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On: 22 October 2012, At: 13:51

Publisher: Routledge

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954 Registered office:
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Middle Eastern Studies

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/fmes20>

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Version of record first published: 08 Sep 2010.

To cite this article: Ali M. Ansari (2001): The Myth of the White Revolution: Mohammad Reza Shah, 'Modernization' and the Consolidation of Power, Middle Eastern Studies, 37:3, 1-24

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/714004408>

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The Myth of the White Revolution: Mohammad Reza Shah, 'Modernization' and the Consolidation of Power

ALI M. ANSARI

... He [the Shah] often grew impatient when American diplomats urged him to modernize at a pace faster than his careful crawl. 'I can start a revolution for you,' he apparently told an American diplomat, 'but you won't like the end result.'¹

This article is an analysis of the ideological construction of the White Revolution in Iran, which was formulated between 1958 and 1963. Situating itself within Iranian political discourse, the concept retained an essential ambiguity until its explicit adoption and promotion by Mohammad Reza Shah in 1963, which was to continue until 1978. In focusing on ideology, this article does not pretend to be a comprehensive analysis of the programme of the White Revolution, although aspects of its implementation are alluded to where relevant to the discussion of ideological development.²

There are many differing definitions of ideology and political myth. For the purposes here, ideology is defined as a systematic collection of ideas which serve to support and sustain a particular conception of relations of domination.³ Ideologies are inherently ambiguous, providing a matrix for interpretation, and relating both to social reality and to other competing ideologies.

While they may distort reality, they are not inherently 'false', nor are they necessarily limited to a particular group or class. Modern political myth is the use of traditional social myths for political purposes through the prism of a particular ideology. It is an aspect of ideological construction which seeks to transform a system of thought into a system of belief, and therefore can be regarded as the legitimating agent of an ideology.⁴ Political myth becomes increasingly relevant and explicit in the political use of history and in the attempt by leaders to identify themselves with a 'principle'.⁵ The dominating 'principle' or ideology in this period is that of 'nationalism', but as will be seen this is temporarily eclipsed in this period

by the demands of 'modernism' which itself conflicts with the 'tradition' of monarchy. The 'White Revolution' can be interpreted as an attempt by the Shah and his supporters to provide a legitimating myth for the Pahlavi monarchy by reconciling the contradictions implicit in these various ideologies in the person of the monarch. *Revolutionizing* the monarch, and the person of the Shah was not unproblematic and indeed would in time generate difficulties of their own, not least because the message was constructed from symbols and values unfamiliar to most of his domestic constituents. In short, the *White Revolution* not only undermined the structural foundations of the Pahlavi monarchy, but also crucially contributed to its ideological destabilization.

The 'White Revolution' was intended to be a bloodless revolution from above aimed at fulfilling the expectations of an increasingly politically aware general public as well as an ambitious and growing professional socio-economic group, and as such anticipating and preventing what many considered to be the danger of a bloody revolution from below.⁶ Although many were looking to heal the socio-economic problems of the country, this was fundamentally a political programme conceived by members of the political elite in order to sustain as much of the established *relations of domination* as realistically possible.⁷ This was a status quo centred upon the institution of the monarchy as the lynchpin of Iranian state and society. The dominant motivating ideology was that of 'modernism'.

Aside from the Shah, there were three men who typify the prevailing attitudes towards the construction of the 'White Revolution': Asadollah Alam, the nominated leader of the Mardom Party, who according to the sources initially conceived of the idea, saw the White Revolution as a vehicle for consolidating the power and authority of the Shah; Ali Amini, Prime Minister from 1961–62, whose government launched land reform and other reforms and who frequently used the phrase 'White Revolution', regarding it essentially as social and economic reform with a monarch who reigned rather than ruled; and Hasan Arsanjani, Amini's vigorous Minister of Agriculture, whose concept of 'White Revolution' was nothing less than the imposition of a social and economic revolution, in which the monarchy would become a welcome and long overdue casualty. After considerable prevarication, and a supporting role during the Amini administration, the Shah not surprisingly opted for Alam's conception and in 1963 was to launch his 'White Revolution' as a political exercise pursuing a particular conception of modernity, undoubtedly influenced by his perception of the industrialized West, in his quest to secure dynastic legitimacy and the institutionalization of his monarchy.

The Shah was anxious to be seen not only as a 'democratic' monarch, progressive and benign, always with the welfare of his people in mind – a characterization he had pursued to variable effect in the post-Musaddiq period – but as a 'revolutionary' monarch. In so doing, he would appropriate the myths of the Left and National Front as a champion of revolutionary nationalism which would assist in legitimizing himself and his dynasty. As the founder and guarantor of a new order for Iran, he would consolidate his dynasty's position within the political system, which he would argue was dependent upon the continuation and consolidation of his dynasty. 'Modernism' and 'Pahlavism' were to merge and become both synonymous and mutually dependant. Monarchy and modernism, perceived as contradictions by many, were thus rationalized into compatibility, even necessity, by the Shah, who saw no contradiction in drawing upon the traditional myths of past monarchs, likewise considered initiators of 'just' orders.⁸ He also developed a vague notion of an alternative utopia, originally labelled the model society, and subsequently (perhaps influenced by Johnson's Great Society in the United States) the 'Great Civilization'.

The 'White Revolution' was therefore a strategy for legitimation, through the use of rationalization, universalization and eternalization. Socio-economic benefits were emphasized in an effort to disguise the real political gains, though as will be seen, most commentators were aware of the 'social reality' of the situation. The Shah also tried to harness the White Revolution as a vehicle for unifying the country by ostensibly giving peasants a stake in the economic welfare of the state, while at the same time of course being grateful to their sovereign for having released them from their 'servitude' to ruthless and exploitative landlords. These landlords, included not only the aristocracy but members of the bazaar and *ulema*, were characterized as the 'feudal' reactionary enemy, in a direct borrowing of language from the West, which can have meant little to most Iranian peasants.

The 1960s decade continued to be turbulent for Iran, not least because of the tremendous growth in education both within the country but also in the impact of Western student politics on the Iranian students who travelled abroad in increasing numbers. Harrison noted the dramatic expansion of geographic mobility, 'Forty thousand Iranians of the upper and middle classes now travel abroad year in and year out on private and official business, for pleasure, for medical treatment and for training. No less than 6,000 Iranians apply to Her Majesty's Embassy here alone for visas for the United Kingdom annually. In reverse moreover, the country is invaded by foreigners; the European and American communities in Tehran numbered 700 in 1914 and today well over 10,000.' With respect to the student

population he noted that 'there are now 17,000 students at six universities in the country and 15,000 more abroad; and between 20 and 30 thousand seek admission to the Universities from secondary schools each year.'

