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Hafez F. Farmayan

OBSERVATIONS ON SOURCES FOR THE STUDY OF NINETEENTH- AND TWENTIETH- CENTURY IRANIAN HISTORY¹

I. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Until recently, most works dealing with nineteenth-century Iran have had special points of view which now are hopelessly out of date. Concerned only with aspects of nineteenth-century Iran, they have treated these subjects either in connection with literature or with the rivalry of the European imperialist powers. Whatever the merits of these works, they may be said to have outlived their main usefulness. The age of imperialism is gone; and though the classical Persian literature of a thousand years may well be immortal, its creative spirit is dust. In Iran, as elsewhere, modern men have drastically altered their political, historical, and literary views. We now need histories of other kinds. It is time to explore and to research. Too much which is published on Iranian history continues to be either shallow, narrow, cliché-littered imitations of the not-so-great historians of the past, or are official glorifications of Iran's present, not always consistent with the truth. The field requires a widely extended and earnest historical inquiry into the development of modern Iranian society through the exploration of its recent past. An investigation of the social structure of nineteenth-century Persia, for instance, is absolutely essential to an understanding of the behavior of the present-day Iranian bureaucracy, which is often inexplicable to the Western observer. When the Persia of the peasants, the *mullás* and the *mírzá*s is brought into clear perspective behind the Iran of the National Iranian Oil Company and the Plan Organization, we shall be in a position to understand the complexities of the present Iranian administrative machinery and the broad spectrum of motivation of its maintenance men.

II. NINETEENTH-CENTURY TRADITIONAL HISTORIOGRAPHY

Nineteenth-century Iran must be studied and must be understood. This requires a painstaking analysis of its society and the ideas and movements rising within it during this hundred years, which was one of the most painful, confused

¹ The author wishes to acknowledge the support of the Social Science Research Council and the Graduate School of the University of Texas at Austin in his researches on nineteenth- and twentieth-century Iranian history.

and significant periods in Iranian history. The nineteenth-century Persian experience constituted the country's main bridge between tradition and modernity. The history of Iran during this period reflects the prolonged struggle of its society, traditional and out of step with the march of events, as it twisted and recoiled in its desperate efforts to avoid the assaults of the West – assaults that were the most unremitting and ruthless in its three thousand years of confrontations with alien cultures. Yet the undeflectable forces of historical processes compelled its submission. In losing the struggle, Iranian society began to perceive certain at least potentially true benefits, certain advantages, certain pleasures. I believe that a tremendous sense of guilt haunts Iranian society for having profited in the abandonment of its traditions, and that this is the reason for the present misadjustment of the Iranian people to their new Westernized ideals and aims. The supreme function of today's historian of Iran should be to help its society understand and accept its present self by understanding how and why it had to transform itself into what it is today. It is impossible to accomplish this without meticulous and exhaustive study. At present this quality of scholarship scarcely exists. As long as studies of contemporary Iran continue to be based on the limited available 'histories' of nineteenth-century Iran, they will continue to be distorted by wrong or narrow perspectives.

An investigation of Persian historical literature itself is rewarding only often enough so that we dare not ignore it altogether. The entire nineteenth century had passed before Persian historians manifested any general changes in their evaluations of what constituted history. At the beginning of the nineteenth century Persian historians were following the florid and verbose style established by their predecessors, which often impeded the presentation of such historical facts and events which they chose to record. These were not real histories of the Iranian people, but chronicles of princes and their viziers who consumed their time warring with one another and plundering whichever unfortunate part of the country was available. After reading through page after page of these wearisome records of looting and bloodshed, the modern reader can with the greatest difficulty occasionally extract a glittering nugget of fact concerning the social and political conditions of the country when these regal forays took place.

The most popular of these are Dunbuli's *Ma'âsir-i Sulţânîyyih*¹ (1826); Hidâyat's supplement to *Rowzatu' ş-Şafâ* (1853); and Sipihr's *Nâsikhu' t-Tavârikh* (1856). There are quantities of histories of this kind which are not yet published.² Limited as they are, the important facts which they occasionally

¹ This work was translated and published in London in 1833 by Sir Harford Jones Brydges under the title of *Dynasty of the Kajars*.

² For example there is *Tâhkirî-i Malik Zâdigân-Tukhmiy-i Khâqân*, written in 1875 by Malik İraj Mîrzâ, son of Fath 'Alî Shâh, which provides biographical sketches of the latter's numerous offspring. There is *Târikh-i Şâhib Qarânî*, by Maḥmûd Mîrzâ, yet another Qâjâr prince; *Târikh-i Zu'l-Qarneyn*, by Faẓlu'llâh Khâvarî; *Târikh-i Jahân Ârâ*, by Mîrzâ Muḥammad Şâdiq; *Târikh-i Âl-i Qâjâr*, by Muşţafâ Qulî Sarâbî; *Kalâmu'l Mulûk va Mulûku'l Kalâm*, by Taqî 'Alî Âbâdî Şâhib Dîvân, which also deals

yield can be of incalculable value to us and we must not overlook them. The nineteenth-century Persian chroniclers were extremely prolific. Under the lavish but alert patronage of their masters, they tirelessly competed with one another, impelled by the same rule of 'publish or perish', but in this case one might better define it as 'write rubbish or perish'. Nevertheless, it is my opinion that all of them, or nearly all, should be studied and printed. Once in a while, examination proves that a few of them, atypically, are extremely valuable. One such, for instance, *The History of Kirmân*,¹ one of the finest local histories, was published in 1961 in Tehran.² Publication of the nineteenth-century chronicles should not be done haphazardly. Altogether they can reveal an enormous amount of information, but they can be of greatest benefit only if they are methodically arranged, studied with care, and published with proper indices and well-researched commentaries. The best way, perhaps, is to present a series under the auspices of a research institute backed by state funds.

