

Religious Family Clans in the Geography of Iran in the 20th Century

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Abstract

The change of power of the Qajars through a coup marked the beginning of a new historical stage in the geography of Iran. Pahlavi, who began to act in the direction of turning Persia into Iran, began to support regional clergy and representatives of religious clans.

During the reign of Pahlavi, regional religious clans began to gain more influence and serve the political system under the auspices of the state. Regional religious groups scattered across the geography of Iran, Iraq, Azerbaijan, and Afghanistan are coordinating their activities in order to gain political power and are beginning to receive the support of both the state and religious leaders.

The clergy created "differences" to strengthen their positions and gradually moved away from the official religious doctrine. Religious supremacy became a regional distinction, which increased its influence on the masses of people. Gradually, each region, national groups begin to stand out from each other with their religious leaders, the religious leader determines the identity of the region.

In the 20th century, the Tabatabay family, the Behbahani family, the Shariatmadari family showed themselves as active participants in these processes in Iran. Members of these families were represented in important religious centers such as Najaf, Qom, Mashhad, taught in religious schools, and headed regional religious groups. In some cases, the decision of these regional religious leaders was more effective than that of the official head of state.

The present article aims to determine the overall picture of the emergence and expansion of the sphere of influence of these religious groups. As a result of the study, it was determined that close family ties play an important role along with religious worldview relations.

Keywords: religious family, religious clans, Iran Religion, Islam and Iran, Islam and Tarikat

Релігійні сімейні клани в географії Ірану XX ст.

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Анотація

Зміна влади Каджарів шляхом державного перевороту ознаменувала початок нового історичного етапу в географії Ірану. Пехлеві, який почав діяти в напрямку перетворення Персії на Іран, став підтримувати регіональне духовенство і представників релігійних кланів.

Під час правління Пехлеві регіональні релігійні клани почали здобувати більший вплив і служити політичній системі під егідою держави. Регіональні релігійні групи, розкидані по географії Ірану, Іраку, Азербайджану та Афганістану, координують свою діяльність, щоб отримати політичну владу, і починають отримувати підтримку як держави, так і релігійних лідерів.

Духовенство для зміцнення своїх позицій створювало «різницю» і поступово відходило від офіційної релігійної доктрини. Релігійна зверхність стала регіональною ознакою, що посилює її вплив на маси людей. Поступово кожен регіон, національні групи починають виділятися одна від одної своїми релігійними лідерами, релігійний лідер визначає ідентичність регіону.

Активними учасниками цих процесів в Ірані в 20 столітті проявили сім'ї Табатабай, сім'ї Бехбахані, сім'ї Шаріатмадарі. Члени цих сімей були представлені у важливих релігійних центрах, таких як Наджаф, Кум, Мешхед, викладалися в релігійних школах і очолювали регіональні релігійні групи. У деяких випадках рішення цих регіональних релігійних лідерів було ефективнішим, ніж рішення офіційного глави держави.

Дана стаття має на меті визначити загальну картину виникнення та розширення сфери впливу цих релігійних груп. У результаті дослідження встановлено, що поряд з релігійними світоглядними стосунками важливу роль відіграють тісні родинні зв'язки.

Ключові слова: релігійна сім'я, релігійні клани, іранська релігія, Іслам та Іран, Іслам і Тарикат

Introduction.

A month before Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the RAND Corporation, one of NATO's think tanks, presents its annual report. The presentation is signed by Ariana Tabatabai. This signature attracts our attention with its special place in the history of Azerbaijani religious thought, especially in the history of the national liberation movement and the Shiite religious faith in the south of Azerbaijan.

The RAND Corporation is a research organization that "researches and develops solutions to public policy problems to help make communities safer, healthier and more prosperous around the world." According to the RAND Corporation website, it is "a non-profit, non-partisan organization committed to the public interest. RAND is positioned as a "think tank" that produces an objective analysis, "Effective Solutions".

