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David R. Collier. *Democracy and the Nature of American Influence in Iran, 1941-1979.* Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2017. 448 pp. $75.00, paper, ISBN 978-0-8156-3497-3.

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David Collier has offered an innovate reading of US-Iran relations from 1941 to 1979. He begins by reminding readers that scholars too often "neglect" the "all-encompassing approach" to studying the binational relationship during the reign of Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi (p. 5). Indeed, I have suggested that this is a significant historiographic intervention, as diplomatic histories on the period are, indeed, divided between two genres.[1] The first is that of the sweeping narrative similar to the works of Barry Rubin, James Bill, and Richard Cottam in the 1980s.[2] The second genre, Collier notes, consists of "snapshots" of events such as the 1953 coup (p. 5). As the US government has declassified more documents, the literature has moved beyond the reporting of Rubin and the history-memoirs of Bill and Cottam to archive-based research on moments ranging from John F. Kennedy's presidency to Jimmy Carter's handling of the Iranian Revolution. Today, historians are in a position to revisit the entirety of the US relationship with the last shah, and that is what Collier does through "the framework of linkage and leverage" (p. 3).

He borrows the concept from political scientists Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way's 2010 book *Competitive Authoritarianism* to explain how US leverage over the shah's behavior waxed and waned during his rule, and how connections between the two societies did or did not facilitate democracy promotion. In Collier's words, "Whereas leverage can be seen as top-down pressure to punish or reward a country for certain behavior, linkage looks to identify, strengthen, and support bottom-up pressures on the host government" (p. 5). The book begins in the Second World War when the "liberal contradiction" (p. 22) between the Achesonian realists and idealists such as Major General Patrick Hurley sparked a "conflict between these two camps" and "shaped US-Iranian relations for the next forty years" (p. 11).

The framework adds interpretive complexity and narrative cohesion to a story that will be familiar to many specialists. It demonstrates that the Harry Truman administration "maximized its leverage" (p. 75) over Iranian politics at a time when the shah initiated a linkage relationship with "key American officials" (p. 61). Dwight Eisenhower did not have sufficient leverage over Mohammad Mosaddeq, Collier argues, so Eisenhower opted "to take advantage of American linkages" (p. 136) in Iran for the "overthrow of democracy" (p. 116). During the late 1950s, the shah played the superpowers to his advantage and "was now utilizing leverage of his own" (p. 176). The Kennedy administration exercised both linkage and leverage during Ali Amini's premiership, but the failure of that experiment was "a water-

shed moment" (p. 227) in that the shah was "in charge" (p. 229) by Lyndon Johnson's presidency. During the 1970s, Richard Nixon's unquestionable support for the shah marked "the final loss of linkage" as "the United States became totally ignorant of Iran's opposition movement" (pp. 252, 253), and the oil crisis brought about the shah's moment of maximum leverage. The lesson of all of this for the revolution was that the events of 1974-79 "show clearly the dangers of not having linkage or leverage" (p. 262). This narrative makes for an engaging read that synthesizes of the literature and is representative of a recent move to reassess the question of agency between the shah and the U.S. government.[3]

Collier's application of the linkage-leverage framework is not without limitations. It is surprising to see no mention to James Bill's "Pahlavism," a concept to which he dedicated an entire chapter to explain how the shah established personal relationships with Americans in government, media, academia, and business to promote mutual interests.[4] Bill's "linkage figures" consisted of royals, royalists, and pro-shah Americans, but Collier's emphasis on democracy leads him to elevate "three forces" above the rest, namely "the United States, the shah, and the Iranians themselves" (p. 3). On the third force, a more diverse portrait of the opposition movements and their avenues to influence in Washington would have been beneficial, as would the inclusion of a fourth force--unofficial Americans--to deliver a more transnational history. Collier's reliance on US government archives skews the nature of linkage in the US-Iran relationship, and Persian-language documents would have provided a more international perspective to elucidate how those policies affected leverage relationships in Iran.

