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Who Was a Bahā'ī in the Upper Echelons of Qājār Iran?

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Abstract: This paper addresses two questions: first, that of the nature of multiple religious identities in a traditional society; second, that of who can be identified as Bahā'īs in the upper echelons of Qājār Iran. The paper identifies five criteria by which individuals can be identified as having been Bahā'īs and suggests that, since none of these are usually conclusive by themselves, more than one of the criteria should be fulfilled before we label someone as a Bahā'ī. The various grades of being a Bahā'ī are also examined. The paper lists a number of examples of people from the Qājār royal family and from among the highest echelons of the Qājār administration who fulfill these criteria. It also looks at two individuals who have not been claimed to be Bahā'īs in the usual Iranian and Bahā'ī histories, and yet, if a close study of their lives is made, considerable evidence can be accumulated that they may have been crypto-Bahā'īs. In all, this paper indicates that there may have been many Bahā'īs in the upper strata of Qājār society, that this is a factor that has not previously been sufficiently recognized and needs to be examined for the light that it may shed on other matters.

Keywords: Baha'i; Bahai; Qajar; Iran; religious identity; crypto-believers; multiple religious identities; social elites

1. Introduction

The matter of multiple religious identities has been investigated by scholars for decades. Briefly, it can be said to occur in three distinct types. First, there are certain religious cultures where it is acceptable to practice multiple religious affiliations. A Chinese person may find no problem in marrying according to a Christian rite but being buried according to Traditional Chinese rituals. Japanese, African and Latin American cultures also appear to accept multiple religious identities readily (see for example, [Hedges 2017](#)). A related second type is the “New Age” type of pick-and-mix religiosity that may find someone practicing Buddhist meditation, dabbling in Kabbalah and participating in pagan rites (see, for example, [Bellah et al. 1985](#)). Third, there are groups of people who take on a religious identity in order to conceal another religious identity because that identity is being subjected to severe persecution. Examples of this include the Shi'ī practice of *taqiyya* (religious dissimulation), which enabled that community to survive centuries of persecution ([Momen 1985](#), p. 183), and Jews in Iran who, under threat of death, converted to Islam while secretly continuing to remain Jews as much as they were able ([Amanat 2011](#), pp. 37–59; [Tsadik 2007](#), pp. 36, 40). This paper examines this third category in relation to another religion that has been persecuted in Iran, the Bahā'ī community.

The claim of the central figure in the Bahā'ī religion, Bahā'u'llāh (1817–1892), which was fully developed by 1867, was to bring a new revelation from God, superseding Islam and more suited to the present time. The Bahā'ī community in Qājār Iran was subjected to intense persecution ([Momen 2015](#); [Momen 2021](#)). Any person publicly identified as a Bahā'ī could expect, as a minimum, harassment from elements in the town stirred up by the local clerics. Loss of property, loss of livelihood, loss of family connection (if they were the only Bahā'ī in the family) and even loss of life were also a distinct likelihood and a frequent occurrence. Not surprisingly, therefore, most Bahā'īs took steps to conceal their religious affiliation to varying extents. This concealment was described even by Europeans. The



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British scholar, Edward G. Browne (1862–1896), even though he came to Iran specifically looking for Bahā'īs, was unable to find any in the first half of his journey (Browne 1926).

Concealment of one's true opinions and beliefs was, and continues to be, deeply imbedded in Iranian culture. This is largely because it is an important part of the practice of Shī'ī Islam. The practice of *taqiyya* (dissimulation of one's belief if in danger because of them) was not simply an option for Iranian Shī'īs—it was obligatory according to many transmitted Traditions of the Shī'ī Imams. Although this Shī'ī practice of *taqiyya* was not allowed in the Bahā'ī teachings, being prudent and not unnecessarily submitting oneself to danger (*ḥikmat*) was part of the instructions given out by the Bahā'ī leadership.¹ In practice, Bahā'īs would take whatever measures were needed in their daily lives to conceal their identity, although if challenged directly, they would not deny being Bahā'īs. Thus, the Bahā'ī practice of *ḥikmat* differed from the Shī'ī practice of *taqiyya*, which allowed concealment of belief even to the point of denying being a Shī'ī. Of course, it took time for this change of culture to embed itself in the Bahā'ī community (see the example of Mīrzā Sa'īd Anṣārī below). Initially, this was not too much of a problem, since the general population persisted in calling them “Bābīs”, followers of the Bāb (1819–1850) who preceded Bahā'u'llāh. Therefore, if they were asked whether they were Bābīs, they could truthfully deny this. After a decade or so (i.e., by the 1870s), the religious and civil leaders realized this, and so, in addition to asking whether a person was a Bābī or not, they would add a requirement for that person to curse both Bahā'u'llāh and the Bāb, which most Bahā'īs would not do. This led on to other stratagems developed by Bahā'īs, the description of which is outside the subject matter of this paper.

Questions of religious identity are complicated enough even under normal circumstances, but when it is a matter of a religion that is being persecuted, it becomes more complicated as followers of that religion try to conceal their identity to mitigate the persecution. It becomes even more complicated when one is considering a member of a persecuted religion that has penetrated all strata of society. Those in the lower levels of society can, if identified and subjected to persecution, move away to a different location where they are not known and rebuild their lives (as many Bahā'īs did; Momen 1991). However, this course is not open to those in the upper echelons of society since they would become known wherever they moved; hence, they needed to be doubly cautious and build up elaborate mechanisms of concealment. The Bahā'ī leadership instructed the Bahā'īs to keep the Bahā'ī identity of high-ranking individuals secret and 'Abdu'l-Bahā would usually only communicate with such individuals through a single Bahā'ī intermediary, with no-one else in the community knowing.² An additional complication is that, in many parts of Iran, especially outside the large cities, the Bahā'īs were the only group advocating social reforms (such as democracy, modern education, advancement of the role of women, etc.), and so, some may have associated themselves with the Bahā'īs to advance such reforms rather than for religious reasons. There were also many Bahā'ī identities, both with regard to how various individuals viewed Bahā'u'llāh and also with regard to how the claims of Bahā'u'llāh evolved over time. A detailed look at this matter would extend this paper greatly and must await a further paper.

While much of this paper concerns the attempts by these notables to conceal their Bahā'ī identity, it should not be forgotten that some of these individuals were actively propagating the new religion; otherwise, it would not have spread through this layer of society (see the example of Āghā Jān Shāhanshāh Khānum and her family below) and some were quite open about their belief (see the example of Vazīr Humāyūn and Mu'ayyir ul-Mamālik below).