This political science article analyzes relations between Russia, Iran, and China, recommends a closer relationship with Russia and puts forward a number of similar proposals, which shows that analysts know little about the realities of Russia. The pointlessness of the proposals prepared for "NATO" becomes more obvious in a month, but we have nothing to do with it. He is the author of the research we are interested in.

Main results.

To visualize the thoughts of the "impartial and objective" RAND analyst, a relative of the photographer Nazenin Tabatabai, who lives in Khorasan, Iran, also places a composition in the text. The caption for the photo reads: "How will Iran react to the assassination of Soleimani and how will the escalation end?" (Mourners hold a photo of the late General Qasem Soleimani as they gather at his funeral, Tehran, Iran, January 4, 2020. Photo by Nazenin Tabatabaei/WANA (West Asia News Agency/Reuters) It's a very emotional scene.

Although this young man, recognized as an expert in important think tanks in Europe, lived his life in exile, adhering to the clan traditions of his grandfathers, he did not lose his Iranianism and continues to live it in new opportunities and conditions.

Who is this expert?

She is the daughter of Javad Tabatabai, who was born in the city of Tabriz on the 23rd of the month of Azer (December 15), 1945, in a religious family. This family, called the Tabatabais of Azerbaijan, for the most part does not know the Azerbaijani language, and in some cases does not hide their hatred. Javad Tabatabay was born 3 days after the victory of the Azerbaijan National Movement and soon they moved to the city of Gum. This scientist, who graduated from the University of Tehran, worked as a professor for a long time, defended his doctorate in Hegel's philosophy, became the editor-in-chief of the Islamic Encyclopedia, although he lived in the United States, he could not leave the idea of Iranism and Persian hegemony. Although some analysts called him a "liberal" and a "nationalist".

Who was this "Tabatabayi family"?

Some sources believe that they came to Iran from Iraq at the beginning of the 19th century and first settled

in the city of Kashan. Thus, in Baghdad and Najaf, the followers of this generation existed for a long time as Shiite scholars. In 1835, Seyyed Jafar Tabatabai built a large building for himself in the center of the Iranian city of Kashan, which took ten years to complete. (Bamdad, 1992a, p. 246). The desire to liken this building to the legend of the Huma bird (swinx) shows that although they are Arabs from Iraq, they are the keepers of the traditions of the Sasanian period. This mansion built in Kashan is known as Tabatabaylar house. It is known that this man, who was a carpet merchant, also lived in Tabriz, so this family subsequently had a long and interesting relationship with the city of Tabriz and the Turks of Azerbaijan. In later times, tabatabay nisbas (meaning my father's father or my grandfather's grandfather) is expressed by adding toponyms such as Kumi, Iraqi, Borujardi, Tabrizi.

If we go back a little, we can establish a more primitive model of this family clan. It turns out that this family, defending the hegemony of Iran and Persia, is actually completely Arab. Genealogy shows that Sadat Tabatabai is the name of the Sadat family whose lineage was continued by Hassan bin Ali. It is said that Ibrahim, the ancestor of the Tabatabais, pronounced "taba" instead of "kaba" due to a speech impediment, and therefore they were called tabatabais. (Ravandi, 1970, p. 235). Some members of this family who settled in the geography of Iran also bore the surnames "Deeba" and "Kia", each of which has a historian.

From the Sadat family, Bani Ataj went to Amul, Bani Asaf went to Isfahan, Bani Mustalkhakan and Bani Mostaj went to Egypt, Bani Karki went to Egypt, Bani Al Mahal went to Khuzestan, Baghdad, Aleppo and Arjan, and Al Hakim and Zawari. Tabatabays who moved to Iraq later arrived in Azerbaijan and Tabriz, Borujar. These family members were also placed in the cities of Yazd, Tabaristan, Dilam, Rey. For a long time, this family clan, which maintains kinship by marrying each other's daughters, was at the center of various political, ideological and some economic projects. Without going too deep, let me mention that the Houthis ideology in Yemen also stems from them. Events such as republicanism, coup d'etat, religious theorizing, school management, professorship, diplomacy, treason are widely known in the history of this family. Tabatabais, who built a clan model similar to the Italian Medici family in European history, are gaining special influence in South Azerbaijan. however, they did not leave historical monuments, museums, works of art and cultural monuments like the Medici.