Furthermore, many of the students of the previous two decades were now in positions of considerable influence, not least Amini's Ministers of Agriculture and Education, and their ideas had been shaped by developments in the post-war era. Put simply, a substantial 'middle class' or professional class was finally coming of age.⁹ According to Harrison, 'the development of a substantial middle class or middle classes, of professional, technical, clerical and managerial people, is the most notable feature of the last 35 years of Iranian social history.'¹⁰ It is important in this respect also to recognize that the political elite were also increasingly divided as to the need and nature of the reform. The fractures emergent among the 'ruling' class, both bureaucrats and landowners, contributed to an atmosphere of change and encouraged the view that radical reform was needed to secure and stabilize the country and the ruling establishment. Harrison's astute analysis of this development is worth quoting in full:

Throughout the upper and middle classes, there are professional people, politicians, economists, planners, bankers, architects, journalists and writers who have been highly educated abroad; the elder, or pre-war, generation for the most part in France, the younger in the US, Germany, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. Although most of these people belong to privileged or prosperous families, whether of the upper or upper middle classes, they comprise a number of the real Iranian reformers and even revolutionaries. *Many indeed would readily connive at revolution, if they judged that it would serve to amputate the 'dead hand' of social and bureaucratic tradition and would offer a hope of more efficient administration and fulfilment of their own ideas whether political and economic aspirations or personal ambitions.* [Emphasis added] These people have seen what is going on in more highly developed societies. They are well read, they have been members of students' unions and debating clubs; and above all they have escaped for a few years from the autocratic system of domestic relations of Iranian family convention. They are acutely conscious, not so much of the absence of political freedoms in their own country, as of social injustice, nepotism, corruption and incompetence ... The bulk of them are not more than 45 years old, and some of them together constitute virtually a corporate intellectual elite ...¹¹

Added to these factors must simply be the impact of the economic growth and land reform which affected Iran during this decade, causing massive socio-economic dislocation and tension, all of which would have

contributed to a certain ideological dynamism. The economic expansion and transformation are exemplified by the growth in telecommunications and mass media. Harrison noted that there were now some 1,000,000 radio sets in the country, up tenfold from 1940, while a contemporary commentator was impressed by the rapid adoption of the television set, a whole new medium for the monarchy to reach the people. As Hambly noted, 'In 1962 it was estimated that there were 67,000 television sets in use reaching a potential audience of 670,000 ... an audience far exceeding the total number of readers of newspapers and magazines ...'¹² For all these reasons, the need for a clear programme of reform, within a pronounced ideological framework, became a matter of urgency.

Asadollah Alam, the leader of the Mardom Party, was clear about the political imperative when he first suggested the concept of a 'White Revolution' as a vehicle for the Shah in discussions with a cautious Sir Roger Stevens in 1958.¹³ In the aftermath of the Iraqi coup d'état, Alam argued that a 'White' (i.e. bloodless) revolution was needed in Iran if the Iraqi coup was not to be repeated in Iran. Astutely, Alam argued that for the people to be mobilized behind the Shah in this 'revolution' an enemy had to be provided. After all, he conjectured, it was the presence of a tangible enemy which had contributed so much to Musaddiq's popular success. Alam's reasoning as told to the British diplomat Kellas is revealing, and is worth quoting in full [emphasis added]:

... Asadullah Alam went on to explain that what he had in mind was in fact a '*white revolution*', which he hoped to bring about under the auspices of the Shah. He was working upon His Majesty's mind to this end. He confessed he had made little progress so far but he was confident that the Shah, for whose intelligence and good will he had the highest regard, would allow himself to be persuaded that he must take the lead of a *popular and national crusade*.

Asadullah explained that to his mind the problem of the survival of the regime was a matter not so much of economics as of psychology and public relations. Colonel Nasser had contrived to inspire the Egyptian people with new zeal by persuading them that his government was their own. Dr Musaddiq had elicited the same enthusiasm by the same means. Asadullah had studied this phenomenon and concluded that the key to success was popularity based upon a measure of nationalistic fervour, which in turn must be founded in some patriotic aspiration, such as the recovery of Bahrain or a struggle against Arab expansion.

Asadullah added that the masses must also be shown that in the development programme of the Plan Organisation there was something for the peasant and the man in the street. The most popular man of the day was M. Moman, Mayor of Tehran, who was cleaning the streets and planting gardens which every man could see for himself and enjoy. The mayor's predecessor M. Montasser had built an hygienic slaughter house, a much more important and fundamental improvement, but who cares about slaughter houses? ...

... a progressive monarchy under a young ruler more popular than Colonel Nasser, Asadullah hoped to prevail upon the Shah to be rid of the present 'establishment', the existing ruling classes must give place to new and younger men. The old gang were not of course to be hurt; this was white not a red revolution; but the Shah must sack them all. Asadullah proposed that the Shah should dissolve the Majlis, dismiss the government and liquidate the ruling classes on the grounds that they were obstructing the necessary reforms and inhibiting the realization of national aspirations which were the object of Imperial policy.

The Mardom Party was to be the instrument of this new order. Asadullah confessed, however, that the Party's progress was not rapid. He found the younger intellectuals, whose support he courted, reluctant to join; they were suspicious and sceptical. To encourage them he was trying to persuade the Shah that the government should be encouraged to fight his Party, to persecute and be oppressive. He suggested that there might even be an election which his party should lose; the loss would be attributed to the riches of the old order and the honest poverty of the peoples' own Mardom Party. Slowly, nevertheless, young nationalists were beginning to approach him. A young man had recently called upon him calling himself a 'pan-Iranian nationalist', and told him that he stood for 'nationalism without Shah'. The Shah was an enemy of the people ...' Alam tries to persuade him otherwise. 'Not only was he, Asadullah, a king's man, willing to listen to the young man but the king himself would hear him with sympathy, for His Majesty was the champion of the people.

Asadullah confessed that he was experiencing difficulty with the Shah himself in promoting these ideas, and with Dr. Eqbal. The Shah was wary, apprehending that Asadullah was a bit too impulsive and enthusiastic. He was afraid also that popular and nationalistic policies, however well controlled, might endanger stability ...¹⁴

However, domestic and international pressures gradually convinced the Shah that if he did not lead the reform, he and his dynasty might be

overcome by revolution from below.¹⁵ This view was confirmed by the anxiety caused by the overthrow of the Menderes regime in Turkey in 1960.¹⁶ Russell noted that, '... I fear that immediate methods are needed, perhaps even a dash of cheap economic demagoguery ...'¹⁷

The notion of a 'White Revolution' thus gradually entered Iranian political discourse and was seized upon by a number of reformers as a convenient conceptualization of the more or less dramatic reforms they hoped to apply.¹⁸ The Shah once again lost the political initiative as he had done in 1951, because his attempted re-invention in the 1950s as a democratic and progressive monarch lacked credibility in the eyes of the people. As Harrison argued,

... The Iranian press and wireless afford an impression of a popular, active, earnest young monarch ... supported by a devoted prime minister and loyal government in indefatigable pursuit of the welfare of the people ... building a prosperous future upon a foundation of social justice ... Unhappily neither foreign observers nor most Iranians believe in this picture ... the mass of people are indifferent to the regime. They simply do not believe that the government cares for the people or that the proceedings of Government have anything to do with themselves.¹⁹

In effect, a looming economic and political crisis precipitated by the elections of 1960,²⁰ combined with international pressure and a not untypical measure of procrastination by the Shah, resulted in the leadership of reform falling onto the shoulders of a respected Iranian aristocrat, who had been ambassador to Washington, Dr Ali Amini. Amini, and his zealous Minister of Agriculture Dr Hasan Arsanjani, represented the highly educated and socially privileged 'revolutionaries' alluded to in Harrison's despatch quoted above, though it would be fair to argue that Amini was more reformer than revolutionary.²¹ Ironically, despite his widely known liberal credentials, the fact that Amini's relatively brief premiership was conducted in the absence of a sitting Majlis incurred the wrath and enmity of National Front politicians who accused Amini of unconstitutional behaviour. Nevertheless, in his brief 18-month tenure, Amini and Arsanjani began the process of land reform in earnest, with the tacit approval of the Shah.

