



The Cultural Politics of Art in Iran

Modernist Iranian art represents a highly diverse field of cultural production deeply involved in discussing questions of modernity and modernization as practiced in Iran. This book investigates how artistic production and art criticism reflected upon the discourse about *gharbzadegi* (westoxification), the most substantial critique of Iran's adaptation of Western modernity, and ultimately proved to be a laboratory for the negotiation of an anti-colonial concept of an Iranian artistic modernity, which artists and critics envisioned as a significant other to Western colonial modernity. In this book, Katrin Nahidi revisits Iranian modernist art, aiming to explore a political and contextualized interpretation of modernism. Based on extensive fieldwork, interviews, and archival research, Nahidi provides a history of modernist art production since the 1950s and reveals the complex political agency underlying art-historiographical processes. Offering a key contribution to postcolonial art history, Nahidi shows how Iranian artistic modernity was used to flesh out anti-colonial concepts and ideas around Iranian national identity.

KATRIN NAHIDI is a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Graz. She has taught at the University of Graz, the University of Osnabrück, and the Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich. Her articles on Iranian modernism have been published in academic journals, including *kritische berichte*, *Stedelijk Studies*, and *Artl@s Bulletin*.

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Modernism, Exhibitions, and Art Production

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In loving memory of my father Essi, and Amoo Behrooz,
whose respective absence and presence have been the motor
for this research

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