



Great Britain and Reza Shah: The Plunder of Iran, 1921-1941

Mohammad Gholi Majd

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Using recently declassified U.S. State Department archives, Mohammad Gholi Majd describes the rampant tyranny and destruction of Iran in the decades between the two world wars in a sensational yet thoroughly scholarly study that will rewrite the political and economic history of the country. The book begins with the British invasion of Iran in April 1918 and ends with the Anglo-Russian invasion in August 1941. Though historians are aware of the events that ensued, until now they have had no written evidence of the dreadful magnitude of the activities. Majd documents how the British brought to power an obscure and semi-illiterate military officer, Reza Khan, who was made shah in 1925. Thereafter, Majd shows, Iran was subjected to a level of brutality not seen for centuries. He also documents the financial plunder of the country during the period: records show that Reza Shah looted the bulk of Iran's oil revenues on the pretext of buying arms, amassing at least \$100 million in his London bank accounts and huge sums in New York and Switzerland. Not even Iran's ancient crown jewels were spared. In contrast to incomplete and unreliable British records for the period, the recently declassified archives and bank records that Majd uses encompass a wide range of political, social, military, and economic matters. A work with immense implications, this book will correct the myth in Iranian history that the period 1921-41 was one of unqualified progress and reform.

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