The writing of the history of Qājār Iran has largely ignored the Bahā'ī presence. In the case of Iranian writers, this was partly in an attempt by some to erase the Bahā'ī presence and partly because the information that someone was a Bahā'ī may have been unknown. Western scholars have relied upon these Iranian sources and have therefore replicated this erasure of the Bahā'ī community in their work (Momen 2008, p. 362 and n.). When considering the actors in Qājār history, a person's religious beliefs are of importance in

assessing their life and actions, and so, this paper is one preliminary attempt to inject the Bahā'ī component back into Iranian history.

Some prominent Bahā'ī families went to great lengths to conceal their Bahā'ī identity. The Afnāns, who were relatives of the Bāb and were a prominent Bahā'ī merchant family in Shiraz and Yazd, for example, used to sponsor Shī'ī rituals such as *rawḍih-khānīs* (recitals of the sufferings of the Imams) and a *dastih* (troupe of people chest-beating and self-flagellating in a ritual procession) during the Muharram commemorations (Afnan 2008, p. 81). In general, all converts from a Muslim background remained outwardly Muslims, while those from Zoroastrian and Jewish backgrounds retained an outward Zoroastrian and Jewish social identity, respectively. Children growing up in prominent families who were Bahā'īs sometimes never heard even the name Bahā'ī spoken at home in case one of the servants should hear and later make trouble for them.³ Those prominent people who were the only Bahā'ī in their family were in an even more difficult position, often having to keep their affiliation secret from even their spouses and children. For example, Mīrzā Muḥammad Riḍā Kirmānī, a mujtahid of Yazd, had met the Bāb and was a Bābī and later a Bahā'ī. He kept his belief so secret that neither the other Bahā'īs nor even his own family knew. Then, on his deathbed in 1885, he revealed this to his son, Shaykh Zaynu'l-'Abidīn Abrārī (1864–1936), and told him to go to Vakīl ud-Dawlih and investigate the Bahā'ī religion (Māzandarānī undated, vol. 6, pp. 798–806; Sulaymānī 1947–75, vol. 5, pp. 253–77). Similarly, the two sons of 'Abdu'l-Raḥīm Khān Kashānī Kalāntar of Tehran appear to have grown up unaware of the fact that their father was a Bahā'ī. It was only through their friendship with other Bahā'īs that they came to know of the new religion and became Bahā'īs (Gail 1987, pp. 1–67). This situation (of the children not knowing the father's affiliation with the Bahā'ī community) probably held true for many of those discussed in this paper.

With this degree of secrecy and concealment, it becomes extremely difficult to discern who was a Bahā'ī. It becomes necessary to try to lay down some criteria whereby someone can be considered a Bahā'ī. In this paper, we will consider the question of Bahā'ī identity in Qājār Iran, particularly as it relates to those in the upper echelons of society.⁴ How can we know whether a person from that period was a Bahā'ī or not? Among those factors that would enable us to identify a person as possibly having been a Bahā'ī, we may list the following:

1. *Those identified in Bahā'ī histories as a Bahā'ī.* This is usually a good source of identification since it usually means that the individual identified mixed with the Bahā'ī community. There are, however, some whose identification by this means might be contested; for example, the leading Shī'ī cleric of the 1880s, Mīrzā-yi-Shīrāzī, has been identified in one Bahā'ī source as a secret Bahā'ī on the basis of one confidential interview he gave (Afnan 2008, pp. 324–50), but such an identification is open to challenge since he never openly declared himself to be a Bahā'ī. The Bahā'ī identity of a number of other clerics has also been challenged, for example Ḥājī Mullā Muḥammad Hamzih Shar'atmadar of Barfurūsh (d. 1281/1864).⁵

2. *Those identified in other sources as Bahā'īs.* Other sources include Iranian Muslim, Zoroastrian, Jewish and European sources. Here again, such identifications are open to challenge since it was not uncommon for individuals to be identified as “Bābīs” (i.e., Bahā'īs) as a way of discrediting them. Indeed, as Nāẓim ul-Islām (Kirmānī) asserted, “It has become the norm in Iran that, whenever it is desired to overthrow someone and remove them from the political scene, they say that he is a Bābī” (Nāẓim ul-Islām 1967, p. 400). Hence, a simple identification of a person as a “Bābī” or Bahā'ī would not necessarily indicate that the person was a Bahā'ī, unless the context and source are carefully examined. For example, Sayyid Jamālu'd-Dīn Asadābādī “al-Afghānī” was often described as a “Bābī” in sources from the nineteenth century⁶ and when Nāṣiru'd-Dīn Shāh was assassinated by one of his followers, a number of Bahā'īs were attacked and even killed on this account. In fact, Asadābādī was associated with Azalī Bābīs but was not himself a Bābī and was somewhat inimical to the Bahā'īs.

3. *Having descendants who are Bahā'īs and who assert that their ancestor was a Bahā'ī.* Again, although this is good evidence, it is not conclusive. There are some who have Bahā'ī descendants and are said to have been Bahā'īs, but were probably not; for example, Māstir Khudābakhsh (1865–1918), a leading Zoroastrian of Yazd.⁷

4. *Supportive evidence from Bahā'ī sources.* Apart from direct statements that a particular person was a Bahā'ī, some sources contain other supportive evidence for a person being a Bahā'ī, such as the writings of the person themselves (especially their poetry, which may hint at their religious affiliation), being a member of a local Bahā'ī council (local spiritual assembly) or being in correspondence with or visiting the Bahā'ī leaders. However, while being a member of a local spiritual assembly is probably conclusive even in the absence of other evidence, very few individuals from the highest echelons of Qājār society would fit this criterion (perhaps only Mīrzā 'Alī Muḥammad Khān Muvaqqar ud-Dawlih (1865–1921), who was on the Shiraz Bahā'ī assembly and later governor of Bushihr (1911–1915)). Many individuals who wrote to Bahā'u'llāh and 'Abdu'l-Bahā or even visited them were not Bahā'īs and some were even antagonistic to the Bahā'ī religion.

5. *Supportive evidence from other sources.* Such evidence includes a close examination of a person's writings (especially their poetry, as in the case of Shaykh ur-Ra'īs below) and accounts of how the individual treated Bahā'īs while holding official positions. But of course, good treatment of Bahā'īs may just indicate a person's humanitarianism or there may have been other factors involved.⁸ Although it is not possible to prove conclusively that any such individuals were Bahā'īs, in all cases, it is necessary to ask the question: if this individual was not a crypto-Bahā'ī or close sympathizer, why would he or she have risked life and wealth by associating with or protecting Bahā'īs in such a manner that laid them open to the risk of being accused of being Bahā'īs?