One very important aspect of Qājār patronage was that, in addition to their support of the traditional chroniclers, the development of a translation program was also encouraged and fostered. It was one of the many and varied attempts towards Westernization in Iran and its remarkable extent has been fully realized in but recent years as a result of researches in various Persian archives. This Qājār program's basic feature was translation and publication of works in sciences, history, biography, travel and literature from Western languages into Persian. The practice was initiated fairly early in the nineteenth century by 'Abbās-Mīrzā, then Crown Prince, and continued well into the twentieth under the patronage of successive Shahs. The program was particularly productive under Nāṣiru' d-Dīn Shah (1848–96), under whose personal supervision a Translation House [*Dāru't-Tarjumih*] was established. There a large staff was gathered for the main purpose of translating European books and periodicals into Persian. These were all read first by the Shah, and afterwards the majority were published and made available to the public. The range of translations was broad, from Boccaccio, Molière and Shakespeare to military sciences, to translations of articles from such newspapers as *The Times*, *Tour de Monde*, and *Le Temps*, as well as from many newspapers published in Turkey, Russia and the Caucasus. Historical and biographical translations were profuse. There were two reasons for this. The Qājār rulers, although beset by historical misfortunes, had a sense

with the enormous family of the second Qājār Shāh; Manúhu'l Qulúb, by Muhammad Nadīm; *Navádīr' l-Amīr*, by Sheykh'l Mashhāyikh; *Tārīkh-i Qājāriyyih*, by Vaqāyi' Nigār Shīrāzī; and *Muntakhab u't-Tavārīkh*, by Mīrzā Ibrāhīm Khān Āshṭiyānī. There are many more of these unpublished historical manuscripts, but space prevents a recitation of their titles.

¹ For the sake of readability, wherever possible, titles of Persian works shall appear in the text of this paper in English translation done by the author. The original Persian shall be noted in transliterated form in the footnotes.

² *Tārīkh-i Kirmân*, edited by Hafez F. Farmayan and M. E. Bāstanīy-i Parīzī (Tehran, 1961).

of their place in history and were conscious of the need for a national history for Iran. They are known to have consciously identified themselves with, or compared themselves to, outstanding rulers in other times and places. What is owed to the vanities of powerful men can never be measured. Volume after volume of historical works were translated into Persian to satisfy the egos of the nineteenth-century Iranian rulers.¹

The second reason for the enormous number of historical translations was that the director of the Translation House, Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān I'timādu's-Saltānih, was himself a historian. Thus during his long directorship, from about 1867 to 1895, the majority of works produced were historical. These were either written by I'timādu's-Saltānih himself, or were ordered by him to be translated.² It would be reasonable to suppose that the availability of these histories, some of which were great works of European authorship, would have stimulated the development of Persian historiography. This was rarely the case, however, because the Qājār aristocracy at the same time continued its patronage of traditional historians. The tedious art of the chronicler was preserved faithfully to the extent that chronicles are still esteemed as history in the hearts of the Iranian public.

European historiographical influence, although it was extremely slow in showing its effects, did manage to appear towards the end of the nineteenth century. It seems first to have been manifested in the neglected work of Mīrzā Āqā Khān-i Kirmānī, entitled *Ā'īnih-yi Sikandarī*.³ The changing trend continued and gained momentum during the active, vital period inspired by the Constitutional Movement, when the talents of another revolutionary from Kirman, Nāzimu' l-Islām, gave Persian historiography new directions in both style and content.

III. BEGINNINGS OF MODERN HISTORICAL WRITING

The appearance of the *History of the Awakening of the Iranians*,⁴ not long after the establishment of the Constitutional regime, marked the opening of a new era in the writing of Persian history. The author of this work, Nāzimu' l-Islām-i Kirmānī, made an earnest and remarkably successful attempt to produce for the first time a history which dealt with the life of a broad segment of the Iranian people. Its theme, sources, documentation, and clear prose style put

¹ Thomas M. Ricks gives a list of some of these histories in the periodical *Iranian Studies*, vol. IV, no. 4, pp. 151–2.

² For a list of I'timādu' s-Saltānih's works see (1) Khān Bābā Mushār, *Mu'alifin-i Kutub-i Chappī*, vol. II (Tehran, 1961), pp. 594–9; and (2) Iraj Afshar, *Rūznāme-ye I'timād-os-Saltāneh* (Tehran, 1966), pp. 14, 1258.

³ See Fereydoun Adamiyat, *Andīshihā-yi Mīrzā Āqā Khān-i Kirmānī* (Tehran, 1967).

⁴ *Tārīkh-i Bidārī-yi Irānīyān* first published in 1910. For the latest and most complete edition, see the one published in 1970 by Bunyād-i Farhang-i Irān under the editorship of 'Alī-Akbar-i Sa'īdī-yi Sīrjānī.

this work on a level far above any Persian histories produced prior to its publication.

In 1925 the new Pahlavi Dynasty was established in Iran. Its immediate effect upon the development of Persian historical research was one of pause. For a decade and a half almost no historical work of value appeared on the scene. As has been the case before with defunct dynasties, during the first years of the new era contemporary Iranian historians wrote, when they wrote at all, as if the period of the Qâjâr Dynasty had never existed. Not even such significant events as the Tobacco Uprising, the Constitutional Movement, the First World War, the Russian Revolution, and the *coup d'état* of 1921, which one would have thought to be eminently suitable topics for historians under the new regime, received any treatment. For more than a decade, potential historians became translators of historical works from European languages, generally dealing with modern Europe or ancient Persia.

