

of the subaltern and its autonomous consciousness.' Second, it addresses the current state of the discipline by distinguishing 'three areas of historical research. [T]he macro political picture, economic, urban and demographic history [and] the social history of Iran.' The statement then proposes a turn to subaltern history (as a sub-field of social history) to overcome some of the current limitations of the historiography of modern Iran. Social history, however, generally assumes its subjects as given by relying on class, ethnic and religious minorities, women, and other subjects of social history, including subaltern social history, as already constituted categories. As the critical debates on South Asian Subaltern Studies have extensively elaborated, if subaltern history simply replaces one set of subjects (the elite) with another – what Gayatri Spivak has called 'subject-restoration' – it remains oblivious to its own engagement in the production of subject-effects, as well as its own participation in the game of knowledge as power. As Spivak has articulated: '[T]hat which seems to operate as a subject may be part of an immense discontinuous network of strands that may be termed politics, ideology, economics, history, sexuality, language, and so on. Different knottings and configurations of these strands, determined by heterogeneous determinations which are themselves dependent upon myriad circumstances, produce the effect of an operating subject. Yet the continuist and homogenist deliberative consciousness symptomatically requires a continuous and homogeneous cause for this effect and thus posits a sovereign and determining subject.'⁵ While subaltern history has expanded the domain of subject categories (by adding peasants and workers, for instance), it has often re-inscribed and re-marginalized already marginalized approaches and topics, such as gender and non-normative sexualities. This is not a problem that can be dealt with by simply adding yet more categories, such as women, because such additions depend on given categories and the presumption of the possibility of completion of categories.

In what follows, we review and critique some of the major contributions to the study of modern Iranian history and culture, from the perspective of gender and sexuality studies in an effort to raise questions about how these methodological issues impact historiographies of modern Iran.

ABSENT WOMEN

We begin with one of the most comprehensive social histories of twentieth-century Iran, namely, Ervand Abrahamian's *Iran Between Two Revolutions*.⁶ In a book exceptionally rich in detail within a Marxist structuralist framework,

Abrahamian seems to assume the self-conscious and autonomous individual as the subject of history. This centering of the subject cuts across the conditions of existence and the discursive constitution of political and social forces and classes; it produces a masculinist historiography focused on the ideas of these hero/subjects in which the relations of power that produce those thoughts and subjects are lost. The structuralist conceptualization of class is connected to the absence of gender in Abrahamian's historiography. Throughout his book, women are conspicuously absent, while Abrahamian avoids issues of gender that are widely recognized as heated points of contention throughout modern Iranian history. Women remain latecomers to this vision of history, with their subjecthood shaped in the wake of their male kin. Women's presence in these narratives is contingent upon their relations to already-constituted self-conscious male figures and organizations, while men's political activities and positions are never derived from *any female kin* associations.

There is almost no mention in Abrahamian's book of women's organizations or women activists in the context of women's rights, nationalist, or autocratic politics. The few times when he mentions individual women and organizations, it is in passing or as an extension of the Shah or other elite (male) politicians or organizations. The Patriotic Women's Society (PWS), for instance, appears as part of a list of the Socialist Party's activities. No agency is given to the PWS as an organization or to its activists. Indeed, only one of its activists, the first president of the organization, is mentioned; and she is referred to as 'Muhtaram Iskandari, the wife of Sulayman Iskandari,' leader of the Socialist Party.⁷ The PWS's brief list of activities is framed within a list of the Socialist Party's activities (Abrahamian, pp. 127–128), reinforcing the impression that the PWS belonged to the Socialist Party just as the PWS leader belonged to the Socialist Party leader.

This tendency to portray women's organizations as unproblematic extensions of the 'main' (male) organization and to qualify the scant number of women mentioned with their marital ties to the 'main' (male) activists also occurs in the discussion of the Tudeh-affiliated Society of Democratic Women. 'The main personalities in these organizations were often the relatives of party leaders – but relatives who had achieved prominence in their own professions or had been active in the early women's movement, especially in the Patriotic Women's Society created by the Socialist Party' (Abrahamian, p. 335). What can we learn by including this women's movement in the historical narrative? Did women's organizations ever disagree with the 'parent' organizations, and if

so, what could this tell us about both the internal dynamics of these groups and the social forces around them? Did these activists actually have agency, or did male kin, through their female extensions (i.e., wives, daughters, sisters), move the women's movement? Does the contingency of women's activism explain why a woman such as Saddiqah Dawlatabadi (1882–1961), who lived an active political life from the mid-1910s through the early 1960s, but whose lifelong activities cannot be subsumed under those of her male relatives, gets no place in Abrahamian's history?

While Abrahamian did not propose to write a gendered history of Iran, his total lack of attention to issues of gender in the interest of writing a general political history reveals that historical generality is implicitly male. Even political and socio-economic issues that are loaded with gendered implications are unimportant in his analysis. In several places (for instance, Abrahamian, pp. 93, 123, 144, 276), Abrahamian notes in passing that gender issues, such as women's education, their legal status in the family, enfranchisement, and women's activity in the labor market created political and social uproar, yet evidently they merit little discussion. By excluding gender, Abrahamian also misses an opportunity to shed important light on his discussion of Iranian secularism. He notes that throughout the modern era, beginning with dissidents of the nineteenth-century (including religious dissent) and the reformers of the Constitutional Revolution, groups have called for 'legal equality of all, irrespective of birth and religion, to secure dignity for all citizens' (Abrahamian, p. 77). Did this language recognize equality and dignity for both men and women, or did it qualify the nature of liberty and citizenship, referring to men only? Abrahamian's silence mirrors the lacuna of Constitutionalist politics that excluded women from citizenship and naturalized 'all' in public political discourse as referring to men only. Even when he discusses a woman of apparent power within the framework of high politics, Abrahamian fails to situate her within the larger scope of Iran's history. We are told that after *Si-i Tir*⁸ placed Musaddiq firmly in power, he 'struck not only at the shah and the military but also at the landed aristocracy and the two Houses of Parliament' (Abrahamian, p. 272). Abrahamian then notes that Musaddiq 'forced Princess Ashraf, the politically active twin sister of the shah, to leave the country' (Abrahamian, p. 272). If Ashraf Pahlavi was politically active, enough so to warrant being banished, why do we hear nothing else about her aside from an erroneous reference to her as Reza Shah's oldest daughter (Abrahamian, p. 149)? Is it because we already know her place in society unproblematically as

