

The Transparent Sphinx: Political Biography and the  
Question of Intellectual Responsibility

Afshin Matin-asgari

Abbas Milani, *The Persian Sphinx: Amir Abbas Hoveyda and the Riddle of the Iranian Revolution* (Washington DC: Mage Publishers, 2000). 399 pages.

Political biography has become a popular genre in post-revolutionary Iran. Government figures, leaders of political parties, academics, and professional writers have already produced a large body of autobiographies, memoirs, biographies, and semi-biographical fiction. When a triumphant Islamic Republic called for a radical break with the past, it also caused a deep sense of anxiety and curiosity about all that was suppressed, rejected, and denied. Despite, or perhaps because of this official sanitization of history, there seems to be an endless appetite for books about the Pahlavi era (1926-79). Thanks to the bleak realities of post-revolutionary Iran, not only the old regime, but even the Qajar monarchy (1796-1925) has now acquired a warm nostalgic glow in popular imagination. For example, in the late 1990s, a best-selling novel called *Bamdad-e Khomar* (Morning of Intoxication) caused a minor cultural stir by going against supposedly populist literary conventions to depict wealth and aristocratic privilege as positive values. Beyond popular culture, a certain historical revisionism seems to be at work in serious historical/biographical studies that, like Abbas Amant's *Pivot of the Universe: Nasir al-Din Shah Qajar and the Iranian Monarchy: 1831-1896* (1997), take issue with pervasive but stereotypical representations of monarchy as the epitome of decadence and stagnation. Writing political biographies and autobiographies related to the Pahlavi era and the Islamic Republic, however, remains more politically sensitive and intellectually daunting. Immediately after his overthrow, the Shah, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, wrote *Answer to History* (1980). A naïvely self-serving account of the Shah's reign, accomplishments, and fall, this book was of little historical import but it set the trend for a "literature of denial," produced by the partisans of the old regime who, like the Shah, have denied its major flaws and/or their own contribution to its failures. Nevertheless, flickers of self-criticism began to show in works such as Parviz C. Radji, *In the Service of the Peacock Throne: The Diaries of the Shah's Last Ambassador to London* (1983); and more so in posthumous releases like Asadollah Alam, *The Shah and I* (1991). Memoirs of foreign diplomats and heads of states, who were involved in Iranian politics, offer some new insights but are often too embroiled in justifying another country's foreign policy priorities. Exercising their usual circumspection, academics and Iran experts have mostly steered clear of writing biographies of contemporary political figures. A notable exception has been Marvin Zonis, whose *Majestic Failure: The Fall of the Shah*, (1991) is critical and informed but too tightly framed in psychohistorical assumptions.

Conscious of their own role in making history, political figures in the Islamic Republic have been more forthcoming in writing and publishing memoirs and diaries. Most of these, especially the writings of those in power, serve immediate political agendas. Still, they contribute to a general trend toward increasing awareness of contemporary history. Khomeini of course wrote no autobiography and official renditions of his life are highly hagiographic. A recent work, Baqer Moin, *Khomeini: Life of the Ayatollah* (1999) is journalistic and casts events in terms of the inexorable march of Islamist forces. But it is a vast improvement over earlier attempts, such as Amir Taheri's *The Spirit of Allah* (1986), that remained at the level of gossip and slander.

Treading these treacherous grounds, we now have Abbas Milani's *The Persian Sphinx: Amir Abbas Hoveyda and the Riddle of the Iranian Revolution*. This is a biography of Hoveyda, the Shah's longest-serving prime minister and Iran's second most powerful man during the monarchy's last two decades. Our first reaction is to commend Milani's audacity to stick his neck out and tackle a bombshell of a subject. On closer examination, the book is an ambitious and sophisticated undertaking, easily the most outstanding in the genre of twentieth-century Iranian political biographies. Moreover, its controversial topic, engaging style, and readable prose make it appealing and accessible to an audience beyond the academe; and it will reach an even wider readership once (a censored or amended) Persian translation appears in Iran.

Any such work is by definition controversial and provocative, but Milani's book requires special critical attention because of its potential impact, particularly on the non-specialist public at large. While it has merit, *The Persian Sphinx* is ultimately a disappointing and misleading work because Milani has injected strong doses of political bias into his historical reconstruction.

The careful reader will find almost all of the author's assumptions, preoccupations, and conclusions summarized in the book's preface. The first major point is the admission that writing about Hoveyda's life has been a continuation, "by proxy," of a previous autobiographical project: "...in pursuit of the riddle that was his life, I have had a chance to revisit some of the same landscapes that I had mined earlier while writing my own memoir."

Those who have read Milani's autobiography, *Tales of Two Cities: A Persian Memoir* (1996), will remember the peculiarities of that work. Beyond childhood sketches, the book had a surprisingly short chapter on Milani's intellectual formation during his student years in Berkeley, California, from the mid-1960s to 1975. At that time, Berkeley was one of world's most culturally and politically vibrant cities. Milani, however, joined an anti-Shah Stalinist sect, whose weltanschauung was derived from close readings of Chairman Mao's works and the *Peking Review*. He then generalizes this experience to characterize all Iranian oppositionists as closed-minded fanatics. But this is blaming others instead of admitting mistakes. Milani could have chosen the less dogmatic wings of the student movement or left the opposition for an independent intellectual path. Yet, he stayed with the Maoist group and was drawn into

political entanglements that Tales of Two Cities mentions but does not clarify.

The most poignant parts of Milani's autobiography are the two chapters where his torments as a political prisoner of the monarchy are described. But an air of ambiguity clouds these sections. Milani tells us how after returning to Iran in 1975 he became a university professor and, still connected to the Maoist group, joined a "think tank" of supposedly reformist intellectuals formed around the queen. This must have been around 1975-76, the very time we find Milani publishing material praising the regime. Is he then implying that his pro-regime writings, including speeches for the queen, were done when he was in fact an undercover Maoist? There is no explanation and no clear chronology of events.

By the end of his second year in Iran (about 1976-77) Milani was arrested because of his leftist contacts. He says that he had given up his revolutionary ideas "long before" landing in prison. He also mentions reaching a quick agreement with the authorities that allowed him to be freed in one year, but adds that media reports distorted his court testimony into praise for the Shah. Again this may be an oblique reference to Milani's writings that were used to attack the opposition in publications by the political police (SAVAK). Tales of Two Cities does not give us clear explanations of these thorny issues. But it may suggest why Milani views Iranian politics as a dichotomous clash between fanatical opposition forces and a flawed but modernizing monarchy, a struggle in which real intellectuals had no choice but to join the latter. It is the continuity of this theme in The Persian Sphinx that makes it an autobiographical work "by proxy."

In the preface to The Persian Sphinx, Milani claims that writing this book convinced him that nearly all his perceptions about Hoveyda had been wrong, thus suggesting the reader might expect a similar experience. He then gives us a synopsis of what he learned about Hoveyda: "He was a true intellectual, a man of cosmopolitan flair, a liberal at heart who served an illiberal master." Expressed in no uncertain terms, these words capture the essence of what Milani wants to convey about Hoveyda. He promises to reverse common perceptions by offering a sympathetic portrait of a man usually seen quite unfavorably. The same passage also summarizes Milani's view of Hoveyda's times:

He lived at the height of Iran's historical struggle between modernity and tradition, Western cosmopolitanism and Persian isolationism, secularism and religious fundamentalism, and ultimately between civil society and democracy on the one hand, and authoritarianism on the other.

