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## A GLANCE AT THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF PAHLAVI ERA

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### *ABSTRACT*

*Pahlavi Era is one of the very important epochs of Iran's history. There are compiled and published many books featuring a multiple array of perspectives regarding the 53-year tenure of Pahlavi inside and outside the country in general or specific forms with diverse qualities and quantities. These works have been presented within the format of memoirs, reports, articles, conversations, interviews, researches and authorships penned by native and foreign writers, Pahlavi family members, proponents and officials involved in that regime and/or its opponents. Many of the valuable works are worthy of reading and they persist; but, some are unfortunately found not immune of personal or religious biases and there are these others replete with historical and misleading mistakes. The judgments made for or against some individuals in the works by writers and speakers are predominantly unilateral and based on personal inferences whereas judging the antecedents should be normative and a result of performing research and it has to, more importantly, take into account the temporal conditions. The average score and the work result of every individual is a scale accepted worldwide for making judgement about the goodness or the badness or serving or betraying. A greater deal of attention has to be paid to this matter in historiography of Pahlavi era. The present study briefly investigates such a historiography.*

**Keywords:** *Historiography, Pahlavi, Contemporary*

## INTRODUCTION

### ***Pahlavi Era Historiography Classification:***

First Era: Reza Shah's Era (the Period of Archaism Literature)

Second Era: The Era of Muhammad Reza Shah Pahlavi's Stabilization (Extolment Literature Period)

Third Era: Pahlavi Downfall Era (the Period of Justifying Literature)

#### ***1. Reza Khan Era (the Period of Archaism Literature):***

With Reza Khan's 1920's coup and establishment of a dictatorship since 1925, the accomplishments of the constitutionalist revolution in the area of civil, social and political freedoms were all swept away. Relying on England and Germany, in its late years, Reza Khan's dictatorship tried to force the Iranian society copy the western communities through exertion of physical suppression and violence.

He promoted an example of pre-Islam Iran and monarchial system and introduced it as a favorable and proportionate pattern for the Iranian society. It was in the ground of this mindset that a new wave came about in Iranian historiography and dealt with the history of pre-Islam Iran (Kianouri, 2007: 12). Pahlavi paid a great deal of attention to historical archaism and extolment of Reza Khan and denouncement of Qajar since this period

which is termed as archaism literature. Such a type of historiography was kept on till 1977 during which it substantially emphasized on the magnificence of ancient Iran and making efforts for linking Pahlavi Era Iran to that of Cyrus Era.

In this period, such important events as tobacco movement, constitutionalism, World War I, Russian revolution and 1921's coup that were conjectured as good titles for Pahlavi Era historians were all forgotten. For a period of over a decade, potential historians played the role of renderers translating the historical works from European languages, mostly modern Europe, and/or ancient Iran (Tavakkoli, 2009: 155).

A group of Iranians were seriously busy with archaism processing and turning it to the ideology of the newly emerging government in this period. There was felt an essential need during Reza Shah's era to codify an ideology for the stabilization of the new Pahlavi order. It had to be a type of ideology that proved the legitimacy and ascension of Pahlavi Sultanate.

Thus, a sort of new struggle is observed in the area of the novel historiography in the works of such figures as Hassan Firniya, Abbas Eghbal Ashtiyani, Kasravi, Foroughi and Sa'eed Nafisi, Taghizadeh's group in Berlin, Muhammad Ali Foroughi in Tehran, Ebrahim Pourdavud, Zabih Behrouz and Zabihollah Sepehri who had authored such works as the book "translation and report of Avesta" and "ancient Iran culture dictionary" by Davud Ebrahimpour, the book "calendar of ancient Iran" by Dr. Muhammad Mo'ain, "the history of Iranian people" by Abdullah Zarrinkoub, "the Great Cyrus" by Sadegh Rezazadeh Shafagh.

So, the scientific methods of the west were exercised and many writings were presented that were either excerpts of western works to be studied by the general public or the translation of the strangers' works that mostly drew the attentions and were used by the university students. They were valuable in that the modern methods of writing history and the style of the new thoughts found a room and were accepted in the historical literature (Fasihi, 1993: 34).

In this period of time, history was considered as a very important applied science but its application was in certain and limited cases. The main objective was not showcasing the past so as to know what to do rather the goal was regulating and offering the native history and the history of the world's changes in a new form [in line with the government's policies] so that a new culture could be created as the foundation of a new political order. Due to the limitedness and the purposiveness of the needs, the historiography school was gradually changed into a superficial and paradigmatic school devoid of dynamicity and inherent growth (Shahbazi, 1998: 168).

The publication of the works by Hassan Firniya regarding the history of ancient Iran came up as a turning point in regard of historiography and in terms of its principles and also in regard of Iranians' self-awareness of their national history. In an order of publication date, his works are: ancient Iran (1927), stories of ancient Iran or a brief history of Iran till the downfall of Sassnids (1929) and the history of ancient Iran (1932-1934, v.3) [the last work is the greatest and the most important work by Firniya]. The importance and value of his efforts in this latter work is compared with Ferdawsi's work in terms of providing Iranians with information on their national history.



It might be possible to claim that the first and the second volumes of Pirniya's ancient Iran is enumerated amongst the research books with the least error and mistake during the recent century for the precision and fuss he has practiced in writing it. He has obtained the latest and the newest and the most authentic information of his time regarding the history of ancient Iran. He has never left the side of fairness and he has compiled the book away from any dogmatism (Bastani Parizi, 2000, p.556).