The period which elapsed between the appearance of *History of the Awakening* (1910) and the outbreak of World War II should be considered as an era of strengthening and training for historians. Although no work as original as the above-mentioned history was produced during this time, the period nonetheless was of utmost importance to future historical writing. During these decades Iran witnessed two world wars, experienced a change of dynasty, and made some drastic steps forward toward modernization. The enormous expansion of the press and the establishment of institutions of higher learning introduced Western techniques of scholarship. Although the historical works produced during this interim were mostly translations or adaptations of Western works for the general public or for the students at the University of Tehran, these were basic and essential to the expansion of existing historical literature in Iran. They were not contributions to Persian historiography as such, but they were extremely valuable in that through them the techniques of modern historical writing already introduced in the nineteenth century were advanced. Likewise, trends toward simplicity and straightforwardness of style were marked for future historians.

The upheavals resulting from the Second World War caused a sudden awakening of interest in Persian historiography, especially of writings on the nineteenth century. Two men, 'Abbâs Iqbâl and Aḥmad Kasravî, were particularly influential in generating this revival. In the summer of 1944, Iqbâl established a research journal called *Yâdigâr* for the purpose of 'uncovering Iran's past and present, first to the people who live in this land, and then to the whole world'. *Yâdigâr* was published for only five years, but it served as a great stimulus to historical scholarship.

Kasravî's contribution was different. His main interest was Constitutionalism, and he did almost all the writing for his journal *Piymân* himself. He first began presenting the history of the Constitutional Movement in *Piymân*, and in 1940 published a book on the subject which since then has had many editions. I do

not wish to underestimate here the contributions of other scholars, but I believe without a doubt that his *History of Constitutionalism in Iran*,¹ with all of its shortcomings, is the most important work that has appeared in Iran since the publication of Nâzimu'l-Islâm's *History of the Awakening of the Iranians*. What is important about Kasravî's work is not the meticulousness of his scholarship, which often falls below the accepted standards of modern historians, but the theme and the spirit with which he approached a crucial aspect of Persian history. Here for the first time one feels that there is a philosophy behind the writings of a Persian historian. What Kasravî has given to the people of Iran is a national consciousness as to their greatest sources of aspirations to dignity and fulfillment in the modern world. He was the first to realize the significance of the Constitutional Movement as the greatest event thus far in modern Persian history. He laid the foundations of a modern national history for Iran. He made Iranians realize that modern history in Iran really began with the Constitutional Movement, and that this new outlook divides the recent history of Iran very naturally into Preconstitutional and Constitutional periods. Modern Persian historiography should count very much on Kasravî's work as the basis on which it can build successive contributions.

The sudden change in the intellectual climate in Iran during the Second World War impelled many writers to strenuous activity. Men who had been scribbling desultorily, or not at all, during the 1930s, went into frenzies of writing during the 1940s under the new freedom granted to them during the war years. Nineteenth-century Iran was suddenly the subject of many historical works. Surviving veterans of major events during Qâjâr rule began to diligently produce their memoirs. That they intended to present to everyone the 'truth' is commendable, but in too many instances historical truth was not served. Among the younger zealots were some who made earnest inquiries into the past, but few were sufficiently trained for the task. One such well-intentioned writer was Huseyn Makkî, whose *Twenty Years of Iranian History*² would have been a truly valuable book had he been disciplined as a historian. Nevertheless, some works of lasting importance did appear during this time. M. Maḥmûd's *History of Anglo-Iranian Relations During the 19th Century*,³ published in eight volumes, which began to appear in 1949, is a notable example. So was Kasravî's great work on the history of the Constitutional Movement, mentioned in a previous context. Kasravî's work inspired other studies of Constitutionalism in Iran. Among the latter perhaps the most outstanding is Miḥdî Malik-Zâdih's *History of the Constitutional Revolution in Iran*,⁴ which was published in six volumes between 1948 and 1953. It was not, however, until the late 1950s that a genuine interest was shown in investigation and analysis of nineteenth-century historical

¹ *Târikh-i Mashrûtiyyat-i Irân*.

² *Târikh-i Bist Sâlih-yi Irân*, 3 vols. (Tehran, 1946).

³ *Târikh-i Ravâbit-i Siyâsi-yi Irân va Ingilîs dar Qarn-i Nûzdahum-i Milâdî*, 8 vols. (Tehran, 1949-54). ⁴ *Târikh-i Inqilâb-i Mashrûtiyyat-i Irân*, 6 vols. (Tehran, 1948-53).

sources. This must be attributed to the fact that at this time a number of well-trained Iranian scholars were present and a variety of journals had come into being. These new journals, patterned after *Yâdigâr*, were mixtures of literary and historical publications aimed at the interests of a variety of readers. *Yaghmâ*, named after its founder Habib Yaghmâîy, was more traditional and conservative in concept. *Sokhan*, founded by Parvîz Khânlarî, claims to be in the *avant garde*. Certainly its earlier publishings were stimulating and promising, but in recent years it has limited itself mainly to mediocre translations from Western literature. *Râhnemâ-ye Ketâb*, a literary review, was founded by Ehsan Yar-Shater. Through its fifteen years of existence it has been managed and edited by Iraj Afshar, who has maintained it at a consistently high standard. In the past decade, two new journals have appeared that are most significant in connection with Qâjâr history. These are *Vahîd* and *Barrassîhâ-ye Târikhî*. The latter is published under certain auspices of the Imperial Army, and it is an interesting fact that this journal deals more with history than any other, and with particular emphasis on the Qâjâr period. The founder and editor of this remarkable periodical is Colonel Jahân-Gîr Qâ'im Maqâmî, who perhaps has done more than any other scholar in Iran for the collection and publication of nineteenth-century documents.

