

Fatemeh Javaheri, *Tahlili naqqādāneh az peymāyeshhāy-e melli dar Iran* [A Critical Analysis of National Surveys in Iran] (Tehran, Iran, Research Center for Culture, Art, and Communication, 2021)

Reviewed by Gholamreza Ghaffari, University of Tehran

Nationwide social surveys in Iran are an important form of social and cultural research. The first national surveys after the 1979 Iranian revolution, all commissioned by government agencies, were conducted in the 1990s. Since then, the findings of these surveys have attracted the attention of social and cultural researchers, academics, government officials, and sometimes even the general public. *A Critical Analysis of National Surveys in Iran* is an attempt to portray and evaluate these national surveys. In this book, the author has selected 24 significant social surveys in Iran and assessed them in terms of methodology, the way government institutions and officials deal these surveys' findings, and their impact on cultural and social policy-making in Iran. In addition, the book evaluates Iran's social scientific academe's encounter with these surveys. From the author's point of view, the structural features of the socio-cultural policy-making system in Iran has itself limited the possibility of putting the surveys' findings to proper use. Additionally, the academe's lack of serious participation in the design, implementation, and interpretation of the surveys' findings has limited their application in the production of knowledge. Relying on interviews with scholars and officials involved in the production of the surveys and the author's analysis, the book raises interesting points about the knowledge system, the policy-making system, cultural and social change, the dominant logic and pattern governing the policy-making institutions, and the mentality of policy-makers and cultural and social managers in Iran. The appendix brings together a few monographs written on the details of main social surveys in Iran and is a useful guide for getting acquainted with these surveys.

doi:10.1017/irn.2022.45

Anonymous, *Az Goruh-e Setareh ta Sazman-e Vahdat-e Komunisti: Rahi be Raha'i* [From the Star Group to the Organization of Communist Unity: A Road to Emancipation] (Vienna, Austria: Ketab-e Raha, 2022)

Reviewed by Afshin Matin-Asgari, California State University, Los Angeles

Covering the history of the "Star Group" (*Goruh-e Setareh*) this book adds three main points of information to existing accounts of the Iranian Left: First, the Star Group, formed by National Front activists in the Confederation of Iranian Students, was unique among Iran's armed revolutionary organizations of the 1970s in its unorthodox anti-Stalinist perspective. Thus, after evolving into the Communist Unity Group/Organization in 1978–1979, it was at the forefront of opposition to the revolution's clerical leadership, even before the fall of the Shah. Second, during the early 1970s, the Star Group represented the Fada'ian and Mojahedin guerilla

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organizations outside of Iran, providing them with arms, training, and radio programs with the help of Palestinian organizations and the Iraqi government. Later, relations with the Fada'ian and Mojahedin broke over disagreements in which the Star Group considered both organizations to have been taken over by Stalinists, leading to such acts as the execution of their "deviant" members. Third, the Star Group was the most internationalist of Iran's revolutionary organizations in term of ideology and the transnational scope of its activities. Aligning with the global New Left, it rejected both the Soviet and Chinese models of socialism, offered an independent anti-authoritarian leftist option to thousands of Iranian students in Europe and the U.S., and forged links to Palestinian guerrilla organizations and the governments of Iraq, Syria, and South Yemen. Members of the Star Group fought alongside Palestinians against Israel, participated in Lebanon's Civil War and defended Oman's revolutionary movement against the intervention of the Shah's army. Regrouped in the Communist Unity Organization, these independent Marxists actively opposed the Islamic Republic until they were crushed, along with all other dissidents, during the early 1980s.

doi:10.1017/irn.2022.46

Abdolhossein Azarang, *Tarikh-e tarjomeh dar Iran: as dōw-rān-e bāstān tā pāyān-e asr-e Qajar* [History of Translation in Iran: From Antiquity to the End of the Qajar Era] (Tehran, Iran, Qoqnoos Publishing, 2015)

Reviewed by Milad Odabaei, Princeton University
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Abdolhossein Azarang's *History of Translation in Iran* offers the reader of Persian with the first systematic account of translation in Iran. Spanning from antiquity to the dawn of *tajadod* (modernity), this ambitious history of translation is at once the history of the languages, nations, and empires that define the *longue durée* of Iranian civilization. It is a well-crafted and accessibly written text. It is based on archeological and historical sources as well as modern European and Iranian scholarship on Iranian history, languages, and discursive traditions. Azarang's conclusions reflect the kinds and availability of sources. For example, the book's observation about translation in the Achaemenid Empire (550–330 BC), which is based on inscriptions such as the trilingual (Old Persian, Elamite, and Babylonian) inscription of Darius I in Bisuton near present-day Kermanshah, are more tentative compared to depictions of translation in more recent times. The noteworthy translation movements of the Sasanid, Samanid, and Qajar periods are reflected in both the extensive bibliography of translation during these periods as well as the very conceptualization of "translation" in the book.

According to Azarang, "translation follows a need" (10). It is a means for the transmission of learning. The book advances a history of translation that is self-consciously a history of the social and political conditions that motivated the turn to neighboring languages and discourses for the sake of civil and social development. This approach is exemplified in locating the transmission of Greek, Roman, and Indian traditions in Sassanid Iran in the geopolitical and sociocultural expanse of the Empire. It is also evident in historicizing translation praxes of Qajar statespersons and a newly emerging *public* intellectual in relation to geopolitical and socioeconomic crises of the nineteenth century. The attention to the *social* location of translation, which no longer fits the pre-modern *sovereign* paradigm of *translatio imperii*, makes