

Deconstruction of Colonial Policies, Especially England, in the History of Iran (Case Study: Volume Seven of Cambridge)

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Abstract

Iranology in the West, despite its emphasis on scientific methodology, has been influenced by a Western-centric perspective, and the Cambridge History of Iran is a prominent example of that. The authors of the seventh volume of the Cambridge History of Iran briefly examined the political and economic developments of the Qajar and Pahlavi periods without providing a scientific and analytical exposition, and they simply passed over them descriptively. The important point is their disregard for British colonial policies during the political, economic, and foreign relations transformations of the Qajar and Pahlavi eras. The present study aimed to elucidate the historians' approach to the contemporary history of Iran. The main issue is 'How the authors of the Cambridge History of Iran have addressed the purification of colonial policies, especially those of England, in historiography?' To this aim, by using a descriptive and analytical-historical method, investigate the main issue of paper relying on credible historical books. The result indicates that the authors of the mentioned volume were not successful in examining the developments in Iran with scientific criteria of historiography, and they attempted to purify colonization, especially by adopting a Western-centric perspective, particularly towards England. They did not provide a fresh explanation or analysis to identify this part of Iran's history.

Keywords: Purification of Colonial Policy, Volume Seven of Cambridge History of Iran, Historiography, Qajar Dynasty, Pahlavi.

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Introduction

The history of Iranian studies in England dates back to the 17th century AD, the first half of the 11th century AH, and the second half of the 10th century Shamsi. This was a time when English diplomats and merchants traveled to Iran due to political and trade relations, and as a result, travelogues were written and research on Iranian studies began. Gradually, individuals such as Malcolm and Sykes published books on the history of Iran to better identify the regions under their jurisdiction, based on their observations, mission objectives, and their insights into the East. As a result, historical research expanded, and Iranian studies grew.

Iranology, as a branch of Oriental studies, was established by Europeans to study various aspects of Iranian civilization, culture, and history. Its primary goal was to familiarize them with the East and gain mastery over it. Therefore, Iranology in the West was founded based on the political, military, and economic needs of Western colonial powers. Despite emphasizing scientific methods in historical research, Iranology in the West was essentially oriented towards the West and justified the dominance of Western colonial powers over the East and the superiority of the West over the East.¹ The Cambridge History of Iran is not exempt from this bias and was written between the mid-19th and late 20th centuries.

This historical collection started its work with the initial capital of the Iran-England Oil Company. Then, the Iranian Studies Institute in Washington and the Yarshater Institute affiliated with Columbia University took over its support. It was somewhat financially supported by government and private institutions, which may have contributed to its continued advancement in line with its supportive mission. This collection of Iranian Studies has been published in seven complete volumes, and despite extensive efforts in historiography, especially in volumes on Ancient Iran (2 and 3) and Islamic Iran until the Safavid era (4 and 5), it has weaknesses, particularly in the seventh volume, that have not been subjected to scholarly critique. The seventh volume of Cambridge History of Iran, especially its contemporary section, has been introduced as a textbook at some universities such as Payame Noor and I, as the author, have been obliged to teach this book at the graduate level in that university for several years due to the structure of the curriculum. However, it has

1. For more information in this field, you can refer to the articles on Oriental Studies and Iranian Studies. For example, see: R.K. Fasih, Simin (1375), "A Discourse on Iranian Studies and the Role of Lambertian Esamari in Iran," Appendix to the book "Iran in the Qajar Era" by Lambert in Tehran, Javidan Khord, pp. 419-447.

many scientific weaknesses. This research focuses on the content criticisms of the section on political and economic developments, with an emphasis on purifying Western colonial policies, especially those of England, by the authors of Cambridge² History of Iran.

The main question of the research is 'How the authors of the seventh volume of Cambridge History of Iran addressed the process of Western colonialism, particularly British colonialism, in analyzing the political and economic developments of Qajar and Pahlavi periods?' This main question can be divided into several sub-questions, which are as follows:

- 1) How have the authors of this section examined the process of political and economic developments in Iran?
- 2) Under the influence of the Orientalist approach in the West, how did these authors address the writing of events related to Western colonial powers, particularly England?
- 3) To what extent has this collection contributed to the identification of this period in Iranian history, and can it truly be considered as a university textbook reference?

The present study aimed to critically examine the text of the book and compare it with historical texts and recent research in order to critique the content of Volume Seven of Cambridge History of Iran (in the section on political and economic developments in Qajar and Pahlavi eras) and provide descriptive, analytical, and critical answers to the aforementioned questions.