Three weeks later the strategy of differentiation began in earnest as the Shah addressed the outgoing Senate with the words that Iran could no longer live in the 'Middle Ages', using language which many under attack considered more appropriate to Europe than to Iran.²² This may also be considered a strategy of universalization and rationalization; since the West provided the model for modernity and was perceived as scientific and

rational, what was thought backward for Europe was equally backward for Iran. Amini was well aware of the concern that land reform, which involved the redistribution of large estates among tenant farmers, was causing among most landlords, many of whom resented the allusion to feudalism. Though most had accepted that some measure of land reform would be inevitable – after all even Dr Musaddiq had proposed it – few were ready for the extent to which they would be stripped of economic and consequently, political power. A previous attempt had been considerably modified by the sitting Majlis, but now Dr Amini, in the absence of a Majlis, was able to propose much tougher legislation, and his enthusiastic Minister of Agriculture was keen to apply it. With customary vitriol, Arsanjani attacked the backward and reactionary ‘feudalists’ and emphasized the ‘progressive’ nature of the reform which would pre-empt a red revolution. Since many *ulema* were also major landowners, and private property was considered inviolable in Islamic Law,²³ they too became the target of attack, and along with the landlords were later to be characterized as *black reaction* by the Shah, while the Left would be characterized as *red subversion*.²⁴ These two euphemisms were quintessential aspects of the myth of the White Revolution, and effectively de-personalized and differentiated opponents of reform.

Indeed much of Arsanjani’s rhetoric was seen as excessive and regarded by many as counter-productive: ‘The Minister of Agriculture, by an intemperate campaign against “feudalism” in the name of land reform, has provoked disturbances amongst the peasantry and alarm against landowners ...’²⁵ On another occasion on a trip to Maragheh in Azerbaijan, the site of the first land redistribution, the minister became embroiled in a bitter argument with a local landlord,

... The party then witnessed perhaps the most dramatic event of the day when Colonel Esfandiari appeared for an interview with the minister during a tea interval ... It appears that the notorious Colonel had risen from the people to be the owner of 20 villages, 15 of which he had recently sold or donated to his children and relatives. He was offering four of the remainder for distribution and retaining one which had a population of 10,000 people. He pointed out that in doing so he was acting strictly within the terms of the law. Dr Arsanjani became very indignant and swore he would deprive the colonel of this village as it was iniquitous that he should remain in control of so many people. He added for good measure that he would strip him of his medals, to which Esfandiari responded that he could have the medals any time he cared to come for them ...²⁶

Like the Shah, Arsanjani was contemptuous of Iran’s tribes and drew analogies with European history: ‘... [He] called the persistence of the

tribes in living a nomadic life "a vestige of the dark ages". He said it was time for them "to end this medieval practice of migration and living in tents", a practice useful for little except the opportunity it gave foreigners to take photographs of them. He envisaged the settlement of the tribes in agricultural areas where they could engage in farming ...²⁷ However, the Minister was convinced that the development of sedentary agriculture was the salvation of Iran, and though he frowned on industrialization in stark contrast to the Shah, he shared the latter's belief in the abilities of the Iranian peasant and actively promoted a conception of a liberated Iranian yeomanry:

The Iranian peasant, who, although wholly illiterate, could recite his national epic by heart, was filled with resources of intelligence and character which had been untapped for centuries. The lamp and the bulb were there and only the liberation of a just social order was needed to supply the necessary connection and the electric current to light them. Every aspect of Persian life and initiative began in the village. The only real source of a potential resurrection of Iran was the Persian peasant.²⁸

The landlords and *ulema* challenged the land reform on three grounds: first they contested the notion that they were feudal; second they attacked the notion that the land reform represented progress, arguing instead that it would cause social and economic dislocation; and third, and probably most damning, was their argument that the reform as administered by Amini, and subsequently the Shah, was illegal in that it both contradicted Islamic law and had been implemented in the absence of a sitting Majlis, and was therefore unconstitutional.²⁹

Landlords were particularly incensed by the notion that they were exploitative 'feudalists', and argued that the high estimation of the Iranian peasant was misplaced. More seriously, they argued that such a radical change in the socio-economic patterns of life could only harm agriculture and encourage migration to the cities. Initially, landowners were able to express their views in the press. Ibrahim Mahdavi commented in the newspaper *Nedaye Sepehr* that, 'If this kind of ownership has a feudal root it has vanished since [*sic*] a long time ago to the establishment of constitution and law and relations between the villages and towns ... Owing to the above factors feudalism in the shape as existed in Asiatic and Western countries never existed and cannot be coincident with land ownership in Iran ...'³⁰ Amini, from a landowning family himself, was sensitive to the criticisms of the landlords, and tried to soften Arsanjani's rhetoric. Meeting landlords, who had organized themselves into an association, he argued that

the primary purpose of the land reform was to maximize agricultural yields; he played down any notion of class warfare but argued that in some cases landlord-tenant relations resembled the traditional perception of the Western feudal model.³¹ Most landlords were not impressed by Amini's reassurances, and though they were prevented from airing their grievances publicly, they were privately scathing about the reform. Although some accepted land reform they were critical of its political aims.³² One landowner, Malek Mansur, a bitter opponent of the reform described the whole process of land reform as nothing more than a public relations exercise.

In one case, after a quite bogus exposition of the activities of a rural cooperative society by the Minister of Agriculture, His Majesty had asked a peasant upon whom he was conferring title deeds whether he had found the cooperative useful; and the peasant replied 'What cooperative?' In another case His Majesty had asked a peasant, to whom he was about to give title deeds covering an allotment of 12 hectares, what was his annual income. The peasant replied, '30,000 tomans'. His Majesty asked that his question should be translated into Turkish and it was repeated in that language. The peasant protested that he understood Persian very well, explained that he farmed in fact a hundred hectares and that his income was indeed 30,000 tomans. Whilst a third peasant was receiving his title deeds from the Imperial hand, it was known to all present that his house was being burned by Fazlullah Beg, Khan of the Shahsavan, who is the landlord in those parts ...