Readers who may be uneasy with such simplistic juxtapositions will be further alarmed as Milani immediately gives his opinion of the generation of Iranian technocrats and bureaucrats represented by Hoveyda:

He embodied the hopes and aspirations, the accomplishments and failures of a whole generation of, usually Western-trained, technocrats who were bent on pulling Iran out of its cycle of poverty and repression

and freeing it from the clutches of tradition.

This of course is a mere repetition of what those same technocrats, including Milani himself, wrote in the 1970s to justify serving the regime. Milani then raises the question of the moral responsibility of Hoveyda and others who served the Shah's regime in important capacities. "Pondering his life, could also, I realized, shed light on serious questions about individual moral responsibility for acts within a political system..."

Obviously, the question of moral responsibility is a core concern of *The Persian Sphinx*. Milani's narrative deals with it indirectly, but his position is stated at the outset. He seeks to show that Hoveyda was a liberal intellectual who, along with a host of other like-minded technocrats, fought against "poverty, repression" and "tradition." The book is not clear as to why such noble efforts failed. Nor does Milani hold Hoveyda, and his cohorts in the ruling elite, seriously accountable for the system's flaws and failures. He seems to indicate that the obstacles were too great and the Shah was too "illiberal." Thus we have the making of a classical tragedy: a despotic king ruling a backward society, facing meddling foreigners and fanatical opponents, and served by intellectuals like Hoveyda, whose moral integrity is consequently questioned and must somehow be redeemed. This is why Hoveyda is cast as "the Persian Sphinx," the symbol of enigmatic and misunderstood intellectuals whose "true story" would also unravel "the riddle of the Iranian Revolution." Indeed there is much at stake here. And to Milani's credit, almost all of his assumptions are clearly stated on the very second page of the book's preface. Let us follow and see how he tells his story and whether it is a compelling one.

The preface continues with some general observations on the place of biography in Iranian history. According to Milani, while pre-Islamic royal inscriptions were "unabashedly self-assertive... With the advent of Islam, the self was gradually eclipsed, and the individual no longer directly described or revealed to the reader." Contrary to this sweeping generalization, Islamic Iran abounds with prose and poetry genres containing much biographical and even autobiographical references. Obvious examples are panegyric and epic poetry, court chronicles, and travelogues. Milani, however, immediately opens himself wider to charges of hyperbole by proceeding with a one-paragraph comparative analysis of the biography genre in Islam and Christianity, contrasting the Gospels' "biographical pluralism" to the Koran's unequivocal narrative and lack of focus on Mohammad's life. Since *The Persian Sphinx* is a work of scholarship, we must also look at its use of sources and methodology of research. Milani makes excellent use of archival material from the French Foreign Ministry, U.S. National Security Archives and National Archives, reports by the CIA and the American Embassy in Tehran, and other intelligence and diplomatic sources. In addition, there are ample references to the memoirs and writings of the Pahlavi elite, the Shah, and Hoveyda himself. These are supplemented by about 130 personal interviews. Milani claims that in deciding who to talk to,

and presumably also what documents to use, he "ignored the political pieties of the left and the right, as well as those of the monarchists and their opponents." Only the second part of this claim is partially true, because the book does observe a regimen of "political pieties." It systematically leaves out scholarly studies, documentary evidence, or personal interviews that reflect serious criticism of Hoveyda. A few such sources are inevitably cited, for example, in relation to Hoveyda's 1966 encounter with oppositionist intellectuals (see below); and leftist writer and film-maker Ebrahim Golesatn is occasionally used as a reference, mainly at the end of chapter twelve, again in the context of a contentious relationship with Hoveyda. A main charge against Hoveyda is his presiding over a regime that systematically imprisoned, tortured, and executed individuals for their political activities. An impartial biographer is therefore expected to have examined the testimonies of at least a few Pahlavi era political prisoners. Many of these have published their memoirs, can easily be located in Europe and the United States, and would have certainly agreed to be interviewed in order to voice their grievances against Hoveyda. But Milani has chosen to ignore such voices, relying heavily instead on sources obviously partial to Hoveyda. Most frequently cited among the latter are Hoveyda's brother, Fereydun, his ex-wife Laila Emami, and his personal secretary and physician. Milani's method of source corroboration further detracts from the book's reliability. He claims that "every story recounted here has been corroborated by a second independent source." But the reference notes do not show such second verifications. Milani's explanation is that second source citations were eliminated because they would have made the endnotes too long. We are assured that he has personally determined the reliability of all accounts that are not independently verifiable. Again, this methodology does not strengthen the book's claims to balance and impartiality.

As for organization, *The Persian Sphinx* has an intelligent and careful structure, reminiscent of an old-fashioned Hollywood film. It opens dramatically in the stormy days of March 1979, with Hoveyda in captivity under the impending shadow of what most readers know is going to be a gruesome execution. Having faithfully served the Shah for almost thirteen years, Hoveyda was placed under house arrest in 1978 as a scapegoat and target for the rising tide of revolution. While the ungrateful Shah and his luckier lackeys escaped the country, Hoveyda was left behind and fell into the hands of revolutionaries. Remaining loyal to the last minute, he refused to incriminate his master, telling a French reporter, "I guess a scapegoat should just remain silent."

Following this sad prologue, the book's main narrative begins as a long "flashback," telling the story of Hoveyda's life from childhood to premiership and finally to his demise and fall. The last two chapters bring us back to the book's opening, as they focus on vivid images of Hoveyda's trial and execution. Milani is successful in weaving together historical accounts and documents, anecdotes, and personal testimonies to give us a textured view of Hoveyda's life and times. But all of this is overshadowed by the book's two related thematic flaws, both meant to elicit sympathy for

its hero. First, Hoveyda's credentials as an intellectual are constantly inflated; Second, the question of his political and moral responsibility is systematically blurred and pushed into the background.

Most readers would agree that a serious intellectual must accept some basic accountability for his/her actions, especially those of a public and political nature. A stronger version of this view predominated in the Iranian intellectual milieu of the 1960s-70s, where some even expected real intellectuals to carry an almost prophetic burden of speaking truth to power. Milani, however, goes in the opposite direction, playing up Hoveyda's intellectual pretensions as if they could compensate for his total and opportunistic surrender to a corrupt and oppressive status quo.

But what exactly were Hoveyda's claims to intellectualism? Milani's early chapters describe how because of his father's diplomatic position, Hoveyda and his brother Fereydun, grew up in Damascus and then in Beirut, where they attended French schools and began to acquire something of a "cosmopolitan" flare (chapters two and three). According to Fereydun, his brother had a youthful interest in French novelists like Andre' Gide and Andre' Malraux. But Milani is stretching things more than a bit by taking such anecdotal references to suggest affinities between young Hoveyda and a hero of Man's Fate or figures like

Saint-Just in his unfailing faith in the purgative powers of violence, Andre Gide in his celebration of carnality, and even Trotsky in his hope for a permanent revolution...