As can be seen from the above, none of these pieces of evidence is conclusive and one should ideally have more than one piece of evidence from more than one of these criteria before suggesting that any individual may have been a Bahā'ī. The higher up the social scale one examines, the more that person might take steps to conceal their identity and so the more difficult it is to make a determination. As several Western observers noted, there were Bahā'īs in the highest echelons of the Qajar regime, including Qājār princes, highly placed officials and the immediate entourage of the Shah (see also below)⁹. Of course, one cannot know what was going on in the mind of a person, but one can assess their relationships and actions. Therefore, for many of these people, it is not possible to make a definitive determination of their religious beliefs and some of them may just have been close sympathizers of the religion rather than outright believers. In the rest of this paper, it is therefore understood that when an individual is designated a Bahā'ī, it indicates that there are sufficient grounds to think that the person may have been a Bahā'ī on account of satisfying more than one of the above five criteria, but that it is possible they may have just been a close sympathizer.

There are also examples of individuals who were not Bābīs or Bahā'īs but stood to be accused of being so, either because they had initially become believers in the new religion but later withdrew from it when persecutions arose, or because their father had been a Bābī or Bahā'ī. Such individuals sometimes acted vigorously to forestall such accusations, even to the extent of persecuting Bahā'īs. Examples of this include Mullā Ḥusayn ibn Mīrzā Sulaymān, a mujtahid, Ḥājī Rasūl Mīhrizī, Mullā Ḥusayn Ardakānī and Mullā Ḥasan Ardakānī, all from the Yazd area (Momen 2021, pp. 349–50, 365).

When one surveys the range of individuals who are in the upper echelons of Qājār society and for whom there is some evidence of their having been Bahā'īs, it is difficult to discern any pattern to this group. Given that the Bahā'ī social teachings advocate such reforms as the advancement of the role of women, modern education and democracy, one might think that there would be a predominance of those inclined towards supporting these reforms. In fact, however, one finds that they include both reformers and conservatives. It is possible to speculate that, while those who supported reforms were attracted to the social teachings of the Bahā'ī religion, those who were political conservatives may have been

attracted to the more mystical writings of the Bahā'ī leaders. Nor is there any geographical bias in the group. In this paper there is not any space to consider in detail the evidence for a large number of individuals. Instead, attention will be focused on the sort of evidence that exists by considering a small number of examples: individuals who were of national importance, leaving aside individuals who were only of local importance. It is also possible to identify a number of persons who are not stated to be Bahā'īs in either the standard Bahā'ī or Iranian sources, and yet, on a close examination of the events of their life, they can be demonstrated to have been, at the least, very sympathetic, but possibly even secret Bahā'īs. I will examine two of these in detail: one taken from the conservative end of the political spectrum and one who supported the reformers.

2. Some Prominent Individuals Who May Have Been Bahā'īs

2.1. Qājār Family

A number of princes and princesses of the Qājār family have been asserted to have been Bahā'īs. Apart from a few individuals, there are four main family clusters that can be identified. One of the earliest was Shams-i Jahan Khānum, who was known as Ḥājjiyyih Shāhzādi Khānum and used the pen name Fitnih. She was a daughter of Muḥammad Riḍā Mīrzā Iftikhār ul-Mulk, the fourteenth son of Faṭḥ-'Alī Shah. She became a Bābī, met Qurrat ul-'Ayn Ṭāhirih and visited Bahā'u'llāh in both Baghdad and Edirne. She wrote an autobiographical poem in which these events are related (*Māzandarānī undated*, vol. 6, p. 415; *Dhukā'ī-Bayḍā'ī 1969*, pp. 167–70, 177–82). She can be considered to have been a Bahā'ī on the basis of criteria 1 and 4 above. Her full brother Muḥammad Hāshim Mīrzā (Jināb) and a half-brother Akbar Mīrzā were also interested in the Bābī movement and attended Bābī meetings. It appears that Jināb later became a student of Mullā Hādī Sabzivārī and drifted away from the Bābī community (*Māzandarānī undated*, vol. 4, pp. 43–44; *Māzandarānī 1971*, p. 208).

Another family grouping of Bahā'īs were the descendants of Ḍiyā' us-Salṭanih (d. 1290/1873), the favorite daughter of Faṭḥ-'Alī Shah. She married Mīrzā Mas'ūd Anṣārī Garmrūdī (d. 1265/1848), who was foreign minister during the reign of Muḥammad Shah. Their daughter, Āghā Jān Shāhanshāh Khānum, married Mīrzā Muḥammad Qāsim Qāḍī Ṭabāṭabā'ī and from this marriage had two daughters, Āghā Shāhzādi (Badī'ih) and 'Udhra Khanum Ḍiyā ul-Ḥājjiyyih. The first daughter became a Bahā'ī through her husband Intizām us-Salṭanih (see below), who was a Bahā'ī, sometime in the late 1870s and in turn converted, with the assistance of her husband and other Bahā'īs, her mother and sister. After the death of her first husband, Shāhanshāh Khānum married Mīrzā Ma'sūm Khān Anṣārī Muntakhab ud-Dawlih, who was a Muslim relative of her first husband, and she moved to Mashhad, where her new husband had a government position, sometime in about 1880. She was put in touch with the prominent Bahā'ī Ibn Aṣḍaq in Mashhad and, after a time there, he married her daughter, Ḍiyā' ul-Ḥājjiyyih. In about 1882, they moved to Tehran, where their house in Khiyābān-i Amīriyyih was a place where many of the royal family and the notables of the city were introduced to the Bahā'ī religion. There are several writings of the Bahā'ī leaders addressed to Āghā Jān Shāhanshāh Khanum and her two daughters.¹⁰ Their descendants today claim them as Bahā'īs. Thus, they appear to have been Bahā'īs on the basis of criteria 1, 3 and 4.

A third family grouping revolved around Tahmasp (or Tahmasb) Mīrzā Mu'ayyad ud-Dawlih, second son of Muḥammad 'Alī Mīrzā Dawlatshāh (1220–1296). He had been governor of Fars during the second Nayrīz upheaval and, thus, was at least partly responsible for the killings of the Bābīs in that episode. Later, however, when he was deputy governor of Khurāsān in about 1864, Ḥājī Ibrāhīm Tūnī gave him a copy of Bahā'u'llāh's Kitāb-i Īqān and he is reported to have declared that either one had to declare oneself without religion or one had to accept the truth of the author of this book (*Māzandarānī undated*, vol. 6, p. 74n). After this, he was in close contact with and protected Nabīl-i Akbar, a prominent Bahā'ī, for much of the rest of his stay in Khurāsān. His sister, who is also called Shams-I Jahan Khanum (but is different to the above person of the same name),