Indeed according to Prince Malek Mansur, the peasants were reluctant to receive their deeds, knowing that having accepted them they could no more depend upon the indispensable assistance of Fazlullah Beg in hard times, and were earning his unlimited malevolence. Mr Malek Mansur observed that the error of land reform and of so many other government projects was that they represent an ill-conceived endeavour to help the people in spite of themselves. But it was socially and economically hopeless to try and work in spite of the people, instead of with the people. In any case, in his view, the Ministry of Agriculture were totally unequal to their task; if the doors of the Ministry were closed today, it would be two years before any farmer was aware of it.³³

Other landlords ridiculed the notion suggested by the Shah and Arsanjani among others that the Iranian peasant could be transformed into a patriotic 'yeoman'. According to Sultan Ali Soltani, '... The regime expected that the distribution of land would produce a nation of patriots with a stake in

the country, which they would be ready to defend against the Soviets. They were waiting for the camel's tail to reach the ground [Persian for a 'blue moon']. On the contrary, they were promoting distrust, disorder and communism ...'³⁴ Others, despite their suspicions of the United States, directed their venom against Arsanjani whose enthusiasm for land reform at whatever cost was causing consternation.³⁵ The British diplomat Makinson recounts a conversation with a certain Yusuf Akbar,

... He said that strictly between ourselves he thought Arsanjani was going 'dotty'. He said that only the night before he, Arsanjani, had received an invitation, which he had publicly accepted, to attend a showing in Persian of a film about land reform in Mexico, called 'Viva Zapata'. Arsanjani had been scheduled to make a speech, but had apparently been dissuaded from such political foolishness. To do so would, according to Yusuf, have been public incitement to the peasants to riot ...³⁶

The harsh reaction to the reform highlighted the tensions inherent in such a profound process if applied rapidly and without apparent coordination. The rhetoric, and in particular the emphasis on 'feudalism', however also indicated the growing division between the new technocrats and their allied aristocratic reformers, and the traditional landowners, who found themselves politically, and in some measure economically, disenfranchised, overnight. These divisions were to remain in place until the end of the Shah's reign and the latter was confirmed in his belief that no progress could be made with the traditional classes – the forces of black reaction.

The Shah was acutely aware that the longer he remained marginal to the process of reform, the less important he would become. He was thus anxious to divest Arsanjani and Amini of any credit in initiating and pursuing the reform programme. The Shah quietly sought to reconstruct his reformist credentials during the Amini administration, while preparing to appropriate the entire reform programme and remould it in his dynasty's image, and ultimately, remould his own reputation.

As early as October 1961, the Shah was privately confiding that he might take direct control of the government, accusing Amini, somewhat unfairly, of 'dithering'.³⁷ Privately, he had made it clear to Harrison that 'he did not consider that Constitutional Monarchy, in our form, was applicable in this country. He also made it fairly clear that it was his present intention to rule for the next few years without a Parliament ...'³⁸ By the beginning of 1962, the government was facing serious protests from students who rioted in the Tehran University campus. Police and paratroopers were sent in to disperse

the students during which hundreds of them were injured.³⁹ Amini, increasingly seen as a tool of the Americans, was also losing any sympathy he had enjoyed as a 'progressive' reformist landowner. The students, who had been shouting 'Long Live Dr Musaddiq', 'Down With Amini', and 'Down with the Shah', were accused by the government of having provoked the police, and to have been encouraged by an unholy alliance with the landlords – black reaction as the Shah liked to label them. The British embassy was understandably dubious of Amini's assertions: 'An alliance of student agitators and "feudalists" against the programme of reform of a "progressive" government is ... hard to believe ...'⁴⁰

In the climate of increasing crisis, the turning point was to come in a confrontation with the military.⁴¹ Amini, anxious to put Iran's financial house in order, had tried to cut the military budget, which had brought him into confrontation with the Shah and the military. He had also hoped for US aid to cover Iran's budget deficit, which was not forthcoming.⁴² As a result Amini resigned in July 1962, and the Shah appointed the loyal Alam in his place.⁴³ The scene was now set for the launch of *the* White Revolution.

The White Revolution was itself launched by decree (the six points were first articulated in November 1961) and ratified by Referendum in January 1963. It was composed of six principles, including land reform, and was to be subsequently extended to 12 points and by the late 1970s to a total of 17 points. What distinguished this 'White Revolution' from what had preceded it under Amini was the fact that it represented a definite programme rather than a vague idea, and that its focus was the Shah as leader. Many of the myths which the Shah was to develop following 1963 were nevertheless being articulated to a greater or lesser degree during the Amini administration, and in order to trace the trajectory of this development it is important to analyze developments during this period.

There were several themes which the Shah attempted to promote in his own person, two of which had been emphasized with vigour by the Amini administration. The Shah wanted to identify himself with 'progress' and what was understood as 'anti-feudalist'.⁴⁴ In addition to this he sought to develop the concept of the 'democratic sovereign' into the 'revolutionary monarch', and as such the language of political discourse became littered with 'revolutionary' rhetoric which to many sat uneasily on the shoulders of a king. Tied to this was his desire to be the monarch of an egalitarian and 'democratic'⁴⁵ society, populated by liberated, economically prosperous peasants, eternally grateful to their liberator. This likewise was an uneasy companion to a monarchy which would emphasize the importance of the social and political order. Unlike Amini and Arsanjani, the Shah wanted to promote industrialization which was essential to his conception of progress and modernity.⁴⁶ Unlike Amini, the Shah was dismissive of the opposition,

and characterized them as either reactionary (black) or subversive (red). His target audience was the 75 per cent of the population which represented the peasantry, and although he continued to pay scrupulous attention to the army, which despite all evidence to the contrary he continued to view as a vital pillar to the monarchy, he neglected the burgeoning professional classes.⁴⁷

Probably his most controversial mythic construction was his utopian vision for the future. He began by arguing for the development of a 'model' country, which by the early 1970s had grown into the 'Great Civilization'. This was his conception of a new order which would successfully amalgamate monarchical tradition with 'modernity': a monarchy based on the support of a grateful and liberated peasantry. Thus in a speech to farmers at Chehel Sotoon and Esfahan in 1963 the Shah said, 'With respect to farming, industry, social activities, good works, the effect of this move in the future will be so great that I think the necessity of this order will be obvious to everyone ... The next generations will live in an environment which I hope will be equal and comparable to the highest social standards anywhere on the planet ... Thus on this road the freemen and free-women of Iran must head towards the future.'⁴⁸ This vision of the future was not only an ideological paradise, but a material one too: '... Your income should be such that you and your family are full. That you will have smart clothes. That you will have a nice house ...'⁴⁹

The Shah's strategy can be divided into appropriation – land reform, he was always at pains to point out, had been his idea; differentiation – enemies were to be dehumanized and marginalized; and legitimation through association with 'rational' and 'universal' norms, many of which were borrowed from the West and therefore meant little to traditionally minded Iranians. He was to return to tradition in his bid to secure the dynasty within his conception of 'modernity', and a beginning was made in his reconstruction of popular democracy, a reaction to the expectations of the popular conception of modernity among professional Iranians. Indeed, as early as January 1960 the Shah emphasized his identification with progress while at the same time differentiating himself from traditionalist 'reactionaries', and taking the opportunity to attack Dr Musaddiq:

... As you have noticed yourself, reactionary thoughts and concepts are dying out in our country. The things we are doing today were perhaps unthought of a few years ago. I well remember that in 1950 when I proceeded to distribute my own estates ... At that time we were the first country in this part of the world to do this. But in 1952, the then head of government prevented me from distributing my own estates. But as you see such reactionary and ridiculous thoughts have

disappeared now ... The more the people of Iran become educated ... the weaker and less effective these thoughts become. Of course all of us shall witness the progress of our society in spite of such reactionary thoughts. These thoughts cannot prevent the realization of the aspirations of the majority of the people who are definitely not reactionary ... The more progressive a country and the more educated a people, the easier it would be to enforce laws such as the proposed legislation on land reform ...⁵⁰