Chapters three and four are also on shaky grounds, where Hoveyda's intellectual formation is reconstructed mostly based on autobiographical notes published when he was prime minister and the remembrances of his brother Fereydun. Still, the picture that emerges here is not flattering. For example, during his undergraduate studies in Brussels in the 1930s, we find Hoveyda "a mediocre student" who "invested much energy and his formidable intellectual insight into identifying the flower, the compliment, or the gift that would most please, or appease his friends."

When France fell to the Nazis in June 1940, Hoveyda supposedly registered the following reaction:

No, this I cannot, dare not believe. France! The land of freedom, the sanctuary of the exiles, you have surrendered? You have given up the fight? That night, along with French friends, I wept for your misery, France; because I have always loved you.

Hoveyda's reaction was similar when Allied forces occupied Iran in August 1941: "Iran, oh, dear Iran, all my thoughts are now with you."

Meanwhile, he was using the privilege accorded to those who could prove "Aryan" descent to arrange several summer visits to Nazi-occupied Paris. There he enjoyed the good life under the protection of close family members who held high diplomatic posts (one uncle being Iran's ambassador to France, while another was in charge of the Iranian embassy

compounds in Paris).

In 1942, Hoveyda returned to Iran and, following family tradition, applied for a job at the foreign ministry, citing "advanced studies in diplomacy," whereas in reality he had only completed a bachelor's degree in political science. This dubious claim to "advanced studies" later became a full blown case of "academic fudging," making him the holder of a doctorate degree from the Sorbonne. With relatives and friends pulling strings, Hoveyda was quickly hired and simultaneously began his two years of compulsory military service, which he managed to have counted toward establishing seniority in his diplomatic job. He also did some writing, including a short story that the veteran writer Ebrahim Golestan described as "somewhat kitsch... and perfectly mediocre."

So far, Hoveyda's credentials as an intellectual leave much to be desired. Now Milani offers an important alibi for the book's hero:

Hoveyda's fluency in French, his knowledge of some of the more recent masterpieces of European literature, and finally his passion for books gained him access to the coveted circle around Sadeq Hedayat, perhaps the most important modern fiction writer in Iran.

Milani's description of the eccentric but principled writer is quite accurate:

Hedayat was highly selective in choosing those he allowed into his inner circle. He did not like to associate with fools, sycophants, or those who wished a purchase on fame by proximity to the famous.

The question then is whether Hoveyda was in any way part of "the coveted literary circle around Sadeq Hedayat." And the answer is negative. Milani can only cite Hoveyda's brother and some unpublished letters to show that Hedayat knew Hoveyda and had received some books from him. Books published abroad were novelty items in the Iran of the 1940s and Hedayat is likely to have accepted them from Hoveyda without allowing him to join his circle of friends. Milani's claim notwithstanding, there is no evidence that Hoveyda even came close to that circle. Nor is the friendship that Hoveyda later developed with the writer Sadeq Chubak, a protégé of Hedayat, proof of close association with Hedayat himself.

Hoveyda, however, was extraordinarily successful in gaining access to entirely different circles. Immediately after finishing his military service, he was appointed to Iran's diplomatic mission in Paris. There, he forged an important friendship with Hasan-Ali Mansur, a young and ambitious member of Iran's political elite, and the man Hoveyda would replace as prime minister in 1965. Hoveyda also became "inseparable friends" with Edouard Sablier, a Middle East correspondent for *Le Monde*. He arranged for the Iranian government to pay for Sablier to travel to Iran, enjoying "a private plane, a beautiful young translator and access to all parts of the country." Sablier's mission was to cover the 1945-46 Azerbaijan crisis, an early Cold War confrontation over the creation in northern Iran of an autonomous government backed by the Soviets. This early

exercise at the corruption of the press soon became Hoveyda's expertise and routine practice. Sablier regularly covered Iran according to Hoveyda's dictates. "Some of my articles," Sablier confessed, "were in reality all Hoveyda's ideas shaped by me into an essay." Milani's comment on Hoveyda's relations with the press sounds inadvertently sarcastic:

Contrary to most Persian politicians of his generation who knew only the bludgeon and the bribe as tools of media control, Hoveyda had a complicated, modern sense of the media. He learned how to keep the media happy.

There is a final footnote to the Sablier episode. Shortly after their initial 1945 meeting, Hoveyda told Sablier of his ambition to one day become Iran's prime minister. This may have been a youthful bout of over confidence, but it also fits in with a pattern of behavior, including the "complicated, modern sense of the media," that Hoveyda was cultivating in accordance with the corruption and cynicism that was a requirement for advancement in Iranian politics.

At about the same time, Hoveyda was embroiled in the so-called "Paris Story." In 1945, French police discovered that Iranian embassies in Paris and Bern were using the diplomatic immunity of their staff for illegal traffic in gold and foreign currencies between France and Switzerland. Iran's minister plenipotentiary to Paris, and Hoveyda's chief mentor at the time, was implicated in the smuggling ring and recalled from his post. Milani spends most of chapter five on a detailed investigation of police, press, and diplomatic records, to show that contrary to widespread allegations, Hoveyda, and his brother Fereydun, were not personally involved in smuggling activities. The "Paris Story" cast a long shadow over Hoveyda's entire career; and unsubstantiated smuggling charges were later used in his trial during the revolution.

More serious charges against Hoveyda, however, relate not to personal financial integrity but to his role as the highest official of a corrupt regime. Milani himself documents scandalous instances of illegal financial activities and influence peddling by members of the royal family, ministers, and Hoveyda's friends during his tenure as prime minister. He claims, without strong evidence, that Hoveyda was opposed to such dealings. But even if this were the case, Hoveyda was still guilty because he stayed on the job and tolerated rampant corruption.

Surviving the "Paris Story" scandal, Hoveyda quickly attached himself to another mentor. This was Abdollah Entezam, a career diplomat and "a man of impeccable integrity" who was also a Sufi and a Freemason. Entezam later enrolled Hoveyda in the Masonic lodge in which he was the grand master. Despite the Masons' widespread notoriety as instruments of foreign powers, especially of the British, Hoveyda joined them because "to become a Mason was deemed a fast track to power and privilege." Hoveyda's relationship with Entezam lasted throughout his life and he always called the older man "patron" or "arbab," the French and Persian words for "boss." In the mid-1940s, Entezam headed Iran's new consular office in occupied Germany. Hoveyda and his

other lifelong friend, Hasan-Ali Mansur, joined Entezam's staff in Stuttgart, where "they lived like a pair of bon vivants" in the war devastated city. At the same time, Mansur began establishing close personal relations with American diplomats in the hopes of such "connections" one day helping him to become prime minister.