Another important source used by second Pahlavi era's historians is the works by Abbas Eghbal Ashtiyani who is considered as one founder of Iran's new historiography for several reasons; he is even realized by some as the father of Iran's novel historiography and, in more exact terms, the father of specialized and academic writing of history.

Abbas Eghbal Ashtiyani is a well-informed and industrious researcher and he is one of the first university professors teaching history in Iran. He has authored several history textbooks during Reza Shah's period, he is the founder of a famous journal named *Yadegar* (1944), author of the book "the new luck dynasty" (1932) and "the history of Mongols" or "the detailed history of Iran" (1933). There are many translations and numerous revisions and research articles and others left from him (Bastani Parizi, 2000: 556).

The third well-known archaist historian in Pahlavi Era is Sayyed Ahmad Kasravi Tabrizi. He is a literary man, historian, dissident, jurist, linguist, researcher etc. His bitter criticisms of Shiism and Shiite clergymen and his putting of stand against some cultural, scientific and literary policies of Muhammad Reza Pahlavi's government had all impelled him to solitude and isolation and this was finally ended in his murdering by Islam Devotees in April, 1945.

The most popular historical work by Kasravi is "the history of Iran's constitutionalism" that was published as an attachment to the *Journal of Paiman* and as a link to the 18-year history of Azerbaijan during the years between 1934 and 1940. Then, it was released as a book in the years from 1940 to 1942.

Amongst the tens of works by Kasravi, the thing that makes these two works, to wit "the 18-year history" and "constitutionalism history" important in terms of the issues related to historiography and modern historiography and contemporary history of Iran is the special look adopted by him towards the reasons and factors of history movement and their interrelationships, rise and fall of Iran's constitutionalism and the role and stance of the people masses therein as well as the reasons and factors giving rise to the digression and decline of that great movement (Yazdani, 1997: 24). Furthermore, in regard of the scientific research principles and regulations, especially the application of the ancillary techniques and sciences in the historical researches, the works by Kasravi are very innovative. He was one of the first critics of the European orientalists and he has written articles criticizing their works. In fact, he was one of the representatives of anti-orientalism stream. He endeavored to substitute a type of national narration of Iran's history for the historical metanarratives and narratives of tribes and sects and ethnic and religious groups in Iran thereby to dismiss the factor that had given rise to the scattering and sequestration of the Iranian society and set the ground for the actualization of nation in the new sense of the concept.



Kasravi took an innovative and proper advantage of such techniques as comparative codicology, numismatics, linguistics and geographical information and historical geography in his works. He created outstanding historical researches like “Anonymous Monarchs” (1928 to 1929), “Azari or ancient language of Azerbaijan” (1925), “names of cities and villages of Iran” (1929-1930), “the history of the lion and the sun” (1930), “the 500-year history of Khuzestan” (1934), “Sheikh Safii and his descendants” (1927) and tens of other valuable treatise and articles (Yazdani, 1997: 24).

#### ***Extolment Literature:***

Extolment literature prevalent in various formats, including [historiography] of the poetical forms employed political power teachings to support the situation governing the country. The eulogists dedicated an important part of their poems to the admiration of the king and his royal family. Moreover, the elements of political thought ruling the Pahlavi era, including archaist nationalism in modernization were reflected in the poems of this group and the political events were rendered and interpreted from the government perspective. They did not fall short of any compliment and commendation regarding the coup on the 28<sup>th</sup> of August and land reforms, the 2500-year celebrations and others and knew the holding of such feasts as an honor, indicator of Iran’s splendor and in favor of the nation and country. Some poets who were inclined towards the royal government in this period were Masha Allah Hodavand, Rahi Mo’ayyeri and Sadegh Sarmad (Dorosti, Ahmad, 2002:305; Shafi’ei, 2010: 230).

#### ***2. Pahlavi Historiography: The Era of Muhammad Reza Pahlavi’s Stabilization (the Period of Extolment Literature)***

After September, 1941, the interests in historiography were abruptly revived with the great changes that had come about as a result of the World War II and Reza Shah’s overturn.

During the early years of his government, Muhammad Reza Pahlavi did not have much of an influence on the intellectual and press organs so that a definite historiographical stream could be pointed out in this period for the Pahlavis. However, the history and historiography took another form in this period (the onset of political and social freedoms).

The years after the coup on 28<sup>th</sup> of August till 1977 mark the stabilization of Pahlavi government. Economic and political policies of the Americans were actively exercised in Iran and the king heralded reaching the “gates of the great civilization”. The dominant extolment literature supported the situation governing the country in various formats, including [historiography] of the poetry forms, through benefiting from the teachings of the political power. The eulogists dedicated an important part of their poems to the praising of the king and his royal family. Besides, the elements of political thought ruling the Pahlavi era, including archaist nationalism in modernization were reflected in the poems of this group and the political events were rendered and interpreted from the government perspective. They did not fall short of any compliment and commendation regarding the coup on the 28<sup>th</sup> of August and land reforms, the 2500-year celebrations and others and knew the holding of such feasts as an honor, indicator of Iran’s splendor and in favor of the nation and country. Some poets who were inclined towards the royal



government in this period were Masha Allah Hodavand, Rahi Mo'ayyeri and Sadegh Sarmad.

***An Example of the Extolment Literary Works:***

Works such as “towards the gates of great civilization”, “retrieved magnificence”, “the splendor and grandeur of Iran’s queen” were written by Rasoul Parvizi. These works signify the pompous and praise-seeking spirits of the Pahlavi ruler; i.e. the literature governing the historiography has been of an extolment and admiration type in this period.