He was also at pains to take any credit for achievement to date away from Amini. Thus in an article published in the *Echo of Iran*, it was argued that Alam and the Shah had always supported Arsanjani but that Amini had been obstructing progress. Indeed it even quoted Arsanjani as saying:

... On the first day when I assumed the charge, I submitted all the clauses of land reform law to the Shah and the first person who was greatly interested in this programme and who in spite of all false reports and tricks by influential persons showed [no] resistance and thus proved his great far-sightedness and devotion to the progress of the country was the Shah himself. It is my honest duty to thank the Shah whole-heartedly at this juncture because in his heart he is always thinking of means and ways for the progress of millions of peasants and toilers of Iran ...⁵¹

It is worth noting that initially, though the Shah noted his own pioneering role, his importance did not as yet supersede that of the country as a whole. Thus it was the 'genius' of Iran as well as the Shah who had pioneered land reform in the region. These themes of anti-reactionary progress along with a bright future (it is worth noting how many times the word 'progress' is mentioned in the following passage) were highlighted again during a speech to the 20th Majlis in 1961:

... The progress made during the previous session shows that our country is well on its way to prosperity. It has made great progress in the political, economic, social, educational and health fields. Although considered just a beginning, the progress has been so great that never before has so much been accomplished in such a short time ... There is little need to mention here that all this progress has been made in peace, order and political and social stability. We have been able to achieve all these outstanding successes because traitors, subversives and demagogues have been kept out of affairs. We hope that our progress in the future will still be greater so that our country becomes, as is our aim, a model of spiritual and material progress ...⁵²

This intrinsic genius came out more clearly in his articulation of Iran's bright future:

I would like to point out that Iran is a country which can rightly hope to have a very bright future. This is because on the one hand we have great natural wealth and resources and on the other we have an ancient civilization which produced great geniuses ... Before long our country will stand out as a rock of stability and security in this rough and stormy sea ...⁵³

Not surprisingly revolutionary developments administered by a revolutionary monarch had to be of historic significance, and as such another aspect of many of the speeches was to emphasize the historical profundity of developments – contextualizing and rationalizing developments within a perceived narrative of Iranian history. Thus, in a speech on the occasion of Farmers Day, the Shah commented, 'The land reform movement is not a reform limited to lands but something that will alter Iranian society ... It is the most deep rooted and revolutionary action that can happen in the life of a nation ... What has taken others centuries to perform or has been accompanied by bloody revolution, which in itself can cause problems, we are performing in a short period ...'⁵⁴ In November 1962, the Shah described land reform as one of the most revolutionary measures to have been taken in 3,000 years of recorded Iranian history.⁵⁵ In a speech to farmers at Maragheh at the completion of land reform the Shah said,

The work which we have begun is not just one type of limited land reform for the peasants. This action will transform Iranian society. In other words it is one of the most profound and in reality, revolutionary, applications, which is possible to occur in the life of a nation. Other nations have only achieved such great works slowly over centuries and sometimes through a bloody revolution ... But I think we should take pride in this that this great work, which others have taken centuries to complete we have been able to initiate this programme with ease and simplicity in this region and other regions, and achieved results within a short time.⁵⁶

Or again at the Farmers' Cooperative Congress: 'Something which may be most nations could not achieve to this standard, during centuries of conflict and blood-letting, we have achieved in one year ... The magnitude of this profound social reform is so great and because we are looking at it from a close distance, we perhaps fail to appreciate its importance ...'⁵⁷ During a dinner at Saltanatabad, the Shah reiterated familiar themes,

... This step that we have taken today, just as you are aware, perhaps in the entire 2500 year history of Iran, no action which has overturned society in this manner has been conducted. It is a matter of pride that a programme of this magnitude has almost been completed in the space of one year: without convulsions; without revolution; without bloodletting. Now, I don't know how much information you have about what has occurred in other places but I can tell you such work may take 100 years, two hundred years, three hundred years, and then still their programmes have not been as progressive ...⁵⁸

The Shah's vision of an egalitarian meritocracy of which he was the champion and guarantor was targeted essentially at the younger generations. This was a myth that had been cultivated since the 1940s but which was given new energy with the advent of the White Revolution, and in particular land reform which had indeed altered socio-economic relations. His enthusiasm for this message won him derisory epithets from his opponents. On the Shah's visit to Turkey, Harrison noted that:

the Shah was reported in the press here to have told a gathering of Iranian students ... that Iran was no longer a land controlled by a thousand families. 'Today ... ours is a country of farmers, labourers, merchants and office workers, and the laws that are being enacted are designed for the majority.' There would be equal opportunity for all honest and dedicated persons and there would be no limit to the progress which could be made. In a speech at a land distribution ceremony at Kermanshah on 14 November the Shah used precisely these same words adding, however, that Iran belonged to all without special privilege to any group ... during his tour of Azerbaijan in September, when he spoke of the revolutionary nature of the current programme of land reform. It is statements of this kind that have been earning him in less progressive quarters the title of the 'Royal Revolutionary' or the 'Imperial Communist' ...⁵⁹

Those who did not agree with the vision being proposed were de-personalized and dismissed as ignorant by the Shah,

Of course we should not be surprised that in among this population of the country, we can estimate that several hundred people, don't understand. This inability to understand may have several reasons. One is that they simply don't have the capacity for thought and understanding. These people, their brains [minds] and thought work in different ways. They call these people shallow [-minded]. One may also call them many other things, but in any case maybe they are not

really to blame since nature has not allowed their small and tired brains [minds] the ability to understand or think.⁶⁰

During a speech at the Farmers' Cooperative Congress in 1341 he identified the forces of black and red with 'Ahriman', the Zoroastrian 'devil':

... Without doubt the reactionary agents of black who for their own selfish reasons want to keep the Iranian nation in the whirlpool of suffering and poverty and injustice, will not stand in the face of these profound and fundamental changes. Similarly the subversive forces of red whose aim is the overthrow of the nation and its surrender to foreigners, are unhappy with the progress of this programme and will try and destroy it. In these circumstances in accordance with my royal duties and loyalty to the oath which I took to protect the rights of the exalted nation of Iran, I cannot be indifferent to the fight between the forces of God and the forces of Ahriman. Since I have raised the standard of this fight on my shoulders ...⁶¹

Here also are clear allusions to traditionalism and religious nationalism with an evocation to Divine Providence. Allusions which were more clearly evoked in a speech to peasants in the holy city of Qom, where the Shah made plain his religious 'credentials' and conviction and the fact that he was 'blessed'. 'One night I dreamt that I was sitting opposite the Commander of the Faithful and his holiness had Zulfiqar across his knee and he gave a bowl and bade me drink from it saying that tomorrow I would be well. In actual fact that night I sweated, my temperature fell and from the next day I regained my well-being.' He also stressed his conviction that he had received visions from the Imams.⁶² Such religious imagery would be central to his later emphasis on the 'myth of the saviour'.