1. The Writing of the Political History of the Qajar Era and the Lack of Attention to the Colonial Approach of England

Chapter one and two of section one of volume seven of Cambridge's History of Iran are dedicated to the Afsharid and Zand periods because they are not relevant to the discussion and are not addressed.³ Chapters

2. The seventh volume has been translated into two sections. The first section includes the history of Iran during the Afsharid, Zand, and Qajar periods, and the second section includes the history of the Pahlavi government. The Afsharid section is written by Peter Avery, the Zand section is written by John Perry, and the Qajar section is written by Gavin Hambly, Nikki Keddie, Rosegraves, Lambton, Isawi, and Richard Topper. The section on the Pahlavi government is compiled by authors such as Gavin Hambly, Amin Saikal, McLauchlan, Ronald Freier, and Peter Avery.

3. The author Peter Avery has focused on the history of Afsharid dynasty in a very concise and general manner, with about seventy pages translated. The section on Nader Shah's successors has been examined in approximately twelve pages, but due to the excessive abbreviation of the content, it lacks significant scholarly value and is more of an overview (Avery, 2014 AD/1393 SH: 1/ 71-83). In this regard, Iranian Iranologists such as Reza Shabani have provided much more scientific and precise historical accounts

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three⁴, four, and five of section one pertains to the political history of the Qajar era.

Gavin Hambly, in the fourth chapter of Section One, has written a brief overview of the reign of Fath-Ali Shah and Mohammad Shah Qajar without analyzing or dissecting its internal developments, and has not paid attention to the colonial policies of Western powers in Iran. Although a series of articles impose limitations on the author's writing, even the number of pages written is not based on scientific and analytical historiography (Overy, 2014 AD/1393 SH: 1/152-222).

In the analysis of internal issues, prime ministers and political developments during the reigns of Fath-Ali Shah and Mohammad Shah Qajar, there has been no attention to the policies of European countries such as Russia and France, especially England, regarding Iran and their interference in Iranian internal affairs. Perhaps they considered their intervention in Iran as natural and normal, and for this reason, they did not pay attention to it (ibid., 191-222). While the origins of some of the country's problems, especially in the field of foreign policy, are related to the treaties concluded with foreign countries and the war between Iran and Russia and the policies of those mentioned countries. To confirm this view, one can refer to the writings of various researchers on the treaties concluded during this period and the colonial concerns of Russia and England (Nafisi, 1989 AD/1368 SH: 1/23-288; ibid., 2/1-30 and 92-179 and 213-218; Atkin, 2003 AD/1382 SH: 112-181; Shamim, 1991 AD/1370 SH: 59-104 and 221-259; Ali Sufi, 2010 AD/1389 SH: 12-113).

of the Afsharid dynasty and the Afsharid period (Shabani, 1990 AD/1369 SH: 1/ 51-160). The history of Zandiyeh has been compiled by John Perry, and its contents, especially those after the reign of Karim Khan Zand, are very brief and general, and in some cases, they are so incomplete that they can be confusing and ambiguous for the reader (ibid., 87-136). In this regard, Iranian authors such as Zargarinejad and Varharam have presented a better historiography of the political and social developments during the Zandiyeh period (Zargarinejad, 2016 AD/1395 SH: 227-312; Varharam, 1987 AD/1366 SH: 36-214).

4. Chapter Three is about the Qajar dynasty and the reign of Agha Mohammad Khan Qajar, which has been compiled by Gavin Hambly. He briefly examines the rise of the Qajars to the reign of Agha Mohammad Khan, although the writing constraints for the collection of articles are taken into account, and the number of written pages is not based on scientific and analytical historiography (Overy, 2014 AD/1393 SH: 1/ 139-151). However, domestic researchers have done a much better and more scientific job of historiography for this period of Iranian history than the Cambridge author, one example of which is the work of Gholamhossein Zargarinejad, which extensively and analytically deals with the process of the Qajar power takeover and Agha Mohammad Khan (Zargarinejad, 2016 AD/1395 SH: 162-302). In Continuation of the chapter, Gavin Hambly discusses the reign of Agha Mohammad Khan Qajar and its internal developments in a better and more detailed manner.

Chapter five of section one discusses the reign of Naser al-Din Shah until the fall of the Qajar dynasty and the constitutional revolution, which was briefly written by Nikki Keddie without analytical and scientific explanation (Overy, 2014 AD/1393 SH: 1/223-270). Keddie writes in order to legitimize British policy: "Although it is easy for someone reading British sources to feel that Britain's inclinations in Iran have been reformist and benevolent, for someone who is more familiar with Iranian and Russian sources, confirming this point is not easy" (ibid., 230). However, it is noted further on: "England opposed genuine patriotic reforms" (ibid.).