IV. HISTORICAL SOURCES AVAILABLE IN PRINT

These materials relating to the Qâjâr period fall mainly into three categories: memoirs (including travel accounts), personal correspondence, and royal or other official proclamations. A great many of these have come into print since the mid-1950s. Lack of space prevents a complete listing of them here, but a few examples must be briefly discussed. Let us first consider memoirs and travel accounts. These contain a great portion of the writings of the individuals who contributed to the literary renaissance of the nineteenth century. From the early years of that century when the first really sustained contact was established with Europe, Persian travellers, principally governmental officials, began publishing accounts of their journeys and experiences. This form of expression gradually became a standard and fashionable literary mode. The Qâjâr *Shahs* and many other royal personages not only gave special patronage to those in their service who reported their activities and impressions in this manner, but also themselves contributed some valuable writings in this genre. Today we have among the hundreds of manuscripts of the last century many fascinating memoirs and travel accounts which reveal much important information on the life and society of Persia of those days as well as displaying admirable literary skill.

A few of these have been printed. In 1962 the *Political Memoirs of Mîrzâ 'Alî Khân Amînu'd-Dowlih* appeared.¹ This work is by a nineteenth-century noble-

¹ *Khatirât-i Siyâsî-yi Mîrzâ 'Alî Khân Amînu'd-Dowlih*, ed. H. F. Farmayan (Tehran, 1962).

man who spent fifty years of his life in the service of the Shah. Worldly, witty, trenchant, a great work of nineteenth-century Persian prose, it teaches us much about the society and politics of his time. A characteristic feature of the level of society in which Amînu'd-Dowlih lived, one which emerges repeatedly in great variety from his pages, was the bitter and intense personal rivalries which by turns flared and smoldered among those who held leading positions in the government. This loathesome trait still marks the élite of Iran, and doubtless its origins lie far back in time, in the socio-political bases of Iranian culture.

Another fine book in the memoirs and travel accounts category of historical writings is the *Daily Memoirs of I'timâdu's-Salṭanih*,¹ published by Iraj Afshar in 1966. This work, while not so polished a literary piece as that of Amîn'u d-Dowlih, is nevertheless a mine of facts and information concerning the later Qājār period. It is an indispensable guide in any study of the social and political aspects of nineteenth-century Iran. A similar work is 'Abdu'llâh Mustowfî's biographical sketches,² which follows the lives and times of members of the Mustowfî family from the rise of the Qājār Dynasty to its fall. With appealing wit the author recreates the manners and accoutrements of the small but important Iranian middle class of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The three books that have been given brief descriptions here, if studied in conjunction with each other, in my opinion provide the best reflections which have come to light thus far of what Iran was like in the not so distant past before accelerating modernization in the present Pahlavi period overtook it.

Related to the memoirs are the travel accounts of the nineteenth century. Early in the 1940s 'Abbâs Iqbâl introduced a few of these in his journal *Yâdigâr*. However, a sustained interest in writings of this sort was not created until the early 1960s, when under the auspices of the University of Tehran a good number of them were photographed and collected in the University's microfilm library. In 1963 the first volume of Ḥajjî Muhammad 'Alî Pîrzâdih's *Travels*, recording the events and impressions of his journey from Tehran to London, was published. The second volume, comprising his return from London to Isfahan, was released in 1965.³ Presented in this pair of books are Iran and the Victorian world as seen through the eyes of a Persian dervish. The particular and distinctive quality of their contents should be greatly interesting to students of modern Iran. The information and observations which the venerable dervish recorded as he traversed India, Egypt and Europe and scrutinized the manners and living of their inhabitants, and also those of Iranians abroad whom he met on the way, from wealthy merchants to discontented revolutionaries, make both quaint and absorbing reading. An even more significant travelogue is that of

¹ *Rûznâmih-yi Khâtirât-i I'timâdu's-Sulṭanih*, ed. Iraj Afshar (Tehran, 1966).

² 'Abdu'llâh Mustowfî, *Sharv-i Zindigâni-yi Man* (Tehran, 1945).

³ *Safar Nâmih-yi Ḥajjî Muḥammad 'Alî Pîrzâdih*, ed. Hafez F. Farmayan (2 vols., Tehran, 1963-6).

Mīrzâ Muḥammad Ḥuseyn Farâhânî, published in 1964.¹ His is an account of a year's journey through western Iran, the Caucasus, Turkey and Arabia. The author, who in 1884 was making a leisurely and roundabout pilgrimage to Mecca, relates his experiences and observations of the peoples and places along his route. Most revealing are what he tells us of Ottoman–Persian relations and of the Arabs under Ottoman rule.

The appearance of these works generated such interest in Iran that other travel accounts were published soon afterwards. Among these, two are particularly noteworthy: Garmrûdî's travels to Europe² in 1838, and Rizâ Qulî Mīrzâ's trip to London in 1836.³ In 1968, the account of the travels of the famous Mīrzâ Sâliḥ of Shiraz was released in Tehran.⁴ Although the printing and editing of this work are careless, still we should be grateful that it is now in public possession, Mīrzâ Muḥammad Sâliḥ was the most distinguished of the first group of Iranian students sent to Europe in 1811. He was the first Iranian to attend Oxford University. After his return to Iran he introduced several European innovations, the most important of which was the printing press. The last book I would like to mention in the memoir and travel account group is the journal of the embassy of Farrûkh Khân to Paris, written by his secretary.⁵ This interesting account is in two sections: the first deals with the ambassador's activities in Europe, and the second concerns the political and social systems prevalent in Europe as seen by members of the embassy in 1857.