the Shah's twin sister? Abrahamian's silence produces a gendered political culture under the guise of transparent representation.

We know that this silence is not a question of lack of sources, thanks to Parvin Paidar's book, *Women and the Political Process in Twentieth-Century Iran*.⁹ Paidar covers almost exactly the same period as Abrahamian's work, and in doing so she places noteworthy emphasis on women activists and women's political organizations. Paidar also relies on the same historiographical paradigm as Abrahamian, dividing her book into three sections: discourse of modernity, discourse of revolution, and discourse of Islamization (which are meant to follow the assumed evolutionary path of the Iranian political process). This categorization raises a set of problems common to modernist histories of Iran, including a tendency to conflate modernization with modernity, and to assume that there was a discursive break between modernity and the Islamic Revolution in Iran. It provokes the question of whether or not the 1970s marked the end of the discourse of modernity.

Reflecting the problems associated with the critical historiography of women in modern Iran, Paidar also undermines any form of women's contestation with state policies and practices. Regardless of the attention she pays to individual women and women's organizations, the state continues to appear as the sole power that co-opts women's movements and awards women rights (Paidar, p. 142). The same pattern repeats itself in her discussion of Family Protection Laws, which she proclaims are the result of the state's modernization policy (Paidar, p. 155). Nonetheless, Paidar's historical analysis is important for recognizing the centrality of gender in twentieth-century Iranian discourse and for making the scant attention to gender in a book such as Abrahamian's appear glaring.

SUBSERVIENT WOMEN

Projections of the modern state as the determining agent of women's rights currently dominate the writing of Iranian women's history: more frequently than not, states bestow while women receive. Even in a book of essays on Reza Shah's period which proposes to re-think 'history from below,' in most of the chapters, sole agency seems to rest with Reza Shah and other elite actors.¹⁰ Although Cronin suggests that the anthology's chapters on women and gender aim 'to understand and articulate the experiences of women themselves, not merely as objects of state policy, but as active participants in their own history' (Cronin, p. 3), they are in fact based on the premise that all women's organizations were swallowed and digested by the state.

Shirin Mahdavi's article is the most reductive. Here the main social actors are a homogenous group of reactionary clerics set in opposition to the courageous and progressive Reza Shah. The organizations and activism of women prior to Reza Shah's addressing of 'the problems of the women of Iran' (Mahdavi in Cronin (ed), p. 184) are referred to briefly but dismissed as insignificant because 'these were lonely voices in the prevailing consensus of opinion adhering to the views of the Shi'i "ulama"' (Mahdavi in Cronin (ed), p. 183). The agency of even these few activists is, once again, derived from their husbands and fathers (Mahdavi in Cronin (ed), p. 187). Women have no agency of their own, their opinions and actions are parasitically drawn from the real subjects of history. It is Reza Shah who establishes the Ladies' Center, whose lectures are directly responsible for increasing the number of women who discarded their *hijab*. Historically, this article borders on ridiculous, since it seems unlikely that an organization founded in 1935 is responsible for the unveiling of some women in northern Tehran years earlier. For Mahdavi, who locates Iranian women's backwardness in their hijab, it is critical to the progress of the nation that the hijab be removed, by force if 'reason' does not prevail. And 'reason' does not prevail because women, as subjects who lack autonomy, have been 'brainwashed,' by 'centuries of indoctrination' (Mahdavi in Cronin (ed), p. 189).

By contrast, Rostam-Kolayi's essay in the same volume focuses more attention on women by discussing how the difference between the rights that middle and upper class women demanded for themselves, and the rights that they demanded on the behalf of lower class women, preserved class hierarchy. Professional jobs requiring higher education were set as the goals of the former, while vocational work, requiring primary education and training, was set as the goal of the latter. The objective was not upward mobility of the lower classes, but their modernization (Rostam-Kolayi in Cronin (ed), pp. 164–166). Rostam-Kolayi's narrative also tracks enforced unveiling as a gradual process that was greatly debated in the 1920s and early 1930s by a variety of social actors. Her approach displaces the notion that the state/Reza Shah was the sole mastermind of a suddenly announced and instantly implemented dictate, to which women merely complied. Nonetheless, when some activists enter the state, they are suddenly robbed of all agency. 'As the state grew in strength, even pro-government women reformers, such as those in *Alam-e Nesvan*, lost the ability to direct reform and were silenced' (Rostam-Kolayi in Cronin (ed), p. 158). She acknowledges the effect that activism had on Reza Shah's decision to unveil women, in other words how these women's activism

informed, and in turn was informed by, state policy. But once Reza Shah seized women's initiative for the state, this dialectic relation is lost.