Then there is the question of how scholars should understand "democracy" within the context of the US-Iran relationship. Collier contends that "the literature has largely ignored Iran's experiments with democracy" and focused instead on "US support for authoritarianism" (p. 5). This is the case in the US foreign relations literature, to be sure, but Iran scholars have spent more time explaining how, to borrow from Collier's framework, the polices of an unleveraged shah and an unlinked United States strengthened the Iranian state at the expense of society.[5] A deeper dive into this historiography would have sharpened the analysis in two ways. The first would have been a more precise definition of what democracy looks like in Iran. Collier's democracy fits under a narrow umbrella, but scholars have written about allegedly democratic Marxian visions in late Pahlavi Iran and "the ayatollahs' democracy" in the Islamic Republic.[6] Second, and perhaps more important, a conceptual clarification would have revealed why historians of US foreign relations rarely use democracy as an analytic frame. It is not the result of an Orientalist assumption that democracy cannot take root in Muslim-majority countries, or an avoidance of the subject because of its attachment to calls for regime change during the early twenty-first century.[7] Rather, it is a reflection of the fact that US foreign policy during the Cold War rarely trumpeted democracy in unfree allied states, a central finding of Collier's book. The alleged silence on democracy in Pahlavi Iran is also methodological, I would argue. Social scientists tend to focus on the contemporary period,[8] and international historians who study human rights rarely include Iran in books that concentrate on Latin America and Eastern Europe.[9]

In the end, this excellent book is theoretically innovative and full of insight into the nooks and crannies of the US-Iran relationship. It is also critical of government officials in Washington and Tehran, as readers learn that US policymakers ultimately pursued a "selfish Iran policy" (p. 49) and that the shah, from the beginning, "rejected democracy" (p. 248). Collier's analysis illuminates the continuities and discontinuities in what is now a multigenerational and international body of literature, and it is firmly rooted in decades of critical scholarship on how the realism-idealism

tension shaped the American experience in Pahlavi Iran. *Democracy* will provide generalists with a lively and informative narrative, one that could be useful in classrooms, and it will give specialists a new framework for thinking about US-Iran relations.

Notes

[1]. Matthew Shannon, ***Losing Hearts and Minds: American-Iranian Relations and International Education during the Cold War*** (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2017), x.

[2]. Barry Rubin, ***Paved with Good Intentions: The American Experience and Iran*** (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980); James Bill, ***The Eagle and the Lion: The Tragedy of American-Iranian Relations*** (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1988); Richard Cottam, ***Iran and the United States: A Cold War Case Study*** (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1988).

[3]. One could date that trend in diplomatic history back to Stephen McFarland, "A Peripheral View of the Origins of the Cold War: The Crises in Iran, 1941-47," ***Diplomatic History*** 4, no. 4 (October 1980): 333-52. But it was largely muted until Andrew Johns, "The Johnson Administration, the Shah of Iran, and the Changing Pattern of U.S.-Iranian Relations, 1965-1967: 'Tired of Being Treated like a Schoolboy,'" ***Journal of Cold War Studies*** 9, no. 2 (Spring 2007): 64-94.

[4]. Bill, ***The Eagle and the Lion,*** ch. 9.

[5]. Collier cites Fakhreddin Azimi, ***The Quest for Democracy in Iran: A Century of Struggle against Authoritarian Rule*** (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008) and Ali Gheissari and Vali Nasr, ***Democracy in Iran: History and the Quest for Liberty*** (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006). Other related volumes include Ali Ansari, ***Iran, Islam and Democracy: The Politics of Managing Change*** (London: Chatham House, 2006); Ramin Jahanbegloo, ***Democracy in Iran*** (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); Farshad Malek-Ahmadi, ***Democracy and Constitutional Politics in Iran: A Weberian Analysis*** (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015); and Ali Mirsepassi, ***Democracy in Modern Iran: Islam, Culture, and Political Change*** (New York: New York University Press, 2010).

[6]. Peyman Vahabzadeh, ***A Guerrilla Odyssey: Modernization, Secularism, Democracy, and the Fadai Period of National Liberation in Iran, 1971-1979*** (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2010); Hooman Majd, ***The Ayatollahs' Democracy: An Iranian Challenge*** (New York: Norton, 2010).

[7]. Reza Pahlavi, ***Winds of Change: The Future of Democracy in Iran*** (Washington, DC: Regnery, 2002).

[8]. Misagh Parsa, ***Democracy in Iran: Why it Failed and How it Might Succeed*** (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016).

[9]. Iran is not once mentioned in, for one example, Mark Philip Bradley, ***The World Reimagined: Americans and Human Rights in the Twentieth Century*** (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016).

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