became a Bābī after meeting Qurratu'l-'Ayn Ṭāhirih in Hamadan ([Gulpāygānī n.d.](#), p. 105). She took with her to this meeting her nephew, the son of Tahmasb Mīrẓā, Muḥammad Mahdī Mīrẓā, Mu'ayyad us-Salṭānih, who was years later converted in Hamadan by the learned Bahā'ī scholar Mīrẓā Abul-Fadl Gulpaygani, along with his son, Muḥammad Ḥusayn Mīrẓā Mu'ayyad us-Salṭānih (after 1916 Mu'ayyad ud-Dawlih, 1855–1920). The latter was in the telegraph department in Tehran, then head of that department in Isfahan until 1897 and then in Shiraz from 1897 to 1905. During the Constitutionalist revolt, he sided with Muḥammad 'Alī Shah and was pressed into becoming the head of the royal cabinet. After the shah's defeat, he left Iran for Baghdad. At this time, he went to 'Akkā and met 'Abdu'l-Bahā. He returned to Iran and wrote a book of Bahā'ī proofs. He was in the court of Aḥmad Shah and was appointed governor of Kashan for a time, then of 'Arabistan (Khuzistan) and died in Muḥammarah in 1339/1920, shortly after his appointment to the latter post ([Māzandarānī 1974–5](#), vol. 8a, pp. 426–27, vol. 8b, p. 832; [Sulaymānī 1947–75](#), vol. 2, pp. 266–71; [Mihrābkhānī 1988](#), pp. 136–41; [Churchill 1906](#), pp. 45–46; [Hafezi 2011](#), pp. 158–59). While the evidence for Tahmasp Mīrẓā amounts to criteria 1 and 4, and that for Shams-i Jahan Khanum criteria 1 and 2 in the above classification, the two Mu'ayyad us-Salṭānihs, father and son, were in correspondence with the Bahā'ī leaders and had Bahā'ī descendants and so can be considered to have points 1, 3 and 4 in support of their being Bahā'īs.

A fourth family grouping is that of Ḥājī Abu'l-Hasan Mīrẓā Shaykh ur-Ra'īs (1264/1848–1918), a Qājār prince who first undertook religious training and became a *mujtahid* and then was a prominent figure in the reform movement. Although most Iranian histories ignore all connections between him and the Bahā'ī religion, there is good evidence that he was a Bahā'ī. This evidence includes his two visits to 'Abdu'l-Bahā, his poetry that alludes strongly to Bahā'ī themes and the fact that he was widely acknowledged to be a Bahā'ī by both his friends and enemies during his lifetime. It appears that his mother, Khurshīd Bīgum, was secretly a Bābī and raised him thus. Much of this evidence is collected in two articles by Juan Cole and therefore need not be detailed here.¹¹ In brief, Ḥājī Shaykh ur-Ra'īs satisfies criteria 1, 2, 4 and 5.

2.2. High Government Officials

Here again, we can discern a number of family groups among whose members a few appear to have become Bahā'īs. One of these is the Ghaffārī family of Kashan, whose most famous member was Amīn ad-Dawlih Ghaffārī, who was Minister of court for most of Nāṣiru'd-Dīn Shah's reign. His son, Mahdī Khān Vazīr Humāyūn (Qā'im-Maqām, Vazīr Makhsūs, Ajudān Makhsūs, 1282/1865–1336/1917), was at first very opposed to the Bahā'īs, but while he was governor of Sulṭānābād in 1904, he was converted by Ḥājī Munis, Ḥājī Tavāngar and Mullā Mīrẓā Āqā Ṭalqānī. Although he tended to be a conservative, he is credited with having persuaded Muẓaffaru'd-Dīn Shah to sign the Constitution when the latter was wavering. It is possible that the influence of the Bahā'ī teachings caused this. After the Constitutional Revolution, he retired to his estate at Vādḡān near Kashan. Although advised by 'Abdu'l-Bahā to be prudent, he came to Tehran and began to teach the Bahā'ī teachings openly. Then he left to visit 'Abdu'l-Bahā in Egypt in 1910 and this fact was announced in the newspapers ([Sulaymānī 1947–75](#), vol. 9, p. 315; [Āvārih 1923](#), vol. 2, pp. 181–83; [Khoshbin 2002](#), vol. 1, pp. 339–41). He satisfies criteria 1, 2, 4 and 5. When news that Vazīr Humāyūn had set off to visit 'Abdu'l-Bahā reached his family, his mother sent his older brother, Abu'l-Qāsim Khān Mukhtār us-Salṭānih, in pursuit to prevent the visit and save the family's honour. Thus, Mukhtār us-Salṭānih met 'Abdu'l-Bahā in Ramlah and became a Bahā'ī there. Mukhtār us-Salṭānih was killed by rebels near Khurramābād during World War I (before 1917; [Khoshbin 2002](#), vol. 1, pp. 341–42). He satisfies criterion 1 only.

A cousin of these two brothers, Ghulām Ḥusayn Khān Ghaffārī Amīn Khalvat (Vazīr Makhsūs, Ṣāhib Ikhtiyār), was private secretary to Nāṣiru'd-Dīn and Muẓaffaru'd-Dīn Shāhs until 1896, then Minister of Court. He is reported to have accepted the new religion after being taught by Nabīl Zarandī in 1864. He was in friendly correspondence with Ṣadr

uṣ-Ṣudūr, a learned Bahā'ī of Tehran, and also closely associated with the Bahā'ī merchant, Muḥammad Ḥusayn Tabrīzī of Kashan (Sulaymānī 1947–75, vol. 10, p. 578; Rastigār 1951, pp. 30–31; Rayḥānī in Amanat 2006, p. 303). He satisfies criteria 1 and 4. His brother, Muḥammad Khān Iqbāl ud-Dawlih, was friendly towards the Bahā'īs while governor of Kirmanshah, and was closely associated with the Bahā'ī merchant, Muḥammad Ḥusayn Tabrīzī of Kashan, and with another Bahā'ī Āqā Muḥammad Karīm Mahūt-furūsh (velvet seller), Qavām Divān Iṣfahānī. He can only therefore be confidently said to have been a sympathizer (Rayḥānī in Amanat 2006, p. 303; 'Alāqiband Yazdī 1910, p. 230; Sulaymānī 1947–75, vol. 3, p. 147).

