



Sepehr Kashani, Muhammad-Taqi. *Nasikh al-Tawarikh (History of the Qajar Period)*. Tehran, Iran: Asatir Publishing. 2008.

Nasikh al-Tawarikh (lit. "Abrogator of Histories") is a nine-volume series by Muhammad Taqi Kashani (1801/2-1879/80 AD) entitled Sepehr (lit. "heaven" or "sky") and later Lisan al-Mulk (lit. "Tongue [or Mouthpiece] of the Nation"). Sepehr was a court historian during the reigns of two Qajar kings, Muhammad Shah (1834-1848 AD) and Nasir al-Din Shah (1848-1896 AD). After Sepehr's death, Nasir al-Din Shah instructed Sepehr's two sons, Abbas Quli Khan and Mirza Hedayat Khan, to finish the task of completing the monumental series. The first five volumes of *Nasikh al-Tawarikh* cover the history of humankind from the time of Adam to the Qajar period, with special emphasis on Islam and Muslim figures. The last four volumes published in two books are an independent collection that is also known as *Tarikh Qajariyyih* (History of the Qajar Period). Book one combines volumes one and two and book two contains volumes three and four. The Qajar volumes start with the establishment of the Qajar dynasty in 1785 AD and continue through the first ten years of the reign of Nasir al-Din Shah (1858 AD).

Volume two in book one and volume three in book two of the 2008 edition used here contain materials on the Bab and his movement. Volume two includes an account of the Bab and the beginning of his movement as well as his debates with clerics in Shiraz, Isfahan, and Tabriz. Most of the content on the Bab and Babis is found in volume three. These include further details on the Bab as well as an account of Tahirih Qurrat al-Ayn. Additionally, readers will find details of the various Babi uprisings at Shaykh Tabarsi by Mullah Husayn of Bushruiyih and Mullah Muhammad Ali Barfurush (Quddus), at Zanjan by

Mullah Muhammad-Ali Zanjani (Hujjat), and at Nayriz by Siyyid Yahya Darabi (Vahid). Volume three also gives an account of the assassination attempt against Nasir al-Din Shah by three young Babis, the severe persecutions of the Bab's followers that ensued, as well as the trial and execution of the Bab himself.

European Languages Section: Sargis Mubagajian Atrpet (1860-1937)



Armenian author Sargis Mubagajian Atrpet (1860-1937) published two books with significant materials on the Bab's religion. The first book titled *Imamat: Strana Poklonnikov Imamov* [Imamat: The Country of the Worshippers of the Imam] was published in Armenian in 1906. The Russian version of the same book appeared three years later, in 1909. The second half of this book was dedicated entirely to the Babis and Baha'is. This book has the distinction of being the oldest work containing a large number of photographs and drawings purported to be those of the Bab and some of the most prominent Babi figures, including Sulayman Khan, Tahirih, and Zaynab—known as Rustam-'Ali—who dressed up as a man and fought in the Zanjaan urban revolt of 1850.

In 1910, Atrpet published another book titled *Babizm i Bekhaizm* [Babism and Bahatism] that included many of the same photographs and drawings. However, in all likelihood, these photographs and drawings are fabrications or imaginary artwork. The drawing from the scene of the Bab's execution is of high quality but historically inaccurate. According to various chronicles, a young follower of the Bab, Muhammad-'Ali Zunuzi (surnamed Anis), was executed with him, but there is no sign of Anis in Atrpet's alleged execution drawing. He must have obtained this particular drawing from its owner, N.V. Khanykov—the Russian Consul general in Tabriz who was at that post during the Bab's execution in 1850 and had taken an artist with him to render a painting of the scene. Although this particular execution drawing is not the one described by Haji 'Ali-'Askar in Nabil's account, it is possible that both works were done by the same professional artist that Khanykov took to the execution scene.

The exact details of how Atrpet obtained the other images are not known. Evidently, he had travelled to Tabriz to gather materials for his *Babism and Bahaism* and came to know Jalil Khu'i, an ally of Jamal Burujerdi. Burujerdi was an influential Baha'i teacher who by this time had broken ranks with 'Abdu'l-Baha and joined forces with 'Abdu'l-Baha's half-brother, Mirza Muhammad-'Ali. According to a letter from an ad hoc committee of the Research Department at the Baha'i World Centre, Jalil sold the photographs and drawings to Atrpet.¹ It is not known how Jalil came to own these materials.²

Bibliography:

Atrpet, Sargis Mubagajian. *Imamat' : patmakan hetaghötut'iw n. Aleks'andrapöl : Tparan "Shirak"*, 1906.
Atrpet, Sargis Mubagajian. *Babizm i Bekhaizm : opyt nauchno-religioznago izsledovanīia Tiflis : Élektropech. N.G. Aganiants*, 1910.

¹ See: <http://bahai-library.com/wwwboard/messages00/584.html>. Atrpet's interactions with Jalil Khu'i might have contributed to his negative view of the Baha'is. For example, see a translation of his article that appeared in the Armenian periodical *Sourhandag*. It denied the Baha'is played any significant role in the Persian Constitutional Revolution of 1905-1911. A translation of this article can be found in 'Le Club de la fraternite Revue du Monde Musulman,' vol. 13, Paris, 1911, 180-4 (quoted in Momen's *The Babi and Baha'i Religions 1844-1944: Some Contemporary Western Accounts*, p. 39).

² Jalil Khu'i was the recipient of Baha'u'llah's *Ishraqat* (Glad Tidings) tablet. 'Abdu'l-Baha tried to dissuade him from association with Jamal and Mirza Muhammad-'Ali, but to no avail. 'Abdu'l-Baha's *Lawḥ-i Hizār Baytī* (Tablet of One Thousand Verses) was also addressed to Jalil and focused on the importance of the Baha'i covenant.