

* شما در کتاب «شکنجه و دموکراسی» نقطه افتراق شکنجه کلاسیک و مدرن در ایران را انتقال آن از ملاء عام به خفا می‌دانید؛ به نوعی گذر از وجه «آئینی» شکنجه (در مکان‌های عمومی و برای مواجهه مجرم با مردم) به وجه «بالینی» آن. اما پرواند آبراهامیان در کتاب «اعترافات شکنجه‌گان» قائل به این عقیده است که: «ایران قرن نوزدهم شکنجه کیفری را پشت درهای بسته نگاه داشت، مجازات‌های رسمی در ملاعام – اغلب در میدان فلکه اجرا می‌گردید.» به عبارتی او بر این نظر است که در دوره مجازات علنی هم شکنجه در خفا اعمال می‌شد. آیا باید در آنچه در ملاعام اعمال می‌شد، تفکیکی بین «مجازات» و «شکنجه» در نظر گرفت؟ انتقال شکنجه و مجازات به خفا از چه دوره‌ای آغاز و انجام شد؟

I think you mean my first book, *Torture and Modernity: Self, State and Society in Modern Iran* – not my second book, *Torture and Democracy*. As I am travelling, I don't have access to Dr. Abrahamian's book. Although we use different words, I don't think we disagree on the facts. I think it is just that our two books have very different historical scopes and different scholarly goals. Abrahamian's book is a narrow study of prison memoirs from the 1920s onwards, with an eye towards public confessions. My first work is a broad sociological study of violence throughout Iranian society from the early Qajar period onwards, of which prison and torture was only a part. In fact I build on Abrahamian's important argument that one pillar of Qajar rule were spectacular public deaths, like Sham' Ajin. I pointed out that by the late Pahlavi period, there were no such public deaths; torture had moved to hidden prisons and out of public view; and that what informed the way blows fell on a body was not law or ritual. This violence was more informed by knowledge of medicine and science, and so more clinical. There were many trends that led to this tendency to hide violence, so it wasn't any single cause or political decision.

So one can't point to a specific date. One can only document trends. Clearly there was a transitional period – roughly from the death of Nasser id-Din Shah onwards – when some flogging and falaka were public and this coincided with hidden violence that was not particularly scientific – again flogging and falaka were quite common. It may be that Abrahamian prefers to call what happens in public in this period “punishment” and what happens in private “torture.” He uses a legal and moral distinction, terms that distinguish between justifiable and unjustifiable violence. But from a social scientific perspective, these words simply point to certain practices – in this case flogging and falaka. When people approved of them (and so did them publicly) they called this violence punishment – as Abrahamian rightly says – and when they did not approve of them (and so did it privately to avoid protest and outrage) – people called it torture.

As a historian, one must document to what people say. But this does not change the fact that the same actions were often used in both places and simply be called different things, and the same principles guided the violence whether it was public or private. It is a methodological precaution then not to call one thing torture and the other punishment – rather one needs to study patterns of violence comprehensively – as I was doing in my first book – regardless of what it is called – whether it is a teacher hitting a student, a factor owner striking a worker, an interrogator striking a prisoner, a sergeant striking a soldier, darugha striking a criminal in the public square. If in all cases, they are using a

falaka – the same instrument striking in the same place - it is the same practice regardless of whether the teacher calls it “education, the sergeant “discipline,” the prisoner “torture” or the darugha “punishment.” We should not confuse words with practices in the world. “Punishment” and “torture” are not real things in the world, but simply records our human judgments. The study of these words is interesting and worth studying, but it is not my concern.