The role of Russian and British diplomacy in the events from the Naseri period to the fall of the Qajar dynasty has been briefly and validly passed according to the Western Orientalist perspective, considering the international conditions of the time (ibid., 245-269). In particular, the fall of the Qajar dynasty and the rise of Reza Khan and the role of Britain in it have been presented as very natural and justified (ibid.,: 264-269), and the support of the British, led by the Ironside, for Reza Khan has been interpreted as establishing order and law in the country (ibid., 267).

Furthermore, the formation of the South Iranian Rifles led by Sykes was only referred to as combating the activities of German forces and spies (ibid., 264-265). While the main objective of this force was to control order and security in southern Iran, secure the oil wells, and preserve British interests in the south (Zughi, 1989 AD/1368 SH: 1/155).

In this regard, one case was also to counter German spies⁵. Moberly interprets the formation of this force in his memoirs as restoring order and law in the south of Iran (Moberly, 1990 AD/1369 SH: 186). However, outwardly it was named as order and law, but in practice, it was deployed to secure British interests in southern Iran.

Therefore, based on various studies, the role of England in the developments of the Naseri and Constitutional periods until the fall of the Qajar dynasty can be proven with a colonial approach (Abrahamiyan, 2012 AD/1391 SH: 46-92; Kazemzadeh, 1992 AD/1371 SH: 91-652; Ali Sufi, 2010 AD/1389 SH: 145-314; Zoghi, 1989 AD/1368 SH (A): 37-184 and 395-520).

Keddie does not address the main and long-term reasons for the formation of the constitutional government in Iran in his multi-page discussion, and only briefly focuses on some minor events. Keddie refers more to the influence of critical writings by Iranian immigrants and some domestic intellectuals in the formation of the constitution (Overy, 2014

5. Cf. Safiri, F. (1986 AD/1365 SH). *Police South of Iran*. (Jafari Fasharki, M; Etedadi, M. Trans). Tehran: Tarikh-e Iran Publishing.

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AD/1393 SH: 1/253-261). In the discussion of the scholars' opposition to the constitution, he only mentions their collaboration with the Shah but does not mention the reason for this action (*ibid.*, 261).

Therefore, the scholarly value of the content in this section is very low due to its brevity, lack of causal explanation, and neglect of important and fundamental aspects of the constitution. Keddie briefly mentions the politics of England in the discussion of the 1907 agreement, the 1919 agreement, and the 1299 coup, but does not examine and explain English politics, and ultimately, in a very brief and journalistic way, discusses how the change of government from Qajar to Pahlavi occurred in Iran without foreign intervention (*ibid.*, 260-269). This historiographical approach has greatly contributed to the cleansing of Western colonial powers in other countries.

2. The Historiography of Qajar Foreign Relations with a Focus on the Purifying of British Colonization

Chapter seven⁶ of the first volume discusses Iran's foreign relations with Russia from the late Safavid period to 1921, which has been compiled by Kazemzadeh. The author addresses the British policy in the Treaty of Gulistan, the start of the Second Russo-Persian War, and the Treaty of Turkmenchay has not received much attention (Overy, 2014 AD/1393 SH: 1/318-323). The author provides a very brief and superficial account of Russia's policy in Iran before and after World War I and does not offer any fresh analysis of Russia's policy. There is also no specific discussion about the Jangal Movement and Soviet policy towards it, and the author does not delve into analyzing Soviet policy towards the Jangal Movement (*ibid.*, 333 and 336). Interestingly, the same author has addressed a more comprehensive analysis of Russian and British policies in Iran (1814-1964) in another book that he wrote and published himself (Kazemzadeh, 1992 AD/1371 SH: 1-557).

6. Chapter six of the first volume is dedicated to Iran's relations with the Ottoman Empire in the 18th and 19th centuries, from the reign of Nader Afshar to the end of Fath Ali Shah's rule. It focuses less on the Qajar period and does not delve into it. This chapter, written by Stanford J. Shaw, is very brief and lacks explanation and analysis of events (Overy, 2014 AD/1393 SH: 1/ 273-293). In some cases, for example, regarding the cause of peace between Iran and the Ottoman Empire in one of Nader's wars, Shaw's interpretation is incorrect (*ibid.*, 282). Although Shaw is a renowned Ottoman historian, this chapter lacks scholarly and analytical writing. Meanwhile, the works of domestic authors, including Abdolreza Houshang Mahdavi, provide better and more analytical insights into Iran-Ottoman relations during that period (Mahdavi, 1990 AD/1369 SH: 145-230).

Probably due to page limitations in composing a collection, Kazemzadeh only summarized the major points and general relationships, and this led to his lack of attention to Western colonial policies in Iran's relations. Ultimately, he contributed to the approach of purifying colonization. In general, Kazemzadeh was not successful in describing the Soviet-Iranian relations until 1921, and his writings essentially repeated the previous authors' materials in this field. Meanwhile, domestic authors like Manshur Garakani have provided a much better and more accurate analysis of Russia's policy in the late Qajar period and the transfer of power to Reza Shah (cf. Manshur Garakani, 65-130 and 147-213).