With regard to the second and third categories of nineteenth-century Persian documents, personal correspondence and state papers, Iranian historiography in recent years has had a series of important contributions. The journal *Barrasîhâ-ye Târikhî* has taken the lead, but others have not been idle. *Râhnamâ-ye Ketâb* has now a regular section on documents and letters drawn almost exclusively from the Qājār period. *Yaghmâ* and *Sokhan* also from time to time publish interesting examples of correspondence from this period, mostly furnished by their readers from personal sources. Colonel Qâ'im Maqâmi, editor of *Barrasîhâ-ye Târikhî*, has published two voluminous works, collections of correspondence and papers, and one work which shows how historians should identify, collate and analyze these documents.⁶ His work is of the highest quality and indispensable to students of modern Iranian history. Here mention also must be made of the volumes of correspondence which are being collected and printed by Ibrâhîm Şafâiy. The editor of these is, unfortunately, not a pro-

¹ *Safar Nâmiḥ-yi Mīrzâ Muḥammad Ḥuseyn Farâhânî*, ed. Hafez F. Farmayan (University of Tehran Press, 1964).

² *Safar Nâmiḥ-yi Mīrzâ Fattâh Khân Garmrûdî*, ed. Fathu'd-Dîn Fattâhî (Tehran, 1968).

³ *Safar Nâmiḥ-yi Rizâ Qulî Mīrzâ*, ed. Asghar Farmânfarma'iy Qājār (Tehran, 1967).

⁴ *Safar Nâmi-yi Mīrzâ Sâliḥ-i Shîrâzi*, ed. Ismâ'îl Râ'in (Tehran, 1968).

⁵ *Makḥzanu'l-Vaqâyi'*: *Sharḥ-i Ma'mûrûyyat va Musâfirat-i Farrukh Khân-i Amîn'u d-Dowlîh*, ed. K. Isfahânîyân and G. Rowshanî (Tehran, 1965).

⁶ (a) *Yikşadu Panjâh Sanad-i Târikhî* (1969); *Asnâd-i Târikhî Vaqâ-yi'-i Mashrûti-yi Îrân* (1969); (b) *Muqadami-ty bar Shinakht-i Asnâd-i Târikhî* (1971).

fessional historian and there are sometimes serious gaps in his presentations. His selections appear to be peculiarly motivated. Sometimes he publishes only correspondence which pleases his patrons. On the other hand, prominent Iranian figures who have refused him patronage find from time to time materials published in Şafâî's collections which seem intended to reflect discredit upon their nineteenth-century forebears. Şafâî as yet has not revealed where these documents come from, but I personally do not doubt their authenticity. Therefore I recommend their use to scholars despite their being published for other purposes than to further the cause of historiography.¹

The majority of the documents which currently are being published in Iran are devoid of commentary or analysis. This is just as well, for at present there are but few well-trained historians who can do dependable work in this field. One who comes quickly to my mind is Fereydon Adamiyat, who not only finds original sources but is also able to explain and evaluate them in excellent enterpretive historical monographs. His works on *Âkhûnd-Zâdih*, *Amîr Kabîr*, and *Mîrzâ Âqâ Khân Kirmânî* are some of the best examples of modern Persian historiography.²

It should also be mentioned at this point that whenever Iraj Afshar, father of scientific bibliography in Iran, gains access to interesting historical papers they usually find their way into print. A good number of extremely important correspondences pertaining to nineteenth-century Persian history were republished by him in 1970 in a book of collected essays.³ I understand that he also will publish an annotated catalogue of printed and unprinted Persian travel accounts. If my information is correct, this catalogue shall, upon its appearance, serve as an invaluable guide to the historiography of modern Iran.

V. UNPUBLISHED MATERIALS ON THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

The foregoing have been but cursory descriptions of some published sources on the history of modern Iran. These are only a small fraction of the quantity which remains unpublished in various archives, libraries, and private collections. No period in Persian history is so rich in source materials as that of the recent *Qâjâr* (1794–1925). As yet this huge legacy is largely scattered about, uncatalogued and uncared for, at the mercy of a negligent bureaucracy and the cleaning habits of Persian housewives. I shiver with horror when I think what papers of national significance may be consigned to oblivion each year as book-

¹ See the following works edited by Ibrâhîm Safâî: (a) *Asnâd-i Sîyâsî-yi Dowrân-i Qâjârîyyih* (Tehran, 1967); (b) *Guzârîsh-hâyi Sîyâsî-yi 'Alâ' u'l-Mulk* (Tehran, 1968); (c) *Panjâh Nâmih-yi Târikhî* (Tehran, 1971); (d) *Asnâd-i Barguzâdih az Zillu'l-Sultân, Sîpah-Sâlâr, Dabîru' l-Mulk* (Tehran, 1971).

² See Fereydon Adamiyat, *Andîshih-hâyi Mîrzâ Fath 'Alî Âkhûndzâdih* (Tehran, 1970); also *Amîr Kabîr va Irân* (Tehran, 1969); and *Andîshih-hâyi Mîrzâ Âqâ Khân Kirmânî* (Tehran, 1967).

³ See Iraj Afshar, *Savâd va Bayâz*, vol. II (1970), pp. 165–511.

shelves, drawers and old trunks are tidied during the annual cleaning frenzy which overtakes all Iranian households just before the New Year! For over thirty years the government has sporadically considered the idea of a national archive. Failure to act on this can no longer be laid to a simple lack of funds. In oil-rich Iran, funds can be found immediately when the government settles on a priority. It is instead a matter of failing to assess the true value of the past, of taking insufficient care or pride in a national heritage.