ADDED WOMEN

The issue at stake in asking where are women in these texts and how are they represented is not simply to retrieve history's agential women, but to challenge the notion of already constituted individuals as the proper subjects of history. It is this notion that accounts for the partial integration of women in some more recent texts as *additional* characters to the cast. Chapters are added, and women make a few more appearances in chapters largely about men (cast as the history of society), yet the question of how women and men are constituted in the first place is rarely asked. For women to be simply added to current stories, one has to assume that other characters, as well as the plot of the story, do not depend on the presence or absence of the women later added. That is, the assumption of a self-conscious and autonomous individual as the subject matter as well as the agent of history underwrites the emplotment of the narrative. Such centering of the individual subject ignores the conditions of its discursive production, and hinders our understanding of the relations of power that form these subjectivities. Our historical narratives act as one of the strands of production that constitute 'subject effects'; among other effects, these narratives produce men and women as the only legible subjects, as binarized sexes with polarized sexualities within a presumed regime of heterosexuality. Thus while sexuality, even more so than gender, seems to be missing from present histories of modern Iran, it is indeed a deeply buried, sedimented analytic upon which the readability of the heteronormalized binary man-woman is dependent. Woman as an added category becomes implicated in the production of modern heteronormativity.

Even in a book such as Janet Afary's, *The Constitutional Revolution, 1906–1911: Grassroots Democracy, Social Democracy, and the Origins of Feminism* women remain in this additive mode.¹¹ For Afary, women, along with peasants and other groups, constitute one of the underdogs of history.¹² Similar to Cronin, Afary centers her book on the concept of 'history from below' (Afary, p. 9). As such, the underdogs, whose views the historian recovers to better 'understand the past' (Afary, p. 1), are presented as objectively defined social groups. The engaged historian is simply a better historian who 'painfully and piecemeal' (Afary, p. 1) overcomes the limitations set by 'the surviving evidence' that tend to primarily emphasize the views of the ruling class. To give a

richer narrative of the Constitutional Revolution, Afary explores its 'multiclass, multicultural, and multi-ideological dimensions' (Afary, p. 3). Despite its stated overall goal, to 'show that the ethnic, class, and gender dimensions of the movement were not obscure, insignificant, and marginal issues with no crucial bearing on the political events' (Afary, p. 3), the methodological grounding of the book in already constituted categories of ethnicity, class, or gender, produces an additive dynamic. The analysis of 'the capitalist world economy' captures textual precedence (as the first chapter) and provides the structural analytic grounding for the rest of Afary's narrative. The high politics of the Russian Revolution, social democracy and 'its impact on the East' (Afary, p. 4), as well as the famous alliance of dissatisfied 'ulama' and dissident intellectuals drive Constitutional politics. While Afary's focus on popular, largely urban, associations provides a welcome expansion of existing narrative schemes, its enfolding within the structuralist scaffolding of the analysis obscures the fact that the views of these underdogs are as much produced by the retrieval work of the historian as the views of the political elite in dominant political histories. Inevitably, women become one more added category, with their own chapter, and, despite the author's best intentions, their presence and impact are largely confined to this turf.¹³

One way of seeing the 'additionality' of women's presence in these texts is to look at books' indices. The indexing indicates, and in turn reproduces, 'women' as a special topic within the larger story of the text. Few books of Iranian history have an item under 'men.' Naturalized as subjects of history, men can be taken for granted. However, most books have an item under 'women.' The pages indexed under 'women' have increased in some of the more recent books.¹⁴ The issue, however, is not a plea for parity, some quota on indexable women. Rather, the very indexibility of women, in contrast to the ubiquity of men, highlights their special, additive nature in historical narratives. Women's indexibility at once produces their particularity and the binary heteronormativity upon which the oppositional pairing of particularized women with the generalized men depends.

Two more recent books – Firoozeh Kashani-Sabet's, *Frontier Fictions: Shaping the Iranian Nation, 1804–1946*, and Mohamad Tavakoli-Targhi's, *Re-Fashioning Iran: Orientalism, Occidentalism, and Historiography* – have been more attentive to integrating gender into their broader historical analyses.¹⁵ Nonetheless, the issue of women as added characters remains a problem that haunts these excellent studies.

While a significant part of *Frontier Fiction's* sixth chapter focuses on gender and the education of citizen subjects, this section reads like an addition placed at the end of the book. A more integrated gender analysis would further complicate notions such as *vatan*, *millat*, and 'national jihad' in earlier chapters. This is not to say that Kashani-Sabet completely overlooks gender in her analysis. She does in fact pay close attention to the gendered language of nationalism throughout the book. For instance, Kashani-Sabet's attention to the change in usage and meaning of *vatan*, from 'motherland' in the Constitutional period to 'fatherland' in Reza Shah's era, not only denaturalizes this term, but also highlights the fact that language, much like borders and frontiers, has its own contingencies and history. However, Kashani-Sabet overlooks gender in other parts of her book, even when it seems equally relevant to her analysis. For example, she rightly argues that the militarization of the nation in Reza Shah's period undermined 'women's contributions to [the] homeland' (Kashani-Sabet, p. 176). However, any allusion to these women's contributions is absent from her narrative. One wonders if this scant attention to gender in other periods has to do with Kashani-Sabet's method, to some extent, still an 'additive' one.

