



REDEFINING NATIONALISM: CONTEMPORARY MEMOIRS BY EXPATRIATE IRANIAN WOMEN

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Abstract

The last decade has witnessed a surge in writings about the women of the Middle East, making it a new and richer field of study. The women question is inextricably linked with decolonizing attempts, the rise of national sentiment and politicization of Islam in the region. This paper is based on a critical reading of memoirs by two exiled Iranian women set against the backdrop of the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1979. Through the analysis of the trans-national memoirs, the paper explores complicated issues of identity and nationalism in a cross-cultural milieu. The findings of the paper point to resistance put up by women on the East-West interface. Despite a betrayal of women's cause and retrogressive moves by the government following the revolution, women are fighting back and resisting the appropriation of nationalism by the Islamic regime.

Keywords

East and West, exilic memoirs, identity, Iranian women, the Islamic revolution of Iran, nationalism, patriotism