During the 1960s a few individuals and institutions, aware of this problem and in a position to do something about it, made efforts to gather, protect and centralize some of these relics. The Majlis Library and the Library of the Senate have sought out and purchased here and there collections of documents and manuscripts related to nineteenth-century Iran. The University of Tehran's Central Library also during the early 1960s began a systematic program of microfilming nineteenth-century memoirs, documents, correspondence, reports, and so forth, from all possible or known sources. The purpose of this program was to make available to scholars all over the world that portion of Iran's heritage which could be recorded on films. This manuscript library and film depository is operating efficiently today under the careful management of Iraj Afshar. Aside from Colonel Qâ'im Maqâmî, I know of no other person in Iran who has done so much to preserve the nineteenth-century sources of Iranian history and to make them available to scholars. The University of Tehran's Central Library now has a fifteen-volume catalogue of its great manuscript and microfilm depository. A thorough examination of volumes 8–15 will reveal a wealth of useful sources for those interested in various aspects of nineteenth-century Iran. Volume 16 in the series is still in preparation. Recent 'reforms' in the University Press have held up its publication, but I was fortunate to be able to examine it in its manuscript form when I was in Iran during the summer of 1972. So far as I am able to judge, the University of Tehran's center of documentation will try its best to help scholars who are engaged in research in Iranian studies. Unfortunately not all libraries in Iran pursue this helpful policy toward scholars.

The Library of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Royal Library both do excellent jobs of preservation. This in itself is commendable, since many manuscripts and public documents formerly fell into the hands of dealers and smugglers. Because of improved surveillance, occurrences of this sort are rare today, but in some libraries it is extremely difficult and sometimes impossible to examine an item needed to reveal or clarify an important historical point. For example, a scholar from one of the Canadian universities has been in correspondence with me for several years, seeking my aid in connection with her research, a biography of Griboyedov, that unfortunate Russian envoy who was murdered by a mob in Tehran in 1828. She desperately needs access to some official Persian files in the archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Her examination of them might well lead to a public vindication of the Iranian

government's role in the unhappy affair of a hundred and fifty years ago, but thus far she has not been allowed near them. Still undiscouraged, when last I heard from her she was in the process of appealing to the Empress of Iran.

The Royal Library and the archives of the Foreign Ministry are perhaps the most important depositories of sources relating to the Qājār period. Nāṣiru'd-Dīn Shāh, who ruled from 1848 to 1896, was the most meticulous and prolific penman of the Qājār monarchs. Almost any collector in Iran has specimens of his correspondence. His ideas, opinions, and decisions are reflected in thousands of public documents and private letters. The present Royal Library, which once was Nāṣiru'd-Dīn's own, has, naturally, more unpublished materials dealing with the second half of the nineteenth century in Iran than any other place. One great source of political and social information on this period are Nāṣiru'd-Dīn's commentaries written by himself in the margins of the several thousand books and reports which he read in the course of his fifty-year reign. These commentaries often illuminate elsewhere unrecorded or unlocated Persian attitudes or sides in historical events, the Western evaluations or descriptions of which are available in Western archives. Thorough investigations of Nāṣiru'd-Dīn Shāh's marginal notes alone can provide many fresh views into the Persian political and social history of his era.

The Malik and the National Libraries also are shelters of important unpublished materials. The manuscript catalogues of these two libraries as well as of the Majlis Library are available in print. The National Library has an especially fine collection of newspapers and journals from the middle of the nineteenth century, when the printing press was introduced in Iran, to the present day.

Libraries are not the only hoarders of unpublished materials on the Qājār period. Almost any governmental organization of importance (either real or imagined) has documents from that period in its archives. Thus far I have mentioned only the Foreign Ministry in this connection, but a vast amount of material also lies in the archives of the Ministries of Finance and Justice. These await future scholars who wish to research the economic and judicial histories of Iran. No other fields in Iranian studies are as untouched as these. Virtually nothing has been written on the systems of public finance and taxation of the nineteenth century. Study of the recent evolution of the Iranian legal system from the old traditional Perso-Islamic, to its current conglomerate, eclectic, often conflicting present one, is both fascinating to contemplate and urgently needed. In the memoirs of Amīn'u d-Dowliḥ we read that in 1888, by command of the Shah, a Civil Code based on Western systems was prepared. Where is it? I have searched for this code but have not found it. Apparently it is not in any of the libraries. A keen student of Iranian judicial history, one with a better nose than I, may one day root it out from some dead governmental file. The whereabouts of the original Iranian Constitution have been unknown since Muẓaffar'u d-Dīn Shāh convened the First Iranian Parliament in 1906. Rumor

relates that it has been seen in a private collection in the United States. I am more inclined to believe that thorough searches of governmental files in Tehran will one day restore it to a startled nation long accustomed to thinking of its 'magna carta' as lost from its bosom.

Vast quantities of public and private correspondence and even state documents relating to numerous phases of Qājār history are in the hands of private owners. Mostly these are descendants of nineteenth-century governmental officials, who have inherited these valuable sources from their ancestors who, due to the lack of central archives, tended to stash all papers in their homes. Access to these sources is difficult, often impossible. Some of these treasures are jealously guarded in hope of future monetary gains and are shown only to potential buyers. Others, whose owners have an eye for interior decoration, have been placed lovingly in glassed mahogany cases for scrutiny by dyspeptic guests during cocktail parties and banquets. In most cases, microfilming of any paper is usually forbidden, for it is a widespread superstition in Iran that photographing documents decreases their value. Fortunately among the private owners there are exceptions. A few will permit scholarly friends, not any scholars, to microfilm or use their papers.¹ Through these limited channels a number of valuable facsimiles have trickled, thanks to Iraj Afshar, into the Microfilm Library of the University of Tehran.

VI. DESCRIPTIONS OF SEVERAL UNPUBLISHED SOURCES

I think at this point it would be useful to describe the nature and contents of a few of the several thousand manuscripts with which a researcher might deal in his investigation of historical sources of modern Iran. A description of even a few should show what type of still untapped information is available.