The book titled “towards the great civilization” was published by Muhammad Reza Pahlavi on the New Year in 1976 and it was used by him for referring to the then progresses and Iran’s prospective programs and theorization of his own ideas and notions thereby to depict his programs and ideals for Iran before the Iranian people.

The book was released by Pahlavi Era’s political culture research and promulgation center in cooperation with Pahlavi library and it was translated by Fereyduun Howaida and Sohaila Shahkar to French, then into English by Fo’ad Rowhani (Tavakkoli, 2009: 15).

Although Amir Abbas Howaida states in response to the question posited by one of the journalists who asked about the real writer of the book that: “I have not said this but it has been written by the contributions of Shoja’a Al-Din Shafa” (Hovida, 1995: 26). In this book, Muhammad Reza Pahlavi blemishes Qajar visage and reminds of the sad social, economic and cultural situation of that period and admires Pahlavi’s performance (Milani, 2001: 423).

The book “the retrieved magnificence” (Universal Press, 1976) is a pictorial story for the children and adolescents of Iran’s contemporary history from September 1941 till 1976. It has been written according to a formal narration of Pahlavi government and based on Muhammad Reza Pahlavi’s life. The book portrayer is a Belgic designer named Dino Atanasio (cited in Shahr-e-Farang Website).

The book “the splendor and grandeur of Iran’s queen” has been authored by Rasoul Parvizi who is a great writer and a literary and political man during 1940s and he represented the people of Bushehr in national parliamentary council and senate. As it was observed, the majority of the works were extolments of shah’s personality and members of royal family. This was done by the force of money and assistance of ministry of the royal court and the internal and external writers.

**3. *Pahlavi Historiography: The Era of Pahlavi Downfall (the Period of Justifying Literature):***

The third group of Pahlavi historiography pertains to the streams after the Islamic Revolution. With the advent of Islamic Revolution and the downfall of Pahlavi Sultanate, Muhammad Reza Shah and the other officials of Pahlavi regime found out that everything they had acquired during these long years have all been lost and they would have to justify their deeds and behaviors one way or another.

Muhammad Reza Pahlavi and his dynasty, the ones separated from Pahlavi regime, who were somehow considered as Pahlavi assistants, and the other important and influential personalities who had had such positions as minister, congress lawyers or prime ministers became inclined towards this type of historiography, to wit oral historiography and memoir writing and memory retelling. To justify their positions and delineate a





positive and somewhat clean countenance of themselves, they took such measures as writing history so as to exonerate their own selves and the Pahlavi government. This was accompanied by the distortion of history and hiding and concealing of many of the realities. In this period, a large number of visage-carving and acquittal of some Pahlavi government personalities and/or softening of Pahlavi History is abundantly seen (Tavakkoli, 2009: 152). Of course, there are seen criticisms of Pahlavi sultanate in such a historiography, as well. But, these criticisms are mostly superficial and directed at their political rivals. The works from this period have several substantial characteristics that are common between them all, including:

- 1) Recounting the Islamic Revolution and the people's choice as disastrous
- 2) Making efforts for finding individuals to blame them for the Islamic Revolution occurrence and blaming one another
- 3) Making extensive efforts for claiming their own cleanliness of the depravities of Pahlavi Regime
- 4) Justification of their own positions in Pahlavi Period (Tavakkoli, 2009: 113)

The followings can be mentioned as but some examples:

During spending of his banishment period in Mexico, Muhammad Reza Pahlavi wrote a famous book called "responses to the history". Following him, his sister, Ashraf Pahlavi, wrote a book named "my brother and I". The secrets of the lives of shah and Farah, Farah Pahlavi's orphan girl (Farah Diba), memories of Solaiman Behboudi, "five years in service of shah" by Ahmad Ashraf and, also, the memories of Lady Farideh Diba (Farah Pahlavi's mother) under the title of "my daughter, Farah" have all been authored by the cuing and consent of Farah Pahlavi. However, Farah, herself, says that: "my dear mother published a book of her memories personally and without consulting with me and she has disclosed many untold materials with an indescribable courage and with no concealing of any fact" (Farah Pahlavi, 2003: 16).

In opposition to the accusations by Farah Pahlavi, in some interviews and European journals, and her mother Farideh Diba (the book of my daughter Diba), Taj Al-Mollok Pahlavi (Iremlou), wife of Reza Shah (mother of Muhammad Reza and Ashraf Pahlavi) publishes her own memories. And, besides Taj Al-Molook, Ashraf and Shams Pahlavi introduce Farah Diba, in their memories, as one of the disruptors of the process of sultanate continuation and shah's downfall due to her inferences in the country's political affairs.

The memoir of Reza Pahlavi, Muhammad Reza Shah's son, was published in the US and it provides answers to the book by Mas'oud Ansari and Farideh Diba (Iremlou, 2001: 16). Pahlavi Regime has been praised in the memoir book of Abdolmajid Majidi, the minister of labor and social affairs in the prime ministry tenure of Hovaida and Ali Amini Majdi, who were prime ministers of Muhammad Reza Pahlavi as well as in the memoir book of Muhammad Ebrahim Taimur Kalali, minister of interior affairs and labor in Mosaddegh's tenure period of prime ministry and the representative in eight rounds of national parliamentary council.

In addition, the former figures in Pahlavi Regime, such as Parviz Raji (the last ambassador of Muhammad Reza Pahlavi in England; 3<sup>rd</sup> of April, 2014 in London) wrote a book named "at the service of Peacock Throne" the tenth volume of which has been translated



by Mehran. It is the diaries of the last ambassador of shah in London that has been published in English in London. Parviz Raji was admired by Ashraf Pahlavi and began serving her band and, in doing so, he made such a great progress that he became practically known as informal spouse of Ashraf. Meanwhile taking hostile positions against Islamic Revolution, Raji makes a lot of admirations extolments about Hovaida who is an old friend of his (Raji, 2003: 85).

