



The Coup: 1953, the CIA, and the Roots of Modern U.S.-Iranian Relations

Ervand Abrahamian

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In August 1953, the CIA orchestrated the swift overthrow of Iran's democratically elected leader and installed Muhammad Reza Shah Pahlavi in his place. Over the next twenty-six years, the United States backed the unpopular, authoritarian shah and his secret police; in exchange, it reaped a huge share of Iran's oil wealth.

The blowback was inevitable, as this "relevant, readable" (*Kirkus Reviews*) history by noted Iran scholar Ervand Abrahamian shows. When the 1979 Iranian Revolution deposed the shah and replaced his puppet government with a radical Islamic republic under Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the shift reverberated throughout the Middle East and the world, casting a long, dark shadow over U.S.-Iran relations that extends to the present day.

In this "well-documented account [that] will become indispensable reading for students of the modern Middle East" (*Choice*), Abrahamian uncovers little-known documents that challenge conventional interpretations of the coup. Offering "new insights into his history-shattering event" (*Reason.com*), his riveting account transforms America's understanding of a crucial turning point in modern U.S.-Iran relations.

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