Similarly, the gendered character of the early concept of *vatan*, which is highlighted in Kashani-Sabet's later analysis of nationalism (Kashani-Sabet, pp. 186–198), is ignored. For instance, she discusses the construction of the soldier as the ideal citizen. If 'soldiers set the standard for patriotism,' did not this implied masculinism of the patriot and later the citizen contribute to the exclusion of women's political demands from Constitutional discourse? Masculine patriotism, in other words, mitigated the way women related to *hubb-i vatan* and reverberated later when nationalism attempted to mold society according to a military structure. Not everything can be addressed in one book, but issues that are central to a book's project could have been given more attention. The quotes Kashani-Sabet draws upon are often laced with sexual imagery, yet she pays little attention to the significance of this sexualized language. In fact, she seems to adopt some of this language in her own discussion. For instance, she characterizes Mirza Malkum Khan's critique of Qajar rule as a critique of 'flaccid leadership' (Kashani-Sabet, p. 75). Whether or not she is adopting Malkum's term, she is reproducing the masculinity of the concept of political leadership through the use of a phallic image.

The rhetorical complicity of an author in heteronormatively gendered language of her/his sources shows up in chapter 4 of Tavakoli-Targhi's

Re-Fashioning Iran, a chapter with an astute analysis informed by feminist scholarship. However, his analysis reaches its limits when he arrives at the issue of male same-sex practices. In apparent agreement with Mirza Fattah Garmrudi, Tavakoli-Targhi writes, 'Europeans were reading their own behavior and ways into Iranian character' (Tavakoli-Targhi, p. 69). Did European narratives about male homoeroticism and homosexuality in Iran not play an important role in the self-fashioning of modern Iranian subjects? Why is it that this incident suddenly becomes a 'projection' of European self onto his Iranian Other? Is it because, despite Tavakoli-Targhi's careful analysis, homosexuality remains a 'homeless' historical phenomenon in his historiography?

Tavakoli-Targhi argues that 'the engendering of the national body as a mother symbolically eliminated the father-Shah as the guardian of the nation and contributed to the emergence of the public sphere and popular sovereignty – the participation of "the nation's children" (both male and female) in determining the future of the "motherland"' (Tavakoli-Targhi, p. 113). However, the trope of the nation as family, which dominated late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Iranian nationalist discourse, was centered on the sons of the vatan, not the children of the vatan. The nation was overwhelmingly transcribed as the sons (*abna'*) of Iran, a male brotherhood of vatani brothers (*baradaran-i vatan*). Not only is 'sons' the word most frequently used; but socially, sons constituted the nation. Contrary to Tavakoli-Targhi's mistranslation of *abna'-i vatan* as the descendents of vatan (Tavakoli-Targhi, p. 181), the Constitutionalists' use of the phrase meant sons of vatan. This is most evident in texts where a contrast appears between *bunat* (daughters/girls) and *abna'* or *banin* (sons/boys). Even when texts used grammatically gender-neutral words, such as *farzandan* (children), the term usually connoted sons. The meanings of gender-neutral words emerge from the discursive contexts of the period, not from dictionary definitions of a later period. The kind of gender-inclusiveness argued by Tavakoli-Targhi inadvertently conceals the historical gender asymmetries of Iranian citizenship in modernist discourse.

While Tavakoli-Targhi resists binarism in his work, sometimes the period's discursive binarism seizes the upper hand. In discussing matriotic versus patriotic nationalism, Tavakoli-Targhi seems to reproduce a picture of opposing forces without dissecting the process that sets them in opposition to each other. According to Tavakoli-Targhi, patriotic nationalism invested the source of legal sovereignty in the king. By contrast, matriotic nationalism was centered on the

land of Iran envisaged as a woman. In the latter context, women could appear as patriotic participants, albeit as a sign of shame to goad men into nationalist activism (Tavakoli-Targhi, pp. 128–132). But if women's participation served a shaming function, this would produce women's participation as secondary and optional to men's primary and necessary participation in the nationalist struggle. It would indicate that the exclusive participation of women was a perversion of the social order; women's participation was shaming because they were doing men's work. It is a call to uphold the gender order (transformed and transposed onto the sociopolitical sphere) by mobilizing men into action. Citizenship is once again coded as male, with female participation as secondary and ultimately unnecessary.

This logic is strangely reminiscent of the nineteenth-century idea of the feminization of power (Tavakoli-Targhi, pp. 65–70). The Constitutionalists' discursive strategies for invoking male action in the public sphere paradoxically drew on the fears and shame associated with the feminization of political power/sphere. Instead of standing in binary opposition to one another, here the counter-modernist discourse (of patriotic nationalism) and the modernist discourse (of matriotic nationalism) overlap. By setting these discourses in opposition to each other, Tavakoli-Targhi erases the intelligibility of this overlap. While matriotic nationalism may have opened up some space for women in the public sphere, Tavakoli-Targhi seems to have an overly idyllic notion of its power to challenge male or class supremacy.

WOMEN WITHOUT A NAME

The production of margins and exclusions that deeply damage a text's central project are thrown into sharp relief in a project that is concerned with excavating the marginalizing and exclusionary effects of other histories of modernity. Najmabadi's book, *Women with Mustaches and Men without Beards: Gender and Sexual Anxieties of Iranian Modernity*, leaves the reader pondering a question that haunts the text: Where is any account or analysis of women's homoeroticism?¹⁶ This writing of history, which questions heteronormative narratives by centering men as those who desire and are the objects of desire, becomes complicit with discourses that see sexuality and eroticism as the exclusive domains of men by ignoring traces of women's desire (same-sex or otherwise). The way that Najmabadi centers *amrads* (young adolescent males) and *amradnumas* (adult men who mimic amrads) repeats the amnesia that erases same-sex practices and

desires of women. If women in the nineteenth and early-twentieth century were subjected to the discourse of *qaymumat* (guardianship) (Najmabadi, p. 207), then a woman who engaged sexually or otherwise with a man's 'possession' would pose a menace to his sexuality. It would degrade a man, perhaps making him even 'less than a woman,' if it were a *woman* (and not another *man*) who violated his *namus* (honor). If, as Najmabadi argues, *amradnuma* was an abject figure because of his refusal to become a man (Najmabadi, p. 212), a woman who refused to become a woman, and committed *sahq* (literally rubbing, a euphemism for sex among women), would threaten the Iranian masculinity that failed to control and discipline her. If Iranian feminism has disavowed male homoeroticism (Najmabadi, pp. 212–213), the omission of this other abject figure disavows female homoeroticism through rendering it invisible. It also buttresses male homoeroticism as a central and generalized category, thereby regrafting female desire as exceptional, passive, invisible, and contingent on male desire.

