

Temporary Marriage in Iran

Proposing a methodology that brings feminist theories of embodiment to bear on the Iranian literary and cinematic tradition, this study examines temporary marriage in Iran, not just as an institution but also as a set of practices, identities, and meanings that have transformed over the course of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Based on analysis of novels and short stories from the Pahlavi era, and cinematic works produced after the Islamic Revolution, Claudia Yaghoobi looks at the representation of *sighbeh* women, or those who entered into temporary marriages. Each work reflects the manner in which the practice of *sighbeh* impacts women by calling into question how sexuality works as a form of political analysis and power, revealing how a *sighbeh* woman's sexual bodily autonomy is used as ammunition against what governments deem inappropriate gendered expression. While focusing mainly on modern Iranian cultural productions, Yaghoobi moves beyond the literary and cinematic realms to offer an in-depth examination of this controversial social institution, which has been the subject of disdain for many Iranian feminists and captured the imagination of many Western observers.

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Gender and Body Politics in Modern
Iranian Film and Literature

CLAUDIA YAGHOOBI
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*For all the Iranian women and men continuing
the fight for gender equality*

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Note on Transliteration, Dates, and Translation

For transliteration, I have used the *Journal of Iranian Studies* system. However, common pronunciation has guided how Iranian names appear in the manuscript. Similarly, when using direct quotes I have used the original transliteration. All translations, summaries, and paraphrasing of the Persian primary and secondary sources are mine unless otherwise stated. All dates are presented in the Gregorian calendar.