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FEEDING MORAL RELATIONS

The Making of Kinship and Nation in Iran

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FRIDAY | APRIL 22 | 12:00PM
10 SACHEM ST. ROOM 105
Light lunch will be served

In post-revolutionary Iran, ideas and practices of the family have become integral to nation-making. The blood of kinship, for instance, reconfigured in the blood and sacrifice of Iran-Iraq War martyrs, has come to delineate and sanctify the Iranian nation. This paper draws from research in Iran among Shi'is who support the Islamic Republic to suggest that, like blood, everyday and ritual acts of kinship such as sharing food and prayer are also being mobilized for the cultivation of pure Islamic relationality in the wider sphere of the Iranian nation-state. This work contributes to scholarship at the intersection of kinship and nation by examining how a full spectrum of substances, acts, and processes of kin-making can naturalize – and sacralize – relations between citizens. It highlights the material and embodied aspects of religious nation-making and provides one the first accounts of family life in provincial Iran since the 1979 Revolution.