

SEMINARI di DIPARTIMENT



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HOW TO THINK AND STUDY POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN REFORMIST / AUTHORITARIAN SYSTEMS

Discute
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Instead of focusing on political participation as a right that is denied or granted, or as the outcome of political and social mobilisations from below, the paper explores what other meanings political participation may have in the context of an authoritarian country – and specifically, the Islamic Republic of Iran. More specifically, my proposition is that we look at political participation as: first, a state-sponsored social programme; second, an attitude of the population, shaped and sustained by the “discourse of power”; and, third, a set of contentious practices from below, which may subvert and go beyond the state’s social programme. Ultimately, I argue that discourses promoted by the state/elite empower political participation. However, people may become political in ways that the regime does not necessarily approve.