Even then, the importance of close relationships with other spiritual families for creating a strong family lineage was known. They were members of the family of Hakim, Birujerdi, Imam Juma, Imami and Almasilar Majlisi, who received protection over a very large area. Having married the daughters of Allam Majlis Muhammadtag, Bahbahani and Tabatabai are connected by family ties. These relationships make the Tabatabai family powerful in Iranian geography.

As already mentioned, tabatabays began to take an active place in South Azerbaijan from the second half of

the 19th century. With the permission of Nasreddin Shah, in 1858, the "Faramushkhana" (Masonic society) began to operate, organized by Melk Khan (of Armenian origin). With appeals from various aristocrats, they reported to the shah that this institution preaches reaction, conducts propaganda against the government (kingdom) and wants to destroy the country. To check the activities of the society, Nasreddin Shah appoints two respected ulema (clerics) to investigate this issue. Seyyed Sadiq Tabatabay and Seyyed Ismail Behbahani investigate this issue, the goals and objectives of the faramushkhan and personally declare to the shah that there is no threat to religion and the state. (Rain, 1978, p. 505). Nevertheless, in October 1861, Nasir ed-Din Shah severely punished the members of the "Masonic lodge" (organization) and decided to abolish it.

At the end of the 19th century, there was a revival of Freemasonry. In the late 70s of the XIX century, Malcolm Khan creates a model of the Masonic organization of the League of "Humanity". Unfortunately, no documents have been preserved that would make it possible to judge who was involved. Since it is a secret organization, there are more rumors about it. His activities were directly directed against the absolutist monarchy and against Nasir al-Din Shah, to whom Malcolm Khan was personally hostile. Although, as before, he appealed to Islam as a religion of justice and mercy and was able to attract the clergy. Melkom Khan, posing as an Armenian converted to Islam, secretly married an Armenian girl in a church in Istanbul, and at the same time treated him like a prince in the Qajar court. The society he founded operated until about 1896. In the same year, the Shah was assassinated, and Malcolm Khan decided to limit the activities of the League of Humanity in the hope of establishing good relations with the newly come to power Mozaffar Ed-Din Shah. (Bamdad, 1992a, p. 62). This policy paid off, and in 1904 Mirza Abbasgoli Khan Qazvini, a follower of Malkom Khan, created a new "Masonic lodge" without encountering any obstacles from the state. This organization, like its predecessors in Iran, was of an elitist nature, as can be seen from its social class structure.

It can be assumed that in fact there were quite a lot of clergies among the members of the new structure. The first to call were 16 deputies of the Milli Majlis - members of the Society (Humanity). Half of the deputies of the first Iranian parliament belonged to the clergy. The new structure, whose spiritual mentor was Malcolm Khan, who lived abroad, advocated reforms in Iranian society, standing on the positions of moderate liberalism. However, at that time the revolutionary movement was gaining strength, as a result of which the Constitutional Revolution of 1905-1911 took place, "spiritual Masons" became active participants in these processes.

There were many clerics who advocated limiting the power of the Qajars to the constitution and the Majlis, which played an important role in overthrowing the absolutist system. The peculiarity of the new Masonic organization was that it was organized under French patronage. Therefore, some ulema who had a negative attitude towards the British willingly joined this group. It

is noted that two clerics, the initiators of the Constitutional Revolution of 1905-1911, Seyyed Muhammad Tabatabai, entered the Awakening Lodge because they believed in it. Years later, his son Seyyed Mohammad Sadiq Tabatabai, Professor Mohammed Hossein, wrote about this in a letter addressed to Mimandineh: "After the revolution, my father and I joined the French Masonic lodge. After that, we suddenly discovered that an English hand was creeping out of the hands of the French lodge, the purpose of which was the colonial enslavement of our country. As soon as my father and I realized this, we immediately left this gatehouse" (Rain, 1978, p. 170). Although it is difficult to believe in the sincerity of the letter, one should know that at that time there were only 359 high-ranking clerics in the country, of which 175 reached the title of "mujtahid jame ash-sharia".