It is true that male homoeroticism, despite being actively forgotten and disavowed, is more accessible to historians through sources such as poetry, paintings, and other historical documents, and that women's relative lack of access to writing in the nineteenth century (and before) makes any historical work extremely difficult. But, one can look at sources about men with a sensitivity that searches for traces of female homoeroticism, similar to the way that Najmabadi has found traces of *amrad* and *ghilman*. There are times in her narrative when the issue of women's transgression surfaces, but those moments are passed over in her analysis. For example, when discussing women's 'cross-dressing' (Najmabadi, p. 213), Najmabadi's analysis is limited to women's sacrifice for a heterosexually imagined nation and to the shaming of men in order to provoke them into political action. Shaykh Fazlullah Nuri's statement about 'women prostitutes roaming the streets of Tehran in men's attire,' is not explored. When Najmabadi writes (Najmabadi, p. 213), 'even when women *actually* dressed as men' (emphasis added), she seems to question the credibility of Nuri's claim, denying the possibility of women's disidentification with femaleness, and thus, overlooking the abjection of those who were not *amrads*. What if Nuri's observation was actually true, as some late nineteenth-century photographs of cross-dressed women, often assumed to be prostitutes, may indicate? What if the female-male binary that we take for granted (as the book argues) is further complicated not just by manhood's demarcation in relation to *amrad*, but also by an abject

figure whose menace has completely erased the memory of her existence? How does one explain that while the *amrad* can be retrieved from historical memory (though with much embarrassment and pain), '*mardnuma*' (we allot this name to the abject that has no name, while recognizing that such designation would momentarily become complicit in the later modernist production of gender as binary!) has no history?

Toward the end of chapter 3, Najmabadi mentions the inclusion of 'real women' in the public sphere (Najmabadi, p. 93). Granted, her book starts and ends by destabilizing the gender binary, yet the use of 'real women' in several places suggests naturalized notions of women. While Najmabadi is careful to recognize different masculinities and the relational definitions of manhood, there is slippage when it comes to women, who appear less fragmented and more heterosexually imagined than men. Despite the expectation that the title of Najmabadi's book incites, this analysis creates a home for the *amrad*, while female (same-sex) desires and practices remain homeless.

The limits of historical sources and their availability to historians are often raised to defer and deter feminist and queer critiques of dominant historiography.¹⁷ We are asked to believe that the nature of sources determines the kind of history we write. We write histories of great men and events, for instance, because more men have left written records and more of men's writings have been preserved. Similarly, great events leave enormous traces for us to work with. However, women also left writings, not as numerous as those penned by men, but nonetheless, women's poetry, travelogs, and theological treatises remain largely untapped and unpublished. This marks both a gender line (between male-authored and female-authored texts) and a class line. When we recognize certain written texts as archival sources, we have already produced men and women of particular classes to stand for all men and women. The overwhelming majority of the population, then and now, men and women, live oral daily lives, leaving little 'self-authored' traces behind. Alternative traces, such as registering the birth of a child in the back of a Qur'an, a line of poetry written on the margin of a *divan*, or a phrase written to mark a tombstone, are too often excluded from the archives of history. Other traces of material culture, visual artifacts, shrine objects, textiles and embroideries, etc. are cordoned off to a different field, that of art history. This is yet another disciplinary effect that has impacted what constitutes our mainstream history. Moreover, the limitations of historical sources are confounded with how those sources are read. To write history with

this distinction in mind would force historians to pay attention to what kind of history we write, and thus how *we* produce our historical subjects.

WRITING WOMEN

Dependency of our historiography on written (manuscripts or published) traces is a problem that deeply shapes what constitute subjects of history, including women's history. Much of current historiography of 'women' is also dependent solely on written records, in particular on the *press* (including Afary, Paidar, Najmabadi 1998). These women, who have become subjects of women's history through historians' readings of their printed articles in the press, then come to stand for 'women,' obscuring the class constitutive work of this historical retrieval.

This dependency on written sources, and especially on the press, is true even today. What becomes news fit to print, and thus the archives for tomorrow's historians to reconstruct the history of today, remains a tiny fraction of particular incidents that become narrativized in a given discursive realm. Such records, today's news/tomorrow's archives, tell us more about that discursive realm than about what happened today or in history.¹⁸ To take this point back into the past should in the very least bring some humility to our historical projects and urge us to surrender the illusion of total history. Although few would today attempt writing total histories, many continue to write as if they are writing a small piece of that larger total project, a project seen as perhaps more complex and difficult but nonetheless *possible*.