The Ghaffarī family was connected by marriage to the Intizām us-Salṭanih family. Mīr Sayyid 'Abdullāh Tafrishī Intizām us-Salṭanih Tafrishī (d. 1892) was the son of Mīrzā Mūsā, *vazīr* of Tehran and brother of Mīrzā 'Īsā, *vazīr* of Tehran (*vazīr* was in effect deputy governor and in charge of finances). In 1309/1891, he succeeded Count De Monteforte as the head of the gendarmerie or police (*vazīr nazmiyyih*). He had become a Bahā'ī through Munajjim-bāshī, who was also from Tafrish, and had converted his wife, Āghā Shāh-zādiḥ (Badī'ih), the above-mentioned Qājār princess. His son, Mīr Sayyid Muḥammad Intizām us-Salṭanih, was also a Bahā'ī (1870–1932) and was among the entourage of 'Abdu'l-Bahā in Paris (Balyuzi 1987, p. 372; Rafati 2000). He was married to Khurshīd Liqā, daughter of Mīrzā Ibrāhīm Khan Mu'āvin ud-Dawlih Ghaffarī, and thus a cousin of the above-mentioned Mahdī Khan Vazīr Humāyūn Ghaffarī. Both father and son qualify as Bahā'īs on points 1 and 3 (and the father on point 5 also). However, the story of the Intizām us-Salṭanih family is complicated by the question of multiple religious identities, since both father and son were also Sufis. Thus, Mīr Sayyid Muḥammad Intizām us-Salṭanih both attained a high position in the Anjuman Ukhuvvat, a branch of the Ni'matu'llāhī order, and at the same time was in the entourage of 'Abdu'l-Bahā in Paris and there are pictures of him assuming a posture of deference to 'Abdu'l-Bahā. It is difficult to assess whether the participation in a Sufi order was a cover for being a Bahā'ī or whether he was able to maintain dual religious beliefs.

Others who were among the entourage of 'Abdu'l-Bahā in Europe were the above-mentioned Mīrzā Mahdī Khan Ghaffarī Vazīr Humāyūn as well as Dūst Muḥammad Khān Mu'ayyir ul-Mamālik (d. 1913), a son-in-law of Nāṣiru'd-Dīn Shāh, who accompanied 'Abdu'l-Bahā from London to Bristol and to Paris, being frequently seen in his company, and is accounted a Bahā'ī in some sources.¹²

In eastern Māzandarān, and especially in the provincial capital Sārī, during the period leading up to and during the Constitutional Revolution, many of the leading figures in the area were Bahā'īs or close sympathizers; some of them had national importance, such as Luṭf-'Alī Khān Kulbādī (d. 1352/1933), who, at various times, held the titles Salār Mukarram, Salār Muhtasham, Muhtasham Niẓām and Sardār Jalīl, and Qāsim Khān Huzhabr Khāqān 'Abdu'l-Malikī Zaghamarzi (later Huzhabr ud-Dawlih). The evidence for this is presented elsewhere (Momen 2008) and therefore need not be detailed here.

The Bahā'ī religion also penetrated a number of the most powerful tribal families of Iran. Ḥusayn Qulī Khān Māfī (1248/1832–1326/1908) had the title Sa'd ul-Mulk until 1305/1887 and then was Niẓām us-Salṭanih. He was from the Māfī tribe which had relocated from their original homeland in Luristān to Fārs and subsequently to Qazvin and is in some sources described as being from the Ahl-i Ḥaqq religious group. Niẓām us-Salṭanih was governor of Bushīr (1299/1881–1300/1882), Zanjan (1303/1885–1305/1887), Khuzistan (1305/1887–1308/1890, 1312/1894–1314/1897); Minister of Justice and Commerce (1315/1897–1316/1898); Minister of Finance (1316/1898–1317/1899); agent for the Crown Prince as governor of Ādharbāyjan (1317/1899–1325/1907); and Prime Minister (1325/1907–1326/1908). He protected the Bahā'īs whenever he was governor of a town, especially after his contact with Mullā Rajab 'Alī Ardakanī in Yazd (where he was governor 1291/1874–1292/1875; at this time he held the title Sa'd ul-Mulk); his wife (the sister of Mīrzā Ḥusayn Khān 'Ahdīyyih, Māzandarānī 1974–5, vol. 8a, p. 442), his private secretary Mīrzā Ḥusayn Khān, his tailor Ustād Mīrzā Shīrāzī, his cook Mīrzā Jalāl and indeed most of

the people in his employ were Bahā'īs (Uskū'ī 1926, part 1, p. 83). His brother, Muḥammad Hasan Khan Sa'd ul-Mulk (d. 1900), was governor of Bushihr (1300/1882–1303/1885), of Bushihr and all of the Gulf ports (1305/1885–1308/1890, 1310/1892–1312/1894), and of Luristān and Burūjird (1312/1894–1314/1896) (Bāmdād 1968, vol. 1, pp. 448–56; Churchill 1906, pp. 70, 75; Varjāvand 1998, vol. 3, pp. 2046–47). He was given the title Sa'd ul-Mulk in 1305/1887 when his brother became Nizām us-Salṭanih. Both Bahā'ī and European sources state that both brothers were Bahā'īs.¹³ Thus, on criteria 1, 2 and 5, they can be accounted as having probably been Bahā'īs. The fact that their cousin Karīm Khān Māfi was recorded as a Bābī and later a Bahā'ī of Qazvin (Māzandarānī n.d., vol. 3, p. 385, vol. 6, p. 559) indicates a deeper Bahā'ī penetration into this family than just these two brothers.

There is also evidence of Bahā'ī penetration of the leadership of the Bakhtiyārī tribe. While 'Alī Muḥammad Varqā, a prominent Bahā'ī, was in prison in Isfahan, he is reported to have converted to the Bahā'ī religion his fellow prisoner, Iskandar Khān Bakhtiyārī, a son of Ḥusayn-Qulī Khān Īlkhānī (chief) of the Bakhtiyārī tribe (Sulaymānī 1947–75, pp. 259–62; Malmīrī 1992, pp. 42–43; Varqā 1994, pp. 23–24; Balyuzi 1985, pp. 78–80). His brother, 'Alī Qulī Khān Sardar As'ad, one of the foremost leaders of the Constitutionalist Revolution, had, while in France, taken on a Bahā'ī, Mīrzā Ḥabībullah Shīrāzī (later 'Ayn ul-Mulk), as tutor to his children and on their return to Iran, collaborated with him in translating books from French into Persian (Milani 2000, p. 43). Later in 1913, he met 'Abdu'l-Bahā in Paris and entertained him (Faizi 1986, p. 175). The Russian scholar and military official Alexander Tumanski, who was conducting research on the Bahā'ī community, reported in 1895 that he knew of two Bakhtiyārī Khans among the sons of Huseyn Qulī Khān who were Bahā'īs (Shahvar et al. 2011, vol. 1, p. 163, vol. 2, p. 81). If this statement refers to these two brothers, then Iskandar Khān satisfies criteria 1 and 2; while 'Alī-Qulī Khān satisfies criteria 2, 4 and 5.