* این نظر شما که شکنجه راهی است برای تثبیت گونه‌ای از رفتار اجتماعی که رفتار عادی شمرده می‌شود، راهی برای عادی‌سازی رفتار شهروندان و «مقاومت در برابر شکنجه تنها مبارزه با حکومت نیست، بلکه همچنین قیامی بر ضد شیوه‌های عقلانی کردن [جامعه] است.» ناظر به ویژگی شکنجه کلاسیک است یا سنتی؟ چون این تعریف بلافاصله شکنجه سنتی را به ذهن متبادر می‌کند که به گفته شما ماهیت «آئینی» دارد و نیز در رویارویی مستقیم مجازات شونده و افراد اجتماع رخ می‌دهد و از این رو به عقلانی کردن جامعه می‌انجامد ولی در شکنجه مدرن و در خفا چه شاخصه‌ای را می‌توان برشمرد که طی آن بتوان امید «نهادینه کردن رفتار و هنجاری مقبول و عادی» را داشت؟

I don't think that captures the contrast I had in mind, if I understand your question correctly. In the Qajar period, for the most part, punishment and torture did not play an important role in shaping people's identities. The public punishments were largely symbolic, laying out a system of signs for everyone to read, but there was no attempt to use punishment to transform prisoners and make them new kinds of people and build a new society on those kinds of personalities.

At a critical point in Iranian society, as in many other societies, punishment became one location where statesmen tried to use it to generate new kinds of identities, and so new societies. They hoped to generate people who identified themselves in new ways, as reformed men or disciplined men. That is the main thesis of my first book. Certainly by the time of the Constitutional Revolution, people came to adopt the legal idea that punishment could be a way of forming rational law-observing citizens, by offering a stable and reliable legal system with predictable punishments. They did think properly regulated punishments, and proper trials, could create a rational community of citizens. And this is why they invested in prisons and policemen.

The Constitutionals may have been the first to express the idea that punishment could be a vehicle for transforming personalities to create a new social order. But they were not the last. As my first book documents, there were other groups who didn't want rational law-abiding citizens, as much as disciplined citizens, and they used punishment to create this kind of personality. And one can see this idea quite clearly during Reza Shah's rule. And there were others, who wanted neither discipline nor law. They wanted citizens who knew their place (whether they were disciplined or not), and who behaved circumspectly because they feared the consequences. And this was how SAVAK used torture.

All three modalities can be found in the late Pahlavi period. What is important is that all three share the notion that punishment can be used to transform personalities – and this

was a notion that was pretty much alien to how Qajar rulers and their subjects understood punishment. So there is a contrast between modern violence and classical (what you call traditional or ritualistic) violence, but not the one you point to.

* شما در گفتگوی انقلاب اسلامی ایران در سال‌های ۱۳۷۸ تا ۱۳۷۹ را «انقلابی علیه شکنجه» توصیف کرده‌اید. اینکه رفتار رژیم شاه و دستگاه ساواک، مردم را به صف انقلابیون هدایت می‌کرد و شکنجه عامل قدرتمندی برای جذب نیرو علیه شاه بود. این رهیافت تاریخی آیا به معنی اینست که شکنجه در ایران هیچگاه در عرف جامعه پذیرفته و تبدیل به نهادی اجتماعی – چنانکه نوشته‌اید نشد؟

Well yes. But it worth observing that there are many revolutions in which people protest against torture. Even the Constitutional Revolution protested Qajar torture. So I meant something a bit deeper. As I have said, one can understand torture in the Pahlavi regime not as simply a political tool, but as a part of the process of modernizing Iranians along certain norms, and to fix these as true or authentic traits of oneself, and building a society around them. If that is the true, then rejecting torture was not simply rejecting dictatorship. Rebelling against torture was also rejecting the fear that drove people to conform to all the norms of modernization, what Al-e Ahmad called Gharbzadegi, and towards creating new possibilities of self-hood. People contested not just the government and society, but the kinds of selves they had developed through the process of modernization. And that does set this revolution apart from many revolutions that simply protested torture as a political tool of the government.