The work by Jahangir Tafssili in the form of a book named “the book of memoirs” and the work by Fereyduh Hovaida in the form of another book named “shah’s downfall” can be enumerated amongst this set. The collection of these resources have been each seeking for exonerating oneself from the crimes, finding guilty individuals, justifying their own role and performance and proving a less accentuated presence of themselves in the bitter incidents of Pahlavi Era (Tavakkoli, 2009: 12).

The memories of the former full general, Hussein Fardoust, who expresses his memories during the years of his presence beside Muhammad Reza Shah (a complete explanation will be provided regarding the evaluation of this source) and the memories of Ahmad Ali Mas’oud Ansari, Farah’s cousin, under the title of “after the downfall” deal with the elaboration of the spirits, dispositions and function of Pahlavi family and intensively seeks blemishing the prestige of Pahlavi family and defending Farah. Miss. Mino Samiimi (Mino Riuz), the head secretary of Farah Pahlavi’s international affairs, writes her memories of her serving the Pahlavi regime formations under the title of “behind the curtain of peacock throne” and publishes it in London (this book has been translated into Persian by Hussein Abu Torabiyani). She divulges many of the events in the backstage of peacock throne (Tavakkoli, 2009: 14).

Oral history is another part of Pahlavi era’s historiography. It is necessary to mention that Iran’s oral history plan was implemented since September 1981 for six years with an allocated budget of 600 thousand dollars under the supervision of American university of Harvard and it was headed by Dr. Habibullah Lajavardi, a Harvard University professor. During the implementation period, the political memories of 150 individuals who have been somehow effective in the contemporary Iran’s incidents, especially Pahlavi statesmen, and other high-ranking officials of Pahlavi regime who fled the country and a number of Islamic Republic’s opponents were recorded through interviews. But, the other objective of the plan is appreciation of loyalty to Pahlavi regime and there are several journals have been published of these interviews such as memories of Abdolmajid Majidi, Ali Amini, Muhammad Ebrahim Amir Taimur Kalali (Eskandari, 1993: 16).

In London, as well, in 1978, Iran’s oral history foundation was established by a group of individuals interested in and enchanted with Iran’s contemporary history and the memories and interviews pertaining to the first degree Pahlavi dynasty relatives and the others who were in close contact with this family or were in the context of the political and social evolutions of Pahlavi era were published like memories of Lady Taj al-Molook Pahlavi (Iremlou), Reza Shah’s wife and the mother of Muhammad Reza and Ashraf and Shams Pahlavi. Of course, there were institutions in Iran like “the center of Islamic revolution documents” and “Iran’s contemporary history research institute” or “library and organization of national documents” and others that had begun oral historiography.



The late, Gholam Hussein Yousefi has the following statements in this regard: “it is evident that such memories (memoir writing) have been sometimes accompanied by claims and brags and unilateral expression of ideas by the writers; or the writers are found more dealing with things that they have been more interested in or more opposed with for a reason or another. But, there are, as well, information and points inserted in them that are vividly advantageous in terms of social as well as historical studies” (Yousefi, 2006: 361).

The investigation of the books published in various grounds of Pahlavi history makes it clear that they can be succinctly classified as below:

### **1) Proponents' Spectrum:**

These are the works and authorships by the defenders or the heads of Pahlavi regime that have been published both inside and outside the country. The memories of this group have been more written by the important and influential figures in Pahlavi regime [like Pahlavi family, former prime ministers, army generals and so on]. They have mostly tried distorting and concealing of many of the realities to absolve themselves in the course of history and before the future generations and blame the others.

In such works, face-making and acquittal by some Pahlavi government's personalities are frequently seen and the few observed criticisms are more superficial and directed at the political competitors. It was discussed in details in the previous section on the period classification of historiography.

As an example, the followings are some of these works and authorships:

“Responses to history”, “a mission for my homeland” by Muhammad Reza Pahlavi; “my brother and I” by Ashraf Pahlavi; “the secrets of the lives of Shah and Farah”, “orphan girl” by Farah Pahlavi (Farah Diba); memories of Shahpour Gholamreza; “my daughter Farah” by Farideh Diba (Farah's mother); “adventures of Farah and I” by Eskandar Deldam; memories of Solaiman Behboudi; memories of the former full general Hussein Fardoust; “five years at the service of shah” by Ahmad Ashraf and so forth.

Some of the published books are arenas of personal retaliation in which they attack one another via making the most inferior accusations. The book by Ahmad Ali Mas'oud Ansari is a personal strike-back to Reza Pahlavi.

Or, Abbas Ghareh Baghi resorts to falsification in his memories for justifying his betrayals and exonerating of oneself so as to present a good visage of himself before the public thoughts [that were cursing them] (Pahalvi, Shahpour, 2010:6; Deldam, 1998: 11).

Although all of these works have been written purposefully, they have streaks of pure truth exposed to the readers' judgments.

### **2) Opponent Spectrum:**

#### **A) Nationalists<sup>1</sup>:**

<sup>1</sup> Nationalism stream has been interested in the revitalization of Iran's history and defending an identity posited as dubious by the orientalist and an array of affiliated intellectuals. Pirniya, Kasravi, Mahmoud Mahmoud and, perhaps, Hussein Makki can be enumerated amongst this group of nationalist historians (Simin Fasihi, Ibid, p.47).