There are a few individuals who were higher placed in government but for whom the evidence is weaker (as mentioned above, this will generally be the case because they had a greater need to conceal their religious identity). For example, there are contradictory indications of the attitude towards the Bābī and Bahā'ī religions of Mīrzā Yūsuf Khān Ashtiyānī Mustawfī ul-Mamālik (1812–1886), who was in charge of the State Treasury from the time of his father's death in 1845 and also effectively the chief minister to Nāshīru'd-Dīn Shah from 1867 to 1871 and from 1873 until 1884, when he was formally appointed Prime Minister and remained such until his death. In the time of the Bāb, he was presented with two of the books of the Bāb and is reported to have been won over by their contents (Nabīl 1970, p. 592). The government newspaper of the time reports that, at the time of the public execution of Bābīs in Tehran after the attempt of the life of the Shah in 1852, he personally fired the pistol shots that killed Mullā Zaynu'l-'Abidīn Yazdī, but he is reported to have later written to Bahā'u'llāh denying this (Balyuzi 1985, p. 446). His close companion Mullā Ḥasan of Sulṭānābād was an adherent of Bahā'u'llāh and it is reported that, when the latter was going to Baghdad to visit Bahā'u'llāh, Mustawfī asked him to ask Bahā'u'llāh for prayers that a son be born to him. Bahā'u'llāh is then reported to have given Mullā Ḥasan some sweetmeats with instructions that Mustawfī was to partake of these. Mustawfī then had a son whom he named Ḥasan and who inherited the title of Mustawfiyu'l-Mamalik (Māzandarānī undated, vol. 6, pp. 345–46). In 1868, he was instrumental in getting Bahā'u'llāh's half-brother Mīrzā Riḍā Qulī freed after he had been imprisoned in Tehran for being a "Bābī" (Māzandarānī undated, vol. 5, p. 487). He is also reported to have eventually come to believe in Bahā'u'llāh through Mīrzā Maḥmūd Khān Balūch ('Abdu'l-Bahā 1971, pp. 92–93; Fu'ādī Bushrū'ī 2007, pp. 400–1; Ishrāq-Khāvarī 2004, p. 242). He may thus be considered to have satisfied criteria 1, 4 and 5 for being a Bahā'ī.

Similarly, Mīrzā Sa'd Anṣārī Mu'tamin ul-Mulk (1815–1884) was, for many years, the Foreign Minister of Iran (1852–1873, 1880–1884). Although Anṣārī carried out a number of actions against the Bābī and Bahā'ī movements, including taking part in the executions of Bābīs in 1852 and pressing for the exile of Bahā'u'llāh from Baghdad to Istanbul in 1862–3, he is also reported to have met Bahā'u'llāh in Tehran and to have been friendly towards the

Bābīs and Bahā'īs. When Mushīr ud-Dawlih was Prime Minister, Anṣārī was dismissed from his post as Foreign Minister and was appointed the chief custodian of the Shrine of Imam Riḍā in Mashhad (1873–1880). One source reports that during the interrogation of the Bahā'ī Ḥājī 'Abdu'l-Majīd Nishāpūrī in Mashhad by the governor Rukn ud-Dawlih, Anṣārī urged Nishāpūrī to say some words of denial of his faith in order to save himself. Anṣārī is then reported to have said: "You know that Bahā'u'llāh mentioned my name in the Tablet to Nāṣiru'd-Dīn Shah and I also am a believer in this Cause. But it is necessary to preserve oneself. Come, the Prince [Rukn ud-Dawlih] does not want to spill your blood, so just say that I am not of this sect" (Fu'ādī Bushrū'ī 2007, p. 79; Ishrāq-Khāvarī 1987, pp. 687–99; see also Balyuzi 1980, p. 446; Māzandarānī undated, vol. 6, p. 39). Anṣārī's knowledge of the new religion may have come from his cousin's daughter, Āghā Jān Shāhanshāh Khānum (see above). This anecdote suggests that the Shī'ī culture of *taqiyya* (see above) may have lingered among some Bahā'īs in the higher echelons of Qājār society (such as Anṣārī), while it was disappearing among the generality of the Bahā'īs (exemplified by Nishāpūrī who refused to practice *taqiyya* and was executed). However, this is to be expected since these high-ranking individuals needed to keep themselves isolated from the Bahā'ī community for their own safety and so would also be less influenced by changes taking place in the culture of the community.

However, the situation is very complicated and not easy to unravel. For example, Mīrzā 'Alī Asghar Khan Amīn us-Sulṭān, who was Prime Minister for most of the latter part of Nāṣiru'd-Dīn Shah's reign and also part of Muẓaffaru'd-Dīn Shah's reign, is said to have been a secret Bahā'ī in a report from Col. E.C. Ross, British Consul in Bushihr, in September 1888 (Momen 1980, p. 247). Although this statement is not corroborated in Bahā'ī sources, he was in correspondence with the Bahā'ī leadership and did act to protect the Bahā'īs on several occasions, most notably after the assassination of Nāṣiru'd-Dīn Shah when he acted energetically to suppress the initial rumour that this had been the work of "Bābīs", and to establish the fact that it was a follower of Sayyid Jamālu'd-Dīn Asadābādī who was responsible (Māzandarānī 1974–5, vol. 8a, pp. 534–35; Sulaymānī 1947–75, pp. 454–55). Thus interestingly, he is an individual who satisfies criteria 2, 4 and 5 and may have become close to being a Bahā'ī in the 1890s but then drifted away from the community and did not make any great effort as Prime Minister to contain the anti-Bahā'ī pogrom in Yazd in 1903.

3. Identity as a Bahā'ī Based on Patterns of Behavior

Finally, in this paper, I propose to examine the lives of two individuals who are not regarded as having been Bahā'īs in the standard Iranian or Bahā'ī histories,¹⁴ and yet a close reading of the record of their lives yields several lines of evidence for both individuals indicating that they may indeed have been secret believers in the new religion or close sympathizers. These two are of interest in that they span the political spectrum, one being a staunch conservative and the other having eventually sided with the reformers.