It is no coincidence that Sheikh Fazlullah Nuri was executed by the revolutionaries after the victory of the constitutionalists in July 1909. At the trial, the death sentence was pronounced by Sheikh Ibrahim Zanjani under the supervision of "Mashruta", and the execution was carried out under the leadership of the Armenian Yeprem Khan. This "revenge", carried out under the pressure of Seyyed Muhammad Tabatabai and Abdullah Bahbahani, is not meaningfully assessed in the sources. It was a legitimate incident, or it didn't look like the perpetrators had overstepped their bounds. After the sheikh's execution, his son Sheikh Mehdi (father of Kiyani, one of the leaders of the Iranian Tudeh Party), apparently believing that his father had "committed crimes" against the people of Iran, refused to take the body, and the body was buried by Khomeini's mother, Ms. Hajjar. Mrs. Hajjar honored the memory of her relative by holding memorial ceremonies on the third, seventh and fortieth days, and mourning ceremonies were held annually until her death in 1917 (Nejat, 2010, p. 379).

At the beginning of the 20th century in the Qajar state, especially in South Azerbaijan, the clergy performed the functions of the head of political parties, and the mosques performed organizational functions. All centers of power were either supporters or enemies of the clergy. The ideological center is the city of Qom. Events in Tehran and other provincial cities were either controlled, supported or rejected from the city of Qom.

It was Mirza Ali Agha Tabrizi who coined the term "ayatollah" as a concept. When Fazlullah Nouri attempted to gain veto power for his fellow mullahs from Tehran under the banner of the Council of Jurists, Mirza Ali Agha opposed the idea and stated that only the opinion of "taqlid" sources deserves attention in matters of faith. (Kazimi, 2023, p. 34).

On December 21, 1911, after the end of the siege of Tabriz by the Russian troops, a conflict broke out between the Russian troops and the revolutionaries. The Russians insisted that he (Mirza Ali Agha Tabrizi) sign a letter confirming the responsibility of the revolutionaries for starting the conflict. He refused, and the Russians hanged him, along with twelve others, on Ashur on December 31, 1911. The Russians killed the revolutionaries-Mashruts of Tabriz and their relatives, as well as many civilians of

Tabriz. The total number of those executed is estimated at around 1,200. The tomb of Tikat tul-Islam is located in the cemetery of poets in Tabriz. Nothing happened to the "Masonic-spiritual" legislators in these processes.

In general, in the first half of the 20th century, the number of tabatabays increased in Tabriz. The famous Ayatollah Sayyid Muhammad Hassan Tabatabai Tabrizi (brother of Allama Tabatabai). Ayatullahul-Uzma Sayyid Ali Tabatabay Tabrizi (1922-2014). Ayatullahul-Uzma Seyid Javad Tabatabay Tabrizi (1928-2008). Ali Gazi Tabatabai aka Allama Qadi or Ayatollah Ghazi (1869–1947) and others. In general, the Tabatabais were mostly long-lived, and the number of children was traditionally large, as they had several wives. However, political and religious historians in the biographies of famous representatives of this genus, perhaps, deliberately do not provide information about the close relatives of their children. It seems that they agreed to keep the relationship of this family clan secret. (Algar, 1973, p. 32).

Participants in historical events note in their memoirs that Seyyed Abdullah Behbahani, Seyyed Mohammad Tabatabai, Seyyed Mohammad Sadiq-Tabatabay, Malek ul-Motakallamin, Seyyed Mortaza Ashtiani, Seyyed Mortaza Jafar Sadr al-Olama, Jemal ad-Din Vaez and many others of Iran. They were members of the Awakening Lodge (Masonic group) and the Ohovvat Society.