It was in his discussion of political democracy that the apparent contradictions in the Shah's strategy became most obvious to critics. The Shah was aware of this and espoused his ideas on this matter with caution. Having initially argued in print that the monarchy could be abolished if it outlived its usefulness, he now proceeded to argue that the institution was in fact a necessity. Thus in 1961, he cheerfully wrote: 'I have learned to look with some detachment at my own position and at the role of our ancient monarchy; and if ever I felt that Persia's monarchy had outlived its usefulness, I would be happy to resign as king and would even join in helping to abolish our monarchical institution.'⁶³ However, privately and increasingly in public, he argued that democracy in the Western sense was not suitable to Iran in its present situation,⁶⁴ and though he constantly referred to the possibility of democracy in the future, by the 1970s this

expedient was discarded in favour of his own conception of democracy which, though initially temporary, had become permanent.

It is indicative that in his first significant book, *Mission for my Country*, published in 1961, he also argued,

I have tried to make it clear that modern democracy, as I see it, is a very broad concept. But democracy is not a series of activities alone; above all it is a philosophy of life, never easy, either for an individual or a nation to acquire. Real democratic government is indeed the most intricate and difficult kind to achieve ... we must also realise that the achievement of political, economic, and social democracy perforce takes time ... There is a limit to the speed with which men and nations can develop in freedom. If we try to rush the process too fast, or if we become impatient or cynical, we shall defeat our own good intentions ...⁶⁵

Similarly, in a speech on the occasion of Constitution Day in 1961, the Shah distinguished between apparent and true democracy, arguing that the latter required education and intellectual maturity. He emphasized that freedom had its limits and that democracy did not imply the freedom to infringe the liberty of others. He was careful also to stress that he had been instrumental in the past twenty years in leading the country towards 'true' democracy.⁶⁶ One may surmise from his speeches the view that the monarchy was indeed guarantor of democracy. Thus in the speech he noted that, 'The principles of equality and civil liberties were proclaimed for the first time in the world by the first monarchs in Iran.' Later he stressed, 'All along this period I have protected the principles of democracy against internal and external dangers and against the enemies that have appeared in the guise of friendship. Just as the Constitution makes me the Guardian and symbol of democracy, I have strived, without any need to resort to pretense, to strengthen the spirit and nature of our Constitutional regime and lead my nation toward a stable and more lasting democracy ...'⁶⁷ In his broadcast message on Constitution Day in 1962 the Shah suggested that his vision of democracy might be different from what had been expected. According to a British embassy report: '... the Shah himself was at pains to point out that there is more to democracy than a couple of legislative chambers; nor was democracy a commodity to be imported from abroad, but every nation must find its own system of government by and for the people.'⁶⁸

Of course the Shah was able to argue subsequently that his referendum, in which a suspicious 99 per cent of the population voted in favour of the 'White Revolution', proved that he was a democrat. This, he would argue, was true democracy in that the people had been canvassed for their opinion directly, although it was in stark contrast to his prevailing view that the

people as yet had not reached the level of intellectual maturity required for democracy. It also contradicted earlier views, some might consider a Freudian slip, that such referenda were the habitual favourites of fascist and communist dictators. Thus only two years earlier he had written,

Communist dictators resemble Fascist ones in that they enjoy holding elections. They hope to give the ordinary working man the idea that he has a voice in the Government of his country. But the Communist rulers allow only one political party; anybody who tries to start another, or who speaks against the ruling party, is likely to be liquidated. In the elections (if you can call them by that name), the voter has no choice, for the only candidates listed are those of the ruling party. *Purely as a matter of form, the citizen is urged or ordered to go and vote; the authorities then triumphantly announce that, let us say, 99.9% of the votes cast were for the ruling party. I wonder how many intelligent people are fooled by that sort of thing.* [emphasis added]⁶⁹

It seems that his inspiration for a referendum was Charles de Gaulle in France, and that his principle audience was Western public opinion, which seemed, curiously, to swallow the entire spectacle without visible concern.⁷⁰ Congratulatory messages from foreign governments, including that of the US, only served to convince the Shah of his own popularity. In responding to Kennedy's message of congratulations, the Shah somewhat haughtily replied, 'The result of the referendum does indeed reflect the wholehearted approval of my fundamental reforms by the well-nigh unanimous vote of the people of Iran.'⁷¹

The success of the referendum, if orchestrated,⁷² was nevertheless generally viewed as a public relations triumph, and most of the Iranian press concluded that the Shah had confounded both the reactionaries and the revolutionaries. One notable weekly cautioned against the triumphalism in the air; '... The consensus of opinion in the Persian language press, however, was that the Shah had confounded both revolutionaries and reactionaries and that he alone was leading the nation. It was not until January 13 that a serious weekly magazine [*Khandaniha*] asked outright the question in the minds of many people; "Where is the Shah leading us?", and, in effect, gave warning that, unless kept under control, a revolution, whether started by the Tudeh or by the Shah, could be dangerous.'⁷³ Others also privately expressed concerns at how the referendum was transforming the Shah into a revolutionary leader with dangerous consequences: '... while favouring reforms, they are apprehensive of the power which the

Shah appears to be putting into the hands of ignorant country men and industrial workers ... and fearful that forces may one day be unleashed by demagogic leadership which could threaten both throne and constitution, particularly if disillusionment with the material benefits of the new land tenure sets in after the first flush of reform ...'⁷⁴

One hint of this demagogic leadership came in June 1963, when Ayatollah Khomeini was arrested for speaking out against the land reform and women's emancipation, leading to severe riots in Qom and Tehran and several other major cities. These riots were ruthlessly suppressed, though much of the initiative for the 'law and order' operation came from Alam. By 1964, Khomeini had been forced into exile after having launched a vitriolic attack on the Shah following the announcement of legal exemptions for all US personnel working in Iran, a move badly handled by Prime Minister Mansur, which with its overtones of nineteenth-century 'capitulations' contradicted the Shah's 'nationalist' credentials. This event, along with the widespread belief in a CIA-orchestrated coup in 1953 to restore the Shah to his throne, were to prove the two great contradictions to the myth of the dynastic champion of Iranian nationalism which the Shah sought to appropriate and develop in a reciprocally dialectic relationship with both his political inheritance and the prevalent environment.

Modernism and later traditionalism were added to this fundamental myth and became integral to the attempted reconstruction of the ideological foundations of the Pahlavi state, and while the economy prospered, perceived social reality found sufficient conjunction with the myth to disguise the inherent contradictions. Ironically (and beyond the scope of this article) increased wealth provided the Shah with further opportunities to develop his political 'myth of the saviour',⁷⁵ crucially utilizing a myth of modernity replete with language essentially alien to the traditional classes, and developed in spite of growing economic weaknesses, thereby exacerbating the variance between myth and social reality, and contributing to a fall which to many, continues to have been sudden, dramatic and entirely unexpected. The 'White Revolution' succeeded, in ways not foreseen by its sponsors, in transforming the political landscape of Iran, economically, politically, and, through the introduction of 'revolutionary rhetoric', ideologically. Despite Mohammad Reza Shah's attempts to reconcile the fundamental contradictions which plagued his 'revolutionary monarchy', it proved an incomplete hegemony, but a powerful if unsuspecting legacy.