The leaders and activists of the national front faction inside and outside the country can be pointed out as individuals from this spectrum. The writers of this front have done their best to accentuate the role of the nationalism front in fighting against Pahlavi in their writings and write the realities in line with factional intentions and defending of the nationalist front and/or parallel to their own personal interests and favors. On the other hand, they have intended to depict a role less accentuated than reality for the clergymen and religious factors and people. One prominent example of this set can be found in the interviews of Shapour Bakhtiar and hopes and frustrations and political memories of Dr. Karim Sanjabi.

Some nationalists have adopted nationalist and liberalist approaches in writing works on Pahlavi era's history amongst which the popular research and academic patriotic book by Gholamreza Nejati, called "the 25-year history of Iran", can be pointed out. Although the work features nationalist and liberalist perspectives, it is notable in regard of the method of document collection and its enjoyment of a scientific research style (Kianouri, 2007: 20).

#### **B) Leftists:**

The majority of the leftist historians are affiliates of people masses faction and proponents of Marxism<sup>2</sup> and feature similar attitudes. Memories of Noor Al-Din Kianouri "a dialogue with history"; memories of Iraj Eskandari, "thirty-year history of Iran"; memories of Abdolsamad Kambakhsh, "the history of laborism movement in Iran"; the memories of Ardashir Avansian, "coup in coup"; the memories of Ehsan Tabari, "fifty years of Pahlavi dynasty's detour and transgression and treason"; memories of Anvar Khame'ei, "memoir, highly turbulent years, politics culture and social evolution and so on"; memories of Fereydun Keshavarz, "I accuse". The followings can be enumerated amongst the leftists who were not associated with people masses faction: Khalil Maleki (confrontation of the ideas and beliefs); Homayun Katouziyan (Iran's political economy, despotism, democracy, national movement); memories of Khalil Maleki and Mosaddegh and/or other individuals like Yousef Eftekhari and Mahdi Khan Baba Tehrani some of which are against the people masses faction and the other political powers in favor of Khalil Maleki. Although these writers have predominantly dealt with the history and performance of people masses performance and leftist groups in their works, they are good sources in regard of the materials and criticisms presented about the tyranny and oppression of Pahlavi regime and its weaknesses. However, the mistakes and errors of the people masses faction have been justified and neutralized in these works.

Since this group had zealous leftist attitudes, it has been incapable of perceiving the general and religious beliefs of the Iranian people and it has fallen short of comprehending the issues the way they have been. Another point is that the

<sup>2</sup> The Marxist stream influenced the country's society of intellectuals firstly by the establishment of communism in Iran followed by the advent of the people masses faction in the country's political scene via promoting the theoretical and ideological basics of Marxism in publishing books like "Iran in the last two centuries" by Ehsan Tabarai and Javanshir's books and others (see also, Simin Fasihi, (1993), "Pahlavi historiography", p.47).



authors and memoir writers of this group were associated with Soviet Union and they suffered a lot of pains and difficulties in staying as such but they were left with nothing but mirage in the end (Tavakkoli, 2009: 22).

As for Iraj Eskandari, the point is worthy of mentioning that he has taken a part in the political evolutions of the period of time between 1941 and 1946. In this period, Eskandari was closely associated with Ahmad Ghavam (Ghavam Al-Saltanah)'s party for which reason his memories are recounted as first hand documents in the elaboration of the events taken place from 1941 to 1946 in Iran.

### C) *Islamists:*

By Islamist historian, the group of authors and writers is intended that believed in fighting within the framework of Islam and religious teachings against the tyranny and cruelty of Pahlavi regime. This group led by Imam Khomeini (may Allah consecrate the honorable soil of his tomb) entered the battlefield after 1960s. They wrote their memories and perceptions with an emphasis on the Islamic perspectives following the lead of Imam Khomeini (may Allah consecrate the honorable soil of his tomb).

The followings are some works by this group: the book “the movement of Iranian clergymen” by Hojjat Al-Islam Ali Davani; though it was published in newspaper form and with a little use of exactness, the documents gathered by the writer are notable and important.

The book “the investigation and analysis of Imam Khomeini’s movement” by Hojjat Al-Islam Sayyed Hamid Rawhani has made efforts to create public disgust of Pahlavi dynasty. The other work has been written by Hojjat Al-Islam Abbas Ali Amid Zanjani under the title of “roots of Islamic revolution” and it deals with the mentioning of the events and details of the Islamic revolution. Another noteworthy work is “the contemporary political history of Iran” written by Dr. Sayyed Jalal Al-Din Madani. He writes in the introductory part that he has written the book by the request of Shahid Musa Namjoo and he has started from the events in Qajar and constitutionalism era and has dealt with Pahlavi history (Tavakkoli, 2009: 17).

The book “memories from Shahid Navvab Safavi” by Hojjatollah Taheri according to memories of Nayyereh Sadat Ehtesham Razavi (Shahid Navvab’s wife) published by Islamic revolution’s document center; and, the book “the life and fight of Navvab Safavi” by Sayyed Hadi Khosrowshahi published by center of Islamic investigations are but some others of the authorships offered by this latter group.