* جسی جی لیف، تحلیلگر پیشین سازمان اطلاعات مرکزی آمریکا گفته که سازمان سیا تکنیک‌های شکنجه را به ماموران ایرانی آموزش می‌داد. شما هم گفته‌اید: «اگر کسی می‌خواهد بداند چرا ایرانیان از آمریکا متنفرند، تنها کاری که باید بکند این است که بپرسد نقش آمریکا در شکنجه ایرانیان چه بود. شکنجه نه تنها انقلاب را شکل داد، بلکه عمیقاً رابطه بین ایران و غرب را مسموم کرد.» این نظر برگرفته از کمک‌هایی است که گفته می‌شود سیا و موساد در تشکیل و تجهیز ساواک داشته‌اند یا شباهت‌هایی بین شکنجه‌های ساواک با متدهای آمریکایی دیده می‌شود؟

I think Americans generally have little memory of the role of the US government in Iran from the end of the Mossadegh period onwards, and so what I was trying to do in the interview you mention, was remind them of that. I was trying to remind them that torture in the war against Osama bin Ladin would not help them any more than it did in Iran, and not to make the same mistake twice.

I think at the time I wrote *Torture and Modernity* (1994), I had no reason to question Mr. Leaf's view; he had knowledge of the CIA. But in *Torture and Democracy* (2007), I did a precise, empirical mapping of torture techniques worldwide over a two hundred year period including a study of CIA torture. I had to conclude that Mr. Leaf was mistaken. There is an Anglo-Saxon tradition in torture that goes back two hundred years, and most CIA techniques come from this tradition. If the CIA taught torture techniques to American client states, then the techniques in all these states – Iran, Philippines, Brazil, South Korea, etc. should be the same or similar. But they are not anywhere except in Brazil. SAVAK techniques draw more on a French tradition than an American tradition,

and even within that context, SAVAK was terribly inventive with unique machines not found elsewhere in the world. This does not change the fact that the US government assisted SAVAK in other respects and either encouraged or turned a blind eye when the SAVAK tortured, so I think my general point is still true.

* پرویز ثابتی، معاون ساواک اخیرا در کتاب خاطراتی که منتشر شده گفته است: «من با شکنجه و هرگونه اقدام غیرقانونی مخالف بودم و تا آنجا که در توان داشتم، از آن جلوگیری می‌کردم. خودم، هیچگاه ندیده‌ام که فردی مورد شکنجه قرار گیرد ولی البته در این باره بسیار می‌شنیدم. موقعی که از سرپرستان بازجویی سوال می‌کردم، غالبا جواب این بود که زندانی با مامورین به زد و خورد پرداخته و در نتیجه مجروح شده است و یا قبل از دستگیری به وسیله رفقای خود مورد شکنجه قرار گرفته است. (یکی از مقامات ساواک: مامورین ما هم ممکن است کتکشان می‌زدند به خاطر زد و خورد، اما مال ما شکنجه محسوب می‌شد و مال آن‌ها می‌شد مقاومت؟)» در انکار شکنجه از سوی ثابتی باید عامل تحریف تاریخ و تطهیر خویش را پررنگ‌تر دانست یا نوعی رفتار قابل درک و تکرار شونده از سوی نهادهای شکنجه‌گر است که اصل موضوع را منکر می‌شوند تا در شدت و عمق آن جوابگو نباشند؟

In her recent book called *Unsettling Accounts*, Leslie Payne has studied many books like Mr. Sabeti's. She points out there is a huge variation – some are repentant, some are angry and blame others, some are unrepentant. She argues persuasively that what former torturers or their directors say depends entirely on the political context that they think exists around them. The decision is strategic and rhetorical decision, not a psychological expression. If the writer writes after a recent democratic transition, they tend to emphasize their professionalism as police officers – something the new government values. If they know they are appearing before a truth commission, they are repentant. If they know their will be no public accountability, they write words for their families to say about them after they are gone. Seen in that context, Mr. Sabeti's statement is probably in that genre of writing. If he knew he was likely to face legal action, he might have written something quite different.

In the case of the torturers Mr. Sabeti describes, that is a different matter. It is well-documented that torturers use their own language to describe what they are doing when they are torturing. This language does serve to not simply serve to keep the violence they do at a distance. It also serves to establish a division between “them” and “us.” If one questions this language, one does not belong to the group, and therefore at risk of being attacked. In this case, it is a matter of social psychology, and not strategy.