

readers. For example, on page 216, there is a discussion of the possibilities and problems of choosing a successor for Khomeini considering the dismissal of Ayatolla Montazeri, while on page 210 the reader is already told that Khamenei (then president) had been chosen as the new Leader of the Revolution. These and other minor inconsistencies need to be corrected for the future edition of the book.

Iran at the Crossroads, despite some misgivings and shortcomings, is an informative book on Iran's foreign policy.

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Rezun, Miron. *Post-Khomeini Iran and the New Gulf War*. Quebec: Centre Québécois de Relations Internationales, 1991.

Iran and the United States have had a strange relationship since the Islamic revolution of 1978-79. The revolution itself spent an inordinate amount of fury in humiliating America through the hostage crisis. The US, on its part, remained equally hostile to Iran through its off-again-on-again tilts toward Iraq during the eight-year long war between the two Persian Gulf neighbors. But the ties between Iran and the United States could not remain on a simple plane. The issue of American hostages in Lebanon forced the Reagan administration to cut a deal with Iran. However, the disclosure of this deal, which emerged as a major foreign policy debacle of the Reagan presidency, forced the United States to fall back on an anti-Iranian posture. The loss of American credibility emanating from the "Iran-gate" also made it necessary for Washington to convince the moderate Arabs of the Persian Gulf region that the "arms-for-hostage" issue was indeed an aberration, and not a well-deliberated policy option. The Kuwaiti invitation to reflag its ships could not have come at a better time.

A similar American preoccupation with Iran was also manifested during the Operations DESERT SHIELD/STORM. By the same token, Iranian foreign policy was also characterized by a similar near-obsession with the nuances of American foreign policy toward the Persian Gulf region. Now the Gulf War of 1991 is history; however, both Teheran and Washington continue to keep their wary eyes on each other's foreign policy "shenanigans." Professor Miron Rezun's monograph, though somewhat dated, should be read by keeping the preceding context in mind.

The author has included several interesting and important sections in his study. For instance, the section on the Iranian "power struggle" is quite crucial because in Iranian politics this issue is never really a settled one. Even

though the Islamic Republic has been experimenting with its own version of "democracy," the cataclysmic nature of its politics remains quite relevant today. In this context, the ongoing power struggle continues to remain a source of consternation for all those who wish to see a stable Iran. Rezun's discussion of factional politics within Iran is both informed and right on the mark. With the passage of time, all one has to do is to insert new or different names.

The weakest part of this study is the section on the "external dimension." Perhaps because of space limitation, Rezun does not go into the intricacies of the Iranian-Saudi rivalry, which used to flare-up even in the early 1970s — during the heyday of "oil diplomacy." Instead, he chose to focus on the "Hajj tragedy," which, in my estimation, is only a symptom of the overall deteriorating ties between these two countries. I also find the section on the "Iraqi invasion" (pp. 14-18) lacking in its treatment of the reasons underlying Saddam's invasion of Kuwait. This section, like the one on the Iranian-Saudi ties, has a tremendous potential for analysis; but the author has opted to provide the reader with a narrative of events.

The section on the Rushdie affair, in my judgment, is not a significant foreign or domestic policy issue. It found a sympathetic audience among Muslims all over the world because of the nature and tone of Rushdie's book. By the same token, it caught the attention of the British and American governments and their respective media because of the unusual nature of the death "decree" issue by Khomeini. But on this point, Rezun and I may have an honest disagreement.

Another point that made me uncomfortable was the fact that almost all of Rezun's sources are from newspaper and news magazine items except for three footnotes where he cited either his own articles, an article by Carol Saivetz that is published in his anthology, or two think pieces from *Orbis*.

However, in general, I think *Post-Khomeini Iran* is a useful study, and it has the potential of developing into an important book. Rezun does not follow the "group think" approach used by a number of American specialists on the Middle East whereby Iran is only seen through a prism of terrorism and anti-Americanism. In this sense, this study is refreshing.

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