### 3) *Memories and Authorships of the Foreigners and Orientalists:*

The non-Iranian works that largely belong to the politicians, prime ministers, agents and spies and western diplomats like England and US and Soviet Union’s ambassadors and others have been predominantly presented within the format of memories, reports, missions and scientific activities of the orientalist and scholars doing research on Iran as well as an array of the other individuals. These issues were more intensively attended to with the formation of orientalist stream and specialization of the courses and majors on the field of Iran Study. Some of them are the results of



works by the journalists and western researchers who have written things about Pahlavi government and have attempted to present an inverse evolution trend of the events via assimilating the realities so as to recommend the imperialist objectives of their own countries and sovereign states. But, the majority of the writers from this group have been more in search of their own countries' imperialist interests and objectives; it means that, amongst the existing realities, they have magnified and highlighted the things they envisioned to be in their favors and aligned with their countries' objectives and then put flesh on the bare bones and kept silent about the things they found against their own ideas.

Another point is that the majority of the foreign history writers are from western countries. Although they have been orientalist and Iran researchers, they had also been commissioned to spy and intelligence missions along with their doing of research about Iran. Due to the importance of such a subject as the westerners' orientalism and history writing in regard of Pahlavi historiography, some examples can be pointed out:

The works by Miss. Lambton, General Sir Percy Saix, Richard Katem, General Hobbers, Bojinsky, Jimmy Karter and others all of whom, meanwhile having written valuable works, have not stayed so much unbiased in their being equipped with the weapon of awareness (Kianouri, 2007: 29).

And, the book "the contemporary history of Iran" by Pytter Avery (complete explanation of the book will be provided in section on criticism of the sources); memories by Kermit Roosevelt, CIA agent and the head of coup operations on 25<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> of August, 1953; the book "foreign policy of the US and Shah" and the book "Mosaddegh and the coup" by Mark Gaziversky are some other examples written by this latter group. Richard Katem, a US embassy clerk in Iran, has been surely a CIA spy; of course, he had been disguised as politician and history analyst. The book "nationalism in Iran" signifies his access to high-ranking officials and his induction of some imperialist historical thoughts (Kianoury, 2007: 574).

The followings are some other specimens of the foreigners' works in historiography of Pahlavi Period:

Jimmy Karter's memories, the book "crisis" and the book "the secrets of Shah's downfall" by Berzinsky, Karter's security counsellor, the book "crisis" by Hamilton George; the book "a mission in Tehran", written by General Robert Hayers and the book "mission in Iran" by William Sullivan and others.

The final point in regard of the present topic is that the works by some foreign writers like Muhammad Honain Haikal in the book "Iran, the story that was never told (or Iran, the narrative that was left unsaid)" has been written in an unbiased manner and from an honest standpoint and perspective (Diba, 2000: 5). Haikal makes a greater use of newspaper style. In his works, he largely deals with the mentioning of the events he himself has personally witnessed and/or quotes the incidents from the mouth of the individuals he has directly been in contact with. This Egyptian writer published the book in 1981 for the first time in Arabic and English and Hamid Ahmadi translated it into Persian.



Due to the importance of the subject of Pahlavi historiography by the foreign historians and the imperialist goals of the majority of them, an example has been explicated below in details:

Kathrin Swynford Lambton was the most active history writer in Pahlavi era. She wrote the book “the landlord and peasant in Persia” to have taken the first step in line with sociology and history of Iran’s society in historiography.

Miss. Lambton was associated with the England’s embassy press in Tehran and she managed her job very well because it had been decided for her to get present in the academic societies (Bullard, 1991: 6).

Miss. Lambton, a contemporary English researcher who studied Iran, learnt Persian language and literature and was present in Iran from 1939 to 1945 at which time the World War II was commenced and she was hired by England’s embassy as press associate. The main task of Miss. Lambton was carefully watching Iranian newspapers to see if the news related to English in Iran’s press are right or wrong? Another task of her was reading Iran’s newspapers and calling on the newspaper writers and publication of commentaries in Persian nearly seven times a month, preparation of commercials and advertisement films and so forth (Lambton, 1998: 503). Miss. Lambton has written a valuable and fascinating research work on nomads but she had another duty and that was being an agent of England’s MI6 spy organization.

In her book “the landlord and the peasant in Iran”, she, meanwhile extolling and praising Reza Khan and justifying her weaknesses and mistakes, vindicates England’s interference in Reza Khan’s affairs. Besides doing non-intermediated research, Miss. Lambton lived in Iran for years and she has travelled all around Iran and she has studied and used a vast part of the works and sources pertaining to the history, economy, social life, land relations, governmental documents and others. Plus, the book “Iran in Qajar Era”, she has also authored “land reforms in Iran” and an article called “Islamic society in Iran”, “an explication of Qom history” and so on (Fasihi, 1993: 92).

The thing seen in Lambton’s political approach towards Iran’s issues is its undoubtedly imperialist nature that is in fact a heritage of the Curzon mindset. As a specimen, Miss. Lambton in her book “the landlord and peasant in Iran” and in regard of the bread drought during late winter in 1941 (everyone knows for sure that it was a plunder of our products by the allied forces that sent them to Russia) exonerate herself and states that it happened because the croplands were set on fire by the German Army and .... She blames Azerbaijan landlords and tribes for all the shortages and introduces them as the main cause and culprit (Lambton, 1998: 470). In her book “the landlord and the peasant in Iran”, Miss. Lambton writes on page 470 that “in Fars, there is enmity between Turk and Tajik (non-Turks) and between city dwellers and the nomads”.

The acquisition of these types of information and reporting them to England government leads to the instigation of ethnic, tribal and language discrepancies the result of which is nothing for Iranian nation other than domestic wars and perishing and, as we know, the policy of “segregate and rule” is frequently exercised by



England everywhere. But, this point has to also be mentioned that two works by Lambton, “landlord and peasant in Iran” and “land reforms in Iran”, though do not pay much attention to wars, they both are noteworthy and deserve more attention due to the writer’s use of detailed and first-hand resources and field observation and personal experience (Schpuller, 2009: 273).