Chapter nine⁷ of the first volume discusses Iran's relations with Britain from the Afsharid period to the late Qajar period (1790-1921 AD), as compiled by Rosegraves. The Orientalist perspective with a Western-centric approach is evident in this chapter. The author portrays the English missions to Iran and Afghanistan as completely normal and presents the defense of British interests in India and Iran as a natural matter. Graves briefly addresses the mission of Mahdi Ali Khan Bahador and Hardford Jones in relation to the Afghan ruler and the Iranian government, portraying their behavior as completely natural in protecting British interests in India (Overy, 2014 AD/1393 SH: 1/369-370).

He even suggests that Jones opposed the disagreement between the Afghan ruler and Iran and condemned the Shia-Sunni divide (ibid., 370). Perhaps they temporarily agreed with such a policy due to British interests in India, but fomenting division was one of the main colonial policies of Britain during that period. The author addresses the purification of British colonial policy with such brevity.

Rosegraves is a concise and justifiable reference to the political and commercial mission of John Malcolm in the Persian Gulf and the court of Fath Ali Shah. The clauses of Malcolm's commercial treaty are seen as a means to support trade growth (ibid., 373). However, many authors refer to the colonial goals of British ambassadors like Malcolm during the reign of Fath Ali Shah (Nafisi, 1989 AD/1368 SH: 2/10-36 and 212-221; Wright, 1983 AD/1362 SH: 61-64 and 111-136; Shamim, 1991 AD/1370 SH: 71 and 75-78).

In regards to Osley's role in the Treaty of Gulistan, with a Western Orientalist perspective, it is written as follows: "Osley played a mediating role in the 1813 ceasefire between Iran and Russia and was only able to prevent the situation from worsening." (Overy, 2014 AD/1393 SH: 1/380)

7. The eighth chapter of the first book, regarding Iran's relations with European trading companies until 1798 (from the Afsharid era to the beginning of the Qajar era), is not addressed extensively as it is less relevant to the research topic.

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While England was concerned about Russia's advance due to its interests in Iran and India, Osley ordered the English officers of the Iranian army to cease fighting and advocated for peace in order to exert pressure on Iran and preserve British interests (Trenzio, 1980 AD/1359 SH: 25; Ghuzanlu, 1983 AD/1362 SH: 127-129; Atkin, 2003 AD/1382 SH: 177-180).

Regarding the start of the Iran-Russia war in its second phase, quoting Melkoun and Ellis, it is believed that pressure from religious extremists was the cause of the war (Overy, 2014 AD/1393 SH: 1/385). It is undeniable that the fatwa issued by the scholars had an influential role in the start of the second phase of the war with Russia. However, there were other factors such as the ambiguity of borders in the Gulistan Treaty, Russian aggression in those regions, and the interference of British officials before and after the Gulistan Treaty in favor of Russia, which had an influential role in the start of the war, but the author does not mention them (Nafisi, 1989 AD/1368 SH: 2/93-123; Transio, 1980 AD/1359 SH: 30).

Rosegraves writes in a friendly manner about the Turkmenchay Treaty and its issues concerning the English officials: "The British delegation sought to ease the conditions for peace" (Overy, 2014 AD/1393 SH: 1/385); while all of England's efforts were aimed at limiting Russia's influence in Iran (Transio, 1980 AD/1359 SH: 34-35; Shamim, 1991 AD/1370 SH: 101 and 108).

This writing style reflects the West-centric perspective of Western Iranologists who exonerate and idealize the West while attributing the problem to the East (Shakouri, 1992 AD/1371 SH: 397-400). In line with this perspective, it considers the arrival of Mohammad Shah Qajar as dependent on British support (Overy, 2014 AD/1393 SH: 1/387) and presents English Sir John Campbell as someone concerned about Iran's weakness (ibid., 389). Apparently, these allegations may seem somewhat accurate, but this concern was not for Iran itself but rather for the threat to British interests in Iran and India. Therefore, if English agents helped in the ascension of Mohammad Shah Qajar, it was only to infiltrate the monarchy and the person of the Shah, because England's position in Iran had declined in comparison to Russia after the Treaty of Turkmenchay (Ali Sufi, 2010 AD/1389 SH: 68-73).

The author continues by mentioning several individuals like Mirza Aghasi and Mirza Masoud Garmroodi as Russian agents (Overy, 2014 AD/1393 SH: 1/389), but does not make any reference to English agents in Iran; while credible research, such as Ismail Rain's research, shows that the number of Iranian spies for Britain was not small (Rain, 1994 AD/1373 SH: 17, 69, 130, 248, etc.).