The Persian élite class during the Qājār period was extremely book-conscious. Since modern printing methods were then not yet widespread, and calligraphy was still esteemed as an important art, thousands of books produced then were of the sorts which in English could be referred to as collections, being usually a combination of papers, letters, poetry, essays, set forth in elegant calligraphic styles of the day and bound together in leather. These manuscripts, which varied greatly in dimensions, some large and thick, some long and thin, some small and chunky, and so forth, all of which increases the pleasure of handling them, have been preserved in the public and private libraries of Iran mostly under the following categories: *munsha'ât* = epistolary, *divân* = collection of poetry, *jung* = miscellanea, *majmû'ih* = collection, *ganjīnih* = treasury, *murâsilât* = letters, *tiligrâfât* = telegrams, *kitâbchi-yi jama' va kharj* = revenues and expenditures book, *kitâbchi-yi âmâr* = statistical book. To show what types of

¹ Asghar Mahdavi, Huseyn Şaqafî I'zâz and Hasan-'Alî Ghaffârî are three individuals who have graciously permitted the University of Tehran to microfilm their most significant documents concerning the nineteenth century. These are now available to the public.

information a researcher might expect to learn from these, let me describe at least one or two manuscripts from each category. These observations are based on my own recent examinations, and I wish to make it clear that the researcher can easily run across hundreds of manuscripts within the above categories, the contents of which will be similar enough to the samples I now describe:

First let us look at one *munsha'ât* from the Law Library of the University of Tehran, and at another from the Humanities Library of the same institution. The first epistolary is a collection of thirty letters written by 'Abbâs Mîrzâ, Crown Prince, to his father Fath-i 'Alî Shâh and the Grand Vizier, and to the Ottoman government explaining Iran's plight regarding the Russo-Persian wars and requesting aid against Russia. The second epistolary concerns the internal affairs of Iran and particularly clarifies the types of relationships that existed between influential members of the Royal Family. It contains eleven letters of the early 1840s, as follows: (1) from Fîrûz Mîrzâ, the Farmân Farmâ, to the Grand Vizier, Hâjjî Mîrzâ Aghasî; (2) from the Grand Vizier to Crown Prince Nâşîrû'd-Dîn, concerning the Farmân Farmâ; (3) from the Grand Vizier to Mahd Ulyâ, mother of the Crown Prince; (4) from the Governor of Kirman and Yazd to the Grand Vizier; (5) from the Grand Vizier to the Governor of Khamsih; (6) from the Grand Vizier to Mîrzâ Taqî Khân, who later was to become the Grand Vizier; (7) from Farhâd Mîrzâ to the Farmân Farmâ; (8) from the Grand Vizier to Mîrzâ Ja'far Khân Mushîrû'd-Dowlih; (9) from Mîrzâ Abdu'llâh, the Chief Secretary, to the Grand Vizier; (10) from the Grand Vizier to Ardîshîr Mîrzâ, a minor prince; (11) from the Grand Vizier to the Farmân Farmâ.¹

The collections called *dîvân* are self-explanatory, being original poems by persons of various positions who may or may not have been poets. Their importance in this reference lies in the fact that they contribute much to establishing the dates of events and in providing names of relevant persons.

The contents of *jung*, or miscellanea, naturally vary according to the tastes of the original owners or compilers. Let me describe one from the Law Library² which was compiled by Prince Bahâu'd-Dowlih, and contains some fifty documents related to the history and politics of the nineteenth century. The highly important ones are the Gulistan Treaty; the Treaty of Turkuman-Chây; a letter from 'Abbâs Mîrzâ to the Russian Envoy; an agreement on the Russo-Persian boundary; a letter from General Yermolov to the Shâh; the Treaty of 1814 with England; the Treaty of 1845 with Ottoman Turkey; and so forth, of lesser value or significance to us. Another interesting *jung* from the same library,³ dated 1879, is one which comprises four essays probably written by Ja'far Qulî Khân Sardâr, author of *Durrih-yi Najafîyyih*. The essays are: (1) a criticism of social conditions in Iran at the time; (2) concerning taxation;

¹ No. 15, د.

² No. 59, ب.

³ No. 369, ج.

(3) concerning the state of paper money; (4) concerning the states of industry and mining.

The *majmū'ih* and *ganjīnih* categories are not so different from the *jung*. *Ganjīnih* perhaps more often contain works that deal with literary activities.

In the *murāsīlāt* category let us examine four¹ from the Law Library. First is a group of letters written between 1863 and 1865 by Hajjī Mīrzā Zamān Khān Ghaffārī, secretary of the Persian consulate in Baghdād. The second is a group of important letters from Nāşiru'd-Dīn Shāh to Ehtishāmu'd-Dowliḥ, Governor General of Luristan and Khuzistan, concerning the affairs of western Iran. Third is a collection of letters from Nāşiru'd-Dīn Shāh to the Grand Vizier, mainly about grievances of individual citizens. Fourth is a group of letters by Mīrzā Āqā Khān Nūrī, the Grand Vizier, and his secretary Dabīru'l-Mulk, to Nāşiru'd-Dīn Shāh concerning affairs of state.

Telegram collections relate more to the latter part of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth, and bear particular relevance to the Constitutional Movement. In my own possession is a group of sixty-five telegrams from around the year 1909 which have reference to affairs in Azarbaijan during critical periods of the Constitutionalists' struggle.² A description of all of them is impossible here, but a few are of special interest. For instance, the first, dated 1908, is a three-page telegram sent from Tehran by Muhammad 'Ali Shāh to the *ulamā* of Azarbaijan. Herein is the Shāh's pledge to support the Constitution, and at the same time his declaration that for interests of the state he shall stand firm against revolutionaries! Another which passed between the Farmān Farmā and the *ulamā* of Tabriz indicates, apparently, that the *ulamā* wanted the Farmān Farmā, who sympathized with the Constitutionalists, to act as intermediary between them and the Shāh. Also there are several telegrams exchanged between 'Aynu'd-Dowliḥ and the *ulamā*, most of them being addressed to Şaqatu'l Islām-i Tabrīzī, the famous martyred Constitutionalist *mujtihad* of Azarbaijan.

