

Foundation for Iranian Studies

Program of Oral History

DR. MOHAMMAD-ALI RASHTI

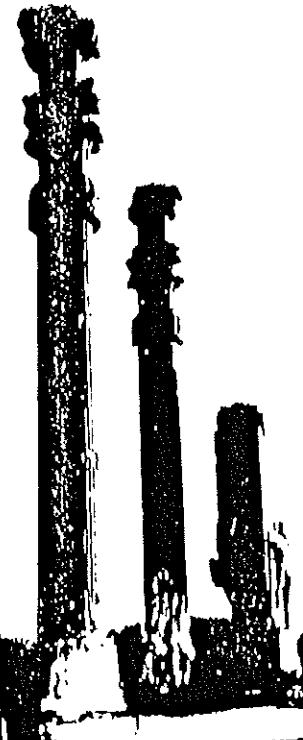
بنیاد مطالعات ایران

Foundation for Iranian Studies

INTERVIEW WITH MOHAMMAD-ALI RASHTI

WASHINGTON, D.C., OCTOBER 1982

INTERVIEWED BY BEHRUZ NIKZAT



COPYRIGHT © 1982 FOUNDATION FOR IRANIAN STUDIES
All rights reserved. No part of this work may be
reproduced or transmitted in any form by any means,
electronic or mechanical, including photocopy and
recording or by any information storage or retrieval
system, without permission in writing from the Oral
History Office, Foundation for Iranian Studies

4801 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Suite 670
Washington, D.C. 20016, Telephone (202) 686-1224

PREFACE

This manuscript is the product of a series of tape-recorded interviews conducted for the Oral History of Iran Program of Foundation for Iranian Studies by Behrooz Nikzat with Mohammad Ali Rashti in Washington, D.C., in October, 1982.

Readers of this Oral History memoir should bear in mind that it is a transcript of the spoken word, and that the interviewer, narrator and editor sought to preserve the informal, conversational style that is inherent in such historical sources. Foundation for Iranian Studies is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir, nor for the views expressed therein.

The manuscript may be read, quoted from and cited only by serious research scholars accredited for purposes of research by Foundation for Iranian Studies; and further, this memoir must be read in such place as is made available for purposes of research by Foundation for Iranian Studies. No reproduction of the memoir either in whole or in part may be made by microphoto, typewriter, photostat, or any other device.

اینجانب متن و نوار مصاحبه‌های انجام شده در ارتباط با برنامه
" تاریخ شفاهی ایران " را به بنیاد مطالعات ایران هدیه
میکم تا صرفاً " در اجراء " برنامه‌های تحقیقاتی بنیاد از آن استفاده
نمایند.

موارد دیگر استفاده از این نوار و متن باید با اجازه اینجانب
باشد.

محمد علی ریسی

مصاحبه شونده

روز شنبه ۱۳۷۷/۱۰/۱۳

مصاحبه کننده

۲۳ آبان ۱۳۷۷

تاریخ

محمد علی ریسی

موضوع نوار

MOHAMMAD-ALI RASHTI

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Mr. Rashti was born in Yazd in 1298 H. (1918) into a commercially-oriented family. He received a Bachelor of Law degree from Tehran University in 1943, and M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in Political Science and International Law from Columbia and New York University.

He served as Deputy Administration Officer and Office Superintendent of General Relations of Plan Organization. He was one of the founding members of Iran Novin Party and was elected Deputy to the 21st, 22nd, and 23rd Majlis from Yazd. While in the Parliament he was a member of Foreign Relations Committee, Planning Committee, and Supervisory Board on Central Bank's Activities. He also held the chairmanship of the Iranian Parliamentary Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Conference.

Mr. Rashti's wide range of professional experience both inside and outside Iran enables him to present a valuable analysis of parliamentary politics, electoral system, and political parties in Iran and abroad. His critical views of the structure and procedure of the Foreign Ministry are specifically worthy of consideration due to his service in that Ministry and as the Ambassador to Swaziland and Lesotho and also as the General Consul in Johannesburg.