'Abdu'l-Ḥusayn Mīrzā Farmānfarmā (1858–1939) was a Qājār grandee whose father, Fīrūz Mīrzā Nuṣrat ud-Dawlih, was a brother of Muḥammad Shah. Farmānfarmā was himself closely connected with Muẓaffaru'd-Dīn Shah. He was married to the Shah's daughter and his sister was the Shah's favorite wife. The starting point of our investigation is the fact that Nuṣrat ad-Dawlih appointed a Bābī, Mullā Ibrāhīm Mullā-bāshī, as the tutor to Farmānfarmā and his older brother, 'Abdu'l-Ḥamīd Mīrzā Nāṣir ud-Dawlih, while he was governor of Sulṭānābād (in the late 1850s). This must of course raise questions about the religious allegiance of Nuṣrat ad-Dawlih himself. Later, during the governorship of both Farmānfarmā and his brother in Kirman in the 1880s and early 1890s, the Bahā'īs were free from harassment and this in a city that had several elements who were hostile to the Bahā'īs (Uṣūlīs, Shaykhīs and Azalīs). At this time, he employed a Bahā'ī, Muḥammad 'Alī Khān, as his steward and the latter's son, 'Azīzu'llāh Misbāh, as his secretary. Later his steward was another Bahā'ī, namely, Āqā Sayyid Naṣru'llāh Kashanī (Amānat 2012, p. 377). When he was governor of Fars in the late 1910s, Farmānfarmā again defended the Bahā'īs (Etemad 2012). Farmānfarmā attended a fête at the Bahā'ī Tarbiyat School in Tehran in

about 1910 (Thābit 1997, p. 55) and sent his children to the Tarbiyat schools.¹⁵ A property that Farmānfarmā owned in Kirmānshāh was rented by a Bahā'ī, Mīrzā Muḥammad Ṣarrāf Iṣfahānī. The remains of the Bāb were placed there for one or two nights on their way from Iran to 'Akkā in 1898. When the Bahā'īs approached Farmānfarmā in 1920 to purchase the property as it was regarded as a holy site, he gave it to them without any recompense.¹⁶

Farmānfarmā's sons, Firuz Mīrzā Nuṣrat ud-Dawlih and Muḥammad 'Alī Mīrzā, were among the Qājār princes who met 'Abdu'l-Bahā in Paris (Faizi 1986, p. 304; Jasion 2012, pp. 140, 319). In a telegram dated 15 January 1917, Col. Hugh Gough, the British Consul in Shiraz—who was well informed about the Bahā'ī community in Shiraz as his Persian secretary, Mīrzā Faḍlu'llah Banān, was a Bahā'ī—lists some of the prominent Bahā'īs in Shiraz, adding that “the Governor-General's son Fīrūz Mīrzā is also said to be one [a Bahā'ī].”¹⁷ As mentioned above, Farmānfarmā's older brother, 'Abdu'l-Ḥamīd Mīrzā Nāṣir ud-Dawlih, protected the Bahā'īs during the time he was governor of Kirman. He married the daughter of one of the most active Bahā'ī women of Rafsanjān. There are thus many indicators that Farmānfarmā and possibly his brother and son may have been crypto-Bahā'īs.

From the other end of the political spectrum was Muḥammad Valī Khān Tunukābunī, who held the titles Naṣr us-Salṭānih and Sipahsalār-i A'ẓam, and who was governor of Rasht 1899–1903. At first, he supported Muḥammad 'Alī Shah but then emerged in February 1909 as commander of the Constitutionalist forces, which, after taking Rasht, marched on Tehran and entered it in July 1909, forcing Muḥammad 'Alī Shah's abdication. He was then Prime Minister several times and held some other important posts until his death in 1926. It is not possible to be certain what early connections he had with the Bahā'ī community, but it is possible this was through Sulaymān Khān Tunukābunī (Jamāl Effendi), a prominent Bahā'ī who was from the same Khal'atbarī family as Muḥammad Valī Khān (they were the largest land-owners in Tunukābun). In any case, in 1899, 'Alī Qulī Khan, a Bahā'ī from a prominent family, stated that the Bahā'īs of Rasht knew him to be a Bahā'ī when he was governor there and 'Alī Qulī Khan approached him as a Bahā'ī for help to obtain a passport to go to 'Akkā to assist 'Abdu'l-Bahā with translation work.¹⁸ The British Consul at Rasht reported that the people of Rasht in 1903 also thought that he was a Bahā'ī (Momen 1980, p. 375). Finally, the French Oriental scholar Nicolas reports that when he was French Consul in Tabriz in 1912, Muḥammad Valī Khān (then Governor of Tabriz) called on him: “The conversation revolved entirely around the Bāb, with whose doctrines my guest seemed to agree” (Momen 1980, p. 515). Muḥammad Valī Khān was among those Iranian notables who met 'Abdu'l-Bahā in Paris in 1913 and was in touch with the Bahā'īs there.¹⁹ Hence, although he is not listed as a Bahā'ī in any of the standard Bahā'ī histories or in any Iranian histories, the facts of his life do provide some *prima facie* evidence that he may indeed have been a crypto-Bahā'ī. It is also possible to speculate that his Bahā'ī sympathies may have been an underlying cause for his switch from the Royalist to the Constitutionalist side.

4. Conclusions

This paper has addressed the question of the nature of religious identity and the possible presence of many Bahā'īs or Bahā'ī sympathizers in the upper echelons of Qājār Iran. It has identified five criteria by which individuals can be identified as having been Bahā'īs and has suggested that, since none of these are usually conclusive by themselves, there should be several lines of evidence across more than one of these criteria before we label someone as possibly having been a Bahā'ī or a close sympathizer. It has listed a number of examples of people from the Qājār royal family and from among the highest echelons of the Qājār administration who fulfill these criteria. It has noted that they were from all shades of opinion across the political spectrum (from reformists to conservatives). It has also looked at two individuals who have not been claimed to be Bahā'īs in the usual Iranian and Bahā'ī histories, and yet, if a close study of their lives is made, considerable evidence can be accumulated that they may have been crypto-Bahā'īs or close sympathizers. In all, this paper indicates that there may have been many Bahā'īs in the upper strata of

Qājār society, and that this is a factor that has not previously been sufficiently recognized and needs to be examined for the light that it may shed on other matters.