In 1950, Hoveyda went back to Iran but he and his patron Entezam could not fit in with the new direction of the country under Premier Mohammad Mosaddeq's independent nationalist government(1951-53). Hoveyda was stationed in Geneva as a United Nations liaison officer. In 1953, a CIA and British intelligence-sponsored military coup overthrew Mosaddeq and reinstalled the Shah, who had fled the country, to the throne. Iran's powerful communist party and the National Front, a coalition of pro-Mosaddeq nationalist forces, were dismantled and the old political elite with ties to the Americans and the British once again took over. Conditions were again ripe for politicians such as Entezam and Hoveyda to climb up. By 1955, the patronage of Entezam helped Hoveyda to land the high post of the director of administration for the National Iranian Oil Company. Now, Hoveyda was becoming something of a "boss" himself, attaching other upward climbers to his coattail. These were men like Parviz Radji, who later became "intimate" with the Shah's notorious sister Princess Ashraf and landed the job of Iran's ambassador to Britain. Another protege, Yaddollah Shahbazi, "turned his friendship with Hoveyda to gold, creating Iran's first chain store and eventually founding a very successful shipping company." Yet another type of "Hoveyda man" was Ehsan Naraghi, a sociologist "who had dabbled in radical politics in his youth" but soon saw the light and became "a conduit between members of the opposition and SAVAK."

In 1960, Hoveyda began editing and publishing a magazine called Kavosh (Exploration) for the National Iranian Oil Company. Kavosh began with a posture of cultural sophistication, handsomely paying "reputable intellectuals" to write for it. But its claim to independence could not be sustained as it soon began to showcase customary adulation to the Shah. Nor do we find Hoveyda writing anything noteworthy for his own magazine. He wrote, for example, about the need for training Iranian technocrats to manage the country's development projects, arguing further that ancient Iranian were indeed "innovative people in Darius's days; they began to construct what would 2,500 years later become the Suez Canal."

Chapter seven has a good discussion of the events leading to the "White Revolution," a reform project that the Shah implemented due to U.S. pressure in the early 1960s. By this time, the political star of Mansur, Hoveyda's old friend, was rising and not surprisingly Hoveyda had "clearly hitched his wagon to that star." Mansur and Hoveyda were now at the center of a group of young foreign-educated politicians and technocrats who formed the "Progressive Circle," ostensibly to address Iran's pressing social and economic problems. More accurately, the Progressive Circle was a vehicle for Mansur to become prime minister, relying on his ties to the Americans and the CIA. Meanwhile the group was already "a quasi official arm of the government," operating under close SAVAK supervision. Milani has a perfectly clear description of the idea behind the

Progressive Circle in the words of the CIA station chief in Iran, who was closely in touch with its leaders:

Hoveyda and Mansur collaborated for quite a number of years in trying to create an acceptable alternative to the unacceptable National Front. They tried to gain the support of the same type of educated and intellectual people that the National Front had appealed to.

In 1962, the Shah fell in line with the American-sponsored reform project, which was implemented with much fanfare as the White Revolution. In the years 1960-63, a broad coalition of opposition forces, mostly led by the National Front, had vociferously argued that reforms should be accompanied by a return to parliamentary and constitutional government. Milani's narrative mostly ignores or downplays this important democratic and independent component of Iranian politics. Instead, he focuses on opposition to the White Revolution led by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. This gives the impression that the choice in Iran was between the Shah's White revolution and religious fanaticism. Thus the Mansur-Hoveyda project of serving an autocratic but reformist Shah might appear more justified. Such readings of the White Revolution, typical of the American State Department and media at the time, have ever since become articles of faith for partisans of Iran's old regime.

In 1963, the Shah declared his support for the Progressive Circle, which then became the Iran-e Novin (New Iran) Party, and worked closely with the Shah and SAVAK to "win" the next parliamentary elections. In the same year, real opposition was decisively crushed in a bloody confrontation. In March 1964, Mansur finally became prime minister and Hoveyda, who wanted the foreign ministry, was named minister of finance. Depiction of Iran-e Novin party hacks as "intellectuals" was part of an international image making campaign. New York Times, for example, had the following kind words for the new Mansur cabinet:

Tehran is stirring with new life... In four weeks Hasan Ali Mansur... has injected confidence into a painfully deflated community... Two days after his appointment on March 7, Mr. Mansur's cabinet of intellectuals was unanimously approved by the Parliament together with a 60-page program of action the intellectuals had drafted. For the first time in Iranian history, a government rising from a political party has come into office with a detailed program.

Already too transparent, Mansur's American ties became flagrant when almost immediately after becoming premier he forced the passage of a parliamentary bill granting diplomatic immunity to U.S. military personnel and their dependents in Iran. Khomeini was exiled over his opposition to this bill and soon one of his young followers shot and killed the prime minister. Now it was Hoveyda's turn to step up to the highest appointed office of the realm. He had waited for this moment all his adult life and nothing like the cautionary advice of an old leftist friend, such as Sadeq Chubak, would deter him.

In a rather lengthy discussion of the specific circumstances under which Hoveyda became prime minister, Milani notes that by this time, due to the Shah's growing autocratic tendencies, "there was little power and independence left to the office." Then he goes on to ask the question that must have been central to the book:

Could Hoveyda safely claim, as he eventually did, that he shouldered little blame for the Shah's illegal intervention in politics simply because, by the time he was appointed prime minister, the system was already in place? Is there no responsibility for continued participation in an already existing, but flawed and unconstitutional, system?

After all, even Hoveyda's old "boss," Entezm, had chosen retirement "over feeding the Shah's increasing appetite for power. Hoveyda, on the other hand, decided during his meeting with the Shah to become the servant of that appetite." But Milani's narrative immediately shies away from this kind of lucid evaluation and instead continues to pile up details and detours that are often interesting and informative but tend to obscure clear judgement.

In fact, Prime Minister Hoveyda's strategic political choices were as clear as the profile of his new associates. Instead of semi-independents like Entezam, he now drew closer to men like Parviz Sabeti, chief of SAVAK's notorious "Third Division," responsible for internal security. Hated by the opposition as "the master behind the machinery of torture, censorship, and oppression," Sabeti became Hoveyda's "close friend and confidant" and an extremely powerful man. "All important appointments -from ministerial portfolios and university professorships to elementary school teachers and most civil service positions- needed his department's security clearance." Moreover, SAVAK was officially part of the prime minister's office. In reality, the Shah was in charge of the SAVAK, but as prime minister, Hoveyda was legally responsible for SAVAK actions. Therefore, when in his Answer to History the fallen Shah blamed SAVAK's doings on Hoveyda, he was technically but dishonestly correct.

Milani's narrative, however, returns to the theme of Hoveyda the intellectual, this time as a prime minister who published elliptical and fragmentary memoirs from his youth. These pieces did not amount to much more than "a grab bag of philosophy and history, political theory and literary allusions." But for Milani, they seem enough to make Hoveyda pass as Isaiah Berlin's proverbial "fox," the restless political animal whose uneasy classification makes it stand apart in "a culture enamored of hedgehogs," i.e., creatures given to dull singular visions. Then, in an even more bizarre and belabored twist, Hoveyda is likened to Walter Benjamin's Flaneur, "an urban detective, unattached and astute, a roaming Gypsy-like character who is 'everywhere in possession of his incognito.'"