Scholars concerned with more recent history garner some advantages, coming from the inter-disciplinary junction of anthropology and history. Successful examples include the works of Amitav Ghosh, Shahid Amin, and Anupama Rao.¹⁹ In scholarship on Iran, however, these two fields have remained largely separate. Anthropological studies of Iran tend to focus on topics of family/kinship/marriage, while history centers on politics, states, and revolutions – a division that reproduces the modernist myth of the private/public divide. One partially successful exception, an attempt to bring the two fields to bear upon research and writing, is Fariba Adelhah's *Being Modern in Iran*.²⁰

Adelhah's book richly and elegantly combines the tools of political analysis, history, and urban anthropology. Nonetheless, while Adelhah's choice of *javanmard* (man of generosity and courage, with a public spirit) as the 'changing same'²¹ effectively disrupts the conventional norms of historiography to a

certain extent, it inevitably privileges a masculinist approach to history and events. Adelkhah does discuss 'javan-zans' [female equivalent of javanmard] such as Fa'izeh Hashimi; however, this concept remains marginal. The javanmard is really a *mard*. If the *javanmardi* ethos is the assertion of the public self (Adelkhah, p. 43), then women are excluded from the realms of *javanmardi*. At best, they appear only in gestures of self-denial when they become wives of disabled war veterans or initiate polygamous marriages for their husbands (Adelkhah, pp. 44–45). Alternatively, women appear in Adelkhah's text as consumers in emerging public and private spaces, becoming individuals through acts of consumption. Did Adelkhah and her research assistants overlook women's *nikukari* (public charity) and their giving practices? The only time in the text when a woman gives monetarily is when she donates along with her husband. One wonders how redefinitions of the relationship between the public and private have remained ungendered, in part because even in this anthropological text, Adelkhah and her team get much of their data from newspapers. How much of women's *futuwwat* (generosity) and *nikukari* enters the public's knowledge of these activities? For example, we know that there were women who donated monetary sums independently, or collected these sums to distribute among the 'needy' (before the revolution and after). It would be interesting to know if these practices have been institutionalized in the same way that Adelkhah writes about practices of openhandedness (Adelkhah, p. 73). The public circle of acquaintances sustained by openhandedness, which produces prestige and backing for its participants, presumes a 'male' public presence. One could perhaps imagine the *javanmardi* ethos being taken on by a woman, who could, thereby, change its nature, but because its whole circulation is imbued with a kind of paternalistic machismo, it may never be recognizable in a woman.

Are these women's *javanmardi* ever recognized publicly, or do they avoid state support and recognition? Furthermore, if practices of *javanmardi* are linked to becoming *adam-i ijtimai'* (a social subject), how is the receiver's selfhood produced in these gift transactions? How are new relationships of class and gender formed through these individualizations? Exploring these issues would, of course, involve fieldwork in the more informal sectors of the economy of openhandedness, but it may add to the analysis by incorporating those who are not recognized in the same way as the more public *javanmard* figures. This is not to say that these women are not social beings and that their practices do not involve a reworking of public and private spaces, for these activities do in fact

entail traveling across the city and engaging in banking activities. Yet, because they do not enter the public record through newspapers, they are subsequently excluded from Adelpkhah's analysis.

CONCLUSION

We began by asking: what makes men, events, and their greatness? In this overview of issues of gender and sexuality in Iranian historiography we have moved on to asking the same question about women: what if instead of 'women' as an already constituted subject whose history we research, we use gender as a lens for reading the constitution of power relations and the shape of culture? What if instead of presuming the heteronormativity of men and women as biologically given and stable subjects, we look at these subjectivities as historical knots, produced at the intersection of numerous strands that are different emanations of power?

In that context, our historiographical narratives and disciplinary practices about modern Iran become one of those strands that have produced some subjectivities, such as heteronormal men and (less often) women, as legitimate subjects of history writing. Similarly, when we questioned the notion of great events, it was to draw attention to how our own practices of historical writing are implicated in producing certain happenings as historically significant events. As summarized insightfully by Ana Mariá Alonso, 'All histories, whether spoken or written, are produced in an encounter between a hermeneutics and a field of social action which is symbolically constituted. Much of this encounter takes place "after the fact"; histories are retrospectives because the contours of the past are finally delineated and fixed from the vantage point of the present. Thus, the contingency of history-as-action is always mitigated by the backward gaze of history-as-representation which orders and explains, which introduces a teleology hardly evident at the time of the original events.'²² Some events become subjects of history because they constitute an important part of collective memory. Others are subsequently forgotten. These remembering and forgettings tell us a great deal about historical and political culture, and regimes of 'knowledge, power, truth' at the time of narrativization – more than what was significant when an action occurred. In other words, the narrative around an occurrence changes, dynamically and continually, as the discursive world of the narrators change. The subsequent historical emplotment of events consolidates a specific configuration of significant and insignificant into some essential truth

about the event, thus occluding its own temporality and contingency.²³ Though historians do not act alone in this process, we are an important part of producing who and what discursively constitutes great events, great men, and exceptional women. In turn, we as historians are constituted by the kinds of historical tales we write.

Iranian historiography has largely resisted 'contamination' by theories of historiography. Such theories are often seen, at best, as opulent products of the West that we do not need to import, or, at worst, as pretentious languages that cover up some historians' laziness to do the really difficult work of archival history. Good history is perceived as theory-free history; historians simply help the silent subjects in the archives gain a voice in the present. But that view of history is itself a particular theory of history: history as an objective, pre-discursive reality with the historian as the external retriever. This is a theory of history that is indeed shared by some feminist historians as well, and to this we now turn.

If, as Booth contends, women's history has not significantly impacted mainstream historiography of the Middle East and North Africa, and, as we have argued, this includes the historiography of modern Iran, we now want to ask, what in the previous decades of feminist scholarship may have contributed to this state of the field? Here we suggest that there are several factors at work, most of them shared by the larger field of feminist historiography. To begin with, one could say that the move from 'women' as a descriptive category to 'gender' as an analytical one is often made only in word use; gender simply stands where women stood before. More importantly, the 'add women and stir' approach makes the added category optional: some like it and do it, others don't. It also participates in the production of women as a special interest category that can be cordoned off as the particular work of historians of women and feminist historians. The 'add women and stir' approach has remained dominant in part because feminist historiography itself has been reluctant to risk opening up the category 'woman' and looking critically into *its* genealogy and history.