Mr. Rashti's parliamentary recollections are most valuable due to special importance and sensitivity of the period he describes; During which the parliament reopened after an interval of two years and nine months, certain controversial laws such as the law of capitulation were passed, and finally, the various political parties were abolished and single party system was established

CONTENTS INTERVIEW # 1 MOHAMMAD-ALI RASHTI

<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
Family background, education in Iran and abroad, work with Voice of America and the United Nations Information Office, fieldtrip to India	1-3
Return to Tehran, work as editor of Tehran Journal, head of U.N. Information Office in Tehran, deputy executive of Foreign Transaction Company, employment in the Plan Organization	3-4
Membership in the Board of Directors of the Progressive Front, participation in political events of the White Revolution period, election as the representative from Yazd, selection as the general consul in Hong Kong, selection as ambassador to Swaziland and Lesotho and general consul in Johannesburg	4-9
A comparison of Iran in the immediate post-WWII period and twenty years later, experiences gained from field-trip to India	9-10
Parliamentary politics in Iran, the electoral system, the central role of political parties, evolution to a one-party system	10-15
Political and economic conditions of Yazd Province	16
Recollections of Dr. Mossadeq's trip to the U.N. to present the Iranian side of the oil industry nationalization case	20-21
Recollection of the years in the Foreign Ministry, a critical view of the Foreign Ministry structural and procedural shortcomings and points of strength	21-28
Important events in his parliamentary terms, ratification of the law concerning political immunity for American military advisors, and capitulation, creation of the "Congress of Free Women and Men"	29-34
Creation of the Constituent Assembly, isolation of the members of Parliament from the rest of the government	34-35
Disintegration of the Iran Novin Party, creation of the Rastakhiz (Resurrection) Party	35-38

CONTENTS INTERVIEW # 1 MOHAMMAD-ALI RASHTI

SUBJECT

PAGE

Factors behind the Islamic revolution, penetration of political opposition in the government, Fardust's betrayal, psychological and economic factors, impact of the intellectuals and the international environment	38-41
Prospect for future, unfulfilled promises of the Islamic government, transformation to either an ultra-left or a military government	41-42

RASHTI, MOHAMMAD ^cALI

Name	Page
Abdoh, Jalal,	3
Alikhani, ^c Ali-Naqi,	21
Ameli, Baqer,	5
Amini, ^c Ali,	5
Amuzegar, Jahangir,	4
Amuzegar, Jamshid,	2
Aram, ^c Abbas,	19,21
Ardalan, ^c Ali-Qoli,	17,18
Asadi, Salman,	34
Asfiya, Safi,	4
Baq'a'i-Kermani, Mozaffar,	17,18
Baq'a'i-Yazdi, Mohammad,	36
Bayat, Shamsoltan,	17,20
Behbudi, Soleyman,	32-34
Buzari, Mohammad ^c Ali,	20
Entezam, Nasrollah,	17,18
Entezam, ^c Abdollah,	2
Fardust, General Hosein,	34,39
Farrokhi,	6
Fatemi, Hosein,	17-18
Foreign Affairs, Ministry of,	23-27
Forughi, Mahmud,	22
Geoff, Lord Goldwyn,	18
Gudarzi, Manuchehr,	4
Hasibi, Kazem,	19
Hejazi, Moti ^c oddowleh,	34
Iran Novin Party,	7,10-11,13,36,38
Jalili, Seyyed Kazem,	6
Javanshir, ^c Abdollah,	36
Kalali, Manuchehr,	33
Kanun-e Moterraqi,	4-6
Khal ^c atbari, ^c Abbas ^c Ali,	7,21,22
Khosravani, General Parviz,	36
Kiya, Nureddin,	17
Mansur, Hasan ^c Ali,	4-6,30,32-34
Mardom Party,	7,32
Mas ^c udi, ^c Abbas,	3,4
Matin-Daftari, Ahmad,	6,17,20
Mirfendereski, Ahmad,	26
Mobin, Gholam-Reza,	34
Mossadeq, Mohammad,	17-20,23
Nasser, Gamal ^c Abd,	15
Navvab, Hosein-Qoli,	17-19
Nikpey, Gholam-Reza,	6
Pahlavi, Mohammad Reza Shah,	5,7,14,24,33, 34,39
Pahlavi, Queen Farah,	14
Pakravan, General Hasan,	36-37
Parkhideh,	19
Parto ^c Azam, Amir Hosein,	37
Raji,	2

RASHTI, MOHAMMAD ^cALI

Name	Page
Rastakhiz Party,	7,13,35,38
Revolution of 1978-79,	38-41
Roosevelt, Franklin D.,	17-18
Sadiq, ^c Isa,	17,20
Saleh, Allahyar,	17-19
Sanjabi, Karim,	7
Shadman, Ziyaoddin,	5
Sharif-Emami, Ja ^c far,	34
Sotudeh, Fereydun,	7
Tabataba'i, Seyyed Ziyaoddin,	6
Taheri, Ziyaoddin,	6
Tajbakhsh, Gholam-Reza,	21
Tehran Journal Newspaper,	3
Tehrani, Ahmad,	7
Vakil, Mehdi,	2,3
White Revolution of 1963,	29-30
Yazdanpanah, ^c Ezzatollah,	21
Yeganeh, Naser,	5
Zahedi, Ardeshir,	5