Seyyed Mohammad Tabatabai, who is represented in many literatures as a draftsman, is the son of Seyyed Sadiq Tabatabai. This Sadiq Tabatabai was a member of a Masonic lodge called "Faramuskhane" founded by Melk Khan in 1858. He betrayed the trust of the Qajar dynasty and joined the Masonic Lodge along with the Bahbahani, and their sons also continued their betrayal in the Mashruta movement. These perfidious spiritual representatives, who desired Majlisi Islam, finally agreed to the creation of Majlisi Mili. (Anarkulova, 1984, p. 145).

Marjai Taqlid, Mujteid, Ayatollah Ozma Seyyed Muhammad Kazem Shariatmadari Tabrizi - was born in 1906 (1284 AH) in the city of Tabriz. His father Seyid Hasan Shariatmadari Tabrizi (died 1914, 1293) was one of the famous preachers of Azerbaijan (Tabriz) of that time.

Like most children from religious families, Sayyid Muhammad, like all other theologians, was educated first in the city of Qom, then in Najaf and was a student of Sheikh Abdul Karim Khaeri Yazdi, Mirza Javad Maliki of Tabriz.

Although there is no information about this person in Azerbaijani and Russian, information is partially presented in English-language resources. However, on the Wikimedia platform (in Persian) you can get a lot of information about this scientist. Surprisingly, Wikimedia shows the worldview of Seyyed Mohammad differently than the propaganda of the Islamic Republic of Iran. In all cases, in the scriptures on Shariatmadi, one can see a set line serving corporate interests. According to the correspondent of the TV channel AN.T, the interviews, built in the form of custom questions and pre-prepared answers, did not "light up" on the dark pages of

Shariatmadari's political views and biography. Also, despite the fact that the son of this clergyman (who has recently given frequent interviews), (Arabadzhyan, 2019, p. 172) Ahmed Shariatmadari lived in exile (in Germany) for the last forty years of his life, despite the fact that he presented himself as an Azerbaijani, despite the fact that he declared that his father should lead the national movement, he seeks to enlist the support of the leadership of the Republic of Azerbaijan, despite his request, he has not yet been to Azerbaijan, because he knows that coming to Azerbaijan for any reason in these forty years will be considered a loss of confidence before by their leaders.

Seyyed Muhammad Shariatmadari led the Khalaoglu mosque in Tabriz from 1934, and in 1950 he returned to Kum and began teaching there. (Oral lecture, 2014). Therefore, Azerbaijan sees its national revival (the national government established under the leadership of Peshawar) in Tabriz and lives in that period in Azerbaijan. Although it is impossible to determine Shariatmadari's opinion about the national movement and the national government in Azerbaijan from specific reliable sources, his disagreements with Khomeini and his opinions in interviews show that his attitude to national issues did not coincide with official state relations.

After the national government was proclaimed in Tabriz in December 1945, Ayatollah Tabatabai moved from Tabriz to Qom with his family. Shariatmadari was in charge of the mosque in the Tabriz bazaar, although at that time he did not have big titles, and we know how important the bazaar is in a city like Tabriz. Instead of asking the son of this clergyman about his father's memories of the Azerbaijani national movement (movement), the journalists who handed over the microphone to the son of Shariatmadari do not make sense to ask questions that many of us are well aware of.

Shariatmadari was considered a supporter of the theory of "civil Islam", opposed to the theory of "political Islam". According to civil Islam, Islam is not for power and does not prescribe any specific forms and methods of government. According to this theory, the main duty of a lawyer is not a politician, but a lawyer. You don't have to get into politics. Shariatmadari believed that national sovereignty should be recognized. From his point of view, national sovereignty eliminates the domination of the people over the people, and the duties of the clergy do not contradict national sovereignty. From his point of view, a "religious jurist" can speak out only in two cases: in the first case, if one or a group of actions contradict Islam, the constitution, or the general interest of the people, and in the second case, important work needs to be done, for which there is no one responsible person when it comes to. This information is the official information posted in the encyclopedia Wikishia of the Qom Theological Institute. (Bamdad, 1992b, p.12). If this information matches in reality, Shariatmadari had to support the Azerbaijani national movement, the "21 Azer" revolution.