Rosegraves portrays the efforts of English agents like Patinger in Herat as justifiable and presents it as a legitimate right of the British government to protect India and intervene in Afghanistan (Overy, 2014 AD/1393 SH: 1/390, 395, etc.). It also suggests that Russian agents, like Khanikov, spent money in Herat to sow discord (ibid., 393), but it does not mention anything about English agents in this regard and only refers to their military assistance and reinforcement of security in Herat (ibid., 390).

Rosegraves connects the motivation for reforms among a group of Iranians to concerns about the Russian threat in Iran, and in his opinion, they see salvation in reforms and closer cooperation with England (ibid., 398). However, Mirza Hossein Khan Sepahsalar and Mirza Malkam Khan are mentioned as acceptable reformists, but Ali Asghar Khan Amin al-Sultan cannot be considered a reformist according to the writer (ibid.). Another point is that the motivations for reforms during the Qajar period were diverse, one of which was caused by Iran's failure against Russia and their threat. Other factors such as the competition between Russia and England in Iran, England's acquisition of numerous privileges in Iran, and Iran's political weakness also provided conditions for the emergence of reformist ideas among enlightened thinkers (Rahmanian, 2011 AD/1390 SH: 14-35).

He believes that regarding the 1919 agreement: "This agreement was made for extensive financial and military assistance to Iran under the supervision of British authorities." (Overy, 2014 AD/1393 SH: 1/427)

This writing is a form of purifying the British colonial policy in Iran. While establishing a type of advisory regime in Iran and indirectly dominating Iran was the goal of the British. Since the direct implementation of British political and military objectives in Iranian territory and direct control over Iranian financial and economic affairs was not practical, the British chose the 1919 agreement as an indirect means to achieve this goal (Sheikh al-Islami, 1989 AD/1368 SH: 12).

At the end of chapter nine, Rosegraves has a general analysis of Britain's policy in Iran. It discusses the purification of British colonialism in Iran and writes: "Iranians, especially after the Iran-Russia war... became accustomed to blaming Britain for most of their misfortunes and ill-fate." (Overy, 2014 AD/1393 SH: 1/429).

He continues to say: "Iranians perceived Britain's economic plans as schemes for colonization and exploitation not plans for development..." (ibid., 430) However, the author was unable to examine British policy in such a way in this chapter that would clarify the reason behind this perception and animosity of Iranians. Therefore, superficial and passing discussions to present the actions of the British in Iran in a positive light

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effectively contradict his overall analysis of British policy in Iran and demonstrate the Orientalist perspective of the West towards the purification of British colonialism.

3. Writing of the Political History of Pahlavi and the Denial of Colonial Politics

Gavin Hambly, in the first section of the second volume of the seventh book, delves into the political history of the Pahlavi government. He has a positive view of Iran's situation and the 1919 agreement, describing it as a means of modernization and assistance to Iran (Overy, 2013 AD/1392 SH: 2/14, 16, and 20). Hambly does not discuss the 1919 agreement further. As mentioned in previous pages, its formation and design were closely aligned with British colonial policy and in cooperation with some domestic politicians who supported British policies (Zoughi, 1989 AD/1368: 1/275-350; Sheikh al-Islami, 1989 AD/1368 SH: 7-21).

Gavin Hambly downplays the role of the English in the 1299 SH/1921 AD coup investigation and only mentions the memoirs of Ironside as the sole evidence to introduce Reza Khan's participation in the coup (Overy, 2013 AD/1392 SH: 2/19).

Regarding Sheikh Khazal, the role of England in Sheikh Khazal's quest for independence is downplayed, describing him with his megalomania and grandiosity. It only states, "Apparently, Sheikh Khazal considered himself practically independent with the support of Britain" (*ibid.*, 22). However, by referring to various documents and books, the significant role of England in the 1299 coup and Sheikh Khazal's uprising can be revealed (Zoughi, 1989 AD/1368 SH: 1/427-519; Mackey, 1978 AD/1357 SH: 3/153-298; Malaei-Tavani, 2002 AD/1381 SH: 388-419 and 182-191).

