

Mateo Mohammad Farzaneh. *Iranian Women and Gender in the Iran-Iraq War*

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REFERENCES

Mateo Mohammad Farzaneh. *Iranian Women and Gender in the Iran-Iraq War*. Syracuse/ New York: Syracuse University Press, 2021, 500p., ISBN: 9780815637103 (0815637101)

- 1 Although there are thousands of documents written on the war in Persian, largely in the field of Sacred Defence (*Defah moqadas*), very few of these concern women. In this book, Farzaneh narrates the story of their participation to the war, drawing upon memoirs, wills, interviews, print media coverage, and oral histories. Women participated not only at home by looking after the household, but also on the front, in many capacities. Farzaneh argues that the war acted as an accelerator for women from poor, religious and often rural backgrounds, and propelled them into socio-political activities.
- 2 The main interest of this book is in the richness and the variety of the stories of these women, based on primary sources. The author gives precise details on their backgrounds, their thoughts and their involvement. This is critical to have a nuanced view of their role. It does not offer simplistic explanations nor theories about their involvement in the war, but let women tell their stories.
- 3 Beyond the historical research, the book takes position on the place of the women who fought in the war in Iranian society today. It shows how the war continued even after the ceasefire and for the following decades by narrating the long-term consequences for these women who were married to veterans or mothers of veterans, as well as the effects that their fighting the war had on their place in society. These women were

patriotic, very religious, but their circumstances are unique, and their politics have evolved throughout their difficult lives.

- 4 The book is highly recommended for Iranian studies scholars of the contemporary period in general, especially those working on the war and its legacy.

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