Conclusions.

This is where the scholar's son Seyyed Hasan Shariatmadari responds in his recent interviews to

comments about the fall of the Muslim People's Movement. In 1979-1981, the national-democratic movement in the south of Azerbaijan was multifaceted. Apart from the People's Muslim Party and its leader Shariatmadari, no one could mobilize the people. Everyone was waiting for the fatwa of the leader (Shariatmadari). Shariatmadari, who did not support Khomeini's call for a referendum, could hear the slogans of hundreds of thousands of people on the streets of Tabriz: "The original 110 people against the legal framework, reformed or not, threatened." He knew that the whole of Azerbaijan was expecting "fatwa" from him, and only his call could unite all the "left and right" (right and left), democrats and non-democrats in Azerbaijan. He didn't. Although there were 11 committees and armed groups in Tabriz and its provinces.

This organization has become a center of power that will frighten people and secular movements in Azerbaijan (Tabriz). The memoirs of the national forces say that his son Hassan (who gave an interview in recent months) was at the head of the armed forces. Although he studied technology in Iran, he was his father's confidant. Hasan Shariatmadari, the leader of the armed forces of the People's Muslim organization, who spent a lot of time with theologians, although he did not receive a theological education, attacked people with different ideas, national activists during elections, beat them to death and threw them into the cemetery, terrorizing the eyes of people.

In the early years of the revolution, he attacked the trade union organization of 13,000 people, created by the carpet weavers and workers of Tabriz, raided the "khanei kargar" (working house-trade union organization) located in the Bagmesh district of the city of Tabriz, dispersed them with his armed gang, beat them to death of the head of the organization, and later executed through the government of Ahmet Shariatmadari, who imprisoned him for six years. (Kasrawi, 1997, p.131). Of course, at that time everyone knew that the Shariatmadari family was the patron of Farshi Iran. This patronage passed to

them after Tabatabai, and they "delivered" to the ayatollah that if the carpet weaver and the workers form a union, then they will have to cut "their share".

At the head of these affairs at that time was Hassan Shariatmadari, who called himself "secular" and entered into an alliance with Reza Pahlavi to build a "democratic Iran." (Kermani, 1949, p. 7).

It is believed that in the first years of the Islamic revolution in Azerbaijan, when there was a political vacuum, Khomeini, who did not travel anywhere in the process of national slogans, came with his son to the city of Qom, to the meeting of Shariatmadari. After this meeting, all national wishes and desires were put to an end. Of course, he could not sit in Qom (city) and lead the national movement in Azerbaijan. Maybe he didn't even have that thought. (Agheli, 1993, p. 371). It is possible that the national rights of Azerbaijan were for him a means of trade with the central government, and he lost in this trade.

However, in all cases, Marjei Taqlid, Mujteid, Ayatollah Ozma Seyyed Muhammad Kazem Shariatmadari Tabrizi played an important role in the national thought of South Azerbaijan, in the victory of the February Revolution (1979), in the theory of national interests that did not contradict religious dogmas, and in the creation of a national Muslim (actually Azerbaijani) movement. The views, expressions, actions and interpretations of this group are very similar to the model of the Taliban in Afghanistan. Of course, they were not national and are not so today. (Namee Negab, 1983). It is known that it was impossible to lead the national movement in Azerbaijan sitting in Guma. Of course, if he came to Azerbaijan, if he mobilized the available armed forces and supporters, the Islamic Republic of Iran would not be able to do anything to him, and there would be no disrespect associated with his death and burial. But he didn't choose it. This was our history, we should know and appreciate it with its victories and defeats.

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