In the revenues and expenditures category lies a world of information. Let us look at four³ from the Law Library which are extremely interesting. The first dates from Nāşiru'd-Dīn Shāh's reign and concerns the entire empire, and consists of various budgetary orders dealing with numerous types of expenditures. Included is a list of the salaries of members of the Royal Family, salaries of scribes, poets and astrologers, and also lists of salaries given by the Shah to subjects of other countries, particularly immigrants from Afghanistan. There are lists of expenditures for religious ceremonies, and others dealing with repairs of various governmental buildings. Finally there is a list of salaries for several ministers, such as Mua'yiru'l-Mamālik, Farrukh Khān and Ḥājibu'd-Dowliḥ.

¹ These are numbered respectively 134, ب; 124, ب; 125/1, ب; 127, ب.

² These have been microfilmed for public use and are available at the University of Tehran Central Library.

³ Numbered respectively as 363, ح; 130, ب; 118, ح; 371, ج.

The second book deals with the revenues and expenditures of Fars province in 1835, and bears the seal of Muḥammad Shâh. The third deals with the expenditures of telegraph offices throughout Iran and the salaries of their employees, for the year 1895. The fourth is the list of revenues and expenditures of the city of Tehran for the year 1849, and bears the seal and signature of Nâşriu'd-Din Shah.

Statistical reports became common during Nâşiru'd-Din Shâh's reign. One which is in a manuscript collection at Cambridge University (K 9-91) enumerates the houses in Tehran in 1851. The second statistical book, examined especially for this paper, is in the University of Tehran's Humanities Library.¹ It is a guide to the city of Tehran and bears the date 1902. Related to the statistical books are the numerous lists of the religious endowment (*'owqâf*) properties. One of this type, which is in my possession, comprises 159 pages and begins alphabetically with the endowments of Azarbajjan and ends with those of Neyrîz.² Such lists have always been explosive in their disclosures, because much originally religiously endowed property has, in the passage of years, miraculously become secular, eventually belonging either to private individuals or to the government.

VII. CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this short outline of Iranian historiographical sources I have only dealt with specimens of various types, mainly unpublished, which are available to one degree or another in Iran. I should scarcely need to say that many such sources exist outside of Iran, in Persian and in other languages. For instance, treasuries of Iranian diplomatic history lie in the archives of Istanbul and in the files of the Iranian embassy in Ankara. For more than two hundred years Ottoman representatives sent political, military and commercial reports to their superiors in Istanbul. Today the Turkish government is happy to have interested scholars investigate these. Likewise, the materials I referred to in the archives of the Persian embassy in Ankara are records of Ottoman-Persian affairs. These were transferred from Istanbul when the Turkish capital was changed with the rise of the republic. This latter material is in the form of reports and letters to the Persian embassy in Istanbul, sent by Persian diplomatic agents throughout the Ottoman empire.

Other sources which require special attention are the collections available in Swedish at the University of Upsala and in the Kungl Utrikes Department in Stockholm, concerning Iranian affairs from 1911 to 1917, when Swedish officers were charged with training and administering the Gendarmerie of Iran.

Doubtless it will take years to investigate sources such as these, and others in relatively out-of-the-way places. At present, however, this is but a small

¹ Numbered 20, ب.

² This list is available in microfilm form at the University of Tehran Central Library.

preoccupation. Our major problem now is that there is as yet no work in Persian or in a Western language which gives us a comprehensive and reasonably objective history of the Qājār period of Iran from its beginning in the last years of the eighteenth century to its end in 1925. Such a work must of necessity comprise several volumes, covering all aspects of political, social, economic, cultural and intellectual history of the Iranian people during this period. This work, if it is to be of value, must be produced by a professionally trained historian or historians. Such a history must be based solidly on the study of published and unpublished primary sources which exist mainly in Iran. Non-Persian materials in the form of diplomatic correspondence, governmental reports, personal memoirs, etc., are essential but can be used only as supplementary material. Almost never should they be used as basic material, at least not exclusively, as has been done heretofore by too many contemporary scholars.

Allow me also to make a few suggestions to the government of Iran. Iranian universities must take a more scholarly approach to historical studies, and should endorse their valuable and practical applications. Fields of specialization with necessary new courses should be established. Higher standards and more meticulous methods of scholarship should be required from both professors and students. The lack of objectivity and mature scientific methodology is evident in the works of even the most talented graduates from Iranian universities.

Furthermore the universities, particularly the University of Tehran, which has the best facilities, must assume leadership in original research studies. Thus far no work of significance in historiography has originated from within these universities. The University of Tehran as yet has no historical journal. The Iranian periodicals which publish historical articles from time to time are journals that have been founded by interested individuals outside the university. They have of course rendered much service to this subject. The fact remains that Iran still lacks a scientific journal devoted wholeheartedly to the cause of modern Persian historiography.

Thirdly, I propose the establishment of a national historical society in Iran with as many branches as possible in the provinces. It is extremely odd that a country which boasts constantly about its long and rich history does not have as yet one historical society. I cannot possibly exaggerate the importance of this matter. A national historical society is needed for the purpose of arousing the national consciousness of the Persian people as to the value of their past. It is needed for preservation of historical monuments, historical manuscripts, and whatever else relates to the history of Iran. It is needed because, by setting up and insisting upon higher standards of research, it can improve generally the quality of works on Iranian history. A national historical society should have sufficient authority and money for its work, and above all it must be free from political control.

Fourthly, establishment of a national archive must not be postponed. Plenty

of material is available, particularly on modern history, but researchers must spend too much valuable time merely locating their material.

Only through such reforms, and the furthering of historical research, will it be possible to learn the perspectives of the history of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Iran, which is so important to those of us who have great hopes for the country's present and future.

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