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Notes

- ¹ For more about this complex issue, see (Lambden 2022; Maneck 1996). In his writings, MacEoin (see for example 1983, pp. 226–27) equates *ḥikmat* and *taqīyya*, which is incorrect, as I have indicated in the text. This matter is, however, more complex than can be dealt with in a footnote.
- ² For example, Jamāl Effendi was sent to Iran to be ‘Abdu’l-Bahā’s intermediary for a message sent privately to Amīn us-Sulṭān (‘Abdu’l-Bahā 1971, pp. 137–38).
- ³ Information was given to the present writer by Mr Hasan Balyuzi whose father, Muvaqqar ud-Dawlih, was governor of the Gulf Ports at the beginning for the twentieth century and a Bahā’ī; his mother was also a Bahā’ī; notes of interview, 23 June 1977. Similar information was given to the present writer by Fereydoun Hoveyda, whose father, Mīrzā Ḥabību’llāh ‘Ayn ul-Mulk, was an Iranian ambassador based in Beirut; personal communication, 25 April 2005. In this latter case, however, the mother was not a Bahā’ī.
- ⁴ There may of course be a great deal of relevant, perhaps even definitive, information in Iranian government archives and in the Bahā’ī World Centre archives, but these are at present inaccessible.
- ⁵ For Bahā’ī assertions that he was a Bābī and then a Bahā’ī, see (Māzandarānī n.d., vol. 3, pp. 437–41n). This is supported by a non-Bahā’ī Iranian historian (Bāmdād 1968, vol. 3, p. 452). For those asserting he was not a Bābī or Bahā’ī, see (Mudarrisī-Chahārdihī 1972, pp. 167–71; Kazembeyki 2003, pp. 272–3, n. 111). For more details of this controversy, see (Momen 2015, pp. 304–5n).
- ⁶ See for example the letter of Amin us-Sultan to Mīrzā-yi Shirazi in Rajab 1309 (Ṣafā’ī 1976, p. 318), and a similar letter in Jamādī II 1309 in which he accuses those stirring up agitation against the Tobacco Regie of being Bābīs (Najafī and Rasūl 1994, vol. 2, p. 183). See also the dispatch of Henry Longworth, the British Consul at Trebizond, who states that Asadābādī is the head of the “Bābīs” (Momen 1980, pp. 362–63).
- ⁷ (Sifidvash 1999, pp. 88–9). Although he has Bahā’ī descendants and some have claimed him as a Bahā’ī, it is clear from ‘Abdu’l-Bahā’s words (Sifidvash 1999, p. 88; Māzandarānī undated, vol. 7, p. 316) that he regarded him as a sympathizer rather than a believer.
- ⁸ For example, Zill us-Sulṭān released the Bahā’ī ‘Alī Muḥammad Khān Varqā from prison in 1883 partly because he was hoping that the Bahā’īs would assist him in his bid for the throne and partly because Varqā had assisted Zill us-Sulṭān’s confidant Ḥājī Sayyāh in Tabriz (Momen 2021, p. 24).
- ⁹ See for example (Feuvrier 1906, pp. 101–2), who makes this assertion. Doctor Feuvrier was Nasir al-Din Shah’s personal physician in the early 1890s.
- ¹⁰ (Māzandarānī undated, vol. 6, pp. 36–37; Brookshaw 2008, pp. 50–52); see also memorandum by Malik-Khusravi in (Arbāb 1990, p. 507) which gives slightly different details.
- ¹¹ (Sulaymānī 1947–75, vol. 7, pp. 420–47; Māzandarānī undated, vol. 6, pp. 37–47; Māzandarānī 1974–5, vol. 8a, pp. 208–18). See also (Fu’ādī Bushrū’ī 2007, pp. 88–9, 145; Ishrāq-Khāvarī 1987, p. 692; Afnān 1997, p. 39; Malikzādīh 1949, vol. 1, p. 212; Cole 1998, pp. 93–116; Cole 2002). On his poetry, see Kazzāzī, *Shaykh ur-Ra’īs Qājār* 33–34; the phrase used “*inkishāfāt-i qalbiyyih va futūḥāt-i ghaybiyyih*” is probably a deliberate allusion to Ibn ul-‘Arabī’s *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyah* and an assertion that Shaykh ur-Ra’īs found in Palestine a parallel to the ‘revelations’ that Ibn ul-‘Arabī had experienced in Mecca.
- ¹² (Zarqānī 1982, vol. 2, pp. 85–86, 88, 101, 116; Balyuzi 1987, pp. 347, 369, 370, 372; Ishrāq-Khāvarī 1966, p. 209; Faizi 1986, p. 173); Dūst Muḥammad Khān’s father, Dūst ‘Alī Khān Mu’ayyir ul-Mamālik, had been a friend of Bahā’u’llāh and even visited him in the Siyāh Chāl prison.
- ¹³ (Māzandarānī 1971, undated, vol. 6, p. 559, vol. 8a, p. 77) states that Nizām al-Salṭanih was a close sympathizer and his brother Sa’d ul-Mulk was a Bahā’ī but a report from the British Consul in Bushihr, Col. E.C. Ross, in September 1888, states that both brothers were Bahā’īs (Momen 1980, p. 247). Hasan Balyuzi who was closely familiar with all aspects of the Gulf confirmed that both were Bahā’īs; (Momen 1980, p. 247) (my footnote on this page was on the basis of the information given to me by Mr Balyuzi). See also (Bāmdād 1968, vol. 1, pp. 448–56; Varjāvand 1998, vol. 3, pp. 2045–46).
- ¹⁴ By standard Bahā’ī historical sources, it is meant such works as (Māzandarānī 1971, undated, 9 vols; Āvārih 1923; Balyuzi 1980, 1985, 1987). By standard Iranian historical sources, it is meant such works as (Bāmdād 1968; Malikzādīh 1949; Nāzīm ul-Islām 1967; Kazembeyki 2003).
- ¹⁵ His daughter, Sattareh Farman Farmaian (1992, p. 49), and his son, Khodadad Farmanfarmaian (1982), attended the Tarbiyat school (he was later director of the Shah’s Plan Organization).

- ¹⁶ (Faizi 1986, pp. 303–4). There are other hints of Farmānfarmā's allegiance to the Bahā'ī religion. Thus, for example, he named his estate and gardens in Tajrīsh north of Tehran the Riḍvāniyyih (possibly after the Garden of Riḍvan associated with Bahā'u'llāh); (Farmanfarmaian 1982).
- ¹⁷ Telegram from Gough to Sir Charles Marling, British Envoy at Tehran, FO 248 1159, Public Record Office, London.
- ¹⁸ 'Alī Qulī Khan needed a passport to get to 'Akkā but his family had sent word to Muḥammad Valī Khān that he should be detained at Rasht. "Khan, however, approached him and whispered in his ear, 'The Bahā'ī Faith has reached America and they need translations of the sacred writings into English. I would therefore be useful to 'Abdu'l-Bahā in 'Akkā. It is urgent that I should go to Him.' The result was, the Governor issued one passport for Khan." (Gail 1987, p. 100).
- ¹⁹ Tunukābunī had been given a copy of 'Abdu'l-Bahā's book *Mufawīḍāt* (*Some Answered Questions*, edited by Laura Clifford Barney). He had, as a young man, heard an eye-witness account of the execution of Badī', Bahā'u'llāh's messenger to Nāshiru'd-Dīn Shah, and has written a moving account of this on the margins of a page of this copy of *Mufawīḍāt*. See (Balyuzi 1980, pp. 300–9) (including photographic reproduction of one page of the account of the execution of Badī' in Tunukābunī's hand-writing).

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