This reluctance comes from a resistance that feminist history has enacted against its own paradoxical logic of supplementarity.²⁴ In its quest to complete the Enlightenment project of centering a humanist subject, that is, the autonomous, individual, unified subject, within the field of history, feminist historiography has been reluctant to be its undoer. As Joan W. Scott has noted, feminist history can be best understood 'as a doubly subversive critical engagement: with prevailing normative codes of gender and with the conventions and... rules

of historical writing.²⁵ But for some feminist historians, women's history as a strategic intervention to support women's causes seems to conflict with its other subversive work of challenging the dominant paradigms of the discipline. In the debates over women's history versus gendering history, for example, social history was most welcoming of the former, but anxious about the latter, especially as gender became a troubled category itself, as an (always) already heteronormalized (and heteronormalizing) category. And as woman turned out to be no less of a troublesome sign, the cries over 'materiality of women' projected issues of discourse and representation as if these constituted a denial of materiality and a threat to feminism as a political project. The essentialist traces in this historiographic project produce not only women as a special topic, but also its own margins of excluded and at times abjected women. Queer historiography has remained largely marginal to the concerns of feminist historiography, despite persuasive arguments against separating sexuality and gender into separate "proper objects" and domains of study.²⁶

In making certain methodological and epistemological choices and refusing others, dominant trends in feminist historiography have often engaged in another form of resistance: not simply 'resistance against theory,' rather, as Elizabeth Weed has argued, resistance against post-structuralism and deconstruction.²⁷ How does one write history, in particular feminist history, in the wake of deconstruction? How does one narrate and deconstruct the work of one's own narrative at the same time? This is clearly a problem for all history writing, but it poses a particular challenge for feminist historiography since deconstruction was in fact empowering for dealing with patriarchal stories. At the same time, however, it makes our own constitution as feminist historians an effect of writing particular kinds of historical narratives.

Feminism has had a paradoxical relation to the debates over contingency in historical events and their historiography. Feminist historiography has been welcoming of the latter, the contingency of 'what historians have told about the past,' as that has enabled it to insist on a place for women who were present but excluded. But it has resisted the implications of the contingency of 'what happened in history,' meaning that at the time of any event, there were other possibilities that could have, but did not happen.

The implications of this contingency would challenge the inevitability of feminism and feminist historiography. Acknowledging the historicity of feminist historiography's own emergence and its terms of challenge would entail thinking

about gender and sexuality as analytics with their own historical genealogies. Without such genealogies, gender and sexuality become inevitably naturalized and render feminism as a teleological marker of progress.

To the extent that feminist historiography, similar to mainstream Iranian historiography, for the most part has not taken up the challenge of history as representation, that is, how the 'eventization' of occurrences happens, it has blocked its own radical dynamic of going beyond 'add women and stir.' Our received memories as history are already stacked as women-absent, gender-unseen and sexuality-privatized. It is this foundational structure that makes it difficult to break through and rewrite a different form of history that does not follow the 'add women and stir' model. Without challenging dominant historiographical paradigms, women's history cannot but remain a marginalized nuisance.

10 WOMEN, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY IN HISTORIOGRAPHY OF MODERN IRAN

- 1 This paper, presented at the conference on 'Historiography and Political Culture in Twentieth Century Iran' (17–18 September 2004), emerged out of sustained conversations in a seminar on critical readings in modern Iranian history in autumn 2003. Our reading list was selective, not exhaustive. Nonetheless, we hope that the analytical points presented here will be pertinent to other works. While our discussions covered many issues that are critical to works on modern Iranian history, for the purpose of the present paper, we have largely focused on issues of gender and sexuality. We thank Amy Young for her skillful editing.
- 2 Edward Ingram, 'Is the dark light enough?' *Historically Speaking* 5, 4 (March 2004): 15–16; quote from p. 15, original emphasis.
- 3 Booth Marilyn, 'New Directions in Middle East Women's and Gender History', (2003), point 10, p. 6, http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/journal_of_colonialism_and_colonial_history/v004/4.1booth.html
- 4 For a critical assessment of the field, largely as far as American history is concerned, see Joan W. Scott, 'Feminism's history' and responses by Afsaneh Najmabadi, 'From supplementarity to parasitism?' and Evelyn M. Hammonds, 'Power and politics in feminism's history – and future', *Journal of Women's History* 16, 2 (2004): 10–39; for colonial and post-colonial histories, see Durba Ghosh, 'Gender and colonialism: Expansion or marginalization?' *The Historical Journal* 47, 3 (2004): 737–55.
- 5 Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'Subaltern studies: Deconstructing historiography', in Ranajit Guha and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (eds.), *Selected Subaltern Studies* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), pp. 3–32. Quote from pp. 12–13.
- 6 Ervand Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982).
- 7 This is an erroneous identification. Muhtaram Iskandari [1895–1925] was daughter of Muhammad 'Ali Mirza Iskandari [Prince 'Alikhan]. She was tutored by and later married 'Ali Muhammad Khan Muhaqqiqi. Sulayman Mirza was a close collaborator with her father in Constitutionalist circles. See Badr al-Muluk Bamdad, *Zan-i Irani az inqilab-i mashrutiyat ta inqilab-i sifid*, Vol. 2 (Tehran: Ibn Sina, 1969 and 1970), 1: 46–9.
- 8 In mid-July 1952, the power struggle between premier Musaddiq and the Shah culminated in the Shah's attempt to replace Musaddiq as the Prime Minister, but a series of strikes and mass demonstrations forced him to reinstate Musaddiq on July 21 (Si-i Tir in Iranian calendar, which has remained the memorialization of that date). See Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, pp. 270–3.
- 9 Parvin Paidar, *Women and the Political Process in Twentieth-Century Iran* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).
- 10 Stephanie Cronin (ed.), *The Making of Modern Iran: State and Society under Riza Shah 1921–1941* (New York: Routledge, 2003).