At this point Milani's literary allusions are pushed so far that they might evoke images unbecoming of the topic's solemnity. Despite ourselves, we may begin to see the incognito detective writer prime minister Hoveyda as something of a film noir anti-hero, in trench coat and

fedora, moving in and out of misty scenes... He could be arguing with a nasty bunch of SAVAK agents in a dark cellar. Someone is tied to a chair in the background. Hoveyda walks up to the man and gently places his own half-smoked cigarette (pipe?) in the victim's gaping mouth... We then cut to the prime minister's office, where a disheveled Hoveyda loosens his tie, removes the trade-mark orchid from his lapel and throws it on a large pile of papers on his desk. He then pulls out an old red-covered notebook from a drawer and begins writing intently (a letter to the ghost of Sadeq Hedayat?)... The next scene shows His Imperial Majesty slapping a poker-faced Hoveyda hard and repeatedly, asking him about a mysterious bird (or Sphinx?)...

But let us look at much sadder scenes of real encounters between Hoveyda and Iran's intellectual dissidents, the so-called "hedgehogs," whose singular vision precluded compromise with the regime of SAVAK torture and censorship. In 1966, Hoveyda who gradually seemed to be more than a mere transitional figure, met with a half-dozen of the country's most famous writers and poets. Among these was Jalal Al-e Ahmad, "a brave, fearless, and defiant foe of despotism," who took the opportunity to attack the regime and its censorship. Hoveyda pretended that he agreed. After all, upon becoming prime minister, he too had boldly proclaimed to the parliament: "I am against the idea of censorship of the media... I am willing to give my life for liberty so that everyone can talk freely." Of course he had been lying to the parliament, just as he was now lying to dissident intellectuals. He would continue to lie for another twelve years, throughout his tenure as prime minister, about censorship, about corruption, about repression, and about torture.

The account of Hoveyda's 1966 meeting with dissident writers and poets reveals the depth of his cynicism. After listening to their complaints, Hoveyda suggested that they form a committee to oversee everything that was published in the country. Al-e Ahmad angrily objected that the prime minister was trying to convince those who had dared oppose censorship to become censors themselves. Finally, and insulting his audience even further, Hoveyda invited them to a less formal meeting where differences could be resolved over "a bottle of scotch." The meeting then came to an end. Censorship intensified and SAVAK began arresting writers who were trying to set up an independent union.

Can we blame Hoveyda and the system he represented for events such as this? Milani is not at all convinced. Resorting to his false dichotomy between the Shah's regime and the dark forces of fanaticism, he even issues a blanket condemnation of Iranian intellectuals. "Ultimately, the intellectuals preferred a de facto alliance with the clerics whose stated goal was the creation of a religious state and who opposed ideas such as women's rights to vote." Statements like this make a travesty of the historical record, including much of Milani's own narrative, that shows how politicians like Hoveyda helped the Shah destroy any chance for the emergence of a more democratic alternative in Iran. Given that impasse, some intellectuals were driven to support Khomeini as an alternative to Pahlavi despotism. But this was by no means the choice of the entire intellectual community. When monarchists and Hoveyda-type politicians fled the fury of the revolution they themselves had caused,

it was Iran's independent intellectuals who stood their ground and paid the price for resisting a clerical takeover. Ahmad Shamlu, Sa'id Soltanpur, Shokrollah Paknezhad, Gholam-Hosein Sa'edi, Mostafa Rahimi, and many other Pahlavi-era dissidents opposed the Islamic Republic from the beginning. The record of this opposition is easily found in contemporary periodicals like Ayandegan, Paygham-e emruz, Tehran Mosavvar, Omid-e Iran, Ketab-e jome'eh and Naqd-e Agah, the latter even featuring a few good pieces by Milani himself. Nor were the thousands of men and women who suffered torture and imprisonment or perished in opposition to the new regime exactly monarchists or Hoveyda-type intellectuals.

Blaming Iranian intellectuals for the revolution and its outcome is a centerpiece of the monarchist mythology that adamantly refuses to accept the old regime's responsibility for its own downfall. Milani is perpetuating a more subtle version of this mythology, seeking to exonerate not the monarchy but those who opportunistically served it, while shifting the blame to the victims of both regimes, especially Iran's dissident intellectuals.

In the 1960s, before even the pretense of constitutional government was dropped, Hoveyda had tried to recruit former oppositionists in order to create a façade of independent politics. But principled individuals, like the socialist leader Khalil Maleki or the fiercely nationalistic Dariush Foruhar, refused to take part in the game of lies Hoveyda was playing.

"The trappings of power," says Milani, "seemed to have a corrosive effect on Hoveyda's initial optimism" about such efforts.

The longer he stayed in power, the more that optimism gave way to a passive, sometimes embittered, cynicism. More and more he tried to use cash incentives to encourage the explicit cooption of opposition members. Some were given lucrative governmental contracts; others were given sinecures.

Those who were bought off in such ways were mostly opportunists rather than oppositionists. Still, Milani tries to provide "balance" to this damning picture of Hoveyda by accusing those who believed in "the futility of working within the existing system" as speaking with "the voice of a peculiar political nihilism that had come to dominate intellectual discourse in Iran." The intellectuals who refused to be bought are dismissed because they suffered from a "form of nihilism" that "had its roots in both Shiite theology and the secular revolutionary theories of the late nineteenth century." Hoveyda may have been corrupt and cynical, says Milani, but his intellectual opponents were no more than Shiite nihilists. Nobody wins. We were all guilty.

Chapter eleven has a good discussion of the rise of the last batch of Pahlavi-era Young Turks, exemplified by men like Dariush Homayun and his brain-child the newspaper Ayandegan. In the late 1960s, the Harvard-educated Homayun was recruited to once again test the possibility of "reforming the Iranian system from within." To that effect, his idea for "a new, independent, liberal yet loyal" newspaper was implemented after careful preparations by Hoveyda and SAVAK chief General Nasiri. But this experiment

in "liberal journalism" was also a failure, since Ayandegan quickly "acquired a tarnished reputation as a SAVAK or American creation." After suffering slight royal reprimand for a few initial journalistic missteps, Hodayun quickly fell in line and enjoyed a rapid rise in the system. In 1977, he became minister of information and was thus directly involved with the strategic workings of censorship. According to him, the Shah personally set the media's general guidelines, while Hoveyda's task was to "co-opt the journalsits. He believed that they all could be bought; it was only a question of finding the price."

In the early 1970s, as Iran's oil income rose suddenly and sharply, so too did the Shah's autocratic and bombastic tendencies. His former insecure grandiosity now turned into full-fledged megalomania, rendering him incapable of even listening to advisors. Meanwhile, Hoveyda served dutifully as a figurehead so that His Imperial Majesty could conveniently run everything from behind the scene.