NOTES

1. FO 371 133055 EP 1671/5 dated 3 Oct. 58. Article in the *Spectator*, written by Andrew Roth.
2. For a comprehensive analysis of the land reform see for example E. Hooglund, *Land and Revolution in Iran 1960–1980* (Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1982), and A.K.S. Lambton, *The Persian Land Reform, 1962–1966* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969).
3. See in particular, J.B. Thompson, *Ideology and Modern Culture* (Cambridge: Polity, 1990), p.71. Thompson himself draws on both the theories of Ricoeur and Habermas.
4. See Paul Ricoeur, 'Science and Ideology' in *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp.222–46. My reading of myth draws extensively on R. Barthes, *Mythologies* (London: Paladin, 1970).
5. G.W.F Hegel, *The German Constitution* (1802), in *Hegel's Political Writings*, trans. T.M. Knox (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964), p.216.
6. FO 371 157605 EP 1015/123 24 May 1961. This sentiment was echoed by the Shah's Prime Minister at the time, Ali Amini; FO 371 157612 EP 1015/280 dated 9 Nov. 1961. See also FO 371 157604 EP 1015/116 dated 21 May 1961.
7. FO 248 1580 dated 30 May 1960, Dr Ram in discussion with Kellas: 'Dr Ram claimed that the truth of course was that the Bill was a political measure. It was intended to show the world that Iran was not a feudal society, such as was supposed to be a liability in the struggle against communism. It might indeed enjoy some success in this respect. But the proper way to resist Communism was economic, and the land reform law was not economic ...' In an undated memo from 1960, Webster Johnson, USOM adviser in the Agricultural Bank, noted that: 'In conversation generally I have said that we believe some form of agricultural revolution as regards techniques is necessary for Iran but that a technical revolution is quite different from re-distribution of land, which is a matter of politics and so largely outside our sphere ...' FO 248 1580.
8. The two key historic monarchs being Cyrus the Great 559–529BC, and the Sassanian, Khosrou Anushiravan.
9. FO 248 1582 EP 1015/36, dated 1 March 1961.
10. See also FO 371 157599 EP 1015/7 dated 31 Oct. 1961 – Lambton's assessment of growing middle-class 'political consciousness'.
11. FO 371 157610 EP 1015/229 1 Aug. 1961.
12. See G. Hambly, 'Attitudes & Aspirations of the Contemporary Iranian Intellectual', *Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society*, Vol.LI, part II, 1964, p.134. The Iranian embassy in London estimated that there were 40,000 television sets and 200,000 radio sets for a population of 2,000,000 in Tehran in 1960; see FO 371 149761 EP 1015/143 dated 23 Dec. 1960.
13. FO 371 133006 EP 1015/34, dated 15 Aug. 1958.
14. FO 371 133006 EP 1015/34 dated 15 Aug. 1958; FO 371 140790 EP 1015/78 dated 4 Nov. 1959; see also FO 371 133006 EP 1015/37 dated 20 Aug. 1958, on the Shah's initial reluctance towards a 'white revolution'. It should be remembered that since the overthrow of Musaddiq the Shah had consistently argued that Iran had had her revolution and consequently was an 'island of stability'; see FO 371 149757 EP 1015/45 dated 7 June 1960. Later General Arfa, a keen supporter of the Shah, would argue in conversation with Sir Roger Stevens that the whole notion was the Shah's idea in the first place, see FO 371 170374 EP 1015/33 dated 18 Feb. 1963. Alam, of course, himself lacked credibility as a champion of the poor: even the pro-Royalist paper, *Farman* commented that, 'Mr Alam was one of the larger feudal barons in the country, more interested in dancing the rumba and grinding the faces of his peasants than in the welfare of the nation.' FO 371 149756 EP 1015/39 dated 24 May 1960.
15. In 1961, an article in the *Christian Science Monitor* made the following astute remark, '... Dr Musaddiq underestimated the attachment of Iranians to the institution of monarchy, although the present Shah, strictly speaking is not of royal blood. If the Shah can identify himself with successful reform, radical changes in the present social and political system of his country would not automatically mean the establishment of a republic ...' FO 371 157603 EP 1015/99 dated 15 May 1961. See also FO 371 157605 EP 1015/139 dated 1 June 1961, on the impending fear of revolution.

16. FO 371 149757 EP 1015/45 dated 7 June 1960: '... The coup has caused within the regime itself considerable anxiety ... Only a few have taken comfort from the reflection that unpopular regimes have been swept away in neighbouring countries while Iran continues to confound the critics who have so long and so loudly proclaimed her to be the least stable element in the Western alliance in the Middle East.'
17. FO 371 133006 EP 1015/50 dated 30 Sept. 1958.
18. The Shah first publicly used the term in July 1960, in reference to the emergence of 'new (younger) blood' in the Majlis elections; FO 371 149758 EP 1015/72 dated 26 July 1960. Amini uses the term in a discussion with Harrison as noted in FO 371 157604 EP 1015/109 dated 17 May 1961.
19. See FO 371 149756 EP 1015/23 dated 8 March 1960. FO 371 149758 EP 1015/84 dated 16 Aug. 1960. The Shah of course had always been keen to stress his democratic and progressive credentials, see FO 371 149755 EP 1015/2 dated 29 Dec. 1959. See also FO 371 149755 EP 1015/20 dated 18 Feb. 1960.
20. Kellas noted with respect to the elections of 1960 that, '... It is claimed that many papers have been spoiled and many bogus or facetious votes cast for the Twelve Imams, Madame Delkash, the cabaret singer, and Mr Shamshiri, who runs the chelo-kabab house in the Bazaar ... Personally I have found it hard to trace anybody, from my cook to the Minister of Court, who has taken the trouble to vote at all; and the wry explanation for the most part is that "it has no purpose".' FO 371 149758 EP 1015/87 dated 23 Aug. 1960.
21. In a private conversation Arsanjani is reported to have said, 'The monarchy stands on four legs, I have destroyed one of them' [that is, the landed aristocracy]. Amini distinguished between a 'white revolution' and real revolution, implying that the former merely represented radical reform – see FO 371 164183 EP 1015/77 speech to the Ministry of Justice dated 12 June 1962.
22. FO 371 149804 EP 1461/3 dated 30 Jan. 1960.
23. FO 371 149804 EP 1461/5 dated 1 March 1960 – Ayatollah Borujerdi issues a fatwa condemning land reform as against Islam. The Shah's reply to this move was unusually blunt, threatening the *ulema* with a 'white coup d'état'. See FO 371 149804 EP 1461/7 dated 8 March 1960.
24. Amini sought to pacify the *ulema* by appointing a religious adviser to the cabinet, going on pilgrimage to Mashhad and Qom and visiting Ayatollah Kashani; FO 371 157611 EP 1015/241 dated 22 Aug. 1961.
25. FO 371 157608 EP 1015/185, dated 22 June 1961.
26. FO 248 1589, dated 6 May 1962.
27. FO 248 1589, conversation with Phillips dated 4 Dec. 1962.
28. FO 248 1588, conversation with Kellas dated 17 March 1962. In a subsequent conversation, Kellas unsuccessfully compared land reform in Iran with that of Egypt; Arsanjani 'went on to complain that I had a low opinion of the skilful Iranian farmers, while I magnified the ability of the degraded fellahin of Egypt.' FO 248 1589 dated 6 May 1962. See also Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, *Mission for My Country* (New York: McGraw-Hill 1961), p.10. Also Shah's speech on 5 Dey 1341 on the occasion of the murder of Engineer Malek Ebadi, in *Enghelab-e Sefid-e Shahanshah* ('The White Revolution of the Shahanshah') (undated Tehran).
29. FO 371 157607 EP 1015/177 dated 20 June 1961. See also FO 248 1588, note by Kellas dated 31 Jan. 1962. See also FO 248 1589 dated 24 Nov. 1962, a number of *ulema* including Khomeini protested that the land reform is both unconstitutional and anti-Islamic.
30. FO 248 1580; Ibrahim Mahdavi, dated 21 Sept. 1960.
31. FO 248 1585 1461, *Keyhan International* (20 July 1961), and letter dated 4 Nov. 1961.
32. FO 248 1580, Kellas in conversation with Hussein Ali Qaraguzlu, dated 28 Jan. 1960. See also FO 248 1588, Kellas in conversation with Mr Afshar, dated 10 April 1962.
33. FO 248 1585 1461, Kellas in conversation with Malek Mansur dated 14 July 1961.
34. FO 248 1588, conversation with Kellas dated 22 Jan. 1962.
35. FO 371 149804 EP 1461/6 dated 8 March 1960. '... Almost all critics of the bill are curiously united in blaming the "Americans" for imposing it. Some argue that it has been thrust upon the Shah and the Government by the Americans, regardless of special conditions in Iran of