The author considers Reza Shah's republicanism as an indigenous movement within Iran (Overy, 2013 AD/1392 SH: 2/24). However, based on reputable research, this view cannot be accepted, and Iran did not have the necessary conditions for republicanism (Malaei-Tavani, 2002 AD/1381 SH: 316-369). Gavin Hambly, with a Western-centric approach, presents a narrative of "Whitescovel West" regarding Iran and Reza Shah, which reflects the perspective of the Western Orientalist School towards Iran. He writes, "Apparently, Reza Shah was a terrifying man ... He had no rival among a weak and helpless nation." (Overy, 2013 AD/1392 SH: 2/25)

The author does not discuss British policies during the reign of Reza Shah and believes that Reza Shah tried to minimize foreign interference in domestic affairs as much as possible (*ibid.*, 26). However, reputable research proves the contrary to this belief, showing that Britain had

interventions in internal affairs, especially Reza Shah's foreign policy (Malaei-Tavani, 2002 AD/1381 SH: 549-570; Zargar, 1993 AD/1372 SH: 59-212). Gavin Hambly has contributed to the cleansing of British politics in Iran with such a writing style.

About canceling the oil contract and signing a new contract during the reign of Reza Shah (1312 SH), there is a valid consideration for the British oil company, and it does not mention its lack of financial commitment to Iran in canceling the contract (Overy, 2013 AD/1392 SH: 2/41). However, based on various sources, one can infer the colonial policy of the oil company and their negligence in fulfilling their financial obligations to Iran (Zargar, 1993 AD/1372 SH: 279-330; Zoughi, 1989 AD/1368 SH: 1/123-135).

Regarding the fall of Reza Shah, it accurately refers to his German inclination and the concerns of Russia and England in this regard. It attributes the Shah's downfall to his neutrality in World War II but does not mention anything about cleansing English politics in Iran through his resignation, appointment of a successor, expulsion from the country, and the role of the British in this matter (Overy, 2013 AD/1392 SH: 2/45-46). However, multiple studies refer to the role of England in the mentioned cases (Zoughi, 1989 AD/1368 SH: 2/100-130; Stewart, 1991AD/1370 SH: 356-372).

In the second chapter of the second book, Gavin Hambly discusses the reign of Mohammad Reza Shah. The author, in the section on the nationalization of oil and the activities of the British Oil Company during Mossadegh's era, lacks a realistic perspective and mostly justifies the company's activities in Iran. He attributes the problems against the company solely to nationalist activities, whether left or right-wing (Overy, 2013 AD/1392 SH: 2/58).

However, based on other research, one can uncover the problems of mismanagement by the English company and the interference of the British government in the company's overall policies (Lewis, 1993 AD/1372 SH: 363-415; Gaziorowski, 1992 AD/1371 SH: 155-197).

Regarding Dr. Mossadegh's policy on oil from a Western-centric perspective, the author writes: "Unfortunately, it was never clear what this man wanted to achieve." (Overy, 2013 AD/1392 SH: 2/62) While Mossadegh's policy was clear and aimed at national independence in the field of oil and strengthening the non-oil economy (Katouzian (A), 1993 AD/1372 SH: 324-362).

Gavin Hambly's viewpoint in the dispute between the Oil Company and Mossadegh is more justificatory and supportive of the oil company (Overy, 2013 AD/1392 SH: 2/62-68). Therefore, all of these examples

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indicate the whitewashing of Western colonial policies, especially those of England, in Iran by Gavin Hambly.

4. The Historiography of Pahlavi Foreign Policy with a Focus on Rejecting Western Colonialism in Iran

Chapter three of the second volume of the seventh book of Cambridge History of Iran discusses the foreign policy of the Pahlavi era, compiled by Amin Saikal. The author briefly and convincingly highlights the role of England in the foreign policy of the reign of Reza Shah, thereby refuting its colonialist policies in Iran (Overy, 2013 AD/1392 SH: 2/118-124).

Saikal introduces Reza Shah as a self-made soldier, who was labeled as the agent of Britain and wanted to save Iran (*ibid.*, 118). However, the research of this period well proves the dependency of Reza Shah on England and the role of England in the developments of this period (Zargar, 1993 AD/1372 SH: 59-128 and 129-181; Malaei-Tavani, 2016 AD/1395 SH: 104-110).

In the field of foreign policy during Mohammad Reza Shah's era, there is no specific discussion about the role of England in establishing the monarchy and events in the early years of the monarchy until 1332. However, it cannot be easily overlooked that role in the early years of Mohammad Reza Shah's reign. Furthermore, the narrative and descriptive account of the United States' policy in the process of the second Pahlavi era is presented without analytical explanation, considering the Shah as independent from foreign influence (Overy, 2013 AD/1392 SH: 2/124-133). Amin Saikal, after the Mordad 28 coup, highlights the role of Mohammad Reza Shah in Iran's foreign policy and presents a narrative and descriptive account of the United States' role in Iran's foreign policy, without believing in America's colonial policy in Iran (*ibid.*, 134-150). The author praises Mohammad Reza Shah's foreign policy without providing an analytical explanation (*ibid.*, 141-146), but still does not ask himself 'Why, despite this seemingly successful foreign policy, the Shah fell?' In response to Amin Saikal's disregard for the Shah's foreign dependence, it should be noted that Gaziorowski, in the book "U.S. Foreign Policy and the Shah," thoroughly describes and proves the Shah's subservience. In addition, there is ample evidence to prove Iran's dependence, particularly in foreign policy, on the United States after 1332 (Gaziorowski, 1992 AD/1371 SH: 199-287 and 132-145).