"Questions of foreign policy, national security, oil, gas, atomic energy, and of course the army were never discussed in the cabinet." Hoveyda would see to it that the cabinet simply approved what the Shah wanted, especially regarding matters such as military spending and the atomic energy program in which the monarch allowed no discussion at all. Milani likens the Shah-Hoveyda relationship to that of "a potentate and his vizier," a pattern reminiscent of "old feudal bureaucracies" and replicated in Hoveyda's relations with his ministers. In addition to their regular salaries, the ministers would receive large monthly cash bonuses from the prime minister's "secret discretionary funds," as well as extra bonuses occasionally dispatched by the Shah himself. Only a few "super ministers," like Ardeshir Zahedi and Jamshid Amouzegar, were in a different category. They had direct and close relations with the Shah that bypassed Hoveyda's office. As foreign minister, Zahedi, for example, did not get along with Hoveyda and went as far as publicly humiliating him.

On Prime Minister Hoveyda's intellectual pretensions, and his relations with independent intellectuals, Milani offers a final striking episode. Hoveyda had known Ebrahim Golestan, a prominent leftist writer, translator, and film maker, from the late 1950s when they both worked for the National Iranian Oil Company. The two men also had some contact through a mutual friend, the writer Sadeq Chubak, and via Fereydon Hoveyda, whose intellectual credentials were more serious than his brother's. In later years, as was his customary approach to dissident intellectuals, Hoveyda had tried bribing Golestan, for example, by purchasing and filing away a critical film he had made about government land reform. Still, Golestan continued to take jibes at the prime minister and had even used him as the model for a thinly disguised pseudo-intellectual fictional character,

Whose accent was mixed, whose intelligence was fine, and whose jokes were from notes. He used a cane for no reason and hid his lust for power and position behind a claim of having no desire for power and being resigned to his fate-- this was obviously visible.

Here, Golestan had directly identified Hoveyda, whose name in Persian means "visible" (or rather "apparent"). In

an early 1970s film, called *Mysteries of the Treasure of the Ghost Valley*, Golestan satirized the Shah's pseudo-modernization projects and Hoveyda's servile and pathetic relation to his "boss." The film ended by predicting a revolutionary finale in which the docile Hoveyda-character takes a beating, with his own cane, at the hands of the ungrateful boss. Initially unnoticed by inept censors, the film was taken down after a few weeks in Tehran movie houses.

One night, shortly after the film was banned, Hoveyda ran into Golestan, who was a guest at his brother Fereydu'n's house. When an argument broke out between the film maker and the prime minister, the angry Golestan made a dramatic gesture. He took off his shirt and threw it at Hoveyda, shouting: "smell it, it has the sweet smell of consciousness... not the stench of someone who has sold his soul." Described by both his own brother and Golestan, Hoveyda's meek reaction to such a sharp public rebuke was an admission of intellectual and moral bankruptcy. He ordered his bodyguards to leave Golestan alone, asked him to sit and calm down over a bottle of the best cognac in the house, and then went on to unhappily complain about the Shah's "hare-brained idea for a new one-party political system." Hoveyda and Golestan met one last time during a formal reception for a high-ranking French official. The words Hoveyda reportedly used to introduce Golestan, to the foreign guest, reiterated his previous guilty admission: "This is our best writer and film director and we invariably suppress his work."

The one-party system Hoveyda had mentioned was a proto-fascist mass mobilization vehicle that was intended to provide the regime with active popular support. The project was indeed a "hare-brained" blunder because it set in motion a series of events that brought about great popular agitation, leading to a revolution and the monarchy's replacement with the authoritarian populist Islamic Republic. According to Milani, the idea of a new party, called Rastakhiz (Resurgence), was originally conceived by a group of technocrats, including Gholam-Reza Afkhami, Manouchehr Ganji, Amin Alimard, and Ahmad Ghoreishi. The Shah made this his idea in 1975, when his delusions of power and grandeur had reached their peak. By this time, no one dared to even differ slightly with the policy guidelines set by the Shah, who would quell even a hint at such misbehavior by posing the menacing question: "Have they not read our book?"

Meanwhile, the Shah had promised a "Great Civilization," within reach in one generation when Iran was to become one of the world's five leading industrial powers. This was premised on rapid economic development, financed by an unprecedented rise in Iran's oil income. Hoveyda and his cohorts made a quick and expeditious transition from the era of Iran-e Novin to that of Rastakhiz, whole-heartedly endorsing and propagating His Majesty's new developmental pipe dreams. What Milani cites as an example of Hoveyda's "most important theoretical pitch" in defense of the Rastakhiz project is a mere repetition of the prime minister's typical cant:

At a time when the ideological man and the technological man can be seen vacillating between

unrelieved gloom and Panglossian optimism, we believe we are not only entitled but duty bound to seek our own path to the future.

The Rastakhiz system was in clear violation of Iran's constitution, but Hoveyda saw no serious problem with it.

Instead of resigning, as so many of his friends and colleagues suggested, he resigned himself to the role that the shah would assign for him in the new scheme of things.

It is more than anachronistic on Milani's part to ponder whether Hoveyda might have acted in a more principled manner at the peak of his power. Milani himself was among those who articulated the Rastakhiz vision, justified a one-party system, and put an intellectual gloss over the Shah's banalities. In 1975, the Aspen Institute for Humanistic Studies, supported by Iran's queen and the Pahlavi Foundation, sponsored an international symposium in Persepolis to discuss Iran's development projects. Milani co-authored one of the lead articles in the volume that was put together from the conference proceedings. The article was mere monarchist propaganda. It heaped uncritical adulation on the Shah's father, depicted the 1953 CIA-sponsored coup as the result of "a power struggle that ended in the restoration and continuation of legitimate monarchy." Mosaddeq and independent Iranian nationalism were obviously not mentioned. Political repression was semantically whitewashed as necessary "social discipline," while the Rastakhaiz project was described as "a unified approach to development wherein participation by the 'mass of the nation' in the decision-making process becomes the permanent political fact of life." In defense of one-party dictatorship, it was argued that Rastakhiz offered a higher form of political democracy that was "substantive rather than formalistic." The obligatory two-page quotation from the Shah adorned the center of the article and statistical tables were provided to prove the impressive accomplishments of the White Revolution (in fact showing not much more than an upsurge in the GNP due to multiplying oil revenues). In the safe retrospective distance of twenty-five years, Milani is still incapable of looking at his own intellectual contribution to the hypocrisy of the old regime, while he muses over the question of Hoveyda's responsibility. If this is self-criticism "by proxy," our author is still several biographies short of his goal. Evasion of individual responsibility is the litmus test that distinguishes those closely associated with the Shah's regime. As a rule, such individuals are quite capable of criticizing and blaming each other, their rival factions in the hierarchy of power, Hoveyda, the Shah, members of the royal family, and of course conspiratorial foreigners, for the fall of a political system which they all helped maintain. But almost none of them has had the intellectual and moral courage to seriously critique his or her own role in such a deeply flawed system. By the late 1970s, Hoveyda was a tired and spent man. His days began with Valium shots and he dozed off in late night parties that he attended alone after his divorce from his wife. Sensing that the Shah was going to replace him,

Hoveyda offered his resignation in August 1977. The Shah appointed him court minister, a job that was taken away from Assadollah Alam, a former prime minister and Hoveyda's archrival who was dying of cancer. Alam's fate "should have been a warning to Hoveyda." A totally dedicated servant, and possibly the Shah's closest friend, Alam was easily dismissed by a royal phone call.