- which they have no experience, out of a misconceived notion that the existing system of land tenure is "feudal" or reactionary. Others are persuaded that the Shah is promoting the bill in an inept endeavour to ingratiate himself to ill-informed American public opinion as a "progressive" monarch. Some even believe that the Americans are dictating legislation in this sense in order to break the political power of the landowners, traditionally the friends of the British in Iran, regardless of the natural order of Iranian society ...' See also FO 248 1589 dated 10 Sept. 1962, in which Lambton notes the dangerous repercussions for the regime of the prevalent idea of American imposition.
36. FO 248 1589, dated 29 Oct. 1962
 37. FO 371 157611 EP 1015/253 dated 5 Oct. 1961. See also EP 1015/255 dated 10 Oct. 1961.
 38. FO 371 157611 EP 1015/260 dated 5 Oct. 1961. Alam, unusually, expressed concern at the possible outcome of direct rule, see FO 371 157612 EP 1015/267 dated 25 Oct. 1961.
 39. FO 371 164180 EP 1015/19 dated 23 Jan. 1962; also FO 371 164181 EP 1015/23 dated 24 Jan. 1962, and EP 1015/29 dated 24 Jan. 1962.
 40. FO 371 164181 EP 1015/32 Hiller, dated 31 Jan. 1962. See also FO 371 164181 EP 1015/29, Hiller, dated 24 Jan. 1962.
 41. FO 371 157605 EP 1015/136 dated 26 May 1961, notes that the military had become increasingly dissatisfied with austerity measures and retirements (cf. Musaddiq). FO 371 157606 EP 1015/156 dated 6 June 1961, notes that Amini's insistence that officers wear civilian clothes in non-military environments had caused discontent among the officer corps.
 42. FO 371 164184 EP 1015/84 dated 18 July 1962.
 43. FO 371 164184 EP 1015/85 dated 19 July 1962. Few were convinced by Alam's appointment and generally regarded it as the Shah concentrating power in his own hands – see FO 371 164185 EP 1015/110 dated 25 Aug. 1962.
 44. During the First Farmers' Cooperative Congress the delegates urged the Shah to ban the term *ra'yat* (serf) from all official documents. *Enghelab*, dated 19 Dey 1341/8 Jan. 1963.
 45. The Shah was to articulate his own particular conception of democracy.
 46. FO 371 157601 EP 1015/55 dated 28 March 1961 – the Shah continued to pay lip-service to decentralization, even though one aspect of land reform was in actual fact to centralize power.
 47. FO 371 164186 EP 1015/135 dated 17 Nov. 1962.
 48. *Enghelab*, speech dated 13 Esfand 1341/3 March 1963.
 49. *Enghelab*, address of the Shah to the heads of the Dehqan Congress, 7 Shahrivar 1341/28 Aug. 1962.
 50. FO 371 149755 EP 1015/12 dated 26 Jan. 1960.
 51. FO 248 1589 Echo of Iran dated 9 Sept. 1962.
 52. FO 371 157600 EP 1015/35 dated 23 Feb. 1961.
 53. FO 371 157599 EP 1015/19 dated 20 Jan. 1961.
 54. FO 248 1589 dated 23 Sept. 1962.
 55. FO 371 164186 EP 1015/138 dated 27 Nov. 1962 – such historical importance provides another vital transitional bridge between revolutionary monarch and Divinely guided monarch. Curiously such sentiments were echoed by the BBC Persian service, see FO 371 170412 EP 1461/5 dated 29 Jan. 1963.
 56. *Enghelab*, dated 1 Mehr 1341/22 Sept. 1962
 57. *Enghelab*, dated 19 Dey 1341/8 Jan. 1963
 58. *Enghelab*, dated 20 Dey 1341/9 Jan. 1963
 59. FO 371 164186 EP 1015/135 dated 17 Nov. 1962.
 60. *Enghelab*, speech to farmers in Birjand dated 13 Farvardin 1342/2 April 1963
 61. *Enghelab*, speech at Farmers' Cooperative Congress dated 19 Dey 1341/8 Jan. 1963
 62. *Enghelab*, speech to the people of Qom, dated 4 Bahman 1341/23 Jan. 1963
 63. *Mission for My Country*, p.327.
 64. FO 371 157611 EP 1015/260 dated 5 Oct. 1961; in discussions with Harrison, the Shah expresses concern over the possible composition of a freely elected Majlis. See also FO 371 157612 EP 1015/261 dated 29 Oct. 1961. See also FO 371 157612 EP 1015/271 dated 30 Oct. 1961.
 65. *Mission for My Country*, pp.164 and 193.

66. FO 371 157610 EP 1015/233 dated 8 Aug. 1961.
67. FO 371 157610 EP 1015/236 dated 10 Aug. 1961.
68. FO 371 164185 EP 1015/108 dated 13 Aug. 1962.
69. *Mission for My Country*, p.162.
70. FO 371 170424 EP 1461/3 dated 6 Feb. 1963.
71. FO 371 170424 EP 1461/2 dated 2 Feb. 1963.
72. FO 371 170373 EP 1015/10 dated 24 Jan. 1963. See also FO 371 170373 EP 1015/13 dated 28 Jan. 1963; EP 1015/15 dated 25 Jan. 1963; EP 1015/16 dated 25 Jan. 1963.
73. FO 371 170373 EP 1015/8 dated 15 Jan. 1963.
74. FO 371 170373 EP 1015/18 dated 29 Jan. 1963.
75. For an interesting discussion of the 'mosaic myth' which permeates many leadership cults, see L. Feuer, *Ideology and the Ideologists* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1975).