***The Weakness of Pahlavi Era’s Historiography:***

One of the issues for which Schpuller and his colleagues have criticized regarding Iran historiography in Pahlavi Era is its ignorance of social history stating that the social and economic historical grounds are still intact and untouched (Schpuller, 2009: 282). He points to the following sentence regarding the memory writing format in this period: “it should not be forgotten that the memoir writers are obsessed with their own beauties and they absolutely do not express the truth” (Schpuller, 2009: 248). Another issue pointed out by Schpuller and his peers is the idea introduced by him on page 249 of his book “Iran’s historiography”, “due to the nature of their sultanate, Pahlavis used to take opposing positions towards the intellectuals and prevented the emergence and expression of authentic and original histories. They opened the door of flattery and attachment as much as they could and the things left of the historiography of this period is a handful of flattery about the historical performance of Pahlavis. In contemporary historiography sources, the remarks by Fereyduun Adamiyyat are noteworthy:

“The newspapers, as the source of news and incidents, can be utilized as far as their limitations allow and in adjustment to the other resources. Although the press is not always a precise scale of assessing the public thoughts, they usually reflect different aspects of various notions”. The minute of the congress is the most authentic source of its worksheet and/or it is the representation of the most important political events of the then time.

The series of the letters exchanged between the congress and shah and other papers are enumerated as important documents (Adamiyyat, 2015: 52).

However, there are many writings at hand but they are unfortunately devoid of any scientific method and style and auditing and criticism of the works based on a scientific approach. Due to the inattentiveness of the country’s political manager towards history and historiography and the lack of a proper recognition of the position and importance of history, this need was not felt and it caused the social sciences to be considered as less important or not important at all. Since the immediate and tangible results are not felt in the social sciences, the non-specialized management and policy-making are easily carried out without them being noticed by anyone. The importance of the death of a society is huger than the death of an individual. Thus, because there is no such a thing as an applied need is felt, the social sciences, in general, and historiography, in specific, have not been developed. Sociology and anthropology along with historiography turned into leisure time hobbies without any link to the life, policy and economy (Shahbazi, 1998: 165).

John Garney proposes the following sentences regarding the ignorance of social history in contemporary history of Iran:





“The political narrations and personal memories were still the common patterns of Iran’s historiography. The great political events like constitutionalist revolution, nationalization of oil industry and the interference of the foreign forces in Iran and/or the expositions of the lives of great politicians and political heroes like Amir Kabir, Sayyed Jamal Al-Din Asad Abadi or Mirza Kuchak Khan Jangali are the most common and most popular people-driven issues whereas other types of history, including the intellectual and economic histories have been less attended to and the social history was not essentially considered in the vast sense of the concept (Gurney, 1990:44).

Of course, Sa’eid Nafisi and Morteza Ravandi’s works should be considered as the first efforts for the codification of Iran’s social history. Consideration of the documents also gains a particular position in this period. Essentially, a strong point of Iran’s historiography is the importance given to the preservation and promulgation of the historical documents and the works observed in the personal and public libraries seem to be good resources for the diplomatic and economic history. Non-Iranian documents, as well, are published in the form of political letter-writing, governmental reports, personal memories and others and they are applied as supplementary documents (Gurney, 1990:45).

Another shortcoming of Pahlavi historiography is “speculative fiction writing”.

Some books written about Pahlavi history are mere stories. Many of these resources are products of the writer’s mind hence not based on any historical truth in such a way that one finds oneself faced with a political and historical novel rather than an authentic historical text; thus, in these works, the writer somehow takes advantage of his mentality and makes imaginations regarding the historical matters like the books by such Iran’s prime ministers as Mas’oud Behboud and the book “Fouziyeh” by Khosrow Mo’tazed. Another weak point of historiography is the issue reminded by Dr. Soroush as pitfalls of the political history.

- 1) Lack of conception about the reasons and factors giving rise to certain happenings and reliance on the rumors
- 2) The role of foreign countries’ spies and conspirators
- 3) Learning lessons from intellectual changes in the west and east
- 4) Never begin with cursing and end with cursing and we are faced in our society with two dangers named praising and insulting.

Soroush underlines the idea that learning lessons from the past history is necessary for all of us parallel to the resolving of the today’s problems, especially in consideration of the recent a hundred-year history of our country that is very fruitful and prolific and it cannot be neglected. If one wishes to comprehend history, s/he has to empathize with the heroes and the makers of the history in such a way that s/he could reach the conclusion that if s/he was in their shoes s/he would have said and did what they had said and done and it is in this case that one can claim to have perceived the history. Standing outside, the arena and arranging others in a line and sticking a label to each of them and insulting them cannot be described as history analysis (Soroush, 1992: 14).



As for nationalism in Pahlavi historiography, Soroush writes: “during Muhammad Reza Pahlavi’s sultanate, emphases were made on Iranian culture (kingship government) because it could back up kingship in Iran. A group of literary men and historians started serving the sultanate system so as to prove the originality of the Iranian ethnicity.

Extremist nationalism was their heritage taking the form of establishing language academy which was per se a favorable organ but it fell into extremism and taking of extravagant measures in line with sweeping the religious culture away for such an excuse as elimination of a foreign culture. Poets and writers like Eshghi, Sadegh Hedayat, Zabih Behrouz and even Sa’eid Nafisi were the provokers of this battle and began reviving of pre-Islam and post-Islam Iranian heroes and expressed their sorrows and sighed here and there envying the kings’ times (Soroush, 1992: 109).