Hoveyda was to wait his turn to be sacrificed when a revolution began to loom on the horizon. Milani's analysis of the revolution is murky and borders on the conspiratorial. He is correct in arguing that it was not inevitable had those in power chosen a different path. But he focuses on blunders such as the January 1978 media attack on Khomeini that helped place the clergy in the leadership of street protests and demonstrations. Meanwhile, as the press began to exercise some independence, "Almost every social problem-from censorship in the media to elections, from the economic development plans to the corruption of governmental officials- was blamed on Hoveyda." Much of this was quite justified because Hoveyda was legally responsible for almost all important policy decisions made and implemented during his tenure as prime minister. But the attacks were also indirectly aimed at the Shah and the entire system. To deflect these, the Shah, who was now reverting back to his habitual indecisiveness in crisis, changed prime ministers again and decided to use Hoveyda as scapegoat.

Instead of such cynical maneuvering, what might have prevented a revolutionary explosion was a return to constitutional government. But the Shah refused to consider this option when it was still feasible. In 1977, he could have replaced Hoveyda and his cabinet with independent liberal figures from or close to the National Front. This choice was still possible in August 1978, when the technocrat prime minister Jamshid Amuzegar was replaced by the wily and infamous Ja'far Sharif-Emami. A few months later the Shah had to beg National Front leaders to step forward and save the regime from total collapse. But it was too late, and Shapur Bakhtiar, who did accept such a task, was almost immediately swept away by the revolution. As might be expected, Milani's discussion of the impending revolution does not probe the possibility of a constitutional government with real opposition leaders, presumably because he sees that as the success of the "long cherished American policy of bringing a National Front Government to power in Iran." Instead, he considers various scenarios of diplomatic intrigue and indulges old SAVAK-monarchist fantasies about how an "iron fisted" response might have put an end to the growing popular protests.

In November 1978, Hoveyda, who was no longer court minister, was arrested. He had already passed on several opportunities for leaving Iran, still harboring illusions about the regime's and his own political future. In a meeting between the Shah, the queen, and their top advisors, no one spoke for Hoveyda. Consequently, he was placed under arrest in a SAVAK safe house, where he waited, "confident that at any moment a monarchist coup would turn back the tide of revolution." During the chaos which culminated in the Shah's departure in January 1979, Hoveyda had other chances to escape but he refused to take the initiative.

When the monarchy collapsed on 10 February, Hoveyda's SAVAK guards fled, telling him to do the same thing. Instead, he surrendered to the officials of the new revolutionary regime. At this point, escape might have been impossible. Hoveyda was far too well known to disappear in the crowds and he could not rely on any support network to hide and smuggle him out of the country.

Milani's description of Hoveyda's arrest and what followed reconnects us to the beginning of the book. These sections vividly recreate the chaotic mood of an unfolding revolution and provide the emotional context for a tragic finale. The once haughty Hoveyda now suffered all kinds of humiliations, leading up to a quick show trial. The most concrete charges against him were those outlined in a 1977 open letter of protest by the dissident writer Ali-Asghar Haj-Seyyed-Javadi. The letter accused Hoveyda of numerous specific and grave violations of the Iranian constitution. The revolutionary court, however, muddled its case against Hoveyda by throwing everything into a mixed bag that included outlandish accusations such as "sowing corruption on earth," smuggling, and selling the country to foreigners.

Milani's last two chapters are mostly devoted to demonstrating how the revolutionary court's standards were in violation of rudimentary legal procedures. He also notes, in passing as usual, the seriousness of the charge against Hoveyda of "unjustified and unconstitutional" submission to the Shah, as well as the weakness of Hoveyda's claim that "he, as prime minister, had no power over policy and no knowledge of SAVAK's work." Still, Milani thinks that the accused had a defensible case: "Incredible as Hoveyda's claim seemed, there is much evidence to vindicate his claim." Here, we expect to see Milani's final argument on Hoveyda's behalf, the kind of defense that might sway a non-partisan court, jury, or reading audience deliberating the overall nature and extent of Hoveyda's moral and political responsibility. But Milani offers no such arguments. Hoveyda received a speedy and unfair trial and was almost immediately executed. As Milani suggests, an ideal court of law, especially in such an important case, must have carefully weighed the evidence against the man and the regime he represented, as well as what the accused had to say in his own defense. That would have served to set the historical record straight and restore a sense of justice, not to perpetuate confusion and bloodshed.

Instead, we see the travesty of justice that was the hallmark of Hoveyda's political tenure return with vengeance to claim him as its victim. This is tragic, but Milani's exceptional sympathy for this particular case distorts the larger tragedy of Hoveyda's life and career. Throughout the book, there is no serious concern for the fact that the worst kinds of political show trials and violations of human rights routinely took place in Iran while Hoveyda was prime minister. This is a curious choice of perspective, given that Milani himself was a political prisoner of the notorious old regime. In 1974-75, at the peak of Hoveyda's power, the annual report of Amnesty International said that "no country in the world has a worse record in human rights than Iran." A ghastly picture of the monarchy's machinery of torture is also found in Milani's autobiography:

...flogging, arm twisting, cigarette burning, crucifixion, sleep deprivation, electric shocks, fingernail pulling, genital crushing, genital electric shocks, hook-hanging, needles pushed under finger nails, and finally the Apollo.

While the above menu combined traditional Iranian methods with the most up-to-date American and Israeli torture techniques, the "Apollo" was SAVAK's own modern invention for the age of moon-landing and space exploration. It consisted of "a metal hood placed on the head of a prisoner that would amplify the sound of his shrieks when he was flogged."

As prime minister, Hoveyda was legally responsible for years of political show trials, torture, and executions. But he consistently and callously denied all such allegations, never showed the slightest sympathy for the regime's victims, and pathetically continued to be the Shah's chief puppet, a role that led to his demise and doom as a scapegoat for his master's crimes.

However, contrary to his cynical and total abandonment by the monarchist clique, not all of Hoveyda's political opponents were gleeful or bent on his destruction. Among others, the new prime minister, Mehdi Bazargan, a political prisoner when Hoveyda had that job, tried to make the revolutionary tribunals operate according to international procedures, especially on Hoveyda's behalf. In the end, all such efforts failed. Hoveyda, along with a mixed group of other high and low ranking monarchist political, military, police, and intelligence operatives, received the kind of "justice" they had meted out to others. Precisely because no human being deserves this kind of treatment, a responsible moral and intellectual stand would not make an exception of Hoveyda.

Milani's concluding chapter, "The Frozen Lake of Cocytus," brings the book's narrative to an emotional climax. Here, we go over elaborate and gruesome details of a captive Hoveyda's final humiliations and torments at the hands of the "hanging judge" Sadeq Khalkhali and other henchmen of the new regime. Milani continues relentlessly with grisly description of Hoveyda's executions, his last dying words, the aftermath as depicted in hostile press commentaries and mocking photographs, and the slow grinding grief of the dead man's elderly mother and a few close friends.