- 11 Janet Afary, *The Constitutional Revolution, 1906–1911: Grassroots Democracy, Social Democracy, and the Origins of Feminism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996).
- 12 An epigraph from Christopher Hill (p. 1) projects from the outset Afary's book as reconstructing the views of 'the underdog'.
- 13 This problem is similarly noted in a review of the book by Mohamad Tavakoli-Targhi, "Afary's analysis is unfortunately confined to the 'add women and stir' model of women's history and does not use gender as a 'category of historical analysis'", *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 31 (1999): 476–80; quote from p. 478.
- 14 Some indicative number of pages indexed under women are: Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, 17 (out of 537 pages total); Afary (in addition to chapter 7, pp. 177–208, that is 32 pages): (21 pages, total 342 pages); Keddie (most recent edition of *Modern Iran: Roots and Results of Revolution*): (33 out of 322 pages); Mottahedeh (*The Mantle of the Prophet*): (6 out of 395); Kashani-Sabet (*Frontier Fictions*) (16 out of 226); Tavakoli-Targhi (*Re-Fashioning Iran*): (23 out of 143); Adelhah (*Being Modern in Iran*): (30 out of 178).
- 15 Firoozeh Kashani-Sabet, *Frontier Fictions: Shaping the Iranian Nation, 1804–1946* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999); Mohamad Tavakoli-Targhi's, *Re-Fashioning Iran: Orientalism, Occidentalism, and Historiography* (New York: Palgrave, 2001).
- 16 Afsaneh Najmabadi, *Women with Mustaches and Men without Beards: Gender and Sexual Anxieties of Iranian Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).
- 17 See, for instance, Najmabadi's 'explanatory footnote 4' of Introduction in relation to the problems raised here, despite her challenge of lack of sources earlier in the same Introduction.
- 18 See Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972), especially Part I, 'Introduction', and Part III, 'The statement and the archive'.
- 19 Amitav Ghosh, *In an Antique Land: History in the Guise of a Traveler's Tale* (New York: Vintage Books, 1992); Shahid Amin, *Event, Metaphor, Memory: Chauri Chaura, 1922–1992* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995); Anupama Rao, *The Caste Question: Struggles for Civil Rights and Recognition by Untouchables in India, 1927–1991* (forthcoming).
- 20 Fariba Adelhah, *Being Modern in Iran*, trans. Jonathan Derrick (London: Hurst and Co., 1999).
- 21 For the elaboration of the concept of 'changing same', in a different context, see Paul Gilroy, 'Sounds authentic: Black music, ethnicity, and the challenge of a "changing" Same', *Black Music Research Journal* 11, 2 (1991): 111–136.

- 22 Ana Mariá Alonso, 'The effects of truth: Re-presentations of the past and the imagining of community', *Journal of Historical Sociology* 1, 1 (March 1988): 33–57. Quote from p. 34.
- 23 See Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, especially volumes 1 and 3 (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1983 and 1988); and Hayden White, *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987).
- 24 See Joan W. Scott, 'Women's history', in Peter Burke (ed.), *New Perspectives on Historical Writings* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University, 1992), pp. 42–66.
- 25 Scott, 'Feminism's history', p. 18.
- 26 See Judith Butler, 'Against proper objects', *Differences* 6, 2–3 (1994): 1–26. See also Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990). For a powerfully persuasive argument against privileging a connection between gender and sexuality compared to between gender and other contextually relevant analytical strands, see Robyn Wiegman, 'Object lessons: Men, masculinity, and the sign women', *Signs* 26, 2 (2001): 355–388.
- 27 Elizabeth Weed, 'Introduction: Terms of reference', in Elizabeth Weed (ed.), *Coming to Terms: Feminism, Theory, Politics* (New York: Routledge, 1989), pp. ix–xxxi.

11 MARXISM, HISTORIOGRAPHY AND HISTORICAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN MODERN IRAN: A PRELIMINARY STUDY

- 1 S. H. Rigby, *Marxism and History* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987), p. 301.
- 2 This point often is disputed by orthodox Marxists and their conservative opponents, both of whom insist on 'correct' readings of Marx. The situation should be familiar to historians of intellectual trends (including religions) who deal with interpretations of 'canonical' texts. See Rigby, *Marxism and History*, a work that in part responded to the influential neo-orthodox reading of G. A. Cohen, *Karl Marx's Theory of History: A defense* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978). For a continuation of this debate, including a robust neo-orthodox critique of Stalinism and postmodernism, see Matt Perry, *Marxism and History* (New York: Palgrave, 2002).
- 3 One should note, for example, that V. I. Lenin's claim, in *The State and Revolution* (New York: International Publishers, 1935), that commitment to violent revolution was integral to Marxism came at an exceptional moment of revolutionary agitation. Lenin himself later modified this claim, for example in his '*Left-wing Communism: An Infantile Disorder*' (New York: International Publishers, 1934).
- 4 It was not Marx but French revolutionaries and historians who originated concepts such as 'class struggle' and 'bourgeois revolution.' See Marx's letter to Joseph