Furthermore, Amin Saikal describes Mohammad Reza Shah's regional policy between 1332 and 1357 as an independent and non-aligned policy that aimed to become the dominant power in the region (Overy, 2013 AD/1392 SH: 2/142, 144-146). He writes: "By the end of

the 1340s, the Shah had the strongest position for independently directing the country's foreign policy" (ibid., 142). Saikal praises Mohammad Reza Shah's oil policy towards the consortium as a deliberate and conscious strategy (ibid., 142-144). He also believes that in the early 1350s, Shah defined Iran's regional interests far beyond the geographical environments of Central Asia, the West, and the Persian Gulf and brought Iran closer to the great civilization it aimed for (ibid., 145-146). Critically speaking, the development of Mohammad Reza Shah's government in that decade was problematic, and this disproportionate economic and social development ultimately led to a crisis in the country (Abrahamian, 2012 AD/1391 SH: 382-412).

In terms of regional discussion, despite being recognized as a superior regional power, it did not have independent status and relied on support from the United States (Gaziorowski, 1992 AD/1371 SH: 199-278). Furthermore, Amin Saikal regards Shah's industrial and military development programs as intertwined and praises his policy in this regard (Overy, 2013 AD/1392 SH: 147).

However, research indicates that these costly military and modernization programs were one of the causes of inflation, subsequent problems, and the Shah's weakness (Gaziorowski, 1992 AD/1371 SH: 381-434; Katouzian (B), 1993 AD/1372 SH: 322-341).

5. The Historiography of Iran's Oil Industry with the Purification from British Colonization

Chapter five of the second book, which is about the oil industry in Iran during the Pahlavi period, was written by Ronald Ferrier and has sparked a lot of discussion and criticism. Considering the financial support of the Iran Oil Company and the British National Oil Corporation to the Cambridge Iranian Studies Institute and Ferrier's own role as a historian for the British Petroleum, his perspective naturally reflects a biased viewpoint. Ronald Ferrier's historiography and interpretation justify the lack of British government intervention in the affairs of the Iran and British oil companies and support the performance of the aforementioned oil company in Iran.

However, in an article titled "The Iran-Britain Dispute over the Oil Issue: A Three-way Relationship," the same author goes into more depth and provides a better analysis than his writings in this chapter of the seventh volume of Cambridge, discussing the Iran and British oil companies, their disputes with the Iranian government, and ultimately the problems of the Mossadegh era and the involvement of the United States and Britain in the downfall of Mossadegh. Even there, however, he takes

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a cautious approach and supports the company (Ferrier, 1993 AD/1372 SH: 263-319).

Ronald Ferrier, writes about the Iran-UK oil company: "New foundation of Iran oil company demonstrated its entrepreneurial power and investment without any intervention or assistance from Britain and defended it." (Overy, 2013 AD/1392 SH: 2/195). In line with decolonization and support for the oil company, he writes: "The oil company has not shown any reluctance or discrimination in terms of employment and promotion of Iranians ... and has been open to anyone who has the necessary qualifications and experience in any position." (ibid., 203)

Of course, actions were taken in this regard after the 1933 AD/1312 SH era of Reza Shah, but until then, no action had been taken to promote Iranians in the company, and the company was completely one-sided and Iranian employees had no position. That is why Freer writes in defense of the oil company: "The oil company was overly cautious and conservative in its right to Iranianize its employees; because the educational level and technical knowledge of Iranians were low." (ibid., 212).

In order to justify Iran's protests against the poor financial performance of the company in Iran after World War II and opposition to reconciliation with the oil company, he writes: "There were hostilities towards the company and its dependence on Britain due to the experience Iran had gained during World War II... and it was accompanied by Iran's excessive expectations for better conditions" (ibid., 213). Furthermore, he writes: "Iranians did not fully understand Britain's critical financial situation in the post-war period and Iranian policymakers were suspicious of it" (ibid.). Therefore, with this perspective and intellectual view, he sought to justify the company's non-payment of financial commitments to the Iranian government and considered the protests and non-payment of Iran's claims as a lack of understanding by England and excessive expectations from Iranians, which served as a justification for purifying British policy and the British oil company.

Ronald Ferrier justifies the nationalization of oil and the formation of an oil consortium in defense of English oil companies, and considers the nationalization of oil a one-sided matter unrelated to Iran's economic interests (ibid., 216-223).