In a final display of his penchant for literary allusions that often remain obscure (even after being translated from the French), Milani ends the book with a Shakespearean grand gesture. Referring to a newspaper mug shot of Hoveyda after execution, he writes:

For much of his political life, Hoveyda had been caught between an opposition, dogmatic and unbending, and a king who in the autumn of his life grew more and more self-referential and despotic. With that almost beatific smile on his dead face, Hoveyda seems to say, "A plague o' both your houses."

Milani could not have been more explicit as to where he wants the readers to stand at the end of the book: staring

with bewilderment at Hoveyda's death mask and bemoaning the tragedy of the perhaps flawed but ultimately well-intentioned liberal intellectuals who rejected a "dogmatic opposition" to serve a despotic king. Ironically, the book abounds with evidence that totally subvert both the author's narrative strategy and conclusion. And this is not a work of deliberate self-deconstruction. Milani fails to convince better informed and critical readers. I doubt that he succeeded at convincing himself here any more than he did in his autobiography.

#### NOTES

Fattaneh Haj-Seyyed-Javadi, *Bamdad-e khomar* (Tehran, 1995). By 2000, this book was in its 24th edition.

Asadollah Alam, *The Shah and I: The Confidential Diary of Iran's Royal Court, 1969-1977*, ed. Alinaghi Alikhani, trans. by Alinaghi Alikhani and Nicholas Vincent (London:, 1991).

William H. Sullivan, *Mission to Iran* (New York: Norton); Jimmy Carter, *Keeping Faith: Memoirs of a President* (New York: 1982); Gary Sick, *All Fall Down: America's Tragic Encounter with Iran* (London, 1986).

Seyyed Hamid Ruhani, *Barrasi va tahlili az nahzat-e emam Khomeini* (n.d: 1977) and A. Davani, *Nahzat-e ruhaniun-e Iran*, 10 vols.(Qom, 1981) contain primary source biographical material on Khomeini.

Autobiographical examples from across the political spectrum in the Islamic Republic include: Mehdi Bazargan, *Yaddashtah-ye ruzaneh* (Tehran, 1997); Mohsen Hashemi, ed., *Hashemi Rafsanjani, Dowran-e Mobarezeh* (Tehran: 1997) and Yaser Hashemi, ed., *Obur az Bohran: Karnameh va Khaterat-e Hashemi Rafsanjani, 1360* (Tehran: 1998). Karim Sanjabi, *Omidha va naomidiha: khaterat-e siyasi-ye doktor Karim Sanjabi* (London: 1989); Mohammadi Reyshahri, *Khaterat-e siyasi* (Tehran: 1990); Nureddin Kianuri, *Khaterat-e Nureddin Kianuri* (Tehran: 1992); Ehsan Tabari, *Kazhrahe* (Tehran, 1989).

Milani, *Persian Sphinx*, x.

*Tales of Two Cities: A Persian Memoir* (Washington DC: 1996), 113-19. For an example of Milani's pro-monarchist writings see Manouchehr Ganji and Abbas Milani, "Iran: Developments During the Last Fifty Years" in Jane W. Jacqz, ed., *Iran: Past, Present and Future: Aspen Institute/Persepolis Symposium* (New York: Aspen Institute for Humanistic Studies, 1976), 33-55.

*Tales of Two Cities*, 138-39.

*Ibid.*, 153-54.

Milani is quoted extensively in *Asrar-e fa'aliyatha-ye zedd-e Irani dar kharej az keshvar* (Tehran: 1977) and its English version, *An Alliance of Reaction and Terror* (Tehran: Focus Publications, 1977). These are both intelligence (SAVAK) publications. The same material was used in a series of articles published in the official Tehran daily *Kayhan* and its English version, *Kayhan International* 19-26 January 1977.

Milani, *Persian Sphinx*, x.

*Ibid.*

See the articles in Iran: Past, Present and Future.

Milani, The Persian Sphinx, x.

Ibid., x-xi.

Outstanding examples are found in Miskawayh's Tajarib al-umam (dynastic), Ferdowsi's Shahnameh, Batha'qi, tarikh-e Beyhaqi. See Julie Scott Meisami, Persian Historiography, To the End of the Twelfth Century (Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, the UK: 1999).

Milani, The Persian Sphinx, xi. One could argue the exact opposite: The Islamic canon was defined almost obsessively by biographical material, i.e., narratives on Mohammad's life contained in the Sira and the massive and contradictory body of hadith literature.

Ibid., xiii.

The most important study of political trials, imprisonment, and torture in 20th century Iran is Ervand Abrahamian, Tortured Confessions: Prisons and Public Recantations in Modern Iran (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: 1999). Milani has chosen not to use this book, whose bibliography includes a long list of personal testimonies, memoirs, and other documentary evidence produced by the political prisoners of the Hoveyda era.

Milani, Persian Sphinx, xiii.

Ibid., 35.

Ibid., 59.

Ibid., 71.

Ibid., 74.

Ibid.

Ibid., 74-76.

Ibid., 87-88.

Ibid., 88-89.

Ibid., 91.

Ibid., 92-93.

Ibid.

Ibid., 101-02.

Ibid.

For specific cases of Hoveyda and corruption see, for example, Ibid., 199, 264-67.

Ibid., 115.

Ibid., 117.

Ibid., 120.

Ibid., 122-25.

Ibid., 126-27.

Ibid., 129-30, 141.

Ibid., 140-44.

Ibid., 144.

Ibid., 153-57.

For an excellent discussion of the US press and Iranian politics, including the White Revolution era, see William A. Doorman and Mansour Farhang, The U.S. Press and Iran: Foreign Policy and the Journalism of Deference Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1987).

Milani, Persian Sphinx, 154, 158-59.

Ibid., 164.

Ibid., 171-77.

Ibid., 171-77.

Ibid., 181.

Ibid.

Ibid., 167.

Ibid., 221-23.

Ibid., 189-91.

Ibid., 191-92.

Ibid., 192-93.

Ibid., 193-95.

Ibid., 194.

See Naqd-e Agah, no.3 Spring 1974 and no.4, winter 1974.

Milani, Persian Sphinx, 195-97.

Ibid., 199; see also, 213-14 and the rest of chapter 11.

Ibid., 201-02.

Ibid., 224.

Ibid., 225-26.

Ibid., 235-39.

Ibid., 250.

Ibid., 243-49.

Ibid., 256-57.

Ibid., 259-60.

Ibid., 261.

Ibid., 275.

Ibid., 267-70. Quote on p.270.

Ibid., 277.

Manouchehr Ganji and Abbas Milani, "Iran: Developments During the Last Fifty Years" in Iran: Past, Present and Fututure, 37-38.

Ibid., 41-42.

Milani, The Persian Sphinx, 279, 283-84.

Ibid., 285-86.

Ibid., 306.

Ibid., 288-92.

Ibid., 294-301.

Ibid., 302-06.

Ibid., 304-17.

Ibid., 336.

Ibid., 314, 320-21.

Milani, Tales of Two Cities, 149.

Ibid.

Milani, Persian Sphinx, 324-25.

Ibid., 346.

1

1