Another point that has to be taken into account regarding Pahlavi’s contemporary historiography is Dr. Shari’ati’s perspective. The late Shari’ati states that: “the root cause of all positive and negative events in the history or the society should be sought on the inside part. No external factor can become a cause in the destiny and past history of a society”.

Blaming the external factors for all of distresses and bad omens and deceiving people are heinous internal realities and their result is ignoring and hiding the main origin and the first loci one spring of which is imperialism. Blaming the imperialism and external colonialism for all of the sins is a sort of acquitting the real causes from the guilt and crime (Shari’ati, 1996: 60).

Another weakness of the works from Pahlavi era is fabrication of books which is so called as copy-pasting. It means that thick books can be created via extracting out some parts and installation of some images and writing a few lines. In some of these types of books, the literature differs in various parts and the book is, in fact, a compilation of materials set up in an arrangement of a type like the book “the father and the son” by Mahmoud Tolou’ei and the book “inside the shah army” by Khosrow Mo’tazed.

3-Some of the works from Pahlavi era are devoid of documentary resources and the writer is found uninterested in citing sources from where s/he has extracted certain assertions and writing which causes the reader dare not to historically rely on these works and/or not to consider the researcher as a real researcher of a real work such as the book the history of Pahlavis written by colonel Hamid Hashemi, though there are cited about eight sources in the end of the book. As put by he, himself, I have earned these beliefs and the observations and studies and knowledge of mine from 27 years of serving Pahlavi government but there are not any references and citations seen inside the text (Hashemi, 2014: 447).

Another point seen in Pahlavi Era historiography is that the role of people and religious identity and the Iranian culture is most often ignored such as in the work of Hussein Maleki (Kianouri, 2007: 12).

## CONCLUSION:



Since the very beginning of Qajar era, the grounding was gradually set for evolution of history examination and historiography by Iranians and the genesis and emergence stream of the modern historiography was formed.

The emergence and development of the newspapers, diaries, university students' dispatch to outside the country, translation of some texts and Europeans' historical researches, daily increasing awareness of the civility and new culture of the western countries and the gradual dominance of eastern thoughts over Iran's intellectual space, modern insights of the orientalist and Iran researchers regarding the various aspects of the history of Iran's civilization and culture, establishment of new schools and teaching of history in curricula and preparation of instructional materials in this regard for the schools and other cases are amongst the factors and causes contributing to the shift in the approaches towards history and historiography of Iranians. Thus, such a shift in Iranians' approaches towards the whole universe influenced history writing and scientific and objective methods of doing research and studying history. The Iranian intellectuals and modernists before and after constitutionalism each were emphasizing in the new and real sense of word on the importance of knowledge and awareness of the history and its role and effect on the awakening and promotion of the whole nation; moreover, from Reza Shah period on, the establishment of Tehran University and the growth and development of modern education rendered systemic the teaching of history in the higher education institutions and in whole the education system.

One of the highly important eras of Iran's history is Pahlavi era; the codification of real and truthful resources of history and answering to the various organized distortions can be observed in this period. According to the great many of the historical books from this period, the criticisms should be rational and the providing of answers should not be originating from personal, sentimental and social emotions and affections. The weak and strong points of each should be demonstrated reasonably and fairly so that the future generations of this territory could reach a correct image of the history of the country and step on a correct path via learning lessons thereof. It has to be reminded that part of the judgments seen in the works of the writers and speakers for and against certain individuals are based on personal inferences: the author's class dependencies have not been ineffective in the discretion and analyses by them of the events in the majority of the cases and this is considered a natural issue. Considering all the temporal and spatial conditions, a logical and fair judgment can be drawn; thus, such a type of judgment is the extract and the fruit of an individual's work and this is a generally accepted scale in the whole universe.

Pahlavi era historiography is on the beginning of its road and it has a long path before it to reach the delineation of a realistic and full-scale image and one should not suffice to one factor in the elaboration of the historical changes rather s/he should endeavor to offer a comprehensive image of the process of evolution of historical phenomena and consider the role of all the internal and external as well as political, economic, social and cultural factors. According to Dr. Soroush, the plotters should not be blamed for all of the guilt and exonerate oneself by doing so; in other words, everyone is as blameworthy in this historical shortfall. In the elucidation of the historical realities, the researcher does not seek for finding the main culprit and convict (whether friendly or foreigner). The event has happened in the past and it is a result of hundreds and thousands of factors (Soroush, 1992: 31).



One factor is not paying attention to the social sciences as an important knowledge in history that should be quite contrarily greatly attended to; thus, sociology, anthropology and historiography should be turned from dilettantism into something more associated with life, politics and economy.

A generation of professional researchers should be trained in history courses out of which intellectual elites could be educated and the status quo of the social and historical researches could be brought to a termination point. Therefore, the most important way of revitalizing the Iranian historiographical tradition is activation of research institutions and historical research centers along with authoring of specialized books in the area of history (none of the main country's libraries like national library, congress library and Tehran University library can be realized as the specialized history library).

In all of the countries whose historiography is fully developed, the research institutions are active along with the history departments. Thus, there is a need for having a highly striving and active and generative area of historical researches that one could resultantly bear witness to the growth of good novels, stories, screenplays and cinemas.

If the history is changed into something of a more applied nature, it can play a more effective role in the daily life and the experience of the consecutive generations of human beings will be kept persisting and this very important issue demands consciousness of the country's officials and politicians in clarifying the philosophy of history and historical research and their applications.

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