He finds Iranians' expectations of the company impractical (ibid., 216). Ferrier writes about the nationalization of Iran's oil: "The act of nationalizing, regardless of its political inevitability and economic attractiveness, was a unilateral takeover rather than a negotiation. Iran destroyed all the bridges behind it in the oil sector, and there was no turning back." (ibid., 219). With his Western-centric perspective, the

author criticizes and sees the nationalization of oil as detrimental to Iran, stating: "This experience was punitive, deeply bitter and regrettable. The financial failure of the oil policy after nationalization weakened him to some extent and his supporters." (ibid., 220)

Ronald Ferrier does not discuss the behind-the-scenes issues of the collaboration between America and England in the overthrow of Mossadegh and the coup of 28 Mordad 32 (ibid., 220-221), while there is meticulous evidence and documentation regarding the oil coup (Lewis, 1993 AD/1372 SH: 363-415; Bill, 1993 AD/1372 SH: 416-472; Nejati, 1985 AD/1364 SH: 297-407).

The author considers the oil consortium contract that was concluded after the fall of the Mossadegh government as a masterpiece of diplomatic skill, commercial acumen, and practical wisdom (Overy, 2013 AD/1392 SH: 2/213). With a West-centric Orientalist approach, he delves into the purification of Western colonialism and exploitation, presenting the oil consortium contract as patriotism. He believes that Ali Amini fulfilled his duty with integrity, patriotism, and solidarity (ibid.), while the mentioned contract contradicted the nationalization law of Iran's oil.

Ronald Ferrierr, in continuation of this chapter, writes: "The Shah of Iran occupied the islands of Abu Musa, Greater and Lesser Tunbs, and annexed Iranian territory to Sharjah and Ra's Al Khaimah." (ibid., 233)

The author, with a Western-centric perspective, portrays Iran as an invader, while these islands are part of Iranian land and were fragmented due to British policies. Under the influence of Western Orientalism, the author justifies Britain's exit strategy from the Persian Gulf and its colonial role in inciting the sheikhdoms of the Persian Gulf to occupy Iranian islands, labeling Iran as the invader.

In continuation of the Western-oriented viewpoint, he praises Mohammad Reza Shah's policies in the first three years of the 1350s decade and believes that the Shah strives to free Iran from the nightmare of foreign penetration in the country's oil industry (ibid., 233). The author interprets the foreign penetration of the Pahlavi government as a nightmare, while their dependence on American policy in the 1350s was evident and apparent.

In summary, Iranian studies in the West, despite claiming impartiality, scientific knowledge, and adopting scientific methods, was simply born out of an economic and political necessity (Fasihi, 1375: 439).

The post-World War II need of major governments to understand the history of Eastern nations led to their deep interest in the East, including Iranian studies, and propelled Iranian studies in the West towards the interests of these governments (ibid., 445). On the other hand, some researchers and historians were financially supported by government

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institutions or affiliated with them, which influenced their perspective towards their financial backers and made them overlook historical realities. The seventh volume of Cambridge's History of Iran scholars was not exempt from these drawbacks.

Conclusion

The Cambridge University Department of Iranian Studies has made efforts to write the history of Iran, which is commendable in this regard. In some volumes, such as the section on ancient Iran and Islamic Iran up to the Safavid period, scientific efforts have been made in the field of historiography.

However, in the section on the developments in the history of Iran from the Safavid period onwards, there are many inconsistencies, with the most notable being in the seventh volume, which has been translated into two parts. The authors of this section have not been successful in scientific historiography and content analysis. Perhaps the connection of this part of Iran's history with the history and actions of major powers such as England and America has posed a challenge for historians and researchers in this section. Iranian studies in the West were created based on the needs of these major powers.

The section on the political and economic transformations of the Qajar and Pahlavi periods in the history of Iran by Cambridge has many shortcomings in terms of historiography and historical perspective. The authors were attempting to justify the policies of England and America in Iran and, in a way, cleanse Western colonialism. They lack scientific and substantive analysis regarding the politics of England and its role in Iran during the Qajar period. Considering the financial support of the Iran Oil Company and England in the formation of this collection, it was evident that they showed caution and bias towards issues such as oil and the British oil company in Iran, and aimed to cleanse the colonial policy of England in Iran.

The outcome of the matter is that the authors of the seventh volume of Cambridge's History of Iran have not been successful in providing a realistic and scholarly account of the political and economic developments of the Qajar and Pahlavi periods in Iran. Despite their efforts, they have had a biased perspective towards the West and have attempted to cleanse Western colonial policies. Therefore, this historical collection cannot serve as an educational and scholarly reference for students and academics in the country.

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